

# The Inside Story of Taiwan's Quiet Revolution

From Authoritarianism  
to Open Democracy

James Soong



## Notes to this edition

This is an electronic edition of the printed book. Minor corrections may have been made within the text; new information and any errata appear on the current page only.

*The Inside Story of Taiwan's Quiet Revolution:  
From Authoritarianism to Open Democracy*

by James Soong

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**Institute of  
East Asian Studies**  
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# Acknowledgments

The current book is fundamentally a translation of the Chinese version that was published in 2018 in Taiwan. It details Taiwan's successful transition from authoritarianism to democracy, a process that serves as a case study for political scientists. I was privileged to be an integral part of Taiwan's democratization as a key government and party official, thanks to the trust that former presidents Chiang Ching-kuo and Lee Teng-hui had placed in me.

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# Preface

This book is a memoir distilled from a series of oral interviews. It begins around the death of the president of the Republic of China, and chairman of the Kuomintang, Chiang Ching-kuo, in January 1988, and ends with my appointment as governor of Taiwan Province in March 1993. This period, just over five years in duration, saw the unfolding of democracy in Taiwan, in a nonviolent process commonly referred to as Taiwan's quiet revolution.

This period can also be thought of as Taiwan's Spring and Autumn era, although much briefer in duration than its historical antecedent (771–476 BCE). After some time of incubation, the economy had begun to take flight. This was followed by the democratization of our political system, which led to a vigorous political scene: within the Kuomintang (KMT), native-born Taiwanese suddenly became a force to be reckoned with, as the Mainstream and Nonmainstream factions wrestled with each other, and as the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), after finding its footing, energetically began to plot its development and to strengthen its factions. Together, these parties transformed the fabric of Taiwan's modern political history into a pattern of incredible complexity and detail.

During this time, I served as deputy secretary-general, then secretary-general, of the KMT. In this capacity, I participated in a good number of historical events or witnessed them close-up. I prompted Yu Kuo-hwa to speak up at an ad hoc session of the Standing Committee, resulting in Lee Teng-hui's succession to the presidency when it was vacated upon Chiang Ching-kuo's death. I "kicked in the goal" that clinched the decision to appoint Lee acting chair of the KMT at approximately the same time. I kicked in another goal at the 13th plenum of the KMT National Congress during the February 1990 political disputes. In that year, I spared no effort in coordinating between the ruling party and the opposition to organize and hold the National Affairs Conference. I helped Hau Pei-tsun organize his cabinet. At the time of the DPP's April 17 protest, I took part in

# Note to the Reader

## *The Principles and Conditions that Made Taiwan's Democratization Possible*

Over the years, I've met world leaders, academics from various places, members of the media, and friends and compatriots concerned with Taiwan's political and economic development; at international and regional forums I've also encountered figures from the Mainland. One thing they all shared was an intense interest in Taiwan's peaceful transition of power, from Chiang Ching-kuo to Lee Teng-hui, as well as Taiwan's democratization—its origins, course, and key factors. Whether from curiosity or admiration, all asked, "How did you do it?" Of course it is an exclamatory question. The response, at any rate, could not be packed into a simple sentence or two, although I have had to respond to similar questions countless times in the last twenty or thirty years. In this book, I will attempt to answer the question one more time, with a bit more order and analysis, with explanations based on my own testimony and impressions of events I experienced and matters in which I was personally involved.

Han Chinese first traveled across the Strait to Taiwan over four hundred years ago. The most significant event since that time, the First Sino-Japanese War, occurred after the Qing dynasty's decline in power. Defeated, China was forced to cede Taiwan to Japan; this marked the start of Japan's fifty-year rule of the island. Another significant event in Taiwan's history was the restoration of Taiwan to China (at that point, the Republic of China) at the conclusion of World War II. Shortly thereafter, in 1949, the Nationalist government lost the struggle against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and retreated to Taiwan, where it attempted to build a model province on the basis of the Three Principles of the People as preached by Dr. Sun Yat-sen. The third significant turn in Taiwan's history was coming under the successful rule and inspiration of Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo. Although Taiwan was confronting the military might of the CCP and threats of other sorts in the realm of diplomatic relations, it gradually managed to rise prominently in the international community and was honored as an exemplar among developing nations, thanks in large

ONE

# The Driving Force behind Chiang Ching-kuo's Decision to Democratize Taiwan

## Two Major Policies of Chiang Ching-kuo's: Fostering the Economy and Promoting Democracy

Ever since the Nationalist government's retreat from the Mainland to Taiwan and especially during the Cold War era, Taiwan had had a global reputation as the "vanguard of anticommunism" and the "bastion of national revival." At the time, people felt it a matter of faith, a sacred duty, to "take back the Mainland" and "save our suffering compatriots." This was not just lip service: the nation was actively preparing for mobilization, militarily and materially, and waiting for the call to arms.

Over time, things quietly changed. Taiwan ceased planning for a military counterattack, pragmatically preferring to establish itself as a model province dedicated to Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles, undertaking the Ten Major Construction Projects, and bringing about the economic miracle that would make Taiwan one of the Four Little Dragons of Asia. From this point on, Taiwan enjoyed economic affluence as more and more residents identified themselves as middle class and the government became increasingly democratic. (For a qualitative and quantitative discussion of this phenomenon, see the "Note to the Reader" at the beginning of this book.)

The change did not occur overnight, or with fanfare. It was a sound, gradual transformation that took place over sixteen years, beginning in 1972, when Chiang Ching-kuo became premier of the Executive Yuan, and ending in 1988, when he died while serving as president.

Before becoming premier, Chiang had made five visits to the United States, meeting with three seated presidents and holding discussions with more than one secretary of Defense. He fully understood that the United States's position in the world was based on strategic considerations, in particular the morass of the Vietnam War, anticipation of normalization of relations with the Mainland to keep the Soviet Union in check, and the

## A Goal Kicked In: Lee Teng-hui Becomes Acting Party Chair

### How Acting Chairman Lee Teng-hui Came to Be Appointed

Suffering from congestive heart failure, Chiang Ching-kuo left his official residence on January 13, 1988, at 3:50 PM. At 7:00 that evening, a provisional Central Standing Committee convened and passed a resolution supporting Lee Teng-hui's succession to the presidency in accordance with the prescriptions of the Constitution. At 8:00 or so that evening, again in accordance with the law, Lee publicly announced his succession.

Chiang's death also left the Kuomintang chair vacant. Whether Lee would succeed to that position had not been worked out. It was considered a separate issue, but it touched on the meaning of succession, and it was on this that the media and the public focused their attention. According to media reports concerning the first wave of public opinion, two views emerged between the 14th and the 20th of January: one view argued that the presidency and chair of the KMT should be held by a single person; the other argued that the chair could be settled later, but in the interim should be held by individual members of the Standing Committee, rotating weekly. Just at this time an increased number of KMT legislators, representatives, and Supervisory Committee members declared their support, individually and publicly, for the first option, unitary leadership.

On seeing that public opinion strongly supported unitary leadership, Lee Huan, then secretary-general of the party, summoned his deputy secretaries—Kao Ming-hui, Ma Ying-jeou, and myself—instructing us to ask members of the Standing Committee for their views on the issue. We were to work separately and to speak with the committee members privately and in confidence. We discovered that the majority favored having Lee Teng-hui serve as acting party chair. Then the media lifted the lid on the second wave of public opinion: between the 21st and the 27th of January, public opinion conspicuously moved in favor of supporting Lee Teng-hui to succeed as acting party chair.

### THREE

## The 13th National Congress of the Kuomintang: A Shift in the Lees' Relations

### **Breaking Fresh Ground at the Opening Ceremonies of the 13th National Congress**

The opening ceremony of the 13th National Congress on July 7, 1988, at Chung-cheng Gymnasium, Linkou, was unprecedented in spectacle and in scope (over ten thousand people attended). On July 8, the scene shifted to Chung-shan Hall on Yangmingshan, remaining there through July 13. But no matter where the congress met, or in what venue, it was a meeting like none that had preceded it.

The choice of such an elegant venue—suggested by me and approved by Lee Teng-hui and Lee Huan—reflected a new tendency in the KMT to look to the United States for political models. Chung-cheng Gymnasium had been completed only four years earlier. It was a completely modern gym, topped with the largest dome in Taiwan, and decked out with streamers, as if for an American presidential convention. The energy in the gym was almost palpable, the atmosphere charged by all the work that had gone into preparations and by the unity that infused the party. The periphery was lined with large television screens for live broadcast of the events, a first for the National Congress. Both environment and outfitting were intended to reflect the democracy that was developing in Taiwan and the new aura the Kuomintang had assumed.

To ensure safe evacuation in case of emergency, I consulted with Chiu Chuang-huan, then governor of Taiwan. We had a small section of road added that would relieve snarls in traffic, a feature that benefits visitors to events at the gymnasium to this day. This was my first experience adapting local conditions to current use, but it was nothing compared to what I would engage in as governor, in every part of the island.

Lee Huan seemed to regard me with favor in those days. I was experienced in spreading information, but inexperienced when it came to elections, something that Lee Huan knew inside and out. Lee would pepper

## Becoming Secretary-General of the Kuomintang

### My Years as Deputy Secretary-General

My responsibilities as deputy secretary-general included the distribution of information, but they didn't stop there. I also assisted Chiang Ching-kuo in launching economic reform Taiwan-style, and in encouraging a free flow of communication between the establishment and what we then called "dissidents." Wu Feng-shan, editor of *Independence Evening Post*, an organ of the Tangwai movement, noted: "Throughout his sixteen years as premier and president, Chiang Ching-kuo seemed to pay particular attention to the opinions of the *Evening Post*. So James Soong, when he headed both the Culture and Communications Department and the Government Information Office, would often come to the paper, under orders to tell me which proposals would be acted on immediately, or later, and which would never be acted on. I got to know Soong then and have kept up the acquaintance ever since" (Wu 2015: 202).

I headed Culture and Communications between 1984 and 1987, work that was not too different in nature from what I did at the Government Information Office. The reason Chiang was able to promote me to deputy secretary-general of the party while overseeing communications was because the scope of my responsibilities had expanded.

When the Tangwai movement first emerged, Chiang Ching-kuo directed me to connect with its members. After the assassination of Henry Liu and the Lee Ya-ping Incident, Chiang had me attend briefings by the heads of the intelligence agencies. The investigation into Henry Liu's death revealed that intelligence had approved the action, which had gone wrong. Intelligence was also behind the *International Daily News* incident involving Lee Ya-ping. It was then that Chiang Ching-kuo told me to start sitting in on the intelligence briefings, to help him gain a firm understanding of news involving the intelligence agencies. I continued to attend the briefings until Lee Teng-hui took office but never spoke of it publicly.

## FIVE

# The 1989 Year-End Elections and the Beginning of My Delicate Relationship with John Kuan

### The 1989 Year-End Elections: John Kuan Is Still in Charge

Lee Huan and John Kuan had done all the work necessary to line up nominees for the 1989 year-end elections, and John had already used up the funding available for electioneering expenses. My responsibilities wouldn't commence until the 1990 elections for county and city councils and magistrates' and mayoral seats.

In addition to legislators, the three elections at the end of 1989 would seat 21 mayors and magistrates, as well as 77 provincial and 94 city council members. Aside from redistricting, there are three factors worth noting: (1) these were the first elections held since the lifting of martial law and the death of Chiang Ching-kuo; (2) these were the first elections since the development of a multiparty government, and the first elections in which the KMT and the DPP would cross swords; and (3) the main issue on which everything hinged in these elections was Taiwan independence. In an interview with the news weekly *Yazhou zhoukan*, I pointed out that up to this point, all Kuomintang policy had been formulated with an eye to the country's best interests and the people's welfare, and that a party that similarly had the people's best interests at heart could prove a formidable opponent.<sup>14</sup>

The results of the December 3 election confirmed that the KMT had suffered a defeat that was utterly unprecedented: they lost 7 mayoral seats, while the opposition's victory in the legislature could be called a landslide. The KMT should have won 21 mayoral or magistrates' seats but in fact won only 14, or 66.67% of the total. They should have taken 130 of the newly opened seats in the Legislative Yuan, but in fact took only 94, or

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<sup>14</sup> *Yazhou zhoukan*, November 20, 1989. See also "宋楚瑜接受香港「亞洲週刊」訪問全文," *Central Daily News*, 1989.11.20, p. 2; and "我們要為民主奠定基礎／專訪宋楚瑜," *Yazhou zhoukan*, 1989.11.26, p. 10.

## A Second Goal Kicked In: The February Political Disputes, from Beginning to End

### The February Political Disputes: More than a Month of Uproar

Lee Teng-hui's first term as president would end May 19, 1990. Elections for the next president and vice president were scheduled for March 20 and 21. More than a month passed between the meeting of the KMT's 13th plenum on February 11 and the date the elections would draw to a close—a month of ceaseless clamor and uproar and, for me, private grief and misery.

There had been disagreement at the 13th Congress over whether to vote by rising or by ballot. This was followed by ceaseless agitation throughout the election process, which escalated to the point where the public, dissatisfied with the expanded authority of the National Congress, became pitted against the government.

On February 11, 1990, a plenary meeting of the provisional National Congress of the Kuomintang convened. The meeting's highlight was to be finalizing the party's nominations for president and vice president in the upcoming election.<sup>17</sup> If the result of that contentious meeting was to be a vote by secret ballot, it was not at all certain that Lee Teng-hui and

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<sup>17</sup> Earlier, on December 17, 1989, *Independence Evening Post* published an article titled "KMT Members Prefer Lee Teng-hui and James Soong as President and Vice President." The article reported on the results of a poll funded by the Taiwanese Public Opinion Foundation focusing on party members' preferences for the two top offices, employing close-ended questions. The poll revealed that 78.5% chose Lee Teng-hui's name from the list given them. Runners-up included Wego Chiang, at 3.9%; Lin Yang-kang, at 3.4%; Lee Huan, at 2.0%; and Yu Kuo-hwa, at 0.5%. Twelve names, including mine, appeared on the list of hypothetical vice presidents. I was preferred by 25.5% of those polled preferred. Runners-up included Wego Chiang, at 10.7%; Lee Huan, at 10.6%; Lin Yang-kang, at 9.5%; Wu Po-hisung, at 6.1%; Chiu Chuang-huan, at 2.2%; Fredrick Chien, at 2.1%; Hau Pei-tsun, at 1.4%; Chen Li-an, at 0.9%; Yu Kuo-hwa, at 0.8%; Lien Chan, at 0.7%; and Shih Chi-yang, at 0.4%. Consequently, for a while I was touted as the "optimal running mate" for Lee.

## The National Affairs Conference

### **The Kuomintang Opens Channels of Communication with Other Political Parties**

The DPP was formally established on September 28, 1986. Prior to this, the most important political organization outside the Kuomintang was the Tangwai Public Policy Study Association, which had been established on September 5, 1984, and was considered an illegal organization, for a time at least.<sup>18</sup> In 1986, the association spawned local chapters, which the Ministry of the Interior repeatedly declared unlawful. The first of these was the Taipei chapter, established on May 10. The “capital” chapter was established by Kang Ning-hsiang a week later. Others followed.

Lee Teng-hui, in a memoir devoted to his years working with Chiang Ching-kuo, notes that on February 7, 1986, Chiang instructed him to open channels of communication with Tangwai adherents over the Lunar New Year period, and to get a good number of people involved. Lee elaborates:

On May 7, 1986, Chiang Ching-kuo instructed the KMT’s Central Policy Committee, without disregarding the rule of law, to step up their efforts to communicate with figures in all sectors to promote mutual understanding. On May 10, we hosted a “communications dinner.” Among the attendees were four scholars who acted as intermediaries: Hu Fo, Yang Kuo-shu, Li Hung-hsi, and Chang Chung-tung. From the KMT we invited the Policy Committee’s three deputy secretaries, who were to liaise with Tangwai’s You Ching and Kang Ning-hsiang. The KMT hosted a second event to further communication between the two sides on May 24. After this, the meetings were discontinued, since they had given rise to wrangling within Tangwai. (Lee 2004: 157)

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<sup>18</sup> The Tangwai Public Policy Study Association was led by Fei Hsi-ping as chairman and Lin Cheng-chieh as secretary-general. When Fei withdrew from the association in March 1985, it elected a new supervisory team: You Ching became chair and Frank Hsieh, secretary-general.

## Hau Pei-tsun Forms a Cabinet

### **Over a Hundred Legislators Petition for the Reappointment of Lee Huan**

Lee Teng-hui began to consider reorganizing the Executive Yuan's cabinet shortly after becoming president. One person he had in mind to head the Executive Yuan—a candidate I strongly supported—was Fredrick Chien, minister of the Council for Economic Planning and Development.

On the basis of an interview with “someone in a position of authority,” the April 19, 1990, edition of *United Evening News* assessed Fredrick Chien as a man of great vitality who would be able to work closely with Lee Teng-hui. Reference to these two qualifying factors clearly suggested that Lee Huan had neither of them, would not prove compatible with Lee Teng-hui, and should retire from high office.

On April 26, at 9:00 in the evening, I met with Lee Teng-hui. We spoke until 1:00 in the morning. Lee candidly evaluated the performances of current ministers and outlined his intentions to reshuffle the cabinet. He was hinting that he wanted me to serve as a messenger to deal with the new premier in the formation of the new cabinet. Ever since the February political disputes of 1990, the Nonmainstream faction had been sparring with the rest of the party. With Lee Huan's appointment in the balance, the faction engaged in what was called the “battle to defend the premier.” On April 28, the speaker of the Legislative Yuan, Liang Su-yung, invited Lee Huan, Lin Yang-kang, and Hau Pei-tsun to dinner, a gesture intended to express his support for Lee Huan and to catch the notice of Lee Teng-hui. Lin Yang-kang himself had openly spoken of his support for Lee Huan several times.

The New KMT Alliance launched an initiative that built up steam, collecting over a hundred signatures from legislators of long standing, those newly elected, and those based overseas, all in support of Lee Huan's reappointment. Following is a transcription of the petition:

## Factional Fighting within the Kuomintang

### The Complicated Nature of Factions in the Legislative Yuan

Put briefly, the factions within the Kuomintang and the Legislative Yuan are numerous and varied. Any number of dissertations could be written on the subject. The most well-known is the CC Clique, which was quite active during the period of the War of Resistance against Japan. Some trace the name to the group's origins in the inner circles or "central club" (CC) of the KMT. Others say the initials "CC" refer to the clique's leaders, brothers Chen Li-fu and Chen Kuo-fu.

The clique was greatly diminished in size and influence after the retreat to Taiwan in 1949, but it did survive. Chen Li-fu, in his memoir, *Lessons Learned through Success and Failure*, recalls an exchange at Sun Moon Lake, at a time when the party leadership was trying to understand what had gone wrong and what they should do to remedy the situation. Chen suggested that Chiang Kai-shek look at KMT history: after every defeat, there was an immediate purge of the party in the expectation that it would renew revolutionary spirit. He continued: "We lost before we ever got the party organized and operating. Place the blame for it all on my brother and myself—we need not be part of the reform—then rally the forces and the party" (Chen 1994: 380). Chen notes that "the Generalissimo did not comment on the suggestion." In August 1950, Chen Li-fu voluntarily emigrated to the United States, where he managed a poultry farm outside Lakewood, New Jersey. Only after the death of Chen Cheng did the Generalissimo summon Chen Li-fu back to Taiwan to take up residence. His elder brother, Chen Kuo-fu, died in 1951 in Taipei after a long illness.

From the time the DPP was established, in 1986, factions within the Legislative Yuan began to grapple with both attacks and reintegration. An analysis prepared by the KMT in December 1988 pointed out that as the senior legislators were dying off, their factions were experiencing attrition,

## The DPP and the April 17 Protest

### **Direct Communication and Coordination with the Radicals of the DPP**

Radical social movements occur when a populace attains a certain level of consciousness, understanding, or enlightenment, or when a state's structure and systems break down. This clearly was the case in Taiwan during the period of democratization, and in particular during the period following the creation of the DPP. Whether fighting for popular support and acceptance, or attempting to broaden its power by petitioning for various propositions, the party took its protests to the streets, mobilizing members of the populace on a large scale. In those days, the special zone around Po-ai Road (where many central government offices are located) and the space in front of the Legislative Yuan building were the major battlegrounds.

In general, radicals assume confrontational, violent, or extreme manners in street protests to convey the worth of their causes. No matter how mild or moderate at the outset, after a certain point, things become heated. This affects the stability of the political system and can lead to tensions, even disorder, within society, interrupting the regular patterns of daily life. The English word "radical" comes from the Latin *radix*, "root." In its semantic origin, the word alludes to radicals' predilection for extreme measures, their advocacy of sweeping change of both government and society, and even individuals' knowledge, thinking, and sense of self-worth.

If in the contest for party advantage neither side is willing to yield, then little will be realized, since many reforms cannot be completed in a single step. Leaders of both parties engage in negotiations. Patiently, starting from opposite sides of an issue, they work toward a middle ground until they strike a balanced solution acceptable to all. Taiwan was fortunate in that when one radical social movement was performing onstage, long talks though the night were quietly progressing backstage, resolving conflicts that might otherwise have erupted into violence.

# Revision of Article 100 of the Criminal Code and the Taiwan Independence Provision

## **Article 100 of the Criminal Code and the Taiwan Independence Association**

The Taiwan Independence Association Incident occurred on the morning of May 9, 1991, on the campus of Tsing Hua University in Hsinchu. Some time earlier, a number of Tsing Hua students had come across the book *Taiwan's Four-Hundred Year History* and had traveled to Japan to meet its author, Su Beng. On their return, the students helped establish the Taiwan Independence Association and distributed literature concerning their views. The Investigation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice thought they'd broken a big case and had traced the mastermind to Tsing Hua. Without consulting university authorities, Investigation Bureau personnel entered campus and arrested a graduate student in the History Department, Liao Wei-cheng. In response and in solidarity, students at Tsing Hua and elsewhere staged a sit-in. On May 12, Chen Shih-meng and other faculty and students demonstrating at National Taiwan University were beaten and driven off by police.

All of this coincided with a four-day visit by former US president Gerald Ford and his wife, Betty Ford, which occupied the attention of government and party officials. I, for one, knew nothing of what had happened at Tsing Hua, nor did the media, at least when the situation was just beginning to unfold.

But after the demonstrations spread to other campuses and faculty became involved, a meeting of Kuomintang and government leaders was scheduled for May 15, immediately following the weekly meeting of the Central Standing Committee. Due to illness, Hau Pei-tsun, then premier of the Executive Yuan, did not attend. The party apparatus, including both myself and Yao Eng-Chi, then party whip at the Legislative Yuan, had certain views concerning the Executive Yuan's failure to consult us on the lifting martial law on Quemoy and Matsu, and the presence of the

## The DPP Joins the National Unification Council

### **The National Unification Council Considers the First Chair of the Straits Exchange Foundation**

Although just two months before Chiang Ching-kuo's death the government had announced that it would expand the scope of democratization in Taiwan and liberalize regulations regarding travel to the Mainland, the governments on either side of the Taiwan Strait remained hostile toward each other. Questions were brought up about how to adjust relations with the government on the other side of the Strait, and how to reduce mutual suspicion and domestic disagreement over policy in order to carry out Lee Teng-hui's wishes.

After the Kuomintang convened its 13th Congress in July 1988, it set up the Mainland Operations Steering Group, which was to meet four times annually. Originally, Lee Teng-hui wanted Shen Chang-huan to act as convener, as shown in the following notes sent me by Lee Huan, then secretary-general of the KMT: "The Central Standing Committee has decided to establish a Mainland Operations Steering Group. This afternoon the party chair decided to ask Shen Chang-huan to head it." And: "You are invited to join the group, along with Hsiao Chang-le [deputy director of the KMT's secretariat]. Deputy Premier Shih [Chi-yang] and the director of the National Security Bureau, Sung Hsin-lien, will also be part of the group." In fact, Shen Chang-huan never took up the appointment. Lee Teng-hui consequently instructed me to step in as convener, a position I kept until I was named party secretary-general.

The strategic planning and designs of the National Unification Council, the Mainland Operations Office, and the Straits Exchange Foundation arose in response to various issues. The National Unification Council was responsible for setting policy; the Mainland Operations Office was responsible for executing policy; and because officials from either side of the Strait were not permitted to meet officially, the original plan called

## The “One Institution, Two Phases” Approach to Constitutional Reform

### **Constitutional Reform by “One Institution, Two Phases” and a Sweep of Retirements in “Two Years and Three Stages”**

In December 1989, elections were to be held for legislators, provincial and city councilors, and county magistrates and city mayors. In the lead-up, the DPP made the election of second-term representatives to the National Assembly an important issue in its platform, pointing out that the KMT's earlier effort to induce the first-term representatives to retire voluntarily had lacked teeth and failed. In the midst of the supplementary elections, I felt some pressure to do something, and so publicly promised that I would persuade thirty-three of the senior representatives who were no longer physically able to attend meetings to retire by February 1, 1990. After the elections were over and accompanied by Lin Tung, then chair of the Central Policy Committee, I visited all thirty-three in their homes and spoke to them earnestly about the problem. It was a sad and thankless task, but I did succeed in getting representatives or their family members to agree to retirement.

The National Affairs Conference was held in the Grand Hotel between June 26 and July 4, 1990. Five of the topics discussed were reform of the National Assembly, local systems, a centralized system of government, Mainland policy and cross-Strait relations, and revision of the Constitution and the Temporary Provisions. The conference reached consensus on these issues: the Period of Mobilization for the Suppression of Communist Rebellion would be terminated; the Constitution would again become the foundation of the legal system, and the Temporary Provisions would be abolished; the Constitution would be revised following a “one institution, two phases” approach; and the revised Constitution would be named the Revised Constitution of the Republic of China.

After the conference, Lee Teng-hui created within the KMT a Constitutional Reform Team, which adopted the incremental “one institution, two phases” approach. “One institution” meant that one government body

## The 2nd Legislative Yuan Is Voted in and the Provincial Government Is Frozen Out

### **Wang Chien-shien and Jaw Shaw-kong Resign from Office to Stand for Office**

On July 1, 1992, the Ministry of Finance announced that it had established three National Taxation Bureaus, in northern, southern, and central Taiwan Province. The head of the ministry, Wang Chien-shien, went on to announce that the work of collecting and auditing national taxes would be removed from the provincial government (which had managed all national tax matters since the Nationalist government's move to Taiwan) and returned to the central government. Lien Chan's provincial government reacted vehemently. It was only after I traveled south to mediate that the provincial council agreed to go along with Wang's new policy. After this, actual implementation of the policy was unproblematic.

Following this effort, Wang Chien-shien tried to change the basis for the land value increment tax, from the government-assessed value to the actual transaction price. This drew an immediate and strong reaction from Tseng Chen-nung, a legislator from Chiayi County. In early August, the Standing Committee had Wang Chien-shien report on the Finance Ministry's new policies. Wang Jin-pyng, a member of the committee and the Legislative Yuan who was a native of Kaohsiung, spoke to the committee on the public reaction at the local level: people were calling it a landgrab foisted on native Taiwanese by the Mainlander minister of Finance; it was an unfair policy, giving fifty cents to the dollar; the policy had been neither communicated to the government beforehand nor explained to the public; and it would not go down easily with locals. It was a rare instance of representatives at the local and central levels locking arms and speaking out in agreement.

There was yet another aspect to the matter. While the landowners were predominantly Taiwan-born, they figured prominently in the KMT's constituency. An increase in their taxes would affect elections. Lee Teng-hui

## Party Diplomacy

Politics and international relations is a field in which I've received academic training, practical experience, and, from Chiang Ching-kuo, guidance and grooming. In my twenties, I studied in the United States and spent seven years researching East Asian political systems and foreign relations under the most respected scholars in the United States. In my thirties, I entered directly into the world of foreign relations, frequently attending meetings of various sorts in Taiwan and overseas, especially in the United States, Europe, Japan, and Singapore, and maintained confidential relationships with heads of state and other influential figures I met at these meetings. I am meticulous in my analyses: I leave no loose ends, I admit no discrepancies or non sequiturs. I still have the habit of reading as if preparing for a seminar; this has let me maintain a firm understanding of, not only Taiwan's domestic situation, but also global attitudes and world news. I've been fortunate in receiving training and experience in the realms of diplomacy and international relations that is available to few in Taiwan. This allowed me to assist Chiang Ching-kuo and Lee Teng-hui significantly when they were trying to forge relations with other countries. It's also helped me understand the strengths and weaknesses of Taiwan's position in the international order of things.

Aside from these political and government leaders, I met numerous others over the years—members of Congress and Parliament, academics and professionals, from around the globe—and I kept up the relationships through visits and correspondence. The Chinese classic *Book of Changes* says that heaven rewards the diligent, and in this case it's true: in return for the time and energy I invested, I gained the friendship and trust of these people from countries other than my own.

This is an undertaking that requires an extraordinary outpouring of patience. It was necessary first to understand the background of the guest from overseas. Next, I would collect relevant materials, and compile lists of conversation topics and reliable information certain to interest the

## In Conclusion: Political Integration through Centripetal or Centrifugal Force

### **The Three Concerns of Politics: Directing Policy, Distributing Resources, Employing Persons of Ability**

Among the various problems developing nations face, political institutionalization is frequently cited by academics focusing on political development or political change as an issue of the utmost importance. Harvard University's late Samuel P. Huntington maintained that developing nations should establish governments that are both effective and formidable, that will lend themselves to building political authority and establishing sound, lawful public order, arguing that only after a government establishes its authority can it bring its resources fully into play: only then will social crises subside, political turmoil be avoided, and political stability be realized. In my opinion, even more important than an effective, formidable government is leadership that understands how to control the course of policy and how to employ people; it must also understand resource allocation and benefit sharing. Only then will a polity be able to raise, and raise again, its competitive strength.

In *The Political System*, the late David Easton defined politics as "the authoritative allocation of values for a society." It follows that political science is the study of how authoritative values are allocated for the benefit of society. I like to explain politics as being concerned with three things: directing policy, distributing resources, and employing persons of ability.

If at the time in the late 1970s, Taiwan had realized that the military option of retaking the Mainland was not feasible, what should it have done instead? What more appropriate use should it have found for the resources that eventually were invested in military mobilization and preparedness? What people should it have employed, appropriately, who could have brought attention to Taiwan's unwavering convictions and worth?

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