

*The End of Washington's Strategic Ambiguity? The Debate over U.S. Policy toward Taiwan**

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Abstract

The Trump administration has shown a strong inclination to play the “Taiwan card” and strengthen relations with Taipei in lieu of Washington’s traditional strategic ambiguity. As the U.S.-China trade competition escalated after 2018, the contending bilateral relations between Beijing and Washington created an opportunity for the administration of Tsai Ing-wen to adopt a more provocative strategy toward Beijing. In order to prevent conflict resulting from Taiwan’s new approach, more fundamental discussions on the definitions and dynamism of why the United States should adjust this traditional security policy are needed, this research suggests, in order to address the question of whether the United States should change to strategic clarity across the Taiwan Strait or adhere to its traditional strategic ambiguity. Moreover, this study also covers relevant literature on strategic ambiguity, investigating the changing patterns of decision making in U.S. foreign policy with regard to cross-Strait relations and U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.

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