

UNITED STATES VITAL INTERESTS: DOES TAIWAN MEASURE UP?

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CHARLES ANDREW ST.SAUVER, (司徒尚禮)
B.S. University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, 1999

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ABSTRACT

UNITED STATES VITAL INTERESTS: DOES TAIWAN MEASURE UP?

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It has been 60 years since the Republic of China's government fled to the island of Taiwan during the Chinese Civil War. Taiwan's rival on mainland, the People's Republic of China, is of the view that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of China. In recent years the mainland has reiterated and then formalized its policy to use force if necessary against Taiwan in the name of reunification. Caught between these positions is the United States. Since the Republic of China's arrival on Taiwan, the United States has provided an external assurance of security for Taiwan. As the People's Republic of China's economic, military, and political power grows it will increasingly have the ability to shape issues in East Asia and beyond, therefore challenging United States' national vital interests. Vital interest is defined as an issue at stake which is so fundamental to the political, economic, and social well being of the United States that it cannot be compromised even if defending it requires military action. Is Taiwan truly a vital interest? Donald Nuechterlein's 16 national vital interest factors are used to evaluate this question from two angles: a literature review and questionnaire. Much like the United States' described position of ambiguity toward Taiwan, this study is also inconclusive to the core question, Taiwan's position as a vital interest in terms of US policy. This conclusion was unexpectedly reached because both analyses scored a virtual 1 to 1 ratio between value and potential costs/risks, thereby providing no differentiation. However, the analysis did reveal issues that should be seriously considered by policy makers when making any final determination on the Taiwan question. Criteria such as the economic and military costs of war are important as well as the fact that Taiwan is fellow democracy and important cog in the regional balance of power. Finally, recommendations provided for more in depth study on Taiwan as a vital US interest may reveal more definitive answers.

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ACRONYMS

DoD	Department of Defense
FAPA	Formosan Association for Public Affairs
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GNP	Gross National Product
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IOP	Instrument of Power
MRBM	Medium Range Ballistic Missile
PGM	Precision Guided Munitions
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PLAAF	People's Liberation Army Air Force
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy
PRC	People Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SAM	Surface to Air Missile
SRBM	Short Range Ballistic Missile
US	United States
USAWC	United States Army War College
USPACOM	United States Pacific Command
TPR	Taiwan Policy Review
TRA	Taiwan Relations Act
WTO	World Trade Organization

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CHAPTER 1. VITAL INTERESTS & THE UNITED STATES/TAIWAN BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP

Overuse & Misuse of “Vital Interest”

Vital interest, or more generally national interest, is a term thrown around wildly by the media, politicians, government officials, and even scholars. Professor David Clinton in the preface of his book “The Two Faces of National Interest” produces no less than seven different real life examples in which the term “interest” is used in public policy discourse.¹ This speaks to the many different ways people interpret national interests: For example, “what is good for the public rather than what it wants,” a “motive force for actions,” also a “smokescreen,” which “oversimplify the world, denigrate our rivals, enthrall our citizens, and justify acts of dubious morality and efficacy,” or finally, simply “concerns, requirements, or needs of states.”²

The definition is not the only problem. There is very often disagreement among the political elite about which issues reach the threshold of a national interest and thereafter, where they rank. In 1994-95 the highly regarded Council on Foreign Relations conducted a year-long study on national interests, including over 100 of its members. “The principle conclusion of the study was dissensus.” Amongst its members, “there was widespread confusion and little agreement about United States (US) interests.”³ For all the uncertainty and disagreements over what truly constitutes US national interests, the term is still widely used especially in the domain of security policy.⁴

Taiwan’s Status

Taiwan’s story and status presents unique problems for US foreign policy in its own right. The US unofficial policy of strategic ambiguity towards the Taiwan issue only adds to its complexity. There is an inherent dichotomy in the US position. While the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) calls for a peaceful resolution, President Bush declared in 2001 that the

US would do “whatever it took to help Taiwan defend itself.”⁵ Another example is from the 1982 US-China Joint Communiqué. In it the US pledged to decrease arms sales to the Republic of China (ROC) eventually terminating them. Countering this, then US President Reagan said that arms sales might rise. As of yet no termination of sales has been given.⁶

Due to the ambiguous stance, Taiwan’s level as a US national interest is difficult to determine. While most scholars agree Taiwan is a US interest, the challenge arises when trying to determine how intense the interest is to America. The key question is whether or not Taiwan is a US vital interest. Or defined another way, is the island important enough that the US is willing to commit its military forces, or blood and treasure, to defend?

In light of the reports that President Obama is secretly conducting a Taiwan Policy Review (TPR)⁷ and also that the Administration’s first Quadrennial Defense Review was recently released in February 2010, this thesis will attempt to delve into the question of whether Taiwan is a vital US interest.

US & Taiwan Historical Relationship

Since World War II, the US relationship with Taiwan has waxed and waned based on its perceived interests in the region. In early 1950, the island was definitely at a low point. President Truman stated that, the United States does not, “have any intention of utilizing its armed forces to interfere,” and will not, “pursue...involvement in the civil conflict in china,” or, “provide military aid or suggestions to Nationalist forces on Formosa.”⁸ At the time it was thought that the communist forces in China were on the cusp of winning the civil war and could be worked with. There was also the factor that President Truman and his administration did not particularly like the Nationalist leader, Chiang Kai-shek.⁹

Despite strong feelings in the Truman administration about Chiang and the Nationalists they were also equally concerned about communist expansion in Asia. Realizing

the strategic significance of Taiwan's location, members of the military establishment and Dean Rusk, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, floated plans to include Taiwan in the US East Asian security framework.¹⁰ Taiwan would be what General McArthur famously described as said an, "unsinkable aircraft carrier," in the Western Pacific.

Needless to say, the administration's fear of communist expansion became a vivid reality when the Korean War kicked off on June 25, 1950 and the "plans" for including Taiwan in the US security structure came to pass. First, the 7th Fleet was ordered into the Taiwan Strait to protect Taiwan. Then in 1954 the two governments signed a mutual defense treaty, thus beginning an era of large amounts of US economic aid¹¹ and close relations.

By the 1970s US interests were evolving and it came at the expense of Taiwan's international status. The US objective was to improve relations with China, putting pressure on the Soviet Union and helping the US extract itself from Vietnam. First in 1972 the US and People's Republic of China (PRC) signed the Shanghai Communiqué, which started the two countries down the path toward normalization. In 1978 a second communiqué was signed by President Carter finally normalizing relations between the US and PRC. Normalization came at the expense of Taiwan, which first lost diplomatic relations with the US and then a year later their mutual defense treaty was terminated.

This by no means meant that the US had severed all interest in Taiwan. In fact it was quite the opposite; a new relationship was forming. "An informal relationship preserving existing laws and agreements so that trade, exchange of people, and the transfer of weapons and technology continued."¹² Fifty-five treaties remained in effect and President Carter stated that, "the people of our country will maintain our current commercial, cultural, trade and other relations with Taiwan through non-governmental means."¹³ This wasn't good enough for the US Congress though. Irrate that they had not been consulted during PRC

normalization they passed the TRA, which spelled out strong political, security, and economic ties between the US and Taiwan must continue.¹⁴

After the 1980 Presidential election in which Republican Ronald Reagan won, many thought there would be positive changes in US Taiwan policy. Reagan had been critical of Carter's handling of the normalization process and had threatened to improve relations with Taiwan.¹⁵ Instead, after entering office, President Reagan was convinced by his top advisors that China's cooperation against the USSR outweighed the need to improve ties with Taiwan.¹⁶ The President then went on to conclude another joint US-PRC communiqué in Shanghai, which at face value looked to reduce arms sales to Taiwan. Reagan followed the communiqué up with the so-called Six Assurances¹⁷, which were meant to allay Taipei's worries that Reagan had perhaps compromised Taiwan's security.

After 13 more years of ambiguous US policy, the 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crises occurred swinging the pendulum back in Taiwan's favor. In a definite ploy to influence Taiwan's national elections the People's Liberation Army (PLA) performed multiple missile tests in the vicinity of Taiwan, and conducted several large amphibious live fire exercises simulating a Taiwan invasion. With the escalated actions and rhetoric the US was forced to step in. After the first missile test they sent an aircraft carrier through the straight, the first in 17 years.¹⁸ After the second missile test in early 1996, and within the span of three days, the US announced the deployment of two aircraft carrier battle groups to the Taiwan area. "The crisis eliminated some of the ambiguity in American strategy, heightening the expectation that Washington would intervene when the PLA threatened Taiwan."¹⁹

The final swing in the pendulum in US-Taiwan relations has occurred in two parts over the last decade. The first is the rough patch of relations between the Chen Shui-bian and the Bush Administration. In the run up to the 2004 ROC presidential election, the Taiwanese

President called for a referendum on relations with China.²⁰ This provoked China and went against the Bush Administration's declared policy that there should be no unilateral change in the status quo by either party.²¹ Fair or not, for the remainder of his presidency, President Chen was labeled as a "trouble maker" in Washington.

The second thing that drove the US focus away from Taiwan is China's rapid economic rise. As a major U.S trading partner and holder of a vast amount of US debt, economic interdependence is growing between the two nations. As a regional competitor, China's growing diplomatic confidence, rapid military modernization, and lack of transparency is worrying. Finally, as a global power with a growing reach, the US is competing for natural resources, while at the same time encouraging more responsible engagement. All of which places constructive China relations high on the US list of interests. Because of Taiwan's status as point of contention between China and the US, this naturally forces into competition the dueling US interests of Taiwan security and constructive China relations.

Current State of US Policy

US policy towards Taiwan is based in four documents: the TRA of 1979, the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972, the Normalization Communiqué of 1979, and the Joint Communiqué of 1982. While these documents combined with US actions paint a picture of a rather ambiguous policy, it has been considered a success. After the last TPR was completed in 1994, Winston Lord, the Assistant Secretary of East Asian and Pacific Affairs stated:

US policy toward Taiwan has been a major bipartisan success story through several administrations. It is balanced; it is faithful to our obligations, our commitments, and our national purposes. It promotes our goals with both the PRC and with Taiwan. Relations with the PRC are official and diplomatic; with Taiwan, they are unofficial but strong. We do not believe that we can or should tamper with this successful formula. We do not seek and cannot impose a resolution of differences between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. Nor should we permit one to manipulate us against the other.²²

Along with the consensus that the US policy on Taiwan is rather ambiguous, many scholars also use the catchy phrase, dual deterrence and dual reassurance, to describe the US policy. It signals to China that the US will not stand by if China attacks Taiwan. To Taiwan it warns that regardless of the circumstances Taiwan should not assume the US will rush to its defense. The US has also reassured China that it believes and will stick to the one-China policy, while at the same time assuring Taiwan it will not sell out Taipei's interests.²³

In addition to this policy, the US stresses that it seeks a peaceful solution to the Taiwan issue. It encourages peaceful negotiations and urges both parties to not act unilaterally on their path to a final resolution.

Problem Statement

From a historical perspective Taiwan-US relations have been up and down since the movement of the ROC government to the island of Taiwan. In the early years the US had a firm policy backed by vast amounts of economic, political, and military support to strengthen the ROC. In the ensuing years the policy evolved into a truly ambiguous one, obscuring the true interests of the US.

The China-US relationship is also very important when reviewing Taiwan policy. US interests in China have steadily grown along with China's rise. Today China is arguably the second most powerful nation in the world. It has a swiftly modernizing military, ranking number two just above Russia.²⁴ It has the second biggest GDP at purchasing power parity, surpassing Japan and Germany.²⁵ This massive financial clout has also bought it increasing amounts of patronage, which adds to its rising diplomatic instrument of power.²⁶ Due to China's growing stature and based on its potential to eventually challenge the US, Washington has been focusing on dealing with China's rise. It is the opinion of some such as John Tkacik, President Clinton's Chief of China Intelligence at the State Department, that,

“Bush’s Asia policy was China-centric to the exclusion of all other considerations,” and to the detriment of Taiwan.²⁷ Tkalcik does go on to say though, “There is no wisdom in confronting China head-on in Asia.”²⁸ Does this mean that US interests in Taiwan rank behind American interests in China?

In the 60-plus year standoff between the PRC on mainland China and the ROC on Taiwan, tensions have been quite high over the de jure status of Taiwan²⁹. Recently, after the Taiwanese elections of 2008, the rhetoric has subsided and both sides have been more conciliatory. This has greatly improved relations. Unfortunately current conditions cannot predict the future. There are still many contentious issues and opportunities which could boil to the top leading to devastating consequences. One example is the next Taiwanese presidential election. If the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) were to regain power and started to take steps towards independence what would happen? A second example is the unknown outcome of the next communist leader transition in 2012. What stance will China’s new leaders take on Taiwan? In both cases the worst case scenario could lead to armed conflict, which could potentially drag in the US. If hostilities were to break out, is there an escalation point at which Washington would feel it is not in the US’ best interests to cross, thereby giving Beijing the upper hand?

This question is a lead-in to the core question of this thesis. Is Taiwan of vital interest to the US? Vital is the key word, because at its most basic definition a vital interest is one in which a nation will use military force to protect. In a world where the media constantly bombards the public with a view of China growing bigger, moving faster, and gaining strength. Also in a world where, due to globalization, the US and China are linked in so many ways it would be easy to say no...tiny Taiwan is not worth it. The counter argument is that support of democracy, US-Taiwan historical ties, and the islands geostrategic importance

make it worth it. Which way should the US lean? What is in the US' best interests? Is Taiwan a vital US interest? It is this paper's goal to tackle these tough questions.

Professional Significance

There are two important objectives driving the significance of this study. First and foremost it strives to provide American leaders with a general framework to think about what goes into determining if Taiwan is of vital interest. Second, it attempts to extend the academic knowledge base by using a modified model that asks the questions national leaders should be contemplating to determine vital national interests.

As much as the academic community would love to have a formula that could pinpoint national interests, foreign policy decision making is an art not a science.³⁰ In order to be more precise on the determination of vital national interests a mechanism should be devised that asks the right questions. This study believes Donald Neuchterlein's national interest framework should be applied to Taiwan. By applying Taiwan's case to Nuechterlein's national interest matrix and vital interest measurement factors, this thesis' dual objectives of furthering academic knowledge on US national interest in Taiwan and helping guide American leaders will be accomplished.

¹ Clinton, W. (1994). *The Two Faces of National Interest*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, p. ix-xi.

² Ibid.

³ Council on Foreign Relations Project on U.S. National Interests after the Cold War, 1994–95 as cited in *The Commission on America's National Interests*. (2000). *America's National Interests*. Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. p. 13.

⁴ Burchill, S. (2005). *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 8.

⁵ Brookes, P. (2003, November 14). *U.S.-Taiwan Defense Relations in the Bush Administration*. Heritage Lecture #808 at Navel War College. Retrieved February 22, 2010 from <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/hl808.cfm> .p. 2.

⁶ Hickey, D. (1994). *United States-Taiwan Security Ties*. Westport: Praeger. p. 36.

⁷ Full TPRs have only been completed on two occasions: first in 1979 after the US shifted recognition to Beijing and again in 1994 by President Clinton. Lowther, W. (2009, April 24). US may launch Taiwan Policy Review. *Taipei Times*. p. 1.

⁸ President Harry S. Truman news conference January 5, 1950, quoted in Hickey. p. 18.

⁹ Ibid. p. 19.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 19.

¹¹ In the years 1951-1970 Taiwan received a total of \$4.9 billion in U.S. aid. Military aid continued until 1978 when official recognition was switched to the PRC. Data is from USAID. (2009). U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, China (Taiwan). Retrieved from <http://gesdb.usaid.gov/gbk/>

¹² Myers, R. (1989). Introduction: A Unique Relationship. In R. Myers (Ed.), *A Unique Relationship The United States and the Republic of China Under the Taiwan Relations Act*. Stanford: Hoover Institute Press. p. 2.

¹³ Hickey, p. 30.

¹⁴ Feldman, H. (1989). A New Kind of Relationship: Ten Years of the Taiwan Relations Act. In R. Myers (Ed.), *A Unique Relationship The United States and the Republic of China Under the Taiwan Relations Act*. Stanford: Hoover Institute Press. p. 28.

¹⁵ Reagan argued that the U.S. had concessions to China during normalization “that were not necessary and not in our national interest.” Hickey, p. 32.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 33.

¹⁷ For more information on the six assurances see in Chapter 2 the section on Taiwan Specific Documents.

¹⁸ Roy, D. (2003). *Taiwan a Political History*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. p. 197.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 202.

²⁰ For a more in depth look at the two questions see President Chen’s Televised Statement of the Peace Referendum on March 20. Retrieved 23 February, 2010, from <http://www.president.gov.tw/php-bin/docset/showenews.php4?section=5&rid=1584>

²¹ The policy had three parts: 1. Taiwan should not declare independence. 2. There should be no use of force by either side. 3. Taiwan’s future should be resolved in a manner mutually agreeable to the people on both sides of the strait. Brookes, p. 3..

²² For a copy of the entire statement refer to: Lord, W. (1994, September 27). Taiwan Policy Review. Retrieved February 24, 2010 from http://usinfo.org/sino/review_e.htm

²³ Lieberthal, K. (2005). Preventing a War Over Taiwan. *Foreign Affairs*. 84 (2). Retrieved February 23, 2010, from <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/60621/kenneth-lieberthal/preventing-a-war-over-taiwan?page=show#>

²⁴ Global Fire Power.Com. (2009). GFP Military Strength Rankings. Retrieved on February 25, 2010, from <http://www.globalfirepower.com/>

²⁵ Purchasing power parity exchange rates is the sum value of all goods and services produced in the country valued at prices prevailing in the US. The ranking was cited from the Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. Retrieved on January 25, 2010, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html?countryName=China&countryCode=ch®ionCode=eas&rank=3#ch>

²⁶ Instruments of power (IOPs) are all means available to the government in its pursuit of national objectives. They are expressed as diplomatic, economic, informational, and military. Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. (2007). *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*. Retrieved from http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp1.pdf

²⁷ Tkacik, J. (2009, April 29). John Tkacik On Taiwan: An Obama TPR: Too Little, Too Late? *Taipei Times*. p. 8.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ De jure and de facto are Latin terms meaning “in principle” and “in practice”. Currently Taiwan has de facto rule over itself, but because it is not internationally recognized it is not considered to have de jure control of Taiwan according to the definition of international law.

³⁰ Neuchterlein, D. (2001). *America Recommitted A Superpower Assesses Its Role in a Turbulent World*. Lexington, Ky: The University Press of Kentucky. p. 31.



CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

National Interest

National Interest Defined

In the realm of international relations there are numerous types of interests. Private interests are those of a nation's businesses or citizens operating abroad. Public interest focuses on a nation's national laws and internal well-being. Strategic interests are second order interests concerned with political, economic, and military means of protecting a nation from threats.¹ Building on these is national interest, which in the most general sense, is concerned with a nation's external environment. It is usually oriented toward political, military, economic, or cultural objectives.²

Of the four main objectives, military or security interests have usually dominated the discussion. Although economics has contributed to national interests, only in the 20th century did it start to play an increased part, especially with the onset of globalization and the uptick of trade, production, and investment.³ International politics have always played a role in national interests as has political tradition, but domestic politics should not be trivialized. National interests are not above partisanship. The need to maintain a power base, keep freedom of maneuver, and remain popular will always find their way into the national interests.⁴ Culture also presents a broad base of influence toward national interests. Trubowitz defined national interests through a nation's social interests.⁵ Geographic and historical precedents can also be included in the broader context of a nation's culture.⁶ Finally, although national values, moral purposes, and human rights do not fall under the traditional definition of national interests, in today's modern society their influence is growing.⁷

Identification of national interests is crucial for the development of policy and strategy. When looking at the external environment, national interest plays numerous functions. First and foremost it can shape political debate, whether defending, opposing, or proposing policy.⁸ It may not necessarily provide answers, but it can help national leaders to agree on the correct fundamental and long-lasting questions that should be debated.⁹ Hans Morgenthau agreed, because he thought questions would add limits and caution into policy formulation.¹⁰ As leaders develop national strategy, determining national interests is usually a precondition. A second function is that national interests can provide justification for leadership's actions. National leaders need to show that their policies are important and worth enacting.¹¹ Henry Farlie once said, "To say that the national interests should be defended is to say that the country itself—its people, its institutions, and its ideas—should be defended."¹² Finally, national interest can be used as an analytical tool. Scholars use it to "describe, explain and assess the adequacy of a nation's foreign policy."¹³

When discussing national interest some basic assumptions are understood. First, members of a society have a number of crucial interests in common. Second, national interest must be limited to your country.¹⁴ If it expands out and touches on concerns not central to a nation then it is not a national interest.

Third, governments are the agents which interpret and articulate national interests. This is a very important point. The Commission on American National Interests stated, "Interests are not just whatever the current government says they are."¹⁵ Simply, governments and national leaders don't create interests, they identify them.

Fourth, certain national interests are permanent and do not change with transient governments. While interests wax and wane in their intensity level, many scholars agree that nations have enduring national interests, or "foundational pillars"¹⁶ that never go away.

Donald Nuechterlein says that there have been four long term interests throughout US history: defense of homeland, economic well being, favorable world order, and promotion of values.¹⁷

Terry Deibel agrees that there are four enduring interests also. His are physical security, economic security, value preservation at home, and value preservation abroad.¹⁸ A final example comes from Robert Art who lists six interests: defense of homeland, deep peace among great powers, secure access to Persian Gulf oil at a stable reasonable price, international economic openness, democracy's consolidation and spread and observance of human rights, and no severe climate change. Although greater in number and much more modern and specific, Art's interests line up well with Neuchterlein's.

Fifth, national leaders must be able to discriminate and rank interests, or a nation's power will be spread too thin. Finally, national interests are expressed as desired end state. An example for Taiwan would be: A peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue.

This section will conclude with the excellent definition of national interest provided by the US Army War College (USAWC):¹⁹

National interests are a nation's perceived needs and aspirations in relation to its international environment. US national interests determine our involvement in the rest of the world. They provide the focus of our actions, and are the starting point for determining national objectives and the formulation of national security policy and strategy.

History & Schools of Thought

The Greek historian Thucydides once said, "Identity of interest is the surest of bonds whether between states or individuals."²⁰ Up until the 17th century though, the national interest was usually secondary to religion and morality. To wage war, leaders justified themselves through these two concepts. This all changed though with the rise of the modern nation-state, which was capped off in Europe by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

Originally the term nation was attached to a racial or linguistic group. The nation was usually identified with the sovereign. Meaning, the interests of the nation were derived from the interests of the ruler.²¹ Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau rejected the notion and was concerned about private interests, such as a sovereign or ruling group, taking over the nation.²² In Rousseau's theory of "general will" he believed, "The bond of society is that identity of interests which all feel who compose it. In the absence of such an identity no society would be possible. No, it is solely on the basis of this common interest that society must be governed."²³ Through time this idea changed from personal interest of a ruler to collective interests of a nation. The modern idea of national interest and the nation state originated after representative bodies grew following the US and French Revolutions.²⁴ Originally the "collective interests" were those of the most powerful groups or classes, but eventually due to the universal suffrage of the 20th century it spread to everyone.²⁵

The other half of the term nation-state is also important in defining national interests. The nation is a natural basis of state, defined as a unit of political power.²⁶ The Italians created this new unit and employed it through a state system of multiple states vying for power. Niccolo Machiavelli was one of the leading philosophers of his time and wrote extensively about the idea of *raison d'état*, the forerunner of national interest. His basic premise was that the survival of the state was the number one political consideration for rulers, and an end on itself.²⁷

Craig and George add to this definition of *raison d'état* by defending it against the morality argument saying, "the idea that the state was more than its ruler and more than the expression of his wishes," and "might violate ordinary religious or ethical standards."²⁸ Machiavelli then goes on to say that nothing is more moral than the interest of the Italian state and that immoral ends can be employed by it.²⁹ Basically they are saying that *raison d'état* and national interest "are a defense of the state as both a moral good and a unit of

political organization.”³⁰ A state’s life is only in this world and has no soul. If it is destroyed there is no after-life and so can take amoral measures to ensure survival.³¹ Treitschke caps this argument by stating, “The state is in itself an ethical force and a high moral good.”³² Not all interests are amoral though. Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger once said, “interests aren’t always amoral; moral consequences can spring from interested acts.”³³ From the concept of *raison d’état*, if state preservation is the ultimate goal, then it will require rationality in political conduct to maintain it.³⁴ No other school of thought speaks to rationality more than realism.

Since Machiavelli’s time realism has been, “defined and developed as the very basis of diplomatic practice.”³⁵ Three assumptions define realism.³⁶ First, nation-states are the dominant actors in world politics. Neo-realist Waltz has said the, “sovereign state has proved to be the best organization for keeping peace internally and fostering the conditions of economic well being.”³⁷ Second, force is an excepted and effective policy instrument. Third, there is a hierarchy of issues from security to economics and social issues.³⁸ Today realism’s view of national interest is considered mainly relevant in the domain of security policy.³⁹

At realism’s core is the idea that the pursuit of power is the primary goal of the nation-state. “National interest, power, accumulation of power, and balancing of power explain all nation-state behavior.”⁴⁰ Charles Kegley has written that the purpose of foreign policy is protecting the national interest in, “a global system characterized by the struggle for power and influence.”⁴¹ One of the most influential realist thinkers Hans Morgenthau wrote, “States pursue only their rational self interests...when they go beyond this it becomes dangerous.”⁴² Karl Von Clausewitz, who is studied intensively by today’s modern military leaders, has also said that there is no reason to go to war except to protect a state’s interests.⁴³ The USAWC builds on this by stating that power is the connecting link between national

interest and the feasibility to attain said interest.⁴⁴ In other words if a nation does not have enough power then a pursuit will not be feasible or in the national interest.

As previously mentioned, national interest is considered most relevant by scholars in the area of security policy where it remains in wide circulation. But it has been challenged on many fronts. Joseph Frankel challenged Morgenthau, saying that his historical and empirical claims were too vague and needed more scientific rigor.⁴⁵ James Rosenau said national interest has “never fulfilled its early promise as an analytical tool.”⁴⁶ The main argument against national interest is that globalization has passed its utility by. “It is too nebulous, egocentric, and outdated to help understand our interdependent globalized world.”⁴⁷ In other words, national interest has been replaced by global perspectives. These ideas are put forth by the idealist or liberal view of international relations.

The liberal view of the world is also at times called complex interdependence and is at the other end of the political spectrum from realism. The main characteristics of complex interdependence are first that multiple channels connect societies.⁴⁸ Governments alone do not talk across borders, but also businesses, non-governmental organizations, and non-governmental elites. Second, interstate relationships consist of many issues that have no clear hierarchy.⁴⁹ So, unlike in realism, the “high politics” of the military does not dominate. Finally, military force is not used by governments when complex interdependence prevails.⁵⁰

Another revealing way to showcase the differences between the two ideals was posited from Scott Burchill. His argument is that realists and liberals disagree about how states conceive of their own interests. Burchill asserts that realists are concerned with relative gains, where it matters who will gain more. Liberals are concerned with absolute gains, where only their welfare matters irrespective of their rivals.

In a world of increasing globalization, where economies are more interrelated, human rights issues are gaining increased awareness, and nations are working together more than ever before, it is hard to argue that idealism is in fact not challenging realism's idea of national interest. Even so, many highly respected "neo-liberal" scholars such as Keohane and Nye see realism and complex interdependence as ideal types saying, "most situations," such as national interests, "will fall somewhere between these two extremes."⁵¹ Also, when crises arise in the international environment, is there a better predictor of state response than national interest?⁵²

Intensity of National Interests

All nations have interests, but not all interests are equal. The intensity of interests is where the importance of interest lies. Borrowing from the USAWC definition; intensity of interests is a means to determine priority or criticality of interest, recognizing that without prioritization, there is the potential for the mismatch of national objectives with a nation's limited resources.⁵³ Determining the intensity or "stake" that a nation has in a particular area is how political scientists and some governments prioritize their national interests. This thesis will review four different scales of intensity from Hans Morgenthau, Donald Nuechterlein, the USAWC, and the bipartisan Commission on American's National Interests.

The oldest of the four intensity scales was developed by Hans Morgenthau. He developed two levels of interest, vital and secondary. He said that vital interests maintain "security as a free and independent nation and protection of institutions, people, and fundamental values."⁵⁴ He went on to say that one must go to war when borders or the nation's existence is threatened.⁵⁵ Secondary interests on the other hand do not directly threaten a nation's borders or sovereignty and so one may seek compromise instead of war.⁵⁶

Building on Morgenthau, Donald Nuechterlein's interest intensity scale expanded to four levels. At the top is survival, which talks of an, "imminent, credible threat of massive destruction to the homeland if an enemy state's demands are not countered quickly."⁵⁷ In other words, when a nation's very existence is directly threatened. Examples include Germany's attack on Great Britain during World War II or the recent example of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The next level down is vital, which differs from survival by the amount of time a nation has to respond. Vital interest, unlike survival, is not just dealing with a security issue, but also economic, world order, and ideological issues as well.⁵⁸ The third level down is major interests, which are, "important but not crucial," to the nation's well being.⁵⁹ For major interests compromise is sought rather than confrontation, much like Morgenthau's secondary interests. Finally, on the bottom are peripheral interests. These interests do not seriously affect a nation as a whole, but may be detrimental to private interests.

The third intensity scale reviewed was the USAWC's. They based their three level scale on the question: "What happens if the interest is not realized?"⁶⁰ They defined the levels as follows: for vital, it "will have immediate consequence for critical national interests," for important it "will result in damage that will eventually affect critical national interests," and for peripheral it "will result in damage that is unlikely to affect critical national interests."⁶¹ The USAWC intensity scale approximates Nuechterlein's scale with the exception of survival being merged with vital.

The final intensity of interests scale was produced by the Commission on American National Interests. They identified four levels of intensity: vital, extremely important, important, and less important/secondary. Unlike Nuechterlein's and the USAWC's scales, the Commission's has three levels below the vital level. For a chart comparing the four scales see Table 1. It bases the levels on a use-of-force concept. Vital interests are defined as

interests the US should use force to defend even if unilaterally. For extremely important, the US should use force only in concert with allies whose vital interests are at stake. In important and secondary, military use is on a case-by-case basis if costs are low.⁶²

National Interest Intensity Comparison			
Morgenthau	Neuchterlein	USAWC	Commission on National Interests
Vital	Survival	Vital	Vital
	Vital		
Secondary	Major	Important	Very Important
			Important
	Peripheral	Peripheral	Less Important or Secondary

Table 1. Literature Review: National Interest Intensity Comparison

After reviewing the four intensity of interest scales, it must be stressed that the dividing line between vital interest and the levels below vital is one of the most important decision points of international relations and politics. Consistently, the most critical decisions are along the Vital/Major line.⁶³ Nuechterlein calls it the line between tolerable and intolerable.⁶⁴ The dictionary defines vital as necessary to the existence, continuance, or well-being of something.⁶⁵ Nuechterlein writes, “An interest is vital when the highest policymakers in a sovereign state conclude that the issue at stake is so fundamental to the political, economic, and social well-being of their country that it should not be compromised—even if this conclusion results in the use of economic and military sanctions.”⁶⁶ “Vital interest is one Americans are willing to expend blood and treasure to defend,” as Samuel Huntington explains.⁶⁷ The 2000 US National Security Strategy defined vital interests as, “directly connected to the survival, safety, and vitality of the nation.”⁶⁸

To summarize, a vital interest is one in which a nation is willing to use military force to defend rather than compromise. President Ronald Reagan oversimplified it by saying “anything we do is in our national interests,” thereby implying that every military conflict is

of vital interest.⁶⁹ It is important to remember that the use of force and a nation's vital interests are not mutually exclusive. An interest is not vital if it is not worth going to war over. On the flip-side states can and do use force over less than vital interests. In US circles the relationship between force and vital interest can be studied by reviewing published use of force guidelines starting with the Weinberger Doctrine during the Reagan Administration.

The Weinberger doctrine grew out of the lessons learned from major Cold War conflicts such as the Korean and Vietnam Wars and as a response to terrorism.⁷⁰ Casper Weinberger, the US Secretary of Defense under Reagan, apparently, while drafting his guidelines borrowed from two great military philosophers Clausewitz and Sun Tzu who said, "If not in the interests of the state, do not act. If you cannot succeed, do not use troops."⁷¹ Therefore in his doctrine, Weinberger's first guideline is that vital interests must be at stake. By the strict rules of vital interest this meant that the US would rarely intervene in the world because very few interests would meet the threshold of vital. Weinberger's contemporary, Secretary of State George Shultz, argued against this doctrine counseling that inaction bordered on paralysis.⁷² Due to the limited nature of flexibility when tying use of force to vital interests, subsequent administrations have backed off this direct correlation. Table 2 from the USAWC provides an excellent overview of recent guidelines for the use of force.⁷³ Notice that Secretary Perry breaks out several types of interests where use of force is valid.

Guidelines for the Use of Force

Two questions:

1. When to use force?
2. How to use force?

Weinberger Doctrine

(November 28, 1984)

1. Vital interests at stake

3. Clearly defined political and military objectives

5. Public support

6. Last resort

Powell

(Fall, 1992)

- No fixed set of rules
- Relevant questions
- Evaluate the circumstances

Unambiguous military objective

Last resort

Will the force be successful?
• Costs & risks
• Decisive means (overwhelming force)

End state consequences (exit strategy)

Perry (Clinton NSS)

(April 1995 / NSS '99)

- Political: interests
- Military: success
- Ethical

1. Vital interests

- overwhelming force
- unilateral (if necessary)

2. Important interests

- ability to succeed
- cost/risk assessment
- last resort
- limited options

3. Humanitarian interests

- catastrophic
- urgent need
- unique resources
- minimal risk
- end state

- Clear mission
- Public support

- Multilateral
- Opportunity cost on the force (OPTEMPO)
- Exit strategy

Joint Pub 1

(Nov 2000)

- Adhere to societal values
- No unbending rules
- Advances national interest (all three categories)
- Clear mission
- International support
- Public support

- Decisive means
- End state and exit strategy
 - Termination conditions
 - Path to success
 - Milestones
 - Alternatives if military unsuccessful
- NGOs and IGO's ready

Rumsfeld

(Nov 2002)

Questions for the use:

1. Necessary?
 - national interest
2. Doable?
 - clear goals
 - military capabilities
 - clear Cmd structure
3. Is it worth it?
 - public support
 - worldwide consequences

Guidelines for how:

- Action – offensive
- Don't restrict options
- no arbitrary deadlines
- Use all elements of power
 - military last choice
- Brutally honest
 - don't promise what can't be delivered

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Table 2. Literature Review: US Guidelines for the Use of Force

With vital interests defined and use of force placed in its proper context, what should a nation use to determine what is vital? As has previously been discussed, many topics influence national leaders' construction of national interest such as security, political, economic, and cultural factors. For vital interests though, a more rigorous standard should be applied. Nuechterlein suggests 16 criteria that can be used to determine whether an issue is vital. He caveats his criteria by not implying any priority of importance, but also realizes that some factors will be more important depending on the issue.⁷⁴ As displayed in Table 3⁷⁵ the criteria are broken up into two groups. The first eight criteria are value factors "that policymakers believe are important to defending and enhancing US national interest."⁷⁶ The final eight criteria are cost/risk factors "that too often are underestimated or ignored during crucial foreign policy deliberations."⁷⁷ It is important that national leaders understand the costs associated with confronting another country in order to head off mistakes, because, "it is easy to declare something your interest, but hard to back out afterward."⁷⁸

Value Factors	Cost/Risk Factors
Proximity of the danger	Economic costs of hostilities
Nature of the threat	Estimated casualties
Economic stake	Risk of enlarged conflict
Sentimental attachment	Cost of protracted conflict
Type of government aided	Cost of defeat or stalemate
Effect on balance of power	Adverse international reaction
National prestige at stake	Cost of US public opposition
Support of key allies	Risk of congressional opposition

Table 3. Literature Review: Nuechterlein's Criteria for Determining Vital National Interests

¹ Neuchterlein, D. (2001). *America Recommitted A Superpower Assesses Its Role in a Turbulent World*. Lexington, Ky: The University Press of Kentucky. p. 15.

² Bartholomees, Jr., J. (2006). *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*. Strategic Studies Institute. p. 10.

³ Sullivan, M. (). *Theories of International Relations: Transition vs. Persistence*. New York: Palgrave. p. 195.

⁴ Kegley, Jr., C, & Wittkopf, E. (Eds). *Perspectives on American Foreign Policy*. New York: St. Martin's Press. p. 169

⁵ Trubowitz P. (1998). *Defining the National Interest, Conflict and Change in American Foreign Policy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 4.

⁶ Nuechterlein. p. 14.

⁷ The Commission on America's National Interests. (2000). *America's National Interests*. Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. p. 9

⁸ Burchill, S. (2005). *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 23.

⁹ Clinton, D. (1988). Introduction. In D. Clinton, & K. Thompson (Eds). *National Interest Rhetoric, Leadership, and Policy*. Lanham, MD: University Press of American. p. X.

¹⁰ Roskin M. (1994). *National Interest, From Abstraction To Strategy*. US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute Report. p. 14.

¹¹ Ibid. p. XI.

¹² Fairlie, H. (1979). Source unknown.

¹³ Burchill, p. 23.

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- ¹⁴ Roskin. p. 8.
- ¹⁵ The Commission on America's National Interests. p. 16.
- ¹⁶ Tatum, K. (2009). The Noblest Form of Power: Implications For 21st Century Strategy. US Army Warfare Center. Carlisle Barracks. p. 20.
- ¹⁷ Neuchterlein. 15-16.
- ¹⁸ Deibel, T. (2007). Foreign Affairs Strategy: Logic for American Statecraft. New York: Cambridge University Press. p. 125-128.
- ¹⁹ Yarger, H, & Barber, G. (1997). *The U.S. Army War College Methodology for Determining Interests and Levels of Intensity*. US Army War College. p. 2
- ²⁰ Burchill. p. 15.
- ²¹ Burchill. p. 23.
- ²² Burchill. p. 14.
- ²³ Rousseau, J. (1960). The Social Contract. In Barker, E. (Ed.). *Social Contract: Essays by Locke, Hume, Rousseau*. New York. p. 190.
- ²⁴ Burchill.. p.24.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Carr, E. (1945). *Nationalism and After*. London. p. 39.
- ²⁷ Burchill. p. 17.
- ²⁸ Craig, G, & George, A. (1983). *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time*. New York. p. 5.
- ²⁹ Roskin. p.1.
- ³⁰ Burchill. p. 18
- ³¹ Roskin. p. 1.
- ³² Treitschke H. (1916) *Politics*. London. p. 106.
- ³³ Kissinger quoted in Kegley...116
- ³⁴ Meinecke, F. (1998). *Machiavellism*. New Brunswick, NJ. p.6.
- ³⁵ Burchell. p. 7
- ³⁶ The three assumptions are pulled from Keohane, R., & Nye, J. (1983). *Realism And Complex Interdependence*. Kegley & Wittkopk. p. 119.
- ³⁷ Waltz, K. (2000). Globalization and American Power. *National Interest*. p51
- ³⁸ Coincidentally security is commonly referred to as "high politics", while economic and social affairs considered "low politics". Ibid.

³⁹ Burchill. p. 8.

⁴⁰ Sullivan. p. 115.

⁴¹ Kegley. p. 101

⁴² Morgenthau quoted in Roskin, p. 3.

⁴³ Clauswitz paraphrased in Roskin. p. 2.

⁴⁴ Roskin. p. 8.

⁴⁵ Burchill. p. 6.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Neuchterlein. p. 14.

⁴⁷ Neuchterlein. p. 13

⁴⁸ Keohane & Nye. p. 120

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Keohane & Nye. p. 121.

⁵¹ Keohane & Nye. p. 120.

⁵² Roskin. p. 14.

⁵³ USAWC p4 interests

⁵⁴ As discussed in Roskin. p. 5.

⁵⁵ Roskin. p. 4.

⁵⁶ Roskin. p. 5.

⁵⁷ Nuechterlein. p.17.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Nuechterlein. p. 19.

⁶⁰ Yarger & Barber. p. 4.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² The Commission on America's National Interests. p. 20.

⁶³ Nuechterlein. p. 26.

⁶⁴ Nuechterlein. p. 19.

⁶⁵ Vital. Dictionary.com. Retrieved on March 1, 2010, from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/vital>

⁶⁶ Nuechterlein. p. 26.



⁶⁷ Bartholomees. p. 226.

⁶⁸ White House. (2000) United States National Security Strategy.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Clinton, p. 86.

⁷⁰ Bartholomees. p. 225-226.

⁷¹ Sun Tzu quoted in Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Bartholomees, Jr. . p. 226.

⁷⁴ Nuechterlein. p. 26-27.

⁷⁵ Nuechterlein, p. 27.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Roskin. p. 10.



CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Decision Making Models

Taiwanese born scholar Joanne Chang in her 1986 book combed through the works of scholars that focused on how foreign policy decisions are made.¹ She settled on seven models she believed best represented the US foreign policy decision making process. They were the rational actor, bureaucratic politics, domestic politics, idiosyncratic, cognitive, and cybernetic models.²

The rational actor model is based on realism. The idea that states behave rationally in pursuit of their interests and seek the most efficient means to get what they want.³ There are four components to the model: goals and objectives are conceived, various options are available, each alternative has consequences, and choice is used to select the alternative whose goals and objectives rank highest.⁴ The rational actor model could be called the “base” model to which the remaining models are compared and contrasted.

The bureaucratic politics model breaks with the rational actor model in that it believes decisions are made through compromises of various actors instead of a unified, single entity, state. Decisions “result from compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interest and unequal influence.”⁵

In the rational actor model domestic politics are set aside and not computed when making national security and interest decisions. In reality, as proposed by the fourth, domestic politics, model national leaders must consider, “congressional support, public opinion, and various interest groups in the making of foreign policy.”⁶ Quandt states, “In a democratic polity, foreign policy is inevitably influenced by domestic realities.”⁷ A major problem with this model is that, for most foreign policy issues, many Americans are ill-informed or apathetic.⁸

The final three models fall under the same umbrella idea that individuals can affect foreign policy decisions. The first, idiosyncratic, model focuses on the importance of individuals. The next two models were developed by Steinbruner. His cognitive model placed importance on the perception of the situation by the decision maker. Steinbruner's cybernetic theory stresses that leaders make decisions by simplifying a complex world.⁹

Of course, all of the preceding decision models have their strengths. The rational actor model sets goals and makes choices based on rational thought. The bureaucratic politics model takes in various inputs from multiple sources. Domestic politics model posits that domestic workings should be considered as playing a role in foreign policy. Finally the final three models led by the idiosyncratic model state that individuals, such as the President, can make a difference when coming to foreign policy decisions.

With these models in mind the thesis question comes to the fore again. Is Taiwan a vital US interest? Is there a single model out there that can combine the exemplified strengths to help US decision makers determine the nation's national interests? This paper believes there is. It is through Donald Neuchterlein's national interest framework.

[Neuchterlein National Interest Framework](#)

The pieces of Neuchterlein's framework have been previously discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. They are enduring national interests, levels of intensity, and 16 factors of a vital interest. To review, enduring interests "are long-term concerns that rise and fall in importance over decades rather than months and years."¹⁰ His enduring interests are again defense of homeland, economic well being, favorable world order, and promotion of values. Intensity levels are used to rank and provide policymakers with an idea as to which interests are most important at a given time and need more resources applied. Neuchterlein has four

levels: survival, vital, major, and peripheral. Finally, the 16 factors help national leaders to determine if an interest is vital (see Table 3).

The three pieces are then split into two parts in order to identify interests. The major part of Neuchterlein's framework uses something he call the national interest matrix. In it, the enduring interests are measured against estimates of intensity. This is done for all state actors involved in a dispute. The final product would then provide the users with the information "whether the issue at hand is likely to end with negotiations or lead to armed conflict."¹¹ Neuchterlein says that the matrix should be viewed as a guide to making wise policy choices in a systematic manner rather than as a sure means of finding the 'right' answer."¹² Levels of intensity chosen are subjective judgments made by those in power. An example of this matrix is provided in Table 4. It is based on a thesis looking into the viability of a Taiwan missile defense.¹³ The following rough analysis will illustrate how the matrix works and can benefit national leaders.

Methodology: National Interest Matrix				
Enduring National Interest	Intensity of Interest			
	Survival	Vital	Major	Peripheral
Defense of Homeland	Taiwan		China	US
Economic Well Being		China, US, Taiwan	US, China	
Favorable World Order		China, US, Taiwan	US, China, Taiwan	
Promotion of Values		US	US, China, Taiwan	

Table 4. Methodology: National Interest Matrix

Looking at defense of homeland, Taiwan would obviously be most affected by any military conflict, hence it falls under survival. For China, although their current territory would not be affected, it considers Taiwan a province of China and so returning it to the

homeland is of major importance. As for the US, there are no direct and immediate threats posed so it falls under peripheral.

The second interest, economic well being, is very important to all three nations. As globalization has expanded the three have increasingly enhanced their economic ties. If the status quo were to change, it would seriously affect their economic well-being. This is definitely the case for Taiwan, but as you can see China and the US straddle the ever important line between vital and major interests. If you'll recall, if the line is crossed, a nation is willing to go to war. The author of the table purposefully left them on both sides to demonstrate the tough decisions national leaders must make.

Favorable world order is the third interest. Like the previous example, the US and China straddle the line again. For China it is mainly a matter of bring the lost province back into the fold. For the US it is a higher intensity because of its ideals of political and economic freedom, peaceful relations, and respect for human dignity. The goal of the Taiwan Relations Act also plays into this interest.

Finally, the last interest, promotion of values, is most important to the US. The US is considered as a nation that actively promotes its values. For example when providing economic aid, strings are usually attached for nations to exhibit positive behavior internally and externally. Although important to China too, it doesn't reach the same level. According to the broad guidelines of the so-called Beijing consensus, China has provided aid to countries with less than stellar human rights and corruption records with minimal strings attached.

For Taiwan, although a favorable world order and promotion of values are important to the fledgling democracy, it is not something they want to lose their de facto sovereignty over.

In summary, although the matrix and the example provided is a great way to determine if an issue straddles the important line between being a major or vital interest, it doesn't quite narrow it down. Something more is required to help national leaders determine if a particular case has crossed the line and is a vital interest. To accomplish this Neuchterlein developed a third piece in his framework, his vital interest factors.

Neuchterlein's vital interest factors is the model of choice for this thesis and will guide this paper's analysis in answering the question on whether Taiwan is a US vital interest. Recalling Chapter 2, the factors are divided into two groupings, value and cost/risk factors. Value factors are those that are important to defending and improving national interest. Cost/risk factors are those that usually are underestimated and overlooked when determining policy initiatives. They are also not desirable. In order to better understand the factors a short description of each has been provided below:

Proximity of the Danger – This factor asks how close to US sovereign soil/assets is the danger posed by this interest? Does the US have enough distance between it and the conflict? The closer the dangers are to the US, the greater the value of this factor and the potential need for action.

Nature of Threat – Compared to the other factors, nature of threat can encompass endless sub-factors. A few of the many questions to ask are what type of international player will be opposing the interest, a weak and disorganized nation or a regional power and everything in between? What type of behavior does the threatening nation exhibit on the international scene? What is the opposing nation's history with the particular interest?

Economic Stake – Looks at the economic benefits that will be lost if the interest is compromised. In the situation of Strait crises, Taiwan's economic value should be examined.

Type of Government Asking for Help – Does the government share the ideals of the United States? If so, then helping them would be of a higher interest. During the Bush administration the US increased its efforts to bring democracy to the world. The thought being that increased democracy would stabilize and make the world a peaceful and more prosperous place for the US.

Sentimental Attachment of Interest Groups – Domestic politics plays a role in framing national interests. In-turn, interest groups are big players in politics. If an issue garners support from a single powerful or a good number of interest groups it is more likely to become a national interest, at least in the short term.

Effect on the Regional Balance of Power – Would inaction maintain the regional balance of power? In Asia, balancing China's rising power is a concern of many of the region's nation states.

National Prestige at Stake – The US ability to make things happen is ultimately dependent on military, economic, and diplomatic strength. National prestige, or how the nation is perceived, plays a role in each of these areas. Prestige is highly valuable and valued by the US government and its citizens.

Support of Key Allies – If allies verbally support US action it is positive. If they provide physical military support, even better.

Economic, Financial Costs – This is similar to the earlier economic stake factor. While that factor studied Taiwan's value, this one looks at everything that could be lost. So in addition to Taiwan, economic connections with China need to be addressed.

Estimated Casualties – How many casualties will the conflict produce? By definition, "casualties usually refer to combatants who have been rendered combat-ineffective, or all

persons lost to active military service, which comprises those killed in action, killed by disease, disabled by physical injuries, disabled by psychological trauma, captured, deserted, and missing, but does not include injuries which do not prevent a person from fighting.”¹⁴

This is a hard number to construct considering the infinite possibilities in armed conflict.

Risk of Enlarged Conflict – Will hostilities be confined to a small area or will targets and objectives expand? For example, will the conflict be focused solely on Taiwan and the surrounding vicinity or will it expand out to China, the US, and even allies like Japan where US bases are located?

Costs of Protracted Conflict – If the conflict drags on, costs will quickly grow. Most obvious are costs associated with military operations, though economic and political costs shouldn't be discounted.

Costs of Defeat or Stalemate – What happens if the nation over-estimates its ability to control and eventually win the conflict? What is the worst case scenario?

Probability of Public Opposition – How do the nation's citizens feel about spending national treasure on the interest?

Risk of International Opposition – What is the international stance on the level of importance the US places on a particular interest? Is it in their interest too? Does it affect them in any way?

Danger of Congressional Opposition – Does Congress support the President's actions? What is its historical ties to the interest? What is its recent actions? Does it think the Administration is going far enough?

Analysis Process

The analysis process will consist of two parts; looking at the criteria individually and through a questionnaire. To quantify the analysis Neuchterlein suggests a simple system rating each factor high, medium, or low. In order to facilitate a bit more differentiation the methodology for this thesis will use four ratings: low, low to moderate, moderate to high, and high. Each will correspond with a number 1-4. If the sum of the value factors is high and the sum of the risk factors is low, the level of US interest is likely vital. If the opposite occurs and the risk factors are high but the value factors are low then the interest is probably not vital, but may still be important.¹⁵

Before each individual method is described two caveats need to be reviewed. First, factors are not given a priority of importance to keep the data clean, although some factors could (and in a more in depth study should) carry a heavier weight on certain issues. The second caveat is that factors are not considered as a scientific method to produce the right answers, but as a roadmap to good policy making decisions.

National Interest Factors Analysis

The purpose of the interest factors analysis is to unearth and gather data which demonstrates how each factor truly affects US national interests with respect to Taiwan during a cross Strait military crisis. During the analysis each factor will be studied by reviewing the literature and identifying indicators. Indicators are data points, which will provide clues to determine, how a factor should be scored. Each factor will then be estimated on the 1-4 scale mentioned above. Table 5 will be used to display and calculate the quantitative assessment.

Methodology: National Vital Interest Factor Scoring			
Value Factors		Cost/Risk Factors	
Proximity of the Danger		Economic/Financial costs of Hostilities	
Nature of the Threat		Estimated Casualties	
Economic Stake		Risk of Enlarged Conflict	
Type of Government asking for help		Cost of Protracted Conflict	
Sentimental Attachment of Interest Groups		Cost of Defeat or Stalemate	
Effect on Regional Balance of Power		Probability of Public Opposition	
National Prestige at Stake		Risk of International Opposition	
Support of Key Allies		Danger of Congressional Opposition	
Total Value Factor		Total Risk Factor	

Table 5. Methodology: National Vital Interest Factor Scoring

Major sources for analyzing the factors come from public and published material. Sources include statements by officials, scholars, and policy experts; government reports and hearings; newspaper and scholarly articles; and books dealing with all aspects of China-US-Taiwan triangular relations. Many of these sources have been touched on in the literature review. As is the case when dealing with sensitive government and military topics, numerous sources of information remain classified.

Questionnaire

The second section of analysis is by questionnaire. The purpose is to gather a subject-matter expert's opinion on the topic in the hopes of comparing and validating section one of the analysis. It is the goal of this paper to target participants that have international relations, security, and US policy experience along with a familiarity with East Asia. Targets groups are US government officials, academic scholars, think tank fellows, and media members. In this initial study 10-15 participants will be used.

The framework of the questionnaire is to lay out a scenario where China is about to initiate military actions focused on Taiwan. With that background, the questionnaire participants would answer 16 questions based on the 16 interest factors of Neuchterlein. Each question will have a ranking of 1-4 corresponding to the same system referenced above.

After all questionnaires have been completed, the data will be tabulated and summarized to compare with section one. The questionnaire used for this study is included in Appendix A.

¹ For a review of scholars and their work on foreign policy decision making see Chang, J. (1986). *United States-China Normalization An Evaluation of Foreign Policy Decision Making*. Baltimore. p. 5.

² Chang bunches the last three models together because they stressed the impact of individuals. Ibid, p. 9.

³ Downs, A. (1967). *Inside Democracy*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.

⁴ Allison, G. (1971). *Essence of Decision*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company. p. 33.

⁵ Ibid. p. 162.

⁶ Chang. p. 7.

⁷ Quandt, W.(1977). *Decade of Decisions*. Berkeley: University of California Press. p. 15.

⁸ Chang. p. 121.

⁹ Steinbruner, J. (1974). *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. p. 235-236.

¹⁰ Neuchterlein, D. (2001). *America Recommitted A Superpower Assesses Its Role in a Turbulent World*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky. p. 17.

¹¹ Ibid. p 20-21.

¹² Ibid. p. 21.

¹³ Carroll, J. (2004). *Joint Theater Missile Defense In Taiwan: Protecting United States Interests and Friends*. US Army Command and General Staff College. Fort Leavenworth, KS. p. 33.

¹⁴ Casualty (person). (2010, May 10). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 02:20, May 23, 2010, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Casualty_\(person\)&oldid=361259580](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Casualty_(person)&oldid=361259580)

¹⁵ Carroll. p. 27.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS

Vital National Interest Factors Analysis

An interest is vital to the US if the President and advisors “conclude that the issue at stake is so fundamental to the political, economic, and social well-being of their country that it should not be compromised—even if this conclusion results in the use of economic and military sanctions.”¹ The purpose of this analysis is an attempt to help determine if Taiwan is a US vital interest. Donald Nuechterlein’s 16 vital national interest factors will be the tool used in accomplishing this task. The analysis will be approached from two different angles. One, by literature review and two through a questionnaire requesting opinions from East Asia regional and US policy experts. The following analysis is therefore provided as an informed opinion based off of pertinent facts, research, and expert analysis.

Proximity of the Danger

In a conflict over Taiwan, China might have a formidable force, but its range is limited. Currently, the Chinese aren’t capable of projecting conventional power across the Pacific.² With 1,500 miles from the nearest territory, Guam; nearly 4,700 miles to Honolulu; and 5,600 to the West Coast of the US the conflict zone seems a long way off to the average American. This seems to be the case until nuclear weapons are inserted into the equation. China, as a nuclear power, does have the ability to reach the West Coast with Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs).³ In a widely circulated story a senior Chinese general, when talking about nuclear strikes with an American scholar, even mentioned the targeting of Los Angeles.⁴ While nuclear weapons are an option, most experts feel hostilities will never reach that level due to the concept of mutual assured destruction.

Back in the conventional realm, the US assets most at risk, due to proximity, are US military forces who have had a steady presence in the region since WWII. In order to hedge

against China's emergence as a regional military power the US has been strengthening its presence in the Asia-Pacific.⁵ For example they have deployed additional aircraft to Guam, additional attack submarines to the theater, and Patriot missile batteries to protect assets in Japan.⁶ US Pacific Command (USPACOM) also makes itself very visible in the region, by participating in numerous joint exercises, assisting in disaster relief, and making over 700 naval port visits each year.⁷ Table 6 shows the 2005 end-strength and distances of US forces in the Asia-Pacific.⁸

American Military Forces in the Asia-Pacific Theater, 2006 ⁹						
Location	Distance to Taiwan (miles)	Total	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marines
Alaska	5,000 (Anchorage)	17,300	7,600	100	9,600	20
Hawaii	4,700 (Honolulu)	34,200	17,100	7,400	4,900	4,800
Guam	1,500	3,200	40	1,400	1,800	5
Japan	1,300 (Tokyo)	34,900	1,800	4,500	14,100	14,500
Korea	1,000 (Seoul)	30,000	20,000	300	9,100	300
Other countries (mostly Australia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines)	NA	700	100	200	200	200
Afloat	NA	12,300	0	12,100	0	200
<i>Total</i>	NA	137,400	51,700	26,000	39,700	20,000

Table 6. Analysis: American Military Forces in the Asia-Pacific Theater, 2006

Of these forces, the bases in Japan and South Korea are the most vulnerable. A combination of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, aircraft, covert operations, naval, submarine, mine, and long range Surface to Air Missiles (SAM) attacks could seriously disrupt US operations.⁹ Figure 1 from the RAND Corporation was titled “The Dragon’s Lair”.¹⁰ The lightly shaded area encompasses the Western Pacific areas most vulnerable to Chinese anti-access measures.¹¹ The key question is whether China will decide to violate other sovereign

nation's territory in going after US military power and therefore making it difficult for those nations not to respond.



Figure 1. Analysis: “Dragon’s Lair”

Due to the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean, most of the US and its assets are far from danger in any sort of conventional war. If this was all, it would equate to a low threat, but more factors need to be added. US military facilities within reach of China’s so-called Dragon’s Lair are vulnerable. The following questions also arise. Would China risk attacking another sovereign nation to get at US military facilities? How effective and long lasting would the effects be? Finally, would China escalate and use nuclear weapons? Although doubtful this and the previous questions are enough to warrant a score of “2” for proximity of danger.

Nature of the Threat

Nature of the threat is perhaps the most complex of Neuchterlein’s vital interest factors. Richard Bush has said of a hypothetical conflict over Taiwan that “There is some doubt about American losses, but not much doubt about the outcome,” in which the US wins.¹² Nevertheless, the threat is substantial; maybe even enough to give the US pause in

engaging China. In order to examine the threat three areas will be investigated: why Taiwan is important to the PRC, China's military (and how it compares to the US military), and finally, possible PRC war strategies.

China's need to reintegrate Taiwan back into China has many influences: sovereignty and territorial integrity as an expression of nationalism, the righting of wrongs brought on by foreign powers when China was weak, regime legitimacy, the domino effect in which acceptance of Taiwan independence would flow to other disputed internal territories¹³, and expansion of China's defensive perimeter as shown in Figure 2¹⁴ where Taiwan is within the first chain.



Figure 2. Analysis: China's Island Chain

For these reasons, reunification is portrayed as a national vital interest, that if not fulfilled “the security and welfare of the Chinese state will be in jeopardy.”¹⁵ Some in China even go as far to say that “If Taiwan's separation from China becomes permanent and legal, China will never be a great nation.”¹⁶ This is driven home by the following PRC statement:

The modern history of China was a record of subjection to aggression, dismemberment and humiliation by foreign powers. It was also a chronicle of the Chinese people's valiant struggles for national independence and in defense of their

state sovereignty, territorial integrity and national dignity. The origin and evolution of the Taiwan question are closely linked with that period of history. For various reasons Taiwan is still separated from the mainland. Unless and until this state of affairs is brought to an end, the trauma on the Chinese nation will not have healed and the Chinese people's struggle for national reunification and territorial integrity will continue.¹⁷

Since Taiwan's move toward a fully fledged democracy in the 1990's the one-China principle has been at the center of China's policy toward Taiwan, therefore driving home the point that Taiwan is a part of greater China. As the Taiwanese electorate has slowly started to drift away from reuniting, the PRC has pushed a static status quo. To Beijing this means that Taiwan is to remain where it is right now, while moving as soon as possible to reunification.¹⁸ To show their resolve, in 2005 the Chinese National People's Congress passed the "Anti-Secession Law", which is a rather subjective law which lays out some red lines Taiwan should not cross. If crossed China would then be forced, by law, to "employ non-peaceful means...to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity."¹⁹

"The prospect of using force to resolve the Taiwan issue appears to be the organizing focus of the PRC's military modernization."²⁰ Chinese planners believe that should a crisis erupt in the Taiwan Strait, the US will enter the conflict and they should prepare for a military clash with the US.²¹ The US quick victory over Iraq in the first Gulf War provided a wakeup for the PLA. The American's high tech and mobile military completely dominated the Soviet-style ground forces of Iraq. At the time, China's own military was very much like Iraq's. This along with the later air campaign in the former Yugoslavia and the second Gulf War opened China's eyes to the fact that their military was weaker and the US military was more capable than they had thought.²²

According to the Department of Defense (DoD), "China's military appears focused on assuring the capability to prevent Taiwan independence."²³ Their goal is to build a formable force designed to win a limited conventional conflict with the US.²⁴ In realizing the military

gap between themselves and the US, China has pushed modernization plans focusing on anti-access capabilities and asymmetric warfare.²⁵

Modernization is occurring in many areas, but one of the biggest is in missile capability. Multiple systems are being upgraded with longer range and higher accuracy. Examples are anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) to take out aircraft carriers to short and medium range ballistic missiles (SRBM & MRBM) to target land and sea threats far from China's shores. As of September 2008 it was estimated that China had over 1,100 SRBM and the number was increasing by 100 per year.²⁶ Facilities in Taiwan and Japan are their most likely targets.

The Chinese maritime force has also upgraded and expanded. They have over 60 submarines: diesel, nuclear, and electric many of which are being upgraded with ASBMs.²⁷ Their diesel submarine fleet's main purpose seems to be harassing a rival's surface fleet.²⁸ Also deploying missiles are 70 patrol craft.²⁹ In addition, over the past decade China has deployed ten new classes of ships.³⁰ Of its 74 frigates and destroyers, 53 are in the East and South China Sea Fleets close to Taiwan.³¹

For air defense, higher quality SAMs are being deployed.³² Russian fourth generation fighters³³ are also being purchased.³⁴ Of the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF), an estimated 2,250 aircraft 490 are within range of Taiwan.³⁵

Also, of high priority for upgrade are the Chinese military's electromagnetic and information capabilities. As the US has shown time and time again, its ability to use technology to manipulate information quickly, thereby overwhelming an adversary, is a key aspect of their success. To counter this and even go on the offensive China is launching satellites, improving information security, and building information warfare capabilities. A new robust cyber warfare unit has even has been created.³⁶

In addition to its modernization initiatives it must not be forgotten that China has the world's largest military by far with over 2.25 million active personnel.³⁷ Its inventory of weapons is also one of the world's largest. In order to get a feel for how China's military forces compare to the other two protagonists in a Strait crisis Bush and O'Hanlon produced Table 7 in 2007³⁸, which is a dated but excellent summary of all three countries capabilities. For a more in depth summary of China's military strength and inventory see Appendix B, which contains the latest estimates by the US Department of Defense.

Type of Military Capability	China	Taiwan	United States
Population (millions)	1,306.3	22.9	295.7
Active-duty military personnel	2,255,000	290,000	1,515,000*
Reserve personnel	800,000	1,657,000	956,000
Active-duty army/marines	1,610,000	200,000	783,000
Active-duty air force	400,000	45,000	355,000
Active-duty navy	255,000	45,000	377,000
GDP (2005; billions)	\$1,890	\$340	\$12,500
Defense spending (2006; billions)	\$100	\$8	\$535
Heavy tanks	7,600	925	8,000
Armored fighting vehicles	5,500	2,100	24,300
Large artillery	17,700	1,800	8,000
Combat jets (number of advanced jets)	2,800 (240)	510 (420)	3,900 (all)
Major warships (number of aircraft carriers)	71 (0)	32 (0)	118 (11)
Attack submarines (number of advanced subs)	57 (11)	4 (2)	58 (58)
Nuclear weapons	300	0	9,000

Sources: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2006* (Oxfordshire, Eng.: Routledge Press, 2006), pp. 29–45, 264–269, and 292–294; and U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military Power of the People's Republic of China, 2006* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 2006), pp. 44–50.

*The U.S. figures for active-duty military personnel include activated reservists.

Figure 7. Analysis: 2006 China/Taiwan/US Military

A decade ago scholars like Bates Gill and Michael O'Hanlon said that numbers like those in Table 7 do not tell the whole story and that China has a hollow military.³⁹ Others such as James Lilley and Carl Ford say the key factor is the upward trend of China's military and its ability to challenge the US in the local East Asia Theater.⁴⁰

When looking at military spending there is an obvious disparity between China and the US. This doesn't present the whole picture though. First, it is not known for certain what Chinese defense spending truly is due to their lack of transparency. The Pentagon thinks that China spends over \$100 billion yearly, but in China's published reports the total is only \$35 billion. The true number is not known. A second note on spending is that in accordance with China's own assessment it can not deter US intervention in a Taiwan conflict.⁴¹ China is investing in asymmetric warfare capabilities to exploit US weaknesses and counter key US advantages.⁴² These capabilities are ballistic missiles and supersonic sea-skimming missiles that can target US aircraft carriers in the region; an enlarged submarine fleet; homegrown satellite reconnaissance and communications capabilities; cyber-warfare; and recently, the demonstrated capability to eliminate satellites and intercept ballistic missiles.⁴³

Active duty personnel should also be reviewed. While China far outpaces the US and Taiwan, it must be noted that the US employs over 700K civilians and hundreds of thousands of contractors. These non-uniformed personnel carry out many of the same jobs that Chinese military members perform. In fact in Afghanistan and Iraq alone there are 250k contractors, more than uniformed personnel.⁴⁴ The caliber of China's manpower has also been called into question. A 1999 DoD publication reported PLA leadership, training and morale were poor.⁴⁵ China's military has not faced combat operations in over three decades when it scuffled with its neighbor Vietnam. Compare this with the US military, which is currently one of the most tried and tested military in the world.

Finally numbers of equipment verses capability needs to be reviewed. In 1999 it was estimated that the US owned \$1 trillion in modern military equipment, while China was well under \$100 billion. Even with increased spending in the ensuing decade, closing in on the

US edge is next to impossible. The reason military capital stock is important is that it is an indication as to how technologically advanced a military is.

Even Chinese analysts argue that high technology determined the outcome of the Gulf War and Kosovo US rapid deployment capabilities allow it to project force quickly where needed, and the US overwhelming information warfare capability is a big factor in its conventional military superiority.⁴⁶ Chinese leaders admit that US capabilities would be particularly effective against Chinese forces in the Taiwan theater.⁴⁷ The US use of its air superiority which showcases “long-range, large-scale, high accuracy weaponry” would restrict Chinese access to Taiwan and be a “threat to coastal political, economic, and military targets.”⁴⁸ This “crisis” in air defense, according to China’s Air Force Command College is that there is a “generation gap” between US high-tech attack platforms and air defense capabilities, which in turn has led the Chinese to “assume that the PLA could not protect its war-fighting capabilities, nor prevent US penetration of Chinese airspace”.⁴⁹ While most of these admissions are quite striking, in the few years since these ideas were published, China’s modernization has pressed forward at breakneck speed.

In 2009, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in a statement before the Armed Services Committee said China’s military modernization “could threaten America’s primary means of projecting power and helping allies in the Pacific: our bases, air and sea assets, and the networks that support them.”⁵⁰ Admiral Robert Willard, Commander of US Pacific Command, told reporters that “in the past decade or so, China has exceeded most of our intelligence estimates of their military capability and capacity every year. They’ve grown at an unprecedented rate in those capabilities.”⁵¹ Back in 2000, the DoD’s annual report on the military power of the PRC said that it would be hard for China to achieve air superiority by 2005 due to the highly trained Taiwanese pilots and their technically superior aircraft. The

2002 report suggests that Taiwan has the qualitative edge, but China's large number of submarines could pose a huge threat. It goes on to state the Chinese still have many obstacles to overcome.⁵² The 2010 Defense Report states that "the balance of forces continue to shift in the mainland's favor."⁵³ It further states that although China has many coercive options toward Taiwan, a successful full scale invasion is not yet possible.⁵⁴

This trend is further bolstered by a 2009 RAND report, which says by the year 2020; the US will no longer be able to defend Taiwan from Chinese attack. The report emphasizes achieving air superiority and also the imperative for China to take advantage of a first strike with its missiles to cripple Taiwanese and US sortie generation capability in the region, placing them at a huge disadvantage in the opening stages of a conflict.⁵⁵ According to US Army databases, attackers have won more than 60 percent of wars in modern times.⁵⁶ "Tactically, countries exploiting surprise often gain advantages that make their forces about twice as effective as they would be otherwise, in the opening hours of battle."⁵⁷

To complete the review for this vital interest factor, four main courses of action and how they threaten the US will be briefly looked at. The first would be some combination of limited force options to coerce Taiwan into changing their behavior. Options could include cyber attacks or kinetic attacks against specific economic, political, or military targets. A lesser example of this was when missiles were fired in the vicinity of Taiwan during the 1990s missile crisis. This strategy would not directly threaten the US, but if long term, the US would likely offer assistance to help stabilize the ROC government.

A blockade would be a second course of action in attempt to limit maritime trade and hurt the economy. In essence, due to People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) current strength it would be a "leaky" but still effective scenario.⁵⁸ If China first gave fair warning and required ships to transit through China for inspection and then confiscated or sunk some

vessel it might be enough to discourage nations and merchants from sailing toward Taiwan.⁵⁹

If US ships were affected in this scenario, it could lead to convoys being formed by the US Navy. If at some point US naval ships are attacked, military escalation could be triggered.⁶⁰

A third strategy would be a missile campaign aimed at weakening the Taiwanese will to fight. This option is credible because of China's large stock of missiles and their estimated growth of 100 per year. On the low end of the spectrum, China could target off the coast or into rural areas.⁶¹ At the mid range, China could target military defense targets and political nodes. This would serve to degrade and neutralize Taiwan's defense forces and political leadership.⁶² On the high end, China could use a "multi-dimensional non-linear saturated missile" strike.⁶³ Missile strikes could even threaten US forces in the region by attacking naval ships or fixed bases in Japan. The goal of attacks on US targets would be to inflict high costs, "compelling the US to withdraw rather than continue to incur costs in pursuit of secondary interests."⁶⁴ Although another goal would be to soften up or incapacitate US air power in the region until an amphibious invasion of Taiwan could be attempted.

Invasion could take many forms. The DoD believes that a PLA invasion of the medium islands of Mazu or Jinmen are well within China's capabilities,⁶⁵ although if the main island was invaded the US military along with most experts feel that it would fail. "Large scale amphibious invasion is one of the most complicated and difficult military maneuvers."⁶⁶ Bush and O'Hanlon raise a good point. They say that historically successful amphibious assaults have air dominance, have an initial superiority at the point of attack, and can reinforce their forces more quickly than the defenders.⁶⁷ At times even if two elements are controlled by the invader the operation could still be unsuccessful. Table 8 lists historical amphibious assaults and their outcomes.⁶⁸

Ingredients in Successful Amphibious Assaults			
Case/Attacker	Air Superiority	Initial Superiority in Troops/Firepower at Point of Attack	Reinforcement/ Buildup Advantage at Point of Attack
<i>Historical Successes</i>			
Okinawa, 1944/U.S.	yes	yes	yes
Normandy, 1944/U.S., allies	yes	yes	yes
Inchon, Korea 1950/U.S.	yes	yes	yes
Falklands, 1982/U.K.*	no	yes	yes
<i>Failed Attempts</i>			
Anzio, 1943/U.S. and U.K.*	yes	yes	no
Gallipoli, 1915/U.K., allies	no	yes	no
Bay of Pigs, 1961/Cubans	no	marginal	no
<i>Possible Chinese Attack on Taiwan</i>			
Taiwan Strait, 2000/PRC	doubtful	no	no
Taiwan Strait, 2010/PRC	doubtful	no	no

Table 8. Analysis: Ingredients in Successful Amphibious Assaults

In order to have any chance of success, China would have to surprise Taiwan and the US by launching missile strikes, followed by airstrikes. They would need to focus on air defenses and airplanes. It is estimated that between 90-300, depending on accuracy, SRBMs could cripple the Republic of China Air Force's ability to defend Taiwan.⁶⁹ Of their remaining estimated 1000 SRBMs they would focus on air defenses, command and control, and possibly US air bases in Japan.

As for US air forces, there are two bases that could realistically help Taiwan, Kadena and Iwakuni, both in Okinawa. In a worst case scenario, it is estimated by RAND that in an initial attack about 30 percent of fighters would be lost on the ground. Afterward due to facility and runway damage sortie generation would be quite low.⁷⁰ This would provide China with a substantial advantage in airpower over the first few days of the conflict until more US forces could be moved in. By then it might be too late.

The second and third ingredients to a successful amphibious landing depend largely on how much firepower and troops can be landed. In China's case, this is currently a weak link. China has 55 total amphibious craft that could be deployed.⁷¹ In a best case scenario for the Chinese, some 31,000 troops could be ferried across with equipment in a single trip.⁷² If you take into account air attacks, missiles, mines, naval engagements, etc. it could be much lower. In this best case scenario of 31K troops, Taiwan would still have an overwhelming defender's advantage. Remember that Taiwan has almost 3 million active and reserve troops, enough in fact to put 1,000 defenders per kilometer of coastline.⁷³ Of course not all the coastline is suited for invasion. With some prior intelligence the Taiwanese could have a force upwards of 60,000 waiting for the invasion.⁷⁴

If Chinese air superiority is maintained the invasion outcome would still not be a sure thing. In Normandy, the German defenders endured air and naval bombardment far beyond anything the PLA could inflict.⁷⁵ The allies in WWII did not have Precision Guided Munitions (PGM) but during the wars in Kosovo and Afghanistan over 12,000 PGMs were dropped and did not coerce rapid surrender.⁷⁶ In summary an invasion attempt would cause China to lose massive amounts of men and materials without a guarantee of success.⁷⁷

After reviewing why Taiwan is important to the PRC, China's military capabilities, and possible PRC war strategies, what can be garnered as to the nature of the threat? First, that it has been ingrained in the Chinese that Taiwan is part of their nation. Independence is unacceptable. Two, while possessing a huge military China's technology and training does not compare to the US or even Taiwan. Due to a massive modernization program they are steadily improving and could soon challenge the US in a regional conflict with niche capabilities. Finally, as the Chinese military improves, its options become more viable and

harder for Taiwan and the US to defend against. Nature of the threat, now and even more so in the future, is high and scores a “4”.

Economic Stake

Taiwan’s economic value to the US should be broken down into two parts: historical and current economic ties. Since 1950 and the beginning of the Korean War, the US recognized Taiwan’s strategic importance and it became a political client of the US helping to contain communism according to the Truman Doctrine.⁷⁸ Unfortunately, after the destruction and chaos of World War II, Taiwan was in rough shape. Allied bombing had damaged the excellent infrastructure built by the Japanese. An estimated three-quarters of its industrial capacity lay in ruins.⁷⁹ 1951 per capita Gross National Product (GNP) was only \$192.⁸⁰

A major spoke of the US containment strategy was to provide foreign developmental aid. The US thought that aid would generate internal political stability, promote economic development and build military strength, which would counteract communist expansion.⁸¹ Initially \$650 million was pledged, but only three months later the Marshall Plan was unveiled in response to the post-war European economic crisis. It provided \$12 billion to sixteen countries.⁸² As a follow-on to the European based Marshall Plan, the Mutual Security Act of 1951 offered a new program for aid. This included support for Taiwan⁸³.

According to USAID⁸⁴ (see Figure 1), in the years 1951-1970, Taiwan received a total of \$4.9 billion in US aid. Of the total, economic and agricultural aid made up \$1.4 billion and military aid totaled \$3.5 billion. After 1965 though, economic aid was negligible. Military aid continued until 1978 when the US switched official recognition of China from the ROC in Taipei to the PRC in Beijing.

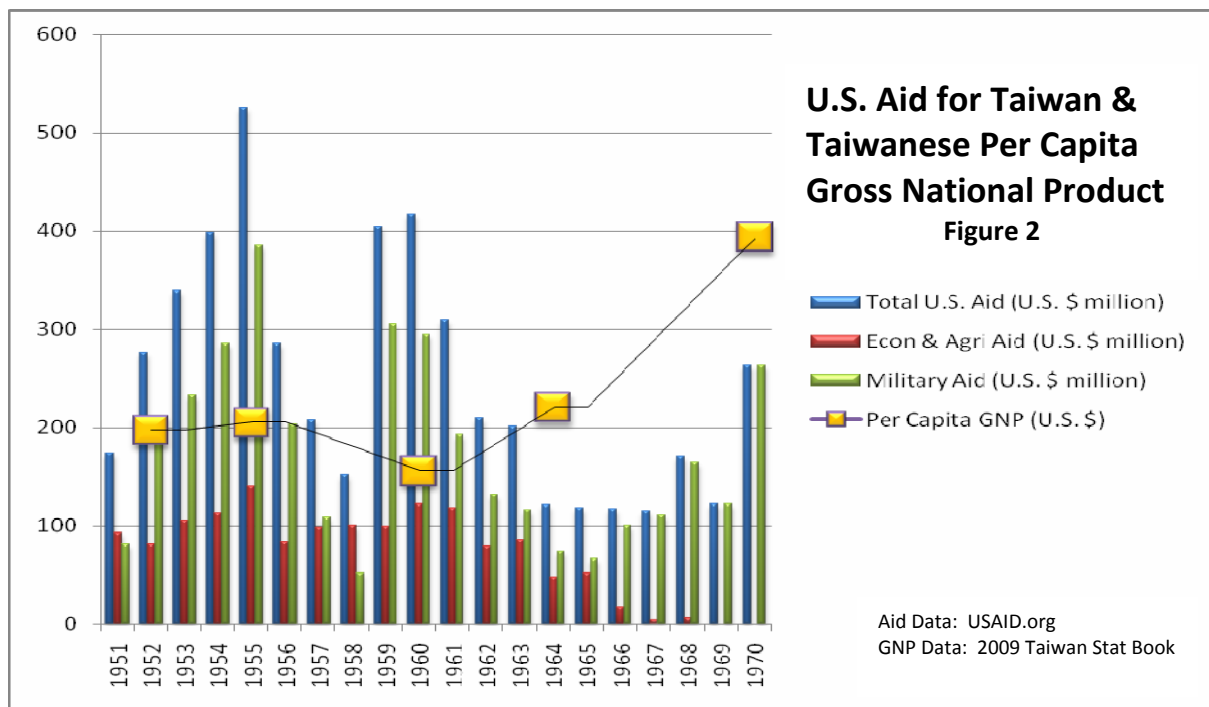


Figure 3. Analysis: US Aid Provided to Taiwan, 1951-1970

Also, as illustrated in Figure 1, starting from a low of \$192 the per capita GNP slowly doubled to \$393 by 1970. Of note in 1975 it had doubled again and by 1980 the number doubled yet again⁸⁵. Viewing these numbers, it looks as if US aid helped the Taiwanese economy stay afloat during the 50's. This gave Taiwan the time to recover from WWII and set a strong economic foundation for the future. This is shown by the steady rise in GNP through the 60's. Of course, as US economic aid phased out in the 1960s Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) started to pour in and brought about the economic explosion of the 70's and 80's in Taiwan.

From the data and scholarly research, it is safe to say that US aid played a huge role in turning Taiwan's economy around and setting it up for the success it enjoys today, an open free market economy based on the US model. With so much historically invested and the great contributor and economic example Taiwan has become, it would be very difficult for

the US to just walk away. The reality though in our, “What have you done for me lately?” society current performance and future potential rank higher.

According to the US government, Taiwan is its 10th largest trading partner⁸⁶. In 2009 the US imported \$28.4 billion in goods, which was 1.8% of the total imports. It exported \$18.4 billion to Taiwan, which was 1.7% of total exports. Taiwan is the sixth largest destination for US agricultural products, totaling about \$2.5 billion annually. Taiwan also imports industrial raw materials and machinery. Exports to the US mainly are electronics and consumer goods.⁸⁷

As for trends, even with the recent recession numbers have still risen quite well. From 1985 until 2009 imports from Taiwan have almost doubled and exports nearly quadrupled.⁸⁸ Interestingly, the trade deficit the US runs with Taiwan has remained rather steady. In 1985 it was \$11.7 billion, while in 2009 it was \$9.9 billion. All of these numbers are very solid, which relays the fact that Taiwan is a firm and reliable trade partner. One in which many believe a possible free trade agreement with the US may not be too far in the future.⁸⁹

Although China economics will be discussed in a later national interest factor, Taiwan’s contribution to China’s booming economy has a direct correlation to their success. In, turn this benefits the US. Let’s take a look at workers, investment and trade to get an idea of the Taiwan effect on China.

First, in 2006 it was estimated that 800,000 Taiwanese businessmen resided in mainland China.⁹⁰ Add family members to that number and close to 5% of the Taiwanese population directly contributing to the Chinese economy in China.

Along with the flow of people to China, FDI has also steadily poured into China from Taiwan. Through 2007 it is estimated that almost \$65 billion has been invested, although some estimates are as high as \$100 billion.⁹¹

The latest development is the so-called three direct links agreement that was reached on November 4, 2008. It opens direct postage, shipping, and flights between Taiwan and China.⁹² Despite the only recent opening of direct trade links, non-direct trade has been really brisk. Again, according to 2007 World Trade Organization (WTO) trade statistics, 12.7% of Taiwanese imports and a large 30.1% of exports are exchanged with China. From China, Taiwan accounts for 10.6% of their imports and only 2.3% of their huge export total. Of note it was estimated that through September 2008, Taiwan had \$72 billion of FDI in China.⁹³

Without comparing Taiwan to China, just how valuable is Taiwan economically to the US? Being the tenth largest trading partner does matter. The Taiwan market has real value for US agricultural products and produces many high tech products⁹⁴ for the US, but that is a relatively narrow band of industries. Also the relatively low percentage of trade the value can be offset from other nations if need be. This makes Taiwan economic value borderline, but with the US historical economic connection to Taiwan it scores as a “2”.

Type of Government Asking for Help

In the late 1980s democratic reform began in Taiwan. By 1996 Taiwan’s first direct presidential election was held. Although Taiwan’s democracy is relatively young, in 2008 it ranked 33on The Economist’s Democracy Index.⁹⁵ Keeping democracy in Taiwan is clearly a US interest and “support for Taiwan seems to be based more on shared norms of democracy and human rights.”⁹⁶

For Americans, democracy is a time honored tradition. The ideals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness coupled with interests in progressiveness, human rights, and free markets has solidified US interest in supporting and encouraging like minded democracies around the world. This solidified in George W. Bush's Administration, during which democracy was actively pushed.⁹⁷

In Taiwan's case "It is important for the PRC to understand the core values of democracy and human rights for Americans. Democratic principles are held so dearly in America that China simply cannot evade the issue of democracy."⁹⁸ Some feel that Taiwan can be held up as a model for democracy in China, since it has proven that a Chinese society, while being democratic and open to the outside world can survive.⁹⁹ Kim Holmes and Walter Lohman believe that the US commitment to Taiwan is based entirely on a concern for individual liberty. Since, in their opinion, every other interest is "tipping in China's favor."¹⁰⁰ Hu believes that a democratic system may win them more sympathy, but the US interest in Taiwan is not ideological, but territorial.¹⁰¹ Finally, Michael Swaine and Minxin Pei remind us that the US has not always supported the notion that democracy equals self-determination, whether in Quebec, Kosovo, Kurdistan, the Basque region or Somaliland.¹⁰² With Bush gone, will Obama's pragmatic realism take hold making US policy not so idealistic?

The answer is Obama will probably move more to the middle on this. The US will not actively go to war to install democracies, but will stand by those who are successful productive members on the world scene. Taiwan as a democracy with a great success story adds much value to the world. It earns a "4".

Sentimental Attachment of Interest Groups

In international relations, as in politics, there are usually two sides to every argument. For large issues, interest groups take a substantial role in framing the debate. In the US the big player in Taiwan issues is the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA). FAPA is a Washington, D.C. based non-profit organization whose mission is to educate “ US policy makers, the media, scholars and the general public,” on Taiwan issues.¹⁰³ Specifically their website states they promote international support for Taiwan independence, promote relations with the US, protect Taiwan’s right to self-determination, promote Taiwanese peace/security, and finally, advance rights and interest of Taiwanese communities around the world.¹⁰⁴ In addition to the people on Taiwan there are also an estimated 144K people living in the US that identify themselves as Taiwanese according to the last US Census.¹⁰⁵

Like most Americans, Taiwanese Americans take pride in their traditions and connection to their ancestral lands. You could say even more for Taiwanese Americans since their brothers have been struggling against the Chinese communists for over a half century. This is the first reason why FAPA is so successful. A second is that as a constituency, Taiwanese Americans are highly educated and rather wealthy, prerequisites for influence.¹⁰⁶ Third due to their passion for the issues, through FAPA, they have developed a calculated and wise strategy to push their issues.

Their strategy is based on two approaches, one defined by Risse-Kappen and another by Keck and Sikkink. Risse-Kappen’s approach is focused on gaining access to policymakers.¹⁰⁷ In the US government that means soliciting support from the President and Congress. While FAPA has attempted to garner the President’s support, they have been most successful at finding members of Congress to champion their causes. These champions played a key role in FAPA’s many successes.¹⁰⁸

The second approach is based on Keck and Sikkink's view that interest groups should focus on norms and values to influence entities.¹⁰⁹ To bring it closer to FAPA, if they focus on possible harm to people (as say a possible Chinese attack), or denial of legal opportunity (de jure independence & not a member in the UN) that will resonate with Americans, due to the US core values or life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

In order to implement the two approaches, FAPA seems to generally follow Keck & Sikkink's four political tactics to influence policy makers. The first is information politics. FAPA is very adept at information politics. They bombard congressional staff with calls, newsletters, pamphlets, and through constituents.¹¹⁰ Their website is also a substantial source of information¹¹¹ Second is symbolic politics or using symbols to boost the cause. Two examples were the use of the 1999 earthquake and 2003 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak to justify entry into the World Health Organization (WHO). Third is leverage politics, or the ability to call upon powerful actors. As mentioned before, FAPA has made it a habit of cultivating Congressmen to champion issues for them. The final tactic is accountability politics, or holding actors to previous stated policies.

How successful and influential is the Taiwan lobby and FAPA? In the past it was considered to be right behind the Israel lobby, the most powerful international lobby in Washington . They "have all been highly sensitive to the US administration's concerns of national interest,"¹¹² have their hands in every piece of legislation proposed on Taiwan, and have cultivated large caucuses in the House and Senate.¹¹³ This strong influence from FAPA on Washington rates them a "3" for this vital interest factor.

Effect on the Regional Balance of Power

In "a global system characterized by the struggle for power and influence,"¹¹⁴ China is without a doubt making gains. Previous vital interest factors have shown China trending

upward in economic and military power. In order to maintain peace and stability in the region, balance of power theory tells us that this Sino rise in power must be met by an offsetting block of power in order for equilibrium to be maintained.

Since World War II US power in East Asia has been based on its alliance structure, forward military bases, political relations, and the global economic system.¹¹⁵ Its strategy has been to deny hegemony to any competing power. The 2002 National Security Strategy stated “Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing, or equaling, the power of the United States.”¹¹⁶ Simply put it has been East Asia’s external balancer.¹¹⁷

China’s gains might be coming at the expense of the US and sending the region “back into a system of Westphalian multipolarity.”¹¹⁸ “There is already substantial evidence that countries such as India, Japan, and Russia, as well as smaller powers such as Singapore, South Korea and Vietnam, are worried about China’s ascendancy and are looking for ways to contain it.”¹¹⁹ For example, Southeast Asian nations want the US to remain and even strengthen their role in the region to balance China.¹²⁰ Japan, South Korea, and India are modernizing and strengthening their navies to “hard balance” China.¹²¹ Robert Kaplan believes it would be prudent for the US to further encourage these nations to militarily buildup as the US gradually declines.¹²²

Where does Taiwan fit in this “balancing” act? Prior to the Korean War Washington believed that Taiwan was not significantly important.¹²³ Once the Korean War began, there was a change of heart and Taiwan became key in containing the expansion of communism. Today thoughts of containing communism have subsided and have been replaced by keeping tabs on a growing rival.

Currently, Richard Bush and Michael O'Hanlon believe that of the many issues the China and US balance, Taiwan is the fulcrum. John Mearsheimer tends to agree. He believes that not only does Taiwan have strategic importance in controlling sea lanes, but it is an important player in the anti-China balancing coalition. He further states that the US and Japan won't let China take the island.¹²⁴ Andrew Kennedy has said that unification would increase China's power and remove a point of leverage for the US.¹²⁵ Alan Wachman in his book "Why Taiwan" feels it would put a huge hole in the containment perimeter and put the US and its allies in a weaker strategic position with respect to China."¹²⁶

In disagreement with this assessment is Chas Freeman who feels "that the stakes in Taiwan are not worth such a struggle," and that "reunification on terms like those proposed by Beijing would threaten no American or allied interest." He goes on to say that "there would be no change in north-east Asian strategic alliance or balance."¹²⁷ Alan Romberg believes that there is "no strategic advantage for the US to hold Taiwan." He goes further by saying that there is no advantage for China either, because it would introduce vulnerabilities to the PLA if there.¹²⁸

Although there is dissent on Taiwan's strategic worth by some preeminent East Asia scholars, most agree that there would be a negative effect in East Asia's balance of power in terms of US strategic interests. Much like the national prestige vital interest factor in the following section, perception would most likely play a big role in any reunification scenario. Even if there was a negligible power shift, rival nations would act based on their perceptions therefore changing the realities and causing a real power shift. The overall consensus earns balance of power a "4".

National Prestige at Stake

As the most powerful nation in the world the US has many interests. In order to maintain these interests the US leans on its past successes and achievements in order to develop a reputation that can positively influence other world players. In the international community this is called national prestige.

During the Bush administration American prestige took a beating. Coinciding with President Obama's election and his message of hope, mutual respect, and dialogue, US prestige is on the rise again. This is borne out by a recent BBC World Service Poll of 28 countries, which shows a substantial improvement of opinion in the past year.¹²⁹

In East Asia some would argue that coming to Taiwan's aid would be highly important to US allies in the region.¹³⁰ The US not only has a historical and moral bond,¹³¹ but firmness is also very critical to regional stability. If the US wavered it would be a dangerous policy that could weaken its credibility and possibly destabilize the region.¹³² As a counter argument, a publication by the CATO Institute states that it "cannot be argued that commitment to defend Taiwan is essential for the US to retain its leadership in the region," and that the "pledge already has set the US back."¹³³

Due to Taiwan's unique international status, not supporting Taiwan might not be as big a blow to US prestige as some might view it. But the fact remains, in reality, US perceptions would be damaged in the eyes of its allies, fellow democracies that look up to it, and people who strive for freedom everywhere. In 1979 Richard Nixon said, "At a time when US credibility as a dependable ally and friend is being questioned in a number of countries, it is also vitally important that the Taiwan issue be handled in a way which will reassure other nations, whether old friends, new friends, potential friends or wavering friends, that it is safe to rely on America's word and to be America's friend."¹³⁴ National prestige at

stake earns a “3”.

Support of Key Allies

The US’ security in the Pacific rests primarily on the post-WWII alliance structure that pairs the US with other countries that share its values.¹³⁵ In the Asia-Pacific region the main US allies are Japan, South Korea, and Australia followed by Thailand and the Philippines. Singapore though not an ally, is a close partner. These regional players could play a pivotal role in any future Strait conflict by neutralizing the effectiveness of Chinese anti-access measures. Even if they don’t participate directly, they might let the US use their sovereign soil, while concurrently not tolerating Chinese incursion into their territory.¹³⁶ Let’s take a closer look at these allies individually to gauge their support.

Japan is the US closest ally in East Asia and is a historical nemesis of China. In recent years, Japanese leaders have attempted to warm political relations with China in correspondence with their increasing dependence on trade, but bad blood and mistrust still remains between the two along with an increase in both countries’ public nationalism.¹³⁷ Japan is worried about China’s military buildup and has been modernizing their forces.¹³⁸ These perceived threats have driven Japan closer to the US.

Japan’s 2005 National Defense Program stated that their alliance with the US was “indispensable” for Japan’s security. It went on to emphasize response to invasions and intrusions into airspace and territorial waters, indirectly focusing on China and North Korea. Finally it stressed operational cooperation in “areas surrounding Japan” and aimed to “encourage the peaceful resolution of issues concerning the Taiwan Strait”.¹³⁹ This was significant for the US and of concern for China because it seemed to indicate Japan’s willingness to participate in a Taiwan crisis.

If a war broke out, it is currently unknown what Japan would do. Due to Japan's historical ties to Taiwan there would be much sympathy to Taiwan's plight with the Japanese public.¹⁴⁰ Most likely they would allow use of US military bases on Japan and provide logistical support. If the conflict was to escalate and Japanese soil or ships attacked they might very well join the war outright, which would help the US immensely due to Japan's "impressive" navy.¹⁴¹

The other staunch US ally in East Asia is South Korea. Technically, the two Koreas are still at war and there are 26,000 American soldiers stationed in the south.¹⁴² Historically South Korea has always indentified with their fellow Confucian nation China and recently their pattern of trade has moved closer to China.¹⁴³ They are also eager to court Beijing, because of the leverage China has over North Korea. Because South Korea believes it needs both the US and China it wants good relations between Washington and Beijing.¹⁴⁴ If war broke out, even if South Korea wanted to help it could not commit forces due to its tenuous situation with North Korea.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps South Korea would be the ideal peace-maker in a Strait conflict.¹⁴⁶

Australia, although quite far away from Taiwan is an active player in the region and is a very close ally of the US. Recently in 2007 it also signed a defense agreement with Japan, which may have set the foundation for "JANZUS".¹⁴⁷ As for treaty requirements and Taiwan, in 2004 Australia's Foreign Minister said that Washington should not automatically assume that Australia would help it defend Taiwan against a Chinese military attack. In a poll shortly after, 72 percent of Australians agreed with the Foreign Minister's statement.¹⁴⁸ Although the Prime Minister quickly backtracked on the statement, it does paint a picture of the Australian's thoughts on their support (or lack of) during a potential Taiwan conflict. Much like Korea, China is a huge trading partner and has displaced the US as Australia's number

two trading partner.¹⁴⁹ For this reason Australia most likely sees itself as an honest broker also.¹⁵⁰

The Philippines could be a wildcard. They requested the US pull their military bases out in the early 1990s but are now hosting US troops to help with their southern insurgency. Although still an ally, they prefer to distance themselves from the US and seem unlikely to be a major player.¹⁵¹

Singapore and Thailand are the final two allies in the region. Both are too far away and would not be crucial to US forces.¹⁵² Currently Thailand's internal political conflict is consuming them and so they would not be much help on the world scene. Singapore has nurtured a military training relationship with both Taiwan and the US.¹⁵³ As recently as 2004 though, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong has said that if China is provoked by Taiwan they will not support Taiwan.¹⁵⁴

In a recent address at the United States Military Academy President Obama reiterated the US commitment to its long standing allies by saying the US "will be steadfast in strengthening those old alliances that have served us so well."¹⁵⁵ Will these partners stand by the US in a cross Strait conflict? Like most issues it depends on the circumstances. If events became dire Japan being the most important most likely would. The other regional allies would provide help where they could with their limited capacities. Being optimistic allied support receives a "3".

Economic & Financial Costs

"Our interest in trade with China is not commercial. It is to establish a relationship that is necessary for the political reasons we both have."¹⁵⁶ This quote from Henry Kissinger to Chairman Mao Zedong in 1973 is striking when considering how far the two countries have come with respect to economic interactions. "The PRC's phenomenal growth rate has

made it a much more economically weighty actor, both as a leading trade partner and host of US multinational investment, and as the largest holder of American debt.”¹⁵⁷ The level of economic interdependence between the two nations has increased greatly since 1979 when the US and China signed their first bilateral trade agreement.¹⁵⁸

Economic interdependence is defined by the extent to which economic performance (GDP, inflation, unemployment, etc.) in one country depends positively or negatively on performance in other countries. In his landmark study in 1980, Solomon Polachek found that dependence decreases conflict because the costs become too great.¹⁵⁹ Also, Polachek developed a model that showed the higher the trade between states the lower the conflict level. “Extensive integration does not necessarily prevent war. The example of England and Germany before World War I is frequently cited.”¹⁶⁰ So what about the US and China, how interdependent are they currently and what affect would this have on the US if the two nations entered into a Taiwan Strait conflict?

In 2009 China was the US second biggest trading partner with \$366 billion exchanged.¹⁶¹ The US exported \$69.6 billion, which was 6.6% of all exports. They imported \$296.4 billion, which at 19% was the largest amount imported from one country. Like Taiwan, China is a very important market for US agricultural goods. In 2008 it was ranked number four with \$12.1 billion shipped to China.¹⁶² Major exports to China include waste and scrap, electronic components, seeds and grains, aerospace products, and resin/synthetic rubber.¹⁶³ Major imports are computer equipment, manufactured commodities (toys, games, etc.), communication equipment, apparel, and audio/video equipment.¹⁶⁴ Of note is that in the 1980s and 1990s most imports from China were low value products. Today advanced technology items are increasingly being traded and the US increasingly dependent. Even from 2003 to 2008 the number has leapt from \$29.3 billion to \$91.4 billion.¹⁶⁵

If technology is trending up what has the overall trend been? From 1985 through 2009 exports have risen 18 times and imports from China have increased a whopping 77 times. Before the recession fully hit in 2008 it was even higher growing to almost 88 times since 1985.¹⁶⁶ With the great disparity in import/exports the deficit has also increased to the astounding number, from \$227 billion in 2009 up from \$6 billion in 1985.

Another link between the US and China is Foreign Direct investment (FDI). The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) defines FDI as “the ownership or control, directly or indirectly, by one foreign resident of 10 percent or more of the voting securities of an incorporated US business enterprise.”¹⁶⁷ According to the BEA, as of 2007, China only has \$1.1 billion invested in the US, while the US has invested \$28.3 billion in China.¹⁶⁸

While China might hold a minimal amount of FDI compared to the US it is quite the opposite when it comes to securities. In 2007 the US held \$97.2 billion in Chinese securities.¹⁶⁹ By June 2008 China was holding \$1.2 trillion of US securities, of which \$727.4 billion were US Treasury securities.¹⁷⁰ Policymakers in the US wince when hearing these numbers, because although they understand that this helps the US meet its investment needs it gives China increased leverage over the US.

All of this interdependence is not without friction. Because the relationship is so large and important there are countless academic and media articles on the problems and disagreements the two trading partners have. A general list of these issues in no particular order are: health and safety concerns over Chinese products, China's currency valuation policy, China's slow implementation of WTO commitments, intellectual property rights, discrimination against foreign firms, and unfair trade subsidies. As of June 2009 the US has filed eight WTO cases against China with five being already resolved. Also of interest is that so far during the 111th session of Congress, eight House resolutions, one House amendment,

three Senate resolutions, and three Senate bills were introduced to address various concerns over China's economic policies.¹⁷¹

So what will be the economic consequences for the US of a military conflict with China over the Taiwan? According to a book published by the CATO Institute, a confrontation with China could lead to a run on the US dollar and a deep recession in the US.¹⁷² Let's take a look at how these two negative consequences could take shape.

When hostilities break out it would trigger a panic from foreign investors who would assess the US dollar to not be a safe investment. They would respond by selling off their dollar holdings. China in an attempt to hurt the US might also dump their huge cache of American securities too.¹⁷³ Initially, with all the dollars flooding the market, US currency would depreciate. The major negative effect of the depreciation would be a rise in interest rates. When interest rates rise quickly the market value of debt securities is reduced, the stock market falls, efficient financial intermediation is undermined, and the solvency of debtors and creditors suffers.¹⁷⁴ All of these outcomes would lead to a recession.

Dollar depreciation isn't the only way the US will land its way in a recession. The other major consequence would be the slowdown or complete stop in trade between the two giants. If this occurred it would devastate businesses that rely on exporting, importing, or who sell products as a secondary source from both China and Taiwan. All of these companies would be forced to buy or sell to a much limited market meaning expenses would rise. To compensate, businesses would be forced to cut back on expenses in the form of salary reductions or layoffs. And those are the lucky companies, others that have borrowed with the expectation of profits would not be able to repay their loans and potentially enter bankruptcy. For American citizens the sum affect would mean higher prices, reduction in salary, and lost jobs...a sure recipe for recession.

The economic costs of a conflict with China would be quite staggering. Trade alone with China accounts for \$366 billion dollars. Add the fact that whether win or lose any conflict will hurt Taiwan's production and trade with the US too. That means trade with the US number second and tenth trade partners will be severely hampered raising prices, handicapping US businesses and hurting the American consumer. In addition, US securities owned by China and all US FDI invested will be seriously affected further damaging the economy. This factor is a definite "4".

Estimated Casualties

A war with China would be unlike any other. It would mainly be an air and naval power conflict. During the 1940s, the war in the Pacific had these elements, but it also had countless land battles as the US implemented its island hopping campaign. In Taiwan's case US ground troops would likely be used sparingly. There are two reasons for this. One, there is virtually no likelihood of invading China. No good would come of it. Two, Taiwan has almost 3 million active and reserve troops to defend their island. This number should be more than enough since that is roughly 1,000 troops for every one kilometer of coastline.¹⁷⁵ A 2000 RAND report said a land assault would likely be very bloody for the PRC.¹⁷⁶ This leaves the air and sea as the most likely options for US casualties.

Due to the countless scenarios and factors, the literature makes very few references to casualties. For the Navy, casualties would come mainly from missiles and submarines. Submarines are considered the most offensive of all warships.¹⁷⁷ China's large submarine fleet could wreak havoc on the US Navy. Another concern is China's development of ASBM. If an aircraft carrier were to be hit it could mean several thousand casualties.¹⁷⁸

In the air, because of the US technological and training advantages it would enjoy an edge over the PLAAF.¹⁷⁹ Without knowing the number or sorties flown it is hard to gauge

losses, but it has been estimated that US 4th generation fighters would have a 2.5-4.5 to 1 exchange ratio with Chinese aircraft. For US 5th generation fighters, such as the F-22, it rises to 27 to 1.¹⁸⁰ While casualties in the air could be relatively low, losses on air bases targeted by China could be damaging. Analysts believe that for China to have the best chance of winning they would have to target air bases in Japan to decrease the US military's options for engagement early on in the conflict.¹⁸¹

In conclusion, because of the multiple tracts a Taiwan Strait conflict could take it is very difficult to estimate casualties. With the assumption that US ground forces would not take a major role in hostilities the chance for a high casualty rate is reduced. If China continues expanding their capabilities and they decide to launch a surprise first strike, naval and air casualties would decidedly rise, but would still be moderate at best. This is due to the relative distance from mainland US and the standoff nature of many US weapons, which can be used from long-range, reducing US vulnerability. Therefore on this potential the casualty factor is scored a "2".

Risk of Enlarged Conflict

A risk of enlarged conflict can mean one of two things. One, that fighting has expanded and more nations have been sucked into the war. Two, that fighting between the US-Taiwan and China has escalated in scope and lethality.

As discussed in the section on support of key allies, while many of the other East Asian nations are more politically connected to the US, economically they are drawn to China. So if the conflict is swift these countries will more than likely not be pushed to make a decision. If the conflict is protracted though, they will eventually have to engage on the side of their traditional ally the US. The wild card in the region is North Korea. If the US

and the world were focused on Taiwan and China, North Korea might take advantage of the situation. As history has shown, predicting what the regime will do is next to impossible.

Currently, the US with its technology, experience, capabilities, and military arsenal is expected to prevail in a war with China and achieve escalation dominance. This means at every level of warfare from conventional to nuclear the US can engage and defeat China.¹⁸² At the initiation of hostilities the US could go one of two ways. The first is that they could restrict operations, which would reduce the risk of escalation.¹⁸³ It has been published that in OPLAN 5077-04¹⁸⁴ that the US anticipates a rapid escalation.¹⁸⁵ In that case the plan would likely recommend a second option of all out strike, because “In the post-Cold War era, US strategy calls for the rapid and decisive introduction of US forces.”¹⁸⁶

After a hard blow from the US, China would either cease hostilities or feel boxed in and lash out therefore escalating the conflict. Bush and O’Hanlon in their book “A War Like No Other” designate five firebreaks or escalation red lines that China and the US should not cross. They are¹⁸⁷:

- Not to expand the geographic scope outside of Taiwan (i.e. avoiding attacks on China, Japan, Guam, etc.)
- Not to escalate to general conventional war (hitting command & control sites)
- Not to fire on each other’s nuclear forces
- Not to ready nuclear weapons
- Not to use nuclear weapons in any way

It is interesting to note that three out of the five red lines are about nuclear weapons. Some believe that a US-China war over Taiwan is the most likely way the US could enter a nuclear war.¹⁸⁸ One positive aspect is that China has a no first use nuclear policy. The second is that the US has approximately 30 times more nuclear weapons.¹⁸⁹ To attack the US would not turn out well for China.

It is not in either the US or China's interest to expand the conflict, but this is especially so for China, who from most expert accounts feels China has no chance in wining a direct conflict with the US. This does not mean enlargement is out of the question. It was previously discussed that it is very much within China's interest to hit US targets in Japan in order to slow the US war machine. On the flip side it is in the US interest to hit China hard to put a quick end to the conflict. Overall, risk of enlarged conflict scores a "3".

Costs of Protracted Conflict

Anytime a conflict is prolonged costs will rise. Costs can come in many forms. This section will review some of the more salient costs starting with mounting military expenditures. As seen in the Iraq conflict, costs are estimated to range anywhere from \$2 billion a week¹⁹⁰ to \$12 billion a month.¹⁹¹ But, worse than dollars, casualty counts will also rise as discussed in factor section on casualties.

As has already been reviewed in the previous two economic vital interest factors, the US and China have a highly intertwined and complex financial and trade relationship. Both countries exchange over \$366 billion a year and have massive amounts of money invested in each other as well.¹⁹² The longer a conflict lasts the further trade will be interrupted and business relationships ruined, sending both countries into deep recessions.

The US has been the external linchpin of East Asian security for a half-century. If a conflict drags on, demonstrating that the US isn't as in control as previously thought, this could trigger a sense of uneasiness and mistrust in the region as the region's balance of power adjusts and nations jockey for position in a new equilibrium. An arms race could be a possible side effect of this outcome, where nations would expand their arsenals to hedge their bets against a powerful China. This would not only make the region much more dangerous,

but cost the US more in defense spending as a new Cold War sets in for the next few decades.¹⁹³

Loss of a strategic partnership would be another costly consequence. As two of the most powerful nations in the world, both the US and China are permanent members on the UN Security Council. If a conflict persisted, enmity and mistrust would fester between the two nations. After suing for peace, this feeling would most likely linger. Progress on issues very important to the US such as nuclear proliferation (North Korea and Iran), world trade, global warming, and a myriad of other concerns would suffer. Eminent scholars have also weighed in on the importance of the strategic relationship moving toward the future. Chas Freeman believes that the interests China and the US share are “very considerable” and “should not be lightly thrown over.”¹⁹⁴ Leslie Gelb goes further to say, “We all feel very sympathetic to Taiwan, but China is a big question about the future of world politics. And if push comes to shove that is going to be more important to us than Taiwan.”¹⁹⁵

Finally, the prestige of the US and its persona of power would suffer. As discussed in the vital interest factor section on prestige, losing prestige would also mean losing the ability or ease of getting things done. This in turn would cost the US more in manpower and money to achieve its goals.

A protracted conflict would cost the US on many fronts. The financial costs will rise, the economy will go into recession, regional stability will decline, the China-US strategic partnership will suffer, the US will lose prestige, and casualties will mount. All signs which suggest costs to the US would be very high. Therefore, costs of a protracted conflict receives a “4”.

Costs of Defeat, or Stalemate

“Let China sleep. For when China wakes, it will shake the world.” This quote from Napoleon in the early 1800’s would be quite telling if the US were to lose a military struggle with China. China will have awakened to become a true rival with the US. The Pax Americana will have been broken ushering in a shakeup in the world’s balance of power. All of the US costs, previously mentioned, whether economic, military, or political will rise dramatically. The world will simply be at a different place. Initial costs to the US will be again be very high and earn a “4”.

Probability of Public Opposition

The best way to judge public opinion in the US is through polling, which is conducted regularly. There have been quite a few polls in the past 15 years whose focus was Taiwan. However, due to how much East Asian dynamics have changed during the time period this paper will only review polls conducted since 2004.¹⁹⁶

US citizens as a whole are very supportive of the idea of Taiwan. In a 2005 Gallop Poll, 76% of Americans understood Taiwan to be a separate country than China and 73% had a favorable impression of Taiwan.¹⁹⁷ A 2006 Harris Interactive poll showed 25% felt that Taiwan was a close ally, 36% felt they were friendly, but not close, 27% felt they were unfriendly.

A 2007 TCCE/Zogby International poll focuses on Taiwan’s agenda to join the UN. Fifty-five percent of Americans supported UN membership, while 27% opposed. Going further, the participants were asked if the Taiwanese people themselves passed a referendum, if the US should not oppose their wishes. Seventy percent of the respondents agreed with the statement, while only 17% disagreed. Finally, the respondents backed off a bit when asked if

the US should openly oppose China's opposition to Taiwan UN membership. Fifty-two percent agreed and 34% disagreed.

In another 2007 Zogby International Poll, participants were asked to agree or disagree on whether the US should take an active role in China-Taiwan relations. Forty-six percent agreed and 50% disagreed. In that same poll, respondents were also asked the two most likely sources of conflict between the US and China. Top of the list was trade at 37%. Energy and human rights followed, both with 26%. Taiwan was ranked seventh at 15%.

Focusing more on Taiwan, a 2006 Chicago Council on Global Affairs poll asked how critical of a threat to the US vital interests was a confrontation between mainland China and Taiwan? 18% said critical, 64% replied important but not critical and 16% said not important. An earlier 2005 Pew Research poll asked essentially the same question, whether a China-Taiwan conflict would be a threat to the well-being of the US. Seventy-one percent of participants saw it as a threat. Along the same lines a 2004 CNN-USA Today polled asked of the importance of a China-Taiwan conflict to US vital interests. Twenty-three percent said critical, 51% said important, while 17% viewed it as not important.

Finally a famous Chicago Council of Global Affairs conducted over the past decade looks at US troop use. It asked if the participants would favor or oppose use of US troops if China invaded Taiwan. In 2006, 32% were in favor slightly up from 27% in 1998. The 2006 polls also showed 61% were opposed, up from 58% in 1998. Along this same vein, a 2005 Gallop poll gave respondents four options and then were asked how their country should help if China were to attack Taiwan. Of US respondents, 3% said defend using military force, 42% said defend using diplomatic efforts, 23% said use both diplomatic and military, and finally 26% said do nothing at all.¹⁹⁸ In one last poll by Zogby in 2007, respondents were asked if the US should intervene if a declaration of independence by Taiwan is met by

military hostilities. Much like the Chicago poll, 32% said yes, 60% said no, while 9% were not sure.

To summarize, a strong majority of Americans feel Taiwan is acting as or should become an independent nation and join the UN. When asked about a whether a China-Taiwan conflict was a threat to the US, a majority of Americans thought it was important but not critical to US interests. Finally, when asked if US troops should be deployed a pretty consistent strong majority was against sending the military. The negative numbers on US military involvement coupled with the fact that the US has been at war for nine years earns the public opposition factor a solid "3".

Risk of International Opposition

International opposition to US military involvement in Taiwan is a difficult question. When the world's greatest power decides to use force, the world is understandably skeptical. But when aggressive nations have invaded their neighbors, US military intervention usually garners world and United Nations support. Examples include North Korea's invasion of the South and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.¹⁹⁹ The major difference though between say Kuwait and Taiwan is that the latter is not recognized as a member of the UN.

In 1971, the ROC, despite being a founding member of the UN, was in 1971 replaced by the PRC. Currently only 23 nations have formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan. Starting in 1991, the ROC has applied many times for membership, but has been turned down. In 2007 Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon went as far to say that "Taiwan is a part of China."²⁰⁰ Regardless, if China attacked Taiwan the UN's stated aims of international law, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and world peace would be shattered in and around the Taiwan Strait.²⁰¹

Despite Taiwan's lack of official recognition and UN status, many nations respect Taiwan for the strides it has made in democracy, human rights, and its economy. In the East West Global Index of Brand Perception, showing how the media reports on nations, Taiwan was ranked 9th in 2008 and 24th in 2009 out of 192.²⁰² A 2005 Gallup poll (Figure 4) shows very favorable impressions of Taiwan from many of the world's more powerful countries.

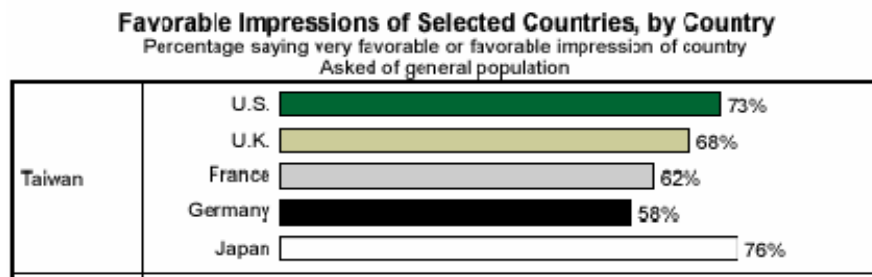


Figure 4. Analysis: Favorable Impressions of Taiwan

Continuing, the poll then asked how their countries should help Taiwan if China attacked (Figure 5). Not surprisingly a vast majority of the respondents felt their country should do something, albeit through diplomatic channels.

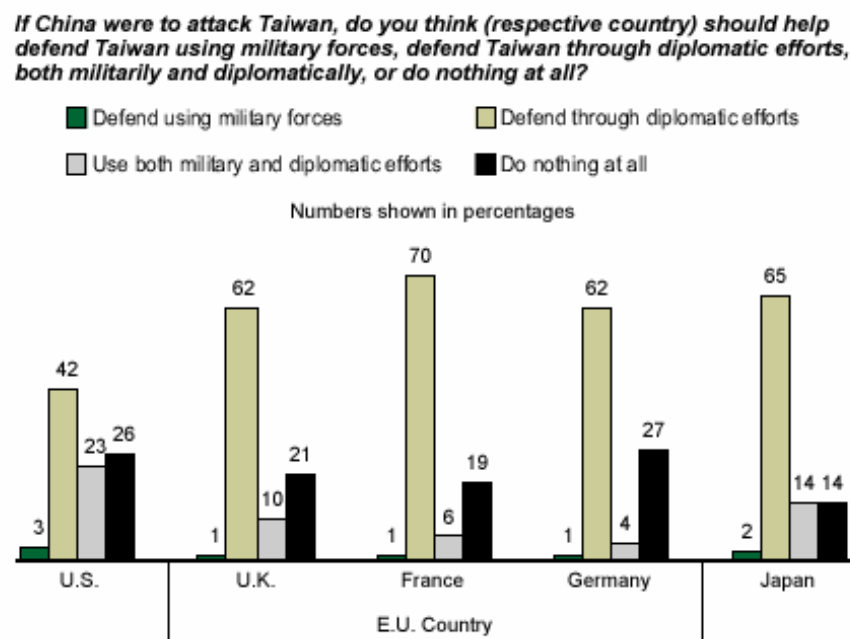


Figure 5. Analysis: Opinion on Taiwan Assistance, Post-Invasion

So will there be international opposition. Even though Taiwan is not officially recognized by many nations it is perceived very favorably. The data seems to say that there will not be much opposition from fellow democracies, especially Western, who view Taiwan as an entity that shares their values of free markets, human rights, and democracy. It is hard to see too many nations opposing US intervention if China invades Taiwan. Probability of international opposition is a “1”.

Danger of Congressional Opposition

Since 1979, when diplomatic ties with Taiwan were severed and the PRC was recognized as the sole legitimate government of China, both houses of the US Congress have strongly supported the island of Taiwan. This started with the TRA of 1979 and has continued through today. Currently the Congressional Taiwan Caucus has 135 members and the Senate Taiwan Caucus 23.²⁰³ That is nearly one-third of all members of congress and a huge voting bloc. On the other side is the Senate China Caucus with just 30 members.²⁰⁴

Every year members of the Taiwan Caucus submit many pieces of legislation, which have many supporters. For example, House Concurrent Resolution 55 had 123 sponsors alone.²⁰⁵ Table 6 displays select bills and resolutions from the two most recent sessions of Congress.²⁰⁶ Although persistent, legislation that aims to change the status quo usually doesn't get out of committee. Notice that diplomatic concurrent resolutions on diplomatic recognition and a US-Taiwan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) have been proposed two years in a row. Regardless of the legislation, when military action is warranted it usually falls on the President as Commander in Chief of the US military to decide on the course of action.

Recent Congressional Legislation (110th & 111th Congress)			
Session	Bill	Description	Location
111	H Con. Res. 18	Supporting diplomatic recognition of Taiwan	Committee
111	H Con. Res. 55	Recognizing 30th anniversary of TRA	Committee
111	H. Con. Res. 200	Taiwan's future requires express consent of the people of Taiwan	Committee
111	H. Con. Res. 276	Supporting a FTA between the US and Taiwan	Committee
111	H. Res. 733	Expressing Condolences to Taiwan in Aftermath of devastating 8 August, 2009 Typhoon	Passed
111	H. Res 927	US arms sales to Taiwan solely determined by Taiwan's defense needs	Committee
111	H. Res 1352	Supporting Taiwanese American Heritage Week & Recognizing close relations between US and Taiwan	Committee
111	S. Con. Res. 63	Supporting observer status for Taiwan in International Civil Aviation Organization (H. Con. Res. 266 the same)	Committee
111	S. 1390	National Defense Auth Act...Sec 1226 requires DoD to submit a report on Taiwan's Air Force	Passed
111	S. 1434	Department of State Appropriations Act for 2010...provision funding democracy assistance to Taiwan.	Passed
110	H. Res 1390	Requiring Senate confirmation for the position of US Director of American Institute of Taiwan	Died on Floor
110	H. Con. Res. 73	Called for diplomatic relations with Taiwan to be resumed	Died in Committee
110	S. Con. Res 48	Called for lifting of restrictions o US visits by Senior Taiwan officials (H. Con. Res. 136 passed)	Died in Committee
110	H. Con. Res. 137	US should initiate FTA negotiations with Taiwan	Died in Committee
110	H. Con. Res. 170	Urged International Olympic Committee to allow Taiwan to participate in Beijing Olympics under name of their choosing	Died in Committee

Table 9. Analysis: Recent Congressional Legislation (110&111 Congress)

Typically if the President decides on a military action, Congress more than likely will support it. After WWII this has predominantly been the case. Then led by Senator Vandenberg (R. –Mich), legislators adopted a “bipartisan foreign policy.”²⁰⁷ This recognized that armed conflict can arise quickly and the President needs to command flexibly and speed to act. Informally, this meant that the president should act and the Congress should support the nation’s leader. It was thought that opposition would undermine confidence in the President and harm national security.²⁰⁸ There have been fights over this power between the

two branches, but usually Congress agrees when the President deems military action is needed.²⁰⁹

With all of the open support for Taiwan and a history of bipartisan foreign policy there are two issues which could still raise opposition. The first is the effect a war with China would have on the US economy and in-turn the American people. As has been previously noted in this paper, an armed conflict with China would more than likely send the US back into recession. Many congressmen and women would be hard pressed to willingly send the nation into another recession.

A second point of opposition could come from an argument on war fatigue. The US has been continuously at war since the terrorist attacks on 9/11. In Afghanistan and Iraq the US has suffered 6,515 fatalities.²¹⁰ This coupled with the daily media bombardment has soured much of the US on war. Would Congressional members, and more importantly their constituents, support sending US to another far off land to fight and die for their country? It would probably depend on the circumstances surrounding how the conflict started.

Congressional opposition to US involvement is an intriguing question, one that bears more study. If China attacked Taiwan and the President deemed it a vital interest then a majority of the US Congress would more than likely support him. It is highly probable that initial opposition, due to the current ongoing military commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan plus Chinese economic ties, will be stiffer than other recent authorizations of force, such as the legislation authorizing force against Iraq.²¹¹ If so there could be quite a fight in Congress and Congressional opposition would earn a “3”.

Summary of Vital National Interest Factors Analysis

The analysis of each factor has been summarized in table 10. For each set of factors, whether Value or Cost/Risk, they have been added together and divided by eight to determine the average.

Analysis: National Vital Interest Factor Scoring (Literature Review)			
Value Factors		Cost/Risk Factors	
Proximity of the Danger	2	Economic/Financial costs of Hostilities	4
Nature of the Threat	4	Estimated Casualties	2
Economic Stake	2	Risk of Enlarged Conflict	3
Type of Government asking for help	4	Cost of Protracted Conflict	4
Sentimental Attachment of Interest Groups	3	Cost of Defeat or Stalemate	4
Effect on Regional Balance of Power	4	Probability of Public Opposition	3
National Prestige at Stake	3	Risk of International Opposition	1
Support of Key Allies	3	Danger of Congressional Opposition	3
Average Value Factor	3.13	Average Cost/Risk Factor	3

Table 10. Analysis: National Vital Interest Factor Scoring (Literature Review)

The value factors averaged 3.13. According to the scale this sets Taiwan's value to the US as medium to high. The cost/risk factors averaged 3.0. This sets the risk at going to war with China over Taiwan at a medium to high level too. As you can see the analysis concluded a 3.13 to 3.0 or converted a 1 to .96 ratio in favor of the value factors. At face value this could indicate that Taiwan has crossed the threshold and is a vital US interest. Recall previously that if the value factors were high and the cost factors low then Taiwan would be vital. If opposite then Taiwan would be important, but too costly to be of vital interest. The 1 to .96 ratio does not meet either of these two criteria. It in fact produces a third scenario where both value and cost/risk factors are relatively high. What does this mean?

With both factors rated medium-high, two different paths can be argued. If the numbers are followed strictly, it shows that the value in defending Taiwan outweighs the risk, albeit slightly. The counter argument would tell us to look at the numbers and realize that if either one value factor was downgraded by one or any one risk factor was upgraded there

would be a tie. This would indicate that the analysis is too close to call and theoretically would be within the margin of error.

In either case neither path is overwhelmingly definitive. Luckily, in the auspice of wanting to provide a solid answer to the thesis question poised, a questionnaire was also sent out to experts in the field. It was hoped that the expert's combined opinions would provide further justification for the results achieved in the first section. Now it might determine the answer to the thesis question itself.

Questionnaire

Participants

Originally the study was aiming for 10 “experts” to participate in answering the questionnaire (located in the Appendix). Unfortunately, only six replied. This should still be enough respondents to get a feel for how the experts view Taiwan through the lens of Nuechterlein's 16 national vital interest factors.

Due to the nature of the study, participants' names will not be published. Here is a general demographic breakout. Five of the participants are American citizens, while 2 are Taiwanese. Of the five Americans, two have served in the US Armed Forces. Four participants have earned PhDs. Their current career fields include four in think tanks, one university professor, one US State Department employee, and one media member. All currently study and work China, Taiwan, and US security or policy issues.

Summary of Questionnaire

Once the questionnaires were returned by the respondents, their “score” for each individual factor was averaged. The averaged factors were then averaged again determine the

average score for each factor set, whether value or cost/risk. The corresponding results are displayed in Table 11.

Analysis: National Vital Interest Factor Scoring (Questionnaire)			
Value Factors		Cost/Risk Factors	
Proximity of the Danger	1.86	Economic/Financial costs of Hostilities	3.43
Nature of the Threat	2.43	Estimated Casualties	2.42
Economic Stake	2.17	Risk of Enlarged Conflict	2.21
Type of Government asking for help	3.43	Cost of Protracted Conflict	3.29
Sentimental Attachment of Interest Groups	2.29	Cost of Defeat or Stalemate	3.86
Effect on Regional Balance of Power	3.43	Probability of Public Opposition	2.43
National Prestige at Stake	2.71	Risk of International Opposition	2.14
Support of Key Allies	2.0	Danger of Congressional Opposition	1.86
Total Value Factor	2.54	Total Risk Factor	2.71

Table 11. Analysis: National Vital Interest Factor Scoring (Questionnaire)

The average score for the value factors was 2.54. The lowest individual value score from a respondent was 1.75 and the highest was 3.43 with a range of 1.68. The top two value factors were regional balance of power (3.43 average) and type of government (3.43 average). Cost/risk factors averaged out to 2.71. Again the lowest individual cost/risk score from a respondent was 2.31 and the highest was 3.5 with a range of 1.19. The top two cost/risk factors were cost of defeat (3.86 average) and economic cost of hostilities (3.43 average).

The ratio of the two sets of factors was then 2.54 to 2.71 or converted a .94 to 1 ratio. From the ratio we can glean that, on average, the respondents felt that the costs were ever so slightly higher than the value of Taiwan. Much like in the first section of the analysis the ratio is very close, but not conclusive according to Nuechterlein's criteria. Again there could be two interpretations of the data. One, that with the slight edge, cost/risks scored higher and this indicates it is too risky to support Taiwan in a conflict. Two, is that the differentiation is not enough and yet again the decision is too close to call.

¹ Neuchterlein, D. (2001). *America Recommitted A Superpower Assesses Its Role in a Turbulent World*. Lexington, Ky: The University Press of Kentucky. p. 26.

² Sieff, M. (2009). *Shifting Powers: The New and Emerging Relationship between the United States, China, and India*. Washington, D.C., CATO Institute. p. 142.

³ China has roughly 20 ICBMs that can reach the US. For updated view of China's missile force see Ross, R. (2002). *Navigating the Taiwan Strait*. *International Security*. 27, (2). p.57.

⁴ Bush, R., & O'Hanlon, M. (2007). *A War Like No Other: The Truth About China's Challenge to America*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc. p. 1.

⁵ O'Hanlon, M. (2006). *U.S. Military Modernization: Implications for U.S. Policy in Asia*. In Tellis, A., & Wills, M. (Eds.). *Strategic Asia 2005-06*. Washington, D.C.: US Department of Defense.

⁶ Chase, M. (2008). *Taiwan's Security Policy, External Threats and Domestic Politics*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. p. 151.

⁷ US Pacific Command. *USPACOM Facts*. Retrieved on 2010, May 20, from http://www.pacom.mil/web/site_pages/uspacom/facts.shtml

⁸ "Numbers are generally rounded to the nearest hundred. Most ships travel 500 to 750 miles a day with loading and unloading typically requiring several days as well. The air force has approximately 96 combat aircraft in Alaska, 15 in Hawaii, 84 in Japan, 84 in South Korea, and roughly a dozen in Guam. The navy has some 22 submarines and 9 major surface combatants in Hawaii. It also stations an aircraft carrier, 9 surface combatants and 3 prepositioning ships with equipment aboard (enough for a brigade of Marines) in Japan. The army has a brigade in Alaska, 2 in Hawaii, and 1 in South Korea; the Marine Corps has the equivalent of 2 brigades in Okinawa, Japan and 1 more in Hawaii." Bush. p. 115.

⁹ Cliff, R, Burles, M., Chase, M., Eaton, D., & Pollpeter, K. (2007). *Entering the Dragon's Lair: Chinese Antiaccess Strategies and Their Implications for the United States*. RAND Corporation. Santa Monica, CA. p. 111.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 112.

¹¹ Anti-access measures are tactics and weapons that the Chinese would employ to restrict US access to the area around Taiwan. Examples are submarines, mines, and anti-ship ballistic missiles.

¹² Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 182.

¹³ For example Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia. Wachman, A. (2007). *Why Taiwan? Geostrategic Rationales for China's Territorial Integrity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. p. 153.

¹⁴ Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). (2009). *Military Power of the People's Republic of China. Annual Report to Congress*. p. 18.

¹⁵ Wachman. p. 161.

¹⁶ Zhu, Z. (2006). *US-China Relations in the 21st Century, Power transition and peace*. New York, NY: Routledge. p.119.

¹⁷ From White Paper – The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China. As quoted in Zhu, p. 119.

¹⁸ Yang, P. (2006). Doubly Dualistic Dilemma: US Strategies towards China and Taiwan. *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*. 6 (2). p. 216.

¹⁹ China's antiseccession law as quoted in Bush. p. 83.

²⁰ Wachman. p. 154.

²¹ Ross. p. 50.

²² Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 25.

²³ OSD. p. 20.

²⁴ Sieff. p. 142.

²⁵ Anti-access capabilities are those that can "attack, at long ranges, military forces that might deploy or operate within the Western Pacific." OSD. p. 20.

²⁶ OSD. p. 22.

²⁷ Ibid. p. 48.

²⁸ Sieff. p. 142.

²⁹ OSD. p. 48.

³⁰ OSD. p. 22.

³¹ Sieff. p. 142.

³² OSD. p. 50.

³³ Jet fighter aircraft are classified by generation. The US is the only country with 5th generation fighters in service, which (above 4th generation fighters) have stealth technology, and organic network centric combat technologies. For a basic overview of the generations see Fighter aircraft. (2010, June 4). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved June 1, 2010, from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Fighter_aircraft&oldid=366008545

³⁴ OSD. p. 22.

³⁵ Sieff. p. 142.

³⁶ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 134.

³⁷ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 102.

³⁸ Figure ref pg 103

³⁹ Gill, B., & O'Hanlon, M. (2003). China's Hollow Military. In Harries, O. (Ed.). *China in The National Interest*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers. p. 255.

⁴⁰ Lilley, J. & Ford, C. (2003). China's Military: A Second Opinion. In In Harries, O. (Ed.). *China in The National Interest*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers. p. 266.

⁴¹ Ross. p 63.

⁴² Ibid. p. 72.

⁴³ Thompson, D. (2010). Think Again: China's Military. Foreign Policy. Retrieved from http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/02/22/think_again_chinas_military?page=full

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Cohan, W. (1999). The Security Situation in the Taiwan Strait. DoD Report to Congress. p. 11.

⁴⁶ Various Chinese resources referenced in Ross. p. 64.

⁴⁷ Chinese source referenced in Ross. p. 66.

⁴⁸ Various Chinese sources referenced in Ross. p. 66.

⁴⁹ Various Chinese resources referenced in Ross. p. 67.

⁵⁰ Gates, R. (2009, January 27). Senate Armed Services Committee Statement. Retrieved from <http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=1337>

⁵¹ Gertz, B. (2009, November 5). Inside the Ring. Washington Times, Retrieved from <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/nov/05/inside-the-ring-70787975/print/>

⁵² Both reports can be found at www.defenselink.mil. Reports were referenced in Sinha, R. (2003). Sino-American Relations: Mutual Paranoia. New York, NY: Palgrave. p. 165.

⁵³ OSD. p. 52.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 43-45

⁵⁵ Shlapak, D, Orletsky, D., Reid, T., Tanner, Murray, & Wilson, B. (2009). A Question of Balance: Political Context and Military Aspects of the China-Taiwan Dispute. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. p. 50-51.

⁵⁶ Epstein, J. (1988). Dynamic Analysis and the Conventional Balance in Europe. International Security. 12 (4).

⁵⁷ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 143.

⁵⁸ Ibid. p. 132.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ OSD. p. 43.

⁶¹ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 131.

⁶² OSD. p. 44.

⁶³ Ministry of National Defense, Republic of China. (2004). National Defense Report. p. 49.

⁶⁴ Ross. p. 74.

⁶⁵ OSD. p. 44.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 45.

⁶⁷ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 129.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 188.

⁶⁹ Shlapak et al. p. 50-51.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 65.

⁷¹ OSD. p. 64.

⁷² Shlapak et al. p. 104.

⁷³ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 191.

⁷⁴ Shlapak et al. p. 106.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p.107.

⁷⁶ Ross. p. 78.

⁷⁷ Sinha. P. 166.

⁷⁸ The Truman Doctrine was a set of principles set in 1947 by President Truman. It was focused on supporting free peoples and fighting against communism. Truman Doctrine. (2010, June 3). In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 06:44, June 4, 2010, from http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Truman_Doctrine&oldid=365920915

⁷⁹ Little, I. (1979). An Economic Renaissance. In W. Galenson. *Economic Growth and Structural Change in Taiwan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univeristy Press. p. 454.

⁸⁰ Council For Economic Planning and Development. (2009). *Taiwan Statistical Data Book*. Executive Yuan, R.O.C. (Taiwan).

⁸¹ The Cold War Foreign Aid Program, 1947-1953. (2009, August 22). In *Encyclopedia of American Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from <http://www.americanforeignrelations.com/E-N/Foreign-Aid-The-cold-war-foreign-aid-program-1947-1953.html>

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Previously the Nationalist government received \$2.5 billion during the Chinese Civil war, which was the biggest expenditure outside of Europe (Cold War Aid, 2009).

⁸⁴ USAID. (2009). U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, China (Taiwan). Retrieved from <http://gesdb.usaid.gov/gbk/>

⁸⁵ As of 2008 Taiwan's per capita GNP had reached \$17,576 or 554, 344NT (2009 Taiwan Stats Book)

⁸⁶ Taiwan, in 2009, was ranked 9th in imports and 15 in US exports. All trade data was retrieved from U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *Foreign Trade*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/country/index.html>

⁸⁷ Dumbaugh, K. (2009). *Taiwan-US Relations: Developments and Policy Implications*. Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, R40493. Retrieved from www.fas.org/sgp/crs/index.html

⁸⁸ Ibid. (numbers are on a nominal basis, unadjusted for inflation or purchasing power disparities)

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- ⁹⁰ Chow, P. (2006). *Speech before Awkward Bedfellows: Taiwanese Businessmen, Mainland Chinese Seminar*, July 18, 2006. Retrieved from http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1462&categoryid=8EF8540E-E3B0-FA92-8727563242D93F67&fuseaction=topics.events_item_topics&event_id=190242
- ⁹¹ Mainland Affairs Council. (2009). Retrieved from <http://www.mac.gov.tw/english/index1-e.htm>
- ⁹² Previously ships had to stop in Okinawa, Japan first and all flights had to be routed through Hong Kong in Foreman, W. (November 4, 2008). Taiwan, China Make Economic History with New Pact. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-11-03-3403084930_x.htm
- ⁹³ Mainland Affairs Council.
- ⁹⁴ US companies such as Dell, Intel, and Apple are highly dependent on Taiwan's peripherals and components. One China: Taiwan Conflict. Wikiinvest. Retrieved on 22 May from www.wikinest.com/concept/'One_China':_Taiwan_Conflict
- ⁹⁵ For comparison, Sweden is ranked at #1, while the US is 18th. From The Economist Intelligence Unit's Index of Democracy 2008. (2008). The Economist. Retrieved from <http://a330.g.akamai.net/7/330/25828/20081021185552/graphics.eiu.com/PDF/Democracy%20Index%202008.pdf>
- ⁹⁶ Wu, J. (2009). Economics, Lobbying, and U.S. Congressional Support for Taiwan, Buying American Support, 2002-2006. *Asian Survey*. 49 (2). p. 380.
- ⁹⁷ White House (2006) *United States National Security Strategy*. National Security Council. Section VII, C, 1.
- ⁹⁸ Zhu. p. 184.
- ⁹⁹ Lasater, M. (1993). *U.S. Interests in the New Taiwan*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. p. 221.
- ¹⁰⁰ Holmes, K., & Lohman, W. (2009, June 26). Principled American Leadership for Asia. The Heritage Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Commentary/2009/06/Principled-American-leadership-for-Asia>
- ¹⁰¹ Hu, S. (1998). Prospects for a Cross-Strait Conflict. Li, X., Hu, X., & Zhong, Y. (Eds.). *Interpreting U.S. China-Taiwan Relations*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America. p. 250.
- ¹⁰² Pei, M. & Swaine, M. (2003, December 7). Where Taiwan Support Stops. Carnegie Endowment For International Peace. Retrieved from http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1417&zoom_highlight=us+vital+interests+taiwan
- ¹⁰³ FAPA.org. Retrieved on 20 May 2010 from www.fapa.org
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. The Asian Census 2000. Retrieved from www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/c2kbr01-16.pdf

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¹⁰⁷ Risse-Kappen, T. (1999). Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Introduction. In T. Risse-Kappen. (Ed.). *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p 20.

¹⁰⁸ A few of FAPA's greatest successes are bills passed against blacklisting by the KMT, for US visa changes, U.S. support for Taiwan's entrance into the U.N., and its WHO campaign. Chen. p. 69

¹⁰⁹ Keck, M, & Sikkink, K. (1998). *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. p. 27-28.

¹¹⁰ Chen. p. 52.

¹¹¹ FAPA.org.

¹¹² Chen. p. 74.

¹¹³ In the section on "Danger of Congressional Opposition" the caucuses and bills will be explored.

¹¹⁴ Kegley, Jr., C, & Wittkopf, E. (Eds). *Perspectives on American Foreign Policy*. New York: St. Martin's Press. p 101.

¹¹⁵ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 19.

¹¹⁶ White House. (2002) *National Security Strategy*. National Security Council. p. 30.

¹¹⁷ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 31.

¹¹⁸ Kaplan II, R. (2010, May 7). Transcript - Q&A With Robert Kaplan on China. *Foreign Affairs*. Retrieved from <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/discussions/interviews/qa-with-robert-kaplan-on-china>

¹¹⁹ Romberg. A. (2008, March 26). Transcript – U.S. Policy Toward Taiwan, Time for Change? *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Retrieved from http://www.carnegieendowment.org/events/?fa=eventDetail&id=1108&zoom_highlight=taiwan

¹²⁰ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 29.

¹²¹ Kaplan II.

¹²² Kaplan II.

¹²³ Ross. p. 55.

¹²⁴ Mearsheimer, J. (2005, November 18). The Rise of China Will Not be Peaceful at All. *The Australian*. Retrieved from <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0014.pdf>

¹²⁵ Kennedy, A. (2007). China's Perceptions of U.S. Intentions Toward Taiwan. *Asian Survey*. 47 (2).

¹²⁶ Wachman. p.136-139.

¹²⁷ Council on Foreign Relations Transcript (CFR). Freeman, C. (2000, April 19). If Taiwan Declares Independence and China Reacts With Force, On Whom Should the U.S. Lean Harder, China or Taiwan?

Retrieved from

http://www.cfr.org/publication/3628/if_taiwan_declares_independence_and_china_reacts_with_force_on_whom_should_the_us_lean_harder_china_or_taiwan.html

¹²⁸ Romberg.

¹²⁹ BBC World Service Poll. (2010). p. 6. Retrieved from
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/160410bbcwspll.pdf>

¹³⁰ Thesis questionnaire feedback. Non-attributed due to confidentiality.

¹³¹ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 110.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Sieff. p. 136.

¹³⁴ CFR. Waldron, A.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Cliff et al. p.103.

¹³⁷ Sieff. p. 139.

¹³⁸ Copper 214

¹³⁹ Fouse, D. (2005). Japan's FY 2005 National Defense Program Outline: New Concepts, Old Compromises. Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies. 4 (3). p. 1-4. Retrieved from
<http://www.apcss.org/Publications/APSS/JapansFY2005NationalDefenseProgramOutline.pdf>

¹⁴⁰ Bush, & O'Hanlon. p. 179.

¹⁴¹ Bush, & O'Hanlon, p. 150.

¹⁴² Sanger, D., Shanker, T. (2010, May 24). Pentagon and U.N. Chief Put New Pressure on N. Korea. New York Times. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/25/world/asia/25korea.html?scp=19&sq=&st=nyt>

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CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The US Taiwan policy of ambiguity apparently has carried over to the results of this thesis. When both sets of data were compared one supported Taiwan as a vital interest, while the other did not. Additionally, neither set had a clear “winner”. In the literature review analysis, Taiwan’s value barely scored higher than the costs of conflict. In the summary of questionnaire results, the combined expert opinion was that the costs of conflict slightly outweighed Taiwan’s value. The thesis might not have been able to definitively answer the question of whether Taiwan is a vital US interest, but it did provide greater insight into the objectives of this paper.

The objectives as previously stated were to provide American leaders with a framework to make more informed decisions about Taiwan and to extend the academic base of knowledge. This has clearly been done by first showing that Taiwan as a separate entity should be considered as having moderate to high value for the US. At this value level the US should continue to nourish Taiwan and find innovative ways to harness its value. Second, the results have shown that Taiwan’s current status would be quite costly to maintain if China decided it was time to reunite by force. Realizing this, the US should continue its policy of deterrence so China is not tempted to reach the point of conflict.

At this point the question might be raised: Doesn’t US leadership already know that Taiwan is valuable when independent and that a war with China would be costly? The answer is most likely yes. But another thing learned from the thesis is that the ultimate choice will not be an easy one. This has been demonstrated by the similar scores for both value and cost/risk factors. The key here is that the President and security advisors are charged with making the fundamental judgment on Taiwan. Leadership needs to know the

pros and cons (values and risks) and where do they fall on his/her personal list of priorities. The results of this thesis can help lead the way on setting those priorities. For the value side balance of power and democracy in Taiwan scored highest. If President George W. Bush were in office, his doctrine stating that fostering democracy is high value coupled with his strong support for nurturing and spreading democracy could well push Taiwan toward being a vital interest.

Another example could emanate from the cost/risk factors, in which two of the highest factors were economic costs and the cost of defeat. Currently the US faces both recovery from a recession and almost a decade of having troops in the Middle East. If both interest factors and current events are combined, President Obama might well decide that deepening the recession and deploying troops yet again might not be in the nation's interest. Therefore Taiwan would not be vital interest.

For Taiwan and China, the factor results could also be useful. The scores can provide a roadmap to focus on policy that could best influence the US and serve their interests. It would be in Taiwan's best interests to work toward raising its value and reducing risk factors. Three policy recommendations would be: increasing the capabilities of the Taiwanese defense force to keep up with China's rapid military modernization, continuing to grow investment and trade ties with the US, and maintaining its commitment to a strong vibrant democracy that young democracies want to emulate and older ones respect.

From the opposite perspective and goal of incorporating Taiwan into China, the PRC's objective should be to undermine Taiwan's value factors, while increasing risks for the US. Again another three policy recommendations follows. One, continue to build on the enormous economic connections the US and China has formed. Work toward becoming a more viable US strategic partner making Beijing indispensable on the world stage. Finally,

most important, continue to improve upon the PLA's capabilities therefore making it to costly for the US militarily intervene.

In the end, although not conclusive on whether Taiwan is of vital interest to the US, this thesis found defense of Taiwan to be both a valuable and risky proposition for the US. Unfortunately, as China grows stronger and more assertive the risk will only heighten, potentially reducing Taiwan's claim as a US vital interest. It is hoped that the relative rankings can provide focused direction for US leaders and interesting new opportunities for scholarly research.

Recommendations

Unfortunately this study was not conclusive, but it did provide insights in how to improve the use of Nuechterlein's national vital interest factors in future research.

First, one of the major problems in both the initial analysis and then the summary of the questionnaire was that there was no clear separation. Taiwan could be an issue where the values and costs are really just that close. Originally in his work, Nuechterlein suggested using a scale of three. A scale of four was chosen for this study to provide a little more differentiation, but mainly to avoid the easy middle answer which could possible skew the data. Therefore, in order to provide more definitive results in any study using Nuechterlein's factors, it is suggested that the scale be expanded.

A second suggestion to achieve more distinct results would be to weigh the factors. At the outset this was deliberately not considered in order to keep the process and data simple in this initial analysis attempt. The benefit of weighing would put more emphasis on the areas which, simply put, matter more. For example, as President of the United States, would the risk of international opposition or economic costs weigh more on your mind? A suggested way to achieve the weights would be to have the experts answer an additional

question ranking each set of factors. The list could then be used as a basis to assign weights to an analysis of the vital interest factors.

Third, although the initial analysis was in depth and very useful into understanding the topic it is suggested future studies focus on an expanded questionnaire process. In addition to weighing the answers, more questions for each factor could be asked, explanations for answers could be required and more experts could be used. This would greatly expand the dataset providing more reliable and specific answers. It would most likely also raise new questions.



APPENDIX QUESTIONNAIRE

U.S. Vital Interests and Taiwan

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to determine if Taiwan is a vital interest of the US. This questionnaire was developed to augment my thesis analysis and provide an “expert” point of view for comparison and further study.

Methodology: The questionnaire is composed of 16 questions. Each question mirrors one of Donald E. Neuchterlein’s 16 value and cost-risk factors that he feels should be considered when determining a vital national interest. When combined, the answers should provide a picture of how strong of a vital interest Taiwan is to the United States. As Neuchterlein has stated:

Caveat 1 – Factors are not given a priority of importance to keep the data simple, although some factors could carry a heavier weight on certain issues.

Caveat 2 – The factors are not considered as a scientific method to produce the right answers, but as a roadmap to good policy making decisions.

Data Use: The information provided on this form will be tabulated and summarized with the other participants’ answers. This will provide a generalized “expert opinion” to compare and contrast with the body of the thesis’ analysis. Names of all participants will be safeguarded and not published in the report.

Instructions: Please answer each question, by marking the appropriate box, where you believe the **US government stands** on a scale of four: low, low-medium, medium-high, or high. After each question there is also a comments box provided if you would like to include a justification or clarification on your choice. At the end of the questionnaire, another open comments section has been provided for any follow-up or further statements. Any follow-on comments would be greatly appreciated. When complete, save the word document and attach it to a reply email to: astsauver@hotmail.com

Scenario: The general scenario and lens through which the following questions should be answered is as follows... Regardless of what led up to this point, Beijing has stated that currently the status quo concerning Taiwan is unacceptable. Taiwan needs to join the PRC or, “force will be used.” A few select missiles have been launched toward Taiwan, and China’s amphibious forces are gathering across the Strait for impending action. The PRC tells the US that in no certain terms, this is an internal Chinese affair and that the US should not interfere. Across the Strait, the Taiwanese government is crying out for US military assistance. Throughout the rest of the world, all eyes are on the US. In your opinion, at this juncture and through a US government perspective, where does the **US government stand** on the following questions/issues with respect to China and Taiwan?

Questions:

1. What level of physical danger does the location of the conflict pose to the US?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

2. How much of a threat does China's aggressive action toward Taiwan pose to the US?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

3. What would be the level of negative economic consequences for the US if it decided not to oppose China?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

4. When making the choice to intervene in a China/Taiwan conflict, how important is it to the US that Taiwan is a fellow democracy?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

5. How much influence does the Taiwan Lobby have on the US government?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

6. To what extent will an annexation of Taiwan by China impact the regional balance of power?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

7. How important is standing by Taiwan to US prestige in the world community?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

8. What is the likelihood that key US allies will support US military engagement in Taiwan?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

9. What would the level of negative impact be to the US economy and financial system if it entered the conflict?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

10. What will be the level of US casualties in a conflict with China?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

11. What is the likelihood that an initial conflict over Taiwan will expand to the greater region?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

12. What are the expected economic costs for the US of an armed conflict over Taiwan?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

13. If the conflict ends in stalemate or defeat, what will the political costs be to the US?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

14. What is the probability of US public opposition to the US military engaging China over Taiwan?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

15. What is the probability of international opposition to US engagement?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

16. What is the probability of Congressional support in such a scenario?

☐ Low ☐ Low-Medium ☐ Medium-High ☐ High

Comment:

Additional Comments:

Thank you for your participation in this research. When complete, save the word document, attach it to an email, and mail back to astsauver@hotmail.com.

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