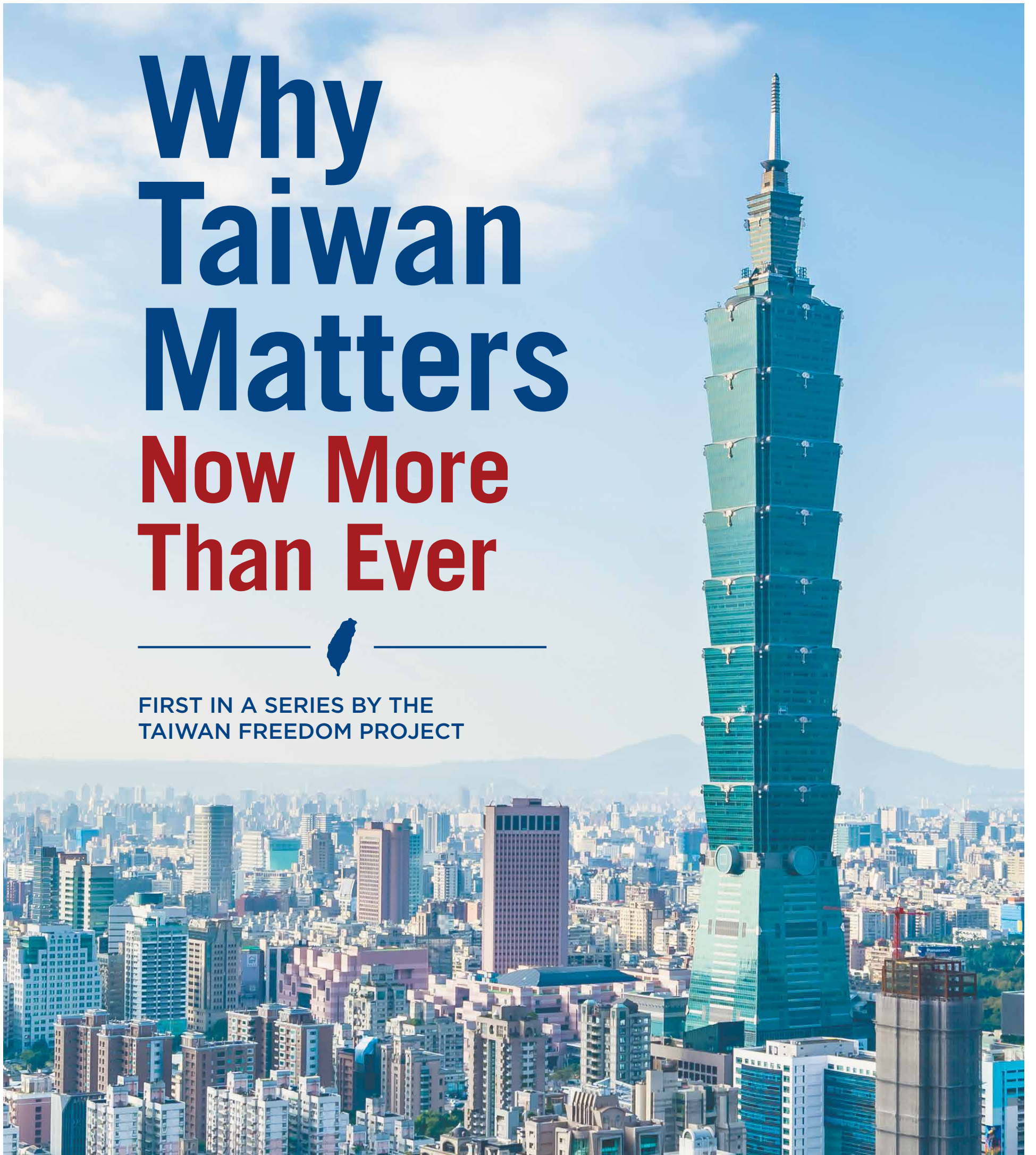


Why Taiwan Matters Now More Than Ever



FIRST IN A SERIES BY THE
TAIWAN FREEDOM PROJECT



Why Taiwan Matters, Now More Than Ever

First in a series by the Taiwan Freedom Project

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Introducing ‘Why Taiwan Matters, Now More than Ever’

By Tom McDevitt and Ian Everhart

As we celebrate America’s Semiquincentennial, we are pleased to present this special section entitled, “Why Taiwan Matters, Now More than Ever” as a sponsored content publication in The Washington Times. This is the first in a series by the **Taiwan Freedom Project** provided as an educational resource for citizen leaders.

Among our Asian friends, Taiwan uniquely embodies the American ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Its 23 million citizens have overcome extraordinary adversity and achieved the near-miraculous: republican self-government, 30 years of democracy, extraordinary prosperity and a free society. Through their hard work, talent, creativity and entrepreneurial genius, the Taiwanese have built their island into an indispensable global center of innovation and technological advancement.

Tragically, Taiwan is threatened like never before by the People’s Republic of China controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), whose record of appalling crimes, tyranny, imperial

aggression and thwarted human potential is far too long to list here. This CCP threat is only 110 miles across the Taiwan Strait.

We agree with House Select Committee on China Chairman John Moolenaar, who writes for this section, that “now more than ever” we must deter the CCP’s aggression. We believe Taiwan to be the most important geopolitical question facing America and the free world. That is why we have undertaken to launch the **Taiwan Freedom Project** and to publish this new series of special sections in English and Mandarin.

Americans and our allies must embrace the full spectrum of statecraft to ensure the next 250 years are defined by peace and freedom. The contributors in the following pages offer profound insights for policymakers and the public alike. This publication is organized into three key areas:

Why Taiwan Matters, Now More than Ever: We introduce Taiwan’s immense importance for American strategic interests, regional stability, the global economy, technology, public health, human rights and culture.

The Threat and the Consequences: Our experts describe the dangers of complacency in the face of the CCP’s escalating aggression and evolving tactics.

What is to be Done?: We offer practical, innovative and time-tested solutions to seize the intellectual and moral high ground in the clash between freedom and totalitarianism.

A free and sovereign Taiwan serves as a beacon of light for China and Asia. The very essence of freedom is manifested when citizens come together of their own volition in common purpose. We invite you to support the **Taiwan Freedom Project**, join our growing network to defend Taiwan’s democracy, counter the disinformation and aggression of the CCP and ultimately achieve a “new birth of freedom” across the entirety of Asia.

There is indeed no weapon in the arsenals of the CCP that is so formidable as “the will and moral courage of free men and women,” as President Ronald Reagan said in 1981.

With your active support and informed voice — as readers, contributors, through referrals, subscriptions, donations, volunteering and grassroots engagement — we can build a winning coalition to propel friendship with and protection of Taiwan to the forefront of national discourse.

For more information, please contact us at TaiwanFreedomProject@proton.me.

Keep the status quo for Taiwan



By Rep. John Moolenaar

Now more than ever, deterring the Chinese Communist Party’s aggression in the Taiwan Strait is a vital U.S. national interest.

Taiwan is a vibrant,

democratic society, and it plays a crucial role in global supply chains. As a steadfast partner of the United States, Taiwan produces the technology Americans use every day, as it makes

As the CCP’s broken promise of a “high degree of autonomy” for Hong Kong has clearly laid bare, the CCP is a revisionist authoritarian power and cannot be trusted. Xi’s mandate to

chains, market access and maritime commerce that all directly affect the U.S. economy. From Taiwan, the CCP would also have a commanding position along the First Island Chain, immediately threatening U.S. allies such as Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines, constraining U.S. military operations and increasing the vulnerability of U.S. territories in the Pacific.

The CCP is increasingly hostile toward Taiwan, launching an average of 2.63 million daily cyber intrusion attempts against Taiwan’s critical infrastructure in 2025, Taiwan’s National Security Bureau said in January. This is a 6% increase from the previous year — with energy and hospital systems experiencing the sharpest rise in attacks. Those are civilian targets — not military targets — and they show that the CCP will target innocent people for its own gain.

the chips in our cars, phones, appliances and more. While our country strengthens our supply chains, we must also deter the CCP’s ambitions to control Taiwan, because losing Taiwan to the CCP would destroy the economy and plunge the world into a depression.

The United States firmly opposes unilateral changes to the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. This status quo has created decades of peace and prosperity for Taiwan, the United States and the world at large. The CCP and Xi Jinping want to upend this status quo and take control of Taiwan.

the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) requires China’s military to be prepared by 2027 to take Taiwan by sheer military force. When a dictator says they are preparing to do something dangerous, all of us must take him at his word.

The chilling reality of the CCP’s designs for Taiwan are a clear and present danger to our economy and our security. According to Bloomberg, a war over Taiwan could cost the global economy an estimated \$10 trillion or roughly 8% of global GDP. If the CCP seizes control of Taiwan, Beijing will be able to dominate and leverage supply

The most important recommendation is ensuring Taiwan is able to defend itself.

» see **STATUS QUO** | C5

The ‘Ten More for Taiwan’ report

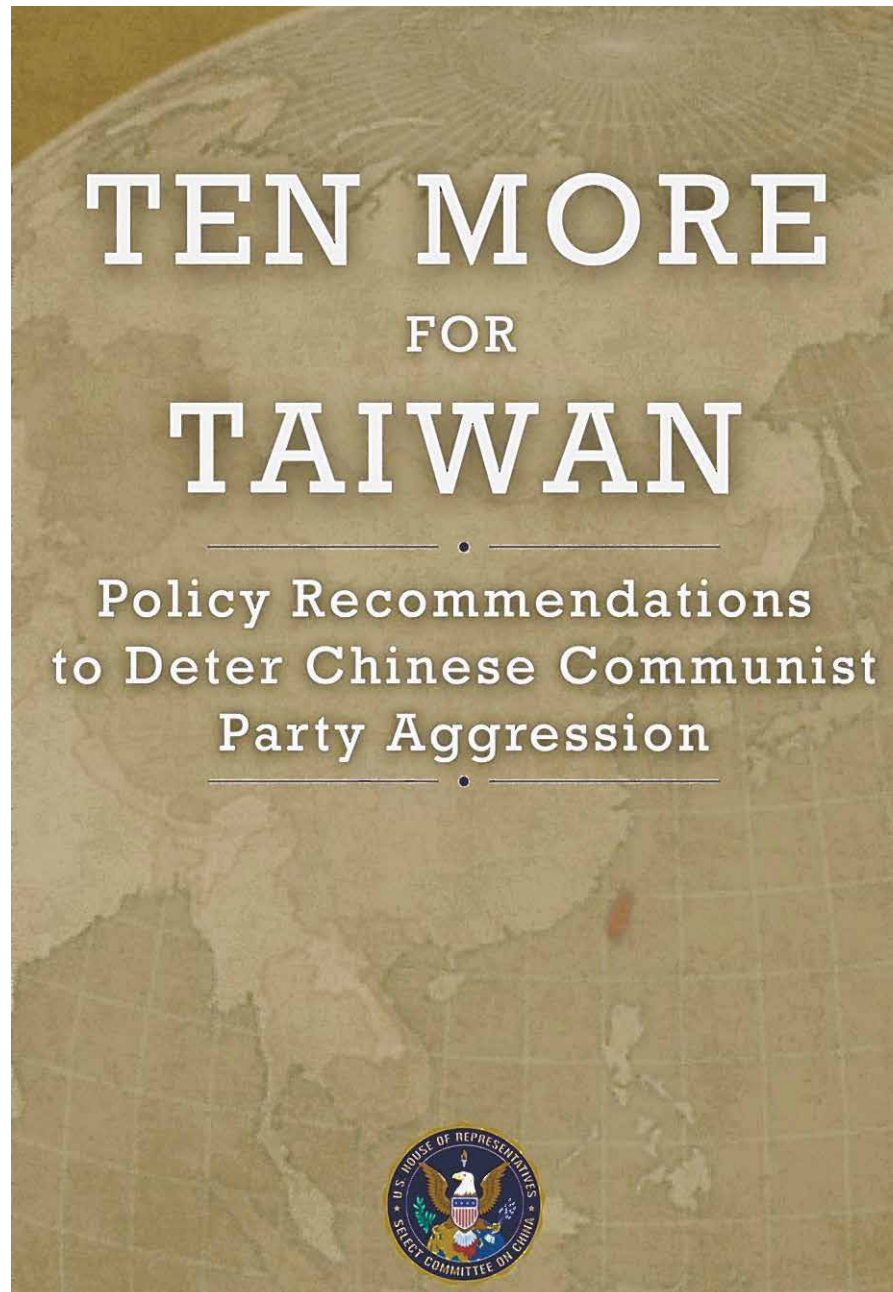
By The House Select Committee on China

The following is an abridged excerpt from the committee’s December 2025 “Ten More for Taiwan” report.

The growing threat of a CCP attack on Taiwan presents a particularly acute threat to America’s prosperity. Losing access to Taiwan’s semiconductors alone would push the United States into an “immediate Great Depression.” Such an attack would also devastate the world economy, with a second study estimating that a conflict would cause global gross domestic product to plummet by \$10 trillion, or ten percent in one single year—far worse than the economic devastation wrought by the Great Recession or COVID-19 pandemic. In short, a military conflict over Taiwan would have disastrous consequences for Taiwan, the United States, and the entire world.

A military attack by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) would also directly threaten U.S. national security and undermine international laws and norms. Congress recognized this threat when it passed the Taiwan Relations Act (P.L. 96-8; 22 U.S.C. §§3301 et seq.) in 1979, which provides that it is U.S. policy to consider “any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.” The Taiwan Relations Act further declared that “peace and stability in the [Western Pacific] area... are matters of international concern.”

A CCP conquest of Taiwan would position an aggressive and expansionist PRC at a key position within the First Island Chain, posing an immediate threat to America’s mutual defense treaty allies such as Japan, the Philippines, and Australia. Furthermore, it would degrade the U.S. military’s ability to defend and operate throughout the Western Pacific and



American territory—including Guam and Hawaii—would become increasingly vulnerable to attack. As one U.S. Naval War College expert writes, a PRC military takeover of Taiwan would give Beijing “newfound strategic leverage” by “turn[ing] the southern flanks of Japan and South Korea” and increase its threat to the Philippines by “command[ing] the northern rim of the South China Sea.”¹ Unsurprisingly, the CCP is aware of the immense geopolitical springboard it would gain from occupying Taiwan. As the Select Committee noted in Ten for Taiwan, one People’s Liberation Army (PLA) handbook boasts that controlling Taiwan would make “Japan’s maritime lines of communication... fall completely within the striking ranges of China’s fighters and bombers.”² Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi echoed this sentiment in November

2025, when she stated her assessment that, for Japan, “any action involving the use of force [against Taiwan], such as China deploying naval ships, can only be described as a survival-threatening situation.”

Finally, failing to deter a PRC military attack on Taiwan would run contrary to some of America’s most deeply held values. Taiwan is one of the world’s most successful and vibrant democracies with a robust media, strong protection of civil liberties, and regular peaceful transfers of power. In contrast, the CCP commands an increasingly repressive one-party dictatorship that allows zero political dissent, denies fundamental individual freedoms, and is carrying out a genocide against the Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The CCP is also attempting to erase the culture of the Tibetan and Mongolian populations

under its rule while destroying civil liberties and the rule of law in Hong Kong, in violation of its pledge to respect Hong Kong’s autonomy. The Taiwan Relations Act states that the “preservation and enhancement of the human rights of all the people on Taiwan are hereby reaffirmed as objectives of the United States.” As the Select Committee wrote in Ten for Taiwan, in the event of an armed CCP attack on Taiwan, “the Taiwanese people would pay a terrible price and their democracy would hang in the balance.”

Many have described the late 2020s and 2030s as a “danger zone” when it comes to the rising CCP threat against Taiwan, frequently citing 2021 congressional testimony from then-commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Adm. Philip Davidson, who warned that the PRC may be prepared to take military action against Taiwan by 2027. Yet 2027’s significance to the debate over Beijing’s threat to Taiwan stems not from retired Admiral Philip Davidson, but from General Secretary Xi Jinping himself and several key CCP milestones. First, in 2027, Xi is expected to secure an unprecedented fourth five-year term as leader of the CCP, its military, and the PRC government at the CCP’s 21st National Congress. Second, in August 2027, the PLA will celebrate the centennial of its founding. Third, the year will conclude as Taiwan enters the final weeks of its 2028 presidential election, slated for January 2028. Finally, and perhaps most consequentially, 2027 marks the deadline set by Xi for the PLA to attain the capabilities needed to invade Taiwan while countering the U.S. military in the Indo-Pacific.

According to the Pentagon, the PLA’s 2027 milestone is specifically aimed at attaining the capabilities needed to counter the U.S. military in the Indo-Pacific and force Taiwan’s leadership to capitulate to the CCP’s terms.³ While there is no guarantee that Xi will attempt an invasion in 2027 or beyond, it is incumbent upon policymakers in the United States and Taiwan alike to deter such a conflict by acting as if this

threat will become manifest. As Chairman Moolenaar noted at the Select Committee's May 2025 hearing, the PRC represents a "very real, near-term threat [...] and the 119th Congress may be the last full legislative session with a chance to alter [CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping's] calculus. We cannot delay."

In 2026, the United States will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of its democracy, while Taiwan will likewise mark the 30th anniversary of its first democratic presidential election. Unfortunately, today democratic governance is under greater external threat in Taiwan and across the Indo-Pacific than at any time since the most perilous days of the Cold War. It remains imperative that, alongside our likeminded allies and partners, the United States continues to stand by the people of Taiwan, who are defending their democracy and freedoms in the face of the CCP's growing military and economic threats.

The Select Committee has identified ten bipartisan findings and recommendations to strengthen deterrence against CCP aggression towards Taiwan. These are a near-term roadmap for how the United States can comprehensively strengthen ties with Taiwan, deepen economic engagement, and expand the U.S.-Taiwan defense partnership:

1. **Clear political signaling from the United States is essential** for communicating American resolve to deter CCP aggression.
2. **Deepening U.S. economic ties with Taiwan strengthens deterrence**, bolsters Taiwan's resilience, diversifies critical supply chains, and benefits the U.S. economy.
3. **The United States must expand all efforts and pathways to ensure Taiwan has the capabilities it needs to defend itself** in a conflict and against daily gray-zone threats.
4. **The United States must rebuild the American defense industrial base** to deliver the capabilities needed by the United States and our partners to deter and defeat aggression.
5. **The Pentagon must fill critical capabilities gaps for Indo-Pacific deterrence** while enhancing its logistics enterprise to sustain a protracted conflict in a contested environment.
6. **The U.S. must strengthen joint military and economic planning with allies and partners**, while accelerating U.S. military access and posture initiatives in the Indo-Pacific.
7. **It is essential to enhance Taiwan's domestic resilience across a variety of scenarios**, including a protracted conflict, a blockade, and cyber-enabled coercion.
8. **The United States must support**

Taiwan in advancing its whole-of-society defense readiness from active and reserve forces to civilian preparedness.

9. **Defending Taiwan's international space and economic ties worldwide enhances Taiwan's strategic resilience.**
10. **Leaders in the Indo-Pacific believe the PRC is closely monitoring the outcome of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, of which Beijing is the chief enabler through its "no-limits" partnership with Moscow**, and factoring lessons from its outcome into its cost calculation relative to a Taiwan invasion.

The complete "Ten More for Taiwan" report can be found on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party's website at chinaselectcommittee.house.gov.



STATUS QUO

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American policy and military posturing must deter a full-scale invasion of the island and make any potential military operation there anything but fast, cheap or promising. As chairman of the Select Committee on China, my committee has made bipartisan recommendations for Congress and the executive branch to implement that will strengthen our nation's own

defense and enhance deterrence in the Taiwan Strait.

The most important recommendation is ensuring Taiwan is able to defend itself. If the CCP knows it will face an unacceptable cost if it attacks or blockades Taiwan, it will never attempt to do so. This deterrence will ensure peace and the status quo.

The Pentagon must overhaul its logistics enterprise, engage in robust military and economic planning with Taiwan, and ensure the timely delivery of weapons systems that Taiwan has purchased. America's defense industrial base must also be revived and

strengthened, with more manufacturing and industrial capacity. We need to slash red tape, remove burdensome regulations, and Make America Manufacture Again. We must be able to quickly replenish weapons stocks, build ships and have the resources we need to protect our country and allow Taiwan to buy the weapons it needs to protect itself.

As our country prepares to mark its 250th anniversary this summer, the friendship between America and Taiwan serves as a powerful reminder to the entire world that democracies must stand together. Our commitment to Taiwan is grounded in the Taiwan Relations Act

and the Six Assurances, cornerstones of a bipartisan policy that has preserved peace and stability for decades.

As the CCP escalates its coercive behavior and aggression against Taiwan, we must rebuild our defense industrial base, work with our allies and like-minded partners, strengthen our defenses against the CCP and ensure the prosperous status quo continues.

Rep. John Moolenaar, Michigan Republican, is chairman of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party.



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Khanna, Moolenaar slam China's interference after Taiwan blocked from WTO Ministerial Conference



Rep. Ro Khanna, California Democrat, is the ranking member on the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. The following are excerpts of his remarks about Taiwan.

Khanna, Moolenaar Slam China's Interference After Taiwan Blocked from WTO Ministerial Conference (March 25, 2026 Press Release)

Today, Ranking Member Ro Khanna (D-CA) and Chairman John Moolenaar (R-MI) of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party issued the following statement following reports that Taiwan was blocked from attending the 14th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

Cameroon's decision to effectively exclude Taiwan from the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference in Yaoundé is another troubling example of China's continued efforts to manipulate multilateral institutions.

Taiwan is a key global trading partner, not only for the United States but for countries around the world. Its compelled absence from the WTO's premier decision-making forum for the first time since its accession in 2001 lessens the WTO's collective ability to address challenges that chart the future of global trade. As a full WTO member, host countries for WTO conferences have a long-standing practice to recognize Taiwan as a "Separate Customs Territory."

This is not an isolated incident. It is part of a sustained campaign by Beijing to marginalize Taiwan and exert undue influence over international bodies. The United States will continue to stand with Taiwan, which deserves a seat at the table as a model democracy, one of the world's largest economies, and a technological powerhouse. We urge the WTO to stand up to China's bullying and facilitate Taiwan's participation in this Ministerial Conference.

Letter to President Trump about U.S. Taiwan policy on May 13, 2026, sent before U.S.-China Summit

Dear President Trump,

We write to encourage you, as you prepare to visit the People's Republic of China (PRC), to reaffirm the United States' long-standing One-China policy in order to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

For decades, the United States has contributed to the preservation of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait by grounding its One-China Policy in the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), the Three Joint Communiqués, and the Six Assurances.

The TRA (P.L. 96-8; 22 U.S.C. §§3301 et seq.) requires the United States to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive

character to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. It also expresses the United States' expectation that the future of Taiwan be determined by peaceful means. The Six Assurances reaffirm that, in the context of the 1982 United States-China Joint Communiqué on United States Arms Sales to Taiwan, the United States did not abandon Taiwan to the People's Republic of China.

Specifically, the second Assurance states that the United States has "not agreed" to prior consultation with the PRC on arms sales to Taiwan. U.S. commitments to Taiwan have contributed vitally to peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait by deterring PRC military aggression and preventing a conflict that the American people resoundingly want to avoid.

Delays of Congressionally approved arms sales to Taiwan undercut the maintenance of effective cross-Strait deterrence, and even the possibility of the PRC unduly influencing the United States' Taiwan policy undermines the spirit of both the TRA and the Six Assurances.

Therefore, in advance of your planned visit to Beijing, we urge you to:

1. formally notify and proceed with the export of Congressionally approved arms cases to Taiwan;
2. affirm the Administration's commitment to the One-China Policy, as based on the TRA, Three Joint Communiqués, and Six Assurances; and
3. oppose any PRC attempt to dictate U.S. policy toward Taiwan.

Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait rest on the United States' steadfast adherence to the principles which it has upheld for decades.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Ro Khanna, Ranking Member, Select Committee on the CCP; Gregory Meeks, Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee; Jim Himes, Ranking Member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; Adam Smith, Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee

Rep. Ro Khanna on Taiwan (via an NPR Feb. 23, 2023 interview)

I think we should stick to President Carter's formulation of the one-China policy and the Taiwan Relation Act, and that is that the United States would provide assistance in the support of Taiwan if there was a violation by China of the peaceful status quo.

What that support looks like, I think, is purposely ambiguous. And partly, it's circumstantial. Everyone assumes that China would invade Taiwan in an amphibious landing. I actually don't think that would be the most logical step that China would take. A far more plausible and concerning step could be if they had a blockade stopping any energy supply coming in to Taiwan...

...It's bipartisan in the United States that we need Taiwan to develop a defense capability to deter any potential military incursion. People recognize that a war in the Taiwan Straits would be devastating. It also, by the way, transcends party lines in Taiwan. Whether it's the DPP, KMT or TPP, the three leading parties, they all believe that Taiwan needs to improve its defense. So this is a place I think we can make concrete progress.

.....
Rep. Ro Khanna represents California's 17th Congressional District. He is also ranking member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Cyber, Innovative Technologies and Information Systems.

Views from Taiwan



President Lai Ching-te

Responding to China's expansionism, gray zone warfare and maritime intrusions

Excerpts from remarks made June 25, 2026, to Taiwan's Whole-of-Society Defense Resilience Committee.

In recent years, China's gray-zone aggression, threats, and infiltration of neighboring countries such as Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines have caused unease among Indo-Pacific countries and the international community.

This is particularly evident in China's recent maritime operations in the East and South China Seas and areas around the Taiwan Strait, ostensibly for law enforcement, patrol, or surveying purposes. These are no longer simply routine technical operations. Rather, they are acts of expansion performed under the pretext of law enforcement. Such actions undermine the status quo of security, peace, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as the rules-based international order.

The joint statement issued by the leaders of the G7 last week clearly underscored the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific region based on the rule of law and reaffirmed their firm opposition to any unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East and South China Seas and across the Taiwan Strait by force or coercion.

I want to emphasize once again: These authoritarian expansionist actions clearly demonstrate that China is the one attempting to change the status quo... Taiwan's efforts to enhance its self-defense capabilities, maintain the status quo of peace and stability, and safeguard our free and democratic way of life are absolutely not acts of provocation.

Taiwan will respond to the G7's call and will engage in collective defense and burden-sharing. We will continue to work closely with like-minded countries, standing together to demonstrate the strength of deterrence and jointly safeguard peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region...



Taiwan's Presidential Office Building in Taipei, the seat of the nation's government and presidency.

In promoting whole-of-society defense resilience, we constantly emphasize that "the more prepared we are, the safer we will be." In today's tabletop exercise, we once again assessed our overall ability to respond to hybrid risks and threats through cross-ministerial and cross-disciplinary cooperation, discussion, and verification, thereby further enhancing Taiwan's security and defense resilience.



Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim

Taiwan's peace through strength initiative, and its essential contributions to world prosperity

Excerpts from "Interview with Jan Jekielek," June 23, 2026, in The Epoch Times.

We will not let the Communist Party of China define who we are... [or] stop us from doing what we need to do to protect our country, to defend Taiwan, to

defend our values, but also to really work with other partners internationally to assert... the shared interest in preserving the peace and stability of this region... in working together to support prosperity...

I think it's reasonable to expect countries to invest in their own defenses, to shoulder those responsibilities... And that's why President Lai has announced not only in our regular budget... but also we've presented a special budget or a supplementary budget that aims at reaching 5 percent of our GDP in defense spending by 2030...

Everything we're doing today in strengthening Taiwan is to prevent an invasion, to prevent that scenario from happening... We also share the belief that peace has to be sustained through strength—and that's from the painful lessons of history. And so, by preventing any kinetic scenario from happening, the peace of Taiwan and the security and stability of this region can be maintained, as well as the global prosperity that is ignited by the critical role that Taiwan plays in global technology supply chains...

We have a strong belief that democracy delivers. It's not just an ideal, but we're talking about a rules-based order, a rule of law, basic rights, and the freedom to innovate, the freedom to be creative, and that's what really fosters economic growth... The PRC continues to champion their form of socialism and communism, while in Taiwan, we stand with our belief that economic freedom, market economics, [and] the political freedoms that are so important to our society, are really what delivers to the needs of the people...



Deputy Minister Shen Yu-chung, Mainland Affairs Council (MAC)

Countering CCP's escalating legal, psychological warfare and transnational repression

Excerpts from remarks on March 13, 2026, to a symposium held by Taiwan's MAC.

The "Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress" adopted at this year's Two Sessions contains highly vague provisions and could serve as a legal basis for shifting "promoting unification" from a slogan to concrete enforcement, potentially imposing on the people of Taiwan an obligation to "promote unification." In the future, even remaining silent or not expressing a position on "unification" could be construed as a "failure to promote ethnic unity," and individuals could be labeled as targets for "opposing Taiwan independence..."

In 2024, the CCP introduced the "22 Judicial Guidelines on Imposing Criminal Punishment on Diehard Taiwan Independence Separatists," thereby institutionalizing its position of "opposing Taiwan independence" and "opposing external interference." Through measures such as publishing lists of "diehard Taiwan independence separatists" and their "accomplices," as well as establishing a tip-off mailbox for reporting "Taiwan independence," the CCP has threatened officials and legislators in Taiwan with "lifelong accountability," sought to create the false impression that it has jurisdiction over Taiwan, and generated a chilling effect among the public...

The intensity of transnational repression is likely to continue increasing, with targets extending beyond businesses, public officials, military personnel, and elected representatives to include even ordinary individuals... The government will respond prudently and will strengthen coordination and cooperation with the international community to jointly counter the CCP's acts of "transnational repression."

Securing the technologies of tomorrow for the Free World

US-Taiwan cooperation key to winning tech competition with China



By Iris Shaw

Beijing is determined to dominate the strategic technologies that will define the 21st century. Fortunately, Taiwan's economic partnership with the United States ensures they remain in the hands of the free world.

Semiconductors, artificial intelligence, smart defense systems and other advanced technologies are becoming increasingly foundational to the global economy. Whether they remain responsibly governed by open societies or manipulated by authoritarian control is a pivotal contest for the future character of world affairs.

The United States and Taiwan engaged in over \$1 trillion in trade in 2025, according to the Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs. This means Taiwan has become America's fourth-largest trading partner, a relationship that spans semiconductors, agriculture, energy, defense technology, and much else.

The two countries cooperated in writing the trade rules and bolstering the investment deals that made this possible. That scaffolding is what allows the secure movement of advanced technologies between open economies, independent of supply chains vulnerable to communist coercion.

The dynamism of today's semiconductor industry demonstrates the immense value of U.S.-Taiwan cooperation. Taiwan's chip industry consists not of one company but a web of specialized firms in design, testing, packaging and fabrication, a comprehensive ecosystem that the Hoover Institution's Kharis Templeman has called one of the most valuable economic partnerships the United States has anywhere in the world. That ecosystem is evolving rapidly.



Taiwan has made its choice clear: the technologies that shape our future must stay in free hands.

TSMC is ramping up production of advanced computer chips, including at its new campus in Arizona, to meet the rapidly growing demand by American entrepreneurs, businesses, research institutions and consumers, powering America's buildout of artificial intelligence. The company has invested \$165 billion in U.S. facilities, the largest foreign direct investment in American history, spread across new fabrication plants that are already creating jobs and training a new generation of homegrown engineers.

What makes this partnership strategically significant is not just its scale but its structure. Taiwan's government answers to its own voters in regular and free elections. This is why Taiwan consistently ranks as one of the best economies in the world for ease of doing business, according to the Heritage Foundation. In industries where long-term trust, enforceable contracts and transparent legal systems are essential, that distinction is foundational and indispensable.

Washington's actions reflect that understanding. The House China Select Committee's "Ten More for Taiwan" report in December called for finalizing a much-needed double-taxation relief agreement between our two countries and building coordinated capacity to counter Chinese economic coercion. That agreement, the United States-Taiwan Expedited Double-Tax Relief Act, passed the House by a vote 423 to 1, a margin of bipartisan consensus rarely achieved on almost any other

issue. Its enactment would meaningfully strengthen cross-border investment flows between our two economies, reinforcing the legal and financial infrastructure that underpins secure technological collaboration.

And make no mistake, Taiwan is not waiting on Washington to protect what both countries have built. In September, Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense published a national public safety guide covering air raid response, disinformation awareness and civil defense enrollment, issued under President Lai's directive.

The presidential committee is backed by the equivalent of \$5 billion in dedicated funding for civilian training and the protection of essential energy, infrastructure and healthcare systems, ensuring Taiwan can thrive, not just survive, during crises.

Taiwan prepares its people with the same discipline it brings to building one of the world's most formidable free markets. Deterrence and economic openness are not separate undertakings in Taiwan but key parts of a strategy to preserve freedom under pressure.

The same instinct toward building together is on display in the defense technology industry. Taiwan's drone exports have grown nearly twentyfold in a single year, and Taiwanese manufacturers have earned a place on the Pentagon's

approved supplier list at a moment when the free world is rightly wary of Chinese-made hardware. A drone supply chain that runs through Taiwan rather than Beijing is another asset for free world technological security.

Taiwan is also integrating artificial intelligence directly (AI) into its air and missile defenses, fielding battle-field management systems designed to shorten decision time under coordinated missile and drone attacks. These systems depend upon Taiwan's broader technological ecosystem. That same industrial base underpins the secure supply chains the United States and Taiwan are building together.

These achievements are made possible only because both governments keep choosing to strengthen cooperation: through trade agreements, tax policy, and defense procurement. Taiwan has shown — in chips, in capital and now in drones and AI-enabled defense — that it intends to proactively build this future with America.

Every dollar invested, every agreement ratified and every contract awarded is a choice about who writes the rules for the technologies that will shape the rest of this century. Taiwan has made its choice clear: the technologies that shape our future must stay in free hands.

Iris Shaw is the Director of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) Mission in the United States, where she leads the Party's outreach to the U.S. government, Congress and the greater policy community.

‘Strengthening the bonds of our partnership’

TECRO and TCCNA highlighted U.S.-Taiwan ties at Kennedy Center Celebration

By ChiuFen McDevitt

On June 12, 2026, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) and the Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce of North America (TCCNA) held a reception at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to celebrate the United States’ 250th anniversary.

The reception also marked the 30th anniversary of Taiwan’s direct presidential election as well as a new milestone in bilateral engagement with the launch of the first-ever direct flight between Taipei and Washington, D.C.

Ambassador Alexander Tah-ray Yui told the crowd of around 1,000 guests that these two anniversaries are precisely what the United States and Taiwan have in common — “strengthening the bonds of our partnership,” according to



Ambassador Alexander Tah-ray Yui addressed 1,000 people who gathered in June to celebrate the United States’ 250th anniversary and 30th anniversary of Taiwan’s first direct presidential election. Image courtesy of Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office.

a news report by Central News Agency. Amb. Yui also mentioned Taiwan as the fourth-largest trading partner with the United States and reaffirmed Taiwan’s democratic resolve against mainland China’s threats and commitment to increased defense spending to ensure peace and stability in

the Indo-Pacific region.

TCCNA President Dr. Eugenia Henry said the event celebrated the shared values and friendship between Taiwan and the United States, while recognizing the contributions of Taiwanese Americans and businesses in strengthening bilateral ties.

Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy said Alaska is the U.S. state closest to Taiwan. He recalled visiting Taiwan last year to advance U.S.-Taiwan cooperation on natural gas and noted that Taiwan and the United States share strong similarities in their systems of government, commitment to freedom and human rights, business models and semiconductor industries.

Gov. Dunleavy added that the democratic experiment launched by the United States 250 years ago continues to be practiced and upheld in Taiwan today. He cited a famous remark by Founding Father Benjamin Franklin following the Constitutional Convention of 1787, underscoring that democracy and freedom — whether in the United States or Taiwan — are long-term endeavors that require “the collective effort, vigilance, and commitment of all people to preserve and sustain.”

Among the guests were

American Institute in Taiwan Managing Director Ingrid Larson; Madeleine Bordallo, director of the Washington, D.C., Liaison Office of the Governor of Guam; Minister Chia-Ching Hsu of Taiwan’s Overseas Community Affairs Council; Johnson Hsiung, president of the World Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce; Jackson Yang, honorary president of TCCNA; and Kenneth Wu, honorary president of TCCNA.

The evening featured a photo exhibition of historic Taiwan-U.S. relations and various stands highlighting Taiwan-U.S. long-standing partnership in agriculture, technology and education. Taiwan’s major airlines also participated in this event, and the National Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology displayed Taiwan’s drone capabilities.

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ChiuFen McDevitt is a founding partner of the Taiwan Freedom Project.

Taiwanese Association of America: A grassroots bridge between Taiwan and US

By Minly Sung and Kuei-Ling Chen

When Taiwanese immigrants arrived in the United States in the mid-1900s, they left an island under martial law. Inspired by U.S. democratic ideals and civic traditions, they established the Taiwanese Association of America (TAA) to promote freedom, human rights and strong people-to-people ties between the two societies.

During Taiwan’s decades under martial law, early members were blacklisted from returning to their home country simply for joining TAA activities and connecting with fellow Taiwanese immigrants. Undeterred, they used U.S. constitutional protections to protest authoritarianism and advocate for the right of the



Taiwanese people to determine their own future.

Since its inception in 1970, TAA has become one of the oldest and largest grassroots networks for Taiwanese Americans, with more than 72 chapters and 10,000 members nationwide. TAA has three core missions: preserving Taiwanese cultural heritage, strengthening U.S. communities through service, and building lasting partnerships between the United States and Taiwan via citizen diplomacy



and public engagement.

As a bridge between the two societies, the TAA promotes mutual understanding through educational exchanges, public discussions and grassroots diplomacy. Local chapters have often curated events to celebrate this heritage, such as Taiwanese American Heritage Week, cultural festivals and Taiwan Day celebrations at Major League Baseball stadiums. These events spread awareness of Taiwan while driving community service through

domestic and international disaster relief efforts, educational forums, scholarship initiatives, youth leadership programs and charitable activities.

The association is also a persistent diplomatic advocate. Every May, members rally across the country to urge the inclusion of Taiwan in global public health bodies like the World Health Organization. In September, TAA communities launch “UN for Taiwan” and “Keep Taiwan Free” initiatives, pressing the case that 23 million Taiwanese citizens deserve a voice on the global stage.

In the halls of government, TAA regularly champions the bipartisan partnership between the United States and Taiwan. Members support the principles of the Taiwan Relations Act and broader stability in the Indo-Pacific. As Taiwan has become a global leader in semiconductors and advanced technology, TAA has expanded its outreach

to highlight Taiwan’s contributions to resilient supply chains, technological innovation and economic security for the United States and its allies.

Looking ahead, TAA sees an even greater role in the artificial intelligence (AI) era and is already working to empower the next generation of Taiwanese American leaders. Top areas of focus are technology, healthcare, education, AI and democratic resilience.

In 56 years, the TAA has grown from a Taiwanese community seeking freedom into a trusted association that enriches American society, supports Taiwan’s international participation and works together toward a more secure, prosperous, and innovative future.

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Minly Sung is president of the Taiwan America Association.

Kuei-Ling Chen is advisor to the Taiwan America Association.

Taiwan is the epicenter of the AI revolution

If China invades Taiwan, it could destabilize the technological foundation of the free world

By Jeffrey Scott Shapiro

Several months ago, while practicing law and journalism, I began studying artificial intelligence at Florida Atlantic University's Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. What I learned convinced me that the AI revolution may determine the balance of power in the 21st century.

America's AI revolution is being built with chips manufactured just 100 miles off the coast of communist China. Chinese President Xi Jinping understands this reality, which is a central reason he is determined to take control of Taiwan.

Taiwan is home to the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., the world's unrivaled leader in advanced microchip production.

TSMC was founded in 1987 as a joint venture between Taiwan's government and the Industrial Technology Research Institute, which launched the island's semiconductor development initiative in 1974. Today, TSMC produces roughly 90% of the world's most advanced chips — the sophisticated hardware required for cloud computing, fifth-generation warfare and cutting-edge smartphones.

Although China has made significant progress in manufacturing the basic semiconductors used in everyday appliances, it remains critically dependent on Taiwan for the high-end chips that drive the global AI revolution. Because China cannot yet replicate these chips domestically, Taiwan's manufacturing dominance has transformed from a commercial asset into a primary driver of global geopolitical tension.

American technology companies such as Nvidia, Apple and Advanced Micro Devices all depend on Taiwan's semiconductor ecosystem. This means Taiwan has become indispensable to the future of artificial intelligence and the global balance of technological power.

The United States still leads the world in many areas of AI software development and chip design. Yet it remains deeply dependent on Taiwan for advanced chip fabrication, high-volume semiconductor manufacturing and sophisticated packaging capabilities that cannot easily be replicated elsewhere. Washington has rightly attempted to reduce this dependence through the CHIPS Act and new manufacturing projects in places such as Arizona and Japan, but those efforts will take years to fully mature.

Mr. Xi clearly understands the strategic implications. Although China



ILLUSTRATION BY LINAS GARSYS

is racing to achieve self-sufficiency, it remains stalled by a lack of specialized equipment and proprietary techniques required for advanced packaging, the critical process of stacking and connecting chips that is now essential for high-performance AI. Control over advanced semiconductor and microchip production would provide Beijing with enormous leverage in the global race for artificial intelligence, a competition that will shape economic power, cyber capabilities, surveillance systems and military superiority for decades to come.

This is why Taiwan matters far beyond East Asia.

A Chinese invasion of Taiwan would not just threaten a democratic ally but could also trigger the largest technological and economic shock since World War II. Even if China could not fully absorb Taiwan's semiconductor industry intact, its dominance of the Taiwan Strait would likely disrupt the global supply chain for advanced chips that power AI data centers, American defense systems and more.

The world received a preview of semiconductor vulnerability during the COVID-era chip shortages, which temporarily disrupted automobile manufacturing and consumer electronics. A Chinese takeover of Taiwan would

trigger a far more devastating disruption. The consequences would ripple through financial markets, communications networks, military procurement and artificial intelligence research itself, potentially causing a severe slowdown in AI development across the free world.

Taiwan's importance is not limited to manufacturing alone. The island has spent years building one of the world's most advanced artificial intelligence and semiconductor ecosystems through research institutions, engineering programs and industrial partnerships designed to accelerate next-generation chip development. Taiwan increasingly views artificial intelligence not merely as an industry but also as a national strategic priority, aiming to transform the island into an era of "smart living," with "AI everywhere."

Those efforts are part of Taiwan's broader Ten AI Initiative, which aims to expand the use of artificial intelligence across the island's economy while positioning Taiwan as a global leader in advanced computing infrastructure.

All these factors... are why Beijing's ambitions toward Taipei are not merely territorial or ideological. They are also technological.

China has rapidly transformed its navy from a regional coastal defense force into the world's largest maritime fleet. Its construction of warships, artificial islands, large amphibious assault ships and helicopter carriers is a strategy to project naval power throughout the Pacific.

This message is unmistakable: Taiwan's fate is intended to mirror Hong Kong's. Control over the island could fundamentally alter the global technological balance of power.

In 1935, Gen. Billy Mitchell warned Congress that "the nation that controls the air will eventually control the world."... Artificial intelligence may prove even more transformative.

Semiconductors and advanced microchips are to the AI age what oil was to the industrial age, and Taiwan sits at the center of that equation.

The defense of Taiwan is no longer just about preserving stability in Asia. It is also increasingly tied to the preservation of Western technological leadership, economic security and the future balance of democratic power worldwide.

Jeffrey Scott Shapiro is a former Washington prosecutor and senior U.S. official who serves on the editorial board of *The Washington Times*. These are excerpts from his article published on May 20, 2026.

Why Taiwan matters to America and the world

Semiconductors, rare earth minerals key to world prosperity and democracy



By Orina Chang

America has long projected power through warships, alliances, economic statecraft and the strength of our ideals. But in the 21st century, America's continued leadership rests just as heavily upon access to technology — especially the world's most advanced computer chips — and the strategic resources that undergird them.

Beijing already holds enormous leverage over the supply chains of rare earth minerals, which are essential for the manufacture of the computing hardware that powers the information economy. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, China supplied 71% of U.S. imports of rare earth compounds and metals between 2021 and 2024 and 67% in 2025. Overall, China produced 270,000 of the world's 390,000 tons of rare earths supply last year. Beijing has shown a clear willingness to use rare earth minerals as geopolitical leverage, including the recent tightening of export controls against the United States, Japan and other countries.

What partly offsets China's rare earths advantage is America's technological counterweight: advanced semiconductors. And Taiwan is the fulcrum of that counterweight.

Taiwan holds roughly 92% of the world's most advanced semiconductor manufacturing capacity. TSMC alone controls more than two-thirds of global contract chip manufacturing. The American vulnerability is equally pronounced: U.S.-based firms capture about 50.4% of global chip revenue but only fabricate about 10% of global chip supply. American and Taiwanese firms cooperate closely to design and power much of the digital future.

If Taiwan fell into Beijing's hands, the CCP would monopolize both ends of the world supply of computing hardware: the



This would not be a normal recession. It would be a digital-age depression.

minerals that go into advanced systems and the chips that make them intelligent.

Washington would face profound strategic, national security and economic consequences. Taiwan is an irreplaceable chokepoint for advanced nodes, packaging, AI accelerators and the firmware support that makes high-end chips usable. If Beijing controlled that ecosystem, the United States would not merely face a supply shock. It would face a world in which China held veto power over the processors needed for artificial intelligence, cloud computing, advanced weapons, telecom networks and the next generation of industrial productivity.

Americans would feel pain across the board. Taiwan-made chips sit inside iPhones, laptops, cars, tractors, cell towers, data centers, medical devices and modern defense systems. Pacemakers, imaging machines, hospital monitors, F-35s, drones, radar systems and advanced communications all depend on sophisticated semiconductors. If Taiwan's chip ecosystem moved into China's orbit, America would face higher prices, thinner inventories, weaker hospital resilience and lower military readiness simultaneously.

Then comes the economic shock caused by the loss of the world's single most important manufacturing hub. One model estimates that severe disruption to Taiwan's semiconductor industry, due to a blockade or war, could slash global GDP by 9.6% in the first year. The United States alone

could face an estimated \$2.5 trillion loss to our economy. Europe would be hit in autos and industrial manufacturing; Japan in equipment and specialty chemicals; South Korea in memory and materials; and America across AI, cloud computing, consumer electronics, defense and health care. This would not be a normal recession. It would be a digital-age depression.

That is why Taiwan's domestic politics matter as much as its military defenses. China does not need to rely only on missiles, ships and aircraft. Beijing is testing a political route to control Taiwan. It is using Taiwan's democratic openness as a weapon against Taiwan itself.

Since the 2024 election, President Lai Ching-te's Democratic Progressive Party has governed without a legislative majority. Taiwan's Legislative Yuan is divided between forces that see the nation's future as tied to the United States and a worldwide alliance of democracies, and forces that favor a softer line toward Beijing. That division is not merely procedural. When opposition forces freeze defense spending, obstruct security cooperation or create legislative paralysis, they give Beijing exactly what it wants: a weaker Taiwan, a divided Taiwan and eventually a Taiwan easier to absorb.

China is exploiting that divide relentlessly. Taiwan's National Security Bureau has warned that Chinese cyberattacks averaged 2.8 million a day in 2025, while more than 10,000 suspicious accounts pushed over 1.5 million misleading messages designed to promote pro-China narratives and sow distrust in the United States. This is not ordinary political competition. It is interference by a totalitarian regime, the weaponization of democracy against itself.

The danger is clear. If Beijing-friendly forces gained decisive control of Taiwan's central institutions, China would not need an amphibious invasion to achieve many of its objectives. Taiwan could be handed over politically before it was ever conquered militarily. The result would be the same strategic disaster: China would control Taiwan's chips, weaken America's leverage over rare earths, fracture the First Island Chain and prove that aggression works.

If Taiwan's future is decided by Chinese coercion — whether through invasion, blockade, cyberwarfare or political capture — America would lose a strategic counterweight, the free world would lose a pillar of the modern economy and democracy would suffer one of its most consequential defeats.

Orina Chang is an entrepreneur, educator and investor. She is chair professor and associate dean of the School of Banking and Finance at National Sun Yat-sen University in Taiwan.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TCCNA

Reflections from my year as president of Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce of North America



By Eugenia Henry

As president of the Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce of North America (TCCNA), I have had a unique vantage point to observe how important Taiwan and its relationship with the United States are to the American people.

I have met with business leaders, elected officials, community members and young people across North America and led delegations to Washington, D.C., to discuss the importance of U.S.-Taiwan relations with members of Congress and government officials. I witnessed firsthand how Taiwan's story inspires respect and admiration far beyond its borders.

Taiwan matters not simply because of its economic success or technological achievements. Taiwan matters because it represents something much larger — a powerful example of what free people can accomplish through hard work, innovation, resilience,

freedom and democracy.

Beacon of democracy and robust civil society

Taiwan is one of Asia's most vibrant democracies and embraces values of compassion, openness, responsibility and international cooperation. Over the past several decades, Taiwan transformed itself from an authoritarian system into a thriving democracy characterized by free elections, independent judiciary, freedom of speech and a robust civil society.

In my frequent conversations with policymakers and business leaders, I have often seen genuine admiration for what Taiwan has achieved. Taiwan demonstrates that democracy is not limited by geography, culture or history. It proves that freedom and democratic governance can flourish and create opportunities for all citizens.

Taiwan also practices its values abroad. Whether through humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, public health cooperation or technological innovation, Taiwan consistently demonstrates its willingness to contribute to the global community.

Time and again, Taiwan has extended a helping hand beyond its borders, sharing resources, expertise and solutions during times of crisis.

Taiwan may be small in size, but it has consistently shown that it can make a meaningful impact on the world stage.

Pillar of economic stability and global technology powerhouse

Taiwan is among the world's leading trading economies and centers of innovation. It has earned a reputation as an essential and trusted partner for nations across the globe.

Taiwan has become one of the world's leading centers of technological excellence. Its economic strength is built upon a highly educated workforce, strong institutions, honest and transparent business practices, investment in its people and a culture that embraces innovation and entrepreneurship.

Many people do not realize how deeply their daily lives depend on Taiwan. The smartphones we carry, the computers we use, the vehicles we drive and the emerging artificial intelligence technologies that are transforming our world all rely on semiconductors produced in Taiwan.

The creativity and stability of Taiwan contribute directly to global prosperity and innovation. Any disruption affecting Taiwan would have significant consequences for international trade, technology production and supply chains. Taiwan's success therefore matters not only to Taiwanese people but to businesses, governments, and consumers worldwide.

A rich cultural heritage

Taiwan's importance extends far beyond economics and politics.

Taiwan's unique cultural identity has been shaped by Indigenous traditions, Chinese heritage, democratic values and global influences. This rich diversity has created a society that embraces openness, creativity and inclusion.

Like so many other Taiwanese Americans, I deeply appreciate the cultural traditions and values that Taiwan has given us. Taiwan's arts, cuisine, literature, music and cultural heritage enrich communities around the world and serve as bridges connecting people of different backgrounds. These cultural connections help strengthen mutual understanding and friendship

among nations.

Throughout my presidency, I met countless Taiwanese Americans who continue to support Taiwan while contributing to the success of their adopted communities across North America. Their stories reflect the same values that have shaped Taiwan's success: perseverance, education, innovation and service.

I am proud to have served alongside so many dedicated volunteers and community leaders who work tirelessly to ensure that Taiwan's voice is heard and appreciated.

Looking forward

I remain optimistic about Taiwan's future. Over the past year, I have witnessed tremendous goodwill toward Taiwan from government leaders, business communities and friends around the world. This support reflects a growing recognition that Taiwan's success contributes to global prosperity, security and democratic values.

Taiwan matters because its story is one of courage, resilience and hope, and because its people have shown what can be achieved when freedom and opportunity are protected.

And it matters because Taiwan's future is closely connected to the future of a world that values democracy, innovation, human dignity and mutual respect.

As Taiwanese Americans and global citizens, we each have a role to play in sharing Taiwan's story and supporting the principles it represents. By doing so, we honor the sacrifices of previous generations and help build a brighter future for those who will follow.

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Eugenia Henry, Ph.D., is president of the Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce of North America (TCCNA), 38th term.

Taiwan's National Health Insurance: A model for the world



By Bay-Mao "Bill" Wu, Pharm.D.

I have been visiting Taiwan annually as an adjunct clinical professor in pharmacy schools and teaching hospitals for over 20 years; I have used Taiwan's National Health Insurance (NHI) and witnessed the way this system functions.

The golden rule in health care systems is "one size doesn't fit all," but maybe we can learn from each other. Let me share a few of my observations.

While discussing the possibility of having national health insurance, many Americans worry about limited access to specialists, long wait times for non-emergency medical procedures and a limit on certain services, such as dental and vision coverage.

Taiwan's NHI is a mandatory, single-payer social insurance plan, instituted in 1995, that offers comprehensive coverage to 99.9% of citizens and legal foreign residents. This program is administered by the National Health Insurance Administration.

The NHI system is globally recognized for its exceptional affordability, high efficiency and generally few and short wait lists.

The following are core features of Taiwan's NHI:

1. Comprehensive coverage: This includes inpatient and outpatient care, Western pharmaceuticals, traditional Chinese medicine, dental care, maternity care and home-based medical services. Generally speaking, you can just walk into your neighborhood clinic without an appointment to see a physician. You can visit any primary clinic, specialist or major hospital without needing a referral from a general practitioner.
2. Single-payer model: The NHI system allows the government to



Keelung Chang Gung Memorial Hospital in Keelung City, Taiwan, is part of Taiwan's healthcare system, which provides comprehensive health insurance coverage to nearly all citizens and legal residents.

radically simplify billing, eliminate administrative waste and keep overall spending to roughly 6% to 7% of Taiwan's GDP. In 2024, the United States spent 17% of our GDP on our hybrid health care system, while the United Kingdom spent 11% of its GDP for their single-payer-dominant system, according to the Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker.

3. Ultra-low out-of-pocket costs: The cost of standard clinic visits are typically between NT\$150 to NT\$360 (=USD \$5-\$10).
4. Strong initial treatment: The health-care system of Taiwan is competent regarding actual surgery and treatment procedures of complicated or major illness; however, post-op care and rehab are not seen to be as important as the initial treatments.

Some downsides with NHI:

1. High doctor volume: The system is easily accessible, and physicians will normally see 50 or more patients a day. It's not uncommon for some doctors to see 100 or more patients a day, and many doctors skip lunch breaks just to finish up their work. Doctors' fees are generally low, so many doctors tend to work extra to bump up the payments. Taiwanese patients average about 15 medical visits per year, and this can lead to physician fatigue and high patient-to-staff ratios.
2. Dispensing vs. educating: The ease of access leads to polypharmacy (the use of multiple medications), which strains the system's budget. I have witnessed this scenario in major teaching hospitals and small clinics. Pharmacists have a "mission impossible" job to do in Taiwan. The major problem is that pharmacists spend more than 90% of their time dispensing medications rather than educating patients or communicating with the prescribers.
3. Rare cases may require prior authorization: The NHI covers most common cases brilliantly; however, expensive treatments, novel pharmaceuticals or rare conditions may experience strict prerequisites and limitations. It's not an easy job for a physician to explain all the guidelines and requirements to the patients, and this creates much confusion among patients.
4. Use of supplementary insurance is common: NHI does not cover everything. To offset cost-sharing for uncovered medications, medical supplies or access to private hospital rooms, approximately 70% of the population chooses to purchase supplementary commercial health insurance.
5. Nursing shortage: There is a considerable shortage of nurses across Taiwan's medical institutions. One consequence is that dedicated

bedside assistance is hard to come by. You have to either ask your family member or hire somebody from outside to help. Nurses are fully occupied with primary medical needs.

6. Imbalanced patient wait lists: With low co-pays and the belief that big hospitals can provide better service, almost all the teaching hospitals have long wait lists of patients. With the new policies of higher co-pays and more patient education, this situation should improve gradually. More patients have been resorting to their primary care physicians lately.

Today's NHI system persistently enjoys very high popular satisfaction rates — above 90% since 2020 — according to an article by Dr. Chunhuei Chi of Oregon State University in the 2024 *Journal of the Formosan Medical Association*.

In Taiwan people are generally proud of the NHI system. Prior to its installment, many patients were losing their life savings due to exorbitant medical expenses. It's a model worth studying for solutions elsewhere, an example of the efficiency, diligence, and organizational excellence for which Taiwan is renowned.

Dr. Bay-Mao "Bill" Wu is a pharmacist and chairman of the Advisory Board of the North America Taiwanese Professors' Association.

4 reasons why Taiwan's survival is key to global flourishing



By Anna Wang

The world today is increasingly volatile, as fires rage across hotspots involving the United States, Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Russia, Ukraine and elsewhere. Meanwhile, a war without smoke has been waged for decades in Taiwan, beneath a veneer of tranquility.

In light of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) intense maneuverings to infiltrate, threaten and annex Taiwan, it is necessary to explain why the island nation is even more important than the aforementioned.

Taiwan is not merely a question of geopolitics or of cross-strait relations. Taiwan's survival concerns the security and stability of the liberal international order itself. It is key to the strategic ambitions of the CCP, whose evil is historically unrivaled. Indeed, the Taiwan question concerns the very future of human civilization.

First, Taiwan sustains the Republic of China (ROC), which was founded in 1912, among the first republics in Asia. Despite the trials and tribulations of the Sino-Japanese War, World War II, the Chinese Civil War and relocation to Taiwan, there was never a discontinuity in the constitutional system, state institutions or the legal basis of the ROC. With the achievement of a full transition to democracy, direct elections, peaceful changes of ruling parties and an independent judiciary, the ROC's legitimacy derives from historical inheritance and the authority of the people.

By stark contrast, the CCP was established as an offspring of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) with the direct support of the Communist International (Comintern), thereby installed as a genocidal Marxist-Leninist regime. Throughout the Chinese Civil War, the CCP relied upon violence to establish a one-party dictatorship. The regime



A view of Taipei 101 from Zhongshan Park in Taipei, Taiwan.

has no connection to Chinese history or traditional culture. It is illegitimate.

Second, Taiwan demonstrates that ethnically Chinese people are completely capable of achieving democracy. The CCP has long claimed that "Chinese people are not suited to democracy" and that "democracy would lead to chaos." Yet Taiwan's development shatters such arguments.

Taiwan and Mainland China share a common cultural heritage, language and ancestral origins. Yet through decades of reform, Taiwan has achieved the full transition from an authoritarian system to constitutional democracy. Taiwan demonstrates the universality of democracy — that freedom, human rights and the rule of law can take root and grow in an ethnically Chinese society without any contradiction to Chinese culture.

For 1.4 billion Chinese people, Taiwan is not merely an island, it is a mirror. It is a beacon, which tells them dictatorship is not their only fate. Chinese society too can establish a free and modern country with the rule of law,

which respects human rights. The continuing survival of Taiwan's democracy is of enormous significance for China's future liberalization and democratization, as an inspiration and role model.

At the same time, Taiwanese society provides much assistance for those pursuing freedom and democracy for China. Those keeping watch across the Taiwan Strait embody the sense of responsibility and sympathy that are implanted by free societies. We are abounding with gratitude for them.

Third, Taiwan has irreplaceable geopolitical value. Situated at the center of the First Island Chain, connecting Northeast and Southeast Asia, Taiwan is a primary strategic hub for the Western Pacific. The Taiwan Strait is not only one of the busiest aviation corridors in the world, it is vital to the energy and trade security of Japan, South Korea and the entire region. Were Taiwan to be conquered by an expansionist totalitarian regime, the First Island Chain would be breached. The security of the Indo-Pacific and of the liberal international

order itself would fall under attack.

Taiwan leads the world in semiconductors, computing, artificial intelligence, shipping and many other sectors. TSMC, NVIDIA and Jensen Huang, etc., are making especially significant contributions. Taiwan is not only a major force for global technological innovation, it has become a role model for the successful implementation of a free market, the rule of law and an open society. Taiwan exemplifies the creativity and competition which freedom unleashes.

For 1.4 billion Chinese people, Taiwan is ... a beacon, which tells them dictatorship is not their only fate.

Fourth, Taiwan is an eternal beacon. I have visited Taiwan and am deeply impressed by how liberty and order are already commonplace across Taiwanese society. People can openly express differing political views without fear or repression. Many Mainland Chinese yearn deeply for the day when they too might enjoy such freedoms and normality.

As a long-time student of Chinese history, I have often reflected that nearly all of the lands which historically comprised the Qing Empire have been conquered, subjugated or ruled by communist regimes. Taiwan is the last holdout. It thus preserves great value for the consideration of a different direction of development for China.

Today, as Hong Kong's freedoms vanish rapidly and Mainland China's civil society continues to wither, Taiwan's existence appears more precious than ever. Taiwan must not become the next Hong Kong. Protecting Taiwan's freedom and security is the shared responsibility of all those who cherish democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Lastly, to defend Taiwan is to keep aflame the hopes of Chinese democracy and to maintain the peace, prosperity and stability of the world.

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Anna Ruiqin Wang is the founder and proprietor of Shining Light Media and the website, www.ipkmedia.com. She was a professor of CCP history at Qinghai Nationalities University and became a Member of the Political Consultative Conference of Qinghai Province. Since immigrating to the United States in 2018, she has dedicated herself to promoting freedom, human rights, religious liberty and democratic values.

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Communist China's threats to Americans: Transnational repression and state-level responses



By Rep. Christopher H. Smith

The following are excerpts of Congressional-Executive Commission on China Co-Chair Smith's opening statement at the June 4, 2026, CECC hearing on "The PRC's Threats to Americans: Transnational Repression and State-Level Responses."

Before we begin, I want to mark a solemn anniversary. Today marks the 37th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

Thirty-seven years ago, millions of Chinese citizens peacefully asked for political reform, democratic openness, and basic human dignity. Their hope was met with tanks.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) unleashed the People's Liberation Army on peaceful demonstrators. Mothers lost sons. Fathers lost daughters. And China lost an idealistic generation to the violence of June 4, 1989.

There has been no full accounting of those killed, imprisoned or disappeared. The Party still tries to erase a massacre the world must never forget.

But Tiananmen cannot be erased. The enduring image of that day is the Tank Man—the solitary figure standing before a column of tanks. His courage reminds us that the desire for freedom is not Western, not foreign and not imposed from outside. It is universal.

As I have said before, a choice has to be made by us all: you either stand with the Tank Man, or you stand with the tank. There is no middle ground.

And there is no middle ground in the subject before us today.

Tiananmen is not a detour from this hearing. It is the key to understanding it. The same Party that tried to crush truth at home now tries to chase truth abroad.

The tactics have changed. The technology has changed. The reach has expanded. But the purpose is the same: to make people afraid to speak the truth



AP PHOTO

FILE - In this June 5, 1989, file photo, a Chinese man stands alone to block a line of tanks heading east on Beijing's Changan Blvd. in Tiananmen Square. An online snafu involving China's most popular e-commerce livestreamer and a cake decorated to look like a tank, referencing the iconic Tank Man photo taken during the 1989 student uprising, has raised questions among some Chinese over the violent crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989. (AP Photo/Jeff Widener, File)

— by almost any means necessary.

Inside China, the CCP uses surveillance, censorship, prison, torture, forced

the United States.

It is outrageous and unacceptable and must be stopped.

We will defend and spread the rights Beijing fears most: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and the right to tell the truth without fear.

disappearance and fear to maintain power. But what happens in China no longer stays in China. The Party wants to control what is said about China here and control who says it.

The CECC has warned about the CCP's long arm for years. Long before "transnational repression" became common phrase, I held a dozen or so hearings in this Commission documenting and exposing a consistent pattern of global abuses — starting with Confucius Institutes in 2014.

Over time, tactics have become more digital and more ruthless: detaining family members in China, doxxing, spyware, deepfakes, Hong Kong bounties and illegal police stations right here in

Transnational repression is not the only threat Americans face. But it is part of a broader, interconnected CCP strategy.

We see that strategy in scam networks stealing from U.S. citizens, fentanyl poisoning our cities, [People's Republic of China] PRC-linked land purchases near military installations, efforts to corrupt politicians and elections, steal private personnel and biometric data, and intellectual-property theft from businesses and universities.

These may look like separate problems. But they share a common purpose: exploit our openness, gather leverage, weaken our institutions, spread propaganda and make Americans pay a price

for standing up to Beijing.

Transnational repression is the most personal form of that strategy. It brings the pressure campaign to the doorstep of the student, journalist, dissident, artist and family member.

That is why state and local responses matter. A victim may first call local police. A student may go to a university official. A state attorney general may see the pattern. A state legislator may realize existing law does not fit the threat.

So the questions are practical: do local officers recognize this threat, do universities know how to protect students, do states have the tools they need, and does the federal government have a real strategy?

That is why I am proud to work with Chairman Sullivan, Senator Merkley, and Representative McGovern on the Transnational Repression Policy Act. This bipartisan, bicameral legislation would define the abuse, improve coordination, train officials, support targeted communities and hold perpetrators accountable. Because victims need more than sympathy. They need protection and a place to turn.

But let me make one point clear. A regime that fears a student's question, a refugee's protest, an artist's statue or the simple memory of Tiananmen is not a strong and confident superpower. It is afraid.

And fear in the hands of a dictatorship is dangerous. It becomes coercion. It becomes censorship. It becomes repression that crosses borders and reaches into our communities.

So our answer must be unmistakable. If the CCP threatens people here, there must be investigations and prosecutions. If it reaches across our borders to spread fear, there must be sanctions. If it takes family members hostage to silence a critic, we will demand their release and expose the cruelty of that tactic. And if it tries to censor a free people, we will defend and spread the rights Beijing fears most: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and the right to tell the truth without fear.

Because in the United States of America, unlike in China, no one needs the Party's permission to speak, to worship, to protest, to remember, or to be free.

That is why this hearing matters.

.....
Rep. Christopher H. Smith, New Jersey Republican, is chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Africa, co-chairman of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission as well as co-chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

Ten China falsehoods exposed by the Trump-Xi summit

Beijing's aggression reflects communist insecurity, not strength

By Miles Yu

The May 2026 Trump-Xi summit revealed a dangerous temptation in American foreign policy: the desire to substitute comforting illusions for strategic clarity.

But illusions do not preserve peace. They invite aggression. The free world must reject Beijing's false narratives and recognize the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for what it is: an authoritarian regime fundamentally hostile to liberty, transparency, democratic civilization and America and all that we represent....

1. The myth of the "Thucydides Trap"

The Beijing summit revived the tired mythology of the "Thucydides Trap," the claim that conflict between the United States and China is inevitable because a rising China is displacing a declining America. This theory is not only intellectually bankrupt, but also historically erroneous, because the rising power was defeated in the Peloponnesian war that Thucydides masterfully documented.

Xi Jinping himself is trapped ... by Marxist-Leninist dogma, which insists capitalism is collapsing and communist victory triumphantly inexorable...

America remains the world's leading military, technological and financial power; the global hub of innovation and inspiration; and the only superpower capable of shaping global security, trade and alliance environments.

China, meanwhile, faces demographic collapse, economic stagnation, mass unemployment, popular disenchantment and elite political instability. More importantly, the real divide is not "China versus America" but communist China versus the entire free world.

2. Taiwan is not the core issue

Beijing insists that Taiwan is "the most important issue" in U.S.-China relations. This is false. The central issue is the irreconcilable conflict between the CCP's authoritarian ideology and the democratic principles of the free world. Taiwan merely exposes and amplifies that contradiction...

3. Taiwan is already independent

Beijing falsely claims that "Taiwan going independent" is provoking instability across the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan is already independent in every meaningful sense: It has its own government, military, constitution, elections, currency and borders. The Republic of



U.S. President Donald Trump, right, speaks with Chinese President Xi Jinping while leaving after a visit to the Zhongnanhai Garden in Beijing, Friday, May 15, 2026. (Evan Vucci/Pool Photo via AP)

China on Taiwan has never been governed by the People's Republic of China for a single day...

4. Taiwan does not belong to communist China

The summit repeated the falsehood that Taiwan "belongs to China." History, law, and political reality say otherwise.

Beijing's obsession with Taiwan is not about territorial integrity but revolutionary ideology... an expansionist ideological compulsion... Beijing threatens Japan in the East China Sea, intimidates the Philippines in the South China Sea, pressures India along the Himalayas, menaces Vietnam, and bullies virtually every neighboring state. Taiwan is not the end goal; it is the opening objective.

5. Xi Jinping is not a master strategist

Many summit observers portrayed Mr. Xi as a visionary statesman shaping a new world order of peace and stability. In reality, he is increasingly weak both domestically and internationally.

Under his rule, China's economy is deteriorating under massive debt,

collapsing consumer confidence, and youth unemployment. Political purges inside the Politburo and the People's Liberation Army reveal deep instability within the regime... China's dependence on Western export markets and imported energy also leaves the regime strategically vulnerable. Beijing's military setbacks and the poor reputation of Chinese weapons systems abroad have further damaged CCP prestige.

6. China is not truly open for business

The summit promoted the illusion that China remains open to foreign business... China's anti-espionage laws, forced technology transfers, arbitrary regulations, data restrictions and political crackdowns have made the country deeply unattractive for investment.

The CCP demands market access abroad while imposing Orwellian controls at home. Decoupling is no longer theoretical but a fast-developing reality.

7. Communist China is not peace-loving

Beijing continues to market itself as

a "peace-loving nation." History says otherwise. Communist China has consistently relied on coercion, intimidation and aggression...

Today, China conducts near-daily military intimidation against Taiwan while threatening neighboring states. A regime that openly prepares for war while threatening democratic nations cannot credibly claim to be a force for peace.

8. "Win-win cooperation" is a dangerous illusion

Summit advocates claimed that U.S.-China cooperation can succeed without addressing democracy, human rights, political repression or China's predatory economic model. This fantasy ignores the nature of the CCP system itself...

[and] there can be no genuine stability while the CCP continues genocide against Uyghurs, dismantles Hong Kong freedoms, weaponizes trade, steals intellectual property and suppresses basic liberties...

9. "Mutual respect" is Beijing's propaganda trap

Beijing repeatedly insists the root problem in bilateral relations is that America "does not respect China." This slogan is deliberately manipulative.

The U.S. respects the Chinese people and Chinese civilization. What it refuses to respect is the CCP's demand for deference and immunity from criticism... Respect cannot mean surrendering truth or abandoning democratic values.

10. The CCP does not represent China

Perhaps the biggest falsehood of all is the claim that the CCP represents China and the Chinese people. It does not. The CCP is a Leninist ruling apparatus of European origin that maintains power through censorship, surveillance, coercion and fear.

Chinese civilization is thousands of years old; the CCP has ruled for less than eight decades. Millions of Chinese citizens themselves seek freedom, dignity and opportunity outside party control. To criticize the CCP is not to attack China. On the contrary, separating China from the CCP is essential to understanding both.

Miles Yu is the director of the China Center at the Hudson Institute. His "Red Horizon" column appears every other Tuesday in *The Washington Times*. He can be reached at mmilesyu@gmail.com. These excerpts are from an article first published on May 25, 2026.

Shifting loyalties in Taiwan's KMT: A cause for concern



By Bo Tedards

The Taiwanese have always been among the most warmly pro-American people in the world, as most visitors can roundly attest. Within Taiwan's political discourse, there historically has never been a substantial constituency of voters opposing America in general. Yet this has begun to change within the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), as it aligns itself with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), its former mortal enemy. This metamorphosis is a cause of concern for Taiwanese and Americans alike.

In recent decades, with the end of the Cold War, democratization and rise of Chinese influence, the KMT has shifted away from its historic friendship with the United States. In response to serious electoral competition, which resulted in its first loss of power in 2000, elements of the KMT have increasingly sought assistance and patronage from none other than the CCP.

The CCP has exploited Taiwan's new openness to facilitate this transformation. It has mounted an intensive and sustained influence campaign to foster an anti-American faction within the KMT, while members of the more pro-American camp have continued to travel regularly to reassure their "old friends" in Washington. This has generated increasingly serious internal wrangling within the party about how to balance relations with China and the US.

This year, we can finally say that the party's leadership is fully in the hands of the anti-American, pro-CCP faction. Chairwoman Cheng Li-wun's visit to China, and in particular her meeting with CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping, should be seen as a moment of clarity.

Cheng's speech in Beijing was notable for being so thoroughly in lock-step with Xi's. Indeed, her entire text



The CCP has exploited Taiwan's new openness to facilitate this transformation. It has mounted an intensive and sustained influence campaign...

could have been delivered by a CCP spokesperson. Cheng upheld not only the so-called "92 Consensus" but also opposition to Taiwanese independence. She used one of Xi's favorite slogans — the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" — as a joint project of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, even though a 2022 CCP "white paper" stipulates that "rejuvenation" must include unification of Taiwan.

Regarding the US, she added this alarming statement: "Hopefully, through the persistent efforts of our two parties, the Taiwan Strait will no longer be a geopolitical flashpoint and will never be a chessboard for interference by external forces." Let's unpack that. A "chessboard" is obviously a binary frame, with China on one side and the United States on the other. All other countries are merely pawns employed by the two main players. Thus, "external forces" can only be understood as referring to the United States.

"Interference," in CCP-speak, includes arms sales to Taiwan, freedom of navigation operations, and any form of military training. It also includes any statement of support for Taiwan in the diplomatic sphere, the Taiwan Relations Act itself, and any acknowledgement that peace and stability in the Strait are a matter of international concern.

With this statement, then, Cheng clearly set forth her opposition to the main thrust of U.S. policy in Asia.

Meanwhile, the KMT has repeatedly wielded its narrow plurality in Taiwan's Legislative Yuan to block critical American priorities, especially on defense. After Taiwan's government spent over a year working together with the Trump administration to craft an historic increase in defense spending and investments, the KMT stalled it on procedural grounds. Chairwoman Cheng notably expressed support for a KMT member who said she hoped the final budget would be "zero."

After intense pressure from the Trump administration and bipartisan members of Congress, a slimmed-down budget was eventually approved. It was notable that the final compromise bill was not sponsored by the KMT but rather by its junior partner. The KMT caucus never fully supported even the reduced defense package; they merely

grudgingly ceased their obstruction.

Cheng attempted to address the increasing alarm among American observers about her party's growing alignment with Beijing during her recent visit to the United States, but her efforts fell flat. It didn't help that, in her marquee speech, she dismissed the very concept of the First Island Chain — a key American strategic priority — as "Cold War thinking."

Fortunately, the Taiwanese voters will in due course have their chance to render a verdict on these views and the overall direction Cheng is taking the KMT. For its part, the Democratic Progressive Party continues to put its faith ultimately in the wisdom of the voters. President Lai Ching-te has continuously appealed for unity in the face of the CCP's attempts to subvert Taiwan's democracy. All free countries must hope that Taiwan's democratic institutions will be able to withstand this pressure.

In the meantime, until the KMT presents concrete evidence of a change in direction, the United States needs to set aside its historical sympathy for the party and regard it as a hostile actor, inimical to US interests.

Bo Tedards is an advisor to the Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the United States.

Taiwan deserves freedom from Beijing's revisionist history

Island's democratic future belongs to its people

By Gerrit van der Wees

In the run-up to the meeting this [May] in Beijing between Presidents Trump and Xi Jinping, the Chinese side has been increasing the volume of its message that Taiwan has “always belonged to China.”

In the view of the People's Republic of China, Taiwan's “return” is an integral part of the postwar international order.

Never mind that China, under Mr. Xi, has been trying to undermine the liberal postwar international order by setting up alternative organizations and schemes detrimental to freedom and democracy. China's own repression of Tibet, East Turkestan and Hong Kong is a vivid example.

Yet the “return to China” is the biggest misnomer. Taiwan has never been part of the PRC. From 1895 to 1945, the island was a Japanese colony. Many in Taiwan view the Japanese period as benign and “strict but fair,” certainly in comparison with the corrupt and repressive Chinese Nationalist rule of Chiang Kai-shek.

Chiang imposed martial law on the island until 1987, after which the Taiwanese gained the freedom and democracy they enjoy today.

Yes, before the Japanese period, Taiwan was very briefly a “province of China,” but that lasted only eight years — an inconvenient truth for Beijing today.

Before that time, as I write in “Taiwan: The facts of history versus Beijing's myths” for the Council on Geostrategy, “From 1683 until 1887, the island was formally administered as part of the province of Fukien, but in reality it was a wild and open frontier. More than 100 armed revolts took place during that period, prompting the observation that there was ‘an uprising every three years and a revolution every five years.’ The inhabitants viewed the Qing Dynasty as very much a

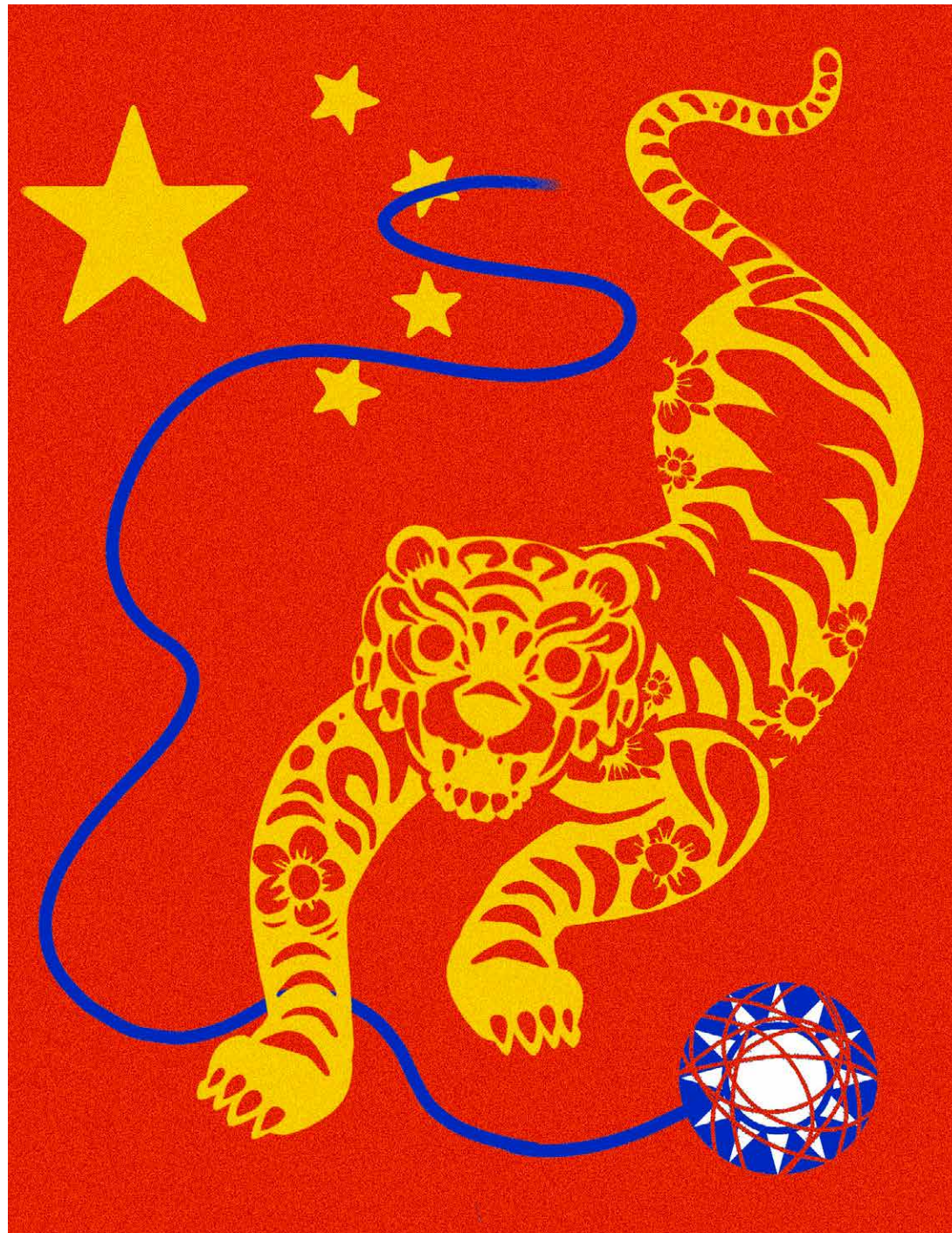


ILLUSTRATION BY LINAS GARSYS

foreign colonial regime and in no way saw themselves as ‘part of China.’”

During roughly the same period, Britain ruled India as a colony. Does one therefore argue that India “should be returned to Britain”? Of course not.

Yet from before 1683, there is even more evidence that Mr. Xi Jinping's claim that “Taiwan has always been part of China since ancient times,” often adding that this has been the case

since the Ming and Qing dynasties, does not hold water.

“Before 1624, Taiwan was inhabited by an indigenous population of headhunting Malay-Austronesians, who ferociously fought each other, but also kept outsiders at bay,” I write. “Occasionally a Chinese expedition passed by the island, such as during the Sui Dynasty (605 and 607 C.E.), but there was no official Chinese presence.”

“When the Dutch [East India Co.] arrived in Anping

(present-day Tainan) in 1624 to establish a trading post, they found no evidence of any Chinese officialdom in Taiwan, let alone any administrative control. It was thus certainly not part of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).”

In 1623, emissaries of Tianqi, then the Ming Dynasty emperor, even told the Dutch (who were trying to take Macao from the Portuguese as they sought a port through which to trade with China) to go “beyond

our territory.” They did not object when the Dutch went to Formosa, where they built Fort Zeelandia and established administrative control as part of the Dutch East Indies Co., which lasted until 1662. It certainly was not “part of China” during those days.

In 1662, Dutch rule ended when Cheng Ch'eng-kung, Ming Dynasty adherent and warlord, was driven from the mainland by the advancing Manchu armies, took refuge on the island and established the short-lived independent Kingdom of Tungning. Yet the Ming Dynasty itself was long gone by then, and the Cheng family's rule ended in 1683, when Koxinga's grandson was defeated by the Manchu navy at the Battle of the Pescadores.

In 1683, the new Manchu emperor was initially not interested in the island at all. His main goal was to defeat the last remnants of the Ming Dynasty. Emperor Kangxi even stated: “Taiwan is outside our empire and of no great consequence.” He offered to let the Dutch buy it back.

There is thus no historical basis for the Chinese claims to Taiwan.

The main reason the U.S. and other friendly countries are pushing back strongly against Mr. Xi's claims is that the Taiwanese fought hard to achieve democracy. Under the United Nations Charter, they have the right to determine their own future.

The only truly peaceful resolution will be achieved if China, the U.S. and other countries accept Taiwan as a fully free, equal and democratic member of the international community.

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 • Gerrit van der Wees is a former Dutch diplomat who teaches the history of Taiwan and U.S. relations with East Asia at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. This article first appeared in *The Washington Times* on May 11, 2026.

PRC's devious 'cognitive warfare': Promote China rule while undermining Taiwan



By Piero A. Tozzi

Late last March, the intelligence community's Annual Threat Assessment startled observers of Taiwan Strait tensions by declaring that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is not planning to invade Taiwan in 2027 and has no "fixed timeline" for annexing the self-governing democracy.

This apparent backtracking from the "Davidson Window" — Admiral Philip Davidson's assessment that the PRC would be capable of invading Taiwan by 2021 — should not cause complacency, however.

The PRC has long been waging cognitive war, kindling skepticism of American commitment to Taiwan, using social media influencers to create societal division and promoting the inevitability of China's rise and Taiwan's annexation.

Prof. Kerry Gershaneck, a visiting scholar at Taiwan's National Cheng Chi University, states that cognitive warfare encompasses a "systematic strategic attack on target populations to achieve whole-of-society mind superiority" aimed at achieving Chinese Communist Party (CCP) objectives "during both peacetime and combat operations."

Sun Tzu's Art of War states "To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill," and cognitive warfare is consistent with a preference for winning without fighting.

That preference needs to be understood, however, in the context of CCP grand strategy to supplant American global leadership, sometimes called the 100-year marathon. Nor does such preference exclude military action. Cognitive warfare can thus be understood as a "softening up" of the target should an opportunity for decisive action present itself.

Kinetic warfare — especially a maritime invasion of Taiwan — nonetheless



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The PRC has long been waging cognitive war... promoting the inevitability of China's rise and Taiwan's annexation.

Emphasizing asymmetric tactics, everything becomes a battlefield, including the cognitive domain.

What then can the United States and Taiwan do to counter an offensive designed to conquer the mind?

Beyond raising awareness of the CCP's objectives and countering propaganda narratives with better and more accurate information — something Taiwan does well without censorship — the best defense is a good offense, targeting CCP vulnerabilities by engaging in truth-based counter-narrative warfare.

This includes exposing Party elites' corruption (including members of Xi Jinping's family, who squirrel away assets in the West) and distinguishing between the CCP and the Chinese people.

Other fruitful topics are:

- How the CCP inflicted calamities upon China's populace from the Great Leap Forward to the Great COVID die-off
- Contrasting Taiwan's democracy with mainland repression, as an example of "what might have been" had the Communists not won the civil war
- Spelling out the blood cost of war over the Taiwan Strait to the Chinese people, especially given American technological superiority recently demonstrated in Venezuela and Iran
- Targeting the fears of CCP members and PLA officers of purging by an increasingly paranoid Xi Jinping
- Questioning the legitimacy of CCP rule based on longstanding Confucian norms, as former premier Li Keqiang did before his untimely death
- Messaging directly to the Chinese people in languages like Tibetan and "dialects" such as Cantonese, which Beijing suppresses in favor of Mandarin.

But first one must overcome the willful blindness of business and political elites in the United States and Taiwan that continue to engage with Communist China as if it were a normal nation, not one that targets Taiwan first and ultimately American global leadership.

Only then can one begin a true counteroffensive for the Chinese mind.

Piero A. Tozzi is senior director of China policy at the America First Policy Institute.

contains risks that may restrain the CCP.

The last major conflict involving the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was a short-duration, casualty-intensive 1979 ground invasion of Vietnam — the same year that the draconian one-child policy was formally decreed. A maritime invasion — where drone swarms darken skies and plow below the sea — would likely be exponentially higher. Given estimates that 70% to 80% of PLA soldiers are single male children, a full-on invasion of Taiwan would extinguish entire family lineages.

While the CCP does not care about human life — including PLA lives — it does care about regime stability, and such extinguishment threatens large-scale domestic unrest.

When coupled with concerns about the PLA's own capabilities, as evidenced by compromised rockets attributable to upper echelon corruption and American military prowess demonstrated in Venezuela and Iran, waging non-kinetic war in the cognitive domain entails far less risk with potentially outsized rewards.

In 2003, the PRC's Central Military Commission formally incorporated a "Three Warfares" strategy comprised of public opinion warfare, psychological warfare and legal warfare as part of military doctrine.

Each of these three prongs have been applied toward Taiwan: propaganda-spouting social media influencers shape narratives about inevitable CCP victory, morale-eroding narratives promote skepticism about American commitment to Taiwan, and lawfare claims distort United Nations General Assembly 2758, which granted the UN China seat to the PRC but did not acquiesce to claims that Taiwan is part of China nor address sovereignty.

While Taiwan is the immediate target — as anchor of the first island chain restricting China's navy from Pacific access should there ever be a shooting war — CCP grand strategy ultimately necessitates the defeat of America.

How to overcome American power is set forth in a 1999 book, *Unrestricted Warfare*, written by two PLA colonels.



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Is Beijing winning the Taiwan narrative war?

U.S. failure to stand up to China could be disastrous

By Stan Kwiatkowski

The Chinese Communist Party recently achieved a series of propaganda and narrative victories in its relations with Taiwan, the United States and the rest of the free world.

In April, a Taiwanese opposition leader flew to Beijing and bent the knee to CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping, signaling subservience.

This preceded the passage of an underwhelming defense budget by Taiwan's Legislative Yuan after months of contention, as well as President Trump's visit to Beijing in May. During that summit, U.S. leadership appeared to be eager to revive relations with the CCP.

Further emboldening Beijing, Washington appears to have stalled weapons sales to Taiwan.

With Chinese military and psychological pressure at record levels and the Trump-Xi summit now concluded, the questions at the heart of the debate go far beyond budget numbers and the optics of meetings.

How committed is Taiwan to its own defense? How reliable is the U.S. as Taiwan's key ally? And who is shaping the answers to those questions in the minds of ordinary Taiwanese?

Even though the U.S.-China meeting produced no formal policy shift on Taiwan, Mr. Xi got what he wanted: the chance to shape the conversation about Taiwan's future.

Beijing has been watching Taiwan's democratic process closely, using proxies among politicians and media to nudge public opinion toward closer relationships with the mainland.

The opposition blocked the defense budget for months, and Kuomintang (KMT) Chair Cheng Li-wun's visit to Beijing right before the Trump-Xi summit was framed by both Beijing and the opposition as "fostering peace."

The message to Washington was clear: Beijing has leverage over the parliament, and Mr. Xi wants the U.S. to believe that Taiwanese public opinion is on his side.

Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te's administration initially proposed a budget of \$39.8 billion to \$40 billion, but the opposition KMT and Taiwan People's Party blocked it, proposing a far-smaller alternative of just \$12 billion.

Their stated justifications: They did not want to provoke China or spend more on U.S. equipment, deliveries of which have been delayed in the past.

After months of heated debate — some of which erupted into brawls on the floor of the Legislative Yuan — the passed bill landed at \$24.8 billion. It is the largest special defense budget in



ILLUSTRATION BY LINAS GARSYS

Taiwan's history, funding critical air defense upgrades and ammunition stockpiling, but it still falls short of Mr. Lai's original plan, which included boosting the domestic drone industry and developing full asymmetric capability.

The State Department's reaction to the passed budget said it all: "Further delays in funding the remaining proposed capabilities are a confession to the Chinese Communist Party."

The opposition's claims that the U.S. is not delivering equipment are exaggerated. The delivery backlog is real, but its causes are well documented: COVID-19 supply chain disruptions, the war in Ukraine and surging demand from the Middle East. Not American unreliability or unwillingness to arm Taiwan.

Ms. Cheng's visit to Beijing was also focused on the 1992 Consensus, the long-standing basis of KMT-CCP relations.

Both Mr. Xi and Ms. Cheng attempted to reframe it, shifting its basis from "One China" to "opposing Taiwan's independence" — a significant concession that was never part of the original framework.

Beijing's narrative warfare runs on multiple fronts, misrepresenting the Aug. 17, 1982, U.S.-China Communiqué to portray American arms sales as illegitimate and misusing United Nations Resolution 2758 to deny Taiwan's international participation.

Inside Taiwan, the battle is being fought through media and online influencers, with pro-China narratives steadily eroding public trust in the U.S. Yimeilun, or "Ameriscepticism" — the belief that the US is purely self-interested and would abandon Taiwan if China invades — is rising in Taiwan.

The current defense budget will not meet Taiwan's security needs. Years of

narrative warfare have eroded public trust, weakened the public will to invest in defense and allowed Beijing to deepen its foothold inside Taiwan's democratic process.

The lessons of history are clear: Mixed signals and perceived lack of will-power invite aggression, which could have truly disastrous consequences for Taiwan and the world.

Washington must overhaul its narrative efforts to revitalize Taiwanese morale and make clear to the mandarins in Beijing that Taiwan is absolutely worth defending.

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Stan Kwiatkowski is a political commentator and host of the YouTube channels "Hard News" and "Freedom Is Not Free." He has lived in Taiwan for more than nine years. This article first appeared in *The Washington Times* on June 7, 2026.

Understanding the Chinese Communist Party's 'political warfare'



By John Dotson

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) seeks to build China into the world's preeminent economic and military power and replace the U.S.-led liberal world order established after World War II with one more amenable to authoritarian states.

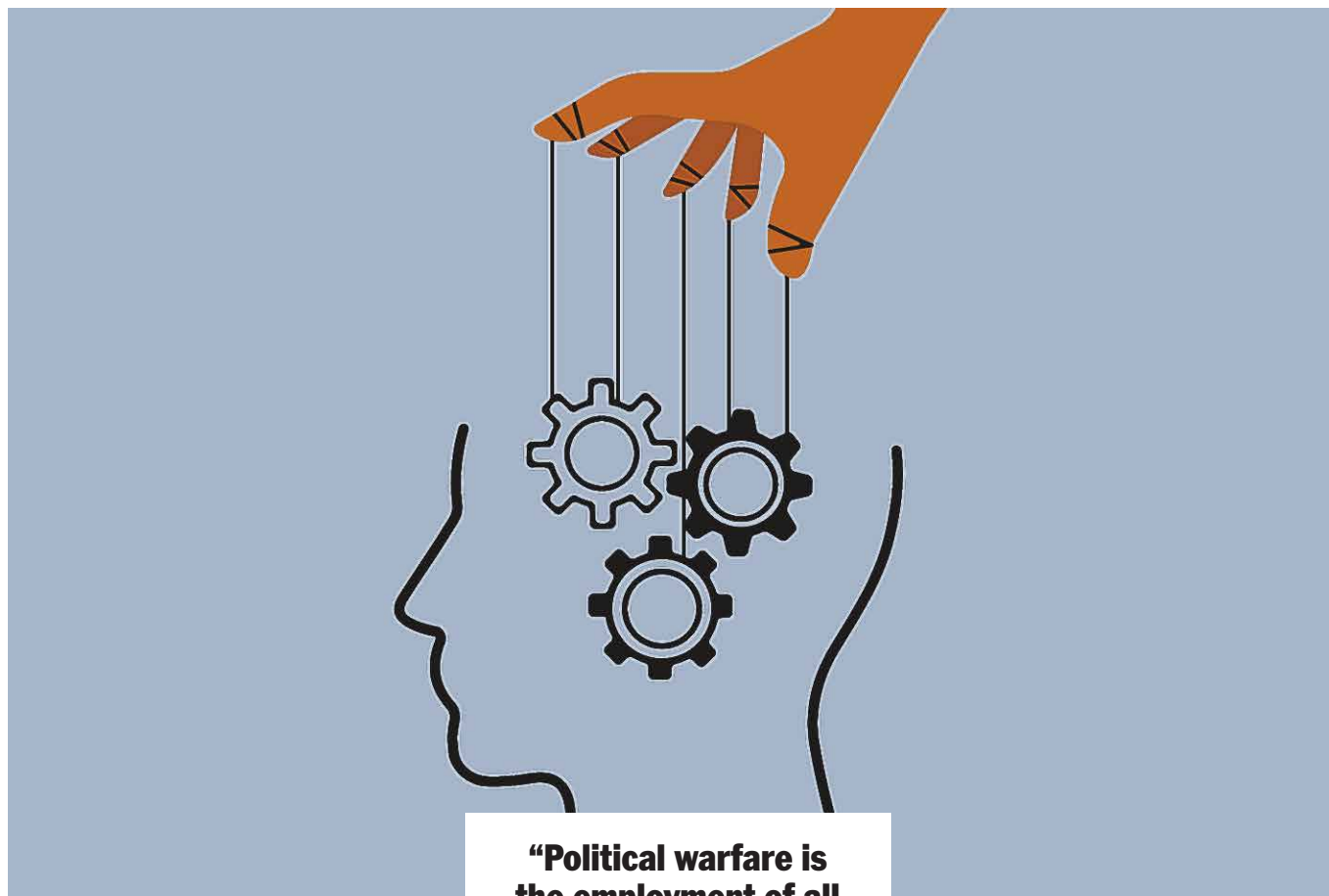
Central to this goal is the annexation of the island state of Taiwan — which the People's Republic of China (PRC), founded in 1949, has never controlled. This "reunification" would go far beyond placing a PRC flag over Taiwan; it would, by necessity, involve the destruction of Taiwan's democratic society and the subjugation of its 23 million citizens.

Political warfare is a fundamental toolkit employed by the CCP to pursue its goals, including the annexation of Taiwan. Poorly understood in Western societies, political warfare has a long history in the international Communist movement — dating back to the theoretical writings of Lenin — and was central to the CCP's rise to power in China. Political warfare remains fundamental to CCP statecraft today.

What Is Political Warfare?

Many terms have been used to describe the subversive efforts of authoritarian states — including "hybrid warfare," "information warfare" and "psychological warfare" — but "political warfare" best captures the scope and purpose of these efforts.

As defined in an internal State Department document from April 1948, "Political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both covert and overt... We have been handicapped by a popular attachment to the concept of a basic difference between peace and war... and by a reluctance to recognize the realities of international relations



"Political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives..."

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— the perpetual rhythm of struggle, in and out of war."

Such a conception best aligns with the approach of the CCP — which depicts itself as being in a state of constant "struggle" against U.S. "hegemonism," with no clear dividing line between peace and war. Accordingly, the CCP engages in political warfare against targeted countries across six domains:

- Information manipulation: The manipulation of the target's information environment, with intent to impact the perceptions and attitudes of the targeted population. This involves efforts to assert influence over traditional media organizations (such as newspapers and television news) and online platforms to advance the CCP's preferred narratives.

- "Lawfare": The process of actively and systematically promoting the PRC's official interpretations of international law and diplomatic practice — even when those positions contradict long-standing norms or logical coherence.

- "Gray zone" operations: A range of activities — including military operations and infrastructure sabotage, such as cutting undersea telecommunications cables — intended to erode the target state's sovereignty and the sense of security held by its citizens, and potentially to prepare for future conflict.

- Economic coercion: The

employment of targeted trade measures — including measures such as import bans, denial of market access and politically oriented trade and investment incentives — to pressure countries and international companies to conform to Beijing's preferred policies.

- United front subversion: A range of measures — including financial and psychological cooptation, the use of front organizations and political subversion — intended to allow the CCP to influence and control persons and groups outside the ranks of the party. Such measures are particularly directed to coopting businesses, political elites, academics and media influencers.

- Intelligence operations: Measures to acquire for the CCP, often through clandestine methods, classified or insider information that could benefit current policy or assist in a future conflict.

U.S. policymakers and the public must gain a greater understanding of the political warfare measures used by powerful authoritarian states against free societies. American academia and

media have often avoided examining the CCP's political warfare. This is perhaps due in part to concerns of appearing xenophobic — a narrative itself promoted by the CCP and which ignores the fact that Chinese-American communities are themselves the ones most targeted by the CCP's transnational repression. Institutional interests — such as business relationships, reliance on foreign student tuition and hesitation to risk antagonizing the Chinese government — may be additional factors.

Public- and private-sector institutions should take more vigorous steps to counter CCP political warfare. To this end, the U.S. national security community should prudently declassify and publicize more of its insights into the subversive efforts of China, Russia and other authoritarian states to influence U.S. policy, and more vigorously enforce the provisions of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. And academic, media and non-profit institutions should work more proactively to promote greater public awareness of the issue.

Political warfare is central to the CCP's statecraft. We must better understand it in order to more effectively counter it.

John Dotson is the director of the Global Taiwan Institute.

Winning the peace against Beijing



By John Lenczowski

For decades, American policy-makers have sought stability with China by managing symptoms rather than addressing causes. The result has been a cycle of engagement, disappointment and growing tension.

Facilitated by years of diplomatic outreach, economic integration, enormous strategic gifts and transfers of technology, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has accelerated a massive military buildup, expanded its global influence operations, intensified espionage, threatened Taiwan and America's allies, and pursued policies increasingly hostile to U.S. interests. Yet Washington still largely approaches China as a difficult competitor rather than what it was all along: an ideological and geopolitical adversary.

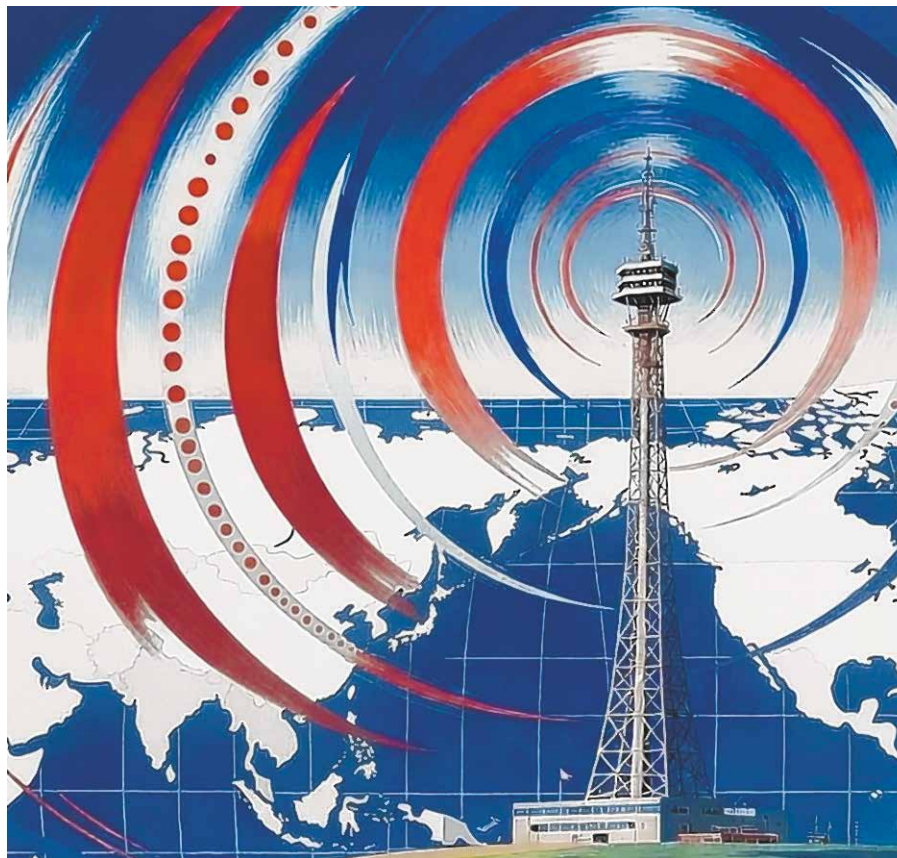
However, the problem is not China itself. It is the Chinese Communist Party.

This distinction is critical. U.S. policy has too often treated the CCP as the permanent and legitimate embodiment of the Chinese nation. In doing so, it has ignored one of the central lessons of the Cold War: Lasting peace cannot be achieved merely through improved atmospherics or diplomatic engagement with totalitarians. Tensions decline only after reducing concern and eliminating their primary cause.

In the case of China, those concerns stem from the totalitarian nature of the CCP and the aggressive policies that flow from it.

The United States has begun strengthening its defenses. Military modernization, supply-chain diversification, investment restrictions and technology protections are all necessary. But defensive measures alone leave America permanently reacting to Beijing's initiatives.

What is missing is an offensive strategy — and not simply a military one but a moral, political, informational and ideological strategy to



place pressure on the CCP's greatest vulnerability.

That vulnerability is not the so-called People's Liberation Army or China's economy. It is the Party's monopoly on information and its fear of its own people.

The CCP rules without the consent of the governed. Following the wreckage of World War II, it conquered China through deception, intelligence operations against their rivals and with the indispensable aid of Stalin's Soviet Union. Its record of atrocities and crimes against humanity over the last century beggars belief.

The problem is not China itself. It is the Chinese Communist Party.

The CCP's own narrative of legitimation is built upon an elaborate body of fabrications. It must therefore suppress free discourse in perpetuity, lest the Chinese people awaken to the lies en masse and demand change.

The CCP thus depends on an immense internal security, surveillance, propaganda and censorship apparatus, which suppresses dissent, maintains the Big Lie, demoralizes and numbs the populace into apathy and isolates subjects from one another — a tool of Soviet statecraft known as atomization.

The regime understands that democratic ideas, free communication, religious belief and independent

civil society all threaten its monopoly on power.

American strategy should recognize this reality and adopt a two-track approach: firmness toward the regime and friendship toward the Chinese people.

During the Cold War, the United States succeeded not merely because it deterred Soviet military power but because it challenged the legitimacy of communist rule. Through public diplomacy, broadcasting, support for dissidents and an unwavering commitment to truth, America demonstrated that the Soviet system was neither inevitable nor permanent.

The same principle applies today. The United States should consistently distinguish between the CCP and the Chinese people. We should openly support universal human rights, religious freedom, the rule of law and democratic self-government. We should expose corruption, repression, forced labor, religious persecution, forced organ harvesting and other abuses that the regime works tirelessly to conceal.

Truth is a strategic asset that broadly favors the free nations. The United States should rebuild its neglected public diplomacy capabilities to leverage truth and openness. During

the Reagan years, Washington invested heavily in international broadcasting through Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. Those institutions helped break communist information monopolies and gave hope to millions trapped behind the Iron Curtain.

Today's challenge is even larger. China has built the most sophisticated censorship apparatus in history. Meeting that challenge requires substantial investment in broadcasting, internet freedom technologies, satellite communications and new methods of bypassing the Great Firewall. The goal should be simple: help the Chinese people communicate freely with one another and gain access to information their government seeks to suppress.

Washington should likewise strengthen relationships with Chinese dissidents and diaspora communities, as well as Uyghur, Tibetan, Mongolian and Hong Kong activists. These communities possess cultural knowledge, credibility and networks that can help communicate ideas the regime fears most.

At the same time, American leaders should abandon the self-censorship common in official engagement with Beijing. Diplomatic dialogue has its place, but dialogue should not require silence about human rights abuses, political repression or aggressive behavior abroad.

President Reagan understood that moral clarity strengthens deterrence. When he challenged the legitimacy of Soviet communism, he encouraged dissidents behind the Iron Curtain and demonstrated confidence in the superiority of freedom over tyranny...

America should seek a stable, peaceful relationship with China while recognizing that its greatest potential partner is not the CCP leadership but the Chinese people themselves.

A successful China strategy will combine military strength, economic resilience, technological security, robust counterintelligence and an energetic campaign of truth. The United States prevailed in the last great ideological struggle not simply because it was materially stronger but because it offered a more compelling vision of human dignity and freedom: It was a manifestation of moral-political strength, without which all the material assets are mere vanity.

If America seeks genuine peace, we must stop courting the CCP and start championing the Chinese people.

John Lenczowski, Ph.D., is the Chancellor, President Emeritus and Founder of The Institute of World Politics, and served as NSC Director of European and Soviet Affairs under President Reagan.

Communist China's reform tied to revival of 'virtue-based ethics' and 'natural rights'



By Piero A. Tozzi

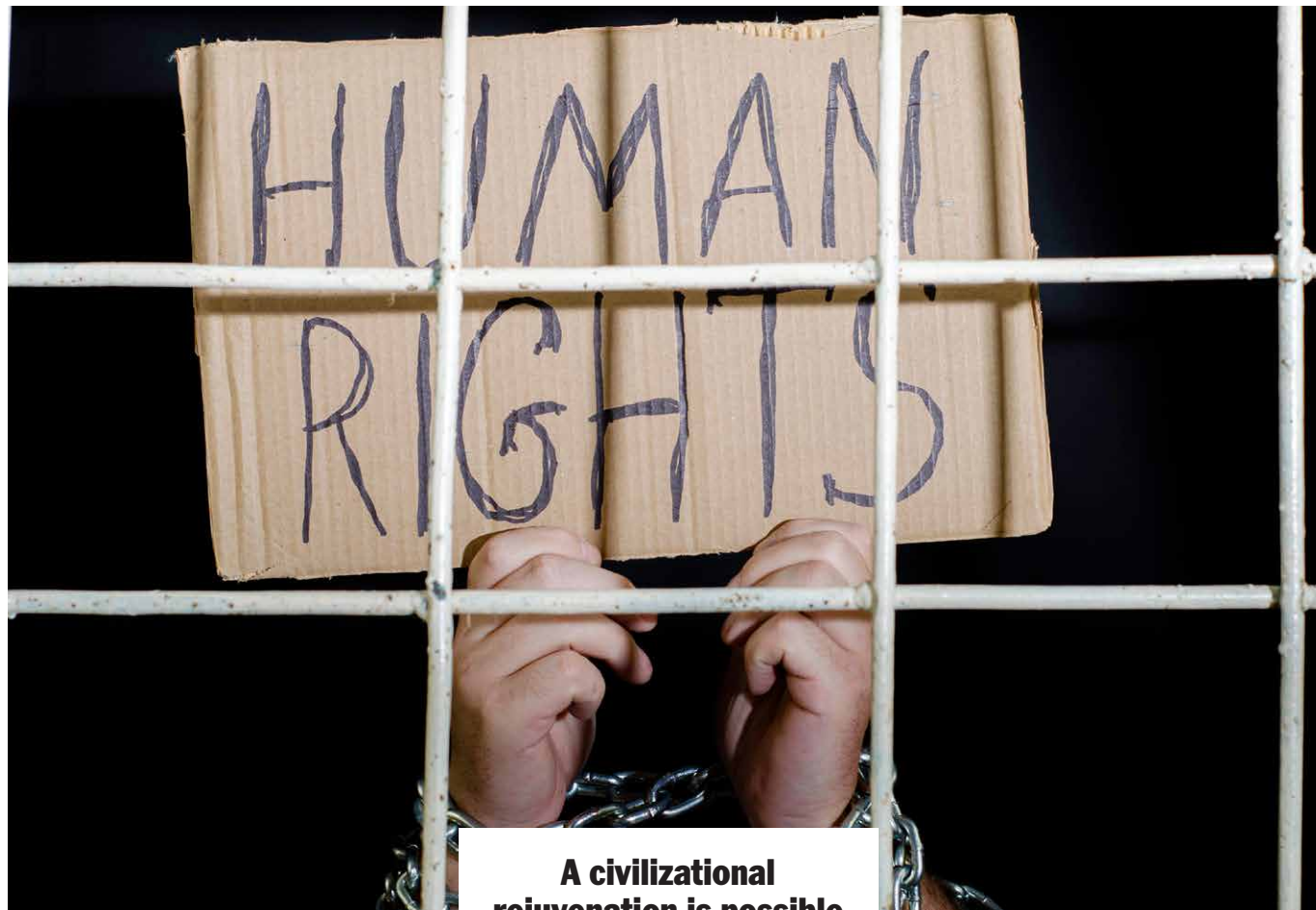
The recent Trump-Xi summit has heightened curiosity over the United States' commitment to human rights in China and to confronting the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) over abuses from forced organ harvesting to Uyghur genocide.

Beyond highlighting prisoners of conscience such as Pastor Ezra Jin — a topic past presidents have downplayed — a broader “Restoration Project” is now underway: Its goal is to reclaim a vision of rights that aligns with the “Laws of Nature and Nature’s God,” to quote the Declaration of Independence, America’s foundational document, and apply it universally and cross-culturally.

The genesis can be found in President Trump’s 2017 Warsaw speech, in which he declared that “Our freedom, our civilization, and our survival depend on...bonds of history, culture and memory.” That appeal to civilizational confidence was echoed during his first term when Secretary of State Mike Pompeo convened the Commission on Unalienable Rights to offer fresh thinking on human rights and recenter U.S. policy in both the Declaration of Independence and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

The concept of unalienable rights is straightforward: Rights grounded in the laws of Nature and Nature’s God cannot be taken away by the state because the state does not grant them. They are rights held *against* the state — civil and political rights like freedom of speech and religion.

Likewise, the UDHR emerged from World War II and the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes tribunals. Faced with atrocities that cried out for justice, prosecutors appealed in part to natural law. The UDHR similarly incorporated



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A civilizational rejuvenation is possible both in the West and China if there is a return to virtue-based ethics grounded in natural rights and reciprocal duties.

natural rights, reflected in provisions such as Article 26(3): “Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.” A *prior* right preexists the state and cannot be taken away by it.

This understanding informs the Trump administration’s creation of an Office of Natural Rights within the State Department. As the Office explains, “Natural rights are unalienable rights that are not bestowed by governments but belong to all individuals by virtue of their being human.”

Secretary of State Marco Rubio reinforced this vision at the Munich Security Conference, calling on Europeans to remember that it was “in Europe where the ideas that planted the seeds of liberty were born.” His remarks were a call to civilizational seriousness: a renewal and restoration rooted in enduring moral foundations.

But what does this mean for China?

There will never be a renewal of the Chinese nation so long as the CCP retains power. The Party remains beholden to an ideology contrary to human flourishing — an amalgamation of Leninism and Chinese Legalism, by which “rule of law” becomes “rule by law.”

Rejection of universal values is the CCP’s greatest vulnerability. A

key document for understanding this mindset is Document Number 9. It identifies as a threat “universal values” that “transcend nation and class and apply to all humanity.” By rejecting such values as “Western,” the CCP seeks to evade accountability and to conflate itself with both the Chinese people and Chinese civilization.

But these values are not uniquely Western.

Chinese scholars and diplomats played a significant role in drafting the UDHR. P.C. Chang of the Republic of China — the government that preceded Communist rule on the mainland and today governs democratic Taiwan — incorporated Confucian concepts of rights and reciprocal duties into the final document. Article 29 reflects this influence: “Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.”

Indeed, Confucian thought contains

principles remarkably consonant with natural rights traditions. Mencius taught that “The people are of supreme importance...last comes the ruler.” Government exists *for* the people, not the other way around. Moreover, Mencius argued that tyrants forfeit legitimacy, lacking Heaven’s mandate.

This reveals a profound confluence between the Western and Chinese traditions. Both recognize a law above the law — a transcendent moral order by which rulers may be judged. In Confucian thought this is reflected in Heaven and the Tao; in the Western tradition, in natural law.

A civilizational rejuvenation is possible both in the West and China if there is a return to virtue-based ethics grounded in natural rights and reciprocal duties. It means holding Xi Jinping and the CCP accountable to a universal standard consonant with principles rooted in Chinese, Confucian thought.

With that accountability, we could see a restoration in both the West and China — and a greater civilizational thriving built upon parallel “bonds of history, culture and memory.”

Piero A. Tozzi is Senior Director for China Policy at the America First Policy Institute.

The Free World must defeat a Leninist China

Taiwan's future depends on it



By Frank Kaufmann

When Taiwan's Vice President Hsiao Bi-khim sat down recently with the Epoch Times' "American Thought Leaders" podcast, she boldly declared: "We will not let the Communist Party of China (CCP) define who we are."

That tone of self-confidence, strength and defiance are just what the times require. The CCP is aggressively attempting to conquer Taiwan through cognitive and grey-zone warfare, as much as through conventional means.

The contest over Taiwan is usually framed in terms of military might and readiness, diplomatic skill and superiority, and in terms of American will. All three framings, while necessary, miss the main point. The contest with the People's Republic of China is ideological at its root and is winnable only if the free world understands the nature of a Leninist regime and acts accordingly.

The CCP's weaponization of partial truths

The CCP is adept at the fusion of truths with distortions, a key element of Leninist statecraft. This is on full display in the crafting of an historical narrative to justify sovereignty over Taiwan.

To be fair, there are legitimate claims any generic Chinese state could make to justify union with Taiwan, and they require a serious answer. Han Chinese culture, Confucian statecraft, the written language, the kinship networks and the regional dialects of Taiwan were carried there from the mainland over centuries. There was no sovereign Taiwanese state before 1949. The Republic of China regards Taiwan as part of a polity that once governed the whole of China, not a nation that seceded from one.



The free world must move beyond a defensive, materialist posture and commit to exposing the Party's anti-human framework.

Yet the CCP has used its Leninist knack for propaganda, deception, global influence peddling and institutional subversion to marry these legitimate arguments to nefarious purposes. This is embodied by the 1971 UN Resolution 2758 and the refusal of so many governments to formally recognize Taiwan as a state, in order to placate Beijing.

Facing hard geographic and demographic realities

Taiwan is roughly the size of Maryland. China is roughly the size of the continental United States with a population 60 times Taiwan's. The strait is 130 kilometers wide and dominated by the densest shore-based missile force on earth. The CCP's Rocket Force

holds Taiwan's airfields, ports, command centers and undersea cables at risk from launch sites already in place. A blockade would not require a shot; it would strangle the island by cutting its energy and food imports.

The United States, for its part, would have to project decisive force across 12,000 kilometers of ocean against a continental power sitting on the near shore. The nearest major American bases in Japan, Guam and the Philippines are all within Chinese missile range. There is no NATO-style adjacent land mass, no continuous logistics chain and no capacity to be on station at scale in the opening 72 hours of a conflict. Taiwan alone cannot defend itself indefinitely. American

reinforcement is the binding constraint, and geography makes it the most challenging contingency for American power projection since 1945.

Leninism brooks no rivals

The material arithmetic is plain. The CCP's historical claim cannot be realized except by force or blockade, and geography favors the claimant.

Fortunately, there is a path forward for the United States and its allies to overcome these challenging circumstances. The decisive variable is not the power of China; it is the Leninist DNA of the regime that governs it.

The CCP is no longer Marxist in the doctrinal sense. It is Leninist where it matters: in the organization of the party as the unshared instrument of state power, in the perpetual identification of enemies, and in the doctrine of unrestricted warfare that operationalizes all of civil society, the media and international law as terrain to be shaped. The "Three Warfares" of psychological, media and legal warfare, and the "360-degree" doctrine of perpetual engagement are not the conduct of a state. They are the conduct of a totalitarian monopoly party that has internalized the philosophy that all relations are relations of force.

A Leninist party cannot tolerate a successful democratic rival on its claimed national territory, because that rival's existence is a standing refutation of the party's claim to the future. This is why peaceful coexistence is impossible under the current ideological frame and why the diplomacy of "managing competition" has produced serial and dangerous disappointments. The frame itself must change.

A future for liberty

It is ideology that gives the CCP regime its dark, persistent purpose. Military and economic containment are necessary, but they are insufficient on their own. The free world must move beyond a defensive, materialist posture and commit to exposing the Party's anti-human framework. By investing in a compelling, humanly resonant ideological counterpoint, we can hasten the internal fractures that history eventually imposes on all such regimes.

When that day of change arrives, a free Taiwan will remain, standing as a testament to the endurance of liberty.

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Trump-Xi meeting changed nothing

Competition with China, U.S.-Taiwan relationship both remain the same

By Yao-Yuan Yeh

The recent meeting between President Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping generated intense speculation about the future of U.S.-China relations and Taiwan's strategic position.

Many observers interpreted Mr. Trump's rhetoric, discussions over Taiwan and reports about delayed arms sales as evidence that Washington may be softening its commitment to Taiwan. Others argued that Beijing successfully shifted cross-strait issues from a "Taiwan-China" framework into a "U.S.-China negotiation" framework.

However, these interpretations fundamentally misunderstand the structure of contemporary international politics. The Trump-Xi meeting did not alter the basic nature of U.S.-China strategic competition, nor did it fundamentally change the U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

Instead, it reinforced the enduring realities that define all three actors.

At the center of the debate was Mr. Trump's reported suggestion that U.S. arms sales to Taiwan could become part of broader negotiations with China. Such statements understandably raised concerns in Taiwan because they appear to contradict one of the Six Assurances' core principles: that the U.S. would not consult Beijing in advance about arms sales to Taiwan...

Yet this transformation in style should not be confused with a transformation in substance. The strategic logic behind U.S. support for Taiwan remains unchanged. Taiwan's survival outside the control of the People's Republic of China, the stability of the Taiwan Strait and the security of the First Island Chain remain core to U.S. national interests...

For Beijing, unification with Taiwan is a core regime objective tied to nationalism and the legitimacy of Communist Party rule. For Washington, preventing China from dominating Taiwan is equally central to preserving American strategic primacy in Asia. These are parallel and irreconcilable objectives.

Indeed, much of the Trump-Xi summit reflected this reality. While both sides publicly displayed cordiality and diplomatic pageantry, the summit produced remarkably few substantive breakthroughs.

China offered promises of expanded purchases of American agricultural products, greater market openness and cooperation on issues such as Iran and maritime security. However, there is deep skepticism within Washington regarding Beijing's credibility. Its failure



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXANDER HUNTER

to fully implement commitments made during the 2020 Phase I trade agreement, as well as repeated unfulfilled promises under the Biden administration regarding fentanyl control and technology restrictions, has created a profound trust deficit.

Mr. Trump may enjoy the symbolism of dealmaking, but American policymakers are fully aware of China's long record of strategic noncompliance.

This skepticism likely explains the unusual atmosphere surrounding the summit itself. Major U.S.-China summits typically conclude with detailed joint statements or clear announcements demonstrating areas of consensus. In this case, however, observers noted the absence of a meaningful post-summit press conference or major policy declaration.

Such silence is highly unusual in diplomatic practice and suggests that substantial disagreements remained unresolved.... It likely indicates that

Washington reiterated its long-standing position: maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait remains a core American interest, while the U.S. continues to preserve strategic ambiguity regarding direct military intervention. Such a position would hardly satisfy Beijing, but it also demonstrates continuity rather than change.

Mr. Trump's own ... suggestion that China would avoid military action against Taiwan during his presidency but might reconsider afterward should not be interpreted as a formal strategic assessment.

In reality, the conditions under which China might use force against Taiwan have remained relatively constant for years. A Chinese attack would most likely emerge under one of three scenarios: severe domestic instability in China that threatens regime survival, a dramatic weakening of Taiwan's defensive capacity combined with declining American support, or a much broader U.S.-China military confrontation that

engulfs Taiwan in a larger conflict.

None of these structural conditions changed as a result of the meeting.

Perhaps the most important takeaway from the summit is that the broader framework of U.S.-China competition remains intact.... Even if Mr. Trump prefers transactional negotiations and dramatic symbolism, the institutional foundations of American foreign policy are remarkably stable.

The State Department, Pentagon, Congress and the larger national security establishment continue to view China as America's primary strategic competitor. Consequently, U.S. policy toward Taiwan is unlikely to shift fundamentally. Strategic ambiguity remains the preferred framework because it simultaneously deters Chinese aggression while discouraging unilateral declarations of independence.

Beneath diplomatic ceremony and political theater, the structural conflict between America and China remains unresolved, with Taiwan at its center

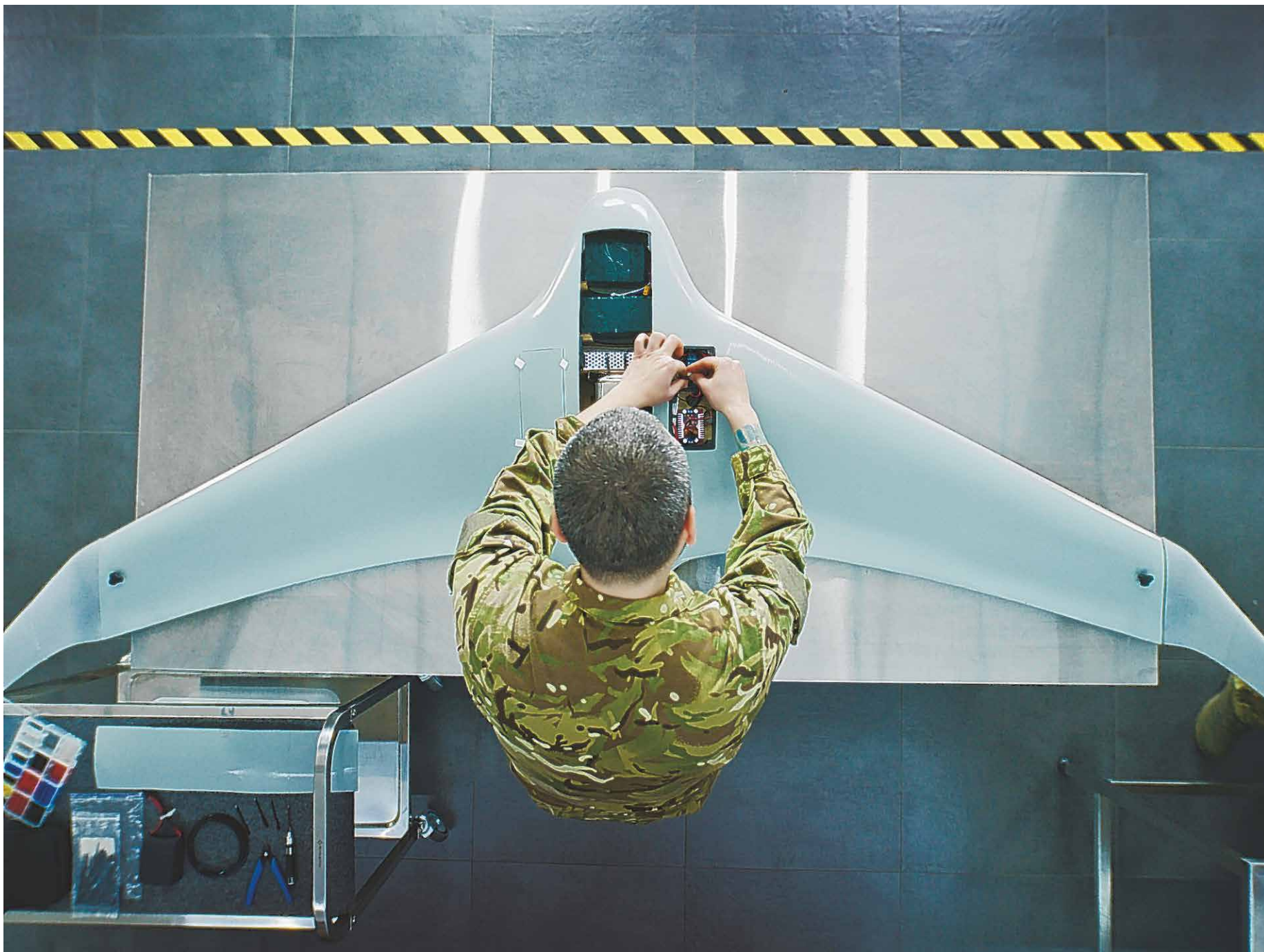
Likewise, America's commitment to preserving Taiwan's security remains tied directly to larger geopolitical calculations rather than personal sentiment toward Taiwan itself.

For Taiwan, therefore, the greatest challenge may not be uncertainty in Washington, but political division at home. Even if the U.S. remains willing to provide military support, Taiwan must still demonstrate its willingness to invest in national defense and deterrence capabilities.

Without domestic consensus and sustained defense commitments, external support becomes increasingly difficult to sustain politically.

Ultimately, the Trump-Xi summit did not redefine the U.S.-China relationship, nor did it fundamentally alter Taiwan's strategic position. It merely revealed, once again, the enduring reality of great-power competition: Beneath diplomatic ceremony and political theater, the structural conflict between America and China remains unresolved, with Taiwan at its center.

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Yao-Yuan Yeh, Ph.D., is a professor and endowed chair of international studies and is the director of the Taiwan & East Asia studies program at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. These excerpts are from an article that first appeared in *The Washington Times* on May 21, 2026.



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The long shadow of delay

U.S.–Taiwan arms delivery backlogs and the future of deterrence

By Jason Hsu and Mark Montgomery



President Trump’s recent suggestion that he could use arms sales to Taiwan as a bargaining chip with China is a stark reminder of what a political issue arms sales to Taiwan can be. The Department of War’s comments that they are pausing the \$14 billion arms sale to Taiwan, supposedly due to the war in Iran, present a major concern that Mr. Trump is taking a dovish turn toward China.

But this is not the only challenge these arms sales face; they have been dogged by excessive delays for decades.

For more than a decade, Taiwan’s defense planning has lived with a structural contradiction. Washington regularly signals political support by approving arms sales, yet the actual delivery of those systems often arrives years later.

The problem is widely referred to as the “arms backlog.” Yet the term obscures more than it reveals. The backlog is a complex set of procurement cases shaped by industrial constraints, bureaucratic processes, and political incentives on both sides of the Pacific. Understanding why delays occur — and why they matter — is essential to restoring confidence in the defense relationship between Washington and Taipei.

The political theater of arms sales

Arms sales to Taiwan have been an integral part of the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, which was passed to address the political, economic, and military relationship between the United States and Taiwan after America switched diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Beijing, in turn, always reacts sharply whenever Washington announces a major sale, signaling both its opposition to external support for Taiwan and an effort to raise the political cost of approving arms sales in Washington. Over time, this dynamic has encouraged some U.S. policymakers to manage the timing of arms sales announcements carefully, occasionally delaying notifications to avoid diplomatic escalation.

This political choreography creates a subtle but important distortion. Arms sales announcements often function as signals of U.S. commitment, yet the equipment itself may not arrive for years. The arms backlog is an estimated \$29.7 billion today, according to the Taiwan Security Monitor at George Mason University, and average deliveries over the past decade have been between \$4 billion and \$5 billion per year.

The four factors in the “backlog” story

In Taiwan's public debate, the arms backlog is often portrayed as a simple story: Taiwan orders weapons, pays for them, and then waits while Washington fails to deliver.

The reality is far more complicated. The backlog comprises numerous procurement cases across categories of weapons, timelines, and sales mechanisms. Some systems are partially delivered while others are impacted by production constraints. Four recurring constraints account for most of the backlog.

The first is industrial capacity, as modern weapons systems utilize specialized manufacturing lines that cannot easily scale. The wars in Ukraine and Iran have placed an enormous strain on the U.S. defense industrial base. Many of the systems Taiwan seeks are also in high demand from the U.S. military and NATO allies. While the United States is working aggressively to increase munitions output, it cannot expand production overnight.

The second constraint is program complexity. Large platforms require years to assemble, test, and integrate, involving hundreds of components and extensive training pipelines. Even after delivery, a system may not be fully operational without spare parts, maintenance infrastructure and properly trained personnel.

Third, bureaucratic procedures slow the process. U.S. arms sales move through multiple stages: technology release reviews, policy approvals, congressional notifications, contracting and production. These procedures ensure oversight and compliance but were not designed for speed. Even repeat purchases can take years to process.

Finally, buyer-side factors also play a role. Changes in Taiwan's requirements, delays in funding approvals or gaps in training infrastructure can slow deliveries or reduce readiness once systems arrive. Procurement is not simply about acquiring hardware; it requires an entire ecosystem capable of absorbing and effectively employing the equipment.

Taken together, these four factors compound to slow nearly every defense procurement decision that runs through Washington. In the case of Taiwan, however, these flaws are exacerbated by the two mechanisms Taipei uses to acquire most U.S. defense equipment: Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and Direct Commercial Sales (DCS).

Under the FMS system, the U.S. government acts as an intermediary between the purchasing country and American defense contractors. Taiwan submits a request outlining the capabilities it seeks, which is then

evaluated and, if both governments agree, signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA), which formalizes the government-to-government agreement. The United States then contracts with industry, manages procurement, and oversees delivery, training, and sustainment. FMS provides transparency and integration support with U.S. forces, but the main downside is that it can move slowly.

DCS purchases are when Taiwan contracts directly with U.S. defense companies and obtains export licenses from the U.S. government. These arrangements can sometimes proceed more quickly and offer greater flexibility for certain types of equipment, particularly components, software, or niche capabilities. Unfortunately, many advanced weapons systems cannot be transferred through direct commercial contracts due to government oversight requirements. DCS purchases may also provide less integration support and logistical coordination than FMS. As a result, Taiwan must balance speed against interoperability and long-term sustainment.

Understanding why delays occur – and why they matter – is essential to restoring confidence in the defense relationship between Washington and Taipei.

These procedures make even simple purchases very complicated, yet these complexities rarely appear in political discourse.

Instead, the dominant narrative on both sides of the Pacific is the most corrosive, transforming defense procurement into a credibility test for both governments. In Taiwan, it fuels skepticism about the value of defense spending. Opposition politicians can argue that the government is wasting money on weapons that never arrive. In Washington, political infighting over defense spending risks being read as a lack of commitment and casts doubts about whether Taiwan can absorb and employ the systems it purchases.

The strategic costs of delay

Delivery delays have consequences that extend beyond inventory shortages. Defense spending in democratic societies is always contested. Arms delivery delays amplify that tension by providing a simple and emotionally powerful grievance: Taiwan paid for weapons but has not received them.

Critics then argue that Taipei should diversify suppliers or rely more heavily on domestic defense production. Both options face serious limitations, but the argument gains traction when delays persist.

The result is that debates over military strategy become partisan identity markers rather than strategic discussions. When procurement becomes entangled in political conflict, the continuity necessary for long-term deterrence begins to weaken.

These issues also come to the fore directly at the water's edge. Taiwan's defense strategy increasingly emphasizes denying China from achieving a quick military victory. That strategy depends on survivable command systems, dispersed forces, and sufficient stockpiles of munitions to sustain combat in the opening phase of a conflict.

If key weapons are delayed, Taiwan risks having systems approved on paper but unavailable when needed. Conversely, even when equipment arrives, insufficient training or integration can limit its operational impact.

Delays in arms purchases due to political controversy or bureaucratic delays in Taiwan can cause U.S. policymakers to misinterpret Taiwan's commitment to self-defense. Additionally, delays can appear as an opportunity for Beijing. If Chinese planners believe Taiwan cannot rearm quickly, they may perceive a window to intensify coercion or test the limits of deterrence. Even if that perception is mistaken, it can increase the risk of miscalculation.

How to break the cycle

The top priority is industrial capacity. Washington must treat weapons production for Taiwan not merely as a diplomatic commitment but as a top manufacturing priority. Expanding production lines for key munitions would benefit U.S. forces, Taiwan, and other allies. Congress should provide sustained funding and long-term demand signals for industry.

Second, the arms sales process itself needs modernization. A dedicated interagency “Taiwan fast lane” could accelerate case processing and coordinate across agencies responsible for export controls, congressional notifications, and contracting. Streamlining repeat purchases — especially for systems already approved for other allies — would significantly reduce bureaucratic delays.

Third, Washington should make greater use of flexible delivery mechanisms, such as stock transfers, to help bridge the gap between procurement approval and full system delivery.

Taiwan must also adapt its procurement strategy. Taipei should prioritize capabilities that can be fielded quickly and that strengthen denial: mobile missile systems, sea mines, drones, resilient communications networks and munitions stockpiles. Large platforms still play an important role, but they should not crowd out investments that deliver immediate operational value.

Equally important, Taiwan must invest in the infrastructure needed to absorb new systems. Training pipelines, logistics networks and maintenance capacity determine whether delivered equipment becomes operational capability.

Finally, political discipline is essential. Defense procurement should be a bipartisan national priority in Taiwan, not a political “football.” Sustained deterrence cannot depend on short-term political cycles.

Deterrence now depends on delivery

In earlier decades, the approval of an arms sale was considered a sufficient political symbol. Today, symbolism is no longer enough. Deterrence in the Taiwan Strait depends on what can actually be produced, delivered, trained, and deployed within the relevant timeframe.

The arms backlog, therefore, offers a warning for both sides to both match defense spending with institutional discipline and to ensure the industrial base can translate policy decisions into operational capabilities.

If Washington and Taipei treat the backlog as a shared operational challenge rather than a political talking point, meaningful progress is possible. Faster production, smarter procurement, greater transparency, and stronger political consensus can restore confidence in the system.

Those steps will not eliminate the risks facing Taiwan. But they will convince any potential aggressor that war would be neither quick nor decisive — and therefore not worth starting.

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An invasion of Taiwan is a dead end

The right path is to return power to the people



By Robert Tsao

The following are excerpts from “An Open Letter to Chairman Xi Jinping, Respectful Greetings for the Year of the Horse,” Feb. 21, 2026.

Dear Respected Chairman Xi,

Hello! I am a mere citizen of Taiwan. I hold neither office, title nor rank, nor do I have power. I also don't have any guns. I cannot subvert your regime, so we ought to be able to live in peace with one another. But the guns and artillery you command are numerous beyond counting, and seemingly ready to fire upon Taiwan at any moment. This leaves me unable to go about my days in peace, such that I feel compelled to ask you a few questions.

First, if you were to launch an invasion of Taiwan in the name of “unification,” other than the devastation which would befall Taiwan, what good would come to the Chinese Communist Party and citizens of the People's Republic of China (PRC), which you lead? ...

On the Taiwan question, your party

has repeatedly declared that “Taiwan has been the sovereign territory of China since ancient times.” This is an obvious lie. Taiwan's indigenous people have a history of inhabiting the island for more than 6,000 years, whereas your state was only founded in 1949.

a way of paying tribute to the enormous sacrifices made by the KMT during the War of Resistance... [in which] your party... merely feigned participation. You, of course, have no qualifications to be “awarded” sovereignty over Taiwan. Your party didn't actively resist the

If your party insists upon invading Taiwan to extend the life of one-party dictatorship, the doom of your country and party will be at hand.

Taiwan was occupied by the Manchu Qing Empire in 1683, until it was ceded to Japan in 1895, a total of 212 years. This absolutely cannot be regarded as the “sovereign territory of China since ancient times.” Most of the territory of Ukraine was ruled by the Mongols between 1240 and 1362, over 120 years. If one were to say that Ukraine has been the “sovereign territory of Mongolia since ancient times,” that would, of course, be a joke.

In 1928, Mao Zedong clearly advocated for Taiwanese independence and the establishment of a “Republic of Taiwan.” And again in 1936 in Yanan... your own party... didn't consider Taiwan to be part of China, yet later revised this to “Taiwan has been the sovereign territory of China since ancient times.” It appears that your party is accustomed to distorting historical facts according to political requirements.

Your party also likes to go on about the 1943 Cairo Declaration, which actually stated that sovereignty over Taiwan would be returned to the Republic of China (ROC) after World War II, not to the PRC...

The Cairo Declaration's advocacy for Taiwan to return to the ROC... was

Japanese, but you brutalized innumerable KMT war heroes after founding your state. Only since then have you unceasingly taken credit for resisting Japan in your propaganda, spreading hatred of Japan and even staging high-profile memorials of “Victory Against Japan Day” ... to confuse the public, rewrite history and obtain sovereignty over Taiwan. This is, in fact, a deception of all Chinese people...

Just 30 years after signing the [Sino-British Joint Declaration regarding Hong Kong] in 1984 with Britain, your government announced it to be a historical document with no binding force whatsoever. We are more than 80 years removed from the Cairo Declaration of 1943 and the Potsdam Declaration of 1945. Certainly both are “historical documents.” Yet your government maintains that these continue to have binding force. Is this not a double standard and quite unreasonable?

Your government furthermore proclaims UNGA Resolution 2758 to have granted sovereignty over Taiwan to China. This is also a claim which dupes the public. In reality, this resolution only agrees for your government to replace Chiang Kai-Shek's representatives at the

United Nations. Not a single word of it mentions Taiwan...

Therefore, are you not deceiving people by claiming that “Unification with Taiwan is for the Great Rejuvenation of the Chinese Nation?” Isn't the real reason your party insists upon unifying with Taiwan because Taiwan has already achieved popular sovereignty? That you have to snuff out the Taiwanese, so that Chinese people won't see us as a role model and demand that power be restored to them?

Respected Chairman Xi, Leninist parties have already been swept into the trash bin of history... Why does your party cling to the old ways in China?

“Popular sovereignty” is already the universal value of progress. Why does your party put up such a desperate struggle and refuse to admit defeat?

If your party insists upon invading Taiwan to extend the life of one-party dictatorship, the doom of your country and party will be at hand. If you adapt to the great trend of popular sovereignty, lift the ban on political parties and advance democracy, your party might still win the support of voters under a democratic system. To phrase things differently, to invade Taiwan is a dead end; the right path is to return power to the people. Which path shall you choose? I respectfully ask you to think carefully and decide wisely.

Lastly, I respectfully wish Chairman Xi good health and a Happy New Year. Regarding an invasion of Taiwan, rein in the horse before it goes over the precipice. On the question of opening up democracy, you could make unparalleled contributions to the nation. This is what we most hope for!

.....
Robert Tsao is the founder of United Microelectronics Corporation.

Defense of Taiwan is essential to defeat China's communist regime and liberate the Chinese people



By Bill Gertz

The United States remains a bastion of freedom and democracy. But American leaders have failed for decades to understand and counter the most serious threat to our existence: the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the nation it rules, the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The growing threat posed by the CCP to the people of Taiwan can be traced to decades of failed policies by American elites. A free, democratic and sovereign Taiwan is a model and inspiration for all Chinese people. And the defense of Taiwan is essential for us to end and roll back the long march of Chinese communism around the world.

The U.S. approach toward the CCP has been a fiasco. Several times since the regime seized power in 1949, the United States rescued a failing and corrupt state that historians blame for the deaths of 65 million people.

From the 1970s, when Henry Kissinger played the China card against Moscow, to the failure of the George H.W. Bush administration to support thousands of pro-democracy Chinese protesters who were crushed beneath tank treads of the so-called People's Liberation Army (PLA) in June 1989, to short-sighted trade and business deals that gutted America's once-powerful economy, Communist China has continued a relentless advance with the backing of American elites.

President Trump's first administration slowed but did not halt the decades-long appeasement toward Beijing.

The signs of a return to appeasement are unmistakable: They include a delay in sending \$14 billion in urgently needed weapons to Taiwan and a renewed reluctance by those in power to tell the truth about the realities of the PRC and its drive for global supremacy.



Deceiving the Sky: Inside Communist China's Drive for Global Supremacy

Bill Gertz

During a meeting last year with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, aboard his militarized Boeing 747, I had a simple message: China is going to take over the world unless the United States prevents it. And if China does achieve world domination, it will be a terrible place, without freedom for our children and grandchildren.

The conquest of Taiwan is a critical first step in this process of CCP world domination, whether by force or subversion — to neutralize an alternative model for the Chinese people, to command the center of the First Island Chain, and to capture intact Taiwan's supremely strategic semiconductor industry.

As with the mass killing spree that followed Mao Zedong's rise to power, the takeover of Taiwan can be expected to produce another round of mass death,

in the hundreds of thousands. The reason is that communist doctrine views people as merely spiritless animals. People deemed by the communists to be on the wrong side of historical materialism can therefore be eliminated to pave the way for a never-to-be achieved communist utopia and new communist ideal man.

So what is to be done? A new strategic approach is urgently needed. As I have written in my two books on China — "The China Threat" and "Deceiving the Sky" — the threat is multipronged, extremely dangerous and metastasizing like the deadliest cancer. The danger we face is essentially ideological and enhanced through a combination of political, diplomatic, military, intelligence, economic, financial and informational power. And it must be

countered on each of these planes.

A first step is to educate and remind the public of the fact that the American-led global system of governance and commerce has produced the most fantastic and extraordinary advancement of humanity in world history.

Next, Taiwan must step up its military readiness. Yes, Taiwan can effectively win against a more powerful PLA with superior and innovative weapons technology, such as its plan for 20,000-armed drones to defeat an assault.

However, Taiwan's soft power can provide the people of China and Chinese around the world with the most vivid example of a free and open democratic system. Taiwan's continued sovereignty will allow China's 1.4 billion people to realize the true future of humankind, and not the dark vision of Chinese Communist leader Xi Jinping's unachievable communist "dream."

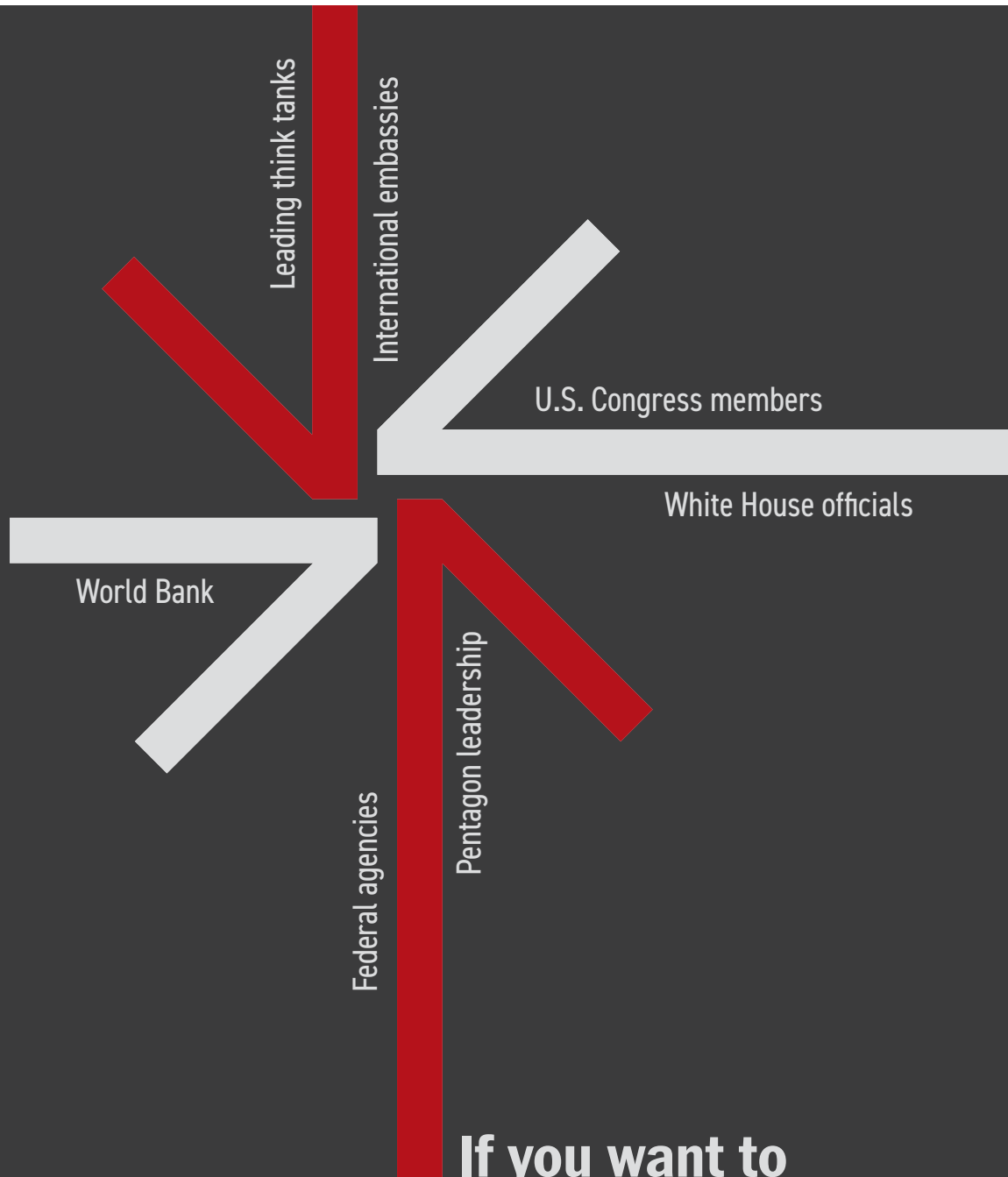
A free, democratic and sovereign Taiwan is a model and inspiration for the Chinese people.

Taiwan's government can also lead the world, with the joint efforts of Taiwanese, Chinese and other diaspora communities, to create a pro-democracy Pacific community, dedicated to promoting the values of freedom. Bringing together many peoples across the Pacific — including those in North and South America — this community of nations could become a potent force in bringing about the peaceful replacement of the despised communist system in China with a democratic alternative.

The United States could strengthen this pan-Pacific democratic community with the commitment that we will never abandon the people of Taiwan.

America urgently needs a new strategic approach to counter the CCP's expansionist objectives. Taiwan must be at the center of that mission. First, to shore up its defenses, then to jointly form a powerful pan-Pacific coalition of democratic nations, to ultimately provide the Chinese people with a model for a better future, for themselves and for mankind.

Bill Gertz is a national security correspondent for The Washington Times and a New York Times best-selling author. He hosts a monthly podcast called Victory Over Communism and his most recent book is "Deceiving the Sky: Inside Communist China's Drive for Global Supremacy."



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