

# The Making of Taiwan Policy in Mainland China: Structure and Process\*

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*This article examines the structure and process of Beijing's Taiwan policymaking. Although policymaking structure and process do not equal decisionmaking itself, they can still reveal some important information about the latter.*

*Beijing's Taiwan policymaking is not completely institutionalized; it has flexibly made use of both institutional and noninstitutional mechanisms. Within the established system, Taiwan affairs offices, and military, security, and foreign policy units may transmit their opinions to higher-level units through official administrative channels. Outside the established system, relevant organizations and persons may pass their opinions directly to the central decisionmaking body, either in the form of important or special reports or opinion exchanges.*

*The author's study indicates that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), military, and security organizations handling Taiwan affairs and research organizations carrying on specialized studies about Taiwan enjoy comparatively greater influence in the shaping of Beijing's Taiwan policy.*

**Keywords:** the CLGTA; the COTA; the TAO; policy choices; institutional channels; the "dual leadership" system

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Policymaking studies have a common problem: their results are not uni-

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versally applicable, since policymaking changes constantly according to time, occasion, personnel changes, system readjustments, and other subjective and objective factors. In other words, analyzing certain countries' decisionmaking processes can uncover problems and offer solutions, but the analysis is meaningful only under specific conditions, systems, and personnel arrangements.

For instance, if a study concludes that a certain unit has a considerable influence on the People's Republic of China's (PRC's) Taiwan policy, the conclusion is only a relative statement. In fact, the scope of influence should be further defined to indicate whether political, economic, or other issues are included, as a unit having a say on political problems might not have the same influence on economic or other issues. In addition, whether the unit exercises its influence through normal institutional channels or not is also a matter of concern, since cadres' personal connections may enable it to transmit its stand through special channels. Therefore, the unit's influence on various issues may vary at different times.

After nearly two decades of reform, the PRC has shown tendencies toward rationalization, professionalization, and institutionalization in decisionmaking. However, it is still a relatively closed society ruled by the will of important leaders; most decisionmaking processes, especially political ones, have remained secrets to outsiders.<sup>1</sup> For example, to mainland Chinese officials and scholars, if discussing the PRC's decisionmaking process during the recent Taiwan Strait crisis was not a taboo, it was at least a very sensitive issue, since one could have been charged with leaking state secrets. It is thus no wonder that most in mainland China have kept silent on this topic.

Despite these difficulties, the study of Beijing's Taiwan policy is an urgent necessity for the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan. If Taipei can ascertain how Beijing's Taiwan policy is formulated and implemented, and which units and individuals have greater influence on policy formation, it may evaluate and handle cross-Strait relations more effectively.

In this article, the author examines Beijing's Taiwan policymaking from the perspectives of institutional organizations, regions, and individual cadres. Of course, the policymaking structure and process are not equal to decisionmaking itself; they can help shape policy choices but generally cannot go

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<sup>1</sup>For more on mainland China's decisionmaking formulas, see Carol Lee Hamrin, "Elite Politics and the Development of China's Foreign Relations," in *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, ed. Thomas W. Robinson and David L. Shambaugh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 77-109; and George W. Tsai, "Beijing's Decisionmaking Formulas and Behavior," *Zhonggong yanjiu* (Studies on Chinese Communism Monthly) (Taipei) 31, no. 4 (April 1997): 99-111.

beyond this, as the final decisionmaking power remains in the hands of a few political figures.<sup>2</sup>

### **Decisionmaking in the Party, Government, and Military Establishments**

Taiwan affairs organizations in the PRC have been established for a variety of functions, including services, policy, economics, research, propaganda, and information collection. They are under Chinese Communist Party (CCP), government, military, economic, journalism, diplomatic, and united front work systems, and some serve more than one purpose and are under the leadership or guidance of more than one unit.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) is both a service and functional unit with the objective of implementing Beijing's Taiwan policy. The New China News Agency (Xinhua) and the research organizations under the People's Liberation Army's (PLA's) General Staff Headquarters and General Political Department also function simultaneously as research, propaganda, and information collection units. In addition, mainland Chinese Taiwan affairs organizations involve not only such institutional factors as the vertical leadership relationship among superior and subordinate units, the horizontal ties among parallel units, and centralized management by specialized departments,<sup>4</sup> but also noninstitutional factors such as the interaction among specific persons and organizations over particular issues.

In the following, the author will examine mainland Chinese Taiwan affairs organizations from both these institutional and noninstitutional aspects; that is, through an organizational approach and power politics analysis. An analysis of the superior-subordinate and coordination relationship among these organizations may help to clarify how Beijing formulates its Taiwan policy.

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<sup>2</sup>A. Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China: Structure and Process* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985), 137; Tai Ming Cheung, "The Impact of Research Institutes in the Post-Mao Period of Peking's Foreign Policymaking," *Issues & Studies* 23, no. 7 (July 1987): 88.

<sup>3</sup>"Leadership" means that a relationship of administrative subordination exists and subordinate units must obey the orders of superior units; "guidance" refers to coordination of operations among parallel units or units without a superior-subordinate relationship that should be respected by all units involved.

<sup>4</sup>David L. Shambaugh, "China's National Security Research Bureaucracy," *The China Quarterly*, no. 110 (June 1987): 280.

### *The Party*

According to the CCP's organizational structure, the National Congress is the supreme CCP power organ, under which is a Central Committee. Since the CCP Central Committee (CCPCC) meets only infrequently, the Party's actual power is in the hands of the Politburo, especially the Politburo Standing Committee.<sup>5</sup> Although the number of Politburo Standing Committee members is small enough to facilitate the holding of regular meetings, the committee does not meet frequently, as indicated by past and present research.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the decisionmaking power lies ultimately with the few Politburo Standing Committee members in charge of routine Party and governmental affairs.<sup>7</sup>

During his visit to mainland China in 1984, A. Doak Barnett learned from Zhao Ziyang, the then-premier, that day-to-day decisionmaking on major policy issues had already shifted from the Politburo and its Standing Committee to the CCPCC Secretariat and the State Council. Judging by the organizational structure, the CCPCC Secretariat and the State Council are equal in status; however, the author believes that the former is more influential in policymaking. According to Zhao, Politburo meetings are generally convened upon the initiative of the CCPCC Secretariat, although members of the Politburo Standing Committee can request that a meeting be held. Moreover, the Secretariat's suggestions for convening Politburo meetings are often based on its discussion of policy issues put forward by the State Council General Office.<sup>8</sup>

The CCPCC General Office under the Secretariat also plays a pivotal role in policymaking, though not necessarily in the shaping of Beijing's Taiwan policy. Its Policy Research Office and Secretarial Bureau each have general staff and secretaries responsible for research, compilation, and col-

<sup>5</sup>Carol Lee Hamrin and Suisheng Zhao, eds., *Decision-Making in Deng's China: Perspectives from Insiders* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1995), xxix.

<sup>6</sup>Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, 10.

<sup>7</sup>It should be noted that despite all this, important decisions are never made by an individual but are made only after group discussion, indicating that all members share the responsibility. See Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, xlv; a mainland Chinese scholar also stated Beijing's verbal attacks and military intimidation moves against Taiwan in 1996 as an example, pointing out that the CCPCC had asked Politburo members to share responsibility by giving their opinions in written form.

<sup>8</sup>See Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, 9-12; readjustments were made after the CCP's Thirteenth National Congress. For more on the CCPCC Secretariat's power expansion and its golden age, see Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, xxxii. In fact, up to now, outsiders have remained unclear about the operations of the CCPCC Secretariat and the Politburo. See H. Lyman Miller, "Politics Inside the Ring Road: On Sources and Comparisons," *ibid.*, 211.

lection of all kinds of information. With their operations basically computerized, they constitute a very important channel providing valuable information to superior units as well as other relevant units. In particular, the power and functions of the General Office's Secretarial Bureau would seem to merit further research.<sup>9</sup> During visits to Taiwan, some mainland Chinese scholars have stated that the functions of the General Office's Policy Research Office have been taken over by the Central Policy Research Center, a Party organization at a higher level. However, these statements have yet to be verified.

The Politburo may establish various kinds of special leading groups to meet functional needs. Two such groups dealing with Taiwan affairs are the Central Leading Group for Taiwan Affairs (CLGTA) and the Central Foreign Affairs Leading Group. Six known CLGTA members are officials at and above the ministerial level, and its importance is highlighted by the fact that it is now headed by Jiang Zemin, the Party general secretary and the president of the PRC.<sup>10</sup> In addition, all provincial and municipal Party committees have all set up leading groups for Taiwan affairs with important Party and government officials as their heads.

In August 1992, the Office of Research of the U.S. Department of State and the Center for Modern China of the University of California co-sponsored a workshop in California. Renowned mainland Chinese dissidents in exile were invited to discuss such problems as politics, leadership, and organizations in the PRC. As Yan Jiaqi pointed out at the workshop, various leading groups composed of Party, government, and military leaders reflect both the CCP's particular concern about certain issues and its absorption of military and government authority at the top. However, it is not clear how functions

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<sup>9</sup>Michael Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making" (Paper prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, published by the Rand Corporation in 1996), 28. In July 1996, an official of the CCPCC General Office told the author that except for very few special cases, important Taiwan affairs information from Party, government, and military organizations must go through the CCPCC General Office before being reported to higher-echelon units.

<sup>10</sup>Leading groups under the CCPCC are task forces composed of Party, government, and military decisionmakers. These groups' decisions depend on the issue, the power and work style of its leaders, and the circumstances. See Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, xxxiv. The six known CLGTA members include Head Jiang Zemin (CCP general secretary and state president); Deputy Head Qian Qichen (foreign minister and vice-premier); Wang Zhaoguo (United Front Work Department head, ex-director of the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, and ex-director of the Central Office for Taiwan Affairs); Jia Chunwang (minister of state security); Xiong Guangkai (deputy chief of general staff of the PLA); and Wang Daohai (chairman of the ARATS and former mayor of Shanghai). Wang Zhaoguo is concurrently secretary-general of the group. In 1997, Chen Yunlin, originally deputy director of the Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) of the State Council, was promoted to director of the same office. It is still unclear whether he will take over Wang Zhaoguo's position, but it appears certain that the group has decided to abolish the post of secretary-general.

and authorities are divided between the CCPCC Secretariat and the Politburo leading groups in the periods when the former is powerful. Whether the former competes with or weakens the authority of the latter is a theme deserving further discussion. However, the mainland scholars seemed to believe that the latter was more likely the case.<sup>11</sup>

Above the CLGTA are the Politburo Standing Committee, the Politburo, the CCPCC, and the CCP National Congress, all of which it is responsible to. However, it is obviously the most important leadership organ responsible for the PRC's Taiwan policymaking. Since it does not hold regular meetings, its major functional institution, the Central Office for Taiwan Affairs (COTA), is of great significance. In fact, the COTA is the CCPCC's highest staff organ responsible for collecting opinions from various quarters and providing policy suggestions for discussion and decisionmaking by superior units. At the same time, it also supervises policy implementation by subordinate units. Its opinions on Taiwan affairs fully reflect the stand of the CCPCC.

The CLGTA was established in 1980, with Deng Yingchao (Zhou En-lai's widow) as its head. At that time, its main tasks were to conduct research on important guidelines for Taiwan affairs, submit suggestions to the CCPCC through regular meetings, and execute the guidelines after their approval by the CCPCC. Major policy guidelines should be first discussed by the CCPCC Secretariat, then submitted to the CCPCC for examination and approval, and finally transmitted to all units by the CCPCC General Office. Deng Xiaoping, who was on the CCPCC, made most important policy decisions on Taiwan affairs.

The COTA was established after the normalization of Beijing-Washington relations in 1979 at Ye Jianying's suggestion. In 1987, Yang Shangkun became the new CLGTA head and continued to promote work toward Taiwan with the help of COTA director Yang Side. Yang Shangkun had formerly served as vice-chairman and first vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and his brother Yang Baibing had been the CMC secretary-general. Because of their close relationship with the military, many COTA members were from the military, especially the PLA General Political Department. Thus, the COTA has taken a relatively tough attitude toward Taiwan affairs and maintained good relations with the military, becoming the main channel through which military cadres express their views on Taiwan affairs.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, xxxiii-xxxiv.

<sup>12</sup>Ken E. Gause, "China's Policy Towards Taiwan," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, December 1995, 562-64.

After the June 1989 Tiananmen massacre, Jiang Zemin became the new CLGTA head, but he made CLGTA secretary-general Wang Zhaoguo responsible for the COTA's routine work and streamlined the organization. Composed of representatives from military, diplomatic, security, united front work, and government departments, it became an important decisionmaking organ and its functional purposes became clearer. The COTA's functions and authorities were also expanded. Already responsible for policy analysis, coordination, and planning, it also began to handle information from the PLA General Political Department, the State Council, and the Ministry of State Security. It thus had all Taiwan affairs information from various Party, government, and military organizations at hand. In 1990, as the COTA and the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) had conflicts over functions and influence,<sup>13</sup> Wang Zhaoguo was made head of both offices, thus initiating the merger of their work and personnel. Since then, the two offices have basically been operated by the same team of personnel.

Some questions need to be further clarified. First, what is the relationship between the CLGTA and the CCPCC Secretariat (parallel in status to the State Council)? Next, how can a balance be achieved between the COTA and the CCPCC General Office (parallel in status to a ministry)? What are their relations with the Politburo? What are their vertical and horizontal ties? As all of them are very important units having significant influence on the collection and flow of information, their vertical and horizontal relationships deserve careful study.

Theoretically, if the CCPCC General Office and its superior unit—the CCPCC Secretariat—are really the key organs for compiling information from Party, government, and military organizations, information on Taiwan affairs from all quarters should be under their control. Therefore, the CCP's COTA, the State Council's TAO, and even the PLA should report all opinions on Taiwan affairs from their subordinate units to the CCPCC Secretariat through the CCPCC General Office. The CCPCC Secretariat would then submit reports to higher-level units and suggest the convocation of meetings for the purpose of policy formulation. This practice is consistent with what Barnett learned from Zhao Ziyang and what the author discovered during field surveys.

As revealed by Western studies and an official of the CCPCC General

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<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 564. However, the two organizations still have different functions. The COTA, mainly responsible for handling and conveying the CCP's Taiwan policy, represents the Party's stand, but the State Council's TAO is responsible for handling the PRC's Taiwan work and represents its stand on Taiwan affairs.



Office, reports to the CCPCC and higher organs are submitted through the CCPCC General Office, which evaluates, summarizes, and distributes them. Only a handful of materials are sent directly to leaders of the highest echelon through unofficial channels in the form of "important reports."<sup>14</sup> However, Western studies show that most reports submitted to higher levels through certain units are "polished" by the latter and contain opinions similar to the latter's views and official views, "softening" radical or very different opinions. Moreover, competition does exist among various organizations, and there are even annual statistics about how many suggestions from individual offices have been adopted as official policies.<sup>15</sup>

It should be noted that the CCPCC Secretariat is the functional organ of the Politburo; the CCPCC General Office is the functional organ of the CCPCC Secretariat; the COTA is the functional organ of the CLGTA; and the State Council General Office and the CMC General Office are the functional organs of the State Council and the CMC, respectively. The CCPCC Secretariat, the CCPCC General Office, the State Council General Office, and the CMC General Office are established organizations, but the CLGTA and the COTA are task forces. Therefore, a comparison of their ranking seems inappropriate. However, it is certain that all these units are ultimately responsible, either directly or indirectly, to the Politburo and the Politburo Standing Committee.

Summing up, there would appear to be a very close work relationship among the CCPCC Secretariat, the CLGTA, the CCPCC General Office, the State Council General Office, the COTA, the TAO, and the CMC General Office, but institutional superior-subordinate relationships do not exist. All these organizations have roles to play in the PRC's Taiwan affairs, but Taiwan affairs are not necessarily handled by the COTA, the CCPCC General Office, and the CCPCC Secretariat. The nature of specific cases and leaders' work styles are also influential noninstitutional factors.

At present, the COTA's main tasks probably include the CCPCC's Taiwan policy and coordination of important Taiwan affairs, while policy implementation is entrusted to relevant ministries and commissions. Principal organizations handling Taiwan affairs remain the Ministry of State Security,

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<sup>14</sup>This was related to the author by an official of the CCPCC General Office during his visit to mainland China in July-August 1996, and is consistent with the results of Michael Swaine's research. See Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making," 62-63.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 70-71.



relevant military organs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the TAO. It is said that preparatory work for CLGTA meetings is carried out by the COTA. At the meetings, representatives from various ministries and commissions submit their own units' opinions and plans for discussion. Important policy issues must be directed to the CCPCC Secretariat through the CCPCC General Office, and decisions are made by the Politburo Standing Committee or the Politburo itself. Decisions on functional issues are made after CLGTA discussion and are conveyed to lower-level units by the COTA for implementation.

According to Xu Jiatusun, ex-head of the Xinhua Hong Kong Office, there is a Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office under the State Council, but there is not a similar organization under the CCPCC. Notifications of meetings in Beijing were sent to Xu by the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office or the CCPCC General Office.<sup>16</sup> In the author's opinion, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office convenes meetings on Hong Kong and Macao affairs, which are its special responsibilities; however, when extensive discussion on its conclusions or reports is considered necessary by higher-level units, meetings may be convened by the CCPCC General Office. The TAO probably operates in a similar fashion and can convene meetings attended by Taiwan affairs units of relevant ministries and commissions and local governments. However, when its reports are sent to the Party apparatus, they may be handled by either the CCPCC General Office or the COTA through meetings.

Some other important organizations within the Party system include the United Front Work Department, the International Liaison Department, and the Propaganda Department. The United Front Work Department is the most important of the three: its head, Wang Zhaoguo, is director of both the COTA and the TAO as well as the CLGTA secretary-general, and its Third Bureau is responsible for united front work toward Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. In addition, the All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots is known as one of the peripheral organizations of the United Front Work Department. The CCP also carries out liaison, united front, and research work toward Taiwan through the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and democratic parties such as the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang and the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League.

### *The Government*

In the government, the State Council is the highest organ of state admin-

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<sup>16</sup>Xu Jiatusun, *Xu Jiatusun Xianggang huiyilu* (Xu Jiatusun's Hong Kong memoirs) (Taipei: Lianjing chubanshe, 1993), 209, 212.

istration under the supervision of the National People's Congress (NPC). It makes decisions on most administrative affairs and directs relevant ministries and commissions and other subordinate organs to handle them. It meets twice a week, and is presided over by the premier. Thus, mainland China practices the system of "responsibility by the premier."<sup>17</sup> The premier is very powerful, as can be seen from the example of Li Peng. He is not a CLGTA member, but he supervises and controls TAO operations, is the head of the CCP's Central Foreign Affairs Leading Group, and is a member of the Politburo Standing Committee. His attitudes toward Taiwan and his influence on Beijing's Taiwan policy cannot be overlooked.

The ministries, commissions, and offices (including the TAO) under the State Council also play important roles in policy formation. There are two reasons for this. First, the government structure is designed to have this effect. To emphasize the importance of their own units and their own expertise, chiefs and specialists of ministries, commissions, and offices do their best to articulate their units' views. In so doing, they hope to influence decisionmaking at the top level and obtain more resources to enhance their own operations. Second, the reform and opening-up policy has resulted in power decentralization. The ministries and commissions have greater power and more resources at hand and therefore can adopt substantive policy positions that reflect the tasks of their units.<sup>18</sup>

Ministries, commissions, and offices of the central government may handle relevant Taiwan affairs within the limits of their functions and authorities. The Ministry of Communications' Technical Plan for Direct Navigation Across the Taiwan Strait is an example, but the ministry still must inform the TAO, a parallel unit headed by a ministerial-level leader. In comparison, the TAO not only has an important say in Taiwan affairs, but also considerable decisionmaking power. However, in the event of very important issues or issues involving many realms, specialized ministries and commissions as well as the TAO submit their views to the State Council, and the final decision will be made by the premier, or their views will be submitted to the CLGTA through the COTA for further discussion, after which the Politburo will have the final say.

<sup>17</sup>Relatively speaking, the State Council is mainly responsible for administrative affairs while the CCPCC Secretariat, parallel in status to the State Council, is the principal organ in charge of political affairs. See Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, 54; and Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, xxxii.

<sup>18</sup>Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg, *Policy Making in China: Leaders, Structures, and Processes* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), 29-30.

The importance of the TAO should be particularly emphasized, as it is an important organ of centralized management, possessing not only "relative" power to make suggestions and decisions, but also the power to supervise policy implementation. Since the CLGTA does not meet regularly and has no permanent executive body, the COTA is responsible for such work as information collection and organizing meetings. However, the COTA actually receives information from the TAO, and for some time both organs were under the supervision of Wang Zhaoguo, who was concurrently the CLGTA head. Thus, the TAO should not be regarded as only an executive body.

The TAO and the Taiwan affairs offices under various ministries and commissions are decisionmaking units which guide similar offices under local governments; they may, according to their functions and authorities, direct and supervise provincial and municipal governments to carry out Beijing's Taiwan policy. However, they are themselves under the control of the CCPCC. Local Party and government organs dealing with Taiwan affairs are not only responsible to heads of local Party committees and governments, but are also under the control of various ministries and commissions. They are thus responsible for implementing both the instructions of higher-level units and Beijing's Taiwan policy. On the other hand, within the limits of their own functions and authorities, they still have relative autonomy and may make suggestions to higher-level units, give directions to their lower-level units, and take measures to coordinate with parallel units in handling Taiwan affairs within their jurisdiction.

The TAO was established in 1988 with State Planning Commission Vice-Minister Ding Guangen as its first director. It was responsible for making overall plans for Beijing's Taiwan work and furthering cross-Straits exchanges, and its main functions involved with organization, management, coordination, and guidance. At first, it was composed of four to five departments, staffed mainly by Taiwan affairs cadres from the COTA, the United Front Work Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ministries dealing with economic affairs and trade, and the military. However, it has been organizationally expanded to a total of eight bureaus, and its current director is Chen Yunlin.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to the TAO, the central government has also set up Taiwan affairs offices under each of its ministries and commissions. Such offices

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<sup>19</sup>For the TAO's organization and functions, see Kuo Jui-hua, *Zhonggong dui Tai gongzuo zuzhi tixi gailun* (An introduction to mainland China's Taiwan affairs organizations) (Taipei: Investigation Bureau, Ministry of Justice, 1996), 94-97.

also exist within provincial-level governments, but they are rare at the county level. In inland and remote areas with little involvement in Taiwan work, Taiwan affairs are handled by foreign affairs offices. Local governments are responsible for funding the operations of their Taiwan affairs offices and appointing and dismissing their Taiwan affairs personnel. However, individual local cadres with excellent performance records and good connections with central departments may be transferred to Taiwan affairs offices at the central level.

Basically, there is no superior-subordinate administrative relationship between the TAO and provincial Taiwan affairs offices, but they do have close contacts. Taiwan affairs offices under central or local departments must accept guidance for their operations from the TAO and provincial Taiwan affairs offices as well as the administrative leadership of their own superior departments. They are responsible to the Party, the government, department heads, and their superior units. This is the PRC's so-called "dual leadership system."

Provincial Taiwan affairs offices do not have decisionmaking powers. However, they have the right to make suggestions since they are working on the front line and have a better understanding of the local situation. Their main tasks include servicing, coordination, providing policy guidance to parallel or lower-level local units, and submitting policy suggestions to higher-level units. Theoretically, visitors from Taiwan should have their visits, meetings, and symposiums arranged through the TAO or provincial Taiwan affairs offices, but they may also contact the Taiwan affairs offices of various departments (for instance, the Taiwan Affairs Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) directly or make arrangements through local associations and institutes of Taiwan studies, as well as federations of Taiwan compatriots. However, if these units make arrangements without asking their superior Taiwan affairs offices for instructions and cause policy deviations or commit policy implementation mistakes, central and provincial Taiwan affairs offices have the power to investigate their blunders.

For instance, if the TAO is dissatisfied with the Taiwan affairs offices of Zhejiang Province and Shanghai Municipality, it will not tell the latter directly through official communications, but would officially request the Zhejiang Provincial Government and the Shanghai Municipal Government to investigate and rectify the latter's mistakes. Similarly, if the TAO has disagreements with the Taiwan Affairs Office of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, it may use such noninstitutional methods as exchanges of ideas, phone discussions, and symposiums to exert pressure on the latter. Within the institutional system, however, it cannot take direct disciplinary action against

the latter, but can only ask the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation to handle the problem. The situation at the local levels is rather similar.

Under the TAO is an ARATS, which on the surface is a nongovernmental organization entrusted by Beijing to conduct routine person-to-person contacts and talks with Taiwan. In fact, it serves as "white gloves" for Beijing just as the Strait Exchange Foundation (SEF) does for Taipei. The officials of both organizations have been transferred temporarily from governmental institutions and they are front-line personnel handling cross-Strait relations. Though the ARATS is mainly a policy implementation organization, it has a certain influence on the PRC's Taiwan policy, obviously due to the weight of its incumbent chairman, Wang Daohan.<sup>20</sup>

The TAO also has eight bureaus, including such important units as news, exchanges, and liaisons. The ARATS itself has six departments, including liaisons and coordination. Both organizations have research, secretarial, and economic units. The secretarial unit is responsible for internal administrative work, but the existence of research and economic units shows that Beijing attaches great importance to these two aspects. Taipei should understand that the views of these specialized units on Taiwan affairs could influence Beijing's decisionmaking.

Some scholars have pointed out that there is no Taiwan affairs office under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the ministry's influence on Taiwan affairs is very limited.<sup>21</sup> However, the current diplomatic struggle between Beijing and Taipei seems to contradict this. In fact, there is a Taiwan Affairs Office under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which plans and takes charge of Taiwan diplomatic work. Without doubt, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs exercises a certain influence on Taiwan affairs through Qian Qichen, a CLGTA member.

In addition to the above-mentioned units, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, the Ministry of Communications, the State Education Commission, the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission, the General Administration of Customs, and the Ministry of Culture also handle Taiwan affairs within the scope of their authority and responsibilities. For instance, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation is in charge

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<sup>20</sup>For the establishment, organizational structure, and important functions of the ARATS, see *ibid.*, 103-10.

<sup>21</sup>Gause, "China's Policy Towards Taiwan," 564.

of cross-Strait economic and trade activities; the Ministry of Communications is responsible for transportation planning; the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission played an important role in thwarting Taipei's attempt to become an Asian Olympic Games host; the Ministry of Culture handles cross-Strait cultural exchanges; and the State Education Commission takes charge of cross-Strait educational exchanges. However, from the political perspective, these ministries and commissions are less influential on Beijing's Taiwan policy than the aforementioned units.

It should also be noted that the influence of Beijing's officials depends on their respective posts in the Party hierarchy. For instance, Shanghai Mayor Huang Ju is parallel in ranking to ministers or provincial governors, but since he is a Politburo member, he is far more influential than a vice-premier who is not on the CCPCC. Moreover, both the TAO director and the minister of culture are Party members and ministerial-level cadres. If the TAO director is a Politburo member but the minister of culture is only a CCPCC member, the former will be much more influential than the latter. In short, one's status in the Party is an important indicator of one's influence.

### *The Military*

Although most observers believe that the PLA has a great influence on the PRC's Taiwan policy and that it played a very important role in the policymaking process during the recent Taiwan Strait crisis, it is extremely difficult to collect evidence because the military maintains even stricter secrecy than the Party and the government. As mentioned above, the COTA is an important channel through which military cadres convey their views on Taiwan affairs. However, how do the PLA's views reach and influence Beijing's top decisionmaking group through institutional or noninstitutional channels and how the PLA and the TAO communicate with each other are questions deserving further examination.

In addition to the CMC under the CCPCC, mainland China has a PRC Central Military Commission under the central government, but these two organizations are basically staffed with the same group of officials, and command units of particular importance such as the PLA General Staff Headquarters, the PLA General Political Department, and the PLA General Logistics Department. Under the CMC there is a General Office and under the State Council there are the Ministry of National Defense and the State Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense. Given that in mainland China the Party exercises leadership over the government and the military, the Ministry of National Defense should be far less influential than



the three PLA general departments. Therefore, the CMC can be seen as the PLA's real decisionmaking body and the PLA General Political Department is as important in status as the CCPCC Organization Department in the Party apparatus.<sup>22</sup>

The CMC does not conduct policy research and analysis, so it depends on its subordinate units for assessment of Taiwan affairs such as Taiwan's national defense policy and military purchases, and their impact on Beijing's national defense strategy. Opinions or suggestions on Taiwan affairs are usually submitted to the CMC by operations, staff, intelligence, and research units through the CMC General Office. Similar to the CCPCC General Office and the State Council General Office, the CMC General Office is also an important channel responsible for providing appraisals and summaries to the CMC as well as distributing CMC instructions to lower-level military units.

How are the military's opinions on Taiwan affairs integrated with those of the Party and the government and reach the Party's highest decisionmaking body? As mentioned above, military cadres usually express their views on Taiwan affairs through the COTA and their representatives on the CLGTA. However, the author believes that a regular reporting procedure exists within the PLA. Military units at various levels would thus report the results of their Taiwan studies to units of the next higher level until the analyses finally reach the CMC; summaries of important views would then be sent to the COTA and possibly also to the CCPCC General Office by the CMC General Office with CMC knowledge or approval.<sup>23</sup>

Western studies have also proven that if the issue is too serious (for stance, whether to hold military exercises in the seas close to Taiwan) for the military to make decisions by itself, the normal institutional practice is for it to (with the knowledge or approval of the CMC) convey relevant information through the CMC General Office to the COTA, or the CCPCC General Office and the CCPCC Secretariat so that final decisions will be made by the Politburo Standing Committee after discussion. However, there are also communications through noninstitutional channels such as high-echelon interactions (i.e., Xiong Guangkai's speech at a CLGTA meeting and Chi Haotian's declaration of his stand at a Beidaihe conference) and "important

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<sup>22</sup>Hamrin and Zhao, *Decision-Making in Deng's China*, xli.

<sup>23</sup>According to an article published in Hong Kong, there is also a Taiwan Affairs Office under the CMC. However, in interviews, mainland Chinese scholars and military officials denied the existence of such a unit. See Luo Bing, "Inside Information on Mainland China's Southeast War Zone," *Cheng Ming* (Contending) (Hong Kong), 1996, no. 4:10.



reports" directly sent by the military to the CCPCC.<sup>24</sup>

Of the three PLA general departments, the General Logistics Department has no important political roles to play and is basically not involved in Taiwan affairs, but the General Political Department and the General Staff Headquarters each have their own research and information collection units (i.e., the Center for Peace and Development Studies and the China Institute for International Strategic Studies). The General Political Department has set up subordinate units in all military regions and one of the important tasks of these units is to monitor communications across the Taiwan Strait. According to mainland Chinese sources, the General Political Department has better Taiwan information channels than other mainland Chinese intelligence organizations. This has enabled it to have a comparatively greater say on Taiwan affairs.<sup>25</sup>

According to a recent Rand Corporation research report sponsored by the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, the implementation of reform and opening-up policies and the death of leaders such as Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping has substantially increased the PLA's influence on the PRC's national defense strategy and civilian leaders; consequently, the military almost enjoys veto power over affairs involving Taiwan.<sup>26</sup> The author agrees with this research result and believes that Taipei should take note of this development trend.

According to a Hong Kong magazine, in early 1996, when cross-Strait relations were strained, the PLA Second Artillery Corps proposed a battle plan against Taiwan, boasting that the battle could be won in three minutes. In March of the same year, the CMC convened an enlarged meeting in Zhongnanhai and established the Southeast War Zone. CMC Vice-Chairman Liu Huaqing described ten possible scenarios in which force would be used against Taiwan. On other occasions, Chief of General Staff Fu Quanyou and CMC Vice-Chairman Zhang Wannian stated that mainland China had the capability to sink U.S. aircraft carriers, and Zhang Zhen, also a CMC vice-chairman, said that mainland China would use modern, sophisticated weapons

<sup>24</sup>Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making," 69.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 67-68; Gause, "China's Policy Towards Taiwan," 563.

<sup>26</sup>Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making," xi-xii. However, according to David Shambaugh's observations in 1987, there was a tendency for civilian views and influence to become increasingly strong. See Shambaugh, "China's National Security Research Bureaucracy," 285-86. Judging by mainland China's recent development trends, the author believes that in general, the influence of civilian organizations has gradually increased, but the military still has the upper hand over issues involving Taiwan.

when necessary.<sup>27</sup> When receiving a visiting U.S. delegation in October of the same year, Deputy Chief of General Staff Xiong Guangkai still stressed the military's intransigent attitude toward Taiwan.

According to a reliable source, at an enlarged meeting held in Beidaihe in July 1995, high-ranking mainland Chinese leaders had a thorough discussion on what policy to take toward Taiwan. At that time, Foreign Ministry officials advocated moderate but appropriate reactions, saying that it was not worthwhile to use force against Taiwan because of Lee Teng-hui's visit to the United States. However, military cadres represented by Defense Minister Chi Haotian strongly supported a tough stand against Taiwan, and their proposal was finally accepted.<sup>28</sup> The author also obtained similar information from meetings with mainland Chinese officials during his visits to mainland China. Thus, it is worth considering why the PLA took such a hard-line stand. Were there institutional factors behind this?

Generally, the military is very conservative on such issues as defending the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity; it would rather take an intransigent stand than make compromises. After the protracted struggle between the Nationalists and the Communists, mainland Chinese military leaders are still under the influence of the confrontation mentality. Thus, the PLA's hard line is easy to understand. Moreover, another factor is the current power struggles within mainland China. Taipei believes that the PLA has attempted to gain political and economic benefits and increase its political influence in the post-Deng era through military intimidation and verbal attacks against Taiwan.<sup>29</sup>

Earlier Western studies show that mainland Chinese leaders (both military and nonmilitary) continue to rely on their own personal judgments on unprocessed data instead of evaluated research and analysis at lower levels.<sup>30</sup> If the views of military leaders on Taiwan affairs are not based on the research results and suggestions of PLA operations and research units, but on their own

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<sup>27</sup>Luo, "Inside Information on Mainland China's Southeast War Zone," 10-11; Tian Tao, "Can Missile Attacks on Taiwan Win the Battle in Three Minutes?" *Cheng Ming*, 1996, no. 1:21; Li Zijiang, "Mainland China Exaggerates the Results of Military Exercises," and "Zhang Wannian Says That Mainland China Is Able to Sink U.S. Aircraft Carriers," *ibid.*, 1996, no. 4:12-15; *Lianhe bao* (United Daily News) (Taipei), October 20, 1996, 10.

<sup>28</sup>Gause, "China's Policy Towards Taiwan," 565.

<sup>29</sup>"An Analysis of Mainland China's Developments After the Mainland Chinese Military Exercises in the Taiwan Strait," in *Zhonggong dui Tai zhengce ji liang'an guanxi zhi yanjiu* (A study of mainland China's Taiwan policy and cross-strait relations) (Taipei: KMT Central Committee Department of Mainland Affairs, 1996), 113-14.

<sup>30</sup>Barrett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, 4, 102.

experiences and personal judgments, we can foresee further shifts in future cross-Straits relations.

On the other hand, should the military's hard-line stand toward Taiwan be mostly based on the suggestions of their own research units, these units' evaluations would have a far greater influence on military leaders than has been suspected by outsiders, and these units might play the more important role of policy consultants to military leaders in the future.<sup>31</sup> It seems obvious that Taipei should strengthen contacts with these military research units and their personnel to improve mutual understanding. Among them, the intelligence and research units under the General Staff Headquarters and the General Political Department should receive special attention.

It is very difficult to understand the positions of mainland Chinese security and intelligence organizations toward Taiwan affairs and evaluate their influence on Beijing's making of Taiwan policy. On the surface, Beijing does not have organizations similar to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency or the former Soviet Union's KGB. However, the Party, the government, and the military have all set up intelligence collection and security units. The Investigation Department under the CCPCC and the Ministry of Public Security under the State Council might have been very important intelligence organizations until their functions were taken over by the Ministry of State Security established in the early 1980s. The latter has set up at both the central and provincial levels subordinate units under the disguise of other names, i.e., the Center for Cross-Straits Cultural and Economic Exchanges in Beijing. The Ministry of State Security is especially well known for its intelligence and strategic studies involving Taiwan, and its minister Jia Chunwang is a CLGTA member.<sup>32</sup>

The Ministry of State Security's main responsibilities include counter-espionage, intelligence collection, and intelligence analysis and evaluation, part of which is concerned with monitoring and taking countermeasures against Taiwan's mainland China work. According to information obtained by the Kuomintang (KMT) Central Committee, the ministry has twelve bureaus and one office with subordinate research units, of which the Third Bureau is

<sup>31</sup>Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making," xii. In fact, most mainland Chinese military researchers have negative views about Taiwan and favor the adoption of a hard-line Taiwan policy. The opinions of Wang Zaixi, a General Staff Headquarters researcher, provide a good example. See Wang Zaixi, *Taihai qingshi huigu* (A review of the Taiwan Strait situation) (Beijing: Huayi chubanshe, 1996).

<sup>32</sup>Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making," 61.

responsible for handling intelligence related to Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan.<sup>33</sup> However, some Western studies have claimed that the Sixth Bureau is the principal unit with such authorities and responsibilities.<sup>34</sup> Which assertion is true remains to be verified.

In the realm of journalism, the Xinhua and the *People's Daily* are Beijing's two most important news organizations. The former plays the role of a state news agency, promoting propaganda both at home and abroad, and the latter is the organ of the Party. As far as Taiwan affairs are concerned, the daily's chief function is to provide authoritative interpretations of the CCPCC's Taiwan policy. Its editorials, commentaries, and observers' articles deserve special attention. Articles published under the name of the daily's editorial department are the most authoritative, but comparatively less frequent than the editorials and commentaries, which fully reflect Beijing's official stands. Other comments and signed articles are slightly less important.<sup>35</sup> Most written attacks against Taiwan in 1995 and 1996 were dished out by these two propaganda organizations.

On the surface, the Xinhua is a State Council organization parallel in status to various ministries and commissions. In reality, it is under the rigid control of the CCPCC Propaganda Department. Serving as Beijing's principal mouthpiece, it has two important functions: to explain Beijing's policy to both the Chinese people and foreigners, and provide the Beijing leadership with important news from foreign countries. In areas with no formal diplomatic relations, the Xinhua's highest-ranking local cadre may also be Beijing's de facto representative. An example of this is Xu Jiataun, who played the role of Beijing's underground governor for Hong Kong when he was director of the Xinhua's Hong Kong Office. In fact, important Xinhua cadres can be transferred to Party and government organizations, and Party and government officials can also be appointed to Xinhua posts. For instance, Wang Zhenyu, former director of the Foreign Ministry's Taiwan Affairs Office, was transferred to director of the Taiwan Affairs Department of the Xinhua's Hong Kong Office. Tang Shubei (currently ARATS vice-chairman), Xu Shiquan (currently director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies under the Chinese Acad-

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<sup>33</sup> *Dalu qingshi ABC* (ABC of the situation of mainland China) (Taipei: KMT Central Committee Department of Mainland Affairs, August 1, 1993), 163.

<sup>34</sup> Gause, "China's Policy Towards Taiwan," 565. However, according to information obtained by Taipei's Investigation Bureau, Beijing's Ministry of State Security has seventeen bureaus. See Kuo, *Zhonggong dui Tai gongzuo zuzhi tixi gailun*, 125.

<sup>35</sup> Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, 118.

emy of Social Sciences), and Xu's predecessor Jiang Dianming also had work experience with the Xinhua.

The Xinhua exercises influence on Beijing's Taiwan policy mainly through the *Reference Data* and *Reference Information* that it compiles. Both are only for internal circulation and contain important information from various countries, and even criticisms of Beijing. Their purpose is to provide access to external affairs for high-echelon cadres, decisionmakers, or persons who should know specific information. The *Reference Data*, accessible to only a very small number of high-ranking cadres in the past, has been far more important than *Reference Information*, although control over its circulation has been allegedly relaxed.<sup>36</sup>

Therefore, through the *Reference Data* and *Reference Information*, the Xinhua can influence the views of high-echelon leaders who are not directly connected with Taiwan affairs and influence the mainland people's impressions of Taiwan. Moreover, its Hong Kong Office does not only have a Taiwan Affairs Department and a Policy Research Office, but also information collection units and personnel, which have the responsibility to submit suggestions on Taiwan affairs; the Xinhua thus has a considerable influence on Beijing's Taiwan policy.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to Party, government, military, and academic research organizations, some mainland Chinese mass organizations are also engaged in Taiwan work, such as the All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots, the Huangpu (Whampoa) Military Academy Alumni Association, the China Council for Promoting Peaceful Unification, the China Overseas Exchanges Association, the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, and the All-China Sports Federation. However, they are only peripheral united front work organizations and do not have a substantial influence on Beijing's Taiwan policy.

The structure of mainland China's Party, government, and military Taiwan affairs organizations is shown in chart 1.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 114-19. For categories of internal reference materials, see Kuo, *Zhonggong dui Tai gongzuo zuzhi tixi gailun*, 237-39.

<sup>37</sup>See Jin Zhong, "Report on Huang Wenfang's Visit to Taiwan," *Kaifang* (Open) (Hong Kong), 1996, no. 8:49-54. According to Xu Jiatur, the Xinhua Hong Kong Office is also responsible for intelligence collection, including information on Taiwan. Intelligence collectors are from the Ministry of State Security, the Ministry of Public Security, the PLA General Staff Headquarters, and the PLA General Political Department. Most of them are given positions in the security department of the Xinhua and some Beijing-funded organizations. see Xu, *Xu Jiatur Xianggang huiyilu*, 52-55.

## **The PRC's Taiwan Policy as Seen from the Perspectives of Regions and Individual Cadres**

Beijing, Shanghai, Fujian, Nanjing, and Hong Kong are areas with significant impacts on Beijing's Taiwan policy:

1. Beijing is mainland China's political center where the CCP leadership, the central government, and important Taiwan affairs organizations are situated.

2. Shanghai is the area from which most government and military officials of the Nationalist government moved to Taiwan. It has experience in external affairs, and is an industrial and commercial center making strenuous efforts to attract Taiwan investments. Moreover, PRC President Jiang Zemin is from Shanghai and has close connections with Shanghai officials of various circles; ARATS Chairman Wang Daohan is a former mayor of Shanghai. All these factors have enabled Shanghai to carry weight in the PRC's Taiwan policy.

3. Fujian Province is situated next to the Taiwan Strait; however, its importance can be better observed from Beijing's transfers of its Taiwan affairs personnel. Wang Zhaoguo, a former TAO director, served successively as deputy governor and acting governor of Fujian in the late 1980s, and was at the same time secretary of the CCP Fujian Provincial Committee. Tang Shubei, ARATS vice-chairman, worked in Fujian in his early career. Li Qingzhou, a former COTA deputy director, was the Fujian governor's special assistant until his recent promotion to another unit. He was allegedly entrusted with the task of transmitting Fujian's opinions on Taiwan affairs to the CCPCC.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, Xiamen University's Institute of Taiwan Studies focuses on Taiwan's history and culture, and its political viewpoints and observations, which are representative of southerners' opinions, can also reach the CCPCC through various channels. Judging from all this, Fujian is certainly a help to the CCPCC in analyzing Taiwan affairs.

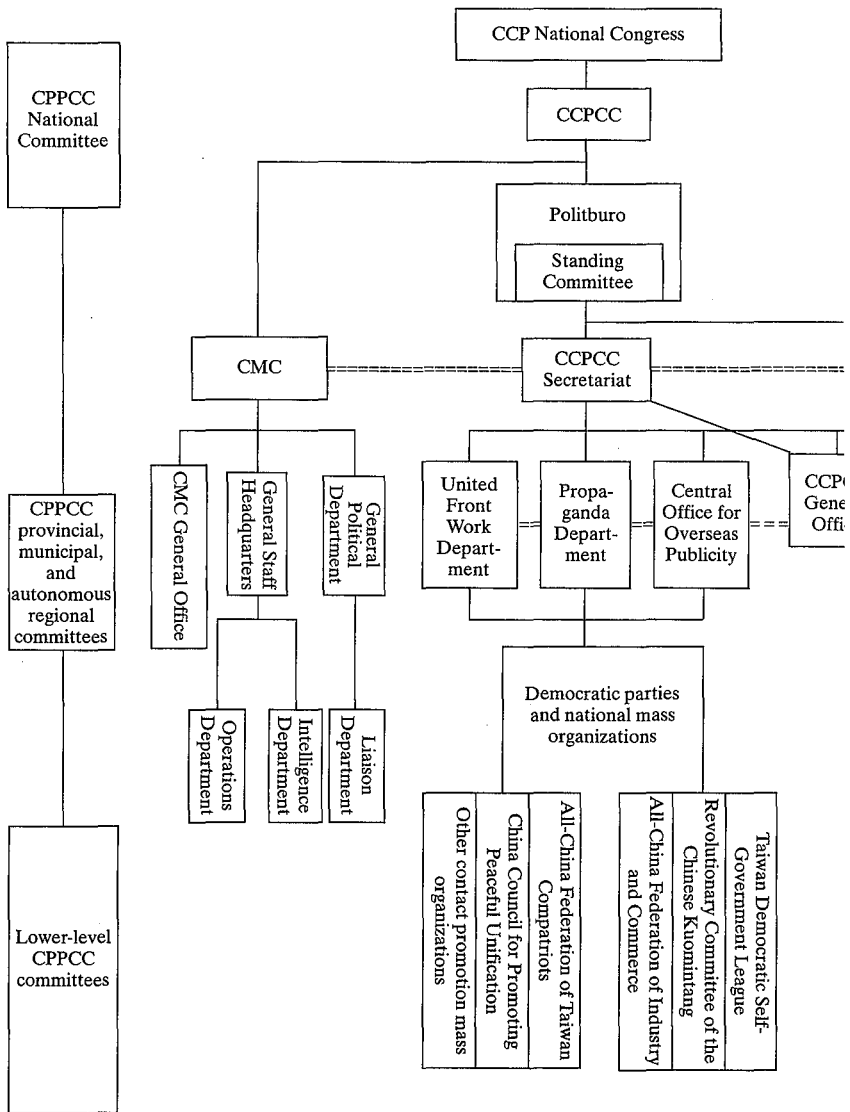
4. Hong Kong and Taiwan also enjoy a close proximity, and most visitors from Taiwan enter mainland China via Hong Kong. Hong Kong is also the main channel for cross-Strait entrepôt trade and an important channel for the flow of Taiwan investment into mainland China. The existence of a Taiwan Affairs Department under the Xinhua's Hong Kong Office further emphasizes Hong Kong's importance.

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<sup>38</sup>Gause, "China's Policy Towards Taiwan," 563-64.

Chart 1

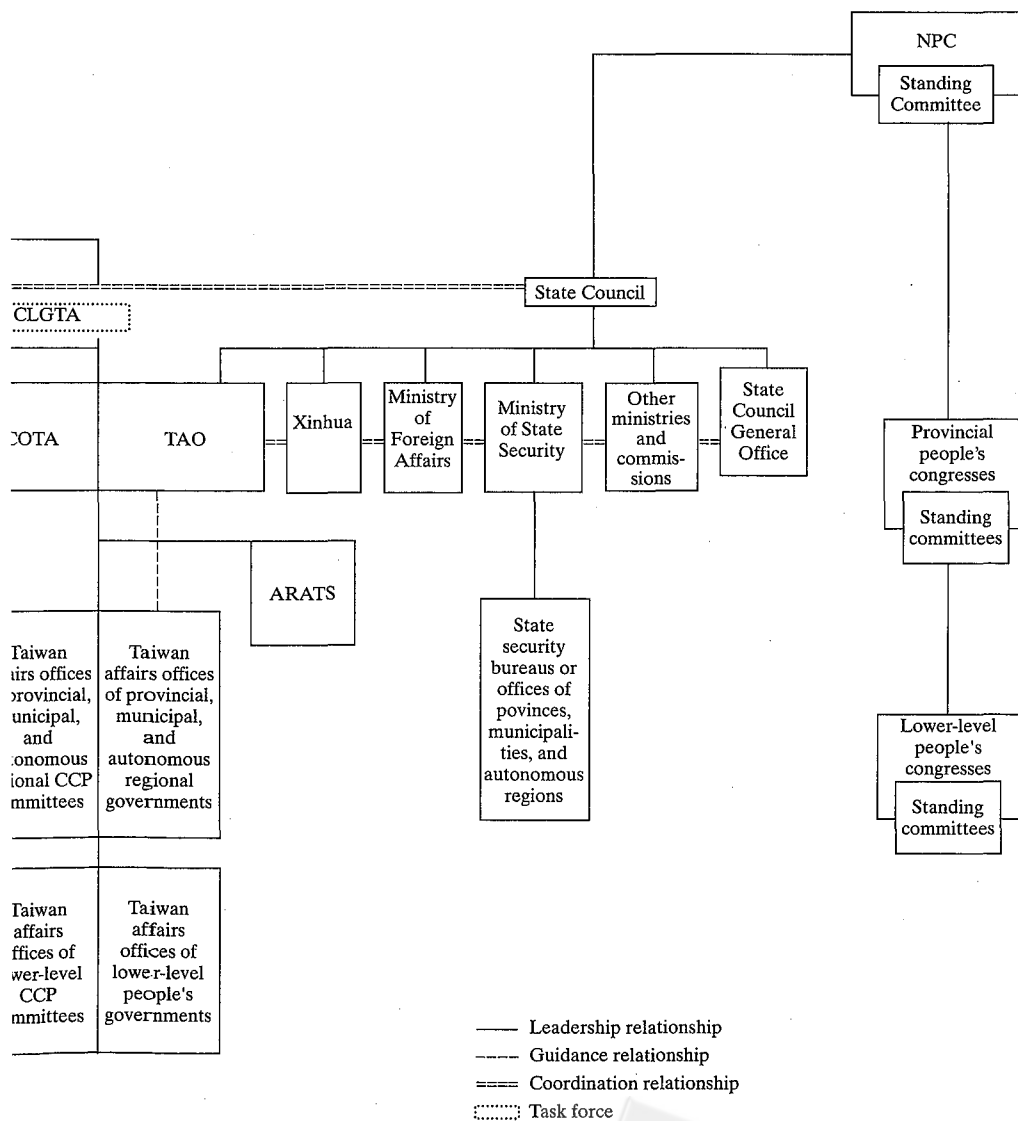
# The Structure of Mainland China's Party, Government, and Military Taiwan Affairs Organizations



## Notes:

On the surface, coordination relationships exist among the CCPCC Secretariat, the State Council, and the CMC. However, in reality, the CCPCC Secretariat guides the latter two organs in most cases—if not exercising leadership over them.





5. Nanjing was once the capital of the Nationalist government, and owns many archives that the Nationalists did not have enough time to remove at the time of their departure. These materials have been helpful for its research work on the Nationalist government. For instance, Nanjing University has an Institute of Taiwan Studies. Moreover, according to a cooperation program for international studies between the university and Johns Hopkins University in the United States, international relations researchers are being trained in Nanjing. Nanjing's influence on Taiwan studies may consequently be increasing.

As far as the viewpoints of CLGTA cadres are concerned, Jiang Zemin assumes overall responsibility; Qian Qichen is responsible for diplomatic affairs; Jia Chunwang is in charge of state security; Xiong Guangkai represents the military's viewpoints; Wang Daohan reflects the opinions of Shanghai; and Wang Zhaoguo represents the stands of the United Front Work Department and the TAO. Undoubtedly, they are the core decisionmakers for the PRC's Taiwan work. On the other hand, although Li Peng is not a CLGTA member, his influence should not be underestimated, as he is the premier and a Politburo Standing Committee member. However, the division of labor between Li and Jiang over Taiwan affairs currently remains unknown to outsiders, so it is difficult to make an accurate judgment.

The role of Xiong Guangkai also requires further explanation. As previously mentioned, the military usually takes a hard-line stand on Taiwan affairs and has a considerable influence on the PRC's Taiwan policy. The General Staff Headquarters's intelligence and operations departments and the General Political Department's Liaison Department are key units. The everyday tasks of the General Staff Headquarters intelligence and operations departments include collecting and compiling important military events from the previous twenty-four hours. Their daily reports are sent to CMC and Politburo members and PLA highest-echelon leaders. Xiong is one of the major leading cadres responsible for this information collection task, and can also submit special reports on important issues when necessary, as he has a close relationship with Jiang Zemin.<sup>39</sup> Obviously, he is an important transmitter of the military's stands on Taiwan affairs.

Of course, influence evaluation is not very meaningful if only well-known core leaders are mentioned. However, it would be difficult to make a list of influential individuals in various Party, government, and academic re-

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<sup>39</sup>Swaine, "The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policy-Making," 69-70.

search institutions. Some second- and third-echelon researchers indeed have the potential to gain influence, but their futures will be hard to predict, since personnel changes take place far more quickly than organizational changes. Moreover, persons on such a list could have objections for fear that they might be censured by relevant CCP units, while those who are not on the list could complain about their absence. Therefore, the author's list in this article is not exclusive, but only a summation of his personal observations during his own visits and interviews.

In examining the previously-mentioned Party, government, military, and news organizations responsible for Taiwan affairs, the author believes that Chen Yunlin, Tang Shubei, Wang Zhenyu, Jiang Dianming, Xu Shiquan, Wang Zaixi, Li Qingzhou, Mu Wen, Sun Yafu, Xing Kuishan, Xiao Jing, Zhang Zhiquan, Zhang Nianchi, and Zhang Kehui are important cadres who influence political affairs. Of course, there are also professional cadres who influence economics, culture, trade, the military, education, communications, and other fields, and their suggestions can influence Beijing's Taiwan policy, but compiling a list of their names will require the work of scholars specializing in nonpolitical fields.

Personnel transfers among the Taiwan affairs units of mainland China's Party, government, news, security, and research organizations seem to be very fluid. Obviously, this is due to the CCP's absolute leadership over the government and the lack of distinction between Party and government functions. This also indicates that mainland China's public service system needs to be consolidated. However, since some medium- and high-level cadres can be swiftly transferred from government organizations to Party or news units and some of them are concurrently responsible for security and research, it is hard for outsiders to completely understand the changes. The aforementioned transfers of Tang Shubei, Jiang Dianming, and Wang Zhenyu are examples. In the future, Beijing's Taiwan affairs personnel might evolve into a specialized system. However, judging by the nature of the central government, it is unlikely that they could become an independent force or a pressure group.

In regard to Taiwan affairs officials engaging in ordinary office work, their appointments were previously made through "planned recruitment and distribution," but a "double track and double selection system" is currently in practice. At present, relevant units may recruit new personnel through examinations, and interested parties also send in applications, though Party spirit and security remain the most important criteria. In addition, relevant units may also recruit through allocations, transfers, and exchanges. According to some mainland Chinese scholars and officials, out of consideration for future

promotion and development, the Taiwan affairs officials and researchers are not necessarily the most qualified people. Some of them have transferred from units working on history, philosophy, and literature only because of their desire for higher incomes.

As revealed in private by some mainland Chinese scholars and officials, the Taiwan affairs officials of various Party, government, and military organizations have smooth official and unofficial channels of contacts among them. They may exchange opinions through submissions of reports, transmissions and countersigning of official documents, telephone, and private gatherings. Basically, central-level cadres already have a mature understanding of central policies and are able to correctly determine what kinds of information should be sent to relevant Party, government, and military departments for reference purposes. Moreover, reference materials and policy suggestions can be transmitted to units and leaders concerned through different channels. Therefore, sufficient and flexible circulation of information and decisions involving Taiwan is achieved, especially at higher levels.

It should be noted that even mainland Chinese officials and scholars have no clear basis for evaluating their own influence on policies; influence depends completely on the nature of the issues concerned. As a rule, all units report their opinions to higher-level departments, and the results will be determined by how the latter handle their reports. As mentioned previously, competition exists among various Taiwan affairs units, but so far no definite model has been found. It seems that there is little chance for such competition to further develop into a line struggle. These units may differ about whether to take tough measures against Taiwan, but they have not yet formed established factions. However, future developments along these lines should be worthy of observation.

## Conclusion

The PRC's decisionmaking process for Taiwan policy is not completely institutionalized; it can also be influenced by noninstitutional factors which are no less important. The institutionalized structures are relatively easier to understand because the vertical and horizontal relationships within the established system are relatively consistent. However, noninstitutional factors are difficult to evaluate because they involve person-to-person and organization-to-organization relationships as well as personal connections. The attitudes and reactions of individual Party, government, and military leaders, especially

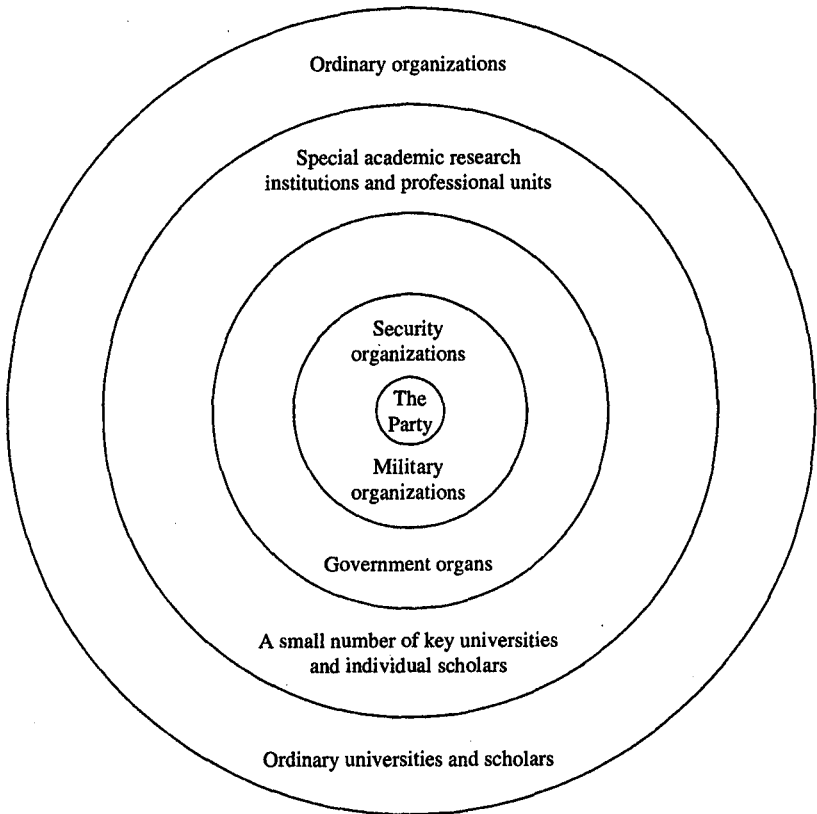
those of the highest echelon, are always irregular.

Within the established system, Beijing's Taiwan policy decisionmaking process is as follows: Local Taiwan affairs organizations submit reports to their higher-level units according to the official procedures of Party, government, and military organizations. At the center, the CCPCC, the State Council, and the CMC each form their own views based on Taiwan affairs information provided by the TAO, the COTA, and the military, foreign affairs, security, economic, news, and united front work organizations. Their information and views will then be summed up within the Party, and final decisions will be made by a small number of leaders authorized by the highest organ of Party power. For instance, Beijing's 1996 Taiwan policy of combining verbal attacks with military intimidation was adopted by a small number of CCPCC leaders after a consensus-building period during which opinions were exchanged among high-ranking leaders.

Within the government apparatus, the TAO and the State Council play the most important roles. Within the Party, the COTA, the CCPCC General Office, and the CCPCC Secretariat are key actors. In the military establishment, the importance of the General Staff Headquarters, the General Political Department, and the CMC General Office deserves special attention. However, all these units are only high-echelon advisory bodies, and the final decisionmaking power lies with a small number of CLGTA and Politburo members. The six CLGTA members are therefore extremely influential, but Li Peng's influence should also not be underestimated.

On the whole, the CCPCC is the core of the decisionmaking core for Beijing's Taiwan policy. Compared to the CCPCC, government, military, and security organizations are slightly peripheral, but the latter two have relatively greater say. Among Party and government organizations, the COTA and TAO, both led by Wang Zhaoguo and Chen Yunlin, are the key units in charge of Taiwan affairs; the Taiwan Affairs Office under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by Qian Qichen is the principal unit responsible for diplomacy with Taiwan. Therefore, their views carry more weight than other parallel ministries and commissions or lower-level Taiwan affairs offices.

In short, Beijing's high-echelon Party and government organizations make policy decisions, its medium-level organizations take care of the administrative work, and most local organizations are only responsible for policy implementation. Within the limits of the center's set Taiwan policy, working organizations can propose "appropriate" new viewpoints on actual developments (the so-called "feedback of opinions"), but they must obey the decisions of higher-level units and put policies into practice. During the opinion feed-

**Chart 2****The Relative Influence of Relevant Mainland Chinese Organizations on Beijing's Taiwan Policy**

back period, the views of various units may be different, and sometimes internal coordination meetings are held for the purpose of achieving consensus. If consensus is not reached even after those meetings, different proposals can be submitted simultaneously to higher-level units. Allegedly, lower-level units are allowed to present three proposals simultaneously, and may also note their preferences for one of these proposals. Of course, the final decision lies with the CCPCC (see chart 2).

Influence on Beijing's Taiwan policy may also be achieved through non-institutional channels. The previously-mentioned organizations and individuals may pass their opinions in the form of "important reports" or "internal documents for reference" to the central decisionmaking body through their personal connection networks, or they may clarify their own stands during discussion meetings or private talks to influence the views of upper- or

parallel-level units. As shown by the results of most studies, under the mainland Chinese authoritarian rule, which emphasizes Party leadership over everything, the attitudes of the leaders count more than the institutional system itself. Of course, the system may condition leaders' choices and lower-level units' opinions may also influence the thinking of upper-level units. However, past experiences indicate that a small number of Communist Chinese leaders may overturn or change the decisionmaking direction. This is a basic element in mainland Chinese politics.

Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Fujian, and Hong Kong are key areas involved in Taiwan affairs. Since the interests of various localities are different, their observations of Taiwan affairs might be somewhat different from the CCPCC. Therefore, Taipei would be well-advised to strengthen studies of these areas from political, economic, trade, and cultural perspectives. It may plan different contact formulas for different areas, and even make these formulas a strategic focus. In so doing, Taipei could win over some allies. Of course, such a strategy could also put Taipei at great risk.

In short, the institutional system is the axis for Beijing's Taiwan policy-making. From top to bottom, throughout the existing Party, government, military, intelligence, propaganda, and united front work establishments, a meticulously organized Taiwan affairs network has been formed to shape, promote, and execute Beijing's Taiwan policy. This network also obtains information concerning Taiwan through noninstitutional channels to avoid biases and misjudgment.

Observers have disagreed about whether Beijing's adoption of a policy toward Taiwan is always preceded by careful evaluation. However, judging by Beijing's proposal of the "one country, two systems" formula for China's unification and Jiang Zemin's "eight points" speech, as well as its other strategic and tactical diplomatic moves, the macro-planning ability of mainland Chinese staff officers should not be underestimated. Taipei should be particularly careful about whether Beijing has already started planning for cross-Straits political negotiations, and whether it has formed any ideas for the content of a cross-Straits peaceful agreement or even a Taiwan Basic Law. When asked about these questions, mainland Chinese scholars always say that they have no knowledge of such things. However, that does not mean Beijing has not made any preparations. Taipei should thus remain highly vigilant.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Jiang's "eight points" proposal was the result of more than a year of staff operations. According to Li Jiaquan, former deputy director of the Institute of Taiwan Studies of the Chinese



Within mainland China, cadres indeed differed over the recent policy of combining verbal attacks with military intimidation against Taiwan. Some held that although it was an effective way to check further development of Taiwan independence tendencies while also warning off the United States and other countries, it was not necessarily the best and only way, since it could have resulted in many undesirable consequences. It is said that during that period, a relatively moderate and rational attitude was adopted by the economic and diplomatic circles, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and the various institutes for Taiwan studies, especially cadres from southern China, those with overseas work experience, and those who had visited Taiwan. However, the military's hard-line position finally held sway despite Beijing's usual emphasis of Party leadership over the government and the military. Of course, such a statement is only a general conclusion, as some military cadres still had reservations about the policy, while some southern cadres were staunch supporters.

After the missile crisis of 1996, Beijing held meetings to take stock of the experience, but no leaders took the opportunity to launch a fierce internal power struggle. Some cadres claimed that Beijing had gone slightly too far by threatening Taiwan with missiles, but the action had also achieved some positive results; for example, it had forced the United States to take a clear stand on the issue. Of course, the costs of such a tough policy were increased dissatisfaction among the Taiwan people and increased international wariness about Beijing.

In the future, if the cross-Strait stalemate continues, Taipei must have a macro-strategy: that is, an omnidirectional strategy regarding mainland China. It should formulate different tactics to deal with different kinds of mainland Chinese Taiwan affairs organizations within the Party, government, and military establishments, either from the south or from the north. For instance, if the opinions of the military and security organizations are expected to become increasingly influential, Taipei should try to determine the reasons and plan appropriate solutions. It should evaluate whether to influence their views by strengthening contact and communication or to adopt all-around or selective confrontational measures. It should do the same with news, cultural, and economic organizations responsible for Taiwan affairs. In short, Taipei must plan countermeasures in advance.

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Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing has already planned for the drafting of a Taiwan Basic Law, but considers the time not yet ripe for unveiling such a plan. See *Lianhe bao*, October 19, 1996, 9.