



Published by:

International Committee for Human Rights in Taiwan

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International edition, September 2000

Published 6 times a year

ISSN number: 1027-3999

93

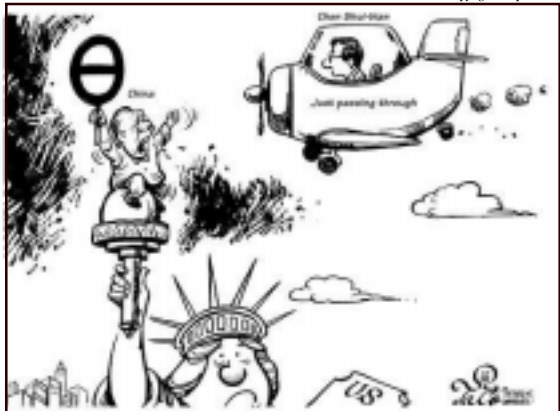
Normalize Taiwan relations

A pre-condition for a peaceful resolution

The election of President Chen Shui-bian in Taiwan and the first-ever transfer of power from the ruling Kuomintang to the democratic opposition of the DPP should prompt a re-thinking of international relations with Taiwan. Until now, the United States and the rest of the Western world have been faced with a “One China” dilemma, imposed on them in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s by two repressive regimes, the Chinese Nationalists and the Chinese Communists.

However, people are waking up to the fact that Taiwan is to be regarded in its own right. The people on the island were not part of the Chinese Civil War, but their fate became entangled in it, when the United States and Western Allies allowed Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalists to occupy the Japan-held island after World War II.

Chiang and his Nationalists perpetuated the “Republic of China” myth, vowing to “re-cover China”, while in the meantime ruling Taiwan with iron fist for more than four decades. The democratization, the increase in political participation by the native Taiwanese (85% of the population), and the subsequent rise to power of



Statue of Liberty ?

Chen Shui-bian and his DPP have now created a fundamentally new situation.

President Chen has emphasized that the island and its people have their own Taiwanese history, culture and identity, and is gradually dismantling the old framework and moving towards a new, fully-democratic, entity and identity as “Taiwan.” The international community should take a more active role in bringing about a peaceful resolution by moving towards dual recognition of both Taiwan and China.

In fact, dual recognition is a pre-condition for a peaceful settlement of the conflict across the Taiwan Strait: as long as Taiwan is isolated and being pushed with its back against the wall by China, no resolution that adheres to the basic principles of democracy, human rights and self-determination can be attained.

As long as Taiwan is being isolated by the international community, it will always remain in an unequal negotiation position vis-à-vis China. It is therefore essential for the US and the rest of the Western world to normalize relations with Taiwan, so it can negotiate on a level playing field.

Talk for the sake of talking ?

Many observers and commentators, and in particular the Clinton Administration, have a habit of urging Taiwan and China to “start talking” and “resume a cross-Strait dialogue.”

While we agree it is always better to have a dialogue than missile firings, talks will not result in positive results if some basic pre-conditions have not been met. In fact, going into talks with unrealistic expectations might lead to a more dangerous situation.

We thus suggest that the three following conditions should be met before fruitful negotiations can even start:

1. China needs to cease its military threats and intimidation, and needs to make it clear that it is committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Otherwise Taiwan will be in a situation that it is talking with a gun pointed at its head;
2. Taiwan itself needs to arrive at a national consensus on the direction in which it is going. For the time being, the views within the island on Taiwan’s ultimate status are still too far apart. More time is needed for a consensus to develop. President Chen has initiated a cross-Strait Task Force to work towards this purpose (see article on page 20).

3. In order to have a fruitful dialogue, a Taiwan and China will have to sit at the negotiating table on equal footing. This point was emphasized by former President Lee Teng-hui in his “state-to-state” declaration in July 1999, and has been reiterated frequently by President Chen Shui-bian.

Who got whom involved?

There is an argument going around in policy circles in Washington that says that “the US should not be dragged into a conflict between Taiwan and China.” To the Taiwanese this argument sounds highly peculiar, because a brief analysis of history shows that it was the United States which dragged Taiwan into a conflict-situation with China.

It all started in 1943, at the Cairo Conference, when President Roosevelt allowed Chiang Kai-shek to claim that after World War II Taiwan was to be “returned” to Nationalist-ruled China. Taiwan was a Japanese colony at that time, which had been ceded to Japan *in perpetuity* at the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki.

Chiang and his “Republic of China” were at the time holed up in Chungking in China, halfheartedly fighting the Japanese, but at the same time being more concerned about the Communists behind his back in Yunan.

So, without consulting any Taiwanese, Mr. Roosevelt tried to pacify Chiang by agreeing to his demands. Mr. Truman didn’t do any better: in 1945, he condoned the actual transfer of Taiwan to the control of Chiang repressive regime – again without any consultation with the Taiwanese themselves.

Another point often disregarded by policy analysts in Washington is the fact that at the 1951-52 San Francisco Peace Treaty, Japan ceded its sovereignty over Taiwan, but no beneficiary was named. According to the conclusions of the conference, this was “*..to be determined in due course, in accordance with the purposes and principles as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations.*”

In the subsequent years, when nation after nation in Asia and Africa got their independence under the smiling approval of the US and the UN, the Chinese Nationalists strengthened their grip on the island through repression and intimidation. Taipei became the “temporary capital” of Chiang's Nationalist regime, which paraded around as “pro-Western” but at the same time remained intent on “recovering” China from the even more repressive Chinese Communist regime.

From the 1940s through the early 1980s, the US – and the rest of the West for that matter – paid scant attention to the plight of the native Taiwanese (85% of the people on the island). It wasn't until the democratic opposition of the *tangwai* started to clamor for human rights and democracy, culminating in the peaceful transfer of power to President Chen and the DPP in the Spring of 2000, that the US paid heed.

Thus, since the US played such a key role in getting Taiwan involved in the Chinese Civil War, it has a distinct responsibility in preserving Taiwan's freedom, democracy, and independence, for which the Taiwanese have worked so hard during the past five decades.

Muzzled in LA

President Chen keeps a low profile

On 13 and 14 August 2000, Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian made a stop-over in Los Angeles, enroute to visit six countries in the Caribbean and Africa. A number of members of the US Congress, many of whom were in LA to attend the Democratic National Convention, were planning to meet with the newly-elected president, who just entered office on May 20th, after his March 2000 election victory.

The members of Congress included Sam Gejdenson (D-CT), Howard Berman (D-CA), Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), David Wu (D-OR), Bob Wexler (D-FL) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH), who have all been consistent supporters of Taiwan in the House.

However, the Clinton Administration put heavy pressure on the DPP-government to decline any requests by Congressmen to meet with President Chen. An aide to Congressman Gejdenson said that the Clinton Administration "...has pressured Chen not to meet with the lawmakers...".

Taiwan Communiqué comment: *We suggest that this course of action by the Administration is yet another signal in the wrong direction: why is the democratically-elected leader of one of the most free and democratic nations in Asia shunned, and being treated like a pariah, while the leaders of a repressive, communist-led government (Messrs. Jiang Zemin and Li Peng) get a red-carpet treatment at the White House in Washington and at the UN in New York.*

If the US wishes to enhance democracy in Asia and the rest of the world it should display a more friendly attitude to those who through hard work and much personal sacrifice brought about a democratic transition in their country. Instead of shunning Chen Shui-bian in LA, we should welcome him in Washington.

Both Berman and Rohrabacher wrote to Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific Stanley Roth to protest the restrictions.

In an excellent editorial titled ***Snubbing Taiwan***, the **Washington Post** on 17 August 2000 strongly criticized the State Department's restrictions. Two quotes from the editorial:

Chen Shui-bian, the president of Taiwan, has just ended his 15-hour stopover in Southern California. Didn't notice that the newly elected leader of one of Asia's most vibrant democracies was on American soil? Well, you weren't supposed to. In deference to the government of Communist China—which considers Taiwan not a success story but a renegade province—the Clinton administration did everything it could to keep Mr. Chen under wraps while he paused en route to the Caribbean and Central America.

... a quick meet-and-greet between Mr. Chen and a few members of Congress hardly constituted anything a reasonable person would describe as reneging on the

longstanding U.S. policy of recognizing Beijing as the sole government of China—or even as the equivalent of Mr. Lee's 1995 tour, which was itself actually innocuous. By bowing to China's bluster, the Clinton administration implied otherwise, setting a dangerous precedent. This was a pretty blunt example of Chinese interference in American internal affairs. Since when does any foreign government get a veto over where authorized foreign visitors—not to mention members of Congress—may go and whom they may see?



President Chen meeting AIT Chairman Richard Bush in LA

In an OpEd article titled *A missing compass in the China connection* in the **Washington Times** of the same day, commentator James Hackett wrote:

Whenever someone from Taiwan is treated with common courtesy, the rulers in Beijing throw a tantrum, which the Clinton administration wanted to avoid, especially during the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles. China has been unusually quiet as it awaits final action by Congress on the bill granting it permanent normal trade relations, but Beijing did state its opposition to Mr. Chen's stopping, even briefly, on U.S. soil.

Ever eager to kowtow to communists, the Clinton administration not only restricted what Mr. Chen could do and whom he could see, it also trampled on freedom of the press. Unable to control the press in this country, the administration instead pressured Taiwan to keep Mr. Chen under wraps. There were no profiles in courage as the administration bowed to Beijing's demands.

In commentary in the **National Review**, Ted Galen Carpenter, vice president at the Washington-based Cato Institute, also strongly criticized the Clinton Administration. A few quotes from the article, titled *Appeasing China, humiliating ourselves*, are given here. The full article can be found at the website of the Cato Institute at <http://cato.org/dailys/08-15-00.html>

.... The administration's conduct is disgraceful but not surprising. It is reminiscent of the policy adopted more than five years ago when then-Taiwanese president Lee Teng-hui requested a visa to attend a reunion at his alma mater, Cornell University. The administration's initial response to objections by the Chinese regime was to offer assurances that the visa request would be denied. Only after Congress overwhelmingly passed a resolution demanding that Lee be allowed to come to the United States did the administration beat a hasty retreat.

The proper response to Beijing's attempts to block the visits of Lee and Chen would have been a firm rebuff. Indeed, the episodes created an opportunity to throw a favorite objection made by Chinese officials back in their faces. The Beijing government habitually responds to U.S. protests about its egregious human-rights record by denouncing "interference in China's internal affairs." Yet Chinese leaders don't hesitate to try to dictate America's visa policy or decide whether a traveler in transit can set foot on American soil.

The administration's excessively deferential behavior toward China not only betrays important American values; it is potentially dangerous. Chinese leaders are impressed with quiet displays of strength and pride; they have justifiable contempt for fawning behavior. Unfortunately, the Clinton administration has all too often engaged in the latter.

Few people would dispute that it is important for the United States to maintain a cordial relationship with China. But there is a big difference between that goal and having U.S. officials abase themselves when China's Communist rulers make outrageous demands or engage in outrageous conduct. The Clinton administration seems incapable of grasping that distinction.

Congress: for high-level contacts with Taiwan

On 25 August 2000, seven Democratic members of the US House of Representatives wrote Secretary Madeleine Albright urging her to end the inappropriate ban on high-level visits between elected Taiwanese officials and US officials.

The Democrats expressed their strong disappointment at the State Department's restrictions on Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian's stopover in Los Angeles in mid-August 2000, and stated that the US policy towards China and Taiwan should be evenhanded: "Since Jiang Zemin comes to the United States to give his views, Chen Shui-bian and his ministers should have the same right", the Congressmen stated in their letter.

The Congressmen added: "The United States has fought for democracy around the world and is without a doubt the world's leading democracy as we enter the new century. Yet, when visiting the US, Taiwan's president was denied the basic rights of freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. The 23 million people of Taiwan have built a mature democracy over the past decade. We wanted to speak with President Chen about his country's accomplishments and its plans to support U.S. interests in Asia."

They concluded their letter by requesting Secretary Albright to ".. immediately conduct a review of Administration policy on visits by high-level Taiwanese officials to the U.S. and take the necessary steps to end the inappropriate ban on high-level visits between elected Taiwanese officials and U.S. officials, including the democratically-elected President of Taiwan."

UN, say "Yes" to Taiwan

Discard the "Republic of China" confusion

The new DPP-government in Taiwan is making a new push to join the United Nations, arguing that the world body could be the appropriate forum for Taiwan and China to settle their differences.

On 3 August 2000, fourteen of Taiwan's diplomatic allies in Africa, and Central and South America wrote to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, proposing that the United Nations consider Taiwan's request to join the organization at the upcoming UN General Assembly in September 2000.



Universal organization?

"We called on the United Nations to regard the recent goodwill we have demonstrated to China and to provide a forum for reconciliation between the sides," Vice Foreign Minister Wu Tzu-dan told reporters in Taipei. *"Since the United Nations is dedicated to resolving international disputes, it should admit the island and let China face the reality of Taiwan's existence",* Wu added.

Each year since 1993, Taipei has mounted the campaign for representation in the United Nations. In doing so, the former Kuomintang government responded to pressure from the DPP, but submitted the application under the anachronistic "Republic of China" name.

The newly-elected DPP government of President Chen Shui-bian is giving less weight to the name issue, but is emphasizing the rights of the 23 million people of Taiwan to be represented in the world body, as well as the contribution Taiwan can make as a full and equal member of the international community.

In an interview with **Business Week**, published in a cover article in the beginning of August 2000, President Chen clearly referred to Taiwan as "a sovereign and independent country" and said that the people of Taiwan expect the government to bring the country into the United Nations.

US Congressional support for Taiwan into the UN

On Thursday, 28 July 2000, a resolution was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives urging Taiwan's membership in the UN and other international organizations. The resolution, **H. Con. Resolution 390**, was introduced by Congressman Bob Schaffer (R-CO), who led a bi-partisan group of 42 House Members in calling on the Clinton Administration to *"fulfill the commitment it made in the 1994 Taiwan Policy Review to more actively support Taiwan's membership in appropriate international organizations."*

Introduction of the resolution was initiated by the Washington-based **Formosan Association for Public Affairs**, which kicked off the "Taiwan into the United Nations Campaign" by the Taiwanese-American community in the United States.

On 5 September 2000, Reps. Schaffer, Steve Chabot (R-OH) and Sherrod Brown (D-OH) issued statements in support of UN membership for Taiwan. The statements were read at the **"UN, say Yes to Taiwan!"** rally in New York on the Dag Hammarskjold Plaza in front of the UN building.

Rep. Schaffer stated *"Taiwan has made enormous strides toward becoming a full democracy. Undeterred by China's threats, the Taiwanese voters elected pro-independence party candidates, ending more than half a century of Nationalist rule. The election returns the government back to the people."* And *"[...] last month I was pleased to introduce HCR-390 to recognize the legitimacy of Taiwan's presence in the international community. Taiwan, as a democratic nation should be afforded the privilege of membership in the United Nations."*

Rep. Chabot stated: *"As an original co-sponsor of HCR390, I have urged President Clinton to fulfill America's commitment to actively support Taiwan's membership in international organizations, including the United Nations."* And *"I am hopeful that before Congress adjourns this year, it will take up this important resolution."*

Rep. Brown stated: *"The people of Taiwan have proved freedom and democracy are not just American ideals, they are universal principles that apply to every individual, to every community, and to every nation."* And *"The U.S. State Department's 1994 Taiwan Policy Review clearly stated it would more actively support Taiwan's membership in international organizations, when the U.S. government determines "it is clearly appropriate." But the Clinton Administration is positioned to influence international policy, it refuses to take the lead and support Taiwanese participation."*

The UN, a “universal forum” ?

On 5 September 2000, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan wrote an editorial, titled *"now let's set a new course for the world, no less"*, which was published in major American and international newspapers. In the editorial Mr. Kofi Annan wrote: *"The United Nations is the universal forum, where all the world's peoples are represented."*

Regrettably, Mr. Kofi Annan has it wrong: right now, a world body which was set up on the basis of the principle of universality is still excluding a free, democratic and independent nation of 23 million people.

The establishment of the United Nations in 1945 signaled the start of a new era and prompted a long series of declarations of independence in Asia and Africa.

Because of a fluke accident of history — the occupation of Taiwan by Chiang Kai-shek's armies fleeing from China — the Taiwanese people were not able to join the international family of nations as an independent nation right away.

Over the past four decades, the Taiwanese have, through their hard work and ingenuity, achieved one of the most prosperous economies of East Asia, and also brought about a full-fledged democracy.

Some international observers argue that we should not raise the Taiwan issue, saying that Taiwan's entry into the UN is impossible, because China has a permanent seat in the Security Council and will block any attempt to let Taiwan join the UN.

We believe that such a position is indefensible and totally wrong: the world should not let itself be intimidated by a repressive and dictatorial China. It should stand up for the principles on which the UN was founded: freedom, democracy, equal rights and self-determination of peoples.



Kofi Annan, meeting "butcher of Tienanmen" Li Peng

In particular Western nations, which seem so eager to trade with China, have the moral obligation to make it clear to China that its acceptance as a full partner in the international community hinges on its recognition of Taiwan as a friendly neighbor.

A full and equal member, no less

It needs to be emphasized time and again that Taiwan fulfills all basic requirements of a nation-state: it has a defined territory, a population of 23 million (greater than that of three quarters of the UN member nations), and a government which exercises effective control over the territory and the population.

Why is it important that this de-facto independent country becomes a full and equal member of the UN ? First, because of the original principles of the UN itself: the world body was founded on the principles of universality and self-determination. If the UN is to survive as an institution that safeguards world peace, it is essential that it adheres to these principles, and applies them to the case of Taiwan.

A second reason for supporting Taiwan's membership in the UN is that this further emphasizes that Taiwan's future is an international issue, to be dealt with by the international community, and not a "*domestic issue*" for the "Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits" to decide on. The responsibility of the international community stems from the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1952, which decided that Japan ceded its sovereignty over Taiwan, and that the future status of Taiwan was to be decided in



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The China cook welcoming the Taiwan duck into the "*domestic issue*" pot

due time "in accord with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations." Certainly in those days, this term could have only one meaning: "independence."

A third reason for supporting Taiwan's entry into the UN is that over the past decade Taiwan has — due to the hard work of the democratic opposition and the overseas

Taiwanese community — achieved a democratic political system. This argument is especially relevant for the United States and Europe. It would be indefensible for the West to deny UN membership to a free and democratic nation, while condoning the presence of repressive, undemocratic nations such as China, Iraq, Iran, etc. This would be a flagrant violation of basic democratic principles.

The choice between Democrats and Republicans

During the Republican and Democratic conventions at the end of July and in mid-August 2000 respectively, the two parties drafted their platforms for the upcoming presidential election campaigns. Taiwanese-Americans and the people in Taiwan are closely watching what these platforms contain about US policy towards Taiwan.

While these platforms are not the final word on the policies that will eventually evolve, they are an indication and a declaration of intent on how the two parties will deal with relations with Taiwan and with the cross-Strait issue.

Below we present a first analysis of the two platforms, and an analysis of which party would offer Taiwan the best hope for a normalization of relations with Taiwan.

The Democratic platform: much lacking

The Democratic platform leaves much to be desired. It contains only one paragraph regarding Taiwan:

A Gore Administration will fulfill its responsibilities under the Taiwan Relations Act. A Gore Administration will also remain committed to a "One China" policy. We support a resolution of cross-Straits issues that is both peaceful and consistent with the wishes of the people of Taiwan.

The opening sentence in the above paragraph raises the interesting question whether Mr. Gore considers the policy of the past eight years as being in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act. Many in Washington – including many Democrats in Congress

— are of the opinion that the Clinton-Gore Administration has undercut the Taiwan Relations Act, and thus *failed* to fulfill its responsibilities.

There is also the question whether the TRA – which was drafted in 1979 – is an adequate framework for the present situation. As we have indicated in earlier articles – see *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 86, p. 10 – the TRA falls far short, as it does not provide a framework to deal with a fully democratic Taiwan, it falls short in helping Taiwan’s membership in international organizations, and falls short in the area of safety and security.

The major weakness in the platform paragraph is of course the phrase that the Gore Administration “...will remain committed to the ‘One China’ policy”, without defining how this policy differs from the policy espoused by the Communist regime in Beijing. As outlined elsewhere in this *Communiqué*, the ‘One China’ concept is increasingly viewed as outdated and defunct.



Taiwan's international diplomacy

The only sentence which goes somewhat in the right direction is the support of the resolution of cross-Strait issues as “...*both peaceful and consistent with the wishes of the people of Taiwan.*”

From an American party that espouses democracy – and even uses the term in its name – one would expect a stronger expression of support for Taiwan as a free and democratic member of the international community. Mr. Gore himself has displayed little interest in the issue, and his key advisers on international relations, Messrs. Leon Fuerth and Richard Holbrooke (presently US ambassador to the UN), seem more intent on continuing the “engagement” policy with China at the expense of Taiwan.

The only point of hope for Taiwan in a possible Democratic Administration is vice-Presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman, who -- as senator from Connecticut -- has taken a lead role in speaking out for democracy in Taiwan and for US defense of Taiwan against any attack by China.

The Republican platform: not bad ... but how did it come about?

In contrast, the Republican platform is much more forceful on the cross-Strait issue, and on the defense of Taiwan. The text of the platform:

A Republican president will honor our promises to the people of Taiwan, a longstanding friend of the United States and a genuine democracy. Only months ago the people of Taiwan chose a new president in free and fair elections. Taiwan deserves America's strong support, including the timely sale of defensive arms to enhance Taiwan's security.

In recognition of its growing importance in the global economy, we support Taiwan's accession to the World Trade Organization, as well as its participation in the World Health Organization and other multilateral institutions.

America has acknowledged the view that there is one China. Our policy is based on the principle that there must be no use of force by China against Taiwan. We deny the right of Beijing to impose its rule on the free Taiwanese people. All issues regarding Taiwan's future must be resolved peacefully and must be agreeable to the people of Taiwan. If China violates these principles and attacks Taiwan, then the United States will respond appropriately in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act. America will help Taiwan defend itself.

On the next pages, you find an analysis of the platform by Mike J. Fonte of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs.

Interestingly, just after the Republican convention, several press reports gave an insight of how the Republican platform on China and Taiwan came about. Both the **Washington Post** and **Washington Times** carried articles reporting that an earlier version had been distinctly more pro-China. It had been drafted by Mr. Robert Blackwill, a lecturer at the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, where he runs an exchange program for Chinese PLA officers.

The US\$ 7 million program is reportedly funded by a Hong Kong businesswoman named Nina Kung. The *Washington Times* article reported that the PLA colonels attending the program are hand-picked by General Xiong Guangkai, China's military

intelligence chief, who suggested in early 1996 that China would use nuclear weapons against Los Angeles if the US dared to defend Taiwan from Chinese attack (*"Secret GOP struggle"*, by Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough in the **Washington Times**, 11 August 2000).

The final platform document was re-drafted by several congressional staffers and former Congressman Robert L. Livingston (R-LA), a member of the platform committee, who felt that the earlier language didn't represent American values, and was not in line with recent statement of candidate George W. Bush on the issue.

US Republicans offer Taiwan more

By Michael J. Fonte, senior policy analyst for the Formosan Association for Public Affairs.

Taiwan should be more pleased with the Republican Party platform than with that of the Democrats. The many changes that were made from the original Republican draft reflect a strong commitment to democratic Taiwan and its future.

"A Republican president will honor our promises to the people of Taiwan, a longstanding friend of the United States, and a genuine democracy. Only months ago the people of Taiwan chose a new president in free and fair elections. Taiwan deserves America's strong support, including the timely sale of defensive arms to enhance Taiwan's security," reads the platform.

This coded reference to the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act was not in the original draft and reflects the endorsement of the TSEA that can be found on George W. Bush's Web site. The first draft endorsed a "one China" policy, and the Bush Web site still notes that the Republican candidate supports such a policy. The final version states, however, that "America has acknowledged the view that there is 'one China.'"

The platform echoes President Clinton's "assent of the people of Taiwan" phrase: "We deny the right of Beijing to impose its rule on the free Taiwanese people. All issues regarding Taiwan's future must be resolved peacefully and must be agreeable to the people of Taiwan," it reads.

Finally, the platform warns, "If China violates these principles and attacks Taiwan, then the United States will respond appropriately in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act. America will help Taiwan defend itself."

The Democratic Party platform is less detailed in its statements about Taiwan. It notes that the US “must continue to engage China while at the same time insisting on adherence to international standards on human rights, freedom, the persecution of religion, the suppression of Tibet, and bellicose threats directed at Taiwan.” A Gore Administration, the platform avows, “will fulfill its responsibilities under the Taiwan Relations Act,” and will also “remain committed to a ‘one China’ policy. Like its Republican counterpart it echoes Clinton’s “assent of the people,” phrase: “We support a resolution of cross-Straits issues that is both peaceful and consistent with the wishes of the people of Taiwan.”

Taiwan should be more pleased with the Republican platform, then, but wary. When Henry Kissinger read the platform, he probably just shook his head knowingly. After all, his proteges are prominent in the team of foreign policy advisors surrounding George W. Bush, men like Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleberger, and should be able to keep Bush junior on the right Kissingerian China track.

Besides, as is amply documented in **The Kissinger Transcripts**, edited by William Burr, Kissinger knows just how important platform statements are. He had to put out some fires with the Chinese over the 1976 Republican platform which virtually embraced a two Chinas policy.

In a mid-August 1976 conversation, Chinese Ambassador Huang Zhen confronted Kissinger on the platform’s statements, saying, “I would like to say something about this [Taiwan]. Recently people in the United States have made many official and non-official comments about Sino-US relations.” Kissinger replied, “Which have been official? I don’t consider the Republican Party platform official.”

Later in the conversation, Huang said, “I hope we can proceed on the basis of the Shanghai communiqué as Vice Premier Zhang pointed out to Senator Scott.” Kissinger responded, “It is our firm purpose to do so. We will act on this basis, and not on the basis of what is written in this or that platform.”

Most political commentators would agree with Kissinger’s views on the importance of platform language for either party. A more serious question is whether either Gore or Bush will take a step back from the accepted version of the US “one China” policy. A look at the historical record doesn’t leave one very optimistic that there will be any change in what has been a distinct China tilt in US policy through Democratic and Republican Administrations alike since 1972.

In Kissinger's grand geopolitical scheme, Taiwan was expendable. During Kissinger's first trip to Beijing, Chinese Foreign Minister Chou En-lai pressed forcefully on the Taiwan issue. According to John Holdridge, a Kissinger aide, only after Kissinger said, "What I had written for him on no two Chinas; no one China, one Taiwan; no independent Taiwan," did Chou respond, "Good, these talks may proceed."

When Nixon himself visited, he explicitly agreed with Chou on the Taiwan issue. His notes for his opening presentation to Chou show this clearly.

"Taiwan: I reiterate what our policy is: 1. Status is determined — one China, Taiwan is part of China — 2. Won't support Taiwan independence."

The previous US position on Taiwan was that its status was "undetermined," left purposely so by the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951. The Shanghai Communiqué of 1972 was more circumspect than the private Nixon-Chou agreements, stating that the US "acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position."

Secretary of State William Rogers, who had been cut out of the China loop by Kissinger, noted that many native Taiwanese did not agree with Chiang Kai-shek's position about Taiwan being part of China. He suggested the language be changed from "all Chinese" to "Chinese." Kissinger tried to get the Chinese to accept the word change, but got nowhere.

Nixon's approach to China has dominated the thinking of all subsequent Administrations on China. Consider the current presidential campaign. Asked in March 2000 what he would do if Taiwan were to declare independence, George W. Bush responded, "I would hope Taiwan would also hear the call that the 'one China' policy is important for the peaceful resolution of the dispute between China and Taiwan. Taiwan must be reminded by our country that the 'one China' policy has allowed Taiwan to develop into a market-oriented economy and to a flourishing democracy. It has worked, and the role of the US is to use our prestige in the world to make sure that the 'one China' policy remains intact."

On 4 April 2000, Al Gore stated, "We also have concerns over tensions building between China and Taiwan. We need to maintain our commitment to the 'one China' policy, but urge China and Taiwan to intensify their dialogue and to resolve their

problems by peaceful means. The administration is honoring its obligation to make defensive weapons available to Taiwan.”

For Taiwan, the democracy card is the key to unlocking this ‘one China’ box. US policy has been based, as William Rogers so clearly noted, on the flawed premise that all people in Taiwan accept the ‘one China’ framework. It wasn’t true in 1972. It is less true today. Platform statements come and go. Neither Nixon’s private assurances to China nor the time-framed Communiques are binding policy statements for tomorrow’s US government, no matter what Chinese leaders think.

Taiwanese democracy is here to stay and must be factored into a new US policy formula. As Chen Shui-bian asked so clearly on Aug. 18, “If we make it [reunification] the only option, will this still be a democracy?”

The above article first appeared in the **Taipei Times** on 30 August 2000. Reprinted with permission.

A new policy needed

The present “One China” policy dates from the 1970s. The problem with this “One China” concept is that it grew out of a time when two Chinese regimes claimed to be the legitimate representative of “One China”. In the 1950s and 1960s, the United States and the rest of the West recognized the “One China” of the Kuomintang on Taiwan, and thereby isolated the PRC - wrongly so.

That part of that equation was resolved in the 1970s when the international community recognized the government in Beijing as the sole representative of China. However, the international community swung to the other extreme, and is now - equally wrongly — isolating Taiwan.

The situation now is fundamentally different from the early 1970s: Taiwan has in the meantime evolved from Chiang Kai-shek’s undemocratic dictatorship to a fully-grown democracy, as exemplified by the peaceful transfer of power to the Chen Shui-bian administration led by the DPP. It does not claim to represent China anymore.

The US should reward Taiwan for moving towards a fully-democratic system by normalizing relations with the island-nation. The present “unofficial” ties are an aberration from the conflict-situation of the past decades.

Just as it was correct to rectify the wrong in the early 1970s by pulling China into the international community, it is right at this time, as we enter the 21st century, to rectify the wrong imposed upon the people of Taiwan, by accepting Taiwan as a full and equal member in the international community.

This new situation — a democratic government which was not part of the Chinese Civil War (which has been the root cause of the tension in the Taiwan Strait) — should lead to a rethinking of the “One China” policy.

The United States should emphasize both the peaceful *process* and an *eventual outcome* in line with the basic principles for which the US stands: human rights, democracy and freedom. Thus endorsement of the principle of self-determination by the people of Taiwan.

The US -- and other Western nations -- should thus revise their policy towards Taiwan along the following lines. The first point is part of present policy. The formulation of the second point aims to get around the “One China” dilemma. The third and fourth points are the application of “consent of the people in Taiwan” to a) the resolution of the Cross-Strait conflict, and b) the future status of Taiwan.

1. The US insists that the Cross-Strait differences should be resolved peacefully, through dialogue. It rejects and opposes the use of force or the threat of force. In accordance with the TRA, the US provides Taiwan with the necessary means to defend itself, and maintains 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.
2. The US recognizes the government in Beijing as the government of China, and expresses the expectation that it will move in the direction of democracy and a full-market economy.
3. Since Taiwan is a democracy, any arrangements between the two sides must have the expressed consent of the people of Taiwan.
4. The future status of Taiwan should be decided by the people of the island themselves, through a democratic process, and without outside interference.
5. The US should take the lead in accepting Taiwan as a full and equal member in the international community by supporting its membership in international organizations such as the UN, WHO and WTO.

Cross-Strait Task Force vs. National Unification Council

During the past weeks, a debate has raged in Taiwan whether President Chen Shui-bian should assume the chairmanship of the National Unification Council. The pro-unification elements in Taiwan society, in particular the People's First Party and the splinter New Party, have put heavy pressure on President Chen to take this step in order to "show his sincerity to work for unification."

However, President Chen has not wanted to take this step, in particular since the NUC is an advisory body to the government, and asked why he should chair a body that advises him on policy issues. He has also increasingly stated that unification is not the only option for Taiwan, and that a full, free and open public debate should take place on the future of the island.



KMT and PFP boycott President Chen's "round table"

In order to facilitate this debate, the president has instituted a **Task Force on cross-Strait Relations**, headed by Academia Sinica President and Nobel prize winner Professor Lee Yuan-tseh. The 25-member task force held its first meeting on Saturday, 2 September 2000. President Chen invited members from all major parties in Taiwan to join the task force, but the pro-unification Peoples First Party and the Kuomintang have until now not wanted to join the activities of the task force, since they feel it undermines the unification agenda of the NUC.

The NUC was set up in 1990 by then-President Lee Teng-hui over the objections of the DPP, which opposed the underlying unification goal of the Council. The DPP's argument at that time – and at the present – is that all possible options for Taiwan's future – including independence — should be discussed, and that unification is not a foregone conclusion.

Below follows an article from the **Taipei Times** of 1 September 2000 regarding the issue. Reprinted with permission.

Chen as head of NUC a bad idea

By Li Thian-hok. *Mr. Li is a board member at large of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs and is chairman of the diplomacy committee of World United Formosans for Independence (USA).*

Academia Sinica President Lee Yuan-tseh says it would be meaningless for President Chen Shui-bian to chair the National Unification Council (NUC) because the NUC is designed to advise the government.

Senior advisor to the President Peng Meng-min has also counseled against such an act. The opposition KMT and the People First Party on the other hand, want Chen to assume the chairmanship of the NUC. This is a grave decision which should not be made without weighing the consequences.

If Chen were to head the NUC, what impact would it have on his political career? Chen's electoral support comes mainly from those with a stronger sense of Taiwanese identity. Another step in the direction of unification with China will certainly disappoint and erode this important base of support. The DPP, already fragmented, will split further apart between those who seek accommodation with China — even at the cost of endangering Taiwan's survival as a democracy — and those who still believe that Taiwan's freedom is not negotiable. Against these disadvantages, Chen cannot realistically hope to gain new support from the die-hard advocates of unification with China, as past voter behavior clearly shows.

Furthermore, caving in to pressure from the opposition parties and China may reinforce the impression among many voters and observers abroad that Chen lacks vision, that he lacks a sense of national purpose, that he is a follower of opinion polls and not a leader.

Even more important is the effect of Chen's decision on Taiwan's security. The Guidelines for National Unification were adopted by the Executive Yuan Council in March 1991, when Taiwan's democratization was just beginning.

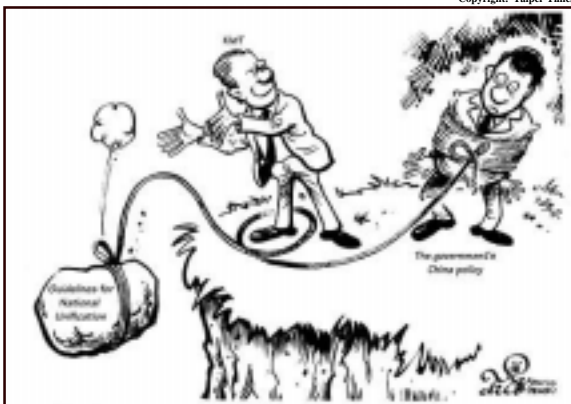
Having elected former president Lee Teng-hui in a direct popular election in 1996 and having achieved a peaceful transfer of power to the DPP this year, Taiwan has evolved

into a full-fledged democracy. The 23 million people of Taiwan now have a right to determine their own future without any outside military or political pressure. Taiwan's future must be decided through an open and fair referendum, conducted after debate among a well-informed electorate. No Taiwan government has a right to prejudice the people's choice.

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To arbitrarily impose unification with China as Taiwan's national goal is to negate the principle of self-determination and to abrogate the Taiwanese people's most basic human right. Such an act will raise the question: is Taiwan a true democracy?

Chen made five substantive concessions to China in his inauguration speech as a show of sincerity and goodwill, but has failed to elicit conciliatory gestures from the other side. Since then, the new DPP Chairman Frank Hsieh has labeled Kaohsiung and China's Xiamen as "one county, two cities." While the attempt has since been aborted, DPP lawmaker Chen Chau-nan proposed the abolition of the DPP's Taiwan independence platform.



All of the above events have contributed to the current China fever, with political parties, trade groups and religious pilgrims all scrambling to visit China and pay homage to China's leaders. Does Chen really wish to add to this snowballing momentum toward unification with the repressive Chinese government?

Among Americans who can influence US policy towards Taiwan, including members of Congress, Sinologists, former government officials and media pundits, there is much appreciation of Taiwan's democratization and support for the status quo, especially Taiwan's continued existence as a free-market democracy free from China's political control.

Even among staunch supporters of Taiwan, however, doubts regarding the Chen administration's resolve to stand up to China's threats and to defend the island's freedom is beginning to creep in. If Chen takes the chair of the NUC, America's support for Taiwan will undoubtedly be further dissipated.

In his May 20 address, Chen pledged not to abolish the NUC or the Guidelines for National Unification during his term in office. However, he is free to amend the Guidelines. Opinion surveys show only 15 percent of Taiwan's population favors unification with China. The remaining 85 percent wants either independence or the status quo. Chen's mandate, therefore, is to maintain Taiwan's de facto independent status indefinitely. Thus, the guidelines could be modified in two ways: First, to make clear unification is not the sole option. And second, to affirm that the future of Taiwan can only be determined by the people of Taiwan, through their freely expressed consent.

Another point worth making is that in its eagerness to placate Beijing, the Chen administration has violated the spirit and letter of the Guidelines for National Unification. The guidelines stipulate three stages for the process of unification. Direct postal, transport and commercial links are to be allowed in the second stage, only after China has implemented democracy and the rule of law and has ended its hostility towards Taiwan in the first stage. Even before his election to the presidency, Chen was already advocating the three direct links. Yet everyone knows China is far from being peaceful or democratic.

Until a new administration takes power in Washington, Chen will be well advised to stop making new concessions to Beijing and ponder scrupulously where he wants to lead the people of Taiwan.

Notes

Israel calls off AWACS sale to China

In mid-July 2000, Israel announced that it was suspending the controversial sale of a Phalcon AWACS radar system mounted on a Russian-built Ilyushin aircraft, which would have enabled China to threaten and attack Taiwanese and American aircraft over the Taiwan Strait (see "*The Israeli Phalcon AWACS sale*", in *Taiwan Communiqué* no. 92, pp. 17-8).

Israeli officials made the announcement at Camp David in Maryland, where Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yassar Arafat were meeting at the invitation of president Clinton to hammer out a MidEast peace accord.

The potential sale by Israel to China had alarmed both Taiwan and the United States, since the sale was reportedly the first of a series of four or even eight, which would in due time enable China to gain air superiority over the Taiwan Strait.

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ISSN Number: 1027-3999

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Taiwan Communiqué supports a free, democratic, and independent Taiwan, and campaigns for full and equal membership of Taiwan in the international community, including a seat in the UN.

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