

May 30, 1980

## Presbyterian leader tried

The General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, the Reverend Kao Chun-ming ( ), was arrested at his home in Taipei on Thursday evening, April 24, 1980, by personnel of the Taiwan Garrison Command (TGC). The TGC agents also confiscated 31 folders with sermons, 24 magazines, and six large envelopes filled with assorted Church documents.

The Taiwan military authorities have accused Dr. Kao of "harboring a fugitive." This "crime" was allegedly committed in December 1979/January 1980, when one of the leaders of Taiwan's democratic opposition movement, Shih Ming-teh ( ) was in hiding following the December 10 Kaohsiung incident, and the subsequent mass-arrest of Taiwanese opposition leaders. Dr. Kao's personal secretary, Shih Jui-yun ( ) and several other Church members were arrested in the beginning of January in connection with this case. They were held incommunicado at the headquarters of the Taiwan Garrison Command for more than four months. The fact that they were holding out against the coercive measures of the police authorities for so long before signing the customary "confession," which is usually the sole basis for indictments in these cases, was the subject of wide discussion and commendation in Taiwan.



**Rev. Kao Chun-ming**

Any person familiar with the situation in Taiwan knows that the real reason for Dr. Kao's arrest is the fact that he and the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan have been increasingly vocal in urging the Chinese Nationalist authorities to "...face reality and to take effective measures whereby Taiwan may become a new and independent country." (Declaration on Human Rights by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, August 16, 1977).

In this issue of our Newsletter you find a brief historical perspective on the position of Taiwan's Presbyterian Church, as well as some information on what occurred at the trial (held in military court on May 16, 1980) of Dr. Kao and nine others accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh.

### *Sentences Announced*

On June 5 1980 the verdict was announced: Reverend Kao was sentenced to seven years imprisonment, and the others received prison terms ranging from two to seven years.

## Lin Yi-hsiung on hunger strike

Following the March 1980 trial of the “Kao-hsiung Eight”, one of the eight, Provincial Assembly member Lin Yi-hsiung, had been released on parole because of the February 28 murders (in all probability by Government agents) of his mother and twin-daughters. In April he remained most of the time in his home area of Ilan, occasionally visiting Taipei. During this time he was continuously followed by secret police agents.

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1980 he decided to visit Taichung, the seat of the Provincial Assembly, to arrange some personal matters. On the way to Taichung he was arrested and accused of “violating the conditions of the parole.” He was then detained at the Taiwan Garrison Command headquarters near Taipei. On May 18, 1980 information leaked out, of the prison, indicating that right after his arrest on May 1<sup>st</sup>, Mr. Lin had gone on a hunger strike: he only drank two cups of milk a day, and his health condition was deteriorating rapidly. At the time of this writing (May 30) it was reported that Mr. Lin had started to take some solid food again, but that his health condition remained precarious.

### Letter from Prison

On February 25, 1980 Mr. Lin wrote a letter in prison, describing his treatment during interrogation, which lasted from December 13, 1979 until the end of January 1980. The letter, seven pages long, was recently smuggled out of Taiwan. The full texts of the letter (the original Chinese text or an English translation) are available from the Formosan Association for Human Rights (F.A.H.R) P.O. Box 2104, Leucadia, CA 92024.

Here you find a translation of the main points:

*“Six interrogators took turns questioning me. One of them was usually responsible for beating me. During the more than 40 days of interrogation, they asked me the same questions over and over again. Their assumption was that Formosa magazine had been set up with the intention to overthrow the government, and it was their (the interrogators’) job to force me, as a member of the staff of Formosa, to confess to that basic premise.*

*At the beginning of the interrogation I was not allowed to sleep at least for three full days. Then they beat me whenever they did not like an answer I gave them. The beating was so severe that finally I gave in and confessed to whatever they told me. After several days and nights of interrogation I was allowed to sleep for a few hours, but then they started beating me again because I could not answer their questions. They wanted me to confess to things that had never occurred.*

*Particularly during the first ten days they beat me everywhere: on the chest, the back, stomach and head. They also kicked my legs and abdomen. They put burning cigarettes in my face, and threatened to take me to the basement for even more severe torture. After about ten days of this they prepared a statement for me to sign: it said that I made a speech at the Kaohsiung rally, and that in that speech I incited the crowd. This was a big joke: I did not make any speech at Kaohsiung and the tape recordings can prove that.*

*I can remember the following threats: (1) If you don't confess, then we will continue to beat you. If we beat you to death, then we will say you committed suicide. (2) If you don't confess we will pull out all your teeth. (3) If you do not cooperate we will label you a communist.*

*I was alone in a state of horror and hopelessness. I could not see my family nor my friends. I was completely isolated from the outside world. I was not allowed to write or receive letters, nor was I allowed to listen to the radio or read newspapers. I was exasperated and finally just signed the statements they had drafted. I completely gave up, and only hoped that they would torture me less."*

## Chronology

In order to give you an overview of the most important recent events, we present here a chronology of events of April and May 1980:

- April 11 - Trial of Hung Chih-liang, prosecution witness against opposition leader Huang Hsin-chieh. No foreign observers or press were allowed in the military court room due to "lack of space", but pictures in Taiwan's domestic press showed several rows of empty seats.
- April 16-18 - First part of the civil court trial of 33 opposition members, accused of involvement in the Kaohsiung incident.
- April 18 - Verdict of the Kaohsiung Eight handed down. Shih Ming-teh received a life sentence, Huang Hsin-chieh 14 years, and the others 12 years imprisonment.
- April 24 - Arrest of Dr. Kao Chun-ming. Indictment of Dr. Kao and nine other persons accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh.
- April 28 - Appeal of the Kaohsiung Eight filed.
- May 1 - Rearrest of Lin Yi-hsiung.
- May 8-9 - Pre-trial hearings of persons accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh.
- May 14-15 - Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Oversight hearings on the implementation of the Taiwan Relations Act.
- May 16 - Trial of Reverend Kao Chun-ming and other persons accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh.
- May 20 - Mr. David Dean, Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, left for Taiwan for consultations.
- May 21 - Professor J. Bruce Jacobs allowed to leave Taiwan.
- May 21-24 - Trial of 33 opposition members resumed. Several defendants testified that they were beaten and kicked by police agents when under interrogation.
- May 24 - Senator Kennedy made major statement on Taiwan at Taiwanese-American function in Los Angeles.
- May 31 - Appeal of the Kaohsiung Eight rejected by military court.

## The Kaohsiung Eight

The trial of the eight major opposition leaders in Taiwan (March 18-28, for a summary description see our Newsletter #10, April 4, 1980) received worldwide attention. On April 18 they were sentenced to prison terms ranging from twelve years to life imprisonment, On April 28 an appeal was filed on behalf of the eight by their lawyers. The main points of the appeal are presented below.

On May 31, 1980 the Taiwan Garrison Command announced in Taipei that a high military court had rejected the appeal and upheld their sentences. At the end of April and the beginning of May Taiwan government authorities had assured U.S. government officials and concerned members of the U.S. Congress that “certainly” the sentences would be reduced upon appeal. These assurances have now proven to be empty promises. The families of the eight reacted to this final verdict with a statement, which you also find reprinted below.

### The Appeal

What follows is a translation of the main points of the appeal. A word by word translation would run into several pages:

1. According to the Constitution of the Republic of China a military court may only try military personnel on active duty. The defendants were civilians and should thus not have been tried in a military court.
2. The martial law, instituted in 1949, was not approved by the Legislative Yuan, and was not signed by the President of the country. The martial law is thus itself a violation of the Constitution of the Republic of China.
3. Terms such as “power-seizure plan”, used by the prosecution to implicate the defendants, were never used by the defendants themselves, but were invented by the interrogators during three three months-long interrogation.
4. The prosecutor and interrogators consistently distorted the meaning of what the defendants had said earlier. E.g. Opposition leader Huang Hsin-chieh had said: “*On December 25th 1978, I appointed a five-member committee to be in charge of the activities of the Non-party Coalition.*” In the verdict this became “*I appointed a five-member committee to work out a plan for the independence of Taiwan.*”
5. During the trial the military court failed to admit all evidence relevant to the case. E.g. seven reels of tape recordings of the Kaohsiung rally, which - according to the prosecution - proved that the defendants had shouted “charge” and “beat the military and civilian police”, were **not played** at any time during the trial.
6. The military court failed to investigate the coercive methods used by the interrogators to get the defendants to confess, The coercion included denial of sleep, psychological torture, physical beatings, and denial of food.
7. The main thrust of the defendants’ activities (publication of a magazine and a rally to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) was the dissemination of information about democracy and human rights. To charge and convict the defendants of “sedition” and “attempting to overthrow the government” is a grave violation of the defendants’ basic human rights of free speech and freedom of assembly.

## Statement by the Families

*“We the families of the defendants, are convinced that our beloved ones are people who are committed to democracy and freedom for the people of Taiwan, and who have fought persistently for peaceful reforms. This verdict is unacceptable to us, since it is based on manufactured evidence and on confessions which did not represent the defendants’ positions, but which were created out of thin air.*

*This verdict is a challenge to all people with a sense of justice and righteousness. We are deeply hurt, but we are hopeful, because we are convinced that there is a democratic future for Taiwan. We strongly believe that the tide of democracy cannot be stopped. The democratic movement will only become stronger in struggle. For the cause of democracy, freedom, and equality in Taiwan we are willing to go to prison with our beloved ones.”*

The statement was signed by the wives of Huang Hsin-chieh, Lin Yi-hsiung, Yao Chia-wen, Chang Chun-hung, Lin Hung-hsuan, and by the brothers of Shih Ming-teh and Ch’en Chu. Shih- Ming-teh’s wife Linda also concurred with the statement.

## The Kaohsiung 33

On April 16, 1980 the trial of 33 opposition members, whose cases had been sent to civil court, started in the Taipei District Court. The main accusation against virtually all of them was that *“They wore a red cloth belt bearing their name and a tri-colored sash, and carried a torch in the march...”* According to the indictment they also shouted “charge”, and encouraged the people attending the December 10 Human Rights Day celebration to *“beat the military and civilian policemen.”* The prosecution, however, refused to play tape recordings made during the evening of December 10, which — according to the prosecution — contained the “evidence” that the defendants had shouted this.

The indictments against two of the 33, Chou P’ing-teh ( ), a local judge in Kaohsiung and a candidate for the Provincial Assembly (1977) and for the Legislative Yuan (1973), and Yang Ch’ing-ch’u ( ), well-know writer and also a candidate for the Legislative Yuan (1978), contained the following fascinating “evidence”: *“The fact that he shouted ‘beat the military and civilian policemen to death’ was corroborated by... photos taken at the scene.”*

The art of lip-reading from *still* photos is seemingly highly developed in Taiwan.

The trial of the 33 was discontinued after three days for unexplained reasons. It was resumed on May 21, and ended on May 24, 1980. As this trial proceeded it became increasingly apparent that most of the defendants had undergone mistreatment while under interrogation: Chou P’ing-teh said that the interrogators of the Investigation Bureau, Ministry of Justice (IBMJ) beat him many times on the head and the mouth. He was also given salt water to drink. Other defendants also indicated they had been kicked and beaten. One defendant brought into the courtroom a bloodied piece of clothing, which he said he was wearing during the interrogation.

On June 2, 1980, the verdicts against the 33 were announced. Twenty two opposition members were sentenced to six years. Ten others received lesser prison sentences.

# The Church under the Cross

## *Dr. Kao's Trial*

The trial of Dr. Kao Chun-ming and nine others accused of harboring opposition leader Shih Ming-teh took place on May 16, 1980, in a military court in Taipei. In the morning session, which began at 8:30 and ended at 12:00 noon, testimony was heard from Mr. Lin Shu-chih ( ) a businessman in Taipei, Mr. Chao Chen erh ( ) a graduate of Tainan Theological College, Wu Wen ( ) a minister from southern Taiwan, Ms. Lin Wen-chen ( ), principal of the Calvin Theological College for Women and a graduate of the Julliard School of Music in New York, and from Dr. Kao Chun-ming himself.

Dr. Kao testified that he had been aware of the fact that members of the Presbyterian Church were involved in helping Shih Ming-teh, but he said that he considered this right out of a Christian sense of love and mercy. He pointed out that he did not consider harboring Shih Ming-teh himself, only because his own house was under police surveillance for 24 hours a day. In response to a question about why he did not turn Shih Ming-teh in, when he discovered that Shih was wanted on suspicion of "plotting rebellion", Dr. Kao answered that Shih had not used or advocated violence.

Kao said that the violence at the Kaohsiung incident had not been caused by the opposition members. He said that he had always hoped that the opposition leaders would be given a civilian trial. Furthermore, he mentioned that as a Christian it was difficult for him to refuse anyone who came to him for help. He said that once the government had put a price on Shih's head, turning him in would have been similar to Judas' betrayal of Jesus. He said that he would rather sacrifice himself than sell out Shih Ming-teh.

On June 5, 1980, Dr. Kao was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. The other nine persons were sentenced to prison terms ranging from two to seven years.

## *A Brief Church History*

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan has existed for more than 100 years. It is deeply rooted in the native Taiwanese population, and can be considered strongly Biblical and evangelistic. It has been particularly clear that its ultimate allegiance to its Christian principles prevented it from submitting its life and program to political authorities, Nevertheless it was forced in 1970 by the Nationalist Chinese government to leave the World Council- of Churches.

Developments since 1970 have forced the Church to become increasingly vocal, particularly on the issues of the future status of the island and human rights. Prior to Mr. Nixon's visit to China, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church issued a "**Public Statement on our National Destiny**" (December 30, 1971). Before Mr. Ford's trip to China, the Church issued "**Our Appeal**" (November 18, 1975) in which it urged the Taipei government to "promote democracy and the rule of law and to establish a society of justice and equality." Before Mr. Cyrus Vance's trip to China in mid 1977, the General Assembly sent a "**Declaration on Human Rights by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan**" (August 16, 1977) to President Carter. In this declaration the Church insisted that " *...the future of Taiwan shall be determined by the 17 million people who live there.*"

Within the context of the confessions of faith in Christ, these declarations thus called for:

1. Self-determination for the people of Taiwan.
2. Domestic political reform in order to attain a democratic society with true equality, freedom, and justice.
3. Recognition by the Chinese Nationalist authorities of the necessity to face reality and to take effective measures whereby Taiwan may become a new and independent country.
4. Freedom from interference in Church' affairs by the governing authorities.

Because of these continuing public affirmations of Biblical principles as they applied to the contemporary situation in Taiwan, the governing authorities sought ways to intimidate the Presbyterian Church leaders, and to interrupt the functioning of the Church: In 1975 the government confiscated 2,200 Bibles printed in the Taiwanese language. Since 1977 a number of issues of the **Taiwan Presbyterian Weekly** disappeared in the mail. In the summer of 1979 the government introduced a law on "Churches, Synagogues, and Temples" in the Legislative Yuan, which would have given the government the power to disband a religious group, if they were not in compliance with Kuomintang party policies.

The arrest of Dr. Kao is thus only the latest chapter in a long series of attempts by the Kuomintang to silence the Presbyterian Church, and to restrict its activities. We urge our readers to bring pressure to bear upon the Nationalist Chinese authorities, either directly or through members of the U.S. Congress; request the release of Dr. Kao and a stop to the government's persecution of the Church.

# Kaohsiung Revisited

Most news reports and other discussions of the Kaohsiung incident have focused on the confrontations between police and rally participants. We believe, however, that it is necessary to point out that the planned events of the evening of December 10, 1979 consisted of a peaceful march, and a meeting at which opposition leaders gave speeches. Recently we received from Taiwan several pictures taken during these events. We believe that these pictures show that the organizers of the Human Rights Day celebration intended to have a peaceful rally, and that the violence occurred when military troops and police moved in on the rally participants with teargas, leaving them no way out of the police encirclement.



Participants lining up for the parade.



Banner reads: "International Human Rights Day meeting of the democratic opposition."



Human Rights Action Center banner.



Crowd listening to opposition leader Huang Hsin-chieh, who was standing on back of a truck.



Police surrounding the rally. Poster reads: "We want general elections."



"Defenseless" military police.



## U. S. Reactions

The heavy sentences meted out to the eight opposition leaders, and the arrest of Dr. Kao, evoked a variety of reactions in the United States. The State Department issued a rather mild statement on April 22. However, even this mild statement caused a major uproar in Taiwan, where the KMT orchestrated a wide variety of protests against this "interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of China." We reprint the State Department here:

*"We are very concerned about the situation on Taiwan which grew out of the Kaohsiung incident of December 10, 1979, and which resulted in the trial and conviction of eight persons on charges of sedition.*

*We hope that it does not signal an interruption in the process of political liberalization which had made progress on Taiwan in recent years. Our primary interest is in seeing a resolution of the situation in a way which contributes to internal stability and human rights on the island.*

*We understand that all of the defendants will have the opportunity to appeal the sentences. We hope that the Taiwan authorities will consider "these appeals in a spirit which will be consistent with the progress made in human rights on Taiwan in the recent past."*

Basically the same thing was said a few weeks later by Charles B. Salmon, Jr., the Director of the Office of Human Rights at State. At a National Foreign Policy Conference in Seattle, WA on May 10th 1980, Mr. Salmon stated:

*"There is real disappointment in the U.S. Government about the trend of events in Taiwan. What seems to be going on represents to us a retrogression. Over the long term these (actions by the Taiwan authorities) cannot produce the kind of stability on Taiwan that the people of Taiwan want.*

*There is also, I might note, a growing Congressional concern and disappointment over the developments in Taiwan. There is specific human rights language in the Taiwan Relations Act, and it seems to us that this kind of growing disenchantment among significant numbers of members of Congress is something that would have to be taken into account (by the authorities in Taiwan)."*

Congressional concern was expressed by Senator Frank Church of Idaho, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who entered a statement by Senator Edward M. Kennedy into the Congressional Record; and by Congressman Fortney H. Stark (D-CA), who entered a letter by the National Council of Churches addresses to President Chiang Ching-kuo into the Congressional Record:

April 30, 1980

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

S 4417

**DISSIDENT TRIALS IN TAIWAN**

● Mr. CHURCH. Mr. President, I submit for the RECORD, a statement by Senator KENNEDY concerning trials of dissidents in Taiwan. Senator KENNEDY asked that I insert this statement of concern in his absence.

Mr. President, I wish to associate myself with his remarks. While I have been a firm defender of Taiwan's security, I hope that the harsh sentences meted out in this instance will be reduced in the name of compassion and in the interest of free political expression.

The statement follows:

STATEMENT BY SENATOR KENNEDY  
I am deeply concerned by the recent sentencing of eight Taiwanese political dissidents to lengthy prison terms.

I had been encouraged by reports from observers of the trials, who informed me that, even though coerced confessions were admitted as evidence, the defendants were allowed to speak freely in their defense. The handling of the trials, and the compassionate temporary release of Lin Yi-hsiung following the brutal murder of his mother and two of his daughters, gave renewed hope for continued political liberalization in Taiwan.

Although the death penalty was not im-

posed, the severity of the sentences—life for Shih Ming-teh, 14 years for Huang Hsin-chieh, and 12 years for each of the other six, including people who had received advanced legal and professional degrees from American graduate schools—will impede any sense of movement toward national reconciliation and moderation.

I am also greatly disturbed by today's indictment on charges of sedition of the Reverend C. M. Kao, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and a well-known believer in democracy and human rights. Reverend Kao has been a consistent advocate of peaceful political change for the island, and friends of Taiwan will simply not

understand a judgment against this respected church leader.

I sincerely hope that new positive steps can be taken and that the appeals process will allow for reduced sentences and renewed movement toward political liberalization, which had been halted by the repressive crackdown in the wake of the "Kaohsiung incident." I also hope that the indictment of Reverend Kao will be reconsidered. As a staunch supporter of the security of Taiwan, I believe it is important that such progress can be made for the Taiwanese people; otherwise, discontent and political tension in Taiwan may increase. ●

**ARREST OF REV. CHUN MING  
KAO IN TAIWAN**

**HON. FORTNEY H. (PETE) STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 6, 1980

● Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I join the many Americans protesting the arrest of Rev. Chun Ming Kao, general secretary of the Presbyterian Church in

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—Extensions of Remarks May 6, 1980**

Taiwan. As Senator Kennedy stated April 30, "Friends of Taiwan will simply not understand a judgment against this respected church leader."

Mr. Speaker, I have heard from the director for East Asia, National Council of Churches on this grave development in Taiwan. Mr. Edwin Luidens sent me a copy of the following message sent to President Chiang Ching Kuo by Claire Randall, general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.:

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
OF CHRIST IN U.S.A.

President CHIANG CHING KUO,  
Office of President,  
Republic of China.

The National Council of Churches in the United States of America is urged by its member denominations to express clearly their sorrow that your government escalated pressure on the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan by arresting the Reverend Chun Ming Kao. Coerced confessions and public

allegations against him will be totally ineffective in breaking down the confidence and respect of the international Christian community in Reverend Kao. His commitment to the welfare of all the people of Taiwan and his insistence on non-violent democratic processes in church and government and his support for your authority under the constitution are well known worldwide. We urge you to order your military and police authorities not to use coercive measures. We urge you to assure yourself that Reverend Kao is given due process under law during interrogation. We urge you to recognize that it is important for a secure and creative future of your country to have the active support and cooperative participation of persons like Reverend Kao and that he should therefore be released and restored to his duly elected position of leadership in the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan at the earliest possible time. Because of our profound concern we would appreciate a reply as to how your government is dealing with these matters.

WILLIAM HOWARD,  
President.

CLAIRE RANDALL,  
General Secretary. ●

On May 24, 1980 Senator Kennedy again expressed his concern about the developments in Taiwan. In an address to a gathering of the Taiwanese Association of America in Los Angeles the Senator stated:

*"We must take individual liberty and the rule of law into account with all governments – whether allies or adversaries. In the hot pursuit of commercial profits and military installations, we cannot afford to ignore chilling practices that promote repression and contempt for human freedom. To do so, as we learned in Iran, is to build our alliances — and indeed our own security — on the quicksand of future instability and conflagration.*

*I share with all of you a special concern for the people of Taiwan. We know that public support has been growing for greater progress toward democracy and human rights. But that hopeful trend toward liberalization was cut short by the Kaohsiung incident last December 10th. The subsequent repressive crackdown by the government against the opposition is a serious setback to the hopes of the people of Taiwan – hopes that we in this country also share – for political freedom on the island.*

*It is true that the open conduct of the dissent trials was an encouraging sign. But the harsh sentences handed down proved the promise to be false. The lesson of these events is clear. Discontent in Taiwan will not disappear until all citizens of the island are assured full protection of their basic human rights and a fair voice in their government.*

*Our democratic ideals and our security interests make it essential for the United States to use its influence in Taiwan to seek improvements in human rights. Indeed, our obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act require us to help preserve and enhance "the human rights of all the people in Taiwan."*

*Therefore I call upon the authorities in Taiwan to release all political prisoners convicted in the Kaohsiung incident or arrested subsequently. I join with Church leaders in this country and around the world in calling for the release of the courageous Presbyterian leader, Reverend C.M. Kao. I also urge that the sentences of political prisoners detained prior to December 10th be reviewed and reduced.*

*Finally, I call for all citizens of Taiwan to be represented fully and fairly in the central government, including legislative bodies. The freedom of each citizen should be guaranteed. No political change should take place without the participation and consent of a majority of the people."*

These remarks by Senator Edward M. Kennedy have not been paralleled yet by any other major political figure in the U.S. Republican candidate Ronald Reagan did make a statement with regard to the international status of Taiwan; in our NEWSBRIEFS we quote from this statement. Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter has not made a statement yet. When he does, we will immediately reprint it in our Newsletter.

The strongest reaction yet to the sentencing of the Kaohsiung Eight came from **The Chicago Tribune**, which expressed its opinion in an editorial on April 28, 1980. We reprint the editorial in full:

## Repression in Taiwan

Taiwanese authorities have further tarnished their reputation and further isolated their troubled island by imposing stiff prison sentences on eight defendants in a controversial sedition trial that ended last week. The sentences, ranging from 12 years to life in prison, will have the effect of suppressing open discussion of Taiwan's future at a critical juncture in its development. Oppositionists will be silenced or radicalized at home, and sympathy for Taiwan in the free world will be diminished.

It could have been worse, of course. The prosecutors had demanded the death penalty, which is the maximum prescribed for sedition in Taiwan. Still, the long prison sentences are shocking. The defendants' "sedition" had consisted mainly of advocating representative democracy and doing away with the Kuomintang leadership's fictitious claim to be the legitimate government of the Chinese mainland.

Such savage suppression of apparently sensible ideas is understandable politically, if not morally. The fiction of Nationalist Chinese sovereignty over all of China is what makes it possible for the mainland minority — about two million of Taiwan's total population of 17 million — to retain its grip on political power. The highest legislative bodies are composed of representatives of the various provinces of China. Taiwan itself — as one of those provinces — has only minority representation. The other seats are held mostly by old men who originally were elected in 1948 before the Nationalists were driven from the mainland. Obviously, democratic reform threatens the mainlanders' political power.

It is that grubby political reality — not some principle of "freedom" versus "communism" or belief in the myth of eventual reconquest of the mainland — that led to the trial and sentencing of the dissidents.

But if such repression can preserve the Kuomintang's power in the short run, it may cost the island dearly in the long run. The Communists in Peking, in common with the Nationalists in Taipei, maintain that Taiwan is a legitimate part of China and that it must "return to the bosom of the motherland." In another decade or so Peking may well possess the military power to bring about that "reunification." If, at that time, the rest of the world accepts diplomatically the one-China doctrine, there will be no legal justification for protecting the Taiwanese from a mainland attack.

But a genuinely democratic and independent Taiwan could campaign for international recognition as a legally separate entity entitled to diplomatic recognition and the protection of international law. It could negotiate defense treaties and generate international political sympathy that would make armed attack by the mainland more unlikely.

In such an arrangement neither the Kuomintang — nor the Chinese Communists — would be compelled to give up forever the idea of reunification. After all, there is a perfectly sound precedent: East and West Germany have solved the problem quite neatly. Given time, realism, and a genuine commitment to freedom, Taiwan's leaders could do the same.

Chicago Tribune

FOUNDED June 16, 1847

## Newsbriefs

The following are brief points of information and updates on issues discussed in our earlier Newsletters.

**1. Health Condition of Prisoners Deteriorating.** As this Newsletter was going to press, we received word that the health condition of several of the detained opposition leaders has deteriorated significantly during the past few weeks. In particular Lin Yi-hsiung, Shih Ming-teh, Chang Ch'un-hung, Yao Chia-wen, and Lin Hung-hsuan are reportedly in poor health.

Lin Yi-hsiung is of course severely weakened due to his hunger strike. Shih Ming-teh has apparently not received the required medication for his back (his spinal column was so severely damaged during interrogation by police in 1962, that he could not walk for two years). Shih now suffers from bad back aches, and one leg has turned numb. Chang Chun-hung has had high blood pressure for some time, but this condition has now worsened during his confinement. Yao Chia-wen also seemed very weak when family members visited him recently. He reportedly had a number of red spots on his face. Finally, Lin Hung-hsuan has apparently been so weakened during his confinement of the past months, that during a recent family visit he had so little strength, that he could not stand for more than two or three minutes. We did not receive any reports on the health condition of other detained opposition members.

We urge our readers to write to U.S. and Taiwan government officials, expressing concern about the health of these opposition leaders, and requesting medical attention for them.

**2. Conditions in Prison.** The opposition leaders are held under rather deplorable conditions: each is confined to a small cell with three other persons (at least one of whom is usually a secret police spy). The "toilet" is just a hole in the ground with no running water. They are "aired" only three times a week (20 minutes each time), and are allowed to wash only once a week. The weekly family visits officially last half an hour, but the time is often cut short by the guards. It is also reported that the opposition leaders are not allowed access to any reading materials.

**3. Reagan Speaks Out.** Presidential candidate Ronald Reagan recently indicated during a campaign swing through Michigan that if he becomes President, he will support re-establishment of "official relations" with Taiwan. Asked if he meant that he would institute a "two China" policy, Reagan answered that that would be something very much worth exploring. Pressed if he would extend official U.S. recognition should Taiwan declare its separate independence, Reagan responded: "Yes, Just like a lot of countries recognized the 13 colonies when they became the United States." (Los Angeles Times, May 19, 1980, p. 18).

**4. Bruce Jacobs Released.** Professor J. Bruce Jacobs, the American researcher who was detained in Taiwan following the murders of the mother and twin-daughters of detained opposition leader Lin Yi-hsiung (see "the Bruce Jacobs story", ICDHRT Newsletter # 10, April 4, 1980) was allowed to leave Taiwan on May 27, 1980. There were, however, some unsubtle conditions attached to his release: the May 22 issue of the KMT's Central Daily News ( ) reported that a Junior High school teacher, Ch'en Yun-tuan ( ) will be Dr. Jacobs' "guarantor". Ms. Ch'en will thus be in a sense a hostage: if Dr. Jacobs says anything the KMT doesn't like, then the KMT can take it out on her.

**5. Hearings in the U.S. House of Representatives.** The Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee will hold oversight hearings on the Taiwan Relations Act on June 11 and 17, 1980. Undoubtedly the developments in Taiwan since the Kaohsiung incident, and in particular the arrest and mistreatment of opposition and church members, will be discussed extensively during these hearings. The Taiwan authorities, fearing increasing U.S. pressure in favor of liberalization and democratization, are orchestrating a major letter-writing campaign to members of the Subcommittee. In pro-KMT newspapers such as the New York-based **World Journal** ( ) and the Taiwan-based **United Daily News**. ( ) the readers are exhorted to write to members of the Subcommittee and sign praise to the economic development of Taiwan and vilify the detained members of Taiwan's democratic opposition. We hope that there is a sufficient salt supply in Washington, DC, so the members of Congress may take each one of these letters with a grain of salt.

**6. KMT bans pro-KMT magazines.** The Nationalist Chinese authorities recently found it even necessary to ban two magazines, which are generally considered to be favorable to the government. The magazines were apparently banned because they published too much verbatim information on the recent trials of opposition leaders. The trials turned into a major forum for discussion of the future status of the island — a discussion which the KMT wants to see restricted to its own smoky backrooms. The official reasons given for the banning of the **Ta Shih Tai** ( , **Great Times**), and the **Chung-kuo pao tao** ( , **China Report**) were that they “published untrue stories about current politics, and attempted to confuse the people's understanding of the government,”

**7. Editor/Writer Li Ch'ing-jung sentenced.** Mr. Li (52), a Chinese mainlander, is a well-known reporter and writer in Taiwan. He received a degree in history from National Taiwan University in 1956. He was a reporter for the **China Times** from 1960 until 1973, when he lost his job after he wrote a series of articles containing criticism of corruption in the government. Early 1979 he became editor-in-chief of **Fu Pao Chih Sheng** ( ). In October 1979 he was arrested briefly (see our Newsletter #5, October 4, 1979).

On December 26, 1979 he was arrested again. For more than a week his wife was not able to learn from police authorities where he was held. On January 3rd 1980 she learned that he was being held at the local Taiwan Garrison Command office. When she went there to try to see him, she was rudely pushed out the door. Mr. Li was tried on charges of “doing propaganda for the communists” in an article he wrote in the Spring issue of **Fu Pao Chih Sheng**. In the article Mr. Li had described the habit, prevalent in the PRC; of “admitting mistakes.” The prosecutor charged that Mr. Li had implied that the Nationalist authorities in Taiwan do not admit their mistakes. On May 16 1980, Mr. Li was sentenced to five years imprisonment. We note that it took the authorities a rather long time (more than half a year) to decide whether Mr. Li's writings constituted “propaganda.”

The International Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Taiwan (ICDHRT) campaigns for the release of political prisoners in Taiwan, and supports the establishment of a free and democratic political system on the island. Please support our activities in pursuit of these objectives with your contributions.

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	Other countries (airmail)	\$ 18.- / year
Contributor		\$ 25.-
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1. 国民党逮捕党外人士之後，緊接的一個目標便是長老教會人士。它的方法與對付党外人士的手段一樣一樣，即是一面溝通，一面逮捕。從一月底開始，國民黨中央政策會副秘書長閔中，政大教授黃越欽，自南而北，與長老教會人士「進行溝通」（據高雄發行的五月二十七日「台灣時報」）；另一方面則秘密逮捕高俊明牧師的周圍人士，包括他的秘書施瑞雲女士。果然如海內外台灣人所預期的，四月十四日，高俊明牧師便遭逮捕，被控罪名是「窩藏叛亂犯」。事實上，這是國民黨有計劃的逮捕。四月十八日首先宣佈施明德是「叛亂犯」，緊接著四月二十四日便逮捕高牧師，罪名立即成立。高牧師在五月十六日的「公開審判」中，表示党外人士不是暴動份子，他原意承擔所有「窩藏案」的責任，他的言詞不卑不亢，充滿了愛心。請大家一起來關心國民黨給他的審判。
2. 林義雄於五月一日再度被捕入獄，理由是「違反保釋的活動限制」。林義雄尚未辯完喪事，即被迫入獄。為抗議這種人權迫害，林義雄在獄中絕食十餘天。現在他開始吃一些稀飯，但身體仍很衰弱。他在二月二十五日（即二月二十八日謀殺案前三天）在獄中撰寫了備忘錄，目前已在島內外廣泛流傳。他所受的刑求的角辱，可自備忘錄看出。讀者有意閱讀這份紀錄，請逕寄「台灣人權協會」索閱，信箱號碼如下：「F.A.H.R., P.O. BOX 2104, LEUCADIA, CA 92024」。
3. 八位党外人士聲請覆判，已遭拒絕。七位党外人士的家屬於五月卅一日發表聯合聲明：「我們對於這樣的判決固然極為痛心，萬分失望，但我們對於台灣的民主前途能有所期待，我們相信民主潮流不可阻擋，民主運動將愈挫愈勇。身為被告的家屬，我們願意和我們的家人為台灣的民主自由和平等共同承擔這種苦難，一同坐監，一同坐牢。」施明德的美籍太太艾琳達，未克一同簽名，但她完全支持這項聲明。
4. 六月二日，三十三位党外人士已被宣判徒刑，其中二十二位得到六年徒刑，其他十一位則五年以下不等。在這次「公開審判」中，幾乎每位都表示在分獄中被刑求。值得注意者，在同平德的楊秀璽的起訴書中，有這一段述詞：「從照片中可以看出他（同）在喊：『打死憲兵！打死警察！』」
5. 親國民黨的兩份刊物「大時代」與「中國報導」已遭禁。
6. 本會係以拯救台灣政治犯，關心台灣人權為目的的組織。我們需要你的捐助支持。請你踴躍支持我們的工作。如蒙捐助，請利用本刊信箱，並參閱第十二頁。謝忱。本會為非營利組織，捐助金額可申報減稅。

## Action.

1. Appeals on behalf of Dr. Kao. We urge our readers to send expressions of deep concern about the arrest of this prominent Church leader and of other members of the Presbyterian Church to members of Congress and to U.S. and Taiwan government officials (addresses listed below).

Also send letters of personal comfort and support to Mrs. Ruth C.M. Kao, 24 Alley 14, Lane 208, Zuei An St., Taipei, Taiwan.

2. Health Condition of Prisoners. You are urgently requested to send mailgrams and letters to the Taiwan officials listed below, expressing your deep concern about the health condition of Lin Yi-hsiung, Shih Ming-teh, Chang Chün-hung, Yao Chia-wen, and Lin Hung-hsüan. Please request the officials to ensure that these opposition leaders receive immediate attention in a hospital. This is urgent, please act quickly.

Addresses: Senator.....	Congressman.....
Senate Office Building	House Office Building
Washington, DC 20510	Washington, DC 20515
American Institute in Taiwan	Department of State
attn. Mr. David Dean	Human Rights Affairs
P.O. Box 1612	attn. Patricia Derian
Washington, DC 20013	Washington, DC 20520
President Chiang Ching-kuo	CCNAA
Chieh Shou Hall	attn. Konsin Shah
Chungking South Road	5161 River Road, NW
Taipei TAIWAN	Washington, DC 20016

3. Birthday Card Campaign. Since several of the detained opposition leaders have their birthday coming up, we believe that it is appropriate that they receive a large number of birthday cards from the United States and Canada. Ask your friends and neighbours to send a card (belated is OK) to :

Person	Birthdate
Lü Hsiu-lien	June 7, 1944
Chen Chü	June 10, 1950
Yao Chia-wen	June 15, 1938
Huang Hsin-chieh	August 20, 1928
Lin Yi-hsiung	August 24, 1941
Lin Hung-hsüan	September 11, 1942

Address: c/o Taiwan Garrison Command, Military Law Section  
Fu Hsing Road, Hsintien, Taipei County, TAIWAN



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