

PRESIDENT BIDEN'S LATEST GAFFE ON TAIWAN DRAWS BEIJING'S IRE

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was asked whether U.S. forces would defend the democratically governed Taiwan, to which he replied: "Yes, if in fact there was an unprecedented attack."

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Contradicting U.S. policy, President Joe Biden has pledged that U.S. forces would defend Taiwan should it face a Chinese invasion. Biden's latest [statement](#) during a Sunday interview on *60 Minutes* is causing somewhat of a kerfuffle in Beijing.

When Biden was asked what Chinese president Xi Jinping "should know about" the U.S.' commitment to the Taiwanese isle, he started off relatively well as he reiterated the U.S.' 'One China' policy. This long-held position, codified in the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, recognizes the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legal government of China, acknowledging also the Chinese position that Taiwan is "part of China"—not governed by it. The act served as the foundation of the 'strategic ambiguity' doctrine, which allows the U.S. to keep up a front of noncommittance concerning Taiwan. It had been carefully constructed to ensure a status quo so that both China and Taiwan could peacefully co-exist.

All pretense of such neutrality was dropped when Biden was asked whether U.S. forces would defend the democratically governed Taiwan, to which he replied: "Yes, if in fact there was an unprecedented attack."

He was then asked to clarify if that meant boots on the ground in the event of a Chinese invasion, to which he answered in the affirmative.

While Biden had made [a similar statement](#) earlier in May, his latest comment on the

matter is his most explicit yet. When queried about Biden's remarks on CBS, a White House spokesperson, like last time, had to walk back the president's statement by emphasizing that U.S. policy towards Taiwan had not shifted.

A response from the Chinese came swiftly. Mao Ning, the [freshly appointed](#) foreign ministry spokeswoman, told reporters [during a briefing](#) that Biden's comments sent a "seriously wrong signal" to separatists forces for Taiwan's independence.

Citing China's dissatisfaction and opposition to Biden's comments, she said that the country [had lodged a formal complaint](#) over it, while warning that China reserves the right to take all necessary measures in response to activities that split the nation apart.

Meanwhile, Taiwan's foreign ministry has [expressed its thanks](#) to Biden for "once again emphasizing the staunch and rock-solid U.S. security commitment to Taiwan," and that it will continue to strengthen its self-defense capabilities and deepen the close security partnership between Taiwan and the U.S.

China-U.S. relations were already at a low point after a U.S. visit to Taiwan by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in August. In response, China conducted its largest-ever military exercises around the neighboring island.

Only last week, China protested [a piece of U.S. legislation](#), the Taiwan Policy Act 2022, which saw bipartisan approval by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The proposal, as its statement says, "expands U.S. efforts to promote the security of Taiwan, ensures regional stability, and deters further People's Republic of China (PRC) aggression against Taiwan." Additionally, it would allow for the setting up of a "broad economic sanctions regime" should Beijing pursue "hostile actions" against Taiwan.

<https://twitter.com/SFRCdems/status/1570158573023547392>

The Act would replace the earlier Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, which was designed to

maintain Taiwan's self-governing status quo by enhancing its self-defense military capacity as Washington switched diplomatic recognition from the Republic of China (ROC/Taiwan) to the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Last month, Chinese ambassador to the U.S. Qin Gang warned that China-U.S. ties would "face disintegration," should this Act see congressional approval. Before its approval, however, in early September the Biden administration had already started the process of 'securing' Taiwan, as it approved a \$1 billion package in arms sales.

According to Washington, such a package complies with the 'One China' policy outlined in the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, as it stipulates that while the U.S. would not establish formal diplomatic relations with Taipei, it can still deliver arms.

There are concerns about whether the U.S.—should it ever decide to take that path—could now stand up to China in a conventional conflict. A recent Bloomberg op-ed piece mentions the fact that while the U.S. military budget dwarfs China's, it does not have the industrial base that is needed to replace military equipment in a quick enough fashion. It would then be quickly overtaken by China, which logistically holds the edge.

Additionally, the U.S. Army is currently dealing with historically low recruitment rates, as it projects that for the next two years it will fall short by nearly 40,000 new recruits. Its vice chief of staff, General Joseph Martin told the House Armed Services readiness subcommittee on July 19th that they had "unprecedented challenges with both a post-COVID-19 environment and labor market, but also private competition with private companies that have changed their incentives over time."

What exacerbates the issue even more is the Pentagon's stated aim to weed out unwanted elements from the U.S. military following the January 6th Capitol riot of last year.

A January 14th, 2021 memorandum by the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, which can safely be interpreted as an attempt to purge sympathizers of former

President Trump from U.S. forces, outlined as its objective the prohibition of “active advocacy and active participation related to supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes by active duty military personnel.”

‘Supremacist’ (only the white kind) and especially ‘extremist’ are terms that, as any seasoned observer of current U.S. politics knows, are often defined—and indeed applied—quite broadly.

Given such obvious, politically motivated purgings (as well as ‘woke’ recruitment ads signaling which ideology reigns supreme), the dearth of enlistments plaguing Biden’s America perhaps is not so hard to explain.