

Make no mistake: China is the enemy

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
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China makes no secret of its ambition to annex Taiwan. The objective is clear in Chinese officials' repeated insistence that Taiwan is an inseparable part of the People's Republic of China — "one that must be brought back into the fold of the motherland" — as well as in Chinese President Xi Jinping's (习近平) reiteration in September last year of Beijing's "one country, two systems" formula for Taiwan.

For anyone who still clings to the illusion that China harbors no ill-intention toward Taiwan, they need look no further than footage of recent Chinese war games to be convinced of its aggression and malice. In a three-minute video clip aired by state-run China Central Television on July 5, drills at Zhurihe Training Base featured People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops maneuvering toward a five-story building with a tower resembling Taiwan's Presidential Office Building. Make no mistake — it is without a doubt that Taiwan was the imaginary enemy in these military exercises.

Should two countries claiming mutual goodwill use each other's symbols of national sovereignty as the backdrops in military drills? The answer is most definitely: "No." The footage comes as a slap in the face for President Ma Ying-jeou (马英九); debunking the lies he has been telling Taiwanese that cross-strait relations are the best they have been in 66 years.

It is not child's play to China: Its objective is to bring Taiwan into its fold and it has a step-by-step unification strategy. Ma, on the other hand, not only makes light of China's increasing military threat, but gives people a false impression that cross-strait relations have improved under his government.

Ma's so-called "Taiwan Strait peace" is superficial, as Beijing has never renounced the use of force against Taiwan to achieve its goal of unification; it is evident by the enacting of its "Anti-Secession" Law and the more than 1,600 ballistic missiles aimed across the Taiwan Strait.

As noted in a defense white paper released by the Japanese government on Tuesday, China's military buildup has led to a shift in the Taiwan-China military balance in Beijing's favor. Furthermore, a Pentagon report released in May said that China's massive military modernization program is dominated by preparations for a conflict with Taiwan, adding that the PLA Air Force has stationed a large number of advanced aircraft within range of Taiwan.

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The footage of the PLA simulating an attack on Taiwan's Presidential Office Building serves as a reminder to the public of China's malicious intent and the need to be vigilant at all times. Ma, as a responsible head of state, ought to be taking the assessments of the Ministry of National Defense seriously. He should also be paying closer attention to the comments the US and Japanese governments have made about China's armed forces being a potential threat to Taiwan.

The Supreme Court last month upheld a life sentence for former Air Force captain Chiang Fu-chung (蔣福中) for passing military secrets to China and "committing an act of espionage for the enemy" in violation of the Criminal Code of the Armed Forces (陸軍刑法).

As it appears the nation's officials and armed forces during Ma's pro-China administration have grown confused about whether Communist China is a friend or foe, Ma is strongly advised to seek consultation from the Supreme Court judges on who Taiwan's real enemy is.

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