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Dr. Chen Wen-chen's death

It has been several months since Professor Chen Wen-cheng died. His body was found on the grounds of National Taiwan University in the early morning hours of July 3, 1981.

On July 20 the Taiwan authorities issued a statement declaring that Dr. Chen's death was the result of "either suicide or an accident." The evidence suggests otherwise: It was **murder**.



Dr. Chen Wen-cheng

We believe that it is most appropriate to hear what Dr. Chen's wife, Su-jen, has to say. Below we reprint an eloquent statement she made at a press conference in Pittsburgh on September 11, 1981. We also present some excerpts from statements made by U.S. Congressman Jim Leach (R-IA). Thirdly we give a listing of articles — mainly from the U.S. media on this case, and on the related issue of spying by Taiwan government agents at University campuses across the U.S.

Here follows Chen Su-jen's statement:

"I am deeply aware of the deep interest and concern that the death of my husband Chen Wen-cheng has generated, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their concern, to express my thoughts about these matters, and to indicate my hopes for the future.

My husband's death was not a suicide or accident. It was murder. Suicide was not his way. He had a future full of potential. He had a new son and a family that he loved and felt proud of, and he had an active and promising career. He was a brilliant and courageous man who loved life and had everything in the world to live for.

Nor was his death an accident. From the minute that I saw his body in the funeral parlor to which it had been taken by the police for custody, I knew that it was not an accident. There were just too many unexplained external wounds, such as a cluster of punctures on his right elbow, a deep wound on his left knee, and three long parallel bruises on his back. In the official autopsy report, these wounds were either mentioned briefly without any explanation of how they might have occurred or they were not mentioned at all.

Only family members were allowed to see his body. Among the many bodies in the funeral parlor, his was the only one that could not be viewed by others.

“My husband’s death was not suicide or accident, it was murder. He was a brilliant and courageous man who loved life and had everything in the world to live for.”

Mrs. Chen Wen-cheng

I would now like to describe a few of the other circumstances surrounding Wen’s death that are not widely known. First of all, when the Taiwan Garrison Command took Wen away on July 2 for the interrogation that led to his death, it was the second time that they had interrogated him. The first time was on June 30, two days earlier.

On June 29, Wen had received a phone call from the Taiwan Garrison Command asking him to come to their offices the next day to discuss his activities in the United States. At this time, the Taiwan Garrison Command held Wen’s exit permit, which he had applied for at Taipei airport upon our arrival in Taiwan six weeks earlier. Under ordinary circumstances, Wen should have received his exit permit within 48 hours after he applied for it, but he had never received it. He had originally planned to return to the United States on July 1, but without his exit permit he had re-scheduled his departure for July 3.

On June 30 Wen went to the Taiwan Garrison Command, and returned, by himself. On that day the interrogation lasted about two hours, and covered both his professional activities and his social activities in the United States. The Taiwan Garrison Command indicated that he should receive his permit on the very next day.

The following day, July 1, I received a phone call at about 5:30 p.m. which supposedly came from the Entrance and Exit Bureau asking that Wen be at home the next morning at 8:00 a.m. to wait for another call from the Bureau, in regard to his exit permit. That phone call never came, but at 8:30 a.m. three civilian clothed men from the Taiwan

Garrison Command came to the door of my brother's apartment, where we were staying, and took Wen for his second interrogation. That was the last time that I, or any other member of his family, saw him alive.

Throughout that day, July 2, I was anxious and worried about my husband. During that day, I had asked a friend of the family to try to find out about Wen's status, but we were advised that we should not make too many inquiries about this matter. Shortly after dinner, however, I could wait no longer and called another friend, Professor Pai, who I knew had connections within the government. He was not at home, and I left word with his wife that he should call me when he came in, no matter how late it was. But he did not call back that night.

My brother and his wife were in their apartment all night waiting for Wen's return, and I kept calling them to learn of any development. Finally after a long sleepless night I again called Professor Pai at 6:30 a.m. on July 3rd. In response to his inquiries



**Dr. Chen and his family before their
fateful trip to Taiwan**

about Wen, he subsequently received two contradictory answers from his sources. At 10:00 a.m. he got the answer that Wen had been released by the Taiwan Garrison Command at about 8:30 a.m. that morning.

I told him that that was impossible because in that case Wen would have been home by then. So Professor Pai went through other channels and got the new answer that Wen had been released at 9:30 p.m. the previous night. There are other contradictions in the answers that we received. When I went to the Taiwan Garrison Command in the afternoon of July 3, I was told that they had escorted Wen back to the ground floor entrance of my brother's apartment building around 9:30 p.m. on the previous night. Later they changed the story, saying that they had escorted him up to the second floor of the building before they had departed.

Teng Wei-hsiang [a friend of the family, who has said that Dr. Chen visited him on the fateful evening. The authorities have used this to “prove” that Chen was alive and well after the interrogation. However, subsequent reports out of Taiwan indicate that Chen may have visited Teng after the first interrogation on June 30th —Ed.] has stated that Wen visited his apartment late at night on July 2. I do not believe that statement. If Wen had been released by the Taiwan Garrison Command after his interrogation he would have let me or some other member of the family know that he was all right. I knew Wen for 12 years. Whenever he was going to be later than expected, by as little as half an hour, he would call me and let me know.

When reporters asked Teng what kind of clothes Wen wore when he visited him that night, and whether Wen removed his shoes when he entered Teng’s apartment, as is the custom in Taiwan, Teng answered that he did not know.

If the Taiwan Garrison Command believes Teng’s statement, why haven’t they tried to find out where Wen was between the time they released him and the time he arrived at Teng’s? Is it reasonable that they would not know? I requested a meeting with Teng and a spokesman for the Taiwan Garrison Command so that I could ask Teng these and other questions, but my request was refused.

My father-in-law wanted to hold a press conference but was warned not to do so. The only way that the authorities could have learned of my father-in-law’s intention was by tapping his phone.

Let me now say a word about campus spies. When Wen came home from his first interrogation on June 30th, he told me that the Taiwan Garrison Command had questioned him about the visit to our home in Pittsburgh of a young woman we had met on just that one occasion. Wen could not even recall who she was when the Taiwan Garrison Command mentioned her name to him, and yet they knew of her visit to our home. How could they have known other than from a report of a spy?

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to friends and Wen’s colleagues at Carnegie-Mellon as well as to the overseas Taiwanese community for their concern, support, and help. I would also like to thank the U.S. Congress and the media in the United States for upholding justice concerning Wen’s death.

I hope that the worldwide response to Wen’s death will help prevent such tyrannical acts in the future. As Wen’s wife, I feel that I have the right and obligation to learn the true cause of his death, and I intend to pursue every avenue open to me.”

Congressman Leach speaks out again

In addition to this statement by Dr. Chen's wife, we present some excerpts from statements made by U.S. Congressman Jim Leach of Iowa. Mr. Leach has a long-held interest in Taiwan and has strongly supported human rights and democracy for the Taiwanese people. On July 9, 1981 Mr. Leach entered a statement in the **Congressional Record**, from which we quote the following:

“...I have indicated to Dr. Tsai Wei-ping, director of the Washington office of the Coordination Council for North American Affairs (the “informal” embassy of Taiwan in the U.S. — Ed.), my concern that this tragic incident be thoroughly investigated and that the results of the investigation be made public as soon as possible.

Hopefully the investigation will yield better results than another about which many Americans concerned for the future of Taiwan remain deeply alarmed. Just 16 months ago, the mother and twin daughters of Taiwan legislator Lin Yi-hsiung were massacred in their home while Un was under detention by martial law authorities who accused him of seditious activity related to the December 1979 Kaohsiung incident. Many questions about the murders of the family of one of Taiwan's most respected young legislators, whom I have been privileged to come to know personally, remain unanswered to this day, but it would appear that the investigation has been abandoned.



Congressman Jim Leach

In the case of Dr. Chen, there is a need to know not only who might have played a role in his death and why, but also a need to probe other aspects of the Taiwan Government's treatment of its critics. How extensive is the Taiwan Government's network of informants here in the United States? Does the Government keep files on every person who participates in anti-Government groups or demonstrations?

Why would the Taiwan Garrison Command consider Dr. Chen, whose views were clear but whose activism was limited, a dangerous influence in our country? How many Taiwanese faculty and students in American Universities are afraid to return to their homeland, lest they be subjected to interrogation at the Taiwan Garrison Command? Will their activities in America be limited by fear of later reprisal?

Most of all, why does the Taiwan Government feel compelled to maintain martial law with rights of arbitrary arrest and detention when few on the island continue to believe in the possibility of military reconquest of the mainland ? Is it not time for the Government to consider widening democratic participation on the island to give a fairer political voice to the native Taiwanese, who by at least a 6-to-1 margin outnumber the Chinese who fled the mainland in the late 1940's ?”

“Is it not time for the Government to consider widening democratic participation on the island to give a fairer political voice to the native Taiwanese ?”

Congressman Leach

On July 10, 1981 Mr. Leach called for Congressional hearings to probe the question of spying by agents of the Taiwan Government in the United States. He stated:

“Given the admitted surveillance by Taiwanese authorities of Professor Chen in the Pittsburgh area and the chilling message his death leaves with everyone of Taiwanese descent living in America, I am convinced of the necessity of highlighting the intelligence activities of the Taiwan Government as well as those of certain other foreign governments and to demand at the highest government levels that these surveillance activities cease.”

Hearings in the House of Representatives

The first one in a series of hearings on Dr. Chen's murder and on the spying issue was held on July 30, 1981 before the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives. Subsequent hearings were held on October 6 (when Dr. Chen's wife testified) and on November 17, 1981. At the first hearing Congressman Leach and President Richard M. Cyert of Carnegie Mellon University presented testimony on the circumstances of Dr. Chen's murder, while others — such as Dr. Mark Chen, President of the World Federation of Taiwanese Associations presented information on spying by agents of the Taiwan Government in the United States. We present a number of quotes from Mr. Leach's statement:

“The case of Dr. Chen illustrates the fears and concerns of thousands of Taiwanese living in the United States. Denied the fundamental rights laid down in our Constitution, they are victims of Taiwan government-directed surveillance and intimidation.

For decades, Taiwanese in the U.S. have been afraid of retribution for speaking out in criticism of their government. They recognize that agents of their government monitor their activities and file reports on them with various parts of Taiwan's security apparatus. They fear being denied visas to return home, having property confiscated or 'frozen.' They fear of having their families harassed, parents and siblings fired or not promoted. They fear of being labeled a 'communist bandit' or 'stooge of the Taiwan Independence elements.' And now, in light of the tragic case of Dr. Chen Wen-cheng, they fear death.

Who was Dr. Chen Wen-cheng?

Friends describe his life as close to a storybook success as any foreign resident of the United States. He had been a top student in his class in college in Taiwan, and in the words of his adviser at the University of Michigan, he was 'outstanding' while pursuing a Ph.D. there in statistics. Just prior to his return to Taiwan in May, he had completed a three-year contract as assistant professor at Carnegie-Mellon University and signed for another three years on his way to probable tenure. He was highly regarded by colleagues and students alike. He deeply loved his work and his family - his wife Chen Su-jen and his year-old son, Chen Han-chie. He was a member of a Taiwanese social club and played an active role in it, notably as a barbecue chef at its seasonal functions."



Prof. Richard M. Cyert

With regard to the Taiwan government's investigation into the cause of Dr. Chen's death, Mr. Leach said the following:

"The report by the District Attorney's investigative task force . . . provides little more than conflicting or unrelated testimony by the District Attorney's witnesses. The investigators obviously made little effort to pursue many of the leads provided them to clear up the inconsistencies."

Further on during his testimony Mr. Leach stated:

"The fact that he (Dr. Chen) was in the Garrison Command's custody and was never again heard from by his family causes even the least skeptical and most naive to question this report. That's because, simply, the Command's reputation is that of

a martial law authority which, when its leaders desire it, enjoys *carte blanche* in efforts to pursue individuals they consider a threat to their monopoly on power and to use whatever means they wish to get a 'guest' to cooperate. The fact the bruises found on Dr. Chen's body would appear of the type inflicted in a beating rather than a fall have not been lost on those following the case.

The TGC's reputation may be exaggerated somewhat by those who, with reason, fear it the most, but enough persons have been abused, tortured and killed over the years by the Command to warrant it the appellation of the ruling party's apparatus of terror."

"... enough persons have been abused, tortured and killed over the years by the [Taiwan Garrison] Command to warrant it the appellation of the ruling party's apparatus of terror."

Congressman Leach

Mr. Leach then discussed the spying activities by Taiwan government agents in the United States:

"The fact that files are kept on Taiwanese students and faculty in this country is nothing new. For more than fifteen years, students have been receiving parents' secret letters, hand-carried here by close friends, informing them of family harassment."

He then presented a lengthy list of ways in which relatives of politically active U.S.-based Taiwanese are the subject of reprisals. He also portrayed in great detail the operations of the Ts'ai-hung ('Rainbow') intelligence network, which runs through the offices of the Coordinating Council for North American Affairs (Taiwan's unofficial 'consulates' in the United States). Mr. Leach indicated that the network collects large amounts of information on Taiwanese individuals and groups who are politically active in the U.S.:

"Knowledge of the thoroughness of the files is often quite shocking for people brought in for interrogation at the TGC. Several days after Dr. Chen Wen-cheng's death, it was revealed by sources within TGC that he had been confronted with tape-recordings of statements he had made in Pittsburgh, as well as photocopies of letters and checks he allegedly sent to Shih Ming-teh, the **Formosa Magazine** general manager who is now serving a life sentence in Taiwan's famous Green Island prison. The Government has since denied that they had tapes of Chen's Pittsburgh comments, but one person whose testimony the TGC has fully supported on all other counts has stated that Chen himself mentioned the tapes in a conversation just hours before his death."

At the end of his statement Mr. Leach called for an FBI investigation of the activities of Taiwan Government agents in the United States:

“It would appear that massive violations of [the Foreign Agents Registration Act] have been made by Taiwan officials in this country, and that a full-scale FBI probe is warranted. It would also appear that information gathered in Pittsburgh is directly responsible for a death in Taiwan, and that the FBI has an obligation to ascertain whether U.S. laws have been violated in the Chen case.

“... just as the Dr. Chen affair has a ‘chilling effect’ on Taiwanese living in this country, a vigorous FBI probe of his death could have a ‘chilling effect’ on the Taiwan Government and upon other foreign governments giving them cause to desist or not to indulge in similar activities. If one government can be held accountable for criminal behavior, others may be more inclined to respect our laws and traditions.

The importance of drawing the line now cannot be exaggerated. Anarchy is increasingly becoming a hallmark of world politics. It is high time for the United States to make clear to the world that our soil will not become a playing field for international hoodlums.”

International press coverage

The death of Dr. Chen and the subsequent hearings in the U.S. Congress attracted considerable attention in the U.S. and international press.

The earliest reports appeared in the **Pittsburgh Press**, where reporters Kathy Kiely and Eleanor Chute presented information on the early developments (July 7, 8, and 9, 1981). The **Pittsburgh Post Gazette** soon followed suit: their staff writer Alvin Rosensweet became the most persistent reporter on the case. Over a period of two months Mr. Rosensweet followed the developments step-by-step. His series of ten articles certainly presents the most detailed report of this tragic affair.

In mid-July — after Congressman Leach’s public statements — the case drew the attention of most major U.S. newspapers and of several international publications. We list the most important articles:

‘US legislator claims professor’s death is related to spying by Taiwan students.’ **International Herald Tribune**, July 15, 1981.

‘Death of Taiwan professor causes uproar on a Pittsburgh campus.’ **New York Times**, July 21, 1981.

‘After police interrogation, a death.’ **Washington Post**, July 28, 1981.

‘Taiwan harassment of students in U.S. reported.’ **Los Angeles Times**, July 31, 1981.

‘Taiwan spies on U.S. students, House panel told.’ **Chicago Sun-Times**, July 31, 1981.

‘Professor Chen goes home.’ **Newsweek** August 3, 1981.

‘Unfall, Selbstmord oder Mord?’ **Frankfurter Allgemeine**, August 5, 1981.

‘Professor’s death linked to alleged Taiwanese spying.’ **Christian Science Monitor**, August 6, 1981.

‘Spies among us; outrage at a professor’s death.’ **TIME Magazine**, August 10, 1981.

‘Death chills a campus.’ By Professor Richard M. Cyert, President of Carnegie-Mellon University, in the **New York Times**, August 27, 1981.

‘Secret cables hint torture of Taiwanese.’ By Jack Anderson in the **Washington Post**, September 14, 1981.

‘Three months after professor’s death, his case still haunts Taiwanese politics.’ **International Herald Tribune**, October 12, 1981.

Four major U.S. newspapers published editorials on Chen’s murder and on the related issue of spying by Taiwan agents in the United States:

‘Another Chen case?’ **Honolulu Advertiser**, July 20, 1981.

‘What happened to Dr. Chen?’ **Wichita Eagle-Beacon**, July 22, 1981.

‘Spying on foreign students.’ **Chicago Tribune**, July 30, 1981.

‘Spy story.’ **Washington Post**, August 6, 1981.

Two Hong Kong-based English-language publications, **Far Eastern Economic Review** and **Asiaweek** also reported extensively on the matter:

Asiaweek:

‘A strange death.’ July 31, 1981.

‘A stranger death.’ August 7, 1981.

‘How did Chen die?’ October 16, 1981 (cover-story).

‘New findings.’ November 27, 1981.

Far Eastern Economic Review:

'Taipei's whodunit.' July 31, 1981.

'Fallout from a death.' August 7, 1981.

Recent developments

On November 17, 1981 U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John H. Holdridge testified before the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific that Chen's death had sparked calls for reform of Taiwan's security police system, but that "none appears imminent" (**Washington Post**, November 18, 1981).

Subsequently, there was a press report that to show its dissatisfaction with Taiwan's explanation of the death as suicide or an accident, the Reagan Administration ".... extended Jimmy Carter's ban on Taiwan's purchase of American riot-control equipment. And the United States will not permit the Taiwan Government to open any new offices here, partly because of Taiwan's surveillance of its nationals on American campuses" (**Newsweek**, November 23, 1981).

On November 25 there was a major reshuffle of government and military officials in Taiwan. Taiwan Garrison Command chief Wang Chin-hsi was replaced by "Taiwanese" general Chen Shou-shan (for more information on how "Taiwanese" Mr. Chen is, see page 13). This move was interpreted by some observers as an attempt by the Taiwan authorities to "... *help ease tensions with the U.S. over Dr. Chen's case*" ('Taiwan police shake-up,' **Newsweek**, December 14, 1981).

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *It appears to us that the removal of TCG-chief Wang is a cosmetic gesture, designed to lead outside observers to believe that basic changes are being made. The contrary is true: Wang's major mistake — in the eyes of his superiors — was that his cover-up of the Chen case did not succeed.*

The fact of the matter is that Taiwan's secret police agencies are retaining their power and influence: the new TGC chief is a protégé of general Wang Sheng, the hardline chief of the "Political Warfare Department" of the Ministry of Defense. General Wang is — probably more than any other government official in Taiwan — responsible for the continuation of the 32 years-old martial law on the island.

Election dilemma

Elections continue to pose a major dilemma for the ruling Chinese Nationalists on Taiwan. They want to be considered “democratic” by the Western countries, and they thus have to go through the ever-recurring process of holding elections. Like any minority regime they know that holding fully free and open elections would mean their downfall, so they proceed with elections that are piously billed as “fair, open, and just,” and they then impose a number of restrictions, which make it very difficult for any opposition grouping to organize itself or be heard.

The recently-held (November 14, 1981) elections for the Provincial Assembly, for the city councils of Taipei and Kaohsiung, and for 19 county magistrate positions thus showed few surprises: the Kuomintang captured 145 (or 77 %) of the 189 contested seats, while the remaining 44 went to *tangwai* (“non-party”) candidates. Of these 44 only about 25 are genuine *tangwai*: the rest are KMT -members portraying themselves as non-party in order to attract more votes [in itself this is an interesting indication of the true popularity of the KMT — Ed.].

It was reported that the election was characterized by the absence of blatant ballot-rigging by the authorities (‘*A vote for Democracy*,’ **Far Eastern Economic Review** November 20, 1981). If this can be counted as a measure of success, then this election would indeed go into history as a “fair, open, and just” election. Nevertheless there was still a considerable amount of vote-buying (see ‘*Much ado about little*,’ **Far Eastern Economic Review**, November 13, 1981).

More importantly, during the campaign preceding the election the opposition candidates remained subject to a sheer endless number of campaign regulations, each one custom-designed to reduce their appetite for running for political office and to minimize their chance of winning. We list the most important ones:

1. First and foremost comes the regulation that no opposition parties can be formed. The *tangwai* candidates may only run for office as individuals. This prevents the opposition from formally establishing a coordination mechanism.
2. The election campaign consisted of ten days; first five days for individually-organized campaign meetings, and then five days during which only government-sponsored meetings could be held. During the first five days the candidates could

only hold meetings at “approved” sites. Needless to say that *tangwai* candidates usually had great difficulty getting approval for their sites, and that KMT candidates got the best sites at the best times of the day.

During the last five days the *tangwai* candidates had to attend the government-sponsored meetings, where their la-minute speeches were sandwiched between the speeches of KMT candidates. This minimized their opportunity to get wide exposure to the public during the crucial final week of the campaign.

3. Both KMT and *tangwai* candidates tried to circumvent the 10-day limit on campaigning by holding tea parties and other such gatherings during the month of October — before the campaign actually started. Invariably the KMT meetings were left undisturbed, while on several occasions the *tangwai* meetings were broken up by the police.
4. Debates between candidates and question-and-answer sessions with the public were not allowed. The candidates were also proscribed from discussing “basic policy” issues. This rule tended to prevent the discussion of real issues, such as martial law, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press.
5. Advertisements in newspapers or on television were not permitted. The government-controlled newsmedia gave ample coverage to the campaigns of KMT candidates and ignored opposition-members.
6. Taiwan authorities — usually very eager to introduce automation — have refused to introduce voting-machines: that would make ballot-tampering more difficult. Ballots are still counted by hand at ballot-counting meetings at which the public can be present to observe the counting. During the November 1981 election the local KMT election committee in Taipei decided that the ballot-counters did not need to show the ballots to the watchers. Appeals by opposition-legislator K’ang Ning-hsiang and several other *tangwai*, who complained that this decision violated the government’s pledge of “openness, fairness, and justice,” were ignored by the government’s central election committee. This situation inspired the following cartoon in one of Taiwan’s surviving pro-*tangwai* monthlies:



Ballot-counter: “According to the regulations, I cannot show you this ballot. Let’s just guess for whom this person voted.”

Prison report

1. **Shih Ming-teh on hunger strike.** On November 20, 1981 reports reached the outside world that on November 4th imprisoned opposition leader Shih Ming-teh had started a hunger strike to protest the murder of Professor Chen Wen-cheng. Mr. Shih’s family was allowed to visit him on November 15th. During this visit he told them that he had been on hunger strike for eleven days. The meeting lasted a little more than two minutes: Mr. Shih was dragged away by prison guards. During the last week of November approximately 30 other political prisoners on Green Island also went on hunger strike in solidarity with Mr. Shih. The strike apparently ended on December 4th.
2. **Chang Fu-chung loses the wrong tooth.** The medical treatment of political prisoners in Taiwan is not quite what it should be: recently writer Chang Fu-chung complained

that he had a toothache. He was hauled into the office of the prison doctor, who quickly extracted not the aching tooth but a good tooth!!

3. **At Kueishan prison the family visits are very brief.** It has been two years since Reverend Hsu T'ien-hsien was dragged from his pulpit during the Christmas Service of Sunday, December 23, 1979. Since then he has been jailed for his participation in the Kaohsiung rally. He is presently being held at Kueishan prison in northern Taiwan. His residence and parish are in southern Taiwan, so now his wife has to travel totally some ten hours each time she wants to visit her imprisoned husband. One would expect that the prison authorities would let her be with her husband for a reasonably lengthy period. However, they may see each other for only ten minutes.
4. **Imprisoned Church official harassed.** According to reports coming out of Taiwan in October 1981, prison officials at Tu-cheng prison continue to harass and threaten Ms. Lin Wen-chen — who is Principal of the Calvin Theological College for Women. Ms. Lin was accused of playing a key role in harboring Formosa Magazine general manager Shih Ming-teh. Before August she was allowed to receive food from the outside - which was a welcome change from the monotonous prison food. However, in August she was singled out and denied further “outside food.”

China's overtures

During September and October, 1981 the authorities of the People's Republic of China staged a major campaign to woo the Chinese Nationalist rulers back into the “embrace of the motherland.” The appeals were timed to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Revolution of 1911, which overthrew the Manchu dynasty and which was the beginning of a long struggle for power on the mainland. The PRC campaign was apparently also designed to forestall President Reagan's plans to sell advanced fighter aircraft to Taiwan.

The response of the Kuomintang authorities was a predictable “no.” However, there are signs that their hard resistance to any form of contacts is dwindling: in October a mainlander KMT-member of the legislature in Taipei, Pu Shao-fu proposed that the Taiwan government allow mainland artists and intellectuals to visit Taiwan.

One week later Mr. Pu traveled to Hong Kong and met with several executives of Peking publications. If any native Taiwanese had done the same thing as Mr. Pu he would

have been arrested and sentenced to life for “sedition”. However, several weeks later Chiang Ching-kuo’s Executive Yuan called Pu’s proposals “meaningful and constructive” (*Reunification: A Contact in Hong Kong*, **Asiaweek**, November 20, 1981).

Peking’s peace offensive also moved some aging mainlanders on Taiwan to decide to return to China: elderly oceanology professor Lin Lu-min defected and settled in his native Fukien province. A more severe blow to the KMT was the defection of professor Ma Bi, an adviser to the infamous Taiwan Garrison Command, and a “special researcher” at the General Political Department of Taiwan’s armed forces. He was considered an expert on Sun Yat-sen’s “Three People’s Principles” and has written several books on the topic.

Another result of Peking’s campaign was that several publications in the U.S. and Europe finally started looking at the plight of the native Taiwanese, and at their struggle for democracy. We present some quotes from three major newspapers:

“..... their recent political activism have suddenly turned them into a domestic political force and an important — some say vital — factor in the sticky reunification issue.”

“But most [native Taiwanese] opposition leaders believe the mainland Chinese here still yearn for their motherland and eventually will make a deal [with China] at the islanders’ expense.”

Both quotes are from: *Native Taiwanese are Key Factor in Delicate Reunification Issue*, **Washington Post**, November 4, 1981.

“..... Peking’s campaign for increased communications between Taiwan and the mainland could have the effect on aging mainlanders eager to catch a glimpse of their native provinces or to be reunited with their relatives. But for the vast majority of native-born Taiwan-ese, the replacement of the Kuomintang by the communists would only mean the substitution of one mainlander regime by another.” (*Peking woos Taiwan, but is key ‘silent majority’ listening ?* **The Christian Science Monitor**, October 12, 1981).

“The most logical step would be for [Taiwan and China] to recognize the great political and economic gulf which now separates them and admit Taiwan’s existence as a separate country. This solution has always been rejected with horror as much by Taiwan as Peking. Kuomintang officials in Taiwan fear local nationalism and they cling grimly to their Chinese-ness. But, as they die off and a new generation rises, the idea of independence will probably become more attractive” (*China’s overtures to Taiwan*, **The Financial Times**, London, October 8, 1981).

Notes

1. A “Taiwanese” general for the Garrison Command? The recent replacement of the commander-in-chief of the Taiwan Garrison Command has been interpreted by some foreign observers as a move by the Taiwan authorities to reduce the police-state image that Taiwan has recently received as the consequence of the arrest of opposition leaders following the Kaohsiung incident, the murder of the mother and twin-daughters of imprisoned Provincial Assembly member Lin Yi-hsiung, and the murder of Professor Chen Wen-cheng this past summer.

The selection of “Taiwanese” general Chen Shou-shan was billed as an improvement over the present repressive situation. We must disappoint the optimists by pointing out that general Chen is not a Taiwanese at all: he originates from Fukien province and came to Taiwan after 1945. During the “February 28, 1947” incident he was the right-hand man of general Peng Meng-chi, and he thus shares responsibility for the massacre of thousands of Taiwanese, who were protesting against the corruption and repression of the Chinese Nationalists. After the 2-28 incident he formally changed his residence from Chuan-chi in Fukien province on the mainland) to Taipei, Taiwan.

2. The “Religious Law” comes through the back door. During the summer of 1979 the Taiwan authorities attempted to pass a law on “Temples, Shrines, Churches, and Mosques,” which would have given the authorities the right to interfere in Church affairs: the proposed law was mainly aimed at the Presbyterian Church. The proposal was put on the back burner after U.S. Congressmen and Church organizations both inside and outside Taiwan expressed deep concern about it.

It now appears that the authorities have started to implement the law without passing it first: recently a “consultative Committee on Religious Affairs” was set up at the provincial level. This committee was given considerable powers. Also a new administrative position of “officer in charge of religion and customs” has been created. In most counties and municipalities these officers have already taken up their positions. Local Presbyterian Church congregations have been pressured to register their church property with these officers.

3. Kuomintang: “Confiscating publications helps democracy.” The Taiwan authorities apparently consider freedom of the press and democracy to be mutually exclusive. For several months a number of non-party politicians have urged the government to lift

the ban on new publications, and to stop confiscating magazines which publish articles containing minor criticism of the government (during the past year almost every month a magazine was confiscated by the police authorities).

On November 21, 1981 the Executive Yuan issued a statement in response to questions from opposition legislator Hsu Jung-hsü (whose husband Chang Chün-hung was one of the “Kaohsiung Eight”). The government’s statement said — in part:

“... our government must *prevent our enemy from using democracy and freedom* as excuses to engage in subversive activities. In the interest of all the people, we therefore have a *temporary* restriction on the registration of new publications. We want to avoid *malicious competition* in the newspaper business II (emphasis added).

To our subscribers

We must apologize for the long time-span between the appearance of the previous issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* and the one you have now in front of you. In order to make up for it we will extend each subscriber’s subscription by half a year.

In the present issue we attempt to cover the past half year as fully as possible. Some of the information is therefore a bit outdated, but we felt that — for the record — it should still be included.

From now on we will publish *Taiwan Communiqué* approximately once every two months — unless events in Taiwan warrant a higher frequency.

Articles and Publications

The American monthly publication **MS Magazine** published an excellent article about Taiwan’s women-rights leader Lü Hsiu-lien in their December 1981 issue. We reprint the article on the next page:

Ms.

GAZETTE

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

NEWS FROM ALL OVER

Sentenced for Feminism 12 YEARS TO LIFE



December 10 is Human Rights Day around the world. But in Taiwan, the arrests in recent years of feminists, civil rights advocates, intellectuals, and religious leaders only symbolize the lack of human rights. Two years ago on December 10 in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, a human rights day rally exploded into violence and more than 200 people were arrested. Eight of them, including two feminist leaders, were tried by military tribunal for "sedition," convicted, and received sentences of from 12 years to life. All of the eight were associated with *Formosa* magazine, an antimilitary government publication that sponsored the demonstration.

The two feminists are Lu Hsiu-lien, 37, an editor of

Formosa, who had been organizing and writing about women's issues in Taiwan for more than a decade, and Chen Chu, 31, deputy director of the magazine's Kaohsiung office. All the defendants at the trial claimed that "confessions" had been illegally extracted from them during two months of intensive interrogation, which included beatings, denial of sleep, and psychological pressure. Lu reported that she was threatened with her own execution and the arrest of her family and friends.

Lu, a lawyer with a master's degree from Harvard, had been a candidate for the Taiwanese National Assembly in 1978—before these elections were canceled. She was determined that despite the

repressive environment, the goals of feminism would be pursued in the political arena and she did not hesitate to speak out and publish, though the government banned most of her books. (Her publications include "New Feminism," "The Amendment for Legalizing Abortion," and "The Past and Future of Taiwan.") She also founded hot lines for women in two Taiwanese cities.

After Lu was arrested, Yeh Tao-wei, a sociologist who also had studied in the United States, tried to continue her organizing work. Yeh founded a "sideline" crisis clinic and a women's aid center in Kaohsiung, and planned to run in the next scheduled National Assembly elections. But she, too, was arrested in the fall of 1980 and also was convicted of sedition by a military court in early 1981; she was sentenced to 14 years in prison.

Amnesty International has adopted the cases of Lu and Chen and is considering that of Yeh. To protest these arrests, write President Chiang Chung-kuo, Chieh Shou Hall, Chungking S. Road, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China; and send copies to your Congressional representatives in Washington. —Jon Knippers Block, Amy Conger, and Mary Kay Dunphy

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<i>Taiwan Communiqué supports a free, democratic, and independent Taiwan, and campaigns for full and equal membership of Taiwan in the international community, including a seat in the UN. Please support our activities with your contributions. Internet homepage: http://www.taiwandc.org</i>	
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