

Sovereignty should be Taiwan's No. 1 issue

Written by Chen Tsai-neng 陳台生
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The US' National Security Strategy, released in December 2017, made it clear that Washington was adopting a new strategy regarding China. On June 6 last year, the US implemented comprehensive measures to counterbalance Beijing's unfair trade practices, and on Oct. 4, US Vice President Mike Pence announced the beginning of a global shift in a speech at the Hudson Institute in Washington.

Given these changes, Taiwanese should engage in some deep reflection on how to protect the nation's right to exist and its sovereignty.

On Nov. 11, 1918, World War I ended and on Jan. 10, 1920, the Treaty of Versailles took effect, ending the international order based on European dominance established with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and replacing it with a political world order dominated by the US.

Along with these changes, modernization came to Taiwan, then part of Japan, which became a major international power, while China has to this day remained within the historical despotic framework of imperialist China.

Pence said that the US' hope when bringing China into the WTO "has gone unfulfilled," that the hope of freedom for Chinese remains unfulfilled and that China wants to "push the United States of America from the Western Pacific and attempt to prevent us from coming to the aid of our allies."

Since the end of World War II, China has seen itself as a rising great power. Today it is relying on its "Chinese dream" to implement a Chinese imperial world order and change the international power structure as it tries to control the Pacific in its pursuit of world hegemony.

Taiwan has been linked to China through the Chinese Civil War. Although Taiwan has severed its bonds with the Chinese authoritarian system to become a de facto independent democratic political entity, it continues to suffer from Chinese interference domestically and internationally, and remains unable to become a de jure independent state.

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Last year, the so-called “1992 consensus” was replaced by the idea that “the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are one family” when Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) replaced former president Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), former vice president Lien Chan (連戰) and People First Party Chairman James Soong (宋楚瑜) as the new representative of Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) and his efforts to erode Taiwan's democracy and way of life.

Pence has called Taiwan a beacon of democracy, but the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) successful intervention in last year's local elections gave Xi and China's Taiwan Affairs Office Minister Liu Jieyi (劉結一) reason to boast firm control of Taiwan.

Today, the capital's mayor — who insists that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are one family — and 15 Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) government heads supporting the “1992 consensus” make up the CCP's political foundation in Taiwan.

Taiwanese must be alert to the fact that this is part of a new kind of warfare that the CCP is directing toward free and democratic Taiwan and the US, using the Internet, money and public opinion.

Next year's presidential and legislative elections are likely to be decisive, with Taiwan facing the CCP's attacks.

Taiwan was defeated in last year's local elections, but fortunately President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) seems to have realized the danger that Ko, the KMT and other pro-CCP politicians pose to Taiwan's sovereignty.

Democratic nations around the world are watching to see whether Taiwanese, the masters of the nation, will hold their ground in next year's elections.

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