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According to the Chinese newspaper *Global Times*, organ of the Chinese “hawks” gathered around President Xi Jinping, authorities recently launched “tax inspections” at various locations of the Taiwanese company Foxconn.

The act is serious and is indicative of the dead-end road Xi and his followers have undertaken, given that it comes after their targeting of some of the private Chinese companies that symbolize the overwhelming economic development of the years 1990-2010, including Jack Ma's well-known Alibaba.

The founder and former president of Foxconn (who resigned to enter politics but retained a substantial shareholding) is Terry Gou of Taiwan, now a candidate in the presidential elections that will be held in Taiwan in January 2024. Gou, imitating Donald Trump's style, has claimed that he knows how to reach an agreement with Beijing that will “prevent Taiwan from becoming a new Ukraine”.

In the polls he is clearly behind Lai Ching-te, the independent Democratic Progressive Party candidate and current vice president of the Republic.

The *GT* quotes “some island” (i.e., the Taiwanese) media as speculating that the inspections could be a path chosen by the mainland (i.e. Beijing) to prevent Gou from running, given that his candidacy could divide the opposition and consequently favor Lai's victory.

In fact, the candidate Beijing views favorably is Hou Yu-ih, who is part of Kuomintang and currently second in the polls behind Lai.

It is likely that the explanation offered by “some island media” is correct, confirming the involuntary masochism of the current Chinese leadership.

“Foxconn” is the name by which Hon Hai Precision Industry is known in the West: it is one of the major electronic components companies in the world, manufacturing for giants such as Apple, Kindle and Nintendo, among others. According to *The Guardian*, it has twelve factories in China, employing 1.3 million workers. Its Longhua factory [in the opening images], near the metropolis of Shenzhen, is sadly famous for the numerous suicides of its employees. Because many of them took their own lives by throwing themselves from the windows of the enormous complex, the management had very large nets installed immediately under the windows on the first floor (there have been fourteen suicides of Foxconn workers confirmed since 2010). The Chinese Foxconn workers at Longhua sleep in the factory and are more or less treated like recruits in an army. They are also prohibited from contact with journalists.



In the meantime...

Terry Gou's giant company was among the first to transfer massive portions of its production to mainland China starting in 1998, in the wake of the excessive and uncritical enthusiasm sparked throughout the world - but above all in the USA, Japan and Taiwan - by the economic opening decided on by communist leader Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s and continued by his successors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. In other words, Foxconn was one of the leaders of China's economic growth and the process that led Beijing to become recognized as a world power second only to the USA. For obvious reasons, whatever mediation the tycoon has in mind cannot be unfavorable to China.



Terry Gou

If Xi Jinping can offer himself today as leader of the so-called “global South” against “excessive Western power”, it is thanks to his predecessors and to foreign companies such as Foxconn, and certainly not to the delusions of Mao Zedong and Lin Biao about the “countryside to surround the city” and other nonsense dear to communist propaganda.

Unfortunately, the Chinese leader seems to have lost his sense of reality. Whatever way the January elections go - though it is reasonable to expect a victory for Lai - the majority of Taiwanese are in favor of the island’s independence. A recent survey by the Taipei Times shows 48.9 percent of citizens in favor of independence, 26.9 percent in favor of maintaining the “status quo” and only 11.8 percent in favor of a “reunification” with China.

Taiwan has not actually been “part” of China for more than a century - from 1895 until today. Starting around 1600, the island was invaded several times and for various reasons by troops of the Ming and Qing dynasties and was even governed by Dutch colonialists for a few dozen years. In an article published three years ago by *The Diplomat*, [Gerry van der Wees](#) states that In the 1920s and 1930s, when Chiang Kai-shek (leader of the Kuomintang Nationalists) and Mao Zedong were fighting for supremacy in China, neither the Nationalists nor the Communists had

much interest in Taiwan. Their respective positions began to change in 1942-43, when, in the run-up to the Cairo Conference in November 1943, Chiang Kai-shek began arguing that Taiwan should be 'returned' to China. Not to be outdone, many communist leaders made similar statements.

The rest was done by the short-sightedness of the Western powers who embraced the concept of the existence of "one China" after the Second World War, in the mistaken belief that the civil war would be won by Chiang Kai-shek's troops. The position was in fact occupied by Taiwan until 1971, then by the People's Republic.

In short, the People's Republic of China's obstinate desire to annex Taiwan has tenuous historical bases and is opposed by the majority of the island's inhabitants.

If we add the presence of the US Seventh Fleet in the Pacific, considered the most powerful in the world, it seems absurd to think that Xi would consider an attack on the island. Of course, he would not be the first dictator to make a suicidal choice that would cost thousands of victims, both military and civilian.

Translation by [Paul Rosenberg](#)

Back to [YtaliGLOBAL](#)