

Taiwan UPDATE, a publication of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA), will appear monthly.

FAPA's goals are:

1. To seek international support for the right of the Taiwanese people to determine the future status of Taiwan (Formosa);

2. To protect and enhance the rights, interests and welfare of Taiwanese communities throughout the world;

3. To promote human rights, freedom and democracy for the people of Taiwan.


Taiwan UPDATE will publish news notes and commentary on recent events in Taiwan. Your suggestions and comments are greatly appreciated.

Taiwan UPDATE staff:

Peng Ming-min, publisher

Michael J. Ponte, editor

Subscriptions are \$15.00 per year. Please send all correspondence to: Taiwan UPDATE, FAPA, P.O. Box 15062, Washington, D.C. 20003



# TAIWAN UPDATE

P.O. Box 15062  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: (202) 547-3686

SEPTEMBER 1987

## OBSTACLES TO DEMOCRACY

The "Four Tigers" of Asia are so named because of their rapid economic rise over the past 20 years. Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and Singapore are all astir with demands for democracy, demands that none of their governments have provided in full.

Many political analysts cite the East's Confucian heritage as a factor in the lack of democratic development. Classical Confucianism emphasizes hierarchy and loyalty, order and stability, deference and cooperation. The mandate to rule can be lost by corrupt administrators, but the burden of proof always weighs very heavily on any "rebels."

Opposition leaders in all four "tigers" are challenging traditional leadership and demanding representative democracy. With highly literate populations and a growing middle class, the pressure to break with feudal, authoritarian political forms is growing.

In a recent (9/6/87) The New York Times article, Nicholas Kristof quotes Ma Ying-jeou, a KMT spokesperson, as looking to Japan's single dominant party with its internal factions for "democratic" inspiration: "It may be that the Japanese system is more favorable to maintaining stability in an Asian context."

South Korea's Chun Doo Hwan, Taiwan's Chiang Ching-kuo and Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew might believe in this path to "democratic" reform, but the vibrant opposition leaders in their countries aren't buying.

### Excuse for Dictatorship

"Most ruling parties say Western-style systems are not good for Eastern people, because we have a special heritage," states Hong Chi-chang, a psychiatrist and opposition leader in Taiwan. "That is a

very good excuse for a dictatorship to stay in power."

The key political reform needed today in Taiwan is rejuvenation of the central parliamentary bodies. The National Assembly and Legislative Yuan are now starkly split between a minority of representatives elected in Taiwan and the decrepit majority, who still cling to the notion of representing mainland constituencies. The Control Yuan has no members directly elected by the people of Taiwan.

### General Elections Needed

Every discussion of the political and civil rights of the 19 million people on Taiwan must begin with the observation that, because of the KMT's claim to rule all of China, there have been no general elections held for Taiwan's three major assemblies - the National Assembly, the Legislative Yuan and the Control Yuan - for forty years. Effective and overwhelming control over the three bodies that govern national affairs and choose the powerful President is the exclusive domain of KMT candidates elected on the mainland in 1947.

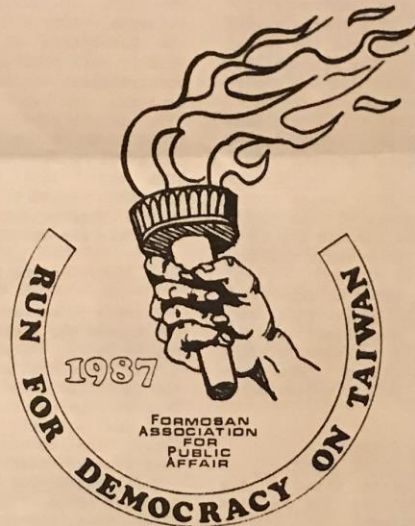
Elections do take place, but the people of Taiwan's representation in the national bodies remains a distinct minority. If opposition candidates captured every seat legitimately open for competition, they would control less than one-twentieth of the National Assembly, one-sixth of the Legislative Yuan and one-third of the Control Yuan.

The average age of the "permanent" members of the central legislative bodies is now over 80. In fact, many of the "permanent members" in the National Assembly were not even elected in 1947. They were candidates and lost, but in 1949 they came to Taiwan with Chiang Kai-

# TAIWAN UPDATE

P.O. Box 15062  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
Tel: (202) 547-3686

OCTOBER 1987



The Formosan Association for Public Affairs' sponsored "Run for Democracy on Taiwan" will kickoff October 31 at the Statue of Liberty with an afternoon torch lighting ceremony. The torch symbolizes the freedom missing in Taiwan today.

Over 80% of the seats in Taiwan's national parliamentary bodies are held by individuals elected in 1947 in China. When the KMT fled to Taiwan in 1949, these "representatives" were appointed to sit as long as the "communist rebellion" continued. Vacant seats are filled by runners-up in those elections.

While some "supplemental elections" do take place, these account for only 5 to 15% of the total representatives. With the taxpayers of Taiwan paying for 100% of the government's bills, this is indeed "taxation without representation."

The Run for Democracy highlights the need for new elections for all the national parliamentary seats on the basis

of equal weight to each vote cast. This is the key political reform needed in Taiwan today if there is to be a real democratic government on the island.

Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY), Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) and N.Y. State Assembly President Mel Miller will join Democratic Progressive Party representatives Fei Hsi-ping and Kang Ning-hsiang as well as former political prisoner Huang Hsin-chieh at the opening ceremony.

Taiwanese American runners will then carry the torch to Washington, D.C. to be greeted at the Capitol on Nov. 3 by a large number of Senators and Representatives headed by Senator Claiborne Pell, Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The torch will travel from Washington to Cleveland, Chicago, Oklahoma City, Houston, Los Angeles and San Francisco before departing for Taiwan. The DPP will carry the torch around the island and hold rallies there on this issue.

Source from Mr. Dean Chang