

Ways to Cope with China's Grey Zone Strategy

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Introduction

The Chinese Communist Party (hereinafter, CCP) was unable to militarily occupy the island of Taiwan during the Chinese civil war and declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China (hereafter, China) on October 1, 1949. From around 1962, the Republic of China (hereafter, Taiwan) revised its "mainland counteroffensive policy", and from October 1965 onwards, it shifted to a so-called "passive counteroffensive" or "waiting for an opportunity counteroffensive". In 1971, the U.S.-China rapprochement completely dismantled this idea. From then on, the continental counterattack became just a slogan.

On the other hand, although it is not clear whether it was a political decision or a military decision, China has never launched a full-scale military invasion of Taiwan to date. China has never exercised effective control over Taiwan and has no legal basis for claiming Taiwan as Chinese territory. However, just as Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi delivered a speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September this year, "the one China principle is already a universal consensus in the international community," China continues to advocate the unification of Taiwan.

If Taiwan were to be destroyed by a military invasion, it would likely cause enormous economic damage to China. Moreover, the extent of human casualties is immeasurable in today's highly developed weapons technology. In addition, should China launch a military invasion of Taiwan, US military support for Taiwan is to be expected, as Russia experienced with its military invasion of Ukraine. Furthermore, it is expected that there will be a backlash from Japan, who thinks that "an emergency in Taiwan is an emergency in Japan," and a backlash from countries that share Taiwan's sense of values is unavoidable.

If China fails to invade Taiwan, the CCP will lose popular support, so it is believed that China will not take action to unify Taiwan by military force until it is convinced of its military victory over Taiwan. In the meantime, if China wants to unify Taiwan, it will have to resort to non-military means. In other words, China will continue to challenge Taiwan with a so-called grey zone strategy, that is, a non-kinetic strategy.

The CCP is said to be faithful to Sun Tzu's martial arts. In his art of warfare, Sun Tzu said, "In war, the best policy is to attack the enemy while maintaining its integrity without harming it." Teaching. It can be said that China, when unifying Taiwan, is trying to secure its brain power by launching information warfare and cognitive warfare based

on the teachings of Sun Tzu, rather than conducting a military invasion.

1 Brain Control Power and Cognitive Warfare

The hybrid war that Russia waged when it invaded Crimea in 2014 is said to be a “model for the Taiwan invasion scenario.” Russia paralyzed social infrastructure and military activities through sabotage activities such as cyber-attacks and the spread of deception and disinformation, leading to chaos in Ukraine. Russia succeeded in annexing Crimea in a very short period.

China's Unrestricted Warfare is much like hybrid warfare, but it is an all-domain warfare fought in all domains: land, sea, and air, as well as space, cyber, and electromagnetic domains. Kinetic warfare is decisive in Unrestricted Warfare, but in the meantime, non-kinetic warfare is important.

One type of non-kinetic warfare is brain control as a weapon that changes the perceptions and influences of the vulnerable public. In other words, brain control is used in the sense of the power to control the brain by realizing control of consciousness by using the emotions of the other party and inciting them. Therefore, brain power is a concept very similar to cognitive warfare, in which information that is convenient for oneself flows, psychologically influencing the vulnerable people of the other party, and changing their perceptions and emotions. The ultimate purpose of brain power is to influence the behavior of others and public opinion.

Cognitive warfare is information warfare that uses narratives and has a great impact on the opponent's information environment. In other words, cognitive warfare is a part of information warfare that combines “facts” that are convenient for China, forms a narrative of “national ideals” as its interpretation, and imposes it on its opponent. Therefore, China believes that the supreme state of information warfare is to deprive Taiwan of the brain control power that is formed in cognitive space and not to fight the military. In other words, China believes that in the gray zone warfare for the unification of Taiwan, securing brain control without resorting to military power occupies an important position.

2 Purpose of the “three warfare”

As mentioned above, in Unlimited Warfare, in addition to land, sea, air, outer space, and cyberspace, cognitive space is emphasized as the sixth battlefield. Today, the battle for “brain control power” to control the human brain has intensified, and the recognition that “social media is a weapon” has spread. Russia's invasion of Ukraine made extensive use of information warfare combined with a variety of non-military means, the so-called “false flag operations”.

In the case of Unrestricted Warfare, we must recognize the importance of brain control power as well as sea control power and air control power. The situation in which the state has brain control power is the situation in which it can secure superiority over the enemy's military strength in cognitive space and can carry out various operations without being greatly hindered by the enemy. Brain control power was originally a concept of political maneuvering for China's domestic society, but it became a warfare to be conducted overseas, and the concept of "three warfare" (public opinion warfare, psychological warfare, and legal warfare) was developed.

In December 2003, China revised its Political Maneuvering Regulations for the first time to include the three wars as an official operational pattern. In 2004, the Chinese Academy of Military Sciences established the "Taiwan Issues Research Center" and the "Political Work Research Institute" to build an overall system from organizational planning to situation analysis, strategy implementation, and operational planning. In addition, China has stepped up its operation of the "three warfare," which does not use force against Taiwan. Of the "three warfare", public opinion warfare focuses on winning people's hearts, psychological warfare focuses on lowering the opponent's morale, and legal warfare focuses on the correctness of arguments.

When General Secretary Hu Jintao took over as chairman of the Central Military Commission at the 4th Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, he immediately recognized the importance of controlling social resources for political operations against Taiwan and using them. He emphasized that China has further strengthened its ability to carry out work with Taiwan. China has created a negative image in the international community that "Taiwan is a troublemaker" and created favorable conditions for the use of force against Taiwan.

After developing and studying the "three warfare" ideology, China has made extensive use of the "three warfare" in soft fields such as politics, military, economics, diplomacy, religion, law, and information. China recognized that it was an important operation that could control the enemy. In other words, China has adopted the "three warfare" ideology and at the same time upgraded its operation of both soft and hard means to develop its so-called "opposition to independence and promotion of unification" goal. And, as a soft strategy, China has improved its united front strategy, which is to "put hopes on the people of Taiwan." Furthermore, as a hard ploy, China expanded the framework of the "One China Principle" under the pretext of "opposing and prohibiting independence" in military, diplomatic, political and legal aspects.

3 Legal Warfare and its Effects

A characteristic of China's legal warfare is that it interprets the international legal order in China's favor, enacts laws and regulations according to its own interpretation, and imposes them on other countries. By repeating the interpretation of international law to its own advantage as if it were the common interpretation of the international community, China creates the illusion that China's laws, rules and principles are correct. Furthermore, China threatens the use of force if there is an intention or act contrary to Chinese laws, rules and principles, and the other party loses its psychological resistance.

China builds a perception of legality and legitimacy through a united front through legal warfare. The purpose of the legal warfare against Taiwan is to gradually establish within Taiwan a legal understanding of the "One China Principle" and "Taiwan is part of China." In other words, China is promoting legal warfare in a united front against Taiwan.

China also argues that Taiwan's membership in an international organization is impossible because Taiwan is part of China. Furthermore, it continues to insist that Taiwan's joining such an organization promotes "Taiwan independence," "one China, one Taiwan," and "two Chinas." Moreover, China strongly urges China not to interfere in China's internal affairs when it mentions the content of the One China Principle, as it has received firm approval from all countries.

The Anti-Secession Law promulgated by China in December 2004 has been strongly questioned in the international community. However, China insists that the Anti-Secession Law is neither a law on the use of force nor a mobilization order against Taiwan. And China strongly appeals that this law will prevent "Taiwan independence," maintain peace in the Taiwan Strait, and promote peaceful reunification. China is also encouraging the international community to accept the legal doctrine that "although China and Taiwan are not unified, the legal status of Taiwan as part of China's territory remains unchanged." Building the legitimacy of the future use of force against Taiwan is the primary role of this law.

In other words, the purpose of China's legal warfare against Taiwan is to address the following questions: whether the future China-Taiwan clash is an international conflict or a civil war, whether it is right for the international community to intervene in it, and to affect the question of whether the laws of armed conflict apply. Furthermore, it can be said that legal warfare is intended to influence the nature of legal issues concerning China's use of non-peaceful means other than war against Taiwan.

As mentioned above, China has established a position to reject foreign powers' interference in China, emphasizing that Taiwan is a part of China and that the "Taiwan

issue" is a matter of China's internal affairs. To this end, China constantly conducts systematic research on historical facts, international treaties, negotiations, international law, territorial waters, and airspace. And it uses legal warfare to logically and fully explain that Taiwan and its surrounding islands are inherent Chinese territories that no one should be allowed to divide.

4 Gray Zone Strategy Countermeasures

As mentioned above, China is developing legal warfare as non-kinetic warfare in Unlimited Warfare. In order to respond to China's gray zone strategy, Taiwan needs to develop theories, arguments, and operational methods for making Taiwan's legitimate claims, and disseminate them both inside and outside the country. In the Russia-Ukrainian War, Ukraine is countering information warfare by exposing Russian information lies and exposing Russia's ways.

In the international community, there are two major ways to politically resolve the conflict between China and Taiwan through non-peaceful means. One is to resort to the interpretation of international law in arbitration or the International Court of Justice based on international law, and the other is to seek mediation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. However, as seen in the recent Russo-Ukrainian War, the UN Security Council was unable to even mediate, let alone adopt an immediate ceasefire resolution, revealing its limitations. Since China, like Russia, is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it is unrealistic to seek a UN Security Council resolution.

Although democratic countries have criticized Russia's outrageous actions and advocate for UN reform, there are doubts about the feasibility of UN reform. Even if it does happen, it will be a long way off. Therefore, Taiwan is expected to actively engage in legal warfare to maintain a high level of security and livelihood for its citizens until the United Nations reform is realized.

In the future, when China takes kinetic and non-peaceful measures, Taiwan, as a sovereign state, can claim the right of self-defense to protect its sovereignty and the security and interests of its people. The right of self-defense is a fundamental right of a sovereign state and an inherent right of a state that cannot be taken away by other states. Despite China's overwhelming political power in the United Nations, Taiwan does not need to give up its basic right to defend itself and appeal to the international community for peacekeeping.

In order to deter attacks by Chinese kinetic means, it is important for Taiwan to face China's military expansion and its intention to invade Taiwan. And Taiwan should make every effort to appeal to the international community to deter China's actions that

undermine regional peace and stability. In other words, as the international community tends to attach importance to human rights and democracy, Taiwan must vigorously promote legal warfare by telling the world that Taiwan has never been ruled by China since 1949, and that the human rights of its 23.57 million Taiwanese citizens will be respected.

In this sense, Taiwan's diplomatic actions in accepting a series of foreign lawmakers' visits to Taiwan since last year have been fully appreciated as they have provided an opportunity to communicate directly to them the issue of the Taiwan Strait. For example, US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan became a concern of the international community as much as China protested it.

In 2021, Lithuania's parliamentary delegation visited Taiwan and established working relations with Taiwan, so there was an incident in which China expelled Lithuanian embassy staff in Beijing. In support of Lithuania's decision, NATO countries and the United States will hold an international conference of law of the sea experts from October 10 to 13, this year, at which many researchers from democratic countries will present their research findings. The author also presented the "Deteriorating Security Environment in the East China Sea," introducing the reality of China's wolf-warrior diplomacy to the world.

The most important strategy against China's gray zone strategy is, as I mentioned earlier, that Taiwan needs to give a polite message to the public and to foreign countries. A central target of China's legal warfare against Taiwan is to gain the right to interpret the China-Taiwan status, thereby preparing for a possible future non-peaceful situation. Therefore, in the face of China's full-scale legal warfare, Taiwan needs to develop theories, statements, and operational methods to counter China's legal warfare. This will allow the people of Taiwan and other countries to know exactly what lies in China's legal warfare. It can be said that the Taiwanese people will not be affected psychologically and will be able to have a sense of security and confidence in the sovereign state of Taiwan.

Conclusion

As a result of examining China's gray zone strategy, that is, brain control power, "three warfare", and legal warfare, the most important thing is that Taiwan should use legal warfare as a countermeasure, as a means of communicating domestically and internationally. There is. Taiwan's democracy is a value in everyday life and one of Taiwan's most precious assets. In this way, the people of Taiwan can maintain their attachment and pride to their country, and democracy will bring Taiwan closer to the values desired by developed countries and the international community, which share the

same values.

Taiwan's democratization process faces more challenges than other democracies, and it has to deal with China, which puts more pressure on it to promote democratization. However, since "human rights and democracy" are universal values of the world, Taiwan should continue its efforts toward democratization to join the mainstream ideas and trends of the future in the international community. On the other hand, it is important for Taiwan to call on respect for democratic and free nations.

In such a legal warfare, the wording must be carefully chosen so as not to give China an excuse to use force as Taiwan seeks independence from China. Hypothetically, Taiwan may be engaged in such legal warfare, but this information has not reached Japan. It is no exaggeration to say that legal warfare in Taiwan is an effective means of countering China's gray zone strategy to establish a common will and promote unity among the Taiwanese people.

The purpose of a nation is to survive, and it has no choice but to protect itself. But we should not forget that democracies that share the world's values support Taiwan's continued democracy.