

**THE CHINA POLICY OF TAIWAN'S
DEMOCRATIC PROGRESSIVE PARTY
SINCE 2012: THE UNFINISHED LAST MILE**

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Executive Summary

1. After Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) lost the 2012 presidential election, three lines of China policy in the DPP, namely, radical, moderate, and pragmatic, have emerged.
2. The radical line is bluntly offensive to the Chinese government as it pursues Taiwan's de jure independence through establishing new national institutions, such as a new constitution and country name. The radical line has been marginalized in the DPP since 2012.
3. The moderate line, which has dominated the party since 2012, is strategically defensive as it does not proactively pursue de jure independence but focuses on defending Taiwan's de facto independence from the Chinese government.
4. The pragmatic line is controversial but promising as it is closest to the ruling Kuomintang's (KMT) open-door China policy. Frank Hsieh, the leader of this line, is the only party heavyweight in personal communication with high level Chinese officials.
5. Taiwanese nationalists and disadvantaged social groups are the core support base of the DPP. Post-2012 presidential election survey shows that they prefer the KMT to handle important national issues such as cross-strait relations, economic development, and Taiwan's international status.
6. The pressure from key DPP members and core support base to adjust its China policy is high, but changes have been slow. The three party heavyweights, Su Tseng-chang, Tsai Ing-wen and Frank Hsieh, want the China policy to serve both the party's and their own political interests.
7. They are trying to find a China policy that would be tolerated by the Chinese government and the fundamentalists of Taiwanese nationalism, and welcomed by Taiwanese society and the American government.