

September 8, 1980

## Shih Ming-teh and Linda on hunger strike



**Shih Ming-teh**

Taiwanese opposition leader Shih Ming-teh (39) began a hunger strike on September 1, 1980 on Green Island, where he is serving a life sentence. Mr. Shih went on hunger strike in protest against the inhuman conditions under which he is being held. Mr. Shih's wife Linda Arrigo — an American citizen — started her hunger strike at noon on September 2, 1980 in front of Republican Candidate Ronald Reagan's campaign headquarters in Los Angeles. She termed her action an act of solidarity with her husband and an act of protest against Reagan's insensitivity to human rights violations in Taiwan. Ms. Arrigo said that Mr. Reagan



**Linda Arrigo**

has been supportive of the repressive Nationalist Chinese regime on the island, and has failed to speak out for freedom and democracy for the native Taiwanese, who constitute 85 per cent of the island's population.

On July 24, 1980 Mr. Shih was moved from the detention center of the Taiwan Garrison Command (TGC - one of Taiwan's feared secret police agencies) near Taipei to Green Island — off the southeast coast of Taiwan. His relatives were not told until three weeks later that he had been moved. To the numerous requests for information on his whereabouts, the authorities gave a bland "we don't know."

Finally, in the middle of August the relatives were informed that Mr. Shih had been moved to Green Island. On August 18 one brother was allowed to visit him. He found that Mr. Shih was being held in solitary confinement, and that he was not allowed to read, receive mail, or write letters. Furthermore he was not receiving medical attention for his back, which was severely injured during interrogation by police in 1962.

On September 1<sup>st</sup> 1980, the authorities granted permission for another family visit. The visiting brother found that Mr. Shih had started a hunger strike in protest against the conditions under which he is being held.

The Taiwanese community in the United States is urging U.S. Government officials and members of congress to express concern about Mr. Shih's condition to the Taiwan authorities.

## Mrs. Yao Chia-wen Injured

During the past several months the wives and other close relatives of the detained opposition leaders have met every Tuesday to comfort and strengthen each other, to exchange information, and to prepare for the weekly visit to their imprisoned husband/brother/or sister on Wednesday morning.

On August 19, 1980 the meeting was to be held at the house of opposition leader Huang Hsin-chieh. The wife of opposition leader Chang Chun-hung was on her way to this meeting together with her two children, and with the wives of opposition leader Yao Chia-wen and Reverend Kao Chun-ming, when the car she was driving was rear-ended by a truck.

The accident occurred on the intersection of Sung Chiang road and Min Tsu road, near Taipei's old International Airport. Mrs. Chang had just turned left when a truck, coming from the opposite direction, ran through a red light and smashed into the back of Mrs. Chang's car. Mrs. Yao suffered one cracked rib. The other occupants suffered minor injuries.

At this time there is no evidence that this was an intentional accident, such as the "accident" at the end of June 1980, when Mrs. Chang was knocked over by a motorcycle while she was standing on the sidewalk.

## Prison Report

At the end of July or the beginning of August, 1980 several of the major opposition leaders were transferred from the Taiwan Garrison Command (TGC) detention center to the TGC jail. However, the physical condition of most of them did not improve very much.

**Chang Chun-hung.** Provincial Assembly member Chang is still suffering from high blood pressure. His wife requested more detailed information from the military prison doctor, but this request was denied.

**Lu Hsiu-lien.** Ms. Lu has in the past required treatment for cancer. Her relatives are concerned that, because she is not now receiving such treatment, her health condition will deteriorate further. Her brother has submitted three requests for her to receive treatment in a regular hospital, but all- three were turned down.

**Lin llung-hsuan.** Of the seven major opposition leaders who are still held near Taipei, Mr. Lin is in the worst physical condition. He is suffering from an intestinal ailment, for which he is apparently not receiving medical attention: he has had diarrhea since February or March.

**Wu Wen.** Reverend Wu is one of the ten persons, who were accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh. In June he was sentenced to two years imprisonment. His wife, Mrs. Wu; recently lost her teaching position in another blatant example of harassment of the relatives of the detainees.

**Chi Wan-sheng.** Mr. Chi (51) is a highschool teacher who received a B.A. degree from Tam-chiang University. He was one of the 33 opposition members who were tried in civil court in May. He received a five year prison sentence. It has now become known that the police treated Mr. Chi in a rather uncivil manner: he was beaten so severely on his head that he has lost his hearing on one side. His relatives requested medical attention for him, but this was refused by the authorities.

## Statement by Congressman Jim Leach

On July 30, 1980 Congressman Jim Leach (R-IO) made a statement titled "Taiwan cracks down on political dissent" to the U.S. House of Representatives. The statement is the most comprehensive analysis yet of the recent developments in Taiwan. We commend the Congressman for his thoughtful concern for human rights in Taiwan. Below you find some excerpts from the seven-page statement.

*"In international politics, Taiwan is considered by some to be an independent nation-state, by others a province of the People's Republic of China, by itself, and a very few others, as the seat of the government of all of China.*

*But in essence, it is none of these. Taiwan cannot realistically be considered a nation-state if its own government refuses to accept this status. It cannot be considered a province of the People's Republic of China as long as the people and the government of the island refuse to embrace Peking's claim to hegemony. Nor can the authorities on Taiwan continue their pretender role as the government of all of China when neither the Chinese people nor the vast majority of the peoples of the world sanction their claim. Taiwan is an international pariah — a people without a country; a government without a basis of legitimacy.*

*..... an oppressive range of political restrictions are in force in Taiwan. The Kuomintang (KMT) is the dominant political party and no real opposition party is permitted to function freely. The president has almost unlimited emergency powers, under which martial law and firm security measures are in effect. Certain political views cannot be expressed, such as support for the independence of Taiwan, opposition to the government's claim to represent all of China and advocacy of improved relations with the PRC. In the national Legislative Yuan (Taiwan's equivalent to Congress) the vast majority of representatives are mainlanders, elected more than 30 years ago from various provinces now controlled by the PRC.*

*For years critics of the Taiwanese Government have urged greater political participation for native Taiwanese. But the issue is not simply one of numbers. A few native Taiwanese can be appointed to office without any expansion of political freedom occurring. The key is to lift Martial Law and allow the sweeping protections of individual rights contained in the 1946 Constitution of the Republic of China to come into force. Single party governments are seldom democratic governments, and the Taiwanisation of those in authority must be accompanied by the protection of alternative points of view."*

Congressman Leach then described the efforts by the opposition movement to build a framework for an official opposition party through Formosa magazine. He also briefly described last December's Human Rights Day celebration, which ended in a confrontation between police and rally participants. He then stated:

*I have personally reviewed at length a transcript of speeches delivered at the Kaohsiung rally and would like to stress that I find no credible evidence for the Government's claim that those arrested advocated sedition or violent overthrow of the Government. Repeatedly speakers appealed for calm.*

*Typical admonitions were:*

*Wang Tuo: We want to prevent all violence. Don't let those troublemakers stir up violence among you.*

*Shih Ming-teh: Let the Taiwanese soldiers go. Don't beat the Taiwanese soldiers.*

*Yao Chia-wen: ...the problems of struggling for human rights and political rights cannot be solved in a brawl .....we must all demonstrate that we are calm and rational, that it isn't true that we can only fight, that we want to calmly struggle for our human rights and political rights.*

*Lu Hslu-lien: ... we only use words, not guns.*

*Chang Chun-hung: Everybody stop moving! ...Stop! The troops are coming forward. Everybody stop moving. Nobody move! (repeated 16 times)*

*K'ang Ning-hsiang: I want to tell you that the most important thing today is not to have a conflict with the riot troops...As I stand here today, I plead and I hope that everyone will stay calm. Commander of the riot troops, please don't haphazardly take action. If you do, then I can only repeat what I have said: you will be the first in the history of Taiwan (to attack your own people when they are quietly listening to a lecture).*

*Huang Hsin-chieh: Everyone, please don't move, don't be so noisy. Commander of the riot troops, you will have to take all the responsibility for what happens.*

*The early part of the rally was characterized by chants ("long live the Taiwanese people...oppose the one-party dictatorship") and by the singing of songs. One entitled "I Hope You Come Back Soon" was an allusion to political prisoners and "Hoping For the spring wind" expressed an understood desire for political change. From an American's perspective, the most interesting was a variation of the civil rights anthem of the 1960's: "We Shall Overcome." The Kaohsiung refrain went: "We will stand up, we will stand up someday. Deep in my heart I do believe, without any doubt, we will stand up someday."*

*While it is true that a number of statements made by the rally's leaders were contentious and critical of the government, with few exceptions, mostly from the crowd, violence was decried. Speakers commented on everything from the safety hazards surrounding nuclear plant placement to the Juridical history of Taiwan. Taxation without representation was a theme. "They (the KMT) collected 30 years worth of our taxes, but we have no one to oversee their spending." Chi Wan-shen argued.*

*Historical analogies were frequent: "Remember that in the Ch'in Dynasty the king burned the books and killed the intellectuals. What about today? We can be arrested for saying one word; we cannot say one sentence of criticism without risking arrest and 3, 5, or 10 years in prison" (Hung Ch'wan-ch'i).*

*As the knot of riot police tightened, the observation of Chang Ch'un-nan was particularly poignant: "In the old days, if you wanted to capture a castle, you would always blockade one gate, leaving three open for people to escape."*

*Unfortunately there was no escape gate for the participants at the Kaohsiung rally, as there is no institutional escape valve for the popular feelings in any society that lacks democratic representation and the freedom to speak and assemble.*

Congressman Leach then presented some background information on each of the major opposition leaders, and described their trial. He commented:

*To a considerable extent the defendants succeeded in convincing outside observers that they were not engaged in subversive activities, and that the government was using Taiwan's strict martial law against them for essentially political purposes. Outside observers simply could not fault the desire of the defendants to promote freer political expression' to establish responsible opposition to the dominant KMT party, to publish a non-censored political magazine, to abolish martial law, and to bring about gradual change in the archaic political institutions on Taiwan. While these objectives might be viewed by the KMT leaders as radical, they appeared moderate and responsible in the context of Western democracies as well as Asian ones like Japan and Singapore.*

*Almost all of the defendants noted that their confessions were not made voluntarily, that they were extracted in the course of exhausting interrogations in which they were allowed very little sleep over many days and that they had been threatened with death if they did not sign. While none claimed openly to have been tortured, it seems clear that at a minimum they were subject to severe psychological pressure, intimidation and harassment during their lengthy interrogations. During this interrogation process, the defendants did not have access to lawyers. They were kept isolated from each other and denied visits from relatives and friends. However, during the trial itself lawyers were allowed to assist in the defense.*

Congressman Leach continued with a description of the trial- of 33 lesser defendants and of the military court trial of the ten persons –including the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church Reverend Kao Chun-ming —accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh. He then stated:

*The government of Taiwan is to be commended for the open manner in which trials of the various defendants took place. There is, however, a distinction between openness and fairness, and it is difficult for an outside observer to be anything except disappointed about the treatment of the prisoners and the severity of the sentences meted out.*

Congressman Leach further commented:

*To broaden political participation without precipitating violence will not be easy. It is, however, imperative to try, for as the government's claim to the mainland becomes less meaningful in the eyes of the world, a new basis for legitimacy must be found.*

*Generally speaking, legitimacy derives from either historical claim or consent of the governed. There is a distinction between a government in exile and a government claiming to represent the aspirations of the Taiwanese people. U.S. recognition of the PRC implies our assessment that the civil war in China is over. The Nationalist claim to the mainland is fictional, and its basis of consent on the island lacking democratic test.*

*Governmental authority in any society is based either on force or consent. The former implies violence and injustice; the latter cooperation and stability. The choice of approach at this juncture in Taiwan's history belongs exclusively to the government, not the dissidents. People do not rebel against themselves, only their institutions. If institutions reflect popular will, violence will be obviated.*

*Accordingly, friends of Taiwan are convinced that the time has come to establish a new basis for legitimacy — that of “consent of the governed.” In the words of Dr. Sun Yat-sen:*

*Such a government will be the most complete and the finest in the world and a State with such a government will indeed be of the people, by the people, and for the people.*

Congressman Leach concluded:

*In a recent speech President Chiang Ching-kuo called on the nation to “heal the wounds,” “bind up the injury and eradicate the scar” created by the events surrounding the Kaohsiung incident. The way to heal the wound, President Chiang observed, “lies in taking the enlightened modern road of democracy. We know that only by following the sound route of democratic government can we harmoniously rectify extreme tendencies and accommodate conflicting views .”*

*These are wise words, and it is the hope of all concerned citizens of the world that they can be given the meaning of example on Taiwan.*

## **Growth with Equity?**

*Growth with equity, the Taiwan Case* is the title of a book by Yale University scholars John C.H. Fei and Gustav Ranis, recently published for the World Bank by Oxford University Press. The main thesis of the book is that in Taiwan economic growth and equity in the distribution of income have gone hand-in-hand, particularly since 1968.

In our Newsletter # 12 (July 30, 1980) we briefly discussed the high economic growth rate of the Taiwan economy: we believe that this growth rate is artificially high due to a severe disregard by the authorities of negative social and environmental consequences of the present industrialization strategy. In particular: the government is enforcing few safety, sanitation and pollution standards. This is pleasant for industries which can thus grow fast without having to invest in pollution-control equipment or medical-care programs for their workers, but in the long term it is costly for the society and the environment.

At this point we focus on the equity question, in particular since the American press has recently paid some attention to this aspect of Taiwan’s development:

*“...it is achieving a distribution of income more equitable than in many lands. The per capita income of the top 20 per cent is 4.8 times that of the bottom 20 percent, less of a difference than in the U.S. itself” (“Taiwan, too”, The Christian Science Monitor, July 10,1980).*

*“The annual per capita income of more than \$ 1,700 is more equitably distributed than in almost any other developing (or developed) nation...” ‘...Taiwan has 2 per cent unemployment (or less)..’ (“In Taiwan, Pluses and Minuses”, The New York Times, August 8, 1980).*

The 2 per cent (or less) unemployment figure is generally considered misleading: in oriental culture it is considered a disgrace to have to admit to not being employed. We quote from a recent article from the Far Eastern Economic Review:

*“Impossibly low” was the comment of one senior economist who questioned the accuracy of a sample survey of unemployment in a Chinese society where to admit to being jobless to a polltaker would involve loss of face (Far Eastern Economic Review, August 8, 1980, p. 42).*

We thus believe that the actual unemployment figure is considerably higher. We also question the validity of the government’s claim of equitable growth. We consulted the World Bank’s World Development Report, 1979 (Table 24, pp.172-173) which presents the income distribution of 28 countries. From these figures we computed the famed ratio of the income of the top 20 per cent over the income of the bottom 20 percent. Lo and behold, Taiwan came out as the most equitable nation in the world:

Sweden	5.61	Argentina	11.43	Taiwan	4.51
Norway	5.92	Costa Rica	16.61	S. Korea	7.95
U.S.	9.51	Chile	11.68	Philippines	14.57
Canada	8.20	Mexico	18.76	Malaysia	17.15
Netherlands	6.60	Turkey	16.62		
Britain	6.16	Venezuela	18.0		

These results only succeeded in increasing our suspicion about the Taiwan data. The data of both the World Development Report and of Fei and Ranis’ work are based on household surveys conducted by Taiwan’s Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics (DGBAS). The Fei and Ranis work presents some of the published information for the period 1964-1973 in tables (pp. 296 -307).

We suggest that there may be several things wrong with these data. The most obvious possibilities are:

1. **Underreporting of income**, particularly in the higher income brackets. This may of course occur in other countries too, but we believe that the practice of “double bookkeeping” is particularly widespread in Taiwan. The fact that the surveys were conducted by the DGBAS — a branch of the widely disliked Executive Yuan — makes it all the more likely that the respondents underreported their income.

2. **Manipulation of the data by the DGBAS.** While this would not be easy to prove, since we do not have access to the raw data, we do believe that it is a general practice of the Taiwan government to give itself “face” (make itself look good) by manipulating the figures a bit. The purpose of these statistics is thus not so much to present the actual situation but to “prove” that the government is doing well.

We feel obliged to raise these questions here, since it is apparent that the statistics presented in the reports mentioned above do not present an accurate picture of equity in Taiwan’s economic development.

## Publications

1. **Formosa Weekly appears.** The North American successor of Formosa magazine came out with its first issue on August 26, 1980. The Chinese-language publication carries articles on the developments in Taiwan, as well as other information of interest to the Taiwanese communities in the United States and Canada, and around the world. We wish the new publication the best of success. Subscriptions (\$ 60.- per year) are available from: Formosa Weekly, P.O. Box 3727, Los Angeles, CA 90051.

2. **Thank you, with Tears,** ( ). Provincial Assembly member Lin Yi-hsiung wrote this small Pamphlet during the few weeks in March and April, when he was out of prison. The book (in Chinese) describes his interrogation in prison and the agony following the February 28, 1980 murders of his mother and two young daughters by an “unidentified person” (yet to be apprehended by Taiwan’s otherwise so efficient police). The pamphlet is available (\$ 10.- per copy) from F.A.H.R., P.O. Box 2L04, Leucadia, CA 92024.

3. **‘In Taiwan, Pluses and Minuses.’** The New York Times recently published a series of articles on Taiwan by former senior editor John B. Oakes. The series (August 6, 7, and 8, 1980) has some good parts, but on several points it is rather weak, since the author did not check independent sources, particularly where it concerns economic statistics (see our article “Taiwan, Growth with Equity?” in this issue.

## Newsbriefs

1. **More Magazines Banned.** We think that it will be necessary to have a regular column in this Newsletter about newly banned publications in Taiwan.

During the month of August two new publications were banned by the Nationalist Chinese authorities: **Warm Currents** ( ), published by opposition leader K’ang Ning-hsiang, and the **Political Monitor** ( ), published by Huang T’ien-fu, a member of the National Assembly, and younger brother of imprisoned opposition leader Huang Hsin-chieh. **Warm Currents** was banned because its cover looked too much like K’ang’s earlier periodicals, **The Eighties** and **The Asian**, both of which were banned earlier this year. The first issue of the **Political Monitor** did not even make it to the newsstands: on August 23, 1980 secret agents from the TGC raided the printing shop where 30,000 copies were being prepared for publication. The agents even confiscated blank paper. The magazine contained recent news about the jailed opposition leaders and their families, as well as an eye-witness account of the Kaohsiung Incident. On August 26, 1980 a banning order was delivered to the magazine’s office. The official reason for the ban: the publication “*tried to confuse the public.*”



**2. More on Nuclear Power.** In our Newsletter #12 (July 30, 1980) we published some information about the nuclear power question in Taiwan. Since then we have become aware of two more articles on this topic:

“Pursuing the nuclear option”, (**Far Eastern Economic Review**, July 25, 1980), and “Resource-short Taiwan plunges ahead with nuclear power plans” (**The Christian Science Monitor**, August 12, 1980). The first article contains several excellent statements by professor Lin Jun-yi, the courageous chairman of the Biology Department of Tunghai University, who is a proponent of conservation and who has been a vocal critic of the Taiwan government’s disregard of environmental pollution. Professor Lin came recently under attack from the extremist rightwing “patriots” after he — in a newspaper article — urged people to use their bicycles more often, instead of motorized vehicles. The “patriots” charged that this “proved” that professor Lin was “under communist influence”.

**3. Card campaign for Lu Hsiu-lien.** A group of human rights activists in Albuquerque, NM has started a card campaign on behalf of Lu Hsiu-lien. The picture cards — which can be sent to Taiwan President Chiang Ching-kuo or to U.S. and Taiwan government officials — are available from M. Kay, P.O. Box 5637, Albuquerque, NM 87185. We urge other groups to initiate similar campaigns on behalf of other opposition members.

## Action

**1. Appeals on behalf of Shih Ming-teh.** It is urgent that as many people as possible make appeals on behalf of Mr. Shih to American and Taiwan government officials. Please send letters or telegrams to the persons listed below. Request that Mr’ Shih be given immediate medical attention, and that he be allowed to read’ write letters, and receive mail. Also express your deep concern about the fact that Mr’ Shih is being kept in solitary confinement. Please act quickly, this is urgent.

Write to:

Ronald Reagan  
Republican Campaign Headquarters  
9841 Airport Boulevard, Room 1430  
Los Angeles, Ca 90045  
tel. (213) 670-9161

Mr. David Dean  
American Institute in Taiwan  
P.O. Box 1612  
Washington, DC 20013  
tel. (703) 525-8474

General Wang Ch’ing-hsu (汪敬煦)  
Commander  
Taiwan Garrison Command  
Taipei, TAIWAN

General Wang Sheng (王昇)  
Political Warfare Department  
Chieh Shou Hall  
Chungking South Road  
Taipei TAIWAN

施明德 7月24日被移送綠島以後，一直被單獨監禁，不准與外區通信，不准閱讀書籍，不准到囚房外散步走動。他的脊椎骨疼痛也一直没有得到医药治療，一條腿已覺麻木。施明德從九月一日開始絕食抗議。以非人道的待遇。請讀者火速行動，極救施明德，馬上寫信，打電報給美國和國政府的官員（地址如上）抗議施明德的待遇，要求國政府尊重基本人權，施明德不應接受單獨監禁，並准許與外區通信，閱讀和囚房外運動的機會。



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# ICDHRT Newsletter

## contents

	Page
Shih Ming-teh and Linda on Hunger Strike	1
Mrs. Yao Chia-wen Injured	2
Prison Report	2
Statement by Congressman Leach	3
Growth with Equity ?	6
Publications / Articles	8
Newsbriefs	8

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.

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