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China’s Military Modernization and its Impact on the United States and the Asia-Pacific

The challenge posed by China to Taiwan’s current status of *de facto* independence includes more than military elements: economic and financial security, information security, energy security, population and land conservation issues, and issues related to health, ethnicity, and national identity have all been identified by the Taipei government as points of concern.¹ In response to the Commission’s request, however, I will focus my remarks today on military issues.

In my view, Taiwan’s military security posture rests on military capability and political will. Military capability is declining in relation to China due to slow construction of a stronger force to confront the mainland. This is apparently due in part to beliefs in Taiwan that (a) China is not serious about employing military force against Taiwan, and (b) if China does employ military force against Taiwan, the United States will intervene immediately and effectively. This is not to say that Taiwan is not devoting serious resources to defense improvements; the C4SI sector in particular has been subject to a coherent, comprehensive plan to improve radar systems, air defense command and control, intelligence hardware, and anti-cyber warfare capabilities. Continued funding is required, however, to ensure that this vital system achieves maximum capability. China is expanding and modernizing the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) with a focus on a Taiwan scenario. Its plans include a wide spectrum of military force against Taiwan directly and against U.S. forces in the case of intervention. Beijing’s threats to use military force to prevent the island’s *de jure* independence are credible in my view, and I disagree with strategic analysis to the contrary.

While the PLA is a formidable, rapidly modernizing force, a military campaign against the island would not be simple. Taiwan’s natural “moat” would be defended by modern, capable naval and air forces; as they demonstrated during past clashes with the PLA, the military should be able to hold out for the one month necessary to allow effective U.S. intervention, should that be forthcoming.

However, geography is not going to change, and Beijing commands a military against which Taipei cannot prevail alone in the long term. The United States continues to stand between the island and mainland military aggression.

The PLA

Beijing appears to have decided, as a result of the 1996 Strait Crisis, that Taiwan has two vulnerable centers of gravity. The first is the will of the island’s people and the second is American military intervention. Hence, future Chinese military plans against Taiwan are likely to try to weaken the first and delay the second of these centers. Two examples of this strategy are Beijing’s warm welcome to Chen Shui-bian’s leading political opponents in the spring of 2005, and its submarine force buildup.

While a full-scale amphibious invasion cannot be ruled out, it is probably Beijing's least preferred option for using military force. More likely are less massive, but still violent military steps, a significant element of which would be an IW campaign focused against Taiwan's C4ISR system, as well as the civilian communications and computer infrastructure. The goal would be a rapid attack on the ability and will of Taiwan to resist extended military pressure.

How the PLA employs its forces will depend on its mission definition. It could be to "teach a lesson," which would likely involve a carefully orchestrated campaign of limited military force applied over a limited period of time, after which Beijing would declare the "lesson taught."

PLA modernization during the past decade and a half has focused on the navy, air force, and Second Artillery. Army modernization has included units offering capabilities applicable to Taiwan scenarios. These include Special Operations Forces (SOF), reconnaissance and helicopter units, and amphibious training. These Army units are being trained and equipped not only to conduct an amphibious invasion, but to support naval and airborne strikes against Taiwan that would offer Beijing more attractive military options. This support would include reconnaissance and targeting; small-scale strike missions, including decapitation efforts; battle damage assessment; and attacks on civilian infrastructure and military facilities.

Amphibious operations could occur in a second or later stage of a conflict, when Taiwan's defenses have been significantly degraded and Beijing wants to send an especially strong signal to the island's military and people that the time to end the fighting has arrived.

Also, an extensive psychological campaign to convince the Taiwan people not to fight would be part of any Chinese strategy. Finally, Beijing is almost certainly assuming that Taiwan and possibly the United States will launch strikes against the mainland; every available air defense asset will be called into action against anticipated cruise missile and aircraft strikes. Of course, strong U.S. military intervention into a Strait conflict would change the equation for both Taipei and Beijing.

Taiwan's Response

A senior Taiwan general, speaking in 1999, cited 2005 as the year in which the military balance would shift decisively in China's favor, particularly with respect to control of the air over the Taiwan Strait. One former Deputy Defense Minister opined that the PLA would be capable of taking Taiwan in 2010. A senior Defense Ministry officer in November 2004 gave 2010-2012 as that date, but since then MND officials have cited 2012, 2015, or even "in 30 years" as the crucial time.² I think that the balance of military capability between Taiwan's military and the PLA has already shifted in the latter's favor.

The government of Taiwan must analyze its strategic situation amidst divisive domestic politics. Its inability to obtain legislative passage of desired defense authorization reflects this divisiveness, but also results from the Chen government's declared prioritization of political, economic, and social improvement programs as key to Taiwan's continued independence. Do the people of Taiwan believe they are in danger of a military attack by the mainland? Although the evidence is variable, a November 2003 poll indicates that they do not.³

Even if Taipei formally declares independence, the number one *casus belli* listed by Beijing, less than a quarter of the population believes China would attack Taiwan. An even more discouraging poll was reported in April 2005, when 65 percent of Taiwan college students “in northern Taiwan” responded that they were “unwilling to fight for Taiwan [and] will surrender if China attacks.”⁴ This sort of result must be taken skeptically; very different results were obtained from a 2003 poll of 1,107 citizens, 77 percent of whom said they would be “willing” or “very willing” to fight if “Mainland China launches a war against Taiwan.”⁵ Polls notwithstanding, I think the question of Taiwan nationalism and the people’s willingness to fight and die for that concept remains uncertain.

Taiwan’s defense structure is impressive, but while the current administration may understand the power of the PLA, it may not credit Beijing’s willingness to employ it. Speaking in March 2005, Mainland Affairs Council Chairman Joseph Wu acknowledged “the danger that war might happen,” but concluded that war is not imminent.⁶ Vice President Annette Lu provided a surprising threat prioritization in December 2004, when she listed the “Three [sic] Big Changes” facing Taiwan as: China’s emergence as a world power, the island’s aging population, “the increasing number of foreign women who enter” Taiwan, the “information gap” between those who do/do not have internet access, and “in people’s thinking,” omitting any direct mention of China’s military threat.⁷

Defense Budgets

An important question in analyzing Taiwan’s defense posture is the declining defense budgets over the past decade or more. Taipei’s defense policies have retarded the modernization and improvement of the Taiwan armed services that is believed necessary by its uniformed professionals.

The Chen Shui-bian administration hopes to obtain significantly increased defense budget resources—especially with respect to the “special” items authorized for sale by President George W. Bush in 2001—but that hope remains unrealized. Even if passed in calendar 2007, the increased defense budget will not correct current readiness deficits that mounted over the past decade or more.

Not significantly increasing the defense budget, while simultaneously claiming an increased military threat from China, does little to increase feelings in friendly and allied countries that the Taipei government is acting responsibly. Speaking earlier this month, Defense Minister Lee Jye was quoted on the same day as describing a growing Chinese military threat but also announcing that the plan to reduce mandatory military service from sixteen to twelve months would be carried out.⁸ This personnel readiness reduction apparently reflects a view among Taiwan’s government officials that the United States would intervene in the event of a mainland military attack, and would do so within a matter of days.

The civilian government’s apparent belief that Beijing will not use military force strengthens its national budget priorities, which emphasize civilian concerns ahead of defense requirements. Although evidence is strictly anecdotal, this seems to reflect the popular attitude on Taiwan, which is not consistent: China poses a serious military threat, but China will not attack.

MND included in its comments in the 2002 Annual Report by observing that Taiwan was “facing a highly hostile threat” from the PRC and stated, rather ruefully, that it “earnestly hopes that . . . the government . . . may keep the national defense budget on a reasonable

level to achieve the goals of maintaining combat readiness and ensuring national security.”⁹

This wish has not been answered, and in 2003 the MND claimed there would be a “three hundred billion (NT) [US\$100 billion] defense budget gap in the upcoming five years.”¹⁰

The Chen Shui-bian government has justified this trend by claiming that the most effective way to safeguard Taiwan’s security was to promote its economic health and competitiveness; in 2003, Chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council Tsai Ing-Wen argued that in the near-term the government should focus on “cross-Strait economic and trading issues,” focusing on military issue only in “the intermediate term (2006-2007).”¹¹

This is a valid policy by the democratically elected government in Taipei, but may not adequately acknowledge the threat from the communist government in Beijing.

The economic argument does little to ameliorate an apparent difference in attitude between civilian officials and uniformed professionals about the defense structure required to achieve effective security for Taiwan.

President Chen Shui-bian has indeed overseen a comprehensive overhaul of the organization and administration of Taiwan’s military and defense establishment since he took office in 2000. These have been the most significant such steps since at least 1949, but require additional resources to put the necessary meat on the organizational bones.

To a significant extent, this difficulty reflects the realities of a modern democracy, but it also reflects a widespread lack of concern about Taiwan’s defense requirements in comparison to domestic economic, social, and environmental priorities. Political strife in the LY had reached the point in May 2005 where the opposition parties refused to “support any bill proposed by the Chen administration.”¹²

Military Readiness

Concerns about Taiwan’s defense problems too often focus on hardware issues.

The most serious personnel problem facing Taiwan’s military is its NCO corps, described by officers of all the services as weak and inadequate. They blame this primarily on the short term of service required of conscripts and the difficulty retaining good enlisted personnel for more than that period. The weak NCO corps means that junior officers perform duties that should be accomplished by mid-grade non-commissioned officers. Every officer I interviewed in 2004-2005 criticized the short length of conscript service, currently just sixteen months (and a conscript who has completed two years of ROTC in high school serves only twelve months) as too short to allow an enlisted man to be properly trained. This situation obviously will be exacerbated when required service for all conscripts is reduced to twelve months in 2008.

A majority of Taiwan’s defense professionals, both military and civilian, favor an all-volunteer military in principle, but doubt the government will be able to provide the funding to make it happen. MND officials are especially concerned about the lack of resources, and offer as a possible solution a “partial all-volunteer” military, although no authoritative numbers of either personnel or cost are publicly available. One estimate for an all-volunteer military is \$20 billion.¹³

Equipment capability is obviously important, but can be outweighed by other factors in the military equation. Some of these were highlighted in a 2001 analysis quoting Taiwan military officers: “top to bottom reform” was called for, specifically to combat low morale, “corruption in the arms procurement process, weak leadership, undue influence of the army, lax training and problems in integrating weapon systems from around the

world.” KMT legislator and retired LTG Shuai Hua-min has argued that “we need to reform our organization, get a new defense system and deal with the threat from the PRC, all at once.”¹⁴

Army G-5 (Plans) officers listed equipment readiness as the Army’s most serious problem; Army G-3 (Operations) officers listed lack of training funds; Air Force G-5 (Plans) officers listed money for flying hours and long-range air-to-air missiles; Navy N2/N3 (Intelligence/Operations) officers listed the lack of C4ISR and weak jointness; the Marine Corps listed obsolete equipment and reduced manning. None of these shortfalls would be included directly in the “special defense budget” that since 2001 has been the focus of defense resource allocation debates in the administration and legislature.

Formally designed, measured exercises are an important means of both training and evaluating military readiness. Exercise categorization by size, complexity, or purpose, but the number conducted by Taiwan—averaging 47 “large-scale” drills per year—is impressive.¹⁵

Taiwan’s premier annual military exercise is the *Hankuang* series, the 23rd of which will occur next month. Each *Hankuang* has a specific theme, but since at least 1997 all have been conducted within a framework of joint warfare. The exercises’ basic assumption has been defense of Taiwan against a PLA attack, but air defense, anti-amphibious and anti-airborne assault operations, anti-submarine warfare, air-ground warfare integration, counter-terrorism, defense of the civilian infrastructure and urban warfare, IW and counter-IW, Reserve Command integration, and TAF use of non-airfield sites have all been included as exercise goals.

Additional, less all-inclusive exercises have focused on many of these same missions, as well as counter-bio terrorism, reserve forces mobilization, and anti-decapitation drills. Exercises have been conducted at various sites on Taiwan and its lesser islands, including Jinmen, Penghu, Pingtung County, and Taipei. This long series of exercises yield important “lessons learned,” including the central importance of defending against the PLA air threat from both manned aircraft and missiles. While the ballistic missiles Beijing keeps adding to in Fujian Province receive most of the media attention, China is also rapidly developing cruise missiles that will be at least as difficult for Taiwan’s air defenses to counter.

The most difficult problem highlighted by these exercises is preserving TAF assets from destruction by initial Chinese attack, so that they may engage PLAAF attackers and strike PLAN combatant and amphibious ships.¹⁶ Anti-decapitation exercises reflect the military’s concern about a dissimilar, but no less dangerous, mainland strategy: Taiwan’s military and civilian leadership, its nuclear power plants, which provide almost one-tenth of the island’s power, and other civilian infrastructure nodes are all likely targets of PLA Special Forces or Fifth Columnists.¹⁷

Taiwan cannot afford to ignore imaginative steps toward improving its defense posture. In 2003, the TAF began experimenting with using super-highways as contingency airfields; several “flyby” exercises were conducted in July 2004, and on the 21st of the month two Mirage 2000 fighters landed, rearmed and refueled, and then took off from the Sun Yat-sen Freeway near Tainan AB. At least six “wartime runways” have been identified, in Chungli, Huatan, Minhsiung, Jente, Matou, and Tungshih.¹⁸ Additional exercises may occur during this year’s *Hankuang* exercise.¹⁹

Civil-Military Concerns

Effective jointness is still a work in progress for both military and civilian defense sectors. The Taiwan military culture, like most, is conservative and slow to change. That may be exaggerated in Taiwan's case by the seriousness of the Chinese threat, with only the United States as a potential ally, and also perhaps because of its rich tradition as a KMT party army throughout the first 75 years or so of its existence.

The dynamic political situation in Taipei is characterized by a president without a legislative majority, a still-developing civil-military relationship with rifts between legislature and defense establishment, and an extremely daunting geopolitical situation. Officers interviewed between 1999 and 2007 have been frank in their comments and criticism about their own service, their sister services, MND leadership, and the civilian administration. This reflects a healthy democracy, but also highlights remaining serious problems, including:

- (1) the incomplete civilianization of MND;
- (2) the military is still in the early stages of developing jointness;
- (3) budget shortfalls in training and readiness;
- (4) the services in general operate capable equipment and weapons systems, but strongly believe they are lagging PLA modernization; the Marine Corps is an exception, with its M41 tanks, obsolete AAVs, and lack of helicopters;
- (5) widely-expressed doubts about the willingness to fight by enlisted personnel;
- (6) the attitude among some military officers and civilian officials that Taiwan's defense is a U.S. responsibility; and
- (7) by inference the attitude that Taiwan does not need to increase defense spending: either the U.S. will defend Taiwan or it will not, in which case the island's status vis-à-vis the mainland is settled.

The U.S. Role

Deciding to intervene in a Taiwan scenario would still pose difficult issues for any American president. First, while the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) does not dictate American intervention to prevent non-peaceful reunification of Taiwan with the mainland, it certainly implies that role.

Second, Washington's post-11 September 2001 "Global War on Terrorism" (GWOT) continues in 2007 to place very heavy demands on U.S. military resources in areas far from the Taiwan theater. While the commitments in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere are most heavily impacting the Army and Marine Corps, the Navy and Air Force are also stretched thin, at least budgetarily. Significant U.S. military intervention in a Taiwan scenario will require the reassignment of forces from other commitments around the world. Furthermore, the costs of these conflicts will extend well beyond actual combat, as the United States will require significant time and money to restore its military weapons supplies and manpower from the ravages of the Iraqi commitment.

Third, U.S. military intervention faces time-distance constraints, as indicated in Table 1, which explains the delays incurred U.S. naval forces dispatched to Taiwan.

Table 1: The Time-Distance Factor

Presumably, U.S. air forces stationed in Korea, Japan, and on Guam could intervene almost immediately, but their effectiveness would be reduced by the distances they would have to fly to reach the scene of action. This raises a fourth issue: the willingness of U.S. allies in East Asia to support military intervention. American mutual defense treaties with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Australia do not commit those nations to support

U.S. military action against China in order to defend Taiwan. For one thing, none of those nations recognize Taiwan as a sovereign country and like the United States “do not challenge” Beijing’s claim that the island is “part of China.” For another, all recognize the growing Chinese economic and strategic weight in Asia. Japan’s attitude would be the most important, given the presence on Japanese territory of major U.S. military bases. U.S. military action in the Taiwan Strait area would be difficult without Tokyo’s full cooperation, including use of Japanese bases, especially Okinawa. No U.S. allies advocate military support of Taiwan’s *de facto* independence; should American military forces be committed to that mission, however, some level of support is likely to be forthcoming from Japan and Australia, but it would be directed to support the United States, not Taiwan. The response by American allies would be more robust in the unlikely event of an unprovoked attack by the PRC against the island.

Fifth, the domestic political environment in the United States will affect the decision to intervene and the strength of intervention. Both the legislative and executive branches, strongly support Taiwan democracy, but will be hesitant to commit U.S. troops if Taipei is perceived as not doing all it should to build its own defenses, or if Taiwan is seen as provoking the crisis.

The spring 1996 crisis in the Taiwan Strait imbued the Taiwan Relations Act with near-treaty authority in the minds of Chinese and Taiwanese policy-makers. The United States effectively intervened in this crisis by deploying two aircraft battle groups (CVBGs) to the area, intervention that apparently surprised Beijing and for which the PLA was unprepared and unable to counter.²⁰ China has appreciated the power of American military might demonstrated in the Iraqi wars of 1991 and 2003, and the Afghanistan campaign in 2001-2002, but the PLA is systematically analyzing lessons learned from these conflicts, closely watching the continuing struggles in those countries, and exercising extensively to find the means to achieve Taiwan reunification despite probable U.S. intervention. These include fighting jointly, the efficacy of aircraft armed with precision-guided munitions, space as a vital warfare theater, the importance of information operations, the value of special operations forces; and the importance of doctrinal development.²¹

U.S. Assessment

The Department of Defense (DOD) conducted more than a dozen assessments of Taiwan’s military capabilities between 1997 and 2004, by mid-grade military officers (O-6 and below) and civilian specialists under the direction of the U.S. Pacific Command. They evaluated infrastructure weaknesses, the island’s C4ISR structure, the Marine Corps, and the Taiwan military’s abilities to defend against air attack, naval blockades, submarines, and amphibious assaults. The results of these studies have been mixed. Taiwan’s ASW capability was rated as “poor,” but the Marine Corps and port security received “positive findings.”²²

Conclusion

Minister of Defense Lee Jye argued in March 2005 that Taiwan’s military had “enough equipment and supplies to sustain a conflict with the Mainland for two weeks at the most.” He implied that this was a satisfactory state of affairs, since “U.S. intervention forces would take one week to reach the island.” He also opined that passage of the Special Defense Budget (and presumably fielding its systems) would allow the Taiwan

military to “last a short time longer,” but then claimed that this “arms procurement” would “ensure peace across the Taiwan Strait for 30 years.”²³

The Minister seems overly optimistic in this report, both in noting the length of time it would take U.S. forces to arrive and in his “30 years” estimate. This estimate was also offered without apparent regard for China’s almost certain continued attention to improving its military capability. The PLA is not standing still. It also indicates that the scope of U.S. intervention is not understood in Taipei: the American goal would not necessarily be to establish Taiwan’s independence, but merely to force a halt to Chinese military action.

The political situation in Taipei is characterized by a politically-troubled president, a still-developing civil-military relationship with rifts between legislature and defense establishment, and a daunting geopolitical situation. The key point in the calculus of American military support for Taiwan seems to lie in the views expressed by Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Michael Ying-mao Kau, immediately following the November 2004 U.S. presidential election. Kau stated that while tension would continue across the Strait, he foresaw “no cross-strait war.” He continued to note that “only the United States is qualified” to intervene in the cross-Strait situation.²⁴ As baldly stated to the author by two senior Taiwan military officers and several civilian officials in Taipei, why spend more money on defense if (a) one does not credit the PRC threat to employ military force, or (b) the United States is certain to intervene in the event of such an attack.

The most realistic strategic estimate of Taiwan’s position is that of a former U.S. Pacific Commander, who urged Taipei to “reverse the decline in [its] military spending of the past decade,” but then noted the difficulty the PLA would face attacking the island, and concluded that “to win,” Taiwan “needs only to endure and pose a threat.”²⁵ In other words, the foundation of Taiwan’s military defense remains the dedication and professional skill of its military and the will of its civilian government and people. Given present trends in China and Taiwan, only successful U.S. intervention could alter the military calculus. Taiwan’s defensive capability requires, more than anything else, the realization that, even if U.S. support is forthcoming, the island will have to be capable of defending itself against the PLA for at least a month. Japan and Australia are strong enough American allies that they probably would—albeit reluctantly—logistically support U.S. military action against China in the event of military action against Taiwan.²⁶

Recent exercises indicate that the island’s military leadership is trying to prepare for the full spectrum of possible Chinese military options, from sabotage to missile strikes to amphibious assault. Defensive improvements underway include a more survivable air defense, better integrated command and control, and improved joint operational capability. These measures also legitimately include “active defense:” the ability to strike selected Chinese targets to derange PLA efforts systemically.

The government’s support for these objectives is inadequate, however, and demonstrates that it does not understand the basic principles of defense: ensuring the compatibility of ways, means, and ends. The government must either match Taiwan’s military capabilities to its political goals, or change those goals to reflect the commitment it is willing make to defense.

Four Questions

I think I have in the foregoing addressed the four specific questions requested by the Commission. I will now use them, however, to summarize my remarks.

(1) How do you assess the military balance across the Taiwan Strait?

I think that China is sitting on the heavy end of the see-saw of military power across the Taiwan Strait. Air power is particularly important in my view, and even a quick review of the past decade and a half is not reassuring: China has acquired the Su-27, Su-30, J-10, Il76, AWACS, and air-to-air refueling aircraft; the PLA air forces are also now far more proficient in joint and over-water operations than previously. Taiwan, on the other hand, has acquired no additional aircraft following completion of the F-16, Mirage 2000, and E2T buys. Finally, crucially important hardening of airfield facilities may not be proceeding as rapidly as it should. A similar imbalance is developing between the navies. China's PLAN is steadily acquiring new surface combatants, amphibious warfare ships, and replenishment-at-sea vessels; most impressive is Beijing's continuing modernization of its submarine force, already one of the world's most capable, especially in terms of conventionally powered boats. The Taiwan navy, in the meantime, has acquired one landing ship dock (LSD) and four *Kidd*-class destroyers from the United States.

(2) How adequate is Taiwan's military capability to meet the threat the Chinese military poses to the island?

The Taiwan military is commanded by smart, dedicated professionals, and its officer corps appears well-educated and well-trained. Past military clashes have shown Taiwan's personnel consistently to exceed the performance of their mainland counterparts. That said, the growing imbalance in equipment very seriously hampers Taiwan's military capability against Chinese military actions.

What weapon systems and other equipment does Taiwan need that it does not now have to enable it to defeat a Chinese attack, or at least enable it to survive for several weeks to give the United States and Japan sufficient time to decide whether to intervene and, if they decide to do so, to do so effectively?

Continued development of command and control facilities and capability; airfield defense and repair capabilities; anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capability, to include sea-bottom listening arrays, and deep-reaching changes to the military personnel system. Immediate purchase of at least a full loadout of SM2 missiles for the four *Kidd*-class destroyers acquired from the United States, and immediate modification to embark and operate helicopters for the three *Kidd*-class not presently so-equipped. Immediate acquisition of the P3C aircraft made available by the United States in 2001 would also significantly improve Taiwan's capability in several maritime warfare areas. Finally, Taiwan's naval defense capability would also be enhanced by expansion and improvements to the naval bases at Keelung and Suao, to lessen the present dependence on Tsoying, which suffers both from a small, relatively shallow harbor and direct exposure to the west.

(3) What is the effect of China's improvements in submarine warfare and force projection on Taiwan's defensive capabilities?

China has long had the capability to overwhelm Taiwan's ASW capability in terms of numbers; the current modernization and expansion of the PLAN's submarine force is more acutely appreciated as a military instrument directed against U.S. intervention in a Taiwan military scenario. China continues to move relatively slowly in terms of conventional power projection—amphibious shipping and troops—but its continued

expansion of ballistic and cruise missile capability amounts to force projection, which I define as the ability to affect events ashore from the sea.

(4) Do you believe Taiwan's increasing economic integration with the mainland has a significant effect on the likelihood China would launch a military attack on Taiwan? Not in a military sense, but as a "pull" on Taiwan toward the mainland, I do think that the increasing economic integration lessens the perception by Beijing that it will have to utilize military force against the island.

Endnotes

¹ National Security Council, "National Security Report, 2006," Taipei; similar concerns were expressed by President Chen Shui-bian in a private meeting attended by the author in February 2007.

² Interview with Minister of Defense, November 2004.

³ I am indebted to Shirley Kan for providing these poll results. Summarized below are the results of 1,069 respondents to the question: "Do you think China would then attack Taiwan if?":

(1) If Taiwan declared independence right away:

23.3 percent agreed

65.6 percent disagreed;

(2) If our Referendum Law on revising the Constitution is passed:

10.5 percent agreed

76.2 percent disagreed;

(3) If our Referendum Law stipulates that a referendum can be held on "changing the national title":

20.2 percent agreed

66.9 percent disagreed;

(4) If our country presently wants to change the national title:

20.1 percent agreed

⁴ Reported in "Sixty-Five Percent of College Students Unwilling to Fight for Taiwan, Will Surrender if China Attacks," *Cross-Strait News*, 7 April 2005, in FBIS-CPP20050407000073.

⁵ Poll by the Foundation on International & Cross-Strait Studies, cited in Chong Pin-lin, *Win With Wisdom When Wrestling with a Giant*, Taipei, February 2004, p. 471.

⁶ Quoted in Joy Su and Melody Chen, "Wu Rides the Waves of Cross-Strait Relations," *Taipei Times*, 28 March 2005, p. 3.

⁷ Taiwan To Face Three Big Changes Within Three Years," *Central News Agency (CNA)*, 29 December 2004 <<http://www.cna.com.tw/eng/ceplist.php?class=1P>>.

⁸ Chen Shui-bian statement, 14 March 2007, in Lilian Wu, "Compulsory Military service to be Shortened to 14 Months," Central News Agency, at: <http://www.cna.com.tw/eng/ceplist.php?class=1P>.

⁹ MND, *ROC National Defense Report, 2002*, Taipei, July 2002, Chapter 2, Section II, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Chapter 2, Section V(2), pp. 6-7.

¹¹ Cited in Ming-hsien Tsai, "Funding Taiwan's Defense Reform," in *Taiwan Defense Affairs*, Vol. 4, No. 1, Autumn 2003, p. 3.

¹² Ko Shu-ling, "Pan-Blue Camp Blocks Arms Bill Again," *Taipei Times*, 18 May 2005, p. 1.

¹³ Unnamed Taiwan government source, in the *United Daily News*, Taipei, 30 September 2003, p. 13.

¹⁴ Ko Shu-ling.

¹⁵ Various media reports.

¹⁶ Threat by unnamed PLA general that China “could erase [the] Taiwan Air Force,” in the *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong, 11 June 1997, p. 9, in FBIS-CHI-97-162; and “PLA Succeeds in Invasion of Taiwan Within 130 Hours,” *China Times*, 11 August 2004, n.p.

¹⁷ Cited in Li Jun-t’ien, “Taiwan Lieutenant General Speculates on Targets of Mainland Attack on Taiwan,” *Huangqiu Shibao*, Beijing, 09 December 2003, p. 10, in FBIS-CPP20031223000031.

¹⁸ Jimmy Chuang, “Jet Fighters Carry Out Freeway Landing,” *Taipei Times*, 22 July 2004, p. 1.

¹⁹ Mac William Bishop, “Military Might and Political Messages,” *Asia Times*, 24 July 2004, at <http://tbrnews.org/Archives/a1020.htm>.

²⁰ Conversation with then LTG Cao Gangchuan, May 1996, who in 2002 became China’s Minister of Defense.

²¹ For Chinese writings on these and other PLA thinking on the operational art level, see the two volumes by Michael Pillsbury, *Chinese Views of Future Warfare*, Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2002, and *China Debates the Future Security Environment*, Washington, DC: NDU Press, 2004.

²² Shirley Kan, *Taiwan: Major U.S. Arms Sales Since 1990*, Washington, DC: Congressional Reference Service, 2006, pp. 3-4.

²³ This comment seemed sincere, and may imply the degree of strategic miscalculation by some in Taipei.

²⁴ Quoted in *CNA*, Taipei, 08 November 2004, at: <http://www.cna.com.tw/eng/ceplist.php?class=1P>.

²⁵ Admiral Dennis C. Blair, USN (Ret.), “Address to the U.S.-Taiwan Business Council Defense Conference,” San Antonio, Tx, 13 February 2003.

²⁶ “The February 2005 “2 plus 2” talks in Washington produced a joint statement of concern by Japan and the U.S. that spurred hopes among Taiwan government and media sources. Also, see Anthony Faiola, “Japan to Join U.S. Policy on Taiwan: Growth of China Seen Behind Shift,” *Washington Post*, 18 February 2005, p. A01; and Tsou Ching-wen, “National Security Council Holds Meeting on Strengthening Ties with U.S., Japan,” *Liberty Times*, 22 February 2005.

Table 1: The Time-Distance Factor ^{a}*

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Distance in nm^b</u>	<u>Time in days at 12 kts^c</u>	<u>Time in days at 20 kts</u>
West Coast	Taiwan	5993	20	12
West Coast	Hawaii	2223	8	4.6
West Coast	Japan	4755	16.5	10
West Coast	Guam	5289	18.5	11
Hawaii	Japan	3346	11.5	7
Hawaii	Guam	3303	11.5	7
Japan	Guam	1359	5	3
Guam	Keelung	1470	5	3
East Coast	Singapore	8364	29	17.5
	via Cape of Good Hope	12,138	42	25
East Coast	Guam	6879	24	14
	via Cape Horn	13,561	47	28

*B.D. Cole, with distances from Hydrographic Office Publication (HO Pub) 151

<http://pollux.nss.nima.mil/pubs/pubs_j_show_sections.html?dpath=DBP&ptid=5&rid=189>.

^aA speed of advance (SOA) of 12 kts allows an aircraft carrier to conduct flight operations as desired; an SOA of 20 kts makes that difficult and also makes it difficult for escorting ships to keep up with the carrier. Distances are for Great Circle routes, including Panama Canal transit for East Coast ships except as otherwise noted.

^b1 nautical mile (nm) equals approximately 1.15 statute miles

^c1 knot (kt) equals approximately 1.15 mph