

## **The Internationalization of the Taiwan Issue and the Kuomintang Government's Countermeasures in 1950**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Following the defeat of the Kuomintang in the civil war of 1949, the US changed its mind, becoming reluctant to carry out the promise of the Cairo Declaration and intending to resolve the Taiwan issue through mechanisms of the United Nations. With the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, President Truman dispatched the Seventh Fleet to defend Taiwan. At the UN, the Soviet Union and the PRC condemned such as an act of aggression and raised the "Complaint of Armed Invasion of Taiwan". As a countermeasure, the US delegation put forward the motion of "Question of Formosa".

Internationalization of the Taiwan issue was brought forth against the complex background of the KMT-CCP Civil War, the Korean War and the Cold War in East Asia. The US advocated further investigation of the issue and a final resolution to be proposed a year later. In particular, "the wish of the inhabitants of Formosa" to be taken into account was put forward; and such principle of self-determination might lead to the repudiation of what was stipulated in the Cairo Declaration. Raising the Taiwan issue was a manipulative act of the US and the hidden agenda was to prevent the CCP from joining the Korean War and to entice it with a UN seat. However, the situation in East Asia changed drastically when the Chinese People's Volunteer Army crossed the Yalu River and got engaged in the Korean War. With the CCP siding with the Soviet Union, settling the issue of Taiwan's status was no longer urgent. In February 1951, the UK motioned adjournment of the debate, "the Question of Formosa" was thus shelved indefinitely.

To the KMT, internationalization of the Taiwan issue posed a rigorous challenge to its claim of Taiwan's sovereignty. Owing to its dependency on the US support, the KMT could not oppose the US proposition and was marginalized during the debate, falling completely into a disadvantageous position in foreign relations.

Nevertheless, the KMT remained the only dominant power on the island. Instructions were issued by the propaganda department and support was demanded from chief editors and writers for a concerted claim on “China has sovereignty over Taiwan”. Even though such claim was untenable under international law and practice, the systematic discourse gained success as an internal operation. Instead of becoming a crisis of governance, internationalization of the Taiwan issue was turned into an effective promotion for greater identification with and loyalty to China.

**Keywords:** Motion of “Question of Formosa”, Korean War, Cold War in East Asia, Cairo Declaration, United Nations, Kuomintang