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FAS Invents a Promising Plan for Reunifying China

Pondering a phone call from a friend in Taiwan asking about the Chinese missile threats, the FAS Executive Committee agreed to send me to Taiwan for an exploratory visit, to see if there was anything that FAS could do.

Something unexpected happened. On the way to Taiwan, reading about it on the plane, I saw a new way of viewing the dilemma of reunification and independence, which I have nicknamed the Northeast strategy. Somewhat to my astonishment, this is provoking considerable interest among a range of officials of the Taiwanese, i.e., Republic of China (ROC), government.

Under this strategy, ROC would continue to pursue both its declaratory goal of reunification and its deeply felt desire for "a reasonable international position prior to China's unification" [Premier Lien Chan, August 1993].

But it would pursue the two goals in a single integrated quid-pro-quo negotiation with the mainland's government, the People's Republic of China (PRC). Abandoning efforts to achieve the "reasonable international position" in opposition to the PRC, it would instead seek to achieve such an international personality in cooperation with the PRC. It would do this by trading off-setting steps toward reunification with steps toward international personality.

Imagine an estranged wife with a powerful husband who demands that she be ostracized by the community until she acknowledges the marriage. Under the Northeast strategy, she would negotiate

with the husband. In return for positive signs that she did not intend to denounce the marriage, and was trying to build confidence between them, she would ask for a corresponding relaxation of the rules regarding her freedom of action. Whether the marriage would, in the end, be reaffirmed in a rather formal way, or in a rather real way, would depend upon the development of their future relations and, in particular, on the course of the negotiation.

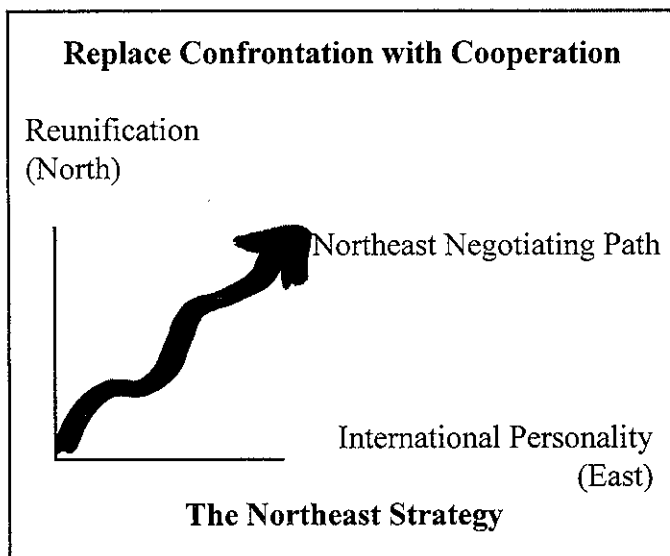
This, it seemed, might be preferable for Taiwan to giving only lip-service to the prospects of some very distant union while struggling to get the community to oppose the powerful partner.

In the alternative, the international community might be forced to choose between a small (21 million population) democracy and a large (1 billion person) non-democratic state--

one that had already been designated as the recognized sovereign state controlling both areas. This route would mean, at best, no progress for Taiwan and, at worst, big trouble.

A graph illustrating the Northeast strategy, and an op-ed advocating the notion appear on pages 3-5. The remainder of the newsletter is a trip report.

It would be inappropriate to attribute specific comments of ROC Government officials. But no one to whom the Northeast strategy was described said anything less than "very interesting," and one key observer said, "You have opened our eyes to a new approach," and, later, that this approach was "mind-opening" and that the "past way of a parallel approach



may not be so good and that, perhaps, the same goal could be achieved by cooperation rather than by conflict." He also later called it a "great idea." A think-tank observer called it "an ideal scenario for peaceful evolution."

Another key Governmental observer said it was not only a way to resolve their problems but "the only way." Indeed, any other solution would tear apart the domestic Taiwan consensus. And, surprisingly, no one said they had thought about the problem in this way before! Even for FAS, which has been called by the Washington Post an "idea factory," this is unusual.

Upon returning home, Ralph Clough of Johns Hopkins University, who appears to be America's greatest expert on Taiwan, said he could be quoted to the ROC foreign ministry as saying that he "...saw no major difficulties and thought the idea very interesting and clever and worth exploring." Despite the idea being highly appropriate, there seemed only the most minor, and tacit, precedents for ROC and PRC to trade off points in the two directions.

—Jeremy J. Stone

At Press Time: On March 23, President Lee, who had been repeatedly denounced by Beijing, won 54% of the vote while the DPP, whose independence position was violently opposed by Beijing, won 22%; thus 75% of the population resisted the military pressures of the PRC. DPP Chairman Shih Ming-te resigned to take responsibility for the fact that the DPP vote was lower than in other island wide elections.

On March 24, Beijing called for a meeting between President Lee and PRC President Jiang Zemin as well as for direct air, shipping and mail links across the Taiwan Strait. Taipei's Premier Lien Chan said Taiwan would explore a "peace agreement" and a long-term policy of "detente" with China.

It appears that President Lee now has a mandate sufficient to envisage a summit meeting on an "equal" basis. Some speculated that his earlier references to visiting a foreign capital might have meant Beijing in the first place. In any case, his 54% was more than some observers thought was necessary for him to propose a Northeast Strategy. (See page 14)

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Rationale for the Northeast Strategy

Following his success in the March 23rd election on Taiwan, President Lee Teng-hui has it within his power to start a process, acceptable to his citizens, that would lead eventually to the reunification of China on terms that would be negotiated subsequently.

His goal should be to combine two currently independent discussions of his foreign policy into a single integrated negotiation with the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland. These are the drive toward unification and the drive toward international status.

Here is how it would work. His government would list, along a horizontal axis, those international goals his Government seeks that are effectively vetoed by the PRC--starting with the easiest ones to achieve and moving on to the most difficult: e.g. rights of travel in private capacity of his officials; membership in various international organizations (e.g. WTO, IAEA, IMF, etc.); and, even, at the end of the axis, membership in the General Assembly. (See pages 4-5)

On a vertical axis, ROC would list the various steps toward unification: direct trade, relaxation of various conditions on trade and exchange, a summit conference, political negotiations, a plebescite, ratification of a reunification constitution, etc.

Trading Concessions

President Lee would propose to enter into a negotiation with the PRC that would trade movement in the vertical (northern) direction for PRC agreement to permit the ROC movement in the horizontal (eastern) direction. The resolvent would be motion in a direction agreeable to both (northeast).

The concept itself, and the concrete steps in the direction of reunification, would neutralize Beijing's charge of "lip-service" to unification. And it would capture the support, in Taiwan, of voters who seek reunification. The quid-pro-quo of steps in the eastern direction toward international status would capture most of the supporters of the independence (Democratic Progressive Party) drive.

All these voters would be told that the process was "fail-safe" since most of the gains of movement in the Eastern direction could not be easily reversed even if

and when negotiations stalled, e.g. expulsion from international organizations to which one has been admitted is not plausible. This would help answer the widespread fear in Taiwan that negotiations are a dangerous "bearhug". (Indeed, the process is fail-safe, also, for Beijing since most of the Northern gains are, also, hard to reverse.)

Further, the voters would be advised that this was an extension of the successful "pragmatic" policy of Lee Teng-hui and Foreign Minister Fredrick Chien, putting substance ahead of theological disputes over names and the "number" of Chinas.

Would Beijing agree? It wants the opening of political negotiations and it has already acknowledged in a White Paper that Taiwan would be permitted, in a reunification agreement, not only economic and cultural autonomy, but also "certain rights in foreign affairs". Taiwan's participation, under a suitable name, in international organizations, and its intercourse with foreign nations, could fit within that phrase. It seems then that Beijing would not refuse to open negotiations it has long sought.

Two China Votes in the U.N.

Moreover, in the context of reunification, what harm is there in the existence of two "Chinese" votes in an agency? Thus, even Taiwan's admission to the U.N.--in the context of the ratification on both sides of a reunification agreement--is entirely possible. The Soviet Union had three seats in the U.N.

In sum, a policy of one-China, two seats, is easily imaginable for Beijing. It can define its "one-China" policy any way it wants. (Needless to say, however, the ROC would have to suspend, for some time, its drive for membership in the U.N. and would only renew that drive in cooperation with the PRC. This answers a major current complaint of the PRC.)

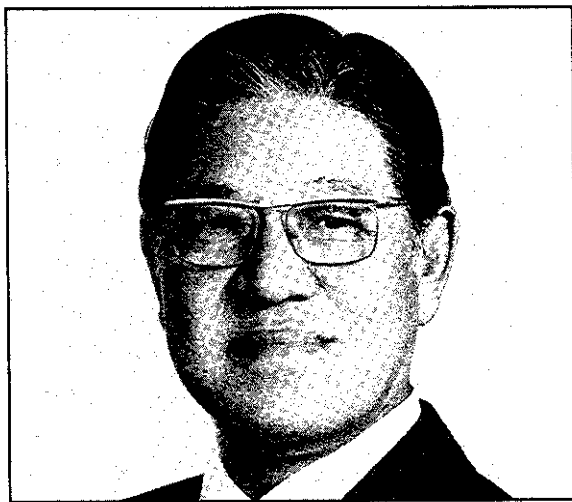
The eventual form of reunification would remain to be decided in the course of what will be long negotiations. If sufficient trust existed at the relevant negotiating stage, the form of reunification could be closer. Otherwise it would be more distant (e.g. a commonwealth). Obviously a change in the social system of Beijing could produce a great deal of trust. On the other hand, the Northeast negotiating process with its (eastern) concessions could produce some

trust as well.

Until now ROC has been preoccupied with completing democratization and has had little motivation to take negotiations seriously. With this first direct election for President, ROC has now the cohesion and standing to pursue real negotiations with the PRC. And the impatience of the PRC has provided new motivation to do so. President Lee Teng-hui could explain all this in his inaugural speech of May 20.

Most important for such a speech would be to present this Northeast strategy as one of negotiation and cooperation rather than confrontation, so as to persuade a politically divided Beijing not to treat it as a negotiating trick. It should be seen, as it is, as a sincere effort to satisfy Beijing's fundamental concern with sovereignty while maintaining the necessary support of a Taiwanese population that is equally intent upon having an international personality for Taiwan. Possibly, certain unilateral initiatives on the part of Taiwan would be useful in restarting the dialogue on this basis.

Frightened by the prospect of war in the Straits, the international diplomatic community will support any plausible ROC initiative. And, in the absence of an ROC plan, the PRC will just continue to lay one condition on another and make later negotiations more difficult. All in all then, for the ROC, it makes more sense to seize the diplomatic initiative with a Northeast strategy than to try to maintain a do-nothing status quo. —J.J.S.



President Lee Teng-hui

His inaugural speech on May 20 will presumably announce new initiatives in reunification.

Steps toward Reunification

ROC negotiates:

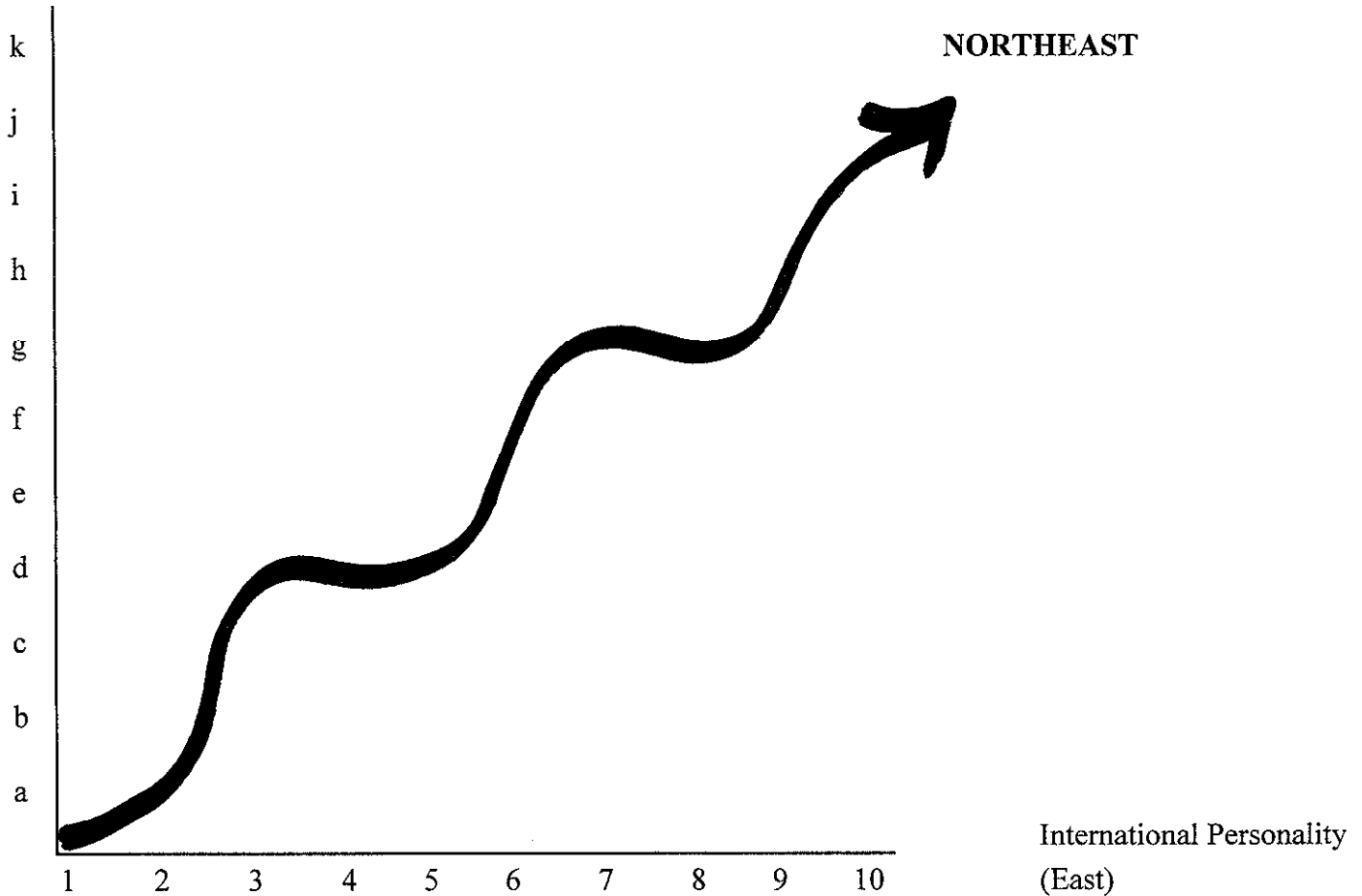
- k. Bilateral Ratification of Reunification Constitution
- j. Taiwan Plebescite Approves Constitution Principles
- i. Agreement on Principles of Reunification
- h. Agreement on the Non-Use of Force
- g. Direct Political Negotiations begin
- f. Summit Meeting
- e. Bidirectional Exchanges of Officials
- d. Bidirectional Exchange of Citizens
- c. Relaxation of ROC Limits on Investment
- b. Relaxation of ROC Limits on Imports
- a. Direct Trade, Shipping, Mail, Air and Phone

The Meaning of the Graph

The points on both axes of this graph are purely illustrative. In reality, there would be many more points in both directions, and some of the current points would be subdivided. Each side might well put the points in a somewhat different order and, perhaps, have quite different points. All this would be subject to negotiation. The entire graph would not be agreed at the outset, but would develop over time. The purpose of the diagram is simply to illustrate how Taipei could stop trying to achieve international status over Beijing's opposition but try, instead, to do so in cooperation with Beijing in return for negotiated progress toward reunification.

Northeast Strategy: A Failsafe Negotiating Process for Achieving Reunification of China Combined With An International Personality for Taiwan

Reunification
(North)



Steps toward International Personality:

PRC withdraws opposition to:

1. Taiwan's officials visiting foreign countries in private capacity
2. Taiwan joining WTO
3. Taiwan joining IAEA
4. Taiwan having offices in various countries where they do not now exist
5. Taiwan joining World Bank
6. Taiwan joining IMF
7. Taiwan joining other subordinate U.N. bodies
8. Taiwan officials visiting foreign countries in an agreed official capacity
9. Taiwan joining U.N. as Observer
10. Taiwan joining U.N. General Assembly

Trip Report: The Week Before the Chinese Military Maneuvers and A New Strategy for Unification

On the plane from Washington, D.C. to Taipei, I examined Ralph Clough's "Reaching Across the Straits" (Westview Press, 1993) and Martin L. Laseter's "The Changing of the Guard" (Westview Press, 1995). It seemed pretty impossible to find a compromise between the two political movements competing in Taiwan's upcoming Presidential election. The ruling Kuomintang (KMT) party said it wanted eventual reunification with China, while the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) said it wanted eventual independence from China.

At least in one dimension. But what if one viewed the goal of independence simply as a drive for "more space." This was, after all, how Taipei's representative in Washington, Benjamin Lu, had described it, a few days before. In this case, the two drives were not literally inconsistent.

What if, then, one viewed them as orthogonal, in a plane, rather than as opposing views along a line. One might then imagine a strategy of trading off the reunification Beijing wanted for that "more space" Taiwan desired, with the resolvent of the two forces moving along some approximation of a 45° axis.

This was born the Northeast strategy that became the focus of the trip and is described within.

Hsieh Shu-yuan--DPP Activist

Dr. Hsieh met my plane. A Taiwanese participant in Pugwash, and an American citizen also, she had



Hsieh Shu-yuan

catalyzed my trip by calling late one night in a search for reassurance: Would Beijing attack Taiwan before the upcoming Presidential election?

She said money was flowing out of the country and, en route to the hotel, offered to have me flown next day to Quemoy, off the China coast, to watch a DPP seminar. But I had a conflicting appointment with the Foreign Minister.

Friday, March 1: Lee Teng-hui Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

The morning newspapers were advancing President Lee's election campaign by reporting that he had been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. A Taiwanese who had succeeded to the Presidency, from the Vice Presidency, in 1988 when General Chiang Kai-shek's son, Chiang Ching-kuo, died, Lee was a very unusual leader.

Lee was one of those many Taiwanese over 60 who had been trained in Japan as a consequence of growing up during the period from 1895 to 1945 when Taiwan was a Japanese colony. After graduating from Kyoto Imperial University in 1946 at the age of 23, he had worked in agricultural economics in Taiwan until, at the age of 42, he won a scholarship to Cornell University, where he earned a Ph.D. in agricultural economics. (His Ph.D. thesis had actually won an annual award from the American Agricultural Economics Association). During this period, he played a major role in Taiwan's agricultural advances which provided a foundation for its later industrial progress.

A straight arrow, who played the violin, he had been chosen by President Chiang Ching-kuo as Mayor of Taipei and, later, as Governor of Taiwan. When his only son died of cancer, one observer said Chiang felt Lee would be "far more inclined to use the power given to him to carry out [Chiang's] legacy rather than to cultivate such power for himself and his family members."

Accordingly, a year later, he was appointed Vice President, reflecting the growing influence in Taiwan of the Taiwanese-born; they were replacing the "mainlanders" who had come with Chiang Kai-shek's

army and were dying out. Mainlanders are now only 15% of the population and their control of all aspects of the society is on the wane.

Tien Hung-mao, President of the Institute for National Policy Research in Taiwan, wrote after Chaing Ching-kuo died:

"In three rounds of power struggles and leadership reshuffling, Lee consolidated his power over the military, the party and the government. In the process he has transformed the KMT from an authoritarian part with a revolutionary heritage to a democratic-type party with a strong indigenous character."

In effect, Lee had become a kind of Gorbachev. Both surfaced at the top as democratically inclined reformers of corrupt and decaying dictatorial parties. And the democracy is certainly in full bloom; the morning newspaper even had one of Lee's former presidential press officers accusing Lee of using the taxpayers money for his campaign. (A KMT spokesman had responded that this charge was "illogical and probably started from a personal grudge.")

DPP Considers the Nomination Misdirected

But at DPP headquarters that afternoon, there was sarcastic derision. Seventy percent of the leaders of this unique opposition party had spent long periods in the KMT jails. It was they who had dared speak out in the 1947-1988 period when dissidence meant repression and imprisonment. The DPP chairman, Shih Ming-te, had spent 25 years in KMT jails and was called the Nelson Mandela of Taiwan. Except for the African National Congress party's black leaders, who had spent decades in South Africa's white jails, no political party in the world had more leaders who had spent more time in prison.

It was the DPP leaders who pushed the envelope, and beyond, of civil liberties. They were the principled insurgents. From their point of view, Lee had done little for them when he was Vice President. They had forced the KMT reforms, not he. Though they did not say so, they certainly felt that it was they who deserved the Nobel Peace Prize for progress in Taiwan.

DPP's Maysing H. Yang, Director of the Department of Foreign Affairs, called Taiwan "my country and an international orphan seeking its rightful place among nations." It appeared from their leading Senator, Chang Chun-hong, that if elected, the DPP

The Taiwanese State of Play

One long-term observer marveled at Taiwan's progress. It had developed so quickly that it had ceased to qualify for Agency for International Development (AID) in 1964. It now has a per capita income of \$12,500 and is headed for middle level European status by mid-century.

Human rights have been essentially eliminated as a problem though Taiwan does have homegrown gangsters. (Indeed, the mafia even has seats in the parliament, specializing in drugs, gambling, and prostitution.)

President Lee has co-opted DPP issues, such as seeking U.N. membership which had held a consensus together. DPP was not planning to seek trials of the KMT for past crimes. And the drive for Taiwanese "independence" had peaked 18 months ago and seems an idea whose time has passed. DPP has been on a plateau in terms of votes.

The international problem is that the PRC leader, Deng Xiao-ping, has left the scene. It was Deng who advised China not to worry about Taiwan until the mainland's economy improved and who had a long view of history. With Deng aging, the Chinese military has gained influence and was pushing Taiwan reunification harder than would have he. Unfortunately, the Taiwanese have not thought through how they want to be related to China.

would hold a plebescite on the question of independence.

But how to phrase the question? DPP had learned from Outer Mongolian politics that they would get a frightened "no" answer if they asked: "Do you want to be independent?" On the other hand, they would get an affirmative "yes" answer if they asked: "Is Taiwan sovereign?" After holding the plebescite, they would, it seemed, declare independence if the situation permitted but would be "low-key" if not.

At the moment, neither reunification nor independence seems possible to them. And if they called for independence too loudly, they might get the opposite result. As to how to live with reunification, if it occurred, they preferred a kind of "common-

wealth" in the British tradition. They did agree that new approaches would be in order.

Chinese or Taiwanese?

Many in the DPP consider themselves Taiwanese rather than Chinese, and they point to the fact that the Chinese who came to the island normally came as men with very few women. From DPP's point of view, it means that, genetically, the present population is descended in significant part from the original Polynesian inhabitants. (Others do not agree.)

One reason the DPP were so determinedly "Taiwanese" was that they had seen nothing but cruelty from the mainland Chinese--decades of repression from the KMT and continuous threats from the PRC. Senator Chang said he would rather be under the rule of the Americans or the Japanese than the Chinese. The Japanese, during their colonial period, had at least ruled by law. By contrast, the KMT had produced the White Terror.

Senator Chang deeply feared the growing trade with China; in his view, Taiwan was substituting trade with friends such as the U.S. for "economic dependence on an enemy." "China," he said, "was a tiger which we cannot fight but must ride."

The DPP noted with wry humor that many KMT politicians were now speaking Taiwanese on the stump and not talking of reunification. And they considered "harmless" the "New Party" that contained former KMT politicians who had defected from the right. The "more pieces the KMT broke into the better" was their attitude.

Chairman Shih Ming-te

DPP's Chairman, Shih Ming-te, was born in 1941. At the age of 21, he was given a 15-year sentence for "plotting the overthrow of the government" simply for participating in a study group where Taiwan's future was discussed.

Released in 1977, he spent two years spearheading free expression. After an historic rally he organized in 1979, he was sentenced to life imprisonment and released only in an amnesty declared by President Lee in 1990. Now, after a quarter-century in prison--about half his life--including long hunger strikes and painful periods of illness and isolated confinement--he was leading the opposition party. Through all his tribula-

tions, he had acted honorably and he seemed young and unmarked by his ordeal.



DPP Chairman Shih Ming-te

He said:

"Taiwan will soon have its own elected President - a remarkable result for which so many have given their lives. This proves that human rights are not given but must be struggled for. We have moved from authoritarian rule to corrupt rule in 8 years."

"Those who nominated Lee for the Nobel Peace prize did not understand Taiwanese culture. He was, really, a fortunate person who took office at a time when martial law was on its way out with all this implied for the inevitability of further democratization. It can be said, however, that from KMT's point of view, he was the worst thing that could happen to them, while from DPP's point of view, he is good."

He went on to explain that, for DPP, China was the more serious problem, since DPP felt it knew how to handle the KMT. As for independence, DPP felt that Taiwan had been independent, de facto, since 1945 and did not have to announce it. An eventual declaration of independence was inevitable but the DPP will press for only what the people want. Currently, 70% wanted the status quo and 30% wanted absolute independence. (But fifteen years ago, only 10% wanted independence and 80% wanted to attack the mainland!).

Caesar Chang: DPP Administrator

After Shih moved on to a press conference, I talked, over dinner, to the DPP Administrator, Caesar

Chang. He had been in prison for several years, including six months in a 10 foot by 10 foot cell with 36 other prisoners, taking turns sleeping with no toilet and suffering from intense heat.

Chang considered the Chinese much crueler than the Taiwanese, who he felt were more forgiving. Native Taiwanese could, he said, spot mainlanders easily from the other side of a room.

DPP, he said, wants a "peaceful transition" from KMT rule but worries that, if it won an election, KMT elements might provoke violence.

The PRC, which refuses to give up the threat of force, lists four scenarios in which it might use this force: a) Taiwan getting nuclear weapons; b) Taiwan falling under foreign control [presumably American]; c) Taiwan declaring itself independent; and d) a breakdown of rule on the island. Under this fourth scenario, a call for help from mainlanders would constitute a trigger for PRC intervention.

All in all, the DPP leaders are the destabilizing conscience of Taiwan. They are committed to their views and are the ideological descendants of Mahatma Gandhi. But while Gandhi benefited from confronting the British with their concept of rule of law and decency, the KMT was, until 1990, a much tougher and more brutal opponent.

Their Taiwanese supporters may be more pragmatic than their leaders, in the Chinese style. The voters, and the donors to the party, seem to want the DPP to exist largely as a prod to the KMT's reform. The past leveling off of the DPP vote may reflect a widespread fear that DPP's success at the polls would dangerously upset a very satisfactory status quo. Since people on the street consider that Taiwan is,

already, effectively independent, the last thing they want is to force the issue.

ROC's Foreign Minister Fredrick Chien

Fredrick Chien has been the leading Taiwanese figure in foreign relations for about 15 years. The son of a renowned chemist, Chien received his Ph.D. in political science from Yale, where he was a classmate of two of my longtime friends and associates, Morton Halperin and Alton Frye, whose careers we discussed. (Alton had written Chien that I had "an incredible history of being helpful in complicated international situations"-- perhaps, one reason the Foreign Ministry was rolling out the red carpet.)

Chien has been Foreign Minister for almost six years and, earlier, had run the ROC's Washington office for another six, from 1983 to 1988. His 44 years in the KMT party had included ten when he was interpreter for the late President Chiang Kai-shek (1965-75). A prodigious worker and networker, with a phenomenal memory, he seems to have met 90 of the 100 Senators during his service in Washington and made friends with many. It was one reason that Taiwan was outmaneuvering the PRC on Capital Hill.

Chien said Taiwan was "no longer a monolithic society and cannot prevent any expression of view." He felt the Chinese were trying to "teach President Lee a lesson" for his visit to Cornell last year.

It was rumored in Washington that Chien had strongly urged against that visit. A few weeks before, he had told a press conference that Taiwan must avoid giving "causa belli" to the mainland. Chien, who had implemented the "pragmatic diplomacy" concept coined by President Lee, must have thought that visit, which was certain to anger Beijing, less than pragmatic.

Chien was about to be moved to Speaker of the Assembly--a prestigious but not very onerous position, since the Assembly was not the Congress but a body that dealt with Constitutional amendments and such. The newspapers announcing this said he had "gained fame for his dressing down of then-U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher" when the U.S. broke diplomatic ties with the ROC. Behind the scenes, the Foreign Ministry was said to be demoralized by the prospect of losing their long-time leader--one who had taken them from losing their seat in the U.N. to the present and who had many world



ROC Foreign Minister Fredrick Chien

contacts.

That afternoon, I bought and read a month's back issues of the English-language China Post. They showed that democracy was in full fling, showing incredible differences from Taiwan's authoritarian past. It included, for good or ill, multiparty politicking. For example, the KMT had barely won the Speakership when the two opposition parties--the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) with 54 votes and the New Party with 21 votes--had joined to try to defeat the KMT; they had come within one vote. The next day they were trying to block the renomination of the KMT's Premier, Lien Chan.

Atomic Weapons?

On February 12, U.S. News and World Report had reported that Taiwan had abandoned a secret nuclear weapons program in March 1988 under pressure from the US. But because Taiwan is technically sophisticated, with six civilian power reactors, it was noteworthy when Lee Teng-hui recently suggested that Taiwan should "restudy the question from a long-term point of view." After three days of criticism, he backed down, pledging that Taiwan "will in no way develop nuclear weapons even though it has the ability to do so."

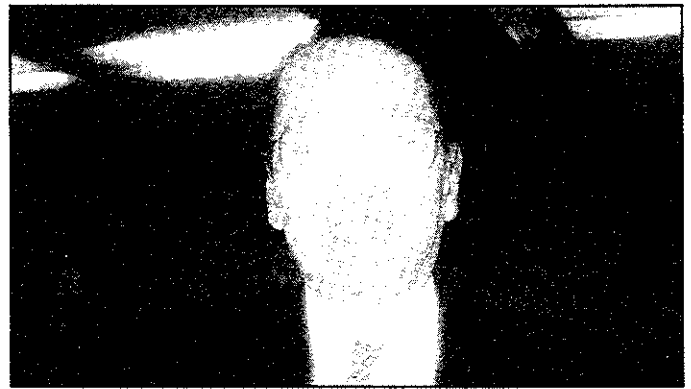
The 2/28 Incident: Uprising and Massacre

February 28, the day before I arrived, was the 49th anniversary of a reign of KMT terror against the Taiwanese population. It is called by both the KMT and the Taiwanese activists, the 2/28 "incident". It was, however, much more than an incident. (See box, page 11.)

The issue discussed in the paper was whether to recognize the atrocity and compensate the victims--as a bill last year had authorized--or to "forgive and forget," which the KMT party preferred.

Background from a Newspaper Editor

Later, over tea, a newspaper editor discussed the various contingencies under which the Chinese might invade. There was, he said, "little risk" of the KMT calling in the Chinese because the ethnic Taiwanese now controlled the army. The two parties, KMT and DPP, were merging ideologically in an effort to find



Peng Ming-min, DPP Candidate

a central ground. Polls showed that Lee was stealing DPP support. Indeed, there are rumors that Lee would like to have a coalition that would permit merging of the two parties and the infusing of the KMT with new blood.

March 3, DPP's Candidate Peng Ming-min

In the late fifties, my wife and I had enjoyed the friendship of a brilliant fellow graduate student in mathematics, Wang Ju-kwei, from Taiwan. We had met only once in the intervening 35 years since our 1960 Ph.D.'s. Because we shared the same Ph.D. adviser, the late Karel DeLeeuw, I considered him my intellectual brother--a tie heightened by the tragic fact that DeLeeuw had been murdered by one of his subsequent graduate students.

Reunited, we went off to a press conference being held by a Taiwanese-Japanese friendship society to support the DPP candidate Peng Ming-min.

Peng, born in 1924, had grown up during the 1895-1945 period of Japanese control. In the thirties, he went to Japanese schools, as was permitted at that time. And by traveling to Japan in 1940, he managed to attend a Japanese high school and, eventually, to graduate from the prestigious Tokyo Imperial University.

He returned to Taiwan in January 1946 in time to witness sympathetically the riots of 1947 that became the 2/28 "incident." At 40 years of age, he had been a highly regarded Chairman of the Department of Politics at the famous National Taiwan University.

But three years later, he was arrested for trying to circulate 10,000 copies of a "Manifesto" calling for the overthrow of "the Chiang regime." He was saved from death by appeals from abroad, and after a dramatic escape from house arrest, he had spent 20 years

The 2/28 Incident: In 1947, Old Style KMT Suppressed a Taiwanese Uprising

Perhaps the most thorough and objective review of the ill-fated uprising and brutal repression that began on February 28, 1947 may be found in "A Tragic Beginning: The Taiwan Uprising of February 28, 1947" by Lai, Myers and Wou (Stanford University Press, 1991). This summary comes from that work.

The story runs something like this. After Japan was forced to cede Taiwan back to China in 1945, the Nationalist Government tried to run the island with a minimum of soldiers because all available forces were needed in the ever more desperate struggles with the Communists.

But the administration by their governor, Ch'en I, alienated the Taiwanese. As U.S. General Wedemeyer reported to the U.S. Secretary of State on August 17, 1947:

"The people [of Taiwan] anticipated sincerely and enthusiastically deliverance from the Japanese yoke. However, Ch'en I and his henchmen ruthlessly, corruptly, and avariciously imposed their regime upon a happy and amenable population. The Army conducted themselves as conquerors. Secret police operated freely to intimidate and to facilitate exploitation by central government officials."

Rebellions Common in China

After the incident occurred on February 28, 1947, there was a popular rebellion that took a characteristically Chinese form of organized violence directed against government authority or misrule. (One expert has recorded over 6,000 cases of this kind of urban violence in only six Chinese provinces between the years of 1769 and 1911.)

Taiwan was always independent-minded and the Ch'ing dynasty had a saying about Taiwan: "Every three years, a small uprising, every five years, a big

one." (In particular, Taiwanese had fought against the Japanese takeover in 1895 forming a Democratic State of Taiwan that, some say, lasted six months.)

Ch'en I tried to appease the uprising by offering reforms, but his efforts were rejected and demands became increasingly radical, including calls for the Nationalist force to disarm. When Ch'en's reform offers failed, General Chiang Kai-shek, based on the mainland, sent an army to put down the revolt.

Using methods that were common on the mainland, the undisciplined nationalist troops, even before docking, began by spraying fire at observers on the shore and, after landing, went on from there to indiscriminate terror and killing. Rules were promulgated that demanded that the Taiwanese inform on their neighbors and colleagues. In the end, these experts believe, 8,000 people were killed from a population of about 6,000,000. [Some estimates run as high as 100,000.]

A systematic effort to eliminate intellectuals who might attempt a future rebellion is alleged to have occurred. All this made normal rule by the KMT impossible. They turned to ruling a hostile territory with party cells in government, economic, educational and social organs--penetrating government and society much as the Communists were doing in the mainland.

Until recently, memories of this event were suppressed. In 1988, the DPP called for "noisy yet harmonious demonstrations" which led to arrests. By January, 1991, President Lee had set up an official inquiry to determine what had happened and to recommend appropriate action to assuage the bitter memories. He later apologized to the victims and pledged to spend \$71 million dollars in compensation. The inquiry said 18,000 had died.

in the United States in opposition. He had a doctorate from the University of Paris (1954) and had participated in Henry Kissinger's Harvard seminars on international relations in 1956 and 1960. He was very sophisticated.

Peng's views, drawn from his writings, minimize Taiwan's links with China. From his point of view, Chinese citizens fled to Taiwan in the last century

because conditions there were so bad. Then China gave up Taiwan to Japan in 1895 without consulting the Taiwanese. After only four years of Chinese rule (1945-1949), Taiwan's relations with the mainland were broken again. Thus, in a hundred years, there had been only four years of control by the mainland.

From Peng's point of view, Chinese influence on the island had been largely harmful, e.g., corruption

under the Ch'ing dynasty and later, dictatorial and corrupt control by the KMT-- while Japanese and Western influence had been beneficial. (Like President Lee Teng-hui, his family had become Christians.)

Peng speaks smoothly and makes a good impression. He addressed the group in Taiwanese, rather than Mandarin. (Some speakers spoke in Japanese and reminisced warmly about their young adult experiences in Japan.)

Peng apologized for not having more time to meet with FAS. He was rushing off to the South of Taiwan and we had time only to shake hands. Peng lost an arm during the U.S. bombing of Japan, where he spent the war, and had been on the outskirts of Nagasaki when the atomic bomb went off. When I mentioned this would be of great interest to our atomic scientist founders, he just grinned.

That Sunday afternoon, in Chiang Kai-shek Square, families were strolling and admiring exhibits for the Lantern festival the next day.

Monday, March 4: New Party and the National Security Council

The New Party had split off from the KMT and was supposed to be more pro-Chinese and pro-reunification. Tien Hung-mao had written that its constituency was heavily concentrated in urban areas among mainlanders and the disgruntled younger middle-class voters.

I visited with one of its parliamentarians, Edward I-Hsin Chen, who was number four on their leadership list. It would have been higher, he indicated, except for affirmative action for Taiwanese (he was a mainland).

But Chen did not seem very pro-reunification, saying that they could wait for the next, third or fourth generation. The New Party's two conditions were that the mainland should become a) free and b) rich before unification. They seemed to worry about being considered "pro-Chinese"; for example, they would not travel to the Mainland without a good excuse, lest it look bad to the voters.

Chen spoke about corruption within the KMT and the danger posed by some legislators, independent of any party, who were linked to organized crime. He did not think President Lee should be credited with democratization, which he attributed to President

Chiang Ching-kuo. But on gaining international status: "I give him credit though I do not think his visit to Cornell was good."

Later, I had an off-the-record meeting with a high official of the National Security Council, Deputy director Lin Bih-jaw, in his office in the heavily guarded presidential "White House". He was friendly and intelligent and heard out my presentation with interest.

Lee Yuan-tseh, President of the Academia Sinica

Still later, I met with the physical chemist Dr. Lee Yuan-tseh, President of the Academia Sinica. Dr. Lee is a Nobel Prize winner in Chemistry who had worked for 32 years at the University of California in Berkeley. He knew FAS well and had even, he said, sent us \$100 for something long forgotten. A man of gravitas, common-sense and good judgment, he was under pressure, I later learned, to become the Premier.

The KMT needs candidates for a post-election premier in May and, because of the confirmation process, they need a candidate who can get through the legislative confirmation process. Dr. Lee, unlike many in the KMT, has no record of corruption and would bring a scientific and objective quality to the position. Of course, as a scientist, he does not look upon this prospect with great delight. And because he has not worked in the political arena, it cannot be guaranteed that he could do this effectively. But he seemed astute enough that it might be possible.

Dr. Lee agreed to sign the FAS Atomic Scientists' pledge not to work on weapons of mass destruction. This is no small thing, considering Taiwan's vulnerability to PRC attack--which provides Taiwan with motivation to construct such weapons--and his own critical position as president of the scientific academy.

Dr. Lee, in the past, has been received at the highest levels of the PRC government, and quite warmly. But in



*President of the
Taiwanese Academy of
Science,
Lee Yuan-tseh*

his present capacity, and having given up his U.S. citizenship, possibilities for visiting the mainland and engaging in scientific exchange are limited.

FAS decided, on the spot, to try to catalyze regular scientific exchange on issues of war and peace between the scientists based in Taipei and those in Beijing. An FAS letter to that effect, endorsed by key leaders, is being sent to President Lee Teng-hui and President Jiang Zemin in the hopes that they will unleash their scientists to meet and discuss reunification and other issues of scientific exchange.

March 5: KMT and a Research Think-Tank

Over breakfast, a DPP financial backer, who was a magnate in the candy business, said, "We have had our own rule for such a short time, we don't want to lose it. Only ten years ago, we could not even speak freely."

Dr. Tien Hung-mao of INPR

In the morning, I visited Dr. Tien Hung-mao, the President of a leading think-tank, the Institute for National Policy Research. He said the PRC was getting steadily tougher from the White Paper to the eight points of Jiang Zemin to today. Taiwan had moved from being an issue to being part of the Beijing power struggle; Jiang Zemin's opponents accused him of being soft on Taiwan. The military was getting stronger in Beijing.

The Chinese thought the U.S. was hostile generally. The U.S. was tilting toward giving ROC more space. And the Chinese were worrying about the election.

Tien said an election in Taiwan was a "subtle declaration of independence" producing, in particular, a leader called a "President," which normally would exist only in a sovereign country. The election provided the ROC with a certain international recognition and became a model for China itself.

The military maneuvers off Taiwan's coast were designed in part, he felt, to show that China was still there and involved. Beijing hoped that with Lee out, the KMT would return to a pro-unification line. It had not anticipated that its maneuvers might lead people to vote for Lee rather than for the independence party, DPP.

I described my "Northeast strategy". Tien said it

Chou En-lai: Practicing What You Preach

In 1972, over dinner, China's Premier Chou En-lai told me of his surprise at the admission of the PRC to the United Nations in 1971 and the expulsion of the ROC. He had heard of it, he said, from a messenger who arrived just as he was waving goodbye to the airplane of Henry Kissinger, who had been on a visit.

Premier Chou said he ordered an investigation into why his foreign ministry, with the exception of a few younger members, had all wrongly predicted that they would not be admitted at that time.

In the end, they decided that the error could be explained in terms of the World War II Sian incident. In this famous incident, Chiang Kai-shek had provoked his generals, by complaining that they were talking to the Communists under the table about a united Chinese front against Japanese invaders. Their angry response was that he was talking to the Communists with a view to a united front, and they locked him up.

Chou was sent by Chairman Mao to effect his rival's release in the interests of such joint opposition to the Japanese.

Thinking about this, the PRC foreign ministry decided that America had made a mistake similar to that of Chiang. America had been telling the world to keep China out of the U.N. (i.e. not to talk to the Communists). But at the time of the crucial vote, Henry Kissinger was visibly in Beijing--talking to the Communists! Like Chiang's generals, the States in the U.N. General Assembly had rebelled.

This story may have some application to the current policy of the ROC. It is busily trading with the Communists and, to that extent, integrating itself with the mainland. On the other hand, it is telling the world that the Communists are so bad that it wants the world, and especially the United States, to jeopardize its trade with the Communists, and much else, in order to give the ROC support to avoid the reunification ROC declares it wants. How long will this be a viable policy?

—JJS

was an "ideal scenario for peaceful evolution. If President Lee won by more than 50%, it was something he could try. In any case, the most important thing was to get the talks restarted."

Over a lunch with his staff, I told them the story of Chou En-lai and the ROC's defeat in the U.N.; it has many morals.

Headquarters of the KMT

Next was an official in the comfortably housed and flag-festooned KMT party. A few years ago, the KMT budget was already about \$200 million U.S. dollars or \$10 per man, woman and child. It would be the equivalent of \$2.5 billion for a U.S. election campaign.

C.J. Chen, Director of the KMT's Department of Overseas Affairs had been a deputy foreign minister and, later, a legislator. He was known also as a singer. He spoke at length and I mostly listened.

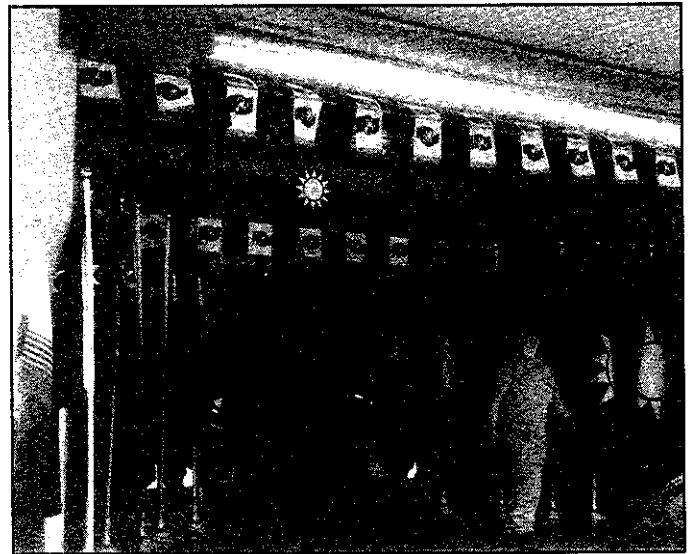
This was the day the PRC announced it would have missile tests for six days in areas quite close to Taiwan--off the mouths of its main ports really. He said it was one of the ROC's most important years comparable to: 1949 (when the KMT army came); 1958 (when the struggle over Quemoy began); 1971 (when ROC was thrown out of the U.N.); 1979 (when U.S. recognized PRC); 1987 (when martial law was abandoned in Taiwan); 1995 (when the two sides had exchanged 8-point and 6-point plans over reunification); and now this.

The DPP, he said, spoke for many things that KMT members, including himself, wanted, e.g., an end of martial law, the revealing of financing by parties, etc. He felt the parties were respecting each other more now and cooperating more. But on the election, the polls showed the KMT having 40% and the DPP having only 8%, with two other independent candidates getting a total of about 20% and the rest undecided. A 60% to 70% majority of the population just wanted the status quo.

On reunification, Chen preferred a long step-by-step process with no specific model, engaged in with patience and creativity.

Evening to Remember: Missiles and Earthquakes

That evening, Hsieh Shu-yuan translated the late newspapers with their alarming diagrams of



KMT's flag festooned headquarters

forthcoming PRC missile tests. It was clearly a use of force to manipulate the election. Why, I wondered, did the DPP, which was not expecting to win, not announce that it was throwing its support behind President Lee--much as the U.S. two party system might have joined to support the incumbent under the circumstances of a foreign threat? (The DPP Central Committee discussed this idea the next day but it seemed that the sense of alarm in Taiwan turned out to be less than this idea presumed.)

At 11:00 p.m., I was thrown out of bed by an earthquake. The room continued to sway--at least six inches. Dressing hurriedly and rushing downstairs, I found--absolute calm! A bellboy said: "No problem, only 2 or 3"--a reference I decoded to refer to the Richter scale. Outside also, all was calm. But two men smoking quietly at the curb turned out to be Iranians who said, with quiet knowledgeability, that the earthquake was probably "5". They were, it seemed, waiting for aftershocks.

Taiwan gets a quake like this every few months and the buildings are designed for "7" or more. This quake had been 6.5 somewhere in the region and about 4 in Taipei. I somehow failed to wake up when the aftershock, a 6.2 (somewhere), came an hour later.

Wednesday: The Mainland Affairs Council

In the morning, I met Dr. Su Chi, Vice Chairman of the Mainland Affairs Council. He had been trained at Harvard, at the Center for Science and International Affairs. My two books on arms control having been

written at a brother Harvard institute under similar intellectual leaders (Thomas Schelling at the Harvard Center for International Affairs)--we talked like old friends and used similar concepts.

He said the reunification was complicated by the fact that there had been virtually no contact with China for 100 years. And they had been preoccupied with democratizing, developing their own economic model, and working out pragmatic diplomacy. (They had dropped, he said, the notion that the Republic of China represented all of China in 1991.)

It would, he felt, be a new era to get into political dialogue, as opposed to dialogue over technical issues of exchanges, in which they were engaged. And Taiwan residents needed more trust; so long as the PRC was socialist, this was a problem.

Briefing of the Policy Planning Staff

The day before my scheduled departure was the important meeting for which I had asked, with the policy planning staff. It took the form of a discussion with Chang Ping-nan, Chairman of the Research and Planning Board. He described it as a liaison with the foreign academics. A former Ambassador to the Bahamas, Chang and his assistant, Ted L.M. Liao, listened politely and Chang was encouraging.

He promptly made arrangements to have the matter further discussed at lunch on my last day.

That evening, by invitation, I joined the DPP at an elegant dinner at the Asiaworld Hotel, where they were celebrating the New Year. There I met the DPP Secretary-General Chiou I-jen, who had been in the newspapers two days before as the victim of an assault in front of DPP headquarters. DPP had no doubt who had ordered the attack--one of the non-party-affiliated legislators



DPP Secretary General, Chiou I-jen, the marks on his face are evidence of the attack

who had mafia ties had earlier threatened them.

Chiou seemed unfazed but still had marks from the beating he had suffered.

Foreign Ministry Critique Over Lunch

Interest in the Northeast strategy was sufficiently high that, on one day's notice, Ambassador Chang had produced two experts to discuss it over lunch. They were Professor John Chao, an international lawyer trained in Britain and with a bearing and accent to match, and Dr. Wu An-chia, who was a consultant to the Mainland Affairs Council and, Professor Chao said, represented the KMT point of view.

In the end, asked by Ambassador Chang what they thought, Professor Chao was very supportive and even agreed to help me flesh out the points on the various axis. Dr. Wu also agreed that ROC needed a "new China policy" but had to leave early for another appointment.

Ambassador Chang reminded me that I had promised him a memorandum supporting the idea.



Ambassador Chang

Some Summary Reflections

A central intellectual obstacle to progress in reunification is the preoccupation with the concept of "one China." It represents an almost religious problem. But ROC has moved from a) claiming it will take over the mainland, to just b) denying the PRC is a legitimate Government, and to c) explaining why ROC should get some kind of recognition. So there has been change.

And such theological issues normally vanish into thin air when serious bargaining begins and substantive concerns take precedence.

One problem is whether, after the election, President Lee Teng-hui will be able to negotiate personally with the PRC directly in light of all its past attacks on him. Or would he need a premier who would be more acceptable to the PRC to work through?

Evolution on Taiwan

Things are changing so fast. President Lee had been quoted as saying that, really, the KMT was only three years old--so much was it being reinvented. The Taiwanese were recapturing the island, from a cultural point of view. As late as 1958, the U.S. Embassy July 4 celebrations would include only mainlanders and no real Taiwanese. In those days, Taiwanese could not go into business effectively unless they had some relationship with a mainlander.

As a consequence of the discrimination shown the Taiwanese, the mainlanders feel a certain guilt and fear that, in a kind of retribution, they may come to be the "blacks" in Taiwanese society--a minority that is repressed. And this is one reason why some want to be reunified with the mainland and why they tell bad stories about Taiwanese President Lee--even calling him Japanese-born.

Much remains to be done in civilizing the KMT party. In particular, its enormous assets should be held in portfolio form (i.e., in the holding of stocks) rather than have the party own enterprises directly. Direct ownership gives too much incentive for the Party to give special benefits to its own enterprises.

One important element in the equation are the overseas Chinese, throughout Asia and America, who might, through advisory committees or in some other

way, be recruited to help in reunification.

Changing Generational Factors

The future of Taiwan is going to be shaped by rapidly changing generational factors. The Taiwanese who knew the pre-KMT period of Taiwanese life, are now 65 and older; they provide candidates for senior office only for a few more years. They include those who were trained in Japan and many who suffered most under the KMT period of martial law. This will weaken the passion and the skills of the pro-independence movement.

The mainlanders who came to Taiwan as young men or older in 1949 are, similarly, 65 and over and will, also, soon cease to be active political participants. Thus the most intense pro-reunification and pro-KMT attitudes will disappear.

As the extremes disappear, less committed native Taiwanese will, effectively, retake the island. And many of them will have a very pragmatic attitude toward reunification. One young ROC official said he was "for reunification if it is good for us but not if it is not." Mutual benefit may become the catchword, rather than "reunification" or "independence." All this is wholly consistent with a Northeast strategy.

—Jeremy J. Stone

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