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## America's "China Policy" Is in Urgent Need of Definition

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The sudden emergence of China's "Anti-Separation Law" (also called the "Anti-Secession Law") this past December was a surprise because, even by Chinese standards, it was unnecessary. Just six days before its announcement, legislative elections in Taiwan reflected waning political sentiment on the island for constitutional reforms affecting Taiwan's *de jure* status as the Republic of China.

That China went ahead and initiated a "legislative" process to put this law on the books was a clear indication that China has moved away from its "fundamental policy of striving for peaceful reunification" and toward a posture of military threat to Taiwan. It is a development that reveals a dangerous weakness in our current China policy: It rests on slogans that have no substance.

### Slogans of China Policy

Let me explain. Three core elements of America's China policy are:

- "Our One China Policy";
- Our opposition to unilateral change in the Taiwan Strait's "status quo as we define it"; and
- Our "non-support" of Taiwan independence.

These three core elements *literally* have no substance in the sense that none of them is defined anywhere in the official lexicon of American diplomacy. And insofar as anyone has any idea about what they really mean, their meaning has no relationship to the actual words that U.S. policymakers use to describe those elements.

### Talking Points

- In general, a democracy cannot have a coherent foreign policy if it refuses to define the core elements of that policy. "One China" and "status quo in the Taiwan Strait" are central to America's China policy, yet they are undefined and internally contradictory.
- Because there is no strategic vision guiding U.S. policy toward China or Taiwan, Congress should require one. Not only is Taiwan a thriving democracy and America's tenth largest export market, but Taiwan has also been an important security partner for the United States.
- The executive branch must be required to conduct a strategic survey of U.S. interests in the region and to consider the possible ramifications to America's strategic posture in the Western Pacific should Taiwan be forced into a relationship with China that would preclude continued U.S. strategic cooperation with Taiwan. Thereafter, policy decisions regarding China and Taiwan must be made to conform with U.S. goals.

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Consequently, when confronted by actions, either by China or Taiwan that tend to annoy or upset the other, no American Administration has possessed a coherent policy framework within which to manage the controversy. Over the years, this lack of coherence has had the unfortunate effect of confusing both the President and the Congress. Our China policy has become an impressionistic fabric similar to Justice Potter Stewart's view of pornography; that is, "I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description [of pornography]; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it..."<sup>1</sup>

In short, our China policy is so vaporous that to call it a "policy" would invest it with a level of thought that is entirely absent.

### A Policy of Non-Definition

Since the end of the Second World War, it has been the official policy of the United States government that the post-World War II status of Taiwan is "an unsettled question subject to future international resolution." Taiwan was a former colony of the Empire of Japan to which Japan abjured in the document of surrender all "right, title and claim" in perpetuity. However, Japan pointedly did not designate any of its victorious enemy nations as the recipient of Taiwan, leaving it for the allied powers to sort out in the fullness of time.<sup>2</sup>

The Korean War and the Cold War intervened to prevent the allies from designating "China" (either Chiang Kai-shek's government-in-exile on Taiwan or Mao Zedong's new "People's Republic of China" in Beijing) as the new sovereign over Taiwan, and the matter went unsettled when the final peace treaty with Japan was signed in San Francisco in September 1951. The USSR refused to sign the treaty. It objected, among other things, to the provision regarding Formosa and the Pescadores:

[T]his draft grossly violates the indisputable rights of China to the return of integral parts of Chinese territory: Taiwan, the Pescadores, the Paracel and other islands.... The draft contains only a reference to the renunciation by Japan of its rights to these territories but intentionally omits any mention of the further fate of these territories.<sup>3</sup>

The "unsettled" status of Taiwan remains the policy of the United States government to this day, except that constant repetition of the phrase "one China policy" has given America's political leaders, in both the Congress and the executive branch, the vague impression that somehow the United States formally recognizes that Taiwan is a part of China.

Compounding the confusion is the Administration's resolute refusal to be clear on the matter (and this is not just a problem with the present Administration, but with all previous ones dating back to President Nixon's first term). For example, just one year ago, before the House Committee on International Relations, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James Kelly had the following exchange, redolent of a certain Stewartesque syntax, with Representative Grace Napolitano (D-CA):

REP. NAPOLITANO: The next question, then, is can the evolution of full-fledged democracy on Taiwan and the clear emergence of a sense of Taiwanese identity meld with the principle of One China, or are they in stark contrast with each other?

MR. KELLY: There certainly is a degree of contrast. The definition of One China is something that we could go on for much too long for this event. In my testimony, I made the point "our One China," and I didn't really define it, and I'm not sure I very easily could define it.

1. See Mr. Justice Stewart, concurring in *Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 378 US 184 (1964).

2. See Memorandum from the Department of State Legal Advisor (L/EA – Robert I. Starr) to the Director of the Office of Republic of China Affairs (Charles T. Sylvester), July 13, 1971, "Subject: Legal Status of Taiwan." This memorandum is reprinted as Appendix C in John J. Tkacik, ed., *Rethinking One China* (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 2004), p. 181.

3. *Ibid.*

I can tell you what it is not. It is not the One-China policy or the One-China principle that Beijing suggests, and it may not be the definition that some would have in Taiwan. But it does convey a meaning of solidarity of a kind among the people on both sides of the straits that has been our policy for a very long time.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, Secretary Kelly was one of the few diplomats in the State Department who actually understood what our position on “One China” really was, and tried his best to differentiate it from Beijing’s “One China Principle” by calling it “Our One China.” But the net effect at the end of that day was to leave Representative Napolitano—and everyone else on the committee, I suspect—just as uninformed about U.S. policy as they were at the start of his testimony.

In his testimony of April 21 last year, Secretary Kelly also listed another core element of our China policy: “The U.S. does not support independence for Taiwan or unilateral moves that would change the *status quo* as we define it.” No one on the committee had the presence of mind to ask Secretary Kelly just how the Administration defined the *status quo* in the Taiwan Strait, but six months later, members of the press engaged his deputy, Randall G. Schriver, in the following Stewartesque exchange:

QUESTION: Randy, how do you define Taiwan independence? Would a change of the name of the country be—or change the national flag—be considered as independence? Thank you.

MR. SCHRIVER: I don’t think it’s useful for me to get into a variety of hypotheticals, and I think, actually, it’s fairly obvious and fairly clear what we mean by our non-support for Taiwan independence. I mean, you could throw out a range of things, and I just don’t want to address them one at a time about the implications, and “is this

independence or is that independence?” I think the statement, and our intent behind it, is quite clear.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, it was not “quite clear.” Clarity was precisely the quality that Secretary Schriver hoped to avoid when he answered the question.

In general, a democracy cannot have a coherent foreign policy if it refuses to define the core elements of that policy. These two core elements—“One China” and “*status quo* in the Taiwan Strait”—are central to America’s China policy, yet they are undefined and internally contradictory.

I consider our China policy to be fatally flawed in the sense that the key terms used to describe it are precisely the opposite of what the words mean on their face. That is, “one China” does not mean that the United States recognizes that Taiwan is part of China, but only that the United States only recognizes one government of China at a time. And “*status quo* as we define it” is nowhere defined either in public or within the confidential proceedings of the executive branch.

A third misconceived element of our China policy, which Secretary James Kelly enumerated at his testimony last year, is that “the U.S. does not support independence for Taiwan.” There is an obvious incongruity between this “non-support” for Taiwan’s independence and America’s devotion to the “expansion of democracy” in Taiwan and our sales of hundreds of millions, indeed billions, of dollars in defense articles and services to Taiwan each year since 1979. Why, pray tell, are we selling Taiwan the instruments to defend themselves with if we do not support Taiwan’s continued separation from China—and hence Taiwan’s independence?

The answer is quite sound. Assistant Secretary of Defense Peter Rodman pointed to the congressional mandate of the Taiwan Relations Act to “maintain the capacity to resist the use of force against...Taiwan” and averred that “the United States takes these obligations very seriously.” He explained:

4. Hearing, *The Taiwan Relations Act: The Next Twenty-Five Years*, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, April 21, 2004, p. 40, at [http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa93229.000/hfa93229\\_of.htm](http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa93229.000/hfa93229_of.htm).
5. Randy Schriver, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Briefing for the Foreign Press Center, U.S. State Department, Washington, D.C., November 20, 2003, at <http://fpc.state.gov/fpc/26534.htm>.

[T]he President's *National Security Strategy*, published in September 2002, calls for "building a balance of power that favors freedom." Taiwan's evolution into a true multi-party democracy over the past decade is proof of the importance of America's commitment to Taiwan's defense. It strengthens American resolve to see Taiwan's democracy grow and prosper.<sup>6</sup>

That sums it up nicely. Why, then, can't the United States government say this out loud? Why do American diplomats blame the Taiwan Relations Act for our support of Taiwan? Why cannot even Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice tell the Chinese that our arms sales to Taiwan are to enable Taiwan to defend its democracy against the threats of tyranny?<sup>7</sup>

The reasons for this are historical, but, truth be told, they are simply force of habit. Dr. Henry Kissinger apparently gave a secret assurance to Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1971 that the State Department would no longer refer in public to the status of Taiwan as undetermined.<sup>8</sup> Apparently through some misplaced loyalty to Dr. Kissinger's secret assurances to Beijing 34 year ago, State Department officials still refuse to say in public that U.S. policy is that Taiwan's legal status remains "unsettled."

Over the decades, on occasion, the State Department has actually hinted at this unsettled state of affairs on Taiwan's legal status in its correspondence and responses to the Congress. However, rather

than adhere to a rigorous and precise vagueness, executive branch spokesmen, and indeed the President himself, betray constant and pervasive befuddlement when it comes to matters of Taiwan and China. The President has on occasion referred to Taiwan as a country in its own right,<sup>9</sup> and the Secretary of State has called Taiwan a "part of China."<sup>10</sup> A scandalous lack of precision in our policy terminology has led to the confusion of otherwise intelligent policymakers.

## A Policy of Pretense

Very early in the U.S.–China relationship, both sides realized that they could not sustain a cooperative strategic partnership against the Soviet Union if each insisted that the other side foreswear core tenets of its foreign policy. From 1971 through 1989, U.S.–China relations were built on an unspoken but very real understanding that enabled both sides to ignore the paramount conflict in their essential interests. It was an understanding based on pretense: China *pretends* to have a "policy of peaceful unification with Taiwan," in return for which the United States *pretends* to have a "one China policy."

The Congress of the United States was clearly frustrated by the fact that this understanding was unspoken and insisted that it be made explicit. It did so in a profound and direct way in 1979 in the Taiwan Relations Act, which declared it the "policy of the United States... (3) to make clear that the

6. Hearing, *The Taiwan Relations Act: The Next Twenty-Five Years*, p. 23. Rodman referred to U.S. National Security Council, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, at [www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html).
7. Department of State officials have been particularly reluctant to acknowledge America's commitment to Taiwan as a kindred democracy and instead insist that the U.S. commitment is simply a legal "obligation." For example, in her meetings with Chinese leaders in Beijing on March 21, 2005, Secretary Rice would say only, "I reiterated that the United States does, in fact, have a 'One China' policy... that also recognizes American obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act." See Secretary Condoleezza Rice, "Remarks to the Press in China," China World Hotel, Beijing, March 21, 2005, at [www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43678.htm](http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/43678.htm).
8. See Kissinger's record of his conversation with Premier Zhou of October 21, 1971, classified TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY, White House, "Memorandum of Conversation," October 21, 1971, p. 27.
9. During remarks on trade policy, President Bush said, "And that's good, that's important to recognize and to welcome both countries, both the Republic of Taiwan, and of course China, into the World Trade Organization." See "President Calls on Senate to Pass Trade Promotion Authority," Remarks by the President on Trade Promotion Authority, Benjamin Franklin Room, the Department of State, April 4, 2002, at [www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020404-4.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020404-4.html).
10. Secretary Colin L. Powell, Interview with Mike Chinoy of CNN International TV, China World Hotel, Beijing, China, October 25, 2004, at [www.state.gov/secretary/rm/37366.htm](http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/37366.htm).

United States decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means."<sup>11</sup>

President Ronald Reagan was equally perplexed by the bureaucracy's aversion to spelling out this linkage. In August 1982, coincident with the announcement of the U.S.–China Joint Communiqué of August 17, 1982, on the question of Taiwan arms sales, President Reagan issued a presidential statement that declared "the Taiwan question is a matter for the Chinese people, on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, to resolve. We will not interfere in this matter *or prejudice the free choice of, or put pressure on, the people of Taiwan* in this matter."<sup>12</sup>

But President Reagan went one step beyond this public statement to mandate this linkage in a confidential presidential directive designed to guide executive branch dealings with China and Taiwan. Indeed, President Reagan declared this linkage was to be a "permanent imperative of U.S. foreign policy."

As you know, I have agreed to the issuance of a joint communiqué with the People's Republic of China in which we express United States policy toward the matter of continuing arms sales to Taiwan.

The talks leading up to the signing of the communiqué were premised on the clear understanding that any reduction of such arms sales depends upon peace in the Taiwan Strait and the continuity of China's declared "fundamental policy" of seeking a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue.

In short, the U.S. willingness to reduce its arms sales to Taiwan is *conditioned absolutely*

upon the continued commitment of China to the peaceful solution of the Taiwan–PRC differences. It should be clearly understood that the linkage between these two matters is a *permanent imperative* of U.S. foreign policy.

In addition, it is essential that the quantity and quality of the arms provided Taiwan be conditioned entirely on the threat posed by the PRC. Both in quantitative and qualitative terms, Taiwan's defense capability relative to that of the PRC *will be maintained*.<sup>13</sup>

### The Challenge of the Anti-Separation Law

China's pretense of a "peaceful policy" toward Taiwan has eroded significantly since 1993.

- In August 1993, with the issuance of a "white paper" on Taiwan relations, Beijing reiterated that "any sovereign state is entitled to use any means it deems necessary, including military ones, to uphold its sovereignty and territorial integrity" and asserted flatly that "the Chinese Government is under no obligation to undertake any commitment to any foreign power or people intending to split China as to what means it might use to handle its own domestic affairs."<sup>14</sup>
- From 1992 to the present, China's military spending has increased at double-digit rates, something one might not have expected following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Virtually every other country threatened by Soviet expansion cut its defense spending significantly in an effort to reap a "peace dividend."
- In July 1995, China's hostile intentions toward Taiwan were manifest when Beijing closed the heavily trafficked Taiwan Strait to commercial shipping for several days while it conducted

11. Taiwan Relations Act, P.L. 96–8, April 10, 1979.

12. See Presidential Statement on Issuance of Communiqué, August 17, 1982, in hearing, *China–Taiwan: United States Policy*, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, 97th Cong., 2nd Sess., August 18, 1982, p. 33. Emphasis added.

13. Emphasis added. For the full text of this short memo, see James R. Lilley and Jeff Lilley, *China Hands: Nine Decades of Adventure, Espionage, and Diplomacy in Asia* (New York: Public Affairs Books, 2004), p. 248. See also Jim Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China, From Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), p. 127.

14. Beijing's August 30, 1993, white paper on *The Taiwan Question and the Reunification of China* reiterated that the PRC "is the sole legal government of China and Taiwan is a part of China"; declared that the United States was responsible for the "Taiwan Question"; and stated flatly that Taiwan membership in the United Nations was "out of the question."

unprecedented “missile tests,” generally viewed as an expression of anger at efforts by Taiwan’s President Lee Teng-hui to improve his country’s international standing.

- In March 1996, the Chinese People’s Liberation Army tested nuclear-capable short-range ballistic missiles in the Taiwan Strait, again closing that important sea-lane to international traffic, in an effort to intimidate Taiwan’s voters during their first-ever presidential elections.
- In August 1999, Chinese high-performance jet fighters, for the first time, began to patrol the Taiwan Strait at the “center line,” challenging Taiwan jet fighters and raising tensions.
- And in February 2000, China issued another white paper which called for the use of “all drastic measures possible including the use of force” if Taiwan did not declare itself part of China and agree to negotiations by a certain date.<sup>15</sup>

If the United States had possessed a coherent and consistent China policy, these separate Chinese challenges to the *status quo* would have been countered by calibrated “restatements” from Washington about our “one China” policy. But they were not.

### China’s Anti-Separation Law and the U.S. Reaction

It is to the Bush Administration’s credit that it is finally doing so as it confronts the Anti-Separation Law. The ASL is a convincing indicator that China’s commitment to peace in the Taiwan Strait is weak at best.

Early unofficial draft iterations of the ASL—which had initially been referred to as the “National

Unification Law”—had been floating around on the Internet at least since 2002 and included all sorts of strange stipulations. Dr. Yu Yuanzhou of Wuhan University proposed legislation that would require the Chinese People’s Liberation Army to attack Taiwan as soon as it is able (no need to await any Taiwanese independence), beginning with bombardments of Quemoy and Matsu, which, according to Article 27 of his draft, “would not be limited to conventional weapons.”<sup>16</sup>

Understandably, the Bush Administration was dismayed when the ASL was announced on December 17, 2004. The Administration’s perplexity was heightened because it followed hard on elections in Taiwan that indicated sentiment for new constitutional revisions had cooled, and hence, Beijing had no justification for stirring the pot with this new legislation.

At first, the Administration’s major worry was that China would try to “define” the *status quo* in the Strait beyond its existing vague guideline. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told the press on February 15 that the “U.S. Government has been quite clear that we don’t think either side should take unilateral steps *that try to define the situation further* or push it in one direction or another.”<sup>17</sup> For consistency’s sake, the Department of State doesn’t want to confine just itself to avoiding definitions, but seems to extend its aversion to defining the *status quo* to all the players. Again, to the Administration’s credit, U.S. officials have maintained a consistent and tough line with all their Chinese interlocutors on the ASL.<sup>18</sup>

When the Chinese went ahead and passed the law on March 14, the week prior to Secretary of

15. China State Council, Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office, “The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue,” February 21, 2000, at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/features/taiwanpaper/taiwana.html>. The white paper declared, among other things, that the “government of the ‘Republic of China’...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,” and “if the Taiwan authorities refuse, *sine die*, the peaceful settlement of cross-Straits reunification through negotiations, then the Chinese government will only be forced to adopt all drastic measures possible, including the use of force, to...fulfill the great cause of reunification.”

16. See Yu Yuanzhou, “Law for the Promotion of the National Unification of the People’s Republic of China (Scholar’s Suggested Draft),” November 1, 2002, at [www.peacehall.com/news/gb/pubvp/2004/05/200405190839.shtml](http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/pubvp/2004/05/200405190839.shtml) (in Chinese).

17. Department of State Daily Briefing, Richard Boucher, Spokesman, Washington, D.C., February 15, 2005, at [www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2005/42316.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2005/42316.htm). Emphasis added.

State Rice's visit to Beijing, the Secretary was even tougher. "We've made very clear that the anti-secession law was not a welcome development because anything that is unilateral in this and that increases tensions, which clearly the anti-secession law did increase tensions, is not good."<sup>19</sup> I have been told that Secretary Rice was even more blunt in her private meetings with Chinese leaders.

The reason for her unhappiness is clear. The central mandate of Beijing's new "Anti-National Separation Law" (*Fan Fenlie Guojia Fa* or, literally, "Law against Splitting the Nation") is the declaration that China "shall" use military force against Taiwan whenever the Chinese leadership decides that all possibilities for "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan have been exhausted.<sup>20</sup> But the Anti-Separation Law makes no pretense of defining either what would constitute an act "entailing" secession or what it might mean to exhaust "all possibilities" for peaceful reunification.

As such, the ASL serves as a free-standing, permanent *casus belli* against Taiwan and the United States. In short, the ASL is an open-ended declaration of war against Taiwan in which the Beijing authorities reserve the right to launch "non-peaceful" actions against the people of Taiwan whenever they wish and without forewarning.

This pre-legitimization of war is a very real change in China's stance toward Taiwan—and indeed toward the United States, which sees the preservation of Taiwan's democracy and autonomy from Beijing as in both its political and strategic interests.

In presenting the draft ASL to the National People's Congress on March 8, 2005, NPC Vice Chairman Wang Zhaoguo asserted that China's constitution stipulates that "Taiwan is an unalienable part of the sacred territory of the People's Republic of China."<sup>21</sup> In this context, it is ironic to note that the only piece of the world's geography that the Chinese constitution declares is an unalienable part of the PRC is Taiwan. Not Beijing or Shanghai or Xinjiang or Tibet.

It is also ironic that the Chinese government insists that the English-language rendering of *fan fenlie guojia fa* is "Anti Secession Law." Of course, Taiwan has never been administered by the People's Republic of China, and it seems an oxymoron to suggest that Taiwan could secede from a country to which it has never belonged in the first place.

### How the U.S. Should React to the ASL

Let me suggest a few ways in which the Congress might remedy the flaws in U.S. policy.

**Define Our Policy.** Recognizing that a problem exists is the first step to finding a solution. In its oversight role, Congress should insist that the Administration actually define its Taiwan policy.

This does not necessarily mean that the Congress should force the Administration into a public enunciation of a policy toward Taiwan that directly antagonizes Beijing. But at the very least, the Administration should be required to develop internal "terms of reference" for Taiwan. What exactly is the "status quo" in the Taiwan Strait? What is "our" one China policy? If we don't support

18. See John J. Tkacik, "Secession Law Strains Ties," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, March 9, 2005, p. 10, at <http://online.wsj.com/article/0,,SB111031906988273848,00.html>.

19. Rice, "Remarks to the Press in China."

20. The text of the Anti-Separation Law neither defines how China's leadership would determine when "all possibilities" have been exhausted nor defines a "major incident" that would "entail" Taiwan's separation from China. See Article 8: "In the event that the 'Taiwan independence' secessionist forces should act under any name or by any means to cause the fact of Taiwan's secession from China, or that major incidents entailing Taiwan's secession from China should occur, or that possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted, the state shall employ non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity." The English text of the ASL is available at the Web site of the official Xinhua news agency at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-03/14/content\\_2694180.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-03/14/content_2694180.htm), "Full text of Anti-Secession Law"; the Chinese text is at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2005-03/14/content\\_2694168.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2005-03/14/content_2694168.htm).

21. "Explication Regarding the 'Law Against the Separation of the Nation (Draft),'" Xinhua News Agency, March 8, 2005, at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2005-03/08/content\\_2666011.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2005-03/08/content_2666011.htm) (in Chinese).

Taiwan's continued separation from China—a separation that has already lasted for 107 of the last 110 years—then why has the Congress mandated in the Taiwan Relations Act that national policy is “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 economic system, of the people of Taiwan”?

**Maintain the Linkage.** President Reagan's “permanent imperative” of a linkage between China's peaceful policy toward Taiwan and our support for Taiwan's defense, and hence its continued separation from China, is clearly in America's interests. Therefore, any step Beijing takes that casts a cloud over its so-called peaceful policy must be matched by a concomitant U.S. step in support of Taiwan's democracy.

If the Administration finds it diplomatically inopportune to react to some act of Chinese belligerence in the Taiwan Strait, there may well be instances where a congressional reaction would give the Administration leverage with Beijing. Beijing's Anti Separation Law, which Chinese diplomats insist is merely a restatement of existing Chinese law and policy, could be balanced by new U.S. legislation—perhaps along the lines of the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (H.R. 1838), which passed the House of Representatives with a veto-proof margin of 341–70 on February 1, 2000. The TSEA, after all, was also a restatement of existing U.S. policies toward Taiwan.

I myself am personally fond of President Reagan's 1982 commitments to Taiwan's president known as the “Six Assurances.”<sup>22</sup> Because they are already a part of existing U.S. policy, enshrining the “Six Assurances” in a future House resolution would also be a very effective counter to future Chi-

nese actions that might challenge the stability and peace of the Taiwan Strait.

**Demand a Strategy.** The Cheshire Cat's first dictum is that if you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. If the United States has no idea what it wants China or Taiwan to look like in five years (let alone 10 or 20), then it doesn't matter what policies it adopts. As Dr. Condoleezza Rice wrote in *Foreign Affairs* five years ago, “China is not a ‘status quo’ power but one that would like to alter Asia's balance of power in its own favor.”<sup>23</sup> This assessment makes it absolutely essential that the United States understand what its own strategic interests, goals, and objectives are in Asia.

## Conclusion

Sadly, there is no such vision guiding U.S. policy toward China or Taiwan. The Congress should therefore require one. In particular, the Administration must be attentive to America's interests in Taiwan. Not only is Taiwan a thriving democracy, and not only is it America's tenth largest export market, but Taiwan has also been an important security partner for the United States.

The executive branch must be required to conduct a strategic survey—confidential if necessary—of U.S. interests in the region and to consider the possible ramifications to America's strategic posture in the Western Pacific should Taiwan be forced into a relationship with China that would preclude continued U.S. strategic cooperation with Taiwan. Thereafter, policy decisions regarding China and Taiwan must be made to conform with U.S. goals.

—John J. Tkacik, Jr., is Senior Research Fellow in Asian Studies in the Asian Studies Center at The Heritage Foundation. These remarks are adapted from testimony prepared for delivery at a hearing of the House Committee on International Relations.

22. John H. Holdridge, “China–Taiwan: United States Policy,” testimony before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, August 18, 1982, pp. 15–16. Holdridge described the “Six Assurances” in his memoir. See John H. Holdridge, *Crossing the Divide: An Insider's Account of Normalization of U.S.–China Relations* (Lanham, Md.: Rowan and Littlefield, 1997), p. 232.

23. Condoleezza Rice, “Promoting the National Interest,” *Foreign Affairs*, January–February 2000, p. 56.