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# 04

## The Kuomintang “in Dutch” in the Netherlands

The Taiwan authorities greatly rejoiced when — at the end of 1980 --the Dutch government indicated that, in all probability, it would grant an export license to the Rijn-Schelde-Verolme (RSV) shipbuilding company for two submarines, to be built in the Netherlands and shipped to Taiwan by 1985.

The Taiwan authorities must have held their collective breaths when in February 1981 the lower house of the Dutch Parliament reversed its earlier support of the transaction, and voted 77 to 70 in opposition of the deal.

Sighs of relief must have been clearly audible in Taipei when Dutch Prime Minister Van Agt and his cabinet decided to ignore the vote of the Parliament. Mr. Van Agt was in a position to do this since parliamentary elections were coming up anyway, and a vote of no-confidence by the Parliament would be relatively futile.

Since February 1981 several changes have taken place in the Netherlands, which make it likely that the submarine-issue will be a hot topic for some time to come. It is clear that the continued approval of the export- license is by no means certain. The two main developments were:

On May 26, 1981 parliamentary elections were held, and Mr. Van Agt's ruling coalition of christian-democrats (*Christelijk Democratisch Appel*, CDA) and conservatives



(*Volkspartij voor Vriiheid and Democratie*, VVD) lost its majority. Since the CDA still has more seats in Parliament than its major opponent (the social-democratic *Partij van de Arbeid*, PvdA) it is probable that the CDA will continue to be dominant in a future ruling coalition, but at least one other party will have to be drawn into the coalition, so that the government can count on the support of the majority of the Parliament.

The major uncertainty for the Taiwan authorities lies in the fact that the parties which are most likely to participate in a future coalition have all been strongly opposed to the submarine deal. Since the formation of a new cabinet has traditionally been a long and arduous process, it will be some time before it is clear which parties will be part of the new government, and what position the new cabinet will take with regard to the sale of the submarines.

A second factor which may affect future decisions by the Dutch government or by the Parliament is the fact that the Dutch news media have become aware of the lack of human rights in Taiwan. Since March 1981 several prominent Dutch newspapers and magazines have published articles, which were critical of the Kuomintang's human rights record and of the lack of freedom and democracy on Taiwan. Below, we will briefly discuss each article:

### *Just Eat, Don't Ask*

On March 14, 1981 **Vrij Nederland** (an Amsterdam-based weekly) carried an article by its reporter Rudi van Meurs, who visited Taiwan in February. The article was titled "To trade with China is a capital crime ....unless you are in big business." Some excerpts:

"According to Prime Minister Sun the Taiwanese are willing to 'sweat blood' in order to chase away the communists. According to our reporter the Taiwanese are indeed sweating blood, but only because the authorities still maintain a 'state of siege' which has severely restricted all freedoms on the island."

Mr. Van Meurs then illustrated the lack of civil liberties in Taiwan with a description of an incident in a coffee shop in Taipei, whereby two secret police agents intimidated a number of civilians. The message was: "Just eat, don't ask." Further on in the article Mr. Van Meurs described the political system: "The National Assembly and Legislative Yuan are nothing more than applauding machines for the Nationalist government."

The article also described the Presbyterian Church, and the difficult conditions under which it has to function:

“This Church stands up for the Taiwanese people. It is very different from the Roman Catholic Church, which obeys the government like a slave .... The Presbyterian Church is a strongly democratic institution. For many years it has appealed to the authorities for the restoration of justice, human rights, and free elections.

‘Only then true reforms can be achieved, and will the government gain the respect of the people’ [read a Church Declaration]. The Presbyterian Church continues to express its opposition against ‘rulers who neglect the rights and wishes of 14.5 million people, and who take undemocratic decisions only to enrich themselves’

.... In the government-controlled press the Church is attacked and slandered; its leaders are imprisoned, and on all sides it receives threats from the authorities. In the past the Church’s Secretariat sent its newsletters by mail, but this has become impossible because the postal service does not deliver the letters ... If there is a vote in the Church’s General Assembly — e.g. about joining the World Council of Churches — then the Assembly delegates are visited by police and government officials, who pressure them to vote against ...

In April [1980] the Reverend Kao was arrested and sentenced to seven years imprisonment by a military court .... What ‘terrible crime’ did Reverend Kao commit? He had done nothing more than what any good pastor should do when his country is occupied: he had refused to inform the authorities about the whereabouts of general-manager of Formosa Magazine, Shih Ming-teh.”

In the article, Mr. Van Meurs also dealt with the fast rise and subsequent banning of **Formosa**, as well as with the -Kaohsiung incident. He then described the flourishing indirect trade — which is sometimes quite direct — between Taiwan and China:

“Quite frequently Taiwanese fishermen are imprisoned for many years because they traded some goods with fishermen from the mainland while they were out at sea. Officially the only goods which are allowed to go to the mainland are tapes with propaganda songs by Taiwanese pop singer Therese Deng .... in reality things are quite different: T’atung, one of the largest electronic firms on the island, has assembly lines for radio parts on the mainland, because the wages there are one-fourth of what they are on Taiwan.

The Chairman of the Board of the Taiwanese firm Addison, which has establishments in all major cities in the Far East, acknowledges that his firm also makes use of products from the mainland.

Officially there is no contact, but ... there **is** a lot of contact. Everybody knows it. But the government is very hypocritical. In Hong Kong one talks about a 'financial marriage' between Taiwan and China, but the Taiwan authorities continue to deny it.

The Taiwanese opposition says: *'If the government acknowledges these contacts, then the Chinese would not be "communist bandits" anymore, and the state of siege would have to be lifted. This would mean that, according to the Constitution, there would have to be freedom of expression and free elections .... The present government would then not be able to continue its iron grip on the 14.5 million native Taiwanese.'*

### ***Taiwan's Church in Rough Chinese Waters***

The second article was written by a prominent Dutch theologian, Dr. J. van der Linden. It was published in the weekly publication of the second largest protestant church in the Netherlands, **Centraal Weekblad** (April 22, 1981, published by the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland). Some quotes:

"Chiang Kai-shek and his successors made Taiwan a strong fortress. His ideal was to use the island as a springboard for his much-desired recovery of the mainland. This has proven to be an illusion. Red China was much more red than Chiang wanted to realize. He did not *want* to realize it, because then he would have had to admit that he had failed.

But the people of Taiwan have suffered deeply because of this illu-sion. Chiang and his followers heavily repressed the island's po-pulation, which did not want to participate in this 'civil war from the mainland.' More than thirty years the island has suffered under a state of siege, which is unparalleled in our modern times."

The author then presented a short history of Taiwan, and focused on the strong and peaceful resistance by Taiwan's Presbyterian Church against the repressive measures of both the Japanese [during the period 1895-1945] and the Chinese Nationalists [after 1945].

In a discussion of the attempts by the Taiwan authorities to pass laws restricting freedom of religion, Dr. Van der Linden stated:

“The Church has resisted this unwarranted interference in its internal affairs. From the pulpit the Church has said this, and the message spread rapidly through a thousand communities across the island. Those who experience the German occupation here in the Netherlands will immediately recognize this situation. In those days it was also the message from the pulpit which strengthened and encouraged the people, and which showed the people in which direction they should go.”

### *The Church in Taiwan stands up for the Taiwanese people*

The third article, which we wish to mention, appeared in the daily **TROUW** (May 7, 1981) which is one of the prominent national newspapers of the Netherlands. The article first discussed the recent refusal of the Presbyterian Church to elect a new Secretary-General:

“The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan has refused to elect a new Secretary-General. One year ago the government arrested the present Secretary-General, Reverend Kao Chun-ming, and sentenced him to seven years imprisonment for allegedly helping a political opposition leader escape arrest.

The General Assembly .... has requested the government to release Reverend Kao. However, the authorities want the Church to elect a new Secretary-General, and then it will discuss whether Dr. Kao might be released at an earlier date. The Church doesn't want to have anything to do with this kind of backhand negotiations.”

The article subsequently presented a brief history of the Presbyterian Church, and discussed the three declarations issued by the Church in 1971, 1975, and 1977. The article then described the most recent attempts by the authorities to smother the **Taiwan Church News**, and inhibit the activities at the Church's seminaries (see also 'Freedom of Religion?', *Taiwan Communiqué* #3, March 28, 1981).

### *The submarines and repression in Taiwan*

The fourth article appeared in the June issue of **VU-Magazine**, the official publication of the Free University in Amsterdam. The University was founded approximately a century ago; it is closely associated with the second largest protestant denomination

of the Netherlands, and is one of several church -sponsored universities in the country). The author of the six-page article is a post-doctoral research-associate at the University.

The article first discussed whether Taiwan has always been an integral part of China:

“Both the government in Peking and the one in Taipei consider Taiwan to be a province of China. However, a close examination shows that during the long history of the Chinese Empire this was only the case for eight years: from 1887 until 1895 the island was officially a province of the Chinese Empire.

Until that time it had not been integrated in the administrative system of the Chinese Empire. The population consisted predominantly of people who had fled wars and famines in the coastal mainland provinces, but if this is a reason to consider Taiwan to be part of China, then the United States should also still be a part of Great Britain.”

The author of the article then briefly discussed the history of Taiwan up until the occupation of Taiwan by the Chinese Nationalists and the February 28 incident of 1947. He then stated:

“Obviously, since 1949 much has changed: the government of Mao Tse--tung and his successors is now generally recognized as the govern-ment of China. However, the government of the Chiang-family is still making desperate attempts to be considered the government of all of China. The rulers in Peking would not have gotten angry about the submarine deal if Taiwan had been a friendly neighbor, but from 1949 until 1971 China was kept out of the United Nations by the pretentious Chinese Nationalists in Taipei.

For many years the Nationalists thus constituted a real threat to China. Even now one can hear declarations in Taipei that China will be ‘recovered’ soon. As recently as March 29, 1981 president Chiang Ching-kuo made such a statement. In response to these pro-vocations the Chinese government has threatened with ‘liberation’ of Taiwan. During the past few years the rulers of China have tried it in a more friendly manner, and have advocated ‘peaceful unification.’ However, the Taiwanese people don’t consider this option very attractive either: the example of Tibet is still fresh in their minds.

What kind of future status would the Taiwanese themselves wish for their island? One has to start by saying that it is very difficult to evaluate the opinions of the Taiwanese. The Taiwan authorities do not allow an open discussion of the status of

the island. Anyone mentioning the words ‘independence’ or ‘self-determination’ in public is quickly arrested by the secret police .... In spite of the lack of freedom of expression there have been, through the years, courageous people who urged the authorities to move towards a more democratic political system.”

The article then discussed Lei Chen’s arrest (1960) and the imprisonment of Dr. Peng Ming-min, Wei T’ing-ch’ao and Hsieh Tsung-min after their ‘Declaration of self-salvation’ in 1964. It continued:

“In the early 1970’s there were more and more signs that people from all walks of life were dissatisfied with the regime of the Chiang’s. The Taiwanese saw more and more examples that the rigid policy of the Chinese Nationalists led to increasing isolation in the inter-national arena.”

The author then discussed the attempts of the Presbyterian Church to convince the authorities to steer in the direction of a representative political system, and he subsequently focused on the persecution of the Church by the ‘authorities. The author continued with a description of the rapid growth of the ‘non-party’ movement, and of the Kaohsiung incident and its aftermath.

He closed with a discussion of the following question:

“How do most native Taiwanese view the sale of the submarines to Taiwan? Most of them indeed view the PRC as a threat to their well-being, but they believe that in the case of an actual blockade or attack by China these submarines would only play a minor role in the defense of the island. However, many Taiwanese view the sale as an endorsement of the repressive military and political apparatus of the Chinese Nationalists. These Taiwanese would only approve of the sale if the Dutch government would make use of its new-found leverage (the improved — though still un-official — relations) by urging the Taiwan authorities to release the imprisoned political and re-ligious leaders, and to take effective measures towards a free and democratic Taiwan.

These native Taiwanese also argue that a democratically-elected government would enjoy the support of the people, and would thus be in a much better position to resist any threat from the mainland than a government which is based on fictitious ideas such as “recovery” of China. They also point out that after a number of years the strong animosity between China and a democratic Taiwan would diminish, and a peaceful coexistence would become possible.”

# Professor Seymour testifies

On May 19, 1981 the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives held its annual oversight hearings on the Taiwan Relations Act. Three persons testified: former U.S. ambassador Leonard Unger, Professor T'ien

Hung-mao (a Taiwanese-American political scientist from Wisconsin), and Professor James Seymour (president of the New York-based Society for the Protection of East Asians' Human Rights).

Since Professor Seymour's testimony is most directly related to our area of interest, we present some excerpts from the statement here. The full text of the eight-page statement is being published in **SPEAHRhead** (available from SPEAHR, P.O. Box 1212, New York, NY 10025).

With regard to the adherence by the Taiwan authorities to the human rights provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act, professor Seymour stated:



**Prof. James Seymour**

“ ... the Chinese Nationalists do not seem to consider themselves bound by international human rights standards, and resent Western interference on the issue. They thus have completely ignored the human rights provisions of the Act.”

To the question “Has there been any impact from the Reagan Administration's private, quiet approach to human rights?” professor Seymour stated:

“This witness is unaware of any such approaches to the Chinese Nationalists. Such demarches would be surprising, in view of President Reagan's avowed friendship for the Chinese Nationalists. If there have been any efforts on behalf of human rights for the people of Taiwan, the results have been decidedly negative. Since the inauguration of President Reagan, not only have there been no commutations or amnesties for political prisoners but there have been quite a few additional human rights violations.”

Professor Seymour then presented details on a number of recent political arrests and sentences. He then stated:

“Thus, whatever the Reagan administration may or may not have been doing about political persecution on Taiwan, the Chinese Nationalists have felt free to continue business as usual.

It is my view that ‘quiet diplomacy’ with ‘friendly’ repressive governments is rarely effective. These governments have already made the judgment that opposition forces are so popular that they are a real political threat. The rulers are probably correct in their judgment, and quiet diplomacy will not cause them to alter their conduct. Overt political and economic pressure has a much better chance, though success is not inevitable.”

Professor Seymour also discussed President Carter’s approach to the human rights question:

“It is my view that in many parts of the world President Carter’s human rights policies were highly successful in relieving human suffering and effecting greater political stability by broadening the base of previously unrepresentative governments. The major successes were in the countries where the policy was given the greatest stress: Latin America and Africa. Unfortunately, a number of countries were exempted from the policy, and one of these was Taiwan.”

He then briefly described the developments in Taiwan during the Carter years, up to and including the Kaohsiung Incident and the subsequent trials. The next major item of the discussion was the availability of information on human rights in Taiwan:

“The Chinese Nationalists go to great lengths to veil in secrecy their human rights violations. When someone is imprisoned for political reasons, his or her relatives are under great pressure not to reveal the true situation to the outside world. The example of the case of Provincial Assemblyman Lin Yi-hsiung is instructive:

Mr. Lin is a highly respected lawyer and writer as well as political figure. He (along with fellow prisoner Yao Chia-wen) did much to try to democratize Taiwan’s legal system so that the poor could enjoy the benefits of legal services. Lin was only remotely involved in the Kaohsiung incident, and did not speak. He was nonetheless arrested, held incommunicado for two months, and subjected to considerable physical and psychological abuse.

On February 26 he was told that he could now be visited by his relatives, but he was warned by his captors not to reveal the nature of his “treatment,” or else “unfavorable things” could happen to his family. Nonetheless he did indicate to them that he had been tortured. His mother then passed this information abroad by telephone (which was undoubtedly heard by security agents). On February 28, she and Lin’s two daughters were murdered.

Most prisoners and their families are probably cowed into silence. Thus I would have to concede that there is probably much more that we do not know about human rights abuses.”

Further along during the testimony professor Seymour stated:

“In a few cases where international attention is intense, the authorities do stage “open trials.” These are not trials in the sense that we are accustomed to thinking of them. The merits of the case in terms of fact and law are not weighted by an independent court empowered to find the defendants innocent. Such decisions are apparently taken before the “trial” is held. However, these trials do provide the defendants with an opportunity to be heard, to repudiate “confessions” which may have been extracted from them, and permit the accused to be judged by public opinion.

In the case of the eight leading defendants in the Kaohsiung case, the trial was reasonably accurately and fully presented to the public in the press. However, the main purpose of these events is to mislead foreign observers into thinking that Taiwan has open trials — a non-fact dutifully reported out to the foreign press by virtually every reporter. In point of fact, after a considerable delay to permit the world to lose interest, the defendants are usually given long prison sentences which are totally unsupported by anything which transpired at the ‘trial’.”

In a discussion of the attempts of the Taiwan authorities to influence foreign opinion, professor Seymour said:

“The Chinese Nationalists go to great lengths to influence the foreign media, and they have been remarkably successful. Thus, few Americans have any understanding of the political realities on Taiwan and the repressive nature of the government there . . . . The Taiwan government’s ‘blacklist’ of people to whom it refuses entry must be a long one indeed. Only the naive and the silent are welcome.”

Professor Seymour then presented a detailed analysis of the various violations of human rights which are prevalent in Taiwan, such as infringements on the freedom of religion, and on constitutional civil guarantees such as free press and assembly, popular participation in government, rights of accused people, and treatment of prisoners.

He was also asked about the implications of the human rights situation for the political stability, military security and economic well-being of all the people on Taiwan. His response:

*“Economic well-being.* Taiwan is a prosperous island, but the experience of other countries suggests that a democratic Taiwan would be even more affluent than it is today. One important improvement would probably be the legalization of a trade union movement. Factory workers are now underpaid and have substandard working conditions. Unions are sorely needed to prevent abuses of workers by employers, and to raise living standards.

*Political stability.* Dictatorships are inherently unstable because the ruling group is in a position to prevent normal change, and it is usually in the rulers’ interest to do so. Thus, necessary changes are postponed until the cumulative pressures are so great that the regime can no longer withstand them. Often the regime itself crumbles at that point. At any rate, there is bound to be serious social upheaval with no certainty that the wishes of the majority will prevail. Events in Iran in the 1970’s are a textbook example of the instability which human rights deprivation can generate.

Like Iran under the Shah, Taiwan *appears* to have been very stable in recent decades. Appearances, however, are deceptive. The facade of stability has been purchased at the price of much human suffering. Time and again the ruling group has had to resort to terrorism to perpetuate their rule. Torture may not be quite as common in Taiwan as it was in Iran, but it and lesser forms of intimidation have been essential to the fabric of Taiwan’s ‘stability’. Such a fabric never holds together indefinitely.

Were the people of Taiwan allowed to determine their destiny by means of a free electoral process, there is every reason to believe that a genuine stability would replace the superficial stability which now exists. The Taiwanese are a well-educated people, and there is a pervasive feeling in society that political excesses must be avoided in view of external threats.”

*Military security.* It is my view, however, that the above-mentioned threat would recede once the Taiwanese gained their human rights. Given a free choice, the people would almost certainly abandon the *raison d'état* of recovering China. Thus, one of the two most destabilizing factors in the region would be eliminated.

The second such factor, China's claim to Taiwan, would not vanish as quickly, and some feel that a declaration of Taiwan independence would only intensify Beijing's resolve. I believe that a continued implicit U.S. commitment to defend the island would make any immediate move on China's part unthinkable, and in due course the Chinese would probably forget about the claim to Taiwan, as they have done with regard to Mongolia.

In short, nothing would do more to enhance the stability of the island and the region than the realization by the Taiwanese people of their human rights. Failing that, we can expect the Chinese Nationalists to continue their bellicose posture towards the People's Republic of China in the fanciful expectation that they will be in a position to pick up the pieces when war breaks out or the communist regime collapses."

Professor Seymour closed with a brief description of the implications for U.S. policy towards Taiwan:

"If an East Asian upheaval is the Chinese Nationalists' dream, it would be a nightmare for everyone else, including the United States. We should only want for the people of Taiwan what they want for themselves. Thus, we should not take sides on the burning political issues, but rather should insist that Taiwan's native and mainlander residents be granted their political rights so that they can decide these issues. This means pressing for the release of all non-violent political prisoners, and permitting total freedom of the media (including the airwaves).

Until the Chinese Nationalists meet their minimal obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we should withhold all military, economic and moral support. After the Taiwanese people have made their free choice, we should assist the resultant government, if it should wish us to, with due regard to sensitivities in the Peoples' Republic of China. If the new leaders are Taiwanese (as is likely to be the case), we should encourage them to respect the rights of individual Chinese Nationalists, and to be scrupulously fair in trying and punishing any who have committed actual crimes. In general, there is every reason to believe that the Taiwanese and resident Chinese mainlanders can live in harmony.

America has no significant security problem in this area. Even a neutral Taiwan should be perfectly acceptable to us. We do have economic interests, but it is unlikely that a popular government would expropriate foreign enterprises. Although there are some socialist-inclined leaders in the non-party movement, their preferred model is nothing more threatening than Sweden.

It is true that foreign (and locally-owned) enterprises would have to pay higher wages after unions were legalized. However, this would have benefits for American industry by preventing Taiwan companies from exporting goods at abnormally low prices. Indeed, there would be great benefit for American workers if their counterparts in places like Taiwan were permitted to engage in collective bargaining.

In short, the United States has everything to gain and nothing to lose from the realization by the Taiwan people of their human rights.”

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## Liu Feng-sung's defense

Liu Feng-sung was one of several opposition figures to be arrested after the December 1980 elections. He was a candidate for a seat in the National Assembly, and was arrested on March 9, 1981 (see *Taiwan Communiqué*, #3, March 28, 1981). He was accused of using the election campaign as “an opportunity to incite others to engage in seditious activities.” He was tried on April 10, 1981 and was sentenced to a prison term of three and a half years.

Before his arrest Mr. Liu worked in the Taipei District Court. After completing high school he passed the teachers qualifying exam and became a high school teacher. Later he passed an advanced civil servants examination and held a position as a probation officer at the Kee lung District Court. He was subsequently promoted and served at the Taipei District Court until he was arrested.



**Mr. Liu Feng-sung**

Mr. Liu was an active member of the opposition. He wrote articles for **Formosa Monthly Magazine**. During the 1980 election campaign he was quite popular: he gave more than forty public speeches and drew large crowds. Opposition sources consider his losing the election another case of ballot fraud by the authorities.

At his trial he presented a lengthy defense. **The Eighties Magazine** printed the first two sections of the four-part defense but decided not to publish the remaining two sections for fear that the authorities would again ban the magazine (**The Eighties**, # 11, May, 1981).

The Los Angeles-based **Formosa Weekly** published the full statement (Issues # 39, 40, and 41, May - June 1981). We present excerpts from the defense statement:

“As I was charged with the ‘crime’ of using the 1980 campaign as an opportunity to incite others to engage in seditious activities, I wish to establish the fact that none of my campaign brochures printed in 1980 were used by the prosecutor as evidence of a violation of the law. The only pamphlet which was apparently against the law was the one entitled ‘work hard for human rights in Taiwan.’ This brochure was printed and first distributed in the December 1978 election campaign. When these elections were cancelled [following the U.S. - China normalization of relations] I kept the remaining 10,000 copies with the intention to use them in a future election.

After the 1980 campaign started I ran out of this brochure very fast. I did not reprint it, because I ran out of funds. Now, however, the prosecutor accuses me of printing and distributing this campaign pamphlet from November 21, 1980 until December 6, 1980.

The charge is thus not true: the brochure was not printed during the 1980 campaign. Line 11 of the pamphlet is evidence to this fact. It says: ‘The United States and communist China are negotiating to reestablish relations. It is expected that they will soon reestablish diplomatic relations.’ In addition, a number of witnesses, including the election supervisory committee and the printer, can testify that this brochure was printed in 1978.

Now then, when I distributed this pamphlet in 1978 I was not given any warning, nor was I reprimanded by the authorities that the contents of this brochure violated any law. Why was this pamphlet legal in 1978, but suddenly became illegal in 1980? Even though the election law did not exist in 1978, the authorities could certainly

have prosecuted me **then** under the existing laws of the Republic of China. If the contents of the pamphlet were not sedi-tious but just ‘inappropriate’, then the authorities should not have hesitated to give me a warning at that time, but they did not even do that!

I therefore continued to distribute this same brochure in 1980, because I was made to believe that my activity was within the bounds of the law. Even when I was distributing this material during the 1980 election campaign, I received no warning nor was I reprimanded for violating the law. Now, three months after the elections I am suddenly arrested and charged with ‘inciting others to engage in seditious activities.’ I am totally perplexed.”

A further accusation against Mr. Liu was that he had urged the audience at the political gatherings to ‘favor overthrowing the government.’ Mr Liu’s defense:

“In the indictment, I was accused of repeatedly saying that every citizen is so fed up with the government that all are in favor of overthrowing it. This accusation is misleading, because my state-ment was taken out of context. According to the transcript of a tape recording of my speech, I said the following:

‘Yesterday I met Chang Chun-nan. He told me that the government-sponsored election meetings in Taichung were very exciting. There were thousands of people at one meeting, when one pro-KMT candidate, Lai Chin-hsi, who was trying to defend the KMT from the criticism of the opposition, asked the crowd: “*Since you are all so unhappy with the KMT, let us overthrow the KMT regime. Do you think that would be a good idea ?*” [Of course the pro-KMT candidate expected the crowd to disagree], but the crowd went wild, and shouted: “Good idea, good idea!!”

Thus, I just quoted what KMT-candidate Lai had said at a government--sponsored election meeting at Taichung. Mr. Lai was not reprimanded at the scene, nor was he taken into custody or hauled into court. But I, who just quoted what he said, was arrested and indicted. The reason why I quoted the incident at Taichung is that I wanted to illustrate that the party in power has lost the hearts and minds of the people. So now I am accused of inciting others to engage in seditious activities. The evidence presented by the prosecution is very unconvincing.”

# Prison report

1. *Freedom is just a word.* Since the end of March the conditions, under which the major eight opposition leaders are held, have improved slightly: they are now allowed out of their cells for one day a week plus one hour on all other days. There is, however, a catch: any other prisoner who is friendly to them during this time is punished. Even a brief casual conversation results in extensive reprisals against the “offender.” Most of the detained opposition leaders, such as Lin Yi-hsiung, Yao Chia-wen and Chang Chun-hung have thus felt compelled to stay in their cells so they would not “cause” undue harassment to others (Source: *Taiwan Church News II 1524*, May 17, 1981 and # 1525, May 24, 1981).

2. *Ms. Lin Wen-chen’s property confiscation*\_(continued). In *Taiwan Communiqué* #3 (March 28, 1981) we reported on the confiscations of Ms. Lin Wen-chen’s property, which took place in September and December 1980. Ms. Lin, who is principal of Calvin Theological College for Women in Taipei, was arrested in January 1980 together with several other members of the Presbyterian Church. It now appears that more of Ms. Lin’s property is being confiscated, although it is not clear whether the most recent con-fiscation is inspired by the secret police authorities or not.

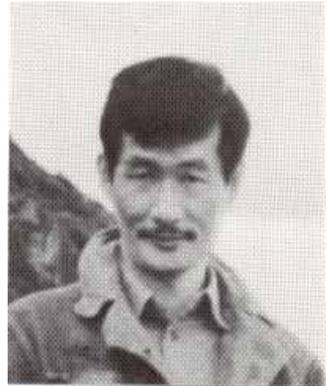
On May 8, 1981 Ms. Lin received a notice from a District Court saying that if she doesn’t pay off a loan to Taipei City Bank, then a piece of land owned by her and her house will be confiscated (Source: *Taiwan Church News* # 1525, May 24, 1981).

3. *Deaths in two families.* During the month of May two persons, who were imprisoned in the aftermath of the Kaohsiung incident, lost their respective mothers: Pastor Wu Wen (accused of harboring Shih Ming-teh) lost his mother on May 6; she died of cancer. Reverend Wu was allowed to leave the prison for the funeral, but he was permitted to attend the funeral ceremonies for only ten minutes.

Ms. Liu Hsiu-lien, Taiwan’s imprisoned women’s rights leader, lost her mother on May 24. When her mother was terminally ill Ms. Liu requested permission to visit her dying mother. This request was denied by the prison authorities~ and she was not even allowed to attend her mother’s funeral, although the government-controlled media reported that she had been granted permission for this.

4. **Shih Ming-teh writes from prison.** Mr. Shih, who is serving a life sentence on Green Island, has recently been allowed more freedom of movement within the prison compound. He has also been permitted to write letters of limited length (200 characters). Two of his letters recently appeared in *Formosa Weekly* (#33, April, 1981). Some excerpts from one of the letters:

“My blood pressure is apparently high. It stays most of the time in the range of 160/100 or 150/110. It dropped when I took medicine, but after that it would rise again. I had recurrent pains in the back of my head. Occasionally I felt my heart beating irregularly. When the weather changes, it often aggravates the pain, and I become somewhat gloomy. Fortunately I have a healthy attitude towards life. Whatever happens to me, good or bad, I always reach out to accept the events and face the situation squarely. I often was able to turn bad luck into good luck, and I could change turmoil into peace.



**Mr. Shih Ming-teh**

Therefore don't worry too much about me. Things are often not as bad as they seem: sometimes, what appears to be a good omen may not turn out very good, and at other times a misfortune may not be what it seems .... [I know] that you are all very worried about me. I can understand your feelings. Both you and other friends around the island and abroad are probably more deeply concerned about my fate than I am myself. In your eyes my life is so tragic; you may feel that God in Heaven is not treating me with fairness.

However, I have carefully examined my life's history, and I found it rich and colorful: I have been loved and rejected, cheered and cursed, misunderstood and adored; I have lived in poverty and in wealth; and I have been very close to death but found myself alive again ...., all these sharply contradictory events have been part of my life. Those who have never cried, how can they feel the real joy of smiling? My feelings tell me that this rich variety of my life's experiences enables me to have a deep understanding of the meaning of Confucius's words:

‘Do not indulge in wealth and honor; be not demoralized when you are in humble circumstances; and yield not to threat or force.’

For those who do not indulge themselves in selfish profits or desires, there is no need to be distressed over immediate hardships. For when today is over, there will always be a tomorrow. Even if one dies a cruel death, there will still be history which will decide what positive contribution one has made. Therefore, I always ask myself to look at the long-range perspective, and avoid being dominated by selfish motives and desires. I am telling you all these things in order to convince you not to feel sorry for me about anything that has happened to me or may happen to me in the future. I have received 'what I have asked for.' Why should we be sorry and brokenhearted ?"

5. **An old arrest revealed.** On May 19, 1981 Professor James Seymour revealed in testimony before a Congressional Subcommittee that the Chinese Nationalist authorities kept secret for six years the imprisonment of Taiwan-Independence advocate Ch'en Shen--ching. Mr. Ch'en is a musician who toured the United States in 1972. His main "crime" appeared to have been using a rubber stamp bearing the symbol of the Independence Movement. He was given a life sentence for "sedition", and is presently being held on Green Island. His wife holds a job in the Kaohsiung Export Processing Zone, but her income is barely enough to support her four children.

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## Articles and Publications

1. **A British Council of Churches publication.** "Taiwanese Voice," written by Anne Ming, is a recent publication of the British Council of Churches. The 28 - page pamphlet gives excellent background information on the political situation in Taiwan and presents a highly accurate description of the Kaohsiung Incident and the subsequent arrests of leaders of the democratic opposition and the Presbyterian Church. Highly recommended. Available at 50 p per copy from: The Division of International Affairs, British Council of Churches, 2-6 Eaton Gate, London SW1W 9BL (English).

2. **A German Church publication.** Not to be outdone by their British counterparts, a German Church group published: "*Taiwan, Texte und Fragen.*" The 48-page booklet presents a general description of politics, economics, and human rights in Taiwan. Authors Justus Freytag and Gerhard Fritz were able to pull together good information from a wide variety of sources. The publication is a good comprehensive source for those who read German. Printed by: Missions-handlung, Hermannsburg, Hamburg 1980 (in German).

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## Notes

1. **Mrs. Yao Chia-wen threatened.** On April 28, 1981 Chou Ching-yü, member of the National Assembly, and wife of imprisoned opposition leader Yao Chia-wen, received a strange tele-phone call. Someone told her that he had “news from Hsu Hsin-liang” (Mr. Hsu, the President of *Formosa Monthly*, was in the United States when the Kaohsiung Incident occurred; he thus escaped arrest). On April 29<sup>th</sup> 1981 the stranger visited her house and told her that on May 20th she would be killed. Mrs. Yao interpreted this as yet another attempt by right-wing extremists to intimidate her. She did not take any chances and asked friends and co-workers to stay with her at all times, particularly on the 20th of May. On that day several dozen friends stayed at her house, and there was actually a festive atmosphere.

Between May 20th and the 26th several strangers came to bother her, and — according to one unconfirmed report — two persons were arrested by the police. However, Taiwan’s media did not report any of these events, and we do not know whether these persons were subsequently charged or just released.



Mrs. Yao Chou Ching-yü

2. **Amnesty International sends a memo.** The Taipei-based *Self-reliance Evening Post* reported on May 5, 1981 that the General Secretariat of Amnesty International had sent a memo to the Taiwan authorities with the request to release all persons arrested in connection with the Kaohsiung Incident. The newspaper reported that these persons had been declared ‘prisoners of conscience’ by Amnesty International (indicating that they had been imprisoned because of their political beliefs, and that they had not advocated violence or committed violent acts).

The newspaper mentioned that several other recommendations were contained in the memo: 1. the government should take effective measures to prevent the recurrence of mistreatment of detainees during interrogation; 2. prisoners should not be kept in isolation; 3. the death sentence should be abolished. The newspaper article also stated that the memo was based on information collected by an Amnesty International delegation during a visit to Taiwan in February 1980.

3. **FX or no FX for Taiwan?** During Secretary of State Alexander Haig's mid-June visit to Peking the question of the sale of advanced US jet fighters to Taiwan was discussed extensively in the U.S. press (the FX — as the jet fighter is presently designated — will either be an upgraded version of the Northrop F-5G, or a downgraded version of the General Dynamics F-16). Prior to Mr. Haig's departure for Peking several "key-officials" spread the word that the US is delaying a decision on Taiwan's request for the FX. One quote:

"Pentagon officers, reversing their judgment, have concluded that Taiwan does not need the advanced FX fighter, which is still on the drawing boards. The officers have come around to the view that China does not pose a major threat to Taiwan, and that China is more important to the United States than Taiwan. But the officers do not want to make this judgment public for fear of a fight with conservatives ('Military aid for China considered as Haig prepares to visit Peking,' ~ *New York Times*, June 5, 1981).

A similar report appeared in the *Seattle Times* ('U.S. holds off on re-quest by Taiwan for more jet aircraft,' June 10, 1981) On the other hand, these reports may just have been designed to pacify Peking on the eve of Mr. Haig's visit. At a later time the U.S. may still go ahead with the FX sale. This is the conclusion which one would draw from the following report: "Taiwanese air force pilots and technical personnel are scheduled to visit General Dynamics in the next month to fly the F-16/J-79 intermediate export fighter and receive detailed briefings" (*Aviation Week & Space Technology*, April 6, 1981).

4. **And the banning continues.** In mid-April Taiwan Garrison Command officers confiscated all copies of a new magazine called **Progress**. The publication was edited by Mr. Lin Cheng-chieh, who became well-known in 1978 when he and fellow writer Chang Fu-chung (imprisoned after the Kaohsiung Incident) wrote a book about the 1977 election campaign, titled "Long Live Elections." Progress was scheduled to appear on the newsstands on April 20, 1981.

## LATE NEWS

### *Taiwanese-American professor murdered*

As this issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* was going to press, we received word of the murder of Dr. Chen Wen-cheng, age 31, a Taiwanese-American who teaches at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburg. Professor Cheng, his wife, and their two-years' old son left the U.S. on May 19 for a family visit to Taiwan.

On July 2 he was called in by the Taiwan Garrison Command. He did not return home, and on July 3rd at 3:00 p.m. he was found murdered at the Library of Taiwan National University. The first report from the coroner indicated that he had been beaten to death at an earlier time. His body had apparently been moved to the Library and dumped from the third floor in an attempt to make it appear to be a "suicide."



**Prof. Chen and his wife and baby son, before their fateful trip to Taiwan**

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