



Taiwan Communiqué

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Election campaign in full swing *Tsai Ing-wen maintains strong lead*

During the past three months, Taiwan's presidential and legislative election campaign has intensified, and also taken some fascinating turns. The decision by the Kuomintang to formally make Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu its presidential candidate was unexpected, while the entry of old-timer James Soong of the People First Party also significantly changed the equation. More on those developments below.

But the most constant factor was the steady, and even increasing, lead by DPP candidate, Dr. Tsai Ing-wen. After her nomination in mid-April 2015 she was already the clear favorite. She solidified her lead with a highly successful visit to Washington DC in early June 2015 (see *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 151), and kept building her momentum in the successive months with solid work at the grassroots and policy level.

While in most opinion polls in late June 2015, Dr. Tsai received between 27 and 40% in a hypothetical three way race (at that point James Soong had not declared his candidacy yet), in late September 2015, most polls gave her a healthy 44-45%. If

Photo: Taiwan Communiqué



Dr. Tsai Ing-wen being welcomed by Taiwanese-Americans in Washington on 1 June 2015

one would normalize that to account for the people not responding, this would mean a support rate of some 56-58% in the actual elections.

During the Summer months, Dr. Tsai crisscrossed the island, shoring up her ties with different groups that had traditionally been leaning towards the Kuomintang, such as the Hakka (she is a Hakka herself from the Southern county of Pingtung), the aborigines, and the farmer associations. In a talk in Taichung on 19 September 2015, she emphasized the importance of transparency and good governance, both weak points of the outgoing Ma administration. She also touted Taiwan's diversity:

Photo: Taipei Times



The piggy-bank campaign started up again

The beautiful thing about Taiwan's society is its diverse cultures and different ethnic groups, she said.

She also had different groups of specialists work on policy papers on issues ranging from judicial reform, energy policy, defense and foreign affairs. In a presentation to some 140 representatives from 64 countries on 22 September 2015, she outlined her "new Southward policy" ideas about strengthening relations with Southeast Asian nations and India.

The DPP also re-launched its highly successful piggybank campaign: in her 2011-2012 campaign this had been a main mechanism for getting donations from small contributors: people would bring in transparent plastic piggybanks in bright colors, filled with small donations. In the 2011-12 campaign, some 140,000 piggybanks were brought in, representing some 87% of the funds raised at the time.

Hung Hsiu-chu's poll numbers keeps dropping

The main surprise in late May / early June 2015 had been that a relative lightweight, Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu became the frontrunner in the KMT Presidential race. After she formally passed the nomination process on 25 May 2015, the Kuomintang Party conducted three separate public opinion polls. These were held 12-13 June 2015, and showed that Ms. Hung could count on a 46% support rating, well above the 30% set by the party as a minimum requirement.

The final step was going to be the formal nomination by the party at its KMT Party Congress on 19 July 2015. However, in the meantime, Ms. Hung – full of unwarranted confidence in herself – starting making one pronouncement after another that were not well-received by the public, and even ran counter to some of the basic tenets and policies of the Kuomintang party. A few examples:

Photo: Taipei Times

- * In May and June 2015, she called for *ending arms procurement from the U.S.*, and said that the Taiwanese should “stop complaining” about the 1,600 or so short- and medium-range missiles China has aimed at Taiwan;



KMT candidate Hung Hsiu-chu mincing no words

- * In mid-June 2015, Hung stated that she fully supported the *highly unpopular textbook changes* made by the Ministry of Education (see story on pp. 8-12), even emphasizing that they did not go far enough. She also stated that the teaching of history should be taught “*in accordance with the ROC Constitution*”, which raises the interesting question how the 1947 document could determine what happened prior to that date;
- * In late June 2015, she flip-flopped on a *possible visit to the United States*, publicly contradicting KMT chairman Eric Chu, who expressed himself in favor of such a visit;
- * However, she caused the biggest shockwaves, both inside the Kuomintang and elsewhere, with pronouncement – made in early May 2015 already — that she favored a “*One China, same interpretation*” formulation, putting herself much closer to Beijing’s position, and way beyond the 1992 Consensus “*One China, different interpretations*” promulgated by Ma Ying-jeou and his administration. She also started to advocate “political talks” and resuscitated the much maligned “Peace Accord” idea that had been shelved after Ma tried to raise it in the 2012 campaign.

Although President Ma Ying-jeou and several hardline KMT heavyweights such as former Vice President Lien Chan initially supported her “*One China, same interpretation*” line, during the subsequent weeks she got herself deeper into trouble by “explaining”

how this new formulation meant that under the “One China Framework” (*Beijing’s concept*) there were two constitutional governments, the PRC’s and the ROC’s. For good measure, she added that the ROC itself didn’t exist, otherwise there would be two China’s.

She also tried to argue that the 1992 Consensus constituted a core principle of the **Three Communiqués** signed between the U.S. and China (in 1972, 1978 and 1982), which seemed a bit incongruous since the 1992 Consensus presumably happened ten years after the third Communiqué, and thus could hardly have been included in these Communiqués.

This all went beyond what many Kuomintang members could bear, and in late June/early July 2015, most observers expected her to be shunted aside by the party elders. But,

surprisingly this did not happen and on 19 July 2015 – at a highly-scripted party convention in Taipei — the Kuomintang “unanimously” nominated her to be the party’s candidate in the presidential election. However, this did not stop the downward slide in the opinion polls: by the end of September her support rating in a three-way race between Tsai, Soong, and Hung hovered between 13 and 15%.

Photo: Taipei Times



Ms. Hung (C) with Kuomintang chairman Eric Chu (L) and President Ma (R) at the KMT Party convention

In another peculiar episode, in early September 2015 Ms. Hung suddenly announced on her Facebook page that she would “take a break” from the election campaign, and went into a retreat at a Buddhist temple. This led to speculation that she would drop out of the race, but a few days later she reappeared, lashing out as usual against her opponents and perceived detractors.

As this issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* went to press, reports were starting to circulate in Taiwan that in early October – before the 10-10 national holiday – Ms. Hung would be shunted aside after all, as many Kuomintang legislators were trying to convince Kuomintang chairman Eric Chu that with Hung as the party candidate, the Kuomintang would also lose the majority in the Legislative Yuan. They argued that with Chu himself as candidate, there would be a chance that the party could retain the LY majority. It remains to be seen whether Chu and Ma will make such a radical move.

James Soong jumps into the race

On 6 August 2015, after many weeks of anticipation that he would enter the race as an independent candidate, veteran politician James Soong finally made his move and declared himself a candidate. At a news conference in Taipei packed with hundreds of enthusiastic supporters, Soong said he decided to run again after being saddened by how the government had handled the controversial changes to high-school curriculum guidelines (see article on pp. 8-12) and to express his dissatisfaction with the long-standing blue-versus-green divide.

Photo: Taipei Times

Soong is a longtime Kuomintang operative, who served as head of the Government Information Office (GIO) from 1979 through 1984, and was responsible for many repressive measures against the then budding democratic opposition *tangwai* publications. Both before and after his GIO posting, he served as personal secretary to President Chiang Ching-kuo. After Chiang's death in 1988, he became a confidant of President Lee Teng-hui and was appointed KMT secretary-general (1989-1993).



PFP presidential candidate James Soong

He was subsequently appointed governor of Taiwan Province (which still existed at the time under the ROC structure brought over from China), and in 1994 became the first and only elected governor of the province: in 1998 the position was eliminated in a much-needed streamlining of the governmental structure.

This, however, embittered James Soong, who had been able to use the position as a means to burnish his “can-do” image as a populist politician. He split with the Kuomintang, and when in 2000 Lee Teng-hui propelled then vice-president Lien Chan to the fore as the Kuomintang party candidate, Soong ran as an independent – splitting the ruling KMT and thus enabling Chen Shui-bian of the opposition DPP to win.

Soong ran again in 2004 on the Kuomintang ticket, as vice presidential candidate under Lien Chan, and again as an independent in 2012. Many observers are speculating whether the 2016 run will be a rerun of 2000 (when Soong just barely lost, with 36% against Chen Shui-bian's 39%) or of 2012, when he got only 2.77%, but his People's First Party gained enough votes to have two seats in the Legislative Yuan.

In the present election campaign Soong is trying to position himself “above the green-blue fray”, and attempts to present himself as the only person who can bridge the political divide in Taiwan. However, many still fault him for his role during the Martial Law Period, while others don’t trust him as his policies are still very China-centric: a key element of his Cross-Strait policy is “maintaining the status quo under the 1992 Consensus”, which is hardly distinguishable from the Kuomintang position.

While right after his 6 August 2015 announcement, most opinion polls gave Soong a rating of around 24-25%, by the end of September 2015, this had dropped to the 14-17% range, around the same level as Kuomintang candidate Hung Hsiu-chu herself.

It is thus unlikely that Soong can threaten the leading position of DPP candidate Dr. Tsai Ing-wen. However, many observers in Taiwan indicate that Soong may be trying to get a sufficient number of seats in the Legislative Yuan for his People First Party, so it can play the role of powerbroker in the new Legislative Yuan. More on that on the following pages.

Will the DPP have a majority in the Legislative Yuan?

At present, the Kuomintang has a majority of 65 seats in the 113 seat Legislative Yuan. The DPP has 40 seats, while the green-leaning Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) allied with former President Lee Teng-hui has three seats, James Soong’s People First Party has two, and two more seats going to smaller parties and independents.

According to Taiwan’s electoral system, 73 legislators will be elected from single-seat districts, 34 seats will be allocated to the parties on the basis of a proportional vote, and six seats are allocated to aborigines through a vote in two three-member constituencies.

In this system, the Kuomintang has traditionally enjoyed a built-in advantage, as both the aborigine seats and a number of small single-district constituencies like the offshore islands of Kinmen and Matsu have gone to the Kuomintang because of the heavy concentration of Kuomintang supporters there.

However, in the present elections, the tide has turned heavily against the Kuomintang, and according to many observers it looks possible that the DPP might win a majority, either by itself, or in conjunction with the Taiwan Solidarity Union (if it meets the 5% threshold) or other “third force parties” that have sprung up in Taiwan after the 2014 Sunflower movement.

According to an opinion poll by the Trend Survey and Research Co (TSR) on 21 September 2015, the New Power Party (NPP) – a group made up primarily of activists associated with the Sunflower movement – would be able to count on a support rating of 5.6% in the elections, exceeding the 5% threshold and thus qualifying for at-large seats. However, according to this survey, neither James Soong’s PFP, nor Lee Teng-hui’s TSU, or the newly founded Green Party – Social Democratic Party Alliance would gain enough support to exceed the threshold.

Copyright: Taipei Times

On the Kuomintang side, a number of legislators running for re-election – fearing that Hung’s coattails would be very short or that association with her would actually damage their chances – decided to leave the Kuomintang party and either run as an independent or explore other possibilities.

When Hung’s candidacy became more of a certainty, there was a veritable exodus of Kuomintang legislators from the party, as they feared

that Hung’s presence on the presidential ballot would work against their election chances. This included prominent Kuomintang legislators such as Lee Chun-hung in Sinbei City, Chang Sho-wen in Yunlin, Cheng Ru-fen in Changhua, and Chang Chia-chun in Yunlin.

And in another sign of discontent: in late September 2015, when many legislators started to put up huge billboards on sides of buildings and along major thoroughfares, none of the Kuomintang legislators featured Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu on their billboard.

Traditionally local candidates have emphasized their close ties with the presidential candidate: not this time. Even Kuomintang vice-President and former Taipei mayor Hau Lung-bin – who is running as a legislator from Keelung – did not have any reference to, or picture of, Kuomintang presidential candidate Hung on his billboards.



KMT legislative leaders watching Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu fly: *Hard to believe that is our leader: our goose is cooked!*

Student protest textbook changes

In the previous issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* we presented an overview of the textbook changes proposed by the Ma government (*Whitewashing Taiwan's history*, TC#151, pp. 12-15). In spite of the widespread protests against the Sino-centric changes and the lack of focus on Taiwan's own history, the Ministry of Education pushed ahead and instructed textbook publishers to base their new textbooks on the new guidelines.

This prompted a new wave of protests, primarily by high-school students, in July and early August 2015. Below we present an overview of these developments.

Students rally at Ministry of Education

As the tensions mounted in mid-July 2015, students held several protest rallies and appealed to the Minister of Education, Mr. Wu Se-hwa to come to a dialogue about the changes. However, all the Ministry did was hold forums at several universities to "explain" the changes. There was no attempt at any real dialogue.

Photo: Taipei Times

In the meantime, the Ministry looked more and more like a fortress with barricades and barbed wire fences being erected around the Ministry compound. The Ministry also announced that the changed curriculum would formally go into effect on 1 August 2015.



Highschool students with placards against Sino-centric "black box" textbook amendments

The tensions boiled over on Thursday 23 July 2015, and in the evening at around 11:35 pm a group of some 30 people, mainly highschool student leaders of the anti textbook-amendment movement, used ladders to climb over the barbed wire and barricades and entered the Ministry of Education, briefly occupying Minister Wu's own office.

The Ministry had called in the police, and a force of around 200 policemen in riot gear arrived, arresting the group at around 1:00 pm. The group, including three reporters who were at the scene to cover the event, were led off in handcuffs. The Ministry Secretary-General Wang Chun-chuan said that the students would be prosecuted on charges of trespassing and damaging public property, although students emphasized that they had not done any damage, and that this was caused by the police entering the building in full force.

The arrested students, including eleven minors and the three journalists, were incarcerated in a detention center for approximately one day. Civic groups and press freedom organizations criticized in particular the arrest of the three journalists, saying this was an infringement on freedom of the press.

Tragic suicide of a student leader

The events took a tragic turn a week later, on 30 July 2015, when Mr. Lin Kuan-hua, a highschool student at Juang Jin Vocational Highschool, and a leading member of the **Northern Taiwan Anti-Curriculum Changes Alliance**, committed suicide in his home in New Taipei City. The day was Mr. Lin's birthday.

Photo: Taipei Times

Lin had been one of those arrested and detained for his role in the occupation of the Education Ministry on 23-24 July 2015, and had even eloquently explained the reasons for the occupation in a popular evening TV talkshow on 27 July 2015, three days before his death.

The Ministry had continued to press charges against the students, and had also instructed the principal of his high school to



Student leader "Dai Lin" Lin Kuan-hua

visit the student at his home, and pressuring him and his parents to end his activities. In the TV talkshow he even laughingly described the exchange with the principal.

In his final Facebook posting, Lin wrote: "*Wish me happy birthday. 8 5 12 16. I have only one wish: Minister [of Education Wu Se-hwa] withdraw the curriculum guidelines.*" Lin's friends later "decoded" the numbers 8-5-12-16 as corresponding to the letters for "h-e-l-p" in the English alphabet.

When news of the death of Mr. Lin broke on Friday, 31 July 2015, this prompted a number of vigils in downtown Taipei, as well as another round of protests near the Ministry of Education. The next day, 1 August 2015, the new guidelines were supposed to go into effect.

Just after midnight in the early hours of Saturday, 1 August 2015, a group of activists – whose numbers had swelled to about 800 and included several parents – used poles and other objects to pull down the police barricades that had surrounded the ministry building for weeks, and started a sit-in that would last almost seven days — until 6 August 2015, when they had to break up the protest as typhoon Souledor approached Taiwan.

An unsatisfactory dialogue with the Minister

Prompted by the death of Mr. Lin and the renewed protests in front of his Ministry, Minister of Education We Se-hwa finally agreed to a direct dialogue with representatives of the students and civic organizations. The meeting was held on Monday, 3 August 2015.

Photo: Taipei Times

However, Minister Su refused to suspend implementation of the new guidelines. The only two concessions he made was that for the time being it would be possible to continue to use old textbooks, if a teacher did not want to make the transition to the new textbooks yet. He also agreed that prosecution of students who had been charged with “unlawful entry” of the Ministry would be dropped.



Minister of Education Wu Su-hwa (L) meeting with students and history teachers (R)

The students and several history teachers accompanying them made eloquent appeals to call off or at least suspend the curriculum changes, and also criticized the opaque process followed by the Ministry, but to no avail: after some 2 ½ hours of discussion the students left the meeting in tears.

At the meeting, Minister Wu also agreed to disclose the names of the members of the review committee that had proposed the changes, and publish the minutes of the meetings. However, in spite of repeated appeals by the students in the subsequent days,

the Minister didn't keep his words, and continued to keep the names and procedures confidential, leading to renewed charges that the Ministry had conducted a non-transparent "black box" operation.

In particular the point that none of the members of the review committee was a specialist in history led many to believe that it was a politically-motivated operation. The convener of the committee was professor Wang Hsiao-po of Hsih Shin University, who is known as a fervent advocate of unification with China.

Highschool students win a moral victory

By Dr. Mark Kao, president of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs. This article was first published in the Taipei Times on 25 August 2015. Reprinted with permission

For many people in Taiwan, the protests by high-school students against the revisions of history textbooks by President Ma Ying-jeou's administration had an unsatisfactory ending.

In spite of the well-reasoned arguments by the students against the Sino-centric amendments themselves and the opaque process followed by the Ministry of Education to push them through, Minister of Education Wu Se-hwa went ahead with the publication of the new textbooks.

However, from a broader perspective, the students won a moral victory: They put the issue of the Ma government's weirdly twisted view of history on the radar, both in Taiwan itself and for an overseas audience. This episode was the beginning of the end of the biased and self-serving accounts of history that have been presented by Ma and the last of his Republic of China Mohicans.

I was both sad and happy to see these protests happen: Sad that an unresponsive government had not learned from the Sunflower experience in spring last year, when it displayed an equally rigid position vis-à-vis the protests against the proposed service trade agreement with China.

As in the case of the Sunflower movement, the high-school students who took part in this year's protest were against the "black box procedures" followed, against the anachronistic perspective based on the outdated worldview of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) and the whitewashing of the authoritarian White Terror period and against the Sino-centric slant in the new history textbooks.

However, I was also happy, because the high-school students came out and showed they are tremendously determined to stand up for their principles, which included adherence to a democratic political system in which decisions are made in a transparent and open manner.

Their principles also include the necessity for schools to teach an unvarnished history that presents facts, instead of false and flawed accounts that were written into history textbooks by the Ma administration.

Copyright: Taipei Times

Taiwan can be proud of its rich and multicultural history, which includes its Aboriginal communities and the period the island was ruled by Dutch, Spanish and Japanese. The young protesters were right to insist on a presentation of history that reflects these Taiwanese roots and diversity.

It was particularly gratifying, and illustrative, so see the Aug. 3 televised discussion between Education Minister Wu and a representative delegation of student leaders and several supportive teachers.



KMT pulling the high-school curriculum in the direction of pro-unification ideology: *Let go! No political interference is allowed.*

The students and teachers presented eloquent and rational arguments on why the new textbooks were incorrect and should be withdrawn, while Minister Wu was left uttering feeble arguments that the textbooks had been printed already, refusing to respond to the students' concerns. The negotiations broke down with the students leaving the meeting in tears.

On Aug. 6 the students had to break up their sit-in protest in front of the Ministry of Education as Typhoon Soudelor was approached Taiwan. They went home and started to prepare for their studies in the new semester.

However, this generation will be back: They are the future of Taiwan and are a key element in the nation's vibrant democracy and civil society. They can help bring about a transition toward a Taiwan that is truly free and democratic, and a full and equal member in the international community.

Taiwan's curious WW-II commemorations

The 15th of August 2015 marked the 70th anniversary of the capitulation of Japan after the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Many countries in Asia commemorated the end of World War II in Asia with exhibits, conferences and military parades, such as the one in Beijing on 3 September 2015.

The commemorations in Taiwan had a twisted angle, as the Chinese Nationalist government of President Ma Ying-jeou tried to use the events to compete with the Chinese Communists on who won the “War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression”, to perpetuate his campaign of engendering anti-Japan sentiment, and to shore up its own dwindling support in the runup to the January 2016 elections. An overview.

For Taiwan, a complex World War II history

For the people of Taiwan, the history of World War II is complex. At the time, the island was a colony of Japan, and its people were thus Japanese citizens, subject to the rule of the Japanese Imperial government. This included military service, and between 100,000 and 200,000 young Taiwanese did their military service in the Japanese army and navy.

Photo: Taipei Times

After Japan's defeat at the end of the war, the Allied Forces under general MacArthur (*General order no. 1*) decided that military occupation of the island would be granted to Chiang Kai-shek's forces, and on 25 October 1945 Japanese governor-general Rikichi Andô signed the surrender document with ROC general Chen Yi.



While the Allied leaders intended this occupation to

Taiwan's World War II military parade at Hsinchu

be a *temporary* measure until a more permanent solution for the island's status could be determined, Chiang Kai-shek and his government termed the October 25th event “Glorious Retrocession Day”, and moved quickly to incorporate Taiwan into ROC territory.

This incorporation became even more permanent when Chiang Kai-shek lost his Chinese Civil War with Mao Tse-tung's communists, and moved his whole government, lock-stock-and-barrel to Taiwan. This situation did not change very much in 1951-52, when in the San Francisco Peace Treaty Japan ceded its sovereignty over Taiwan, and it was decided that the matter of Taiwan's status was to be determine at some time in the future, "taking the wishes of the Formosan population into consideration."

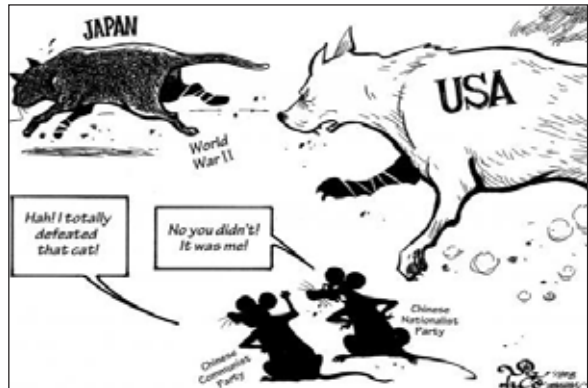
So, fast-forward to the present: there are thus *three* very different narratives about World War II in China and Taiwan: 1) The Chinese Nationalists narrative as recounted by the current KMT government in Taiwan, 2) the Chinese Communist narrative as told by the PRC government in Beijing, and 3) the Taiwanese narrative as told by former President Lee Teng-hui (see following story, below).

ROC-PRC competition on who led war effort

The Chinese Nationalist narrative reflects the experiences of those who came over to Taiwan from China with Chiang Kai-shek. This version of history sees the victory over Japan as the glorious conclusion of eight years of warfare, running battles, oppression by the Japanese, and resistance against the Japanese in China itself.

Copyright: Taipei Times

For the Chinese Nationalists, the war started with the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 7 July 1937 and concluded with the Japanese surrender in 1945. This version of history also emphasizes that Chiang Kai-shek and his Chinese Nationalists led the fight against the Japanese occupiers. There is some mention of the role of the Americans and other Allies, but in particular President Ma and his government have been eager to emphasize that Mao Tse-tung and his Communists only played a rearguard role.



CCP mouse to Chinese KMT mouse: *Hah, I totally defeated that cat!* Chinese KMT mouse: *No, you didn't! It was me!*

The Kuomintang government organized two major events and a host of smaller seminars and commemorations, reflecting its emphasis on the leading role Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalists played in the fight against Japan: a major military parade at Hukuo Army Base in Hsinchu on 4 July 2015, and a WW-II exhibition at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, lasting from 7 July 2015 through 24 June 2016.

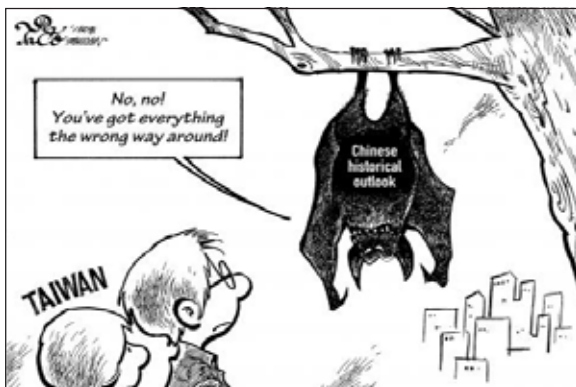
At the 4 July 2015 event in Hsinchu, President Ma said that the historical fact that Chiang Kai-shek led the ROC military in the eight-year war against the Japanese, fighting numerous battle and ultimately securing victory “cannot be denied.” The president said 204 generals sacrificed their lives and over 3.22 million servicemen and officers were injured or killed while at least 20 million civilians died during the war.

Beijing’s distorted version of events

However, in the PRC’s official narrative, which was in full view during the commemorations in China culminating in a large military parade in Beijing on 3 September 2015, it was primarily the Chinese Communist guerillas pinning down Japanese troops that brought Japan to its knees.

Copyright: Taipei Times

There was little mention of the Chinese Nationalist role, although Chiang Kai-shek himself is currently receiving something of a rehabilitation in China. More on this can be found in an article by former **New York Times** correspondent Richard Bernstein in an article in **Foreign Policy** (*Assassinating Chiang Kai-shek*, 3 September 2015).



Chinese historical outlook to Taiwan: *No, no! You got everything the wrong way around!*

The fact that Beijing played up its role seemed to have two major purposes: 1) to reassert the legitimacy of the Communist Party regime domestically in a time when the economy is in a downturn and many Chinese are questioning its leadership, and 2) project power internationally, in particular through the prominent display of advanced weaponry at the military parade.

The overall approach was not well received internationally: many countries stayed away from the 3 September military parade, lest it be interpreted as support for the PRC's aggressive behavior, both inside China against democracy and human rights activists, and internationally against its neighbors, in particular around the East China Sea and the South China Sea.

An excellent rebuke of the PRC's distortions of history was written by former US Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia & Pacific Randy Schriver in **The Diplomat** (*China has its own problems with history*, 31 August 2015).

Lien Chan draws ire for attending military parade

An interesting Taiwan-related sideline was that Beijing did invite a number of prominent political figures in Taiwan to attend the 3 September 2015 commemorations and military parade. The Ma government – highly conscious of Beijing's attempt to rewrite history – urged people not to go, as the PRC was not “upholding the historical facts regarding the ROC's war against Japan” (presidential office spokesman Charles Chen on 27 August 2015).

However, former KMT chairman and presidential candidate (2000 and 2004) Lien Chan, who has been the most rabidly pro-Beijing politician in Taiwan, did decide to go with his wife and a coterie of supporters. This caused a significant rift with the Ma government, with President Ma himself commenting that it was “inappropriate” for Lien Chan to go.



Lien Chan at the military parade in Beijing

Others on the extreme deep blue side of the Kuomintang were supportive of his trip, including Kuomintang presidential candidate Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu, who spoke glowingly of the former chairman, and said it would be “a good thing” for him to join the 70th anniversary commemorations, including a military parade.

Another person who voiced support for the trip was Shi Hsin University professor Wang Hsiao-po, who became infamous in Taiwan recently because he headed the Ministry of Education's task force that proposed history textbook changes (see pp. 8-12).

Wang stated: *“I do not think there is anything wrong with Lien’s decision [to attend the event] since he currently holds no government or party positions. Plus, I think he (Lien) might intend to convince the Chinese Communist Party [CCP] to work with Taiwan to rewrite history textbooks.”*

As it was, Mr. Lien Chan did meet with President Xi Jinping, and commented during the encounter that the Nationalists and Communists “cooperated and coordinated” in the campaign against Japan, and that the Chinese Communist Party troops led by Mao Tse-tung had tied down the enemy behind their lines and eventually helped defeat the Japanese aggressors.

Mr. Lien’s words and actions were a major contravention of the official Kuomintang line, and thus drew ire from across the political spectrum in Taiwan, with both pro-government and opposition commentators criticizing him for aligning himself with the rulers in Beijing, and saying that he had fallen for the “united front” tactics of the PRC.

Former President Lee speaks out (again)

During the second half of July and into late August 2015, former president Lee Teng-hui – who served as Taiwan’s President from 1988 through 2000 and who is generally considered Taiwan’s “Father of Democracy” spoke out on two Japan-related issues. A summary:

Agrees that the Senkakus belong to Japan

During a 21-27 July 2015 visit to Japan, former President Lee received a warm welcome from the Japanese side, where he is seen as a supporter of good Taiwan-Japan relations, and one who has emphasized the positive side of Taiwan’s Japanese colonial period (1895-1945).

Lee was received at the Diet, where he delivered a speech titled “The Paradigm Shift of Taiwan” to hundreds of Japanese lawmakers, in which he outlined the major shift Taiwan has undergone since its transition to democracy during Lee’s presidency in 1988-2000, developing into a multi-ethnic society.

He also expressed disagreement with the “one China” concept, saying that it prevented Taiwan from playing its full role in the international community. He lauded the fact that both Japan and Taiwan had embraced democracy and liberty, and called for the two nations to work together to contribute to peace and stability in the world.

According to press reports in Japan, Lee also met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in an unprecedented one-and-a-half-hour meeting at the Capital Hotel Tokyu where he was staying (across from Abe's residence), exchanging views on developments in the region. However, the offices of both Lee and Abe refused to confirm such a meeting.

However, remarks Lee made during a press briefing at the **Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan** in Tokyo on Thursday 23 July 2015 caused shockwaves in Taiwan. In response to questions, the former President reiterated his long-held view that the Senkaku Islands (referred to as Diaoyutai in Taiwan) are Japanese territory and do not belong to Taiwan.

Photo: Taipei Times

The sovereignty over the island group is a hot-button issue for the Ma administration, which has used it to whip up nationalistic fervor among its diehard supporters. So it came as no surprise that the next day there was a barrage of statements criticizing the former President. Ma Ying-jeou's presidential office itself issued a statement on 24 July 2015 that Lee's assertion had "humiliated the nation". The spokesman, Mr. Charles Chen, stated that the islands had been "undisputed" the inherent territory of the ROC since 1683.



Former President Lee Teng-hui addressing Diet members in Tokyo

The foreign ministry in Taipei also chimed in by stating that the islands are under the jurisdiction of Ilan County, while Kuomintang Party spokesman Lin Yi-hua stated that Lee's remarks were "detrimental to the nation's sovereignty." And on 25 August 2015, president Ma Ying-jeou himself jumped into the fray by publishing an OpEd in the **Washington Times**, in which he attacked Lee for his statement.

Beijing got into the act too when the PRC's foreign ministry issued a statement on 24 July 2015, referring to Lee as "a stubborn Taiwan splittist" and saying that the Taiwan issue concerned China's "core interests", urging Japan to stick to the "one China" policy. The same day, the spokesman of Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office, Mr. Ma Xiaoguang, lambasted Lee's "despicable behavior, saying that it caused "extreme harm" to cross-Strait relations.

In the following week, Taiwan's right-wing extremist New Party announced that it was going to file treason charges against the former president for "colluding with a foreign state" with the intent to subject the territory of the ROC to that state, which – under Article 104 of the Criminal Code — is subject to imprisonment of three to ten years. In the meantime, the whip of the Kuomintang caucus in the Legislative Yuan announced it would submit a legislative amendment stripping 92 years-old Lee of all privileges he enjoys as former head of state.

Lee shrugged off the criticism, saying that Japanese administrative control and sovereignty over the Senkakus is a fact of life, and that he wouldn't lose any sleep over the attacks by Ma and his administration.

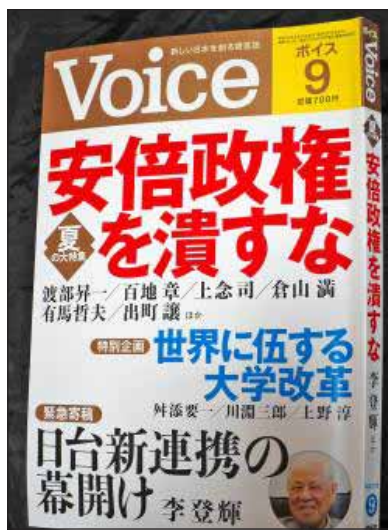
Taiwan did not fight “War of Resistance”

However, that was not the end of the commotion surrounding the former President. In the third week of August 2015 a new controversy erupted, when in an interview with the Japanese **VOICE Magazine**, President Lee Teng-hui criticized pronouncements by President Ma Ying-jeou on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Japanese surrender and the end of World War II in Asia.

The overall thrust of his interview was on how Taiwan and Japan could work together on economic and regional issues, and what the prospects were for future relations between the two countries. In the interview, Lee criticized Ma's increasing reliance on China, and stated that the so-called "1992 Consensus" was a fake, as there was no consensus in 1992 (when Lee himself was president).

But most of the subsequent ire was reserved for Lee Teng-hui's remarks disagreeing with President Ma Ying-jeou's recent statements during commemorations of the end of World War II, that during the war Taiwan had fought in "China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression."

Lee stated that, as Taiwan was part of the Japanese Empire until 1945, the people on the island could



VOICE Magazine from Japan

hardly have fought in that war against Japan, but that they had actually been Japanese citizens, and that many of them – including himself and his brother – served in Japan’s army and navy, and at the time considered Japan as their mother country.

Copyright: Taipei Times

These remarks evoked a torrent of hysterical criticism, first from President Ma himself, who branded Lee a “traitor”, while Kuomintang presidential candidate Hung Hsiu-chu said that when she heard the news she became “hot under the collar”, and called on people to denounce Lee. In a meeting with veterans in Hsinchu on 21 August 2015, she shouted: “*Are you not pissed off? Do you not hate him?*”



Ma Ying-jeou's different reactions to Lee's remarks and Lien Chan's visit to Beijing

The Kuomintang’s caucus in the Legislative Yuan even called a special press conference on the matter, and denounced Lee as a “traitor who sold out his nation”, and a “Japanese running dog.” It reiterated the threat to propose a law to strip Lee of all privileges and pensions he enjoys as a former head of state.

DPP Chairwoman and presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen commented on the discussion by appealing for tolerance and calm: “*Each generation and ethnic group in Taiwan has lived a different history, and therefore their memories, experience and interpretations of the past are not the same,*” Tsai said yesterday. “*When a nation faces such a situation, we have to maintain an attitude of understanding, so that we can learn from history, instead of using what happened as a tool for manipulating rivalry and social division.*”

“*Now we are a democratic and free nation, and everyone has the right to choose; therefore it is our shared task to defend our freedom and democracy,*” Tsai said. “*No one should sabotage our freedom and democracy by stirring up rivalry — I believe the public is mature and is capable of facing the issues that history brings up.*” (“DPP’s Tsai calls for end to muckraking over histories”, **Taipei Times**, 23 August 2015).

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *The episode regrettably shows that the ultra-nationalists within the Kuomintang still perceive their version of events as the one and only possible account of history. They are still not sensitive to the idea that a large section of the population doesn't share that twisted view of history, and does have a very different collective memory.*

It is also clear that the Ma government is using these two episodes (the Senkaku debate and the World War II commemoration) as a way to stoke nationalistic fervor in order to regain ground for his Chinese Nationalist Party.

The KMT party is in deep decline, and looks certain to lose the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for January 2016. By focusing on the emotional issues of sovereignty over the small group of rocks and the KMT's "glorious role" in World War II, President Ma is trying to rally his supporters and avert a coming political disaster.

Report from Washington

Open letter to President Obama

On 21 September 2015, FAPA President Mark Kao wrote the following letter to US President Barack H. Obama regarding the September 25th visit to Washington of Chinese President Xi Jinping. The text follows below.

As the president of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA), a Taiwanese-American grassroots organization that promotes freedom, human rights and democracy for the people in Taiwan, I write to you today to relay to you the concerns of Taiwanese-Americans.

As you prepare to welcome China's President Xi Jinping to the White House, we appeal to you to reaffirm America's support for freedom, democracy and human rights in Taiwan. We understand that the United States needs to engage China. However, such engagement should not come at the expense of America's core values — freedom, democracy and human rights, as embodied in the country of our birth, Taiwan.

As you know, the people of Taiwan have developed a vibrant democracy, and the country is now looking forward to presidential and legislative elections in January 2016, which will in all likelihood bring the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) to power. During the past months, the PRC has threatened of "consequences" if the DPP

wins. We believe this is an unwarranted interference in Taiwan's internal affairs, and urge you to prevail on President Xi to accept Taiwan as a friendly neighbor and move towards normalization of relations with its democratically- elected government.

We ask that you remind Mr. Xi that it is a core interest of the United States that the future of Taiwan be resolved peacefully and with the express consent of the people of Taiwan. We also urge you to refrain from proffering U.S. respect for China's "sovereignty and territorial integrity" as China lays unjustified claims to sovereignty over Taiwan.

We also ask that you impress upon Mr. Xi that China dismantle its 1,600 missiles targeted at Taiwan and renounce the use of force against Taiwan. To safeguard Taiwan is to embrace freedom, democracy and human rights. This is the best way to maintain peace and stability in Asia and is consistent with the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act.

Lastly, it is essential that China end Taiwan's international political isolation. Taiwan is a peace-loving country that is able and willing to carry out United Nations Charter obligations. Taiwan deserves an equal place in the international family of nations, and its people should be fully represented in international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Health Organization and others.

Thank you, and we look forward to hearing from you on these matters that are so important to our Taiwanese-American community.

(signed) Mark Kao Ph.D. President, Formosan Association for Public Affairs

In Memoriam

Human rights activist Lynn Miles (1943-2015)

Longtime human rights fighter Lynn A. Miles, 72, passed away at the Tzu Chi General Hospital in the Taipei suburb of Hsintien on 8 June 2015. He had been suffering from mesothelioma, a cancer linked to asbesthos that attacks the membrane lining of the lungs and abdomen.

Miles came to Taiwan in 1962 to study Chinese, but soon got involved in political issues when he befriended notable figures such as National Taiwan University professor Peng Ming-min and writer Li Ao. In 1967 he, together with a German friend Klaus-Peter Metzke, he set up The Barbarian, a political café in Hsimenting in Taipei City.

In 1971 he was deported by the government of Chiang Kai-shek for his close association with political dissidents, and moved to Osaka in Japan, from where he continued his work in support of democracy and human rights in Taiwan. He set up the International Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in Taiwan (ICDHRT), which for most of the 1970s was one of the very few sources of information about political repression in Taiwan.

Photo: Taipei Times

ICDHRT lay also at the roots of our own *Taiwan Communiqué*, which we started in 1980 as the publication of the US branch of ICDHRT, and continued from that time on as an independent publication. In 2005 it became an official FAPA publication when the editor joined the FAPA staff in Washington DC.

After many years in Osaka, Miles returned to the United States for some time, but as soon as Taiwan's "blacklist" was lifted in the early 1990s, he returned to Taiwan and immersed himself in politics and social life in Taiwan again. He was a familiar face at protests over rights issues, and spoke out when he perceived injustice.



Lynn Miles (1943-2015)

In 2008 he published *Borrowed Voice: Taiwan Human Rights through International Networks, 1960-1980*, chronicling the personal experiences of dozens of foreigners who had been involved in the struggle for human rights in Taiwan. It was co-authored with another longtime human rights activist, Linda Gail Arrigo.

During the Sunflower occupation of the Legislative Yuan in March-April 2014, Miles was one of the few foreigners who joined the students in their occupation of the Legislative Yuan meeting chamber. In February 2015, Miles was among 119 people indicted by the Taipei Prosecutors Office for involvement in the demonstrations.

On Saturday, 13 June 2015, a funeral service for Miles was held in Taipei with DPP Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen and a number of prominent democracy advocates paying tribute to Miles and his work. Tsai called Miles a witness of his times, and said that because of many friends like him who took actions to support us, that Taiwan was able to become democratic in the end.

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The goals of FAPA are: 1) to promote international support for the right of the people of Taiwan (Formosa) to establish an independent and democratic country, and to join the international community; 2) to advance the rights and interests of Taiwanese communities throughout the world; and 3) to promote peace and security for Taiwan

Internet homepages: www.fapa.org and www.taiwandc.org

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