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Cooperation and Conflict: The Offense-Defense Balance in Cross-Strait Relations*

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With political relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait in transition, the possible consequences of Taiwan's strategies toward mainland China warrant special attention. This article focuses on Taiwan's relations with mainland China under the rubric of cooperative security and their implications for the offense-defense balance of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Particular attention will be given to efforts to prevent cross-Strait conflict as suggested by the neoliberal school of thought, i.e., cooperative security measures such as the creation of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP); and the neorealist approach, i.e., ameliorating the security dilemma by incorporating Taiwan in the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system as proposed by the U.S. Republican Party (GOP). This article throws new light on these issues and raises questions about the utility of these approaches.

Keywords: cooperative security; cross-Strait relations; multilateralism; offense-defense balance; security dilemma

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Over the last several years, a new theoretical perspective on the post-Cold War international relations has emerged. Labeled by its advocates as neoliberalism, this theoretical perspective focuses on the

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coordination of international politics through ad hoc arrangements or international institutions or regimes. Generally, this perspective explains the rising levels of interdependence and the contractual environment in international relations. More specifically, international institutions and regimes often reduce uncertainty and transaction costs in responding to rising interdependence. Thus, as an organizing principle, neoliberalism is characterized by three properties: indivisibility, generalized principles of conduct, and diffused reciprocity.[1]

In other words, the chief feature of the neoliberal school is that the current international institutional order is in a multilateral form. The second feature of neoliberalism, as its name implies, is its view that multilateral institutions are persistent and connect sets of rules, formal and informal, that prescribe state behavioral roles, constrain state activity, and shape state expectations.[2]

Neoliberalism theorists have thus attempted to grapple with the age-old problem of how to enhance cooperation in international relations from a perspective that explicitly endorses institutional order and characterizes the prevailing mode of theory.[3]

The study of neoliberalism has received much attention over the past few years, but has struggled with many questions as well. Criticism has evolved along with the acknowledgment of its theoretical weakness.[4] Debates have arisen regarding various explanations of neoliberalism in the post-Cold War East Asian region as well as in Western Europe.[5] In the case of East Asia, part of the difficulty undoubtedly lies in the fact that Asian states lack either experience or confidence in this embryonic structure of cooperative security. Considerable areas of potential conflict over territory also exist. Moreover, the risk of intrastate war has increased, as exhibited by

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[1]Lisa L. Martin, "The Rational State Choice of Multilateralism," in *Multilateralism Matters*, ed. John Gerald Ruggie (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 91.

[2]John Gerald Ruggie, "Multilateralism: An Anatomy of an Institution," ibid., 10.

[3]See Volker Rittberger, ed., *Regime Theory and International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); and David A. Baldwin, ed., *Neorealism and Neoliberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

[4]See John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/1995): 5-49; and Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, "The Promise of Institutionalist Theory," ibid. 20, no. 1 (Summer 1995): 39-51.

[5]See Michael Brenner, ed., *Multilateralism and Western Strategy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 209-31; and International Institute for Strategic Studies, ed., "The Slow Progress of Multilateralism in Asia," in *Strategic Survey 1995-1996* (London: Oxford University Press, 1996), 189-96.

the recent tensions in the Taiwan Strait. It thus appears that the anarchical nature—or the security dilemma depicted by the realists—of international politics still prevails.

With political relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait in transition, the possible consequences of Taiwan's strategies toward mainland China warrant special attention. In this article I will not evaluate neoliberalism or its rival concept of neorealism per se; rather, I will focus on Taiwan's strategies vis-à-vis mainland China under the rubric of cooperative security. Specifically, implications for the offense-defense balance of the two sides will be examined, particularly efforts to prevent cross-Strait conflict as suggested by the neoliberal school of thought, i.e., cooperative security measures such as the creation of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP); and the neorealist approach, i.e., ameliorating the security dilemma by incorporating Taiwan in the Theater Missile Defense (TMD) system as proposed by the U.S. Republican Party (GOP).[6] My central focus will be on both the theoretical and empirical grounds.

Accordingly, the purpose of this article is not to show that these approaches lack persuasiveness as unambiguous and necessary theories to explain cross-Strait relations, but to establish precisely how reality is distorted. At best, these approaches permit certain limited utilities which are by no means self-evident given the complexity of cross-Strait relations. In addition, this article purports not only to prove the obvious, that is, that these approaches cannot claim a perfect solution, but also to examine what was essentially ignored in these approaches. This article first attempts to examine Taiwan's strategies toward mainland China in theory, by outlining the conditions for creating a cooperative security system and the key stages in its development. It will then evaluate this cooperative security strategy in practice, with reference to cross-Strait offense-defense balance considerations.

The Strategy of Cooperation and Conflict: Taiwan's Strategy Toward Mainland China

The strategic relationship between Taiwan and mainland China

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[6]See I Yuan, "Multilateralism and Cooperation under the Security Dilemma: Interna-

over the past decades has been characterized by imbalance which has also exhibited a cycle of instability-stability, or what is depicted by Robert Jervis' *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* as a spiral/deterrence model.[7]

Taiwan, after having pursued a policy of reconquering the mainland for so many years, finally abolished the "Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of National Mobilization for the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion" in 1990. Taiwan hoped that this gesture would elicit more positive responses from the other side, and cross-Strait relations appeared to further change when President Lee Teng-hui established the National Unification Council (NUC) in October 1990. The NUC adopted the *Guidelines for National Unification* the following March in which it stated that unification would be attained in three phases: a short-term phase during which the two sides would build understanding through nonofficial exchanges and contacts through quasi-official intermediary organizations; a medium-term phase of mutual trust and cooperation when official contacts and direct communications would be established; and a long-term phase of consultation and unification in which the two sides would map out a constitutional system for a democratic, free, and equitably prosperous China.[8]

According to Taipei, progress through the three phases depends on developments within mainland China and relations and exchanges between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. The shift toward a more cooperative stance culminated in the establishment of two nominally unofficial organizations—Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) and mainland China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS)—in 1991.[9] In the meantime, Taipei has concentrated on international political measures, hoping that latent security concerns

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tional Relations Theories and U.S.-PRC Relations," *Wenti yu yanjiu* (Issues & Studies) 35, no. 6 (June 1996): 1-18.

[7]See Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), 58-113; Charles L. Glaser, "Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Expanding and Refining the Spiral and Deterrence Models," *World Politics* 44, no. 4 (July 1992): 497-538; and Stephen Van Evera, "Offense vs. Defense and the Security Dilemma," in *Causes of War: The Structure of Power and the Roots of War*, vol. 1 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, forthcoming), chap. 5.

[8]See *Guidelines for National Unification* (Taipei: Mainland Affairs Council, 1992).

[9]I Yuan, "Cooperation under Anarchy? Paradoxes of the Intra-Chinese Rapprochement," *Issues & Studies* 31, no. 2 (February 1995): 54-66.

across the Taiwan Strait will be ameliorated with growing international ties.

Yet, all of these developments were interrupted after President Lee's visit to Cornell University in June 1995. Beijing's display of military force in the Strait during early 1996 was only its most recent challenge to Taiwan; its mounting campaigns of diplomatic pressure and military intimidation have been in response to the latter's continuous efforts to gain international recognition. Taipei insists that it must maintain an autonomous space to engage in international activities and requires Beijing to renounce its use of force against Taiwan as a condition for peaceful reunification.

Here, a classic security dilemma is present. Taipei has insisted on its international breathing space and Beijing giving up the use of force as the sine qua non conditions for reunification. For Beijing, these two conditions are nonnegotiable. The situation is a security dilemma since both sides cannot easily take measures to strengthen their own security without making the other feel less secure, leading to countermeasures that will negate their original measures. This in turn will pressure both sides to restore their preferred ratio of strength by further increasing their own armaments.[10] In Beijing's eyes, Taiwan's efforts to join a U.S.-led cooperative security framework, i.e., CSCAP, or participate in the U.S.-led TMD system have been regarded as an unacceptable condition which needs to be dealt with fiercely. The logic of the security dilemma is thus closely related to that of the action-reaction model,[11] of which cross-Strait relations are an example.

In studying cooperation under the security dilemma, Robert Jervis' classic work "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma" stresses that "the security dilemma is ameliorated when the defense has the advantage over the offense and when defensive postures differ from offensive ones."[12] Since Jervis' offense-defense theory is by far the most powerful and useful realist theory on the causes of war, it seems

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[10]Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to Strategic Studies* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 78.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Regarding the meaning of offense and defense, see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," in *The Use of Force*, ed. Robert J. Art and Kenneth N. Waltz, 3rd edition (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1988), 67-97; and David Goldfischer, *The Best Defense: Policy Alternatives for U.S. Nuclear Security from the 1950s to the 1990s* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), chap. 1.

Table 1
A Typology of Offense-Defense Balance

	Offense has the advantage	Defense has the advantage
Offensive posture not distinguishable from defensive one	1 Doubly dangerous	2 Security dilemma, but security requirements may be compatible
Offensive posture distinguishable from defensive one	3 No security dilemma, but aggression possible; Status-quo states can follow different policy than aggressors; Warning given	4 Doubly stable

Source: Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," in *The Use of Force*, ed. Robert J. Art and Kenneth N. Waltz, 3rd edition (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1988), 94.

reasonable to argue that (see table 1):

> The differentiation between offensive and defensive systems permits a way out of the security dilemma; the advantage of the defense disposes of the problems. . . . There is no reason for a status-quo power to be tempted to procure offensive forces, and aggressors give notice of their intentions by the posture they adopted. Indeed, if the advantage of the defense is great enough, there are no security problems. The loss of the ultimate form of the power to alter the status quo would allow greater scope for the exercise of nonmilitary means and probably would tend to freeze the distribution of values.[13]

Accordingly, when analyzing current cross-Strait relations, Jervis' classic work has led some strategists to suggest a neoliberal approach, while others point to a neorealist solution.

On the one hand, neoliberal strategists argue that cross-Strait relations could be ameliorated by a multilateral solution. Accordingly, they suggest that cooperative security does not provoke tensions, but rather safeguards strategic stability between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. The logic of their arguments is that offensive posture

[13] Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," 96-97.

is as much the cause of strategic instability as defensive posture is the cause of strategic stability.

In its most ideal form, according to Randall Forsberg, a leading advocate of a cooperative security system, two essential prerequisites for the creation of a full-fledged cooperative security system are required: (1) Nonviolent Conflict Resolution: conflicts should be resolved by talks, negotiations, and other nonviolent means; and (2) Nonoffensive Defense: armed forces should be maintained and used only to the minimum extent needed to defend against and deter non-defensive uses of force. Accordingly, a transition is required to develop a cooperative security system, and is organized around four key phases: (1) undertaking to create a cooperative security system; (2) making initial confidence-building cuts in forces, industries, and exports; (3) limiting options for large-scale unilateral intervention; and (4) completing comprehensive defense-oriented reductions and restructuring.[14] This is compatible with the three-phased principles stipulated in the *Guidelines for National Unification* as stated earlier.

Whereas Forsberg's conceptualization of cooperative security represents one of the most comprehensive and systematic approaches, implementation of this strategy in the Asia-Pacific region would involve a cooperative security regime—a regional confidence-building mechanism through multilateral security dialogues, which include official bodies such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Along with arms control regimes, such as the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), this is a cooperative, simultaneous process engaged in by parties involved[15] (see table 2). Such a process requires the formation of a negotiated, coordinated defensive system over time, accompanied by a negotiated, coordinated reduction of offensive weaponry systems. In such a manner, it is posited that some of the danger and tension produced by mainland China's preponderance of

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[14]For a debate on cooperative security, see Randall Forsberg, "Creating a Cooperative Security System," *Boston Review* 17, no. 6 (November/December 1992): 1-3; Stephen Van Evera, "Preserving Peace in the New Era," ibid., 4-5; and Steven Miller, "Dilemmas of Cooperative Security," ibid., 9-10.

[15]See Ashton B. Carter, William J. Perry, and John D. Steinbruner, *A New Concept of Cooperative Security* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institutions, 1992), 9-11; and Patrick Clawson, ed., *Strategic Assessment 1996: Elements of U.S. Power* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1996), chap. 8.

Table 2
Multilateral Cooperative Security Mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific

1. Treaties	Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT)
2. Conventions	Biological Weapons Convention (CBW) Chemical Weapons Convention (CCW)
3. Agreements	Agreement on Military Relations in Border Areas (AMRBA) Five Power Defense Arrangement (FPDA)
4. Organizations	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
5. Regimes	Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) Export Controls
6. Dialogue Bodies	ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) South China Sea Informal Meeting (SCS-IM)
7. Others	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Pacific Democracy Defense Program (PDDP)

Source: I Yuan, "Multilateralism and Cooperation under the Security Dilemma: International Relations Theories and U.S.-PRC Relations," *Wenti yu yanjiu* (Issues & Studies) 35, no. 6 (June 1996): 9.

military forces in the Asia-Pacific region would be eased.[16]

To supplement official channels, advocates of two-track multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific region suggest that increasing nongovernmental activities and institutional linkages to promote international security cooperation may now be essential. Nonofficial forums and organizations which include academics and government officials acting

[16]See U.S. State Department, *Fact Sheet: Major Accomplishments in the Asia-Pacific Region*, EPF, no. 504 (November 8, 1996): 1-2; and Yuan, "Multilateralism and Cooperation," 9.

in private capacities thus have a role in government decisions adopting cooperative approaches, i.e., CSCAP, Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD), and the South China Sea Informal Meeting (SCS-IM, also known as the Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea) (see table 3).

It is against this backdrop that CSCAP has been organized for the purpose of providing a structured process for regional confidence-building and security cooperation among countries and territories in the Asia-Pacific region.[17] Four working groups on maritime security, North Pacific security, cooperative and comprehensive security, and confidence and security-building mechanisms have been established.[18]

Following this line of thought, Taiwan has worked steadfastly with the support of the United States, Canada, and Australia to join CSCAP as a regular member. As expected, it met with stern opposition from Beijing, which has insisted that Taiwan can only be admitted as an observer representing an academic institution, i.e., National Chengchi University's Institute of International Relations.[19] Yet, in the aftermath of the recent Taiwan Strait crisis, Beijing demanded that Taiwan be admitted only on an individual member basis in the Fifth CSCAP Steering Committee Meeting held in June 1996.[20]

It is against this backdrop that an alternative strategy is being considered. Beijing's threat of the use of force, including its large-scale military exercises and tests of nuclear-capable missiles in the Taiwan Strait, has offered Taiwan an opportunity to incorporate itself in a multilateral TMD system under U.S. leadership.

Richard D. Fisher, Jr., a leading advocate of this strategy, offers a

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[17]See the Charter of CSCAP, Article II: The Purpose and Functions of CSCAP which was adopted in Lombok, Indonesia, December 16, 1993. The major functions of CSCAP are as follows: (1) to provide an informal mechanism by which political and security issues can be discussed by scholars and others in their private capacities; (2) to encourage the participation of such individuals from countries and territories in the Asia-Pacific on the basis of the principle of inclusiveness; (3) to organize various working groups to address security issues and challenges facing the region; (4) to provide policy recommendations to various intergovernmental bodies on political-security issues; (5) to convene regional and international meetings and other cooperative activities for the purposes of discussing political-security issues; and (6) to establish linkages with institutions and organizations in other parts of the world to exchange information.

[18]See Desmond Ball, "A New Era in Confidence-Building: The Second Track Process in Asia/Pacific Region," *Security Dialogue* 25, no. 2 (1994): 164.

[19]An informal meeting was held in April 1995 between Yu-ming Shaw, director of the IIR and Li Luye, chairman of mainland China National Committee for CSCAP.

[20]See Yuan, "Multilateralism and Cooperation," 11.

Table 3
Membership in Regional Organizations

	Political/Security Forums			
	Track I[1]		Track II	
	ASEAN (7)	ARF (21)	CSCAP[2] (15)	NEACD (6)
Asia-Pacific				
Australia		X	X*	
Brunei Darussalam	X	X		
Myanmar (Burma)		X		
Cambodia (Kampuchea)		X		
China		X		X
Hong Kong				
India		X	X#	
Indonesia	X	X	X*	
Japan		X	X*	X
Korea (North)			X	X
Korea (South)		X	X*	X
Laos		X		
Macao				
Malaysia	X	X	X*	
New Zealand		X	X	
Pakistan				
Papua New Guinea		X		
Philippines	X	X	X*	
Russia		X	X	X
Singapore	X	X	X*	
Taiwan				
Thailand	X	X	X*	
Vietnam	X	X		
North/South America				
Canada		X	X*	
Chile				
Colombia				
Mexico				
Peru				
United States		X	X*	X
European Union[3]		X	X	

* = founding members; # = associate members; EU is counted here as one member.

Source: http://www.stimson.org/pub/stimson/cbm/china/orgstbl/html.

Notes:

[1]Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, and Laos were unanimously approved in December 1995 to join ASEAN. Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, and Laos currently have observer status; Myanmar's application for observer status was only recently approved. In order to officially join ASEAN as full members, however, certain criteria (such as open-market reforms) will have to be met by each state. All three states are expected to

become full ASEAN members by the year 2000. Along with mainland China and Russia, India became a full dialogue partner of ASEAN in December 1995 and has been invited to join the ARF (currently, there is a debate on whether ARF membership should be contingent on whether a state has signed the NPT). All ASEAN dialogue partners and observers may sit in at ARF and other ASEAN meetings. Pakistan is a partner of ASEAN.

[2]The terms under which mainland China and/or Taiwan may become members are under consideration.

[3]Members of EU include Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

neorealist school of thinking when he states in his recent article "China's Threats to Taiwan Challenge U.S. Leadership in Asia" that the "U.S., therefore, should maintain a balance of power in Asia favorable to the U.S. by deploying missile defenses. In so doing, the U.S. should sell Taiwan defensive weapons in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act. These may include advanced air-to-air missiles, conventional submarines, missile defense systems, and preparing U.S. naval TMD forces to help defend Taiwan when is needed."[21]

This view is in accordance with Robert Dole's policy stance in his major policy speech on Asia. Dole stated that:

> We should deal with Taiwan as it is a long-term friend and a political and economic success story that is the envy of much of the world. . . . The U.S. is committed and morally obligated to help Taiwan to maintain the capacity to deter any effort to determine its future through violence. . . . There's no more clearly necessary weapon system for Taiwan than effective missile defense. . . . The current policy of not sharing information on missile threats or missile technology with Taiwan must be changed. The U.S. should work with Taipei on BMD [Ballistic Missile Defense] needs as we already are doing with Seoul and Tokyo. . . . Including Taiwan in the Pacific Democracy Defense Program would show seriousness about defending ourselves and our allies and it would demonstrate our support for peaceful resolution of Taiwan's future.[22]

In response to this thorny issue, the Clinton administration has a contingent plan which provides a necessary shield for Taiwan should such a missile attack occur. According to the program, the United States could provide a sea-based, theater-wide missile defense which consists of modifying the Aegis air defense system (SPY-1 Radar and

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[21]Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "China's Threats to Taiwan Challenge U.S. Leadership in Asia," *Backgrounder* (Heritage Foundation Asian Studies Center), no. 139 (March 6, 1996): 3-9 (see http://www.heritage.org/).

[22]See Robert Dole, "U.S. Must Reassert Its Unique Role in Asia," *USIA Wireless File*, EPF, no. 305 (May 9, 1996): 1-16.

Standard Missile Block 4A) to give Taiwan point defense capability.[23]

Two fundamental concepts used by the neorealists, self-help and power, are present here.[24] In the case of tense cross-Strait relations, given the necessary reliance on self-help, a state must prepare to defend itself against potential threats from others by all means. For Taiwan, joining the multilateral-based TMD system seems to be a logical option.

Taiwan's Multilateral Strategy and Its Relevance to Offense-Defense Balance: A Four-Scenario Analysis[25]

Having summarized the main elements of Taiwan's multilateral strategy, an evaluation of its utility in regard to the offense-defense balance is cogent at this juncture.

By referring to the four scenarios depicted in table 1, an analysis of the offense-defense balance between Taiwan and mainland China is based on Taiwan's international posture, i.e., the degree to which multilateral institutions may change the direction and magnitude of cross-Strait cooperation and conflict over security issues. The overarching theme of this analysis is that in cross-Strait relations, a security regime may be identified which is composed of anarchy, hierarchy, and uneven distributions of military forces. It provides a general power framework within which the two sides interact.[26] Each security regime has two essential and interlinked attributes, or pillars: offense/defense advantage posture and offensive/defensive posture. Each security regime is based on a set of values and goals, as well as certain premises about cross-Strait relations.[27] In its pure forms, all four security regimes which are comparable to the four scenarios

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[23]See I Yuan, "An U.S.-ROC Joint Evaluation of the TMD System," *Lianhe bao* (United Daily News) (Taipei), September 20, 1996, 11.

[24]Robert Powell, "Anarchy in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (Spring 1994): 313-44.

[25]For a more detailed analysis of the cross-Strait crisis, see a forthcoming paper entitled "Asymmetry and Strategies of Cross-Strait Conflicts: The Taiwan Strait Crisis Revisited."

[26]Here, the independent variable is the degree to which multilateral institutions, which are composed of confidence and security-building mechanisms, arms control procedures, and the TMD system, may cause changes in the direction and magnitude of cross-Strait cooperation. The dependent variable is the level of cross-Strait cooperation on security issues. The analysis of this paper uses the security regime theory.

[27]For a similar discussion, see Yuan, "Cooperation under Anarchy?" 57-60.

suggested earlier are listed as follows: the status quo regime (*Type 4*), the arms control regime (*Type 2*), the arms race regime (*Type 3*), and the conflict regime (*Type 1*). Accordingly, these four regimes may represent compliant, congruent, withdrawn, or contradictory relations between the two sides.[28]

Generally, current multilateral strategists have taken the most drastic line by arguing that cross-Strait relations could better be defined as a multilateral system. Accordingly, multilateralism does not provoke political tensions between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, but rather promotes the development of strategic stability. The logic of their arguments is that offense is as much as the cause of strategic instability as defense is the cause of strategic stability, given asymmetrical power relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.[29]

Such arguments, which explain certain aspects of the post-Cold War era, do not offer an adequately comprehensive treatment of the situation, however. Yet, a close look shows that even multilateralism's proponents doubt that they can achieve the intended goals.[30]

In its ideal form, implementation of this design would be a cooperative, simultaneous process engaged in by all parties involved. As stated earlier, such a process would require the formation of a negotiated, coordinated development of a comparable confidence-building mechanism over time, accompanied by a reduction of offensive weaponry. The ultimate goal would then be a security regime that stabilizes offensive and defensive relations. A confidence-building mechanism with arms control regimes, i.e., the MTCR, NPT, and CTBT, offers such a way of muting the security dilemma as indicated earlier (*Type 2: Arms control*).

One of the most frequently voiced criticisms of multilateralism

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[28]The idea of security regime was borrowed from David C. Gompert et al., *Nuclear Weapons and World Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), chap. 1; and Robert Jervis, "Security Regimes," *International Organization* 36, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 357-78. For a more recent treatment of the security regime theory, see Volker Rittberger, ed., *Regime Theory and International Relations* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1993); and Mark J. Valencia, *A Maritime Regime for North-East Asia* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[29]For a systematic discussion of asymmetry and strategies of conflict reduction, see I. William Zartman and Victor A. Kremenyuk, eds., *Cooperative Security: Reducing Third World Wars* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1995), chap. 2.

[30]Banning Garrett and Bonnie Glaser, "Multilateral Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region and Its Impact on Chinese Interests," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 16, no. 1 (June 1994): 14-34.

is that should Taiwan participate in this multilateral security regime, it would destabilize the deterrent relationship which has prevailed for the past few decades and lead to a renewed arms race. The greatest fear is that of an uncoordinated race to a defensive system which could result in mainland China indulging in a first strike if it can deploy a satisfactory defensive system, or engaging in a preemptive strike if it believes that deployment of Taiwan's offensive system is imminent.[31]

Even if such a cooperative security regime is created, the actual stage of transition during which offensive capabilities are scaled down according to negotiated timetables and defensive systems are being deployed in a like manner will still be a time of uncertainty, vulnerability, and opportunity.[32] The strength of multilateral institutions would determine how destabilizing this period would be, all other intervening variables remaining equal. However, some suggest that the transition to defense-dominated deterrence can be achieved either unilaterally by one side, or competitively by both. In such cases, though, the prospects for ending an arms race or controlling the expansion of a defensive system would be greatly reduced, and the prospects for destabilization of cross-Strait relationship would greatly increase. If we assume that Taipei and Beijing can coordinate their efforts and devise a cooperative security regime for the bilateral transition to defense-dominated deterrence, there still remains the possibility of other intervening variables which could destabilize the planned process.

The question remains of what effect a defensive transition by a multilateral institution would have on the configuration of forces. It has already been established that mainland China is quantitatively and in some aspects qualitatively superior vis-à-vis Taiwan. Future qualifications must be made between mainland China and Taiwan, as the former has arsenals of great magnitude, while the latter has arsenals and force configurations that can only provide a survivable first-strike deterrent. That is, Taiwan's arsenal is defensive in nature, and in its view, a minimal deterrent. Yet, we are faced with a situation wherein Taiwan believes that it now has a minimum necessary force

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[31]On the logic of first-strike stability, see Melvin Best and Jerome Bracken, "First-Strike Stability in a Multipolar World," *Management Science* 41, no. 2 (February 1995): 298-321.

[32]See Evera, *Causes of War*, 230.

for unilateral deterrence and hence limited autonomy in its participation in the world scene (*Type 4: Status quo*). We might want to inquire into whether Taiwan is correct in this assumption, as it has already moved ahead with modernization plans that seek to upgrade its air and sea-based deterrents with new weaponry systems.

It is important to note here the psychological importance of deterrence in regard to the deterree as well as to the deterred. For Taiwan, minimal deterrence has transformed what would otherwise be an unsolvable security dilemma into a situation wherein it has retained some autonomy of action on the international scene, independent of pragmatic diplomacy and what it feels to be some measure of freedom from the fear of a mainland preemptive strike. This psychological factor may allow Taiwan some degree of satisfaction with the present situation, and thus diminishes its desire for moves that might jeopardize matters, such as attempting to develop a nuclear arsenal. Therefore, in a cross-Strait dyadic structure, the situation also enhances favors of mainland China, as it does not need to divide its attention among growing numbers of potential threats. Although intra-Chinese conflict remains a reality, this small cushion of stability should not be ignored. A transition to a truly multilateral institution would probably be extremely unstable, especially given the way in which forces would be arrayed against mainland China.

Since mainland China derives so many benefits from its possession of military forces, it is committed to retaining this capability. Unfortunately, even an ideal cooperative defensive transition under the rubric of a multilateral institution would threaten to negate this capability, leaving mainland China politically vulnerable to international intervention. This would present an unacceptable threat to its security and national aspirations, and it would respond by augmenting its offensive forces and tentatively exploring offensive possibilities (*Type 3: Arms race*).

Thus, we can see that implementation of multilateral institutions, far from fulfilling its purpose of defusing political tension and increasing political stability in this region, could provoke just the opposite. If mainland China were to engage in an arms buildup during a cooperative defensive transition, especially during the sensitive phase before a cooperative security regime is fully established, it is more than likely that it would also return to deploying offensive weapons, as indicated by the recent missile exercises. If one places this in the context of Taiwan's increasing offensive forces, along with increases in multilateral security institutions, one can easily foresee that main-

land China will feel overwhelmed with potential threats. This would provoke an equivalent Chinese response which could develop into an offensive and defensive arms race spiral, dooming the peaceful solution goal embodied by the *Guidelines for National Unification*[33] (*Type 1: Conflict*).

What this means in reality is that Taiwan, when confronting mainland China, may not be permitted to vitiate the security arrangement of other nations merely of its own volition. It thus appears incumbent on the Taiwan authorities to resolve mainland China's concerns as a precondition for engaging in a cooperative defensive transition. By ignoring the dissatisfaction that may destabilize their actions, both sides may be giving impetus to the very sort of conflicts they wish to avoid. It must be remembered that a cooperative security regime is a project that may take place fairly far in the future, and post-Deng China may change significantly in the time encompassed by the terms of the regime.

If one admits that multilateral strategy might be destabilizing, and that an imposed condominium of mainland China would also be destabilizing, then it appears that the security dilemma posed by the defensive transition must be resolved, or mainland China may be able to exercise an effective veto over the cooperative process as demonstrated in its recent deeds. In a nutshell, the crux of the multilateral strategy is a reductionalist approach to cross-Strait relations.

The TMD System's Impact on Mainland China[34]

In line with this analytical framework, several factors explain the TMD system's impact on mainland China.[35] First, the system could

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[33]See T. V. Paul, *Asymmetric Conflicts: War Initiation by Weaker Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[34]For a debate on the TMD system, see Steven A. Hildreth and Jason D. Ellis, "Allied Support for Theater Missile Defense," *Orbis* 41, no. 1 (Winter 1996): 101-21; Henry F. Cooper, "To Build an Affordable Shield," ibid., 85-99; Curt Weldon, "Why We Must Act at Once," ibid., 63-69; and Mark T. Clark, "Arms Control is Not Enough," ibid., 71-84.

[35]See "Chinese Renounce Big Nuclear Power," *International Herald Tribune*, November 17, 1995, 1; "China Complained About U.S. TMD Plans," *New York Times*, February 18, 1995, A4; and Michael Krepon, "Are Missile Defense MAD?" *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 1 (January/February 1995): 23. For a similar discussion which took place earlier, see John W. Graver, "China's Response to the Strategic Defense Initiative," *Asian Survey* 26, no. 11 (November 1986): 1237; and Bonnie S. Glaser

undermine mainland China's efforts to maintain a credible military force. Beijing believes that TMD will have a dangerously destabilizing effect on the arms race between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. So long as the offense-defense balance exists, neither side will risk attacking the other, but extending the arms race, in Beijing's eyes, would grant Taiwan defensive superiority. This would disrupt the existing strategic balance and heighten the potential for either a preemptive strike by the side facing an imminent strategic disadvantage or an attack by the side that attains superiority, a situation which is detrimental to both arms race stability and crisis stability.[36] Moreover, mainland China's opposition to TMD could lead to increased tensions, and the deployment of a large-scale Chinese strategic defense system could weaken mainland China's offensive capability. Mainland China's military forces may also no longer provide a credible retaliatory capability against Taiwan independence.

Second, the new technological developments generated by the TMD system could further widen the overall gap in military technology between mainland China and Taiwan. This could place new pressure on the Chinese authorities to shift some of the resources from its current economic development priorities to military modernization.

Third, mainland China views the TMD system as detrimental to its national interests. It is argued by Beijing that the system will destabilize cross-Strait relations at a time when mainland China is most vulnerable, at the expense of its security interests.[37]

Fourth, since mainland China derives so many benefits from its possession of military forces, it is committed to retaining that capability. Yet, even an ideal cooperative defensive transition under the TMD scheme would threaten to negate Chinese military capabilities, leaving it vulnerable to unpredictable political outcomes.

Finally, the present delicate balance between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait could be upset by increased U.S. military pressure or rapid technological breakthroughs in U.S.-led TMD that would

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and Banning N. Garrett, "Chinese Perspectives on the Strategic Defense Initiative," *Problems of Communism* 35, no. 2 (March-April 1986): 29-30, 34, 41.

[36]*People's Daily*, October 21, 1996 (see http://www.snweb.com/gb/people_daily/1996/10/21/f1021.003).

[37]See Eric Arnett, ed., *Nuclear Weapons After the Comprehensive Test Ban* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 26; and *People's Daily*, July 30, 1996 (see http://www.snweb.com/gb/people_daily/1996/07/30/a0730.001).

downgrade the credibility of mainland China's nuclear deterrent.[38] Additional demands on mainland China's security resources could result in strengthening the position of those who already advocate reversing the priorities of the modernization program and placing military and heavy industrial development in more urgent positions. This would in turn have a destabilizing influence on Chinese domestic politics, which could then be reflected in its behavior in the international sphere. This cooperative defensive transition envisioned by the TMD system would threaten mainland China's self-proclaimed goal of minimal deterrence and leave it extremely vulnerable to U.S. military pressure.[39]

To summarize, mainland China's fears about the TMD system lie in the fact that it might destabilize the offense-defense balance and seriously threaten its national security. Beijing sees the mainland's national interests as being better served by the strategic status quo in which military superiority is on its side.[40]

Conclusion

The Taiwan-mainland China reconciliation begun by the late President Chiang Ching-kuo and developed by his successor Lee Teng-hui has been one of the most important strategic breakthroughs in the Taiwan Strait since the 1949 civil war. In broad terms, each ROC leader from Chiang Kai-shek to Lee Teng-hui has sought to use better relations with the United States as a means to position itself favorably in the U.S.-mainland China-Taiwan triangular relationship, stabilize regional security, and secure a balance of forces in the Taiwan Strait favorable to Taiwan. On the one hand, Taiwan's policy, which is erecting a multilateral framework to engage mainland China effectively, might be destabilizing the offense-defense balance. On the other hand, the U.S. Republican Party's recent gestures toward a position in opposition to Beijing could increase the hostility between

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[38]*People's Daily*, November 6, 1996 (see http://www.snweb.com/gb/people_daily/1996/11/06/d1106.007).

[39]See David B. H. Denoon, *Ballistic Missile Defense in the Post-Cold War Era* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), 175-76.

[40]*People's Daily*, July 15, 1996 (see http://www.snweb.com/gb/people_daily/1996/07/15/f0715.009).

the United States and mainland China. Robert Dole's May 1996 speech represents an important signal toward mainland China and also reflects substantive new thinking in the U.S. policy community of deploying the TMD system in the Asia-Pacific region.[41]

The questions with which we began this investigation were whether the present configuration of military forces in the Taiwan Strait represents a stable system, and what effect, whether it be a cooperative defensive transition or a TMD system, would have on military configurations in the future.[42] Since mainland China derives so many benefits from its possession of military forces, it is committed to retaining this capability. Unfortunately, both an ideal cooperative defensive transition and a proposed TMD system would threaten to negate this capability, presenting a threat to mainland China's security and national aspirations. It would thus respond by augmenting its offensive forces and tentatively exploring confrontational alternatives. Consequently, we can see that the implementation of a cooperative security regime or a TMD system, far from fulfilling its purpose of defusing the arms race and increasing stability in this region, could provoke just the opposite.

All this means in reality is that mainland China will not cede to the U.S.-led security arrangement easily. It is incumbent on the parties involved to resolve Beijing's concerns as a prior condition for engaging in such a new cooperative security. By ignoring the dissatisfaction that may result from their actions on the rest of the world, both sides of the Taiwan Strait may be giving impetus to the very sort of destabilizing change they wish to avoid.

If one admits that mainland China could destabilize the region, and that an imposed condominium of the United States could also destabilize the region, then it appears that the security dilemma posed by the defensive transition must be resolved, or mainland China might exercise an effective veto over the cooperative process. It does not

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[41]The policy debate between the Democrats and the Republicans on the TMD system and Taiwan was clearly stated by Natale Bellocchi, former director of the American Institute in Taiwan, who testified before a hearing of the ROC Legislative Yuan in which he stated that the issue had not disappeared with the end of the presidential election. See *China News* (Taipei), December 18, 1996, 2. See also Richard D. Fisher, Jr., "Building a More Secure Asia Through Missile Defense," *Backgrounder*, no. 138 (October 24, 1995): 1-15.

[42]For more on the issues of the existing deterrence paradigm for the post-Cold War period, See Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., ed., *Security, Strategy, and Missile Defense* (McLean, Va.: Brassey's, 1996), 19-24.

appear that the sort of unit veto system proposed by Morton Kaplan would have much applicability in a defense-dominated world,[43] but the sort of multilateral approach that would be needed to implement such a system could be the prerequisite for a cooperative security.[44]

[43]Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, 2nd edition (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967), 50-52.

[44]See Gareth Evans, "Cooperative Security and Intrastate Conflict"' *Foreign Policy*, no. 96 (1994): 6-7.