Taiwan Perspective Essay, Research Paper

Comment critically on at least two Taiwan futures.

As United States policy states we support the “one China” idea but we will defend Taiwan if mainland China begins to attack. Thereby putting us at war with China. Taiwan would then be a free state, assuming we control and win the war, but at what cost to America? And for how long?

Taiwan’s future should be dependent upon Taiwan. Taipei possesses a huge financial reserve; Washington should help the island spend it by selling them the arms they need to properly defend itself from an invasion or attack by China. Allowing Taiwan to develop a deterrent force is the single most important step to deter conflict. Taipei’s threat to resist would be credible. A China that could not count on an easy victory would be much less likely to risk war. The United States should extricate itself from potential conflict before war erupts in the Taiwan Strait.

Eventual unification with China may happen for these reasons. The linguistic and historical ties between the mainland and Taiwan. Taiwan is part of “China”, though not part of today’s People’s Republic of China. China could become strong someday. If unified in the future, Taiwan could be a part of the strong country, China. If Taiwan “declares independence” today, it will risk war and decrease the probability of joining a great China in the future.

Conversely, in the past 100 years, Taiwan was part of different Chinas (Ching, ROC, PRC) for only 4 years. The historical tie is weak. Taiwan has never been governed by the People’s Republic of China. The political tie is non-existent. Taiwan’s economic policy, industry policy and monetary policy, are greatly different from China due to its distinct economic characteristics. China should contribute to this experiment by supporting such efforts. China’s government could use the lessons that Taiwanese people learned so painfully, in order to promote Chinas political reforms towards democracy in the future.

Yet another option could be to maintain the status quo. It is too risky to “declare independence” for the possible Chinese military invasion could prove unpleasant. Wait until China becomes more democratic and reasonable. Then it would be easier to choose a comfortable unification or safe “independence”. Taiwan could just sit tight like Hong Kong.

Bibliography

Sources:

President Clinton’s Speech on U.S. Policy Toward China, 4/7/1999

Governing China, From Revolution to Reform Kenneth Lieberthal