



# Taiwan Communiqué

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## Gearing up for presidential elections

### *Tsai Ing-wen is the DPP nominee*

During the past few weeks, Taiwan has started to get into gear for the 2012 elections. On 19 April 2011 the Central Election Commission decided that the Legislative Yuan elections (originally slated for December 2011) and the Presidential elections (originally slated for March 2012) would be combined and held on Saturday 14 January 2012.

A few days later, on 27 April 2011, the DPP announced that Tsai Ing-wen was the winner in its primary process, beating out former Prime Minister Su Tseng-chang. The nomination was formally confirmed by the DPP's Central Standing Committee on 4 May 2011. At the same time, the Kuomintang announced that incumbent President Ma Ying-jeou would be its candidate. Some analysis and commentary:

### *Combining the presidential and legislative elections*

A heated debate erupted in Taiwan about the reasons for combining the elections. Many commentators indicate that this executive decision was made because president Ma felt it was to his advantage to have the legislative and presidential elections coincide: his popularity is relatively low (around 33% in most opinion

Photo: Democratic Progressive Party



DPP Chair Tsai Ing-wen becomes presidential candidate

polls) and by combining the elections he hopes to be able to ride the coattails of popular local candidates. However, in many districts, particularly in the South, the local candidates see Ma as a risk, and want to distance themselves from the president.

Another effect of combining the elections is that it increases the turnout, and a higher turnout has traditionally been good for the ruling Kuomintang: people who would otherwise stay home and not vote for the president come out, vote for their local candidate, and then they might as well cast their vote for the president.

A second issue in moving the presidential vote from March to January is that it significantly lengthens the transition period, since the inauguration date is constitutionally fixed on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Many observers are asking what will happen during this long transition period, particularly if the DPP wins. Will some right-wing elements in the old Kuomintang create unrest or organize demonstrations against the new government? And what will China do under those circumstances? Will it act rationally, or will it create unrest or tension?

## ***Will the elections be fair?***

A continuing issue is also the fairness of the elections. While the vote counting by the Central Election Commission is generally considered to be fair and non-partisan, a number of other factors do tilt the playing field in favor of the ruling Kuomintang party.

One major factor is money. The Kuomintang is reportedly the richest political party in the world, reaping the benefits from many companies and enterprises it has owned since it came from China in 1945-49. Major amounts of funds are channeled to the local levels, where they are used by local KMT officials to influence the vote.

A second factor are the *Taishang*, Taiwanese businessmen in China who have benefitted from the KMT's China-leaning policies. They are induced to fly back to Taiwan and cast their vote for the ruling party. Some observers suggest that the new date of the combined elections, one week before Lunar New Year, was specifically chosen to facilitate the vote of the businessmen, who would be returning home for the New Year.

A third factor is related to control of the press. While Taiwan's media do show a reasonably wide spread across the political spectrum, the major publications such as the **China Times** and **United Daily News** are very much in the pocket of the ruling Kuomintang, while several other publications are increasingly under the control of money

interests favorable to China. Only the **Taipei Times**, **Liberty Times** and **Formosa TV** are considered part of the Green Camp and can be expected to present more objective news.

## ***How will China influence the elections?***

Then there is the question how China will attempt to influence the elections. A first salvo across the bow was already fired in early May 2011, when Jia Qinglin, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), urged the people of Taiwan to “choose the right person” in order to maintain the stable development of the cross-strait relationship. Jia made his remarks when meeting Wu Poh-siung, the former chairman of Taiwan’s ruling Kuomintang (KMT) in Chengdu on 6 May 2011.

DPP Chairwoman and presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen responded that China should realize that the Kuomintang will not be the ruling party in Taiwan forever and must therefore try to establish a “certain relationship” with the DPP sooner or later. “*It is the DPP’s policy to maintain an open-minded and practical attitude toward the cross-strait relationship when we regain power in 2012,*” Tsai said. “*We will try to find a way to establish a ‘mutual and long-term’ relationship with China. And we are also hoping that China is on the same track.*”

Copyright: Taipei Times



**KMT legislators about combined elections: "It's no good. Master Ma is still scared of the tiger, even with all of us here to protect him."**

Observers in Taiwan also predict that in the run up to the elections, China will grant Ma and his government a number of symbolic favors in order to increase his chances of winning the elections. In the meantime, Ma himself is returning to the “I am for Taiwan” mode, which characterized his 2008 election campaign. This became evident with the choice of the campaign slogan for the elections: “Taiwan Cheers, Great!”

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** *It is doubtful that the voting public will be convinced this time around. The experience of Ma pushing his “Taiwan” identity during the 2008 election campaign, and then turning 180 degrees around after his May 2008 inauguration and going off on the “We are all Chinese” angle is not easily forgotten.*

*People in Taiwan do want peaceful relations with China, but many feel that Ma has gone too far too fast in accommodating the PRC, and has insufficiently protected Taiwan’s interests, both in the economic area (ECFA), as well as in the areas of international space and safeguarding Taiwan’s sovereignty. Time and again he compromised Taiwan’s sovereignty and dignity in order to win favors from the PRC and make it appear that he was making headway in gaining international space.*

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## The World Health Organization and Taiwan

### *Internal memo: Taiwan is “province of China”*

On 9 May 2011, DPP legislator Kuan Bi-ling announced in Taipei that she had received an internal World Health Organization memo instructing its agencies to refer to Taiwan as “province of China.” The memo, dated 14 September 2010, also stated that procedures used by the WHO to facilitate relations with Taiwan were subject to Chinese approval. The memo further stated that Taiwan “as a province of China, cannot be party to the International Health Regulations (IHR).”

The information in the memo stands in stark contrast to the image presented by the Ma Ying-jeou administration, which announced the “breakthrough” in May 2009, and emphasized that Taiwan’s observership amounted to “substantive participation” and had come about as a result of direct negotiations with the WHO, without Chinese involvement.

The disclosure of the memo caused a firestorm in Taiwan, with the democratic opposition and overseas Taiwanese organizations accusing the Ma administration of misleading the public on the issue, and the Ma administration itself scrambling to do damage control by filing a protest with the WHO.

However, the protest letter itself became a source of controversy when it was discovered that phrases concerning Taiwan’s sovereignty, which appeared in the Chinese-language

version and which were clearly for domestic consumption, disappeared in the English text. Terms referring to “the nation” or “our country” in the Chinese text were mysteriously translated as “my”, “I” and “our”.

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**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** The episode clearly shows that the approach taken by the Ma administration in creating more international space for Taiwan is leading nowhere. If anything, it has increased the PRC’s stranglehold on the issue: by insisting that Taiwan be labeled a “province of China”, the PRC is trying to put Taiwan and the international community before a fait accompli.



**Ma administration:** "That was my strongest protest yet ... They can't possibly ignore it."

The only way out of this quagmire is for Taiwan to present itself as a free and democratic nation under the name “Taiwan” and forget about any fuzzy designations such as “Chinese, Taipei.” For the international community it is essential to make a push to accept Taiwan in its midst, and resist Beijing’s bullying. History has shown that appeasement of authoritarian regimes has disastrous consequences.

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## The Jasmine revolution No quiet Sunday stroll in China

Another series of events with implication for relations between Taiwan and China were the Jasmine revolutions in North Africa, where street demonstrations toppled repressive regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, and where turmoil is still ongoing in Yemen, Syria and Libya.

The whiff of jasmine drifted over into East Asia, prompting democracy activists in China to call for Sunday afternoon strolls and for people to smile at each other during these strolls. The Chinese authorities wanted none of this, and harshly cracked down on the

budding movement, arresting dozens of activists and closing down websites and blogs which even hinted at the word “jasmine.”

To the people in Taiwan, the Chinese crackdown – in particular the arrest of prominent artists Ai Weiwei – was a stark reminder that the Beijing regime is still highly repressive, and that the Ma administration’s rapprochement towards the PRC carried major risks.

A good analysis of this situation was given by ambassador Nat Bellocchi:

## ***A chance to stand on the right side of history***

*By Nat Bellocchi, former chairman of the American Institute in Taiwan. This article first appeared in the Taipei Times on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2011. Reprinted with permission.*

The “Jasmine Revolution” is rolling over North Africa: first Tunisia, then Egypt and now Libya. Oppressed people are suddenly seeing that entrenched regimes are not forever, and are taking to the streets, giving people power new meaning.

However, it is having worldwide repercussions: Restlessness and unrest has not been confined to neighboring countries such as Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. This weekend, pro-democracy activists in China attempted to spread the word on the Jasmine Revolution, leading to an unprecedented crackdown by security forces, and an almost total clampdown on the Internet. In addition, the Chinese Communist Party politburo reportedly met to discuss measures to prevent the news of what is happening in North Africa from spreading in China.

Where this is going in China is anybody’s guess, but we need to ask the question: “Whose side are you on?” In Egypt, people suffered under former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak’s repression for many decades. His secret police was all-powerful and it had student spies at US universities, tattling on their fellow students.

However, during the decades when this went on, few in the West had an inkling of what was going on and even fewer saw what was coming. Mubarak was perceived as an ally of the West and the US and Western European governments didn’t want to “rock the boat” and upset the “sensitive relations” with the regime. In doing so, we neglected to maintain relations with the leadership of the democratic movement — those who will be important in the days ahead.

By the same token, many in the West are all too concerned about not “rocking the boat”

and upsetting the “sensitive relations” with the repressive leaders in Beijing. We need to be on the right side of history and do a much better job in establishing and maintaining good relations with those who work for human rights and democracy — in China itself, as well as in Tibet and East Turkestan [Xinjiang]. The Dalai Lamas and Rebiya Kadeers of this world need to be guests of honor in the White House and presidential offices around the world all the time.

For Taiwan, there is a particularly important role. Under the government of President Ma Ying-jeou it has moved toward “rapprochement” with China, but in the view of many observers, it has been too accommodating and has put insufficient emphasis on democracy and human rights.

Ma recently emphasized in an interview with the Washington Post that he wants US arms sales to proceed in order to negotiate with China “from a position of strength.” While we need to be fully supportive of US arms sales to Taiwan, we must also emphasize that Taiwan’s most important asset is its democracy. That gives it much more “strength” than all the weapon systems combined.

So, in its dealings with China, Taiwan needs to be up front with human rights and democracy, instead of keeping these issues on the back burner or avoiding them altogether. Taiwan can help China best by being much more supportive of China’s democratic movement. Taiwan should warmly welcome the Dalai Lama and World Uyghur Congress president Rebiya Kadeer instead of trying to keep these courageous leaders out.

If and when a monumental change takes place in China, as well as in Tibet and East Turkestan, we need to be able to say that we were on the right side of history. We need to be able to say that we helped push in the right direction. Taiwan has a proud history of democratic change. That needs to be held up as an example for China to follow.

Copyright: Taipei Times



China "threatened" by the Jasmine blossom

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## ***Who is missing 36,000 documents?***

In early April 2011, press reports from Taiwan indicated that the Ma administration had “discovered” that some seventeen former DPP officials had “failed to return” a total of some 36,000 documents, which they received during their term in their respective offices.

The DPP officials responded that they had filed and classified documents according to the standard regulations, and accused the Ma government of using the issue as “political persecution” in the run up to next year’s presidential and legislative elections.

A group of international scholars and writers agreed, and wrote the following open letter to President Ma. The letter was originally signed by 34 scholars, but Rev. Milo Thornberry, author of “*FireproofMoth*” (see book review on pp. 21-23) joined the group after the letter had been sent to the press.

### ***Open letter to President Ma Ying-jeou***

Dear President Ma,

April 8<sup>th</sup> 2011

*As you will recall, on a number of earlier occasions, we the undersigned, scholars and writers from the US, Canada, Europe and Australia, have publicly addressed our concerns to you about a number of worrisome trends in Taiwan. We raised these issues as international supporters of Taiwan’s democracy who care deeply about the country and its future as a free and democratic nation-state.*

*At this time we write you to express our concerns about a recent new development: the charges by your government that seventeen former DPP officials violated the National Archives Act and two other laws by “failing to return” some 36,000 documents during the DPP administration.*

*According to a statement by your government on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, the case is currently being investigated by the Control Yuan, which indicated that criminal charges might be lodged as well.*

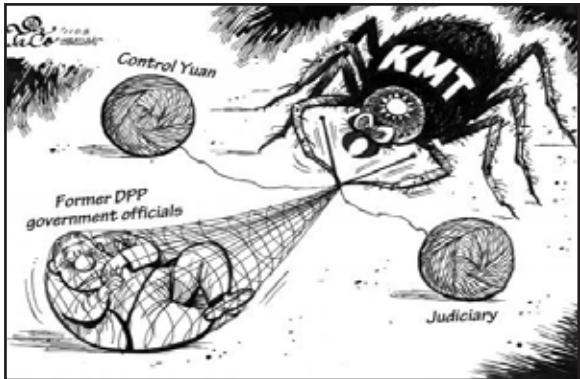
*The list of names of those being investigated includes DPP luminaries such as former secretary-general of the presidential office and minister of transportation Yeh Chu-lan, former secretary-general and foreign minister Mark Chen, former deputy secretary-*

*general and ambassador to Washington Joseph Wu, former deputy secretary-general and foreign minister Eugene Chien, and former secretary-general and prime minister Su Tseng-chang.*

*We are disquieted by the timing of this announcement. If any documents had been “missing”, this should have been noted during the transition period between the DPP administration and your government in 2008. To come up with this matter three years later, when the primaries for next year’s presidential elections are underway, does suggest a political motive.*

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*Moreover, the announcement of the “missing documents” actually came one day before Mr. Su Tseng-chang declared his candidacy in the DPP presidential primary. Mr. Su will undoubtedly play an important role in the upcoming presidential elections, either as a candidate himself or as a supporter of the eventual candidate. Announcing an investigation of him and the others at this time certainly gives the impression of a political ploy intended to undermine and discredit the DPP and its candidates.*



**KMT spider tightening the "missing documents web" around former DPP officials**

*We also want to point out that, in any governmental organization, after documents are seen and reviewed by the high officials, they are processed and filed by lower level officials. These generally are civil servants, who do not change from DPP to KMT administration. In Taiwan’s regulation-governed bureaucracy, they will not easily deviate from the established rules on handling of documents.*

*As observers of political developments in Taiwan for many decades, we believe that these charges are unwarranted and politically motivated. Obviously, in a democracy there is a need to uphold the law, but this needs to be done fairly and evenhandedly, without any hint of abuse of power.*

*In our view, this move by your government is seriously lacking on both counts. It appears to be an attempt to use the Control Yuan and judicial system for political ends, in an effort to appear “legal” and avoid criticism by foreign governments and human rights groups.*

*We therefore urge you and your government to sustain Taiwan’s democracy at the highest levels, and refrain from using the judicial system for political purposes.*

*The Taiwanese people worked hard to make the transition to democracy only twenty years ago. They deserve to have leaders who play by rules that are fair, balanced and unbiased.*

*Respectfully yours,*

The letter was signed by a total of 35 scholars, writers and former US and British government officials, including Ambassador Nat Bellocchi, former Chairman of the American Institute in Taiwan, Prof. Jean Pierre Cabestan of the Hong Kong Baptist University, Gordon G. Chang, author of *“The Coming Collapse of China.”*, Prof. June Teufel Dreyer of the University of Miami, Michael Rand Hoare, Emeritus Reader at the University of London, Prof. Christopher R. Hughes, London School of Economics and Political Science, Thomas G. Hughes, former chief of staff to the late Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI), Prof. Bruce Jacobs of Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, Richard C. Kagan, Professor Emeritus of History, Hamline University, St. Paul Minnesota, Hon. David Kilgour, former Member Parliament and Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific (2002-2003), Canada, and Prof. André Laliberté of the University of Ottawa, Canada.

The signatories further included Prof. Daniel Lynch of the University of Southern California, Prof. Victor H. Mair of the University of Pennsylvania, The Very Rev. Bruce McLeod, former president, Canadian Council of Churches and former moderator, the United Church of Canada, Prof. Donald Rodgers of Austin College, Texas, Prof. Christian Schafferer of the Overseas Chinese Institute and Chair Austrian Association of East Asian Studies, Prof. David Schak of Griffith University, Australia, Prof. Peter Tague, Professor of Law, Georgetown University, Prof. Ross Terrill, Fairbank Center, Harvard University, author of *“The New Chinese Empire”* and *“Mao”*, Rev. Milo L. Thornberry. Author, *“Fireproof Moth, A missionary in Taiwan’s White Terror”*, John J. Tkacik Jr., U.S. Foreign Service (Retired), Prof. Arthur Waldron, Lauder Professor of International Relations, University of Pennsylvania, Prof. Michael Yahuda, Professor Emeritus, the London School of Economics & Visiting Scholar, George Washington University, and Stephen Yates, President of DC International Advisory, and former Deputy Assistant to the Vice President for National Security Affairs

## ***The KMT government's irate response***

Ma administration officials responded furiously to the letter, with the presidential office and foreign ministry calling press conferences on 10 and 11 April 2011 to denounce the group of foreign scholars and call on them to “respect Taiwan’s rule of law.” The officials also denied that there were any political considerations in the investigation.

On 13 April 2011 the foreign ministry initiated a probe into whether the 34 foreign scholars and writers had actually signed the letter or knew its contents. A number of the scholars across the globe subsequently were invited by the local Taiwan representative offices to discuss the matter over lunch or dinner.

The office of the president even circulated a four-page response by presidential spokesman Lo Chih-chang, defending the government’s position. But until now, there have been no further reports that the investigation into the missing documents was proceeding.

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## **Erosion of justice and democracy**

### ***Forty eight cases of political prosecution***

Over the past few years – since the inauguration of President Ma Ying-jeou – we have regularly reported on the erosion of justice in Taiwan, and in particular about the (ab)use of the judiciary against members of the former DPP government.

Until now it was difficult to measure how widespread the practice of judicial persecutions was, but recently we received an overview of political cases, listing 48 known cases of prosecution of former DPP members. While not all of these defendants might have been totally without fault, the manner in which they were prosecuted does show a political agenda on the part of the prosecutors.

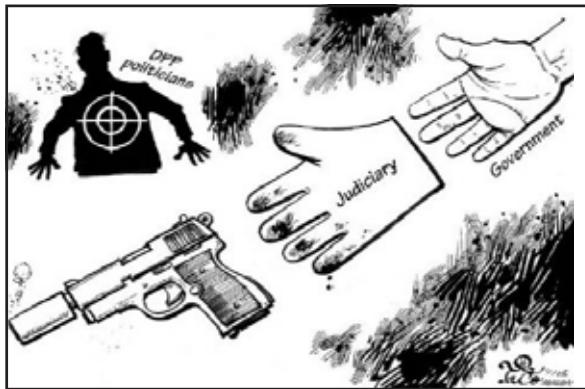
Among the cases listed are former minister of interior Yu Cheng-hsien, former foreign minister Mark Chen, former prime minister Yu Shyi-kun, former transportation and communication minister Kuo Yao-chi, current Chiayi county magistrate Chen Ming-wen, and current Yunlin county magistrate Su Chih-fen.

In a number of the listed cases, the proceedings have gone to the local District Court and even to the Taiwan High Court already, but both courts – to their credit – ruled that the defendants were not guilty. But in each case the prosecutors appealed the case to the Supreme Court, thus dragging on the cases.

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** *This technique of perpetually appealing legal cases against present and former DPP officials seems to have become a standard weapon in the arsenal of the KMT-leaning prosecutors. It has all the appearance of legality, but in the meantime it ties the defendants down, leads to extravagant defense costs, and continues to hang over their heads like a dark cloud.*

Copyright: Taipei Times

*The “blue” character of the judicial establishment is of course a heritage of some 50 years of Kuomintang rule, much of it under a one-party martial law, which lasted from 1949 through 1987. During that period, the judiciary system was an instrument of repression, and many judges and prosecutors in the system owed their position – and allegiance – to the KMT party.*



**The use of the judiciary for political persecution**

*Under presidents Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian, there was a significant effort to make the judiciary more independent and politically neutral. This was only partly successful, as even then there were cases with a strongly anti-DPP bias, such as the prosecution of Tainan mayor George Chang and National Science Council vice minister Sheih Ching-chih.*

*However, after President Ma came to power, a generally vindictive atmosphere was created by the new government in which the prosecutors felt at liberty to go after virtually any former DPP official, resulting in the wave of arrests and prosecutions which started in November 2008. Many of these were “fishing expeditions” which never resulted in convictions, but certainly meant a lot of hardship for the people involved.*

*One could ask if a politically neutral prosecutor would not have gone after former president Chen Shui-bian. That probably would have been the case, but in that*

*situation Chen would have received a fair trial and would have been treated in a civilized manner, not been questioned for 30 hours in a row, not gotten a cell without a table or chair or been handcuffed and ankle-cuffed when going for a medical checkup. Those are certainly indications of political retribution.*

*The string of prosecutorial and judicial misconduct shows that the judiciary is still far from professional and politically neutral, prompting many legal insiders in Taiwan and outside observers like New York University Law Professor Jerome Cohen to call for fundamental judicial reform on the island.*

## ***Former President Chen not guilty on diplomatic funds charges***

In previous issues of *Taiwan Communiqué* we reported on the court cases against former President Chen Shui-bian and his wife Wu Shu-jen, who were sentenced in December 2010 to a total of seventeen years imprisonment on two separate bribery and embezzlement charges. We particularly focused on the flawed judicial procedures against them, and on the ill-treatment of the former president in prison.

In a new twist, the Taiwan's Supreme Court on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2011 found the former President not guilty on a third case against him, charges of embezzling \$330,000 from a special diplomatic fund. The decision upheld the ruling of two lower courts.

Prosecutors had alleged that Chen pocketed the money reserved for foreign trips for personal use. Presumably, any charges on this point would open a Pandora box of charges against present (KMT) officials, who are using the funds in similar fashion.

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## **Is the US “abandoning” Taiwan?**

### ***Various scholars express doubt on US commitment***

During the past few months, a number of US scholars and writers have suggested that the US reduce its commitment to the defense of Taiwan, primarily to smoothen relations with a rising and more assertive China. The first recent article along those lines was Prof. Charles Glaser's essay “*Will China's rise lead to war? Why realism does not mean*

*pessimism*", which was published in the March/April issue of **Foreign Affairs**.

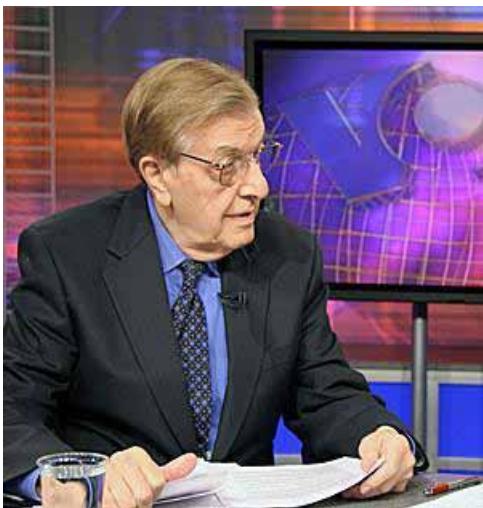
This was followed in quick succession by 1) a report titled "A way ahead with China" authored by a roundtable group of scholars and former officials headed by former admiral Joseph W. Prueher, and published by the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia, 2) a paper drafted by George Washington University Professor Bob Sutter titled "*Taiwan's Future: Narrowing Straits*", 3) a paper by the Cato Institute's Ted Galen Carpenter, titled "*The ticking Taiwan time bomb*", 4) publication of an address by former ambassador Chas W. Freeman to the China Maritime Studies Institute, titled "*Beijing, Washington, and the Shifting Balance of Prestige*", and finally 5) an OpEd in the **Taipei Times** of 11 May 2011 by Prof. John Copper of Rhodes College in Memphis Tennessee, titled "*Could US policy abandon Taiwan.*"

With such a wave of articles expounding the same line, outsiders could be forgiven for thinking that Washington was about to change course on the issue of relations with Taiwan, but key Washington insiders such as Richard Bush of Brookings and Charles W. Freeman III have argued that these ideas have little traction in Washington and are "very much fringe commentary."

As it was, the wave of "abandon Taiwan" articles was quickly followed by a long series of rebuttals, including by people such as ambassador Nat Bellocchi, former Chairman of the American Institute in Taiwan, Messrs. Dan Blumenthal and Gary Schmitt of the American Enterprise Institute, Mr. Rupert Hammond Chambers of the US-Taiwan Business Council, and by **Taiwan Communiqué** editor Gerrit van der Wees, who authored an article titled "*The US will continue to support Taiwan*", published in the **Taipei Times** at <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2011/05/16/2003503338>

Below, we reprint an article by Ms. Mei-chin Chen of Washington DC, who presents a number of key counterarguments.

Photo: Voice of America



**Former AIT Chairman Nat Bellocchi:  
rebutting the "abandon Taiwan" line**

## ***What about protecting Taiwan's democracy?***

*By Mei-chin Chen, a commentator based in Washington DC. This article was first published in the Taipei Times on 16 May 2011. Reprinted with permission.*

Several US academics have argued in recent articles that the US should distance itself from Taiwan because China's power and influence are rising and it would become more "costly" for the US to maintain close ties with Taipei, and in particular maintain its defense obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act.

Charles Glaser of George Washington University argued along those lines in a recent article in Foreign Affairs, while Bob Sutter, also of GWU, recently painted an equally gloomy picture, saying that the rise of China is giving Beijing leverage over Taiwan, and in light of Taiwan's weakening positions in economic and military strength and the diplomatic front, the status quo is becoming unsustainable and Taiwan has very limited options for its future and unification with China is deemed inevitable.

The academics seem to make two assumptions: first, that the rise of China is unstoppable and the US needs to adjust its policy to accommodate Beijing's increasing influence on the international stage; and second, that given China's economic and military power, Chinese annexation of Taiwan is a foregone conclusion.

Neither of these assumptions takes account of the most important reason for US support for Taiwan — that Taiwan is a democracy and that China is still ruled by an authoritarian regime. If the US wants democracy to prevail in East Asia, it needs to be more assertive in its support for a democratic nation like Taiwan.

If the US wants China to become democratic, it needs to maintain a vibrant democracy on its doorstep. Right under the surface in China, people are clearly longing for a more free and open political system. Hundreds of human rights activists are languishing in prison, including Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo. In recent months, China has, in an effort to prevent anything similar to the revolutions spreading across the Arab world, intensified repressive measures and arrested and imprisoned more human rights activists, journalists, Internet bloggers and artists.

The basic conclusion is that China will not become democratic if the US gives up on Taiwan. However, the scenario of Taiwan's eventual unification with China is also totally out of step with the aspirations of Taiwanese. A recent opinion poll conducted by the Global Views survey center showed that nearly 70 percent of respondents rejected

unification with China, and given a free choice, would opt for independence.

At this point, the people of Taiwan can still say what they want, in spite of China's military threat and intimidation. In less than eight months, on Jan. 14, Taiwanese are going to the polls to elect a new president.

The choice is clear: the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) government of President Ma Ying-jeou has maneuvered Taiwan into closer orbit with China, while the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) wants to retain Taiwan's freedom and democracy, and — if elected — would steer the nation toward a more balanced policy, seeking closer cooperation with the US and other democracies like Japan.

Taiwan is at a critical juncture in its history. Recent opinion polls have shown that DPP presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen, the first female presidential candidate in the history of Taiwan, is in a good position to win the presidency. In a recent Forbes article, she was described as a pathfinder and a creative thinker who has proposed practical and moderate approaches to dealing with China.

Instead of distancing itself from this budding democracy, the US should be more supportive of democracy in Taiwan and respect the aspirations of Taiwanese to continue to live in freedom and democracy.

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## **Report from Washington**

### ***Congressman Andrews introduces F-16 resolution***

For the past five years, Taiwan has been urging the United States to agree to selling Taiwan a total of 66 new F-16 C/D fighter aircraft, to replace aging aircraft in its fleet. On a number of occasions, Taiwan wanted to submit its formal "Letter of Request", the first step in the process for approval of such a sale. However, the US did not want to accept such a letter, both in the waning days of the Bush administration and in the Obama administration.

The reluctance of the US government to move ahead with this request – in spite of reports such as the one by the US Defense Intelligence Agency in January 2010 that Taiwan's air defense is showing increasing vulnerability due to the aging of its fighter aircraft (see **Taiwan Communiqué** no. 127, p. 19) – has also raised concerns in Congress.

On 1 April 2011, the ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Lugar (R-IN) wrote a letter to Secretary of State Clinton, stating “I am very concerned that if the Administration does not act favorably on Taiwan’s outstanding Letter of Request (LOR) for sales of F-16C/D aircraft, Taiwan will be forced to retire all of its existing F-16A/B aircraft in the next decade, leaving it with no credible air-to-air capability.”

On April 13 2011, there was also action on this issue on the House side: New Jersey Reps. Robert Andrews (D-NJ) and Scott Garrett (R-NJ) introduced a resolution calling for the expeditious delivery of F16's to Taiwan and concluding that the future of Taiwan should be determined by the people of Taiwan. The resolution concluded *inter alia* that it is the sense of Congress that



**Repr. Robert Andrews (D-NJ)**

- 3) the future of Taiwan should be determined peacefully by the people of Taiwan and free from coercion by the Government of the People's Republic of China; and
- 4) the President should take immediate steps to redress the deteriorating balance of airpower noted by the 2010 DOD's annual report on China's military power, and move forward expeditiously with the sale to Taiwan of new F-16 C/D aircraft and upgrades of the existing F-16 A/B fleet.

The resolution referred to the Taiwan Relations Act as “the cornerstone of United States-Taiwan relations....” and stated that “*in the near-term, China's armed forces are rapidly developing coercive capabilities for the purpose of deterring Taiwan's pursuit of de jure independence,*” and that “[t]hese same capabilities could in the future be used to pressure Taiwan toward a settlement of the cross-Strait dispute on Beijing's terms while simultaneously attempting to deter, delay, or deny any possible U.S. support for the island in case of conflict.”

## ***House and Senate send F-16 letters to President Obama***

At the end of May 2011, both the House and Senate sent similar-sounding letters to President Obama, urging him to move forward with the sale of 66 new F-16 C/D fighter aircraft to Taiwan. The House letter was signed by more than eighty members of the House of Representatives, while the Senate letter carried the signatures of 45 members of the US Senate.

The text of the Senate letter, which was initiated by the two co-chairs of the Senate Taiwan Caucus, senators Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and James Inhofe (R-OK) and dated 26 May 2011, is given below:

*Dear Mr. President:*

*We are writing to express serious concern about the military imbalance in the Taiwan Strait. To maintain peace and stability in the Strait, it is critical that your administration accept Taiwan's Letter of Request (LOR) and move quickly to notify Congress of the sale of 66 F-16 C/D aircraft that Taiwan needs in order to modernize its air force.*

*Successive reports issued by U.S. and Taiwanese defense authorities clearly outline the direct threat faced by Taiwan as a result of China's unprecedented military buildup. Beijing presently has more than 1,400 missiles aimed at Taiwan, and China is in the process of deploying next generation Chinese and Russian manufactured ships, fighter aircraft, and submarines. Military experts in both Taiwan and the United States have raised concerns that Taiwan is losing the qualitative advantage in defensive arms that has long served as its primary military deterrent against China.*

*Taiwan desperately needs new tactical fighter aircraft. Within the next decade Taiwan will retire 70% of its fighter force structure. Its F-5s have reached the end of their utility, its Mirage fighters lack parts and life-cycle support, and its Indigenous Defense Fighters are being converted to a trainer role. Additionally, Taiwan's existing 145 F-16 A/B fighters all require a mid-life upgrade. With F-16s already in its inventory, Taiwan is seeking to combine its fighter fleet around a single airframe with the commensurate cost and operational benefits.*

*We are deeply concerned that further delay of the decision to sell F-16s to Taiwan could result in closure of the F-16 production line, and urge you to expedite this defense export*

*process before the line closes. Without new fighter aircraft and upgrades to its existing fleet of F-16s, Taiwan will be dangerously exposed to Chinese military threats, aggression and provocation, which pose significant national security implications for the United States.*

*The Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) of 1979 directs both the Congress and the President to make decisions on arms sales to Taiwan based solely on the “judgment of the needs of Taiwan,” and we believe that Taiwanese pilots, flying Taiwanese fighter aircraft manufactured in the United States, represent the best first line of defense for our democratic ally, while presenting no offensive threat to China.*

*We urge you to act swiftly and provide Taiwan with the F-16 C/D aircraft that are critical to meeting our obligations pursuant to the TRA and to preserving peace and security in the Taiwan Strait.*

*Sincerely,*

## ***PLA general Chen Bingde misspeaks in Washington***

An interesting episode in US-China relations took place on 18 May 2011, when at the end of the US visit to Washington by China's Chief of the General Staff of the PLA, General Chen Bingde, the US DOD hosted a joint press conference by General Chen and US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen. The press conference was

Photo: DOD

marked by several misstatements, both by General Chen and Admiral Mullen.

General Chen made a major blunder when he quoted Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as saying that “...she reiterated the US policy;

*that is there is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is part of China.”* The next day the State Department issued a clarification, indicating she had not said that, but that



**US Admiral Mike Mullen and PLA General Chen Bingde  
at the press conference**

she had simply reiterated “Our One China policy”, based on the three Communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act.

General Chen also got it wrong when he stated that some members of Congress he talked to had indicated to him that “*...it is time for the United States to review this legislation*” (the Taiwan Relations Act). The offices of the members of Congress whom Chen had met later denied outright that any such assurances had been given. “*No member of Congress at the meeting ever said or even remotely indicated that the TRA may be ‘reviewed’*” stated one source.

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Interestingly, General Chen also seemed to deny that China has missiles deployed opposite Taiwan. He stated in the press conference that “*I can tell you here responsibly that we only have garrison deployment across Taiwan, and we do not have operational deployment, much less missiles, in – stationed there.*” The general’s remarks were subsequently contradicted by Taiwan’s Minister of National Defense Kao Hua-chu, who called General Chen’s statement “far from the truth.” Chen’s statement is also at odds with the US annual report on China’s military power, which has been documenting the Chinese missile buildup for more than ten years.

Admiral Mullen also got into the act of misspeaking, when he said that he shared “*...the view of peaceful reunification of China.*” The DOD spokesman immediately issued a rectification indicating that the Admiral had been referring to “*peaceful resolution.*”



**PLA General Chen Bingde:** "We dont have any missiles aimed at Taiwan. Just ask him if you don't believe me."

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** *The misquotes and misinterpretations by Admiral Mullen and by PLA General Chen Bingde show how confusing the US “One China policy” is. The US needs to make it clear that its “One China” policy only relates to which government is the government of China – that issue was resolved in 1979.*

*On the issue of Taiwan, the US needs to make it clear that it supports democracy on the island, and fully supports the people on the island determining their own future. The US should also make more of an effort to accept Taiwan as a full and equal member in the international community, instead of leaving it dangling in diplomatic isolation.*

*With regards to Admiral Mullen's pronouncement that he shares the view of peaceful reunification of China: the Admiral obvious misspoke, but it is highly regrettable that such mis-statements by high US officials have become so commonplace. One would hope that they have as basic US policy ingrained in their mind that the US supports a peaceful resolution.*

*And, in our view, the only peaceful outcome possible would be for a free, democratic and independent Taiwan to be accepted as a full member of the international community, just like the Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, were internationally recognized after the demise of the old Soviet Union. That would indeed be in the best interest of Taiwan, the United States and China.*

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## Book Review

### ***Fireproof Moth; Mission in Asia in Times of Turmoil***

*By Milo Thornberry, reviewed by Gerrit van der Wees*

Fireproof Moth is an autobiographical account of a Methodist missionary's stay in Taiwan in the late 1960s, but it reads like a thriller. Thornberry first describes his personal journey to becoming a minister in the mid 1950s and the pursuit of spirituality that led him into life as a missionary.

In 1965, the Methodist Church decided to send Thornberry and his wife Judith to Taiwan, and the couple went through preparatory sessions at Drew University and Stony Point Missionary Orientation Center north of New York. During this time he did read some critical works such as George Kerr's *Formosa Betrayed* and Mark Mancall's *Formosa Today*, which had just been published at the time.

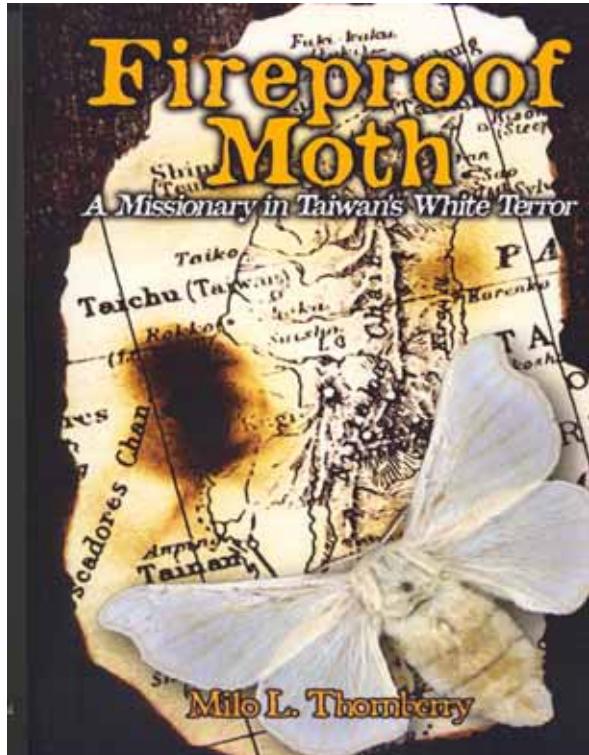
Upon arrival in Taipei on New Year's Eve 1966 they settled down, started language school, and gradually came to experience the suffocating hold which the Kuomintang regime of Chiang Kai-shek had on society in Taiwan. They also got to know Prof. Peng

Ming-min, who was under house arrest at the time for publishing a document titled “A Manifesto for Self-Salvation” in 1964.

Gradually they became more immersed in life in Taiwan, continued language training, and learned about the lack of political freedoms and human rights on the island. They also started to help channel support from overseas to families of political prisoners, with the help of Peng’s two courageous students, Hsieh Tsung-ming and Wei Ting-chao. They also started to produce mimeographed information sheets to inform visiting friends and colleagues overseas about the repressive political atmosphere in the island.

Together with other foreign friends in Taiwan they approached American and European reporters, gave them background information on developments in Taiwan, which would then be published in the news media. Fox Butterfield and the New York Times and Selig Harrison of the Washington Post were among them.

When in September 1968 Professor Peng Ming-min told them that he had received indications from the Investigation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, one of the main secret police organizations at the time, that Peng might have an “accident”, a plan was devised to smuggle Peng out of Taiwan. After more than a year of preparation, the plan became a reality, and on 3 January 1970, Peng left Taiwan on a doctored Japanese passport, disguised as a Japanese musician. He safely made it to Sweden, where he received political asylum. Eventually Peng made it to the United States, where he became a senior research scholar and visiting professor at the University of Michigan.



Oddly, the Kuomintang authorities never discovered the role played by Thornberry and his wife in Peng’s escape. They surmised that he had been helped by the CIA. The matter even came up in the February 1972 discussions between Kissinger and Nixon with Chinese Premier Chou Enlai. Chou accused the Americans of aiding Professor Peng in his escape, but Nixon responded with indignation: “*We had nothing to do with it.*”

However, Taiwan’s secret police agencies kept an ever tightening watch over Milo and Judith, and on 2 March 1971 – more than a year after Peng’s escape – they were arrested and expelled from Taiwan. A witness who came to their home after they had been put under house arrest was Selig Harrison, who wrote a front page article about it in the Washington Post (*“Taiwan expels US missionary”*, 4 March 1971).

It wasn’t until December 2003, at a reunion of human rights and democracy activists organized by the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, that Milo and Judith – as well as the Japanese counterparts who also played a crucial role — disclosed their involvement in Peng’s escape.

The book reads like a spy thriller and fills a key void in the written history of Taiwan’s very recent transition to democracy. Highly recommended. The full title of the book is: **Fireproof Moth; A Missionary in Taiwan’s White Terror**”, by Rev. Milo L. Thornberry. Published by Sunbury Press, Lemoyne, Pennsylvania. February 2011.

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