



# Taiwan Communiqué

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# 146

## Taiwan's Sunflower Revolution

### *Historic protest for democracy and a free future*

The 18th March 2014 will go into Taiwan's history as a momentous day: on that date, several hundred students from universities around Taiwan entered the country's legislature, the Legislative Yuan, and occupied the main chamber.

The immediate reason was that on the previous day, a KMT chairman of a committee charged with reviewing the proposed Service Trade Agreement with China, which had been signed on 21 June 2013, abruptly decided that the "review" had been completed, without even one minute of deliberations.

Photo: AFP

The chairman, legislator Chang Ching-chung, sent the legislation to the plenary session of the legislature, where it would be passed by an up-or-down vote without further discussion. This move infuriated many in Taiwan's society whose livelihood would be affected by the influx from China, and prompted the students to take action.

On the following pages we present a summary account of the events, and also give



Students in the Legislative Yuan during their occupation from 18 March through 10 April 2014

underlying reasons for the protests: why are the students and so many others in Taiwan society upset and angry about the moves by the Ma Ying-jeou government? We also discuss the implications of the protest for both domestic politics in Taiwan (elections are coming up in 2014 and 2016), and for cross-Strait relations.

## *Peaceful occupation of Legislative Yuan*

The occupation of the Legislative Yuan by the students prompted immediate expressions of support from many segments of society: During the same evening many people came to the legislature to form a “human wall” to protect the students, while a number of DPP legislators positioned themselves between the police outside and the students inside in order to prevent a forced eviction.

Copyright: Taipei Times

During the night of 18 March 2014, the police attempted to push their way into the legislative chamber three or four times, but were pushed back by students who had barricaded the eight entrances with chairs.

During the next few days, the students settled in, and became the focus of attention of the Taiwan and international media, with publications such as **Wall Street Journal**, **New York Times**, **Businessweek**, **Bloomberg** and **CNN** publishing more than one article each about the developments.



"Student protest dove" blocking the cross-Strait Service Trade Pact gun

Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who had a major run-in with President Ma Ying-jeou in the *Constitutional Crisis* in September 2013 over wiretapping of his telephone conversations, played a constructive role by reaching out to both sides, and by attempting to reach an agreement. Wang also insisted that no force be used to clear the legislative chamber.

However, by the week's end it became clear that the government was not going to budge: on Saturday 22 March 2014, Prime Minister Jiang Yi-huah rejected the students' concerns

and stated that government would continue to push for passage of the agreement with China, and that the agreement would not be renegotiated.

On Sunday 23 March 2014, President Ma himself gave an *impromptu* press conference to the international press where he labeled the students' actions "illegal" and called for an immediate passage of the highly unpopular trade agreement, completely disregarding the cause of the protest.

## *Police violence at Executive Yuan*

This uncompromising stance by the Ma government prompted a separate group of some 60 students to decide to enter the Executive Yuan (Cabinet) offices, just a few blocks away from the legislature, and at 7:35 pm in the evening of 23 March this group climbed barricades and a wall surrounding the Executive Yuan compound.

A number of them climbed through a window into the building, made themselves comfortable in a lounge on the second floor, and helped themselves to some "*Taiyang bing*" (a popular Taiwanese cake) in the fridge. The damage to lamps, chairs, furniture etc. occurred later when the heavily-armed riot police moved in and used a major amount of violence to remove these students. When they exited at a side door at Tianjin St, many of the students were limping or stumbling, some falling and needing to be helped out or nursing their injured arms, legs or their heads. Some looked dis-orientated and very distressed, much more so than one might expect if they had simply been plucked from that group inside seated with interlocking arms on the red carpet.

Photo: Reuters



**Riot police using water cannon at student protest at Executive Yuan**

A courageous group of lawyers were there — in their white court robes — to meet with the students as they were led out of the building in ones or twos. The lawyers later reported that the students had been beaten severely by the riot police.

In the meantime, a much larger group had remained outside the building, but inside the walled compound. They opened the gate and let supporters in. Soon there were some 3,000 protesters within the compound. They sat on the ground with interlocked arms, singing songs.

Photo: Taipei Times

However, at around 10:30 pm a force of around 500 riot police with sticks and shields arrived. When the police received further reinforcements by midnight, they started to move in on the peaceful crowd, hitting people with batons. Hundreds of students and bystanders were hurt, and dozens of them were rushed to hospitals. Later on in the night, police also used water cannons in their efforts to dispel the crowd.



**Sunflower students protesting in the rain**

By early Monday morning, most of the crowd within the compound had been cleared, but more than 10,000 people remained on the streets near the building.

A funny follow-on story is that a deputy secretary general in the Executive Yuan complained on Monday 24 March 2014 that the students had eaten from his box of *Taiyang bing* and had left a cookie half eaten!! A local businessman immediately sent 150 boxes of replacement *Taiyang bing*, but they were not accepted by the hapless official. Videos and jokes about it were going viral in Taiwan.

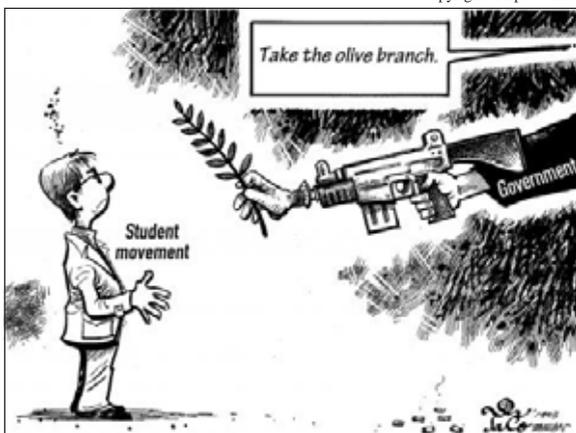
## *Seesaw negotiations*

In the subsequent days (March 25-28), a seesaw negotiation occurred between the presidential office and the leaders of the students still occupying the Legislative Yuan on whether, and how, a meeting could take place between president Ma and student leaders. The student leaders urged the president to:

- a. First propose and pass legislation governing the monitoring of negotiation and implementation of agreements with China.

- b. Then allow a clause-by-clause review of the Service Trade Agreement in the appropriate legislative committees, with a possibility to amend the text. This would require renegotiation of the agreement.
- c. Allow KMT legislators to make up their own mind on the specifics of the legislation without imposing party discipline.
- d. Convene a constitutional conference dedicated to coming up with suggestions for improvement of governance and checks and balances. The present system is viewed by many as rather dysfunctional.

Copyright: Taipei Times



**KMT government negotiating with the student movement: "Take the olive branch"**

President Ma did indicate he was willing to meet with the students, but the students felt that the proposal lacked substance and sincerity. President Ma did then give a

press conference on Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, on the eve of the massive rally in front of the Presidential Office (see below). In the press conference Ma did make vague references to the monitoring mechanism and the constitutional conference (points a and d) but refused to budge on the crucial points, the Service Trade Agreement itself and party discipline (points b and c).

## ***Half a million people march in support***

A week later, on Sunday, 30 March 2014, student leaders had called for a rally in front of the presidential office in support of their campaign against the Service Trade Agreement with China. Hundreds of thousands responded: by the early afternoon some 350,000 people had flooded Ketagalan Boulevard and surrounding streets and by the end of the afternoon, the organizers estimated the crowd at 500,000, while some media outlets even had higher estimates.

The organizers had speeches and music performances throughout the afternoon, and foreign observers at the scene said there was a festive atmosphere with sunflowers abounding throughout the crowd.

On the same day, some 45 rallies were held in support of the students' actions in some 16 countries around the world, including Paris, London, Berlin and Washington DC. The students in the Legislative Yuan had set up big screen videoconferencing with a number of these rallies abroad, including Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Australia.

International media also extensively covered the events, including the New York Times, BBC, Bloomberg and others. A British visitor who happened to be in Taipei wrote the following impression:

Photo: Reuters

*I did indeed get to today's demonstration, which lived up to expectations of being a historical occasion in Taiwan History. Rather I became enveloped in it in the early afternoon. After skirting around the edges.... I soon found myself locked into the crowd, which extended almost as far as the eye could see in every direction.*



**Massive rally supporting the Sunflower student movement in Taipei attracting 500,000 people**

*What struck me as remarkable was the complete cross-section of the people present, of all ages from infants to the aged in wheel-chairs. These were by no means the wild bunch of students I had come expecting. True that I didn't get anywhere near the legislature or other flash-points. Surprisingly there seemed to be no 'police presence' in the parts I could visit.*

*Towards evening I tried to work my way home, but that proved impossible. The nearby Metro Station was cut off due to crowd pressure and one could hardly move in the nearby streets, where the roadway was taken up by seated figures and the sidewalks were crammed with an almost stationary crush. I tried to exit via another road, which was absolutely solid and one needed an hour to move a couple of hundred metres. On the side one could see another major thoroughfare packed out equally in the same way, as far as the eye could see.*

*What was throughout evident was the general good-nature of the crowds, with cheering and clapping to the speeches but no rowdiness as far as I could see. I*

*noticed how well-behaved the people seemed to be in such crowds .... if this were Europe there would have been pushing and shoving and a real danger of a crush developing.*

*There were also very good-natured responses to the presence of the occasional European or American face. There were efficient marshals and medical teams rushing in saline and evacuating the occasional collapsed person. The many large screens at close intervals showed the speakers very efficiently and later various musical turns.*

*It all added up to a massive vote of no-confidence in President Ma and the KMT. One could hardly resist paraphrasing the famous intervention of Brecht: 'If the KMT feels it has lost confidence in the people, perhaps it should think of electing another people.'*

## *A peaceful departure from the LY*

This massive event added to the momentum in support of the student protest. However, the government did not budge on the review of the Service Trade Agreement, and on Friday 4 April 2014, the situation became very tense again when reports in the **Apple Daily** and **Liberty Times** indicated that the authorities were planning to clear the Legislative Yuan by sending in some 6,000 riot troops. The news prompted several thousand people to go to the legislative building to form a human shield to protect the students.

Copyright: Taipei Times



**Speaker Wang Jin-pyng on "prestige mountain":  
Wow, I have never been this high up in my life!**

Finally, a major breakthrough occurred on Sunday 6 April 2014, when legislative Speaker Wang jin-pyng went to the Legislative Yuan, accompanied by a number of legislative caucus leaders, and met with the students. Speaker Wang promised that he would not move forward with legislative deliberations on the Service Trade Agreement before the legislature passes a law stipulating oversight and monitoring of cross-Strait negotiations and agreements.

The Presidential Office and the Executive Yuan (Cabinet) said they were taken “by surprise” by Speaker Wang’s proposal, but the students welcomed it, and on Monday evening (April 7<sup>th</sup>) they announced that they would clear the legislative chambers by 6:00 pm on Thursday 10 April 2014.

## *Sunflower representatives visit Washington*

On 9 and 10 April 2014, just as the occupation of the Legislative Yuan was ending, two representatives of the Sunflower Student Movement, Mr. Wei Yang and Ms. “Meredith” Huang Yu-fen, visited Washington at the invitation of the **Formosan Association for Public Affairs**. In DC they had a series of meetings presenting background and insights on what prompted the movement, and its significance for Taiwan.

Photo: Taiwan Communiqué

On the first day they held an extensive press conference, only two blocks from the White House, at which they emphasized that they felt it necessary to move into action in order to defend Taiwan’s core values of democracy, sovereignty and justice. They said that the legislature had become “dysfunctional and useless”, and that their action had succeeded in raising the political awareness among the public on the dangers of the Service Trade Agreement with China.



**Sunflower student representatives Wei Yang and Huang Yu-fen in Washington DC**

They also had meetings with the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), with Taiwanese students studying at Georgetown and George Washington universities, and with an enthusiastic crowd of local Taiwanese-Americans at a church in the suburbs of Washington.

On the second day of their visit they had a meeting with the State Department and the American Institute in Taiwan, exchanging views on the developments in Taiwan, and spoke at a Congressional briefing with members of Congress and their staff.

At the Congressional briefing Mr. Wei explained the developments in Taiwan and the motives for the Sunflowers to spring into action. He concluded his statement as follows:

*We as the Sunflower Movement student activists ask you to urge the US Department of State and the White House to express their deep concern to the Taiwan authorities about the gradual drift of a democratic Taiwan towards a repressive and authoritarian China. This drift is eroding the freedom and democracy that we treasure so much. We do have these shared values with the United States and we hope the United States can stand with us to help protect our democracy.*

From Washington they travelled to New York City, Houston, Dallas and Los Angeles and San Francisco for speeches and meeting with the Taiwanese-American community.

## ***International scholars and writers speak out***

The events in Taipei also prompted a group of 39 international scholars and writers to address an open letter to the Sunflower students and to President Ma Ying-jeou. The letter was published in the Taipei Times on 10 April 2014. Below is the full text of the letter.

*As international academics and writers from nine different countries, we the undersigned are longtime observers of developments in Taiwan. We lauded the transition to democracy in Taiwan in the late 1980s and rejoiced when the people of Taiwan moved to consolidate their democracy under former presidents Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian. We also applauded Taiwan's quest for acceptance in the international community as a full and equal member.*

*However, during the past six years, we have on multiple occasions felt it necessary to express our deep concern about the erosion of freedom, democracy and human rights. Under the current administration, Taiwan has been drifting toward China at the expense of the country's hard-earned freedom and democracy.*

*This brings us to the present crisis surrounding the occupation of the Legislative Yuan by the Sunflower movement in protest against the way the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) government was pushing the highly controversial cross-strait service trade agreement through the legislature.*

*We fully appreciate the reasons the students took this action, and express our support for the peaceful, reasonable and rational approach they have taken. This highly*

*unusual act was the cumulative effect of the broadly felt frustrations with the way the government was making a mockery of democracy by not being responsive to concerns from many sectors of society, not only about the substance of the service trade agreement itself, but also the secretive way the government was attempting to enact it.*

*The precipitating factor was the highly irresponsible decision by KMT Legislator Chang Ching-chung, the chairman of a legislative committee, who declared the clause-by-clause review of the pact completed after 30 seconds, without any deliberations. This patent violation of the basic principles of democratic procedure galvanized the students into action.*

*When one talks about the rule of law, then this means a government of, by and for all people. The students' actions show in a very eloquent way that the government needs to use the law to protect the weak and to allow those without a voice to defend their interests.*

*If the government fails in that responsibility and remains unresponsive to those concerns, people will act to restore those basic democratic principles.*

*As longtime observers of developments in Taiwan over the past decades, we believe that the concerns and anxiety are also prompted by the underlying political agenda. The People's Republic of China (PRC) obviously perceives this trade pact as a stepping stone toward "unification." We firmly believe that the people in Taiwan, having worked hard for their democracy, want to remain free and democratic. They want to determine their own future, and do not want to be coerced by a repressive and undemocratic China.*

*President Ma Ying-jeou, we urge you strongly to proceed in the spirit of, and in accordance with, the principles of Taiwan's democracy, and move toward a much-needed reconciliation in Taiwan itself. You have built your policies on rapprochement*

Copyright: Taipei Times



**President Ma to "sovereignty rooster": Don't worry!  
Just go along with my plan for a while, and if you don't  
like it out there, you can go back home ...**

*across the Taiwan Strait, but in the process have given PRC leaders the distinct impression that their goal of unification is within reach.*

*This is a false premise that is detrimental to Taiwan and its sovereignty. Nobody is against peace across the Taiwan Strait, but peace must be brought about under the clear understanding that China fully respects Taiwan's sovereignty and the freedom of the people in the nation to determine their own future. At this point there is little reason to trust Beijing's motives.*

*The first step toward a Taiwan consensus would be to follow the lead of Legislative Yuan Speaker Wang Jin-pyng who proposed a way forward out of the present impasse. Failure to respond positively will have serious consequences for Taiwan's international image, and for the future of democracy and freedom in Taiwan.*

*It is also incumbent on you, as president, to ensure that the debate is continued freely, democratically and civilly. Sending in riot troops with sticks and batons against peaceful students is not a responsible way to move forward. Instead it damages the nation's credibility.*

*The Sunflower movement shows that Taiwan can have a bright future. The nation can be proud of what these young people have been willing to endure for their ideas and ideals. Multiple opinion polls as well as the massive attendance of about 500,000 at the rally on Sunday March 30 attest to the movement's very broad basis of support in society.*

*It is up to you, Mr President, to show wisdom and willingness to work with the students and other civic groups for Taiwan and its future. The world is watching.*

*Respectfully yours,*

The statement was signed by a total of 39 international scholars and writers. The full list can be viewed at [www.taiwandc.org](http://www.taiwandc.org)

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# Nuclear power issue comes to a boil

In the third week of April 2014, new protests started in Taipei and other cities around Taiwan against the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant, which is nearing completion at Kungliao, only 26 miles NE of Taipei. On the following pages we present an overview of the developments.

## *Lin I-hsiung on hunger strike*

The immediate reason for the renewed protests was that on 22 April 2014, a prominent democratic leader in Taiwan, Mr. Lin I-hsiung, who served as DPP party chairman between 1998 and 2000, went on a hunger strike at his former home, now a Presbyterian Church in Taipei. Lin vowed to fast to the end if the government does not agree to halting construction of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant.

Photo: AFP

Mr. Lin is generally considered the *Nelson Mandela of Taiwan*: he was a political prisoner in the early 1980s when on February 28<sup>th</sup> 1980 his mother and six-year-old twin-daughters were knifed to death in what was widely believed to be a political murder by the ruling Kuomintang. The murders were never resolved.



**Former DPP Chairman Lin I-hsiung during his hunger strike at Gikong Church in Taipei**

After Mr. Lin began his hunger strike, a number of civic organizations organized a series of rallies and sit-ins, and during the weekend of 26-27 April 2014, several major rallies were held around Taipei, including one counting some 30,000 people in front of the presidential office on Saturday, and another one of some 50-60,000 people in front of the Central Railway Station in Taipei on Sunday afternoon.

Regrettably, in the early morning of Monday, 28 April, riot police with the help of water cannons used harsh tactics to remove peaceful protesters from the major thoroughfare in front of the Central Station.

Also in the morning of 28 April 2014, Mr. Lin I-hsiung left the Gikong Church where he was fasting, and paid a visit to the grave of his mother and twin-daughters in Ilan. However, after his return to Taipei he went to the emergency center of Taiwan National University Hospital for treatment.

Finally, at 2:30 pm on Wednesday 30 April 2014, it was announced that Mr. Lin was ending his hunger strike, saying he was grateful for the “phenomenal anti-nuclear effort” in Taiwan during the past two weeks. He said that he would continue his fight against nuclear power and in support of Taiwan’s democracy and the country’s sovereignty.

## *Government decides to suspend construction*

The grassroots pressure did eventually force the Kuomintang government to reassess its position: on Sunday, 27 April 2014, President Ma held a meeting with three key local officials in Northern Taiwan, Taipei Mayor Hau Lung-bin, New Taipei City Mayor Eric Chu, and Taichung county magistrate Jason Hu. Premier Jiang Yi-huah and several other government officials also attended the meeting.

Photo: Taipei Times

Afterwards it was announced, albeit by a KMT party spokesperson, that the government had agreed that the first reactor of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant would be sealed after completion of the ongoing security inspection, and that work on the second reactor (which is approximately 90% completed) would be suspended immediately.

The announcement stated that the Nuclear Four plant would only be activated at a future date after a national referendum had been held on the issue. The meeting also concluded that a national energy conference on the country’s energy needs and policies should be held in the near future.

On the next day, Monday 28 April 2014, Premier Jiang Yi-huah confirmed the decision, but at the same time made a number of extremely ambiguous statements, leading many observers to doubt the sincerity of the

government’s intentions on the issue. Amongst other things, he said *“Our response does not mean that we will terminate the construction of or abort the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant.... Our policy on the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant remains unchanged.”*



**Young anti-nuclear protester in Taipei on 27 April 2014**

## *What kind of referendum will it be?*

With the government's decision to have a moratorium on the construction of Nuclear Four, the focus of the discussion is now shifting to the national referendum agreed to by the Ma administration. At issue are three aspects of the referendum: the timing, the phrasing of the question to be asked, and the ground rules for the referendum.

Copyright: Taipei Times

On the timing: it would be logical to have it coincide with the upcoming local elections at the end of November 2014, mainly for county magistrates and city mayors, and local county and city councils. However, some voices may argue for the referendum to coincide with the next national elections for the presidency and for the Legislative Yuan, which will not be held until early 2016.



**President Ma Ying-jeou:** *Hey don't ask me! He will take care of the nuclear issue*

On the phrasing of the question: there are basically two possibilities, along the lines of: A) “*Are you in favor of stopping construction of the Nuclear Four Plant and opposed to putting it in operation?*” or B) “*Are you in favor of continuation of construction of the Nuclear Four Plant, and in favor of putting it into operation?*”

The phrasing of the question is extremely important because of a very specific ground rule in Taiwan's archaic referendum law, which stipulates that a referendum only passes if more than 50% *of the eligible voters* express themselves in such a referendum.

If the referendum is held under this rule, and even if a large majority *of the respondents* vote in favor, but the 50% threshold is not reached – and the referendum does not pass – then with phrasing A) the construction and operation of the plant would continue, while with phrasing B) it would stop.

Many observers argue that this threshold is unreasonably high and in practical terms impossible to reach. Not a single referendum in the United States would pass if this rule

were applied. A more reasonable approach would be to drop this particular clause, leaving the decision to a simple majority of those who participate in the elections.

In the following OpEd, a Taiwanese-American specialist in the building of nuclear and other power plants presents an interesting alternative.

## ***Nuclear plant conversion a viable option***

*By James Kuo. Mr. Kuo is a former principal structural engineer at American Electric Power in Columbus Ohio. This article was first published in the Taipei Times on 3 May 2014. Reprinted with permission.*

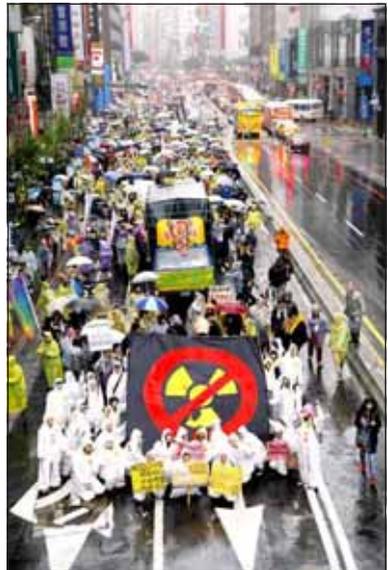
Over the past week, former Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) chairman Lin I-hsiung's hunger strike, which called for an end to the construction of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant in Kungliao District, New Taipei City, met with a sympathetic response among Taiwanese at home and abroad.

Photo: Taipei Times

As Lin says, even if the plant passes the safety check, there are no guarantees that it will be safe, given the possibility of human error and natural disaster. In addition, there is the as yet unresolved issue of nuclear waste treatment.

In my capacity as principal structural engineer at American Electric Power, I returned to Taiwan in 2012 and last year, to participate in several lectures and public hearings arranged by the legislature's Economics Committee, to put an end to the construction of the Kungliao plant and help provide a possible replacement solution.

With the exception of reactors from General Electric and Westinghouse, the construction of nuclear power plants are turnkey projects provided by reputable and experienced international construction companies that provide the full design, procurement, contracting, construction, supervision and commissioning of the civil, structural, mechanical, piping, electrical, instrumentation and nuclear engineering for a whole project.



**Anti-nuclear protest in Taipei**

For example, the turnkey for Taiwan's first nuclear power plant was provided by Ebasco and for the second and third plants it was provided by Bechtel. The Fourth Nuclear Power Plant was designed by Stone & Webster, but Taiwan Power Co (Taipower) handled the turnkey. Because the construction was not reliable, the Atomic Energy Council and the Control Yuan have on several occasions issued corrections and fines.

Taiwan and Japan are located in a seismically active region that experiences strong earthquakes and tsunamis. The first power plant was designed to withstand ground acceleration of 0.3g and the second, third and fourth to withstand 0.4g.

In comparison, the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant was designed to withstand 0.6g and others, like the Hamaoka and the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa power plants, are designed to withstand 1.02g of ground acceleration. The Diablo Canyon Plant, the only nuclear power plant still in operation in California, is designed to withstand 0.75g despite the fact that only some 26,000 people live within 16km of the facility.

The San Onofre Plant in southern California ceased operations in 2012 and it has been announced that it will be decommissioned ahead of schedule. In the past year, five nuclear power plants have been decommissioned ahead of schedule in the US due to concerns over safety or economic efficiency.

If design or poor workmanship mean the main structure of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant cannot withstand an earthquake, the containment vessel could crack and perhaps even collapse. If that happens, the next step in the ultimate response guide — to pump cooling water into the nuclear reactor and the spent fuel pool — would become untenable.

During my two visits to Taiwan, I went to the first, second and Fourth Power Nuclear Plant as well as the Datan Natural Gas Power Plant in Taoyuan County.

The Datan plant is a combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) generation plant with an installed capacity of 4.484 gigawatts (GW) and a thermal efficiency of 53 percent, which is quite high. Unfortunately the capacity factor was only 35 percent in 2011, only generating power for about one-third of the time, thus wasting the investment in the plant's construction.

If it could be changed into a base load power station with a capacity factor of 90 percent, it could produce 4.0GW of power, which would be enough to replace the first power plant and the Gongliao plant, which produce 1.27GW and 2.7GW respectively. It would also

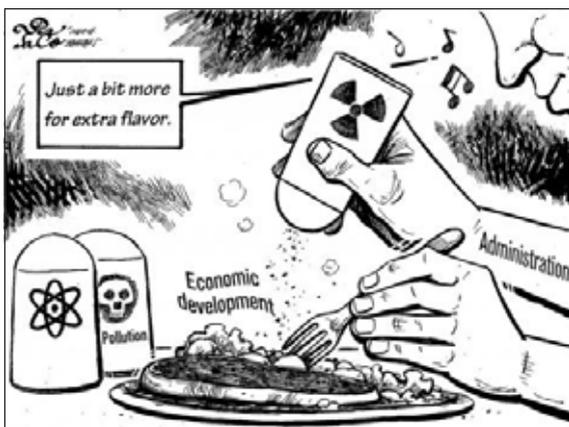
remove the excuse that ending construction of the fourth plant would require power to be delivered from the south of Taiwan to the north.

A liquid natural gas terminal could be built at Datan. In addition to providing gas directly to the Datan plant, it could also provide for northern Taiwan and in the future supply natural gas to the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant were it to be modified for natural gas power generation.

Copyright: Taipei Times

Since 2009, the cost in the US of shale natural gas has dropped from NT\$3.73 per cubic meter. The US government has allowed exports of natural gas to Asian and European countries with which the US does not have free-trade agreements.

Also, many Japanese power companies, for example Osaka Electric Power Co, are now importing natural gas directly from the US. Taipower should import gas by itself rather than go through state-run oil refiner CPC Corp, Taiwan (CPC), where it is exploited at every turn. This would lower the current CPC price of NT\$19 per cubic meter.



**The Ma administration adding some more nuclear salt for extra flavor**

Until it is possible to generate large volumes of electricity through renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, consideration should also be given to turning the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant into a natural gas plant.

Between 1985 and 1990, I was involved in American Electric Power's conversion of the 97-percent-completed Zimmer nuclear power plant into a coal-fired facility. I was also involved in the conversion of the 85-percent-completed Midland nuclear power plant into a CCGT power plant by adding a gas turbine heat recovery steam generator cycle and a generator using the original nuclear power plant's steam turbine cycle, a condenser and power transmission equipment. Given the scale of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant, my estimate is that it could be converted to a CCGT facility with a further investment of NT\$65 billion (US\$2.2 billion) over five years.

During their time at university, my three children participated in the International Youth Culture and Study Tour organized by Lin I-hsiung’s Chilin Foundation. When I told them a few days ago of the sacrifices and contributions Lin was making to protect the nation, they said: *“Dad, you should do something.”* That is why I decided to share this information with my Taiwanese friends and relatives.

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## **Report from Washington**

### ***Two TRA-at-35 hearings in the US Congress***

This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, which together with the 1982 Six Assurances form the cornerstone of US policy towards Taiwan. The event was commemorated with a number of seminars and events in Washington, including two Congressional hearings; one in the House and one in the Senate.

### ***House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing***

On Friday 14 March 2014, the House Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing chaired by Congressman Ed Royce (R-CA), who stated that Taiwan needed continuous US support in order to maintain a credible deterrence against China. But he said: *“I reluctantly submit that we are not doing enough to meet the spirit of the TRA – we need to do more.”*

The US administration was represented by Deputy Assistant Secretary Kin Moy, who painted a rather rosy picture of US-Taiwan relations, and came under heavy fire from members of the committee on a range of issues. A brief summary:

- \* Chairman Ed Royce expressed his strong disappointment that



**Congressman Ed Royce (R-CA) chairing the House Foreign Affairs Committee**

Assistant Secretary Danny Russel did not come to testify himself. He emphasized that for the US to have a strong Asia policy, it is essential for the Administration to be engaged with Congress on the important issues;

- \* Chairman Royce and several other members called for the Administration to be more forceful in its support for Taiwan's inclusion in the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). Mr. Royce stated: *"I want to be sure that Taiwan is included."*
- \* Congressmen Elliot Engel (D-NY) and Gerry Connolly (D-VA) questioned US commitment to help defend Taiwan, in particular arms sales. Mr. Engel asked about the costs of the F-16 A/B upgrade in view of a US Air Force decision to drop the CAPES avionics system, while Mr. Connolly asked why it is taking the US so long to decide on the assistance to Taiwan on the provision / purchase / building of submarines, which has been "under review" since 2001.
- \* Congressmen Steve Chabot (R-OH, chairman of the subcommittee on Asia and Pacific) and Brad Sherman (D-CA) both raised the issue of the incarceration and health condition of former President Chen Shui-bian, urging the administration to come out in support of medical parole for the former president.
- \* Congressmen Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Randy Weber (R-TX) both questioned the viability of the current "One China" policy. Mr. Smith called it a Cold War relic and proposed that the US move towards a "One China, One Taiwan" policy.
- \* Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) called on the Administration to support passage of the Taiwan Policy Act, and for the lifting of US restrictions on high-level visits from Taiwan.

## ***Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee hearing***

On Thursday, 3 April 2014, the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee also held a hearing on the Taiwan Relations Act's 35 anniversary. It was chaired by Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), and this time Assistant Secretary of State Danny Russel did show up and presented his testimony.

In his presentation he also gave a rather rosy picture of US-Taiwan relations, and repeated some of the usual mantras on US policy towards Taiwan. However, the press in Taiwan picked up on one new phrase that seems to be more reassuring than previous statements:

that “*strong support for **Taiwan autonomy** also helps give our friends in Taiwan the confidence to strengthen their cross-Strait relations ...*” (emphasis added).

There were actually two more statements in the testimony that are worth noting:

- \* In the very beginning of his testimony, Mr. Russel stated: *Strengthening our relations with Taiwan and our longstanding friendship with the people on Taiwan remains a key element of the U.S. strategic rebalance to the Asia-Pacific.* This was reportedly in response to earlier criticism that Taiwan had barely been mentioned in US discussions about the pivot/Rebalancing.



Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), chairman of the Subcie on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, SFRC

- \* Almost at the end of his testimony, the following phrase appeared: ... *the State Department encourages the UN, its agencies, and other international organizations to increase Taiwan’s meaningful participation in technical and expert meetings. Taiwan has the resources and expertise to play a constructive role in the work of those agencies.*

**Taiwan Communiqué comment:** So, while the State Department continues to cling to the outdated phraseology that the US only supports Taiwan’s membership in international organizations **where statehood is not a requirement for membership** (emphasis added – Ed), it now does seem to promote participation in the UN and its agencies.

*While this is a baby-step forward in US policy, it remains to be seen what the net effect will be. The efforts to have substantive participation in organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) have been disappointing at best.*

Continuing with the hearing: there was a lively Q&A on the following main topics:

- \* The subcommittee chairman, **Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD)**, raised the issue of Taiwan's membership in the Trans Pacific Partnership, and urged the Obama Administration to work harder to help Taiwan get a seat at the table in all international organizations. He stated that Taiwan needs to have the ability to have a meaningful role in international organizations, and also emphasized that the world needs Taiwan's help in meeting global challenges.
- \* The ranking member on the subcommittee, **Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL)**, touched on a number of issues, including support for Taiwan in the Rebalancing. He also made the comparison with the developments in Ukraine, and said that just like Ukraine, Taiwan is threatened by a large and undemocratic neighbor. He urged more measures for the US to help defend Taiwan. **Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT)** later echoed this sentiment.
- \* Both Senators Cardin and Murphy asked Assistant Secretary of State Russel about the recent Sunflower movement in Taiwan that occupied the Legislative Yuan. Russel responded by stating that the events are evidence that Taiwan does have a "robust democracy", and described the reasons why the students objected to the Service Trade Agreement. He said the US does not take a view on the agreement itself, but emphasized that the pace and scope of movement in cross-Strait discussions must be "*in accord with the comfort level of the people on both sides of the Strait.*"
- \* Senator Rubio created some fireworks when he strongly pushed Mr. Russel on President Reagan's Six Assurances as cornerstone of US-Taiwan relations. Russel's response was rather non-committal, only saying that the Six Assurances "*are things we take seriously and remain important elements as we form practical policies.*" This prompted Senator Rubio to say: "*I am concerned about your answer because on a number of occasions after meeting with the President, the Chinese have misrepresented our position.*"

In a second session, two other witnesses, Messrs. **Randy Schriver** of Project2049 and **Abraham Denmark** of the National Bureau of Asian Research presented perspectives from the think tank community in Washington. Mr. Denmark mainly focused on defense issues, while Mr. Schriver gave an excellent analysis of the recent Sunflower student protest in Taiwan, highlighting the deep-seated anxiety in Taiwan about the direction of cross-Strait relations and what that might mean for Taiwan's status.

# Book Review

## Debating China; *Ten conversations*

*Edited by Nina Hachigian. Reviewed by Gerrit van der Wees*

This book represents a comprehensive exchange between US and Chinese scholars on a broad range of issues, and clearly shows the wide gap existing between the two sides on basic values and policies. Kudos to Hachigian for bringing this exchange about and for the rigorous and systematic fashion in which she organized the debate.

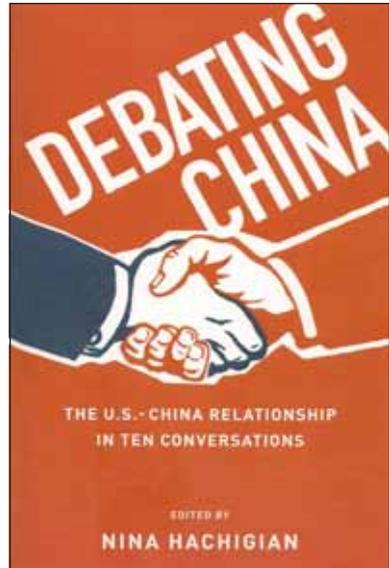
What becomes increasingly clear as one reads through the book is that sheer irreconcilable differences exist between the basic values and perceptions of the two sides. Virtually all Chinese scholars perceive the US as standing in the way of China's rise to prominence and a leadership position in the region, if not the world.

Two of the sharpest exchanges are between Columbia University professor Andrew Nathan and Chinese scholar Zhou Qi (on "Political Systems, Rights and Values"), and between Christopher Twomey of the US Naval Postgraduate School and Xu Hui of China's National Defense University (on "Military Developments").

Nathan emphasizes the universality of human rights and discusses how under the current

system in China these rights are systematically violated at every political level, from the Party to the police, to the state security ministry. Ms. Zhou counters that China is striving to ensure communal rights and freedoms, and that in the process individual freedoms cannot be a focus yet.

In the chapter on military developments Twomey and Mr. Xu clash on the need for China's major military buildup during the past two decades. Twomey argues that China is not threatened by outside forces, and states that the US pivot / rebalancing occurred in response to China's provocative moves against its neighbors in the East China Sea (Senkakus) and South China Sea.



We would be amiss if we did not comment on the chapter on Taiwan and Tibet, in which Jia Qingguo of Peking University and Alan Romberg of the Stimson Center are the discussants. As expected Professor Jia does toe the Beijing government line and presents the case for unification along the lines of Hong Kong and Macao as inevitable.

Romberg does set him straight on a number of points, explaining that the policies followed by the Beijing government are not winning the hearts and mind of the people in Taiwan, and that in any case few people in Taiwan feel any sense of political affinity with China: they feel that they have earned their own place and role in the world, and overwhelmingly reject unification.

However, a drawback of this chapter is that Romberg does betray his political colors and his alignment with the positions of the ruling Kuomintang in Taiwan. It would have been good of Hachigian would have found a commentator with a more objective stance in that respect.

Many other chapters are worth reading, but let me close by focusing on one overall perspective prompted by former Assistant Secretary Jim Steinberg's observation at the end of the book. In his closing remarks Steinberg argues that to dispel the mutual mistrust there is a need for "strategic reassurance": *concrete steps that explicitly address each other's source of misgiving, especially, but not exclusively on matters of security.*

The fundamental problem with this approach is that it treats the US-China relationship as a kind of "dual exceptionalism": the concerns / interests of the two major powers tend to get higher priority, to the detriment of the interests of other players in the region. And those other players are democratic allies of the United States, such as Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines.

A much more constructive approach would be to discuss, and deal with, the concerns and interests against the background of a broader picture, in which regional interests and the rights of the smaller players are protected, and deals between the US and China at the expense of others are avoided.

In conclusion: an important and multifaceted work that presents excellent insights into the profound differences between US and Chinese values and perspectives. Highly recommended.

The full title of the book is: **Debating China: The US-China relationship in ten conversations.** Edited by Nina Hachigian, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress in Washington DC. Published by Oxford University Press, New York, January 2014.

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