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Towards the “Three Yes” policy

Preparing for Taiwan’s future

The November 1997 election victory for the democratic opposition in Taiwan brings the prospect of further gains by the DPP in Legislative Yuan elections at the end of 1998, and a possibility of a DPP-victory in the presidential elections in 2000.

Mr. Chen Shui-bian, the likely DPP candidate in the next Presidential elections, stated in an interview in the **Washington Post** (“*Taipei’s ambitious mayor*”, 6 February 1998) that the future of Taiwan can only be decided by the 21.5 million people on the island through a referendum. While those elections — and the referendum — are still some time off, this new prospect requires the United States and other nations around the world to reassess their policy towards the island nation.

The basic elements of such a new policy could be summarized under the heading of the “**Three yes**” policy:

1. **Yes**, the people of Taiwan have the *right to determine their own* future under the principle of self-determination as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
2. **Yes**, the People’s Republic of China can *accept Taiwan as a friendly neighboring state*, instead of perpetuating the hostility and rivalry dating from the Chinese Civil War with the Kuomintang;



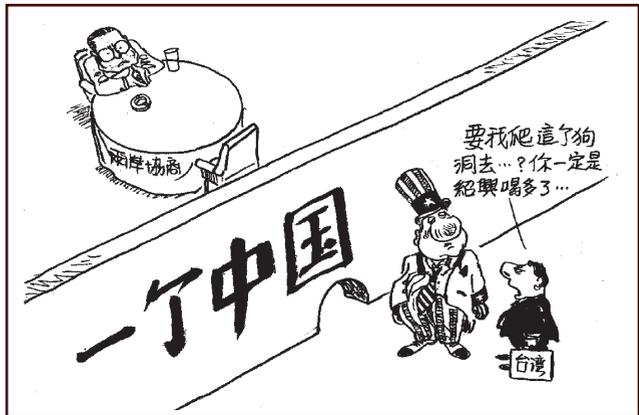
Mr. Chen Shui-bian

3. **Yes**, the international community, and in particular those nations which adhere to democratic principles, will *accept Taiwan as a full and equal member* in the international family of nations, including the UN.

Such a “Three Yes” policy would enhance peace and stability in East Asia, since it would finally end the decade-old hostility between the Kuomintang authorities on Taiwan and the Communists in the PRC.

Of course, until now China has not been willing yet to accept friendly relations with Taiwan as an independent neighboring state yet. However, over the next few years, the situation will change, like it changed in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s: who would have predicted in 1987 that the Berlin Wall would fall, that the Soviet Union would collapse, and that a new Russia would accept democratic governments in Eastern Europe and even allow the Baltic States to become independent ?

The conventional wisdom in the United States and other Western nations has been the anachronistic “One China” policy rooted in the Cold War. This outdated policy “acknowledges” the Chinese claims to Taiwan, and emphasizes “peaceful resolution” of the conflict by the “Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits.” Regrettably, such policies play into the cards of Beijing,



Taiwan to the USA: *"If you think I will crawl through that tiny hole in the "One China Wall", you are nuts !!*

and reinforce the Chinese misconception that they can gradually reduce Taiwan’s international links by “playing tough”, and in the end invade and annex the island.

It is thus essential for peace and stability in East Asia that the United States and other Western nations help prepare for positive change in that region, and attempt to convince the Chinese leaders that it is in their own interest to accept Taiwan as a friendly neighbor. The “Three Yes” policy outline above provides a sound basis for such an approach.

China's "let's talk" offensive

Starting at the end of December 1997, the Beijing regime began a "let's talk" offensive. In a series of statements by officials from President Jiang Zemin and premier Li Peng (the "butcher of Tienanmen") on down, Beijing urged the Kuomintang authorities to come to the negotiating table for "political" talks.

Beijing itself had broken off the lower-level "technical" talks between the mainland's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) and Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) after President Lee Teng-hui visited Cornell in June 1995, and is sparing no efforts in preventing Taiwan from gaining international breathing space.

In some of the statements, they even implied that Taipei would be "treated as equal" and that there would be "no pre-conditions" if Taipei came to the negotiating table — as long as they accepted Taiwan to be part of "One China." And that is where the problem comes in ...!!

Mr. Lee Teng-hui's "no-haste" approach

To his credit, President Lee Teng-hui has not let himself be pushed by the Chinese ploys, and devised the "no haste" approach, emphasizing that China should first show good faith in the lower-level "technical" discussions on a range of issues, before any "political" level talks can be held.

Mr. Lee has also stated that any political talks can only be held if the Beijing authorities would accept Taiwan as an "equal political entity".

Taiwan Communiqué comment: Any talks at the present time, and any concessions the Kuomintang would make in such talks, would be



The waiting game

viewed by the Taiwanese electorate as a sell-out to the Communists, and would cost the Kuomintang dearly in upcoming Legislative Yuan elections at the end of 1998 and Presidential elections in March 2000.

The Kuomintang would thus do well to wait. Hasty and ill-prepared talks at the present time can only result in the unification of an unhappy Taiwanese mouse with a big fat Chinese cat.

Meaningful talks with China can only be held if 1) the Beijing leaders show some readiness to accept Taiwan, and 2) there is a broad consensus on Taiwan on the future of the island. Such a consensus is lacking at the present time, and can only be achieved if the people on the island can express themselves freely and openly on the issue of their future — without any Chinese interference, with missiles or otherwise.

Chen Shui-bian: DPP-chairmanor Taipei mayor?

The November 1997 elections victory for the opposition Democratic progressive Party (DPP) has focused international attention on the person likely to lead the DPP in the future: Taipei Mayor Chen Shui-bian.

At this point, Mayor Chen is trying to decide whether to run for party chairman in June 1998 or run for re-election as Taipei mayor at the end of the year. Either position would provide him with a good stepping stone for the race for the Taiwan Presidency in March 2000. As DPP chairman he would control the Party machinery, essential for the presidential race. However, for the DPP it is also essential to trounce any Kuomintang challenger for the Taipei mayorship position, and Chen is still the best person for that job.

Mayor Chen has also started to speak out more on national and international affairs: in several interviews with the press, he reiterated his conviction that the Taiwan Government should hold a referendum to allow the people to decide their political future. “The future of Taiwan should be decided by its residents by means of a referendum,” Mr Chen said during a short visit to Japan at the end of December 1997. He added: “Taiwanese people have the right to decide their future and decide where Taiwan should go.”

Mr Chen, a key figure in the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), stressed his party would hold a referendum on independence if it came to power, adding the timing of a referendum would be carefully studied.

In a separate interview Chen said a democratic move to independence by Taiwan should be respected by the international community. "The Democratic Progressive Party wants to establish a sovereign independent Republic of Taiwan, to form a new constitution and to let Taiwan residents make the ultimate choice about Taiwan's future," Chen said.

"Such positions have not been revised, altered or abolished," Chen said. He added that he was confident that the Democratic Progressives, a banned, underground organization

before martial law was lifted in 1987, would soon become Taiwan's ruling party.

"Democracy in Taiwan has matured to an extent that it could endure Chinese Communists' missile tests," Chen said, referring to Beijing's war games and missile tests in the run-up to Taiwan's March 1996 presidential elections. "(The missile tests) could not shake Taiwan people's willingness and determination to pursue democracy. Why will the Democratic Progressives' becoming a ruling party or controlling the parliament, or even winning the presidential election, destabilize Taiwan?"

Mr. Chen also touched on the Asian financial crisis: He said the island would feel the effects of East Asia's financial crisis despite its sound economic situation. "This is a world issue," Mr Chen said. "Taiwan cannot avoid being influenced by Asian financial problems." Mr Chen said Taiwan had a responsibility to help affected Asian nations since "to help others means Taiwan helping itself".



Mayor Chen at the crossroads: DPP chairman or Taipei City mayor ?

The Asian Economic Crisis

East and Southeast Asia is being engulfed by a major financial and economic crisis, the to-be-expected result of unbridled economic development at any cost, and the over-blown expectations of short-sighted foreign investors during the past decade.

Taiwan weathering the storm

So far, Taiwan has remained relatively untouched by the storm. While the NT dollar dropped 17 percent against the US dollar, this was minuscule in comparison to the drop in other currencies. While inflation in nations like Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea skyrocketed, in Taiwan prices remained stable.

The strengths of Taiwan are well-known: an industrious, well-educated population, a versatile industrial structure, with many small and medium-size enterprises, which are accustomed to strong competition at home and abroad, and a relatively open economy.

Its weakness is its close proximity to China, and the heavy investments made by Taiwanese firms in the Chinese coastal areas. According to a **Reuters**

report from Tokyo ("*Taiwan's mainland exposure risky*", 21 January 1998) Taiwan is vulnerable because of the overinvestment by Taiwanese smaller firms, some 40,000 of which are reported to operate in the coastal Chinese provinces.



"Santa" premier Vincent Siew on his way to Southeast Asia: Chinese missile not far behind

This report and other recent analyses (see below) say that the real effects of the economic crisis hitting China are still to come.

A brief overview of articles:

- * *“Shaky stability”*, **Wall Street Journal**, 15 December 1997
- * *“What Asia’s financial crisis portends”*, **New York Times**, 29 December 1997
- * *“On the road to capitalism, China hits a nasty curve: joblessness”*, **New York Times**, 20 January 1998
- * *“China will have to devalue, and Hong Kong will hurt”*, **International Herald Tribune**, 3 February 1998
- * *“The Asian Blues”*, **New York Times**, 3 February 1998

Building relations with Southeast Asia

To its credit, the government of President Lee Teng-hui has acknowledged the dangers of the “too-close-for-comfort” economic links with China and has attempted to discourage investment in the Chinese coastal provinces, arguing in favor of a “southward” policy of links with Southeast Asian nations instead.

The Southward policy gathered steam during the past few months, when the economies of Southeast Asian countries went through a downward surge. This provided an opportunity for the Kuomintang authorities to extend a helping hand to its Southeast Asia neighbors, an opportunity which they grabbed with both hands.

It started following the APEC meeting in Vancouver in November 1997, when several of the Southeast Asian leaders were invited to “stop by” in Taipei on the way home. The Prime Ministers of Malaysia and Singapore did. Then in the beginning of January 1998, several of the Kuomintang’s leading politicians such as Premier Vincent Siew and Vice-president Lien Chan made quick forays into countries such as Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines, hobnobbing — and in the case of Singapore even playing golf — with the respective leaders.

Of course the Chinese in Beijing didn’t like all this coziness, but all they could do was fume.

Washington Times editorial: “People’s” Republic of China on Taiwan ?

Taiwan’s stable position in the Asian economic crisis provided for some amusing confusion in Washington. **The Washington Times**, faithful to its conservative leaning, wanted to write an editorial praising the Kuomintang authorities for their deft handling of the economic and financial crisis.

However, in the editorial, titled “*Taiwan’s opportunity*” and published on 1 February 1998, the paper made an interesting blooper by referring to Taiwan as “People’s Republic of China on Taiwan.”

This error is of course not of the Washington Times’ making, but is due to the outdated policy of the Kuomintang authorities on Taiwan, who continue to refer to themselves as “Republic of China.”

The democratic opposition in Taiwan has long argued in favor of discarding this anachronistic title, and to work towards acceptance of Taiwan as a full and equal member of the international family of nations under its own name, “Taiwan.”

We urge the Kuomintang, and the international community, to end this confusion and to *let Taiwan be Taiwan*.

Offense, defense, and diplomacy

US DOD concerned about Chinese military threat

On 11 December 1997, the top-ranking official at the Pentagon responsible for Asia warned that the United States must keep closer tabs on potentially threatening Chinese military modernization, particularly in view of recent reports that the PLA intends to take further steps to intimidate Taiwan.

“I think there actually are areas that we don’t know about, that we think there’s more to know about,” Kurt Campbell, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs, said at a National Press Club forum on possible future Chinese threats.

Such unknown areas chiefly involved Beijing's military intentions but also included its interest in "asymmetrical" warfare, or taking advantage of perceived U.S. vulnerabilities, Campbell said. "Those are capabilities that take advantage of certain intense areas of effort in terms of missiles or satellites or information," he said. "Those are areas that I think we're going to have to watch very carefully as we move forward. I think it's something that we are putting a higher level of effort into, both in terms of our ability to gather information and to analyze it," he added.

Campbell said the U.S. approach to China should be "a mixture of strength and respect" while pushing for greater transparency in military matters. "If your strategy toward China has too much strength, then you find yourself veering toward confrontation and conflict which is in no one's interests. But ... if you have too much respect you find yourself kowtowing to the Middle Kingdom," he said.

Campbell spoke as the United States and China began their first-ever formal defense "consultative talks," a bid to foster better understanding and communication between the Chinese and U.S. military establishments. The two-day session at the Pentagon brought together Lt. Gen. Xiong Guangkai, deputy chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army, and Undersecretary of Defense Walter Slocombe.

The PLA general became infamous in the beginning of 1996, when during the escalating crisis preceding the Taiwan Presidential elections, he made a threat of nuclear strikes on Los Angeles.

At the height of the confrontation, General Xiong made headlines in America when he told a US academic: "Americans care more about Los Angeles than Taiwan." The remarks were widely interpreted as a veiled threat of nuclear strikes on America's West Coast, and helped fuel the crisis in which Washington sent two aircraft carriers to the western Pacific to counter Chinese missile tests off Taiwan. "He is now indelibly engraved in the American consciousness as the man who wants to nuke Hollywood," joked former CIA director James Woolsey.

The visit is the first of what US officials hope will be an annual review of security issues and military-to-military relations. "These talks are designed to increase understanding, to increase transparency," Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said. "They're based on the very simple premise that the world's most powerful nation and the world's most populous nation have to be able to deal with each other in an adult, mature way both in areas where they agree and areas where they disagree."

Richard Fisher, a Chinese military expert at the Heritage Foundation, a private research group in Washington, told the National Press Club forum that China was preparing to use missile, air and naval forces “if it deems necessary” to retake Taiwan and “to deter and if necessary engage” U.S. forces coming to Taiwan’s defense.

Voicing doubt Beijing would attempt an outright invasion of Taiwan, Fisher said a more likely scenario involved large-scale missile strikes to “butter up” the island followed by a blockade by air and naval forces. “To be sure, the PLA (People’s Liberation Army) will have to develop enormously to be able to accomplish these envisioned missions around Taiwan,” Fisher said.

Without referring specifically to this assessment, Campbell said he wished to associate himself with “almost everything that Richard Fisher has said because I think he’s perhaps our best analyst on Chinese military capabilities.”

Israel and Russia aiding Chinese military

U.S. defense experts said in 13 December 1997, they believe that Russia and Israel are the main sources of advanced military technology for China’s armed forces. In a forum discussion at the **National Press Club**, the experts, including former CIA Director James Woolsey and former Assistant Secretaries of State Winston Lord and Richard Solomon, agreed that China’s military hardware is still based on 1950s technology.

But the panel also agreed that there are pockets of high technology within the armed forces that could pose a threat to the region and even to the United States.

Rick Fischer of the **Heritage Foundation** said one of the main concerns is that Israel has been a major source of U.S. advanced technology for China. The chief concern is that Israel sold China the existing prototypes and designs for the Lavi fighter, which was never put into production in Israel.

In the mid-1980s, the United States forced Israel to forgo production of the warplane when it halted all aid to the project on grounds that it would have swallowed too much money and deprived Israel’s other military forces of much-needed weapons.

The Lavi, making use of U.S.-supplied technology based on the F-16 fighter, had many of the latest U.S. innovations, including flight-guidance technology and carbon-fiber structures. The experts believe the Lavi is the basis for a Chinese-designed strike fighter designated the J-10.

Mr. Fischer said another concern is a Chinese missile with a 1,000-mile range and a radar-guided warhead known as Radag. Radar-guided warheads are extremely accurate and can hit a circle 50 yards across at a distance of 1,000 miles. Mr. Fischer said the source of the radar-guided warhead could be Israel, because Israel had access to that technology from the United States. U.S. allies that receive U.S. technology are forbidden from transferring that technology to third countries without Washington's permission.

Another source of U.S. military information is Dassault, the French aviation firm. Russia is thought to be an even larger supplier of technology, which has helped China design aircraft and missiles.

The Chinese are also surreptitiously converting some American civilian technology such as computers to "dual use," employing them for military purposes that would be forbidden under American law.

The panel of experts believed that the Chinese People's Liberation Army is downsizing, from about 3 million men to about 2 million. But some of the downsized troops are being transferred to a new paramilitary police force, mainly used for internal security purposes.

Despite some of the disturbing military advances, especially in missiles, the panel of experts believed that China could not pose a credible military threat to the United States or Japan until 2005 at the earliest, and more like 2010.

PLA plans Taiwan intimidation

According to press reports in Hong Kong, the Chinese Central Military Commission held a meeting in the beginning of December 1997, in which it discussed weapon development for the 21st century, with the specific purpose of intimidating Taiwan.

Diplomatic sources in Beijing said the meeting ended on Thursday, 11 December 1997. Major speeches were reportedly delivered by President Jiang Zemin, also commission chairman, and vice-chairman General Zhang Wannian.

Sources said Mr Jiang's speech emphasized the importance of the Army adapting to changes in the "overall situation", saying resources and talents should be focused on developing "key weapon systems". An army source said General Zhang highlighted the

need to strengthen “the construction of cross-century military equipment”. The top brass also blatantly stated that military intimidation of Taiwan would be stepped up.

The reports specifically quoted PLA officers as saying that in order to curb “splittist” activities, the PLA should “raise the effectiveness of military intimidation” against Taiwan.

Dangerous diplomacy

In the beginning and middle of January 1998, three former US government officials came through Taipei — prompting one commentator in Taiwan to refer to the island’s “*...newfound status as an ex-US policy-maker transshipment center.*”

First came Joseph Nye (former assistant secretary of defense), then Richard Holbrooke (former assistant secretary of State), and then William Perry (former defense secretary) with a whole entourage.

Whether the visits were in some way coordinated or just coincidence remains a mystery. But **The Economist** correspondent Laurence Eyton and other Western correspondents in Taipei concluded that the foray of these former US officials amounted to dangerous diplomacy (“*Shuttle diplomacy dangerous*”, **China News**, 25 January 1998).

The two main problems — according to the article — are:

1. this represent a trial balloon by the foreign policy establishment in Washington to pressure Taiwan into negotiations with China. According to this analysis, some Clinton Administration officials have staked a lot on bettering relations with China at any cost, and look on Taiwan with a mixture of contempt and annoyance, because it simply gets in the way.
2. The second problem is the quality of the people involved. None of the three seemed to have a profound understanding of Taiwan. A journalist in Taipei who had dinner with Holbrooke was shocked at how poor his knowledge of the situation was. Holbrooke apparently thought Taiwan was in favor of the Beijing-proposed “One country, two systems.”

Mr. Perry didn’t do too much better: he arrived in Taipei from Beijing, and stated that Beijing was “..prepared to restart talks with Taiwan without preconditions.” The

China News article correctly concluded that this would have been a “stunning policy change and a huge concession to Taiwan” on Beijing’s part, and chided Mr. Perry for simply not understanding what he was talking about.

Fortunately, the Taiwan government saw through the Beijing ploy, and concluded that the Beijing definition of “One China” is a pre-condition in itself.

However, the worst of the three was former Pentagon policy-maker Joseph Nye, who reportedly proposed that three way deal in which Beijing would somehow accept a “higher international profile” by Taiwan, and Taiwan would in return declare it would never declare independence and would lift its ban in direct links with China. In addition the US would make a commitment not to recognize Taiwan should it declare independence, and would urge other nations not to do so either.

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *while the Taiwanese would welcome real help in solving the problem with China, these three gentlemen started out on the wrong foot. It would be good if they first talked extensively with democratically-elected representatives of the Taiwanese people. After all, it’s their future we are talking about.*

In particular Mr. Nye’s proposals represent the worst kind of horse-trading and meddling in Taiwan’s future, and should be rejected out of hand. It disregards the basic principles of self-determination and democracy which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and which constitute (we presume !!) the basis for US foreign policy.

The US and other nations need to emphasize once and for all that it is the right of the Taiwanese people to determine their own future, without interference, threats or intimidation from China. And if they, the people of Taiwan, wish to be accepted as an independent nation named “Taiwan”, that choice should be respected and even applauded by the international community.

As we have emphasized time and again, the best way to solve the problem is for China to accept Taiwan as a friendly neighboring state. This is in the mutual interest of the two nations, and will enhance safety and stability in East Asia.

Book Review: Crisis in the Taiwan Straits

Edited by James R. Lilley and Chuck Downs, (Ft. McNair, Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1997), 347 pages.

Beijing's July 1995 and March 1996 missile tests broke the calm in the Taiwan Straits under which Taiwan had begun its journey to democratization and Beijing began its journey to economic reform.

Beijing's maneuvers refocused attention on what had become an Cold War backwater. Crisis invites scholars to review for the layman the history, diplomacy and tools to which few have paid attention. This collection of conference papers sheds an interesting light on the military tools available to the Chinese on both sides of the Straits.

The opening politico-historical essay by June Teufel Dreyer breaks no new ground, and neglects to analyze the effect of democratization and Taiwanization on the cross-Straits equation. The closing politico-historical essay by Waldron argues that the United States has become less protective of Taiwan and that the international community should rescue Taiwan. Neither essay argues that Taiwan is the master of its own fate.

But the bulk of the volume takes the crisis in the Taiwan Straits as an exercise in the application of military means. In the first part of his essay, Richard Fisher provides an excellent chronology and detailed description of Beijing's missile tests. Instead of describing a muscle-bound Hercules, however, the bulk of these papers describe Beijing's military machine as is all potential and little bite.

Journalist Tai Ming Cheung concludes the PLA is "presently ill-prepared to storm Taiwan." Dr. Bates Gill notes that Beijing's "range of potentially successful military action against Taiwan remains limited for the next ten years..." Military analyst Harlan Jencks mentions Beijing's "relatively primitive command, control communications and intelligence (C3I) systems". Ken Allen's review of the PLAAF and the Aviation Ministry speaks of enormous tactical, training and industrial problems. The McVadon essay, a professional look at naval issues, debunks a Normandy invasion scenario and concludes that the PRC Navy is in no position to handle Taiwan's forces, let alone American.

The most bracing essay in the volume is Harlan Jencks' piece "Wild Speculations on

the Military Balance in the Taiwan Strait.” He describes the problems of finding accurate information on both antagonists’ military capability. He reviews published and Internet sources, cautioning against overly relying on any one source. He characterizes many sources as ‘bean-counters’ who rely on equipment totals to substitute for policy, intent, and capability. He suggests that counting PRC ships known to be tethered and rusting isn’t helpful.

Jencks argues that all the scenarios regarding how a military conflict might erupt all depend on some shaky assumptions. Beijing’s problem, as most authors admit, is that much PRC equipment is poorly manufactured and embodies obsolete technology. Beijing’s military doctrine suffers from poor tactics, inadequate organization and unrealistic training. As Jencks notes, these weaknesses require many observers to be creative in suggesting scenarios appropriate to Beijing’s limitations for how it can overwhelm Taiwan.

The good news for Taiwan at present appears to be Beijing’s weaknesses. The bad news is that Beijing’s narrow range of military options may heighten the miscalculations which could lead to violent confrontation. Most authors agree that Beijing’s military options are reduced to demonstrating its missile technology. This option is clumsy, imprecise, and threatening. Just the situation which conflict theory suggests misperception and lost opportunities thrive and countries stumble into war.

While most essays presume Beijing’s antagonism is to Taiwan’s democratization, Andrew Huang’s essay makes a point worth pondering. Looking at naval issues and the geography of Asia, he notes that Taiwan is key to the defense of the Chinese mainland. This raises the specter that the democratization of Taiwan may be only be one of a number of concerns Beijing has about the consequences for itself of a potentially independent Taiwan. Beijing does not have a blue water navy and might assume that a Taiwan inside the tent would help keep foreign hands at bay.

The volume represents an uneven mix of analyses of the military situation in the Taiwan Straits. Certainly the volume is worth the Jencks, McVadon and Kenneth Allen articles. However, some of the others are flawed at best and some — like June Teufel Dreyer’s — a rehash of old facts with gaping holes where new developments could have been mentioned.

Finally, it would welcome if a similar amount of time and energy would be spent in developing scenarios for *peace* in the Taiwan Straits, instead of war.

Local Elections

The Kuomintang's "comeback" ... or rampant vote-buying ?

On 24 January 1998, elections were held in Taiwan for small city mayors, township chiefs and county councils. The Kuomintang held on — more or less — to the share of the vote and the number of seats won in the previous elections (see “1994 local elections, rampant vote buying”, *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 60, pp. 6-8), prompting some pro-Kuomintang commentators to refer to a “comeback” after the ruling party’s stunning defeat in the November 1997 County Magistrate and City Mayor elections.

However, these local elections did not reflect the political shifts taking place at the national level in Taiwan, and showed a continuation of the political stagnation at the local level due to the decades-old domination and stranglehold of the Kuomintang on local politics on the island.

The results in numbers were as follows:

| | No. of seats | Percent of the vote |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Township Chiefs: | | |
| KMT | 232 seats | 55.4% |
| DPP | 29 seats | 18.9% |
| Independents | 55 seats | 25.0% |
| New Party | 0 seats | 0.7% |
| Total | 319 seats | 100.0% |
| County Counselors: | | |
| KMT | 523 seats | 49.0% |
| DPP | 113 seats | 15.7% |
| New Party | 10 seats | 3.0% |
| TAIP | 1 seat | 0.3% |
| Independents | 243 seats | 32.0% |
| Total | 890 seats | 100.0% |

Voter turnout was a low 60 percent, partially due to the cold and rainy weather sweeping the island, but more importantly, the little interest in these elections by the electorate. The lack of interest was due to a number of factors:

- 1 The fact that at a National Development Conference at the end of 1996, the Kuomintang and the DPP had agreed that elections at these levels would be abolished in the future and make way for appointed civil service personnel.

However, in the run-up to the elections, some conservative factions within the Kuomintang started to argue for a continuation of these elections beyond the year 2000. The DPP stated it expected the Kuomintang to stick to the 1996 NDC deal.

2. The widespread vote-buying and fraud, which — even according to pro-government publications — was “rampant”, and the influence on these elections by underworld figures and gangster organizations.

Vote-buying in these elections is much easier than in the higher-level County Magistrate elections, because of the small area of the constituencies. A “regular” vote could be bought for 300-500 NT\$ (10 to 18 US dollars), while votes in key elections reportedly went for amounts as high as 20,000 NT\$ (approx. 600 US dollars).

Press reports in Taipei on the day after the elections reported that the Taiwan High Court had stated that 477 cases of vote buying, and 15 cases of election-related fraud had been reported. In addition, at least 11 candidates in the election had been targeted by police in a crackdown of organized crime.

The (virtual) disappearance of the New Party

One interesting aspect of the elections was the virtual disappearance of the pro-unification New Party. The party had already received a strong beating in the November 1997 elections for city mayors and county magistrates, when it received only 1.3 percent of the vote.

In these local elections it was only able to muster 10 county counselor seats (1.1 percent) while it didn't get any township chief position. It is thus clear that the party has virtually no support outside its narrow powerbase among the Chinese mainlander minority in Taipei, and will thus play an role of decreasing significance in Taiwan politics.

Remembering “February 28th”

51st Commemoration

28 February 1998 will mark the 51st commemoration of the “February 28th Incident” of 1947, in which tens of thousands of Taiwanese were slaughtered at the hands of the Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist Chinese troops. The date represents a burning memory in the minds of the Taiwanese, who were subjected to four more decades of repressive Kuomintang rule after that.

It wasn’t until 1987, when — under pressure from the burgeoning Taiwanese democratic movement — that Chiang’s son Chiang Ching-kuo had to repeal martial law, setting the stage for the rapid democratization of the island’s political system in the subsequent years.

In earlier issues of Taiwan Communiqué we have presented background information on the tragic events of 1947 in greater detail (see “*February 28 1947*” in *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 74).

Here we simply wish to emphasize the great significance of the date in Taiwan’s history, and remind the international community that in the collective memory of the Taiwanese people, the “February 28th Incident” takes a central place equivalent to that of the Holocaust in the memory of the Jewish people.

New book upcoming: “Formosa calling”

Within the next few months, a new book will be published about the events surrounding “February 28th”. It is written by Mr. Allan Shackleton, who served as Industrial Rehabilitation Officer with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in Taiwan in 1947.

After World War II had ended, Mr. Shackleton — who had served as a young soldier in the First World War, and fought in Northern France against the Germans — volunteered to serve as an officer in UNRRA.

Not long after he arrived on the island, the “February 28th Incident” happened,

followed by large-scale executions of Formosans at the hands of Chinese Nationalist troops brought by Chiang Kai-shek from the mainland.

During this period, Mr. Shackleton traveled widely through the island, and was a first-hand observer of the brutality and repression. After his return to New Zealand in December 1947, he was so appalled at what he had seen that he spent many weeks writing “Formosa Calling.”



Mr. Alan Shackleton during his travels in Taiwan

Although Mr. Shackleton made his manuscript available to **George Kerr**, who referred to it in his monumental work “*Formosa Betrayed*”, the work was never published until now. Mr. Shackleton passed away in New Zealand in 1984 at the age of 87.

In our next issue, we will present further information on the book, and when and where it will be available.

Report from Washington

Taiwan into the World Health Organization

In mid-February 1998, two members of the US House of Representatives, Steve Chabot (R-OH) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH), introduced a Resolution into the House stating that “... *Taiwan and its 21 million people should be represented in the World Health Organization.*”

The move coincides with the announcement in Geneva that Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland is to be the new Director General of the world health body. She is

succeeding Hiroshi Nakajima from Japan, who was under increasing criticism for his abysmal leadership at the world organization.

Mrs. Brundtland is expected to restore credibility to the WHO, and is expected to be more evenhanded when Taiwan's membership comes up in the organization's annual meeting in May 1998. In last year's meeting, Mr. Nakajima played a sordid role by rejecting Taiwan's request for observer status even before it came on the agenda.

To reinforce the upcoming Taiwanese request to be included in the WHO, the President of the US-based **Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA)**, Professor Chen Wen-yen, wrote Mrs. Brundtland a letter, in which he stated:

"I would like to take this opportunity to bring the following issue to your attention.

According to Chapter III of the WHO charter "Membership in the Organization shall be open to all States." In the charter's first chapter, the WHO set forth the objective of attaining the highest possible level of health for all peoples. The "Health For All" renewal process, as initiated in 1995, emphasized that "Health For All" remains the central WHO vision in the 21st century.

Taiwan is a nation-state whose population of 21.5 million is greater than that of three-quarters of the member states in the WHO, and whose population aspires to share the noble goals of the WHO. Due to the PRC's unreasonable and unjustifiable political pressure in the international community though, Taiwan is excluded from the WHO today.

The high frequency and rapidity of international travel and trade linked to growing interdependence for economic growth and resources increases the risk of the transmission of various infectious diseases to Taiwan such as AIDS and the Hong Kong chicken flu. Taiwan's direct and unobstructed participation in international health cooperation forums and programs is a necessity.

Good health is a basic right for every citizen of the world and access to the highest standards of health information and services is the first step in protecting that right. The denial of WHO membership to Taiwan is an unjustifiable violation of its people's rights.

We ask that the WHO accepts Taiwan as a member and we urge you to do whatever lies in your capability to bring the people of Taiwan into the WHO."

The South African (dis)connection

South Africa drops “ROC” for PRC

On 1 January 1998, South Africa dropped its diplomatic ties with the Kuomintang authorities and establishing official relations with the PRC. The move follows the announcement by South African president Nelson Mandela on 28 November 1996 that he would switch relations at the end of 1997.

For some time after his May 1994 election as President of South Africa, Mr. Mandela had attempted to pursue a “dual recognition” policy of recognizing both the Kuomintang’s “Republic of China” and the Communist “People’s Republic of China.” However, this “two-China” policy was unacceptable to the Beijing regime, and finally Mr. Mandela gave in and decided to switch recognition.

In the context of establishing relations, South Africa and the PRC, on 30 December 1997 signed an accord, in which inter alia South Africa “recognizes” China’s position that Taiwan is part of China.

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *We regret that South Africa let itself be tricked like this by the Chinese: the PRC never had any sovereignty over Taiwan, and any attempt to claim such sovereignty amounts to Chinese neo-Colonialism. We believe that Mr. Mandela would be one of the first to voice his opposition to such a policy.*

It is also ironic that South Africa, which now has majority rule and is headed by a former political prisoner, has dropped an increasingly democratic Taiwan in favor of a repressive and totalitarian China, which still imprisons political dissenters.

While it is of course highly regrettable that South Africa is giving in to pressure by a dictatorial Communist regime, the break in relations is also due to the Kuomintang’s stubborn clinging to its “Republic of China” title, and its outdated insistence to be part of the so-called “One China.”

The Kuomintang would be wise to drop its anachronistic policies, and move towards a more realistic “One China, One Taiwan” policy, which recognizes the reality that Taiwan and China are two separate nations, which can live in peaceful coexistence next to each other.

In Memoriam

During the month of January 1998, several prominent members of the overseas Taiwanese community passed away.

In Tokyo, **Dr. Kuo Jung-chi**, the founding president of the World Federation of Taiwanese Associations (WFTA), passed away on January 5, 1998 at the age of 77. Dr. Kuo will be remembered as one of the fathers of Taiwanese independence movement, because of his strong belief in, and his dedication to the movement. A medical doctor by training, he emigrated to Japan from Taiwan in 1950s during the Kuomintang's "White Terror" campaign. He started a pharmaceutical company, and became a successful businessman. In the 1970s he helped set up the WFTA, the umbrella organization for the overseas Taiwanese community. He donated generously and helped fund the activities of different organizations in Taiwan and overseas.

Dr. Lee Ya-yen from Houston, Texas passed away in Taipei on January 12, 1998 at the age of 53. Dr. Lee was a prominent neuro-radiologist at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center of the University of Texas in Houston, Texas. He was a prominent member in the Taiwanese community in the United States. In 1992 he served as president of the North American Taiwanese Professors Association (NATPA), and also served as president of Taiwanese Association in Houston, where he was instrumental in the construction of the Taiwan cultural center. Dr. Lee is survived by his wife Gin-ru, daughters Jennifer and Angeline and son Frederick.

Dr. Chen Yi-shung, from Potomac, Maryland passed away in Taiwan on 3 January 1998, at the age of 59. Dr. Chen received a Ph.D. degree from the University of Washington, and was working at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. He was a devout Christian and was the founder of Taiwanese Evangelical Church in Washington DC. He was also an active member of the Taiwanese community in the greater Washington area and served as board member of the local Taiwanese Association. Dr. Chen was a good friend and strong supporter of Taiwan Communiqué. He and his wife Tina and several close friends from the church are the devoted volunteers who always help with the sorting of Taiwan Communiqué in preparation for mailing. He is survived by his wife Tina, daughter Angela and son Joseph.

The fourth person who we remember, is **Nancy Lee**, wife of Professor Wylie Lee in Laguna Hills, California. Since the mid-1970s Nancy and her husband have been steadfast members of the overseas Taiwanese community, first in Seattle — where they helped set up Taiwan Communiqué — and later when they moved to California.

Commemorating Prof. Chen We-chen

“In July 1981, Wen-chen Chen was 31 years old and was about to move up from assistant professor to associate professor in the Statistics Department at Carnegie Mellon University. By all accounts he was a quiet and serious man occupied by scholarly pursuits. He was also a husband, the father of a one-year-old son, and an avid basketball and softball player.”

Thus starts an article titled “His death in Taiwan triggered political change” by editor Jim Davidson in the Winter 1997 issue of **Focus**, the Carnegie Mellon faculty newspaper. It commemorates professor Chen, an active member of the Taiwanese overseas democratic movement, who was found dead in Taiwan, after he had been interrogated by the Kuomintang’s secret police, the fearsome Taiwan Garrison Command.

The case aroused anger in the US academic and overseas Taiwanese communities, and awoke the US government and Congress to the repressive nature of the Kuomintang’s regime, which had maintained martial law on the island since 1948.



Prof. Chen, his wife, and infant son shortly before his fateful trip to Taiwan.

While the case did indeed help accelerate the process of political change in Taiwan, the Kuomintang authorities never solved the case: they stonewalled and implied that Prof. Chen might have fallen off the building or committed suicide. An eminent Pittsburgh forensic pathologist, Dr. Cyril Wecht, traveled to Taiwan at the request of Chen’s family, and after an autopsy concluded that Prof. Chen had been murdered.

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *It would be appropriate if the Kuomintang authorities would reopen the case of Professor Chen and find those responsible for his death. Uncovering the truth about the case is an essential element in achieving a fair and just society in Taiwan, and healing the wounds of the past.*