

**The Dangerous Strait:**  
**A Predictive Analysis on Possible Military Intervention**  
**by the U.S. & Japan over the Taiwan Strait**  
**Using the Lockwood Analytical Method for Prediction (LAMP)**

By

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## INTRODUCTION

China's latest military movements and engagements in the Taiwan Strait were an event that had considerable bearing on both regional security and the cross-strait relations between Taiwan and the mainland China. Before Taiwan held its first open presidential election in mid-nineties, the Chinese military fired missiles just tens of miles away from Taiwan's two largest seaports and conducted two large-scale joint-forces exercises across the strait. Beijing's war brinkmanship was intended to intimidate Taiwan's public and show its 'determination and capability' to fight against Taiwan's independence. Nevertheless, China's military maneuvered in the Taiwan Strait stirred up alarm and uneasiness among Asian countries, the U.S. and of course Japan.<sup>1</sup>

Beijing's prime objective of its war games was to send Taiwanese leaders an ambiguous message in an extremely glaring and intense method that the mainland would not put up with anymore of Taiwan's continued quest for independence. Taiwan has long been viewed by Beijing government as a renegade province of the People's Republic of China. Taiwan's former president Lee Teng-hui's unofficial visit to the United States in June of 1995 was regarded by Chinese leaders as a breakthrough in Taiwan's 'flexible diplomacy,' which might bring more international recognition for Taiwan's pursuit of independence. Taipei, in recent years, has been working hard to expand its 'living space' in the international arena, as shown by its campaign for returning to the United Nations and other high-profile international maneuvers. It has openly argued for 'two separate international entities' representing China in the world and welcomed

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<sup>1</sup> Hu, Weixing, 'China's Taiwan Policy and East Asian Security', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, August 1, 1997

parallel diplomatic recognition from other countries.<sup>2</sup> The Taiwanese military spent enormous money purchasing advanced aircraft, missiles, and anti-submarine weapons from the West and Beijing was irritated when Taipei used ‘dollar diplomacy’ to get some small African nations switch diplomatic recognition from Beijing to Taipei (e.g. Liberia, Belize, and Senegal). If a few small countries are no big deal for Beijing, any substantive progress in major Western countries would be threatening and Beijing must respond strongly. Lee’s trip to the U.S. constituted such a breakpoint that Beijing’s defense on ‘One China’ policy might collapse in a domino effect. Thus, the Chinese leaders felt compelled to roll back Taiwan’s offense by such drastic measures as military exercises in the Taiwan Strait.

Many military and political analysts comment that the Taiwan Strait is probably the most dangerous flashpoint in the world. Any minor military conflict in this sensitive area could easily escalate to a full-scale war between the world’s superpowers. It is true that the Beijing government would never tolerate Taiwan’s unilaterally proclaim of independence, as Beijing’s top hardliner officials constantly insist to ‘liberate’ Taiwan by military force ‘at all cost’ should it attempt to separate with the motherland. On the other hand, Beijing is trying its every political and diplomatic efforts to the Taiwan leadership in the hope that they would eventually reunite with the mainland under the ‘One China’ principle peacefully.

There is no doubt that China could easily take over Taiwan by military force as the latter’s defense force is significantly weaker than the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) from the mainland. The only uncertain issue which could change the overall result is whether an

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<sup>2</sup> Council of Mainland Affairs (Taiwan), Taihai Liangan Guanxi Shuominshu (The State of the Relations Across the Taiwan Strait), July 1994.

outside force would intervene should the PLA invade Taiwan. This research paper is therefore aiming to answer this question by using the LAMP method.

I will now proceed to apply the 12 steps of the LAMP methodology to my research paper.

### **STEP 1. DETERMINE THE ISSUE FOR WHICH YOU WILL TRY TO DETERMINE THE MOST LIKELY ISSUE**

After reading the introduction, one might ask the following question, ‘What will happen when China decides to take over Taiwan by military force?’ Since the U.S. and Japan have vast interests in the region as well as the military capability to engage in the Taiwan Strait, it would be logical to assess whether any of them would try to influence the process or intervene China’s military actions. Therefore the next sensible question will be ‘What will the U.S. and Japan react if China invades Taiwan?’ These questions will form the background of this research paper using the LAMP for predicting the issue of how these two nations would react when China tries to solve the Taiwan issue by military means.

The hypothesis of this paper is that both the U.S. and Japan will react in a manner commensurate with the legitimacy of China’s invasion as viewed by the two nations. For example, if Taiwan decides to proclaim independence unilaterally despite the strong objection from Beijing and Washington, then the military action to be taken by Beijing might be viewed as a legitimate action, or at least an understandable action, by other countries, including the U.S. and Japan. Although this is not to say the two nations would just sit back and watch, their actions or assistance to be provided to Taiwan would be limited when compared to another

scenario such as when China invades Taiwan without a sound and legitimate reason. In order to validate my hypothesis, I will try to address the following issues:

1. The likelihood of China's invasion on Taiwan;
2. The stance of the current leadership in Taiwan towards independence;
3. The meaning of 'One China' principle and its meaning to Taiwan as conceived by Beijing leaders;
4. The strategic importance of Taiwan;
5. The policies on Taiwan by the U.S. and Japan;
6. The military assistance to be provided to Taiwan by the U.S. and Japan during the military crisis over the Taiwan Strait.

In addition, when I prepare this research paper using the LAMP method, I also make the following assumptions:

- Scenarios take place in current time with current political leaders and socio-economical situations;
- China, the U.S. and Japan are not in the middle of regime change;
- The U.S. maintains the same military power in the region;
- Beijing leaders view Taiwan as a renegade province and would not accept any form of independence in contrary to the 'One China' principle.

## STEP 2. SPECIFY THE NATIONAL ACTORS INVOLVED

The United States (US) and Japan (JP) are the national actors involved for the purposes of this LAMP paper. As mentioned before, both the U.S. and Japan have vast economic and military interests in the region. They are also the only two powerful nations in the region that can provide effective military or political influence over the Taiwan Strait. Moreover, under the Taiwan Relations Act which will be explained in depth in Step 3, the U.S. has the obligation to defend Taiwan by *'make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability'*.<sup>3</sup> As to Japan, Tokyo government recently announced that it agreed with the U.S. that the Taiwan Strait issue was a *'mutual security concern'*<sup>4</sup>. It is therefore logical to assume the U.S. as well as Japan would at least consider some form of action in the event that Taiwan is under military attack.

Although there are other nations in the region, such as the Philippines, Indonesia or Malaysia, that can be directly affected should there be a military conflict over the Taiwan Strait, I do not intend to include them in this paper as I believe that their political or military influences are minimal.

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<sup>3</sup> Section 3 of the Taiwan Relations Act (1979)

<sup>4</sup> *'Taiwan's ex-president may visit Japan'*, *Reuters News*, January 11, 2006

### **STEP 3. PERFORM AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF HOW EACH NATIONAL ACTOR PERCEIVES THE ISSUE**

#### **Historical Background**

To fully understand the complicate and delicate relationship between Taiwan and the mainland China, it would be necessary to go back in time to examine the historical background of what caused the current setting up of the Taipei government.

The island of Taiwan was a province of China since the Ching Dynasty (1644-1911). In 1895, Taiwan was formally ceded to the Empire of Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki following the defeat of China in the first Sino-Japanese War. For the next fifty years, Taiwan was ruled by Japan. In late 1943, the U.S., the U.K. and the Republic of China under the Kuomintang (KMT) or the Nationalist government at that time issued a communiqué stating that it was their intention to return Taiwan to China. This agreement later became to be known as the Cairo Declaration. Specifically, the communiqué stated:

*‘Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the First World War in 1914, and that all territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa (i.e. the present Taiwan) and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China’<sup>5</sup>*

Towards the end of the second world war in July 1945, the leaders of the U.S., U.K. and the Republic of China (ROC) declared in the Potsdam Proclamation that ‘the terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of

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<sup>5</sup> ‘Conference of President Roosevelt, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and Prime Minister Churchill in North Africa’ *Department of State Bulletin*, December 4, 1943, p.393

Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku and such minor islands as we determine.’<sup>6</sup> When the war ended, the Allied Powers gave the Nationalist government of the Republic of China to accept the Japanese surrender and administer the island of Taiwan. The Chinese civil war soon started between the Nationalist government and the Communist forces led by Mao Zedong.

In 1949, after suffering a series of major defeats on the mainland, the Nationalist government retreated to the island of Taiwan. As might be expected, the influx of almost two million troops, government bureaucrats and refugees was a severe strain on the island’s limited resources. But it was widely believed at that time that the situation was only transitory; Taiwan would serve either as Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek’s last stand against the Chinese Communist or as a staging area to retake the mainland. No one at that time expected that the Nationalist government would remain in Taipei for over half a century until today.

Following the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, U.S. President Truman ordered the U.S. Seventh Fleet to neutralize the Taiwan Strait. With China’s entry into the Korean War, U.S. support for Taiwan became firm policy. These moves probably spared the Nationalist government on Taiwan and helped lay the groundwork for the ensuing economic and political miracles on the island.

Since the Nationalist ruling clique retreated to Taiwan, although its regime has continued to use the designations ‘Republic of China’ and ‘government of the Republic of China’, it has long since completely forfeited its right to exercise state sovereignty on behalf of China and, in reality, has always remained only a local authority in Chinese territory.

### **The Formulation of the ‘One China’ Principle & Taiwan’s ‘Two States’ Theory**

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<sup>6</sup> ‘Proclamation Defining Terms for Japanese Surrender’ *Department of State Bulletin*, July 29, 1945, p.137

On the day of its founding, the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China declared to governments of all countries in the world, 'This government is the sole legitimate government representing the entire people of the People's Republic of China'. Shortly afterwards, the Central People's Government telegraphed the United Nations, announcing that the Nationalist authorities had 'lost all basis, both de jure and de facto, to represent the Chinese people', and therefore had no right to represent China at all. One principle governing New China's establishment of diplomatic relations with a foreign country is that it recognizes the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legitimate government representing the whole of China, and severs and refrains from establishing diplomatic relations with the Taiwan authorities.<sup>7</sup>

These propositions of the Chinese government met with obstruction by the U.S. government in the 1950's. The U.S. government, in an effort to isolate and contain the Communist China, lobbied for 'dual recognition' among the international community in order to create 'two Chinas'. Naturally, the Chinese government opposed this, insisting that there is only one China in the world and, Taiwan is a part of China. China has evolved the 'One China' principle precisely in the course of the endeavor to develop normal diplomatic relations with other countries and the struggle to safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity.

For the next forty odd years after 1949, although the Taipei government did not recognize the legitimate status of the government of the People's Republic of China as the representative of the whole of China, they did insist that Taiwan is a part of China and that there is only one China, as opposed to 'two Chinas' and 'Taiwan independence'. This shows that for a long time there has been a common understanding among the Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Strait on

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<sup>7</sup> Press statement issued by the Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council, PRC, on February 21, 2000.

the fundamental question that there is only one China and Taiwan is a part of Chinese territory. This fundamental belief also prompted the economic cooperation, business and tourist exchanges between the people of China and Taiwan in the past decades.

In July 1999, the then president of Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui, surprised many during an interview with a German radio station when he openly defined the relations between mainland China and Taiwan for the first time as ‘between two countries, at least special relations between two countries’. With this definition, he abandoned Taiwan’s previous position of China and Taiwan being ‘two equal political entities’, which now according to him, were actually equal to ‘two countries’. The Taipei government also later confirmed of the change in the government’s position and affirmed that the ‘two states’ theory was a result of a year-long study by the Taipei government.<sup>8</sup> The change of Taiwan’s mainland policy was significant. Taiwan under previous presidents, Chiang Kai-shek and his successor, Chiang Ching-kuo, had held a consistent position that both mainland China and Taiwan are Chinese territory and there is only one China, and this China is the Republic of China (ROC), not the People’s Republic of China (PRC). This position began to change when Lee stepped into office in 1988. Long before the radio interview, Lee’s government had begun to change its position in that Taipei would not compete with Beijing for the ‘right to represent China’ in the international arena, rather it began to emphasize that the two parts of China should have the right to participate alongside each other in the international community as equal prior to unification.<sup>9</sup> As expected, Taiwan’s new initiative provoked China’s fury. In addition, it had led to a fundamental change in China’s perception of Taiwan’s real intention on reunification and, consequently, doubted about the latter’s previous peaceful reunification strategy, tempting it to form a new Taiwan strategy. With the wide support in

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<sup>8</sup> ‘Taiwan Moves to Sell ‘Two States’ Policy World –Wide’, *Straits Times (Singapore)*, July 15, 1999

<sup>9</sup> ‘White Paper on Cross-Strait Relations’, *Reuters Newsline*, July 14, 1994

Taiwan for Lee's 'two states' theory, Beijing began to realize that it could no longer rely on Taipei to pursue peaceful reunification. Beijing believed that Taiwan would not retract the 'two states' position so long as Lee was in power. It therefore placed its hopes on the new President. Furthermore in September 1999, Taiwan's diplomatic allies failed, for the seventh year, to get the United Nations General Assembly to consider its membership. What was noteworthy was that it was the first time that the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council affirmed their 'One China' position on the same occasion in the General Assembly's steering committee. With this international response, Beijing did not feel the rush to resolve Taiwan's issue by immediate military force. Instead it chose to wait for the outcome of the presidential election in Taiwan in March 2000 before deciding on its next move.

### **Current Political Situation of Taiwan under President Chen Shui-bian**

Taiwan's presidential election in 2000 saw the first defeat of the Nationalist (or Kuomintang) government, for the first time after fifty-five years in power, by the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). The leader of the DPP, Chen Shui-bian, was elected to be the new president of Taiwan with over thirty-nine percent of the vote.<sup>10</sup> As both Chen and the DPP refused to accept the 'One China' principle all along, it was the last thing that the Beijing leaders wanted to see. However, since his election, Chen has shifted from being a radical advocate of Taiwan's independence that he and the DPP had stood for during the past years. This shift has relieved popular worries over an imminent military clash across the Taiwan Strait. Still, Beijing leaders were uncertain as to whether this was just a tactical adjustment to allow a temporary breathing space for Chen to consolidate his power before becoming strong enough to challenge Beijing on the reunification issue, or whether the shift would lead to

abandonment of his pursuit of Taiwan's independence. The difference between these two would determine peace or war in future.

Domestically in Taiwan, more and more people, especially the younger generation, tended to regard Taiwan as a sovereign nation and objected to the reunification with the mainland. In a public poll conducted several years ago, 71 percent of the respondents said that Taiwan was a sovereign nation. Almost 45 percent of the respondents considered themselves as 'Taiwanese' rather than 'Chinese'.<sup>11</sup> In addition, most people in Taiwan refused to accept Beijing's 'One Country, Two System' model that is currently being used in Hong Kong and Macau.

Although Chen has not pushed the independence issue to the limit and exercised flexibility in dealing with the 'One China' principle issue, the stance of the DPP remained that Taiwan is a sovereignty country. In Beijing's view, even if Chen personally gives up the pursuit of Taiwan's independence, it would be of little use to Beijing because the ruling DPP and the independence forces as a whole have not yet collapsed. For the hardliners in Beijing, Chen's flexibility did not mean the abandonment of his pursuit of independence, but as Chinese Vice-Premier Qian Qichen said, Chen's action was only a 'change from a pursuit of overt independence to a covert one'<sup>12</sup>. With the fact that Beijing has never abandoned the policy on resolving the Taiwan issue by military force, there is always the possibility that Beijing might resort to use force if Taiwan would not agree to peaceful reunification with the mainland at the end.

## **Taiwan's Strategic Importance**

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<sup>10</sup> 'Taiwan Election Result', *Oriental Daily Newspaper (Hong Kong)*, March 19, 2000

<sup>11</sup> 'Taiwan's Recent Poll', *Oriental Daily Newspaper (Hong Kong)*, September 20, 2001

Because of historic and geographic dynamics, Taiwan's security is firmly and securely tied to the interrelationships between the United States, Japan, and mainland China. Since both the United States and Japan see China as a latent menace to Asian security, Taiwan's strategic significance merits attention. It is then to be expected that the United States and Japan consider Taiwan's current situation vis-à-vis the strategic framework of the U.S.--Japan Joint Declaration.

The geographic location of Taiwan places it immediately spanning the strategic front line of the U.S. and Japan's 1,000-nautical-mile maritime defense line. Therefore, Taiwan is in a position to manage and balance the equilibrium of security relations between the north and south Asia-Pacific region. In this respect, Taiwan bolsters the security interests of the U.S. and Japan.

Mainland China clearly recognizes the strategic value of Taiwan to the mainland's national interests. In the May 1996 issue of *Vessels Knowledge*, an article entitled "The Geographic Values of Taiwan Island in Maritime Strategy" made the following vivid observations: *Taiwan is 900 nautical miles south of the outlet of the Yalu River, 800 nautical miles north of the Nansha Islands. A Taiwan-based modernized naval force could carry out a fully mobilized attack throughout Chinese territorial waters within two days. Taiwan itself is a valuable military base to the mainland coastal region and to the entire Southeast Asian region as well. The strategic value of Taiwan goes far beyond its description as 'an unsinkable aircraft carrier.' The recovery of Taiwan will reverse the mainland's current semi-sealed situation and provide a gateway for China to enter the Pacific. But if Taiwan is heavily influenced by foreign powers, China will not only be blocked at its front door, but its northern sea routes will also be restricted by the Ryukyu Islands. The entire maritime industry would be thwarted. With respect*

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<sup>12</sup> Qian's talk at Beijing University on May 26, 2000, reported by CTN TV, May 26, 2000

*to the mainland's most developed five coastal provinces and cities (Shandong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Shanghai), the strategic opportunities Taiwan yields are inestimable.*<sup>13</sup>

Taiwan also factors heavily in the development of China policy in the U.S. and Japan. Both countries hope that China's economic reforms will continue to fuel modernization efforts and, in turn, encourage political reforms aimed at Western-style democratization. China's democratization would remove the huge burden of being China's opponent from the U.S. and Japan.

With its shared language and cultural background, Taiwan could exert a strong influence on mainland China's modernization efforts. Taiwan's economic expertise has already fueled the fast-growing economy of the mainland, and Taiwan's democratic reforms have established a model for mainland China's future political development. This "lighthouse effect" further enhances Taiwan's strategic importance.

### **Could China Invade Taiwan ?**

There are few doubts that the Chinese PLA has the capability to take control of Taiwan by military force. To boost its military pressure over Taiwan, the PLA has placed high priority on the development of land-attack cruise missiles for medium to long range missions. It had only one theatre missile brigade in 1995; the number is expected to grow to seven between 2005 to 2010.<sup>14</sup> PLA also recently indicated that they had developed two land-attack missiles: *Chang Feng* and *Chang Feng 1*. The range of *Chang Feng* is believed to be 600 km and accurate to

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<sup>13</sup> Lee Yia-Chiang, 'The Geographic Values of Taiwan Island in Maritime Strategy', *Vessels Knowledge* 200, May 1996, pp. 16-17.

within 15 meters. *Chang Feng I* has a range of 1,300 km and accuracy to within 5 meters.<sup>15</sup> China also deployed Russian-made S-300PMU1 and S-300PMU2 surface to air missile batteries, which have a minimum range of 90 km. They could severely challenge Taiwan's air operations in the Taiwan Strait as they are deployed in Longtian opposite Taiwan. Other missiles deployed include SA-2, SA-10 and SA-15.<sup>16</sup>

A possible scenario for China to take control of Taiwan will have to start by taking an offensive assault against important assets that include airfields, command-and-control facilities, and ships using its missiles, aircraft, and special forces. This will be done employing the element of surprise, so that Taiwan could not reposition its airplanes, get its ships under way, and begin general military mobilization while its command-and-control infrastructure was still intact. Such scheme would represent China's only hope of establishing air and sea dominance, which in turn would compose its only hope of rapidly deploying enough troops ashore on Taiwan to stand a chance in subsequent land battles.

Following such offensive, China would then pull together and load up amphibious and airborne resources to cross the Taiwan Strait altogether. It would simultaneously overwhelm the strait with many other ships as a diversion and will serve as an agitation to Taiwanese and U.S. inspection forces and as a magnet for Taiwanese anti-ship missiles that might otherwise be fired at valuable military vessels. China would hope to use control of the skies, together with mass confusion in Taiwan created by its preemptive strikes, to limit Taiwan's ability to move reinforcements to areas that PLA airborne and amphibious forces would then attack.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 'Delegation Pressing for AEGIS Sale', *Taipei Times*, December 18, 2000

<sup>15</sup> 'China: Quantum leaps in missile know-how', *Strait Times*, January 23, 2000

<sup>16</sup> 'China Deploying over 400 Missiles Opposite Taiwan: Report', Central News Agency (Taiwan), August 8, 2000

<sup>17</sup> Hanlon, Michael, 'Can China Conquer Taiwan?' *International Security*, 2000, vol. 25, no. 2

Despite threats from China that it might resort to force if Taiwan would not agree to peaceful reunification, a top U.S. navy official once said a Chinese invasion of the independent island was unlikely. ‘Something like an invasion would be quite improbable,’ according to U.S. Navy Secretary Richard Danzig, ‘I don't think there is a realistic likelihood that (the People's Republic of China) would invade Taiwan, the cost would be too great.’ Such a move would also almost certainly necessitate U.S. Navy involvement in order to counter China's military advantage over Taiwan, as it did in 1996 when China conducted a menacing, large-scale military exercise close to the island. U.S. President Bill Clinton sent two carrier battle groups to the Taiwan Strait, forcing China to back down. However, it was emphasized that the U.S. officially continues its ambiguity about precisely what will be done in a given situation in Taiwan. Furthermore, Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon downplayed the nature of the threat China made, calling it only ‘rhetorical.’<sup>18</sup>

Another voiced out opinion was from the admiral in charge of U.S. forces in the Pacific who elucidated that a Chinese invasion of Taiwan would fail, and that Beijing could cause ‘a lot of damage’ with large-scale missile attacks. ‘Clearly, they are capable of doing a lot of damage to Taiwan with the several hundred missiles that they have, with the navy and the air force that they have,’ Adm. Dennis Blair, commander of 200,000 troops of the U.S. Pacific Command, declared to reporters at the Pentagon. Likewise, Adm. Blair told the Senate that the short-term chance of a regional conflict is fairly low. ‘At the current time, the rhetoric is more heated than the military,’ he told the Senate Armed Services Committee. He urged Beijing’s leaders during recent meetings in Beijing to exercise ‘restraint and moderation’ toward the island. The admiral

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<sup>18</sup> ‘Navy says Chinese invasion of Taiwan ‘improbable,’’ *United Press International*, February 24, 2000

also told Beijing's leaders that the recent white paper outlining a new threat to take the island by force "was not a helpful step toward that peaceful solution" to the dispute.<sup>19</sup>

According to Derek Mitchell, Asia specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, 'for political and economic reasons a *military solution to Taiwan* is a big loser for them..... It is obvious that China wants to focus on internal development, peace, and stability. They don't want to give a signal that they solve problems with a gun.'<sup>20</sup> At the same time, military action could destabilize Asia. China would force small regional states to choose between the U.S. and China - something few want to do.

More significantly, cross-straits violence could waken a deeply contentious undercurrent between Japan and China. Should China attack Taiwan, nationalist factions in Tokyo could have 'every excuse they need,' according to one Japanese scholar, to develop the nuclear-weapons capability that many in Tokyo are already hinting about.

The consequences could bring a changed Japanese economic strategy -- the Japanese would do everything they could, to redirect the markets of Asia, including its own, away from China. Huge amounts of money will be lost to restructure East Asian markets and change the future.

### **U.S. Policy on Taiwan**

The U.S. policy toward the Taiwan Strait crisis has changed in both nuance and direction since the normalization of Sino-U.S. relations. The U.S. policy is based on a delicate balance

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<sup>19</sup> Gertz, Bill, 'Admiral says Taiwan invasion would fail,' *The Washington Times*, August 3, 2000

between the requirements of the three communiqués with the PRC and its domestic law, Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 (TRA). The core elements in U.S. China policy since the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué and 1978 normalization agreement are: (1) The United States recognizes that the government of the PRC is the sole legal government of China; (2) There is only one China; (3) Taiwan is a part of China; (4) Within this context, the U.S. will maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan. According to these international obligations, Washington should view China's reunification as an internal affair of China, and will not interfere in future reunification process between the China mainland and Taiwan. But, when normalizing relations with the PRC, the United States linked itself with the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. Although this policy was never accepted by Beijing, it has become official U.S. policy through the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act (TRA).

The Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96-8, 10 April) requires the administration to *'consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.'* It also warrants the administration to *'provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character'* and to *'maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economical system, of the people on Taiwan.'*

To maintain a balance in its policy toward Beijing and its policy toward Taipei, Washington must discourage such thinking in Beijing that the military option is the best solution to the Taiwan issue, while at the same time reassure Taipei that it should not pursue *de jure* independence.

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<sup>20</sup> Robert Marquand, 'Would China invade Taiwan?' *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 22, 2004

Washington's most important interest in the Taiwan Strait is to avoid military conflict. Any such conflict would force the U.S. to choose between intervening on Taiwan's behalf and risking war with China, or failing to honor its long-standing commitment to defend Taiwan-Chinese aggression. But U.S. policy has become more problematic in recent years as Taipei began pursuing more visible international role and the independence force has become more prominent on the island. The Clinton Administration stumbled on a major foreign policy issue when it granted visa for Lee Teng-hui's visit to his U.S. alma mater. Beijing viewed this as a major violation of U.S. 'One China' policy. Beijing's fierce responses included recalling ambassador, suspending all high-level exchanges, and withdrawing from the talk on the Missile Technology Control Regime. These strong reactions made Washington reassess its policy of maintaining a balance on its policy toward Beijing and Taipei. The Bush Administration also recently reaffirmed its 'One China' policy during the meeting between President Bush and Chinese President Wu Jiang-tao at the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference held in Seoul in November 2005. U.S. senior officials also indicated that the Bush Administration would not support Taiwan's pursuit for independence. However, there has also been conflicting stance by other U.S. policymakers. The U.S. Congress has been pushing for the passage of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TSEA), aimed at upgrading U.S. military co-operation and integration with the Taiwan military. In 2001, the U.S. House of Representatives' International Relations Committee passed a bill to give Taiwan the designation of a 'major non-NATO ally' (MNNA).<sup>21</sup> Privileges that such allies enjoy include priority delivery of excess U.S. national defense articles and participation in joint research and development projects.

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<sup>21</sup> 'Taiwan may get ally status', *Straits Times (Singapore)*, May 5, 2001

Sino-U.S. relations have direct impacts on Asia Pacific stability, and Washington realized that it cannot afford confronting Beijing over the Taiwan issue, especially during this time when the U.S. is fighting the war on terror. This is because the intensification of tension in the strait will increase the chance of getting the U.S. involved in a military conflict with China in Asia.

### **Japan Policy on Taiwan**

From Taiwan's perspective, the Japanese government's approach to cross-strait relations has been defined as: 'official China, civilian Taiwan'. Thus, Japan appears to be heavily influenced by China's attitudes on the matter of cross-strait relations. Considering Taiwan's geographic proximity to Japan, security concerns will probably always outweigh economic concerns.

Given the cross-strait stalemate, Japan has been more attentive to the Taiwan situation. Following the reorganization of Japan's political parties in the early to mid-1990s, the Japan-Taiwan relationship began to shift from being economically oriented to becoming more politically oriented, from concealed contact to more direct and open contact, from low-level communications to higher-level ones.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, Japan's cross-strait policy remains: 'One China, peaceful solution.' Japan's attitude toward dealing with a military conflict in the Taiwan Strait is even more ambiguous and obscure than that of the United States.

In the past, the Japanese government only once expressed support for the U.S. commitment to defend the Republic of China (ROC): in the Nixon-Sato communiqué of 1969, which stated that 'the security of Taiwan is of utmost importance to Japan.' However, it was

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<sup>22</sup> Lu Juen Yen, 'Japan's Security Strategy from a Geopolitical Perspective,' Japan Studies, *Chinese Academic of Social Sciences* (Beijing: 1995) p.36.

reported very recently that the Japanese government was proposing a new law that would allow the U.S. forces to have first priority in using all major seaports and airports in the event of a military conflict in the nearby territory of Japan.<sup>23</sup> Many analysts believe that this law is aiming at the future Taiwan Strait conflict, as there has been report indicating that the U.S. would need to rely on the logistical support from the airfields in Kyushu and Okinawa to provide military operations against the PLA forces should China invade Taiwan.<sup>24</sup> The close military connection between the U.S. and Japan is also seen in the recent military exercise held in California between the Japanese Self Defense Forces and the U.S. Marines.<sup>25</sup> Japan also angered China when Prime Minister Koizumi conducted his annual visits to a war shrine in Tokyo seen by critics as a symbol of its past militarism. The relation between the two countries is at its lowest point in recent decades. Moreover, Koizumi's administration is planning to amend the Japanese constitutions in order to change the name of its armed forces from 'self defense force' to 'army'.<sup>26</sup> This significant change represents that the Japanese wants to expand its military for the first time since the end of the Second World War. This couples with the fact that Japan openly agreed with the U.S. in February 2005 that the Taiwan Strait issue was a 'mutual security concern' tends to show the Tokyo government wants to take a more leading role in the region and not afraid of confronting its next door neighbors.<sup>27</sup>

Japan seems content with the status quo in the Taiwan Strait for the time being as this serves the best interests to both Japan and the U.S. Nevertheless, the outcome of the Taiwan Strait dilemma largely depends on Taiwan's political aspirations and mainland China's ambitions

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<sup>23</sup> 'U.S. to use Japanese ports during war', *Oriental Daily Newspaper (Hong Kong)*, January 13, 2006

<sup>24</sup> 'U.S. to join with Japanese forces to fight PLA', *Oriental Daily Newspaper (Hong Kong)*, November 15, 2005

<sup>25</sup> 'Japan holds military exercise with U.S. Marines', *Oriental Daily Newspaper (Hong Kong)*, December 17, 2005

<sup>26</sup> 'Japan changes constitutions', *Oriental Daily Newspaper (Hong Kong)*, November 23, 2005

<sup>27</sup> 'Taiwan's ex-president may visit Japan', *Reuters News*, January 11, 2006

for Taiwan. A cross-strait military conflict that drew in the United States and Japan would have a disastrous impact on the entire Asia-Pacific region.

## **STEP 4. SPECIFY ALL POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION**

### **Levels of Military Intervention**

In the event that China invades Taiwan, each national actor (i.e. Japan and the U.S.) will be forced to make a decision as to how to respond. Although there are many different levels of intervention and engagement and they are obviously classified, for the purpose of this LAMP prediction paper, I will classify the intervention levels into three categories as follows: 1) No Military Intervention (**NM**); 2) Limited Military Support (**LM**); 3) Full-Scale Military Intervention (**FM**).

No Military Intervention (**NM**) means that the national actor decides not to provide any military support to intervene the PLA's invasion. However, it does not mean the country would do nothing. It is obvious that other countries, including Japan and the U.S., might consider non-military actions such as economic sanctions to be taken against China in the event of its invasion to Taiwan. Other non-military measures may probably be recalling ambassadors and terminating relationship with Beijing government, or even boycotting Beijing's Olympic Games in 2008. As this paper is not going to predict precisely what action to be taken, I will group all these non-military actions as 'No Military Intervention' (**NM**).

Limited Military Support (**LM**) means that the national actor decides to provide limited military support to Taiwan's defense. This kind of military support might range from providing anti-missiles capability to defend from Chinese ballistic missiles, such as the Theatre Missile Defense (TMD), to sending warships to blockade all or part of the Taiwan Strait. Other measures may include sending 'voluntary' military personnel or advisers to support the Taiwan armed forces or supplying all kinds of war machines to Taiwan military.

Full-Scale Military Intervention (**FM**) means that the national actor decides to launch a full-scale military intervention to fight off the PLA's invasion. Some anticipated actions are sending warships from the U.S. Seventh Fleet or Japan's Naval Self Defense Forces into the Taiwan Strait and directly engaging the PLA's sea invasion or sending military personnel to land ashore at Taiwan to support its defense. Although this scenario would be the worst for all parties and would have a disastrous impact on the whole world as it would certainly mean a war has broken out between some superpowers of the world, this scenario is not unlikely under today's political atmosphere and therefore it must be included in our prediction.

#### **STEP 5. DETERMINE THE MAJOR SCENARIOS WITHIN WHICH YOU WILL COMPARE THE ALTERNATE FUTURE**

As I assume that China would invade Taiwan in this LAMP research paper, there will be two major scenarios under which the invasion would take place. The scenarios will be as follows:

- **Scenario #1: Taiwan proclaims independence unilaterally**
- **Scenario #2: Taiwan does not proclaim independence but indicates it will no longer follow the 'One China' principle**

#### **Hypothetical Scenario #1**

Taiwan's president Chen Shui-bian and his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) have continuously indicated that Taiwan is a sovereignty nation. Prior to his election in 2000, he stated that he would call for general election to decide whether to proclaim the island's independence or not if he were elected to be president. Although he did not keep this promise

after he was elected into office, there were many voices in the DPP calling for the general election in the island. The general election to decide Taiwan's fate has long been regarded by Beijing as a significant move towards the island's independence. Some hardliners in Beijing has openly stated that the PLA would take action to 'liberate' Taiwan 'at all cost' in the event that the voters in Taiwan decided to proclaim the island's independence. Although at this time Chen's government does not state clearly when the general election will be held, there are some pressure recently from the top DPP leaders to force Chen to call for the general election as soon as possible. Given Taiwan's current weak economy and the fact that DPP is losing its popularity over its rival party, the Nationalist Party (or Kuomintang, KMT), the DPP leadership wants some dynamic changes on the island. Also at this time, a few more small nations in Africa and the Pacific decide to switch the diplomatic recognition to the Beijing government and cease the relationships with Taipei. The 'living space' for Taiwan in the international arena is getting smaller and its 'dollar diplomacy' is losing its attraction. Chen therefore decides to take a risky step in order to regain his support by calling for a general election to allow the twenty millions Taiwanese to vote for the future of the island.

Despite strong outcry by Beijing government and other Asian countries, Chen insists to hold the election. One of the reasons for Chen's bold decision is the recently passed Taiwan Security Enhancement Act by Washington. Chen is confident that Washington would defend Taiwan if China makes any military action towards the island. However, the U.S. has repeatedly called Chen to suspend his move. White House spokesman states that the U.S. does not want to see Taiwan changes its status quo and calling Chen to cool down and initiate a dialogue with Beijing. However, this does not Chen's action and on the day of the general election, over 90 percent of the voters turn up. The pro-independence alliance won marginally over the pro-status

quo party. On the next day, Chen Shui-bian announces the establishment of the Republic of Taiwan and he naturally becomes the first president of the republic.

Beijing has maintained a close eye on the election. The PLA has also prepared the invasion long before the election day. Soon after the result of the election is announced, PLA launched its biggest military operation since the Korean War. Hundreds of PLA navy vessels begin crossing the Taiwan Strait while another two hundred state-of-the-art M-11 ballistic missiles are above the strait and heading towards strategic military targets on the island. The U.S. president and the Japanese Prime Minister are talking over the phone considering their course of action.....

The above hypothetical scenario is the backdrop for Scenario #1. I will now go to the second hypothetical scenario.

## **Hypothetical Scenario #2**

In this scenario, the first part is exactly the same as Scenario #1. Chen is calling for the general election to let the people decide the island's fate despite strong protests from other countries, including China. However, the result of election is different. Here in this scenario, the voters decide to maintain the status quo for the island. Chen will not be the first president of the Republic of Taiwan as the voters has voted against independence. Moreover, the leadership of the DPP believes Chen's popularity is dropping significantly and therefore decides to ask him for resignation. After Chen's resignation, the pro-independence DPP nominates a new candidate to sit for the re-election of the president. This candidate later becomes the new president of the island. Although the people in Taiwan have voted against independence, in order to raise his popularity, he makes a policy to form the future of Taiwan. In the new policy, he makes very

clear that Taiwan will no longer follow the 'One China' principle and will re-establish its 'two states policy'. In other words, despite the fact that Taiwan is not declared to be 'Republic of Taiwan', it is claiming a sovereignty nation's status in parallel with China. Moreover, Taiwan is beginning to spend huge amount of money to purchase advanced military weapons from Europe and the U.S. It also increases its 'dollar diplomacy' program in an effort to get other nations' diplomatic recognitions. All these moves have angered Beijing. Hardliners in Beijing have successfully persuaded the Chinese top leaders to 'liberate' Taiwan once and for all. The rest of the military action is similar to Scenario #1.

**STEP 6. CALCULATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PERMUTATIONS OF  
POSSIBLE “ALTERNATE FUTURES” FOR EACH SCENARIO**

In this step, X equals the number of options and Y equals the number of actors involved (who have the same number of options available to them). Z equals the total number of “alternate futures” to be compared. The formula used to accomplish this step is  $X^Y=Z$  (for each scenario). The equations are as follows:

**Scenario #1: Taiwan proclaims independence:  $3^2 = 9$**

**Scenario #2: Taiwan does not proclaim independence:  $3^2 = 9$**

**STEP 7. PERFORM A PAIRWISE COMPARISON OF ALL “ALTERNATE FUTURES”  
TO DETERMINE THEIR RELATIVE PROBABILITY**

Note: There are nine possible “alternate futures” (AF) for each scenario. At this point, each AF is “voted” on the probability of occurrence of one AF over another. NM = No military intervention, LM = Limited military support, FM = Full-scale military intervention.

**Table 1.Scenario #1: Chinese invasion following  
Taiwan’s declare of independence**

US	JP	US JP	NM NM	NM LM	NM FM	LM NM	LM LM	LM FM	FM NM	FM LM	FM FM	TOTAL VOTES
NM	NM	AF #1		1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	6
NM	LM	AF #2	0		1	0	0	1	1	1	1	5
NM	FM	AF #3	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	1	1
LM	NM	AF #4	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	7
LM	LM	AF #5	0	1	1	0		1	1	1	1	6
LM	FM	AF #6	1	0	1	0	0		1	0	1	4
FM	NM	AF #7	0	0	1	0	0	0		0	0	1
FM	LM	AF #8	0	0	1	0	0	1	1		1	4
FM	FM	AF #9	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0		2
											<b>TOTAL VOTES</b>	<b>36</b>

**Table 2. Scenario #2: Chinese invasion NOT following Taiwan's declare of independence**

US	JP	US JP	NM NM	NM LM	NM FM	LM NM	LM LM	LM FM	FM NM	FM LM	FM FM	TOTAL VOTES
NM	NM	AF #1		0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
NM	LM	AF #2	1		1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
NM	FM	AF #3	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LM	NM	AF #4	1	1	1		0	1	0	0	0	4
LM	LM	AF #5	1	1	1	1		1	1	0	0	6
LM	FM	AF #6	0	0	1	0	0		0	0	0	1
FM	NM	AF #7	1	1	1	1	0	1		0	0	5
FM	LM	AF #8	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	8
FM	FM	AF #9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0		7
											TOTAL VOTES	36

**STEP 8. RANK THE “ALTERLMTE FUTURES” FROM HIGHEST RELATIVE PROBABILITY TO THE LOWEST BASED NUMBER OF VOTES**

**Table 3. Scenario #1: Chinese invasion following Taiwan’s declare of independence**

	US	JP	TOTAL VOTES
AF #4	LM	NM	7
AF #1	NM	NM	6
AF #5	LM	LM	6
AF #2	NM	LM	5
AF #6	LM	FM	4
AF #8	FM	LM	4
AF #9	FM	FM	2
AF #3	NM	FM	1
AF #7	FM	NM	1
			<b>36</b>

**Table 4. Scenario #2: Chinese invasion NOT following Taiwan’s declare of independence**

	US	JP	TOTAL VOTES
AF #8	FM	LM	8
AF #9	FM	FM	7
AF #5	LM	LM	6
AF #7	FM	NM	5
AF #4	LM	NM	4
AF #2	NM	LM	3
AF #1	NM	NM	2
AF #6	LM	FM	1
AF #3	NM	FM	0
			<b>36</b>

**STEP 9. ASSUMING THAT EACH “ALTERNATE FUTURE” OCCURS, ANALYZE EACH ALTERNATE FUTURE IN TERMS OF ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ISSUE IN QUESTION**

**&**

**STEP 10. STATE THE POTENTIAL OF A GIVEN FUTURE TO “TRANSPOSE” INTO ANOTHER FUTURE**

Note: These two steps are being combined. The potential for transposition will immediately follow the analysis of the alternate futures.

### **Analysis of Pairwise Comparisons**

There are two pairwise comparisons for the scenario of an invasion by China over Taiwan. The two specific scenarios being compared against one another are as follows: 1) Chinese invasion following Taiwan’s official proclamation of independence; 2) Chinese invasion NOT following Taiwan’s proclamation of independence. I will focus my detailed analysis to the top three most likely alternate futures (AFs) for each scenario.

**Table 3. Scenario #1: Chinese invasion following Taiwan’s declare of independence**

	US	JP	TOTAL VOTES
AF #4	LM	NM	7
AF #1	NM	NM	6
AF #5	LM	LM	6
AF #2	NM	LM	5
AF #6	LM	FM	4
AF #8	FM	LM	4
AF #9	FM	FM	2
AF #3	NM	FM	1
AF #7	FM	NM	1
			<b>36</b>

In this Scenario, the highest vote alternate future (AF) is # 4. That is, there will be limited military support given by the U.S. and no military intervention or support at all from Japan. As stated in the in-depth analysis at Step 3, the U.S. is obliged to provide certain degree of defense or protection for Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act and the more recent Taiwan Security Enhancement Act. However, top U.S. officials in both Clinton and Bush administrations have repeatedly stated that the U.S did not want to see any unilateral change in the status quo of Taiwan. Some even stated that the U.S. should not be involved in the military conflict with China if Taiwan acted ‘stupidly’. In other words, in the event of Taipei declares independence unilaterally, it will be likely that Taipei will be on its own without the support from Washington. Taipei’s unilateral action will definitely provoke Beijing whose policy has been widely known that they will not accept Taiwan to become a sovereignty nation. It is highly likely that Beijing will use this as an excuse to invade Taiwan. Considering Beijing has always claimed that the Taiwan issue is an internal problem of China, Beijing will regard the invasion of

Taiwan as legitimate and sound action to take back the renegade province once and for all. They will highly likely to warn other countries, such as the U.S. and Japan, to stay away from this 'internal conflict' of China. Bound by the Taiwan Relations Act, although Washington does not support Taipei's action, it would be reasonable to assess that the U.S. would provide some military support to Taipei for its own defense. As stated before, this kind of military support might include providing Theatre Missile Defense (TMD) to defend from Chinese ballistic missiles or sending warships to blockade all or part of the Taiwan Strait in an effort to delay the Chinese invasion. However, the main concern for Washington will be to avoid a direct military conflict or engagement with the Chinese PLA. In this AF, Japan will not provide any military support to Taiwan. This is understandable as Tokyo also repeatedly stated they did not want Taiwan to change the status quo unilaterally. Although Japan will provide no military intervention, it is assessed that Tokyo will take some forms of economic sanctions against China in a way to voice its objection to Beijing's military action. Moreover, it would be reasonable to assess that although Japan takes no military intervention on its own, it will provide necessary logistical support to the U.S. forces in the Region.

The second highest vote AFs are # 1 and # 5, each with six votes. The AF # 1 is that there will be no military intervention or support from both the U.S. and Japan. The AF # 5 is that there will be limited military intervention from both the U.S. and Japan. As explained before, neither Washington nor Tokyo wants to see an unilateral change in the status quo of Taiwan. It remains to be the official policies of both governments to adhere the 'One China' principle and object Taiwan to become a sovereignty nation. Therefore, it is reasonable to see that neither country will try to defend Taiwan by confronting the Chinese PLA directly. As stated before, as a close ally of the U.S. in the Region, Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) will

likely to follow the action of the U.S. military. It will therefore be likely that the Japanese SDF will join the military operations with the U.S. in an effort to delay, rather than to fight directly, the PLA's invasion.

The likely potential of a given future to 'transpose' into another AF is from # 4 to # 1. That is, it is likely that the U.S., instead of providing limited military support, takes no military action at all. This is because the fact that Taipei declares independence unilaterally is viewed by many U.S. officials as violation of the Taiwan Relations Act and therefore the U.S. has no further obligation to protect Taiwan. Instead, both the U.S. and Japan will resort to other lighter actions, such as economic sanctions, against China for its military action on Taiwan.

**Table 4. Scenario #2: Chinese invasion NOT following Taiwan's declare of independence**

	US	JP	TOTAL VOTES
AF #8	FM	LM	8
AF #9	FM	FM	7
AF #5	LM	LM	6
AF #7	FM	NM	5
AF #4	LM	NM	4
AF #2	NM	LM	3
AF #1	NM	NM	2
AF #6	LM	FM	1
AF #3	NM	FM	0
			<b>36</b>

In the second scenario, the highest vote AF is # 8. That is, there will be full military intervention by the U.S. and limited military intervention by Japan. In this scenario, China's

invasion will be regarded by others as an ‘illegitimate action’, as Taiwan has not yet declared independence. The invasion would be based on a weak excuse and it will therefore provoke many countries, including especially the U.S. and Japan, who would definitely regard the invasion as an aggressive behavior. Therefore, the U.S. will likely take full military action to protect Taiwan. Possible actions might include sending ground forces to Taiwan to assist the defense and launch counter attack on the Chinese mainland. The Japanese SDF will likely to provide limited military assistance to the U.S. counterpart.

The second highest vote AF is # 9. That is, both the U.S. and Japan will take full military intervention. This AF is similar to # 8 with the only difference being the Japanese level of involvement. Japan, in an effort to demonstrate to the world that their military is comparable to the U.S. and its allies, will try to launch a military offensive operation overseas for the first time since the Second World War. Although the current Japanese constitutions forbid the Japanese SDF to launch offensive operation overseas, there have been many voices in Japan to call for amending the constitution in order to allow its forces to engage in military operations with its allies. China’s invasion on Taiwan may provide a good opportunity for Japan to carry out this amendment in an effort to contain the Chinese ‘aggression’ and to protect the Japanese interests in the Region.

The third highest vote AF is # 5. That is, both the U.S. and Japan will take limited military intervention. Although both countries should regard the invasion as ‘illegitimate action’, they tend to consider seriously if they really want to engage the Chinese PLA directly. By sending ground forces to Taiwan and to launch counter attacks on the Chinese mainland will likely to start a full scale war with China, another superpower nation in possession of nuclear weapons. It will be that both the U.S. and Japan would rather take indirect military action to

support the defense of Taiwan. Possible actions might include sending ‘voluntary’ military personnel or advisers to support the Taiwan armed forces or supplying all kinds of war machines to Taiwan military. By taking this course of action, both the U.S. and Japan will not be officially at war with China.

The likely potential of a given future to ‘transpose’ into another AF is from # 8 to # 9. That is, Japan will likely to take full military intervention instead of limited military action together with the U.S. As mentioned before, Japan is currently expanding its military capabilities by constantly upgrading its war machines and to take part in military exercises with the U.S. outside of Japan. These moves indicate that it is trying to show to the world that Japan is not just an economic country and Japan, similar to the U.S., has the capability to protect its national interests overseas. Moreover, Chinese invasion on Taiwan may give the Japanese an excuse to take full military action to protect the nearby Daoyu Island which the sovereignty is still in dispute between the two countries. Therefore it would not be surprised to see Japan takes this opportunity to engage in full-scale military operation together with the U.S. to confront the Chinese PLA.

**STEP 11. DETERMINE THE “FOCAL EVENTS” THAT MUST OCCUR IN OUR PRESENT IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT A GIVEN ALTERNATE FUTURE**

**&**

**STEP 12. DEVELOP INDICATORS FOR THE FOCAL EVENTS**

*Note: I will provide the focal events and the indicators for the number two voted AF respective to Scenarios 1 & 2, since the most likely alternate future (i.e. number one AF) is very close to our present and thus has the fewest focal events.*

**Scenario 1. Chinese Invasion following Taiwan’s Proclaim of Independence**

**Alternate Future #1 (US: No Military Intervention; Japan: No Military Intervention)**

- Taiwan’s leaders insist to provoke China by increasing military capability and ignore the advice given by Washington and other western countries;
- Taiwan develops high-tech offensive weapons or even attempts to develop nuclear arsenal despite disagreement from the U.S.;
- Chinese leaders meet and make ‘secret’ dealings with U.S. high-level policymakers prior to the invasion;
- Japan continues to be a very close ally with the U.S.;
- China threatens to use nuclear weapons against foreign forces if the latter intervenes;
- Chinese PLA Navy’s capability increases dramatically and is capable of causing serious damage to the U.S. Seventh Fleet.

## **Scenario 2. Chinese Invasion NOT following Taiwan's Proclaim of Independence**

### **Alternate Future #9 (US: Full Military Intervention; Japan: Full Military Intervention)**

- Japan's military capability increases significantly by purchasing high-tech offensive weapons from the U.S.;
- Japan amends its constitutions and allows its military forces to operate in offensive operations overseas;
- Right-wing supporters, especially military imperialists, begin to dominate the Japanese leadership;
- Japanese leadership continues to have the full support from Washington;
- China intends to invade the nearby islands in the South China Sea after Taiwan's invasion;
- Rich natural resources are found in the seabed of the Taiwan Strait;
- Chinese PLA Navy seals off the nearby sea lanes.

## CONCLUSION

China has long regarded Taiwan as a renegade province and Beijing has tried every effort in the past half century in a hope that Taiwan would reunite with the motherland peacefully. However, the current political atmosphere across the Taiwan Strait tends to show the peaceful reunification is still something that will not happen in the near future. Instead, the military show-offs by China, Taiwan and other neighboring countries further escalate the tension in the Region. As many analysts predict that the next regional conflict would be the Taiwan Strait, this makes the Taiwan issue a significant problem for future U.S.-Sino relations and an important issue which, if not handle with care, would easily escalate to a war between two nuclear superpowers.

China's policy on Taiwan is somewhat clear. As long as Taipei follows the 'One China' principle, Beijing leaders will highly unlikely attempt to resolve the problem by military force. Both the U.S. and Japan are happy with the present status quo of Taiwan and have warned Taipei not to provoke Beijing by making steps towards independence. If Taiwan decides to change the present status quo on its own, neither Washington nor Tokyo government would likely to back up Taiwan's action. It will be viewed by the U.S. and Japanese leaders as 'not worthwhile' to defend Taiwan 'at all cost' since the mess is created by the Taiwanese themselves. However, it may be a totally different picture if China invades Taiwan without any legitimate reason. The present U.S. and Japanese forces in the Region will likely to take military action to preventing Chinese hegemony in the Region with a view to protect their own interests. Obviously, both the U.S. and Japan leaders will exercise restrain in dealing with this delicate issue, as a full-scale war in the Region will definitely have adverse effect on the global economy.

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