

One Party, Two Systems

一国两制 YēGuó Lipng Zhì



Táiwǎn wasn't always a renegade province. The once insignificant fishing island first had the 光荣 guāng róng (honor) of becoming part of the Chinese Empire in 1206 when Genghis Khan founded the 元 Yuán dynasty (1206-1368).

In 1684, the island was made a prefecture of coastal mainland 福建 Fújiàn province. In 1885, during the 清 Qīng dynasty (1644-1911), Táiwǎn was officially proclaimed a province of China. It wasn't until 1949 that the island province went AWOL.

In 1945, after China single-handedly vanquished the Japanese and won World War II, it took back Táiwǎn from the 倭寇 wǎkòu (midget bandits) who had been squatters there since 1895. With the 小日本人 xiǎo rì b, n rén ("little Japanese") blown clear off the map, China caught a break from being raped and pillaged and could finally get back to its civil war undisturbed.

In 1948 蒋介石 Jǐàng Jièshí (Chiang Kai-shek) and his 国民党 guó mín dǎng (KMT; Nationalist) lackeys lost the war and fled like sissies to Táiwǎn. There they suppressed tens of thousands of rebellious 本地人 b, n dì rén (natives) and established the so-called 中华民国 zhōng huá mǐn guó (ROC-Republic of China), pledging to someday "retake the mainland."

Meanwhile, 毛主席 Máo zhǔxí (Chairman Mao), the rightful ruler of the Chinese people by 天明 tiān mìng (mandate of heaven), declared that the People's Republic of China would not rest until both the mainland and Táiwān were reunited. 幸亏 Xìng kuǎi (Luckily) both sides agreed on the "one China" policy - that China and Táiwān are both part of the same country and should be reunified. This mutual understanding has for the most part kept the peace in the region up to the present day.

By the late 1970s most of the important countries in the world had already shifted recognition from Táiwān to the PRC, including the United States. And, despite the ongoing sale of 军事武器 jūn shì wǔqì (military weapons) to Táiwān by Washington, both China-US and China-Táiwān relations and exchanges have improved in leaps and bounds over the last three decades.

But when 李登辉 Lǐ Dēnghuī (Lee Teng-hui) - a native Táiwānese and holder of a doctorate degree from New York's Cornell University - became the President of Táiwān in 1989, China was not happy. Lee, a big-mouthed smart aleck, was suspected of being a 狼 láng (wolf) in 羊 yáng (sheep's) clothing and a closet independence supporter. These suspicions were confirmed when Lee began practicing his "pragmatic diplomacy," which included trying to increase diplomatic recognition for Táiwān through "financial incentives" to other countries. Lee even tried to buy his way into the United Nations for a US\$1 billion 贿赂 huì lù (bribe)!

Beijing's leadership once again ground their teeth when Lee visited the United States in 1995 and delivered a speech at Cornell University in which he said "communism is dead" and many other things which, when taken out of context, sound much worse than they were intended.

The last straw was when Táiwān held its first direct presidential elections in 1996 after Lee's US visit. Just to remind the 走狗 z(u g(u (running dogs) who's boss, China test fired a few 火箭 hu(jìpǎn (missiles) across the Táiwān Straits and conducted some military exercises-including deploying 150,000 troops to a coastal area near Táiwān. Of course the United States, always eager to 干涉 gānshè (meddle) in the affairs of other countries, sent two aircraft carrier groups into the Táiwān Straits. The American Imperialists later thought twice and backed off, allowing the crisis to cool.

More recently, Lee had the gumption to declare that relations between China and Táiwān should be on "a special state-to-state basis." After a comment like that, who could argue that China isn't justified to blow something up?!

Lee continues to 狗仗人勢 g(u zhàng rén shì (bark bravely with powerful backing), making crass remarks while hiding behind the military and economic might of Táiwān's 老大哥 lǎo dà gē (big brother) in Washington. But why should the United States, the economic superpower, make so much fuss about an island with a

land mass of only 14,000 square miles and a population of 21 million with scant natural resources? Perhaps Taiwan's foreign exchange reserves of more than US\$100 billion, and the island's production of the vast majority of the world's computer microprocessors has something to do with it.

How ironic that America criticizes other countries about 人权 rén quán (human rights) issues, and is big brother to Táiwān, where human rights violations are as common as lecherous businessmen. It just goes to show that a country's human rights violations can be overlooked if that country has enough money to keep buying expensive high-tech weapons.

With China and Táiwān at each other's throats again, 老百姓 lǎo bǎi xìng are playing politician and speculating as to whether China will go to war with Táiwān. The Chinese government has said that China will never give up efforts to bring back Táiwān and will not 排除动武的可能性 pái chú dòng wǔ de kě néng xìng (rule out the use of force) if Táiwān 宣布独立 xūn bù dú lì (declares independence).

Of course China would rather see Táiwān united with 祖国 zǔ guó (the motherland) through peaceful talks at the 谈判桌 tán pàn zhuō (negotiation table) than through use of violent force. After all, Taiwanese are 华人 huá rén (Chinese) too. And like their 大陆 dà lù (mainland) counterparts, they have no interest in suffering the 经济损失 jīng jì sǔn shī (economic losses) that would

undoubtedly result from a war across the Straits.

In the purely hypothetical event that China did go to war with Táiwān, who would win? China's military forces far outnumber Taiwan's, but Táiwān boasts modern weapons of war made in the USA, while most of China's are obsolete. Then there's the possibility of Uncle Sam sticking his 高鼻子 gāo bízi (big nose) into China and Taiwan's sibling rivalry and further tipping the scales.

China could probably ensure victory over Táiwān by destroying the Taiwanese airforce on the ground using conventional ballistic missiles (or, better still, nuclear missiles). That would be like 一举两得 yí jǔ liǎng dé (killing two birds with one stone) because it would cripple the Taiwanese air force and deter American intervention at the same time. Or, China could 利用 lì yòng (take advantage of) its huge naval forces and overwhelm the Taiwanese navy and attain and maintain a blockade of Táiwān. And, by placing a bunch of submarines in the Taiwanese Straits and East China Sea, China could make the US think twice before interfering.

But as long as both sides agree on the principal of 一国两制 yí guó liǎng zhì, short for 一个国家两种制度 yí gè guó jī liǎng zhì (One China, Two Systems), there will always be hope for peaceful settlement to the 回归 huí guī (reunification) issue.