

Cross-Strait Relations: In Search of Peace

Alan D. Romberg

The election campaigns in Taiwan continue to move along with all of the surprise twists and turns one might have predicted. The decision of the Central Election Commission (CEC) to opt for a “one-step” ballot at the time of the LY election on 12 January—handing out all ballots, including for candidates and referenda, at the same time—has created great turmoil. KMT authorities, who control 18 out of 23 localities, pledged not to go along with the CEC decision, which in turn triggered a spate of harsh comments from all sides. Included among those was one from President Chen Shui-bian, who seemed to threaten martial law. Chen later dissociated himself from that idea, but the firestorm he set off did not dissipate and he did not disown other suggestions that he said merited “serious consideration,” such as replacing election officials in those places that refuse to obey the CEC or invalidating or delaying the LY election.

The UN referendum issue continued to be a focus of much of the campaigning, and was given particular prominence by official American statements highlighting U.S. opposition to the DPP proposal to enter the UN “in the name of ‘Taiwan’”¹ and by reactions to those statements from Chen Shui-bian and the candidates. The economy grew as a topic of attention, with each candidate (unsurprisingly) asserting that his program was what Taiwan needed, while the opponent’s program would prove disastrous.

DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh Chang-ting and President Chen Shui-bian claimed to be in total agreement on all issues, but the record would suggest that on everything from cross-Strait investment to handling of a PRC “peace accord” initiative (see below), they differed substantially.

The KMT ticket of Ma Ying-jeou and Vincent Siew retained a 15–17 point lead over Hsieh and Su Tseng-chang as of late November, but the margin continued to be slowly eroded.

U.S. defense secretary Robert Gates had a successful visit to Beijing, that included reaching an agreement to establish a “hot line” between American and Chinese military authorities. Nonetheless, PRC

anger over new U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, perhaps in combination with a desire to maintain secrecy about the details of an ongoing PLA military exercise, led to on-again, off-again permission for a visit by the aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk* to Hong Kong for a Thanksgiving reunion with family and friends who had traveled there at their own expense for the occasion. The net result of what has to be characterized as a PRC blunder was that *Kitty Hawk* did not go to Hong Kong, with hard feelings generated among those U.S. personnel affected. Of even greater concern to the U.S. Navy was Beijing's refusal to allow two USN minesweepers facing stormy weather to refuel in a timely manner.

In terms of cross-Strait relations, however, the recent development of greatest interest was General Secretary Hu Jintao's moderate handling of Taiwan in his political report to the 17th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, and particularly his mention of a possible cross-Strait "peace agreement." This went a considerable step beyond Jiang Zemin's "eight-point proposal" for an agreement on "cessation of hostilities," and it seemed to accord with KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou's proposed "interim peace accord." Although it is not of as immediate importance as other issues we have discussed in recent issues of *CLM*—there is no prospect of movement in this direction before the change of administration in Taipei in May 2008—it is of sufficient importance that we have chosen to focus on it in this essay, putting off more detailed and timely discussion of the presidential campaign until the next issue.

To understand the significance of Hu's proposal, we need to place it in the context of what has come before. For this reason, we start with a discussion of the evolution of Beijing's position toward the use of force against Taiwan and toward the prospects for peace.

Evolution in the PRC Position through March 2005

One point to keep in mind when thinking about possible cross-Strait peace arrangements is the distinction between the requirements for ultimate unification and the steps helpful to management of Taiwan-Mainland relations in the interim. With regard to the former, a decision to adopt a formal policy of "peaceful reunification" was first taken in late 1978 by Deng Xiaoping in the context of his consolidation of power, promotion of his reform program, and management of China's external environment through U.S.-PRC Normalization.² The new policy did not, of course, represent any compromise on the "right" to use force if necessary to defend against challenges to "one China," or even as a means to promote reunification; moreover, Deng made clear that his patience was not

unlimited.³ Still, the promotion of “peaceful reunification” was a significant shift at least in rhetorical terms, and probably in terms of basic thinking as well, away from the line on “liberation,” even “peaceful liberation.” As the New Year’s Day 1979 “NPC Standing Committee Message to Compatriots in Taiwan” announcing the new policy put it, the Mainland pledged to

. . . take present realities into account in accomplishing the great cause of reunifying the motherland and respect the status quo on Taiwan and the opinions of people in all walks of life there and adopt reasonable policies and measures in settling the question of reunification so as not to cause the people of Taiwan any losses.⁴

This has more or less remained the PRC’s policy toward reunification over the almost three decades since. But Jiang Zemin’s continuing emphasis throughout his tenure on achieving unification within a finite timeframe was noteworthy. In the Taiwan White Paper issued in February 2000, for example, the “three if’s”—conditions under which force could be used—included one (sometimes referred to as “the third ‘if’”) that strongly implied the time for achieving negotiated reunification was limited:

[I]f a grave turn of events occurs leading to the separation of Taiwan from China in any name, or if Taiwan is invaded and occupied by foreign countries, *or if the Taiwan authorities refuse, sine die, the peaceful settlement of cross-Straits reunification through negotiations*, then the Chinese Government will only be forced to adopt all drastic measures possible, including the use of force, to safeguard China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and fulfill the great cause of reunification.⁵

In mid-2004, a PRC-controlled newspaper in Hong Kong reported that Jiang was still talking about a deadline for unification, and even about using force for that purpose.⁶

Jiang, of course, also openly spoke of the potential use of force for the more limited purpose of thwarting Taiwan independence. But the presumed target of such force evolved over time. When Jiang rejected any promise not to use force against independence activities in his “eight-point proposal,” he said that any such force would not be directed at “our compatriots” in Taiwan “but against the foreign forces who intervene in China’s reunification and go in for ‘the independence of Taiwan.’” In his report to the 16th Party Congress in 2002—his last as party head—Jiang’s statement reflected the changes that were taking place within Taiwan:

Our position of never undertaking to renounce the use of force is not directed at our Taiwan compatriots. It is aimed at the foreign forces’ attempts to interfere in China’s reunification *and the Taiwan separatist forces’ schemes for “Taiwan independence.”*⁷

This perspective was still evident two years later, in September 2004, when Jiang was retiring as the Party's Central Military Commission chairman. Although, as he ceded this final top post, he endorsed the notion of exerting "utmost efforts" to resolve the Taiwan issue through peaceful means, he nonetheless felt constrained to add that "we shall by no means make the commitment to forsake the use of force; this is a major political principle."⁸

Despite Jiang's hope to complete reunification within a finite timeframe, and despite his implied threat to use force, if necessary, to bring that about, in fact his 30 January 1995 "eight-point proposal" was also a baseline document on pre-unification peace:

We have proposed time and again that negotiations should be held on officially ending the state of hostility between the two sides and accomplishing peaceful reunification step by step. Here again I solemnly propose that such negotiations be held. I suggest that, as a first step, negotiations should be held and an agreement reached on officially ending the state of hostility between the two sides under the principle that there is only one China.⁹

But with Hu Jintao's accession to power,¹⁰ the position began to evolve. First, in a very important development, on 17 May 2004, three days before Chen Shui-bian's second inauguration as president, and following a difficult campaign in which Chen had raised the issue of writing a "brand new" constitution for Taiwan and broached various other matters relating to formalization of the island's separate status, the PRC's Taiwan Affairs Office issued an "authorized statement."¹¹ The focus of the statement was not on the long-term goal of reunification, but on management of cross-Straits relations before then:

To put a resolute check on the "Taiwan independence" activities aimed at dismembering China and safeguard peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits is the most pressing task before the compatriots on both sides of the Straits.

It projected two paths that Taiwan might follow: one based on "one China," which promised closer and more harmonious relations, the other characterized by a "separatist agenda," which would be crushed:

We will never compromise on the one-China principle, never give up our efforts for peace negotiations, never falter in our sincere pursuit of peace and development on both sides of the Straits with our Taiwan compatriots, never waver in our resolve to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and never put up with "Taiwan independence".

Whether Beijing really thought that a transformation of relations was possible during Chen Shui-bian's second term or not, the statement also held out what Beijing doubtless meant to be seen by the world at large—and by people in Taiwan—as an olive branch. It said that, “no matter who holds power in Taiwan,” as long as they recognize that there is only one China in the world to which Taiwan and the Mainland both belong, give up “Taiwan independence,” and abandon separatist activities, then cross-Strait peace, stability, and development could proceed. This could include

[r]esumption of cross-Straits dialogue and negotiations, formal ending of the state of hostility through equal-footed consultations, establishing a mechanism of mutual trust in [the] military field, and jointly building a framework for peaceful, stable and growing cross-Strait relations.

Four months later, an article appeared in the PRC-controlled Hong Kong press that caught the attention of many people.¹² It reported that an “authoritative person” in Beijing—later identified as Professor Huang Jiashu of People's University— “pointed out . . . that mainland China's basic policies on Taiwan would continue to follow Jiang Zemin's Eight-Point Proposal but that there would be some adjustments in the specific implementation and wording.” “Escalating provocation” by “Taiwan independence” forces needed to be dealt with, but there had been a downgrading of urgency in the push for reunification. This had led Beijing, the “authoritative person” said, to adopt a three-pronged “countermeasure” policy: “strive for talks, prepare for war, don't fear delay” (爭取談，準備打，不怕拖).

Viewed against Jiang's pursuit of near-term reunification and the *sine die* “third ‘if’” in the February 2000 White Paper, the significant new element here was the last: “don't fear delay.” As the article amplified the concept, it meant that “under the precondition that Taiwan will not be separated from China, the mainland hopes to strive for a peaceful construction environment (和平建設環境) for 20 years and [to] maintain the status quo of the Taiwan Strait.” Thus, the article reported, unless Taiwan used constitutional change to delineate a Taiwan or Republic of China that explicitly excluded links to the Mainland, previously used phrases such as “the Taiwan issue cannot be delayed indefinitely” and “indefinite delay is equivalent to Taiwan independence” would thenceforth be avoided in Chinese Communist Party documents on Taiwan.

By the time the 2004 Defense White Paper was issued at the end of December, however, the line had hardened. Taiwan had undergone a heated LY election campaign in which Chen Shui-bian had again moved to the left, placing great stress on his view that Taiwan is a sovereign, independent state and calling for “rectification of names” of state-owned corporations as well as Taiwan's overseas representative offices. The Defense White Paper darkly proclaimed that “the situation in the relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits is grim.” All of the Chen administration's sins were laid out, capped by the conclusion that the “Taiwan independence” forces had not given up on pushing

toward their goal through a “new constitution.” These activities were described as “increasingly” having become “the biggest immediate threat to China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as peace and stability on both sides of the Taiwan Straits and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.”¹³

Beijing had been considering for some months whether to issue a “unification law” to counter Chen Shui-bian’s separatist activities, and it was in this period before the LY election—when it was widely believed the DPP would win control of the legislature—that the PRC committed itself to passing what later became known as the Anti-Secession Law. Even though, in accordance with the thrust of policy since at least May 2004, the focus of the law was blocking independence, not promoting reunification, many observers still believed that Beijing would have been wiser to reassess the overall post-LY election situation and hold off on the legislation, which inherently seemed out of synch with the DPP’s—and Chen’s—defeat in the election. But it was probably too late in PRC political and bureaucratic terms to reverse course again. Moreover, many in the Mainland believed that, especially given the softening of the text between announcement of the draft in December and enactment in March, the law struck a proper balance between its extensive enumeration of positive elements in Taiwan policy and the single article dedicated to the possible use of force if Taiwan stepped over independence-related “red lines.”¹⁴ As had been the case with the 17 May Taiwan Affairs Office statement, it was seen as useful on this occasion to get ahead of the curve, laying out the Mainland’s own positions in a pro-active way rather than always responding to Taipei’s latest moves.

In late January 2005, as the text of the Anti-Secession Law was being massaged, Politburo Standing Committee member Jia Qinglin, in what was widely seen as a softening of the PRC’s tone—though not in the requirement to accept “one China”—repeated the offer from the 17 May statement to talk to “any person” in Taiwan who ceased independence activities, not rejecting talks “just because someone has come to power”:

What the mainland is concerned about is his policies and his attitude toward the existing basis of cross-Straits negotiations. Regardless of his past rhetoric and actions, as long as he starts now to unequivocally recognize the 1992 consensus that upholds the one China principle, the cross-Straits dialogue and negotiations could resume right away, and any matter could be put on the table.¹⁵

Hu Jintao Strikes a New Chord

In early March 2005, a week before final passage of the Anti-Secession Law, Hu Jintao gave “an important speech” that set forth a “four-point guideline” for handling cross-Straits relations in the “new situation.”¹⁶ The guidelines largely followed the points in the

17 May 2004 Taiwan Affairs Office “authorized statement,” but they assumed a new importance now that they were established by Hu as one of the main pillars of Beijing’s cross-Strait policy:

- Never waver in adhering to the “one China” principle.
- Never abandon efforts to seek peaceful reunification.
- Never change the principle of placing hope on the Taiwan people.
- Never compromise in opposing “Taiwan independence” secessionist activities.

Hu still insisted on recognition of the “one China” principle and the “1992 Consensus” as the basis for moving ahead, but his tone was more moderate and he accentuated the positive opportunities to talk about an “official conclusion of the state of hostility, the establishment of military mutual trust, the Taiwan region’s room of international operation compatible with its status, the political status of the Taiwan authorities and the framework for peaceful and stable development of cross-Straits relations.” He used the term “peace” or “peaceful” (和平) 25 times in the guidelines and voiced at several places a concept that would assume increasing importance over time: the “common” (共同) aspirations and responsibilities of people on both sides of the Strait for protecting the nation’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and working out, “on an equal footing,” issues connected with “the process of realizing peaceful reunification.”¹⁷

Two months later, in early May 2005, Zhang Nianchi, director of the Shanghai East Asia Institute, published an article in a Hong Kong journal touting the virtues of the new approach toward Taiwan.¹⁸ Zhang argued for keeping one’s eye on the main issue, which was China, and recognizing that Taiwan was a secondary issue. That is, if the PRC managed its own affairs well (all the while maintaining a solid deterrent against Taiwan independence and sustaining the newly passed Anti-Secession Law), then things would inevitably go well with Taiwan. The “first and foremost task” of the Chinese people was to grow strong and prosper. For this, one needed to “swap time for space for development.” In the meantime, as it was growing stronger, China needed to give serious consideration to the special experience of Taiwan and the various concerns of the Taiwan people, including particularly their sense of “self-preservation” and their demand for “status.”

Zhang called for confidence, patience, and determination, arguing that some people were not sufficiently prepared for the protracted, complex, and difficult nature of cross-Strait relations. Consistent with Huang Jiashu’s call not to fear delay, and perhaps going a bit beyond it, Zhang wrote: “Even if Taiwan should drift away for a while, we should also have faith in the great cohesive power of the Chinese nation to heal its own wounds. . . . A temporary setback on the Taiwan issue would be considered minor, but a setback on the future and destiny of China would be major.”

Taiwan's response

As part of the pretense by both sides that they were putting forward terms acceptable to the other, Chen Shui-bian blithely ignored the inherent contradiction of his own position as reflected in a single sentence in his 2004 National Day message: “My every waking moment is spent on contemplating the grave responsibility of *how to improve cross-strait relations and secure Taiwan's status and diplomacy in the international community.*”¹⁹ Countering the PRC's precondition of “one China” with his own proposal for moving ahead “based on the existing foundation,” in his National Day Address that same day he put forward a series of proposals that included creating confidence-building measures, ending the state of hostilities, and establishing a “Code of Conduct across the Taiwan Strait.”²⁰

A month later, Chen chaired a “High-Level National Security Meeting” where he expanded on these ideas. He again called upon Beijing to “face the reality of the existence of the Republic of China.” Striking a pose of reasonableness, he said, “If both sides can be understanding and magnanimous toward each other, differences and hostility can be resolved through peaceful dialogue and rational consultations.” He also sought to get around the issue of accepting the “1992 Consensus” by stating that he was prepared to “actively promote Three-Links and cross-strait trade and cultural exchanges” and to agree on nonstop charter flights “building upon the basis of the 1992 meeting in Hong Kong.”²¹

Taipei's formal response to the Anti-Secession Law came on 29 March 2005, two weeks after its passage.²² The response charged the PRC—an “autocratic . . . one-party dictatorship” —with threatening regional peace and security by seeking to unilaterally change the status quo, escalating tensions, and violating international law in suppressing free, democratic, sovereign, and independent Taiwan.

In April 2005, as the governments of the two sides were engaged in rhetorical one-upmanship, KMT chairman Lien Chan traveled to Beijing where he and—using his party title for this purpose—CCP General Secretary Hu Jintao issued a joint press communiqué. Based on a “common proposition” of the two parties “to uphold the ‘Consensus of '92’, oppose ‘Taiwan independence,’ pursue peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, promote the development of cross-strait ties, and safeguard the interests of compatriots on both sides of the strait,” they agreed on five tasks:

- Promote resumption of cross-strait negotiations as soon as possible, and pursue together the happiness of the people on both sides;
- Promote an end to the state of hostilities, and reach a peace accord;
- Promote all-round cross-strait economic exchanges, establish a cross-strait economic cooperation mechanism;
- Promote consultations on issues of participation in international activities, which concern the Taiwan public; and
- Establish a platform for periodic party-to-party contact.²³

Among the detailed points under these broad headings were a call for establishment of a “military mutual trust mechanism” (echoing the Taiwan Affairs Office’s 17 May 2004 authorized statement, which had contained the first public PRC proposal for cross-Strait military confidence-building measures), opening direct sea and air links, holding “priority discussion” on Taiwan’s WHO participation (*once* cross-Strait consultations had been resumed), and working together “to create conditions to gradually find the ultimate solution method” for handling Taiwan’s participation in the international community.

Shortly thereafter, in conversation with visiting PFP chairman James Soong, Hu Jintao reiterated a long-standing PRC proposal to establish the “three direct links” through professional associations even before formal cross-Strait dialogue was resumed.²⁴

Although the DPP’s unexpected failure to gain control of the LY in the December 2004 elections had caused the Chen administration to put forth a “moderate” face that lasted for most of the next year,²⁵ these “united front” approaches by Beijing to the pan-Blue opposition parties virtually guaranteed Chen would reject any agreements Hu reached with Lien or Soong. By late 2005 and the beginning of 2006, perhaps in part to reinvigorate his rapidly sinking public support, the Taiwan president once again assumed the offensive and, in a progression of speeches, he laid the foundation for steps to reinforce Taiwan’s separate status.

In his National Day Rally speech in early October 2005, Chen called for “comprehensive constitutional reviews and revisions” and stressed the importance of Taiwan’s diplomatic success: “The expansion of international participation is a core aspiration that links Taiwan to the world.”²⁶

Following DPP setbacks in so-called “three-in-one” local elections that December, the “moderate” face of the administration, Premier Frank Hsieh, stepped down and Chen stepped up the pace of his efforts to underscore Taiwan’s separate status. In his 1 January 2006 New Year’s address,²⁷ Chen asserted that the PLA had adopted a three-stage plan to attack Taiwan, thus arguably vitiating the precondition for adhering to the “four noes, one will not” policy of his two inaugural addresses. Less than a month later, in his 29 January 2006 Lunar New Year remarks, he proposed to “earnestly consider” abolishing the National Unification Council (NUC) and National Unification Guidelines (NUG)—even though maintaining them was the “one will not” dimension of his earlier pledges.²⁸ In that speech, he also promoted adoption of a new constitution (which later emerged as a proposal for a “Second Republic Constitution”) and, significantly for what followed, he raised “for careful consideration” whether Taiwan should not apply to the United Nations in the name of “Taiwan” (用台灣的名字).²⁹

Beijing Struggles with a Response

In the weeks that followed, Beijing focused primarily on the NUC/NUG issue.³⁰ Although the decision in late February to scrap the Council and Guidelines did not in itself cross any PRC “red lines,” Hu Jintao branded the action as a “dangerous step” toward “Taiwan independence.”³¹ Perhaps even more important to Beijing than what Taipei did was Washington’s eventual acquiescence in Chen’s action. It raised doubts in Beijing about American ability, or willingness, to keep Chen to his word and to forestall still more provocative steps in the future.

Indeed, as one observer saw it, Chen partially designed the action against the Council and Guidelines specifically to create a rift between Beijing and Washington.³² In this view, although the U.S. opposition to “Taiwan independence” is “not without a measure of sincerity,” it is primarily a “stop-gap measure taken in a passive, crisis-management and controlling manner.” Thus, the United States responds to Taiwan’s provocative moves in accordance with its judgment about the seriousness of Beijing’s response, not because opposing independence is a part of American national strategy, as it is part of the PRC’s. According to this analysis, the U.S. approach provides openings for “Taiwan independence” forces to take a substantial step forward, followed by a small step back to appease Washington, the net effect of which is slow encroachment on the Mainland’s bottom line with implicit American acquiescence. The author called for the United States to oppose not only “Taiwan independence” as “the ultimate conclusion” but also any attempt by Taipei to push toward independence.

Whether that call has been satisfied by stronger American objections to Taiwan moves since then is a matter of judgment. But it is worth noting that the arguably inadequate U.S. response to the National Unification Council and Guidelines matter was followed by a much more pointed and effective response to the proposal for a “Second Republic Constitution,” contributing to its eventual shelving by the Chen administration.

That said, the third of Chen’s Lunar New Year’s speech goals, application to the UN under the name of “Taiwan,” then rose to prominence in early 2007, once again heightening PRC concerns about both U.S. will and effectiveness in such matters. In this case however, the DPP-proposed referendum on the UN issue was viewed by Beijing as far more consequential than the Council and Guidelines, as a step by Taipei to lay a legal foundation for moving to formal, *de jure* independence.³³ This PRC judgment was reinforced by an accompanying new round of “name rectification” or “desinicization” efforts by Taipei as well as a new campaign that implied a renewed focus on pursuit of a new constitution and independence.³⁴

Beijing has struggled to find the right formula to balance two important considerations. On the one hand, it wants to demonstrate how seriously it takes the UN matter—especially the referendum—and to credibly signal, without precipitating a near-term crisis, that any further movement toward formal independence could trigger military

confrontation. On the other hand, it is seeking to lay the foundation for smoother cross-Strait relations after May 2008, and it realizes that too sharp a reaction now could make progress after May more difficult.³⁵

For the first of these purposes, Beijing rolled out its heavy guns in the form of a statement by Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan on the 80th anniversary of the founding of the PLA. Cao repeated the standard formulas about making “utmost efforts” for the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations and Beijing’s commitment to “strive for the prospect of peaceful reunification.” But drawing on language from Article 8 of the Anti-Secession Law, he also warned that “We are determined, able, and prepared to check ‘Taiwan independence’ and major incidents leading to ‘Taiwan independence’ so as to resolutely defend our state sovereignty and territorial integrity.”³⁶

Moreover, as discussed in *CLM* 22, while in Australia for the APEC Summit meeting a month later, Hu Jintao took a particularly sharp line on Taiwan in a speech to a Chinese audience. And in his meeting with President Bush, he identified the coming several months as a “period of high danger” in cross-Strait relations: “We must issue harsher warnings to the Taiwan authorities that any separatist attempt in any form seeking ‘Taiwan independence’ will go in vain.”³⁷

Nonetheless, and despite the passage of the (somewhat watered down but still provocative) “Normal Country Resolution” by the DPP at the end of September 2007³⁸ as well as Chen Shui-bian’s 10 October National Day address focused on the UN issue,³⁹ Hu Jintao seemed to shift gears as he worked on the other aspect of the policy, that is, laying a foundation for more-productive cross-Strait relations following Chen’s departure from office.

Hu’s 17th Party Congress Proposal for a Peace Agreement

In his 15 October 2007 report to the 17th Party Congress, Hu laid out a comprehensive cross-Strait policy in a brief but important statement.⁴⁰ He did not touch specifically on neuralgic issues such as the DPP’s “Normal Country Resolution” or the UN issue. Instead, he repeated the “four-point guideline” from spring 2005—including its emphasis on the “one China” principle—but then went on to add an element that had been included in the joint press statement with Lien Chan in April 2005 but had not appeared previously in authoritative documents:

On the basis of the one-China principle, let us discuss a formal end to the state of hostility between the two sides, *reach a peace agreement* (和平协议), construct a framework for peaceful development of cross-Straits relations, and thus usher in a new phase of peaceful development.⁴¹

In an important article interpreting Hu's approach, Professor Huang Jiashu described what he sees as a significant change in Hu's thinking about both cross-Strait relations in general and about the "one China" principle.⁴² As Huang put it, to realistically expect to reach a peace agreement on the basis of the "one China" principle, one needs to introduce greater flexibility into that principle. And, in fact, he sees just such a change taking place, with Hu moving increasingly to identify the "one China" principle with people (属人主义) rather than with government (属政府主义) or territory (属地主义). Huang cites several advantages of this "people-oriented approach,"⁴³ but what is equally interesting is his observation that, while "joint" or "common" (共同) interests and tasks have been cited before, Hu for the first time captured this "people-oriented" approach in a new way in his 17th Party Congress Report in what Huang calls the "three commons" ("三个共同" or *sange gongtong*). These are: a community with a shared destiny based on shared blood (命运共同体); the two sides having a common homeland (共同家园); and the two sides needing to decide together (共同决定) as the entire people of the Chinese nation those issues that relate to sovereignty and territory to protect that common homeland.

In bringing his analysis to bear on the current controversy over use of referenda in Taiwan, Huang expands on Hu's point that any steps relating to China's sovereignty and territorial integrity need to be decided by the entire Chinese people, including the people of Taiwan. On the one hand, Huang notes, Hu is warning those separatist forces who would use a referendum in Taiwan to promote de jure Taiwan independence, emphasizing that such matters cannot be decided by a referendum among the Taiwan people alone. But on the other hand, he says, the matter of referenda can be viewed on two other levels. At one level, if a referendum in Taiwan concerned only party assets or corruption,⁴⁴ then of course the Mainland would have no objections; what Beijing opposes is separatism, not democracy. At another level, when, in the future, the two sides unify, this would be a "change in the status quo," and since this is a matter that must be decided in common, at the appropriate time one would certainly want to seek the assent of the people of Taiwan.⁴⁵ By implication, Huang appears to be suggesting that a referendum could be one of the possible ways of doing that.

Hu's emphasis on "commonality,"⁴⁶ Huang says, signals the PRC's determination that decisions on future cross-Strait relations should be approached entirely on a "win-win" basis. Thus, he affirms, seeking to reach a "peace accord" means that Beijing is not at all anxious about forcing completion of political unification in the current period; that it has more patience about resolving the Taiwan question; that, as it implements the "do not fear delay" approach, it is reflecting its better understanding of the sentiments of the Taiwan people; and that Beijing is showing that it has more sincerity in seeking compromise and that it aspires to take greater account of the views of the other side.

Consistent with this analysis, another article in the PRC-controlled Hong Kong media explained that, in its October meeting, the Central Committee, "proceeding from Taiwan's current conditions," had determined that discussions on "one country, two

systems” and peaceful reunification could be shelved for now and that “efforts should be made to promote ‘the signing of a peace agreement between the two sides’ as soon as possible.”⁴⁷ How this squares with Hu’s prominent reference to “one country, two systems” in his political report to the 17th Party Congress is not clear.

Moreover, at least one important official statement in recent weeks underscored Beijing’s short-term concern with possible independence-oriented initiatives by Chen Shui-bian before May, including some notably strong language about the UN referendum.⁴⁸

Unsurprisingly, Chen Shui-bian rejected Hu’s proposal, going so far as to demand that Beijing first abandon the “one China” principle, abolish the Anti-Secession Law, and dismantle the missiles opposite Taiwan.⁴⁹ But Frank Hsieh, interestingly enough, took a softer line. Perhaps attempting not to be outflanked by Ma on the issue of cross-Strait peace, he said that, as long as Taiwan’s “essential character” (identity) and “dignity” (主體性和尊嚴) could be maintained, any peace proposal was feasible. Asked whether such a peace agreement could be concluded within a “one China” framework or had to be concluded “in the name of ‘Taiwan,’” Hsieh responded that that was a “technical issue” (技術性的問題) that did not need to be addressed at this point.⁵⁰ Ma Ying-jeou, on the other hand, perhaps to ensure he was not cast in the role of Beijing’s agent, responded somewhat more cautiously. He called Hu’s proposal for peaceful management of cross-Strait relations an “improvement,” but placed his initial stress on the requirement that the future of Taiwan had to be decided by the Taiwan people themselves.⁵¹ Ma later reemphasized his intention to work for a peace accord, but he underscored that the precondition for signing any such accord was the removal of “all the missiles targeting Taiwan.”⁵²

Conclusion

Clearly there will be no movement toward a peace accord before May, and perhaps for some time after that. But the point of this long rehearsal of the evolution of Beijing’s thinking about what cross-Strait peace entails—and at what stage, and in what way, to pursue it—is to suggest that there is at least some prospect of moving toward greater stability in the next couple of years. By most accounts, Hu Jintao has strengthened his leadership position. When this is combined with the fact that most Mainland observers, in and out of government, say that the evolution of leadership thinking on Taiwan in the past three or four years has come from Hu himself, rather than from a body of advisors, and with the likelihood of a more moderate, even if “nationalistic,” administration in Taipei soon, there may be an opportunity to make progress.

That is not going to be easy by any means. Not only will there be skeptics on both sides of the Strait who will see the interests of their side at risk in any sort of agreement,

but the task of defining terms and working out procedures will be extremely complex even with the best of intentions. Still, one has to assume—or at least hope—that, even as the Taiwan election campaign moves ahead at full speed, some serious thinking will take place on both sides about the initial, informal cross-Strait exchange of ideas that could usefully take place as early as next spring.

Notes

¹ “Roundtable Briefing With Taiwan Media: Thomas Christensen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs,” Washington, 6 December 2007 (<http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2007/96691.htm>) and “Press Roundtable: AIT Chairman Raymond F. Burghardt,” Taipei, 11 December 2007 (<http://www.ait.org.tw/en/news/officialtext/viewer.aspx?id=2007121103>).

² Alan D. Romberg, *Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice* (Washington: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2003), 96.

³ Deng told a visiting congressional delegation in January 1979 that it would be all right for Taiwan to refuse talks on reunification for one or two years, but if that refusal persisted for a long time, for example 10 years, then the issue would have to be settled by use of force. (Romberg, *Rein In*, 97).

⁴ Romberg, *Rein In*, 97.

⁵ “The One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue,” White Paper released by the Taiwan Affairs Office and the Information Office of the State Council, 21 February 2000 (http://www.gwytb.gov.cn:8088/detail.asp?table=WhitePaper&title=White%20Papers%20On%20Taiwan%20Issue&m_id=4; emphasis added).

⁶ “PRC says ready to attack Taiwan within 20 years,” AFP, 16 July 2004 (disseminated by *Taiwan Security Research*, <http://taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AFP-160704.htm>).

⁷ “Jiang Zemin’s Report to the 16th Party Congress, 2002, Parts VII and VIII (<http://www.chinalaw.gov.cn/jsp/contentpub/browser/contentproe.jsp?contentid=co1775203762>; emphasis added).

⁸ “Hu’s takeover ‘natural and convincing’: Jiang,” *People’s Daily*, 21 September 2004 (http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200409/21/eng20040921_157680.html).

⁹ “Jiang Zemin’s Eight-point Proposal (1995-01-30),” Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council (http://www.gwytb.gov.cn:8088/detail.asp?table=JiangEP&title=Search&m_id=3).

¹⁰ Hu became General Secretary of the Party in November 2002, state president in March 2003, chairman of the Party’s Central Military Commission in September 2004, and chairman of the state Central Military Commission in spring 2005.

¹¹ “Taiwan Affairs Office of CPC Central Committee, Taiwan Affairs Office of State Council are authorized to issue statement on current cross-Straits relations,” 17 May 2004 (http://www.gwytb.gov.cn:8088/detail.asp?table=Headlines&title=Search&m_id=154; Chinese-language text is at http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2004-05/17/content_1472943.htm).

¹² Che Zhiguo, “Beijing’s Authoritative Person Analyzes Fine-Tuning of Policy on Taiwan,” *Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao*, 25 September 2004 (translated by Open Source Center [OSC], CPP20040925000027). The occasion for the discussion was a large gathering of officials and experts in Beijing (“Beijing Officials, Academia Reach Consensus on Reunification Law,” *Hong Kong Hsiang Kang Shang Pao*, 26 September 2004, A7, translated by OSC, CPP20041028000100).

There was much debate subsequently over whether Hu Jintao himself embraced the three-part slogan, but there was broad agreement that, whether he had or not, it captured the spirit of Hu’s own approach, including that, as long as there was “a ray of hope” for peaceful unification, the PRC would persist in seeking it.

¹³ “China’s National Defense in 2004,” *People’s Daily*, 27 December 2004 (<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/whitepaper/defense2004/defense2004.html>). The United States also

came in for criticism in this context: “The United States has on many occasions reaffirmed adherence to the one China policy, observance of the three joint communiqués and opposition to ‘Taiwan independence.’ However, it continues to increase, quantitatively and qualitatively, its arms sales to Taiwan, sending a wrong signal to the Taiwan authorities. The US action does not serve a stable situation across the Taiwan Straits.”

In the meantime, however, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell had directly rebutted Chen’s claims of Taiwan’s sovereign independence (“Interview with Mike Chinoy of CNN International TV,” U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/37366.htm>, and “Interview with Anthony Yuen of Phoenix TV,” U.S. Department of State, 25 October 2004 <http://www.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/37361.htm>).

The U.S. had also criticized the name change proposals: “These changes of terminology for government controlled enterprises or economic and cultural offices abroad, in our view, would appear to unilaterally change Taiwan’s status, and for that reason we’re not supportive of them.” (Daily Press Briefing, DPB 199, Department of State, 6 December 2004; <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2004/39460.htm>). Many people in Taiwan believe that these American positions contributed importantly to the DPP defeat in the LY elections in December.

¹⁴ “Article 8 – In the event that the ‘Taiwan independence’ secessionist forces should act under any name or by any means to cause the fact of Taiwan’s secession from China, or that major incidents entailing Taiwan’s secession from China should occur, or that possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted, the state shall employ non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.” (“Full text of Anti-Secession Law,” *China Daily*, 14 March 2005; http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-03/14/content_2694180.htm; Chinese-language text is available at http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2005-03/14/content_2694168.htm.)

¹⁵ “Cross-Straits talks on basis of ‘one China’ principle,” *People’s Daily*, 29 January 2005 (http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200501/29/eng20050129_172276.html).

¹⁶ “胡锦涛:发展两岸关系4点意见,” *Xinhua*, 6 March 2005

(<http://www.lianghui.org.cn/chinese/news/803430.htm>). An English-language version is available at “Four-point Guidelines on Cross-Straits Relations Set Forth by President Hu,” Third Session 10th National People’s Congress and Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, 4 March 2005 (http://www.gwytb.gov.cn:8088/detail.asp?table=Headlines&title=Search&m_id=305).

¹⁷ “Peace” or “peaceful” (和平) appears 15 times in the Anti-Secession Law that passed 10 days later, on 14 March; “common” (共同) appears three times.

¹⁸ Zhang Nianchi, “The Taiwan Issue and the Future and Destiny of China,” *Zhongguo Pinglun*, 1 May 2005, 11–16 (translated by OSC, CPP20050509000078).

¹⁹ “President Chen’s National Day Message,” Office of the President, 10 October 2004

(http://www.president.gov.tw/en/prog/news_release/document_content.php?id=1105497996&pre_id=1105497996&g_category_number=145&category_number_2=145; emphasis added).

²⁰ “President Chen’s Address to the National Day Rally,” Office of the President, 10 October 2004

(http://www.president.gov.tw/en/prog/news_release/print.php?id=1105497997).

Chen defined the “existing foundation” with clarity: “The sovereignty of the Republic of China is vested in the 23 million people of Taiwan. The Republic of China is Taiwan, and Taiwan is the Republic of China. This is an indisputable fact.” This theme has frequently been augmented with such formulations as “Taiwan is Taiwan, and China is China; Taiwan and China are two completely different countries.” (“The President Attends the Commemorations of the Democratic Progressive Party’s 20th Founding Anniversary,” Office of the President, 28 September 2006, translated by OSC, CPP20060928071001).

All of this was predictably rejected by Beijing, which charged Chen with lying, cheating, and provoking disruption of peace and stability through “an open and audacious expression of ‘Taiwan independence.’” At the same time, the TAO spokesman reiterated Beijing’s position as expressed in the 17 May 2004 authorized statement, including the prospects for a bright future if only Taiwan would embrace the “one China” principle. (“Chen’s ‘easing tension’ words nothing but ‘lies’,” *Xinhua*, 13 October 2004, http://www.gwytb.gov.cn:8088/detail.asp?table=Headlines&title=Search&m_id=221).

- ²¹ “President Chen Presides over a High-level National Security Meeting,” Office of the President, 10 November 2004 (http://www.president.gov.tw/en/prog/news_release/document_content.php?id=1105498011&pre_id=1105498011&g_category_number=145&category_number_2=145).
- ²² “The Official Position of the Republic of China (Taiwan) on China’s Passing of the Anti-secession (Anti-Separation) Law,” Mainland Affairs Council, 29 March 2005 (<http://www.mac.gov.tw/english/english/anti/mofa940329e.htm>).
- ²³ “Text of KMT-Beijing agreement,” Xinhua, 29 April 2005 (reported by BBC News, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/4498791.stm>).
- ²⁴ “Hu Jintao Sets Forth Four Viewpoints on Cross-Straits Ties,” Xinhua, 12 May 2005 (<http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/Leaders/128695.htm>). Beijing had long since laid out two alternative paths for establishing the “three links.” One was through resumed SEF-ARATS dialogue, but that still required acceptance by Taiwan of the “one China” principle. The other was to negotiate through “professional associations,” even though it was fully expected that on both sides the principal negotiators would be officials acting in an ostensibly “private” capacity. The current government in Taipei has flirted with this second model, but has eventually backed away each time for political reasons.
- ²⁵ It was as part of this new approach that the current DPP presidential candidate, Frank Hsieh Chang-ting, was appointed premier.
- ²⁶ “President Chen’s Address to the National Day Rally,” Office of the President, 10 October 2005 (http://www.president.gov.tw/en/prog/news_release/print.php?id=1105498504).
- ²⁷ “President Chen’s New Year’s Message,” 1 January 2006, Office of the President (http://www.president.gov.tw/en/prog/news_release/document_content.php?id=1105498802&pre_id=1105498802&g_category_number=145&category_number_2=145).
- ²⁸ “President Meets Fellow Villagers of Tainan County for Lunar New Year Reunion Lunch Party,” Office of the President, 29 January 2006 (translated by OSC, CPP20060203312001).
- ²⁹ “總統與台南鄉親歡聚新年團圓餐敘,” Office of the President, 29 January 2005 (http://www.president.gov.tw/php-bin/prez/shownews.php?issueDate=&issueYY=95&issueMM=01&issueDD=29&title=&content=&_section=3&_pieceLen=50&_orderBy=issueDate%2Crid&_desc=1&_recNo=0).
- ³⁰ These issues have been covered in some detail in previous issues of *China Leadership Monitor*. The NUC/NUG issue was reviewed in “The Taiwan Tangle,” *CLM* 18, Summer 2006; the “Second Republic Constitution” proposal was discussed in “Politicians Jockey for Position in Taiwan’s 2007–2008 Elections, While Japan Jockeys for Position Across the Strait,” *CLM* 20, Winter 2007; and the UN referendum question in “Applying to the UN ‘in the name of ‘Taiwan’,”” *CLM* 22, Fall 2007.
- ³¹ “Hu Jintao slashes ‘Taiwan independence’ attempt,” Xinhua, 28 February 2006 (http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-02/28/content_4239872.htm).
- ³² Huang Jiashu, “Passive US strategy could be upgraded,” *China Daily*, 12 May 2006 (http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200605/12/eng20060512_264998.html).
- ³³ Alan D. Romberg, “Applying to the UN ‘in the name of ‘Taiwan’,”” *CLM* 22, Fall 2007.
- ³⁴ “Chen declares ‘Four Wants and One Without’,” *China Post*, 5 March 2007.
- ³⁵ A recent poll showed the growing gap between the two sides in the minds of people in Taiwan, which should reinforce the impetus in Beijing for a more productive approach. (“People across Taiwan Strait become increasingly distant: poll,” CNA, 28 November 2007.)
- ³⁶ “Cao Gangchuan Says: We Are Determined, Able, and Prepared To Check ‘Taiwan Independence’,” Hong Kong *Zhongguo Tongxun She* (ZTS), 31 July 2007 (translated by OSC, CPP20070731163017).
- ³⁷ “Chinese President Hu Jintao Meets with His U.S. Counterpart Bush,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 6 September 2007 (<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t360601.htm>).
- ³⁸ “民進黨通過 “正常國家決議文,” (full text), dwnews.com, 30 September 2007 (http://www5.chinesenewsnet.com/MainNews/Topics/2007_9_30_7_42_29_326.html; an English translation, “Normal Nation Resolution,” is available at the Democratic Progressive Party [DPP] website, http://www.dpp.org.tw/upload/policy/20071029100043_link.pdf).
- ³⁹ “President Chen Shui-bian’s 2007 National Day Address,” Office of the President, 10 October 2007 (<http://www.president.gov.tw/en/>).

⁴⁰ “Full text of Hu Jintao’s report at 17th Party Congress,” Press Center of the 17th CPC National Congress, 15 October 2007 (<http://english.cpc.people.com.cn/66102/6290214.html>; emphasis added). (The Chinese-language version of Hu’s remarks on Taiwan is available at <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/104019/104099/6429414.html>).

⁴¹ The final resolution of the 17th Party Congress chose to elide most of these themes, sticking instead to tried and true formulations: “With a firm grasp of the theme of peaceful development of relations across the Taiwan Straits, we will sincerely work for the well-being of our compatriots on both sides of the Straits and for peace in the Taiwan Straits region, vigorously advance the great cause of peaceful national reunification, resolutely oppose secessionist activities aimed at ‘Taiwan independence,’ and safeguard China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation.” (“Full text of resolution on CPC Central Committee report,” Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, 21 October 2007, http://www.gwytb.gov.cn:8088/detail.asp?table=headlines&title=Headlines&m_id=763.)

⁴² Huang Jiashu, “Reactions after reading Hu Jintao’s political report to the 17th Party Congress,” (“胡锦涛十七大政治报告读后感”), 20 October 2007 (copy provided to this writer by Professor Huang). An abridged version appeared in English three weeks later: “A common desire for cross-Straits peace,” *China Daily*, 9 November 2007 (http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2007-11/09/content_6242719.htm). Except where indicated, my discussion of the article is based on the Chinese text.

⁴³ In the *China Daily* version they are listed as:

First, they are closer to the contemporary democratic belief that “the people are the masters of the country and national sovereignty belongs to the whole nation”.

Second, they go beyond the dispute between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits over a government’s representativeness and which side holds the territorial sovereignty, and creates more flexible space for the two sides to reach a consensus on the one-China issue.

Third, they express more humanitarian concern and sentiment. Consider the phrases “common destiny” and “common homeland”, which remind us that compatriots on both sides of the Taiwan Straits are of the same blood and cultural heritage. They also reflect on the lives and development of more than 1 million Taiwanese business people operating on the mainland; and, in terms of the future, they paint a beautiful picture of people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits pursuing peace, development and prosperity together.

Fourth, it is easier to win understanding and support from the international community.

⁴⁴ These are the topics of the referenda that will be on the ballot in January 2008, along with the LY candidate ballots.

⁴⁵ “将来两岸统一，也是‘改变现状’，既然是‘共同决定’，届时一定要征得台湾同胞的同意”

⁴⁶ In addition to the *sange gongtong*, Huang counts up four other times that “共同” was used in this segment of Hu’s speech, bringing the total of such references to seven. This was two more times than “共同” was used in the March 2005 “four-point guideline” speech, even though that earlier speech was almost four times as long as the Taiwan section in the 17th Party Congress report. As Huang notes, this makes the latter probably the first time the phrase has been used in such concentration in as important a policy document as this.

⁴⁷ Yang Sunxi, “The Two Sides of the Taiwan Strait Should Sign a Peace Agreement as Soon as Possible,” *Hong Kong Wen Wei Po*, 31 October 2007 (translated by OSC, CPP20071101329002).

⁴⁸ Sun Yafu, “Sincerely Work for the Well-Being of the Compatriots on Both Sides of the Strait and for Peace in the Taiwan Strait Region: Studying and Implementing the Spirit of the 17th Party Congress,” *People’s Daily*, 21 November 2007 (translated by OSC, CPP20071121701003).

Sun’s article contained all of the positive words and ideas in Hu’s report, as well as expressing great confidence about defeating Taiwan independence forces and the international community’s rejection of their activities. But he also had the following to say:

The development of the situation in “holding a referendum for the purposes of joining the United Nations” and the result of the election of Taiwan’s new leader will produce a significant influence on the trend for the future situation in Taiwan, on the “Taiwan independence” forces’

ability to carry out secessionist activities, and on the Taiwan authorities' policies concerning the cross-strait relations . . .

The most important task in our work related to Taiwan now is still opposing and containing the secessionist activities aimed at "Taiwan independence," especially the activities aimed at "de jure Taiwan independence," and we will never allow the Chen Shui-bian authorities to succeed in their plot of "holding a referendum for the purpose of joining the United Nations (绝不允许陈水扁当局推动“入联公投”的图谋得逞).

It is not clear what "never allow . . . to succeed" really means. Read literally, one might think that the PRC will intervene to block the referendum. This seems highly unlikely, however. More to the point, it reflects the PRC view that passage of the referendum will create a legal basis for moving ahead to formal independence, and that the PRC will absolutely not tolerate that. If so, this is hardly a new position. But it is a very strong reminder of the importance of the referendum in Beijing's eyes, and it was no doubt designed as a reminder to all concerned, not least the United States, that this is serious business. Interestingly, care is taken to ascribe these intentions to "the Chen Shui-bian authorities," thus reserving PRC judgment about Frank Hsieh's responsibility.

⁴⁹ "President Chen Responds to China's Push for a Cross-strait Peace Agreement," ("總統針對中國推動兩岸和平協議作出回應"), Office of the President, 16 October 2007 (<http://www.president.gov.tw/>).

⁵⁰ Lin Hsien-yuan, "Hsieh: Cross-Strait peace agreement feasible if it can protect Taiwan's dignity." *China Times*, 16 October 2007 (林憲源, "兩岸和平協議 謝: 能維持台灣尊嚴就可行"; <http://news.chinatimes.com/2007Cti/2007Cti-Focus/2007Cti-Focus-Content/0,4518,9610160141+96101609+0+174729+0,00.html>).

On the other hand, Hsiao Bi-khim, who has been running the diplomatic aspects of Hsieh's campaign, and who recently was appointed to head the DPP International Affairs Department, said that talks with the Mainland under the rubric of the "one China" principle are not acceptable, since that would deny the right of the Taiwan people to make the choice of their own free will. (Deborah Kuo, "Dialogue under 'one China' premise unacceptable: DPP," CNA, 19 October 2007.)

As opposed to Hsieh, who said that, while he would not collaborate with Ma to promote cross-strait peace because the issue is the responsibility of the national leader and "we have only one president," he and Ma could work together "for the mutual benefit of all concerned" (T.C. Jiang, "DPP presidential candidate vows to pursue cross-strait peace," CNA, 12 November 2007), Hsiao suggested greater distance from Ma, reportedly saying that the "unconditional acceptance" of the "one China" principle by "some individuals and political parties" in Taiwan made her feel "extremely distressed." Hsiao's position more closely tracked that of Chen Shui-bian, who also sought to keep distance between the DPP and Ma, arguing that Ma's suggestions for signing a peace accord under the "1992 Consensus" was a "trick to deceive Taiwan's people" and would lead to Taiwan being swallowed up by the Mainland. (Flor Wang, "President rejects tycoon's call for peace law," CNA, 13 November 2007.)

⁵¹ Elizabeth Hsu, "KMT candidate proposes cross-strait talks based on '1992 Consensus'," CNA, 16 October 2007. The United States, meanwhile, called it "a step in the right direction." (Robert J. Saiget, "China's Hu calls for peace agreement with Taiwan," AFP, 15 October 2007.)

At least one Mainland analyst saw Ma's response as defiant, and as a result stressed Beijing's continued reliance on the people of Taiwan, not the authorities, even after next May: "Ma Ying-jeou has yet to take office, but he already displays the airs of one who owns Taiwan and does not take the agreement between the KMT and CPC seriously. To quote an old saying in officialdom, the tail wags the dog. It appears that we cannot put too much of our hope on those who run the government in Taiwan, regardless of who they are. Instead we have to pin our hopes for the future of the strait on the people of Taiwan." (Lu Li, "Hu Jintao's Report to the 17th CPC National Congress Contains New Guidelines for Peaceful Reunification," Hong Kong *Ta Kung Pao*, 24 October 2007; translated by OSC, CPP20071102710013.)

⁵² Deborah Kuo, “KMT candidate to seek cross-strait peace accord if elected,” CNA, 12 November 2007. At times over the past two years, Ma has suggested that *reducing missiles* opposite Taiwan would be a precondition for *opening* peace accord negotiations. It is unclear whether the newly stated requirement for *removing all missiles* targeting Taiwan before *signing* such an accord is to replace that earlier precondition or be added to it.