

**Show of Force: The PLA and the  
1995–1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis**

**Andrew Scobell**

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## **About the Author**

Andrew Scobell is assistant professor of political science at the University of Louisville and research associate of the East Asian Studies Center at Indiana University. His work has appeared in a variety of journals, including *Armed Forces and Society*, *China Quarterly*, *Comparative Politics*, and *Problems of Post-Communism*. A visiting scholar at A/PARC from February to July 1998, he is presently completing a book about China's use of force.

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China conducted a series of military exercises and missile tests in the vicinity of the Taiwan Strait between July 1995 and March 1996. On July 18, 1995, Beijing announced that missile tests would be conducted targeting an area some 90 miles off the coast of northern Taiwan. Then, on three consecutive days, July 21, 22, and 23, a total of six DF-15 missiles were launched from sites in Fujian province—two per day. The following month, after a five-day advance warning, PLA naval vessels and aircraft conducted ten days of live-fire tests off the coast of Fujian. Further military exercises were conducted in mid-November to the south of the Strait, including joint operations involving air, land, and naval arms of the PLA. On March 5, 1996, Beijing announced it would soon begin another round of missile tests. This time they were to be targeted at seas less than fifty miles from Taiwan's busiest ports. On March 8, three DF-15 missiles were fired from bases in Fujian. Five days later, another DF-15 missile was launched. Finally, also after advanced warning, live-fire tests and war games were conducted off the coast of Fujian to the north of the Strait and to the south of the Strait between March 12 and March 25. The maneuvers included amphibious landing exercises and aerial bombing. Some forty naval vessels, two hundred and sixty aircraft, and an estimated 150,000 troops participated.

The military exercises of the summer of 1995 were meant to signal China's displeasure at the visit of Taiwanese president Lee Teng-hui to the United States that June. The maneuvers and tests of March 1996 were meant to intimidate Taiwan in the lead-up to a presidential election and to chasten the incumbent, President Lee, who seemed certain to be reelected (which he was). The more general aim of these shows of force was to deter Taiwan from pursuing independence from China. And in both instances, China was also addressing an-

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\* This paper is part of a larger study of China's use of force since 1949.

other important audience: the United States. The message for Washington was that Beijing was deadly serious about Taipei and was prepared to use force if necessary to unite Taiwan with China, American intervention notwithstanding. This message was intended to deter the United States from promoting Taiwan's independence.

## **Why the Case Is Worth Studying**

This case is worth studying for at least two reasons. First, the crisis was the most recent show of force by China in an ongoing conflict that began in the 1940s—a holdover from the still-unresolved Chinese Civil War. The military exercises marked a serious escalation of tensions in the Strait that, until mid-1995, had seemed at a fifty-year low. One respected American scholar asserted that these actions amounted to a “China on the warpath.”<sup>1</sup> A prominent PLA analyst in Hong Kong, in a study issued in mid-1996, concluded that the threat of military conflict in the Taiwan Strait would remain serious at least until 2001.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps more significantly, a number of studies by Chinese civilian and military researchers contend that the Taiwan issue is the one dispute most likely to drag China to the brink of war in the foreseeable future.<sup>3</sup> Beijing also views Taiwan as the most important issue in its bilateral relationship with Washington.<sup>4</sup> The issue of Taiwan will not disappear. The island is the ultimate prize in Beijing's quest for political control over Greater China (i.e., China plus Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao). Taiwan is likely to reemerge as a serious issue in 2000 because of two scheduled events: in December 1999 the Portuguese colony of Macao is due to return to Chinese sovereignty, and this will highlight the topic of unification as China enters the millennium; and then, early in 2000, Taiwan is to hold its next presidential election. One of the leading contenders for the office is a prominent opposition politician from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)—a party openly committed to Taiwanese independence.

Second, and equally important, the 1995–1996 Strait confrontation is significant because it was the first crisis of the post-Deng Xiaoping era. While Deng was among the living during the events described, he was barely alive and hardly kicking. Deng was too sick to play a dominant role in the proceedings or, for that matter, to be even moderately involved in the decision making. His incapacitation and subsequent death in February 1997 marked the passing of the old guard of Chinese Communist Party leaders. It marked the last gasp of the dual-role elite of the Long March generation and the emergence of a civil–military dichotomy within China's leadership. One can now speak of a clear distinction between those individuals who are soldiers and those who are civilians. Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji and Li Peng, unlike Mao or Deng, have no claim to extensive military experience or expertise. This is not to say Deng became totally irrelevant or that the Long March–era leadership was completely out of the picture. Deng's name was invoked, and his commitment to unification was trumpeted. A high-level party document circulated in early 1996, prior to the March missile tests, was full of quotes from Deng on the question of Taiwan. Most of these remarks were clearly quite dated, but the sternest one appeared to be of more recent vintage: “China is capable of blockading Taiwan if we consider it as necessary to solve the long-term issues [in order] to serve the national interest.”<sup>5</sup> This is tame language for someone like Deng, who was not one to mince his words when the occasion called for tough talk. Thus it is extremely unlikely these remarks were made during 1995 or 1996. A handful of Long March–era leaders did

play a significant role in the crisis—notably military figures. Particularly important were elderly generals Liu Huaqing and Zhang Zhen. Both were vice chairmen of the Central Military Commission (CMC), and Liu was concurrently a member of the Chinese Communist Party's Politburo Standing Committee. But this appears to have been their last hurrah, as both Liu and Zhang have now been retired from their posts on the CMC and Liu has been dropped from the Politburo.

## The Key Question

Was China being dangerously bellicose in 1995–1996, and was the PLA leading the charge? There are a number of different, very straightforward explanations posited regarding the crisis, articulated in a special section of *The China Journal* (July 1996), but none of these seems fully satisfactory. None adequately explains the complex whole.<sup>6</sup> Among the more nuanced and sophisticated analyses of the crisis, there are two dominant interpretations:

1. China's response reflected a more belligerent, dangerous turn of policy toward Taipei. It represented a serious escalation of tensions in the Taiwan Strait and raised the specter of war—one that could conceivably draw in the United States. This turn of events is either the result of:

- a. Pressure by hawkish, hard-line soldiers on moderate, mild-mannered statesmen for a tougher, more aggressive response to Taiwan, or
- b. A strong consensus among both civilian and military leaders in the Politburo. One of the best articulations of this interpretation is by Melvin Gurtov and Byong-Moo Hwang.<sup>7</sup> They argue that both points are relevant, i.e., the military became outraged and took the initiative in pressing for a harsh response, and then a consensus among all top leaders emerged that a tough military response was required.

2. The second interpretation is that the response was an elaborately orchestrated and scripted Chinese opera—again, the result of a consensus decision by civilian and military leaders. The entire production was carefully planned, and each move was clearly telegraphed well in advance to the other actors. In the minds of China's civilian and military leaders, there was little danger of actual military conflict breaking out. Leaders on both sides of the Strait recognized this was a major theatrical event, with each person playing a clearly defined role. When the opera was over, matters went back to normal. You Ji, an academic based in Australia, and several other perceptive analysts posit such an interpretation.<sup>8</sup>

What are the main assumptions underlying each interpretation? The first variant of the former interpretation, that the military was the driving force behind China's belligerent behavior, feeds into the stereotype of soldier-as-warmonger. The second variant of the first interpretation is that the belligerent behavior was the result of civil-military consensus forged by powerful nationalist appeal of the Taiwan issue. The second interpretation—crisis as opera—is a cultural explanation that fits with the orthodox view of China's strategic tradition. The assumption here is that the Chinese cultural preference is to avoid actual combat and to use dramatic theatrical displays to overawe the enemy. Perhaps best typified by the title of a recent book, *Symbolic War*,<sup>9</sup> this interpretation is consistent with many studies that empha-

size that Chinese strategy and tactics since ancient times have consisted largely of seeking to win without fighting, of outwitting the opponent by ruse and stratagem—consistent with the themes of Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*.

Which interpretation is accurate? Each contains a significant element of truth. The crisis does reflect a more belligerent approach, but it also represents a considerable amount of posturing by individual officials and different bureaucratic actors. The missile tests and war games were undertaken in deadly earnest, but from the beginning the exercises were meant to be strictly limited to a “show of force” with absolutely no plans to escalate to actual war. In 1995–1996, China was actually more bellicose toward Taiwan than it had been in the 1980s and early 1990s, but it was no more bellicose than it had been in the 1950s and 1960s.

A major puzzle is how to explain the extreme bellicosity of the PLA in this instance. It seems inconsistent with the disposition of Chinese military figures in other cases, in which soldiers possessed a conservative, pessimistic outlook and exhibited a clear reluctance to use force.<sup>10</sup> Analyses of other Chinese cases suggest that Richard Betts’ findings from U.S. case studies—that soldiers tend to be no more eager, and often much less eager, than statesmen to resort to military action—hold true for China.<sup>11</sup>

How accurate are the accounts of bellicose Chinese military figures in the Taiwan crisis? Some experts, notably Michael Swaine and June Dreyer,<sup>12</sup> question the reliability of these reports, but most scholars find them credible and consistent. And civilian researchers in China agree that the PLA was more aggressive on Taiwan than were the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and other non-military actors. Significantly, it was military researchers who consistently denied this was the case.<sup>13</sup> Of course, the military is not a monolith, with every soldier holding the same point of view. There seem to be definite differences between branches of service, for example. Nevertheless, reports of soldiers expressing bellicose views on Taiwan are numerous and verifiable.

Why did soldiers act so belligerently? There are three main factors, which will be expanded upon in the following sections:

1. Coercive diplomacy tends to be problematic for soldiers;
2. Chinese civilian and military leaders had a clear understanding that the military exercises were strictly limited, and in their minds there was little chance of escalation to actual combat; and
3. The Taiwan issue had a powerful emotional and nationalist influence on soldiers.

## **Civil–Military Relations and Coercive Diplomacy**

Coercive diplomacy is difficult enough for statesmen to practice, even without factoring in civil–military relations. In coercive diplomacy, “force is used in an exemplary, demonstrative manner, in discrete and controlled increments to induce the opponent to revise his calculations and agree to a mutually acceptable termination of the conflict.”<sup>14</sup> To optimize its chances of success, coercive diplomacy requires attention to both “carrot” and “stick”: that is, demonstrating a credible threat but at the same time offering some incentive for the other party to comply. Moreover, great care must be taken to make the signals as clear as possible—to ensure that the threat of force is recognized as such and is not taken as preparation for imminent attack that might escalate to open conflict. But diplomats and soldiers see coercive



diplomacy from very different perspectives.<sup>15</sup> While both prefer a solution short of war, statesmen favor subtle signals and gradual increases in the pressure applied to an opponent in order to deter or to compel. Soldiers, in contrast, prefer to send a strong, direct, and unambiguous message—a rapid, massive show of force to bring the opponent swiftly to his senses. “The strategy of coercive diplomacy,” according to Alexander George, “calls for just enough force to demonstrate [one’s resolve] to protect well-defined interests and also to demonstrate the credibility of one’s determination to use more force if necessary.” He continues:

In contrast to traditional military strategy, coercive strategy focuses on affecting the enemy’s will rather than upon negating his capabilities. It does not rely on ample or quick use of force to achieve political objectives. Rather, if threats alone do not suffice and force is actually used, it is employed in a more limited, selective way.<sup>16</sup>

From the perspective of the PLA, the responses of MFA to Taiwanese actions and to what was perceived as direct American interference were weak and indecisive. The escalation of sanctions by the MFA in the summer of 1995 seemed pathetic and ineffective: the cancellation of ministry-level visits between China and the United States, the recall of Beijing’s ambassador from Washington, each got no response. The White House had suddenly reversed itself in late May 1995 and granted Taiwanese president Lee Teng-hui a visa after Secretary of State Warren Christopher had assured his Chinese counterpart, Qian Qichen, a month earlier that this would not happen. Lee went to a reunion at his alma mater, Cornell University, and gave an ebullient and bombastic speech trumpeting the virtues of “the Republic of China on Taiwan.” In short, his visit was hardly low-key. Along with recent changes by the Clinton administration easing up on the strict rules governing contact between American officials and their Taiwanese counterparts, Lee’s visit marked, in Beijing’s view, a significant change in U.S. policy. And, from Taipei, Lee’s government seemed to launch bolder and more aggressive diplomatic initiatives aimed at giving Taiwan a higher profile on the global stage (e.g., so-called “vacation diplomacy”: offering a billion-dollar donation to the UN in exchange for a seat). Lee’s speech at Cornell seemed to justify the concern raised by some analysts in Beijing a year earlier over signs that the Taiwanese leader was moving further and further down the road toward independence.<sup>17</sup> Within Taiwan, avowed proponents of independence, the DPP in particular, grew more vocal and seemed to garner increased popular backing.

Furthermore, when viewed by the Chinese military in the light of the events of 1994–1995, the conciliatory fifteen-year-old policy of “peaceful unification” with Taiwan seemed to be bringing the prospect of union between the mainland and Taiwan no closer. From the PLA’s perspective, it was time to show a lot more “stick” and a lot less “carrot.”

In mid-June 1995, after Lee Teng-hui’s triumphal return from the United States, an emergency session of Beijing’s top policy-making body on Taiwan, the Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group (TALSG), was called. The two civilian leaders of the TALSG, Chairman Jiang Zemin and Vice Chair (and Foreign Minister) Qian Qichen, were confronted by three irate military men insisting it was time for harsher action. Normally the body has only one military representative, Deputy Chief of General Staff Xiong Guangkai (who sits alongside half a dozen civilians, including Jiang, Qian, Wang Daohan [head of Beijing’s quasi-official Association for Relations across the Taiwan Strait], and Wang Zhaoguo [director of the CCP United Front Work Department]). Also present this time were the two most senior figures in the PLA: generals Liu Huaqing and Zhang Zhen, both vice chairs of the Central Military Commission. Liu at the time was also the only PLA leader on the Standing Committee of the

Politburo. These military men definitely charged the atmosphere and ensured a change of policy.<sup>18</sup>

The PLA leaders were particularly dissatisfied with the existing criteria for using force against Taiwan: a formal declaration of independence by Taipei and/or direct support or intervention by an outside power. Senior soldiers were instrumental in adding a third justification for resorting to war: “covert independence,” or “purposeful perpetuation of a state of division” of China, including “deliberate procrastination” by Taipei in talks with Beijing. According to “an informed source”: “Until the revision of the criteria for using force, the generals were frustrated that they could never legitimately start a military action, since neither Lee nor other Taiwan politicians would openly declare independence.”<sup>19</sup> If an actual military operation were to be launched, the PLA high command would prefer a swift attack against Taiwan using massive force over a gradual escalation of military pressure. Such an attack would begin with precision strikes against military targets on Taiwan.<sup>20</sup>

## **A Strictly Limited, Carefully Controlled Regional Operation**

The military exercises were clearly defined, circumscribed in terms of location, duration, and scope. This was explicitly communicated several days in advance to Taipei and Washington.<sup>21</sup> The July 1995 exercises, although carefully planned, were so speedily arranged and implemented that not much advance notice was given to Taiwan or the United States. By contrast, preparations for the exercises of March 1996 were undertaken many months in advance, and advanced notice was given, especially to the United States. Vice Foreign Minister Liu Huaqiu was dispatched to Washington in March to make certain that the Clinton administration was aware that China was only planning military exercises and missiles tests—not a direct attack on Taiwan. Liu is concurrently director of the State Council’s Office of Foreign Affairs and a key member of the Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group, two extremely influential bodies in Chinese foreign policy making. He is a very senior member of Beijing’s foreign-policy establishment—the position he occupies has been likened to the post of the U.S. National Security Advisor—and his dispatch to Washington was to ensure that the Clinton administration could be confident he spoke with an authoritative voice.<sup>22</sup>

In order to ensure strong central control, in mid-October 1995 a “Headquarters for Operations Targeting Taiwan” (*dui Taiwan junshi zhihui bu*) was established in Beijing under the command of the director of the PLA’s General Staff, Zhang Wannian. Zhang reported directly to the CMC—indeed, he was a vice chair of that organ. The headquarters was responsible for directing the exercises and coordinating among the PLA services, as well as the Nanjing and Guangzhou Military Regions and the East China Sea Fleet—all falling within a specially designated Nanjing “War Theater” (*zhanqu*) encompassing the entire Taiwan Strait area.<sup>23</sup> Pains were also taken to ensure no direct contact with the enemy, since actual hostilities were not desired. The live-fire exercises and war games, while held in the vicinity of the Taiwan Strait, were well-removed from Taiwan itself. And the use of missiles was intended to minimize the risk of a direct confrontation between mainland and Taiwanese military. Of course, the use of missiles was the most provocative element of the PLA’s saber rattling, especially those missiles launched in March 1996 at the sea lanes some 30 miles off the northern port of Keelung and 47 miles from the busy southern port city of Kaohsiung. And at least one missile passed over the outskirts of Taipei on its way to the splashdown site. Still,

from the PLA perspective, the missiles were almost the ideal option, because they were a clear demonstration that Beijing's threats were credible—China had the will to use force and the capability to strike Taiwan—and offered little danger of escalation. Having said this, Chinese leaders were certainly concerned about the U.S. response; otherwise Vice Foreign Minister Liu Huaqiu would not have been dispatched to Washington in early March. This move was unprecedented in the history of the PRC and indicated the high level of importance Beijing attached to making its intentions on Taiwan clear to Washington. It also reflected a degree of uncertainty in Beijing over the U.S. reaction to the military exercises. Beijing apparently anticipated that the United States might send one naval battle group to the vicinity of Taiwan, but seemed surprised when two were dispatched.<sup>24</sup> The muted U.S. response to the PLA exercises and missile tests of the summer of 1995 gave Chinese leaders the impression that if any reaction was forthcoming from Washington it would be simply token.

Therefore, in the PLA's view, these actions were not very dangerous. In fact, the aim of the exercise was to avoid actual conflict in the future by deterring Taiwan from pursuing independence. Thus the harsher and more bellicose the PLA acted and talked, the more effective the exercise would be.<sup>25</sup> It is noteworthy that the most virulent and threatening rhetoric from military figures came not in the weeks surrounding the initial missile tests and live-fire exercises in the summer of 1995 but, rather, in the months leading up to the operations in the spring of 1996. Since the actions of July and August 1995 were more hastily staged and scripted—prompted by Lee Teng-hui's speech at Cornell—when PLA leaders were most furious, one might expect to have heard the most bellicose rhetoric at this time. But the most venomous barrage of threats and condemnations came in the lead-up to March 1996, when Beijing and the PLA had months to prepare for the exercises and to coordinate and carefully script the blasts of rhetoric. This suggests that the barrage of militant military rhetoric was less an emotional diatribe expressing gut feelings and more a sequence of deliberate and well-rehearsed sound bites. The message to Taiwan was, "This is what you can expect if you persist in pursuing the road to independence, so stop before it is too late."

There are reports that some PLA leaders pressed for exercises and missile tests with no warnings. This seems rather implausible: Why would the military not want to give advance warning if the purpose was to intimidate Taiwan? Giving notice of the tests would only serve to heighten the level of intimidation felt by Taiwan. More credible are the reports that soldiers wanted to fire between two and eighteen more missiles during the March 1996 tests.<sup>26</sup> This is plausible because in virtually every regard the military show of force that spring marked a significant escalation from the previous summer's actions: number of troops, ships, planes involved, and the proximity of the missile target zones to Taiwan. The glaring exception was in the number of missiles fired: in March 1996 four DF-15 missiles were fired—two fewer than the previous July.

The tough talk by military figures was tempered by assurances that they did not want war with Taiwan. General Zhang Wannian, commander of the operation, insisted during the March exercises that the PLA strongly desired peaceful unification rather than military conquest.<sup>27</sup> PLA leaders didn't want to fight a war they knew they might not win. Therefore the generals did not want to attack Taiwan if it could be avoided. No Chinese leader, civil or military, wanted to see a war with Taiwan. This is underlined by new signs of substantial flexibility on Taiwan policy in 1998.<sup>28</sup>

What the exercises of 1995–1996 also reflect, however, is the PLA's interest in focusing its new doctrine of "Limited War under High Technology Conditions" on a meaningful, plausible, and tangible scenario. Thus military planners were presented with a golden opportu-

nity to test the effectiveness of weaponry and combined-service exercises. The seizure of Taiwan is now a central scenario for the PLA, one on which military planners can concentrate their energies.<sup>29</sup>

## **Taiwan Evokes Intensely Emotional and Nationalistic Feelings among Soldiers**

The fact that national unification is a deeply cherished dream among virtually all Chinese is widely recognized. Taiwan, of course, is the ultimate prize for Beijing. With the resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong a year ago and the scheduled return of Macao in 1999, by the twenty-first century only Taiwan will remain just beyond Beijing's reach. In asserting that all Chinese are strongly nationalistic, what some analysts seem to overlook is that soldiers in any country tend to be extremely patriotic, far more so than civilians. PLA leaders are super patriots, fiercely supportive of unification and deeply suspicious of meddling by foreign countries in what are regarded as China's internal affairs. Perceived violations of Chinese territorial integrity and infringements on its sovereignty are viewed with special outrage, and this is particularly true in the case of Taiwan.

On the subject of territorial disputes, the PLA was very angry at the MFA for downplaying the most recent squabble over the Diaoyutai or Senkaku islands (claimed by Japan and China). According to Chinese military researchers, the PLA wanted to send warships to the islands in late 1996 and early 1997 to protect activists from Hong Kong and Taiwan, but this proposal was vetoed by the MFA. One retired senior officer expressed a mixture of pride and embarrassment to me that Hong Kong and Taiwanese compatriots displayed far greater patriotic fervor than their mainland brethren. Beijing was conspicuous by its silence and inaction. Indeed, some Chinese have criticized their own government for being too cowardly and overly sensitive to upsetting Japan over the Diaoyutais.<sup>30</sup>

In order to understand better the aggressive stance of military leaders in the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, it is useful to draw a parallel with the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. In the classic study of the crisis, *Essence of Decision*, Graham Allison depicts top American military figures as exceedingly bellicose, much more so than most of the top civilian officials.<sup>31</sup> U.S. soldiers tend to come off looking like the caricature of the bloodthirsty modern-day warrior portrayed in some Hollywood movies. Just as one comes away from the Cuban case with a disturbing picture of the Pentagon, so a study of the most recent Taiwan Strait crisis presents an alarming portrait of the Chinese military high command. However, neither case is particularly representative of the dispositions of senior soldiers. This is because Cuba was a very special case for U.S. soldiers, much as Taiwan is for Chinese soldiers. Just as Cuba lies right off the U.S. mainland in the Caribbean in what has long been considered an American sphere of influence, so Taiwan, located just off the coast of mainland China, has been considered a part of Chinese territory for centuries. In 1962 the Kennedy administration viewed the interference of an outside power in Cuba, specifically the basing of Soviet missiles, as a very dangerous development—one that posed an unacceptable threat to the United States. In 1995 and 1996 China's Communist leaders viewed American behavior toward Taiwan as a flagrant interference in China's internal affairs, one that presented them with a grave strategic dilemma. Particularly odious in Beijing's view was the encouragement and support given to Taipei in its steps down the road to independence. An independent Taiwan backed by the

United States would not only shatter China's dreams of eventual reunification, but also pose a direct security threat to the mainland.

Not only is the PLA's attitude toward Taiwan colored by intense nationalism, but it is also affected by the deep-seated belief that the military bears a special responsibility for achieving unification with Taiwan. In Mao's time the PLA was on the front line in the Taiwan Strait with the mission of liberating the last bastion of Chiang Kai-shek. Preparation for an invasion of the island in the early 1950s was sabotaged by U.S. intervention in the Korean War and the establishment of an American alliance with Taiwan. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s the military kept up a regular barrage of the KMT-held islands of Quemoy and Matsu and grabbed the limelight in the series of crises (1954–1955, 1958, and 1962).

Furthermore, the PLA and its leaders also have been intimately involved in the post-Mao initiative to achieve a peaceful union between the mainland and Taiwan. The two key events that signaled this change from emphasizing a military solution to stressing a peaceful one involved the military. First, it was the PLA that, on January 1, 1979, ceased its shelling of the offshore islands, marking the end of an era of conflict and confrontation. Second, it was Marshal Ye Jianying who, in September 1981, fired the first full salvo of the peaceful-unification offensive by making the initial formal appeal to Taiwan—what became known as the “one country, two systems” formula.<sup>32</sup>

After Lee Teng-hui's speech at Cornell, PLA figures pressed for a quick and forceful response by Beijing. It seemed to have been the last straw. China had not vehemently protested when President Bush announced the sale of F-16s to Taiwan in 1992, and China had not strenuously objected when Lee Teng-hui was given a visa to visit the United States in May 1995. But the generals drew the line at Lee's inflammatory rhetoric at Cornell.<sup>33</sup> In a September 1995 interview with a Hong Kong newspaper, General Liu Huaqing, China's most senior soldier, stated:

In June, Li Denghui [Lee-Teng-hui] went to the United States flaunting his connections with foreigners, openly forsook national interests, brazenly advocated a split, and resisted reunification. This inevitably has increased tension across the Taiwan Strait.

We resolutely oppose any moves by foreign forces to interfere in China's internal affairs and to undermine China's reunification, and resolutely oppose the conspiracy of the Taiwan authorities of going against the overall interest of the nation, resisting the great cause of peaceful unification of the motherland.

The People's Liberation Army of China is the powerful defender of state sovereignty and unity and will never permit any part of the territory of the motherland to be cut apart. Our army is determined, and has the ability to smash all schemes undermining the reunification of China and practicing Taiwan independence, and to triumphantly fulfill the sacred mission of safeguarding the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The irresponsible policy of Li Denghui [Lee Teng-hui] will only bring disaster to the Taiwan compatriots. If the Taiwan authorities cling obstinately to their course and continue to play with fire, they will be acting as if they were lifting rocks only to drop them on their own feet.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, it is the PLA that is most suspicious of the United States. Many soldiers are convinced that the United States is the chief instigator and supporter of the Taiwan independence movement.<sup>35</sup> Deputy Chief of PLA General Staff Xiong Guangkai delivered a veiled threat to the United States in the course of a heated discussion with former assistant secretary of defense Charles Freeman in early January 1996. Freeman said he warned the Chinese offi-

cials that any PLA action against Taiwan would prompt a stern response from the United States. The Chinese military leaders at the meeting retorted that the United States didn't "have the will" to put its forces in harm's way. Xiong reportedly stated, "In the 1950s, you three times threatened nuclear strikes on China, and you could do that because we couldn't hit back. Now we can. So you are not going to threaten us again because, in the end, you care a lot more about Los Angeles than Taipei."<sup>36</sup> President Yang Shangkun, a career soldier, speaking in October 1991, condemned "foreign forces instigating Taiwan independence" and threatened that "whoever plays with fire will perish with fire."<sup>37</sup> Similar warnings were given by top Chinese leaders prior to the PLA's intervention in Korea in 1950 and before the PLA attack on India in 1962.<sup>38</sup> The depth of the PLA's suspicion about U.S. motives can be gauged from a more recent example. In the aftermath of the surprise detonation by India of a nuclear device in May 1998, some military researchers in Beijing reached the conclusion that the United States had detected signs of India's preparation for nuclear tests but remained deliberately silent in order to surprise and scare China. They were highly skeptical of the U.S. claim that there had been an "intelligence failure."<sup>39</sup>

And there were other factors motivating harsh rhetoric from soldiers. Military men were playing the role of hawks in part because it was expected of them and in part because it was much to their advantage to do so. The PLA as an institution is eager to put the memory of Tiananmen firmly behind it, and Taiwan provided a heaven-sent opportunity to show the military as the staunch defender of the motherland. The virulent and aggressive public statements by PLA figures are plays to public opinion. The cause of reunification with Taiwan is strongly supported by ordinary Chinese people, and most would back a military attack on Taiwan if it were rationalized as preventing Taiwan from separating from China. The massive public support for Beijing's handling of the crisis is evident from the strong approval rating the Chinese government got for "ensuring a strong national defense"—a higher approval rating than for any other issue except family-planning implementation. In a poll of Beijing residents taken in December 1995, in the midst of the strait crisis, 64.3 percent of the respondents gave the government a "good" or "very good" rating in providing for national defense. This favorable assessment rose to 95.1 percent when the category of "fair" was included.<sup>40</sup> While one must be cautious of generalizing from this Beijing sample, it seems very likely that a similar approval rating existed in China's population as a whole.

The crisis also gave the PLA a chance to show that it has a central role to play as the "stick" element in Beijing's "carrot and stick" approach to Taiwan. By vocally touting their intense patriotism, soldiers reminded China's civilian leaders of the PLA's indispensability in the serious and ongoing game of coercive diplomacy with Taiwan. This should help the PLA win a bigger defense budget or at least avoid large spending cuts. It is probably not just coincidence that the public announcement of the March missile tests was made early on the morning of March 5, 1996, the same day the National People's Congress opened its new session.<sup>41</sup>

Individual interests also motivated bellicose and ultranationalist barrages. The saber rattling provided officers from the Nanjing and Guangzhou Military Regions an opportunity to gain the attention of superiors. They hoped that if they demonstrated great enthusiasm and patriotism this would enhance their chances for a promotion. Moreover, if, by chance, there was some military conflict and their units saw action, their long-term career prospects would be enhanced. The shocking words of a two-star PLA general during the crisis, "Women dapo Taiwan!" (We will crush Taiwan!), vividly recalled by several Taiwanese scholars, should be viewed in this context.<sup>42</sup>

## Conclusion

The case of the 1995–1996 Taiwan Strait crisis stands as a largely successful instance of coercive diplomacy by Beijing. This conclusion seems justified because China achieved most of its goals without resorting to actual warfare: getting Taipei and Washington to take China’s warnings seriously and resulting in a more chastened and less boisterous Taiwanese independence movement. Coercive diplomacy fails when one of two things occurs: (1) war breaks out, or (2) the opponent fails to modify/change its behavior. In this case war was quite clearly averted, and Taiwan did moderate its words and deeds. It is admittedly more difficult to make a definitive assessment on the second point: to establish, in a straightforward fashion, the precise goals of China’s coercive diplomacy. Nevertheless, there is greater recognition and awareness among Taiwan officials and politicians of the need to avoid antagonizing Beijing with bravado and public-relations exercises aimed at trying to trump China at every turn on the world stage.<sup>43</sup> Also, now that Beijing has acted belligerently, it feels it can afford to be flexible, allowing for the possibility of some kind of agreement between Taiwan and China. But the effort cannot be ruled a total success: Only a month after the crisis, in April 1996, President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto signed a joint declaration committing Japan to providing logistical support and assistance to U.S. military forces in East Asia, including in the Taiwan vicinity (not specifically mentioned by name but clearly implicit). Drawing Japan more directly into any future Strait tensions is definitely not what Beijing could view as a success.

Significantly, China’s general success in the 1995–1996 crisis contrasts with a rather dismal record of failure in other cases of coercive diplomacy. The cases of Korea (1950), India (1962), and Vietnam (1979) are some obvious examples of failure because in each instance, war broke out.<sup>44</sup> Prior crises in the Taiwan Strait in 1954–1955 and 1958 also count as failures, not because they resulted in wars but because they were not successful in modifying Taiwanese or American behavior.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps the success in the most recent Taiwan crisis can be credited to a process of learning by Beijing on how best to manage coercive diplomacy or to the fact that dealing with fellow Chinese minimized the potential for misreading Beijing’s signals.<sup>46</sup> The story with Washington is radically different, as I explain below.

In short, then, PLA figures were not really as hawkish as they tried to appear at the time or as others have made them out to be. Their belligerency is explained partly by soldiers’ response to coercive diplomacy, partly by the military’s eagerness to apply its new doctrine, and partly by the intense nationalist feelings aroused by Taiwan. But although the 1995–1996 crisis amounted to a “show of force” with no intention by China to initiate actual hostilities against Taiwan, it nevertheless gives cause for concern for at least four reasons:

1. First of all, the crisis underlines the fact that the PLA is actively preparing to take Taiwan by military means if need be. This does not mean that an attack is imminent or that China is capable of launching a successful invasion of Taiwan or even an effective blockade. What it does mean, however, is that the PLA is likely in time to surmount the challenge of tackling Taiwan because these scenarios are consistent with current military doctrine—“Limited War under High Technology Conditions”—and because it is concentrating its efforts in terms of force structure, training, and weapons-systems development and acquisition. When an organization focuses all its efforts toward achieving one task, it can get very good at it quite quickly, no matter how challenging. While armies, like all bureaucracies, can, as James Q. Wilson observes, be highly resistant to change and innovation, once a new strategy has been

adopted, tactics, organizational formats, and weapons systems can all be tailored remarkably swiftly to fit the required specifications.<sup>47</sup>

2. Second, the crisis provides a wake-up call that the PLA finds the idea of a preemptive attack increasingly appealing. Under the new doctrine of limited war, the key battle is the first one. Moreover, the principle of active defense (*jiji fangyu*), which has been at the core of Chinese strategic thinking for decades, does not preclude offense. In fact, if conditions merit it, a preemptive strike may be the optimal form of “active defense.”<sup>48</sup>

3. Third, the crisis highlights the preferred choice of tactics for a PLA attack on Taiwan: missiles. Using missiles as its primary weapon against Taiwan plays to China’s strength.<sup>49</sup> While on paper China has a vast numerical superiority over Taiwan in terms of manpower, aircraft, and naval vessels, these statistics are very misleading. It would be extremely difficult to bring into play the hundreds of thousands of soldiers needed for an invasion, because China does not have the appropriate ships or landing craft in anywhere near the numbers required. This raises the spectacle of what has been called, tongue-in-cheek, the “million-man swim.” Moreover, the PLA’s dated air and naval craft are outclassed by Taiwan’s more modern air wings and fleets. And many of the air and sea craft formally part of the PLA’s inventory are probably inoperable, while a good portion of those that do function are in poor condition and likely capable of only limited service. Additionally, when assessing China’s air capabilities, it is important to note that training for pilots is totally inadequate.<sup>50</sup>

Missile technology is one area in which China has clear superiority over Taiwan. The threat by a senior Chinese general to former assistant secretary of defense Charles Freeman that China was prepared to launch one missile a day for thirty days at Taiwan should be taken seriously.<sup>51</sup> Missiles armed with conventional warheads have the potential to do serious damage to Taiwan’s defense capabilities. They could, for example, destroy the island’s airports, grounding Taiwan’s air force and thus delivering a devastating blow to the island. If aimed at civilian targets or at remote, sparsely populated areas, they would terrorize and demoralize the 21 million inhabitants.<sup>52</sup> And, even more alarmingly, there is the possibility of nuclear escalation.<sup>53</sup> While current Chinese nuclear warheads are not of an appropriate size to fit DF-15 missiles, the warheads and/or missiles could be made compatible.<sup>54</sup> If the alleged statement of an MFA official with responsibility for arms-control issues is true, then China has not ruled out arming these missiles with nukes. The official reportedly said in August 1996 that China’s “no first use” pledge did “not apply” to Taiwan.<sup>55</sup> Certainly Iain Johnston’s research reveals that Chinese military strategists openly discuss the use of tactical nuclear weapons.<sup>56</sup>

4. Fourth, there was a dangerous lack of clear communication between Beijing and Washington during the crisis. The result could have been an undesired escalation to direct military conflagration between the two nuclear powers. The key issue for the United States was an uncertainty about just how far China was prepared to go in March 1996. Beijing believed it had made its intentions crystal clear: The object was to intimidate Taiwan and to warn the United States not to meddle in Taiwan’s affairs—no actual invasion or attack was planned. Washington initially seemed asleep at the wheel—ignoring and/or downplaying the crisis and then scrambling to overcompensate in March 1996. As Warren Christopher later wrote about the crisis, “The administration was concerned that a simple miscalculation or misstep could [have lead] to unintended war.”<sup>57</sup> While Washington–Beijing relations are much better today in the wake of reciprocal state visits by Jiang to the United States in 1997 and Clinton to



China in the summer of 1998, the potential for misperception and misunderstanding is still there.

In sum, this successful case of coercive diplomacy underscores the significance of the civil-military distinction in post-Deng China, emphasizes that the PLA's new doctrine of limited war is now front and center, and reminds one of the potency of nationalist emotions on the issue of Taiwan.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Waldron, "Deterring China," *Commentary* 100, no. 4 (October 1995), p. 21

<sup>2</sup> See the summary of the study's findings cited in *Defense News*, August 26–September 1, 1996, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Fan Zhenjiang, "China's Defense Policy into the Twenty-first Century," *Guofang Daxue xuebao* [National Defense University Journal] no. 1 (March 10, 1997), p. 6. Another military researcher highlights Taiwan as an area of serious conflict potential. See Lt. Gen. Mi Zhenyu, "China's Strategic Plan of Active Defense," in Shi Bike, ed., *Zhongguo daqushi* [Megatrends China] (Beijing: Hualing Chubanshe, 1996), pp. 58–59. According to an influential civilian academic, Taiwan is "East Asia's greatest potential hot spot." See Zheng Wenmu, "The Main Points of China's International Political [situation] in the Twenty-First Century," in *ibid.*, p. 46. Taiwan is also a central scenario for China's military forecasters and planners as the next war. See, for example, Xiao Bing and Qing Bo, *Zhongguo jundui neng fou da ying xia yi chang zhanzheng* [Will China's Army Win the Next War?] (Chongqing: Xinan Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 1993), chap. 3. See also the analysis and excerpts translated in Ross. H. Munro, "Eavesdropping on the Chinese Military: Where It Expects War—Where It Doesn't," *Orbis* vol. 38, no. 3 (Summer 1994), pp. 355–372.

<sup>4</sup> According to one group of military researchers: "After the end of the Cold War Taiwan has been increasingly used by the United States as an extremely important chess piece to contain China." See *Zhongmei guanxi de fazhan bianhua ji qi qushi* [Changing Developments and Trends in China-U.S. relations] Zhu Chenghu, chief editor (Nanjing: Jiangsu Renmin Chubanshe, 1998), p. 194. Taiwan, of course, has always been a central issue in U.S.-China relations. "The greatest obstacle to the normalization of relations between the two countries was the Taiwan question." See Zi Zhongyun, "foreword," in *Mei-Tai guanxi sishi nian, 1949–1989* [Forty years of U.S.-Taiwan relations] (Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1991), p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> "Document Cites Deng Remarks on Taiwan Blockade," *Hong Kong Standard* February 13, 1996, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: China* (hereafter FBIS) February 13, 1996, p.11.

<sup>6</sup> For a critique of these explanations, see Andrew Scobell, "Taiwan as Macedonia? The Strait Crisis As a Syndrome," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* vol. 21 (1998), pp. 183–184.

<sup>7</sup> Mel Gurtov and Byong-Moo Hwang, *China's Security: The New Roles of the Military* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), pp. 274–279.

<sup>8</sup> You Ji, "Making Sense of War Games in the Taiwan Strait," *Journal of Contemporary China* vol. 6 (1997), pp. 287–305; this author's interviews in Beijing, Shanghai, and Taipei, May–June 1998.

<sup>9</sup> Jonathan Adelman and Chih-Yu Shih, *Symbolic War, China's Use of Force, 1840–1980* (Taipei: Institute for International Relations, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> For the classic articulation of the “military mind,” see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil–military relations* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1957), chap. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises* 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

<sup>12</sup> Michael D. Swaine, *The Role of the Chinese Military in National Security Policymaking* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1996), pp. 11–14; June Teufel Dreyer, “The Military’s Uncertain Politics,” *Current History* vol. 95, no. 602 (September 1996), pp. 258–259.

<sup>13</sup> Interviews in Beijing and Shanghai, May–June 1998.

<sup>14</sup> Alexander George, “The Development of Doctrine and Strategy,” in Alexander George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, and Vietnam* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas A. Fabyanic, “The Grammar and Logic of Conflict: Differing Conceptions of Statesmen and Soldiers,” *Air University Review* vol. 32, no. 3 (March–April 1981), pp. 23–31.

<sup>16</sup> George, “The Development of Doctrine and Strategy,” p. 18.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Li Jiaquan, “Where Are the Chinese People’s Feelings?” *Renmin ribao* [People’s Daily] June 17, 1994, p. 5. I am grateful to Ramon Myers for bringing this article to my attention.

<sup>18</sup> Ting Chen-wu, “Hawks Dominate China’s Policy Toward Taiwan,” *Hsin Pao*, March 14, 1996, in FBIS March 21, 1996, pp. 12–13. Also in June Jiang Zemin made a self-criticism at a meeting of the Central Military Commission, taking responsibility for mistakes in Beijing’s policy toward Taiwan. David Shambaugh, “China’s Commander-in-Chief: Jiang Zemin and the PLA,” in C. Dennison Lane, Mark Weisenbloom, and Dimon Liu, eds., *China’s Military Modernization* (New York and Washington, D.C.: Kegan Paul International and American Enterprise Institute Press, 1996), p. 210.

<sup>19</sup> Willy Wo-Lap Lam, “‘Covert Independence Movement’ Justifies Invasion,” *South China Morning Post*, November 28, 1995, in FBIS November 29, 1995, pp. 92–93.

<sup>20</sup> John Zeng, “PLA Thinking About an Invasion of Taiwan in the Year 2000,” in Peter Kien-hong Yu, ed., *The Chinese PLA’s Perception of an Invasion of Taiwan* (New York: Contemporary U.S.-Asia Research Institute, 1996), p. 139. This information is based on interviews Zeng conducted in China in July 1995. See also Zeng Liang-ping, *Leap Month of August 1995: T Day—The Warning of War in the Taiwan Strait* (Taipei: Business Weekly, 1994).

<sup>21</sup> You Ji, “Making Sense of War Games,” p. 301.

<sup>22</sup> For an account of Liu’s meetings with U.S. officials in January 1996, see Barton Gellman, “U.S. and China Nearly Came to Blows in 1996,” *Washington Post* June 21, 1998, pp. A1, A20–A21. On Liu’s power and influence in Beijing’s foreign policy establishment, see Swaine, *The Role of the Military*, pp. 25–26.

<sup>23</sup> Jen Hui-wen, “CPC Specially Sets Up Headquarters to Plan Military Exercises Targeting Taiwan,” *Hsin Pao* December 22, 1995, cited in FBIS January 2, 1996, p. 37; Willy Wo-Lap Lam, “‘Covert Independence Movement’ Justifies Invasion,” p. 93.

<sup>24</sup> It is standard procedure for the U.S. Navy to send two battle groups, one to serve as a backup for the other. Thus, the United States had no “message” for China implicit in the number sent. I am indebted to John Lewis for drawing my attention to this point.

<sup>25</sup> You Ji, “Making Sense of War Games,” pp. 300–01.

<sup>26</sup> Richard D. Fisher, Jr., “China’s Missiles over the Taiwan Strait: A Political and Military Assessment,” in James R. Lilley and Chuck Downs, eds., *Crisis in the Taiwan Strait* (Ft. McNair, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1997), p. 174.

<sup>27</sup> Speech to participants in the March 1996 military exercises quoted in *Ta Kung Pao* March 27, 1996, cited by You Ji, “Making Sense of War Games,” p. 301.

<sup>28</sup> Interviews in Beijing and Shanghai, May–June 1998. On the emergence of a more moderate and flexible line on Taiwan, see Bruce Gilley and Julian Baum, “What’s in a Name?: For China, an offer it thinks Taiwan can’t refuse,” *Far Eastern Economic Review* May 7, 1998, pp. 26–27.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, Nan Li, “The PLA’s Evolving Warfighting Doctrine, Strategy, and Tactics, 1985–1995: A Chinese Perspective,” *The China Quarterly* no. 146 (June 1996) and sources cited in footnote 5 of this paper.

<sup>30</sup> Interviews in Beijing and Shanghai, May–June 1998.

<sup>31</sup> Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), chap. 6.

<sup>32</sup> At that time, of course, Ye was chairman of the National People’s Congress’s Standing Committee—but chosen because he was a PLA veteran with ties to KMT leaders going back to his days at the Whampoa academy near Canton in the 1920s.

<sup>33</sup> Ting, “Hawks Dominate China’s Policy toward Taiwan,” pp. 12–13. See also Willy Wo-Lap Lam, “‘Covert Independence Movement,’” pp. 92–93.

<sup>34</sup> *Ta Kung Pao* September 4, 1995, cited in FBIS September 7, 1995, p. 32.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, John W. Garver, “The PLA As an Interest Group in Chinese Foreign Policy,” in Lane, Weisenbloom, and Liu, *Chinese Military Modernization*, pp. 259–272.

<sup>36</sup> Gellman, “U.S. and China Nearly Came to Blows,” p. A20. While Freeman has refused to reveal his source, the U.S. intelligence community has concluded it was Xiong who made this incendiary remark. See *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> “Yang Shangkun’s Speech,” *Renmin ribao* [People’s Daily] October 10, 1991, in FBIS October 15, 1991, p. 33.

<sup>38</sup> This point is made by Allen Whiting, “Chinese Nationalism and Foreign Policy after Deng,” *The China Quarterly* no. 142 (June 1995), p. 303.

<sup>39</sup> Interviews in Beijing and Shanghai, May–June 1998.

<sup>40</sup> The highest approval rating was for “implementing family planning”: 77.2 percent of the respondents said the government was doing a “good” or “very good” job of this (this rose to 95.5 percent if the category of “fair” was included). In comparison, the percentages of the sample agreeing that the government did a good or very good job of “providing welfare to the needy” and “maintaining societal order” were 22.8 percent and 21.7 percent, respectively. Yang Zhong, Jie Chen, and John M. Scheb II, “Political Views from Below: A Survey of Beijing Residents,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* vol. XXX, no. 3 (September 1997), p.

479. There is no way to determine how much the strong approval rating on defense policy was influenced by Beijing's handling of the Strait crisis.

<sup>41</sup> This point is also made by Richard Fisher. See "China's Missiles over the Taiwan Strait," p. 174.

<sup>42</sup> Interviews in Taipei, May 1998.

<sup>43</sup> Interviews in Taipei, May 1998.

<sup>44</sup> On Korea, see Allen Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968); Thomas J. Christensen, "Threats, Assurances, and the Last Chance for Peace: The Lessons of Mao's Korean War Telegrams," *International Security* vol. 17, no. 1 (Summer 1992), pp. 122–154. On India, see Allen Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975). On Vietnam, see James Mulvenon, "The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: The 1979 Sino-Vietnamese Border War," *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies* vol XIV, no. 3 (Fall 1995), pp. 68–88.

<sup>45</sup> Shu Guang Zhang, *Deterrence and Strategic Culture: Chinese and American Confrontations, 1948–1958* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), chaps. 7 and 8; Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization and Sino-American Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), chap. 6.

<sup>46</sup> I am grateful to Ramon Myers for suggesting this latter point to me. If this point has validity—and I believe it does—it raises the question of why earlier instances of coercive diplomacy by Beijing in the Taiwan Strait were not more successful. Several factors seem important in explaining the different outcomes of the earlier cases, including the fact that in the 1950s China's "stick" was not big enough and there was no obvious "carrot" for Taiwan. In short, forty years ago Beijing was neither adept at nor capable of practicing the diplomatic and military dimensions of effective coercive diplomacy.

<sup>47</sup> James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), pp. 5–6, 14–18. Wilson's case in point is the German military and its preparations to attack France at the outset of World War II. I am grateful to Karl Eikenberry for stressing this important concept and providing the citation.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, Mi Zhenyu, "China's Strategic Plan for Active Defense," pp. 53–54. See also Nan Li, "The PLA's Evolving Warfighting Doctrine."

<sup>49</sup> Fisher, "China's Missiles over the Taiwan Strait," pp. 186–187; Eric McVadon, "PRC Exercises, Doctrine, and Tactics Toward Taiwan: The Naval Dimension," in Lilley and Downs, eds., *Crisis in the Taiwan Strait*, pp. 269–270. See also Bruce Gilley, "Operation Mind Games," *Far Eastern Economic Review* May 28, 1998, pp. 31–32. At least one analyst anticipated this kind of use of missiles by Beijing. See Chong-Pin Lin, "The Role of the People's Liberation Army in the Process of Reunification: Exploring the Possibilities," in Richard H. Yang, chief editor, *China's Military: The PLA in 1992/1993* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 170.

<sup>50</sup> On these issues, see Harlan W. Jencks, "Wild Speculations on the Military Balance in the Taiwan Strait," in Lilley and Downs, eds., *Crisis in the Taiwan Strait*, pp. 139–245; Kenneth W. Allen, "PLAAF Modernization: An Assessment," in *ibid.*, pp. 217–247; McVadon, "PRC Exercises, Doctrine, and Tactics," pp. 249–276.

<sup>51</sup> Partrick E. Tyler, "As China Threatens Taiwan, It Makes Sure the U.S. Listens," *New York Times* (national edition) January 24, 1996, p. A3.

<sup>52</sup> I am indebted to Henry Rowen for making this important point about the threat posed by conventional missiles.

<sup>53</sup> For some discussion of this possibility, see Jencks, "Wild Speculations," pp. 151–154.

<sup>54</sup> For a fascinating account and analysis of China's missile program, see John Wilson Lewis, "China's Ballistic Missile Programs: Technologies, Strategies, Goals," *International Security* vol. 17, no. 2 (Fall 1992), pp. 4–40. On the DF-15, see pp. 34–26, and Table 1 on p. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Fisher, "China's Missiles over the Taiwan Strait," p. 167.

<sup>56</sup> Alastair Iain Johnston, "China's New 'Old Thinking': The Concept of Limited Deterrence," *International Security* vol. 20, no. 3 (Winter 1995–1996), pp. 5–42.

<sup>57</sup> Warren Christopher, *In the Stream of History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 427. For a particularly good analysis of the U.S. role in the crisis and the implications thereof, see John W. Garver, *Face Off: China, the United States, and Taiwan's Democractization* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997).

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