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# **Under Attack: Recommendations for Victory in the PRC's Political War to Destroy the ROC**

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## **Abstract**

The People's Republic of China is engaged in a war for global hegemony. It is a war fought largely for influence and control, using words, coercion, corruption, and violent covert operations-- Political Warfare! If the PRC wins the war, the world faces a future of grim, oppressive totalitarian rule, under the boot of an unprecedented, tyrannical form of Sino-Fascism. The Republic of China is "the primary target" of Beijing's global political warfare. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013) At least for now, political warfare is the PRC's primary means of destroying the ROC and bringing Taiwan into communist China. Taiwan's democratic system of government presents an existential challenge to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) political authority.

Beijing seeks the political subordination of the ROC to the PRC, ostensibly under a One Country, Two Systems principle. In practice, the CCP's desired final resolution of the Chinese Civil

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War will be entirely on CCP terms, and will entail the destruction of the political entity called Republic of China, and absorbing Taiwan as a province into the PRC. Beijing prefers to win the last phase of this civil war without firing a shot, but Xi Jinping has made it clear he will employ brute military force if he deems it necessary.

This paper provides, from a concerned American's perspective, recommendations the ROC should adopt to defeat the PRC's war against it, in order that democratic ROC may survive and thrive. It briefly examines why it matter that the ROC win, as well as the terminology and philosophical and historical underpinnings of Political Warfare as a foundation for making the strategic-level recommendations.

**Keywords: Political warfare, Hegemony, Expansionist, China dream, Influence operations**

## **Why it Matters Who Wins**

Before undertaking a task as ambitious as recommending steps the ROC should take to ensure its survival, it is important to take the obvious first step: define why it is important that the ROC not lose this war. To this end, it is crucial to define the nature of the regime that attempts to destroy the ROC and its freedoms. As obvious a step as this may appear to be to any reasonably competent policy maker or academic, many in government, academia, and the news media consciously avoid exploring these seminal issues.

Why can't the people of Taiwan simply passively accept the CCP absorbing the ROC into the PRC? On a global scale, why can't the world simply accept and abide a "rising China", a seemingly benign term so often employed by PRC propaganda organs and its enablers in other countries? After all, few would be concerned if, say, a rising Brazil or a rising India sought regional hegemony and proclaimed a desire to, as the PRC has, "lead the world into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century". The answer is simple, and stark.

**The PRC is an expansionist, coercive, hyper-nationalistic, militarily powerful, brutally repressive, fascist totalitarian state.**

The world has seen what happens when expansionist totalitarian regimes such as the PRC are left unchallenged and unchecked. In the world of this type of hegemon, there is no place for ideals such as democracy, popular sovereignty, inalienable rights, limited government, independent thought, free expression, and rule of law. Taiwan will be no exception.

The world has seen this type of fascist, totalitarian rule play out before, of course. Oppressive rule by territorial predators has, sadly, been the normal state of man for most of human history. The identification of the individual as merely a subject of the state; control of media, education, entertainment; control of major economic sectors; lack of checks and balances, control by a single party with a

separate chain alongside the government, personality cults, militarism, a contrived historical narrative of humiliation leading to hyper-nationalism and an entitlement to aggression are the same defining traits that the world witnessed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, Imperialist Japan, and Lenin's Soviet Union.

Such political structures and narratives established a divine right of governance for monarchies, dictatorships, and empires long before the founding of the CCP. The CCP's Sino-Fascism looks exceptional and different to us today only because fascism had become rare on our planet in the few decades, before its recent resurgence. But there is nothing new or inherently Chinese about it. It's just the same old totalitarian fascism--but this time with Chinese characteristics.

The threat that the PRC's modern totalitarian Sino-Fascism poses is, however, unprecedented. The power of modern technology and the PRC's rapid convergence of massive economic, military, and political power positions it to be a totalitarian menace unequalled in history. It has repeatedly signaled that it is now strong and confident enough to pay a very large price to achieve that hegemony.

## **Totalitarian Foundations of the PRC's Political Warfare**

In the minds of the Chinese Communist Party rulers, the PRC's political war against the ROC is designed to "rejuvenate" China to its former imperial grandeur as The Middle Kingdom--to once again be Everything Under the Sun, the all-powerful Hegemon Power (Baquan). (Mosher, 2000, pp. 1-2)

In reality, it is a war to ensure the CCP's total control over the China's population and resources, as well as those of the barbarian state--nations it seeks to dominate both nearby and globally. Much like the emperors of the Celestial Empire at its zenith, the CCP effectively classifies other barbarian nations as either tributary states that recognize the PRC's hegemony, or as potential enemies. (Mosher, 2000, p. 3) Despite lofty pretense of simple peaceful national rejuvenation reflected in Xi Jinping's China Dream, (Xi Jinping, 2017) the CCP

has no desire for equality among nations. Rather, it seeks to impose its all-encompassing civilization on other lesser states. The ideological foundation of Xi's China Dream is an unrepentant, fascist, totalitarian Marxist-Leninism. (Birtles, 2018)

For the CCP, this is a total war for regional and global supremacy. "The means are all-inclusive, information is omnipresent, the battlefield is everywhere ... (it is fought) beyond all political, historical, cultural, and moral shackles. ("Chapter 18: The Chinese Communist Party's Global Ambitions (Part II)," 2019) The war takes on many forms, and the terminology regarding those forms can confuse and paralyze those under attack.

Consequently, it is best to simply call the aggression what the PRC calls it: "political warfare." Its political warfare is conducted on a global scale. Beijing flouts international law and increasingly eschews existing rules and norms. It relies instead on coercion and corruption to achieve its economic, military, and diplomatic aims. Through its extensive propaganda and influence tentacles, it savages rules or actions that, in the CCP's view, "contain" China's power or "hurt the feelings of 1.4 billion Chinese". Its strategies include "fracturing and capturing regional institutions that could otherwise raise collective concerns about China's behavior, and intimidating countries in maritime Asia that seek to lawfully extract resources and defend their sovereignty". (House Committee on Armed Services, United States House of Representatives, 2018) Its Foreign Ministry and propaganda organs savage as "immoral" those who criticize its egregious human right abuses. (Xinhua, 2018)

The PRC's Political Warfare apparatus is a key weapon of compellence in its drive for regional and, ultimately, global hegemony. Its PW arsenal of coercive weapons is immense. Economic coercion has become particularly visible, as the CCP uses the promise of its Belt & Road Initiative (BRI), foreign direct investment, market access, and "debt traps" to compel foreign governments to acquiesce to its wishes on political and security matters. It shapes public opinion both inside and outside its borders "to undermine academic freedom, censor foreign media, restrict the free flow of information, and curb civil society". (House

Committee on Armed Services, United States House of Representatives, 2018)

Singaporean Ambassador Bihahari Kausikan notes that China is a totalitarian Leninist state that takes a holistic approach which melds together the legal and the covert, in conjunction with persuasion, inducement and coercion. Importantly, Kausikan identifies the aim of the PRC's is not simply to direct behavior but to condition behavior.

"In other words, China does not just want you to comply with its wishes," Kausikan asserts. "Far more fundamentally, it wants you to think in such a way that you will of your own volition do what it wants without being told. It's a form of psychological manipulation." (Kausikan, 2018)

Other features of the PRC's Political Warfare strategy include the following: (Mahnke, 2018)

- A clear vision, ideology, and strategy.
- The use of overt and covert means to influence, coerce, intimidate, divide, and subvert rival countries in order to force their compliance.
- Strong centralized command of political warfare operations by the CCP through organizations such as the United Front Work Department.
- Capable bureaucratic instruments and implementation mechanisms.
- Tight control over the domestic population.
- Detailed understanding of targeted countries.
- Employment of a comprehensive range of instruments in coordinated actions.
- Willingness to accept a high level of political risk from the exposure of its activities.

As it wages global political war to achieve its political, economic, and military ends, China exports authoritarianism that intentionally undermines the credibility of democracy and individual freedoms. There has recently been a long-overdue awakening to this fact, as Australia's John Garnaut notes:

*Belatedly, and quite suddenly, political leaders, policy makers and civil society actors in a dozen nations around the world are scrambling to come to terms with a form of China's extraterritorial influence described variously as "sharp power",*

*“United Front work” and “influence operations” . ... A dozen others are entering the debate. But none of these countries has sustained a vigorous conversation let alone reached a political consensus... ” (Garnaut, 2018)*

The PRC’s PW has been especially effective over the past decade, as it continues its work of seven decades to destroy the ROC and the ROC’s ability to retain its hard-won democracy, sovereignty, and political and economic freedom. While the ascension of Tsai Ing-Wen and Donald J. Trump to the presidency of the ROC and the USA, respectively, has resulted in greater willingness of both nations to confront the PRC, there is still insufficient attention devoted to the threat of PRC PW. There is an apparent lack of will to identify and confront it, and resultant insufficient resources dedicated to fight it.

In Taiwan, Fu Hsing Kang College is dedicated to educating ROC Political Warfare officers, and the Political Warfare Bureau, Military Intelligence Bureau, and Ministry of Justice Investigative Bureau have had successes countering the PRC. But they are now “playing defense” only, and the ROC has had little success in preparing the “whole of government” and the general public for this fight.

It is worth noting that at one time, the Republic of China and the U.S. were quite good at Political Warfare. They successfully waged political warfare against the Communist Bloc through a variety of mechanisms. These mechanism included overt actions such as building political alliances and initiating economic development (i.e. the Marshall Plan in Europe), “white” propaganda, covert operations as clandestine support of friendly foreign elements, “black” psychological warfare, encouragement of underground resistance in hostile states, covertly funding noncommunist political parties, covertly starting magazines and organizations to organize artists and intellectuals against communism, and providing financial and logistical support to dissidents behind the Iron Curtain, and military support for freedom fighters. (Parello-Plesner & Li, 2018)

## Political Warfare Terminology

If, as Clausewitz wrote, “war is the extension of politics by other means”, then it's fair to say that the PRC's political warfare is “an extension of armed conflict by other means”. This point was initially posited by America's George Kennan, who is best known for his delineation of Western grand strategy during the Cold War in the famous Long Telegram regarding Containment of February 22, 1946. Two years later, Kennan drafted another memorandum, entitled ‘The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare’. (Kennan, 1948) Kennan's second landmark of strategic thinking makes the point, strikingly from the perspective of 2019, that *(We) have been handicapped by a popular attachment to the concept of a basic difference between peace and war, by a tendency to view war as a sort of sporting context outside of all political context...and by a reluctance to recognise the realities of international relations, the perpetual rhythm of [struggle, in and out of war']*.

He briefly laid out the nature of the threat from the Soviet Union, and defined “political warfare” as follows:

*In broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert. They range from such overt actions as political alliances, economic measures ... and “white” propaganda to such covert operations as clandestine support of “friendly” foreign elements, “black” psychological warfare and even encouragement of underground resistance in hostile states.*

This definition is as valid today as it was in 1948, but the PRC version has evolved in ways not fully understood in 1948, and new concepts and semantic battlegrounds have emerged. Accordingly, it is useful to examine more deeply key PW-related terms needed to understand this new battleground. The terms Influence Operations and Political Warfare overlap extensively and are considered by many to be virtually interchangeable terms. They are not. There are various definitions



from credible institutions for these terms, but unfortunately each definition varies somewhat from the other, obscuring conceptual clarity. Accordingly, for the purposes of this study these hybrid definitions apply:

**Influence Operations** (IO): *those operations by the PRC, designed to influence foreign government leaders, business, industry, academia, news media and other key influentials and elites in a manner that benefits the PRC, often (but not always) at the expense of the self interests of the countries at which the info ops are directed.*

**Political Warfare** (PW): *an extension of armed conflict by other means, and a critical component of PRC security strategy and foreign policy. PW includes those operations that seek to influence emotions, motives, objectives, reasoning, and behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the PRC's political-military-economic objectives, and are generally conducted with hostile intent. PRC Political Warfare is all encompassing: it is "Total War" that goes beyond traditional Liaison Work (building coalitions in a "United Front" to support the PRC and to "disintegrate" enemies) and the "Three Warfare" (strategic psychological warfare, overt and covert media manipulation, and use of law or "Lawfare") to include use of "active measures" that include violence and other forms of coercive, destructive attacks. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, pp. 5-6)*

It is essential to recognize that PRC PW is the normal way the CCP does business: while in the U.S. and the ROC such actions require special authorities and oversight, the CCP sees PW as everyday modus operandi.

Traditional weapons in the PRC's PW Arsenal of Influence include operations such as United Front activities (i.e. the Chinese Association of Friendly International Contacts, or CAFIC), the use of law to undermine countries and institutions ("Lawfare"), psychological operations, propaganda, diplomatic coercion, disinformation (to include "fake news"), misinformation, and such "soft power" functions such as public diplomacy, public affairs, public relations, cultural affairs activities, and "Indoctri-tainment". Below is a brief overview of some of these PW weapons.

## **The Three Warfares**

The PRC's "Three Warfares" consist of strategic Psychological Warfare, Media Warfare, and Lawfare. (Gertz, 2014)

The U.S. Department of Defense defines Psychological Warfare "as efforts to influence or disrupt an enemy's decision-making capabilities, to create doubts, foment anti-leadership sentiments, and deceive opponents". Psychological warfare includes diplomatic pressure, rumors, false narratives, and harassment to express displeasure, assert hegemony, and convey threats.

Media Warfare, also known as public opinion warfare, is overt and covert media manipulation to influence perceptions and attitudes. Media Warfare leverages all instruments that inform and influence public opinion. These instruments including films, television programs, books, the Internet, and the global media network (particularly Xinhua and CCTV) and is directed against domestic populations in target countries. It includes "Indoctri-tainment", as exemplified in such as movies as the propaganda blockbuster *Wolf Warrior II* and the box office flop *The Great Wall*.

Lawfare, or Legal Warfare, exploits laws to achieve political or commercial objectives. Tools used in lawfare include domestic laws, international legislation, judicial law, legal pronouncements, and law enforcement. They are often used in combination. For example, the PRC has used lawfare to bolster its territorial claims by designating of the South China Sea village of Sansha, on the disputed Paracel Islands, as part of Hainan Prefecture. The legal measure sought to extend China's control far into the South China Sea. Vietnam, Philippines, and other states have claimed the islands. It also uses Lawfare to block U.S. military construction and activities in Japan (Gershaneck, 2018d) and in U.S. Pacific territories. (Gershaneck, 2018a)

## **Active Measures**

The PRC's PW also includes espionage and covert, Cold War-style active measures which, today, are not always clearly recognized by inexperienced government officials as PW. As Kennan noted, the PRC reverses Clausewitz's famous dictum that "war is the extension of politics by other means" by conducting political warfare as the extension of armed conflict by other means. Many policymakers and diplomats in the ROC and the US fail to recognize these active measures as PW, and thereby imperil of the security of their respective countries. (Gershaneck, 2018a) (Gershaneck, 2018b)

These PW active measures tactics, techniques, and procedures include street violence, espionage, subversion, blackmail, assassination, bribery, deception, enforced disappearances (kidnapping), coerced censorship and self-censorship, carrot-&-stick funding practices ranging from infrastructure projects to supporting think tanks, co-opting once-legitimate news agencies, business "partnering", use of proxy forces (such as the United Wa State Army in Myanmar). It also includes military power short of war, such as exercises and operations (i.e. PLAN transit of Taiwan's waterways, PLAAF over flights of Taiwan and Japan's territorial waters, and PLA-Thai Armed Forces training exercises).

The "active measure" tools may be employed for specific purposes, such as when an "enforced disappearance" in Thailand is used to silence an expatriate Chinese critic of the CCP. The "disappeared" critic is not the only PW target here. The overall PW impact, once such an enforced disappearance is publicized within the host nation, is substantial: citizens of Thailand and freedom-seeking Chinese citizens hoping to find refuge in Thailand learn quickly that the anaconda is indeed in the chandelier--and the Thai government will not protect them from it.

## **Liaison Work**

Liaison Work supports United Front and other PW operations, and it runs the gamut of politics, finance, military operations, and intelligence to amplify or attenuate the political effect of the instruments of national power. Stokes and Hsiao (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013) note: “the Chinese (PW) campaign bears all the hallmarks of a Soviet-era "active-measures" operation except that it is far more sophisticated and likely to have a higher degree of success.”

In addition, they observe that, “in an orchestrated campaign of good cop/bad cop, Chinese officials have gone directly to U.S. public opinion, trying to appeal to sentimental feelings of cooperation and partnership while literally threatening war. The operation is aimed at five levels: the American public at large, journalists who influence the public and decision makers, business elites, Congress and the president and his inner circle.” The same messages and audiences apply to Taiwan.

The PRC now employs international organizations such as Interpol and the World Health Organization (WHO) to conduct its PW operations for it. For example, before the PRC admitted “detaining” Interpol’s then-president, the U.S. Department of Justice was asked to investigate whether the PRC Vice Minister of Public Safety, Meng Hongwei, acting in his capacity as Interpol’s president, was abusing Interpol to harass or persecute dissidents and activists abroad. (Johnson, 2018) Concurrently, the WHO has been accused as acting as an agent of PRC PW by excluding, in the past few years, Taiwan from the World Health Assembly, in apparent violation of its own charter. (Gershaneck, 2018c)

Liaison Work leverages specialized intelligence collection and analysis, liaison work to create and exploits divisions within an opposing leadership’s government, particularly the defense establishment. To this end, it develops and sustains rapport with foreign elites through exchanges and influences perceptions on Taiwan and with other external audiences through propaganda, and strategic, operational, and tactical-level psychological operations. It also counters an opponent’s efforts to shape perceptions within China.

Different organizations within the PRC conduct Liaison Work. The Liaison Work of the PLA is broader in scale than most, but it is representative. It entails many tasks, including “organizing and executing Taiwan work; ... leading All-Army enemy disintegration work; ... organizing and leading psychological warfare ... guiding and executing border negotiation political work and external military propaganda work; assuming responsibility for relevant International Red Cross liaison and military-related overseas Chinese work.” (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, p. 15)

Subversion, more commonly referred to in PRC parlance as disintegration work, is the flip side of friendly contact work. Ideological subversion targets political cohesion of coalitions, societies, and defense establishments. Beijing’s operatives target individuals or groups to find and exploit political and psychological vulnerabilities. They then leverage propaganda, deception, and other means to undermine an opponent’s national will through targeting of ideology, psychology, and morale. As part of this “disintegration” mission, they also identify, evaluate, and recruit potential intelligence sources. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, pp. 15-16)

Liaison Work is also directed at counter-subversion--to counter adversarial political warfare. The PRC views any effort to Westernize and weaken CCP control through peaceful evolution and promotion of universal values as “subversion”. As a result, psychological defense and ideological education is imperative, and includes such measures as Internet monitoring and restricting media access. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, p. 16)

## **The United Front**

United Front Work is a classic Leninist tactic with the goal of forging the broadest possible coalition of interests so as to undermine the “chief enemy.” The CCP uses united front work in both domestic and foreign policy, according to New Zealand academic Anne-Marie Brady, who has written extensively on the topic.

The CCP has perfected this aspect of PW over many decades, and it has been expanded significantly under the reign of Xi Jinping, whose father directed United Front and PW work for much of his career.

While the CCP's United Front Work Department has functional responsibility for these operations and activities, united front work is a task of all CCP agencies as well as a basic task of every CCP member. Every CCP agency, from the International Liaison Department to the Central Propaganda Department to the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, is tasked with engaging in united front activities, as are PRC government departments and local authorities. Executives of China's state owned enterprises are all CCP members, and increasingly the CCP is intruding into the management of joint ventures, (Denyer, 2018) so it's safe to assume intense PRC business engagement in United Front work regarding U.S. firms, and it is common practice in Taiwan-PRC joint ventures. (Gershaneck, 2018a)

## **Soft, Hard, Sharp, and Smart Power**

Another way to view PRC PW is through the lens of the terms soft power, hard power, smart power, and sharp power. The term soft power describes gentler means of influence, such as cultural and academic exchanges, public diplomacy, state diplomacy, foreign assistance, military diplomacy, and global trade and investment. Soft power simply means the ability to affect one nation's government and people through attraction to another country's culture, political ideals, policies, military engagement, and through persuasion, rather than by coercion through threatening military or economic means.

Coercive measures, such as threat of military attack, blockade, or economic boycott, are termed hard power. The term "smart power" was coined to accommodate the use of both hard and soft power as policy, that is, the use of both "carrots and sticks" to achieve foreign policy objectives. Political Warfare, as practiced by the PRC, entails soft, hard, and smart power, but also operations and

techniques, which are not hard in the openly kinetic or forcefully coercive sense, but are not soft in the more gentle “attract and persuade” sense, either. The PRC’s very aggressive influence and PW activities comprise what is now commonly referred to as “sharp power.”

Sharp Power is a form of asymmetric warfare that exploits the openness of democratic societies. In an open and democratic system, sharp power is like a Trojan horse that covertly sabotages social harmony. A National Endowment for Democracy (NED) report defines sharp power as the aggressive use of media and institutions to shape public opinion abroad. Sharp Power is “sharp” in the sense that it is used to “pierce, penetrate, or perforate the information and political environments in the targeted countries.” (NED, 2017)

To many, Sharp Power represents a new front in the battle for public opinion. However, Sharp Power is merely a standard element of PRC PW, in a fashionable new wrapping. Further, it is an insufficient term to define the comprehensive PRC coercive influence that threatens the ROC, the U.S., and much of the rest of the world. The tendency by Taiwan’s and America’s policy makers and academics to avoid the use of the term “PRC Political Warfare” in favor of the use of the term “PRC Sharp Power” is mistaken. This semantic choice blurs the fact that the PRC considers itself at war with Taiwan and the U.S., and dampens both nations’ ability to take appropriate counter measures.

## **Fascist and Totalitarian**

Finally, it is important in the context of any discussion of PRC Political Warfare to clearly and frequently define the nature of the PRC regime. To this end, it is crucial to frequently utilize the terms totalitarian and fascist to characterize both the CCP and the PRC as a society. Oddly--and indefensibly--many academics, government officials, and business leaders in Taiwan go silent when those terms are used to describe the nature of the CCP and the PRC.

While some histrionically deny the terms apply, most realize the terms are

indeed accurate but simply fear to use the terms for fear of retribution--much as timorous characters in Harry Potter books feared to say the name of the evil Lord Voldemort.

But, as Confucius wrote: If names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be conducted successfully. (Watson, 2007) By any objective reading of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, definitions of the words *totalitarian* and *fascist* apply to the PRC today:

**Totalitarian:** *of or relating to centralized control by an autocratic leader or hierarchy; of or relating to a political regime based on subordination of the individual to the state and strict control of all aspects of the life and productive capacity of the nation especially by coercive measures (such as censorship and terrorism)*

**Fascism:** *a political philosophy, movement, or regime (such as that of the Fascisti) that exalts nation and often race above the individual and that stands for a centralized autocratic government headed by a dictatorial leader, severe economic and social regimentation, and forcible suppression of opposition; a tendency toward or actual exercise of strong autocratic or dictatorial control*

By these definitions, the PRC is inarguably *totalitarian* and *fascist* based on the CCP's actions, its laws, and its culture:

- First, the CCP severely curbs the freedoms of its people, the people are allowed no rights to resist the will of their rulers, and dissent is crushed--and crushed violently, if necessary.
- Second, power is highly centralized, run on *Marxist-Leninist* tenets and nominally communist--the PRC is, per the PRC Constitution, a dictatorship!
- Third, the nation is exalted above the people. Hyper-nationalism or jingoism is powered by a sense of historical grievance or victimhood. China is overcoming its "century of humiliation" at the hands of Western imperialism, and every day Chinese children are exhorted to "never forget national humiliation".

The rationales for labeling the PRC "totalitarian" are perhaps best explained by



Chinese human rights lawyer Teng Biao: Xi Jinping's new **totalitarianism** and Mao's old style of totalitarianism don't differ by all that much. ... Under this kleptocratic system, the assets of regular citizens have never been afforded any institutionalized protection. On the ideological front, the Party has monopolized the media, created no-go zones in scholarship, instituted a brainwashing-style education system, established the Great Firewall, and persecuted intellectuals for their writing. On the legal front, the Party has always ridden roughshod over the law. Black jails, forced disappearances, torture, secret police, surveillance, judicial corruption, controlled elections, forced demolitions, and religious persecution have all been rampant.

These abuses are a key element in the Party's system of control. ... China is adopting a "**sophisticated totalitarianism.**" This totalitarianism is strict and refined without being brittle and dogmatic; it's cruel and barbaric without being chaotic. (Teng, 2018)

## **A Brief History of PRC Political Warfare**

An understanding of how the PRC conducts PW requires a brief overview of China's unique historical context. While the PRC is a newly modernized powerhouse militarily and technologically, its current foreign and security policies have deep roots in its ancient history. These roots include deep-rooted fears regarding the PRC's geo-strategic situation, the CCP's strategic culture inherited from its first despotic emperor, and the relationship between the Chinese Communist Party and the Leninist Soviet Union in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **A Tough Neighborhood Fosters Xenophobia**

Apologists for the CCP's expansionist, xenophobic, and brutally repressive policies often justify them on the basis on China's long history of conflict and

invasion. China's history has, in fact, been turbulent. Across two millennia, "Chinese regimes were forced to fight for their survival against powerful invaders that either swept across the Eurasian plains or assaulted across the eastern seaboard. The few geographical barriers on this vast land mass provided only limited protection, and the resulting security challenges foster compelling historical narratives, a strong civilizational identity, and deep nationalism. Successive regimes mobilized these historical and cultural strengths to reinforce their legitimacy and periodically generate xenophobia." (Mahnken, Babbage, & Yoshihara, 2018)

The CCP was not the first despotic regime to fully excite paranoid xenophobia, but it has exploited it most successfully. The CCP exercises unprecedented ability to control the information, thoughts, and actions of both its internal population and, increasingly, the populations of other countries through means unimaginable to early emperors. This totalitarian perspective, grounded in its first emperor Qin Shi Huangdi's worldview, provides the traditional strategic culture of centralized despotism, coercion, and persuasion that drives contemporary CCP political warfare. From the earliest Shang and Zhou dynasties rulers, despotic autocracy was the natural order of life, with no compact like a Magna Carta or concepts like post-Westphalian rights intervening between an emperor and control of his subjects.

## **Ancient Despots as CCP Role Models**

The first emperor, Qin Shihuang, imposed the first totalitarian state. He ruled with an iron fist, and regulated every aspect of his subjects' lives. Of note, he instituted a control regime copied by Communists worldwide: he assigned political commissars to spy on governors and military commanders to ensure they did not deviate from Qin's policies or criticize government policy.

"Control over his 40 million or so subjects exerted through every aspect of their daily existence. For example, only officially approved troupes, musicians, and

entertainers were authorized to entertain the masses, using repertoires approved by the Ministry of Interior. Severe punishment was the order of the day: for major capital crimes, the offender and his entire family were annihilated. For even the most minor infractions, millions were sent to forced labor projects such as building imperial highways and canals. As he built his cult of personality to imbue himself with a godlike image and establish total supremacy both internal and external to his empire, Qin attempted to eradicate thought itself: he ordered the burning of all books in the Imperial Archives except his own memoirs. Private ownership of books was prohibited. Soon, pyres of burning books lit up cities at night, but three million men were branded and sent to labor camps for owning books nonetheless.” (Mosher, 2000, pp. 20-25)

Qin’s foreign policy was one of aggressive expansionism, designed to achieve absolute dominance in the near region and, by slow extension, over the world—that is, to achieve “hegemony”. That hegemony was also fired by a sense of racial superiority and of supremacist entitlement. The characters for China, 中国, literally mean “central nation,” and notions of centrality and superiority, to include pervasive allusions to the superiority of the Han race, historically pervade Chinese literature and thought. China’s rulers have always encouraged nationalism and ethnocentrism to shore up legitimacy.

China’s elites believed their emperor to be the only legitimate political authority in the known world, and they were the highest expression of civilized humanity. Accordingly, despots treated the barbarian nations as a suzerain, exacting tribute, imposing unequal conditions, and influencing the barbarian leaders and peoples through both hard military and soft cultural and economic power. For 2,000 years, this hegemony over the regional vassal and tributary states and, to an extent, the “barbarians from the Western Oceans” beginning with the Portuguese in the late 1500s, lasted, sustained by both de facto political warfare and powerful armies. (Mosher, 2000, pp. 2-5)

Largely because of these demanding strategic circumstances, there have been strong incentives for China’s rulers to harness all of the resources of the society in innovative ways. As far back as 500 BC, Sun Tzu argued strongly for political,

psychological, and other non-combat operations to subdue enemies prior to committing armies to combat

*“The highest realization of warfare is to attack the enemy’s plans; next is to attack their alliances; next to attack their army; and the lowest is to attack their fortified cities. Thus one who excels at employing the military subjugates other people’s armies without engaging in battle, captures other people’s fortified cities without attacking them, and destroys other people’s states without prolonged fighting . . . For this reason, attaining one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the pinnacle of excellence. Subjugating the enemy’s army without fighting is the true pinnacle of excellence.”* (Sun Tzu, 1996, p. 50)

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Chinese communists such as Mao Tse-Tung carried with them Qin’s totalitarian tendencies and Sun Tzu’s strategic prescriptions, as they sought revolutionary inspiration from Marxism-Leninist ideology. In the 1920s and 1930s, the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, Soviet Union) greatly influenced the fledgling CCP with its virulent perspectives on achieving power.

## **Soviet Influence**

Moscow initially provided the role model for Chinese communist policy, organization, and operations-to include, especially, PW. The CCP learned operational arts from the Moscow-led Communist International (Comintern). As they did, they adapted USSR operational arts with their own unique historical context, merging Western revolutionary theory and practice with his version of what might be termed “total war with Chinese characteristics”. Mao combined this historical strategic culture, COMINTERN instruction, and insights from Clausewitz, Lenin, Trotsky, and others. He then developed, tested, and refined a new concept of revolutionary war in order to overthrow Chiang Kai-shek’s nationalist (Kuomintang; KMT) government and force it into exile on Taiwan. Mao also used the concept in his more limited efforts to defeat the Japanese forces that

had invaded China.

“The importance of early political operations throughout the theatre of operations, including in enemy strongholds, became a key foundation of Chinese military doctrine for revolutionary and unconventional war, as well as for a broader range of operations. Chinese leaders in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw these political campaigns as being critically important not only on home territory but also in enemy countries.” (Mahnken, et al., 2018)

Mao wrote: “Lenin teaches us that the World revolution can succeed only if the proletariat of the capitalist countries supports the struggle for liberation of the people of the colonies and semi-colonies. ... We must unite with the proletarians of. ... Britain, the United States, Germany, Italy, and all other capitalist countries; only then can we overthrow Imperialism ... and liberate the nations and the peoples of the world.” (Mao Tse-tung, 1965, p. 104)

## **Political Warfare in the Continuing Chinese Civil War: 1920's to the Present Day**

Communist and Nationalist forces began fighting each other in the late 1920s, and during much of the Chinese Civil War, both the Communist and Nationalist (Kuomintang, or KMT) armies spread false information to sow discord in enemy-controlled areas, spreading rumors about defections, falsifying enemy attack plans, and stirring up unrest in an effort to misdirect enemy planning. (Hsiao, 2018)

World War II led to a united front between the CCP-KMT and a truce of sorts. During this time CCP underground political work was segmented into multiple systems. An Urban Work Department, which evolved in the United Front Work Department (UFWD), focused on ordinary citizens, minorities, students, factory workers, and urban residents. The Social Work Department, which was established in February 1939 as an operational arm of the Central Special Work Committee, concentrated on “the upper social elite of enemy civilian authorities, security of senior CCP leaders, and Comintern liaison.” An Enemy Work Department was established for political warfare against opposing military forces. (Stokes & Hsiao,

2013, p. 7) These departments sought to fulfill three main missions:

1. Build and sustain a united front with friendly, sympathetic military figures;
2. Undermine the cohesion and morale of the senior enemy leaders and create tensions between officer and enlisted ranks; and
3. Win over and incite defection among those in the middle.

Emphasis was placed on psychological and ideological conditioning of senior enemy defense authorities in order to “weaken national will, generate sympathy for CCP strategic goals, and develop clandestine sources of military intelligence”. Tactics used included “financial incentives, shame, and promises of leniency”. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, p. 8) The Japanese surrender in August 1945 marked a new phase in the Chinese Civil War. Having preserved its strength during the Japanese occupation, the Red Army's Enemy Work Department (political warfare) efforts shifted focus from Imperial Japan toward the central ROC government. Despite recognition of both parties' legitimacy in October 1945, the civil war recommenced shortly thereafter.

## **Target: Taiwan**

In May 1946, the CCP established a Taiwan Provincial Work Committee, which was responsible for integrated political-military operations to subvert ROC forces on Taiwan. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, pp. 8-9) The CCP carried out united front political work in preparation for the Red Army's physical occupation of the island. Intensified PLA political warfare operations on Taiwan began after the fall of Shanghai in May 1949, when the CCP began deliberate planning for an amphibious invasion that was anticipated in April 1950. After the Nationalist government relocated to Taiwan in 1949, the propaganda and disinformation war continued as the two sides flooded propaganda and disinformation into enemy-controlled territories to affect public opinion and troop morale. (Hsiao, 2018)

In January 1950, ROC counterintelligence on Taiwan discovered and disrupted CCP clandestine operations. The leader of the operation (Cai Xiaoqian) was

arrested and recruited by the KMT, and helped neutralize more than 400 CCP operatives on Taiwan. Other CCP operatives on the island fled to Hong Kong where they joined the newly formed Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League, a CCP-approved pro-unification party that still exists until today. In June 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. President Truman ordered the U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet to “prevent any attack on Taiwan”. Although Chiang Kai Shek volunteered ROC forces to fight in Korea, they were not deployed for U.S. fear of widening the war with the PRC. Nonetheless, the PRC attacked United Nations (UN) forces in Korea in October 1950. (Goldstein, 2015, pp. 19-20) The Chinese People’s Volunteer Army (CPVA) Political Department had primary responsibility for political warfare against UN forces, and its Enemy Work Department was responsible for management of enemy POWs, propaganda, misinformation, and other tasks.

In 1954, two key events occurred: the First Taiwan Straits Crisis, a prelude to PRC invasion of Taiwan; and the signing of the U.S. and ROC Mutual Defense Treaty, initiated in large part to deter PRC invasion plans. The First Crisis involved the ROC “offshore islands” (Jinmen, also called Quemoy; Mazu, also called Matsu; and Dachen). In September 1954 the PRC began massive shelling of the islands, combined with intense propaganda and psychological operations that lasted into early 1955.

In 1956, the CCP established a Taiwan Affairs Leading Small Group (TALSG), an ultimately powerful group responsible for overseeing Taiwan PW operations. Over the next two decades, the GPD/LD’s primary mission was to undermine the legitimacy of the governing ROC authorities on Taiwan, manage territorial disputes, and counter “U.S. imperialism.” To this end, the TALSG carried out missions intended to sow distrust within Taiwan society and between Taiwan and the United States. According to Stokes and Hsiao, an example of early CCP use of misinformation and forgery can be found in a series of letters that were delivered to Chiang Kai-shek through his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, proposing direct peace talks, and a negotiated solution that would grant the authorities on Taiwan a high degree of autonomy. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, p. 9) Another example was a 1962 English-language media report out of Singapore in 1962 that asserted that

Chiang Kai-shek's inner circle had reached a secret agreement with the CPP after more than five years of negotiations. The report alleged that Chiang had agreed to accept Taiwan's status as a self-governed autonomous region, but only after Chiang's passing. Such CCP efforts were intended to undermine resolve on Taiwan and create mistrust between United States and Taiwan. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, p. 9)

In August 1958, the PRC initiated the Second Taiwan Straits Crisis, with the same intense artillery shelling and propaganda and PsyOps. The most intense shelling stopped by the end of the year, but this propaganda and periodically shelling with PsyOps materials lasted for nearly 30 years. It is notable that the Eisenhower administration was concerned enough about the impact of ROC morale from the crisis that it directly provided supplies and 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet support, and deliberated use of nuclear weapons in defense of Taiwan. (Stokes & Hsiao, 2013, pp. 27-28) The Taiwan Strait psychological war that began in the 1950s continued until the 1990s. Following the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1958, both sides remained engaged in an intense international diplomatic contest, while PW engagements included "covert operations, subterfuge, and other efforts to encourage defections by enemy officers through psychological warfare". (Hsiao, 2018) The Kinmen-Xiamen contest was, perhaps, most colorfully symbolized by alternate day artillery shelling with warheads full of propaganda leaflets instead of high explosives.

While Taiwan remained the PRC's central focus, PRC PW officials turned to other contentious areas, such as the PRC's 1959 occupation of Tibet and subsequent uprising, and the 1962 Indian-China border war. During this period 1959-61, Mao's "Great Leap Forward" with its resultant widespread famine and the millions of deaths, also impacted PRC PW activities against Taiwan, as did the "Sino-Soviet split". The Sino-Soviet split led to bloody border skirmishes in 1969. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), many external PW operations were severely curtailed as Mao threw the PRC into bloody turmoil. But the PRC achieved a major diplomatic (and, implicitly, PW) victory when the UN General Assembly voted in 1971 for the PRC to replace the ROC as the representative of China.



President Nixon's visit to the PRC in 1972 attenuated some of the PRC's propaganda and related PW activities aimed at Taiwan and its relationship to the U.S. From 1949 until that visit, PRC PW framed the Taiwan "problem" in ideological terms. It accused the "U.S. imperialists" of "occupying Taiwan", and employed the theory of "class struggle" to judge Taiwan's society. It routinely interpreted Taiwan's political, economic, and educational systems using communist ideological jargon. (Chiu, 1979, p. 129) In 1973, the PRC began systematically exploiting the 2:28 Incident to "win over the hearts" of the Taiwanese people by holding anniversary ceremonies and study sessions. The first such meeting hosted roughly 138 participants, with nearly half Taiwanese, that included "party members, military personnel (including former KMT generals), administrators, nationality leaders, professors, writers, youths, women, form Kuomintang generals, diplomats, and administrators". (Chiu, 1979, p. 134)

The Cultural Revolution brought a decade of civil war, chaos, and ruin to mainland China. However, PW infrastructure was reconstituted in the late 1970s at the conclusion of the Cultural Revolution. With its reconstitution came renewed Taiwan-focused political warfare operations. Up to that point, the PRC's Taiwan policy staff work was dominated by the Central Investigation Department (CID), which was also focused on intelligence operations, and which was eventually incorporated into the Ministry of State Security (MSS). This was not necessarily a new PRC model: during the height of China's Civil War, the united front, state security, and liaison work systems worked closely together as underground work entities.

Of considerable significance, the end of the Cultural Revolution allowed the CCP to vastly expand the UFWD mission. United Front work was originally focused internally, on domestic concerns within the various factions and ethnicities in China. Through the disastrous Great Leap Forward and the bloody Cultural Revolution, UWFD remained vectored inwardly. But beginning in 1979, Deng Xiaoping broadened the focus outside the PRC to include Overseas Chinese. (Gershaneck, 2018a) This ultimately led to a sea-change in United Front capabilities. Overseas Chinese were enticed to invest in the PRC to support Deng's

Four Modernizations, and to support PRC policies and actions within the countries where they resided. This led to vast increase in UFDW funding, as well as to the PRC's economic revival. (Gershaneck, 2018a)

The deaths of Chiang Kai-Shek in April 1975 and Mao Tse Tung in September 1976 did nothing to change the nature of the PRC-ROC PW competition, but in 1978 the beginning of the Democracy Wall Movement and economic reform within the PRC gave small hope that perhaps communist China would become less totalitarian. This would prove to be a false hope. Cross-Strait relations began to warm in the 1980s, and the CCP officially shuttered its overt propaganda program from Xiamen in 1991. On the surface, the "war without gunfire" that had lasted for over 40 years appeared to be over--but of course it did not end. Rather, says Hsiao, propaganda and disinformation found new outlets in the mass media and "new media".

On January 1, 1979, the U.S. formally recognized the PRC, and severed official relations with the ROC (to include terminating the Mutual Defense Treaty). In April of that year, the U.S. Congress, not confident in the Carter Administration's stated security assurances regarding Taiwan, passed the 《Taiwan Relations Act》 (TRA), which provided "substantive continuity in the vital security sphere ... on unofficial terms", along with continuity in "commercial, cultural, and other relations". (Goldstein, 2015, pp. 56-58) The PRC attempted to lure ROC officials in unification with schemes such as the *One* "Country, Two Systems" proposal, but the ROC rejected the advance and called for unification under a democratic, free, and non-communist system. Meanwhile, the PRC established United Fronts such as the China Association for International Friendly Contact (CAIFC). Using CAIFC and its United Front variations as platforms, the CCP has co-opted a large number of ROC military officers, through such programs as "Linking Fates" Cultural Festival of Cross-Strait Generals. (Hsiao, 2017b) In the PRC, many Taiwan business were approached with business and other offers, in exchange for their cooperation in support of PRC PW objectives.

As President Chiang Ching-Kuo steered Taiwan from authoritarian rule to democracy, he maintained his strong belief in the necessity of fighting the political

war with Beijing. This ideological defense of the ROC was invaluable. With the passing of Chiang Ching-kuo in January 1988, the CCP worked to establish a dialogue with Chiang's successor, Lee Teng-hui. This was accomplished via a neo-Confucian scholar who worked with a representative from the UFWD, the chairman of the UFWD's KMT Revolutionary Committee and a Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Standing Committee member. In 1991, the ROC ended its national mobilization for suppression of the communist rebellion that was initiated in 1949, and by 1995 President Lee instituted other democratic reforms that empowered the people of Taiwan. Among other steps he took was to end the decades long cover up of the 2:28 Incident. (Goldstein, 2015, pp. 73-74) All would impact PRC PW strategies and operations in coming years. For example, as recently as 2017, the CCP would try to co-opt the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 2:28 (and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the lifting of martial law in Taiwan) by hosting a commemorative event by its front organization, the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League (TDSGL). (Hsiao, 2017a)

In July 1995, the PRC demonstrated its hard power in an attempt to influence Taiwan public opinion by conducting a series of missile tests in the waters surrounding Taiwan along with other military maneuvers off the coast of Fujian. Then, to influence the outcome of the 1996 presidential election, the PRC conducted a show of force as PW yet again just days before the March 26 election: it launched missiles over the island and conducted massive live-fire and amphibious assault exercises in an attempt to deter the Taiwanese people from voting for Lee. The PLA also disrupted trade and shipping lines around Taiwan. The U.S. response was to dispatch two aircraft carrier battle groups to the area. The next day the PRC announced suspension of the missile "tests". The PRC PW effort backfired miserably, as Lee became the first democratically elected president of the ROC by a wide margin, and 75 percent of the total vote went to candidates opposing moving towards unification with the PRC. (Goldstein, 2015, pp. 88-89) However, the PW operation did boost the popularity of a political party that named itself the New Party. (Goldstein, 2015, p. 88) This political party would later be associated with PRC PW, and tainted by allegations of conducting espionage

operations against Taiwan for the PRC. (Pan, 2018)

By Taiwan's second direct presidential election in 2000, the PRC was engaged in ever-increasing and more-subtle united front operations, and in 2001 it directed the establishment of the China Association for Promotion of Chinese Culture (CAPCC) as a principle PLA platform for cross-straits political warfare operations. On March 18, 2000, Chen Shui-bian was elected as president of the Republic of China, leading his Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) to victory over two strong KMT contenders. For the PRC, the DPP was a nightmare, as it is historically pro-independence with grievances against the mainlander KMT government that had repressed Taiwanese natives for so long. Consequently, before the election, the PRC used a wide range of PW and other means to intimidate Taiwan's voters from supporting Chen and to influence Chen's behavior if elected, including the threat that force might be used against Taiwan if its leaders "refuse sine die (indefinitely), the peaceful settlement of cross-strait reunification through negotiations." (Goldstein, 2015, pp. 95-96) By 2005, Beijing had accelerated its UF and "people to people" diplomacy, and established regular contacts with the KMT (as well as the opposition People First Party). These party contacts at the leadership level would pave the way for vastly improved relations between Taipei and Beijing (and KMT-CCP party to party relations as well) after the KMT crushed the DPP in the 2008 presidential and legislative elections.

Between 2008 and 2016, interactions between Taiwan and China increased rapidly and extensively as Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou pursued a policy of rapprochement with Beijing. With the rapidly expanding cross-strait travel, academic exchanges and investment, says, J. Michael Cole, the opportunities for China to engage in political warfare increased exponentially. (Cole, 2015) The PRC had viewed Ma's election as a "historic opportunity" in its efforts to bring Taiwan into the PRC. (Goldstein, 2015, p. 120) The inroads the PRC was allowed to make in terms of political influence as a result of his cross-strait rapprochement resulted in serious damage to the ROC's security and national unity, and garnered increasing resentment and criticism in Taiwan. As PRC media praised Ma and his rapprochement initiatives, Beijing continued to a wide range of political warfare

and related cyber attacks against Taiwan, and PRC intelligence operations expanded significantly. (Gershaneck, 2018a) According to Cole and other experts, during Ma's terms in office, there was a rapid expansion of cross-strait travel, academic exchanges and investment, so the opportunities for PRC to engage in political warfare increased exponentially. (Cole, 2015) For example, Ma's academic exchanges sent large number of highly educated but underemployed (and unemployed) Taiwanese (including many with PhDs) to the mainland in search of jobs. With little foundation in how to identify or resist PRC intelligence enticements, they fell easy prey to CIS, MSS, PLA, and other offers of funding for "research" and "consultant services". (Gershaneck, 2018a)

Such access to a wide array of Taiwan's academics vastly increased Beijing's ability to divide and demoralize the people of Taiwan. Regarding PRC intelligence operations, Ma's reign has been characterized a "dark decade" for Taiwan's intelligence war with PRC. (Tsao, Shih, Chin, & Het, 2018) In addition to many Taiwan academics and students, under Ma the PRC's PW and intelligence community obtained far greater access to retired government officials, particularly military officers and ministerial-level officials in charge of defense, economic, foreign affairs, and other vital functions. (Gershaneck, 2018a) Many were co-opted with offers of free trips to the mainland, as well as lucrative payments for services. By the end of his administration, the people of Taiwan perceived Ma had gone too far in the direction of unification, at the expense of Taiwan's sovereignty and interests. (Goldstein, 2015, pp. 125-128) The opposition political party, the DPP, won the next presidential election by a landslide.

Following DPP candidate Tsai Ing-wen's election as president of the ROC and her inauguration on May 20, 2016, a "Cold Peace" has defined cross-Strait relations. The essential parameters of "cold peace" are a set of policies carried out by both by the PRC and Taiwan follow: On the one hand, Beijing indicated that unless Tsai accepted the PRC's precondition of the "1992 Consensus," there would be no official or semi-official communications between the PRC and Taiwan, no international space for Taiwan, and no more "economic handouts" to Taiwan. On the other hand, Tsai is reluctant to accept the term "1992 Consensus" as she was

elected president with an ambiguous pledge to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. (Huang, 2016) The PRC's resultant strategy has been to increase diplomatic, economic, and military pressures on Tsai's government through a wide range of United Front and other PW activities. The objective of the PRC's current PW is "regime change" or prompting Tsai to "mistakenly provoke China". (Huang, 2017)

## Recommendations

The ROC faces a relentless, multi-faceted onslaught of PRC political warfare strategies, tactics, techniques, and procedures. Implementation of the below six recommendations will help the ROC, better prepare to fight and win this total war with the PRC:

1. **Publicly acknowledge the Political Warfare threat, prioritize it as "existential", and use the term Political Warfare to accurately reflect its nature.** Publicly and frequently, recognize the threat and make combatting it a national priority! It is vital to use correct terminology in policy documents and publicly to describe the wide array of political warfare operations the PRC is conducting and the existential danger they pose.
2. **Mandate a National Strategy to counter hostile state competition below the level of armed conflict (i.e. PRC Political Warfare), with appropriate organization, training, manpower, and funding.** Through legislation, require a comprehensive approach, and include the requirement to appoint a highly respected coordinator for political warfare within the National Security Council, the establishment of a strategic operational center of gravity, under non-military control.
3. **Rebuild institutions that can successfully undertake national-level information operations.** The ROC must revive its ability to engage in information operations and strategic communication similar in scope to the capabilities it developed during the Cold War era. This includes a governmental

structures and capacity building with the private sector, civil society, and the news media.

4. **Establish systematic education programs in government, industry, business, academia, and the general public regarding PRC PW operations.** Establish short and long courses in senior-level and intermediate-level professional courses, as well as entry level for the intelligence, commerce, public affairs, and education-affiliated communities, along with the private sector. Universities must engage in education, while news media and other institutions may be utilized for training key officials, influencers, and the general public.
5. **Increase the readiness, manning, and training of Law Enforcement and Counter Intelligence professionals to better screen, track, and expose PRC PW activities.** It is apparent that combatting PRC PW has not received the priority it must have in order to vie successfully in resource battles within the bureaucracies. All resources are stretched thin, and there appears to be inadequate to prepare LE and CI personnel to successfully perform this task.
6. **Routinely expose PRC PW operations publicly.** As a matter of law and policy, expose covert and overt PRC PW and IO. The Legislative Yuan and Executive Yuan should mandate an annual National Security Bureau-led, publicly disseminated intelligence report on United Front interference and influence operations. This report should include practical advice for ordinary citizens about how to recognize and avoid these operations.

## **Conclusion**

This paper addresses the philosophical underpinnings, terminology, and history of the PRC's Political Warfare against the ROC. It provides new ways to think about the Political Warfare threat, and includes specific insights on how to rhetorically frame and fight the battle. Further, it provides six important recommendations that will allow the ROC (and other targeted countries) to

successfully develop more effective strategies and resources to fight back and win the war.

In essence, the ROC must first re-learn the nature of the PW threat, and understand how the PW battlefield has changed in light of the PRC's unprecedented technological, organizational, and economic advances. As part of this essential understanding, elected officials and policy makers must focus attention on the threat by properly employing useful terminology. Then they must invest heavily and with great urgency to fight the Political Warfare threat to inoculate their institutions and citizens against the existential threat posed by PRC PW, and then to take the fight back to the aggressor. It is time to stop losing the PW fight, and to "gear up and engage in the fight". Only then will it be possible to take the war back to the aggressor, and ultimately win.



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