

# The U.S.-Taiwan Alliance: Who's in Charge?

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The United States and Taiwan are "allies." In Section 2(b)(6) of the Taiwan Relations Act, the United States has articulated a formal defense commitment to Taiwan,<sup>1</sup> a commitment that is arguably more binding than the one embodied in the now-defunct U.S.-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty.<sup>2</sup> So, who's in charge of the U.S.-Taiwan alliance? Like many alliance relationships between a strong state and significantly weaker states, this de facto alliance relationship has the potential to permit the weaker state to have undue influence in guiding the direction of the alliance.<sup>3</sup> The fear, of

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<sup>1</sup>The Taiwan Relations Act, PL. 98-6 of April 10, 1979. Section 2(b)(6) reads: "It is the policy of the United States to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan." In Section 3(c), the TRA directs that "The President and the Congress shall determine, in accordance with constitutional processes, appropriate action by the United States in response to any such danger."

<sup>2</sup>Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States of American and the Republic of China, Signed at Washington, December 2, 1959. See *Treaties and Other International Acts Series (TIAS)* 3178. Art. II of the Mutual Defense Treaty says "The Parties separately and jointly . . . will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and communist subversive activity directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability." Art. V states that each Party will "act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes."

<sup>3</sup>See Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990). Walt defines an alliance as a "formal or informal relationship of security cooperation between two or more sovereign states" which includes "some level of commitment and exchange of benefits for both parties." Walt notes that while some see strong state-weak state

course, is that actions by Taiwan's leaders might spark hostile military responses that, in turn, could catalyze a confrontation that would drag the United States into a shooting war in the Taiwan Strait—the so-called "Taiwan Threat."<sup>4</sup> The record of U.S.-Taiwan interactions over the past decade, however, yields convincing evidence that *despite Taipei's attempts at times to move the partnership in ways not consonant with U.S. interests, Washington is the leader in this bilateral relationship.*

### **How Much Influence Does Taiwan Have on U.S. Policymaking?**

Clearly, the United States is the dominant partner in the U.S.-Taiwan alliance relationship. Is it possible, however, that Taiwan's leadership exerts a disproportionate influence on alliance decisions? There is considerable evidence that in 1995, Taiwan's President Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) managed to reverse a firm decision by the U.S. State Department to deny him entry into the United States for the purpose of giving a speech at his alma mater at Cornell University. In 1994, Lee's first attempt to visit the United States was hampered by the State Department's concerns for China's reaction. On May 4, the Department permitted President Lee's aircraft to refuel at Honolulu en route to Costa Rica, but refused to let Lee leave the airport. Lee chose to stay in his aircraft rather than go out for a stretch in the dingy "VIP" lounge at the military terminal. "Many Americans were appalled," said *The Economist* magazine. Professing alarm that the American snub had belittled Taiwan's nascent democratic system, Lee—through his Kuomintang (KMT 國民黨, or the Nationalist Party) party organization, not Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (外交部)—hired the

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alliances as a "tool for the management of weaker states" [p. 7], there is another dynamic in the form of "transnational penetration" where "lobbyists may use a variety of means to alter public perceptions and policy decisions regarding a potential ally" (p. 46).

<sup>4</sup>The inspiration for the paper is drawn from "The Taiwan Threat?", a special issue of *Issues & Studies* (vol. 38, no. 1/March 2002), guest-edited by Andrew D. Marble, which looked at the question of whether or not Taiwan could—intentionally or otherwise—pull the United States into war with China.

hard-ball Washington government relations firm of Cassidy & Associates to press for changes in U.S. policy toward Taiwan and specifically for approval of his visit to Cornell at the university's invitation. Taiwan had used (and still employs) Washington lobbyists in public relations efforts in the United States. Prior to 1994, however, virtually all lobbying on Capitol Hill and the Executive branch had been handled by its embassy and its later successors, the Coordination Council for North American Affairs (CCNAA 北美事務協調委員會), renamed "TECRO" (Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office 台北經濟文化代表處) in 1994. Taipei's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) was aghast at the thought of using a Washington lobbyist not under MOFA's control. However, because MOFA was also against President Lee's proposed visit to Cornell University, Lee circumvented his diplomats and worked with Cassidy through KMT party channels.<sup>5</sup>

For over a year, Cassidy worked overtly on Capitol Hill to build support for Taiwan in general, and for the Lee Cornell visit in particular. Cassidy also worked quietly behind the scenes directly with the White House to loosen up its resistance against Congressional pressures to accord President Lee the dignity befitting the chief of state of one of Asia's model democracies. In the end, the Congress overwhelmingly passed the bipartisan H. Con. Res. 53 expressing the sense of Congress that President Bill Clinton should welcome a visit by President Lee to his alma mater.<sup>6</sup> Before the resolutions actually came to the floor, however, the steamroller of political support for Taiwan was building. On April 17, Secretary of State Warren Christopher met Chinese Vice-Premier/Foreign Minister

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<sup>5</sup>For a discussion of the history of the Cassidy connection, see "Institute of Taiwan Politics and Economics renews contract with Cassidy, economic downturn affects big grants, contract lowered to US\$1 million" (台灣政經所決與卡西迪續約，景氣欠佳募款不易，簽約金額減至一百萬美元), *World Journal* (世界日報) (New York), July 20, 2002. For a complete record of these events, see Zou Jingwen (鄒景雯), *Lee Teng-hui zhizheng gaobai shilu* (李登輝執政告白實錄 A true record of Lee Teng-hui's time in power) (Taipei: INK chuban youxian gongsi, May 2001), 264-68.

<sup>6</sup>The House passed the resolution 396-0 on May 2, and the Senate 97-1 on May 9, 1995. See Shirley A. Kan, *China/Taiwan: Evolution of the "One China" Policy—Key Statements from Washington, Beijing, and Taipei*, Congressional Research Service, RL30341 (Updated May 24, 2001), 36.

Qian Qichen (錢其琛) at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel during a United Nations session and tried to explain to Qian that "very frankly the American public and particularly the American Congress do not understand the Chinese position" on keeping Taiwan President Lee out of the United States. Christopher made clear that "we would consider a transit visit" for Lee.<sup>7</sup>

It is difficult to argue from this one episode, however, that Taipei—and not Washington—is the driver in the relationship. Surely, Taiwan's President viewed relations with the United States with profound dissatisfaction throughout the Clinton administration.<sup>8</sup> The uncertain reaction of the Clinton administration to the Chinese missile tests—which closed the Taiwan Strait to commercial shipping in July and August 1995 and just prior to Taiwan's presidential election in 1996<sup>9</sup>—apparently gave the Chinese the impression that the way to deal with the United States was with firm displays of military force. Immediately following the missile threats, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia Winston Lord told a House International Relations Committee hearing that there was an American desire to stay out of the Taiwan issue and rearticulated a Taiwan policy that was non-objectionable to China.<sup>10</sup> At one point, Lord even insisted on nation-

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<sup>7</sup>See "Background Briefing by Senior Administration Officials After Secretary Christopher's Bilateral Meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Qian" at the Waldorf Astoria, New York City on April 17, 1995 by a "senior administration official."

<sup>8</sup>Zou, *Lee Teng-hui zhizheng gaobai shilu*, 264-68.

<sup>9</sup>See U.S. Department of State, Noon Briefing, July 24, 1995. Spokesman Nicholas Burns told a questioner that "we do not believe this test contributes to peace and stability in the area," adding "it's been the long-standing policy of the United States to seek to promote peace, security, and stability in the area of the Taiwan Strait. This is in the interests of the United States, the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan." Asked if the United States considers the test a provocation, Burns replied: "We don't believe that it contributed to peace and stability in the area. We've made that clear to the Chinese government." In December 1995, a top Chinese general made a thinly-veiled threat to use nuclear weapons against the United States should America attempt to come to Taiwan's assistance in a war situation. Despite the publication of this threat on the front page of the *New York Times*, the State Department's reaction was to say "to our knowledge, the Chinese government has not changed its fundamental policy of seeking a peaceful reunification with Taiwan." See Patrick Tyler, "As China Threatens Taiwan, It Makes Sure U.S. Listens," *New York Times*, January 24, 1996, 1. Gen. Xiong Guangkai (熊光楷) is identified as the official in Jim Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), 342.

<sup>10</sup>See Kan, *China/Taiwan*, 37-38.

wide television that "Taiwan doesn't agree with it [a two Chinas policy] either.... They don't want official relations with us, because they believe in a one-China policy. But they want a higher profile."<sup>11</sup> For the next four years, U.S. policy toward China was marked by American accommodation of China's demands for an articulation of the "three no's" policy, first by the State Department spokesman during the October 1997 visit of Chinese President Jiang Zemin (江澤民) to Washington<sup>12</sup> and again by President Clinton himself during his June 1998 visit to China.<sup>13</sup>

Had Taiwan indeed wielded undue influence over the United States, one might have expected a muted American reaction to President Lee Teng-hui's July 1999 pronouncement that Taiwan had a "special state-to-state relationship" (特殊國與國關係) with China. Instead, as Lee Teng-hui put it, "the most difficult trial following the 'special state-to-state relations' issue was not the pressure from the opposite coast, but that our greatest ally America all at once adopted a stance of clearly drawing a line between us and them."<sup>14</sup> As Chinese and Taiwanese jet fighters began to cross the center line of the Taiwan Strait in the following weeks and tensions roiled, U.S. pressure on Lee intensified. White House National Security Advisor Samuel Berger phoned his Taiwanese counterpart to demand prior consultation on changes in Taiwan's policies toward China.

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<sup>11</sup>See transcript for the *Charlie Rose Show* on the Public Broadcasting Service for July 12, 1995; USIS Wireless File EPF102 (07/17/95), "Lord and McCain on Vietnam and U.S.-China Relations" (Text: Lord/McCain on Charlie Rose Show 7/12/95) (10230).

<sup>12</sup>On October 31, 1997, at the conclusion of the state visit to the United States by Chinese President Jiang Zemin, State Department spokesman James Rubin answers a reporter's question: "We certainly made clear that we have a 'one China' policy, that we don't support a one China or one Taiwan policy, we don't support a two China policy. We don't support Taiwan independence, and we don't support Taiwanese membership in organizations that require you to be a member state. We certainly made that very clear to the Chinese." See the transcript of the State Department Noon Briefing for October 31, 1997 at <<http://ww.state.gov>>.

<sup>13</sup>On June 30, 1998, President Clinton told a questioner at the Shanghai Library: "I had a chance to reiterate our Taiwan policy, which is that we don't support independence for Taiwan, or two China's, or one Taiwan-one China. And we don't believe that Taiwan should be a member in any organization for which statehood is a requirement. So I think we have a consistent policy." See transcript of the President's remarks at the Shanghai Library available at the archives of the Foreign Press Center at <<http://www.fpc.state.gov>>.

<sup>14</sup>Zou, *Lee Teng-hui zhizheng gaobai shilu*, 265.



Finally, under direct instructions from President Clinton, the U.S. side demanded that, if President Lee was unwilling to retract the "two states" formulation, at the very least Lee not repeat such statements. Lee agreed, he said, partially "to give Clinton face."<sup>15</sup>

The White House decision to grant President Lee Teng-hui a visa to speak at Cornell University in 1995 was the exception that proved the rule: Washington was clearly in charge of the U.S.-Taiwan alliance. The real story behind Clinton's decision to reverse the State Department remains to be told, but for the rest of the Clinton administration, Taiwan was treated like, and felt like, a very junior partner. The change in the Clinton administration's attitude toward Taiwan came only after a series of alarming and provocative moves from Beijing, and even then, the Clinton administration declined to take a public stance on defending Taiwan. Throughout all of these events it could hardly be argued that the Taiwanese were pulling the strings. Quite the contrary, many in the U.S. administration were undoubtedly questioning the usefulness of the alliance.

Sensitive to these sentiments in the Clinton administration, Taiwan's arguably pro-independence president-elect Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) sought to reassure the United States that his new government would adopt a "moderate" policy of "goodwill" toward China. In the period between Chen's election on March 18, 2000 and his inauguration on May 20, Chen reputedly consulted closely with the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) Director Raymond Burghardt on the contents of the presidential inauguration speech and insisted that one "principle" of the speech would be that it would "satisfy America."<sup>16</sup>

The advent of the George W. Bush administration brought with it a completely different outlook on how to handle the "China threat." It is

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 239-44.

<sup>16</sup>John Pomfret, "China, Taiwan Ask U.S. to Intervene," *Washington Post*, May 13, 2000; A01. Although the State Department denied that it passed on the speech, the Taiwan press quoted the president-elect as listing "three conditions" for his speech—the first being "it must satisfy America" (讓美國滿意). See Cheng Renwen and Huang Qianyu (鄭任汶、黃乾玉), "Bian Puts forth Three Principles for Inauguration Speech" (扁提就職演說三原則), *Zhongyang ribao* (中央日報 Central Daily News) (Taipei), May 4, 2000 (Internet edition), available at <<http://www.cdn.com.tw/daily/2000/05/04/text/890504a2.htm>>.

doubtful, however, that the Bush administration's approach was ever dictated from Taipei. This is not to say the charge has not been leveled. After years of conservative sniping at the Clinton administration for being dangerously close to Beijing, if not outright in Beijing's pocket, some liberals have hinted that Bush administration officials are too close to the Taiwan government.<sup>17</sup>

To be sure, many top national security aides in the Bush administration have long warned of a "China threat" and have seen that explicating the U.S. security commitment to Taiwan was far more likely to deter China from its military threats and hostile rhetoric against the island than attempts to pacify Beijing. In 1999, twenty-five prominent conservatives signed a joint letter calling on the Clinton administration to "declare unambiguously that it will come to Taiwan's defense in the event of an attack or a blockade against Taiwan."<sup>18</sup> The Bush administration appears to appreciate America's political and economic stake in Taiwan more than did the previous administration. In a major speech on June 10, 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell went out of his way to note that "people tend to refer to Taiwan as 'The Taiwan Problem'." He averred that "I call Taiwan not a problem, but a success story. Taiwan has become a resilient economy, a vibrant democracy and a generous contributor to the international community."<sup>19</sup>

No doubt Secretary Powell welcomed—and may have encouraged—contributions of millions of dollars from Taiwan sources to the Afghan relief effort, and he even arranged for five Taiwan nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to be at the Tokyo donors conference in January 2002.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>John Pomfret, "Secret Taiwan Fund Sought Friends, Influence Abroad," *Washington Post*, April 5, 2002; A01, and John Pomfret, "In Fact and in Tone, U.S. Expresses New Fondness for Taiwan," *ibid.*, April 30, 2002; A12.

<sup>18</sup>See a joint letter by The Heritage Foundation and The Project for the New American Century, August 24, 1999, available at <[http://www.heritage.org/news/99/nr082499\\_letter.html](http://www.heritage.org/news/99/nr082499_letter.html)>.

<sup>19</sup>"Colin Powell Remarks at Asia Society Annual Dinner; Secretary Colin L. Powell, New York City, June 10, 2002," available at <<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2002/10983.htm>>.

<sup>20</sup>On November 9, 2001, the Taiwan government announced the island had donated US\$7,030,000 in humanitarian assistance to Afghan refugees; NGOs contributed another

Powell even persuaded Taiwan to provide a charter jet to fly the Afghan delegation from the Middle East to Tokyo for the conference.<sup>21</sup>

### Taiwan's Political Clout in the United States

While it is difficult to make the case that these policies are driven even partially by machinations from Taipei, the political clout of Taiwanese-Americans in the United States is certainly a factor in gaining Taiwan support in the Congress. The "Formosa Association for Public Affairs" (FAPA 台灣人公共事務協會) is one of the most effective grassroots lobbying operations on Capitol Hill—yet the Association is staffed by volunteers, not by professional lobbyists, and is run on a shoestring budget. The FAPA is reputed to be politically active in a number of Congressional districts with large Taiwanese-American communities. Many members of Congress no doubt appreciate the financial and electoral support they receive from these constituents, but there is certainly not enough of such support to explain why over 115 members of the House of Representatives have eagerly signed on to become members of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus.<sup>22</sup> Congressional sources explain that Taiwan's support in the Congress is because Taiwan is a "good product." The island is a democracy, a magnificent trading partner, and is threatened by China which everyone

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US\$1,134,000. On December 28, a second shipment of humanitarian aid valued at US\$2.5 million donated by Taiwan to Afghan refugees was distributed by the international charity, Mercy Corps, transported in 41 TEU containers including rice, tents, and blankets. Taiwan MOFA also paid freight costs of US\$237,000. On March 28, 2002, Taiwan donated US\$50,000 in cash to surviving victims of a series of earthquakes in northern Afghanistan late Monday. On May 6, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) website (ReliefWeb) carried an article "Rice, Roads, and a Little Bit of Hope," describing the Mercy Corps' "food for work" project carried out in partnership with Taiwan's government.

<sup>21</sup>Zou Jingwen, "Taiwan U.S. Anti-Terror Cooperation, Secretly Aid Afghan Officials' Travel to Japan" (台美合作反恐、暗助阿國人員赴日), *Ziyou shibao* (自由時報 Liberty Times) (Taipei), August 7, 2002.

<sup>22</sup>L.S. Chu and Sofia Wu, "Membership of Pro-Taiwan U.S. Congressional Group Growing," Taipei Central News Agency, June 29, 2002.



"loves to hate." Moreover, bashing an administration (whether it be Clinton's or Bush's) for neglecting Taiwan has virtually no political downside.

Congressional pressure has, however, never been translated into Executive action when faced with Bush administration resistance. For example, the Bush administration came into office intending to sell destroyers equipped with advanced AEGIS missile defense and combat control systems to Taiwan, something both Taipei and influential members of Congress have urged. Yet despite those pressures, the Bush administration withheld approval of the AEGIS sale to Taiwan in April 2001 in order to retain leverage on Beijing's increasing missile deployments against the island. Only when it became clear that Beijing intended to deploy even more missiles did the Pentagon quietly inform Taiwan that AEGIS would be forthcoming.<sup>23</sup>

Prior to September 11, 2001, the Bush administration had been less willing to humor Beijing on any issue, much less Taiwan. The April 1, 2001 collision of a Chinese jet fighter and a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft over the South China Sea and China's subsequent detention and interrogation of the U.S. survivors confirmed in the Bush administration's view that China did not necessarily wish America well. Since then, President Bush and the administration have repeatedly taken the Beijing regime to task for violations of nonproliferation commitments, human rights abuses, violations of its World Trade Organization (WTO) pledges, detention of American citizens and residents, and support for "rogue states." China, for its part, continues to view the United States as an insatiable hegemon eyeing Central Asia as its next great target of expansion.

Given China's hostile perspective, there is plenty of reason, therefore, for the Bush administration to take seriously the security needs of Taiwan. Since the May visit of Chinese Vice-President Hu Jintao (胡錦濤) to the United States, however, the Bush White House has been noticeably less vocal on Taiwan issues. This lower profile could be due to the administra-

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<sup>23</sup>Wu Mingjie (吳明杰), "U.S. Side Discloses Plan to Sell Four AEGIS in Eight Years" (美方透露我八年後獲四艘神盾艦), *Ziyou shibao*, July 27, 2002.

tion's concerns in the Middle East, all of which will involve some United Nations acquiescence and perforce the acquiescence of the Permanent Five members of the Security Council—of which, of course, China is one.

One measure of the Bush administration's wariness of poking Beijing is its newfound sensitivity on the Taiwan issue. The administration gave tepid support to Taiwan's effort in May 2002 to gain observer status in the World Health Organization (WHO), despite President Bush's signature on the legislation requiring such support.<sup>24</sup>

The Bush administration, moreover, definitely has its own ideas about "Taiwan independence." President Bush himself has always exhibited an uneasiness with "independence,"<sup>25</sup> presumably because of the potential it has to escalate swiftly into a shooting war with China, and not because he has some conceptual problem with Taiwan as separate from the mainland.<sup>26</sup> This same uneasiness was probably what prompted Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, in response to a reporter's question, to opine that the U.S. non-support for Taiwan independence was "another of saying we're opposed to" Taiwan independence—a first for any U.S. government official.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, a few days after he made this remark,

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<sup>24</sup>See a report from Hong Kong's *Singtao Daily* (星島日報) (Internet edition), "Washington Tells Hu Jintao It Has No Intent to Aid Taiwan WHO Bid" (華府無意助台入世衛), May 13, 2002; and Liu Ping (劉屏), "Bush Signs Law, U.S. Will Aid Our Participation in Observer Status in WHO Annual Meeting" (布希簽署法案, 美助我以觀察員資格參與WHO年會), *Zhongguo shibao* (中國時報 China Times) (Taipei), Internet edition, April 6, 2002.

<sup>25</sup>On April 25, 2001—the same day that he told ABC News that the United States would "do what it takes to help Taiwan defend itself," President Bush insisted that "my administration strongly supports the 'one China' policy, that we expect that any dispute to be resolved peacefully . . . nothing has really changed in policy as far as I'm concerned." Bush also said that, "*I certainly hope Taiwan adheres to the 'one China' policy, and a declaration of independence is not the 'one China' policy.*" Emphasis added. See <<http://www.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/04/25/bush.interview.03/index.html>>.

<sup>26</sup>On April 4, 2002, before a gathering of trade delegates at the U.S. State Department, Bush made the following observation: "that's important to welcome both countries, both the Republic of Taiwan, and of course China, into the World Trade Organization. It's positive, it's a positive development for our country." President Bush's "mis-statement" was later clarified by the White House (despite the fact that it remains preserved in the text of the speech at the White House website as of May 20, 2002) at <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020404-4.html>>.

<sup>27</sup>"Briefing at the Foreign Press Center by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz on

Wolfowitz later responded to virtually the same question and admitted that he should not have improvised his response.<sup>28</sup>

The Bush administration clearly sees itself as the manager of the U.S.-Taiwan alliance. So much so that the White House apparently is comfortable with using its political influence to promote major American exports. The AIT, the U.S. quasi-embassy in Taipei, issued a press release in July 2002 complaining that Boeing was unfairly shut out of bidding on Taiwan's China Airlines (CAL 中華航空公司) aircraft purchase worth US\$2 billion and that the European consortium Airbus SAS had already sold at least twelve mid-range jets to CAL reportedly by offering steep discounts. The AIT statement said: "We expect that before a decision is made, Boeing will be given an opportunity to make its case to the appropriate decision-makers." CAL said a final decision had yet to be reached. However, a CAL spokesman sourly retorted that Boeing has had every opportunity to make their pitch. "If you want to win the deal you have to satisfy your client. If Boeing wants to get the deal they have to work harder," the spokesman said.<sup>29</sup>

Taiwan can play tough, too, it seems. The Clinton administration attempted to pressure Taiwan on behalf of Boeing in August 1999, just after it had complained to then Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui about antagonizing Beijing with his "special state-to-state relationship" doctrine. Several U.S. government officials visited Taiwan to harangue CAL into buying Boeing's 777 airliners, apparently to unsympathetic Taiwan government ears. The Taiwan side evidently told Boeing they would be more open to a 777 purchase if Boeing would send its own top officers to make the pitch. Boeing's CEO declined, however, worried he might offend Beijing. Sources in Taiwan said the absence of a top Boeing official in Taiwan to

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the upcoming meeting of the International Institute for Strategic Studies Conference On East Asia Security," 3:09 P.M. EDT, Wednesday, May 29, 2002. See <<http://fpc.state.gov/10566.htm>>.

<sup>28</sup>See "Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz Media Availability after IISS Speech," transcript at <[http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2002/t06012002\\_t0601ma.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2002/t06012002_t0601ma.html)>.

<sup>29</sup>Richard Dobson, "CAL Pressured by the U.S.," *Taipei Times*, July 26, 2002, available at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/news/2002/07/26/story/0000153647>>.

promote the Boeing 777 absolved Taiwan of any political obligation to Boeing and CAL eventually decided against the 777 for technical reasons.<sup>30</sup>

## Conclusion

One would be hard pressed to find any evidence that Washington was not fully in charge of the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, or that Taipei has not resigned itself to being the junior partner. Indeed, the leader of Taiwan's People First Party (親民黨) charged that President Chen was so beholden to American interests that he was prepared to spend vast amounts of money needlessly on U.S.-recommended weapons systems.<sup>31</sup> This is hardly an indication that Taipei feels it has undue influence in the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. So deep had divisions between Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP 民主進步黨) and the opposition become over the perception that the DPP is too dependent on the United States that by July 2002 opposition legislators refused to join a DPP-led (and supposedly nonpartisan) "Taiwan-USA Inter-parliamentary Amity Association" delegation to Washington, citing "different opinions regarding certain issues." Instead, they chose to arrange a separate opposition itinerary.<sup>32</sup> Surely some of those differences of opinion involve U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. Some opposition legislators complain, "If the United States wants us to buy something, we just buy it."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>"Boeing Frets about Beijing, Only Sends Regional Officer to Taiwan, CAL Can't Escape U.S. Pressure to Buy" (波音顧慮北京, 只派分區主管赴台, 華航仍難逃美國推銷壓力), *New York World Journal*, August 11, 1999.

<sup>31</sup>Zhao Jialin (趙家麟), "James Soong: Buying Kidd Destroyers, Big and Unsuitable" (宋楚瑜: 購紀德艦大而不當), *Zhongguo shibao*, June 29, 2002.

<sup>32</sup>"Two Delegations of Legislators Plan for July Visits to the United States," Taipei Central News Agency cited in *Taipei Times* (Internet edition), available at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com/news/2002/06/25/story/0000141718>>.

<sup>33</sup>See Liu Ping (劉屏), "Legislative Delegation to the United States Hits a Soft Nail in the U.S. Military" (立委訪美團碰美軍方軟釘子); *Zhongguo shibao*, August 1, 2002. Also note worries that Taiwan is spending too much on imported arms: "U.S. Worries That Taiwan Cannot Digest US\$15 Billion in Arms Buys" (美抱怨: 150億美元軍售台灣無力消化), *Ziyou shibao*, August 1, 2002.

The final set of evidence that Taiwan views itself as the junior partner in the U.S. relationship emerged as President Chen Shui-bian articulated a "one side, one country" (一邊一國) description of Taiwan's apposition to China on August 3. The ensuing confusion over the meaning of the phrase caught Washington off guard, especially the White House which did not want to have a new Taiwan-China fight threaten a crisis as the United States mulled war against Iraq. Harsh messages to Taipei resulted in the hurried dispatch to Washington of Taiwan's top mainland policy official with promises that communications will be better in the future.<sup>34</sup> That Taiwan does not carry more weight within the structure of the de facto U.S.-Taiwan alliance is out of the ordinary when considering the track records of other strong state-weak state alliances. This is not surprising, however, in light of Taiwan's peculiar position in the international community, and an objective look at the U.S.-Taiwan relationship reveals that the United States is clearly in charge.

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<sup>34</sup>See Christopher Nelson, "Taiwan Reassurances on Chen 'Independence/Referendum' Remarks Welcomed, But Don't Allay U.S. Concerns," *The Nelson Report*, August 8, 2002.

