

China to Use Pelosi's Visit to Taiwan

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In response to Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, China not only conducted cyberattacks and fake news dissemination on an unprecedented scale, but it also conducted military exercises on an unparalleled scale around Taiwan after Pelosi left Taiwan. As the G7 leaders condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine in their joint statement, the international community condemned China's action as an attempt to "change the status quo by force." Taiwan society, which has been calmly observing the situation, is moving further away from China.

Why did China react so strongly in the first place? In principle, China would have tolerated a visit to Taiwan by a member of the legislature of a country that does not have diplomatic relations with Taiwan (Republic of China). In 1996, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich was opposed by China from taking a route directly from Beijing to Taiwan, but a visit to Taiwan that went via Tokyo was not much of a problem. However, the Xi Jinping regime has raised the bar. Identifying the Tsai Ing-wen administration as plotting to gain Taiwan's independence, the Xi Jinping regime decided to condemn all actions by other countries, even by members in the legislature, that support or approach the Tsai Ing-wen administration. As long as China was insisting on this policy domestically, it would have been impossible for China to back down before the Chinese Communist Party personnel announcement in autumn 2022. On the other hand, the U.S. can be said to have shown that it will not go along with the hurdles raised by China.

Also, in applying the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, it was also perceived that advanced countries were leading a color revolution in Hong Kong, and that these countries have been behind the democratization movement since the Umbrella Movement. The Chinese are sensitive to Pelosi's visit to Taiwan because China's basic perception is that behind the Tsai Ing-wen administration are the U.S. and Japan, which has ambitions for Taiwan. Japan considers it a problem that Chinese missiles fell into Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), but since China considers Japan to be behind the Tsai Ing-wen administration in the first place, there is an aspect of dealing with Japan harshly about this incident.

China's response before and after Pelosi's visit to Taiwan faced condemnation from the international community and Taiwan. However, for China, there are several things it has been able to

do while pointing the finger of blame, saying that the U.S. provoked China. First, China was able to quickly raise the level of the strategy it pursues, which is to show Taiwan society that it has the military capability to conduct an armed invasion of Taiwan, while also conducting cyberattacks, fake news, and other gray-zone infiltration to attract Taiwan society more toward China. China has been able to direct the world's understanding of international affairs, or at least the understanding of international affairs around China, to center on the U.S.-China "confrontation" to some extent rather than on Russia's Ukraine problem. China does not want a head-on collision between the U.S. and China, but it envisions a world in which the U.S. and China will compete until 2049. On the other hand, China may have intended to show its difference from Russia by not actually invading Taiwan, but this attempt has not been successful.

In the future, China will try to force Taiwan society to "give up" by demonstrating its military power and increasing its internal penetration. However, it is difficult to imagine that Taiwan society will yield to China. What should be noted is what will happen when China judges that the effects of its demonstration of military power and penetration of the gray zone cannot not be seen. At that point, it can be assumed that China will raise the level of its threats by using force, such as seizing uninhabited islands in the Taiwan Strait or the South China Sea. Even if unintentional, there is a possibility of escalation if the chain of events continues.

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