

China Sends Warning On Taiwan Arms Sales

by William Jones

At a press conference at the Chinese Embassy in Washington on July 12, Chinese Press Counselor and spokesman Sun Weide issued some rather pointed warnings regarding U.S. attempts to exacerbate the Taiwan issue by increasing arms sales to the Taiwan government.

The hastily arranged press conference caught people somewhat by surprise; such press conferences are very infrequent. But it was obvious from Sun Weide's remarks that the Chinese government was intent on getting across a message to policy-makers in the U.S. capital, directed probably to both the Bush Administration and the Congress, where neo-conservatives allied to Vice President Dick Cheney have been busily working to heat up the cross-Strait issue, as well as beating the drums on Hong Kong elections.

Secondly, the press conference came shortly after the visit to Beijing by Bush National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, in which it is reported that similar warnings were issued privately. Rice met there with a number of top officials, including Chinese President Hu Jintao, as well as former President Jiang Zemin. Aside from any concerns they may have expressed to Rice privately, they also deemed it necessary to follow up with a more public statement on the issue.

U.S. Neo-Cons Stirring up Trouble with China

While on the official level, U.S.-Chinese relations appeared to be developing smoothly, with regular contacts between government officials on all levels, there have been clear signs of trouble on the horizon. While Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian has, perhaps under Administration pressure, been less strident over the last few days, a large Taiwan delegation was in Washington in June, visiting Congressional offices and others, in which they were being encouraged by the usual neo-con suspects on Capitol Hill to upgrade their defense purchases.

Press counselor Sun Weide minced few words as to how China viewed this issue. "The U.S. leaders have reaffirmed on many occasions that the U.S. side adheres to the one-China policy, abides by the three China-U.S. Joint Communiqués, and opposes Taiwan independence," Sun said. "However, we are gravely concerned over the recent U.S. moves on the Taiwan question. We strongly urge the U.S. side to stop selling advanced arms to Taiwan, cut the military links between

the U.S. and Taiwan, stop any official exchanges with Taiwan authorities, and stop supporting Taiwan efforts to join the international organizations where statehood is required. Only in this way can the stable development of the China-U.S. relations as well as the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait be guaranteed," Sun Weide said.

In addition, two major reports have been issued in the last several months, one by the Pentagon and the other by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission. The Pentagon report mooted the possibility of a Taiwan attack on the Three Gorges Dam as a possible "scenario" if there were a military conflict between China and Taiwan. The Congressional Commission report, stopped just short of calling for a change in the "one-China policy." Needless to say, these reports were like waving a red flag in front of the Chinese leadership. The two reports, Sun said in reply to a question about them from *EIR*, were "filled with Cold War rhetoric." "Some people here are not comfortable with China and don't want to deal with China," Sun added.

Cheney Threatened China

That potty-mouth Vice President, Dick Cheney, also visited Beijing in April. While allegedly trying to allay Chinese fears over any independence moves on the part of Chen Shui-bian, Cheney also put out a not-so-subtle threat that the situation in Taiwan might be influenced by how China "deals" with the situation in Hong Kong, a clear attempt at interfering in what is now a Chinese affair.

Sun then criticized the U.S. media articles that complained about the "lack of democracy" in Hong Kong, underlining the simple fact that under the many years of British rule, the people of Hong Kong had never participated in the process of selecting the chief executive. Since the handover of Hong Kong to China, there have been two elections, and will be a third election in September. The elections are being handled, Sun Weide pointed out, in accordance with the Basic Law regulating the "one country, two systems" implemented by China in the handover.

"Hong Kong is China's Hong Kong," Sun said. "The Chinese people have the determination, the capability and the wisdom to maintain the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. The U.S. government has stated on many occasions that it supports the implementation of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law. We again urge the U.S. side to honor its commitments in its deeds," Sun said.

Sun also warned the United States about being inflexible in the six-party talks, indicating that the United States should be prepared to offer "corresponding measures" at the moment North Korea declares it has frozen its nuclear activities.

After making a mess of U.S. policy in Southwest Asia, Cheney and his minions seem intent on stoking the fires for another major debacle—with potentially devastating consequences for the entire Asia-Pacific region. The sooner Cheney gets his walking papers, the safer the world will be.