

eventually to New Delhi's "forward" policy in 1961 of advancing Indian Army sentry posts into the zone disputed with China. After more than a year of successive official protests and authoritative *People's Daily* commentary, Beijing moved with military force on October 20, 1962.

As the details in appendix 2 show, the protest calculus employed by the PRC's MFA and *People's Daily's* hierarchy of authoritative commentary was different in the 1960s than the practices of the post-Mao period exemplified in the 1978–1979 Sino-Vietnamese border crisis analyzed above. In particular, following media practices of that day, *People's Daily* published authoritative "observer" articles instead of commentator articles. But the same pattern of escalating authority and language was evident in the 1961–1962 border crisis with India.

Signaling Case Studies—Taiwan

Over the past two decades, Beijing has deployed its classical hierarchy of warning signals at least four times regarding Taiwan. These were:

- in 1991, as the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) made explicit its Taiwan independence platform and the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) moved to convene the first session of the ROC National Assembly since 1946
- in 1995, after Washington surprised Beijing by issuing ROC President Lee Teng-hui a visa to visit the United States
- in 1999, when ROC President Lee Teng-hui described the relationship between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland as a "special state-to-state relationship" in the early months of campaigning for March 2000 general elections
- in 2003–2004, when ROC President Chen Shui-bian and DPP politicians pressed passage of a referendum law and then put referenda on the ballot for March 2004 general elections.

In none of these instances did Beijing ultimately use military force against Taipei, although once Beijing's efforts to deter Lee Teng-hui from actually making his trip to the United States in June 1995 failed, Beijing did stage over the ensuing 9 months a series of three military exercises—including missile "test" firings into the East China Sea in August 1995 and off Taiwan in March 1996—to underscore its readiness to use military force to achieve its objectives. And in 1999, Beijing's warnings about potential use of military force reached the highest levels

of authority and sharpness. Each of these case studies therefore offers insight and clarity into how Beijing would respond to cross-strait tensions relevant to today. Appendix 3 offers detailed chronologies for each of these cases.

1991

The context for Beijing's deployment of its classical hierarchy of warning statements in 1991 was, first, KMT steps to revise the 1946 ROC constitution and hold elections for a new National Assembly; and second, escalation of public advocacy on behalf of Taiwan independence. An extraordinary session of the National Assembly in April 1991 mandated an end to the period of national mobilization and elections for a new National Assembly in 1991 and for the Legislative Yuan in 1992. The new National Assembly elections held on December 21—the first since November 1946—were a critical step in the evolution of ROC politics because they ended the 45-year tenure of mainland members who were elected in 1946 (having migrated to Taiwan at the end of the Chinese civil war), and installed a new membership that was overwhelmingly Taiwanese in origin. This transition from decrepit mainland holdovers to Taiwanese politicians enabled long-suppressed advocacy of Taiwan independence to move to the forefront of the political agenda.

Advocacy of Taiwan independence was in particular the agenda of the Democratic Progressive Party, which was founded in 1986 before the KMT lifted the longstanding ROC ban on political parties other than the KMT itself in 1987 and that operated under a continuing threat of prosecution under a statute that banned advocacy of Taiwan independence. As Taiwan's politics liberalized, however, public agitation on behalf of independence escalated. As the KMT and ROC dropped enforcement of the ban, the DPP in 1991 moved to write a new party platform that explicitly incorporated a plank on independence. In August 1991, a DPP seminar produced a draft for a new state constitution that declared Taiwan a "democratic republic" and renamed the ROC the "Republic of Taiwan." The following October 13, 1991, the DPP formally adopted a platform calling for the establishment of a "Republic of Taiwan" by popular referendum.

In the narrower cross-strait context, Taipei had begun to respond to Beijing's decade-long pitch to begin cross-strait exchanges that might lead to what Beijing hoped would be a "peaceful unification" and resolution of the Taiwan question. After the KMT lifted the ban on Taiwanese tourist travel and business investment in the PRC, a million Taiwanese a year were visiting the mainland and Taiwanese investment on the mainland coast skyrocketed. In November 1990, Taipei established the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), an unofficial body that would coordinate issues arising from the growing cross-strait exchanges. The rise of the DPP and advocacy

of Taiwan independence and the concurrent Taiwanization of ROC politics put Beijing's long-term goals in jeopardy.

The broader international context in which these developments in Taiwan unfolded included the wave of new democracies created among some of the states of the former East European Soviet bloc, the independence of the three Baltic states from the Soviet Union, the evolving collapse of the Soviet Union itself, and the relaxation of tension between the two Koreas, leading to the December 1991 bilateral nonaggression and denuclearization pacts. The PRC continued to suffer from the blackened international image it received from its brutal suppression of the Tiananmen demonstrations in June 1989, although the G7 countries had already begun in 1990 to roll back the economic (but not military) sanctions they had imposed the year before.

Through the early months of 1991, PRC media reported on political trends in Taiwan and commented only at low-level, nonauthoritative levels. Finally, on June 3, an authoritative *People's Daily* commentator article warned that Taiwan's politics were on "a dangerous path" and warned advocates that they were "playing with fire" and to "rein in at the brink of the precipice." Two more commentator articles—one blasting the DPP's draft "Republic of Taiwan" constitution and another condemning any international support for "one China one Taiwan"—followed over the ensuing months.

Meanwhile, speeches by top PRC leaders on important anniversaries—by CCP General Secretary Jiang Zemin on the CCP's 70th founding anniversary, by Premier Li Peng on National Day, and by President Yang Shangkun on the 80th anniversary of the 1911 Revolution that created the Republic of China—incorporated warnings against pursuit of Taiwan independence. Yang Shangkun's warnings, delivered 2 months before the National Assembly elections, were the sharpest, advising that Beijing would "not sit idly by" in the face of efforts to "split" China and urging Taiwanese not to make "a wrong appraisal."

Finally, in a speech marking the 60th anniversary of the 1936 Xian Incident (which formed a CCP-KMT coalition against Japan) and 10 days before the Taiwan elections, Jiang Zemin renewed calls for cross-strait talks and reiterated Yang's warning to Taiwanese not to make a "wrong assessment." Five days before the elections, Beijing announced formation of its own unofficial body corresponding to Taipei's SEF, the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS).

The December 21 elections gave KMT candidates an overwhelming majority in the new National Assembly, marking a signal defeat for the DPP. The PRC media immediately reported the election's results as rejection of Taiwan independence by Taiwan's electorate.

In summary, Beijing's invocation of its warnings hierarchy was relatively restrained. There was no press comment above the level of *People's Daily* commentator articles—the lowest rung of authoritative commentary—devoted specifically to Taiwan events; the sole *People's Daily* editorial was not aimed specifically at Taiwan trends but rather was pegged to the 20th anniversary of the PRC's seating in the United Nations. High-level leadership statements came only in broader speeches marking major anniversaries. Finally, leadership and *People's Daily* warnings focused on political themes, advising Taipei not to go too far without raising the prospect of military intervention.

1995

The 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis was triggered by the decision of the Clinton administration—after months of advising Beijing that it would *not* do so—to grant Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui a visa to visit his alma mater, Cornell University, where he had earned a Ph.D. in 1968 in agricultural economics. Several of Lee's friends in Taiwan donated money to Cornell to endow a Lee Teng-hui chair in agricultural economics, with the stipulation that Lee be invited to attend the chair's inaugural ceremony in Ithaca, New York. Lee's visit was thus billed as private, although it was widely expected that he would plump for greater acceptance of Taiwan in the international community. The Clinton administration vowed it would not issue Lee a visa because granting a visa to a sitting Taiwan president would violate the 1978 agreements that normalized U.S.-PRC relations. The administration relented, however, when first the House of Representatives and then the Senate passed nearly unanimous nonbinding resolutions demanding that the administration give Lee a visa. On May 22, the State Department announced that it would grant Lee a visa after all. Lee's visit proceeded on June 8–12. Beijing appears to have regarded the Clinton decision as the last straw in a slow, incremental effort by Washington to upgrade ties with Taipei. In 1992, the Bush administration decided to sell 150 F-16s to Taipei. In 1994, the new Clinton administration completed a Taiwan policy review that upgraded the level of cabinet contacts with Taipei. In U.S.-PRC relations, the administration had in May 1993 conditioned renewal of PRC most-favored-nation trading status in 1994 on performance in several categories of human rights improvements, a threat that the administration ultimately backed away from even though Beijing did little to meet Washington's conditions.

Beijing's initial response was immediate and authoritative, pressing Washington to reverse its decision. As the appended chronology shows, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen the next day delivered a “strong protest” to U.S. Ambassador Stapleton Roy, warning of “grave consequences” unless Washington reversed itself. A Foreign Ministry statement—the

top level of Foreign Ministry utterances—repeated the same warning. Two days later, the Foreign Ministry announced that two ongoing visits by PRC leaders were cut short. On May 26, a *People's Daily* commentator article, entitled “A Serious and Dangerous Retrogression,” advised that Beijing “absolutely would not tolerate” violation of its sovereignty. And a nonauthoritative editorial in the PRC-controlled Hong Kong communist newspaper *Ta Kung Pao* urged Washington “not to turn a deaf ear” and “miscalculate,” forcing Beijing to “react further.”

Once Beijing's effort to press Washington to reverse itself failed and Lee's trip began, Beijing then moved to levy consequences in both U.S.-PRC and cross-strait relations. On June 9 (the day after Lee's trip began) in a meeting with President Clinton, PRC Ambassador Li Daoyu stated that Washington had “seriously damaged relations.” A *People's Daily* commentator article the same day reiterated Li's assessment and that Washington would “pay a price” for its actions. On May 16, a Foreign Ministry spokesman announced that Li Daoyu had been called home indefinitely “for consultations” and that a long-planned second session of SEF-ARATS talks was postponed indefinitely. In early July, Beijing announced a series of “missile tests” in the East China Sea, the first of a set of three military exercises that unfolded over the following 8 months. These included live-fire amphibious landing exercises on Dongshan Island off the Guangdong coast in November 1995 and a second round of “missile tests,” this time into waters immediately off Taiwan's largest ports, Kaohsiung and Keelung, in March 1996—on the eve of Taiwan's presidential election.

In summary, Beijing deployed its warnings hierarchy at a high, authoritative level in reaction to a U.S. reversal of policy that clearly surprised and embarrassed it. Its warnings were calculated to press Washington to reverse itself, and when that failed, it responded with political steps to express its displeasure, complemented by a prolonged series of military exercises intended to underscore its readiness to defend its sovereignty against further slight.

1999

Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui's statement during an interview with the German news agency *Deutsche Welle* on July 9, 1999—that the relationship between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland was a “state-to-state, or at least special state-to-state” relationship—triggered the most intensive invocation of Beijing's warning calculus. Over the ensuing 2 months, Beijing's warnings escalated in level and clarity with regard to a potential use of military force. Tensions abated and Beijing's warnings receded only in late September after repeated assurances from the Clinton administration that it continued to adhere to a “one-China” policy and after it became clear that Taipei's bid for greater international recognition had failed.

Several contextual factors catalyzed Beijing's escalating response to Lee's statement. First, Lee made his statement as the campaign for the March 2000 presidential election was getting under way. Lee himself was not running, so his remark was perhaps an effort both at shaping his political legacy and at shaping the politics of the election. U.S.-PRC relations had been put on an improved footing during the bilateral summits of October 1997, when Jiang Zemin visited the United States for the first time, and June 1998, when President Clinton visited China. But more recently relations were troubled first by President Clinton's last-minute rejection of a bilateral accord on PRC accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) during Premier Zhu Rongji's visit to Washington in March 1999 and then in April by the American bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade during the Kosovo war. In addition, in March Congress began debate of a Taiwan Security Enhancement Act, intended to beef up American military collaboration with Taiwan. In this period, the Clinton administration was also debating whether and how to extend theater missile defense to Taiwan. Finally, Nicaragua and a few other member states introduced a motion in the UN General Assembly calling for the seating of Taipei in the United Nations.

As the chronology in appendix 3 shows, Beijing's initial response to Lee's July 9, 1999, statement came in the form of a joint spokesman statement issued on July 11 by the CCP Central Committee and State Council Taiwan Affairs Offices that warned Taipei "to pull back before it is too late and to stop playing with fire." On the 12th, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Zhu Bangzao warned Lee Teng-hui that he "had gone too far down the dangerous road of playing with fire" and urged him to "rein in at the brink of the precipice." Wang Daohan, chairman of Beijing's unofficial cross-strait exchanges organization ARATS, declared the same day that Lee's statement "undermined the foundation" necessary for continued cross-strait contacts. On July 14, a *People's Daily* commentator article blasted Lee's statement as exposing his "secessionist ambitions."

On July 20, a report in the PRC-controlled Hong Kong communist newspaper *Wen Wei Po* complemented these official warnings, citing Su Jing, deputy chief of staff of the Nanjing Military Region—the region charged with primary military responsibility over the Taiwan Strait—on the progress of a PLA exercise on the Fujian coast and predicting that Lee Teng-hui will "ruin himself by playing with fire" and will "drown in an ocean of people's war." On July 27, Xinhua cited PLA Chief of the General Staff Fu Quanyou denouncing Lee as "lifting a great rock only to drop it onto his own feet" and declaring that the PLA has "the determination and strength" to defend China's sovereignty. Defense Minister Chi Haotian similarly warned Lee "not to underestimate" the PLA's determination. Over the same period, *People's Daily* published three more commentator articles denouncing Lee's statement.

In late July and early August, SEF chairman Koo Chen-fu and Taipei's Mainland Affairs Council proffered elaborations of Lee's statement, prompting an escalation in Beijing's response. On August 10, *People's Daily* published an article under the byline "Observer," a highly authoritative vehicle that had disappeared since the 1960s, calling on Taipei "to stop before the brink of the precipice." On the 18th, the military newspaper *Liberation Army Daily* published a commentator article declaring that the PLA would rather lose a thousand men before ceding an inch of territory. Over the next 2 weeks, low-level reports in PRC and Honk Kong communist media laid out Beijing's military options in the event of a war in the Taiwan Strait and played up China's missile capabilities. On September 2, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Sun Yuxi warned that Lee Teng-hui's efforts to incorporate his "two-state theory" into the KMT's platform were "pushing the Taiwan people nearer to the abyss of war."

Over the first 3 weeks of September, Beijing's warnings of potential war sharpened further. In comments aired by Xinhua, CCP chief Jiang Zemin, Fu Quanyou, and Chi Haotian in succession renewed promises that the PLA stood ready to defend Chinese sovereignty. CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Wannian on September 10 was reportedly "keeping a close eye" on Taiwan developments while monitoring PLA exercises off Zhejiang and Guangdong, declaring that the PLA was "ready to crush" any attempt at splitting the country. On September 13, the Hong Kong communist newspaper *Ta Kung Pao* reported a CMC resolution ordering steps to mobilize for war over Taiwan. Between September 7 and 16, *People's Daily* carried six commentator articles on the crisis.

As rapidly as Beijing's warnings intensified over the weeks down through mid-September, they dropped off sharply after September 16. On that day, Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Sun Yuxi noted Beijing's satisfaction at the defeat of the proposal to seat Taipei in the UN. In addition, President Clinton conveyed American assurances of a continuing "one-China" policy to Jiang Zemin during a meeting in Auckland, New Zealand, on September 11, an occasion that Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan praised as having produced "positive and constructive results."

The level and clarity of Beijing's warnings regarding the prospects for military confrontation in the 1999 crisis exceeded those attending any other in the post-Cold War era. Beijing capped the episode in February 2000 when it released a new white paper on the Taiwan question that added a new condition under which it might be forced to resort to military force. In addition to its two longstanding bottom lines—if Taipei were to declare independence or if foreign forces intervened in Taiwan to promote Taiwan independence—Beijing now added the refusal of Taipei to negotiate "*sine die*" (without a date certain) peaceful resolution of the unification question.

2003–2004

The most recent deployment of Beijing's warning calculus was in response to the efforts of Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian and the DPP to push through the Legislative Yuan a referendum law that could provide the mechanism for a plebiscite on independence for Taiwan. In this instance, Beijing dealt with a favorable context in U.S.-PRC relations. In 2002, Washington explicitly reaffirmed its "one-China" policy and its opposition to Chen Shui-bian's statement that "there is a country on each side" of the Taiwan Strait (一邊一國), a formulation that recalled Lee Teng-hui's "state-to-state" cross-strait relationship. Throughout the referendum law debate in Taiwan, Washington renewed its insistence that it did not support Taiwan independence and reaffirmed to Beijing its "one-China" policy.

In this context, Beijing could respond to the debate in Taipei in the summer and fall months of 2003 with low-level authoritative protests issued by the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office that branded Chen's and the DPP's referendum push as "a dangerous trend" and that warned Taipei that Beijing would not "tolerate" steps toward Taiwan independence. In November, in response to comments by American politicians that blurred Washington's opposition, Beijing's warnings notched up as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman began to call on the Bush administration "to be crystal clear" in its commitment to one China and its opposition to a referendum.

Also in late November 2003, Taiwan's Legislative Yuan passed a watered-down referendum law, and Chen Shui-bian moved to put two referenda on the agenda for national elections scheduled for March 20, 2004. Beijing's warnings thereafter escalated as the elections approached. On December 25, Hu Jintao met with 200 businessmen from Taiwan and stressed common interest in stable cross-strait relations and warned that Beijing would not tolerate Taiwan independence. In early January, State Council Taiwan Affairs Office deputy Wang Zaixi warned that Beijing's "restraint has a bottom line" and Beijing would not "waver or compromise" with regard to Taiwan independence. In mid-January, while visiting New York, Wang recalled that the February 2000 PRC white paper had set a third condition under which Beijing would consider use of military force—if cross-strait negotiations did not begin *sine die*—adding that Beijing would have to "move up its timetable" if Taipei made the "wrong judgment."

High-level leadership statements on Beijing's opposition to the referendum continued down to the eve of the election. Finally, on March 20, 2004, Xinhua reported the defeat of Chen's and the DPP's referenda, and a joint Central Committee and State Council Taiwan Affairs Office statement pronounced the referenda as "illegal acts that went against the will of the people."