

**Domestic Vulnerability and the Use of Non-Militarized Foreign Confrontation:
A Case Study of Taiwan's Foreign Policy toward China from 2000 to 2008**

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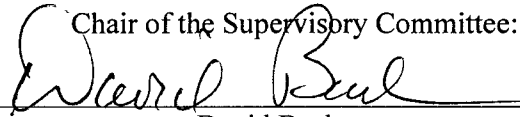
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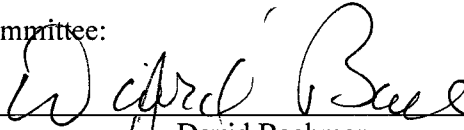
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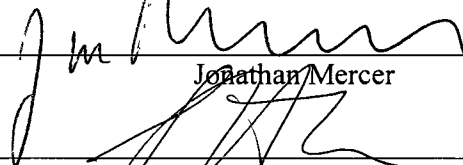


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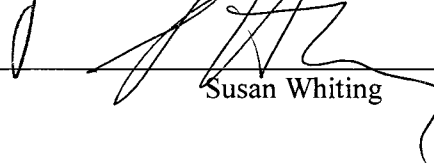
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Abstract

Domestic Vulnerability and the Use of Non-Militarized Foreign Confrontation:
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This dissertation examines whether state leaders initiate nonviolent foreign provocation for diversionary purposes. After reviewing the ongoing debate over the diversionary foreign policy theory's validity and the tremendous efforts by IR scholars to address this issue, I discuss a recent theory revision suggestion by Clark and others about expanding the dependent variable to nonviolent foreign confrontation. Nonetheless, although this suggestion is insightful, little empirical effort has been made to test its applicability. Therefore, the goal of this dissertation is to investigate whether there is positive relationship between state leaders' domestic problems and their initiation of nonviolent foreign provocation toward rival states.

Based on an in-depth case study on Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's (2000-2008) provocative China policy, I find that nonviolent foreign provocation is a broadly-used strategy for the president to divert domestic attention away from his problems. The statistical results further show that, in Taiwan's case, political rather than economic and social

challenges are more likely to drive the leader to pursue nonviolent provocative policy toward China. Lastly, both the quantitative and qualitative analyses demonstrate that intra-party/coalition is positively associated with the president's diversionary motivation. This suggests that existing indicators of state leaders' domestic problems are insufficient, and thus the inclusion of the variable of intra-party/coalition would improve the empirical measurement of domestic vulnerability.

To examine whether the positive findings on the non-militarized diversionary foreign policy hypothesis is idiosyncratic to Taiwan's case, I also conduct a preliminary analysis on Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's and Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's Russia policy. The results show that Georgia's case provides positive, although moderate, support for the non-militarized diversionary foreign policy hypothesis. This leads to my conclusion that future studies on diversionary behavior should take into account both militarized and non-militarized external provocation.

Table of Contents

	Page
List of Figures	iii
List of Tables	iv
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Research Question	3
Literature Review	5
Alternative Explanations	15
Hypothesis Testing and Research Design	19
Operationalization of Key Concepts	23
Data Collection	30
Expected Contribution	31
Chapter Outline	32
Chapter Two: Historical Background and Chen Shui-bian's China Policy	33
Authoritarian Rule, the Dawn of Democracy, and the Cross-Strait Relations	35
The Impact of Democratization and Lee Teng-hui Legacy on Cross-Strait Relations	39
Peaceful Regime Change and Chen Shui-bian's Domestic Problems	47
Chen Shui-bian's Moderate China Policy Position during the First Two Years....	51
A New Phase: Chen Shui-bian's Fluctuation between Moderation and Confrontation	53
Summary	71
Chapter Three: Testing Hypotheses of Chen Shui-bian's Provocative China Policy	74
Data, Model, and Statistic Analysis	74
Strategic Interaction or Diversionary Behavior?—A Test of the Hendrickson Propositions	79
Alliance politics and Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy	121
Summary	123
Chapter Four: Nonviolent Diversionary Foreign Policy Theory in Georgia and	

Ukraine	127
Georgia’s Rose Revolution and Saakashvili’s Political Crisis	128
Georgian’s Foreign Policy toward Russia amid the Political Storms	137
Spy Politics and Hendrickson’s Propositions	145
Alliance Politics and Saakashvili’s Russian Policy	149
Ukraine’s Orange Revolution and Yushchenko’s Political Crisis	151
Ukraine’s Foreign Policy toward Russia during the Political Storms	160
Summary	166
Chapter Five: Conclusion	167
Research Findings	168
Theoretical Implications	171
Empirical Implications	172
Policy Implications	173
Bibliography	176

List of Figures

Figure Number	Page
2.1	46
2.2	46
2.3	49
2.4	49
2.5	50
2.6	50
2.7	71
4.1	130
4.2	130
4.3	136
4.4	152
4.5	152
4.6	153
4.7	160

List of Tables

Table Number	Page
1.1	26
2.1	69
3.1	77
4.1	136
4.2	159

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Dedication

To my parents and husband.

**Domestic Vulnerability and the Use of Non-Militarized Foreign Confrontation:
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Chapter One

Introduction

On December 8, 2003, Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) shocked his domestic and international audience by announcing his decision to hold a "defensive referendum" in March 2004, calling on China "to remove missiles opposite Taiwan and renounce the use of force in cross-Strait relations."¹ Aiming to mobilize anti-China sentiment on the island, this provocative move enraged both Taiwan's most powerful rival and supporter, China the United States respectively. Beijing's immediate response was to seek Washington's help to stop Chen from holding the referendum, fearing that any direct hostile reaction would agitate Taiwan people and thus further benefit Chen's nationalist maneuver. Nonetheless, behind this cautious approach, the Chinese Central Military Committee was "stepping up preparations for some form of tough military action," including the move of "heavy equipment and crack troops from different parts of China...to the Nanjing Military Region, which is responsible for the Taiwan theater."² Beijing's military preparation indicates that a physical confrontation was very likely if either side of the Taiwan Strait lost

¹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Strains over Cross-Strait Relations," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2003).

² Willy Lam, "Beijing Seeks Washington's Help in Taiwan Election," in *China Brief* (2004).

its cool. Considering Washington's stake in the East Asia, the worst scenario of such confrontation would be an armed conflict between China and the US over Taiwan.³

The 2003 initiative of the defensive referendum is not the only provocative policy proposal of President Chen. Throughout his presidency, tension between Taipei and Beijing occurred repeatedly as a result of Chen's anti-China policy. These recurrent tensions led to Schmitt and Sullivan's worrying comment, which states that "Nowhere in the world is the danger of a major war more serious in its potential consequences than in the Taiwan Strait."⁴ Seeing this potential danger, scholars and experts of cross-Strait relations have tried hard to understand the driving force of Chen's provocative China policy. Among these efforts, one most frequently cited explanation focuses on the impact of election.⁵ Although this perspective has its merit, it is nonetheless too narrow. Drawing upon the diversionary foreign policy theory, in this research I argue that the driving force of President Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy is the domestic crisis that threatened his power stability. That is, in order to divert domestic attention from such crisis, Chen appealed to external provocation as

³ Michael D. Swaine, "Trouble in Taiwan," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 2 (2004): 39.

⁴ Gary J. Schmitt and Tim Sullivan, "Managing a Cross-Strait Crisis: The Limitations of Crisis Management Theory," in *National Security Outlook* (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 2008), 1.

⁵ This election cycle model is illustrated by Nincic, who shows that US presidents tended to be more hostile against the Soviet Union during presidential election years to demonstrate to voters their competence in handling Soviet threats. This hostile position would continue into the first and maybe the second year of the president's term but be modified afterward if the alleged threat did not occur for fearing that the public might get wary about prolonged hostilities. This model also predicts a more conciliatory president toward the Soviet Union in his second term since he does not need to run for reelection. See Miroslav Nincic, "U. S. Soviet Policy and the Electoral Connection," *World Politics* 42, no. 3 (1990). Drawing on Nincic's analysis, Kuo's and Kuan's works demonstrate a positive association between presidential election years and the rise of hostilities against China. See Su-Feng Kuo, "Taiwan's Democratization and Its Foreign Policy: The Impact of Taiwan's Elections on Its China Policy" (Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 2000); Hung-chang Kuan, "Taiwan in Cross-Strait Relations: 1987- 2004" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2007); Hung-chang Kuan (關弘昌), "Taiwan Guonei Xuanju Duiqi Dalu Zhengce Zhi Yingxiang (台灣國內選舉對其大陸政策之影響, the Impact of Domestic Elections on Taiwan's Mainland Policy)," in *Chongxin Jianshi Zhengbian Zhongde Liangan Guanxi Lilun* (重新檢視爭辯中的兩岸關係理論, *Revisiting Theories on Cross-Strait Relations*), ed. Tzong-ho Bau (包宗和) and Yu-shan Wu (吳玉山) (Taipei: Wu-nan, 2009).

a strategy for power resurrection. Electoral consideration is only one of the diversionary factors, and therefore cannot fully explain Chen's China policy fluctuation.

The diversionary theory of foreign policy is an important theory in the field of international relations that offers insights into the relationship between domestic politics and external conflict. Its main argument posits that state leaders facing domestic crisis tend to initiate external conflict to divert popular attention away from their problems. This simple, yet intuitively persuasive hypothesis has attracted numerous academic efforts to test its validity. Nonetheless, one major weakness of existing works of this kind is that most studies focus exclusively on militarized conflict and ignore the possibility that nonviolent foreign policy could also serve diversionary purposes. This research gap leads to another significant bias: since minor states are less likely to be able to use force abroad at their convenience, focusing on militarized conflict limits the applicability of the diversionary theory to major powers only. Aware of this consequence, Clark suggests that scholars interested in this theory should start paying attention to the diversionary uses of nonviolent foreign policy.⁶ Although this advice sheds important light on the direction of future revision of the diversionary theory, it has not been carefully examined. Therefore, this research aims to take this task by conducting both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the relationship between domestic problems and nonviolent foreign confrontation in small states.

I. Research Puzzle

The main puzzle this research attempts to investigate is *whether leaders in small states use nonviolent foreign policy to divert public attention from domestic problems. As*

⁶ David Clark, "Can Strategic Interaction Divert Diversionary Behavior? A Model of U.S. Conflict Propensity," *Journal of Politics* 65(2003): 1014.

Clark and others argue, one way to address the inconclusive findings among large-N diversionary studies might be to expand the scope of the dependant variable by taking into account the use of nonviolent foreign policy. For this purpose, Taiwan's foreign policy toward China under the Chen Shui-bian administration (2000-2008) presents a most-likely case for two reasons. First, the coexistence of repeated governing crises and cross-Strait confrontations during this period of time suggests that there might be some causal linkage between Chen's provocative China policies and his domestic struggle for political survival. For instance, when Chen first entered the office, he adopted a moderate approach toward China in the hope that his good-will gesture would lead to a breakthrough in the cross-Strait deadlock. Nonetheless, after two years of no progress, he decided to take a tougher stance by publicly stating that the relationship between the two governments across the Taiwan Strait were "one country on each side" on August 3, 2002—a statement which was seen as a declaration of Chen's intention to change the cross-Strait status quo and pursue Taiwan's independence by his domestic and international audience. At the same time, Chen was losing his popularity among the public. Accordingly, it is very likely that Chen's hostile policy initiative against China was driven by his needs to divert attention away from his governing problems. Unlike great powers, minor states' weak military capability makes it unlikely for their leaders to initiate militarized conflict to divert domestic crisis, and therefore would generally be counted as "disconforming" cases of the diversionary war hypothesis. Nonetheless, this conclusion seems to be too assertive, since it ignores that possibility that minor states might instead choose nonviolent foreign provocation for diversionary purposes. Therefore, this research's analysis of Chen Shui-bian's case is an important attempt to expand the scope of existing studies on the diversionary foreign policy theory. If the result

demonstrates a positive relationship between Chen's domestic problems and his nonviolent provocation against China, one could have stronger confidence to argue that existing diversionary literature should recognize the importance of nonviolent diversionary foreign policy. One caveat of focusing the research on a single state is that the findings could be idiosyncratic. In order to address this issue, I include two additional cases for a preliminary test of the applicability of the research result based on Taiwan's case: Georgia's and Ukraine's Russian policies after their democratic revolution in 2003 and 2004 respectively. There are two reasons for this comparison. First, like Taiwan, Georgia and Ukraine experienced peaceful democratic transition in the first decade of the 21st century. Second, these two states' sovereign disputes with their powerful rival neighbor, Russia, resemble Taiwan's relationship with China. These contextual similarities suggest that the research findings in Taiwan's cases might also apply to Georgia and Ukraine. Positive results of these examinations would broaden the explanatory power of the revised framework of diversionary theory.

II. Literature Review

Although the use of foreign conflict to divert domestic problems by state leaders has been discussed for centuries,⁷ Simmel is the first political scientist to offer a social science foundation for it. Drawing upon sociology literature that out-group threats tend to enhance in-group cohesion, Simmel argues that "war with the outside is sometimes the last chance for a state ridden with inner antagonisms to overcome these antagonisms, or else to break up

⁷ Yitan Li, Patrick James, and A. Cooper Drury, "Diversionary Dragons, Or "Talking Tough in Taipei": Cross-Strait Relations in the New Millennium," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 9(2009).

definitely.”⁸ This so-called “rally ‘round the flag” effect has been identified by many scholars.⁹ Coser echoes Simmel’s point, but adds four preconditions that have to be met for an external threat to enhance in-group cohesion:¹⁰

[T]he group already exists as a ‘going concern,’ has some minimal level of internal cohesion, perceives itself as a group and the preservation of the group as worthwhile, and believes that the external threat menaces the in-group as a whole and not just one part of it.”

Nonetheless, although Coser is the most cited for the in-group/out-group foundation of the diversionary hypothesis, these qualifications have not been widely recognized and systematically tested.

Social scientists have been trying to verify the diversionary hypothesis with mixed findings. While case studies using a historical analysis approach tend to find positive evidence for the association between domestic turmoil and use of force abroad,¹¹ large-N quantitative research fails to produce consistent evidence linking domestic instability to adventurous foreign policy. For instance, Rummel’s cross-section study of 77 states for the

⁸ Georg Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations*, trans. Kurt H. Wolff (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955), 93.

⁹ For instance, see John E. Mueller, “Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson,” *American Political Science Review* 64, no. 1 (1970): 18-34; ———, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York: Wiley, 1973); Michael B. MacKuen, “Political Drama, Economic Conditions, and the Dynamics of Presidential Popularity,” *American Journal of Political Science* 27, no. 2 (1983): 165-92. Nonetheless, not all external threats increase internal cohesion: some might even intensify internal fragmentation. Lewis Coser identifies two conditions that have to be fulfilled for this in-group/out-group hypothesis to work: a minimal level of prior internal cohesion has to exist, and the external conflict must threaten the group as a whole and not just part of it. But there are no precise criteria to measure what a minimal-level of internal cohesion should be, and the public’s perception of an external crisis could vary from case to case. See Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1956).

¹⁰ Jack S. Levy, “The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique,” in *Handbook of War Studies*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 261. Also see Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, 93-95.

¹¹ For case studies supporting the theory, see Ernest B. Haas and Allen S. Whiting, *Dynamics of International Relations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956); Richard N. Rosecrance, *Action and Reaction in World Politics: International Systems in Perspective*. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963); Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); Jack S. Levy and Lily Vakili, “Diversionary Action by Authoritarian Regimes: Argentina and the Falklands/Malvinas Case,” in *The Internationalization of Communal Strife*, ed. Manus I. Midlarsky, *Studies in International Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1992).

1955-1957 period using factor analysis finds no causal linkage between domestic and foreign crises.¹² Subsequent replications of his work also show no empirical support for the diversionary assumption.¹³ On the contrary, Ostrom and Job find that while very low levels of presidential approval tend to constrain the president from using force, the combination of mid-level approval and significant drops of public support compared to the time he took office significantly increases the possibility of using force. James and Oneal, Russett, and Smith also identify that a declining economy, the prospect of losing an election, and plunging presidential approval ratings tend to induce diversionary motivations.¹⁴ Levy attributes this discrepancy between the theory and qualitative research result on the one hand, and quantitative findings on the other, to the need for better specified models for theory testing.¹⁵ Following Levy's comments, recent works on diversionary foreign policy have focused on specifying the conditions under which diversionary strategies are preferred by fragile leaders, including the nature of domestic problems, domestic power structure, regime types, and external constraints. There are also others trying to address the issue of misspecification by incorporating more explanatory variables or by making conceptual adjustments to key variables.

¹² Rudolph J. Rummel, "Dimensions of Conflict Behavior within and between Nations," *Yearbook of the Society for General Systems* 8(1963).

¹³ For instance, see Raymond Tanter, "Dimensions of Conflict Behavior within and between Nations, 1958-60," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 10, no. 1 (1966); Michael Haas, "Social Change and National Aggressiveness, 1900-1960," in *Quantitative International Politics*, ed. J. David Singer and Chadwick F. Alger (New York: Free Press, 1968); Jonathan Wilkenfeld, "Models for the Analysis of Foreign Conflict Behavior of States," in *Peace, War and Numbers*, ed. Bruce Russett (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972). For more recent works, see James Meernik, "Presidential Decision Making and the Political Use of Military Force," *International Studies Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (1994); Joanne Gowa, "Politics at the Water's Edge: Parties, Voters and the Use of Force Abroad," *International Organization* 52, no. 2 (1998).

¹⁴ Bruce Russett, "Economic Decline, Electoral Pressure, and the Initiation of Interstate Conflict," in *Prisoners of War? Nation-States in the Modern Era*, ed. Charles S. Gochman and Alan Ned Sabrosky (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990); Patrick James and John R. Oneal, "The Influence of Domestic and International Politics on the President's Use of Force," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35, no. 2 (1991); Alastair Smith, "Diversionary Foreign Policy in Democratic Systems," *International Studies Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1996).

¹⁵ For a thorough review of this discrepancy, see Michael Stohl, "The Nexus of Civil and International Conflict," in *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research*, ed. Ted Robert Gurr (New York: Free Press, 1980); Levy, "The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique."

1. Theory refinements at the domestic level

Scholars focusing on domestic factors have tried to better identify whether there are institutional factors affecting the association between domestic troubles and the foreign conflict. Russett and Russett and Barzilai find that the power structure and regime type play an important role in the use of diversionary strategy, indicating that great powers and democracies are more likely to engage in diversionary behavior: the former does so because they are less constrained by the external environment, and the latter is more motivated because they face direct pressure from the public.¹⁶ Similarly, Gelpi demonstrates that while democracies tend to initiate diversionary war in dealing with domestic unrest, authoritarian states are more likely to avoid external conflict when facing domestic difficulties.¹⁷ Davies finds that in non-democracies, violent domestic strife increases the chance of diversionary uses of force, while nonviolent domestic strife tends to invite repression. On the contrary, democracies are more likely to initiate external conflict regardless of the types of domestic strife they are undergoing since they are unwilling to use repression.¹⁸ Mansfield and Snyder take a somewhat different position and argue that the diversionary mechanism is most likely to occur in transitional democracies.¹⁹ But this conclusion is refuted by Pickering and Kisangani, who find no significant relationship between consolidating democracies and the

¹⁶ Bruce M. Russett, "Economic Decline, Electoral Pressure and the Initiation of Interstate Conflict," in *Prisoners of War: Nation States in the Modern Era*, ed. Charles S. Gochman and Alan Ned Sabrosky (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1990); Bruce Russett and Gad Barzilai, "The Political Economy of Military Spending and Military Action," in *The Political Economy of Military Spending in the United States*, ed. Alex Mintz (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1991).

¹⁷ Christopher Gelpi, "Democratic Diversions: Governmental Structure and the Externalization of Domestic Conflict," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 2 (1997). But there are also other scholars who find that authoritarian regimes are more likely to have strong diversionary incentives. See Levy and Vakili, "Diversionary Action by Authoritarian Regimes: Argentina and the Falklands/Malvinas Case."

¹⁸ Graeme A. M. Davies, "Domestic Strife and the Initiation of International Conflicts: A Directed Dyad Analysis, 1950-1982," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 5 (2002).

¹⁹ Edward D. Mansfield and Jack L. Snyder, "Democratization and War," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 3 (1995); —, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005).

diversionary use of military force. Rather, their work demonstrate that mature democracies, consolidating autocracies, and transitional polities are more prone to diversionary military intervention when facing elite and mass unrest.²⁰

Another variant of theory advancement takes into account the diversity within the states that might complicate the diversionary incentive. Morgan and Bickers point out that extending the findings of the conflict-cohesion hypothesis from works on small groups to large ones such as states bear empirical risks, since “States consist of many groups that may be seriously at odds with one another and, in some cases, may even feel less enmity toward foreign groups than toward competing domestic interests.” Therefore, “a foreign enemy may not rally the support of all domestic opposition.”²¹ To capture the domestic diversity, the authors test both the impact of aggregate public support and partisan support on U.S. presidents’ decisions to use force abroad. Their finding suggests that, instead of focusing on the average approval rating, “state leaders typically adopt [diversionary] tactics only when faced with a loss of support from within their ruling coalition.”²² This partisan hypothesis is further confirmed by Morgan and Anderson’s quantitative research on Great Britain.²³ Fordham’s study on the relationship between economic performance and U.S. presidents’ uses of force also takes into account partisan differences. His research shows that Republican presidents tend to initiate diversionary conflict when facing high unemployment, since they

²⁰ There are, however, differences in the driving forces of diversionary behavior among these three regime types. Mature democracies are more likely to divert when facing both elite and mass unrest. Consolidating autocracies are much more responsive to elite unrest than mass unrest. Transitional polities tend to initiate military intervention when there is mass unrest at home. Jeffrey Pickering and Emizet F. Kisangani, "Democracy and Diversionary Military Intervention: Reassessing Regime Type and the Diversionary Hypothesis," *International Studies Quarterly* 49 no. 1 (2005).

²¹ T. Clifton Morgan and Kenneth N. Bickers, "Domestic Discontent and the External Use of Force," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 1 (1992): 28.

²² *Ibid.*: 49.

²³ T. Clifton Morgan and Christopher J. Anderson, "Domestic Support and Diversionary External Conflict in Great Britain, 1950-1992," *The Journal of Politics* 61, no. 3 (1999).

are more concerned about inflation problems and often reluctant to adopt expansionary macroeconomic policies to reduce unemployment at the risk of rising inflation. On the contrary, Democratic presidents are more likely to use diversionary tactics when inflation is high because “[their] tendency to avoid policies that would control inflation but increase unemployment makes the diversionary use of force more attractive to them.”²⁴ Brulé and Hwang’s examination of the legislative-executive relations in the U.S. further confirms Fordham’s findings.²⁵ Although not limited to cases of diversionary foreign policy, a study on political survival by Bueno de Mesquita and others echoes this research perspective, which points out that state leaders only try to appease those groups essential for their political survival. Therefore, leaders in democracies are more likely to pay attention to the demands of the public than their counterparts in authoritarian regimes, since the latter’s power consolidation was primarily rested on a small group of political elites within their political coalition.²⁶

A further expansion of the partisan support approach suggests that “a consideration of the partisan ideological roots of leadership attitudes toward international conflict” might increase the possibility of diversionary conflict. Drawing upon an earlier theoretical assumption that “relatively ‘hawkish’ foreign policy stances resonate with conservative voters (or those belonging to ‘right-leaning’ political parties) and that relatively ‘dovish’ foreign policy stances resonate with liberal voters (or those belonging to ‘left-leaning’

²⁴ Benjamin O. Fordham, "Partisanship, Macroeconomic Policy, and U.S. Uses of Force, 1949-1994," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 4 (1998): 436.

²⁵ David J. Brulé and Wonjae Hwang, "Diverting the Legislature: Executive-Legislative Relations, the Economy, and Us Uses of Force," *International Studies Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2010).

²⁶ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2003).

parties),”²⁷ scholars in this vein find that conservative governments are more likely to initiate diversionary foreign conflict than their liberal counterparts.²⁸

Lastly, other than searching for possible domestic correlates of diversionary behavior, some scholars explore the possibility that state leaders might use inward conflict to divert internal problems. Drawing upon Coser’s qualifications on the in-group/out-group hypothesis, Tir and Jasinski point out that domestic conflict along domestic ethnic lines should be a more effective diversionary strategy than external confrontation.²⁹ By analyzing the Minorities at Risk (MAR) data, they demonstrate that state leaders suffering from economic underperformance and government unpopularity have greater probabilities to initiate a violent attack against domestic minority groups.

2. Theory refinements at the international level

Scholars are also concerned about whether structural factors have confounded the association between domestic crisis and external conflict. DeRouen, for instance, shows that larger number of Soviet/Russian crisis activities in a given period of time is related to higher possibilities of US use of force. Therefore, studies on US presidents’ diversionary behavior should take into account this variable in order to control the effect of the leaders’ strategic

²⁷ Dennis M. Foster, ““Comfort to Our Adversaries”? Partisan Ideology, Domestic Vulnerability, and Strategic Targeting,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 4(2008): 422. Also see Ian Budge and Richard I. Hofferbert, “Mandates and Policy Outputs: U.S. Party Platforms and Federal Expenditures,” *The American Political Science Review* 84, no. 1 (1990); Russett, “Economic Decline, Electoral Pressure, and the Initiation of Interstate Conflict.”; Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Richard Hofferbert, and Ian Budge, *Parties, Politics, and Democracy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); Richard Eichenberg, *Public Opinion and National Security in Western Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Kenneth A. Schultz, *Democracy and Coercive Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

²⁸ Dennis M. Foster and Glenn Palmer, “Presidents, Public Opinion, and Diversionary Behavior: The Role of Partisan Support Reconsidered,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2(2006). For a more detailed review, see Foster, ““Comfort to Our Adversaries”? Partisan Ideology, Domestic Vulnerability, and Strategic Targeting.”

²⁹ Jaroslav Tir and Michael Jasinski, “Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War: Targeting Ethnic Minorities,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 5 (2008).

consideration in response to existing external threats.³⁰ Others demonstrate the importance of strategic avoidance, which argues that the rival states are less likely to attack politically vulnerable leaders due to their strategic consideration that the latter might have greater incentives of using external conflict to divert domestic problems. This finding may explain the lack of consistent empirical support for the diversionary hypothesis.³¹ Similarly, Clark's zero-inflation model shows that although high unemployment (for Republican presidents) and inflation (for Democratic presidents) are associated with increased diversionary incentives for US presidents, their chances of doing so decline dramatically once these two economic indicators pass a certain threshold. He attributes this non-linear relationship between internal crisis and external conflict to the strategic consideration of the targeted rival states. As he argues, would-be targets of a diversionary foreign policy might choose to respond with caution and deliberation to avoid the outbreak of conflict, and thus reduce the opportunity for the conflict-seeker to put his consideration into action.³² This finding is further confirmed by Fordham.³³ Finally, it is now broadly acknowledged that rivalry settings between two states are an important conditioning factor of the occurrence of diversionary

³⁰ Karl DeRouen, "Presidents and the Diversionary Use of Force: A Research Note," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (2000). Moreover, to take into account other scholars' calls for refining the diversionary theory by taking into account the "interdependent causal relationship between domestic and international politics," DeRouen uses a two-equation simultaneous to test presidential uses of force and presidential approval as endogenous variables. This research design reports a robust finding of positive associations between high unemployment and presidential uses of force, and between uses of force and presidential approval. For discussion about this causal interdependency, see Levy, "The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique," 805; Patrick James and Jean S. Rioux, "International Crises and Linkage Politics: The Experiences of the United States, 1953-1994," *Political Research Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1998).

³¹ For instance, Leeds and Davis discover that advanced democracies are more likely to be targeted by international rivals at times of growing economies. Brett Ashley Leeds and David R. Davis, "Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 6 (1997).

³² Clark, "Can Strategic Interaction Divert Diversionary Behavior? A Model of U.S. Conflict Propensity."

³³ Benjamin O. Fordham, "Strategic Conflict Avoidance and the Diversionary Use of Force," *The Journal of Politics* 67, no. 1 (2005).

conflict.³⁴ As Mitchell and Prins demonstrate, the setting of enduring rivalry context is a critical condition for the diversionary hypothesis to hold. In other words, the authors' research find that "domestic turmoil tends to increase the probability of military action in rivalry settings but actually has the opposite effect in nonrivalry settings."³⁵

3. Conceptual Adjustment of the dependent variable

The discussion above shows that political science scholars have made tremendous efforts to refine the diversionary theory of foreign policy. However, most of these works focus on major powers such as the United States and Britain.³⁶ This bias undermines the generalizability of the diversionary foreign policy theory. Therefore, this research argues that scholars should look beyond militarized conflict when studying states' diversionary behavior. To be more specific, since dispatching troops overseas contains great costs, why not consider options that would be less costly yet still efficient for state leaders to divert their domestic problems? For instance, Morgan and Bickers point out that war is too costly and risky a diversionary option, and thus "[l]ower-levels of hostile actions, such as threats to use force, shows of force, and uses of force short of war may be adequate to create the perception of a foreign threat, are less costly and less risky, and may actually be more effective at increasing

³⁴ Sara McLaughlin Mitchell and Brandon C. Prins, "Rivalry and Diversionary Uses of Force," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (2004).

³⁵ *Ibid.*: 958.

³⁶ Among the few exceptions are: Ross A. Miller, "Regime Type, Strategic Interaction, and the Diversionary Use of Force," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43, no. 3 (1999): 388-402; Kurt Dassel and Eric Reinhardt, "Domestic Strife and the Initiation of Violence at Home and Abroad," *American Journal of Political Science* 43, no. 1 (1999): 56-85; Berger Heldt, "Domestic Politics, Absolute Deprivation, and the Use of Armed Force in Interstate Territorial Disputes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 43, no. 4 (1999): 451-78; Andrew J. Enterline and Kristian S. Gleditsch, "Threats, Opportunity, and Force: Repression and Diversion of Domestic Pressure, 1948-1982," *International Interactions* 26, no. 1 (2000): 21-53; Pickering and Kisangani, "Democracy and Diversionary Military Intervention: Reassessing Regime Type and the Diversionary Hypothesis." See discussion in ———, "Democracy and Diversionary Military Intervention: Reassessing Regime Type and the Diversionary Hypothesis," 25; Li, James, and Drury, "Diversionary Dragons, Or "Talking Tough in Taipei": Cross-Strait Relations in the New Millennium," 370.

domestic cohesion.”³⁷ Like war, uses of force require substantial military capability, which minor powers are less likely to possess. Does this mean small states are unable to adopt diversionary tactics? Existing diversionary literature focusing on uses of force provides insufficient answer to this question. Fortunately, recent scholars have begun to note that the dependent variable of diversionary theory should include both nonviolent and violent foreign policies. As Clark points out, while “the diversionary theory in political science focuses almost exclusively on the use of force abroad to divert attention, it is important to realize that leaders might pursue nonviolent policies as efforts at diversion.”³⁸ Lebow’s study of thirteen brinkmanship crises also demonstrates that while state leaders initiated confrontational foreign policy, none of them were deliberately trying to provoke a war.³⁹ Therefore, one possible explanation of the discrepancy between the diversionary foreign policy theory and empirical findings based on it might be that while domestic problems induce confrontational foreign policy, not all of them escalate to militarized conflict. If this is the case, studies relying on war datasets such as the Correlates of War (COW) or the Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) data collection would be unable to detect these non-militarized conflicting behaviors. Models sensitive to less-hostile conflicting foreign policy thus are necessary.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the main goal of this research is to examine whether there is a causal linkage between state leaders’ domestic problems and their initiatives of nonviolent provocative foreign policy. The primary case used to examine this relationship is Taiwan’s foreign policy toward China by President Chen Shui-bian. Chen’s

³⁷ Morgan and Bickers, "Domestic Discontent and the External Use of Force," 32.

³⁸ Clark, "Can Strategic Interaction Divert Diversionary Behavior? A Model of U.S. Conflict Propensity," 1014.

³⁹ Richard Ned Lebow, "Soviet Incentives for Brinkmanship?," *Bulletin of the atomic scientists* 37, no. 5 (1981): 16; Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*.

China policy is a most likely case for Clark's suggested theory refinement. On the one hand, a careful examination on the causal processes that link Chen's domestic problems to his provocative China policies would help the further development of an analytical framework on nonviolent diversionary foreign policy. On the other hand, the case's failure to demonstrate the existence of the state leader's diversionary drives would cast strong doubt to Clark's advice.⁴⁰ One weakness of this case study is that since Chen's China policy presents a most-likely case, positive findings from it might not add significant support to the theory revision. One way to cope with this shortcoming is to carefully select alternative theories for which it is also a most-likely case. Under this consideration, this research considers two competing explanations: strategic responses to external provocation and alliance politics.

III. Alternative Explanations

The principal hypothesis of this research is the diversionary foreign policy theory. Besides domestic politics, one should also take into account whether the leader's foreign policy decision is a response to the changes in the international environment. In the context of cross-Strait relations, the most important external factors that define Taiwan's security environment and in turn influence Taiwan's Chinese policy are China's provocative behavior and US support. To account for these factors, this research applies the analytical frame works of strategic responses and alliance politics to examine President Chen Shui-bian's China policy. Similarly, Russian hostility and US support also have crucial impact on the national security of Georgia and Ukraine. Therefore, this research considers two competing explanations: strategic responses to external provocation and alliance politics.

⁴⁰ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 121.

1. Strategic Responses to External Provocation

While Taiwan's confrontational foreign policies toward China could be a result of President Chen Shui-bian's desire to divert his domestic crisis, it is also possible that they were reactive policy responses to China's provocation. As Levy points out, while state A's domestic conflict might lead to its leaders' diversionary behavior abroad, it is also likely that this internal weakness would tempt state B to intervene assertively. As a result, external conflict could rise due to state A's responses to state B's exploitation of this window of opportunity.⁴¹ Empirically, strategic targeting has been demonstrated by Foster, who finds that American presidents facing legislative oppositions are more likely to be the target of incident initiations by rival states. As the diversionary theory argues, this type of strategic targeting is more likely under an enduring rivalry.⁴² The relationship between Taiwan and China fits the condition of enduring rivalry for both sides have collided over the status of Taiwan's sovereign status. For China, bringing Taiwan back to the CCP's legal jurisdiction has been an important goal on its political agenda. For Taiwan, however, maintaining its sovereign autonomy is a bottom line. These diverging perspectives lead to the constant friction between both governments over political issues. In the era of 1949-1970, the relationship between Taiwan and China was extremely hostile.⁴³ Both governments were engaged in military competition against each other. Although the development of social and economic ties between both sides since late 1980s has to a great extent alleviated the risk of military conflict, their hostility toward each other continues due to the disputes over

⁴¹ Levy, "The Diversionary Theory of War: A Critique," 269.

⁴² Dennis M. Foster, "An "Invitation to Struggle?" The Use of Force Against "Legislatively Vulnerable" American Presidents," *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (2006).

⁴³ John F. Copper, "The Origins of Conflict across the Taiwan Strait: The Problem of Differences in Perceptions," *Journal of Contemporary China* 6, no. 15 (1997): 216.

Taiwan's legal status. Considering this context and the difficulties the Chen Shui-bian administration experienced due to its minority government status, it is highly likely for China to adopt the strategic targeting approach to pressure Chen into accepting its "one China" principle as a precondition to resume cross-Strait talks, which would force Taipei to take a tough response in order to defend Taiwan's sovereignty and autonomy. The same logic also applies to the Georgian-Russian and Ukrainian-Russian relationship, since Moscow poses strong security threats to the two former Soviet states. Accordingly, it is important to examine whether these state leaders' provocative foreign policies toward their rivals were actually strategic reactions to the latter's confrontational behavior.

2. Alliance Politics

In his study on military alliances, Glenn Snyder argues that the key security dilemma faced by members of an alliance is the choice between cooperation by giving "a strong general commitment and full support in specific adversary conflicts," and defection by granting "weak commitment and no support in conflicts with the adversary."⁴⁴ Each strategy generates opposite trade-offs between two side effects of alliances: abandonment and entrapment. Strong commitment reduces the risk of abandonment but increase the possibility of entrapment, since this strategy might encourage the ally to risk excessive danger to challenge its adversary. On the contrary, weak commitment lowers the chance of entrapment, but raises the likelihood of abandonment by inviting the ally to cast doubts on its loyalty.⁴⁵ Hence, alliance dynamics have great implication on states' security policy decisions.

⁴⁴ Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (1984): 466.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 467.

Drawing upon Snyder's alliance politics framework, Ross identifies two characteristics of alliances with power asymmetries: "[first,] the great power's commitment can heighten the small power's confidence that its adversary will be deterred from use of force; [second,] the great power's commitment to intervene in a war can heighten the small power's confidence that it can endure the costs of war, thus making war an acceptable option."⁴⁶ Both dynamics encourage the lesser ally to engage in adventurous conflict behavior. Examples include strong German support of Austria increasing the latter's confidence to challenge Russian interests in the Balkans in 1913, and North Korea's decision to invade South Korea in 1950 backed by the Soviet Union's and China's firm defense commitment.⁴⁷ Wu Yu-shan also finds that the non-Russian post-Soviet states with strong ties with the West are more likely to engage in balancing than bandwagoning toward Russia.⁴⁸

The United States has been Taiwan's most important, though informal, ally. Since the signing of the Shanghai Communiqué in 1972 and the normalization of Sino-US relations in 1979, Washington has adopted the principle of "strategic ambiguity" as its policy guidelines toward both Taipei and Beijing, which states a policy bottom line that "[t]he United States was willing to accept the eventual reunification of Taiwan under Chinese rule if that came to pass, but it continued to insist that this or any other outcome be achieved by peaceful means

⁴⁶ Robert S. Ross, "Explaining Taiwan's Revisionist Diplomacy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 15, no. 48 (2006): 448.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Other than support from the western allies, another important factor that influences ex-Soviet states' choice between balancing and bandwagoning is economic development. The stronger a state's economic development is, the more likely it would pursue a balancing policy against Russia. see Yu-Shan Wu, "Theorizing on the Political Economy of Cross-Strait Relations: An Analogy with Russia and Its Neighbors," *Issues and Studies* 31, no. 9 (1995).

and backed up this insistence with the implicit threat of military action.”⁴⁹ During the years before the mid-1990s, US cross-Strait policy was focused on deterring China’s military invasion into Taiwan during the early years. But this situation changed after the 1995-1996 era, in order to respond to Taiwan’s seeking greater state autonomy as a result of its democratization and growing Taiwanese identity—an effort that has posed strong challenges to the status quo in the cross-Strait relations. Since then, Washington faced a policy challenge of “dual deterrence,” which requires it to deter both Taiwan’s and China’s attempt to take unilateral actions to change the cross-Strait status quo.⁵⁰ Under this structural context, any shift in the balance between Washington’s policy toward Taipei and Beijing might attract the latter two actors’ responsive policy changes. Holding a strong belief in “democratic peace,” the Bush administration also gave strong support for the newly democratized Georgia and Ukraine. Therefore, it is important to examine whether President George W. Bush’s apparent policy tilt strengthened these young democracies’ confidence and thus encourages them to take assertive actions to challenge their powerful neighbors.⁵¹

IV. Hypothesis Testing and Research Design

The principal hypothesis this research aims to test is the diversionary theory hypothesis, which states that *leaders in small states are more likely to adopt nonviolent provocative policy against their foreign rivals when faced with domestic problems*. It also

⁴⁹ Andrew J. Nathan, "What's Wrong with American Taiwan Policy," *The Washington Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (2000): 94.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*: 102.

⁵¹ Two brief yet inspiring policy analyses demonstrate this possibility. See Douglas H. Paal and Jeffrey Bader, "Georgia's Lessons for Taiwan," *Far Eastern Economic Review*(2008), <http://www.feer.com/international-relations/2008/september/Georgias-Lessons-for-Taiwan>; Richard C. Bush and Kenneth G. Lieberthal, "From Georgia to Taiwan," *The Wall Street Journal Asia*(2008), http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0916_taiwan_bush.aspx?p=1. Both works warn the George W. Bush administration against sending strong yet not affordable defense commitment to its newly democratized allies.

examines two alternative theories: the strategic reaction hypothesis argues that *state leaders are more likely to launch nonviolent provocative policy if their rival states initiate a confrontational action first*, and the alliance politics hypothesis posits that *state leaders are more likely to adopt nonviolent provocative policy when they enjoy strong support from their powerful allies*. I apply both quantitative and qualitative methods to test these proposed theories. There are two reasons for adopting both approaches. First, the quantitative statistical model provides a rigorous tool for examining the relationship between different proposed independent variables and the dependent variable, while the qualitative analysis offers contextual evidence to enhance the validity of the quantitative findings. Second, a qualitative analysis could help identify the impact of those independent variables that do not have the same temporal structure as the others—in this research, the powerful ally’s commitment. Since the level of alliance commitment usually takes longer time to change than other variables examined here, a qualitative analysis about whether there is positive association between alliance commitment and provocative policy would be a better analytical tool in this research.

Quantitatively, I adopt an Ordinal Least Square regression model for hypotheses testing. Following Ostrom and Job’s work, the data are analyzed on a quarterly basis.⁵² I then conduct a small-N comparison across the leader’s different policy initiatives to examine the background and process of them. This comparison allows a “paired observation of values on the [independent variables] and [dependent variable] across a range of circumstances,”⁵³

⁵² Charles W. Ostrom and Brian L. Job, "The President and the Political Use of Force," *The American Political Science Review* 80, no. 2 (1986).

⁵³ Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 62.

and a careful search “for evidence of all links in all the chains,”⁵⁴ Moreover, this qualitative examination is especially insightful to examine the effect of those domestic factors less specified in existing literature.

In order to provide a systematic framework for this comparison, I rely on Hendrickson’s four propositions that he applies to identify US presidents’ uses of diversionary war. As Hendrickson points out, one major issue of diversionary studies is the difficulty in assessing whether a confrontational foreign policy is driven by the leader’s parochial needs or consideration of the state’s comprehensive strategic needs. To address this issue, Hendrickson proposes four propositions as the criteria of diversionary foreign policy. First, he argues that for a diversionary attack, *the participation in the decision making process should be limited to the president and a small group of his close aides*. The rationale of this proposition is that when the number of people involved in the decision making process increase, there would be greater chance that someone would raise objections to the president’s plan. Since a diversionary conflict is expected to serve the president’s parochial rather than national interests, he would prefer a “quieter” decision making approach to comprehensive consultation.⁵⁵ In other words, this characteristic reflects the lack of deliberate consideration among different government organizations.

The second proposition states that *the strike should be militarily premature and there would be an absence of American national interest*.⁵⁶ This proposition rules out the possibility that a foreign conflict is necessary for national interests at the time. The third proposition concerns domestic reaction. It posits that *the opposition would criticize the*

⁵⁴ Ibid., 66. Also see George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 214.

⁵⁵ Ryan C. Hendrickson, "Clinton's Military Strikes in 1998: Diversionary Uses of Force?," *Armed Forces & Society* 28, no. 2 (2002): 313.

⁵⁶ Ibid.: 314.

president's use of forces as reckless. The logic of this proposition is that while the Congress might support a use of force if it fits US national interests, the opposition would raise its criticism against it if the action is solely for the president's personal benefits.⁵⁷ Therefore, the opposition's attack shows that there is a lack of internal consensus about the necessity to initiate the conflict. Lastly, the fourth proposition argues that *foreign allies would criticize the president's diversionary use of force*, because they see no legitimacy of the conflict. While allies might express understandings or sympathy for a foreign conflict decision that fits a state's national strategic interests, they would otherwise disapprove it if it is driven by diversionary intent. An example of this proposition is that Clinton's use of force against Iraq in 1996 invited strong criticism from many in the French media, which condemned his action as a strategy "for his political gain in the forthcoming American presidential election."⁵⁸ In sum, these four propositions take into account the decision making conditions of and internal and external reactions to a foreign conflict initiation. While none of them provide a decisive criterion of diversionary foreign policy, testing these four propositions together would help researchers better identify whether a foreign conflict is driven by strategic needs or diversionary intent.⁵⁹

In her work on the 1989 US invasion of Panama, Cramer reevaluates Hendrickson's four propositions and proposes one important revision to his third proposition.⁶⁰ According to Hendrickson, the opposition parties' objection to the leader's initiation of an external conflict presents an evidence of the decision's lack of national strategic consideration. But Cramer's work finds bipartisan support for President George H.W. Bush's invasion of

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ See Hendrickson, "Clinton's Military Strikes in 1998: Diversionary Uses of Force?," 315.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Jane Kellett Cramer, "'Just Cause' Or Just Politics?: U.S. Panama Invasion and Standardizing Qualitative Tests for Diversionary War," *Armed Forces & Society* 32, no. 2 (2006).

Panama in Congress. She argues that two equally possible interpretations of this consensus could still lead to the conclusion that this is a diversionary use of force: it is likely that the Democrats supported Bush's decision because they falsely perceived its strategic necessity, or because "it was a popular fait accompli, which would be highly unpopular to oppose."⁶¹ The first interpretation indicates that the Bush administration successfully made up a "believable" cover story to lure the opposition's support. The second interpretation demonstrates that by instigating domestic nationalist sentiment, the Bush administration's diversionary use of force successfully leave the opposition no choice but to show its support for the government. Cramer's suggestion is insightful for it points out that the opposition's response to a diversionary foreign policy could be less straightforward. Therefore, when analyzing the oppositions' support or disapproval of the state leader's confrontational foreign policy, this research will take into account these two possibilities by carefully examining how they present their support to the government and the public.⁶²

V. Operationalization of Key Concepts

1. Dependent Variable

The unit of analysis in this research is the state leader's foreign policy initiatives toward the rival state. I adopt the Goldstein net-cooperation scale based on McClelland's famous World Event Interaction Survey (WEIS) to identify whether a foreign policy initiative counts as a nonviolent provocation. In order to provide a systematic framework for studies on international events data, McClelland creates a 61-category coding scheme to

⁶¹ Ibid.: 196.

⁶² Moreover, as IR scholar Elizabeth Saunders points out to me, it is common that the opposition disapprove of the ruling government's policy. Therefore, what is more important is to observe how they interact with the government after casting their initial doubts.

classify different types of international events.⁶³ However, the categorical WEIS scheme makes it difficult for scholars to study the intensity of conflict and cooperation during a specific period of time. To address this issue, Goldstein establishes his net-cooperation scale by assigns each foreign policy action listed in the WEIS scheme a weighted score based on the assessment made by a panel of IR scholars. The score ranges from -10 to 10, with negative scores indicate conflictual events and positive scores refer to cooperative events. This cooperation-conflict continuum provides a more detailed and sensitive scale for the studies of events data.⁶⁴ I define a nonviolent provocative foreign policy as one that has a negative score in the Goldstein scale ranging from -0.1 to -7.0 (see Table 1-1). Since the central concern of this research is the volume of nonviolent diversionary provocation, I give each cooperative policy a score of 1 and each nonviolent provocation a score of -1. This design allows one to see clearly the fluctuation between conciliation and provocation in one's policy orientation.

Applying the Goldstein Scale to identify Taiwan's provocative foreign policy toward China faces a significant challenge, however. Due to the fact that Taiwan and China are engaged in a constant fight over the definition of the former's sovereign status, some provocative policies might not be reflected on the Goldstein scale. To avoid missing important observations, I argue that Taiwan's policy that seeks to unilaterally alter or redefine the status quo in the cross-Strait represents an aspect of policy provocation that is not usually captured in an international scale but contains the possibility of triggering a bilateral military conflict between Taiwan and China. For instance, in 1999, former President

⁶³ See Charles McClelland, *World Event/Interaction Survey Codebook, 1966-1978*, Third Edition ed., Icpssr 5211 (Ann Arbor: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1978).

⁶⁴ Joshua S. Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for Weis Events Data," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36, no. 2 (1992); McClelland, *World Event/Interaction Survey Codebook, 1966-1978*.

Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) publicly described the relationship between Taiwan and China as “special state-to-state” in an interview by a German media organization, *Deutsche Welle*. This statement immediately invited strong criticism from the Chinese government, which then unilaterally severed the communication mechanism between the two semi-official organizations: the Sea Exchanges Foundation (SEF) in Taiwan and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) in China. There were also voices demanding a military retaliation inside the government, but the Chinese leadership decided to avoid military actions eventually. This case exemplifies the importance of the cross-strait status quo, defined as the preservation of existing constitutional framework and sovereign symbols. Clear indicators of the status quo during the Chen Shui-bian era were the president’s inaugural pledges in 2000 on the cross-strait relations: no declaration of Taiwan independence, no change of national title, no incorporation of former President Lee’s “special state-to-state relationship” statement to the Constitution, no referendum on unification or independence, and the maintenance of the National Unification Council and Guideline.⁶⁵ These pledges were Chen’s important assurance to his domestic and international audience that maintaining the cross-strait status quo would continue to be his China policy principles.

⁶⁵ See President Chen Shui-bian's 2000 Inaugural Speech, "Taiwan Stands Up: Advancing to an Uplifting Era," <http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=18907&rmid=2355&sd=2000/5/20&ed=2000/5/20>.

Table 1-1: Actions of Conflict in the Goldsteign Scale

Event Type	Weight
223 Military attack; clash; assault	-10.0
211 Seize position or possessions	-9.2
222 Nonmilitary destruction/injury	-8.7
221 Noninjury destructive action	-8.3
182 Armed force mobilization, exercise, display; military buildup	-7.6
195 Break diplomatic relations	-7.0
173 Threat with force specified	-7.0
174 Ultimatum; threat with negative sanction and time limit	-6.9
172 Threat with specific negative nonmilitary sanction	-5.8
193 Reduce or cut off aid or assistance; act to punish/deprive	-5.6
181 Nonmilitary demonstration, walk out on	-5.2
201 Order person or personnel out of country	-5.0
202 Expel organization or group	-4.9
150 Issue order or command, insist, demand compliance	-4.9
171 Threat without specific negative sanction stated	-4.4
212 Detain or arrest person(s)	-4.4
192 Reduce routine international activity; recall officials	-4.1
112 Refuse; oppose; refuse to allow	-4.0
111 Turn down proposal; reject protest, demand, threat	-4.0
194 Halt negotiation	-3.8
122 Denounce; denigrate; abuse	-3.4
160 Give warning	-3.0
132 Issue formal complaint or protest	-2.4
121 Charge; criticize; blame; disapprove	-2.2
191 Cancel or postpone planned event	-2.2
131 Make complaint (not formal)	-1.9
063 Grant asylum	-1.1
142 Deny an attributed policy, action, role or position	-1.1
141 Deny an accusation	-0.9
023 Comment on situation	-0.2
102 Urge or suggest action or policy	-0.1
021 Explicit decline to comment	-0.1
094 Request action; call for	-0.1
025 Explain or state policy; state future position	0
091 Ask for information	0.1
011 Surrender, yield to order, submit to arrest	0.6
012 Yield position; retreat; evacuate	0.6
031 Meet with; send note	1.0
095 Entreat; plead; appeal to; beg	1.2

Table 1-1: Actions of Conflict in the Goldsteign Scale (Continued)

101 Offer proposal	1.5
061 Express regret; apologize	1.8
032 Visit; go to	1.9
066 Release and/or return persons or property	1.9
013 Admit wrongdoing; apologize, retract statement	2.0
062 Give state invitation	2.5
054 Assure; reassure	2.8
033 Receive visit; host	2.8
065 Suspend sanctions; end punishment; call truce	2.9
082 Agree to future action or procedure, to meet, or negotiate	3.0
092 Ask for policy assistance	3.4
093 Ask for material assistance	3.4
041 Praise, hail, applaud, extend condolences	3.4
042 Endorse other's policy or position; give verbal support	3.6
053 Promise other future support	4.5
051 Promise own policy support	4.5
052 Promise material support	5.2
064 Grant privilege; diplomatic recognition; de facto relations	5.4
073 Give other assistance	6.5
081 Make substantive agreement	6.5
071 Extend economic aid; give, buy, sell, loan, borrow	7.4
072 Extend military assistance	8.3

2. Independent Variables

1) The Diversionary Model

The independent variables of the diversionary model are factors that result in state leaders' domestic vulnerability. Following James and ONeal's research design, I measure these variables by a quarterly basis.⁶⁶ I take into account three types of domestic problems based upon existing literature on diversionary foreign policy: poor economic performance, public dissatisfaction, and political challenges. First, to measure economic performance, I apply three indicators commonly used by scholars to test the diversionary theory: GDP per capita, inflation, and unemployment rate.⁶⁷ Second, I measure public dissatisfaction with the president's approval ratings and the presence of large-scale domestic protest. The approval rating of each given quarter is the average of all available approval ratings reported in the period of time. Large-scale domestic protest is a binary variable. A quarter with a national protest of the size over 10,000 participants is given the score of 1, while the others get the score of 0. Third, political challenges are measured by whether the given quarter is an electoral campaign season and whether there is an intra-party/coalition conflict at the time, both are binary variables. The quarters before the polling date of the presidential and legislative elections is considered a campaign quarter, while others are indicated as non-campaign quarters. Moreover, to take into account Enterline's suggestion that it is important to explore whether there are other sources of domestic threats⁶⁸ and Bueno de Mesquita et al.'s finding that a leader's power stability within his/her own political group¹⁵ critical for

⁶⁶ James and ONeal, "The Influence of Domestic and International Politics on the President's Use of Force."

⁶⁷ See Russett, "Economic Decline, Electoral Pressure, and the Initiation of Interstate Conflict."; Fordham, "Partisanship, Macroeconomic Policy, and U.S. Uses of Force, 1949-1994."; DeRouen, "Presidents and the Diversionary Use of Force: A Research Note."; Li, James, and Drury, "Diversionary Dragons, Or "Talking Tough in Taipei": Cross-Strait Relations in the New Millennium."

⁶⁸ Andrew J. Enterline, "Introduction to Cmps Special Issue: Diversionary Theory," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 27, no. 5 (2010): 412.

their political survival.⁶⁹ this research includes another binary variable: state leaders' intra-party/coalition crisis. This variable is measured by examining whether there are internal frictions that threaten to take over state leaders' dominant power within their parties and political coalitions.

2) The Strategic Reaction Model

The independent variable of the strategic reaction model is a foreign crisis that requires the state leader to respond to. The indicator of this variable is whether there is a provocative foreign policy by the rival state prior to the subject state's foreign policy announcement. I define a rival state's provocative policy as one that has a negative score based on the Goldstein scale. Each quarter is given a value of 1 if there was a provocation (as the Goldstein Scale defines) by the rival state. Due to the lack of official diplomatic relationship between Taiwan and China, the category of "break diplomatic relations" in the Goldstein Scale is not applicable to the cross-Strait relations. Nonetheless, considering that the competition for diplomatic recognition is one of the zero-sum, antagonistic issues between Taiwan and China, I include the switch of diplomatic recognition from the ROC to PRC by the former's official allies as one indicator of PRC provocation.

3) The Alliance Politics Model

The alliance politics model considers whether increased support by strong allies creates an incentive for a state to challenge the status quo vis-à-vis its rival neighbors. In this research, the level of support by powerful allies includes three binary indicators: (1) oral defense commitment; (2) formal defense agreements; and (3) military assistance offered by

⁶⁹ Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival*.

allies whose intervention is crucial to reduce the external threat against the state. Military assistance represents the strongest level of support, followed by formal defense agreements and then oral defense agreements. Based upon the alliance politics argument, leaders in the lesser states are more likely to initiate nonviolent foreign provocation when one or more of these three indicators are present.

VI. Data Collection

Studying contemporary policy is a difficult task, since most relevant official documents are still unavailable to the public.⁷⁰ Therefore, to analyze Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's China policy, this research relies on the president's speeches and memoirs, government documents, reports from local major newspapers and international newswires, as well as academic works on foreign policy.⁷¹ A common concern of using public documents, known as "assessment at a distance," is that one cannot be sure to what extent these public speeches reflect their true attitude.⁷² In response to this issue, Renshon's study on U.S. president John F. Kennedy's operational code has demonstrated that state leaders' beliefs expressed in public statements are highly similar those shown in private contexts.⁷³ To further address this concern in my principal case of research, Taiwan, I also conduct in-depth interviews with President Chen Shui-bian's close aides, his major political allies, and Taiwan

⁷⁰ Richard Ned Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic: The Origins of the Falklands War," in *Psychology and Deterrence*, ed. Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow, and Janice Gross Stein (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 90; Matthew Fuhrmann and Bryan R. Early, "Following Start: Risk Acceptance and the 1991-1992 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 4, no. 1 (2008): 25.

⁷¹ The three major Chinese local newspapers are the *United Daily*, the *China Times*, and *Liberty Times*. The first two have a pro-unification and pro-KMT orientation, while the third one is pro-independence and pro-DPP. Belonging to the same news group, the *Taipei Times* is an English newspaper that shares the same ideology with the *Liberty Times*. Another important news source is the Central News Agency, the official news agency in Taiwan that publishes local news pieces in multiple languages.

⁷² See Mark Schafer, "Issues in Assessing Psychological Characteristics at a Distance: An Introduction to the Symposium," *Political Psychology* 21, no. 3 (2000).

⁷³ Jonathan Renshon, "When Public Statements Reveal Private Beliefs: Assessing Operational Codes at a Distance," *Political Psychology* 30, no. 4 (2009).

and U.S. experts on cross-Strait relations. These interviews allow me to gather more evidence for cross examination.

Data on Georgia and Ukraine are collected from government websites, academic analyses, and major international newswires and broadcasts with comprehensive coverage of global news, including the *Agence France Presse*, the *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, *Interfax News Agency*, and *Russia & CIS General Newswire*, and others. However, due to the constraints of resources and language, I am not able to conduct interviews in these two countries.

VII. Expected Contribution

This research expects to make both significant theoretical and policy contributions. Theoretically, it attempts to address the mixed empirical findings of the diversionary foreign policy theory by adopting an important conceptual adjustment—an expansion of the dependent variable from the traditional concept of using force abroad to the use of nonviolent confrontational foreign policy. This in turn would demonstrate that diversionary foreign policy is not just an option for great powers, although the majority of existing literature seems to suggest that this is the case.⁷⁴

From a policy perspective, positive findings in this research would show that in responding to minor powers' confrontational policy, concerned states should develop greater "sensitivity" to their domestic political dynamism—both inter-party and inner-party, rather than simply focus on ideological causes and opportunity.⁷⁵ In other words, a sophisticated understanding of Taiwan's internal power struggles could help concerned states better handle

⁷⁴ Pickering and Kisangani, "Democracy and Diversionary Military Intervention: Reassessing Regime Type and the Diversionary Hypothesis," 23-43.

⁷⁵ Lebow, "Soviet Incentives for Brinkmanship?," 17.

the diplomatic challenges raised by Taiwan's leaders. It would also advise the CCP not to overly rely on containment against their disliked Taiwan leaders, since the latter's domestic political vulnerability would increase their incentive to appeal to independence issues. This result might in turn raise the chances of a physical conflict in the Strait due to the Chinese leadership's misinterpretation of Taiwan's policy intentions.

VIII. Chapter Outline

The structure of rest of this dissertation is as below. Chapter two reviews the development of the cross-Strait relationship since 1949, the international and domestic environment surrounding the Chen Shui-bian administration, and the fluctuation in President Chen's China policy. Chapter three tests the diversionary and the alternative hypotheses against the empirical evidence. To examine whether the research findings from the previous two chapters can be applied to other cases, chapter four offers a preliminary examination of the foreign policy making toward Russia in two former Soviet states: Georgia and Ukraine. The ability to explain these states' Russian policy with the nonviolent diversionary model would expand the model's generalizability, and heighten this research's contribution to the diversionary foreign policy literature. Finally, the concluding chapter summarizes the findings of this research, discusses their theoretical and empirical implications, and offers suggestions for the direction of future studies.

Chapter Two

Historical Background and Chen Shui-bian's China Policy

On March 18, 2000, Taiwan successfully accomplished its first peaceful and democratic regime change in Chinese history. On that day, the long-term governing Nationalist Party, or Kuomintang (the KMT), was defeated by the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (the DPP). While this remarkable democratization achievement was welcomed by many people on the island and the international community, it also brought worries to both sides of the Taiwan Strait as well as Washington, Tokyo, and other world capitals due to the DPP's pro-Taiwan independence orientation.¹ In fact, the party and its presidential candidate, Chen Shui-bian, were well aware of these concerns prior to the election. To shake off its radical anti-China image, the DPP passed a new policy guideline in May 1999 entitled "The Resolutions on Taiwan's Future" under the effort of Chen. This document recognized that Taiwan is already an independent state under the name of the Republic of China, which implied that there was no need to establish a republic of Taiwan as designated in its previous Party Platform.² This modification was an important effort to persuade the majority voters that the DPP was capable of maintaining a smooth relationship with Beijing. Upon taking office, President Chen additionally made the "four no's and one

¹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Groping for a Formula for Cross-Strait Talks," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2000).

² The DPP's Party Platform was established in November 10, 1986. Together with the Party Constitution, this document serves as the highest guiding principle of the party's policy direction. In 1991, the Fifth Party Congress passed an amendment to it, which designated "the establishment of a sovereign and independent Republic of Taiwan" as a primary goal of the party. This passage is then known as the "Taiwan Independence Article." In 1999, the Eighth Party Congress passed the Resolution on Taiwan's Future and included it into the Platform. This new amendment was meant to replace the old Taiwan Independence Article, although there were different opinions about whether the latter was still valid. For the full text of the DPP's Party Platform, see: http://www.dpp.org.tw/upload/history/20100604120114_link.pdf (in Chinese). Accessed on October 3, 2011.

without” promises in his inaugural speech on May 20 to assure his domestic and international audience of his intention to preserve the cross-Strait status quo, by which he declared that:

As long as the [Chinese Communist Party (CCP)] regime has no intention to use military force against Taiwan, I pledge that during my term in office, I will not declare independence, I will not change the national title, I will not push forth the inclusion of the so-called "state-to-state" description in the Constitution, and I will not promote a referendum to change the status quo in regard to the question of independence or unification. Furthermore, there is no question of abolishing the Guidelines for National Unification and the National Unification Council.”³

The “four no’s and one without” promises are Chen’s first important step to initiate his good will toward Beijing. But Beijing did not reciprocate with a friendly response. Instead, the Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO)⁴ issued a statement criticizing Chen for avoiding the one-China principle. Although the TAO also indicated that Beijing was ready to talk with the Chen administration, the lack of a mutual agreement over the one-China principle between Taipei and Beijing remained a major obstacle to the resumption of cross-Strait talks.⁵

During the first two years of his presidency, President Chen made significant effort to break the cross-Strait impasse, including announcing the opening of direct post, trade, and transportation exchanges between Taiwan’s frontline islands and China, relaxing administrative restrictions on cross-Strait economic activities, and offering higher flexibility on cross-Strait dialogue. Nonetheless, Beijing continued to ignore Chen’s good will gestures, insisting that Chen had to publicly accept the “one China” principle before talks between both sides of the Strait could be resumed. After two years of no progress, Chen seemed to lose his patience in the summer of 2002. On August 3, he made a statement defining the

³ For the full text, see President Chen Shui-bian's 2000 Inaugural Speech, "Taiwan Stands Up: Advancing to an Uplifting Era," <http://english.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=491&itemid=18907&rmid=2355&sd=2000/5/20&ed=2000/5/20>.

⁴ The Taiwan Affairs Office is an official institution under the State Council responsible for administrating Taiwan-related issues.

⁵ Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Groping for a Formula for Cross-Strait Talks."

cross-Strait relations as “one country on each side” in his inaugural speech as the DPP’s chairman. This incident marked the beginning of frequent China policy fluctuation between confrontation and moderation throughout the remainder of Chen’s presidential tenure. While those dramatic policy changes and their consequences seem to suggest that Chen’s foreign policy thinking toward China was inconsistent and sometimes even irrational, they also pose an important empirical puzzle for students of the cross-Strait relationship. In this research, I propose that Chen’s provocative China policies were driven by his need to divert his political difficulties at home such as weakening economy, declining public support, competitive elections, large protests, and leadership challenges from within his party. Before proceeding to the theory test, this chapter provides a review of the historical background of the cross-Strait relations and the fluctuation of Chen’s China policy. The first section reviews the development of cross-Strait relationship during the authoritarian regimes of Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo. The second section discusses the impact of Taiwan’s democratization on the cross-Strait relationship since the late 1980s. The third section reviews Chen’s domestic challenges after he took office. The fourth and fifth sections trace the changes in Chen Shui-bian’s China policy orientation.

I. Authoritarian Rule, the Dawn of Democracy, and the Cross-Strait Relations

The relationship between Taipei and Beijing has been a crucial factor in Taiwan’s political development since the KMT lost its domestic battle on the China mainland and retreated to Taiwan in 1949. Upon the establishment of the Nationalist government in Taipei, President Chiang Kai-shek’s (蔣介石, 1950-1975) primary political goal was to take back the mainland from the CCP. Therefore, he designated the principle of “no coexistence (*han-zei*

bu liang li, 漢賊不兩立)” in handling with Taiwan’s foreign relations, which declares that the KMT’s Republic of China (ROC) would not hold diplomatic ties with any country recognizing the CCP’s People’s Republic of China (PRC).⁶ This principle also applied to Taiwan’s relationship with international organizations. Nonetheless, Chiang Kai-shek’s expectation to recover the mainland gradually became unrealistic after a series of diplomatic setbacks in the late 1960s and 1970s. First, in 1969, Taipei began to worry about whether its security ties with the US would begin to change as the newly elected US President Richard Nixon decided to play the “China card” to deter the Soviet Union and to disengage US defense involvement from Asia.⁷ In 1971, the first big shock came as the PRC took over the ROC’s seat in the United Nations as the legitimate government of China. Nixon’s visit to Beijing to seek China’s cooperation against the Soviet Union in 1972 enraged the KMT government. Nonetheless, Taipei was unable to stop the eventual normalization of the Sino-US relationship. President Jimmy Carter’s announcement that the US would switch diplomatic recognition from the ROC to the PRC marked the most humiliating blow for the KMT in the decade. The immediate impact of these diplomatic crises in the 1970s was the KMT’s losing legitimacy. As Hood points out, the authoritarian leadership in Taipei now had to worry about how the KMT could “maintain its pledge to liberate the mainland without outside recognition,” and whether it should “open the political system to contestation since now that the realities of restoring the mainland seemed remote.”⁸ To address this legitimacy

⁶ James C. Hsiung, "Diplomacy against Adversity: Foreign Relations under Chiang Ching-Kuo," *Asian Affairs* 27, no. 2 (2000): 118-19. The CCP pursued the same foreign policy principle of no coexistence in general. The only exception for both sides of the Strait was Hong Kong, where contacts between people in the mainland and Taiwan were made sporadically in the 1950s and 1960s.

⁷ *Ibid.*: 115.

⁸ Steven J. Hood, *The Kuomintang and the Democratization of Taiwan* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 65.

issue, Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國), Chiang Kai-shek's eldest son,⁹ decided to accelerate its progress of political liberalization to “pacify discontent Taiwanese.”¹⁰

To cope with the KMT's losing legitimacy in the 1970s, the KMT decided to further open up the party and posts of key government officials to Taiwanese. For instance, in 1972, when Chiang Ching-kuo became the premier, he appointed six Taiwanese to positions at the cabinet level in the Executive Yuan.¹¹ Chiang Ching-kuo also decided to increase more locally elected seats in the National Assembly and Legislative Yuan and allow more non-KMT candidates to compete in these elections.¹² This important change encouraged political participation by more Taiwanese. In 1977, non-KMT political activists began to emerge to the center of Taiwan's political platform as they secured “22 seats in the provincial assembly and four posts as mayor or country magistrate.”¹³ These people, known as “Dangwai” (黨外, which means “outside the Kuomintang”), were able to win about 30 percent of the vote in subsequent elections in 1980, 1981, 1983, and 1985.¹⁴ As their group grew bigger and stronger, many of the members began to demand for organizing a political party in mid-1986.

To reach this goal, in 1985 they organized a “Dangwai Central Election Assistance Association” to include the demand for forming a new party in their common electoral

⁹ Chiang Kai-shek died on April 5, 1975. The vice President, Yen Chia-kan succeeded him as the president. Although Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國) was elected as the President of the ROC (May 20, 1978) after Yen's term ended, he “had taken over from his father much of the responsibility in daily routines as well as making policies” in as early as his serving as the minister of defense (1965-1972). He then became the premier 1972. See Choyun Hsu, “Historical Setting for the Rise of Chiang Ching-Kuo,” in *Chiang Ching-Kuo's Leadership in the Development of the Republic of China on Taiwan*, ed. Shao-chuan Leng (New York: University Press of America, 1993), 13.

¹⁰ Hung-mao Tien, “Taiwan in Transition: Prospects for Socio-Political Change,” *China Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (1975): 617.

¹¹ *Ibid.*: 616.

¹² Andrew J. Nathan and Helena V. S. Ho, “Chiang Ching-Kuo's Decision for Political Reform,” in *Chiang Ching-Kuo's Leadership in the Development of the Republic of China on Taiwan*, ed. Shao-chuan Leng (New York: University Press of America, 1993), 37.

¹³ Yangsun Chou and Andrew J. Nathan, “Democratizing Transition in Taiwan,” *Asian Survey* 27, no. 3 (1987): 280.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 281.

platform. This action created high tension between the Dangwai and the KMT.¹⁵ President Chiang Ching-kuo tried to delay the Dangwai from forming a “full-scale political party” by agreeing to allow the Dangwai Research Association on Public Policy, one of the opposition organizations, to “registered legally...and serve as a political party in all but name” in the upcoming election in December 1986. The reason of this negotiation was to buy time for the president so that he could announce his decision to legalize the formation of new parties and thus seize credit for the KMT.¹⁶ Nonetheless, due to internal objections, Dangwai leaders decided to go ahead and announced the development of their new party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in September 28, 1986. This action posed a strong challenge to Chiang, as he had to choose between suppression and legalization of the newly established DPP. Eventually, Chiang decided to declare it illegal. But at the same time, he went on to speed up his political reform that would legalize the new party. In October 1986, under Chiang’s effort, the KMT Standing Committee passed two reform proposals: a decision to abolish martial law and replace it with a national security law, and a revision to the law on civil organizations to lift the ban on organizing new parties.¹⁷ These two proposals were passed by the Legislative Yuan and took effect in mid-1987 and early 1988 respectively, representing an important achievement of political liberalization by Chiang.

Following Taiwan’s dramatic changes in domestic politics during the 1970s-1980s era was a shift of its foreign and China policy. Understanding that the “no coexistence” principle would put Taiwan at a disadvantageous position since the PRC had gained broad international diplomatic recognition, President Chiang Ching-kuo decided to adopt a new foreign policy guideline—the “substantive diplomacy” principle. Although this decision was

¹⁵ Nathan and Ho, "Chiang Ching-Kuo's Decision for Political Reform," 41.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Chou and Nathan, "Democratizing Transition in Taiwan," 288.

formally made after President Jimmy Carter normalized US relations with the PRC in 1979, it began to emerge in Chiang's mind as early as 1971—the time when the ROC was thrown out of the UN and the PRC took its seat. Based upon this new approach, Taiwan would seek to establish not only official, but also unofficial, “substantive,” relationship with foreign countries.¹⁸ This change in foreign policy successfully saved Taiwan from a total diplomatic isolation. Following the change in foreign policy strategy, Chiang lifted the 38-year-old state of martial law in 1986 and permitted Taiwan people to pay family visits to China in November 1987. One thing worth emphasizing is that, although Chiang switched from the old “no coexistence” principle to the more flexible one of “substantive diplomacy,” he did not touch sensitive sovereign issues. In other words, he never attempted to redefine the relationship between Taiwan and China. This work was begun by his successor, Lee Teng-hui, several years later.

II. The Impact of Democratization and Lee Teng-hui Legacy on Cross-Strait Relations

After President Chiang Ching-kuo died in 1988, his successor Lee Teng-hui came to power with two issues on the top of his political agenda: to continue Taiwan's democratization and the KMT's reform and localization. For Lee, the latter was an indispensable step to achieve and preserve the progress of the former.¹⁹ To compete with the DPP, a key issue the KMT had to address was Taiwan's national identity. Since the opposition began to emerge to challenge the KMT's party monopoly in mid-1970s, national identity has become one of the core issues for the political activists. The opposition attacked

¹⁸ Hsiung, "Diplomacy against Adversity: Foreign Relations under Chiang Ching-Kuo," 116, 19-20. Hsiung used “pragmatic diplomacy” to describe Chiang Ching-kuo's flexible foreign policy. But to distinguish it from Lee Teng-hui's more progressive approach, this research uses “substantive diplomacy” and “pragmatic diplomacy” to describe Chiang's and Lee's foreign policy strategy respectively.

¹⁹ Interview with Lee's close aide.

the KMT regime's legitimacy by arguing that it was a foreign regime representing only the mainlanders who came to Taiwan with Chiang kai-shek's troops after the CCP took over the mainland. Therefore, it went on, the majority Taiwanese need a new government to represent them. Since then, how to embrace and honor Taiwanese identity has become a central issue in the party competition between the KMT and the pro-independence opposition. Chiang Ching-kuo coped with this issue by recruiting more Taiwanese elites into the KMT and the central government. In 1984, he nominated Taiwanese elite Lee Teng-hui as his vice president. After Lee assumed office, he took more radical steps to handle the DPP's challenges on identity issues. Lee portrayed himself as someone dedicated to promote Taiwanese identity and political reform. Lee's effort to localize the KMT first gained success in 1993, when a faction of anti-Lee members left the party to establish the New Party (NP). By that time, 70 percent of members and 57 percent of the KMT's Central Standing Committee were Taiwanese.²⁰ Three years later, he became the most important symbolic figure representing Taiwanese identity after he won a landslide victory in the first direct presidential election in 1996.

With respect to Taiwan's external relationship, President Lee pushed Chiang Ching-kuo's substantive diplomacy further into a pursuit of "pragmatic diplomacy," which instructed the government in Taipei to actively expand its international participation and friendships with foreign countries. Underlying this new doctrine was Lee's confidence in Taiwan's economic power and democratic achievement. By providing investment programs to less developed countries and membership contributions to international institutions, this

²⁰ Ralph N. Clough, *Cooperation or Conflict in the Taiwan Strait?* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999), 79-80.

approach had successfully broadened Taiwan's international space.²¹ Taiwan's smooth progress in democratization also attracted increased support for it from the West. But unlike Chiang, Lee's pragmatic policy not only focused on Taiwan's international visibility. Rather, he also tried to secure Taipei's *de facto* independent sovereignty and autonomy from Beijing. For this purpose, he proposed that the dispute over the "one China" policy between Taipei and Beijing could be addressed by the formula of "one country, two governments," a deviation from the KMT's "conventional policy to compete with the CCP for the sovereignty of China."²² This formula was meant to replace Deng Xiaoping's initiative of "one country, and two systems," which put Taiwan subordinate to the CCP's authority. Lee first introduced this "one country, two governments" formula in his inauguration speech in 1990, when he announced that "The KMT government is willing to hold talks with the PRC within the one-China framework and on a government-to-government basis *with equal status*."²³ In May 1991, the KMT government unilaterally terminated its 42-year-old civil war status with the CCP. This decision indicated that Taiwan formally acknowledged the existence of two equal political entities in two separate areas of China.²⁴ In 1992, Taiwan officially adopted the "one China, two equal political entities" concept to define its "one China" principle.²⁵ Building upon this definition, the Lee administration continued its social and economic opening

²¹ Murray A. Rubinstein, "Political Taiwanization and Pragmatic Diplomacy: The Eras of Chiang Ching-Kuo and Lee Teng-Hui, 1971-1994," in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (New York: An East Gate Book, 2007), 462.

²² Ogasawara Yoshiyuki, "Taiwanese Identity and The "One China Principle": Policies of the Lee Teng-Hui Administration Towards China."

²³ Peter Ferdinand, *Take-Off for Taiwan?* (London: A Cassell Imprint, 1996), 72-73. Also see the website of Mainland Affairs Council: <http://www.mac.gov.tw/big5/mlpolicy/cschrono/sc2.htm#001>. Accessed March 11, 2010.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 73.

²⁵ On August 1, 1992, an official definition of the "one China" principle was passed by the National Unification Council, stating that the existence of a divided China governed by the two political entities is an objective reality. Please see the archive of the mainland China policy at the website of Mainland Affairs Council: <http://www.mac.gov.tw/>. Accessed May 15, 2011.

toward China.²⁶ Negotiations over non-political issues via government-authorized private agencies also took place. The relationship between both sides of the Strait was smoothly expanding during the early 1990s.

However, disagreement between Taipei and Beijing regarding the former's sovereign status continued to produce great uncertainties over cross-Strait relations.²⁷ Exacerbating this situation was President Lee's dedication to expand Taiwan's international visibility. As discussed above, Lee's "pragmatic diplomacy" obtained substantial success in the early 1990s. By the mid-1990s, Taiwan had achieved significant democratization progress, including the political reform to hold the first direct presidential election scheduled in March 1996. These achievements created the image of an active political reformer for Lee, which was popular in the West. Fully understanding the advantage of this positive reputation, Lee decided to use Taiwan's democratization as leverage to win over greater support from other democracies. For instance, in 1994, Lee hired the Cassidy & Associates, a powerful Washington lobby firm, to increase Taiwan's ability in winning favors with the US government—Taiwan's most important ally.²⁸ This strategy was successful. Elsewhere in the world, Taiwan's economic diplomacy was also fruitful. During the New Year period of 1993-1994, President Lee and Prime Minister Lien Chan (連戰) even "made breakthrough visits to the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand."²⁹ These diplomatic accomplishments, along with Lee's effort to promote the Taiwanese identity, seriously concerned Beijing. Some began to suspect that Lee was having a secret agenda to pursue

²⁶ Lee's cross-Strait policy principle was "engagement on the basis of equal status."

²⁷ John Fuh-sheng Hsieh, "Taiwan's Mainland China Policy under Lee Teng Hui," *American Asian Review* XX, no. 1 (2002): 111.

²⁸ Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *Lee Teng-Hui and Taiwan's Quest for Identity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 196-97.

²⁹ Michael Yahuda, "The International Standing of the Republic of China on Taiwan," *The China Quarterly* 148(1996): 1333.

Taiwan's *de jure* independence from China. In 1995, Lee submitted an application for a US visa to attend the reunion ceremony of his alma mater, Cornell University. Lee considered this trip an important step to demonstrate Taiwan's sovereignty to the international society. As a result of Taiwan's successful public relations effort in Washington and the Clinton administration's weak position vis-à-vis Congress, the State Department finally decided to grant Lee the visa after weeks of political struggle.³⁰

Lee's Cornell visit enraged Beijing, who saw it as a proof of his independence agenda. To retaliate, PRC President Jiang Zemin launched a series of missile tests in the Taiwan Strait about 90 miles north of Taiwan beginning July 21, 1995.³¹ The missile firing continued in early 1996, and finally stopped after the US deployed two aircraft carrier battle groups toward the Taiwan Strait. Besides showing its resolve of retaliation, Beijing might have also expected that its military intimidation could "pressure President Lee not to run for president in the first direct presidential election in the R.O.C's history or, alternatively, persuade Taipei to cancel the election,...[which] strongly implied Taiwan possessed national sovereignty apart from China and therefore represented a two-China or one-Taiwan, one-China policy."³²

³⁰ Other than the lobbying by Cassidy & Associates, one diplomatic incident that occurred in the previous year also contributed to Congress's support for Lee's visit in 1995. In 1994, on his trip to Central America, the US government granted Lee a "second-class" status reception when the latter's flight was making a refueling stop in Honolulu. Lee refused to get off the airplane and expressed his anger to Natale Bellocchi, the head of the Washington office of the AIT who was responsible for receiving Lee. This event soon spread to the news media and caused strong critiques among the public and members of the Congress. There was a pro-Taiwan atmosphere in Congress against the State Department's concern of China. Several Congressmen began to discuss the possibility of inviting Lee for a visit to the United States as compensation. This support toward Taiwan continued into the next year. In 1995, when Lee was again considering attending the reunion event at Cornell University, Congress expressed strong support for Lee's visit and requested that the Clinton administration issue its permission. Facing strong pressure from the legislature and the public, the Clinton administration finally decided to grant a visa for Lee's visit.

³¹ Bates Gill and Chin-hao Huang, "More Strait Talk: Ten Years after the Taiwan Missile Crisis," *China Brief* 5, no. 22 (2005).

³² John F. Copper, "The Origins of Conflict across the Taiwan Strait: The Problem of Differences in Perceptions," *Journal of Contemporary China* 6, no. 15 (1997): 201.

Despite Beijing's military and verbal threats, Lee won the election with a majority of votes. Cross-Strait relations thus entered a period of stalemate.

During his last term in office (1996-2000), President Lee continued to promote Taiwanese identity and to resist Beijing's political and economic influences. This effort reached its peak in the middle of 1999, when Lee publicly defined the relationship between Taiwan and China as "nation-to-nation, or at least special state-to-state ties" in an interview with a German broadcaster, Deutsche Welle.³³ This statement again infuriated Beijing, and killed a planned visit by Wang Daohan, president of the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS).³⁴ It also prompted the Chinese leadership to issue a *White Paper on the One-China Principle and the Taiwan Issue*, which explicitly declares that "if Taiwan indefinitely rejected political talks with Beijing on China's unification, Beijing would have to use certain coercive measures, including military force, to resolve the Taiwan issue."³⁵ The consequence was escalated tension in the Straits.

Lee Teng-hui's twelve years of ruling left an important political legacy that strongly influenced the 2000 presidential election. His promotion of Taiwanese identity successfully shaped and reinforced the general public's self-identification. According to a longitudinal survey conducted by the Election Study Center (ESC) at the National Chengchi University, although approximately 50% of Taiwan people hold dual identities (both Chinese and Taiwanese), the ratio of people who consider themselves as solely Taiwanese rose from 17.6% in 1992 to 39.6% in 1999. In contrast, the ratio of solely Chinese identification

³³ The full text of the interview is available on the website of the Mainland Affairs Council: <http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=61697&ctNode=6232&mp=1>. Accessed February 17, 2010.

³⁴ The ARATS is a "non-governmental" organization established by China to handle technical or business matters with Taiwan. Its counterpart in Taiwan is the Straits Exchanges Foundation (SEF).

³⁵ Xiaobo Hu and Gang Lin, "The PRC View of Taiwan under Lee Teng-Hui," in *Sayonora to the Lee Teng-Hui Era*, ed. Wei-chin Lee and T. Y. Wang (New York: University Press of America, 2005), 292.

decreased from 25.5% in 1992 to 12.1% in 1999 (see Figure 2.1). This change in the public's national self-identification meant that presidential candidates' willingness and capability to express their love for Taiwan, rather than for China, were now an important factor to attract more votes. Nonetheless, from a policy perspective, the rise of Taiwanese identity does not equal an increased quest for Taiwan independence. As the ESC's surveys demonstrate, the majority of Taiwan people prefer maintaining the status quo in the Taiwan Strait (see Figure 2.2). Therefore, after several years of cross-Strait stalemate and the emerging crisis resulting from Lee's "special state-to-state" statement, the public was concerned about whether those presidential candidates were capable of improving Taipei's relationship with Beijing and lifting the current restrictions regarding cross-Strait exchanges imposed by the Lee administration. In sum, Lee's identity politics and hard-line China policy position left two important legacies for the competitors of the presidential office. On the one hand, they have to be able to demonstrate their ability to secure the "Taiwan-first" value.³⁶ On the other hand, they are also expected to seek cross-Strait détente and create a more favorable environment for social and economic exchanges between Taiwan and China. These two objects are sometimes mutually conflicting, and thus striking a balance between them has become a highly challenging task for Lee's successors.

³⁶ Szu-yin Ho and I-chou Liu, "The Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of the Taiwan People in the 1990s," *American Asian Review* XX, no. 2 (2002): 72.

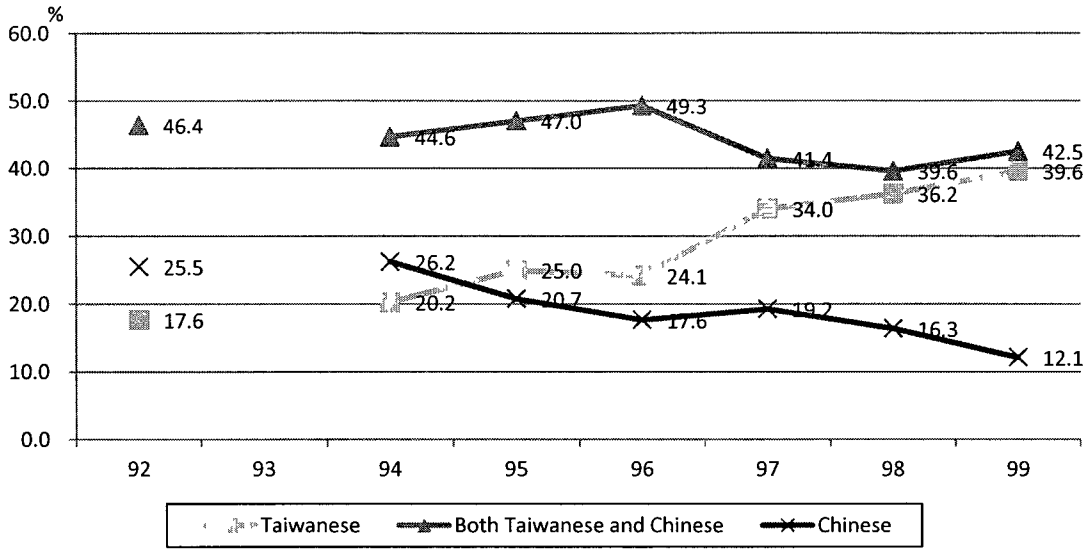


Figure 2.1: Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity in Taiwan over Time

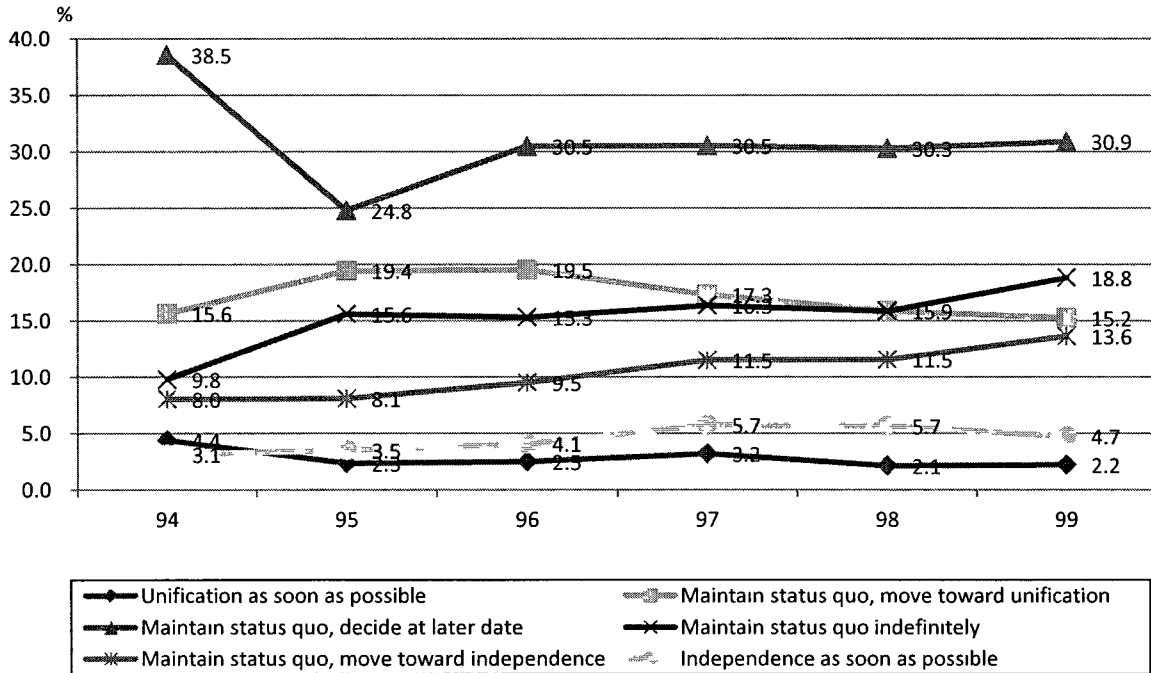


Figure 2.2: Changes in Unification/Independence Preferences in Taiwan over Time

III. Peaceful Regime Change and Chen Shui-bian's Domestic Problems

The presidential election on March 18, 2000 was a political watershed of Taiwan. On that day, the DPP presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian defeated the long-ruling KMT's candidate Lien Chan and others, and became ROC's second president directly elected by the people on the island. Nonetheless, although this change of power had remarkable implications on Taiwan's democratic achievement, it also brought high levels of political instability to the island as a result of the Chen administration's inability to effectively run the central government. Three factors attribute to the newly elected president's governing difficulties. First, Chen did not win the election with a decisive majority vote. Rather, he defeated the second-place candidate, the independent James Soong Chu-yu (宋楚瑜), with only 2.5 percent of vote.³⁷ Second, the DPP did not control the majority of the Legislative Yuan. Therefore, this gave the informal opposition coalition of the KMT and the newly established People's First Party (PFP) great advantage in counterbalancing the DPP government's power and obstructing its policy decisions. Third, the DPP lacked both experience in and savvy political personages for running the giant state bureaucracy.³⁸ These weaknesses seriously undermined President Chen Shui-bian's ability to fulfill his governing responsibility.

Other than political factors, the emergence of economic crisis further challenged the Chen administration's governing capability. Two months after Chen took office, Taiwan's stock market began to plummet as a response to a series of the government's economic policy mistakes. For instance, the government's surprising announcement of scrapping the

³⁷ In the 2000 presidential election, the DPP's Chen Shui-bian and Annette Lu Hsiu-lien (呂秀蓮) won 39.30% of the vote, the KMT's Lien Chan and Vincent Siew Wan-chang (蕭萬長) won 23.10% of the vote, and the Independent James Soong and Josephine Chao-hsiung (張昭雄) won 36.8% of the vote.

³⁸ See Yun-han Chu, "Democratic Consolidation: In the Post-KMT Era: The Challenge of Governance," in *Taiwan's Presidential Politics*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), 89.

ongoing Fourth Nuclear Power Plant in October 2000 strongly damaged Taiwan's international credibility.³⁹ The Chen administration's inability to produce consistent economic policy further weakened the business sector's trust in the government and increased the uncertainty in the economic environment.⁴⁰ Consequently, Taiwan began to suffer from economic recession since late 2000. Figures 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5 below demonstrate the statistics of Taiwan's weighted stock exchange index, unemployment rate and inflation rate from 2000 to 2007. Taiwan's stock market took a nose dive in August 2000 and never returned to the level of 8,000 until mid-2007. The slumping stock market signaled the business sector's and the public's lack of confidence in the economy. Another economic challenge to the Chen administration was the rising unemployment rate. The inflation rate also began to surge since the summer of 2003. These poor economic records resulted in serious economic pressure on the Chen administration. The declining economy and constant political collisions between the ruling and opposition parties seriously damaged the public's trust in the state leader. According to the periodic public survey conducted by the TVBS Poll Center, President Chen's approval rating dropped rapidly after enjoying sky high support by the public during the first two months of his presidency (Figure 2.6).

³⁹ ———, "Taiwan in 2000: Managing the Aftershocks from Power Transfer," *Asian Survey* 41, no. 1 (2001): 47.

⁴⁰ Yu-shan Wu, "Taiwan in 2001: Stalemated on All Fronts," *Asian Survey* 42, no. 1 (2002): 31.

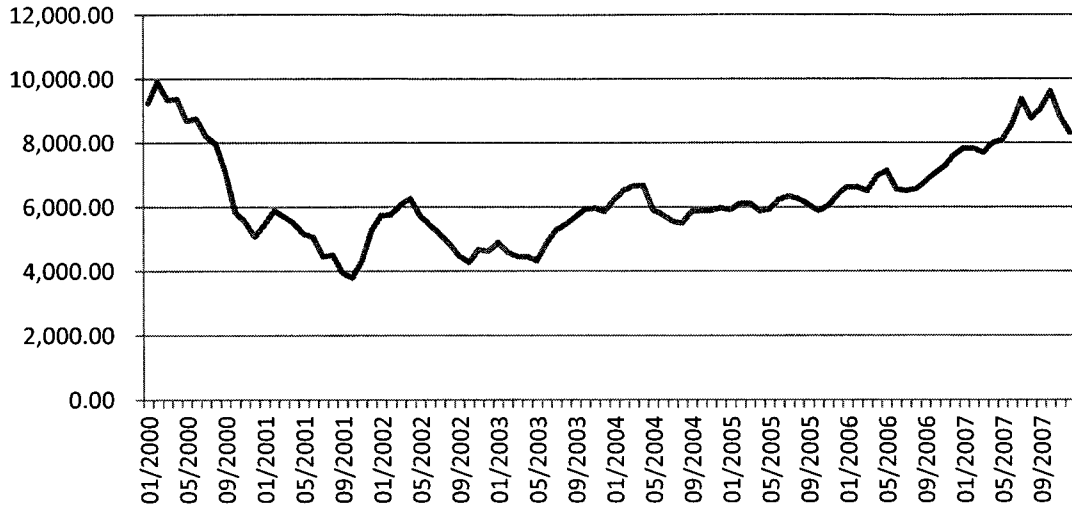


Figure 2.3: Taiwan Stock Exchange Weighted (TAIEX) Index, May 2000-December 2007⁴¹

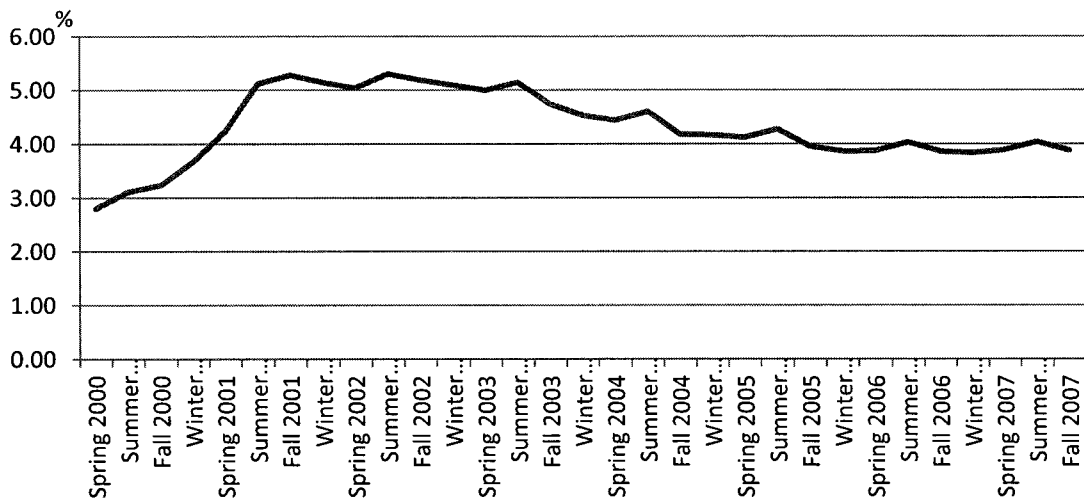


Figure 2.4: Taiwan's Unemployment Rate, 2000-2007⁴²

⁴¹ Data are available at the website of Taiwan Stock Exchange Corporation (TWSE): <http://www.twse.com.tw>. Accessed November 20, 2011.

⁴² Data are available at Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan. <http://www.dgbas.gov.tw>. Accessed November 11, 2011.

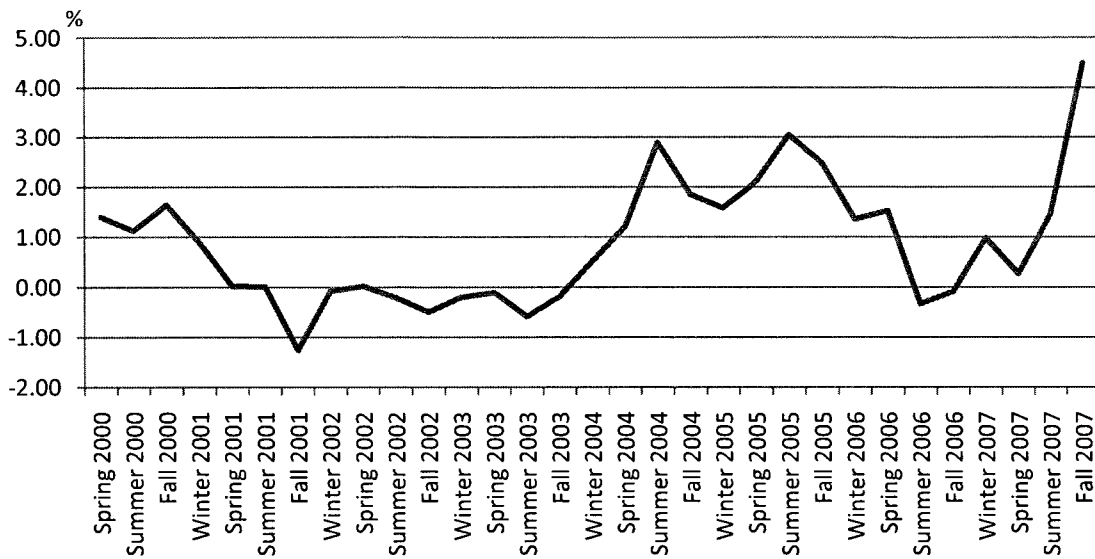


Figure 2.5: Taiwan's Inflation Rate, 2000-2007⁴³

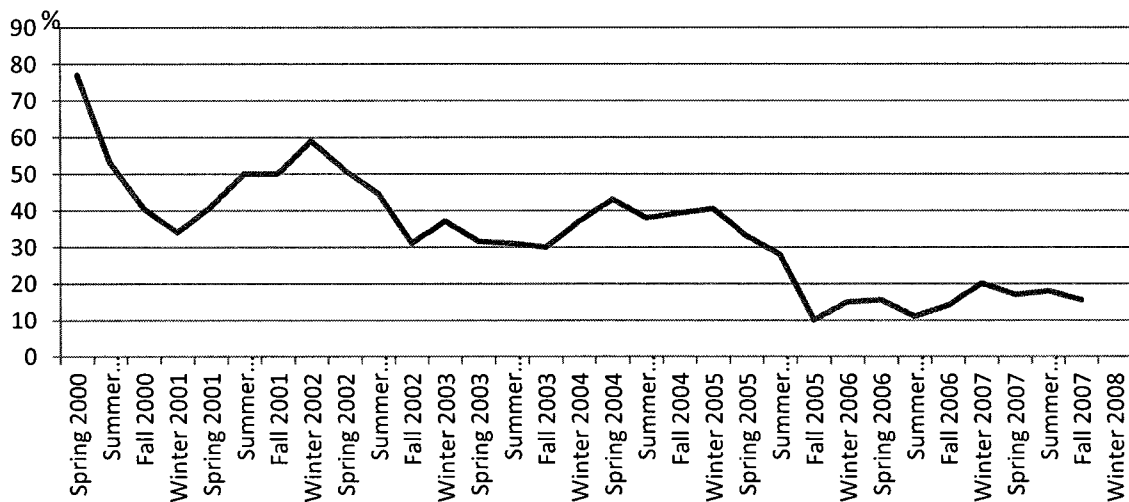


Figure 2.6: President Chen Shui-bian's Approval Rating, 2000-2008⁴⁴

⁴³ Data are available at Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan. <http://www.dgbas.gov.tw>. Accessed November 11, 2011.

⁴⁴ The polling reports are available on the TVBS Poll Center's website: http://www1.tvbs.com.tw/tvbs2011/pch/tvbs_poll_center.aspx.

IV. Chen Shui-bian's Moderate China Policy Position during the First Two Years

In the area of the cross-Strait relations, President Chen Shui-bian took a moderate stance toward China at the beginning of his presidency. During his presidential campaign, he repeatedly emphasized his desire to repair the damaged cross-Strait relations resulting from former President Lee Teng-hui's "Special State to State" statement. In his 2000 inaugural speech, Chen made the "four no's and one without" pledge to assure his international and domestic audiences that he would not unilaterally change the cross-Strait status quo during his tenure. Although this promise was welcomed by the Clinton administration, Beijing responded with great suspicion and caution. The TAO in Beijing criticized Chen for avoiding the "one China" principle in his inaugural speech. Seeing the DPP government's fragility in front of the KMT-controlled Legislative Yuan, the Chinese leadership was determined to put great pressure on Chen to get him to officially accept the "one China" principle as Beijing defined it.⁴⁵ Such a demand was a clear contrast to the DPP's political principle that considers Taiwan as an independent state. Moreover, it also contradicts the pro-unification KMT's party position on the "one China" issue, which claims that the idea of "one China with different interpretation" was the key principle defining the KMT's "one China" principle. Therefore, accepting the "one China" principle as Beijing defined it would be political suicide in Taiwan, since no political leader would accept without risking his or her political career. Chen responded to Beijing's demand by calling for the two sides to resume

⁴⁵ Vincent Wei-cheng Wang, "The Chen Shui-Bian Administration's Mainland Policy: Toward a Modus Vivendi or Continued Stalemate?," *American Asian Review* XX, no. 3 (2002): 108. Since 1979, Beijing has insisted that the "one country, two systems" formula should be applied to define the "one China" principle. This formula considers Taiwan a local province subordinated to the central government in Beijing. See T. Y. Wang and I-Chou Liu, "Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations," *Asian Survey* 44, no. 4 (2004): 578.

talks without preconditions and expressed that he was willing to discuss “one China” as a topic.⁴⁶ The Chinese leadership dismissed his proposals perfunctorily.

Despite Beijing’s cold shoulder, Chen Shui-bian’s attempts to break the cross-Strait stalemate continued. On September 14, 2000, Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) announced that the “mini three links” between Taiwan’s frontline islands and China would be established gradually in the coming years.⁴⁷ This policy officially took effect on January 1, 2001. In August 2001, Chen endorsed a policy suggestion presented by a cross-Strait panel of the Economic Development Advisory Conference (EDAC) to replace the restrictive “no haste, be patient” policy guidelines regulating cross-Strait trade and investments implemented by former President Lee Teng-hui in 1996⁴⁸ with a more liberal formula of “active opening, effective management.”⁴⁹ Three months later, the Executive Yuan announced its decision to lift the previous US \$ 50 million cap on individual

⁴⁶ Wang, "The Chen Shui-Bian Administration's Mainland Policy: Toward a Modus Vivendi or Continued Stalemate?," 101.

⁴⁷ The opening of the “three links,” which refers to direct post, trade, and transportation exchanges between Taiwan and China, has always been a key issue in cross-Strait relations. After years of discussion, there was still no progress in realizing this goal due to the unresolved disputes over Taiwan’s sovereign status between Taipei and Beijing. To address the mounting social demands of the “three links”, Taipei announced unilaterally the opening of the “mini three links” between Taiwan’s frontline islands and China. The government’s hope was that this limited contact could provide a foundation for both sides of the Strait to negotiate a mutually satisfying plan for the “three inks.” Wen-hung Fang, "Links between Kinmen, Mainland China to Take Effect Gradually: MAC," *Central News Agency*, September 14, 2000, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁴⁸ In order to slow down Taiwan businessmen’s investment in China, President Lee Teng-hui announced the “no haste, be patient” policy as the new guideline for cross-Strait economic exchanges in August 1996. The policy prohibited Taiwan businessmen from participating in any infrastructural project or investing in high-tech sector on the mainland. It also ruled that any investment in the mainland exceeding US \$50 million dollars were subjected to administrative approval on a case-by-case basis. See T. J. Cheng, "China-Taiwan Economic Linkage: Between Insulation and Superconductivity," in *Dangerous Strait: The US-Taiwan-China Crisis*, ed. Nancy B. Tucker (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 103.

⁴⁹ The Economic Development Advisory Conference was convened by President Chen Shui-bian to build consensus among different political parties and industrial and social groups regarding the future direction of Taiwan’s economic policy. The conference included five panels—cross-Strait matters, industry, employment, finance, and investment. David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Of Economics and Elections," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2001). The final report by the cross-Strait panel is available at the policy archive of the Mainland Affairs Council, http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=59299&ctNode=5645&mp=1&xq_xCat=2001. Accessed March 25, 2009.

investment in China and reduced the number of production categories in which Taiwan investors were prohibited in investing.⁵⁰

On May 9, 2002, when delivering a speech during his inspection tour to Taiwan's frontline island, the Dadan Island in the Kinmen (Quemoy) group. President Chen once again expressed his good will toward Beijing. He stated that he would continue pursuing the normalization of cross-Strait economic and trade relations, and expanding the scale of the current "mini three links" as preparations for the eventual goal of establishing the "three links." He also maintained that he planned to send a delegate headed by the DPP's China Affairs Department to visit China as an important first step to resume cross-Strait talks after he took the position as the DPP's chairman on August 1.⁵¹ On the next day, Chen further expressed his flexibility in cross-Strait negotiation by pointing out that his administration was "willing to consider authorizing private organizations to negotiate with Beijing for the opening of...the three links...under the three highest principles of "no downgrading, no localization and no marginalization."⁵² In order to establish mutual understanding, several DPP elites close to Chen made unofficial trips to China. On July 16, President Chen decided to appoint legislator Chen Chung-hsin (陳忠信) as chief of the DPP's China Affairs Department. This appointment was another effort of the president to break the impasse between the DPP and CCP, since legislator Chen had been well known for his pragmatic China policy orientation and his active advocacy for an "open-door policy" toward China,

⁵⁰ Deborah Kuo, "Executive Yuan Passes Easing of 'No Haste, Be Patient' Policy," *Central News Agency* November 7, 2001, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵¹ Sofia Wu, "President Chen to Send DPP Negotiators to Mainland China," *Central News Agency* May 9, 2002, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic. The full content of the speech is available at the MAC's website, http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=59204&ctNode=5645&mp=1&xq_xCat=2002. Accessed April 10, 2010.

⁵² ———, "President Outlines 3 Principles for Three Links' Talks," *Central News Agency* May 10, 2002, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

according to the designated DPP secretary-general Chang Chun-hsiung (張俊雄).⁵³ A senior DPP legislator described this decision as “a big gift to Beijing by President Chen.”⁵⁴ At the time, the atmosphere between Taipei and Beijing was reasonably smooth, though official dialogue was still absent.

V. A New Phase: Chen Shui-bian’s Fluctuation between Moderation and Confrontation

Although President Chen Shui-bian offered various proposals to break the cross-Strait deadlock, Beijing kept ignoring his friendly messages. Therefore, after two years of stalemate, Chen’s China policy position began to shift between moderation and confrontation. In the summer of 2002, he made a provocative statement, in which he implied that Taiwan and China were two different countries. But despite the subsequent political tension between Taipei and Beijing, Chen soon returned to his previous moderate policy direction. In mid-2003, however, Chen initiated a series of anti-China policies that challenged the cross-Strait status quo. This period of confrontation ended in mid-2004, and Chen once again shifted back to moderation. However, he returned to a provocative China policy stance in the years of 2006 and 2007. This section provides a review of Chen’s policy fluctuation after the summer of 2002.

1. The “Walk on Taiwan’s Own Path” and the “One Country on Each Side” Incidents in summer 2002

⁵³ ———, “DPP Reshuffles Staff Ahead of Chen Taking Party Chairman Position,” *Central News Agency* July 18, 2002, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵⁴ Chio-shui Lin (林濁水), *Lishi Juchang: Tongku Zhizheng Banian (歷史劇場：痛苦執政八年, Theatre of History: Eight Years of Painful Governance)* (Taipei: INK Publishing, 2009), 56.

A big shock in the cross-Strait relationship occurred on July 21, the same day President Chen Shui-bian concurrently became the DPP's chairman. Earlier that day, the Beijing-based *Xinhua News Agency* reported that Nauru had signed a communiqué with China in Hong Kong to switch its diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China. The report also said that Nauru has accepted Beijing's "one China" policy, which stated that "Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory."⁵⁵ The timing of this report was seen as a slap on the face for Chen, especially after he had made a series of good-will gestures to seek cross-Strait reconciliation. Angered by this humiliation, Chen castigated Beijing for initiating a diplomatic war with Taiwan by playing "money diplomacy." He also threatened that if the Chinese leadership kept refusing to reciprocate his friendly proposals, Taiwan might have to seriously consider the possibility to "go its own path." Although Chen did not explain what he meant by "Taiwan's own path," it was generally interpreted as a threat to formally declare Taiwan independence.⁵⁶ To ease domestic and international concerns about this statement, related administrative heads and DPP officials clarified that there would be no changes of the current good-will China policy direction. However, several days after the Nauru incident, Chen made another controversial speech regarding the cross-Strait relations when addressing via video the annual conference of the World Federation of Taiwanese Associations, an overseas organization that has dedicated to pursuing Taiwan independence. In this speech, Chen called for his audience to pay great attention to three important issues. First, Taiwan people should seriously consider that they "walk on their own path and walk toward their own future." He further defined the "Taiwan's own path" as the path to democracy, the path

⁵⁵ "Nauru Sets up Formal Ties with Mainland China," *China Post* July 22, 2002, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵⁶ William Foreman, "Taiwan Opposition Demands President Explain Apparent Threat of Independence," *Associated Press* July 22, 2002, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

to freedom, the path to human rights, and the path to peace. Second, it is important to make it explicit that the status between Taiwan and China is “one country on each side.” Third, it is impossible for Taiwan to accept the “one country, two systems” formula and that the 23 million people on the island are the only ones who have the right to decide the future of Taiwan.⁵⁷ This speech immediately invited strong reactions from the public: independence supporters cheered his remark of “one country on each side of the Strait,” while others worried about its negative impact on the already strained cross-Strait relations. Beijing’s TAO issued a statement criticizing Chen for “leading Taiwan toward disaster.” The government also initiated a propaganda barrage against Chen, which for the first time attacked him by name.⁵⁸ Although there was no immediate crisis resembling the situation in 1999, when President Lee Teng-hui made the “special state-to-state” statement, the mistrust between both sides of the Strait grew deeper. Speculation about Chen’s true intention and the possibility of a radical policy shift in favor of Taiwan independence has emerged both within and outside the island. But Chen and the MAC later made a series of statements to reassure that the administration’s China policy remained unchanged. Taipei’s China policy attitude moved back to a more friendly position soon after. For instance, Chen announced that his government was determined to normalize cross-Strait economic ties in late August and reiterated his “four no’s” pledges in his 2003 New Year Speech. The president’s avoidance

⁵⁷ E. H., "President Chen's Remarks on Cross-Strait Relations Criticized," *Central News Agency*, August 3 2002. The full context of the speech is available at the Presidential Office’s press releases archive: <http://www.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=131&itemid=1311&rmid=514&sd=2002/08/02&ed=2002/08/04>. Accessed January 22, 2011.

⁵⁸ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Chen Muddies Cross-Strait Waters," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2002).

of repeating his “two countries on each side” seemed to signal his intention to pursue cross-Strait reassurance.⁵⁹

2. The 2003-2004 Anti-China Campaign Proposals

President Chen Shui-bian’s policy attitude toward China remained modest during the first quarter of 2003. Nonetheless, after mid-2003, as Chen began to campaign for his reelection in a national poll scheduled for March 2004, he proposed a series of hostile China policy initiatives. For instance, when the World Health Assembly (WHA) once again rejected Taiwan’s application for observer status with the World Health Organization (WHO) on May 19, 2003,⁶⁰ Chen took this chance to publicly call for a national referendum on Taiwan joining the WHO. He argued that this referendum was crucial for Taiwan people to demonstrate to the world their consensus and determination to take part in the international organization. This act could also evoke anti-China emotions among the public, who had been angered by Beijing’s delay in admitting the origins of the spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and its initial effort to interfere with the WHO’s communication with Taiwan.⁶¹ Following Chen’s call, his administration began to draft a bill to provide legal basis for holding referenda. The initiative for a WHO referendum triggered Beijing’s alarm, since it always considered the passage of a referendum law, which might open a door for a future referendum on Taiwan’s *de jure* independence, highly dangerous.⁶²

⁵⁹ ———, “China-Taiwan Relations: Chen Adopts a More Cautious Approach,” in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2003).

⁶⁰ Beginning in 1997, Taiwan has submitted its application for observer status in the WHA annually.

⁶¹ David G. Brown, “China-Taiwan Relations: The Shadow of Sars,” in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2003).

⁶² *Ibid.*

While the referendum law was sent to the Legislative Yuan for deliberation, President Chen augmented his anti-China propaganda. Starting from mid-July, Chen frequently repeated his earlier controversial statement that Taiwan and China were “one country on each side across the Strait.” On July 25, 2003, in a meeting with former US representative to Taipei James Lilley, Chen told him that “the next year’s presidential election will be a competition between ‘one country on either side’ of the Taiwan Strait and the ‘one China’ principle.”⁶³ This statement was a declaration that “China-related issues” would be the main theme of Chen’s reelection campaign. On September 28, Chen pledged that he would construct a “new constitution” in 2006 when speaking on the DPP’s 17th birthday celebration.⁶⁴ In the following days, Chen further stated that the new constitution he planned to draw up would “transform Taiwan into a ‘normal, complete, and great’ country,” implying that a change of the national name, flag, and territory would be considered. The DPP explicitly linked the new constitution to “the rejection of the ‘one China’ principle and promotion of the concept of ‘one country on each side’.” All these statements implied that the Chen administration would begin to pursue Taiwan’s *de jure* independence. The result was rising tension between Taipei and Beijing.

On November 27, the Legislative Yuan passed the Referendum Law proposed by the KMT and its political ally, the People’s First Party. Unlike the Executive Yuan’s draft, the KMT-PFP version of the Referendum Law draft has strict limits on the topics for referenda. Further bad news for President Chen and the DPP was that this legislation also prohibited the

⁶³ Chieh-yu Lin, "Taiwan President: Election to Be Competition between 'One Country on Each Side of Strait,' 'One-China Principle'," *Taipei Times* July 26, 2003, FBIS, CPP20030728000190.

⁶⁴ Yun-Ping Chang and Tai-lin Huang, "Taiwan President Pledges New Constitution in 2006," *Taipei Times* September 29, 2003, FBIS, CPP20030929000152.

executive branch from initiating referenda,⁶⁵ which tied the president's hand over his plan to hold a referendum on joining the WHO. Nonetheless, determined to play the "referendum card" for his election campaign, Chen decided to take advantage of Article 17 regarding the handling of emergent national security challenges, which authorized the president to "initiate a defensive referendum on national security issues should the nation come under the threat of external invasions."⁶⁶ Drawing on this article, Chen declared that he would initiate a defensive referendum in conjunction with the presidential election to call on Beijing to remove missiles currently targeting Taiwan and to renounce the use of force against Taiwan. Beijing was immediately infuriated by these two issues that were aimed to prompt the public's hostility toward it. Nonetheless, understanding that any threatening reaction would only justify Chen's anti-China maneuver, Beijing did not respond directly to it. Instead, it turned to seek Washington's help to curb Chen's independence-leaning propaganda. Worrying that intensified confrontations across the Strait would complicate its ongoing war in Iraq and on terrorism, the US put strong pressure on Chen to give up his plan. Eventually, Chen conceded by replacing these two confrontational issues with less sensitive topics to ease Washington's anger. The finalized topics for the defensive referendum thus were: first, whether Taiwan should purchase more anti-missile weapons to strengthen its defense capability in the face of China's military threat; second, whether the government should

⁶⁵ Due to its inability to control the majority seats in the legislature, the DPP-proposed bill of the Referendum Law that contains no restrictions on the topics was not adopted. David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Strains over Cross-Strait Relations," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2003).

⁶⁶ Sofia Wu, "President Chen Reaffirms Determination to Hold 'Defensive Referendum'," *Central News Agency* November 30, 2003, accessed August 11, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

negotiate with China to form a “peaceful and stable framework for cross-strait interactions.”⁶⁷

3. Back to Moderation: Chen Shui-bian’s China Policy after Winning the Reelection

President Chen Shui-bian’s provocative campaign strategy brought high tensions in the Taiwan Straits in late 2003 and early 2004. Nonetheless, he made a significant shift in his cross-Strait policy direction after he won reelection. First, despite Beijing “issu[ing] its most threatening policy statement to date” one week before his second inauguration,⁶⁸ Chen explicitly stated in his inaugural speech in May that constitutional reform would be made through its amendment procedure, rather than an unconstitutional referendum he proposed in his campaign. Second, he retreated from his radical position during the presidential campaign regarding sensitive subjects such as national name, flag, and territorial definition, and instead announced that these issues should not be included in the constitutional reform process before there is a comprehensive consensus on these issues. Third, he reaffirmed his “four no’s and one without” pledges he made in the 2000 inaugural address. Lastly, he expressed his desire to resume cross-Strait dialogue.⁶⁹ When his pro-independence supporters blamed

⁶⁷ Tim Culpan and Philip P. Pan, “Taiwan Alters Arms Referendum Language,” *The Washington Post* January 17, 2004.

⁶⁸ Yun-han Chu, “Taiwan’s National Identity Politics and the Prospect of Cross-Strait Relations,” *Asian Survey* 44, no. 4 (2004): 485. One week before Chen’s second inauguration, PRC Premier Wen Jiabao in London revealed that Beijing was considering drafting a National Reunification Law to authorize the central government to adopt necessary means—including uses of force—to pursue cross-Strait unification. See Willy Lam, “Beijing Steps up Pressure on Chen,” *CNN News* May 19, 2004, accessed May 5, 2011, http://articles.cnn.com/2004-05-18/world/china.willycolumn_1_li-weiyi-li-jiaquan-nos-policy?_s=PM:WORLD.

⁶⁹ For the full text of Chen’s inaugural speech in 2004, see President Chen Shui-bian’s 2004 Inaugural Speech, “Paving the Way for a Sustainable Taiwan,” <http://www.mac.gov.tw/public/Data/962822475171.pdf>. Accessed on July 20, 2010.

him for moving away from his campaign promises, Chen argued that his position change was a necessary move in order to win broader support of the political opposition.⁷⁰

Other than moving back toward a moderate position on sovereign issues, President Chen also took a bold step to seek breakthrough in the cross-Strait relations in the spring of 2005. In his 2005 New Year speech, Chen proposed that his government would establish a “Cross-Strait Peace Council” to seek domestic consensus over a stable framework for interaction between Taipei and Beijing. In late February 2005, Chen met with PFP Chairman James Soong to discuss possible cooperation between both parties. In a statement of a mutual agreement over ten consensuses, Chen reiterated his “four no’s” promises and pledged that his constitutional reform would not include issues regarding changes in national sovereignty, territory, and cross-Strait status quo. Furthermore, when KMT Chairman Lien Chan and Soong announced their plan to visit Beijing to demonstrate their ability to communicate with the Chinese leadership, Chen decided to give them his blessing at the last minute before their departure after his initial criticism. This action angered Chen’s predecessor, Lee Teng-hui, who strongly criticized the two opposition leaders’ China visits for “selling Taiwan” and condemned Chen for his failure to objection to such visits. In response, Chen fired an all-out attack against Lee.⁷¹ Chen’s action was a risky move for the purpose to seeking cross-Strait reconciliation, because it undermined the close political ties between him and Lee and between Chen’s DPP and its political ally, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU).⁷²

⁷⁰ Maubo Chang, "Chen Says His Vision of Constitutional Reform Best Serves the People," *Central News Agency* May 25, 2004, accessed August 11, 2010.

⁷¹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Opposition Leaders Visit China," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2005), 86.

⁷² The TSU is a pro-independence party formed by Lee Teng-hui’s supporters in August, 2001. Lee Teng-hui is the party’s spiritual leader.

Chen's withdrawal from his radical position after mid-2004 reduced the tension between both sides of the Strait. Although Beijing's refusal to have contact with the Chen administration continued, Chen's China policy remained moderate for more than one year before another shocking turn in Chen's China policy position occurred in early 2006.

4. The Political Campaign on Abolishing the National Unification Council and Guidelines for National Unification

In the run-up to the 2005 local elections for city mayors and county magistrates, President Chen tried to use anti-China rhetoric to mobilize support for DPP candidates.⁷³ He warned his audience that the KMT would sell Taiwan to China once it won more than half of the city and county halls.⁷⁴ As the polling date approached, Chen further threatened to tighten restrictions on cross-Strait activities "in order to safeguard the well-being and rights of the people" if the opposition coalition won more than half of the posts contested.⁷⁵ However, Chen's campaign strategy did not work. Rather, the DPP suffered a "larger than expected defeat" in the elections.⁷⁶ While the KMT won 14 of the 23 constituencies (mayoral seats in five cities and magistrate posts in 18 counties), the DPP only won six of them—a decline from its previous nine posts.⁷⁷ The worst news for the DPP was its loss of three important power bases to the KMT: I-lan County, Taipei County, and Chia-yi City. After the defeat,

⁷³ Seats open in the "three-in-one" local elections include city, county, and town government heads and council members. The elections of city mayors and county magistrates were the most important ones.

⁷⁴ "Highlights: Ettoday, P'ing-Kuo Jih-Pao 6 Nov 05," November 6, 2005, FBIS, 200511071477.1_927c009a52402e1d. It is reasonable to argue that the elections were for local administrative posts and representatives and did not have direct impact on cross-Strait relations. Nonetheless, the focus of Chen's campaign strategy was to portray the KMT as a traitor of Taiwan. Once it grew stronger in the local elections, it would gain greater sources to conspire with China to undermine Taiwan's sovereignty.

⁷⁵ Nai-kuo Han, "President: China Policy to Be Tightened If Opposition Wins Elections," *Central News Agency* November 30, 2005, FBIS, 200511301477.1_5eb4002b2a020198.

⁷⁶ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Will Cross-Strait Momentum Resume?," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2005).

⁷⁷ "Taiwan Opposition Wins Landslide Victory in Local Elections," *Agence France Presse* December 3, 2005, FBIS, 200512031477.1_d75d00188c6b5e84.

Chen chose to shy away from the public for several days in order to sort out his administration's future direction of policy priority. Many predicted that Chen would not change his previous moderate policy line under public pressure.⁷⁸ Some indications in the government seemed to support this optimistic view. First, in response to worries about whether Chen would carry out his campaign threat to tighten cross-Strait restrictions, Vice MAC Chairman You Ying-lung (游盈隆) confirmed that "The government will not take the initiative to tighten cross-strait policies unless the Chinese government makes a move which is against the interests of the Taiwanese people."⁷⁹ In an interview, Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) Chairman Chang Chun-hsiung said that President Chen's statement about tightening cross-Strait policy was unofficial, and thus should not be quoted out of context. Chang also predicted that there would be a window of opportunity between 2006 and 2008 to reestablish institutionalized negotiations between the SEF and the ARATS.⁸⁰ Even within the DPP, many senior members argued that the party should stop using nationalist propaganda to run elections.⁸¹

However, President Chen surprised most of his party members and the public by moving in the opposite direction. When he finally returned to the media spotlight to give the 2006 New Year's speech, he announced his decision to switch the government's cross-Strait policy principle from the more liberal guideline of "active opening and effective management"

⁷⁸ Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Will Cross-Strait Momentum Resume?." DPP legislator Lin Chuo-shui, a senior party member, also pointed out that President Chen's pre-election threat to tighten cross-Strait policy would not happen. Instead, "the DPP regime has come to an understanding that it has to revise its cross-Strait policy with new thinking." But he also warned that President Chen might follow through his threat if "the pan blue continues to tip in favor of Beijing and even tries to interfere in the government's exchanges with Beijing." See "Highlights: Taiwan Daily Papers' Internet Versions 5 Dec 05," December 5, 2005, FBIS, 200512051477.1_7f8b02019744a766.

⁷⁹ Hsiu-chuan Shih, "No Major Change in Cross-Strait Policies: MAC," *Taipei Times* December 5, 2005, FBIS, 200512051477.1_b5f90078e36b18c2.

⁸⁰ "Highlights: Cross-Strait News 6 Dec 05," December 6, 2005, FBIS, 200512061477.1_cd570061ec3437d0.

⁸¹ "Highlights: Taiwan Political Weekly 25 Dec 05," December 28, 2005, FBIS, 200512281477.1_e9d6030134112247.

to the more restricted one of “active management and effective opening.”⁸² The pro-independence forces immediately expressed their support for this new principle,⁸³ although the TSU was somewhat skeptical about how much progress toward Taiwan independence Chen would achieve.⁸⁴ After the New Year’s speech, Chen became more amenable to demands from pro-independence groups. In late January, the pro-independence organization World Taiwanese Congress (WTC) passed a resolution designating the scrapping of the National Unification Council and the Guidelines for National Unification as their goal for the year during its annual meeting in Dallas, USA. Examination Yuan President and DPP activist Yao Chia-wen (姚嘉文) reported this resolution to Chen after returning from the meeting as a guest speaker. In response, Chen announced that he intended to abolish the National Unification Council (NUC) and Guidelines for National Unification (GNU) several days later during a meeting with his supporters in southern Tainan County (台南縣), a political stronghold of the DPP.⁸⁵

President Chen’s plan to abolish the NUC and GNU immediately caused a political storm for the politically symbolic significance of the two institutions. Established in October 1990 under then President Lee Teng-hui, the NUC’s goal was to draw up the GNU in order to “define the goals for different phases of the ROC's future China policy and constitute a

⁸² In 2001, the Chen administration announced the “active opening and effective management” policy guideline for cross-strait exchanges. While the 2001 policy principle emphasized the government’s goal to ease restrictions on cross-strait economic exchanges, the new guideline stressed the need for the government to tighten its control over the development of cross-strait economic ties.

⁸³ Alan D. Romberg, “The Taiwan Tangle,” *China Leadership Monitor* 18(2006), accessed May 2, 2010, http://media.hoover.org/documents/clm18_ar.pdf. For news text, see Editorial, “Chen Finally Finds Strategic Clarity,” *Taiwan News* January 3, 2006.

⁸⁴ Shu-ling Ko, “TSU Throws Its Support Behind Chen's Statements,” *Taipei Times* January 2, 2006, OSC, 200601021477.1_3e2f0083de30d54a.

⁸⁵ The WTC is a US-based annual meeting formed by pro-independence groups in 2000. This proposal was reported to President Chen by Examination Yuan President Yao Chia-wen (姚嘉文), who is also a senior party activist. Lilian Wu, “Pro-Independence Group Advocates Scrapping of NUC: Examination Head,” *Central News Agency* January 23, 2006, OSC, 200601231477.1_9fcb005064653f60.

long-range blueprint for national unification.”⁸⁶ The Executive Yuan passed the GNU in March 1991. Together, these NUC and GNU represent Taiwan’s commitment to eventual unification with China. When the DPP’s Chen Shui-bian took office in 2000, he pledged not to abolish the NUC and the GNU during his presidency. Along with the “four no’s”, this promise aimed to reassure the Taiwan public and the international community of Chen’s commitment to maintaining the status quo in the Strait.⁸⁷ Therefore, Chen’s announcement of his plan to scrap the NUC and GNU quickly caused Beijing and US concern, since it was an apparent violation from one of Chen’s “four no’s and one without” promises. After a month of intensive communications between Taipei and Washington, Chen agreed to use the term “cease to function” instead of “abolish” to handle the NUC and GNU issues. Nonetheless, the dispute over whether Chen actually deceived the US by equating the term “cease to function” to “abolish” in front of his domestic audience continued afterwards.

5. The Decision to Hold A Referendum on Joining the United Nations as Taiwan and the “Four Wants and One Without” Speech

The NUC dispute was finally settled by the end of February after President Chen Shui-bian announced that the NUC and GNU would “cease to function” rather than “be abolished.” On March 21, 2006, in a meeting with Stephen Young, the newly appointed director of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), Chen assured him that there would be no changes in his promises to the U.S and no more “surprises” between Taipei and

⁸⁶ Mainland Affairs Council, “Relations across the Taiwan Straits,” <http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=68292&CtNode=5836&mp=4>. Accessed on July 8, 2010. For full text of the Guidelines for National Unification, see: “Guidelines for National Unification,” http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=51022&CtNode=5913&mp=3&xq_xCat=1997. Accessed on July 8, 2010.

⁸⁷ Kerry Dumbaugh, *Taiwan: Overall Developments and Policy Issues in the 109th Congress*,” CRS Report for Congress (September 17, 2008).

Washington.⁸⁸ On June 8, Chen further reiterated his “four no’s” promises when receiving AIT Chairman Raymond F. Burghardt.⁸⁹ However, more surprises did come in a few months.

In early September, President Chen pledged to his supporters in his hometown during a rally that he would pursue three political campaigns in the remainder of his presidential tenure: “apply for U.N. membership under the name of Taiwan, promote a new constitution and demand the opposition KMT return its ill-gotten assets to the nation's coffers.”⁹⁰ This statement was an indication that Chen was playing the nationalist card again. On November 1, in an interview with *Financial Times*, Chen stated that he would dedicate the remaining time of his tenure to constitutional change. He further argued that it was worth considering ceasing the “absurd and unrealistic definition of sovereignty” in the current constitution and writing a “Second Republic Constitution,” in which the precise scope of Taiwan’s sovereignty and territory would be redefined in the preamble. Chen argued that this new constitution would not change the cross-Strait status quo or break his 2000 inaugural pledges on not to declare Taiwan independence, because “the relevant section of the old constitution defining the territory would not be touched.”⁹¹ However, although Chen, being trained as a lawyer, was skillful at making careful linguistic distinctions to paper over or expand differences,⁹² this technical defense was not convincing to his audience outside and on the island.

⁸⁸ , *China Times* March 22, 2006, Section A5.

⁸⁹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Despite Scandals, Some Small Steps," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2006).

⁹⁰ Y.F. Low, "President Pledges to Carry out Three Campaign in Remainder of Term," *Central News Agency* September 9, 2006, accessed March 2, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

⁹¹ For the interview, see Kathrin Hille, "Taiwan's President Suggests Writing New Constitution," *Financial Times* November 1, 2006, accessed March 2, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic. According to the current ROC Constitution, the state’s territory includes “existing national boundaries.” Since the Constitution was written while the ROC government was still in China, the scope of the territory generally refers to the land under the KMT regime’s control prior to 1949, including the mainland of China and Mongolia.

⁹² I thank Professor David Bachman for pointing out this to me.

President Chen accelerated his effort to push his agendas forward regarding sensitive sovereign issues in the year of 2007. On March 4, when making a speech at the dinner in Taipei celebrating the 25th anniversary of the pro-independence Formosa Association for Public Affairs (FAPA), Chen declared that there were four things that Taiwan wants: independence, name rectification and to join the UN and other international organization as “Taiwan,” a new constitution, and economic and social development. Furthermore, he argued that Taiwan did not have the “usual left-right political issues.” Instead, the core political divide in Taiwan is along the independence-unification spectrum.⁹³ This statement, known as the “four wants and one without,” was a vivid contrast to the “four no’s and one without” pledges Chen made in 2000 and thus constructed an intentional breach of his previous promises that he would not pursue Taiwan independence and related policies. In April 2007, with Chen’s support, DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun announced the party’s plan to launch a referendum on joining UN as “Taiwan”. This proposal was first rejected by the Referendum Review Committee but later revived by the DPP-governed Executive Yuan.⁹⁴ Chen also quietly encouraged Yu to have the party adopt a “normal country resolution,” which explicitly committed the DPP to Taiwan’s name change, to writing a new constitution redefining Taiwan’s territory and population, and to holding a referendum that declares Taiwan as independent.⁹⁵ Apparently, at this time point, Chen has entirely replaced his

⁹³ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: To Be Concerned or Not?," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2007). For full Chinese context of this speech, see <http://www.president.gov.tw/Default.aspx?tabid=131&itemid=12424&rmid=514&sd=2007/03/01&ed=2007/03/10>.

⁹⁴ The Referendum Review Committee is the main review body of referendum proposals. The committee members include representatives of different parties and independents. Once it receives a proposal, the committee members meet to discuss whether to approve the proposal or not. The decision then was sent to the prime minister in the Executive Yuan. If the proposed referendum is approved by the committee and the Executive Yuan, it is then scheduled for a national vote.

⁹⁵ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: In the Throes of Campaign Politics," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2007).

pragmatic approach with a confrontational one vis-à-vis mainland China. The cross-Strait relations thus were again filled with tensions.

In this section, I review the fluctuation of President Chen Shui-bian's China policy since 2002. To provide a detailed view of changes in Chen's China policy orientation, I compiled a list of his policy initiatives regarding the relationship between Taipei and Beijing, as shown in Table 2.1. The last column of the table indicates the nature of each policy on the cooperation-conflict dichotomy. I give each friendly policy aiming to enhance bilateral cooperation a value of 1, and each confrontational policy seeking to break the president's promises to maintain the status quo in the Strait a value of -1. Based on a survey on policy analyses by the US-based think tank, Center for Strategic & International Studies, news reports in local news agencies, and official policy statements, I collect fifty one policy initiatives and proposals by President Chen. Figure 2.7 demonstrates the quarterly fluctuation in Chen's China policy orientation. It shows that high levels of provocation in Chen's China policy appeared in fall 2003, winter 2006, and the period between summer 2006 and summer 2007.

Table 2.1: President Chen Shui-bian's policy initiatives toward China.

No.	Date	Policy	Cooperation/ Conflict
1	5/20/2000	Made the "Five no's and one without" pledge	1
2	6/20/2000	Proposed a reconciliation meeting without preconditions.	1
3	12/31/2000	The New Year's message mentions the concept of "political integration" with China; initiated to cancel former President Lee Teng-hui's restrictive policy on cross-Strait exchanges.	1
4	5/18/2001	Proposed to meet with General Secretary of the CCP Jiang Zemin and to conduct cross-Strait talks on all kinds of issues as long as these talks are held under peaceful, equal and democratic rules.	1
5	1/1/2002	Proposed to establish "constructive cooperation" with China, and a new framework to pursue economic and culture integration as the first step of political integration.	1
6	1/13/2002	Announces the word "Taiwan" will be added to ROC passports.	-1
7	5/9/2002	Proposed to send DPP official to China, reiterated political integration ideas; invited PRC leader to visit Taiwan.	1
8	7/21/2002	Threatened that Taiwan may have to "go its own way" if China continued to ignore its friendly proposals.	-1
9	8/3/2002	Makes video conference remarks about "one country on each side."	-1
10	8/25/2002	Instructed the central government to renew effort to achieve "three links"—direct transportation, trade, and postal links.	1
11	1/1/2003	Reiterated the "Four no's" pledge.	1
12	5/20/2003	Called for referendum on WHO participation.	-1
13	8/12/2003	Revived the "one country on each side of the Strait" statement.	-1
14	8/13/2003	Proposed three-stage process can lead to direct transport in 2004.	1
15	9/9/2003	Stated that steps for convenient cross-Strait transport will be taken by Oct. 19.	1
16	9/28/2003	Called for new constitution in 2006.	-1
17	10/4/2003	Stated that Taiwan should become a "normal, complete, great state."	-1
18	10/7/2003	Called for end of "one China" concept and acceptance of "one country on each side."	-1
19	11/11/2003	Stated the plan to draft constitution by 2006, and submit it to referendum and implement by 2008.	-1
20	12/8/2003	Announced anti-China topics for the "defensive referendum" to be held on March 20.	-1
21	5/20/2004	Retreated from his campaign proposals on constitutional reform via referendum and changes of national name, flag, and territory definition. Implicitly reiterated his 2000 promises without mentioning the four no's and one without	1
22	10/10/2004	Proposed talks based upon "1992 meeting in Hong Kong."	1
23	11/7/2004	Pledged "new constitution" for Taiwan when meeting with pro-independence professors.	-1

Table 2.1: President Chen Shui-bian's policy initiatives toward China—continued.

24	11/10/2004	Proposed a military buffer zone and a Taiwan Strait Consultation Mechanism	1
25	11/15/2004	Stated the plan to seek to join UN as "Taiwan."	-1
26	11/30/2004	Reaffirmed his commitment to the "four no's."	1
27	1/1/2005	Proposed to establish a Cross Strait Peace Council	1
28	2/24/2005	Met with opposition PFP Chairman James Soong and signed a 10-point statement. Reiterated four no's and his promises not to include issues regarding sovereignty, territory, and cross-Strait status quo in constitutional reform.	1
29	5/3/2005	Invites General Secretary of CCP Hu Jintao to come and observe Taiwan's sovereignty	1
30	6/27/2005	Called for controls on high-tech trade with China.	-1
31	9/4/2005	Stated that PRC academic degrees will not be recognized	-1
32	1/1/2006	Initiated a more restrictive policy of "active management, effective opening" to govern cross-Strait activities.	-1
33	1/29/2006	Proposed to scrap the NUC and GNU.	-1
34	6/8/2006	Reiterated the "four no's" pledge when receiving AIT's Burghardt.	1
35	9/24/2006	Called for reconsideration of territory defined in constitution	-1
36	9/28/2006	Declared that "Taiwan is Taiwan, China is China, and Taiwan and China are totally different countries."	-1
37	10/15/2006	Proposed to consider the idea of "second republic."	-1
38	11/3/2006	Proposed to freeze current constitution and establish a second republic.	-1
39	2/8/2007	Proposed to change name of China Postal Service and other state-owned businesses and overseas government offices.	-1
40	3/4/2007	Delivered the "four wants and one without" statement.	-1
41	4/11/2007	Send a letter to WHO Secretary General Margaret Chan applying for membership as "Taiwan."	-1
42	5/11/2007	Invited PRC President Hu to visit Taiwan.	1
43	5/16/2007	Declared that Taipei will apply to UN as "Taiwan."	-1
44	5/16/2007	Encouraged DPP Chairman Yu to draft the "Normal Country Resolution."	-1
45	5/21/2007	Declared that Olympic torch must come from and go to third countries.	-1
46	5/22/2007	Announced that referendum on joining UN as "Taiwan" to be held during elections.	-1
47	7/18/2007	President Chen sends letter to UN Secretary General Ban applying for admission as "Taiwan."	-1
48	7/3-/2007	President Chen writes UNSC President Amb. Wang and Secretary General Ban again applying for UN membership.	-1
49	10/10/2007	In National Day address, President Chen for first time does not use term "Republic of China."	-1
50	10/29/2007	President Chen says vote for UN referendum is a vote against unification.	-1
51	11/6/2007	President Chen says 40 percent cap will not be eased while he is president	-1

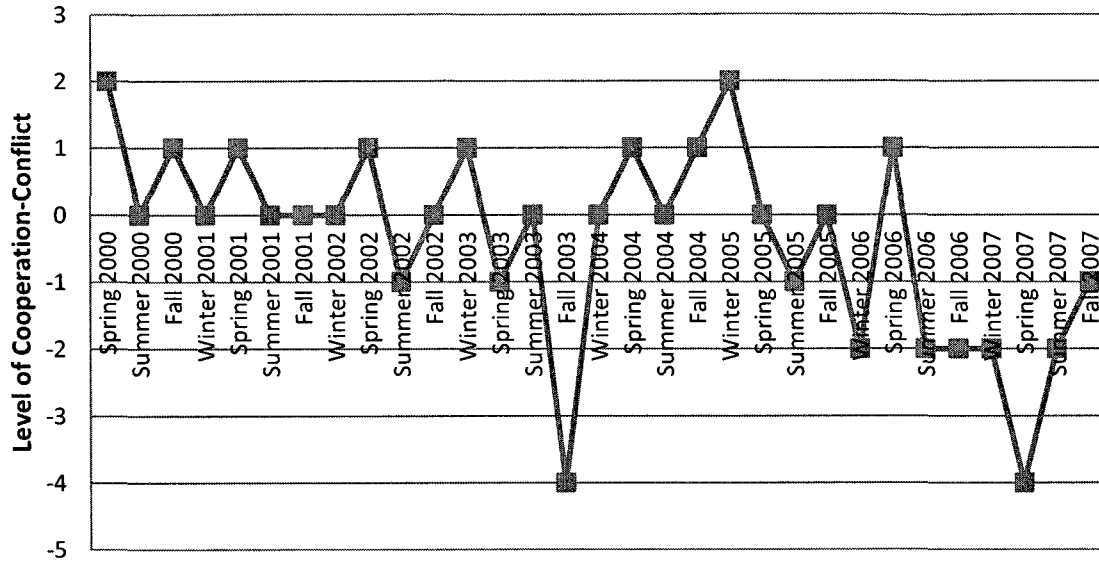


Figure 2.7: Level of cooperation-conflict in President Chen Shui-bian's China policy by quarter. Higher positive scores represent greater tendency of cooperation.

Summary

The cross-Strait relationship has been an important issue in Taiwan's politics. Taipei's effort in handling its relations vis-à-vis Beijing and the outside world is complicated by its political liberalization and democratization in recent decades. During the years of Chang Kai-shek's authoritarian leadership, Taiwan's foreign policy was guided by the "non-coexistence" principle, which would not allow any country or international institution to recognize the ROC and the PRC at the same time. After Chiang Kai-shek died, his son and successor Chiang Ching-kuo adopted a more flexible foreign policy principle known as "substantive diplomacy." This new policy guideline allowed Taiwan to establish unofficial relationship with countries and international institutions recognizing the PRC, and thus was crucial for Taiwan's survival in the international society. However, despite his innovative foreign policy thinking, Chiang Ching-kuo still followed the traditional "one China"

principle, which insisted that the ROC and the PRC were two competing regimes for the representativeness of China.

Chiang Kai-shek's and Chiang Ching-kuo's insistence on the traditional "one China" principle was faced with strong challenges when President Lee Teng-hui pushed forward its democratization progress. In order to expand his power base and consolidate the KMT's ruling in Taiwan, Lee put the promotion of localized Taiwanese identity at the top of his political agenda. As Taiwanese identity flourished on the island, Lee decided to push his predecessor's "substantive diplomacy" further to call for broader international recognition of Taiwan's independent sovereignty and autonomy. His strategy of using Taiwan economic power and democratic achievement to win international friendship turned out to be successful. These achievements led Beijing to suspect that Lee was secretly looking for Taiwan's *de jure* independence, and thus the cross-Strait relationship began deteriorating in 1995. By the time Lee left office, Taipei was faced with a complicated environment of cross-Strait policy-making: a declining economy with both international and domestic causes, a society closely integrated with the Chinese market, and a strong sense of Taiwanese identity among the public. The first two circumstances resulted in an increasing demand of cross-Strait reconciliation to improve Taiwan's trade and investment profits by the business community as well as the public. The latter condition created a request to safeguard Taiwan's sovereign independence and to continue expanding its international space. Any leader after Lee would need to cope with these two policy demands carefully, since they are often mutually conflicting.

Chen Shui-bian entered office after Lee stepped down in 2000. As the first non-KMT regime, the Chen administration's ruling of Taiwan was full of political struggles and

controversies. Among those inconsistent policies causing internal and external confusions, the most influential was Chen's foreign policymaking toward China. Although he put the improvement of the cross-Strait relationship on the top of his political agenda during his first two years in office, the president nonetheless began to shift back and forth between confrontation and moderation. Chen's China policy had critical international consequences: they not only exacerbated the strained relationship between Taiwan and China, but also seriously undermined Washington's trust in and support for the Taipei. More significantly, the recurrent tensions increased the risk of a militarized conflict that would involve two major powers, China and the United States, in the Taiwan Strait. Therefore, it is important for students of international and cross-Strait relations to understand the driving forces behind Chen's decision making of provocative China policy. In this research, I propose that President Chen's shifts toward provocative China policy were driven by his need to divert domestic problems that threatened his power survival. To verify this hypothesis, in the next chapter I conduct both quantitative and qualitative analyses to examine whether the diversionary foreign policy model best explains changes in Chen's China policy.

Chapter Three

Testing Hypotheses of Chen Shui-bian's Provocative China Policy

Chapter two of this dissertation reviews the fluctuations in President Chen Shui-bian's China policy orientation. In this chapter, I will analyze whether the diversionary foreign policy theory or an alternative theory best explains those changes. If the diversionary hypothesis is correct, one should find in the data that rising levels of provocation in Chen's China policy are positively associated with deteriorated domestic political, social, and economic conditions. On the other hand, if the strategic reaction model is the most compelling explanation, one should expect to find that Chen was more likely to launch a confrontational China policy when there was a diplomatic or political provocation by Beijing. Furthermore, if alliance politics best explains Chen's China policy changes, one should see greater levels of policy provocation when Taipei enjoyed stronger political support of Washington.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. The first section discusses the quantitative data and the result of the quantitative analysis. The second section applies qualitative analysis of the political process leading up to Chen's provocative policy initiatives. The third section examines the second alternative explanation, the alliance politics model. The last section summarizes the findings of this chapter and discusses their theoretical implications.

I. Data, Model, and Statistic Analysis

The principal hypothesis of this dissertation is that President Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy was driven by his need to divert attention from domestic problems. The dependent variable, the level of provocation in President Chen Shui-bian's China policy

is measured by a quarterly aggregation of the conflict/cooperation score, as demonstrated in Figure 2.3. As discussed on Chapter 2, I collect Chen's China policy initiatives from various sources. I assign each initiative a score of positive 1 or negative 1, depending on whether it has a cooperative or confrontational characteristic. The independent variables of the diversionary model are Chen's domestic problems, including GDP per capita, inflation and unemployment rate, public approval, large-scale domestic protest, election quarter, and intra-party/coalition conflict. I collect the data of the economic indicators from the Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, the government department in charge of national statistics in the Executive Yuan.¹ All the economic indicators are lagged by one quarter. Data of the president's approval ratings come from the TVBS Poll Center, one of the major public opinion survey centers that publish periodical polling data.² The reason I select this source is because it is the only public opinion poll that conducts frequent surveys (at least one in each quarter) on the president's approval ratings while also providing raw data to the general public. One concern of using this data source is that the TVBS News Corporation's pro-KMT position might bias its polling reports. Nonetheless, this caution does not apply here since this dissertation concerns the impact of the temporal variation in the approval ratings rather than the "snap shot" effect of a specific survey report. Following Li et al.'s previous work on Chen Shui-bian's China policy, I lag the approval rating by one time-unit.³ An intra-party/coalition conflict is marked when a given quarter witnessed an election of party chairmanship or a high-profile protest by party/coalition elites to demand that Chen Shui-bian should hand over his leadership. Data of the intra-party/coalition conflict

¹ The economic data are available on the department's website: <http://www.dgbas.gov.tw/mp.asp?mp=1>.

² The polling reports are available on the TVBS Poll Center's website: http://www1.tvbs.com.tw/tvbs2011/pch/tvbs_poll_center.aspx. The raw data are available for purchase.

³ Yitan Li, Patrick James, and A. Cooper Drury, "Diversionary Dragons, or 'Talking Tough in Taipei': Cross-Strait Relations in the New Millennium," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 9(2009): 384.

and large-scale domestic protest are collected from a variety of news reports. Lastly, the independent variables of the strategic reaction model and alliance politics model in Taiwan's case is PRC provocation and US support, respectively. Data of these two variables come from news reports and China's and US official policy statements.

One limitation of this regression model is that it is not suitable to capture the second alternative hypothesis in this dissertation—the level of US support for the Chen Shui-bian administration. The reason is that it usually takes a longer time span—maybe years—for a state to change its alliance commitment toward an ally. Therefore, the quarterly basis model is not adequate to capture the variation in US commitment to Taiwan. Therefore, I examine this alternative theory with a qualitative analysis in the third section of this chapter. To summarize, the regression model tests four sets of hypothesized relationships. The first three are parts of the diversionary model, and the last one represents the strategic reaction model:

1. Higher levels of provocation in President Chen's China policy are associated with lower GDP per capita and higher inflation and unemployment rate.
2. Higher levels of provocation in Chen's China policy are associated with lower approval ratings and the presence of large-scale domestic protest.
3. Higher levels of provocation in Chen's China policy are more likely to occur during the quarters of electoral campaigns and when there is intra-party/coalition conflict.
4. Higher levels of provocation in Chen's China policy are associated with the presence of PRC provocations.

The statistical results are listed in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: OLS regression analysis on Chen Shui-bian's China policy

	Coefficient	Standard Error	P-value ^a
Lagged GDP per capita	-0.0000	0.0000	0.3512
Lagged inflation rate	0.6293	0.2438	0.0089
Lagged unemployment rate	0.4265	0.3702	0.1314
Lagged approval	0.0171	0.0250	0.2508
Protest	0.2139	0.3018	0.2432
Presidential election	-1.7853	0.9863	0.0427
Legislative election	-0.1042	0.8946	0.4543
Intra-party conflict	-2.7019	0.7748	0.0012
PRC provocation	-0.7014	0.5009	0.0884
Constant	-1.0771	5.4709	0.4230

Note: a. One-tailed test.

b. Number of observations=30.

According to the result shown in Table 3.1, political factors are the main driving force of Chen's provocative China policy. The results show that the level of provocation in Chen's China policy increased during the presidential election campaign quarters, which is consistent with much existing work on diversionary foreign policy. The most interesting finding is that the more influential attribute of Chen's confrontational China policy orientation was the emergence of intra-party conflict. This supports my additional diversionary hypothesis based on Bueno de Mesquita's argument that leaders' legitimacy within their political coalition is a crucial element for their political survival.⁴ This variable has been ignored in current diversionary literature due to the fact that the relevant data are generally not available in existing datasets. The model used in this chapter thus leads to an important preliminary research finding on the role of intra-party/coalition conflict in the relationship between domestic politics and diversionary foreign policy.

In terms of economic factors, the statistical analysis does not find lower GDP per capita or higher unemployment rate to be associated with higher levels of policy provocation.

⁴ See Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2003).

However, the model shows that Chen tends to pursue a more cooperative China policy during the times of higher inflation. This finding suggests that the president might have to focus more on economic rather than political policy when faced with inflation problems. The social diversionary variables, protest and presidential approval rating, did not have significant influence on the level of Chen's provocation toward China. Lastly, China's provocative policy against Taiwan also failed to explain the fluctuation in Chen's China policy orientation. This finding demonstrates that the president's provocative China policy initiative did not reflect his strategic response to Beijing's hostile policy actions, and thus should convince us to reject the strategic reaction model.

The above statistical analysis demonstrates that the main contributors to Chen's provocation against China are upcoming presidential elections and political challenges over his leadership within his party. To enhance the power of these quantitative findings, the next section provides a qualitative analysis based on small-N comparisons of the president's provocative China policymaking. The purpose of this step is to examine the contextual evidence on the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. Therefore, I focus on the four most dramatic policy shifts discussed on Chapter 2: the "walk on Taiwan's own path" and "one country on each side" remarks in the summer of 2002, the *campaign initiatives on new constitution and defensive referendum in fall 2003*, the decision to abolish the National Unification Council (NUC) and Guidelines of National Unification (GNU) in winter 2006, and the "four wants and one without" statement and the plan to hold a referendum on joining the United Nation (UN) under the name of Taiwan in winter 2007.

II. Strategic Interaction or Diversionary Behavior?—A Test of the Hendrickson Propositions

In order to offer a systematic framework for the comparisons in the section, I adopt Hendrickson's four propositions of diversionary foreign policy to examine whether these four provocative China policy initiatives reflect President Chen Shui-bian's strategic response to China's threat or his desire to divert domestic problems that jeopardized his political survival. According to Hendrickson, the decision making of a diversionary foreign policy has four characteristics. First, the policy is made single-mindedly by the leader or by a small group of close aides to the leader without conducting a comprehensive consultation with related administrative heads in advance. Second, the policy does not reflect the state's strategic interests. Rather, it merely serves the leader's parochial political benefits. Third, since the diversionary policy does not serve the state's strategic interests, Hendrickson argues that the opposition would strongly oppose such a policy. Besides this, one has to take into account Cramer's revision of this proposition, which suggests that the opposition's support could also be an indicator that the policy is a diversionary one. Also based upon the second proposition, Hendrickson argues that the fourth characteristic of a diversionary foreign policy is that the leader's foreign allies would not support or sympathize with his or her confrontational initiative because of its lack of strategic necessity.⁵ These four propositions together form an analytical framework that helps students in international relations conduct a more structural qualitative analysis to diversionary foreign policy. In the following text, I examine whether Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy initiatives fulfill all these

⁵ Ryan C. Hendrickson, "Clinton's Military Strikes in 1998: Diversionary Uses of Force?," *Armed Forces & Society* 28, no. 2 (2002).

propositions. A positive result would further strengthen the findings in the statistical model in Section 1.

1. Were the provocative policies made without meaningful consultation?

The four provocative policies examined in this section share one common characteristic: they were all personally made by President Chen Shui-bian. There were no indications that Chen conducted comprehensive or even cursory policy consultation with related department leaders before making the decisions to implement these policies. Even key party officials of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) were often taken aback by these policy announcements.

(1) The “Walk on Taiwan’s Own Path” and “One Country on Each Side” Statements

Although there were speculations that President Chen Shui-bian’s call for the people of Taiwan to “walk on their own way” in his inaugural speech as DPP Chairman demonstrated his decision to change his China policy shift toward a tougher stance, it was actually an improvised action of the president. According to a close aide to Chen, the president’s confrontational message was an immediate response to Beijing’s high-profile announcement that Nauru had switched its diplomatic recognition from the ROC to the PRC on the day of Chen’s DPP inauguration. Considering Chen’s recent efforts to seek cross-Strait reconciliation, including his talks about flexible arrangements for future dialogues about the “three links”⁶ and his decision to appoint the pragmatic political figure Chen Chung-hsin (陳忠信), as director of the DPP’s China Affairs Department, the Nauru incident was apparently a slap in the face for the president. Therefore, Chen’s off-the-script statement

⁶ The “three links” refer to direct transportation, trade, and postal exchanges between Taiwan and China.

reflected his anger with this disgraceful treatment. As one former high-rank official puts it, China's unfriendly action on the eve of Chen's inauguration as DPP Chairman was akin to pouring a bucket of stinking waste on someone who was holding a celebration party. No one could take this humiliation without making some sort of retaliation.⁷

A few days after the "walk on Taiwan people's own way" statement, Chen went on to describe the relationship between Taiwan and China as "one country on each side" of the Taiwan Strait when addressing the annual conference of the World Taiwanese Conference (WTC). This was another off-the-cuff statement by Chen, and he did not even consult with his small decision making group about this announcement. Officials of the DPP's Policy Research and Coordinating Committee and its Legislative Yuan Caucus told the press that they were not informed by the president about this statement beforehand.⁸ Close aides to Chen pointed out that the decision to talk about this issue during the speech was an impromptu one made by Chen himself to express his disappointment about Beijing's lack of positive responses to his goodwill gesture, while at the same time appeasing his pro-independence audience in the WTC.⁹

(2) The 2003-2004 Reelection Campaign and Defensive Referendum

Unlike the "walk on Taiwan's own path" and the "one country on each side" statement, President Chen's declaration that he would write a new constitution for Taiwan and his decision to hold a defensive referendum concurrently with the 2004 presidential election was a carefully calculated plan to mobilize his supporters while at the same time to attracting more median voters. However, the deliberation was kept within a small group of

⁷ Interview with former NSC official in the Chen administration.

⁸ *China Times Express* August 4, 2002, section A2; *China Times* August 5, 2002, section A4.

⁹ Interviews with former top officials of the Chen administration.

Chen's close aides, most of them members of the NSC or the Presidential Office.¹⁰ Key administrative heads in the Chen administration were not consulted by the president.¹¹ As for the idea to hold a defensive referendum, it was completely invented by Chen himself as a way to counteract the Legislative Yuan's decision to not grant the executive branch the right of referendum initiation. The top-down decision-making process of these two policy initiatives indicated a lack of comprehensive exchange of opinions across related administrative departments.

(3) *The 2006 Political Campaign to Abolish the NUC and GNU*

President Chen Shui-bian's statement about abolishing the NUC and GNU apparently caught "most observers by surprise, including high-ranking members of the DPP."¹² For instance, Vice President Annette Lu Hsiu-lien (呂秀蓮) told reporters that Chen's NUC remark was "unexpected." Then DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun (游錫堃) also said that Chen did not inform the party about his move in advance.¹³ Nor did Chen discuss this issue with the newly appointed Premier Su Tseng-chang (蘇貞昌) beforehand.¹⁴ An unnamed official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) also confirmed that many high-ranking officials were not aware of Chen's plan to launch the NUC abolition campaign at the Lunar New Year gathering, including Presidential Office Secretary General Mark Chen Tang-shan (陳唐山),

¹⁰ *United Daily Evening News* September 29, 2003, section A2.

¹¹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Strains over Cross-Strait Relations," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2003).

¹² For instance, Vice President Annette Lu denied any involvement in the decision-making process. See Kerry Dumbaugh, *Taiwan: Overall Developments and Policy Issues in the 109th Congress*, CRS Report for Congress, (September 17, 2008), 4. DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun also confirmed that the party was not informed of Chen's plan in advance. See "Highlights: Taiwan Political Issues 31 Jan 06," January 31, 2006, OSC, 200601311477.1_dd92022cb0377e65.

¹³ For Lu's and Yu's responses respectively, see *United Daily News* February 1, 2006, OSC, 200602011477.1_56140142e8edbf6c; *China Times* February 1, 2006, OSC, 200601311477.1_dd92022cb0377e65.

¹⁴ Kerry Dumbaugh, *Taiwan: Overall Developments and Policy Issues in the 109th Congress*.

Foreign Minister Huang Chih-fang (黃志芳), MAC Chairman Joseph Wu Jau-shieh (吳釗燮), and the president's close aides.¹⁵ Finally, the tremendous "damage control" efforts by the administrative heads also demonstrated the administration's unpreparedness for this event.¹⁶

However, although President Chen's close aides seemed to be unprepared, Chen's decision to abolish the NUC was by no means an impromptu one. Rather, he had been considering this initiative for some time. After the December 2005 local elections, Chen held several private meetings with pro-DPP personages, most of whom were independence advocates.¹⁷ His 2006 New Year's speech was a friendly gesture to pro-independence supporters. In early January, a pro-independence magazine, *Xin Taiwan Xinwen Zhoukan* (新台灣新聞週刊, the *New Taiwan Weekly*), reported that a close friend in academia suggested to President Chen that he should scrap the NUC and GNU to counter the KMT's pro-unification agenda. This report was a "trial balloon" of Chen's NUC policy, although it did not catch much attention due to the magazine's lack of popularity.¹⁸ Accordingly, there must have been some discussion about the NUC policy between Chen and his close aides in the two months of December 2005 and January 2006. But Chen decided to announce it publicly prematurely without seeking a consensus among his advisors.

¹⁵ *China Times* February 7, 2006, OSC, 200602071477.1_698500f8847c4ff0. Interviews with former DPP and MAC officials of the Chen administration, January 2010.

¹⁶ After President Chen's Lunar New Year's speech, Vice Premier Tsai Ing-wen held several meetings with Secretary General of the National Security Council Chiou I-jen, MOFA Minister Huang Chih-fang, and MAC Chair Joseph Wu Jau-shieh, among others, in order to draft official statements about Chen's speech to address domestic and Washington's strong concerns. MOFA also tried to seek Washington's understandings through communication with the Taipei-based American Institute in Taiwan and R.O.C Representative David Lee's diplomatic effort in Washington.

¹⁷ *China Times* January 2, 2006.

¹⁸ Shih-chung Liu, "Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan's U.S. Policy, 2004-2008: Analysis and Recommendations " *CNAPS Visiting Fellow Working Paper, The Brookings Institution* (November 2009): 13, 18. For the original news report, see Tien-Sheng Kao (高天生), "Dujia Neimu: Xuejie Cubian Fei Guotong Gangling (獨家內幕: 學界促扁廢國統綱領, inside Story: Scholar Urges President Chen to Scrap the National Unification Guidelines)," *Xin Taiwan Xinwen Zhoukan* (新台灣新聞週刊, *New Taiwan News Weekly*) January 5, 2006. Available at: <http://www.newtaiwan.com.tw/bulletinview.jsp?bulletinid=23311>. Accessed 15 May 2010.

(4) *The “Four Wants and One Without” Declaration and the “UN Referendum”*

President Chen’s “four wants and one without” declaration resembled his “one country on each side” statement in two aspects: the occasions and timing he chose to make the speeches. First, while the “one country on each side” statement was made when holding an audio conference with the pro-independence WTC, Chen made the “four wants and one without” remark when addressing another independence-supporting organization, Formosa Association for Public Affairs (FAPA). Second, as the “one country on each side” statement, Chen did not consult with his close aides before making the “four wants and one without” speech.¹⁹ Except for Premier Su Chen-chang, many administrative heads of the Chen administration—including MOFA Minister James Huang Chih-fang, MAC Director Joseph Wu, and Vice President Annette Lu—confirmed to the press that the president did not forewarn them.²⁰ To handle the negative consequence of Chen’s surprising action, the Presidential Office quickly took comprehensive damage control efforts on the next day. Besides conducting intensive communication with Washington, the office also issued official statements to clarify that Chen was not planning to declare Taiwan’s *de jure* independence, and therefore his remark did not breach the “four no’s” inaugural pledges.²¹ However, Chen was determined to continue his nationalist agenda. Therefore, he instructed DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun to promote the party’s plan to hold a referendum on joining the UN under the name of Taiwan concurrently with the 2008 presidential election. Chen then instructed the

¹⁹ Shih-chung Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiuji: Taimei Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*) (Taipei: Taiwan Brain Trust, 2010), 165.

²⁰ *China Times* March 6, 2007, section A2. Premier Su claimed that he had seen the script of President Chen’s script in advance, see *China Times* March 7, 2007, section A4.

²¹ *China Times* March 6, 2002, section A4.

Presidential Office to establish a special propaganda task force to implement the “UN for Taiwan” political campaign domestically and internationally.

2. Were the provocative policies strategically necessary?

(1) The “Walk on Taiwan’s Own Path” and “One Country on Each Side” Statement

The immediate cause of President Chen Shui-bian’s July 21 “walk our own way” statement was the Nauru incident. Nonetheless, it also reflected Chen’s long-time disappointment with Beijing’s unwillingness to respond to his proposals about breaking current stalemates and conducting cross-Strait dialogues. As discussed above, before Chen’s assumption as DPP Chairman, he had adopted a series of efforts to improve mutual understanding between Taipei and Beijing. Besides choosing Chen Chung-hsin to head the DPP’s China Affairs Department, he also sent key DPP figures to visit Beijing in their personal capacities to exchange thoughts with Chinese officials in charge of cross-Strait issues. Chen even informed Beijing in advance about the list of people he planned to appoint to fill the DPP’s China and foreign policy related-posts. According to one official who attended these opinion exchanges, the atmosphere during these communications was cool. Therefore, the timing Beijing chose to announce the establishment of a China-Nauru diplomatic relationship was as a big surprise to Taipei.²² With this catalyst, President Chen felt it necessary to make tougher remarks to regain his esteem and demonstrate Beijing’s unreasonableness to his supporters. This suggests that the “walk on Taiwan’s own path” remark was more a warning to Beijing that Taipei’s goodwill was not unlimited than a real policy change of Chen and his administration.²³ In fact, Chen softened his tone toward China

²² Interview with former official in the Chen administration.

²³ *China Times* July 24, 2002, A3. A former official of the Chen administration points out that some Chinese officials in charge of cross-Strait affairs told Taipei that the Nauru incident was not a well-crafted plan by the

soon afterwards. For instance, on the next day, he instructed DPP deputy secretary-general Yu Shyi-kun to double the party's effort to introduce the "Resolution on Taiwan's Future" to people outside the party. The "Resolution on Taiwan's Future" was the DPP's official document adopted in 1999 in order to put aside its Party Constitution which declares that the pursuit of *de jure* Taiwan independence was the party's ultimate goal and to enable the party to seek cross-Strait conciliation. Yu's task indicated that Chen was still trying to improve the relationship between the DPP and the CCP.²⁴

Nonetheless, Chen's "walk on Taiwan's own path" statement did not change Beijing's hostile attitude. Rather, it reinforced it. Several days after the DPP chairman inauguration ceremony, China's major news outlet, the Xinhua News Agency (新華社), issued an article criticizing Chen's remark as "unwise threats" and was completely unhelpful to the improvement and stability of cross-Strait relations.²⁵ This was the first time Beijing criticized Chen by name since he took office in May 2000. On July 27, a news report said that military generals of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) have submitted a petition to President Jiang Zemin (江澤民), urging him to take a tougher stance on Taiwan.²⁶ A few days later, PRC Defense Minister Chi Haotian (遲浩田) presented a threatening message against Taiwan during a speech at the reception of the 75th anniversary of the PLA, warning that "we will try our utmost to achieve peaceful reunification but we will not renounce the use of force."²⁷ All

central leadership, but an accident resulting from poor bureaucratic coordination among different departments. Nonetheless, this diplomatic shock had already seriously damage Chen Shui-bian's ability to persuade his more anti-China supporters that a continuation of the effort to pursue cross-Strait reconciliation was the correct policy direction.

²⁴ *China Times* July 26, 2002, accessed March 8, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

²⁵ *Xinhua News* July 26, 2002, accessed March 8, 2010, <http://www.mac.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=62629&ctNode=6229&mp=1>.

²⁶ Jason Blatt, "Chinese Military Commanders Reportedly Seek Tougher Stance on Taiwan," *South China Morning Post* July 27, 2002, accessed March 8, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

²⁷ Peter Harmsen, "China's Army Marks 75th Anniversary with Taiwan Threat," *Agence France Presse* August 1, 2002, accessed March 8, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

these responses showed that despite the fact that Chen quickly softened his tone after the July 21 speech and continued to express his desire to seek cross-Strait contact, his statement had already deepened Beijing's mistrust. The Chinese leadership even considered Chen's emphasis on the DPP's "Resolution on Taiwan's Future" as an attempt to move toward *de jure* independence rather than an effort to create a more favorable platform to nurture cross-Strait communication. Faced with Beijing's negative response, especially the PLA's military threats, Chen decided to make the more provocative "one country on each side" statement when holding a video conference with his pro-independence audience.²⁸ Therefore, this statement reflected a reactive, rather than proactive, action.

The above analyses shows that President Chen's "walk on Taiwan's own path" and "one country on each side" statements reflected a strategic response to Beijing's unfriendly action. The purpose of these two statements was to make reactive responses to Beijing's unfriendly diplomatic and verbal provocations, while at the same time pressuring Beijing into reconsidering its persistent rejection to Taiwan's proposals of reopening cross-Strait contact. Consequently, they did not involve substantial policy change toward an unfriendly direction. Pragmatic efforts to expand cross-Strait economic ties were continued afterwards.²⁹

(2) The 2003-2004 Reelection Campaign and Defensive Referendum

In the case of Chen's anti-China campaign platform, it was unclear how the initiatives of a new constitution and defensive referendum fit Taiwan's strategic interests. On the one hand, there were no provocative cross-Strait policies from Beijing during this period of time,

²⁸ Interview with a top official of the Chen administration. Also, on August 2, President Chen Shui-bian and Vice President Annette Lu Hsiu-lien responded to Chi's remark by stating that repeated military threats would only push Taiwan farther away from unification. Chieh-yu Lin, "Government Leaders Lash out at China," *Taipei Times* August 2, 2002, FBIS, CPP20020802000064.

²⁹ "Taiwan Furthers Exchanges with China Despite Chen's Threat," *Agence France Presse* July 31, 2002, accessed March 9, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

since it was preoccupied with other domestic and international issues.³⁰ On the other hand, Chen's lack of clear blueprint about the new constitution and defensive referendum demonstrated that he did not mean to carry out these ideas seriously. First, although Chen repeatedly pledged that a new constitution would make Taiwan a "normal, complete, and great" country,³¹ he never gave a clear explanation about how this new constitution would redefine Taiwan's relationship with China. This lack of comprehensive details was a strong contrast to former President Lee Teng-hui's "special state-to-state relations" formula, a proposal aimed to redefine the cross-Strait status quo in Taiwan's favor that was formulated after extensive studies by a panel of prominent scholars.³² Moreover, the post-election development demonstrated that the issue of a new constitution was clearly a dispensable topic for Chen. During the campaign, he told his supporters that the new constitution would be passed by a referendum.³³ But after he won reelection, he declared that the constitutional reform would be carried out following the amendment procedure regulated by the current Constitution, which was highly unlikely due to the DPP's minority position in the Legislative Yuan.³⁴ This change of attitude infuriated many of Chen's pro-independence supporters.³⁵

Second, President Chen's idea about the defensive referendum was mainly motivated

³⁰ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Pernicious Presidential Politics," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2003).

³¹ "Call for New Constitution Aimed at Making Taiwan Great Country: Chen," *Central News Agency* October 10, 2003, CPP20031004000071.

³² The problem about this formula was that President Lee revealed it to the public prematurely before the administration could conduct inter-department coordination and consultation with other countries which have strong national interests in the Taiwan Strait area.

³³ For instance, see Chieh-yu Lin, "Taiwan President Renews Call for New Constitution at Kaohsiung Rally," *Taipei Times* October 26, 2003, FBIS, CPP20031026000076; Sofia Wu, "President Confident of Holding Referendum on New Constitution in 2006," *Central News Agency* November 30, 2003, FBIS, CPP20031130000037; Kao Tenson, "Taiwan President Sticking to His Ideals," *Taipei Times* January 11, 2004, FBIS, CPP20040112000157.

³⁴ Chieh-yu Lin, "Chen to Continue Middle Way," *Taipei Times* May 21, 2004, FBIS, CPP20040521000160; Lilian Wu, "Scope of Constitutional Reform Won't Include Nation's Status: Chen," *Central News Agency* May 20, 2004, accessed March 10, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

³⁵ Debby Wu, "Constitutional Reform Plan Generates Heat," *Taipei Times* May 22, 2004, FBIS, CPP20040524000245.

by his determination to hold a referendum concurrently with the 2004 presidential election to mobilize his supporters.³⁶ This electoral consideration can be demonstrated by how Chen handled Washington's concerns about this issue. The initial topics for the defensive referendum Chen declared in December 2003 were demands on Beijing to dismantle its missiles targeted on Taiwan and to renounce the use of military force against Taiwan. Nonetheless, after Washington expressed its serious concerns about the defensive referendum, Chen instructed his National Security Council (NSC) officials to work out alternative, less confrontational topics to ease US concerns while at the same time keep the defensive referendum alive.³⁷ Eventually, the two topics the Chen administration chose were to ask the voters about whether the government should "acquire more advanced anti-missile weapons to strengthen Taiwan's self-defense capabilities," and whether it should "engage in negotiation with China on the establishment of a 'peace and stability' framework for cross-strait interaction in order to build consensus and for the welfare of the peoples on both sides." This shows that Chen's primary concern was not about whether the referendum could enhance Taiwan's security. Instead, what is most important to him was how to use the referendum to mobilize his supporters and to increase his opportunity to win the presidential reelection.

From a foreign policy point of view, Chen's anti-China campaign strategy strongly damaged Taiwan's strategic interests because of the bilateral quarrels between Taipei and Washington that it caused. Before announcing these two decisions, President Chen did not forewarn the US to seek mutual understanding.³⁸ Moreover, the timing Chen chose to announce his defensive referendum plan created a greater negative impact on Taiwan-US communication, according to a former official of the Chen administration. During the months

³⁶ Interview with former official of the Chen administration.

³⁷ Interview with former official of the Chen administration.

³⁸ *China Times Express* September 30, 2003, section A2.

that the Legislative Yuan was in a process of discussing various drafts of bills on referenda, Washington was worried that the more progressive version of the referendum law proposed by the Executive Yuan would be passed. This worry was lifted when the more conservative draft proposed by the KMT and the People's First Party (PFP) was adopted by the Legislative Yuan on November 27. However, the US was soon taken aback by Chen's decision on a defensive referendum. NSC Asia Director James Moriarty and AIT Director Douglas Paal were especially infuriated when learning that Chen had found a new way to revive the referendum dispute. Their anger at Chen thus became an important negative factor in the future communication between Taipei and Washington.³⁹

According to the above analysis, President Chen's campaign manipulation on writing a new constitution and holding a defensive referendum hardly fit Taiwan's strategic interests from various perspectives. Rather, they were mainly political instruments aimed to mobilize Chen's DPP supporters while at the same time utilizing Beijing's existing military threats and possible negative feedback to his initiatives to appeal to the independents.⁴⁰ This was evident by Chen's flexibility on the topics of defensive referendum, and by the fact that after winning the reelection, he abandoned his campaign proposal on writing a new constitution AND having it passed by a referendum.

(3) The 2006 Political Campaign to Abolish the NUC and GNU

There are different explanations of what motivated President Chen Shui-bian's NUC decision. In the evening after Chen's NUC remark, the Public Affairs Department of the

³⁹ Interview with former official in the Chen administration.

⁴⁰ As one former official pointed out during an interview with the author, Chen did hope that these electoral manipulations would lead Beijing to make rhetoric threats against Taiwan or to conduct military exercises targeted on Taiwan—as they did during the 1996 and 2000 presidential elections, which then would very likely boost his vote shares and hurt the more pro-China KMT candidates, Lien Chan.

Presidential Office issued a statement, saying that the president had not breached his 2000 inaugural promises. Rather, the president's decision was simply a response to the recent Legislative Yuan resolution demanding that the Presidential Office dissolve all ad hoc panels and commissions whose establishment did not have a legal basis.⁴¹ Explanations made by MOFA and MAC reiterated the connection between the Legislative Yuan resolution and the president's NUC remark, while they also emphasized the need to defend Taiwan against China's intensified suppression since its enactment of the Anti-Secession Law in March 2005.⁴² However, Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-Pyng (王金平) dismissed the association between the legislative resolution and Chen's intention of scrapping the NUC and GNU. Wang argued that these two institutions were not the targets of the legislative resolution, because they were approved by the Executive Yuan.⁴³ A former official who had participated in the discussion regarding the NUC decision with Chen also confirmed that the Legislative Yuan resolution was simply one among the several excuses the Chen administration cited to defend the controversial remark. Although it provided a legal explanation to justify the decision, it was by no means the main reason that drove Chen to launch the NUC campaign.⁴⁴

With regard to the explanation based on Taiwan's need to defend itself against China, the timing of Chen's announcement hardly held any strategic advantages for Taiwan. As National Policy Advisor to the President Ruan Ming (阮銘) argued, the best time to scrap the

⁴¹ Maubo Chang, "Chen: Scrapping of Unification Guidelines Considered," *Central News Agency* January 31, 2006, OSC, 200601311477.1_9f060056b0436c93.

⁴² Taijing Wu, "Abrogating National Unification Guidelines Still Pending: MAC," *Central News Agency* February 2, 2006, OSC, 200602021477.1_09ed00161f407153; Sofia Wu, "Chen's Speech Has Nothing to Do with Status Quo Change: Minister," *Central News Agency* February 1, 2006, OSC, 200602011477.1_2d4200707a399a07.

⁴³ Shu-ling Ko, "Chen Didn't Break Any Promise: Yu," *Taipei Times* January 31, 2006, OSC, 200601311477.1_d2e60064d80ae068.

⁴⁴ Interview with former official of the Chen administration.

NUC was March 2005 when Beijing passed the Anti-Secession Law. If this decision had been announced at that time, “there would have been nothing that China or the United States could have done [to oppose it],” Ruan claimed.⁴⁵ This delay created the image that Taiwan, rather than China, was the provocative actor and thus made it much harder for Taipei to receive international sympathy. Such diplomatic consequences made it doubtful that Chen’s NUC campaign served any of Taiwan’s national interests. Rather, Chen’s primary concern was its internal political effect. As his domestic leadership faced severe challenges by the opposition, traditional DPP supporters’ loyalty became critical for Chen’s political survival.⁴⁶

Since late 2005, the Presidential Office was under severe attack by the opposition and the media as the the national policy advisor to the President, Chen Che-nan (陳哲男), and the Presidential Office adviser, Chen Min-Hsien (陳明賢), resigned for involvement in the racketeering of in the hiring of and in exploiting Thai labors to work for the Kaohsiung mass rapid transit (MRT) system construction project.⁴⁷ This incident deeply hurt Chen Shui-bian because Chen Che-nan has been a high-ranking party member and a close aide to the president. Both President Chen and the DPP chairman Su Tseng-chang made public apologies for Chen Che-nan’s alleged involvement in the scandal, and the latter was expelled from the ruling party.⁴⁸ But according to a public poll conducted by the United Daily News, the majority of the public expressed their distrust of the government: 54 percents of the respondents said they did not believe President Chen’s statement that he did not have prior

⁴⁵ *Central News Agency* February 10, 2006, OSC, 200602101477.1_ecc000489648902e.

⁴⁶ *Interviews with former officials of the Chen administration, January 2010.*

⁴⁷ Sofia Wu, "CNA: President Supports Judicial Probes into Krtc Scandal: Aide," *Central News Agency* (October 5, 2005), FBIS, 200510051477.1_c5b80076443a12c7.

⁴⁸ Lilian Wu, "CNA: President Apologizes for Former Aide's Involvement in MRT Scandal," *Central News Agency* (October 29, 2005), FBIS, 200510291477.1_23c20043f64deec6; Sofia Wu, "CNA: DPP Chairman Apologizes for Corrupt Party Member," *Central News Agency* (October 29, 2005), FBIS, 200510291477.1_2bad0022566b67f7; "AFP: Former Chen Shui-Bian Aide Expelled from Taiwan's Ruling Party," (October 30, 2005), FBIS, 200510301477.1_e960002802186ff9.

acknowledge of Chen Che-nan's irregular behavior; 62 percents said they did not believe President Chen was clean; and 52 percents thought the DPP was a corrupt political party.⁴⁹

Although the president's image had been damaged by the MRT scandal, Chen still decided to take a dominant role in the party's campaign for the 2005 local elections on city mayors and country magistrates in December. When the DPP suffered a landslide defeat in the elections, many people believed that President Chen's hostile cross-Strait policy rhetoric during the campaigns and his administration's poor performance and scandals were the causes of the disappointing election outcomes. Two opinion surveys conducted by key newspapers after the official announcements of election results also showed that more than 40 percents of the public thought President Chen was most responsible for the defeat. The percentages of respondents who thought Premier Hsieh or DPP Chairman Su was most responsible were less than ten percents, according to China Times Poll Center.⁵⁰ Sensing the Chen was widely blamed for the party's poor election performance; potential competitors for the 2008 presidential candidate began to contesting greater party leadership. Moreover, the DPP's most radical faction, the New Tide (新潮流), was demanding for a thorough investigation into existing corruption accusations against Chen's close aides and even his family members. Losing this power struggle would mean giving up the rest of his political influence, which is dangerous for a leader already in trouble. Against this backdrop, Chen's NUC initiative was a strategy to garner support from fundamentalist supporters.⁵¹

The parochial benefit of the NUC initiative was clear. Within his party, traditional DPP followers' support for the NUC campaign helped Chen reconsolidate his party

⁴⁹ Han Nai-kuo, "CNA: Majority of People Have Lost Confidence in DPP Government: Survey," *Central News Agency* (October 30, 2005), FBIS, 200510301477.1_90260046dd3330d3.

⁵⁰ "Highlights: Taiwan Daily Papers' Internet Versions 5 Dec 05," (December 5, 2005), FBIS, 200512051477.17f8b02019744a766.

⁵¹ Interviews with former officials of the Chen administration and DPP officials.

leadership. As a survey conducted by the *United Daily News* (聯合報) after Chen's announcement of his NUC/GNU decision showed, although Chen's overall approval rating went up only by two percent from 23% to 25%, there were significant increases of support among pro-DPP supporters (up from 56% to 65%) and among the people in favor of immediate independence (up from 49% to 57%).⁵² Within the party, the need to defend the president's NUC decision left it no room to consider some younger DPP members' demands for accelerating investigations into the Presidential Office's alleged involvement in corruption and for a reform of the party's power structure. This enabled Chen to get rid of criticisms by his own party fellows. Eventually, by launching the NUC campaign, Chen successfully coerced his DPP colleagues to unite around him and support his party leadership.⁵³

The benefit President Chen gained from the NUC policy outside the DPP was also significant. After the initial turbulence, Chen and DPP officials began to use this issue to attack KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九). On February 8, DPP Director of the Department of Culture and Information Tsai Huang-liang (蔡煌瑯) urged Ma to support the idea of scrapping the NUC if he respected the will of the Taiwan people. During a meeting with Legislative Speaker Wang, Chen stated that his decision was a response to Ma's earlier statement that unification is the KMT's ultimate goal, which is consistent with the spirit of the Guidelines for National Unification.⁵⁴ Chen argued that he would be endorsing Ma's

⁵² This survey was conducted on the night of 28 February 2006 by the United Daily News Survey Center, see *United Daily News*, accessed on March 1, 2009, <http://udn.com/NEWS/NATIONAL/NATS3/3189062.shtml>.

⁵³ Interview with former official of the Chen administration.

⁵⁴ Ma made this statement in an interview with the *Newsweek* magazine. See Jonathan Adams, "'Conditions Aren't Ripe'; Ma Ying-Jeou, Head of Taiwan's Pro-Mainland KMT, Says Beijing Is Not Pushing Unification Anymore," *Newsweek International* 33 (December 26, 2005).

eventual unification policy stance if he did not abolish the NUC and GNU.⁵⁵ To counter the criticism that he would single-mindedly pursue unification with China, Ma decided to purchase a full-page ad in the pro-independence *Liberty Times* (自由時報) to clarify the party's position on the independence-unification issue. This February 14 advertisement declared that although Taiwan independence is not the KMT's policy goal, it remains an option for the Taiwan people. The independence advocates considered this policy shift a substantial victory for the NUC campaign, for it forced Ma to "get tough" with Beijing. Pro-independence media welcomed the KMT's compromise, and urged the DPP to keep putting pressure on Ma. "[G]o after him. Make him commit on every issue that can be named," said the *Taipei Times* editorial.⁵⁶ The DPP responded to the KMT's advertisement by asking Ma to support the NUC abolition as a proof of his sincerity. The fact that Ma had to repeatedly defend and clarify the KMT's position on sovereignty issues hurt his popularity, limited the opposition coalition's ability to attack the Chen administration's governance problems, and diverted public attention from the corruption accusations against the president's close aides. After successfully forcing Ma to adjust the KMT's position on the unification-independence issue, Chen reemerged as an unchallenged leader of the DPP and its political allies. In sum, the NUC policy manipulation helped Chen consolidate his standing among pro-independence supporters, who were crucial for him to fight the current political battle within the DPP and against the opposition forces.⁵⁷

(4) The "Four Wants and One Without" Declaration and the "UN Referendum"

⁵⁵ Neil Lu and Flor Wang, "KMT Chief Warns of Seriousness of Scrapping Unification Guidelines," *Central News Agency* February 9, 2006, OCS, 200602091477.1_26ee0057276dd2ed.

⁵⁶ Editorial, "Time to Push Ma Off the Fence," *Taipei Times* February 16, 2006, OSC, 200602161477.1_49eb0076180b562a.

⁵⁷ See "Chen Is Preparing for Post-Presidential Career," accessed on June 1, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

It is apparent that President Chen's nationalist political campaign in 2007 hardly served Taiwan's strategic interests. First, Chen made the "four wants and one without" statement right after he implicitly promised AIT Director Stephen Young that there would not be any other policy surprises resembling the NUC incident between Taipei and Washington in late February.⁵⁸ This bad timing made Chen's remark even more "surprising" and unreasonable, and thus seriously damaged the president's credibility. Second, Washington considered the "four wants and one without" statement highly provocative, because it was a vivid contrast to Chen "four no's and one without" pledges in 2000. This breach of pledges severely hurt the US-Taiwan relationship, and gave Beijing greater leverage to pressure Washington to reduce its support for Taiwan.

On the contrary, the political campaign to hold a referendum on joining the UN as "Taiwan" seemed to fit Taiwan's national interests on the surface. Since the PRC took its seat at the UN, Taiwan has been fighting a difficult battle to maintain or regain its membership in many international organizations whose membership only applies to sovereign states. To break Taiwan's isolation from the international community, former President Lee Teng-hui launched Taiwan's annual effort of applying for its returning to the UN. President Chen Shui-bian continued such an effort after entering the office. Nonetheless, the UN turned down Taiwan's membership application every year. As a result, the Chen administration asserted that holding a referendum on joining the UN under the name of Taiwan rather than the ROC is the most effective way to refute China's erroneous "one China" framework. This referendum, it argued, would significantly increase Taiwan's opportunity to join the UN.

⁵⁸ *China Times* March 5, 2007, section A2.

However, applying for the UN membership as Taiwan implied that there was one China and one Taiwan in the world, which was unacceptable to most countries. Such an open challenge to the “one China principle” bore the risk of alienating those foreign friends sympathetic to Taiwan’s international isolation—a risk that can be illustrated by Taiwan’s application to join the World Health Organization (WHO). In 1997, Taiwan began its annual effort to apply for “observer” status in the World Health Assembly (WHA), the decision-making body of the WHO composed of delegations from member states. The US has been supportive of Taiwan’s bid for observer status in the WHA. Japan and the EU Parliament also began to issue their open support for it since 2002. In 2004, the US and Japan for the first time cast their votes in support of Taiwan’s WHA bid. This development shows that although Taiwan’s effort to become an observer in the WHA has not been successful due to China’s opposition, it has gradually obtained increasing support from the Western countries and Japan.⁵⁹ However, in 2007, President Chen decided to raise the profile of Taiwan’s effort to joining the WHO by launching an application for full membership under the name of Taiwan directly. Since WHO membership is applicable to sovereign states only, such an application had the implication that there was one China and one Taiwan in the world. Consequently, Taiwan’s bid for WHO membership suffered a bigger failure than in the past: even the US and Japan voted against it.⁶⁰ This diplomatic setback demonstrated that holding a referendum on joining the UN under the name of Taiwan was by no means a better strategy. Instead, it might have forced Washington to openly state its opposition to Taiwan’s

⁵⁹ Lung-Chu Chen (陳隆志), "Taiwan Jiaru Shijie Weisheng Zuzhi Dexin Celue (台灣加入世界衛生組織的新策略, Taiwan's New Strategy of Joining the World Health Organization)," *Xin Shiji Zhiku Luntan (新世紀智庫論壇, New Age Think Tank Forum)* 33(2006): 5-6, 12-13.

⁶⁰ *China Times* May 15, 2007, Secion A1.

application for UN membership, and further jeopardized Taiwan's effort to expand its international space.⁶¹

Lastly, the timing of Chen's announcement of his referendum plan also illustrated its lack of national strategic consideration. In early 2007, NSC Secretary-General Chou I-ren (邱義仁) conveyed to Washington Chen's plan to hold a referendum on joining the UN as Taiwan during a secret visit to the US. Washington was highly concerned about Chen's plan, and therefore instructed AIT Chairman Raymond Burghardt and Director Stephen Young to express US opposition to it and to work out a mutually agreed solution with Taipei regarding this issue. In a routine trip to Taipei on June 14, Burghardt met with Chen to continue this bilateral communication. However, four days later, before there was any conclusion between Taipei and Washington, Chen chose to publicly announce his referendum plan when receiving President of the Heritage Foundation Edwin Feulner. This act enraged the Bush administration, which considered the occasion Chen chose to make the announcement a serious provocation to the US.⁶² This inconsiderate timing suggested that Taiwan's external relations with its allies were not Chen's primary concern, which further refuted his claim that the referendum plan would enhance Taiwan's international status.

Although the "four wants and one without" statement and the declaration for "UN referendum" did not fit Taiwan's national interest, they nonetheless benefited Chen's power stability. The president's domestic leadership had been seriously damaged in the spring and fall of 2006, as a result of his family members' involvement in a corruption case. In April 2006, the First Lady Wu Shu-chen (吳淑珍) was accused of illegally accepting the vouchers

⁶¹ Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiujié: Taimei Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008)), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*, 172-73.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 170-71.

of the Sogo Pacific Department Store as bribery. In May, President Chen's son-in-law Chao Chien-ming (趙建銘) was accused of involvement in insider trading of Taiwan Development Cooperation stock.⁶³ As more evidence against Wu and Chao gradually emerged, the public's dissatisfaction with President Chen grew to a very high point. In August, former DPP chairman Shih Ming-te (施明德) launched a large-scale mass demonstration to call for the president to step down. This political campaign lasted for more than two months, drawing tens of thousands of people on the street to oust President Chen. In the midst of this political storm, Chen began to talk about sensitive sovereign issues. On September 24, he called for the reconsideration of the territory defined in the constitution. On September 28, he further declared that "Taiwan is Taiwan, China is China, and Taiwan and China are totally different countries."⁶⁴ He even urged his party members to consider the goal of establishing a "second republic" that could completely cut off the link with China. Since then, Chen's China policy has focused on the promotion of Taiwan nationalism in order to consolidate the pro-independence fundamentalists' support for him.

As Chen began to heavily rely on the "deep green" supporters for his political survival, he had to ensure that his reputation as the "independence leader" was unshakable. This task faced two challenges. First, Chen had to compete with his predecessor, Lee Teng-hui, for the leadership within pro-independence groups. Second, as the upcoming presidential election in 2008 approached, the DPP had to elect its presidential candidates in April. If the new candidates chose not to follow his anti-China policy line, Chen's leadership within the DPP would be weakened. To cope with these challenges, Chen chose to make the "four

⁶³ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Despite Scandals, Some Small Steps," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2006).

⁶⁴ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: More Small Steps," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2006).

wants and one without” on March 4, 2007, after Lee Teng-hui criticized him for giving the “four wants and one without” pledges that restrained the government from taking more radical steps on sovereign issues.⁶⁵ Similarly, the campaign to hold a referendum on joining the UN as Taiwan was aimed to boost the “green” constituents’ support for Chen, rather than the DPP presidential candidate, Hsieh Chang-ting. Being known as a pragmatist, Hsieh was hoping to produce a moderate platform of China policy to attract more independent voters’ support. Nonetheless, if Hsieh’s approach proved effective, it would demonstrate that Chen’s manipulation of nationalist issues was not the best policy for the party. In turn, it would undermine Chen’s party leadership. Therefore, to retain his political influence after he left the presidential office in May 2008, Chen had to keep Hsieh close to his belt. The UN referendum well served this purpose, as Hsieh lost control over his own campaign eventually. In sum, Chen’s “four wants and one without” statement and the UN referendum were a continuation of his diversionary strategy for power resurrection since the painful mass protest in fall 2006. To increase his chance to maintain dominant political influence within his own party and among his supporters, Chen had to keep his provocative China policy alive and active.⁶⁶

3. Did opposition parties criticize the provocative foreign policies as reckless and/or unnecessary?

(1) The “Walk on Taiwan’s Own Path” and “One Country on Each Side” Statement

While the DPP’s political ally, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), welcomed the “walk on Taiwan’s own way” and “one country on each side” statements, the opposition

⁶⁵ Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiujiu: Taimei Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008)), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*, 165.

⁶⁶ Interview with former DPP officials.

coalition's response was negative.⁶⁷ KMT Chairman Lien Chan criticized that Chen should clarify whether Taiwan's own path means Taiwan independence. PFP Chairman James Soong Chu-yu also attacked Chen for being inconsistent on his policy direction. As a consequence, both Lien and Soong refused to attend an inter-party political summit proposed by Chen to address domestic political, social, and economic issues.⁶⁸ The KMT and the PFP also strongly denounced the "one country on each side" statement. Lien accused Chen of contradicting the "four no's and one without" pledges and putting Taiwan's national interests in danger. Another senior KMT official described Chen's remark as "reckless."⁶⁹ The KMT further called for the president to apologize for "disturbing the society," and threatened to invite Chen to make an official report to the Legislative Yuan to clarify his statement.⁷⁰ PFP director of the Policy Coordination Center Chang Hsien-yao (張顯耀) said that Chen's risky statement showed that he might have overestimated US support for his administration.⁷¹ The PFP Legislative Yuan Caucus also blamed Chen for lacking comprehensive consideration and ignoring the safety and rights of his people.⁷²

(2) *The 2003-2004 Reelection Campaign and Defensive Referendum*

⁶⁷ *China Times* July 31, 2002, section A2; Kwang-chun Huang, "TSU Welcomes President's 'One Side, One Country' Statement," *Central News Agency* August 3, 2002, accessed March 9, 2010, LexisNexis Academic. The TSU was a political party established by former President Lee Teng-hui after he left the KMT in 2000, whose primary goal is to pursue Taiwan's independent status vis-à-vis China. It is more pro-independence than the DPP on the political spectrum of unification/independence.

⁶⁸ Maubo Chang, "President's Proposal for Summit Panned by Major Opposition Leaders," *Central News Agency* July 22, 2002, FBIS, CPP20020722000223.

⁶⁹ David Hsu, "KMT Head Slams Chen's Remarks on Referendum for Taiwan Future," *Central News Agency* August 3, 2002, accessed February 23, 2010, LexisNexis Academic; Flor Wang, "Opposition Blasts President's Remarks on Cross-Strait Ties," *Central News Agency* August 4, 2002, accessed March 9, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁷⁰ Maubo Chang, "Ripples from President's Remarks Continue to Spread in Taipei," *Central News Agency* August 05, 2002, accessed March 9, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁷¹ Wang, "Opposition Blasts President's Remarks on Cross-Strait Ties."

⁷² Lilian Wu, "PFP Pans President's 'One Country on Each Side of Strait'," *Central News Agency* August 4, 2002, accessed March 9, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

After President Chen announced his idea to write a new constitution, the KMT and the PFP criticized him for abandoning his moderate China policy approach and breaking his “four no’s and one without” pledges.⁷³ Interestingly, after their initial critiques, the KMT and PFP began to worry that their opposition to Chen’s new constitution initiative would be seen as anti-reform by the voters. To counter this possible negative perception, they raised their own plan on constitutional reform and used political propaganda to advertize their ideas. Moreover, in order to compete with the DPP’s new constitutional initiative, KMT’s Lien boldly announced that he planned to complete the constitutional reform via referendum in early 2005, an apparent attempt to “preempt President Chen Shui-bian's promise to hold a similar referendum in December 2006 to allow popular participation in the drawing of a ‘new constitution’ for 2008.”⁷⁴ Lien’s new campaign strategy was mocked by Chen, saying that the KMT-PFP Coalition could only follow the DPP’s footprints rather than come up with their own campaign issues. The KMT-PFP Coalition’s decision to follow suit prevented them from being marked as anti-reform. Nonetheless, this decision also impeded the coalition’s ability to focus their attack on the Chen administration’s poor performance in the past years and to set a campaign agenda that was in their favor. The fact that the KMT and PFP were forced to change their initial position to compete with Chen’s nationalist propaganda indicated that Chen’s initiative of a new constitution was a successful tactic to distract the opposition’s energy to attack on his poor governance record, which fits Cramer’s revision to Hendrickson’s second proposition.

Similarly, the KMT-PFP coalition also opposed Chen’s plan to hold a defensive referendum. But again, although Lien and Soong strongly criticized the defensive referendum

⁷³ *China Times* September 29, 2003, section A3.

⁷⁴ “Taiwan's Opposition Parties to Finish Constitutional Reform in 2005,” *Agence France Presse* November 15, 2003, accessed March 11, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

as another electoral tactic by Chen, they were afraid that their insistence on boycotting it would be seen as denying people's democratic rights. As a result, they eventually gave up their initial plan to bring to the Constitutional Court the dispute over whether the president had the right to hold a defensive referendum concurrently with the presidential election.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, due to its high level of controversy, Lien and Soong did not try to initiate their own defensive referendum.

Lastly, there were even disagreements within the DPP over the timing Chen announced his decisions to write a new constitution and to hold a defensive referendum. DPP Legislator Lee Wen-chung (李文忠) argued that Chen's single-minded decision to write a new constitution without comprehensive considerations would hurt his credibility, while others also questioned whether Chen really had a clear plan regarding the content of the new constitution.⁷⁶ Along with Lee, two senior DPP officials and Legislators Lin Cho-Shui (林濁水) and Shen Fu-hsiung (沈富雄) also voiced their concern that Chen's assertive decision to take advantage of the defensive referendum for election purposes did not fit Taiwan's national interests.⁷⁷ Lin's attack was especially powerful for he has been well known as the "Taiwan independence theorist" of the DPP. This lack of consensus among DPP officials further indicated that Chen's nationalist initiatives did not reflect a strategic need of the state.

(3) The 2006 Political Campaign to Abolish the NUC and GNU

The opposition strongly criticized Chen's NUC initiative. The opposition coalition denounced it as "an unnecessary provocation to Beijing and a strain on US-Taiwan

⁷⁵ *China Times* February 3, 2004, section A4.

⁷⁶ *United Daily Evening News* September 29, 2003, section 2; *China Times Express* September 30, 2002, section A2.

⁷⁷ *China Times Express* December 1, 2003, section A2.

relations.”⁷⁸ To counter Chen’s maneuver, the KMT, with the support of the PFP, decided to initiate a petition to recall President Chen for a vote in the Legislative Yuan and held a mass demonstration to protest Chen’s NUC initiative.

Nonetheless, as discussed above, the opposition coalition failed to stop Chen’s NUC manipulation. Rather, frictions between the KMT and the PFP intensified during their political cooperation against the abolition of the NUC because of their different views on what actions should be taken and when would be the proper timing for these actions. For instance, although the PFP supported the KMT’s recall motion, it nonetheless decided to launch another impeachment motion against Chen.⁷⁹ The KMT’s Legislative Yuan Caucus was reluctant to support this impeachment motion, indicating that initiating an impeachment bid right after the recall motion would divert attention away from the latter.⁸⁰ These two parties also disagreed on the theme of their planned mass demonstration against the Chen administration in March. The KMT preferred to focus on economic issues, but the PFP insisted that Chen’s scrapping of the NUC should be included. In the end, these two parties decided to hold their own anti-Chen rallies separately, although key KMT and PFP figures attended both rallies.

(4) The “Four Wants and One Without” Declaration and the “UN Referendum”

As in the previous cases, the opposition coalition responded negatively to President Chen Shui-bian’s “four wants and one without” statement. KMT acting chairman Wu Poh-hsiung (吳伯雄) argued that Chen’s remarks “could seriously damage the Taipei-Washington

⁷⁸ U.S. Congressional Research Service, “Taiwan: Overall Developments and Policy Issues in the 109th Congress (R133510),” 5.

⁷⁹ Nai-kuo Han, “PFP to Ask Grand Justices to Rule NUC’s Scrapping Unconstitutional,” *Central News Agency* March 3, 2006, accessed August 11, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁸⁰ *China Times* March 2, 2006, section A4.

relationship and deal another heavy blow to the fragile cross-Strait ties.”⁸¹ The PFP’s response was harsher than the KMT’s. Arguing that the president’s intention to pursue Taiwan independence would bring Taiwan to a war with the PRC, PFP Legislative Yuan Caucus filed a charge of treason with the Taiwan High Court Prosecutor’s Office against Chen.⁸²

Besides the opposition, the TSU, the DPP’s main political ally, also dismissed Chen’s remarks. It criticized Chen for only bringing up the issues of a new constitution and name rectification when there was a major election approaching, and thus his pro-independence pledges were nothing but empty slogans.⁸³ There were even critiques within Chen’s own party. DPP legislator Lin Chuo-shui again argued that Chen’s “four wants and one without” statement was not helpful for enhancing Taiwan’s sovereign status because of its lack of strategic clarity.⁸⁴ Others pointed out that Chen’s recent pledges were rhetorical and did not reflect a pragmatic plan for future national development.⁸⁵

The domestic responses to Chen’s decision on a referendum on joining the UN as Taiwan were more dynamic. Other than criticizing the Chen administration’s referendum plan, the KMT also proposed its version of UN referendum to compete with Chen’s proposal. The KMT’s referendum proposal asked people if they supported Taiwan’s “return” to the UN and other international organizations “under the name of the ROC, Taiwan or other feasible

⁸¹ "Taiwan Leader Criticised for Independence Remarks," March 5, 2007, accessed March 18, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁸² *China Times Online* March 5, 2007, accessed March 18, http://vip.tol.com.tw/CT_NS/CTSearchList.aspx, 2010.

⁸³ *China Times Online* March 5, 2007, accessed on March 17, 2010, http://vip.tol.com.tw/CT_NS/ctsearch.aspx. Accessed on March 17, 2010.

⁸⁴ *China Time* March 5, 2007, section A2.

⁸⁵ *China Times* March 6, 2007, section A4.

titles that ensure successful entry and national dignity.”⁸⁶ The KMT argued that its referendum proposal was consistent with Taiwan’s effort to regain its participation in a variety of international organizations since 1993, and thus did not challenge the cross-Strait status quo.⁸⁷ The rationale for KMT’s decision to compete with the DPP on UN referendums was based upon its assessment that the DPP’s slim victory in the 2004 presidential election could be partly attributed to the successful manipulation of the defensive referendum, which helped mobilize the latter’s supporters to go to the polls. Therefore, if the KMT failed to bring its own referendum plan to counter the DPP’s manipulation, it would probably suffer another defeat in the 2008 presidential election. As KMT acting Chairman Wu Poh-hsiung argued, the KMT would better give up the 2008 presidential election if it were to let the DPP to run a solo show on the issues about the UN referendum and Taiwan’s sovereignty.⁸⁸ Wu’s comment demonstrated that the KMT perceived Chen Shui-bian’s manipulation on nationalist issues was perceived as a successful tactic to control the agenda-setting ability in domestic political competition.

4. Did allied or friendly states criticize the provocative foreign policies?

(1) The “Walk on Taiwan’s Own Path” and “One Country on Each Side” Statement

Although these two statements caused a political storm inside Taiwan and raised Beijing’s suspicions about President Chen’s intention to adopt pro-independence policies, responses from other countries were mild. Washington expressed its low-key concern about whether these statements indicated substantive policy changes in Taipei. To assure the US

⁸⁶ Flor Wang, “KMT Would Welcome DPP Endorsement for Its Referendum Plan,” *Central News Agency* June 29, 2007, accessed March 18, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁸⁷ *NOW News* September 14, 2007, accessed March 18, 2011, <http://www.nownews.com/2007/09/14/301-2157338.htm>. Accessed March 18, 2011.

⁸⁸ *China Times* September 4, 2007, section A4.

that this was not the case, NSC Secretary-General Chiou I-ren held several meetings with AIT director Douglas Paal to clarify Taipei's position.⁸⁹ Chen also sent MAC Chairwoman Tsai Ing-wen to Washington to provide further explanation and clarification to the US. Eventually, the US accepted Taipei's assurance, but reiterated its "one-China" policy and non-support for Taiwan independence.⁹⁰ Besides US concerns, there were no strong negative responses from other international friends of Taiwan. Japan did not issue an official statement regarding Chen's remarks, but major Japanese newspapers were sympathetic to Chen's frustration with China.⁹¹ Therefore, although Chen's "walk on Taiwan's own path" and "one country on each side" statements did not gain support from Taipei's allies and those states friendly to it, it did not invite severe critiques, either.

(2) The 2003-2004 Reelection Campaign and Defensive Referendum

Unclear about the substantive content Chen had in mind on the new constitution he called for, the US responded with caution. About two weeks after Chen's initial announcement, NSC Advisor Condoleezza Rice urged "both Taipei and Beijing to avoid unilateral steps that would change the status quo," and "reiterated the 'one China' premise of Washington's policies and called upon all parties to adhere to 'one China'."⁹² On the surface, Washington seemed to approve Chen's idea of a new constitution after AIT Chairwoman Theresa Shaheen traveled to Taipei to communicate with Chen. But the US silence only reflected that there was a power struggle among different people of different political positions going on within the Bush administration. Unfortunately, Chen and his aides seemed

⁸⁹ *China Times* August 3, 2002, section A3.

⁹⁰ C.J. Chen and P.C. Tang, "U.S. Sticking to One-China Policy: State Dept. Official," *Central News Agency* August 08, 2002, accessed March 9, 2010; W. H. Kuo and P.C.Tang, "U.S. Does Not Support Taiwan Independence : NSC Spokesman," *Central News Agency*, accessed March 9, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

⁹¹ *China Times* August 5, 2002, section A3.

⁹² Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Strains over Cross-Strait Relations."

to interpret this as US support in their favor. Therefore, when Chen announced the more controversial decision on a defensive referendum, Washington quickly decided to send out a strong and clear message about its opposition.⁹³

Within a week of Chen's announcement about his intention to hold a defensive referendum, White House Spokesman Scott McClellan publicly stated on December 3 that it was "important to note that the United States opposes any unilateral attempts to change Taiwan's status." On the next day, he further elaborated that the US opposition to those unilateral attempts "would apply to both Beijing's possible use of force and any moves by Taiwan itself that would change the status quo on independence or unification," and calling on both sides of the Strait to "refrain from actions or statements that increase tensions or make dialogue more difficult to achieve."⁹⁴ McClellan's statements showed that Washington equated Chen's defensive referendum to one on Taiwan's unification with China or independence.⁹⁵ Seeing there was no sign that Chen would back off from the defensive referendum issue, President Bush publicly criticized Chen when holding a brief conference with PRC Premier Wen Jiabao (溫家寶) in Washington, saying that "the comments and actions by the leader of Taiwan indicate that he may be willing to make decisions unilaterally to change the status quo, which we oppose."⁹⁶ According to David Brown, an expert on cross-Strait issues, Bush's remark was "the sharpest criticism of Taiwan voiced by any US president since diplomatic relations were broken in 1978 and a clear indication of the current

⁹³ Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiuji: Taimai Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*, 46-47.

⁹⁴ "US Declines to Confirm Official Sent to Taiwan on Low-Key Mission," *Agence France Presse* December 3, 2003, accessed March 12, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic; Scott McClellan, "The White House Regular Briefing," *Federal News Service* December 4, 2004, accessed March 12, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

⁹⁵ Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiuji: Taimai Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*, 53.

⁹⁶ Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Strains over Cross-Strait Relations."

strains in US-Taiwan relations.”⁹⁷ To double the seriousness of this message, Bush even seemed to nod his head when Wen thank him for expressing his “opposition” to Taiwan independence, which hinted at a possible change of US policy from “does not support” to “oppose” Taiwan independence. Bush’s statement and silence about Wen’s words showed that Chen’s campaign manipulation had caused grave damage to the ties between Taipei and Washington.⁹⁸

As a close ally of the US in Asia, Tokyo usually follows Washington’s lead on cross-Strait policy and rarely issues its own official comments. Therefore, the Japanese government did not make any public response to Chen’s nationalist campaign manipulation about writing a new constitution. But this changed when Chen’s decision to hold a defensive referendum caused serious US-Taiwan frictions. On December 26, former Japanese Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro conveyed a message from Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro to Chen that Japan did not wish to see referenda in Taiwan during a low-key private trip to Taiwan.⁹⁹ Three days later, Tokyo sent a letter via its *de facto* embassy in Taiwan, the Interchange Association, to President Chen to voice its concern over the referendum and urged him to adhere to his “four no’s and one without” pledges made in his 2000 inaugural speech.¹⁰⁰ This, according to the Taiwanese newspaper *United Daily News*, “was the first time that the Japanese government has voiced its concern to Taipei about the Taiwan Strait situation since the two countries severed diplomatic ties[in 1972].”¹⁰¹ Besides Japan, the EU also issued “a strongly worded

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ "Japan Official Urges Taiwan's Chen to Exercise Caution on Referendum," *Japan Economic Newswire* December 29, 2003, accessed March 11, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic; "Japan, EU Concerned About Taiwan's Plan for Referendum," *Agence France Presse* December 30, 2003, accessed March 11, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

¹⁰¹ *United Daily News* December 30, 2003, accessed March 11, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic. Quoted in "Japan, EU Concerned About Taiwan's Plan for Referendum."

letter to Taipei” to express its serious concerns over the defensive referendum.¹⁰² In late January 2004, French President Jacques Chirac went further to say that Taiwan’s decision to hold a defensive referendum was “aggressive,” “irresponsible,” and a threat to stability in Asia when attending a joint meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao.¹⁰³ The DPP government considered this a very unfriendly gesture.

(3) The 2006 Political Campaign to Abolish the NUC and GNU

President Chen’s NUC campaign immediately invited strong opposition from the US. In response to Chen’s remark on scrapping the NUC, the State Department issued a statement on January 30, 2006, reiterating Washington’s “one China” policy and emphasizing that it “does not support Taiwan independence and opposes unilateral changes to the status quo by either Taiwan or Beijing.”¹⁰⁴ This was an extraordinary move by Washington, since it rarely issues statements regarding Taipei’s policy.¹⁰⁵ State Department Spokesman Adam Ereli explained the purpose of this action by stating that “We are issuing this [statement] in the wake of some comments by President Chen in Taiwan that we don’t want to be inflammatory or send the wrong signal.”¹⁰⁶ The *Nelson Report* even described an infuriated Bush asking his advisers that “He did it AGAIN after what happened last time?” when being briefed about Chen’s NUC remark.¹⁰⁷ James Keith, State Department Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

¹⁰² *China Times* December 30, 2003, section A2. Quoted in "Japan, EU Concerned About Taiwan's Plan for Referendum."

¹⁰³ "Chirac Strengthens Criticism of Taiwan Referendum," *Agence France Presse* January 27, 2004, accessed March 11, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

¹⁰⁴ Amber Wang, "Taiwan's Chen Turns on China to Win Friends at Home: Analysts," *Agence France Presse* January 31, 2006, OSC, 200601311477.1_ef12008401ccfd96;

¹⁰⁵ *China Times* February 1, 2006, section A2.

¹⁰⁶ Peter Alford, "Cool It on China, US Warns Taiwan," *The Australian* February 1, 2006, accessed 1 June 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

¹⁰⁷ Reportedly President Bush was referring to President Chen’s decision to call a national referendum in 2003. Maubo Chang, "FM Rebuts Report on U.S. Anger with ROC President," *The Central News Agency* February 5, 2006, OSC, 200602051477.1_7f05005771ec58c1.

for China, Mongolia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, called for “improved communication” between Washington and Taipei, while also urged President Chen to stop “surprises.”¹⁰⁸

To address the NUC dispute, MOFA officials and the AIT held intensive meetings to exchange opinions. President Bush even sent a senior NSC/State team to Taipei to deliver his grave concerns and to convince President Chen to retreat from his NUC decision in mid-February.¹⁰⁹ Chen refused to retreat, but eventually agreed to soften his tone by replacing the term “abolish” with “cease” after several weeks of bilateral negotiation. This change of phraseology partially satisfied the US, since “cease functioning of both entities” does not directly imply a change of “status quo.” But many have speculated whether there was any real difference between “cease” and “abolish” in practical effect. To warn against Taipei’s seemingly obvious attempt to play with this ambiguity,¹¹⁰ Washington issued a written statement asking Taipei to “unambiguously affirm that the February 27 announcement did not abolish the National Unification Council, did not change the status quo, and that the assurances remain in effect.”¹¹¹ Chen did not offer such clarification until the domestic situation changed again in summer. Instead, when meeting with Ma Ying-jeou on April 3, Chen admitted that he wanted to “abolish” the NUC. He further stressed that although the final decision was to end the council’s activity, the fact that it no longer had any budget and staff indicated the NUC “no longer exists.”¹¹² Eventually, to send a strong warning signal to Chen against his nationalist manipulation, Washington only agreed to offer him brief

¹⁰⁸ Charles Snyder, "US to Chen: Please Stop the Surprises," *Taipei Times* February 6, 2006, OSC, 200602061477.1_b55c009315b83989.

¹⁰⁹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Missed Opportunities," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2006).

¹¹⁰ Y.F. Low, "MOFA Urges Public Not to 'Overinterpret' NUC Cessation," *Central News Agency* March 4, 2006, OSC, 200603031477.1_f7aa003d1d2c64a7.

¹¹¹ See Adam Erel, "Taiwan: Senior Taiwan Officials - Comments on National Unification Council," March 2, 2006, accessed May 31, 2010, <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/62488.htm>.

¹¹² S. C. Chang, "President Goads KMT to Snatch 'One China' Interpretation from PRC," *Central News Agency* April 3, 2006, OSC, 200604031477.1_2c77009905793f4e.

refueling stops in Honolulu and Anchorage when Taipei applied for the president's transit stops in New York and Los Angeles during his trip to Latin America in early May—a treatment Chen considered humiliating.¹¹³ The fact that the US government became more open to public criticism of Chen after the NUC campaign also shows that this incident was a pivotal turning point of US-Taiwan relationship.¹¹⁴

Besides the US, Japan, another state with a friendly relationship to Taipei, also reiterated its “One China” policy and opposition to “any status quo to be broken by any unilateral action from both sides” in response to Chen's NUC decision.¹¹⁵ The EU commented that President Chen's NUC manipulation moves were unhelpful for stability in the Taiwan Strait.¹¹⁶ Moreover, in an interview by the Beijing-based Xinhua News Agency, Cristina Gallach, Spokeswoman for EU Foreign Policy Chief reportedly described Chen's NUC policy as “provocative.”¹¹⁷ These criticisms by Taiwan's democratic friends caused significant diplomatic consequences for Taipei: China took this opportunity to increase its influence with these countries, having them reiterate their “One China” policy and opposing or providing no support for positions toward Taiwan independence. China's strategy of using the US and Japan to rein in Taiwan especially put Taipei in a disadvantageous situation in the international arena.¹¹⁸

(4) The “Four Wants and One Without” Declaration and the “UN Referendum”

¹¹³ Brown, “China-Taiwan Relations: Despite Scandals, Some Small Steps.”

¹¹⁴ Interviews with U.S. experts of US-Taiwan relations, September 2010.

¹¹⁵ “Japan Reiterates One-China Policy,” *Xinhua* January 31, 2006, OSC, 200601311477.1_e1580015b9d246bf.

¹¹⁶ Brown, “China-Taiwan Relations: Missed Opportunities.”

¹¹⁷ “Solana's Spokeswoman: Chen Shui-Bian's Actions 'Provocative,’” *Xinhua* February 28, 2006, OSC, 200602281477.1_375e0012860a9a6c.

¹¹⁸ Hsiu-chuan Shih, “China Uses US, Japan to Rein in Taiwan,” *Taipei Times* February 21, 2006, OSC, 200602211477.1_cc060078f2abea80.

Washington did not offer a strong response to Chen's "four wants and one without" remark. Only the State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack made a comment reiterating that the US does not support Taiwan independence and that it opposes any unilateral change of cross-Strait status quo by either Taipei or Beijing. He also emphasized that "[r]hetoric that could raise doubts about [Chen's four no's] commitments is unhelpful" when answering questions regarding Taiwan on a regular press briefing.¹¹⁹ However, behind this calm response in public, the State Department was enraged by Chen's recent remarks. Jeff Bader, who served as Director of the John L. Thornton China Center at the Brookings Institute during that time, described it as the last straw that breaks the camel's back in the Taipei-Washington relations, which resulted to Washington's all-out dissatisfaction with Chen.¹²⁰

As discussed in the previous section, Washington saw Chen's decision to hold a referendum on joining the UN under the name of Taiwan as a provocative act. At first, it tried to pressure Chen to change his mind through the State Department's spokesman. The next day after Chen announced his decision, McCormack publicly expressed US opposition to it. The Bush administration also tried to send its warning messages to Chen through unofficial channels.¹²¹ After these attempts failed to dissuade Chen, Washington decided to bring this issue to a higher diplomatic level. Beginning from late August, top-level US officials made a series of comments attacking Chen's UN referendum:

¹¹⁹ Sean McCormack, "State Department Regular Briefing," *Federal News Service* March 5, 2007, accessed March 19, 2010, LexisNexis Academic.

¹²⁰ Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiuji: Taimei Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008)), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*, 167.

¹²¹ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: In the Throes of Campaign Politics," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2007).

- On August 27, Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte said that Taipei's UN referendum could be interpreted as a step toward a declaration of independence of Taiwan, which the US considered a mistake.¹²²
- On August 30, National Security Council senior director for Asian affairs Dennis Wilder described the act as "perplexing," arguing that Taiwan is not a state and thus is not able to join the UN.¹²³
- Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Thomas Christensen reiterated US opposition to the issue on several different occasions. On December 6, he held a press conference for Taiwan press, during which he called the UN referendum "unwise, provocative, and risky."¹²⁴
- On December 12, AIT Chairman Ray Burghardt flew to Taipei to deliver President Bush's serious warning message to Chen.¹²⁵ Meanwhile, to increase the credibility of the warning, Washington decided to put a hold on Taipei's purchase request for 66 F-16 C/D aircraft.
- On December 21, under Beijing's pressure, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice openly criticized the Chen administration's UN referendum as a "provocative" step.¹²⁶
- On January 17, Negroponte in Beijing reiterated US opposition to the UN referendum.¹²⁷

¹²² Naichian Mo, "Phoenix Tv Interview with Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte," *Federal News Service* August 27, 2007, accessed March 19, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

¹²³ "Taiwan Move to Join UN 'Perplexing:' White House," *Agence France Presse* August 31, 2007, accessed March 19, 2010, LexisNexis Acedemic.

¹²⁴ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Beijing Keeps Its Cool," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2007).

¹²⁵ Liu (劉世忠), *Lishi De Jiujiu: Taimai Guanxi De Zhanlue Hezuo Yu Fenqi (2000-2008)* (歷史的糾結: 台美關係的戰略合作與分歧 (2000-2008), *the Knotting History: Strategic Convergence and Divergence in Taiwan-U.S. Relations (2000-2008)*, 174.

¹²⁶ Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Beijing Keeps Its Cool."

Washington's strong and firm opposition to President Chen's UN referendum suggested that this act did not fit Taiwan's national interests, since the US was one of the few friends Taipei could rely on to expand its participation in international organizations. Besides the US, other friends of Taipei also voiced their strong opposition to President Chen's UN referendum, including the EU, France, the UK, and Japan.¹²⁸ As a result, Chen's nationalist manipulation provided Beijing good opportunities to urge those states to reassure or reinforce their compliance with the "one China" policy, which was extremely harmful for Taiwan's survival in the international society.

According to the above analysis, three of the four cases in Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy passed all of the Hendrickson propositions: the president's nationalist campaigns on a new constitution and the defensive referendum, on abolishing the NUC/GNU, on the "four wants and one without" and joining the UN as Taiwan. First, they were all made by Chen and a small group of his close aides. Therefore, there was no deliberate consultation between the Presidential Office and other related administrative heads. Nonetheless, although this proposition makes great sense in the context of US political system, it is doubtful to what extent it applies to other states. In the case of Taiwan, foreign policy decisions are traditionally made by the president without comprehensive consultation with a broad range of administrative heads. This remains true during the democratic era. Although President Lee Teng-hui were more willing to work with a stable group of close aides for foreign policy formation, neither he nor President Chen Shui-bian conducted

¹²⁷ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Taiwan Voters Set a New Course," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2008).

¹²⁸ Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Beijing Keeps Its Cool.,"; David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: Taiwan Voters Set a New Course," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2007).

comprehensive cross-department consultation for foreign policymaking. Considering this, a consistency with the first Hendrickson in Chen's China policymaking does not necessarily prove that the given policy is for diversionary purpose. This might also be true for other democracies—and especially for young democracies—where the power of foreign policymaking centers on the state leaders. Therefore, the fact that Chen's decision making of the four provocative China policies examined in this chapter fit Hendrickson's first proposition does not present a sufficient test for diversionary foreign policy.

Second, these initiatives did not reflect any strategic needs of the state in response to a change in the external environment. On the one hand, the evidence shows that there were no policy provocations from Beijing prior to Taipei's initiatives. During the campaign period for Taiwan's 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, Beijing retained a low-profile position to avoid any hostile action that might aggravate Taiwan people and thus benefited Chen's anti-China tactics. Instead, Beijing's policy toward Taipei has focused on seeking appeasement toward its opposition and public after the passage of the counter-productive Anti Secession Law in March 2005. On the other hand, the rapidly improved US-China relationship after 9/11 and the Bush administration's preoccupation with the war on terror--and especially the war on Iraq—suggested that the US tolerance for Taiwan's challenges on sovereign issues might significantly decrease. Therefore, Washington's ability and willingness to intervene with military action in the Taiwan Strait might decrease significantly should Taipei's behavior trigger a physical conflict. Judging by these circumstances, Chen Shui-bian's nationalist policy was made under a disadvantageous external environment, which bears a high risk to Taiwan's national security.

One argument commonly asserted by people who support Chen's policy is that Chen's provocative China policy fits Taiwan's national interests well for it could demonstrate Taiwan people's loyalty toward the island to Beijing and thus increase the cost for the latter's attempt to annex Taiwan with force. Moreover, considering that China is a revisionist state, Taiwan's best strategy should be confrontation, not conciliation. This argument seems to make sense on the surface, because traditional studies on the international security dilemma have pointed out that when faced with revisionist states, a state's best strategy would be deterrence.¹²⁹ On the contrary, a state should pursue reassurance to avoid conflict as a result of falsely perceived threats under security dilemma, defined as "many of the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of other."¹³⁰ Nonetheless, Christensen's analysis of the cross-Strait relationship offers an insightful objection to the above definition about strategic dilemma. Christensen argues that "Successful deterrence requires both threats and assurances about the conditionality of those threats."¹³¹ Therefore, the best strategy to deter a revisionist, especially a "conditionally aggressive" one such as China, should be a combination of increased military capability and continued political assurance.¹³² In Taiwan's case, this means that the Chen Shui-bian administration should seek increased US defense commitment, while at the same time offer political reassurance to China that such strengthened US-Taiwan military cooperation would not lead to Taiwan's pursuit of *de jure* independence. However, Chen's China policy was an exact opposite to this strategy: it politically provoked Beijing while at the same time

¹²⁹ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

¹³⁰ ———, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (1978): 169.

¹³¹ Thomas J. Christensen, "The Contemporary Security Dilemma: Deterring a Taiwan Conflict," *The Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2002): 7.

¹³² *Ibid.*: 11.

damaged Washington's trust in and support for Taipei. Therefore, the above argument that Chen's provocative China policy serves Taiwan's national interests is unconvincing.

Interestingly, the empirical evidence of the opposition's reaction to Chen's provocative China policy initiatives supports both Hendrickson's third proposition and Cramer's revision to it. In all the three cases, the opposition first responded to Chen's policy statements with strong criticisms, but then tried to modify Chen's idea and then incorporated the less radical version of it into its own policy platform. In the case of the 2003 presidential campaign, the opposition parties initially opposed Chen's decision to write a new constitution and to hold the defensive referendum, criticizing this nationalist agenda as putting Taiwan's security at risk. Nonetheless, the KMT-PFP Coalition was eventually forced to announce similar yet less sensitive proposals to compete with Chen's nationalist policy. The rationale behind such a decision was the fear of being seen as less patriotic than the DPP—which might result in a loss of votes. The same situation occurred in the other two cases. During Chen's NUC/GNU manipulation, KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou was forced to announce a change of the KMT's initial anti-independence position and to declare that independence should remain an option for Taiwan people, although it's not the policy objective of the KMT. In the case of Chen's "four wants and one without" statement and the following campaign to hold a referendum on joining the UN as Taiwan, the KMT once again had to announce a similar but rhetorically different referendum initiative—returning to the UN as Taiwan or any other titles acceptable to Taiwan people and the international community—to compete with the president's nationalist manipulation.

The above analysis shows that in all three cases, Chen's provocative China policy initiatives successfully undermined the KMT and the opposition coalition's ability to

challenge his leadership by attacking his political problems and poor governance performance. It also builds a bridge between Hendrickson's original proposition and Cramer's alternative proposal. On the one hand, Hendrickson's third proposition about the opposition's criticisms is not a strong criterion for identifying diversionary foreign policy, for it is common for the opposition to take the opposite position on most of the government's policy decisions.¹³³ On the other hand, Cramer suggests that the opposition's support for the president's action might actually prove that it is a diversionary policy if the "entire operation ended shortly [so that] there was not much opportunity for congressional scrutiny or opposition."¹³⁴ Although Cramer's statement makes sense for quick militarized action, it is not fully applicable to nonviolent foreign policy, which usually allows ample space for the opposition to express their opinions. The findings in this chapter support both Hendrickson's and Cramer's ideas by demonstrating that the opposition tends to oppose a diversionary policy first, but then is forced to support or move closer to that position. Moreover, this chapter also finds that in addition to the opposition, President Chen's own party officials also expressed strong criticisms against his diversionary policy. But like the opposition, these DPP officials had to silence their objection later. Therefore, more convincing evidence would have to show a broader disagreement with the leader's policy decision among various political groups, including the independents and even the president's own political party or coalition.

Other than inter-party competition, Chen's diversionary strategies also helped him weather the political crisis within his own party. Prior to the NUC/GNU incident and the

¹³³ I thank Elizabeth Saunders for offering this insightful view to me in the 2010 Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association.

¹³⁴ Jane Kellett Cramer, "'Just Cause' Or Just Politics?: U.S. Panama Invasion and Standardizing Qualitative Tests for Diversionary War," *Armed Forces & Society* 32, no. 2 (2006): 196.

“four wants and one without” statement, Chen’s leadership was strongly criticized and questioned by key party officials and members as a result of the corruption problems of his close aides, his family members, and even himself. The president’s vulnerability also drove DPP heavy weights to look for the opportunity to take over Chen’s power position. However, Chen’s nationalist agenda turned his supporters’ attention to controversial sovereign issues, and thus coerced those challengers to mute their criticisms or even to express their loyalty to him under the fear of being labeled as traitors to the Taiwan Nationalism. Instead of losing his influence, Chen was able to reinforce his control of the DPP after both crises.

Lastly, friendly countries’ opposition to Chen’s provocative behaviors demonstrates that these countries did not see the clear strategic necessity of these policies, and that the Chen administration did not try to seek their backing in advance. In fact, Chen was not worried about foreign reactions to his anti-China policy initiatives. As he told his government and supporters, he was confident that he could fix Taiwan’s relationship with the US and other concerned countries *after* overcoming the current domestic problems.¹³⁵ This shows that his primary target of those policies was domestic constituents. For this purpose, Chen was willing to risk Taiwan’s foreign relations.

In contrast, Chen’s “walk on Taiwan’s own path” and the “one country on each side” statements were a different case. Although these statements were also attacked by the opposition, they nonetheless did not invite strong critiques from foreign friends. Moreover, these two statements were actually responses to Beijing’s provocative decision to announce Nauru’s switching diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China. In sum, this case only fits two of Hendrickson’s propositions. This disconfirming case indicates that although

¹³⁵ Interviews with former officials in the NSC and Presidential Office.

diversionary incentives best explain Chen's provocative China policy, it is clearly not the only reason of Chen's risen hostility against China.

III. Alliance politics and Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy

The alliance politics model posits that states with strong support from a powerful ally are more likely to engage in risky foreign policy behavior. Based upon this theory, Bush and Lieberthal suggest that President Bush's friendship with Taiwan is the driving force of President Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy.¹³⁶ If this argument is correct, one should expect to see a retreat from a hard-line position following a decrease of US support. Nonetheless, this is not the case for Chen.

The US-Taiwan relationship suffered a backlash in 1999 due to then President Lee Teng-hui's controversial "special state-to-state relationship" statement, which he used to define the status quo between Taiwan and China. Therefore, when Chen Shui-bian won the 2000 presidential election, Washington made considerable communicative efforts to ensure that the DPP's pro-independence orientation will not guide Chen's policy direction. The bilateral relationship between Taipei and Washington enjoyed a significant boost when President Bush entered office in 2001. In mid-2001, several events indicated that the bilateral relationship has reached a historical high. On April 23, the Bush administration announced a large arms sale package to Taiwan. The next day, in an interview with the ABC News, Bush stated that the US would do "whatever it took" to help defend Taiwan from China's attack.¹³⁷ Washington's relaxation of restrictions on President Chen's and other Taiwan officials'

¹³⁶ Richard C. Bush and Kenneth G. Lieberthal, "From Georgia to Taiwan," *The Wall Street Journal Asia*(2008), accessed October 2, 2010, http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0916_taiwan_bush.aspx?p=1.

¹³⁷ David G. Brown, "China-Taiwan Relations: A Fragile Calm," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2001).

transit stops in the US further demonstrated the strengthened relationship between the two governments.¹³⁸ The Bush administration's supportive attitude toward Taipei continued even after the war on terrorism rose to the top of its foreign policy agenda. Although Washington gradually abandoned its hawkish position toward Beijing for strategic consideration, it also made significant efforts to ensure that the improvement of Sino-US relations would not jeopardize Taiwan's interests.¹³⁹

While Washington was trying to keep a balance between its policy toward Taiwan and China, frictions between the Chen and the Bush administrations first emerged in the summer of 2002, as a result of Chen's "one country on each side" statement.¹⁴⁰ This incident caused strong concern in the White House, but there was no significant change in US position toward Taiwan. However, Chen's provocative actions during his 2003-2004 reelection manipulation changed Bush's friendly perception of Chen, and eventually caused the removal of Therese Shaheen from her post as the Chairman of American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) in March 2004. The Bush administration subsequently shifted its tilt toward Taiwan to a more balanced strategy, emphasizing its opposition to any unilateral moves to change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. The US-Taiwan relations hit a rocky patch after the friction over Chen's NUC campaign in the winter of 2006, which completely destroyed the mutual trust between the Chen and the Bush administrations.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ During the Clinton administration, Taiwan officials were barely allowed to make transit stops in the U.S. When permission of such a stop was granted, it usually came with strict restrictions prohibiting the traveling officials from any public activities. But after the Bush administration came to office, President Chen and his officials were allowed to have "public appearances and meetings with Washington's apparent blessing" when making stopovers in the U.S. See Ted G. Carpenter, "President Bush's Muddled Policy on Taiwan," *Foreign Policy Briefing* 82(2004): 3.

¹³⁹ Robert Sutter, "Bush Administration Policy toward Beijing and Taipei," *Journal of Contemporary China* 12, no. 36 (2003): 477, 89; Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, "U.S.-Taiwan Relations: Four Years of Commitment and Crisis," in *Comparative Connections* (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2004).

¹⁴⁰ Kerry Dumbaugh, *Underlying Strains in Taiwan-U.S. Political Relations*, CRS Report for Congress, (April 20, 2007), 7.

¹⁴¹ Interview with a former aide of President Chen Shui-bian.

This review of the development of US-Taiwan relationship from 2000 to 2008 suggests that Washington's support of Taiwan was strongest during the early months of Bush's presidency, and then gradually declined as a result of Chen's lack of credibility and Washington's strategic interests in closer U.S-China's cooperation. Therefore, we should see a decreased motivation for Chen to adopt provocative China policy following the Bush administration's retreat from its initial tilt toward Taiwan. But empirical evidence shows that Chen's provocative China policy initiatives intensified during the last two years of his presidency, when he tried to repudiate his "four no's and one without" campaign pledges. This suggests that the alliance politics model does not explain Chen's provocations toward China.

Summary

This chapter examines President Chen Shui-bian's provocative China policy. I began the analysis with an OLS regression model designed to test the diversionary hypothesis against the strategic reaction one. The result shows that domestic crisis, rather than Beijing's hostile act, best explains the fluctuation of Chen's China policy orientation. Among different types of domestic crisis, electoral competitions and intra-party conflict were the key factors that drove Chen's diversionary desire. The second section provides a qualitative analysis of the context of the decision making of Chen's four provocative China policy initiatives. Applying Hendrickson's four propositions of diversionary foreign policy, I demonstrate that only one of the four cases under examination reflected Taiwan's strategic needs to respond to China's policy provocations. Therefore, the strategic reaction model fails to account for the recurrence of Chen Shui-bian's confrontational challenges to the cross-Strait status quo.

Instead, Chen's desire to survive political challenges to his national and party leadership was the key motive of his provocative China policy shifts. Chen's ability to win the bitter reelection battle in 2004 and reassert his position as the DPP's strong leader after a set of scandals might further reinforce his belief in this type of strategy.

The second alternative explanation, the alliance politics model, also fails to explain President Chen's policy fluctuation. Considering that this hypothesis is not suitable for a quarterly-based test, since the level of US support for Taiwan does not usually vary within a short period of time, I use a qualitative analysis to examine whether the hostility in Chen Shui-bian's China policy initiatives were higher during the Bush's first term, when the US president expressed stronger support for Taiwan and the Chen administration. The analysis does not support the alliance politics model. On the contrary, Chen was more inclined toward an adventurous China policy during his second term, when the US-Taiwan relationship significantly deteriorated. For instance, Chen did not openly try to breach the "four wants and one without" pledges until the winter of 2006. Washington's attempt to send strong warning messages over the Taiwan president's recurrent policy provocations toward Beijing failed to prevent him from further risky behavior. This evidence demonstrates the insufficiency of the alliance politics model.

The findings in this chapter have significant theoretical implications. They provide empirical evidence to support Clark's suggestion that besides militarized conflict, nonviolent foreign provocations can also serve as diversionary strategy to solve a state leader's domestic power crisis.¹⁴² Since minor states do not have the same capability of launching military actions abroad as powerful states, understanding their alternative options of diversionary

¹⁴² David H. Clark, "Trading Butter for Guns: Domestic Imperatives for Foreign Policy Substitution," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 5 (2001).

strategy is crucial for enriching the existing diversionary literature, which traditionally focused on great powers. This chapter also points out a direction for solving the issue of inconsistent research findings on the diversionary war hypothesis among large-N studies. Since leaders in minor states could use nonviolent foreign provocations to divert domestic crisis, traditional measurements that limit the dependent variable to militarized conflict would be insufficient to test the diversionary hypothesis. Therefore, futures cross-country studies might benefit from taking into account both violent and nonviolent foreign policies in their dependent variable.

This chapter also suggests that other than those measurements of domestic crisis already available in existing databases, such as economic records, elections, approval ratings, and protest, scholars should also consider other less accessible measurements that might also have important influence on state leaders' political survival. Based on Chen Shui-bian's case, I demonstrate that intra-party conflict has strong impact on the president's diversionary behavior. This shows that although data of this variable might be more difficult to obtain, future studies on diversionary theory should nonetheless make continued effort to take into account this important political variable.

This chapter makes methodological contribution by offering two further revisions for Hendrickson's propositions of diversionary foreign policy. First, it proposes that the first Hendrickson proposition about the lack of comprehensive consultation among administrative heads is not a sufficient criterion for a diversionary foreign policy. Second, this chapter also proposes an expansion of the third Hendrickson proposition. This proposition posits that for a diversionary foreign policy, one should see objection from the opposition to it. Nonetheless, since it is not uncommon for the opposition parties to oppose the ruling party's policy in a

competitive political environment, this characteristic is a weak test for the diversionary theory. Cramer's suggestion that the opposition's agreement with the state leaders afterward should be an indicator of diversionary foreign policy is insightful. However, as evident in Chen Shui-bian's diversionary cases, a much stronger indicator would be objection and criticism from within the ruling party or the ruling coalition. Accordingly, this research proposes a three-level test to enhance the third Hendrickson proposition. First, the opposition would oppose the policy. Second, the opposition would eventually accept the policy or silence its objection to it as a result of mounting nationalist pressure. Lastly, there would also be strong initial criticisms against the policy within the ruling party.

Since 2002, scholars and policymakers have made significant efforts to understand the inconsistency in Chen Shui-bian's China policymaking, worrying that the recurrent tensions in the Taiwan Strait might escalate into serious regional conflict in the East Asia. Although there is speculation that Chen's provocative China policy initiatives might be driven by his desire to divert domestic problem, little effort has been made to prove this causal relationship by conducting a systematic examination of the empirical evidence.¹⁴³ This chapter thus takes an important step to fill this gap between empirical speculation and theoretical proof. Besides the above-discussed theoretical contributions, findings in this chapter could help state policymakers better understand the rationale of Chen's China policymaking, and thus improve their capability of responding if similar situations emerge in the future.

¹⁴³ Although Li et al. apply the diversionary theory to examine Taiwan president's political attitude toward China, they focus on rhetorical expression rather than the fluctuation in policy initiatives. See Li, James, and Drury, "Diversionary Dragons, or 'Talking Tough in Taipei': Cross-Strait Relations in the New Millennium."

Chapter Four

Nonviolent Diversionary Foreign Policy Theory in Georgia and Ukraine

The analysis of Taiwan's China policy making under President Chen Shui-bian demonstrates that nonviolent foreign policy can be used for diversionary purposes. To examine whether the above findings can be applied to other cases, this chapter investigates the connection between Georgia's and Ukraine's domestic politics and their Russia policies. Due to their historical ties to the Soviet Union, Tbilisi and Kiev have been struggling to enhance their sovereign security and state autonomy since the breakup of the USSR. However, as a regional power in the Eurasia area, Russia considers these two states' attempts to move away from its influence a serious threat to its strategic interests and regional leadership. Against this backdrop, Georgian-Russian and Ukrainian-Russian relationships have been knotty. The tensions in these two dyads intensified after the peaceful democratic revolution in Tbilisi and Kiev in the mid-2000s, which resulted in the rise of the two pro-Western leaders, President Mikhail Saakashvili and President Viktor Yushchenko. Besides the enduring rivalry with Russia, domestic situations in these two newly democratized countries have also been challenging, as both leaders experienced severe political and economic problems threatening their power position in the years following the revolutions. The similarities of the external and internal political conditions in the post-democratic revolution era in Georgia, Ukraine, and Taiwan suggest that the former two are great cases to test the finding in the latter case about the use of nonviolent diversionary foreign policy.

This chapter includes six sections. The first three sections review Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's and Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's political challenges, respectively. The fourth and fifth sections examine these two presidents' foreign policy

toward Russia during their difficult times and whether their political vulnerability was linked to provocative Russia policies. The last section summarizes the research findings.

I. Georgia's Rose Revolution and Saakashvili's Political Crisis

In November 2003, angry Georgians ousted Eduard Shevardnadze (1992-2003), their second president since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, by holding a series of large-scale public protests against the regime's corruption problems and poor economic performance.¹ Mikhail Saakashvili, one of the opposition leaders of the mass demonstrations, was then elected as the state's third president after sweeping 96 percents of the vote in January 2004.² This peaceful transition of power was known as the Rose Revolution. While this democratic transition was cheered by the international society, Georgia's strengthened ties with Western countries and especially the United States have complicated the country's external relations with Russia. On the one hand, the Georgian leadership's nationalist position against Russia's dominant influence since the 1990s has undermined the relationship of these two neighboring states.³ Their bilateral relationship plunged to its lowest point on the eve of the Rose Revolution as a result of President Shevardnadze's nationalist projects and pro-Western orientation, as well as Putin's support for the two break-away provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.⁴ Therefore, Shevardnadze's resignation seemed to open a window of opportunity for Tbilisi and Moscow to repair their relationship. On the other hand, however,

¹ Nana Sumbadze, "Saakashvili in the Public Eye: What Public Opinion Polls Tell Us," *Central Asian Survey* 28, no. 2 (2009): 185.

² Jesse D. Tatum, "Democratic Transition in Georgia: Post-Rose Revolution Internal Pressures on Leadership," *CAUCASIAN REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* 3, no. 2 (2009).

³ Jaba Devdariani, "Georgia and Russia: The Troubled Road to Accomodation," in *Statehood and Security: Georgia after the Rose Revolution*, ed. Bruno Coppieters and Robert Legvold (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 153.

⁴ Andrei P. Tsygankov and Matthew Tarver-Wahlquist, "Duelling Honors: Power, Identity and the Russia-Georgia Divide," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5(2005): 309.

the newly elected Saakashvili proved to be no less pro-Western or nationalist than his predecessor. Although President Saakashvili's considered a friendly relationship with the Kremlin a policy priority, his desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) poses a serious threat to Moscow's determination to prevent these two organizations from expanding their influence to the Caucasus. As a result, the Georgian-Russian relationship remains fragile in the Saakashvili era, characterized by recurring disputes over nationalist and sovereign issues.

Despite his overwhelming victory in the 2004 presidential election, domestic challenges gradually emerged for President Saakashvili due to the government's inability to effectively improve the country's economy and address corruption problems.⁵ Economically, although Georgia's GDP per capita increased gradually, its inflation rate rose dramatically from 6.2% in 2005 to 11.0% in 2007 (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2).⁶ The serious inflation problems exacerbated the country's economic condition. As a result, political and social unrest emerged, challenging the state leader's power stability. There were three major domestic threats to the leader's power stability. First, since early 2006, opposition parties had launched numerous public protests to demand Saakashvili's resignation. While some of these demonstrations were small in size and short in duration, two of them led to severe political storms threatening Saakashvili's power position: the mass rallies in November 2007 and April 2009. Both demonstrations lasted for over one month, bringing more than ten thousand people onto the streets. Second, nationwide elections were also crucial for Saakashvili's control of national power. Lastly, the gradual decline of Saakashvili's popularity suggests that the president was losing his support among the general public.

⁵ Sumbadze, "Saakashvili in the Public Eye: What Public Opinion Polls Tell Us," 185.

⁶ Data on the unemployment rate across time are not available in the statistics published by the Georgian government.

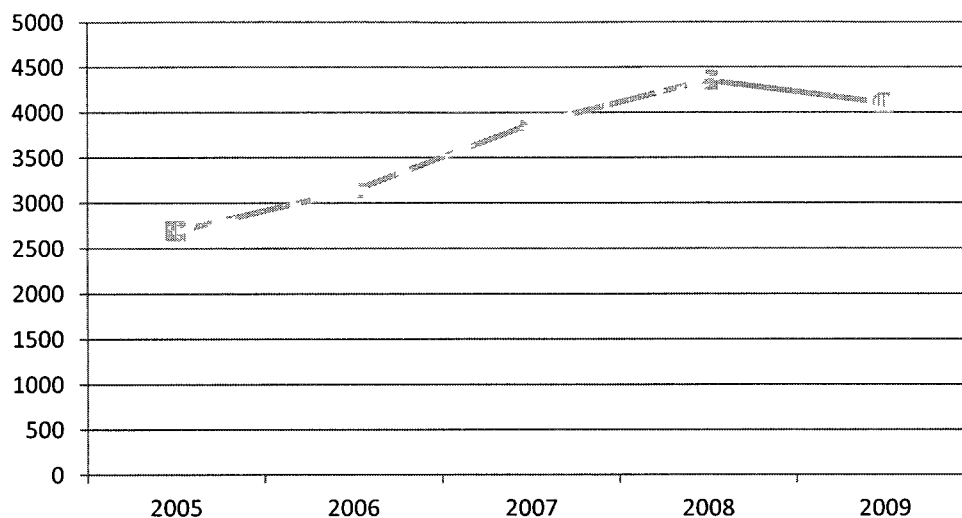


Figure 4.1: Georgia's GDP per capita, 2005-2009 (Unit: Georgia Lari)⁷

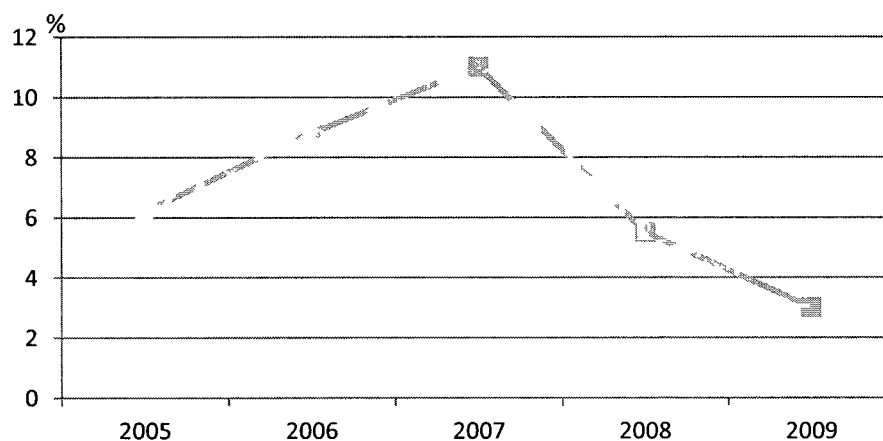


Figure 4.2: Georgia's annual inflation rate, 2005-2009⁸

1. Mass Demonstrations

The frictions between President Saakashvili's government and the opposition parties began to intensify in mid-2007. On September 27, Georgian government arrested former

⁷ Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia, <http://www.geostat.ge>. Accessed on November 1, 2011.

⁸ Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia, <http://www.geostat.ge>. Accessed on November 1, 2011.

Defense Minister Irakli Okruashvili for “extortion, money laundering, abuse of power and negligence during his time as defense minister” after the latter accused the president of ordering the killings of several high-profile figures.⁹ Opposition parties launched a mass rally outside the parliament the next day to denounce this arrest. According to the *Agence France Presse*, this demonstration was “one of the strongest shows of opposition to Saakashvili since he came to power.” Approximately 50,000 people showed up.¹⁰ This turmoil then developed into a full-blown public protest on November 2, when more than 50,000 protesters marched into the streets to express their anger. Led by the “National Council of United Public Movement” organized by ten opposition parties,¹¹ the rallies demanded that early parliamentary elections be held in the spring of 2008.¹² These large protests seriously undermined Saakashvili’s legitimacy and posed serious threats to his political power. Speculations that another peaceful revolution might emerge to bring down the current government began to spread. Although negotiations were held between the opposition leaders and government representatives, Saakashvili firmly refused to change the date of the parliamentary elections. On November 7, a physical conflict erupted when police ordered protesters to disperse. The government declared a state of emergency after a violent clash between the protesters and the riot police.¹³ The Saakashvili administration’s use of violence and the installation of the emergency rule invited grave concerns from its Western allies,

⁹ “Former Georgian Minister Held after ‘Liquidation’ Comments,” *Agence France Presse* September 27, 2007, accessed August 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic. Irakli Metreveli, “Georgia in Political Turmoil after Arrest of Opposition Figure,” *Agence France Presse* September 28, 2007, accessed August 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

¹⁰ The organizers of the demonstration, however, claimed that there were about 10,000 people in the street. “Thousands Rally in Georgia against Ex-Minister’s Arrest,” *Agence France Presse* September 28, 2007, accessed August 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

¹¹ Svante E. Cornell, Johanna Popjanevski, and Niklas Nilsson, “Learning from Georgia’s Crisis: Implications and Recommendations,” (The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, 2007), 7.

¹² The regular parliamentary elections were originally scheduled in October 2008 according to a constitutional amendment.

¹³ Thomas de Waal, “Modern Georgia: Rebirth, Rose Revolution, and Conflict,” in *The Caucasus: An Introduction* (2010), 207.

neighboring states, and international human rights NGOs. To ease these pressures, the president announced his decision to hold an early presidential election on January 5, 2008.¹⁴ The opposition regarded this as a victory, but rallies on the streets continued. When Saakashvili won the January election with a majority vote in the first round, the opposition claimed that the election was rigged and that the president's victory was a fraudulent. It once again launched a mass rally in the capital city, which drew more than 100,000 participants.¹⁵ However, this post-election demonstration did not obtain much support in the long term, since most international monitoring groups confirmed that the elections were free and fair. Another protest with similar size was held later in May 2008, when the opposition argued that the ruling party's victory in the May 21 parliamentary elections was also an outcome of Saakashvili's election manipulation.¹⁶

Another political storm occurred in early 2009. In January, the opposition once again formed a united front against Saakashvili. It threatened to launch a large-scale mass protest if the president did not resign by March 15.¹⁷ They also demanded early presidential and parliamentary elections. After the president refused to comply with their requests, the opposition held a public demonstration on April 9, which brought 50,000 to 100,000 protesters onto the Rustaveli Avenue in the capital city. The protests continued for more than a month and reached another peak on May 26, when the size of the rally increased to over 100,000 people.¹⁸

¹⁴ The presidential election was originally scheduled in late 2008. Nikolai Topuria, "Georgian President Calls Early Elections," *Agence France Presse* November 8, 2007, accessed August 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

¹⁵ "Opposition Rally in Tbilisi Draws over 10,000 Supporters," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* January 13, 2008.

¹⁶ "Opposition Demands Meeting with President Saakashvili," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* May 26, 2008.

¹⁷ "Georgian Opposition to Demand Saakashvili's Resignation by March ...", *Russia & CIS Presidential Bulletin* January 14, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

¹⁸ "Over 100,000 Opposition Activists Hold Rally in Tbilisi," *Central Asia & Caucasus Business Weekly* May 26, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

2. Elections

In the years between 2005 and 2009, Georgia held three important elections: the 2006 municipal elections for city councilors, the 2008 snap presidential election, and the 2008 parliamentary elections. The frictions between the president and the opposition made these elections highly contested, although the ruling party, the Unified National Movement (UNM), enjoyed a significant advantage as a result of various electoral maneuverings between 2005 and 2008.¹⁹

The municipal elections on October 5, 2006 were the first nationwide electoral competition after the ruling UNM consolidated its power in March 2004. Citizens in different municipalities of Georgia voted for their councilors on that day. The elected councilors would then cast votes to elect the mayors. As discussed above, the opposition had been rallying public support to contest Saakashvili's legitimacy since early 2006. This rising challenge increased the stakes of winning the mayoral posts for the president, thus the ruling party was determined to secure an "overwhelming victory."²⁰ Therefore, although the elections were for local administrative posts and councilors, they had high political significance for the ruling party.

Saakashvili faced a severe challenge in the snap presidential election on January 5, 2008, as the political turmoil in early November 2007 had seriously undermined his legitimacy. Nonetheless, although the opposition drew high levels of public and media attention with successful mass rallies during the presidential campaign, the fact that some of

¹⁹ See Miriam Lansky and Giorgi Areshidze, "Georgia's Year of Turmoil," *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 4 (2008): 160-62.

²⁰ Zaal Anjaparidze, "Opposition Fragments Ahead of Georgian Local Elections," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 3, no. 173 (2006). Also see ———, "Multiple Issues Make Opposition Seem Attractive to Georgian Voters," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 3, no. 41 (2006) accessed September 10, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=31434, 2011.

the opposition was not able to agree on one single candidate due to intra-party factions to a great extent reduced its chance to win the election. Eventually, Saakashvili secured 53.47 percent of the votes, allowing him to avoid a legally mandated second round of voting against another top candidate.²¹ The electoral victory gave the president a new mandate to continue ruling the country, although some observers argue that the decline of his vote gains from 96% of the vote in 2004 to 53% in 2008 indicated a significant loss of public trust in their leader.²² The elections did help Saakashvili reestablish his democratic image in front of his western allies, as reports from international observers concluded that the elections were “mostly free and fair.”²³

Another important electoral competition, the parliamentary elections, was scheduled on May 21, 2008. In order to enhance its opportunity to win, the opposition decided to establish a nine-party coalition to challenge the ruling UNM. To counterbalance the opposition’s cooperative efforts, the UNM-controlled parliament passed a constitutional amendment to strengthen the ruling party’s advantage in parliamentary election, which “increased the number of majoritarian [seats that] would be elected in single-mandate constituencies from 50 to 75 and reduced the number of [seats] elected through the proportional system from 100 to 75.”²⁴ The UNM’s manipulation of electoral rules indicated the ruling party’s concern that losing the public support that might undermine its capability to performance well in competitions over the proportional party-list.

²¹ Jim Nichol, "Georgia's January 2008 Presidential Election: Outcome and Implications," (Congressional Research Service, 2008), 2-3.

²² *Ibid.*, 5.

²³ Tatum, "Democratic Transition in Georgia: Post-Rose Revolution Internal Pressures on Leadership," 164.

²⁴ Lansky and Areshidze, "Georgia's Year of Turmoil," 161.

3. Popularity

Saakashvili enjoyed sky-high popularity when he swept 96% of the votes in the 2004 presidential election. But his popularity soon began to wane as a result of the public's growing frustration with the central government's slow progress in solving critical social and economic problems. According to a national survey conducted by Georgian Opinion Research Business International (GORBI), the Georgians' support for Saakashvili went down to 38.2% in March 2005—a 25% decline in six months.²⁵ The decrease of public confidence in the president was more evident after 2006. According to the recurrent survey by the International Republic Institute (IRI), the percentage of the Georgian public who considered the state to be going in the wrong direction increased significantly from 24% in October 2004 to 59% in February 2009 with some fluctuations during this period of time.²⁶ Table 4.1 and Figure 4.3 below show that the public's approval for Saakashvili's leadership was especially low in the surveys of April 2006, September 2007, and February 2009.

The above analysis shows that up to the end of 2009, President Saakashvili went through four serious power challenges: the local elections competition in October 2006, the mass protest in November 2007 and the snap presidential election on January 2008, the parliament elections in May 2008, and the April 2009 mass protest. If the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis is correct, one should expect that President Saakashvili would have appealed to provocative but non-militarized Russian policy to divert attention from his domestic power struggle. Therefore, the next two sections examine

²⁵ The GORBI is the Georgian branch of Gallup International. See Zaal Anjaparidze, "Saakashvili Concerned as His Margin of Support Continues to Decline," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 2, no. 75 (2005), accessed September 10, 2011, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=30265.

²⁶ The International Republican Institute, "Survey of Georgian Public Opinion," available at <http://www.iri.org/news-events-press-center/news-iri>. Accessed September 9, 2011. Data came from various years.

Saakashvili's Russia policy during these four time periods to understand whether the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis applies in the Georgian case.

Table 4.1: Public opinion on whether Georgia is going in the right or wrong direction²⁷

	Right	Wrong	Don't Know
Feb 2009	27	59	14
Sep 2008	47	42	11
Feb 2008	41	48	11
Sep 2007	36	58	6
Feb 2007	48	41	11
Apr 2006	39	51	10
Oct 2005	50	38	12
Jun 2005	65	25	10
Oct 2004	65	24	10

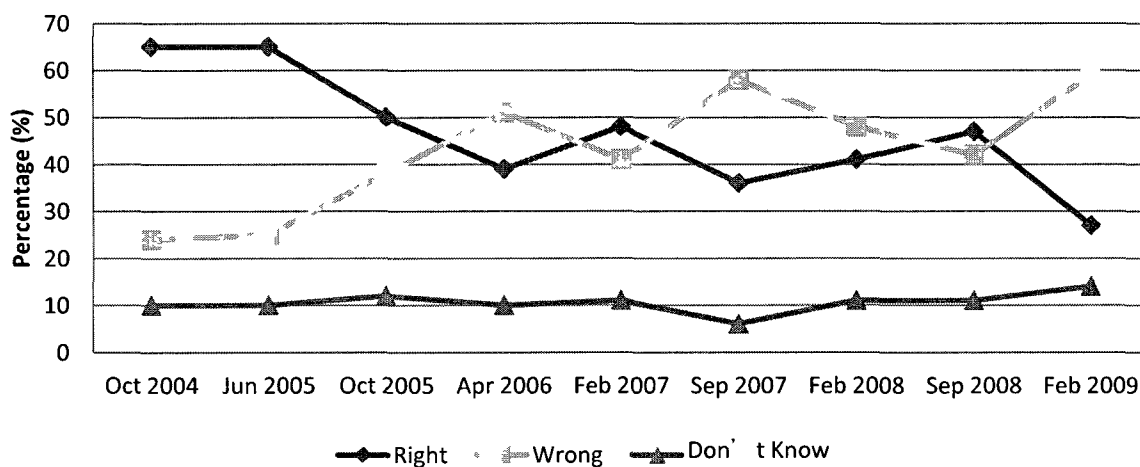


Figure 4.3: Public opinion on whether Georgia is going in the right or wrong direction

²⁷ Source: The ISI Surveys of Georgian Public Opinion (http://www.iri.org/news-events-press-center/news-iri/show_for_country/1690).

II. Georgian's Foreign Policy toward Russia amidst the Political Storms

The relationship between Georgia and Russia has been highly complicated since the breakup of the Soviet Union, as the former's attempt to consolidate sovereign independence and territorial integrity clashed with the latter's relentless effort to maintaining its control over the former Soviet states. The bilateral relationship reached the lowest point on the eve of the Rose revolution, as a result of President Shevardnadze's close ties with the US and Russia's accusation that he was harboring Chechen guerillas.²⁸ Aware of the domestic consequences of continued conflict with Moscow, Saakashvili promised to improve relations with Russia during his electoral campaign in late 2003.²⁹ After entering office, Saakashvili made several efforts to rebuild the friendship between Georgia and Russia, including banning Chechen rebels from entering Georgia,³⁰ paying a visit to Moscow in early February,³¹ and briefing Russian President Vladimir Putin about the result of his visit to the US to ease Moscow's suspicion about the new president's intention.³² Nonetheless, the smooth relationship soon unraveled, turning into constant fluctuations between tension and stalemate after mid-2004. To examine whether the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis could explain the ups and downs of the Georgian-Russian relationship, this section analyzes Saakashvili's policymaking toward Russia during the periods of his political storm.

²⁸ Georgie A. Geyer, "Conversations with Eduard Shevardnadze," *The Washington Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (2000): 65.

²⁹ Charles King, "A Rose among Thorns: Georgia Makes Good," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 2 (2004): 13.

³⁰ "Georgia's Sakaashvili Promises to Reverse "Dangerous" Stance on Chechnya," *Agence France Presse* Jan 27, 2004, accessed August 20, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

³¹ Nikolai Topuria, "Georgian Leader Tries to Build Friendship with Russia's Putin," *Agence France Presse* Feb 11, 2004, accessed August 20, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

³² "Georgia's Saakashvili Briefs Putin on US Visit: Kremlin," *Agence France Presse* Mar 2, 2004, accessed August 20, 2011, NexisLexis Academic.

1. The 2006 Municipal Elections and Saakashvili's Russia Policy

The 2006 local elections were Georgia's first democratic elections for municipal heads. Therefore, whether the ruling party could secure a clear victory had great implications for the president's domestic leadership. Another factor that underlined this consideration was Saakashvili's waning popularity since early 2006. In the spring of 2006, the opposition began to attack the ruling party for being unable to improve the domestic economy and reduce corruption. The opposition heads not only openly voiced their disagreement with the ruling party, but also organized a public demonstration demanding the president's resignation. Although the protest was moderate in size and short in duration, it revealed the emergence of Saakashvili's political vulnerability. Hence, when the October local elections approached, it seemed very likely that the cautious Georgian president would turn to the diversionary strategy to take away public attention from his weak governance performance.

Georgia and Russia got into intense diplomatic fights in early 2006 as a result of a mysterious bombing on January 22 of Russian pipelines that deliver gas to Georgia and Armenia.³³ As the cut-off of gas supplies caused an immediate energy shortage in the gas recipient countries, Saakashvili took a tough stance and accused Moscow of facilitating the attack as a means of intimidating Georgia.³⁴ Moscow denied the accusation, but was unable to provide any suspects responsible for the incident. A war of words emerged as the energy crisis deepened. Saakashvili seized this opportunity to seek alternative sources of gas supplies to reduce Georgian dependence on Russian energy, which further deepened the rifts between both sides. Russia's decision to ban wine imports from Georgia for health reasons in

³³ Vladimir Socor, "Russian Energy Supply Cutoff to Georgia: Another Wake-up Signal to the West," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 3, no. 15 (2006).

³⁴ "Russia Using Energy as Means of Blackmail - Georgian President Saakashvili," *Poland Business Weekly* January 20, 2006, accessed November 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

late March exacerbated the political clash between the two countries.³⁵ Saakashvili retaliated by threatening to ban beer imports from Russia and withdrawing from the Russian-led bloc of former Soviet states, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).³⁶ The tension finally began to ease in June, as Putin and Saakashvili pledge to repair the damaged relationship between their countries.³⁷

Nonetheless, another policy conflict broke out in late September. On September 22, two weeks before the local elections for municipal councilors, Tbilisi arrested four Russian officials in Georgia for spying for Moscow.³⁸ This action triggered a diplomatic crisis between the two governments, as Russia recalled its ambassador to Georgia, withdrew its officials from Tbilisi, cut off its trade and transportation relationship with Georgia, and expelled more than one hundred Georgian citizens.³⁹ Saakashvili released the alleged spies after the US's intervention. In response, Russia launched an economic embargo against Georgia.⁴⁰ Disputes over Russian sanctions continued for another month. Saakashvili's high-profile announcement of its arrest of Russian spies prior to the 2006 elections suggests the possibility that it was a provocation by the Georgian side.

³⁵ "Georgian President Says Russian Wine Ban Is Political," accessed August 22, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

³⁶ "Wine Wars Rage as Georgia Threatens to Ban Russian Beer," *Agence France Presse* May 2, 2006, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; "Georgian President Thanks Russia for Drinks Ban," *Agence France Presse* May 22, 2006, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

³⁷ "Putin, Saakashvili Pledge to Mend Ties, Join Efforts to Resolve Conflicts," *Agence France Presse* June 13, 2006, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

³⁸ "Moscow Cries Foul as Georgia Arrests Four Russian 'Spies'," *Agence France Presse* September 27, 2006, accessed September 12, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

³⁹ "Russia Recalls Ambassador, Evacuates Staff in Row with Georgia," *Agence France Presse* September 28, 2006, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; "Russia Cuts Transport, Postal Links with Georgia," *Agence France Presse* October 2, 2006, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; "Russia to Expel 119 Georgians," *Agence France Presse* October 10, 2006, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁴⁰ "Georgian Leader Warns Moscow against Bullying," *Agence France Presse* October 4, 2006, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

2. Mass Demonstration and Diplomatic Standoff in November 2007

The November 2007 mass demonstration created intense political turmoil in Tbilisi. At the same time, domestic support for President Saakashvili's leadership also declined significantly. The IRI public opinion survey shows that less than 40% of respondents believed their country was moving in the right direction, while over 50% of them thought the direction was wrong.⁴¹ When the mass demonstration intensified on November 7, Saakashvili accused Russia of facilitating the unrest in the capital city.⁴² The Chairman of the Georgian parliamentary committee for defense and security, Givi Targamadze, also alleged that the government had obtained tape recordings proving the opposition leaders' collaboration with Russian authorities to launch the mass demonstration against Georgian government.⁴³ On the same day, the president announced his decision to expel several Russian diplomats for "spying" in the country without providing concrete evidence.⁴⁴ On November 8, the Georgian prosecutor's office further accused two opposition leaders of "spying and plotting a coup with the help of Russian officials."⁴⁵ These spy accusations led to the deterioration of the Georgian-Russian relationship.

Besides the mass demonstration, Saakashvili faced another challenge with the snap presidential election on January 5. The decision to hold the election was aimed at rebuild the president's domestic legitimacy through the election, while also demonstrating to the Western allies his commitment to democracy. The US and EU welcomed the president's call for an early presidential election.

⁴¹ The International Republican Institute, "Survey of Georgian Public Opinion."

⁴² "Russia Involved in Georgia Unrest: Saakashvili," *Agence France Presse* November 7, 2007.

⁴³ "Moscow Is Behind Opposition Actions - Georgian Authorities," *Ukraine General Newswire* November 7, 2007.

⁴⁴ "Georgia to Expel Russian Diplomat 'Spies': Saakashvili," *Agence France Presse* November 7, 2007.

⁴⁵ "Georgia Accuses Opposition Leaders of Russia-Backed Coup Attempt," *Agence France Press* November 8, 2007, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

Saakashvili's announcement that he was moving up the presidential elections transformed his political clash with the opposition in an electoral competition. During the two months leading up to the election, Saakashvili concentrated his campaign on a nationalist theme. Besides emphasizing his goal of maintaining Georgia's territorial integration and bringing the country into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Saakashvili also announced that a referendum on Georgia's NATO accession would be held concurrently with the presidential election.⁴⁶ However, since the majority of the public in Georgia supported the country's NATO membership, and since there was little evidence that the public demanded the referendum, Saakashvili's decision to hold a NATO referendum was clearly a symbolic move to mobilize his pro-NATO supporters.⁴⁷ Interestingly, this campaign strategy was very similar to Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's initiative to hold a defensive referendum along with the 2004 presidential election. This shows that referendum on security issues seems to be a useful tool for state leaders' nationalist manipulations. Saakashvili's campaign tactic seemed to be successful, as his popularity rating grew stronger as the election drew nearer.⁴⁸ Eventually, Saakashvili won the reelection in a single round with a 53.47% majority vote. Soon after his election victory, Saakashvili expressed his desire to mend ties with Russia.⁴⁹ In February, the president even declared that he would create a special foreign ministry department to focus on the task of restoring confidence in the

⁴⁶ "Georgia Referendum to Include NATO Question: Official," *Agence France Presse* November 26, 2007.

⁴⁷ Mandy Kirby, "Georgian Presidential Vote to Be Twinned with Referendum on NATO Entry," *Global Insight* November 27, 2007, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; Andrew E. Kramer, "After Crackdown, Election Today Tests Georgian Leader," *The New York Times* January 5, 2008, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; Irakli Metreveli, "After Unrest, Georgia Struggles to Revive NATO Bid," *Agence France Presse* December 7, 2007, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁴⁸ "Georgia: Saakashvili Leads Daily Newspaper's Opinion Poll," *BBC Worldwide Monitoring* December 10, 2007, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁴⁹ "Georgia's Saakashvili Hopes to Mend Ties with Russia," *Agence France Presse* January 25, 2008, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

Georgian-Russian relationship.⁵⁰ This change of attitude from confrontation to conciliation after the presidential election also resembled Chen Shui-bian's behavior after winning reelection, which indicates that Saakashvili's provocative policy toward Russia in the November-December 2007 period of time was very likely a diversionary tactic to distract the public's attention from domestic problems and to mobilize nationalist support.

3. The May 2008 Parliamentary Election and the Georgian-Russian War in 2008

Georgia's hostility toward Russia began to grow in the month prior to the parliamentary elections in May 2008. Nonetheless, it is difficult to determine whether this rising confrontation was driven by Saakashvili's diversionary considerations for electoral purposes, since Russia's decision to upgrade its official relationship with the two breakaway Georgian regions, South Ossetia and Abkhazia, triggered a diplomatic crisis between Moscow and Tbilisi in mid-April.⁵¹ This decision was highly provocative in Georgia's eye, for the reunification with these two breakaway republics had been the former Soviet state's national objective since the 1990s. In response, Saakashvili claimed on April 24 that he would seek help from Georgia's western friends to remove Russian peacekeeping troops from the rebel region of Abkhazia.⁵² But Russia continued to advance its support for the secessionist authority in Abkhazia. On May 1, Moscow sent extra troops into the rebel region,

⁵⁰ "Georgia Creates Unit to Mend Ties with Russia," *Agence France Presse* February 1, 2008, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵¹ On April 24, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree with the authorities of these two breakaway regions to recognize their independence and to established official ties with them. See Irakli Metreveli, "Georgia Accuses Russia of Attempting to Annex Territories," *Agence France Presse* April 16, 2008, accessed September 13, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵² "Georgia Seeks West's Aid to Oust Russian Peacekeepers," *Agence France Presse* April 24, 2008, accessed September 20, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

inviting strong criticism from Tbilisi and NATO.⁵³ A week later, when talking to Russian journalists, Saakashvili implicitly warned that there would be negative consequences in troubled Russian regions such as Chechnya and North Ossetia if any country attempted to annex part of Georgia.⁵⁴

After several months of growing hostility between Tbilisi and Moscow over the two breakaway Georgian regions, an intense military conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia finally erupted on August 7, as both sides exchanged heavy artillery fire against each other. On the next day, Russia began its military attack against Georgian forces, which marked the beginning of the Georgian-Russian war that shocked the world. In response, Saakashvili declared a 15-day “state of war” status.⁵⁵ The Georgian-Russian military conflict lasted for five days. On August 10, Georgia announced its plan to withdraw its military troops from South Ossetia and called for a ceasefire and peace talks.⁵⁶ On August 12, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced Russia’s decision to conclude the military operation because “the aim of Russia’s operation for coercing the Georgian side to peace had been achieved.”⁵⁷ A ceasefire plan was agreed upon by Saakashvili and Medvedev later that day, although conflict involving military actions continued into September.

As the above discussion shows, although Georgia made a series of hostile statements toward Russia prior to the 2008 legislative elections, the existence of Russian provocations made it highly difficult to determine whether these statements were for diversionary purposes.

⁵³ “Extra Russian Troops Arrive in Georgian Rebel Zones: Agencies,” *Agence France Presse* May 1, 2006, accessed September 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵⁴ ———, “Georgia Accuses Russia of Attempting to Annex Territories,” *Agence France Presse* April 16, 2008, accessed September 20, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁵⁵ Jim Nichol, *Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests*, CRS Report for Congress (2008), 5-6.

⁵⁶ Pavel Felgenhauer, “The Russian-Georgian War Was Preplanned in Moscow,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5, no. 156 (2008). Also see Interfax, August 10.

⁵⁷ *ITAR-TASS*, August 12, 2008. Quoted in Nichol, “Russia-Georgia Conflict in South Ossetia: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 7.

In fact, judging from the context and content of the statement, they seemed more likely to be Saakashvili's reactive moves in response to Moscow's ambitious behavior in the Georgian breakaway regions.

4. The April 2009 Mass Demonstration and the May 2009 Diplomatic Frictions

Georgia's domestic turmoil reoccurred in April 2009 when the opposition began its months-long large mass demonstrations against President Saakashvili on the streets of Tbilisi. This political storm posed serious challenges to Saakashvili's leadership. At the same time, the president's domestic support hit a new low: only 27% of the respondents believed that their country was moving in a right direction.⁵⁸ One week after the beginning of the mass demonstrations, the president announced that his government had arrested a Russian youth activist who had been planning to provoke an armed conflict in South Ossetia.⁵⁹ In May, Saakashvili and his administration accused Russia of trying to facilitate a mutiny at one Georgian military base, which was thwarted within hours.⁶⁰ The government also announced that it had arrested several top officials collaborating with Moscow and intending to overthrow the Saakashvili regime.⁶¹ Russia dismissed this accusation as "insane." Although Tbilisi soon backed away from its accusation because of the lack of direct evidence, it nonetheless moved further to charge and arrested a former diplomat for spying for Russia.⁶²

III. Spy Politics and Hendrickson's Propositions

⁵⁸ The International Republican Institute, "Survey of Georgian Public Opinon."

⁵⁹ "Georgia Says Russian Activist Arrested over 'Provocation'," *Agence France Presse* April 16, 2009, retrieved from accessed September 11, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁶⁰ Pavel Felgenhauer, "Risk Increasing of Russian Intervention in Georgia," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 6, no. 88 (2009).

⁶¹ "Tbilisi Accuses Russia of Encouraging Georgian Military to Stage Mutiny," *Central Asia & Caucasus Business Weekly* May 5, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁶² "Georgia Arrests Ex-Diplomat for Spying for Moscow: Ministry," *Agence France Presse* May 6, 2009, accessed October 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

According to the discussion above, there seemed to be a pattern in Saakashvili's Russia policy making when he experienced serious domestic problems. In three of the four cases of his political vulnerability—the upcoming local elections in October 2006 and the November 2007 and April-May 2009 public protests—the president made high-profile accusations and arrests of Russian spies, blaming Moscow for facilitating the social unrest in Georgia. In order to assess whether these Russian spy accusations were driven by Saakashvili's desire to divert domestic attention from the opposition's criticism and public dissatisfaction, I examine the context of the president's policymaking with the revised Hendrickson propositions suggested in last chapter. That is, Saakashvili's "spy politics" had to meet three criteria: they would not fit national strategic interests, the opposition would disapprove of them or be forced to silence its criticism afterward, and the foreign allies would oppose them.

1. Was there strategic necessity?

The constant frictions between Georgia and Russia over the latter's military presence in Abkhazia and South Ossetia increased the difficulty of distinguishing Tbilisi's proactive provocations from its reactive ones. Therefore, although Saakashvili's spy politics seem to be a proactive act given there were no apparent diplomatic provocations by Moscow prior to it, the prolonged tension and sporadic military friction between both governments to some extent reduce our confidence to identify those spy accusations as proactive. The fact that all three cases were publicly announced by the Georgian government in a time when President Saakashvili was facing critical power challenges from the opposition and mass demonstrations suggests that Saakashvili might be more willing to authorize his government

to make spy arrests or more willing to publicize his government's discovery and handling of Russian spies when he was facing increased power challenge from the opposition and the public. However, further research is necessary to provide more solid evidence in support of this assessment.

2. The opposition's reaction

In all three cases, the Georgian opposition condemned President Saakashvili's spy accusations by arguing that the president had not taken into serious consideration the dire consequences these acts could lead to. Alleging that the president's real motivation was to play the Russian card to divert domestic attention from the country's domestic problems, the opposition raised strong criticisms of those accusations. For instance, in response to Saakashvili's spy accusation in September 2006, Salome Zourabichvili, one of the opposition leaders and ex-foreign minister, complained that the Saakashvili government's high-profile arrest and detention of the Russian officials, arguing that the administration had violated international principle, which stipulated that "foreigners accused of spying are handed over to the authorities of their home country without fanfare." Following this statement, Labor Party leader Shalva Natelashvili accused that the government's handling of the spy dispute was driven by the leader's diversionary purpose ahead of October 5 local elections.⁶³

Similarly, when Saakashvili declared the exposure of Russian spies and accused the opposition of cooperating with Moscow to instigate domestic unrest in November 2007 and May 2009, the opposition denounced it as the president's strategy to "deflect attention away

⁶³ "Georgian Opposition Blames Electoral Calculations for 'Spy Scandal'," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* October 2, 2006, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

from the widening street protestors.”⁶⁴ Saakashvili’s constant attempt to connect domestic dissidents to Russian conspirators seemed to show that the spy politics had become a key strategy for the president to fight domestic political battles. Interestingly, as many experts of the Georgia-Russia relations observe, this kind of diversionary strategy is also commonly used by Tbilisi’s rival neighbor, Moscow.⁶⁵

Lastly, although there was little discussion about how other members in the ruling party responded to Saakashvili’s spy politics, the fact that anti-Russian opposition parties also raised strong criticism against it provides additional support for the diversionary hypothesis.

3. Responses from western allies

Tbilisi’s spy accusations and arrests in September 2006 immediately drew wide international attention. In response, NATO ministers made a statement calling on both sides to calm the tension on September 30, 2006, while US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld expressed Washington’s concern with the Georgian-Russian confrontation.⁶⁶ When the friction continued to intensify, Washington put pressure on Tbilisi to solve the dispute. Georgia finally gave in and released the four Russian army officers in custody on October 3, after President Bush held a phone conversation with President Saakashvili.⁶⁷ In contrast, the 2007 spy dispute did not receive substantial attention from Georgia’s allies, because their

⁶⁴ Luke Harding, "Georgia Plunged into Crisis after State of Emergency Declared," *The Irish Times* November 8, 2007, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; "Georgia Blames Russia for Army Mutiny," *EuroNews* May 5, 2009, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁶⁵ "Is Moscow Behind Georgian Unrest?," *Radio Free Europe* November 14, 2007, accessed August 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁶⁶ Maya Topuria, "Georgia-Russia Spy Row Ratchets up, West Urges Calm," *Agence France Presse* September 30, 2006, accessed September 23, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁶⁷ Chris Stephen, "Bush Intervenes as Russian Officers Released," *The Irish Times* October 3, 2006, accessed September 21, LexisNexis Academic.

primary concern was to pressure Saakashvili into lifting the state of emergency rule he implemented on the same day. Washington expressed its “disappointment” at Tbilisi’s undemocratic decision and asked Saakashvili to lift the emergency rule immediately.

Similarly, the 2009 mutiny and spy accusations did not obtain support from Georgia’s western allies. The Pentagon stated that it did not have any information about Russia’s involvement.⁶⁸ NATO officials criticized that Saakashvili’s charge of Russian-facilitated mutiny against him as a way to publicize the upcoming NATO exercise in Georgia for his political gains.⁶⁹ The US newspaper, the Washington Times, also published an article suggesting that Saakashvili was fabricating the mutiny plot “to draw attention away from popular protests against his rule.”⁷⁰

Among all three cases, the spy accusation in September 2006 received the strongest criticisms from Georgia’s allies. Evidence of western objections in the last two cases was less clear, although doubts about Saakashvili’s real motivation behind the acts implicitly indicate the allies’ fading trust in Georgian president given the volatile political manipulations.

The above analysis shows that President Saakashvili’s spy politics generally meet the three revised Hendrickson propositions. As the relationship between Georgia and Russia was highly complicated, it is difficult to assess whether Saakashvili’s spy accusations were purely proactive acts without conducting further research in the field. Nonetheless, although the preliminary examination in this research provides only moderate evidence of the applicability

⁶⁸ "Georgia Mutiny an 'Isolated Incident': Pentagon," *Agence France Presse* May 5, 2009, accessed September 3, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁶⁹ Valentina Pop, "Russia's Rhetoric Not Helpful for Jittery Georgia, EU Says," *EUobserver* May 7, 2009, accessed September 3, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁷⁰ Dan Catchpole, "Plot or Ploy? Georgia Mutiny a Brief Distraction from Protests," *The Washington Times* May 7, 2009, accessed September 3, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

of the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis in Georgia's case, it opens an important front for further investigation into President Saakashvili's Russian policymaking. That is, an in-depth field study is needed on Georgia's domestic politics and Russia policymaking to offer supplementary evidence of the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis.

IV. Alliance Politics and Saakashvili's Russian Policy

As in the case of Taiwan, one has to consider the possibility that President Saakashvili's provocative Russia policy initiatives were encouraged by the strong support from his western allies, especially the US. If this alternative hypothesis explains the president's spy politics, one should see a change in such behavior when the level of US support of Tbilisi shifts.

Saakashvili had obtained strong support from the Bush administration since the Rose Revolution brought him to power. On the one hand, the new Georgian leader's pro-western orientation made him a highly welcomed ally for the US. On the other hand, Georgia's peaceful democratic transition at the end of 2004 satisfied President Bush's ideological belief in promoting democracy all over the world. Praising the Georgian government as "beacon of liberty" in the post-Soviet region,⁷¹ the Bush administration promised to provide Tbilisi substantial security assistance such as promoting Georgia's accession to NATO and making a firm statement in support of Georgia's territorial integrity against threats from secessionist threats and Moscow. Therefore, Washington's warm friendship with Tbilisi might have

⁷¹ Joseph Curl, "Bush Praises Georgians," *The Washington Times* May 11, 2005, accessed November 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

encouraged Saakashvili to take risky approaches toward Russia, as Bush and Lieberthal suggest.⁷²

Nonetheless, there was no sign that Saakashvili was changing his provocative Russian policy approach after President Bush left office in early 2009. Although the new Obama administration also publicly declared its support for Georgia's independence, autonomy, and territorial integrity, it also wanted to "reset" Bush's confrontational policy line and establish a good relationship with Russia.⁷³ This casts doubt on the extent to which the Obama administration would be willing to confront Moscow to defend Tbilisi's interests, as "getting Russia right" has been placed on the top of Washington's foreign policy agenda.⁷⁴ Moreover, after the 2008 Georgian-Russian war, many western allies were losing patience with the Georgian president.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, despite his declining popularity in the West, Saakashvili did not give up his playing of the Russian card when facing domestic challenges. Therefore, in April 2009, he once again adopted the tactic of Russian spy blame game when handling the opposition rallies on the street. This suggests that while US support might have given him greater political confidence, it was not the primary attribute of his nonviolent Russian provocations.

⁷² Richard C. Bush and Kenneth G. Lieberthal, "From Georgia to Taiwan," *The Wall Street Journal Asia* (2008), accessed October 2, 2010, http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2008/0916_taiwan_bush.aspx?p=1.

⁷³ Joseph Curl, "Up to Georgia If It Wants to Join NATO, Biden Says," *Agence France Presse* February 8, 2009, accessed November 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁷⁴ Rachel S. Salzman, "U.S. Policy toward Russia: A Review of Policy Recommendations," American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

⁷⁵ Tom Esslemont, "Georgia Licks Wounds One Year On," *BCC News* 2010, accessed November 14, 2011, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8187859.stm>.

V. Ukraine's Orange Revolution and Yushchenko's Political Crisis

Ukraine's recent democratic transition was triggered by a presidential election fraud on November 2004 that favored Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.⁷⁶ The Leonid Kuchma government's (1994-2005) attempt to steal the election from the leading challenger Viktor Yushchenko triggered widespread anger. Thousands of protestors poured into the streets demanding the truth of the election outcome. After weeks of turmoil, the court ruled that a new election would be held on December 26. As expected, Yushchenko was elected as Ukraine's third president since the breakup of the Soviet Union with 52% of the vote. This peaceful resolution of the political deadlock between the Kuchma government and Yushchenko's political camp was known as the Orange Revolution based on the color of flag of the newly elected president's campaigning coalition.

The newly elected President's political tasks were no easy. After years of Kuchma's rule, Ukraine was struggling with a sagging economy and widespread corruption. To cope with these problems required tremendous reform of the existing institutions. Complicating these challenges were the strong political influence of the president's major opponent Yanukovich, and frictions within the Orange Coalition. Eventually, the Yushchenko government proved unable to effectively improve the state's economy and combat corruption. In the year of 2008 and 2009, Ukraine suffered a very high inflation rate and unemployment rate respectively (see Figures 4.4 and 4.5). The resulted disappointment among the public and the emerging frictions within the president's political coalition gradually led to severe threats to the president's leadership.

⁷⁶ Adrian Karatnycky, "Ukraine's Orange Revolution," *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 2 (2005): 35.

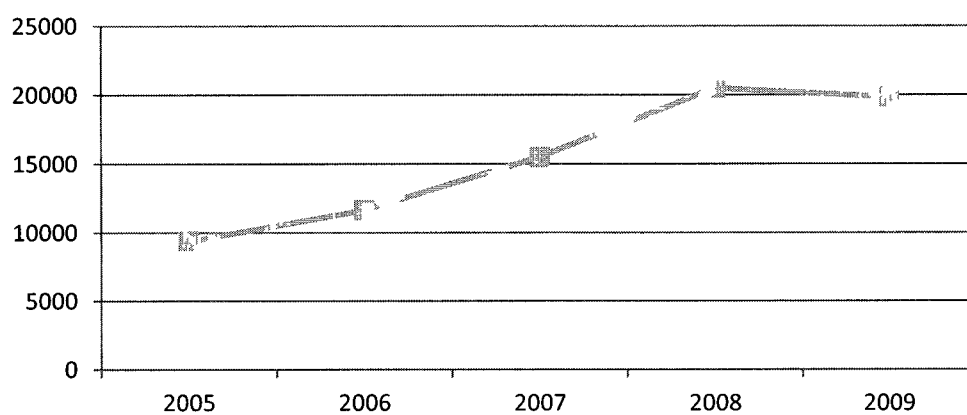


Figure 4.4: Ukraine's GDP per capita, 2005-2009 (Unit: Ukrainian Hryvnia)⁷⁷

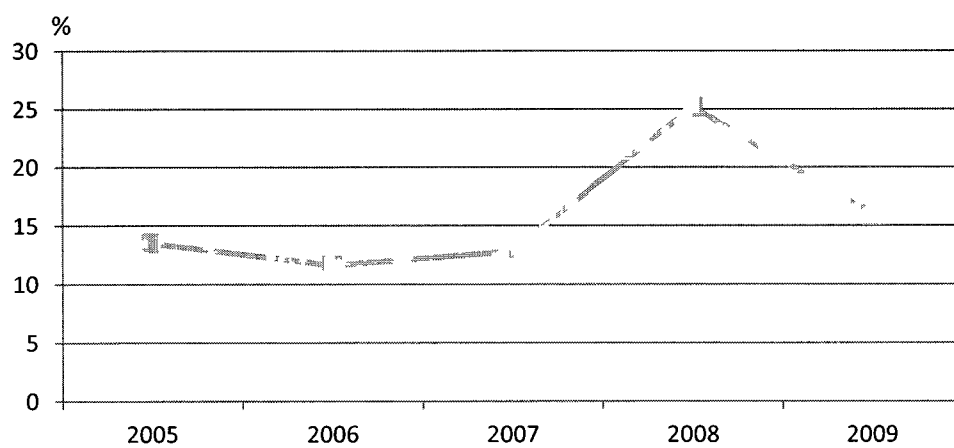


Figure 4.5: Ukraine's annual inflation rate

⁷⁷ Data of Figures 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 come from State Statistics Service of Ukraine, <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>. Accessed November 21, 2011.

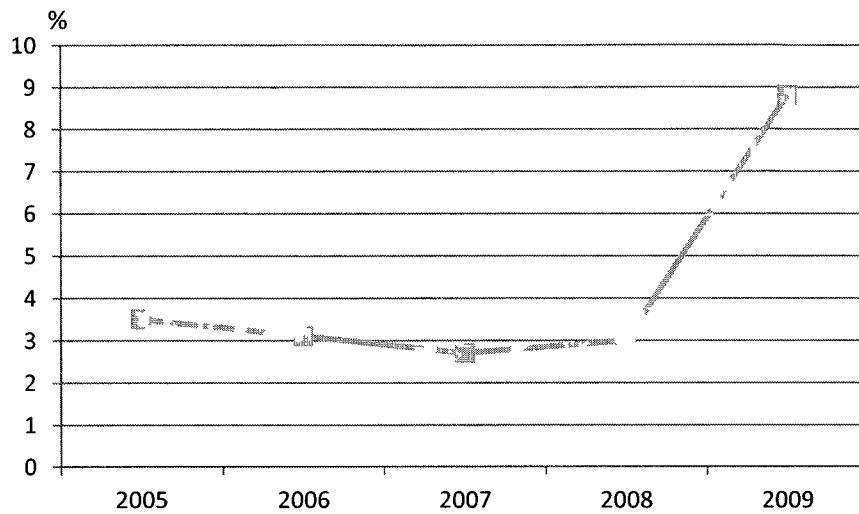


Figure 4.6: Ukraine's annual unemployment rate, 2005-2009

Domestic political turmoil in Ukraine after the Orange revolution was no less severe than in Georgia. Nonetheless, unlike Tbilisi, Kiev's political crises were caused by constant conflict between the president and his major opponent—the leader of the Party of Region, Yanukovych. Recurrent intra-coalition fights between the president's Our Ukraine bloc and another key pro-Orange force, the Yulia Tymoshenko bloc, posed further threats to the stability of Yushchenko's power. Elections and declining popularity were also critical challenges for the president. Therefore, Yushchenko's five years in office were characterized by constant political turmoil.

1. Election

There were three national elections during President Yushchenko's tenure: the parliamentary elections in 2006 and 2007, and the presidential election in 2010. Each of the

three elections has an important effect on the stability of Yushchenko's power. The 2006 parliamentary elections were scheduled to be held on March 26. Due to the split between Yushchenko and the former Prime Minister Tymoshenko in September 2005, the latter's political bloc was now competing with the president's Our Ukraine party for pro-Orange votes. Another strong competitor was Yanukovich's the Party of Regions. According to the constitutional amendments that took effect on January 1, 2006, the formation of the new cabinet required a relatively stable majority in parliament. However, pre-election public opinion polls showed that none of the three powerful parties could win a majority vote. For example, a public poll conducted by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology reported that the likely vote share of the Party of Regions was 37.7%, Our Ukraine 23.3%, and the Tymoshenko bloc 13.2%.⁷⁸ Therefore, speculations about whether Yushchenko would choose to form a ruling coalition with Tymoshenko or Yanukovich were all over the media before the elections.⁷⁹ When the election results came out, Yushchenko lost not only to Yanukovich, but also to Tymoshenko.⁸⁰ After several months of bitter negotiations, the president finally formed a ruling coalition with the pro-Russian leader Yanukovich and appointed him as the prime minister.⁸¹

The formation of the Yanukovich government briefly resolved the political crisis in the summer following the 2006 parliamentary elections. Nonetheless, fundamental differences on various issues between the president and the prime minister soon began to

⁷⁸ "Regions Party Leading in Opinion Poll," *Ukraine General Newswire* February 9, 2006, accessed September 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁷⁹ Oleg Varfolomeyev, "Yushchenko Choosing between Tymoshenko and Yanukovich?," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 3, no. 56 (2006).

⁸⁰ The Party of Regions received 32.1% of the popular vote, the Yulia Tymochenko bloc and the Our Ukraine bloc received 22.3% and 13.9%, respectively. See Vicki L. Hesli, "The 2006 Parliamentary Election in Ukraine," *Electoral Studies* 26(2007): 510.

⁸¹ Oleg Varfolomeyev, "Yushchenko, Yanukovich Reach Compromise," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 3, no. 151 (2006).

emerge and caused constant conflict between them. As head of the cabinet, Yanukovych often disregarded or refused to implement Yushchenko's policies. The fear of losing control over the government prompted Yushchenko to issue a presidential decree to dissolve the parliament on April 2, which then required an early parliamentary election to be held in two months.⁸² The Yanukovych government initially refused to accept the decree, but eventually agreed to set the election date on September 30 after one month of political standoff.⁸³

The 2007 parliamentary elections were even more challenging to Yushchenko. Although the president had signed an accord with Tymoshenko to declare the re-establishment of their alliance, the latter nonetheless decided to run for the upcoming parliamentary elections separately. Unable to organize a strong coalition with other pro-Orange oppositions to maximize his bloc's vote gains, Yushchenko was facing a tough election.⁸⁴ On the contrary, Yanukovych's party remained the strongest force, as pre-election polls constantly showed that it enjoyed the highest support of voters.⁸⁵ The election outcome was similar to the 2006 election, as the Party of Regions turned out to be the biggest winner with 34.37% of the votes, followed by the Yulia Tymoshenko bloc's 30.71%. Yushchenko's Our Ukraine ranked the third, but with a much lower vote share: only 14.15%.⁸⁶

The last election Yushchenko ran for during his tenure was the presidential election on January 17, 2010. According to a public opinion poll conducted by sociologists of the

⁸² Pavel Korduban, "Yushchenko Rules to Dissolve Parliament," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 4, no. 65 (2007).

⁸³ ———, "Crisis over, but Rule of Law Undermined in Ukraine," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 4, no. 104 (2007).

⁸⁴ ———, "Yushchenko Starts Election Campaign for His Party," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 4, no. 126 (2007).

⁸⁵ For instance, see "Five Political Forces Capable of Winning Seats in Ukrainian Parliament - Pol," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* June 21, 2007, accessed September 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; "Yanukovych Leads in Pre-Election Poll," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* July 19, 2007, accessed September 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; "Most Ukrainian Plan to Vote in Elections - Poll," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* July 30, 2007, accessed September 7, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁸⁶ Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, "Ukraine: Pre-Term Parliamentary Elections 30 September 2007," in *OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Report* (The OSCE/ODIHR, 2007), Annex.

FOM-Ukraine research center in late July, Tymoshenko and Yanukovych were the two most competitive candidates: 23.7% of the respondents supported Tymoshenko, and 20.5% chose Yanukovych. Only 7% said they would vote for Yushchenko.⁸⁷ The president decided to run for the reelection regardless of the unpromising pre-election polling results.⁸⁸ This meant that Yushchenko would have to compete against his former ally Tymoshenko for pro-Orange supporters' votes. In the end, Yushchenko lost to his two competitors in the first round. Yanukovych was elected as the new president after a runoff election on February 14.

2. Inter- and Intra- Coalition Political Conflict

In March 2006, as a consequence of political conflicts between President Yushchenko and his former political ally and important supporter during the Orange revolution, the Yanukovych's Party of Regions won the largest number of seats in the parliamentary elections. After several months of failed attempts to organize a pro-Orange coalition, Yushchenko was forced to name Yanukovych as the prime minister.⁸⁹ Nonetheless, due to the latter's pro-Russian orientation, the prime minister not only kept delaying the president's plan of applying for membership of NATO and the EU, but also took substantial actions to weaken the president's power. When Yushchenko issued a decree on April 2, 2007, to dissolve the parliament, serious political conflict between the president's supporters and the anti-Orange proponents broke out. Thousands of people held rallies on the streets of Kiev to protest the president's decision, demanding that the president quit. Pro-Yushchenko

⁸⁷ "Tymoshenko Leads Presidential Candidate Ratings in Ukraine - Public Opinion Poll," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* July 31, 2008, accessed August 8, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁸⁸ "Ukraine President Launches Underdog Election Bid," *Agence France Presse* October 27, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁸⁹ Ivan Katchanovski, "The Orange Evolution? The "Orange Revolution" And Political Changes in Ukraine," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 24, no. 4 (2008): 352.

supporters also held demonstrations of approximately the same size to protest against their anti-Orange counterparts.⁹⁰ The political tension between Yushchenko and Yanukovych grew so high that it began to involve a struggle to control and mobilize the state's security forces in late May. Fearing that this dangerous development would lead to a civil war, the two camps finally agreed to make a compromise and set the date for parliamentary elections on September 30, which ended the months-long political crisis.⁹¹ After the Yulia Tymoshenko bloc and Yushchenko's "Our Ukraine" bloc won a narrow majority in the elections, they formed a ruling coalition. Tymoshenko was again named as the prime minister, and the Orange camp took back its control over the government.⁹²

A second political crisis for Yushchenko emerged in the summer of 2008, when the political frictions between him and Prime Minister Tymoshenko intensified.⁹³ This political clash was due to these leaders' positions on various political issues, as well as the possibility that they would run in the 2010 presidential election as competitors. As the conflict within the Orange coalition kept escalating, Yushchenko threatened to leave the government coalition if Tymoshenko did not refrain from trying to reduce the president's power.⁹⁴ This political storm finally ended in December 2008, after both sides again decided to sign a deal to form a coalition.⁹⁵ Finally, the last political crisis for President Yushchenko occurred in late 2009, when his "Our Ukraine" bloc unilaterally withdrew from the government

⁹⁰ "Thousands Rally in Kiev against President," *Agence France Presse* April 2, 2007, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁹¹ Anya Tsukanova, "Security Dispute in Ukraine Led to Compromise," *Agence France Presse* May 28, 2007, accessed August 4, 2011, LexisNexis Academic; Steven Woehrel, *Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy*, CRS Report for Congress (August 13, 2009).

⁹² Katchanovski, "The Orange Evolution? The "Orange Revolution" And Political Changes in Ukraine," 352.

⁹³ Maria Danilova, "Ukraine Ruling Coalition Heading toward Collapse," *Associated Press* July 17, 2008, January 14, 2009, accessed August 8, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁹⁴ Woehrel, "Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy," 3.

⁹⁵ "Ukraine Parties Sign Coalition Deal," *Agence France Presse* December 16, 2008, accessed August 8, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

coalition.⁹⁶ Yushchenko then decided to run for the presidential election scheduled in January 2010, but his low popularity posed a serious challenge to his chance of winning the reelection.⁹⁷

3. Popularity

Despite his high popularity during the Orange revolution, public support for President Yushchenko began to fall soon after. According to the public opinion polls conducted by the Razumkov Centre throughout Yushchenko's tenure, the percentage of people who expressed strong support for the president dropped significantly in the fall of 2005 after political friction occurred between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko resulting in the latter's removal from the post of prime minister. Nonetheless, the level of overall support for Yushchenko remained moderate, though it gradually declined over time. A sharp popularity decline occurred in the midst of a more serious political fight between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko in fall 2008. As Table 4.2 shows, public support for the president was down to 17.8% in September. Yushchenko was unable to recover from such low public support.

In sum, the analysis above indicated that there were four major political challenges for President Yushchenko since the Orange Revolution: the parliamentary elections in March 2006, the 2007 parliamentary elections resulted from the dissolution of parliament, the Yushchenko-Tymoshenko split in summer-fall 2008, and the campaign for the presidential election in late 2009. Section VI examines Yushchenko's foreign policy toward Russia during these periods of time.

⁹⁶ "Ukraine President's Party Wants to Leave Coalition," *Agence France Presse* June 28, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

⁹⁷ "Ukraine President Launches Underdog Election Bid," *Agence France Presse* October 27, 2009, accessed August 1, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

Table 4.2: Ukrainian Public's Support for Yushchenko's Activities⁹⁸

	Fully support	Support certain actions	Do not support	Don't know such politician	Difficult to answer
Feb 2005	48.3	23.2	23.3	0.2	5
Apr 2005	49	23.8	21.9	0.3	5
Jun 2005	41.3	29.9	24	0.4	4.3
Aug 2005	33.2	31.5	29.4	0.3	5.6
Sep 2005	19.8	38.3	34.1	0.2	7.6
Oct 2005	19.2	36.8	36.1	0.1	7.7
Nov 2005	17.6	32.7	41.1	0.7	7.9
Dec 2005	20.6	30.2	41.3	0.5	7.3
Jan 2006	21.3	30.4	42.2	0.2	5.9
May 2006	20.6	34.4	40.8	0.2	3.9
Jul 2006	14	32.4	45.9	0.4	7.3
Sep 2006	11.1	34.9	47.5	0.5	6.1
Oct 2006	8.5	35.7	49.4	1	5.4
Dec 2006	12.1	37.5	42.8	0.4	7.1
Feb 2007	11	27.6	53.6	0.8	6.9
Mar 2007	12	28	53.4	0.5	6.2
Apr 2007	14.1	23.5	55.9	0.5	6
Sep 2007	16.1	27.6	50.8	0.9	4.6
Dec 2007	19	31.6	42.4	0.4	6.6
Feb 2008	17.6	36.6	40.4	0.2	5.1
Mar 2008	12.6	35.2	45.4	0.7	6.2
Apr 2008	11.6	31.8	48.1	0.6	8
May 2008	6.3	31.7	53.1	0.3	8.5
Jun 2008	9.9	29.2	55.6	0.4	4.8
Oct 2008	4.3	13.5	75.6	1.1	5.6
Dec 2008	3.4	14.3	76.4	0.7	5.2
Mar 2009	2.5	15.5	78.5	0.7	2.9
Apr 2009	2.4	17.2	76.7	0.5	3.2
Jul 2009	5.7	17.5	73.2	0.9	2.8
Oct 2009	4.8	14.2	77.5	0.6	2.8
Dec 2009	4	14.6	77.3	0.8	3.3

⁹⁸ Source of the public opinion polls: Razumkov Centre (<http://www.uceps.org/eng/socpolls.php>).

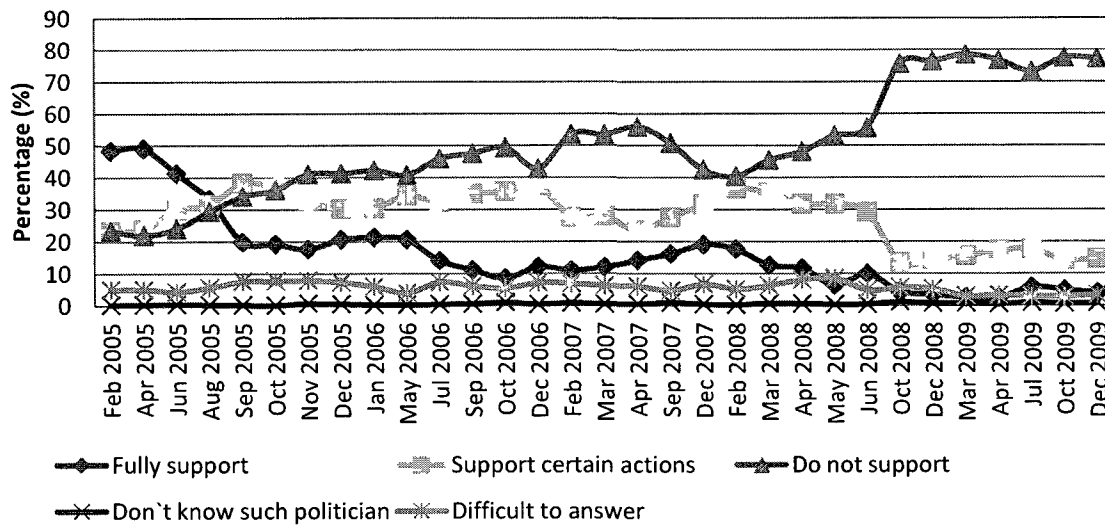


Figure 4.7: Ukrainian Public's Support for Yushchenko's Activities

VI. Ukraine's Foreign Policy toward Russia during the Political Storms

President Yushchenko's pro-European orientation and rise to power worried Russia, which backed Yanukovich during the election. Nonetheless, Yushchenko took a pragmatic position toward Russia after taking office.⁹⁹ He traveled to Moscow for an official visit one day after his inauguration to show his respects for Ukraine's "eternal strategic partner." In response, Russian President Putin assured him that Moscow hoped to establish a friendly relationship with the Yushchenko administration, and would not try to undermine its authority.¹⁰⁰ Although Yushchenko's pursuit of closer ties with the EU added uncertainties into the future of the Ukrainian-Russian relationship, the atmosphere between both

⁹⁹ Karatnycky, "Ukraine's Orange Revolution," 44-50.

¹⁰⁰ "Yushchenko Calls Russia 'Eternal Strategic Partner'," *Agence France Presse* January 24, 2005, accessed September 15, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

governments was smooth in early 2005. Nonetheless, as the case of Georgia's Saakashvili, Yushchenko's Russia policy began to fluctuate between hostility and calm afterwards.

1. The parliamentary elections in March 2006

The Ukrainian-Russian relationship during the months leading up to the parliamentary elections was not smooth. In January, disagreement over the price hike of Russian gas supplies caused serious diplomatic frictions between the two sides. Ukraine's refusal to accept Russia's new contract terms prompted the latter to cut off gas supplies to it on January 1, 2006. This action immediately led to the falling of pressures and non-delivery of gas in other European countries, arguably due to Ukraine's illegal withdrawal of gas from the transit pipelines passing through its territory. The issue was finally solved after Russia signed a new agreement with Ukraine, allowing the latter to purchase Russian gas at the price of \$95 dollars per 1,000 cubic meters on January 4.¹⁰¹ To retaliate, Ukraine began to call for Russia to pay higher rent for its Black Sea Fleet's bases in Crimea in mid February.¹⁰² This request provoked further friction between the two neighboring countries.

Nonetheless, the diplomatic clash between Ukraine and Russia could not be attributed to President Yushchenko's diversionary strategy for electoral gains in March. Rather, it was more a tit-for-tat conflict resulting from the energy crisis in the beginning of the year. There was no significant Ukrainian provocation against Russia prior to the parliamentary elections, as the campaign focused on domestic issues.

¹⁰¹ The Russian Gas company Gazprom's initial price increase request was \$230 dollars. Jonathan Stern, "The Russian-Ukrainian Gas Crisis of January 2006," (Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2006); Olga Nedbayeva, "Russia Staying out of Ukraine Election Race: Analysts," *Agence France Presse* March 21, 2006, accessed September 17, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

¹⁰² "Ukraine Tells Russia to Pay More for Black Sea Fleet Base," *Agence France Presse* February 14, 2006. According to an agreement between Kiev and Moscow in 1997, Ukraine leased its major bases in the Crimea to the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The lease was to expire in 2017.

2. The Early Parliamentary Election in September 2007

Similar to the previous case, there were no provocative policy initiatives toward Russia by President Yushchenko during this period of time. When the rifts between Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yanukovych escalated in the spring, the president's priority was to take control over the Internal Troops—the elite forces critical for the success of the Orange Revolution—from the Ministry of Internal Affairs for his own security. After issuing a presidential decree to subordinate the Internal Troops to himself on May 25, Yushchenko ordered 2,000 of them to move into Kiev. But the troops were stopped outside the capital by traffic police under the parliament's order.¹⁰³ The mobilization of military units created prevailing fears of war among key political leaders and eventually led to a compromise between Yushchenko and Yanukovych regarding the date of an early parliamentary election.

During the election campaign, Yushchenko did not focus his effort on foreign policy issues either. Instead, he concentrated on domestic issues on corruption and economic conditions, including “the cancellation of immunity from prosecution for members of parliament,...increasing wages and pensions, doubling the provision for military servicemen, and introducing new benefits for mothers and orphans.”¹⁰⁴ Accordingly, there was no evidence suggesting a diversionary use of Russia policy by Yushchenko to address domestic challenges in mid 2007.

¹⁰³ Katchanovski, "The Orange Revolution? The "Orange Revolution" And Political Changes in Ukraine," 360; Korduban, "Crisis over, but Rule of Law Undermined in Ukraine."

¹⁰⁴ Korduban, "Yushchenko Starts Election Campaign for His Party."; "Ukraine Tells Russia to Pay More for Black Sea Fleet Base."

3. The Yushchenko-Tymoshenko Split in the Summer and Fall 2008

Serious conflict between President Yushchenko and Prime Minister Tymoshenko emerged again in the summer of 2008. Tymoshenko's clear intention to run for the 2010 presidential election further exacerbated the hostility between the two leaders. Due to the overlap of their constituent bases, it was critical for Yushchenko to draw more pro-Orange supporters away from Tymoshenko, who at the time enjoyed much greater popularity than the president. Therefore, when the Georgian-Russian war over South Ossetia broke out in early August, Yushchenko seized this opportunity to play the Russian card at home actively. As an ally of Georgian President Saakashvili, Yushchenko sided with him in condemning Russia's militarized invasion of Georgian territory and urged Moscow to withdraw its troops. This reaction was reasonable considering the friendship between these two presidents, but Yushchenko took one step further. On August 10, Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave Russia a "nasty" surprise by warning that Ukraine might "take measures to prevent the Russian Black Sea Fleet vessels from returning to their base in Sevastopol in the Crimea if they were involved in combat operations against Georgia," and that the ban "might last until the conflict in South Ossetia is 'regulated.'"¹⁰⁵ This threat triggered dangerous Russian hostility. To avoid a militarized conflict with Russia, Yushchenko changed his original stand and instead issued a presidential decree on August 13 requesting Russia to "provide advance permission for movement of Russian military ships, planes, and personnel on Ukraine territory."¹⁰⁶ This action was aimed at demonstrating his tough stance against Russian interference with Georgian sovereignty without provoking a possible armed conflict. Beyond that, he also made a resolute statement that the Russian Black Sea Fleet's lease of its

¹⁰⁵ Roman Kupchinsky, "Ukraine and the Conflict in South Ossetia," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 5, no. 153 (2008).

¹⁰⁶ Woehrel, "Ukraine: Current Issues and U.S. Policy," 5.

Sevastopol naval base, which would expire in 2017, “will not be renewed, that the Black Sea Fleet will have to leave in 2017, and that the issue is non-negotiable.”¹⁰⁷ Disputes over the Georgian-Russian war then became a political tool for Yushchenko’s bloc. After the ruling coalition collapsed in early September, the president and the “Our Ukraine” bloc accused Tymoshenko of “high treason” for remaining neutral and not supporting Georgia when it was at war with Russia in August.¹⁰⁸ With the warning that Russia was attempting to destabilize Ukraine,¹⁰⁹ it seemed that this act was to discredit Tymoshenko in front of his anti-Russian and pro-Western supporters. But to what extent this strategy worked was unclear, since the president’s popularity continued to decline in late 2008.

4. The Competition for the 2010 Presidential Election

The most important political agenda for President Yushchenko in late 2009 was his campaign for reelection. In an attempt to boost his record-low popularity, he put the issue of the Russian Black Sea Fleet at the core of his election campaign. In late July and early August, Yushchenko decided to expel high-ranking Russian diplomats under an accusation that they had been conducting anti-Ukraine activities in the country.¹¹⁰ This highly hostile decision aggravated Russia, which then decided to retaliate by expelling two Georgian diplomats. In November and December, after kicking off his campaign activities, Yushchenko repeatedly emphasized his firm insistence that the Russian fleet had to leave

¹⁰⁷ Dominique Arel, “Ukraine since the War in Georgia,” *Survival* 50, no. 6 (2008-2009): 21.

¹⁰⁸ “Ukraine President Accuses Pm of ‘Treason,’” *Agence France Presse* September 20, 2008, accessed August 2, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

¹⁰⁹ “Kiev Accuses Russia of ‘Destabilising’ Ukraine,” *Agence France Presse* September 13, 2008.

¹¹⁰ “Tensions in Russia-Ukraine Relations Sweep Off Scale - Medvedev,” *Russia & CIS Diplomatic Panorama* August 11, 2009, accessed September 17, 2011, LexisNexis Academic.

Ukraine in 2017.¹¹¹ In early December, he doubled his rhetoric by calling the Russian fleet a “destabilizing factor” for Ukraine.¹¹² On January 4, two weeks before the presidential polls, Yushchenko warned the public that the Russian Black Sea Fleet might stay in Ukraine after 2017 if Tymoshenko was elected as president.¹¹³ This suggested that the target of Yushchenko’s anti-Russian rhetoric was Tymoshenko, who shared a similar group of supporters with him. But the election results proved such a tactic ineffective, as Yushchenko received a low vote share (5.45%) in the presidential election.

The above analysis shows that the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis was less applicable to President Yushchenko’s Russia policymaking. Among the four critical political challenges the president experienced, he only appealed to hostile Russia policy when facing ugly clashes with Tymoshenko in 2008 and 2009. In case of the 2006 and 2007 parliamentary elections, Yushchenko focused more on issues regarding domestic reforms and possible coalition building. However, although he adopted a more aggressive position against Russia during his political clash with Tymoshenko, the presence of the Georgian-Russian war at the same time made it difficult to assess whether his move was a proactive or reactive behavior. This leaves us only one possible case: the president’s repeated rhetoric against the Russian Black Sea Fleet in late 2009. Accordingly, the lack of consistent evidence suggests that the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis is not a strong explanation of Yushchenko’s Russia policy.

¹¹¹ "Yushchenko Insists on Russian Fleet's Withdrawal from Ukraine in 2017," *Russia & CIS General Newswire* November 11, 2009.

¹¹² "Russian Fleet Presence a Destabilizing Factor - Yushchenko," *Russia & CIS Military Weekly* December 4, 2009.

¹¹³ "Russia Fleet May Stay in Ukraine If Tymoshenko Becomes President," *RIA Novosti* January 4, 2010.

Summary

The case of Georgian foreign policy toward Russia demonstrates that the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy is a strategy that President Saakashvili commonly used to divert attention from his administration's problems. However, the case of Ukraine does not provide solid support for the theoretical framework. Moreover, a simple comparison between the two post-Soviet cases demonstrates two interesting points. First, in Georgia's case, the key power challenges that led to President Saakashvili's diversionary Russia policy were the mass demonstrations in 2007 and 2009. Nonetheless, this is not the case for Ukraine's President Yushchenko. Although public protests occurred frequently after the Orange Revolution, none of them was powerful enough to threaten Yushchenko's state leadership. The real challenges came from competition between Yushchenko and his powerful ally Tymoshenko, as the power struggles within the Orange Camp in 2008 and 2009 demonstrated. This difference echoes the finding in chapter 3 that intra-party/coalition conflict should be taken into account as an indicator of leaders' political vulnerability, because it is critical for state leaders' political survival. That is to say, the often-used indicators in the existing literature such as elections, protests, approval ratings, and economic growth, cannot fully cover the nature of leaders' domestic difficulties. However, the challenge lies in how to establish accurate quantitative measurements of intra-party/coalition conflict, as the domestic situation might vary across countries. Therefore, how to create a reliable indicator for more complicated types of political struggles is an important issue for future studies. Before this goal can be achieved, qualitative studies on a broader range of states are necessary to better understand this new indicator, and to search for other possible indicators of political vulnerability.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

The main purpose of this research is to examine whether leaders in minor states tend to initiate nonviolent foreign provocations when they are facing domestic economic, political, and social problems. Drawing upon sociological theory that out-group hostility tends to enhance in-group cohesion, the diversionary foreign policy theory posits a positive relationship between state leaders' domestic political vulnerability and their initiation of foreign conflict.¹ Nonetheless, although the diversionary assumption is logically and intuitively persuasive, large-N quantitative studies of it have usually produced mixed or inconclusive findings. To address this issue and to improve this theory, scholars have made tremendous efforts to better specify the domestic factors leading to diversionary motivation and international factors that might have a confounding effect on the relationship between domestic problems and foreign provocations. While these efforts to a great extent enrich the diversionary literature, they have not yet been able to solve the issue of inconsistent findings. Considering this, this research argues that besides the independent variables, students working on diversionary theory should also pay greater attention to the refinement of the dependent variable. As Clark and others point out, one weakness of existing diversionary literature is that most studies focus only on militarized conflict.² Considering that many minor states do not possess the capability to use force abroad at the leader's convenience, this bias might contribute to the mixed findings of the diversionary theory. However, although

¹ Brett Ashley Leeds and David R. Davis, "Domestic Political Vulnerability and International Disputes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 41, no. 6 (1997): 814.

² David Clark, "Can Strategic Interaction Divert Diversionary Behavior? A Model of U.S. Conflict Propensity," *Journal of Politics* 65 no. 4 (2003); Jeffrey Pickering and Emizet F. Kisangani, "Democracy and Diversionary Military Intervention: Reassessing Regime Type and the Diversionary Hypothesis," *International Studies Quarterly* 49 no. 1 (2005).

Clark's call for attention to nonviolent diversionary foreign policy is insightful, little effort has been made to examine whether there is a positive connection between state leaders' political vulnerability and nonviolent foreign provocations. This research thus undertakes this task by conducting an empirical study of three small states to identify the causal relationship. In this chapter, I discuss the research findings and their theoretical, empirical and policy relevance.

I. Research Findings

1. Solid evidence in the primary case of Taiwan

As introduced in the first chapter, the main question of this research is whether leaders in small states tend to initiate nonviolent foreign policy at times of political vulnerability. The primary case I adopt to test the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis is Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's China policy from 2000 to 2008. I apply both quantitative and qualitative analyses to carefully examine whether there is a positive relationship between President Chen's domestic problems and his provocative China policy initiatives. The statistical results show that two indicators of political vulnerability were positively associated with Chen's provocative China policy initiatives: presidential elections and intra-party conflict. According to the results, Chen was more likely to adopt provocative China policy initiatives during the presidential campaign season and when there was power competition within the DPP that could undermine his party leadership. Other political and social indicators, including presidential approval, nation-wide protest, and legislative elections, did not have a significant influence on Chen's China policymaking. Economic factors such as GDP per capita and the unemployment rate were not influential. However, the

finding that lower inflation rates were associated with greater levels of provocation toward China ran counter to the diversionary theory's hypothesis that greater inflation should result in higher levels of foreign provocation. This result suggests that Chen might have paid greater attention to domestic economic policy during times of rising inflation.

In the statistical model, I also examine whether China's provocations toward Taiwan influenced President Chen's policy orientation. The result demonstrates that Chen's provocative initiatives were not driven by Beijing's hostile behavior, ruling out the alternative explanation of strategic reaction. To offer further evidence, I also apply qualitative analysis of the four most salient shifts in Chen's China policy orientation. Judging from Hendrickson's four propositions of diversionary foreign policy, I find three of the four cases meet the criteria and thus can be identified as example of Chen's strategy to divert attention away from his domestic problems such as poor performance ahead of presidential elections, and emerging political challenges from within the DPP to contest his party leadership.

I also examine another alternative explanation, the alliance politics hypothesis, with qualitative analysis. Considering that the alliance relationship usually does not change in a short time period, the quarterly based statistical model in this research is not adequate to test the alliance politics hypothesis. The result finds that the Bush administration's support for Taipei was not the driving force of President Chen's provocative China policy initiatives, since he continued repeating his anti-China "surprises" even after the White House had clearly withdrawn from its original tilt toward Taiwan.

2. Moderate evidence in Georgia and little evidence in Ukraine

Due to the lack of some quarterly economic indicators and insufficient data on the president's approval rating, it is currently not able to conduct a quantitative analysis for preliminary studies on Georgia and Ukraine. Therefore, I apply the Hendrickson propositions to assess whether both presidents tended to initiate nonviolent proactive conflict with Russia when they went through domestic turmoil. The result shows that Georgian President Saakashvili tended to play on Russian xenophobia by filing spy accusations when he faced strong challenges from the opposition, including competitive elections and mass demonstrations led by the opposition. In Ukraine, there was little connection between Yuschenko's inter- and intra-coalition conflict and his provocations toward Russia. This indicates that Yuschenko's Russia policymaking is a disconfirming case for the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis.

The preliminary study of Georgia's Russian policy demonstrates that the nonviolent diversionary foreign policy hypothesis can be applied to countries besides Taiwan, although further field work is necessary in order to produce stronger evidence for the Georgia case. In terms of the disconfirming case of Ukraine, there are two possible explanations of it. First, the lack of evidence might result from the limited sources of information available. Due to constraints in research resources, this study's preliminary inquiring concerning Georgia and Ukraine rely on English-language newspapers covering news about these two countries' politics. Without cross-referencing domestic news media and government documents, some crucial evidence might be missing. However, the second possible explanation is that the nonviolent diversionary hypothesis simply does not apply to Ukraine, and thus the next

question to ask is why Yushenko was less willing to appeal to diversionary strategy to distract the public's attention away from his poor governing records. In either case, future studies on the use of nonviolent diversionary foreign policy are critical for advancing the theory testing and discovering additional factors that might have a conditioning impact on the causal relationship between domestic problems and foreign provocations.

II. Theoretical Implications

The findings in this study have important theoretical implications. First, they provide empirical evidence supporting a recent call to consider nonviolent foreign provocations as one of the diversionary strategies state leaders might adopt. As minor states are less capable of initiating militarized conflict abroad, existing literature focusing on militarized conflict might limit the diversionary theory's applicability. Therefore, taking into account nonviolent options would expand diversionary theory's explanatory power, and thus could help scholars make further progress in solving the issue of inconsistent findings among quantitative diversionary studies.

Second, this study's findings also suggest that the independent variables commonly applied to measure state leaders' political vulnerability in existing diversionary literature ignore one important variable: the leaders' conflict with challengers from within their own political groups. In a competitive environment, losing an intra-party/coalition battle over group leadership could lead to a great loss of political influence. Therefore, while democratic leaders have to attract the majority of the public for electoral gains, they also need to overcome intra-party/coalition conflict to ensure their own political survival. The difficulty of measuring intra-party/coalition competition means that researchers need to carefully study

the power dynamics within state leaders' political parties and coalitions to obtain sufficient information on it. Nonetheless, this difficulty could be resolved by conducting collaborative works with scholars from different regions or countries. A more ambitious goal would be to construct a cross-country database of this variable, which would to a great extent help researchers establish more sophisticated models for testing the diversionary theory.

III. Empirical Implications

Empirically, this study also makes a methodological contribution by pointing out the necessity of two further revisions to Hendrickson's four propositions of diversionary foreign policy. First, it concludes that the first Hendrickson proposition about the absence of comprehensive consultation among administrative heads does not serve as a sufficient criterion for a diversionary foreign policy. Hendrickson holds that this proposition is an important criterion of diversionary foreign policy for the highly institutionalized US government. Nonetheless, for less institutionalized states such as many young or transitional democracies, the lack of comprehensive consultation might result from the leaders' decision making styles or the state's institutional legacy, rather than reflecting their diversionary motivation. For instance, in Taiwan's case, policy regarding cross-Strait relations, national defense, and diplomacy are considered to be dominated by the president. Therefore, although some presidents might be more willing to work with a larger decision making team than others, comprehensive consultation with different departments before initiating important China policy has not been a characteristic for Taiwan president's policymaking. Therefore, this study proposes that the first Hendrickson proposition could be removed from the other three.

Second, this study also offers an expansion of the third Hendrickson proposition. This proposition posits that for a diversionary foreign policy, one should see strong criticism from and objection from the opposition. Nonetheless, since it is common for the opposition to raise criticism of the ruling party's policy, this characteristic presents only a weak test for the diversionary theory. Cramer's argument that the opposition's agreement with the state leaders after initial objection should be considered an indicator of diversionary foreign policy is more insightful. However, by analyzing Chen Shui-bian's China policymaking, this study finds another important characteristic of Chen's diversionary initiatives. That is, besides inviting criticisms from the opposition, they were also opposed by many officials of the ruling party. This phenomenon shows that Chen's provocative initiatives neither serve Taiwan's national interests nor benefit his party's future development. Moreover, both the opposition parties and discontented DPP officials were forced to change or silence their initial objection later. Accordingly, I argue that the original third Hendrickson proposition should be expanded to include a three-level assessment: a weak diversionary test of whether the opposition opposes or criticizes the president's foreign provocations, a moderate test of whether the opposition is forced to silence its objection or to accept the president's policy, and finally, a strong test of whether besides the opposition, there are also strong criticisms against the policy within the ruling party.

IV. Policy Implications

At the policy level, this research suggests that when handling confrontational bilateral relations, concerned state leaders should develop sophisticated understanding of the involving states' domestic politics. For instance, the Bush administration's ideological belief

on democratic peace and its firm support for young democracies such as Taiwan, Georgia and Ukraine without having carefully considered the domestic dynamics within these countries might have complicated their internal conflicts, and thus exacerbated the instability of their bilateral relations with the rival states. Using Chen Shui-bian's NUC campaign as an example, the United States might have been better prepared for Chen's nationalist manipulation if it had been more aware of the seriousness of his leadership crisis after the December 2005 local elections. It was probably unrealistic to expect that Washington could completely stop Chen's China policy adventurism considering his dire need to reconsolidate political power. However, if nothing else, better preparation could prevent Washington from being repeatedly taken aback by Taipei's provocative China policy, and thus allow it more room to explore available policy options.

Moreover, although nonviolent provocations are less confrontational than military actions, they can significantly raise the risk of physical conflict as bilateral tension escalates. Therefore, it is also important for western leaders to develop greater sensitivity regarding the provocation initiators' domestic problems in order to establish more efficient solutions to solve regional frictions.

The main objective of this research is to examine whether there is a positive relationship between small state leaders' emerging political vulnerability and their nonviolent foreign provocations toward rival states. The positive findings indicate that future studies should incorporate nonviolent provocations into the dependent variable. In qualitative studies, it would be profitable for researchers to conduct a comprehensive investigation to further understand if specific types of nonviolent provocations are preferred by state leaders as part

of a diversionary strategy. For large-N studies, one might use categorical dependent variables to measure different types of foreign conflict such as war, use of force, and nonviolent provocation. Another way of measuring both violent and nonviolent conflict is to apply the Goldstein Cooperation-Conflict Scale. Furthermore, for quantitative studies, international event datasets of interstate interactions such as WEIS and COPDAB, or other similar datasets that focus on interstate interaction within a specific region, are especially useful. Lastly, considering that scholars have just begun to pay attention to the concept of nonviolent diversionary foreign policy, studies using a mixed method of both quantitative and qualitative approaches would help researchers better identify the relationship between domestic problems and nonviolent foreign provocations.

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