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December Election Crucial Contest

The national and local elections due to take place on 2 December 1989 will be a crucial contest for both the ruling KMT and the opposition DPP, as the magnitude of the elections is almost unprecedented. One national and five local elections are to be held at the same time, which takes place once every twelve years. A total of 293 seats are to be contested.

The DPP, which is entering the race for the first time as a legalized political party, is aiming for two breakthroughs. Firstly, It aims to capture at least half of the 21 seats of city mayors and county magistrates. The rationale for this "local strategy" is that if the DPP can emerge as a dominant force controlling local executive offices, it will be in a better position to force changes at the national level.

Secondly, it aims to win at least 30 percent of the total number of votes. In December 1986 — just 2 months after it was formed — the DPP won about 22 percent of the vote.

Whether these goals can be achieved depends on many factors. A projection by researchers from the **Academia Sinica** and private opinion polls showed that the DPP might be able to win between 26 and 35 percent of the votes.



"New Nation Alliance" candidate
Ms. Yeh Chu-lan and her daughter

DPP chairman, Huang Hsin-chieh, who has just been elected to a second term on 29 October 1989, is optimistic about his party's prospects in the coming elections. Nevertheless, the democratic opposition still faces many hurdles.

A major hurdle is the ruling KMT's dominant position in the government, the military, and the security apparatus. It has a well-organized and well-financed party machine, which can mobilize large groups of voters from the military, the civil servants, and teachers.

Another hurdle is the ruling KMT's control over radio and television, which give scant coverage to the election campaign of opposition candidates. By limiting the opposition's access to the media, the authorities can thus minimize its exposure and the chances to become better known to the electorate.

Nevertheless, the KMT in recent months has been embroiled in scandals. The justice minister has just resigned over corruption allegation in the "golf course corruption scandal" (see story on page). Critics said that the KMT authorities' inept handling of the scandal has damaged the image of the party.

The KMT authorities has also been slow in rejuvenating the three branches of the parliament. Since the passing of the retirement bill in the beginning of 1989, so far only a handful of the aging members have voluntary retired. The KMT authorities' unwillingness to push the old guard into retirement can give extra ammunition to the DPP candidates.

A new development in this year's election is the formation of a poll-watching organization called "League for Clean Elections", patterned after NAMFREL, the movement for free elections in the Philippines, which played such as crucial role in the February 1986 elections there. Its founder is feminist Ms. Lü Hsiu-lien. She emphasized that her organization strives for a clean election campaign by exposing candidates who engaged in bribery, vote buying and other corrupt practices. Ms. Lu wants her organization to help supervising the counting of ballots in order to be able to catch fraudulent practices by officials.

Below is a list of seats to be contested in these elections:

- * 101 seats in the national-level Legislative Yuan
- * 16 county magistrates
- * 5 city mayor positions (the mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung are excluded, as they are appointed by the central government)
- * 77 seats in the Taiwan Provincial Assembly

* 51 seats in the Taipei City Council

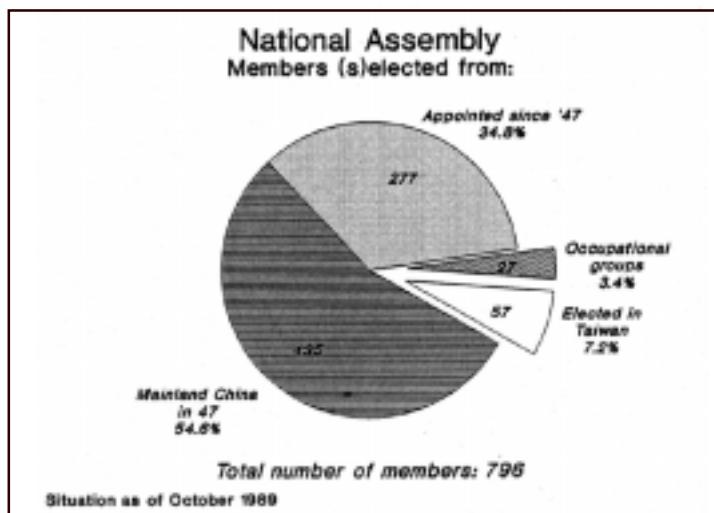
* 43 seats in the Kaohsiung City Council

Main Election Issues

Although a considerable proportion of the seats is at the local level, it is expected that several national issues will dominate the election campaign. Prominent among these are the continuing lack of democracy of the political system, in which old mainlanders continue to have a major say, the freedom to advocate Taiwan independence, the continuing diplomatic isolation, the right of overseas Taiwanese to return home, and the environment. On the following pages we briefly discuss the most important issues:

The KMT's "10 percent democracy"

In our previous issue we already discussed the fact that approximately 60 % of the members of the **Legislative Yuan** were elected on the Chinese mainland in 1947, and have not run for election since then. Even with the recently-approved increase of Taiwan-elected legislators, only 25 % of the Legislative Yuan-members will be elected directly by the people of Taiwan; the remainder are selected from occupational groups and overseas Chinese (see *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 41, pp. 9—10). In the **National Assembly** the situation is even worse, as the following chart shows:



Although the Assembly does not have any direct influence on policymaking, it is still has an inordinate influence, for two reasons:

1. It elects the President. Since the next “election” for the Presidency will take place in March 1990, the current President Lee Teng-hui — who succeeded former President Chiang Ching-kuo after his death in January 1988 — has attempted to curry favors with the creaky gerontocrats.
2. To the ruling Kuomintang, the National Assembly is the central symbol (“*Fatung*”,) of their claim to legitimacy as government of all of China. they will thus do everything to keep the Assembly in place as long as possible.

The following chart gives an overview of the distribution of seats in all three legislative bodies.

	LEGISLATIVE TURM	NATIONAL ASSEMBLY	CONTROL TURM
Elected directly by the people in Taiwan	78	57	--
(B) elected from occupational groups & via Prov. Assembly and CITY Councils	23	27	22
Total number of seats contested in Taiwan	101	84	22
Appointed from overseas Chinese groups	29	—	19
Old “permanent members” elected on mainland China in 1947	166	435	21
Alternate delegates, appointed since 1947	--	277	--
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	294	796	53
Elected directly by the people in Taiwan	26.4 %	7.2 %	0.0 %

* As of the beginning of November 1989, the overall percentage elected directly is 10 %. With the increase in the number of Taiwan-elected seats in the Legislative Yuan from the present 54 to 78, this will increase to 11.8 %.

To the democratic opposition of the DPP, this system represents an outdated anachronism from days long gone. They press for total restructuring of the system, so that all legislators — as well as the President and mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung — will be elected directly by the people of Taiwan.

A Creaky Gerontocracy

Until very recently the international press had scant attention for the anachronistic political system in Taiwan: the main focus was always on the decades-old rivalry between the Kuomintang and their archenemies, the Communist regime in Peking. The fact that Taipei's government still formally considers itself the rightful government of all of China — and therefore maintains a legislature in place in which old legislators elected on the mainland in 1947 still hold an overwhelming majority — had somehow escaped the scrutiny of Western reporters; until now that is.

This is quickly changing: on 6 November 1989, **TIME Magazine** published an excellent article, titled "*Grandfathers in their own country.*" The article illustrates the absurdity of the situation with the gerontocrats in the National Assembly's Planning Commission for the Recovery of the Mainland, which meets regularly, "...despite the futility of its mission."

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *The matter would indeed be quite hilarious, were it not for the fact that for the past four decades this system has deprived the Taiwanese people of a say in their political system and the future of the island. As we have documented extensively during the past decade, this undemocratic system was able to persist because the Kuomintang authorities exercised tight control over the population through a combination of clever manipulation of the media and the education system on the one hand, and outright repressive measures (martial law and secret police) on the other hand.*

While the situation has improved significantly since 1986, when — due to pressure from the increasingly vocal democratic opposition movement — a gradual liberalization set in, the present situation is still far from democratic, as is illustrated with the statistics on the three legislative bodies, presented above.

"New Nation Alliance" Calls for Taiwan Independence

On 6 November 1989, 32 candidates associated with the "New Movement" group within the DPP formed a "New Nation Alliance" in Taipei, calling for a new constitution, a new parliament, and a new nation. They drafted a joint platform for the coming elections, in which they emphasized that these goals will be achieved by peaceful means. Other mains points in the platform are independent sovereignty, peaceful coexistence with China and a return to the United Nations.

The Alliance is the culmination of a year long campaign of the “New Nation” movement, which was initiated by former political prisoners, Messrs. Huang Hua, Yang Chi-hai and opposition journalist Cheng Nan-jung. Many prominent DPP candidates have now joined the Alliance. It is now expected that the issue of “Taiwan Independence” will become a central theme of the December election campaign.

The Kuomintang authorities, which have until now attempted to stifle any open discussion on the future of Taiwan, have once again emphasized that candidates, who advocate Taiwan independence in the election campaign, will be “dealt with severely.” The National Security Law, which replaced the old martial law, bans any discussion on the issue of Taiwan independence. In 1988, two advocates of Taiwan independence were sentenced to 11 and 10 years of imprisonment respectively.

The most prominent “New Nation” candidates are:

- * Ms. Yeh Chu-lan, the courageous widow of the late opposition journalist Cheng Nan-jung, who is running for a seat in the Legislative Yuan in Taipei city; she has already received death threats if she continues to advocate Taiwan independence.
- * Dr. Lu Hsiu-yi, a former political prisoner and the current director of the DPP foreign affairs department, who is running for Legislative Yuan in Taipei county.
- * Ms. Chou Hui-ying, wife of reverend Ts’ai Yu-ch’üan, a Presbyterian minister who is serving a seven year and four months’ prison term for advocating Taiwan independence. Ms. Chou is running for a seat in the Taiwan Provincial Assembly.

Buying diplomatic recognition

Another topic which will receive close attention during the campaign is the diplomatic isolation, which is the result of the Kuomintang authorities’ outdated claim to be the rightful government of all of China.

Although the Taipei authorities initiated a new “flexible diplomacy” approach about a year ago (see **Taiwan Communiqué** no. 37, pp. 4-6), they presently have diplomatic ties with only some 26 countries.

The KMT has attempted to break out of the downward spiral by establishing ties with more small African and Caribbean countries needing development aid: Grenada on July 20th, Liberia on October 9th, and Belize on October 13th.

The “new” aspect of this development is that the Taiwan authorities do not object anymore to having diplomatic ties with a country that simultaneously maintains diplomatic ties with Peking. However, Peking did object and broke ties with all three.

The new ties were heralded as “diplomatic breakthroughs” by the Taipei authorities, but it soon leaked out that they were the result of “money diplomacy”: large sums of taxpayers’ money were used to “buy” these diplomatic ties. This aspect became known when Liberia’s Foreign Minister Rudolph Johnson announced that the KMT authorities had promised his country a US\$ 200 million grant for road construction and improvement of the country’s education facilities. Earlier, Taiwan had promised a US\$ 10 million aid package to Grenada. Press reports in Taiwan indicate that a similar package will be offered to Belize.

While the people in Taiwan applaud the fact that the authorities there have halted the isolationist trend of their predecessors, they believe that the Kuomintang will not get very far in breaking its isolation — particularly with the democratic nations of Western Europe and North America — if it continues the fiction that Taiwan is part of China.

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *Continuation of the “Republic of China” myth will indeed remain the single most important stumbling block for any nation wanting to establish diplomatic ties with Taiwan. Only if the authorities there allow Taiwan to become Taiwan in its own right and not some pseudo-substitute for China, will it be possible for the international community to recognize Taiwan as Taiwan.*

* * * * *

The “Kaohsiung Incident”, 10 years after

A turning point in Taiwan’s history

December 10th, 1989 will be the tenth anniversary of the “Kaohsiung Incident”. When it took place, it was hardly noticed internationally, but since then it has been recognized as an important turning point in Taiwan’s recent history.

The now well-known event of the evening of 10 December 1979 started out as the first major human rights day celebration on the island. Until that time the authorities had never allowed any public expression of discontent, but in the summer of 1979 a slight thaw had set in, during which two opposition magazines were established: *Formosa Magazine*, headed by veteran opposition Legislative Yuan-member Huang Hsin-chieh, and *The Eighties*, headed by up and coming opposition leader K’ang Ning-hsiang.

Formosa Magazine quickly became the rallying point for the budding democratic movement. During the fall of 1979, it became increasingly vocal, and it was only natural that it would use 10 December as an opportunity to express its views on the lack of democracy and human rights on the island.

When the day arrived, the atmosphere had become tense because of increasingly violent attacks by right-wing extremists on offices of the magazine and homes of leading staff members.

What happened on that fateful evening is history: the human rights day celebration ended in chaos after police encircled the peaceful crowd and started using teargas, and pro-government instigators incited violence (see the account of the event in our publication **The Kaohsiung Tapes**, which carries a translation of sound tapes made during the evening of 10 December 1979). Newspaper reports right after the event



Riot police at Kaohsiung detonate teargas into the crowd

reported that in the ensuing confrontations, more than 90 civilians and 40 policemen were injured. However, in an amazing display of magic, the authorities managed to end up with 182 policemen and 1 (!!!) civilian injured.

Although most injuries were relatively minor, the authorities quickly played up the injuries on the police side, sending high officials and TV- and film-actresses to the hospitals to comfort the injured policemen.

More seriously, three days later, the KMT authorities used the incident as an excuse to arrest virtually all well-known opposition leaders. They were held *incommunicado* for some two months, during which reports of severe ill-treatment filtered out of the prisons. The arrested persons were subsequently tried in three separate groups: in

March/April 1980, the eight most prominent leaders (the “Kaohsiung Eight”) were tried in military court and were sentenced to terms ranging from 12 years to life imprisonment. In April/May 1980, a second group of 33 persons who had taken part in the Human Rights Day gathering were tried in civil court and sentenced to terms ranging from 2 to 6 years.

A third group of 10 persons associated with the Presbyterian Church were accused of helping the main organizer of the demonstration, Mr. Shih Ming-teh, when he was in hiding, because he feared torture and immediate execution. Most prominent among this group was Dr. Kao Chun-ming, the general-secretary of the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Kao was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. The others received lesser sentences.

The importance of the incident is in the fact that it galvanized both the Taiwanese people in Taiwan as well as the overseas Taiwanese community into political action. The movement which grew out of the incident subsequently formed the basis for the present-day democratic opposition of the DPP and its overseas support network of Taiwanese organizations in North America and Europe.

As a commemoration of the incident we wish to focus on two aspects:

1. the incitement of violence by the authorities: just recently, *Taiwan Communiqué* came into contact with a former member of the military police in Taiwan who told us that there was direct involvement by the military police in the incitement of violence. Below you find his story.
2. the ill-treatment of the opposition leaders during their incommunicado detention, resulting in forced confessions. Below you find excerpt from their statements.

A third important development, which is focusing renewed international attention on the Kaohsiung Incident are the arrest of, and charges against, Mr. Hsu Hsin-liang. Below you find information on the developments surrounding his case.

Military Police as Instigators

By a former member of the Military Police

“In 1981, I graduated from college. Before we entered the military service, a few of my friends got together to celebrate. During dinner, my friends brought up the subject of Kaohsiung Incident. They were regular readers of *tangwai* magazines and were criticizing the KMT authorities handling of the incident. As I was not familiar with

the *tangwai* magazines, I initially did not quite believe what my friends told me. Then one of them told us a shocking story: He said that at the time of the Kaohsiung Incident, his cousin, who was serving in the military police, was member of a unit which was ordered to dress up like civilians and to beat up the uniformed military police in order to aggravate the conflict between the oppositionists and the military police. He said that afterwards his cousin felt deeply depressed and regretted the fact that he had played a role as instigator at the Kaohsiung Incident.

After I entered the military service, I was assigned to the military police myself. In 1983 in a celebration for the Chinese New Year, the battalion commander and the political commissar of my unit, after a couple of drinks, were bragging about the heroic acts of the military police. They said that since the death of Chiang Kai-shek, the military police has been sidelined. But since the Kaohsiung Incident, the authorities had regained their confidence in the military police. I then pressed them for an explanation. They told me the story of their joint experience:

In 1979, the battalion commander was stationed in Tainan, and the political commissar was stationed in Chia-yi. More than a month before the Kaohsiung Incident, the different military police units in southern Taiwan were moved around. The unit in Yun-lin was moved to Chia-yi, and the unit in Chia-yi was moved to Kaohsiung.

They said the authorities planned the Kaohsiung Incident. The strategy was to surround the oppositionists with three layers. The first layer was the military police, the second layer was the army and the third layer was the police. They received order from their superiors that they should not fight back if they were beaten.

Between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon of December 10, 1979 (four hours before the demonstration commemorating Human Rights Day started, and before any irregularities had taken place — Ed.), the military police, the army and the police had already taken up positions.

When the action took place during the evening of December 10th, the military police marched forward and closed in on the demonstrators, then they retreated again to their original position. This was repeated two or more times. The battalion commander explained that the purpose of this exercise was to cause panic and fear in the crowd and also to provoke anger and confusion.

The political commissar also said that the number of injured military police were exaggerated. Even those who suffered only minor scratches were hospitalized. Many

of the low ranking soldiers were thrilled to see high officials come to the hospital to pay them visits and to offer them money. They were excited by the visits of film actresses, who came to give them flowers and kisses."

Coerced confessions

Some of the former Kaohsiung prisoners discussed their treatment in prison for the first time ten years after the Kaohsiung Incident in interviews with *The Journalist* and *Freedom Era*.

Huang Hsin-chieh. After his release in May 1987, Mr. Huang returned to political life in Taiwan again: in October 1988 he was elected chairman of the DPP-party, and at the end of October 1989, he was re-elected to a second term.

"I was taken to the basement of An Kang Detention Center of the Investigation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice. The interrogation continued non-stop for seven or eight days. They wanted me to confess to things that I completely had no knowledge of. When I refused to cooperate, they pounded the table and shouted at me.

They used intimidation and coercion. They threatened to give me harsh treatment, if I did not cooperate. They told me that if I cooperated with them, they would let me go home to spend the Chinese New Year with my family. The "confession" was prepared by them. They asked me to copy it but I refused to put my signature on it. Then they threatened to arrest my brother and my daughter. I finally gave in."

Chang Chün-hung. Mr. Chang was also released in May 1987. During the past year he has served as Secretary-General of the DPP-party. His wife was elected to the Legislative Yuan in 1980, and has been re-elected ever since.

"I was imprisoned in the basement of An Kang Detention Center of the Investigation Bureau. My interrogators had three shifts. Every shift varied from two to three people. The interrogation continued non-stop for seven days. They screamed at me and poured cold water on me, when I about to close my eyes and fall asleep. They also slapped my face.

The basement was extremely quiet. The quietness frightened me. When the interrogators came marching with heavy steps, it was frightening to hear the noise of their boots and their shouting of passwords. I did not know whether they were coming to get me out to go through another round of non-stop interrogation, to confess to things that I did not know about.

The interrogation centered on the “five-member committee” and “the short and long term plan to seize power.” In fact, there was no such plan, it was a complete fabrication by the Investigation Bureau. The “confession” was also fabricated by them. At first, I refused to put my signature on it. Then they threatened to arrest my wife and my sister. I did not want my family to suffer, so I signed the “confession.”

Ms. Chen Chiü. Ms. Chen was released in February 1986. She has since been very active in Taiwan’s human rights movement, and is presently serving as executive director of the **Taiwan Association for Human Rights** (TAHR), Taiwan’s most prominent and active human rights organization.

“I was taken to the An Kang Detention Center of the Investigation Bureau. The interrogation continued non-stop for at least three days. On the fourth day, they let me go back to my cell at midnight. But early in the morning at 5 AM, they took me back for further interrogation.



Formosa Magazine staff in the summer of 1979

There were four shifts of interrogation. Every shift had four people. The Investigation Bureau now denied that physical violence was used. They did slap me in the face and often treated me with verbal abuse. What frightened me the most was not knowing when the interrogators would appear again in front of the door to drag me out for another round of questioning to confess to things that I had no knowledge of.

All the interrogators refused to tell their names. It was not until after the Jung-hsing scandal (a bribery scandal involving members of the Taipei City Council — Ed.) broke out that I found out from television news report that one of my interrogators was Wong Tsu-ch’o, the son of the former chief of the Investigation Bureau. We were watched

24 hours. There was a spot light, a one-way mirror in my cell. Even when I went to the toilet and took a bath, someone was with me all the time.”

Ms. Lü Hsiu-lien. Ms. Lü — a prominent women's rights leader even before the Kaohsiung Incident — was released on medical bail in March 1985. Since then she spent some time at Harvard University, continuing her studies. She recently returned to Taiwan and is presently heading the League for Clean Elections.

“I was detained at the Ching Mei Detention Center. Although they did not beat me up physically, they used different methods of intimidation and threats, which were even more frightening: once, they showed me the picture of the bullet-ridden body of Wu Tai-an after he was executed. They said to me: “Open your eyes. Look at this bloody mess. You will be the second Wu Tai-an. This is how you will end up.”

They also wanted me to read the notice, which was sent to the wife of Wu Tai-an notifying her to come and pick up her husband's remains. They said to me : “Read this notice, read it loud. Do you hear me ? Soon your family will receive the same notice.” They also told me: “Wu Tai-an died with bare chest. That wouldn't be appropriate for a girl.”

Besides this type of intimidation, they also mistreated me in other ways, such as refusing to give me food, ordering me to stand facing the wall for several hours on end. Sometimes they ordered me to eat a big meal, which was meant for two people. Even the “confession” had to be tailored to their needs. If they didn't like it, they tore it up and ordered me to write it over again.”

Lin Yi-hsiung. Mr. Lin, a former Provincial Assembly- member, was treated most harshly during his interrogation. On 28 February 1980, his mother and two of his daughters were murdered in one of the most gruesome — and still unsolved — political murders in Taiwan (see *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 38, pp. 8-11). Mr. Lin was released in August 1984. Since then he has devoted himself to study and research. The following is an excerpt from a statement he wrote on 25 February 1980, three days before the murders took place.

If the investigators were not satisfied with an answer, they would keep hitting me until I couldn't bear it any longer. I shall never forget the verbal intimidation, and what some of the investigators said to me: “If you don't talk and give us the evidence, we will beat you. If you get beaten to death, we will just say that you committed suicide out of fear or guilt. If you don't talk we will knock all your teeth out.”

The nameless man who beat me was fierce and evil. One look at him and I would shiver. His modus operandi was punches and kicks. To scare and intimidate me, he often threatened to have me dragged down to the basement. For about ten days, he punched my chest, back, and abdomen. He kicked me in the shins and in the stomach. Sometimes he held a lit cigarette against my face.

The return of Hsü Hsin-liang

Mr. Hsü Hsin-liang is a former Taoyuan County Magistrate, who was associated with ***Formosa Magazine***, but left Taiwan for the United States some two months before the Kaohsiung Incident. In the U.S., the flamboyant Mr. Hsü became one of the leading members of the overseas Taiwanese community, and spoke out frequently and vocally for democracy in Taiwan and independence of the island.

Since 1986 he has on a number of occasions attempted to return to Taiwan. However, although he was on the Kuomintang's most-wanted list, the authorities prevented him from entering Taiwan, fearing that he would become a rallying point for his still numerous supporters in Taoyuan (see ***Taiwan Communiqué*** no. 28, pp. 15 - 18).

On 27 September 1989, Mr. Hsu did finally succeed in entering Taiwan, disguised as a fisherman on a fishing boat. He wanted to return to Taiwan at this time to attend the funeral of his political mentor, Mr. Yu Teng-fa, who was murdered on 14 September 1989 (see story on page 23).

However, the authorities arrested him and on 12 October 1989, they charged him with "sedition" for his involvement in organizing the Kaohsiung Incident — a peculiar charge in view of the fact that he was in the U.S. at the time. Mr. Hsu's arrest and detention immediately led to large- scale demonstrations by his followers from Taoyuan County (see story on page 17).

* * * * *

A series of demonstrations

September 26: for "Taiwanese" organizations

On 26 September 1989, more than 300 people representing 34 civic groups staged a demonstration to protest the Civic Organizations Law, which bans the use of "Taiwan" in the name of organizations (see "Taiwan authorities prohibit Taiwanese organiza-

tions”, *Taiwan Communiqué*, no. 41, p. 11). The gathering included representatives from groups such as the Taiwan Association for Human Rights, the Taiwan Environmental Protection Union and the Taiwan Aboriginal Rights Association.

At 10:00 a.m., they delivered a letter of protest to the Legislative Yuan. In the afternoon they marched to the Ministry of Interior, some 20 people walking inside a makeshift cage to symbolize the restrictions on freedom of association. At 3:50 p.m., the demonstrators arrived at the gate of the Ministry of Interior. Several people delivered speeches of protest on top of a publicity truck. The aboriginal representatives performed an aboriginal dance around the cage.

Then Ms. Chen Chü, executive director of TAHR, went into the Ministry to request the deputy minister to come out to receive the letter of protest (the minister himself was not in). However, at around 4:50 p.m., after a long wait, only a low-ranking official from the Ministry appeared at the gate to receive the letter of protest.

The crowd became angered at the lack of response by the Ministry to their petition, and a melee ensued between the crowd and the police, which had set up a cordon around the Ministry. During the conflict, a number of demonstrators and policemen were injured, none seriously. At 5:07 p.m., the same low-ranking official, guarded by policemen, appeared again to receive the letter of protest, which ended the demonstration.

However, a few days later, the authorities stated that 16 policemen had been injured when they had “tried to prevent club-wielding and stone-throwing demonstrators from storming the Interior Ministry building.” The police said that they had recommended to the Taipei Prosecutor’s Office that the protest’s organizers, human rights leader Ms. Chen Chü and Mr. Lin Chung-mo, be charged with “violating laws governing demonstrations, interfering with duties of the police, and obstructing order.”



Freedom of Association in a cage

September 27: for Aboriginal Land Rights

On 27 September 1989, another confrontation took place, when some 1,000 aborigines in traditional tribal costumes converged on the Legislative Yuan building, asking for the return of some 54,000 hectares of land to the aborigines. The land had been illegally seized from them when the Chinese Nationalist authorities moved from the Chinese mainland to Taiwan in 1949.

The aborigines requested to meet with Legislative Yuan speaker Liu Kuo-tsai, but the request was rejected because “the speaker is in a meeting with a group of Swedish parliamentarians” (we wonder whether the Swedish delegation knew that their presence was being used as an excuse for not meeting the aborigines !! — Ed.).

When their request was not met, a number of the aborigines started a sit-in in the corridor of the legislature building. At that point — at around 4:00 p.m. — the riot police charged the group and attempted to drive them out of the building. The aborigines fought back with the bamboo sticks they had used for their banners.

The tense situation ended a short time later when Mr. Liu Kuo-tsai emerged after all and spoke with tribal leaders. The crowd then left and converged upon the Executive Yuan, where they requested a meeting with Prime Minister Lee Huan. After two hours of negotiations, Mr. Lee finally agreed to meet with aboriginal leaders within ten days to attempt to solve the land rights issue.

September 28: for Academic Freedom on Campus

On the next day, another group took to the streets in order to express their grievances: some 1,500 professors and students marched through Taipei in an unprecedented show of discontent with the Kuomintang’s tight control of academic life. In particular, the protesters demanded that faculty appointments be made on the basis of academic qualifications, instead of political loyalty to the Kuomintang, as is often the case at the present time.

The protesters also pressed for the removal of military “instructors” from the campuses. These “instructors” are officially in charge of teaching the “Three People’s Principles”, but in reality act as a “thought police”, ensuring that the students do not deviate from the “right” political path. The demonstration also protested the presence of “career students” on campus, who are paid by the Kuomintang to report on professors and other students.

The September 28th event was organized by National Taiwan University professor He Teh-fen, chairman of the Committee for the Promotion of Revision of the University Law. The crowd first went to the Education Ministry to present a petition to Minister Mao Kao-wen. However, he did not show up, and sent his vice-minister Yang Chao-hsiang instead. The protesters interpreted this as an insult, and tore up the petition in front of Mr. Yang.

The protesters also brought two gifts for Mr. Mao: a “sheep award” and a pair of glasses. They said Mao deserved the sheep award because he always meekly takes his orders from the Kuomintang, and the glasses because he needs to see more clearly the direction of Taiwan’s education reform. At the Ministry a group of students dressed as kindergartners played a number of traditional children’s games to mock the current education policy which has turned the universities into kindergartens.

The crowd then moved to the KMT party headquarters, where they burned two copies of the University Law. They said that the recent draft revisions proposed by the KMT were just window dressing and contained no fundamental improvements.

The September 28th event had an unpleasant aftermath for three students at National Taiwan Normal University: they were called in several times by their military “instructors” who told them that they had proof (= pictures) that the students had attended the demonstration, and that they would be given demerits.

October 10: for the release of Hsü Hsin-liang

On 10 October 1989, a demonstration organized by the DPP Taoyuan branch to protest the imprisonment of Hsü Hsin-liang ended in violent clash with the police. Both DPP members and policemen were injured. Fifteen people were arrested then released on bail.

More than 2,000 supporters of Hsü began the march northward to the Tucheng Detention Center from Taoyuan, the hometown of Mr. Hsü, at around noon. They came in 80 tour buses and scores of private cars. At 2:00 p.m., the demonstrators broke through a police cordon at an intersection in the Taipei suburb of Panchiao. Then the demonstrators got out of the buses and began marching on foot in the direction of Tu Cheng Detention Center.

To prevent the demonstrators from entering the detention center, the police had set up several layers of barbed-wire barricade around the Detention Center and a human wall of riot police stood guard. The standoff between the police and the demonstrators continued until after midnight.

However, at around 3:00 o'clock in the morning of October 11, the police began using violence to disperse the crowd. Many DPP members were injured as a result of police beating including Taipei City Council-member Lin Cheng-chieh and his wife; Mr. Chang Chün-hung, secretary-general of DPP and Mr. Tsai Shih-yuan, deputy secretary-general of the DPP. Mr. Lin was injured rather seriously, having broken two ribs. He and another demonstrator, Mr. Tsuo Ching-tung were taken to the hospital for treatment. The police claimed that 14 policemen were injured.

The police also arrested 15 people, including Mr. Lin, Mrs. Chung Pi-hsia, wife of Hsu Hsin-liang and 13 members of the DPP on charges of "interfering with police duty." They were released on bail after being questioned by the police. Mr. Lin and Mr. Tsuo remained in the hospital under protective police custody.

In an interesting display of self-censorship, the government-controlled television did not show any of the events surrounding this demonstration, but focused exclusively on the glossy "National Day" parade of October 10th.

Ms. Chen Wan-chen on hunger strike

Also on October 10, former political prisoner Yang Chin-hai, led a group of some 200 DPP members from Kaohsiung County in a demonstration in Taipei in support of Ms. Chen Wan-chen. The gathering ended in a series of scuffles and running battles between police and demonstrators.

Ms. Chen, a well-known overseas Taiwanese journalist, had spent ten years in the United States, where she was active in the movement supporting the democratic opposition. However, in May 1989 she secretly returned to Taiwan to attend the funeral of opposition journalist, Cheng Nan-jung on May 19, 1989.

Since then she has attempted to re-establish her domicile in Taiwan, and has tried to register as a candidate in the upcoming elections. However, the authorities — embarrassed by the fact that she managed to slip through the net — has refused to let her register, "because she has no valid identification card." In protest, Ms. Chen went on hunger strike on 23 October 1989.

The authorities said that they cannot issue her a valid ID card until she registers as a resident in Taiwan. But the authorities said that she cannot register as a resident until she shows a record of her entry.

Before she went into exile in the United States, Ms. Chen was a prominent reporter with the *China Times* until she became disenchanted with the paper's pro-government policy. In 1978, she was a candidate in the race of National Assembly. The election was canceled after the United States established diplomatic ties with mainland China.

In July 1989, she was sentenced to five months imprisonment by the Taipei District Court for "violating the National Security Law by entering Taiwan illegally." The prison term was converted to a fine, but the prosecutor appealed to the High Court because she did not tell the Court when and how she entered Taiwan.

In September 1989, the Taipei branch of the opposition DPP nominated her as a candidate in the race for a seat in the Taipei City Council. On October 11, an old tour bus, which served as her campaign headquarters, was towed away from a park in central Taipei. More than 200 policemen were on hand to enforce the order.

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Prison report

Dr. Hong Chi-chang sentenced to long prison terms

On 18 September 1989, Dr. Hong Chi-chang — a prominent member of the Democratic Progressive Party, DPP — returned to Taiwan from an extended stay in the United States. He intended to run in the upcoming elections for a seat in the Legislative Yuan representing Tainan City.

However, the authorities ordered Dr. Hong to appear in court on the afternoon of 20 September 1989 in connection with charges related to his role in two major anti-government demonstrations in 1987 and 1988. He was subsequently sentenced to two prison terms, one — of fifteen months — for his involvement in the "June 12th Incident" of 1987, and the second -- of eighteen months — for his role in the "May 20th Incident" of 1988. He is appealing the sentences.

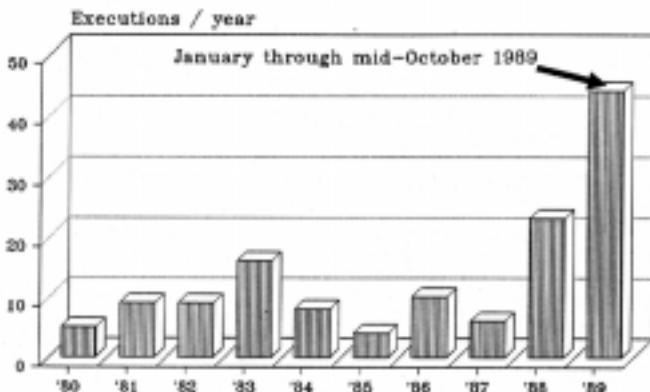
Highest number of votes. A psychiatrist by profession and head of the Psychiatry Division of Mackay Hospital in Taipei, Dr. Hong was elected to Taiwan's National Assembly in 1986 as a candidate of the DPP, receiving the highest vote total of any candidate for that body in its history. He represents the working class constituency of Taipei County, and is also a member of the DPP's policy-making Central Standing Committee, as well as a lay leader of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

Dr. Hong is a major advocate of social justice in Taiwan. He has been instrumental in setting up centers to assist disabled workers, aborigine fishermen, and other groups at the bottom of the social ladder. Since March 1989, he has been in Washington DC, studying the U.S. political system at the invitation of the International Center for Development Policy.

Wave of executions reaches record heights

The wave of executions, which started in the second half of 1988, is reaching record heights. According to data compiled by *Taiwan Communiqué*, at least 42 persons were executed in Taiwan between the beginning of January and the middle of October 1989. As the graph below indicates, the number of executions is much higher than at any time in recent history.

The death penalty in Taiwan



The executions of convicted criminals are an attempt by the Court authorities in Taiwan to stem the rapidly rising crime rate, particularly kidnappings for ransom, robberies, rape, and murder.

However, at a meeting of legal experts and scholars in mid-July 1989, a Justice Ministry official had to acknowledge that the policy was not working. He stated: "Thirty-two executions [since 1 January 1989] averages out to 4.6 per month. But rape, robbery and murder of kidnapped victims are happening with greater frequency. The law isn't a panacea for crime. We must dig to the root of the problem."

Others at the meeting concurred that the explanation of the phenomenon had to be found in society itself. National Taiwan University professor Chen Jo-chang commented: "I think society is sick, not just the criminals. So much opportunism prevails

in our society, ..." Another scholar, National Taiwan Normal University professor Chang Chun-hsing attributed the rampant crime rate to unhealthy social trends, such as "placing money above anything else."

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *we are pleased that there is at least a realization in some circles in Taiwan that the rising crime rate is — in part — due to the greed and "get rich quick" mood prevailing on the island. As we commented earlier (TC no. 39, p. 19): ... the increasing crime rate is also in part due to the widening gap between the rich and the poor in Taiwan. The social fabric of the society is deteriorating under the onslaught of greed and desire for "quick wealth" which go hand in hand with the economic policies promoted by the KMT.*

The answer of the problem does not lie simply in the execution of small criminals, but in proper education of the public about respect for eachother's life and property, and in ensuring that fairness prevails in all facets of public life, in particular the economy and the judicial system. Furthermore the authorities should set the right example by doing more to reduce corruption in high places.

However, in a related development, on 16 October 1989, the Taiwan authorities announced the draft of a new law, titled "Temporary Law on Crimes that Endanger Social Order." Ten days later, the draft was approved by the Executive Yuan (Cabinet) and submitted to the Legislative Yuan for approval. The draft law provides for a major increase in the use of the death penalty for a wide variety of crimes, some of which with rather vague definition, such as "destabilizing the economy" by operating unlicensed investment firms, "harming social order", and leading demonstrations which "illegally put barricades around factories" (a reference to the fast-rising environmental movement on the island, which is protesting the pollution caused by factories by blocking access to those factories which pollute most heavily).

Freedom of the Press ?

Military accuses Capital Morning Post of "sedition"

On 24 October 1989 the press in Taiwan reported that the Military Headquarters of the off-shore island Kinmen had requested the Taiwan High Court to file sedition charges against the publisher and the chairman of the *Capital Morning Post*, which began publishing in June 1989. The chairman is Mr. Wang Erh-yu. The publisher is Mr.

K'ang Ning-hsiang — generally considered a moderate DPP-member of the Legislative Yuan. Mr. K'ang is also a member of the Central Standing Committee of the DPP.

The reason for the military's move is a story carried in the 17 August 1989 issue of the *Capital Morning Post*, in which the paper reported that a new Memorial Hall on Kinmen island, built in commemoration of former President Chiang Ching-kuo, had been demolished with explosives by the military. The paper reported that the reason for the demolition was that chief-of-staff Hau Pei-tsung was dissatisfied with the construction work, and ordered the building to be destroyed and a new one built in its place. A new CCK Memorial Hall was inaugurated on 25 October 1989.

The story of the demolition apparently leaked out in August 1989 because the island's civilian population considered it a waste of funds: they had long urged improvement of the air traffic control facilities at the island's airport, but the military had delayed the improvements "due to lack of funds." The airport is under military control because the off-shore islands are still technically under martial law.

Reports of a major explosion had been circulating on the island for some time, but had been dismissed by the military as an "accidental explosion" in an ammunition warehouse. However, there were no reports of injuries. Then a soldier, who had just retired from the army, confirmed that the Memorial Hall had been demolished, and that he had taken part in the project.

More "Sedition" Charges against Journalists

In the beginning of October 1989, Ms. Kuo Chao-yen, a former publisher and Mr. Hsieh Chien-ping, a former editor of *Democratic Progressive Weekly* were charged with sedition for publishing an article, which alleged that troops with armored vehicles attempted mutiny on the off-shore island of Kinmen.

The article, which was written by editor Hsieh Chien-ping, who used the pen name Hsieh Wan-li, appeared in issue No. 144. The Ministry of Defense accused the magazine of "spreading rumors" and requested the Taipei Prosecutor's Office to bring charges. They were charged under Article six of the Statute for the Punishment of Rebellion.

In a separate case, the Supreme Court on 12 September upheld the sentences imposed earlier against two other *Democratic Progressive Weekly* journalists, former editor Chen Wei-tu, and Mr. Chen Chung-yi (see *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 41, p. 20). These sentences have now become final.

Both men had been charged with “sedition” by the authorities, who found them “guilty of spreading rumors endangering national security and undermining public confidence in the government” after they attempted to publish a book in which he alleged that chief-of-staff Hau Pei-tsung was planning a *coup d'état* during the October 10th “National Day” parade in 1988.

Old warrior Yu Teng-fa Murdered

On 13 September 1989, Mr. Yu Teng-fa, age 88, a prominent member of the DPP opposition, was murdered in his home in Kaohsiung in Southern Taiwan. Ms. Yu Chen Yueh-ying, Yu’s daughter-in-law who serves as Kaohsiung County Magistrate, said that Mr. Yu suffered a deep wound on the back of his head, and was found by a visitor lying on his back in a pool of blood.

Mr. Yu and his family have dominated Kaohsiung politics for the past three decades. Mr. Yu was born in 1903 in Southern Taiwan into a rich farm family. He was elected a member of the Nationalist government’s National Assembly in 1947, but he left the Kuomintang in the following year, and subsequently became a pioneering member of Taiwan’s democratic opposition movement. In 1960, he was elected Kaohsiung County Magistrate — the position now held by his daughter-in-law. In 1979 he became internationally known when he was arrested after he expressed support for the budding democratic movement in Taiwan. His arrest prompted the first open political demonstration against martial law in Taiwan, on 22 January 1979.

At the time of this writing it was still not known who murdered Mr. Yu, or what motives could have been. It could have been a burglary gone awry, or a local feud. Mr. Yu’s family believes that political motives were behind the murder.

In Memoriam Reverend Edwin Luidens

With sorrow, *Taiwan Communiqué* learned of the death — on 12 May 1989 — of the Reverend Edwin M. Luidens, who retired in 1987 as Executive Director for East Asia and the Pacific of the National Council of Churches of Christ in U.S.A. He was an ordained minister of the Reformed Church in America, and had served as General Secretary of its Board of World Missions before taking the position with the Council in 1968.

Reverend Luidens worked tirelessly for human rights, peace, and justice in Asia and the Pacific, frequently testifying before U.S. Congressional committees on matters of concern to the U.S. religious community. In 1980, he attended the Kaohsiung Incident Trials in Taiwan as a representative of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

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