



Reader Survey:

Does Strategic Ambiguity Still Make Sense?

The Asia Foundation's Commissioned Task Force on America's Role in Asia had as one of its primary recommendations, "Maintain the one-China policy and strategic ambiguity about U.S. actions." The Task Force Report acknowledges that "maintaining the policy (and its ambiguity" is by no means automatic or easy," but further argues that "absent a specific crisis (or the prospect of one), detailing the circumstances under which the United States would (or would not) intervene in the Taiwan Straits could needlessly embolden or antagonize one side or the other."

Recent comments by President Bush, at first glance, seemed to point in the direction of dropping "strategic ambiguity" in favor of greater assurance that America would "do whatever it takes" to help Taiwan defend itself. However, subsequent statements by the President and others stressed that there had been no policy change.

But, does the policy of strategic ambiguity still make sense? Some well-respected security specialists, including a few associated with the current administration, would disagree with the Asia Foundation Task Force's recommendation. We would like to know what PacNet readers think. Please take a moment and respond to the below questions. We will tabulate the results and report them in a future PacNet.

We would also like your views on whether or not the U.S. should actively oppose Beijing's bid to host the 2008 Olympics. Some have argued that China should not receive such a reward until its human rights record improves substantially. Others argue that hosting the Olympics will help put pressure on Beijing to open up and lighten up. Tell us what you think, and why.

For more on the Asia Foundation Task Force Report, see PacNet 19A, which will be distributed to Email subscribers and will also be available on the [Pacific Forum Web Site](#). For a brief commentary on Taiwan "independence," see PacNet 19B. Those who receive PacNet by fax may request either or both supplemental PacNets but are also encouraged to provide us with an Email address if available.

PacNet Reader Survey 1-2001: Does Strategic Ambiguity Still Make Sense?

1. Should the U.S. continue its policy of "strategic ambiguity" about possible responses to future cross-Straits scenarios? YES _____ NO _____ UNCERTAIN _____

2. Why? (Please briefly share your thinking on this subject with us)

3. Should the U.S. actively oppose Beijing's bid to host the 2008 Olympics? YES _____ NO _____ UNCERTAIN _____

4. Why or why not?

5. Please specify where you are from, to assist in analyzing the results: US _____ PRC _____ Taiwan _____
Other Asia _____ Other _____