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The Kuomintang's comic opera *The ruling party ditches Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu*

As we reported in the previous issue of **Taiwan Communiqué** (#152, *Hung Hsiu-chu's numbers keep dropping*) the popularity of Kuomintang candidate Ms. Hung continued to decline during the period between her formal nomination on 19 July 2015 and the beginning of October 2015, down to around 13-15%.

This prompted a number of Kuomintang legislative candidates – concerned that she would drag their election chances down with her — to panic and pressure KMT chairman Eric Chu to reconsider her nomination, lest the Kuomintang would also lose its majority in the Legislative Yuan. As we went to press in late September 2015, this led to widespread reports that Ms. Hung would be shunted aside (*Taiwan Communiqué* no. 152, p. 4).

Photo: CNA

The first formal move came on 7 October 2015, when at a meeting of the Kuomintang's Central Standing Committee, committee member Chiang Shuo-ping proposed to hold a special party congress at which Ms. Hung's nomination would be reviewed. The proposal was adopted by all of the 28 members present (out of a total of 39 members for the committee as a whole), sufficient for the required 2/3 majority.

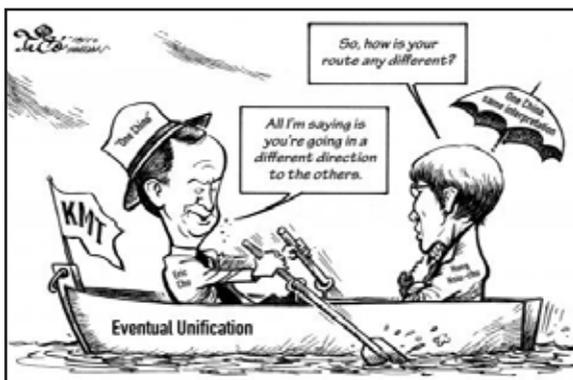


Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu giving a fiery speech at the Kuomintang party convention

One week later, on 14 October 2015, the Central Standing Committee decided with 26 votes to annul Hung's nomination for the presidency and hold the party congress on Saturday 17 October 2015. KMT Chairman Eric Chu also disclosed that in the previous weeks he had talked to Ms. Hung on several occasions, trying to convince her to consider the "broader interests" of the party and bow out, but apparently to no avail.

Interestingly, in an opinion poll conducted on 6-7 October 2015 by the **Cross-Strait Policy Association**, 59.6% of the respondents indicated that they considered the Kuomintang's plans to remove Ms. Hung from her position *unreasonable*, while only 15.3% supported the plan. The poll also showed that Mr. Eric Chu only scored marginally better than Ms. Hung, 19% versus 18.5%, in a three-way race against the DPP's Tsai Ing-wen and the PFP's James Soong.

Copyright: Taipei Times



Ms. Hung and Mr. Chu in the same unification boat:
"All I am saying is that you are going in different directions to the others."

In the meantime, Ms. Hung refused to back down and clung to her position, saying that she would "*rather die than withdraw from the race.*" On 14 October 2015 she issued a strongly worded press release expressing her "deep regret" over the committee's decision, which she said "*..will only plunge the KMT deeper into crisis.*"

The move by the Kuomintang also prompted noisy demonstrations in front of the KMT headquarters in Taipei by hardline supporters of Ms. Hung, who lambasted Chairman Eric Chu as "a traitor." The infamous **Bamboo Union** gang leader "White Wolf" Mr. Chang An-le – who is known for his ardent pro-unificationist stance – and a number of his gangsters also joined the protests.

The whole episode also gave rise to an interesting "dialogue" between Ms. Hung and Eric Chu: at the Central Standing Committee meeting on 7 October 2015, Mr. Chu elaborated on the reasons why the party should remove Ms. Hung from the presidential race. He mentioned the disastrous prospects in the Legislative Yuan elections if she stayed on, but also stated that Ms. Hung's stance on cross-Strait relations "*deviates from those of both the party and mainstream public opinion*".

The next day, on 8 October 2015, Ms. Hung shot back and stated during a speech at a World Peace Congress held in Taipei, that her cross-Strait policy is “no different from that of President Ma Ying-jeou.” She said she just wanted to be “clearer on certain aspects” and that in her view there needs to be “a breakthrough and a deepening of the [so-called] 1992 Consensus.” She said she was not considering withdrawing from the race, and stated that the party “...will subject itself to total collapse if it resorts to unjust measures and depends on misjudgment.”

In the process, Ms. Hung also managed to pronounce that she felt it should not be a problem that she was advocating “ultimate unification with China” as the ROC Constitution itself called for it.

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *Ms. Hung doesn't seem to realize that she is living in a dream world, and that society in Taiwan around her has changed. Since the Sunflower movement of 2014 and the – for the Kuomintang disastrous – local elections of November 2014, there is a whole new political landscape in Taiwan.*

In this landscape there is no room for the tired and decrepit ideas of the old “ROC”, in which Taiwan was being herded towards “ultimate unification” by the Kuomintang’s old guard, largely fitting within Beijing’s designs for incorporation of the island and its people within the PRC.

Taiwan’s new democracy is starting out from the present status quo in which Taiwan is for all intents and purposes a free and democratic country, and works towards acceptance by other nations (including China) of the island as a friendly neighbor and a more full and equal member in the international community.

Mr. Eric Chu becomes the candidate

Photo: VOA

But at a hastily-convened Kuomintang party congress held on 17 October 2015 at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in Taipei, 812 out of 891 delegates voted to rescind Ms. Hung nomination and accepted the proposal to nominate Mr. Chu as the official candidate for the Kuomintang. However, his plate is overflowing with a number of problems. A brief rundown:



Kuomintang Chairman Eric Chu

* The main reason for the removal of Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu was that the **KMT candi-**

dates in the legislative races saw a disaster coming because of her outlandish views and positions. The question remains whether Mr. Eric Chu will be able to accomplish a net gain in those races: because of his more moderate views, he will be able to garner support from the “middle of the road.” However, Ms. Hung’s unceremonious removal has caused a deep divide within the party, and deep-blue, hardline, supporters of Ms. Hung will likely stay home, reducing support on that side of the political spectrum.

- * The move is also putting Mr. Chu himself in a dilemma: when he ran for the position of magistrate of Sinbei City (formerly Taipei County) only one year ago — in the Fall of 2014 — **he pledged that he would serve out the full four year-term as magistrate.** Thanks to this pledge he won with a slim majority. But now he is breaking his pledge to the residents of that county. Mr. Chu subsequently announced that he would take a temporary leave of absence from his duties. Through this maneuver he avoids that a special by-election, which the KMT would almost certainly lose, reducing the number of counties ruled by the party to only five out of 22.
- * In addition, on 14 October 2015, the Special Investigation Division (SID) of the Supreme Prosecutors’ Office **charged Mr. Chu with violating election laws** by allegedly maneuvering secretly to have Ms. Hung replaced. Article 84 of Taiwan’s Presidential and Vice-presidential Election and Recall Law stipulates a prison term for *“anyone who asks for a promise or asks a candidate or a person with the qualifications to be a candidate to abandon the campaign or conduct certain actions by offering bribes or other undue benefits...”*

On Tuesday, 20 October 2015, Eric Chu and KMT Secretary-General Lee Shu-chuan were called in for questioning to provide clarifications on whether the KMT’s replacement of Hung Hsiu-chu as its presidential hopeful involved any “tradeoffs” enticing Ms. Hung to leave. According to press reports, on 5 October 2015 (two days before the KMT Central Standing Committee decided to call for her ouster) Secretary-General Lee gave a check of NT\$ 30 mln (approx. US\$ one mln.) to Ms. Hung’s campaign.

Mr. Chu also raised eyebrows when, on 1 November 2015, he unveiled his campaign slogan: a multicolored **ONE Taiwan**, with the Hanji characters “Taiwan is strength” under it. He seemed to be borrowing a page from DPP candidate Dr. Tsai Ing-wen, who has her campaign emblems in multiple colors – representing the rich multi-cultural society in Taiwan.



Pro-independence parody of Mr. Chu's campaign flyer



Eric Chu's campaign flyer

But observers were primarily amused at his sudden switch to “One Taiwan”, away from the “One China” mantra the Kuomintang has clung to for so many decades. To many, this looked like a political ploy designed to regain some lost ground in the election campaign. Other wondered if it was the beginning of a move by Chu to “One Taiwan, One China”, the term used by pro-independence supporters.

In any case, on the following pages we present our arguments why we think Mr. Chu is on the wrong track with his policy pronouncements since his nomination as the KMT’s candidate.

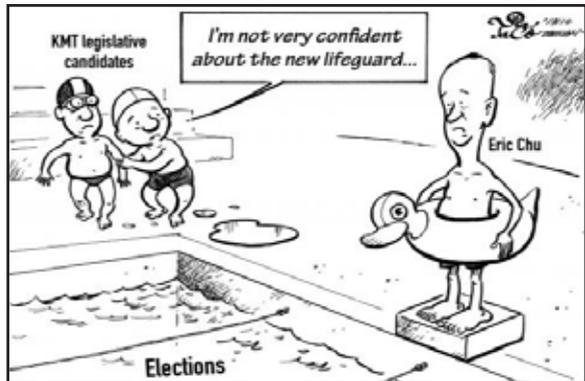
Mr. Eric Chu on the wrong track

By Gerrit van der Wees, editor of Taiwan Communiqué. This article first appeared in the Taipei Times on 23 October 2015. Reprinted with permission.

After stage-managing the unceremonious ouster of Kuomintang presidential candidate Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu on Saturday October 17th 2015, the party’s chairman Mr. Eric Chu is now himself the presidential candidate.

Copyright: Taipei Times

Ms. Hung’s extreme pro-China slant was leading the staid ruling Kuomintang to an almost certain catastrophe in both the presidential and legislative elections, and her removal presumable was designed to guide the party back to a more mainstream course. One would thus have expected some more even-handed pronouncements from the newly-minted presidential candidate Mr. Chu.



KMT legislative candidates: "I am not very confident about the new lifeguard..."

However, Mr. Chu’s first statements do not give very much hope that his campaign will meet high standards. In his acceptance speech at the KMT’s emergency party convention this weekend, Mr. Chu implored the assembly to “safeguard the KMT’s reins of government and majority in the legislature” in order to “preserve our healthy democracy of checks and balances.”

It is highly peculiar that Mr. Chu has now suddenly discovers the principle of checks and balances in governance. Where was he when the Kuomintang itself held executive and legislative power at the same time, while it also had a heavy hand in judicial power? There was nary a word of concern or protest by Mr. Chu during the past 7½ years of Kuomintang rule, when the Ma government undermined Taiwan's hard-won democracy in so many ways.

The next eyebrow-raising remarks by Mr. Chu related to his assertion that a collapse of the Kuomintang would pose an *existential* threat to the ROC. The problem with this remark is that it reflects the old notion of the party-state that is so deeply ingrained in the thinking of old KMT hardliners who hark back to the days of Chiang Kai-shek.

In the modern day and age, the nation-state is supposed to be above the party fray, and it might actually be good if a party that has been ruling for too long gets a drubbing, so it will hopefully reinvent itself and rise from the ashes in a new shape that is more in tune with the mainstream thinking on the island.

A third perplexing remark was his challenge to DPP presidential candidate Dr. Tsai Ing-wen to “clarify” whether her definition of the status quo adheres to the so-called “1992 Consensus.” It is indeed amazing how Mr. Chu – and others in the KMT – cling to this vague and anachronistic concept. He is simply asking for trouble as he knows well that the PRC certainly doesn't have the same interpretation as his ROC. In fact, it doesn't even recognize the existence of the ROC.

So, why not search for a more stable concept that lays the foundation for a longer-term, more sustainable relationship with China in which the PRC accepts Taiwan as a friendly neighbor? That would be a more forward-looking approach which contains better safeguards for Taiwan's continued existence as a free and democratic nation.

In passing, Mr. Chu also tried to imply that Washington does look more favorably on the Kuomintang than the DPP “*because the KMT has solid cross-Strait policies that are conducive to peace and stability across the Strait.*”

He does seem to forget that Washington has been watching developments in Taiwan closely, and has noted that the China-leaning policies of president Ma Ying-jeou have no traction whatsoever anymore in Taiwan. After the Sunflower Movement and the November 2014 local elections there is a new political landscape in the country, and Washington knows that.

In addition, in spite of the KMT's accommodating cross-Strait policies, Beijing has pursued aggressive and expansionistic moves in both the East and South China Seas that are seen by Washington as a serious threat to peace and stability in the region. As Taiwan is located right in the middle, it has attained strategic importance for the United States: Washington will want to ensure that Taiwan is clearly on the US' side and not drift off in China's direction.

Election campaign in final stretch

Tsai Ing-wen maintains strong lead

As of early November 2015, Taiwan's presidential and legislative election campaign is going into its final stretch. Dr. Tsai Ing-wen of the opposition DPP is maintaining a strong lead, while the ruling Kuomintang went through a flabbergasting reshuffle of its presidential candidate (see story on page 1).

Photo: Democratic Progressive Party

As has been the case during the campaign since early Spring 2015, Dr. Tsai Ing-wen solidified her position even further, on the one hand with a visit to Japan in early October 2015, and on the other hand by outlining a number of core policies and organizing the grassroots of the DPP. She also presented a positive image, keen to bring about national unity, when she attended this year's "Double Ten" celebration on October 10th 2015 (see story on pp.11-13).

Tsai Ing-wen's foreign policy speech

On 22 September 2015, at a diplomatic reception on the occasion of the 29th anniversary of the DPP party, Dr. Tsai gave a key address outlining her foreign policy objectives. The gathering was attended by some 150 guests, including diplomats from 64 countries.



Dr. Tsai Ing-wen giving her foreign policy speech

Dr. Tsai titled her speech *Fostering peace through global contribution; a pragmatic and sustainable approach to Taiwan's foreign policy*, and first outlined the DPP's vision for Taiwan, saying "In less than four months' time, the people of Taiwan will be choosing a new leader and a new way forward for this country. This leader will be facing a multitude of great challenges: from revitalizing the economy, regaining the public's trust in government, to ensuring that Taiwan remains strong and secure in a region with growing uncertainties."

She referred to the 18 co-founders of the DPP, who established the party 29 years ago, and said: "The same spirit and resolve we saw 29 years ago carries over today. They remind us that we can – and we will – overcome the challenges. They inspire us to continue charting a better course forward for Taiwan. Ladies and gentlemen, Taiwan's position in the world is premised on keeping our international relations strong and vibrant. This is the foundation of what keeps Taiwan secure; and vital to our efforts to diversify our economy."

She then focused on **regional efforts and international participation**, saying that "sustaining peaceful international relations is a responsibility shared by all members of the global community. The DPP intends to fulfill our share of this duty in building a steady and consistent regional and international environment.

This is essential for Taiwan as we tackle difficult economic and social reforms at home. One of our foremost priorities is to foster regional cooperation by participating in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, disease prevention, and climate change mitigation efforts."

She referred to the Syrian refugee crisis, and stated that there is a need for Taiwan "to establish a domestic legal mechanism that will enable Taiwan to join international efforts to assist refugees."

She added that if elected, her government would "expand operations at our rescue training center in central Taiwan, where we will share Taiwan's valuable experiences in responding to natural disasters at a regional level. We will also actively work to reduce tensions in regional flashpoints, such as the South China Sea, where confrontation is threatening to roll-back decades of peaceful relations in the region."

She mentioned that one of Taiwan's most valuable assets is its vibrant civil society. She said: "Long-term partnerships with NGOs – from both Taiwan and abroad – will form the backbone for a pragmatic approach towards our global outreach. Through NGOs,

we will seek to open up new venues that will enable Taiwan to make meaningful contributions abroad. As an example of this, we intend to establish an international center for NGOs to ensure Taiwan becomes a regional leader in supporting the valuable work conducted by these organizations.”

Dr. Tsai then discussed how she intends to build stronger bilateral international partnerships. As a priority she said she would strengthen Taiwan’s partnerships with the United States, Japan, and other like-minded democracies from around the world. She added: “...if elected next year, my administration will work even harder to strengthen bilateral ties on the basis of building long-term, sustainable partnerships. The future DPP administration will engage actively with our diplomatic allies to identify new opportunities centered on education, culture, investment, and economic collaboration.”

She specifically mentioned that with Europe she saw great opportunity “...to strengthen our exchanges in fields such as innovation, high tech, green energy, as well as youth and NGO engagements.” She added: “European efforts in building new energy and certain competitive agricultural sectors also hold important examples for Taiwan as we deal with our own economic challenges. I look forward to a strong economic engagement with our European friends that can leverage and expand our cooperation in these areas.”

She also stated that she wanted to build up our relations with neighbors in Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent, and announced that a future DPP administration would pursue a ‘New Southbound Policy’ in the years ahead. She stated that “ASEAN and India are poised to become two of the world’s largest economic bodies. Strengthening our overall relations is a natural choice for Taiwan as we diversify our economic and trade ties.”

In closing, she outlined her new and innovative approach to foreign affairs, and said: “These new initiatives will help rebrand and reshape our international image as a country that can play a positive and dynamic role in the 21st century. They will form an important part of our efforts to build confidence and earn respect from the international community.”

She concluded: “Ladies and Gentlemen, it is our pledge that Taiwan’s foreign policy will be stable, consistent and forward looking. We will make ourselves a responsible and indispensable partner in the international community.”

Successful visit to Japan

Another important moment was Dr. Tsai's early October 2015 visit to Taiwan's closest democratic neighbor, Japan. She arrived in Tokyo on Tuesday 6 October 2015, and stayed until Friday 9 October 2015. During that time she had meetings with the Taiwanese expatriate community, Japanese officials and members of the Diet.

Photo: Taipei Times

In particular she focused on how the two neighbors could cooperate to strengthen bilateral economic relations, enhance regional stability, and establish a cooperative framework for the private sectors of the two countries.



Dr. Tsai Ing-wen being welcomed in Japan

She did give a speech at the headquarters of the ruling LDP party, comparing the similar history of the two parties: the LDP came back from a resounding defeat several years ago, while the DPP hopes to return to power after the January 2016 elections. She said: *"I hope the DPP will be able to cooperate with the LDP as two ruling parties to reinforce the relationship between the two nations after the elections next year."*

According to press reports she also met Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during the visit, but neither the Japanese government nor the DPP confirmed these reports.

On Taiwan's and Japan's competing claims over the Senkaku/Diaoyutai, she stated that these *"are negotiable"* adding that the fisheries agreement inked between Taiwan and Japan in 2013 was a good precedent on how the two nations could work out an agreement.

Opening of the DPP campaign headquarters

On Sunday, 18 October 2015, Dr. Tsai officially opened her campaign headquarters with an outdoor rally in Taipei. The event was attended by several thousand people enjoying the festive event with music, a market selling locally grown agricultural products and handicraft ... and speeches. Tsai introduced a number of key scholars and experts who are leading her think tank and campaign efforts in the various policy areas.

In a rousing 20-minute speech, Tsai was able to inspire the crowd and delve into a number of substantive policy issues at the same time. Her speech was also outward and forward looking – in contrast to President Ma’s speech at the Double Ten celebration a few days earlier (see *National Day celebrations*, pp. 11-13).

In her speech, Tsai promised to “... *lead Taiwan into a new age of tolerance, reconciliation, stability and peace.*” She added that “*The fight for political interests can never bring peace and prosperity for the people, and the struggle for power will not take the nation forward.*”

She said: “*Politics should be as simple as possible. It should respond directly to the needs of the people, it should help to solve problems for the people, and this is what I want to do for Taiwan.*”. She concluded by saying that “*my politics is the politics of fulfilling dreams for the people.*”

At the rally there were also several booths set up to accept piggy banks filled with donations. Long lines formed in front of the booths and during the event alone more than 2,000 piggy banks were submitted to the campaign.

National Day celebrations

A controversial “Double Ten” heritage

Taiwan’s current national day, “Double Ten” — celebrated on 10 October – has a controversial history. It marks the beginning of the Wuchang Uprising in 1911, which led to the collapse of the Ch’ing Dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China (ROC) on 1 January 1912.

However, in 1911-12, Taiwan was under Japanese rule, as it had been ceded to Japan *in perpetuity* under the 1895 Shimonoseki Peace Treaty, and the date thus bears little relevance to the people on the island. After Japan’s defeat at the end of World War II, the island and its people came under control of Chiang Kai-shek’s Chinese Nationalists, who ruled it under martial law until 1987.

In the island’s transition to democracy under President Lee Teng-hui in the period 1988-1992, Taiwan moved toward full democracy with elections for all seats in the legislature, the Legislative Yuan (1992), and direct elections of the president through universal suffrage (1996).

However, the overall structure and governmental system of the ROC brought over from China continued to exist, although Lee and his DPP successor President Chen Shui-bian implemented a number of reforms and changes, including the abolishment of a number of old vestiges such as the “Taiwan Province” (a governmental structure at the local level stemming from the time Taiwan was considered a “province of China”) and the “National Assembly” (a body solely responsible for electing the president and vice-president, and amending the constitution).

Photo: Taipei Times



Folk dancing at the Double Ten celebration

Also remaining were the national flag brought over from China, the celebration of national day on October 10, and the national anthem, a Kuomintang party song from 1924 about Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles of the People.

Over the past decades there was strong disagreement in Taiwan over these “national” symbols, as many native Taiwanese rejected them because they had been brought over from China and had little to do with Taiwan itself and its history, while the hardcore Kuomintang supporters fiercely clung to them, and considered them key to the existence of their “Republic of China.”

Tsai Ing-wen attends and builds bridges

Against this background, DPP candidate Tsai Ing-wen face a dilemma: refrain from attending the 10-10 ceremonies – like she had done during the past seven years – or attend. She chose the latter, and attended with a delegation of 23 DPP mayors, county magistrates, legislators and other office holders.

In her defense of the move, she argued that she wanted to show that she deeply cared about national unity and democracy. She said that democracy is an asset that needs to be safeguarded by all, and added: *“The nation should stand together. The opposition party’s attendance at the Double Ten National Holiday should not be an issue anymore.”*

She also stated that *“... our country will begin to have an atmosphere of solidarity so that we can stand together to protect Taiwan’s most valued treasures: democracy and*

freedom. They are our most precious assets. I also hope that our country can stand in unity regardless of what stage we're at in the presidential campaign."

As it was, the ceremony provided an interesting opportunity to observe the dynamics between Dr. Tsai and KMT Chairman Eric Chu and PFP Chairman James Soong – who were seated next to each other on the podium – and KMT candidate Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu, who according to the protocol was seated right behind Mr. Chu. News reports described the interaction between Ms. Hung and Eric Chu as “rather cold” (not surprising in view of the events the previous few days), while Dr. Tsai was reported as having “warm exchanges” with both Eric Chu and Ms. Hung.

Photo: Taipei Times



From left to right: Eric Chu, Hung Hsiu-chu, Tsai Ing-wen and James Soong at the Double Ten celebration

Another noteworthy moment in the ceremonies came with the singing of the national anthem, which still retains the words “our party” in its text (referring to the old Kuomintang). News media in Taiwan reported that Dr. Tsai refrained from singing those words.

Overall, the ceremonies had a very “Taiwanese” touch with a display of Taiwanese folk dances, and the singing of Taiwanese folk music by elementary and high school students. Some observers in Taiwan ascribed that to the increasing influence of Legislative Yuan speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who hails from Southern Taiwan, and who represents the Taiwanese wing of the Kuomintang party. Below we discuss the Taiwanization of the Chinese Kuomintang (pp. 15-18).

President Ma Ying-jeou’s speech: out of touch

Decisively out of touch was President Ma Ying-jeou, who gave a speech at the 10-10 ceremonies extolling the virtues and achievements of his – failed – policies. The title of the speech was “*Taiwan’s future, sustaining peace and prosperity*”, but he spent most of his time looking backwards: he started by referring once again to the 70th anniversary of the end of the “*War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression*”, which took place in China during a time when Taiwan was under Japanese control (see *Taiwan’s curious WW-II commemorations*, *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 152, pp 13-17).

He then pronounced that over the past seven years “...we have defended Taiwan’s freedom and democracy, in terms of political rights and civil liberties” in spite of the fact that many in Taiwan feel that his *rapprochement* with China has pushed a democratic Taiwan closer to a repressive China at the expense of Taiwan’s freedom, democracy, and civil liberties. He dismissed criticism on this point as “misunderstandings.”

Photo: AP

He elaborated on a number of his achievements in social justice, social welfare programs, public safety, renewable energy, revitalizing the economy, and then focused on his East China Sea Initiative of 2012 and South China Sea Initiative of 2015, both of which have gone nowhere as none of the major claimants – China, Japan and other nations around the South China Sea – have responded in any way to these ideas.



President Ma giving his speech at the Double Ten event

But Mr. Ma was really out of order when he tried to explain that the current status quo is dependent on adherence to the divisive “1992 Consensus”, which in his view was based on the outdated ROC Constitution, devised for China in 1947. He said that the “1992 Consensus” was the most important of five “principles”, which he outlined in his speech.

He also tried to paint a gloomy picture if his successor – Dr. Tsai Ing-wen was standing right behind him — would deviate from the “1992 Consensus”: “...if we abide by that consensus, cross-Strait relations flourish. If we diverge from it, relations will deteriorate. And if we oppose it, there will be turmoil in the Taiwan Strait.”

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *The problem with President Ma’s logic is that the “1992 Consensus” is an utterly vague concept that pronounces there is “One China” but that each side can have its own interpretation. Mr. Ma’s interpretation may be that this “One China” is the old “Republic of China”, but the PRC certainly has a different opinion: it doesn’t even believe the “Republic of China” exists.*

So, is this a stable basis for future relations? Certainly not. It may have brought a temporary lull in Beijing’s attempts to incorporate Taiwan but it is certainly not a solid foundation for long-term future relations between a democratic Taiwan and its big, and undemocratic, neighbor.

The real status quo is that Taiwan is – under whatever name one prefers – a free and democratic nation. The sooner the Beijing acknowledges this fact and starts to treat it as a friendly neighbor, the better. For this to happen, it is also essential that the international community gives the right example and ceases to treat Taiwan as a “problem” in their relations with China, but starts to consider Taiwan in its own right.

The “Taiwanization” of the Chinese KMT *Ma Ying-jeou: the last of the Mohicans*

The Kuomintang party in Taiwan has its origins in China. It has its roots in the “Republic of China” that was established in 1912 after the 1911 Wuchang uprising which ended the Ch’ing / Manchu Dynasty and started some 38 years of tumultuous KMT rule of China.

As is well-known, it transplanted itself to Taiwan after Mao Tse-tung and his Communists defeated Chiang Kai-shek’s Chinese Nationalists in 1949, and started another 38 years of repressive and undemocratic rule in Taiwan, under which the mainlanders who came over with Chiang tightly controlled all positions of power in the government, economy, industry, police, military and education.

Copyright: Taipei Times

During that time the only way to get a position in government, economy or education was to become a member of the only party that was allowed to function, the Kuomintang. While there were thus many Taiwanese who were rank and file members of the Kuomintang, all higher positions in the hierarchy were reserved for mainlanders.



Ms. Hung and Mr. Chu: "Finally we have reached a One China consensus!"

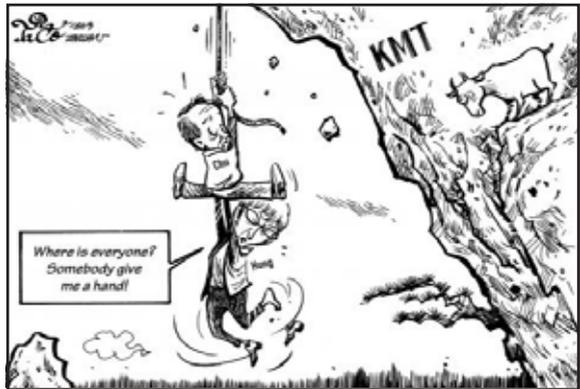
With Taiwan’s democratization under - native Taiwanese – President Lee Teng-hui, this started to change, and higher positions in the government and party were gradually more accessible to native Taiwanese.

However, under President Ma Ying-jeou, the core inner circle of power around the President was still very much dominated by people considering themselves “Chinese” and most policies and pronouncements emphasized the “Chinese” character of the state and party.

But in society at large, there was a rebirth of the Taiwanese identity, which was particularly strong among the young generation that grew up after the end of Martial Law and had little recollection of the traditional ties that bound the Kuomintang to China. And many local politicians like Legislative Speaker Wang Chin-pyng, who have their roots in Taiwanese society, grew in power and influence within the party.

Copyright: Taipei Times

There is thus little traction anymore for the view that the government in Taipei represents the old “Republic of China” while only a few percent of the people refer to themselves as “Chinese” anymore, and support for unification has dwindled to around ten or twelve percent. An American official thus recently referred to president Ma as “*the last of the ROC Mohicans.*”



Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu hanging on for dear life:
“Where is everyone? Somebody give me a hand!”

Ms. Hung accelerated the demise of the old KMT

It is also interesting to see how Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu’s candidacy hastened the demise of the old Kuomintang. Her positions on a range of issues were so far out in right field that the mainstream population started to realize the disastrous consequences of continued Kuomintang rule under a Hung Hsiu-chu presidency.

It started with her advocacy of the “*One China, same interpretation*” dictum in May-June 2015, which went way beyond the already highly unpopular pro-China policies of the Ma administration. This by itself led quite a number of KMT legislative candidates to distance themselves from Ms. Hung (even KMT vice-chairman Hau Lung-pin refused to have Ms. Hung’s picture featured on his billboard in Keelung, where he is running for a legislative seat), while her ratings in the opinion polls went into a tailspin.

But it also extended to her flip-flops on relations with the United States: She argued strongly *against arms procurements* from the United States, and said Taiwanese should “stop complaining” about the 1,600+ short- and medium-range missiles China has aimed at Taiwan. She also pronounced herself *against a possible visit to Washington*, while KMT chairman Eric Chu expressed himself in favor of such a visit. Now Mr. Chu is the candidate, he has belatedly scheduled a visit for mid-November 2015.

Ms. Hung also painted herself into a corner on two other controversial issues, which are being hotly debated in Taiwan: the completion of the construction of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant and the issue of the highly unpopular history textbook changes made by the Ministry of Education.

On the *Fourth Nuclear Power Plant*, she expressed herself in favor of completion and starting operation of the plant, which is located in Kungliao, only 26 miles NE of Taipei, in an active seismic zone. After strong protests in April of 2014, the Ma government had decided to seal the first reactor, and that work on the second reactor would be suspended, pending a national referendum on the issue to be held at a future date (see *Nuclear power issue comes to a boil*, *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 146, pp. 12-18).

On the *history textbook changes* she even stated that the changes didn’t go far enough, and claimed that the teaching of history should be done “*in accordance with the Constitution*” which of course raises the interesting question how the 1947 document could determine what happened prior to that date. These remarks angered the many thousands of highschool students who were protesting the Sino-centric changes made by the Ministry (see *Students protest textbook changes*, *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 152, pp. 8-12).

So, overall, Ms. Hung and her ill-fated presidential campaign showed how much out of touch she and her deep-blue wing of the party were, and how far removed from mainstream Taiwanese society. In particular her strongly pro-China ideological brand didn’t sit well with society as a whole, and led to a strong rejection of her and her policies. By early October 2015, most opinion polls showed her support rating to be between 15 and 18%, some 30% behind DPP candidate Dr. Tsai Ing-wen.

What will a new KMT look like?

When Mr. Eric Chu was elected chairman of the Kuomintang in January 2015, he was seen as something of a fresh face. He voiced support for a number of reforms, including constitutional reform designed to move Taiwan’s system of government from the current quasi-presidential system to a parliamentary system. He also voiced support for lowering

the voting age from 20 to 18, and for a resolution of the issue of ill-gotten party assets, which has hounded the party for decades (see *The Kuomintang tries to reinvent itself*, *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 149, pp. 18-20).

However, in the intervening months, Mr. Chu has not been able to break away from the stranglehold imposed on him by the old ideological party stalwarts, like Lien Chan, Vice-President Wu Den-yih, and president Ma Ying-jeou himself. Even his pronouncements after his nomination to the KMT presidential candidacy, show that he was sticking rather closely to the traditional KMT party line (see *Mr. Eric Chu on the wrong track*, pp. 5-7).

This refusal to change and initiate reforms, combined with the farcical candidacy by Ms. Hung Hsiu-chu and the lack of responsiveness to mainstream opinion on a range of issues, led to the spectacular implosion of the Chinese Kuomintang that we witnessed during the past few months.

Veteran Taiwan-watcher **Peter Enav** blamed it primarily on the failure of the KMT party to redefine itself during the past two decades (*The KMT implo-*

sion and historical inevitability, *Thinking Taiwan*, 13 October 2015), while the normally pro-China **WantWant China Times** thundered in an editorial: "...the party center has gone down the Tea Party route, doubling down on its Chinese Nationalist ideology and policies that have made the Ma administration so unpopular" (*Thoughts on the Kuomintang's spectacular implosion*, 05 October 2015).

So, it will be interesting to see what the KMT will look like after the elections. Mr. Chu will certainly lose the presidential race, but if he is able to limit the loss in the Legislative Yuan races, then he might have a role to play in leading a future KMT. In that case, he will in all likelihood team up with current Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng, who is the main exponent of the "Taiwanese" wing of the Kuomintang, and move the party towards a more Taiwanese-centric basis with deeper roots in Taiwan itself.

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Ma Ying-jeou to his successor: Just follow this "1992 Consensus" line, OK?

However, as this issue of *Taiwan Communiqué* went to press, there were widespread reports in the press in Taiwan that a significant rift had developed between Mr. Chu and Speaker Wang over the ranking of Mr. Wang on the KMT's at-large list in the legislative elections.

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Mr. Wang felt that in view of his standing he deserved the no. 1 spot -- and thus a virtual guarantee that he would continue as Speaker (if the KMT won a majority) -- while Mr. Chu felt that he couldn't preempt the nominating committee, and held off. All of this doesn't bode well for a future cooperation between the two.



Kuomintang to legislative Speaker Wang Jin-pyng:
Come here, boy. Come on, I have a nice bone for you.

In any case, if Mr. Chu fails to manage to retain a reasonable number of legislative seats for the Kuomintang, then his days as party chairman are numbered, and it will be anybody's guess how the party will further implode and self-destruct under the guiding hand of the old ideologues and last-of-the-Mohicans like President Ma Ying-jeou.

Report from Washington

Congressman Chabot introduces legislation affirming Six Assurances

On 28 October 2015, former chairman of the Asian Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Rep. Steve Chabot (R-OH) introduced legislation titled: "Reaffirming the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances as the Cornerstone of United States-Taiwan Relations." The full text of the resolution is as follows:

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 88

**Reaffirming the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances
as the Cornerstone of United States-Taiwan Relations**

Whereas for more than 50 years a close relationship has existed between the United States and Taiwan, which has been of major economic, cultural, and strategic advantage to both countries;

Whereas over the past two decades, the people of Taiwan have worked hard to establish a vibrant and pluralistic democracy in their country and conducted five successful presidential elections, successive elections for members of their national legislature, numerous local elections, and two national referendums;

Whereas the United States has vital security and strategic interests in the Taiwan Strait, with United States troops stationed in countries within the Taiwan Strait region;

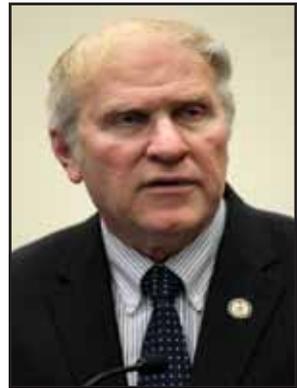
Whereas April 10, 2015, marked the 36th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96–8), codifying into law the basis for continued commercial, cultural, and other relations between the United States and the Taiwan;

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act has been instrumental in maintaining peace, security, and stability in the Taiwan Strait since its enactment in 1979;

Whereas when the Taiwan Relations Act was enacted, it affirmed that the United States' decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China was based on the expectation that the future of Taiwan would be determined by peaceful means;

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act declares that peace and stability in the area are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern;

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act states that it is the policy of the United States to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character to maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan;



Steve Chabot (R-OH)

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act also states that “it is the policy of the United States to preserve and promote extensive, close, and friendly commercial, cultural and other relations between the people on Taiwan, as well as the people on the China mainland”;

Whereas in 1982 president Reagan wanted to reinforce United States support for Taiwan and therefore issued the Six Assurances;

Whereas the Six Assurances are guidelines to conduct relations between the United States and Taiwan and stipulate that –

1. The United States would not set a date for termination of arms sales to Taiwan.
2. The United States would not alter the terms of the Taiwan Relations Act.
3. The United States would not consult with China in advance before making decisions about U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.
4. The United States would not mediate between Taiwan and China.
5. The United States would not alter its position about the sovereignty of Taiwan which was, that the question was one to be decided peacefully by the Chinese themselves, and would not pressure Taiwan to enter into negotiations with China.
6. The United States would not formally recognize Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan.

Now Therefore be it Resolved, *That—It is the sense of Congress*, the Senate concurring, that the United States hereby affirm that the Taiwan Relations Act and the Six Assurances together form the cornerstone of United States relations with Taiwan.

Book Review

From Taiwan to the World and Back

A memoir of Ambassador Lo Fu-chen

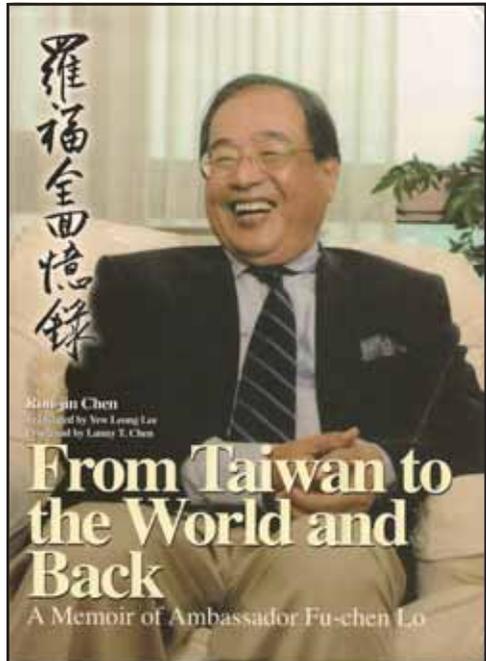
By Chen Rou-jin, reviewed by Gerrit van der Wees

Dr. Lo Fu-chen is one of those people who can move effortlessly from one culture to another. He grew up in Taiwan, but then went to both Japan and the United States for his studies. His home is Taiwan, but he feels equally at home in both Japan and the United States. This book present highlights from his life in 66 brief and highly readable flashbacks.

Dr. Lo was born into a well-to-do family in Chiayi in Central Taiwan, but at the beginning of World War II his mother took him and his sister to Japan, where they attended elementary school during the war year. Lo tells of witnessing the first US air raid bombing of Tokyo, and of having to be relocated to the country-side with his whole class to be out of danger.

After the war, the family moved back to Taiwan, which had now become occupied by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists. As a teenager he witnessed the "228" massacre in 1947, went to the well-known Tainan First Highschool, and headed for Taipei to study economics at the prestigious National Taiwan University.

After doing his military service in Taiwan's navy, he contemplated his future and decided to go for graduate studies at Waseda University in Japan. In the meantime he had his first touches with political activism, joining in a secret pact with other future democracy leaders, and writing an article critical of Chiang Kai-shek in Lei Chen's **Free China Journal**.



Waseda was followed by more graduate studies, this time at the University of Pennsylvania, where he specialized in regional economic studies. At UPenn he developed a friendship with many prominent scholars, which would help him greatly later in his professional life, and also become active in the newly-formed Taiwan independence and democracy movement.

After receiving his PhD from UPenn in 1968 the Lo family, now enriched with two sons, moved to Pittsburg where Lo worked for a consulting firm. He also continued his political activities, reflected in the book by a couple episodes of how Lo and his friends rallied Taiwanese supporters for the Taiwan team at the Little League championships at Williamsport, PA.

In 1973, Dr. Lo moved to Nagoya, Japan to work for at the UN Center for Regional Development, starting a 27-year UN career that would bring him to many countries, including the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand, Korea, and even China to conduct studies, conferences and projects on the topic of regional development. The job also brought him in contact with many world leaders such as Chinese Premier Zhao Zi-yang, Philippine president Corazon Aquino, Dutch Prime Minister Andries van Agt, and many more.

In 2000, at the age of 70, he retired from his UN position, but then was drafted by the newly-established DPP government in Taiwan as ambassador to Tokyo, where he served with distinction and even helped bring about a diplomatic breakthrough: the 2001 visit of former Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui to Japan. Since then, Lee visited Japan on a number of occasions.

Conclusion: a fascinating book, well written in the format of 66 brief narratives of episodes and anecdotes which give a good insight into the life and times of Dr. Lo Fu-chen.

The full title of the book is: **From Taiwan to the World and Back, a Memoir of Ambassador Fu-chen Lo**. Written by Rou-jin Chen, translated by Yew Leong Lee, and proofread by Lanny T. Chen. Published by Avanguard Publishing House, Taipei, Taiwan, 2015.

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

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