

淡江大學八十九學年度碩士班招生考試試題

系別：美國研究所

科目：英文寫作

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1. Reading Comprehension Questions (50%):

Read the article below and answer the 5 questions on the next page with at least one sentence. Sometimes, of course, more than one sentence will be necessary. Avoid excessive copying word for word from the article.

By THOMAS J. CHRISTENSEN  
WASHINGTON, the Washington Post

In the post-Cold War era, there has been a continuing debate over the appropriateness and morality of America's policy of "strategic ambiguity" toward relations between mainland China and Taiwan. The policy has attempted to maintain peace across the Taiwan Strait by keeping both sides guessing about when the United States might intervene on Taiwan's behalf. As Vice President Al Gore put it recently, this policy has restrained "hotheads" in both Taipei and Beijing.

By adhering to a "one China" policy, this country keeps supporters of a declaration of independence by Taiwan wondering whether the United States would back Taiwan in a war sparked by such a declaration. Meanwhile, America's prohibition of anything but a peaceful settlement of cross-strait differences helps deter Beijing from coercing Taipei into accepting unification on the mainland's terms.

The problem with the ambiguity strategy is not its logic or its track record but its recent failure to prevent a spiral of tensions across the Taiwan Strait and its fragility in American domestic politics. Not just hotheads but moderates in both Beijing and Taipei seem worried that the United States is leaning too hard toward the other side's positions and thereby threatening their core interests.

This impression leads to impatience and encourages adventurism in both Taipei and Beijing. If left uncorrected, it quite likely will lead to cross-strait conflict in the next 10 years. Some increased clarity by the United States, then, seems in order to correct misperceptions on both

sides of the strait.

Perhaps more important, the ambiguity strategy has come under domestic attack. If it is not replaced with a clearer but still moderate strategy, it is likely to be replaced by something much more radical and dangerous. For example, many critics of ambiguity want to jettison the Cold War era posture for an unconditional commitment to Taiwan's security. They combine strategic and moral arguments for their position that appeal easily to American values of democracy and anti-communism. They argue that the Cold War logic that justified the ambiguity in the China policy of President Nixon and his successors is out of date, because the Soviet Union no longer exists as a primary reason to court Beijing. Moreover, they argue that Taiwan's recent democratization means America is morally obliged to commit unconditionally to defend Taiwan against the still-authoritarian mainland.

The advocates of continued ambiguity generally rely on practical arguments to reject calls for a clear and unconditional commitment to Taiwan. They fear that such a commitment would destroy bilateral relations between Washington and Beijing. More immediately, they worry that such a commitment would encourage Taiwan to declare formal independence, thereby sparking an otherwise avoidable war into which the United States would be dragged. Beijing has threatened to use force in response to such a declaration and advocates of continued ambiguity take Beijing seriously on this score.

The supporters of continued ambiguity are losing the battle in U.S. politics for two reasons: They fail to realize that a conditional

commitment need not be ambiguous and they have unnecessarily ceded the moral high ground to their opponents. Advocates of a moderate Taiwan policy need to recognize that a clear, but conditional, commitment to Taiwan is possible and is the surest way to pursue not only America's strategic and economic interests but also America's moral mission of defending and spreading democracy.

Some Beijing officials that Chinese culture and Western-style democracy do not mix. Second, and more important, by remaining democratic but holding out the prospect of unification with the mainland under the right conditions, Taiwan offers strong incentives for the People's Republic of China to commit itself to political reform as a means of enticing Taiwan into some form of eventual unification. Many inside and outside the Chinese Communist Party want gradual but meaningful political reform on the mainland for its own sake in any case. By hitching their reformist wagon to the goal of unification with Taiwan, these reform-minded elites can wrap themselves in the flag of patriotism and amplify their voices.

If Taiwan were to declare formal independence nothing good would occur in terms of America's desire to spread democracy. Even if, for some unforeseen reason, Beijing acquiesced to such a declaration, the democratizing influence of Taiwan on the mainland would be greatly reduced. In the more likely event that warfare broke out, the civil liberties and freedoms on Taiwan itself would likely be curtailed or abolished in the setting of war mobilization and an extended emergency.

On the mainland, such a war likely would lead to a hardening of Chinese nationalism and anti-Western thinking. This would encourage a Chinese authoritarianism that might border on '30s-style fascism. Voices of democratic reform inside and outside China might be repressed even further. Even if Taiwan were to "win" such a war with the help of the United States, lost would be everything

America worked for in mainland China during the Cold War, from a prosperous and free Taiwan to a working relationship with a mainland slowly evolving in a promising direction.

In order to win the domestic debate in the United States, principled advocates of a conditional but strong commitment to Taiwan's Chinese democracy need to go on the moral offensive and remove the ambiguity in their stance. Taiwan's democracy and Taiwan's independence are logically and morally separate issues. The United States should support the former by committing to Taiwan's defense against unprovoked attack but should distance itself from the latter. Standing idly by while Taiwan's democracy was overrun by the mainland would hurt America's reputation with its allies in the region, encourage Beijing to use force to solve international problems and, of course, allow the destruction of the nascent democracy on Taiwan.

But encouraging Taiwan to abandon its historical liberalizing role in Chinese politics by declaring permanent separation from mainland China also runs against American moral and security interests. Washington therefore should tell Taiwan in no uncertain terms that Americans will not fight and die to defend a Taiwan that declares constitutional independence from the Chinese nation. At the same time, America should warn the mainland that a military attack on a Taiwan that is still legally Chinese will meet a U.S. military response.

The writer is an associate professor of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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## Reading Comprehension Questions (50%):

- (a) What is the name of the American foreign policy that the author talks about, and what countries does it relate to?
- (b) What is the major problem according to critics of this policy?
- (c) What is the general benefit according to advocates of this policy?
- (d) Who seems to be winning the debate, the critics or advocates of this policy? Why?
- (e) What are the two moral reasons, according to the author, why the U.S. should oppose independence in this situation?

## 2. English Composition (50%):

Write a short well-organized essay in good English explaining what you think is the greatest scientific or technological invention in history, and why.

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