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Newsletter No.24 July 2014

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Editor's Note

To resume our analytical works on Taiwan's domestic situation and external relations, we proudly present to you the newest edition of Taiwan Brain Trust Communication. This issue of TBT Communication first looks at the "Sunflower Movement" that was triggered at the beginning of March by the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement. Two articles from Taiwan Brain Trust President Liu Shih-chung are featured: " Cross-Strait Ties and Public Opinion in the Wake of the Sunflower Student Movement" and "The Impact of the Sunflower Movement On Cross-Strait Relations".

The Sunflower Movement shook Taiwanese around the country and attracted the close interest and scrutiny of the international community, while also influencing the development of cross-strait relations. As a result, on June 25 the director of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, Zhang Zhijun, came to Taiwan for a series of official meetings around the country in order to establish the causes of the movement. Thus for this issue we have specially invited Prof. Li-wen Tung from Central Police University's Department of Public Security to provide an overall assessment of Zhang's Taiwan trip. His article is titled "A Brief Comment on the Impact of Zhang Zhijun's visit in Taiwan".

The Sunflower Movement also provided a big boost to Hong Kong's Occupy Central action of July 1st. In light of this, the current issue has also invited Prof. Tseng Chien-yuan at the Chung Hua University's Department of Public Administration to analyze China's approach toward Hong Kong and Taiwan in his article "Zhang Zhijun's Taiwan Visit and its Tmpiration for Hong Kong".

In international affairs, we have reports on two of Taiwan's neighbours in Northeast Asia. The Abe administration in Japan announced on July 1st that it lifted a ban on "collective self-defense", a decision that will have a considerable impact on both China-Taiwan relations and the situation on the Korean Peninsula. Very soon after the announcement, Chinese President Xi Jinping travelled to South Korea for two days of talks and held a summit meeting with President Park Geun-hye. The power struggle and contending strategies in Northeast Asia are fuelling an environment both unusual and fragile, altering international political trends throughout the region and shaping a new international order.

This issue of TBT Communication has responded to the turbulence in East Asia by inviting Taiwan Brain Trust's Director of Research Department, Li Ming-Juinn to write "Japan's Abe Administration Lifts Ban on Collective Self-Defense". The article points out that this action of Prime Minister Abe's government is the game-changing decision in all of the time since Japan's pacifist Constitution came into force after World War II, allowing the country to move from its former exclusively defensive role to one in which it can launch military action and wage war in conjunction with other states. This will have a tremendous influence on the situation in East Asia, and Taiwan's status will become increasingly important.

The article "An Analysis of the South Korea-China Summit" is provided by Szuchi Tung, the Deputy secretary general of the Taiwan Association for Northeast Asian Studies. He writes that the summit on the one hand displayed China's "new stance on Asia policy"; on the other it represents South Korea's attempt at a new foreign policy, following the earlier Sunshine Policy of improving relations with Pyongyang and its pro-U.S. line. Yet South Korea's biggest policy issue is how to find an appropriate location and role between the two powerful foreign policy strategies in Washington (the "Asia pivot") and Beijing.

Cross-Strait Ties and Public Opinion in the Wake of the Sunflower Student Movement

Liu Shih-chung

The Sunflower Student Movement that unfolded in Taiwan in March and April has drawn international attention and affected the development of cross-strait relations. The United States and China both acknowledge that the movement has resulted in complex implications for Taiwan-China relations. Cross-strait experts in Washington and Beijing are currently assessing its impact.

In early June, two months after the end of the movement, Taiwan Brain Trust conducted a public opinion survey, interviewing by phone randomly selected citizens. The survey returned 1,072 valid responses and had a margin of error of $\pm 3\%$ at a confidence level of 95 percent. The major findings are as follows:

1. Increase in self-identification with Taiwan:
In comparison with a similar survey conducted a year ago, the ratio of those identifying themselves as “Taiwanese” has reached a historic high of 60.5 percent and an even higher share of 72.9 percent for young adults in the 20-29 age bracket. Only 2.9 percent of the respondents identify themselves Chinese, while 32.8 percent say they are both Taiwanese and Chinese. If respondents are forced to choose between “I am Taiwanese” or “I am Chinese,” as many as 89.2 percent (92 percent among 20-29 year olds) identify themselves as Taiwanese compared to 6.7 percent who declare to be Chinese.
2. More people believe Taiwan is a sovereign, independent country:
As many as 61 percent support the above statement, 3.4 percentage points more than in the previous poll in March before the Sunflower Student Movement. Those, who do not believe that Taiwan is a sovereign, independent nation, account for 26.8 percent, a decrease of 4.7 percentage points from before the student protests.
3. Increasing support for independence:
Preference for independence has risen from 26.4 percent before the student movement to 28.3 percent after. Among young adults, preference for independence has risen more dramatically from 31.8 percent to 40.8 percent during the same period. In contrast, preference for the status quo remains almost unchanged at 55.8 percent. Support for unification with China has dropped from 10.4 percent before the student movement to 7.8 percent after. In this case, the ratio is the same for the 20-29 year olds.
4. Fewer people believe China is a friendly nation:
The ratio of those who believe that China friendly toward Taiwan has declined from 34.1 percent before the movement to 30.1 percent after, while the share of those who regard China as a hostile nation has risen only slightly from 50.1 percent to 50.4 percent during the same period.
5. Majority approves of the Sunflower Student Movement:
A total of 53.1 percent of respondents believe that the Sunflower student Movement had a positive influence on Taiwan’s future democratic development, whereas only 28.6

percent think its influence was negative.

6. As many as 60.2 percent of respondents still disapprove of President Ma Ying-jeou's mode of pushing forward the Cross-Strait Service and Trade Agreement on Trade in Services.
7. A vast majority of 85 percent of respondents do not understand the content of the government-proposed plan for "free economic pilot zones."
8. An overwhelming majority of 91.5 percent of respondents think the Taiwanese government should explain the content of the "Free Economic Pilot Zone" scheme to the public.
9. Dissatisfaction with the China policy of the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) is voiced by 58.4 percent compared to 22.3 percent who are satisfied. The major opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) does not fare much better with 48.7 percent of respondents voicing dissatisfaction with the DPP's China policy and just 19.1 percent voicing satisfaction.
10. Public support for President Ma Ying-jeou has slightly recovered from 19.3 percent directly after the Sunflower Student Movement to 21.6 percent in June. As many as 66.7 percent of respondents say they do not support Ma. However, for adults in the 20-49 age group that ratio rises to almost 70 percent.
11. The approval rate for the KMT stands at 21.4 percent compared to 63.6 percent who are dissatisfied with the ruling party. Among middle-aged citizens (age groups 30-39, 40-49) that figure even soars above 70 percent.
12. Public approval for the opposition DPP stands at 24.9 percent compared to 52.9 percent who are not satisfied with its performance.

Generally speaking, the latest Taiwan Brain Trust opinion poll shows that Taiwan's public affirms the positive influence of the Sunflower Student Movement for Taiwan. It is also obvious that the student movement has led to

an increase in the share of Taiwanese citizens, who identify themselves as Taiwanese, favor independence and perceive China as hostile toward Taiwan. Among young adults, these upward trends are particularly pronounced. These shifts in public opinion are also reflected in the fact that as many as 70 percent of 30-39 year olds are dissatisfied with the ruling KMT.

It is contradictory that the widespread dissatisfaction with the Ma administration and the KMT does not translate into strong support for the DPP. This shows that as a result of the student movement the DPP faces the danger of being marginalized. Obviously, the student movement has not only resulted in complex implications for cross-strait relations but has also had subtle effects on Taiwanese party politics. It is worth observing how the two major parties deal with these trends in the future. **BT**

Liu Shih-chung is
President of Taiwan Brain Trust