Socio-Economic Changes and Modernization in an Age of Uncertainty: Taiwan in the 1990s and Its Future Challenge

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGES AND MODERNIZATION IN AN AGE OF UNCERTAINTY: TAIWAN IN THE 1990S AND ITS FUTURE CHALLENGE

Wen-hui TSAI

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I. THEORIES ON DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION

A. Three Competing Theories of Development and Modernization

Since the end of World War II, the development of Third World nations has attracted attention from social scientists throughout the world. Various theories have been proposed in an attempt to understand these developments. In general, theories of development and modernization can be categorized into three competing schools of thought: convergence theory, dependency theory and world system theory.

Convergence Theory

In the decades after World War II, the idea of modernization dominated thinking about economic and social change in the Third World, and it held out the expectation that the economic prosperity and democratic political institutions found in the developed industrial nations would spread throughout the world. This is the process of convergence. The theory, in essence, suggests that internal factors such as the values, culture and social structure of a given society will determine the course of modernization it will take and that all societies will tend to move toward a Western type of social structure. The theory also implies that the introduction of Western technology produces not only economic development but a variety of other structural and cultural changes. Thus, the more a society moves towards modernization, the more it will resemble the Western mode of life, economically as well as socio-politically.

Harvard sociologist Talcott Parsons’ view of the system of modern society reflected such a conviction of convergence. Parsons insisted that there was only one modern system of society: the Western system. All other types of society were merely variations of the Western system. This modern system of society is now under the leadership of the United States. According to Parsons, regardless of their societal differences, all societies will follow the footsteps of the United States and adopt American socio-political structures.¹

Dependency Theory

The chief feature of the dependency theory is its focus on the structure of the international system - particularly in its economic aspects - rather than the internal characteristics of particular countries. The theory argues that the sovereign states of developing societies have long been dependent on an evolving mixture of technology, financing, markets and basic impacts on the international economic system dominated by capitalist power. These less developed societies may be considered "hooked," for they cannot exist without their dependence.

Developed by Argentinean economist Raul Prebisch in the late 1940s, and advanced by Chicago economist Andre Gunder Frank in the 1960s, dependency theory argues that development in Latin American countries was stunted because their economies were too dependent upon primary commodity exports and manufactured imports from Europe and America. A. G. Frank summarized this line of arguments in the following way:

1. The "underdeveloped" countries are in fact highly developed adjuncts to the capitalist countries of Europe and North America.

2. The rich countries could not have accumulated their wealth without exploiting the poor ones, so under-development is simply the reverse side of development.

3. Modernization theory focuses on factors internal to poor nations and ignores their embeddedness in a world economy dominated by the rich ones.2

Dependency theorists thus believe that the convergence perspective simply can be dismissed as the ideological justification for continued capitalist domination of the Third World.3

The dependency theory was criticized as being biased and ideological, and for distorting evidence. Tony Smith felt the theory deprived local histories of their integrity and specificity, making local actors little more than the pawns of outside forces.4

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World System Theory

While dependency theory grew out of Latin American experience, world system theory has its historical roots in the Marxist-Leninist theory of colonialism and colonial expansion experienced by pre-modern Europeans. The most comprehensive and systematic formulation of the world system perspective was developed by an American sociologist named Immanuel Wallerstein and his students. Wallerstein viewed the contemporary world system as an international system of economic and political stratification in which nations compete for control.5

According to Wallerstein, there are three tiers of nations within the world system. First, there are core capitalist societies that control most means of production such as factories and technology. The United States, West Germany, and Japan are examples of core capitalist societies. They are relatively autonomous and stable, and have great economic and military power. They have a complete division of labor and produce a wide range of goods or services. Their economies are geared for manufacturing goods, not for providing raw materials.

Second, there are peripheral societies that include underdeveloped societies such as Uganda and Nicaragua. Peripheral societies own little or no means of production, are dependent on other nations, tend to be politically unstable and are weak militarily. They have few highly skilled workers and are more likely to specialize in providing raw materials.

Third, there are semiperipheral societies that stand between the core capitalist societies and peripheral societies. Examples of this type of society include South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. They are generally moving toward a diversified industrial economy and provide cheap skilled labor for core society industries. Although development in these semiperipheral societies has been relatively successful, they are nevertheless still dependent upon investment and trade from core societies.

The world system, then, is a complex interdependency plagued by the cruel logic that every society builds its fortune upon others' misfortune. Core capitalist societies need cheap raw materials from the two other types of societies to maintain profit margin, while at

the same time semi-peripheral and peripheral societies depend on
the purchasing power and markets of core capitalist societies. Through such interdependency, every society contributes to the exist-
ence and operation of the world system.

In comparing these three competing theories, the strength of
convergence theory lies in its emphasis on those internal variables,
such as institutional arrangements, cultural values and demographic
characteristics, that have contributed to the modernization of a so-
ciety. In contrast, both dependency theory and world system theory
place great weight on the external variables and the interconnec-
tions between developed and underdeveloped societies.6

To a large degree, the seemingly contradictory perspectives
represented by these three competing theories reflect the complex-
ity of the process of modernization. Not only do differences exist
within industrialization, economic growth and modernization, but
also no society develops in a vacuum without international inter-
ference. Although each theory has its own merit, a synthetic view
probably would provide us with a better understanding of the com-
plex process of modernization.

B. The Taiwan Experience and a Theoretical Synthesis

Sociologists and other specialists on modernization in Taiwan
seem to be heavily in favor of the world system theory in their in-
terpretation of Taiwan's past path of modernization, viewing Tai-
wan as a victim of manipulation and exploitation on the part of the
West and Japan. Although the world system theory has some merit
in the study of Taiwan's modernization process, it fails to take into
account the complexity of modernization involving both the inter-
nal and the external transformation of society in Taiwan. From an
analytical point of view, stages of national development in Third
World societies like Taiwan, industrialization, economic growth and
modernization must be differentiated as three different and interre-
lated stages, each with its own salient features.

Industrialization in the strict sense entails the extensive use of
inanimate sources of power in the production of economic goods
and services. But, in a broader sense, industrialization is often used
to describe the process of radical change in methods of production
and economic and social organizations, and the consequent rise of

the factory system. Thus, industrialization is often measured by changes in productive technology, in labor organization, in occupational structures and in economic consumption.

Economic growth may be defined in terms of the total physical output of the economy. It refers to increases in the economy's real gross national product or real national income. It is also often linked to increases in real per-capita output. Thus, a growing economy, by definition, enjoys an incremental increase in its annual production output and income.

Sociologically speaking, industrialization and economic growth are the two special forms of social change that focus on transformations related to production and consumption in economic activities in society. Modernization, on the other hand, is a process which involves transformation of all systems by which people organize society, i.e., the psychological, social, economic, intellectual, religious and political systems.

Studies of development in non-Western societies in general, and in East Asian societies in particular, clearly point out that the above differences among industrialization, economic growth and modernization are not merely differences in the scope and quality of change, but represent three different stages of development in these societies. Figure 1 illustrates such a conceptualization.

In this model, three major change agents are identified as being responsible for moving Taiwan from underdevelopment to modernization: family, state and the middle class. The shift of family capital from land ownership to industrial development in the 1950s and 1960s provided the initial push necessary for Taiwan's early stage of industrialization. The state functioned in the 1970s as an efficient coordination mediator and policymaker in expanding Taiwan's economy from agricultural concentration to export orientation; it created a favorable environment conducive to sustained economic growth. The members of the middle class who had been active participants in Taiwan's economic growth during the 1970s became the chief advocates in the mid 1980s for demanding political reform and improvements in the quality of life, in order to move Taiwan into a new stage of modernization. It was thus clear that industrialization was a pre-condition in Taiwan for the emergence of economic growth, which then led to socio-political modernization.

In other words, without an extensive change in the system of production and consumption in a society's economy, sustaining economic growth will not occur; without a sustaining economic growth
Figure 1. Interlocking Relationships Between Macro and Micro Level Change in Taiwan: A Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Change</th>
<th>Stages of Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macro-Structure</td>
<td>Industrialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e.g., increasing use of nonanimated resources, the emergence of factory institutions increasing industrial labor force, and urbanization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-Interaction</td>
<td>Economic Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e.g., increases in employment opportunity and wage earning; merit-based policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agents of Change</td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Strategies</td>
<td>Land reform, shifting capitals on land holding to industry; the emergence and institutionalization of family enterprises.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To pave the way for other extensive changes in the non-economic sectors of the society, modernization will not be completed. A society is modernizing if it can look beyond economic-and-production-related changes to changes in political, social and cultural systems. It would be naive, however, to conceptualize modernization as a feature intrinsic to autonomous societies. Modernization in any society must be seen as part of an international system. This is particularly true of the modernization efforts of the Third World nations, for modernization after all is a process of coming from without. A society’s position in the world order undoubtedly will
affect each step of its modernization. International environment must be taken into account if a society is to be industrialized, enjoy economic growth and move into socio-political modernization.

Chronologically, Taiwan began to enter the industrialization stage in the 1960s, advanced to the economic growth stage in the mid-1970s, and started its push toward full-scale modernization in the mid-1980s. Although Taiwan was under the constant threat of the Chinese Communists during its push toward modernization, today without any doubt, Taiwan is a modernized nation-state.

The focus of this essay is Taiwan in the 1990s, the third developmental stage in the above-mentioned theoretical scheme. It was a time of tremendous change in every phase of Taiwanese society. During the 1990s, we witnessed Taiwan’s economy being upgraded from a labor intensive industry to information technology; the emergency of a non-KMT national power leadership; and, a widespread social change that included extensive social welfare programs. On the positive side, these rapid changes improved the quality of life for people in Taiwan. On the negative side, however, they created a tremendous fear of confusion and uncertainty. The constant threat from the People’s Republic of China on the other side of the Taiwan Strait has further complicated the situation.

As presented in our theoretical model, economic development, political democratization and social change are all interconnected. Changes in one sphere will result in changes in the other two. This essay will detail the changes that have occurred in Taiwan in the 1990s in its push toward full modernization. We will also discuss the potential problems Taiwan is facing as a separate political entity away from the PRC and as a member of the international community.

II. TAIWAN IN THE 1990S AND BEYOND: ECONOMIC CHANGE

A. Economic Performance

Taiwan’s economic development is well documented in the literature of development and modernization in the Third World. Ever since Taiwan’s economic planners shifted the country’s economic developmental strategy from an agriculture economy to an export-oriented economy in the 1950s after the Nationalist government had moved to Taiwan, its economic performance has been extremely impressive; a Taiwan economic miracle was declared, characterized by a steady growth in gross national product, an in-
crease in per capita income and a large amount of foreign exchange holdings.  

During the decade of the 1990s, economic development continued its pattern of steady growth. The growth was slower than the earlier decades of the 1970s and 1980s, due to international trade competition launched by the People’s Republic of China and the 1997 outbreak of the Asian financial crisis.

As one can see from the Table 1, Taiwan’s economic growth rate was as high as 7.1% in 1994 and 6.68% in 1997. It suffered a slowdown in 1998 immediately after the Asian financial crisis started, but it has bounced back nicely with the estimated growth of 6.57% in 2000. The per capita GNP also shows similar fluctuations, but with overall growth. The GNP per capita increased from U.S.$11,802 in 1994 to U.S.$14,505 in 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Economic Growth Rate (%)</th>
<th>GDP (Million NT$)</th>
<th>Per Capita GNP (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1,773,931</td>
<td>2,669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2,855,180</td>
<td>3,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4,810,705</td>
<td>8,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5,918,376</td>
<td>10,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7,017,933</td>
<td>12,686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>8,328,780</td>
<td>13,592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>9,289,929</td>
<td>13,235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Social Indicators of the Republic of China, 1999, Table 7, p. 12)

One very important indicator of Taiwan’s economic health has been its international trade activity. China External Trade Development Council, a cabinet level office, is the principal organization in Taiwan designed to facilitate closer cooperation between government and industry as well as between Taiwan and its trading partners. The Council maintains 38 branch office, design centers and trade centers throughout the world. The Council was very instrumental in promoting Taiwan’s international trade activities.

From the 1960s to the 1990s, trade surplus has enabled Taiwan to amass a huge amount of foreign exchange reserves, among the

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largest in the world. In 1990, Taiwan’s import volume was U.S.$54.72 billion and its export volume was U.S.$67.21 billion, a surplus of U.S.$12.49 billion. With the exception of 1996, Taiwan’s trade surplus continued to decline as a result of pressure from U.S. and other trade partners to increase Taiwan’s imports. Table 2 gives a detailed account of Taiwan’s international trade volume and its surplus.

Table 2. Taiwan’s International Trade Volumes
(Unit: US$ billion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Exports</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>67.21</td>
<td>54.72</td>
<td>12.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>81.47</td>
<td>72.01</td>
<td>9.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>93.05</td>
<td>85.35</td>
<td>7.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>115.96</td>
<td>101.28</td>
<td>14.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>110.58</td>
<td>104.67</td>
<td>5.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>121.59</td>
<td>110.69</td>
<td>10.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Cross-Strait Economic Statistics Monthly, February 2000, Table 35, p. 49)

The employment structure in Taiwan in the 1990s showed a steady growth in the service sector, and declines in both the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. In 1999, 54.5% of laborers were employed in service sector, 37.2% in the manufacturing sector and 8.3% in agriculture, forestry and fishing.

One troubling sign in the 1990s was an increase in unemployment. Ever since 1993, both the number of unemployed persons and the unemployment rate has increased. An estimated 128,000 persons were unemployed with an unemployment rate of 1.46 in 1993. But in 2000, the number of unemployed persons reached 300,000 and the unemployment rate 3.06%, the highest it has been since the early 1970s.

Another troubling spot in Taiwan’s economy in the 1990s was the tumbling of its stock market. Affected by a global stock market change, Taiwan’s stock market showed violent fluctuations throughout the 1990s. According to available data prepared by the government’s accounting and statistics department, Taiwan’s stock market experienced its highest gain in 1997, with a daily turnover of NT$130.2 billion, but it fell to NT$109.3 in 1998. By the end of 2000, its daily turnover was only NT$49.3 billion, a level similar to that of 1996. The unstable stock market has continued during the first months of 2001. With the collapse of high tech stocks worldwide, Taiwan’s stock market will continue to experience a wild ride,
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with potential political and national security consequences. Already, blame has been placed on the one-year old administration of President CHEN Shui-bian, as reflected in his current low job approval rating.

B. Cross-Strait Trade between Taiwan and China

The most troubling sign of Taiwan’s economy that has a very far-reaching security implication is its growing dependency on trade with the People’s Republic of China. Ever since Taiwan opened its door for indirect trade with China in 1991, the volume of trade between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait has grown substantially.\(^8\) This is particularly true in the 1990s.

According to the Hong Kong Custom Statistics, the value of Taiwan’s trade with China via Hong Kong totaled US$4,043.6 million in 1990 and reached its peak in 1995 with a total of US$11,457 million. In 1999, Taiwan’s trade with China via Hong Kong was US$9,803 million.\(^9\) More alarming is that trend the growth of imports from China and the decline of export to China since 1995 and as a result, Taiwan’s transit trade balance with China has been severely affected. Table 3 lists the trade volume between China and Taiwan since 1990.

The importance of Cross-Strait trade was evident that Taiwan’s export to China was estimated to be 17.52% of Taiwan’s total export in 1999, in comparison with a mere 1.70% in 1981 and 3.32% in 1990.\(^{10}\)

Although the government cautioned Taiwan’s businessmen to be patient and to maintain their base in Taiwan, the volume of Taiwan’s investment has steadily increased. In 1991, Taiwan’s indirect investment in China was only US$844 million, but it reached US$2,599 million in 1999. From 1987 to 1999, total Taiwan indirect investment totaled US$23,864 million. During that period, more than 66 percent of Taiwan’s investment was to Guangdong and Jiangsu provinces.

Fujian province, from where the great majority of Taiwanese ancestors had migrated, generated the third largest Taiwanese in-

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10. Id., p. 24.
Table 3. Transit Trade between Taiwan and China via Hong Kong
(Unit: US$ million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Transit Trade</th>
<th>Taiwan Exports to China</th>
<th>Taiwan Imports from China</th>
<th>Trade Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4,043.7</td>
<td>3,278.3</td>
<td>765.4</td>
<td>2,512.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>5,793.1</td>
<td>4,667.2</td>
<td>1,126.0</td>
<td>3,541.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>7,406.9</td>
<td>6,287.9</td>
<td>1,119.0</td>
<td>5,168.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>8,689.0</td>
<td>7,585.4</td>
<td>1,103.6</td>
<td>6,481.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>9,809.5</td>
<td>8,517.2</td>
<td>1,292.3</td>
<td>7,224.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>11,457.0</td>
<td>9,882.8</td>
<td>1,574.2</td>
<td>8,308.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>11,300.0</td>
<td>9,717.6</td>
<td>1,582.4</td>
<td>8,135.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>11,458.9</td>
<td>9,715.1</td>
<td>1,743.8</td>
<td>7,971.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>10,019.0</td>
<td>8,364.1</td>
<td>1,654.9</td>
<td>6,709.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>9,803.1</td>
<td>8,174.9</td>
<td>1,628.1</td>
<td>6,546.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Cross-Strait Economic Statistics Monthly, February 2000, Table 2, p. 16)

Investment with 10.8 percent. During that same period, 22.98 percent of Taiwan's investment in China went to electronic and electric appliances, followed by basic metals and metal products (8.55%), and food and beverage processing (8.53%). The total individual remittance to China, which included household remittances, donations and other transfer payments to individuals between 1990 and 1999, was US$2,804,697,442.79 and the total business remittance to China that during the same period was US$1,738,526,454.12 According to statistics compiled by the China Statistical Bureau, Taiwan's direct investment in China was ranked only behind Hong Kong and the United States in 1999.13

Economists in Taiwan have warned the government that Taiwan's increasing dependency on trade with China will make Taiwan's economy vulnerable to China's manipulation and control. They also have worried about the growing number of industries in Taiwan moving their production to China because of high labor costs in Taiwan.14 Such a shifting of production from Taiwan to

11. Id., Tables 6 and 7, pp. 22-23.
China will make China more competitive against Taiwan in the international trade market on the one hand, while creating fewer employment opportunities for workers in Taiwan on the other. The rising unemployment rates in the late 1990s and early 2000 were a clear indication of an economic slowdown in Taiwan.

Today, Taiwan’s economy is at a crossroad. The rise of labor costs and the need to open the country’s export market have pushed many Taiwanese to trade with China and/or move their production operation to China. The impending entry of both Taiwan and China into the WTO will be likely lead to a further substantial increase in trade between Taiwan and China. The pressure for more direct trade with China is building, forcing the government of the Republic of China on Taiwan to take further risky steps to allow direct links.

III. TAIWAN IN THE 1990S AND BEYOND:
SOCIAL CHANGE

Although Taiwan’s economy has fluctuated since the 1990s, its developmental path is still well entrenched. Changes on the societal level, however, were much broader. As indicated in the theoretical model we developed earlier, by the 1980s Taiwan had entered the third stage of development in its push toward modernization. The main focus of activities in this stage is centered around socio-political changes. Taiwan abolished Martial Law in 1987, and since then we have witnessed the several significant changes in Taiwan’s social and political spheres.

A. Improvement in the Quality of Life

Modernization represents a better way of life for people everywhere. The Nationalist government in Taiwan is built upon the Three Principles of the People (San Min Chu I) advocated by its founder, Dr. SUN Yat-sen, in the beginning of the 20th century. Min Tsu Chu I calls for nationalism in searching for China’s national identity. Min Ch’uan Chu I means building a democratic form of government, and Min Sheng Chu I concerns the people’s quality of life. According to Dr. Sun, if China was to evolve into a modern nation, people should have the four necessities of life: food, clothes, shelter and travel. Once national identity was created and democracy was realized, China would then shift her focus to social modernization, i.e., the improvement in quality of life. Dr. Sun believed four types of citizens need not work: young people, the aged, handicapped and pregnant women. He said young people in the
community should have the privilege of receiving education; the aged, the handicapped and pregnant women all should have the right to be cared for by the community. Thus, schools should be built, hospital facilities ought to be improved and nursing homes for the elderly should be provided.\footnote{15}

Throughout the years between the 1950s and the 1980s, people on the island of Taiwan have not only successfully met Dr. Sun’s call for providing its citizens with such basic necessities as food, clothes, shelter and travel, but also have begun to improve their quality of life in a way that is far more extensive than Dr. Sun’s vision. Economically, Taiwan has shown very impressive growth in both personal and national wealth; politically, Taiwan has pushed successfully in building a democratic style of government that responds to the call of its people.

Several major indicators of the quality of life are presented in the following table, which illustrates these improvements.


dataframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birth Rate (0/000)</th>
<th>Death Rate (0/000)</th>
<th>Average Life Expectancy (years)</th>
<th>Illiterate Rate (Age 15 and over) (%)</th>
<th>Number of Health Personnel (per 10,000 population)</th>
<th>Crime Rate (per 10,000 population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Improvement in the quality of life in Taiwan is evident from the above table. We can see the decline in the birth rate and the prolonging of the average life expectancy in both men and women. The illiteracy rate also shows a decrease, from 11.6 % to 5.1% be-

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\footnote{15. For a detailed discussion of Dr. Sun's three principles, please refer to Sung-Yuo TSENG, \textit{Dr. SUN Yat-sen's Thought and Modern Social Thought}, Taipei: San Min Publishing Co., 1980. For discussion on Dr. Sun's social welfare programs, please refer to Wen-hui TSAI, \textit{In Making China Modernized: Comparative Modernization Between Mainland China and Taiwan}, Baltimore: University of Maryland School of Law, 1996, pp. 59-64.}
tween 1981 and 1998. People’s health care showed improvement, as the number of health personnel (physicians, dentists, pharmacists and nurses) increased from 10.9 per 10,000 persons to 65.7 per 10,000 persons. Finally, with improved personal income and a more relaxed political atmosphere, the number of people in Taiwan who traveled to foreign countries for tourism also showed tremendous growth, from slightly more than half a million to nearly 6 million.

Improvement in the quality of life can also be seen in the wider availability of various types of household appliances, and the ownership of automobiles and computers. For instance, in 1975, only 16.42% of households in Taiwan owned color television sets; in 1997 nearly every household in Taiwan had a color television set. The 1997 statistics also showed that 99.19% of households owned refrigerators, 97.54% households were equipped with telephones, 73.83% had heating and air conditioners, 93.99% had washing machines, and 57.07% owned some type of video cassette machine. Only 1.27% owned automobiles in 1975, but the figure in 1997 reached 53.79% and computer ownership increased from 1.46% of households in 1983 to 28.39% in 1997.\(^{16}\)

In summary, people in Taiwan have enjoyed better education, better health, and travel to foreign countries for tourism. As the number of children born to each married woman declined, smaller family size is now the rule, not the exception. If a country’s success in modernization is measured by improvement in the quality of life, Taiwan definitely is now a highly modernized society even with an increasing crime rate.

### B. Collective Movements and Demand for Social Reform

James Davis in his study of collective movements and revolution suggests that, as a nation’s economy improves, there will be a rising expectation on the part of the government from the general public to demand institutionalized societal reform in providing opportunity for broader social participation and social welfare coverage. The collective consciousness over non-economic growth emerged in the 1980s in Taiwan, and led to a demand for governmental action. Street demonstrations and public unrest covering non-economic issues became a daily occurrence in major cities in Taiwan. People began to take economic growth as a given and pushed for reforms in non-economic sectors.

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According to a report by MA Chi-hwa, a total of 1,462 cases of public protest demonstrations were staged during the period between July 1986 and June 1987. During that period of time, four such incidents occurred in Taiwan on an average day. The *Tzu-li Morning News* reported that throughout 1987, sixty-nine different groups of people had gathered in front of the Legislative Yuan in order to send their petitions in person to express their respective grievances. Public unrest was clearly on the rise. During the first four months of 1988, 729 public demonstrations were staged.

Other government statistics showed there were 566 incidents of public demonstration in 1986 with a total of 223,798 participants, while in 1990 there were 8,727 such incidents with more than one million participants. If we take 1986 figures as the base 100, the projected incident index in 1990 would have been 1,542 and the participant index 467. The dramatic increase is clearly evident.

Developmental sociologists in general agree that although modernization would bring a better way of life, it also is a cause for destruction and discontent. The emphasis on such factors as rational action rather than traditional ways of doing things, the abandonment of ascriptive factors in favor of achievement factors, and the rise of universalism to replace particularism and high technological development all upset the traditional patterns of doing things and cause structural imbalance and psychological discontent among people in the competition among sectors within a society. James C. Davis believed that major episodes of collective violence generally follow on the heels of economic prosperity. With the improving economy, a gap starts to occur between levels of peoples' fulfilled needs and their desired ones, so that they come to feel discontent about their achievements relative to their own expectations. Frustration quickly follows, and from this grows social unrest and collective demonstration.

In general, five preconditions are conducive to the emergence of collective action and social movement: (1) a high level of social discontent and inequality. People are dissatisfied with their current form of life and wish for a new scheme of living; (2) efforts by people to remove the source of their discontent or to improve their

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situation are blocked by barriers in the social structure; (3) there is contact or interaction among members of a discontented group; (4) people feel that collective action will relieve the discontent; and, (5) a system of ideology is developed that supports and justifies proposed actions.\footnote{Joe HSU, "New Administration Unveils Program to Promote the Well-being of Women," \textit{Taipei Journal}, Vol. XVII, No.35 (September 8, 2000), p. 2.}

The frequent collective movements in Taiwan since the 1980s clearly demonstrate that economic prosperity alone will not prevent and/or eliminate the emergence and existence of the above preconditions: structural deficits are the cause. A number of past structural factors also seem to have contributed to the creation of the above-mentioned preconditions that are conducive to the emergence of collective movements in Taiwan since the 1980s.

First, the uneven development between the economic and non-economic spheres of Taiwanese society has created a normative lag that shows incompatibility and conflicts between modern rational economic behavioral patterns and traditional systems of values and beliefs. There is a high degree of uncertainty as a result of rapid economic growth and sudden wealth. People are caught in an anomie situation where existing ways of doing things do not work anymore. Frustration and dissatisfaction start to spread to all corners of the society.

Second, the inability of political institutions to satisfy people's demands for greater participation in the government's decision-making process has also produced public unrest and demonstrations. While the Kuomintang was dominated by an aging and traditional-oriented elite group, there was still strong resistance against mass participation in politics in the 1980s. The creation of the opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party, and the subsequent demonstrations and rallies staged by its supporters clearly demonstrate the need for immediate reform to open new channels for wider political participation by non-Kuomintang members. Although the ruling Kuomintang Party has begun a process of power decentralization, it is too little and too slow. People continued to voice their demands by demonstrating in public in the 1990s.

Third, the increasing differentiation of Taiwanese society has transformed Taiwan from a homogeneous society to a heterogeneous society, one in which diversity and competing values share built-in characteristics. Studies of the modernization process have shown that continuous structural differentiation is evident in all
modernization changes. In such a process of structural differentiation, an individual's family roles and occupational roles are separated, new categories and occupational groups emerge, women become less subordinated to their husbands than before, and the traditional ascriptive criteria of social status breaks down. Although differentiation in modernization is designed to create a more balanced and efficient system through newly differentiated units, it also poses new problems of integration and stability for the system involved, as the result of the loss of social control through such traditional integrative institutions as the family and kinship groups.

What happened in Taiwan during the 1980s came about as the result of a lack of effective coordination among newly differentiated units in the process of modernization. Competition exists not only between old and new institutions, but also among those newly differentiated units in society, and such competition often manifests itself in collective action. The high frequency of demonstrations and the diversification of the goals of social movements in Taiwan reflect a societal imbalance as well as an unequal distribution of resources in the later stage of Taiwan's social and economic development. Organized groups compete for scarce resources through public demonstrations.

In the 1980s, Taiwan was clearly in a transitional stage, recently having moved out of the traditional, agricultural society and entering an industrialized and modernized one. Public unrest and protest movements made society aware of existing and potential social problems, and thus forced the government to expand its social welfare programs to a wider population in Taiwan. Social welfare programs in the 1990s were quite extensive, including benefits for children, elderly, women and other minority groups in society.

C. The Installation of Social Welfare Programs

If we follow the three-stage theory of modernization developed in the beginning section of this essay, then the call for providing extensive social welfare would have likely emerged in the third stage after a society has successfully improved its economy. The evolution of social welfare programs in Taiwan can be divided into three major stages, each with its own distinguishing features.

The first stage, "Welfare Nonexistence," ran from 1949 to the mid-1970s, and was characterized by the state's overzealous planning for economic growth at all costs. There was very little social welfare legislation enacted by the government. Most assistance and
relief programs were targeted for a few exclusive groups, such as aid to military personnel and dependents and retirement benefits for military personnel, government employees and teachers. Social welfare programs for the general public were almost non-existent, for social welfare programs were seen as burdensome to economic growth. Taking care of the newly-migrated refugees from the mainland was the primary goal of social welfare programs in this stage.

The second stage might be called the stage of “Growing Pains” that ran from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. This stage showed the government’s interest in promoting extensive social welfare to all less fortunate, regardless of their ethnicity. As Taiwan became more and more isolated in the international arena with the withdrawal from the United Nations and the severing of diplomatic relations with the United States, the Nationalist government became to realize that it had to build stronger support from Taiwan’s residents to justify its political legitimacy. Expansion of social welfare programs was seen as a good political investment for its ruling party, the Kuomintang.

The third stage is a stage of “Maturation,” in which social welfare programs became the center of political attention. In response to popular demands, political candidates from local to national offices campaigned for more social welfare legislation and extensive social welfare coverage to young and old, to women and to disadvantaged ethnic groups.

The expansion of social welfare programs creates a demand for more resources from the private and public sectors of society. As part of the rising expectation we mentioned earlier, people expect government to take more responsibility for providing welfare coverage. Legislation alone does not help; it must be backed by an expanded budget to cover welfare expenses. Table 5 provides the

Table 5. Government Net Expenditure on Social Welfare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Amount</th>
<th>(100 Million NT$)</th>
<th>As % of Total Government Expenditure</th>
<th>As % of GNP</th>
<th>Per Capita Net Benefit for Social Welfare (NT$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1,178</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5,733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2,828</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>13,005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

growth of net expenditure on social welfare at various levels of government agencies in Taiwan between 1966 and 1998.

As can be seen in the above table, the total amount spent by the government on social welfare increased very impressively, from 1,100 million NT dollars in 1966 to 282,800 million NT dollars in 1998, an increase of nearly three hundred percent in 22 years. As a result, the share of social welfare expenditure within total government expenditure increased from 4.7% to 14.2% during the same period and accounted for 3.2% in GNP in 1998. It is clear that the increase in money spent on social welfare was not caused by inflation; it was real growth. Each person's share of the benefit from social welfare in 1998 stood at more than thirteen thousand NT dollars. Growth in personal income and extensive social welfare have clearly made Taiwan a better place to live.

The need for more extensive social welfare programs has gained more and more attention from the government. In July 1998, the government called a National Social Welfare Conference in Taipei to identify problems in social welfare service and to lay out new directions for social welfare planning in the 21st Century. The keynote speech was delivered by the President of the Republic of China, Dr. LEE Teng-hui, to express the government's commitment in providing assistance and welfare to the general public. At the closing ceremony, Prime Minister Vincent SHIEW announced that the Executive Yuan would develop a proposal to upgrade the central government's social welfare bureau to a cabinet level post under a new name, the Ministry of Social Welfare, to reflect the growing importance of social welfare in the nation.

IV. THE SOCIAL POLICY OF CHEN'S NEW ADMINISTRATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON SECURITY

The election of Mr. CHEN Shui-bian to the presidency is a historical breakthrough in Taiwan's push toward democracy. Table 6 lists the vote distribution in the Presidential election of 2000. But it also causes concern. Mr. Chen is known for calling for Taiwan's independence from the mainland. China is very suspicious of any move Mr. Chen makes. If Mr. Chen continues his strong stand on Taiwan's independence, he definitely will alienate members of the mainland ethnic group who came to Taiwan with the late CHIANG Kai-shek in 1949. The confrontation between the "mainlanders" and the Taiwanese will escalate. Taking a Taiwan indepen-
Table 6: Vote Distribution by Regions in 2000 Presidential Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical Regions</th>
<th>Number of Votes</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soong (Independent)</td>
<td>Lien (KMT)</td>
<td>Chen (DPP)</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Municipalities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taipei City</td>
<td>631,538</td>
<td>347,564</td>
<td>587,465</td>
<td>10,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaohsiung City</td>
<td>259,023</td>
<td>208,544</td>
<td>398,381</td>
<td>3,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan Providence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Northwest Region</td>
<td>1,115,864</td>
<td>587,377</td>
<td>974,352</td>
<td>16,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central Region</td>
<td>790,837</td>
<td>378,541</td>
<td>517,214</td>
<td>35,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Region</td>
<td>932,158</td>
<td>565,933</td>
<td>904,026</td>
<td>13,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central Region</td>
<td>243,851</td>
<td>210,256</td>
<td>412,351</td>
<td>4,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Southeast Region</td>
<td>652,376</td>
<td>612,736</td>
<td>1,147,738</td>
<td>12,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offshore Islands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penghu</td>
<td>17,723</td>
<td>10,418</td>
<td>16,487</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinmen</td>
<td>19,991</td>
<td>3,543</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machu</td>
<td>2,362</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,664,392</td>
<td>2,925,513</td>
<td>4,977,737</td>
<td>96,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Vote Share</td>
<td>36.84%</td>
<td>23.10%</td>
<td>39.30%</td>
<td>0.76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Dence stand, Mr. Chen is also very likely to irritate China and provoke China into taking military action against China.

Nevertheless, President Chen's success will be judged by his domestic policies rather than his way of dealing with China. Although China is forever a threat to Taiwan's security and the future of Mr. Chen's new administration, China would not likely launch any hostile military invasion against Taiwan if the people in Taiwan are satisfied with their government and if there is no serious internal disturbance in Taiwan. Successful domestic policies thus hold the key not only to the fate of Chen's administration but also to the security of Taiwan as independent from China. In the following sections we shall discuss the new administration's domestic policies and its juggling act in balancing interpower play between the United States and China as it relates to Taiwan's future security.

A. Domestic Policies in the New Administration

During the presidential campaign, Mr. Chen promised to make his government “a government for all people” and “rule by the clean and upright.” At the time of this writing, five months have passed since the inauguration of Mr. CHEN Shui-bian to the presidency. What has President Chen and his new administration done in fulfilling their campaign promises to restore law and order and to
extend the availability of social welfare to all citizens? In this section, we shall make a brief examination of several main domestic policies of the new administration. Many of these measures set forth by the administration stem from promises Mr. Chen made during the presidential election campaign.

In his presidential Inauguration speech, President Chen said he wanted to be a “president for all people.” He declared,

“The spirit of ‘a government for all people’ lies in the fact that ‘the government exists for the people.’ The people are the masters and shareholders of the state. The government should rule on the basis of majority public opinion. The interests of the people should reign supreme over those of any political party or individual.”20

Moving the nation to a welfare-state is the new president’s attempt to serve “all people.” There are two basic principles in social welfare programming, according to President Chen: the principles of “fairness and universality” and “priority to minority groups.” In the following, we shall give a brief introduction to the new administration’s efforts to create on welfare programs for women and the elderly and on crime control.

*Rising Women’s Status*

Although women have contributed greatly in Taiwan’s push toward industrialization and economic growth, women are a subordinate minority in Taiwanese society. Gender equality is a hot discussion topic at many public forums. The protection of women’s rights ranks high on President Chen’s list of priorities for improving the quality of life in Taiwan. During the presidential election campaign, he proposed a “new middle road” policy that would strengthen the woman’s point of view in government decision-making. He said his new administration would develop a more efficient daycare and education system for preschoolers and children in primary school. The government hopes that the programs will increase the labor participation rate of women by encouraging them to pursue careers after they get married and have children.

The most significant change in the issue of gender equality can be found in the appointment of several women to the new administration. President Chen chose a feminist movement leader, Ms.

Annette LU (LU Hsiu-lien), as his running mate in his presidential campaign. Ms. Lu studied law in both the National Taiwan University and Harvard University. Her political awareness runs the gamut from feminism to the democratic movement. For her involvement in the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979, she was given a 12-year jail sentence.

Ms. Lu also founded the Taiwanese Women’s Association in North America, the Association to Promote Taiwan’s Entry into the U.N., and the Taiwan International Alliance, and ran a publishing house devoted to feminist literature in Taiwan. When Ms. Lu was tapped as CHEN Shui-bian’s running mate December of 1999, she declared, “[t]he time has come when women will divide the political burden with their male counterparts after paying half the taxes for so many years.”21 When CHEN Shui-bian won the election, Ms. Lu became the first woman to hold the office of the Vice-President of the Republic of China on Taiwan, the highest office a woman has ever held in Taiwan’s political arena.

In the formation of his new administration, President Chen has also appointed nine women cabinet posts in the Executive Yuan. They were: CHANG Po-ya (Minister of the Interior), YEH Chu-lan (Minister of Transportation and Communication), CHEN Yu-chiou (Chairwoman of the Council for Cultural Affairs), CHEN Chu (Council of Labor Affairs Chairwoman), TSAI Ing-wen (Mainland Affairs Council Chairwoman), CHANG Fu-mei (Chairwoman of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission), LIN Fang-mei (Chairwoman of National Youth Commission), CHAO Yang-ching (Chairwoman of the Fair Trade Commission), and CHUNG Chin (Government Information Office Director-General).

Together with Vice President Lu, this is the largest-ever group of women occupying high office in the central government of Taiwan. As far as the history of political development in Taiwan is concerned, May 20, 2000 not only saw the peaceful transition of political power from the Kuomintang to the DPP, it also marked a very important step toward gender equality in politics. President Chen thus fulfilled his campaign promise of recruiting women into the new administration.22


22. For a detailed biographical account of these ten women leaders, please refer to the cover story, “Women at the Top...A VP and the Nine Ministers,” Sonorama, Vol. 25, No. 7 (July 2000), pp. 32-52.
The new household registration law will allow new born children to choose their surname from either the father’s or the mother’s side. Traditionally, children in Taiwan must take their father’s name as their surname. The new law has now made it possible for children to adopt the mother’s name as their surname. Moreover, a number of laws have been introduced to reduce sex crimes against women, such as rape, spousal abuse and child prostitution.23

Elderly Welfare

Taiwan’s elderly population has expanded quite significantly in both number and proportion compared to the total population. In 1946, the elderly population aged 65 and over numbered 155,243 persons. But in 1999 this number was 1,865,472, an increase of 1,710,229 in 54 years. As a consequence, the elderly population’s share in Taiwan’s population also has increased, from 2.55 percent to 8.44 percent during the same period. The United Nations defines an aging society as one having 7.0 percent of its population 65 years old or over. Taiwan has clearly achieved that distinguished status, and its aged population is expected to reach 20.5 percent by the year 2036. The 1999 index of aging was 39.40 percent, compared to 6.16 percent in 1966, and the dependency ratio between the economically productive age group (15-64) and the dependent age group (0-14 and 65+) is expected to be 5 to 1 by the year 2036.24

As a consequence, the need to provide relief to the elderly in Taiwan has become necessary and urgent. The newly elected President has proposed a “three-three-three special agenda” that calls for a monthly stipend of NT$3,000 for each elderly citizen, free medical care for children under age three, and a low mortgage interest rate of three percent for first time home buyers. The most far-reaching welfare program for the elderly, however, will come when the new administration enacts its newly passed bill to establish an Elderly Pension system that will guarantee financial security for the elderly. A National Annuity Program was initially scheduled to be effective by the end of 2000, but it is now being delayed because of budgetary constraints Taiwan has experienced after last year’s earthquake.

One major emergent goal in these welfare programs is to assist the elderly in managing their time actively without fear of financial insecurity. In the view of the government, the family still bears most of the responsibility for taking care of the elderly. The public, by involving governmental agencies and private charity organizations, will function as a supplement in assisting the family to provide complete care for the elderly in Taiwan.

"Rule by the Clean and Upright:" Political Corruption and Crime Control Measures

One of the major problems in Taiwan's politics under Kuomintang rule was widespread political corruption that linked government officials to organized crime. President Chen believes that Taiwan's law and order cannot be restored if government officials continue to be associated with organized crime. He made a pledge in his campaign that he would run a clean government. He expressed a desire to establish a government that is clean, efficient, far-sighted, dynamic, highly flexible and responsive. In his Inauguration speech, the new president declared,

"Rule by the clean and upright" has its topmost priority the elimination of "black gold" — the involvement of organized crime and moneyed interests in politics — and the eradication of vote-buying. For a long time, the Taiwanese people have been deeply repelled by moneyed politics and the interference of organized crime. . .Today, I am willing to promise hereby that the new government will eliminate vote-buying and crack down on "black gold" politics, so that Taiwan can rise above such sinking forces and ensure rule by the clean and upright. We must give the people a clean political environment.25

Immediately after President Chen took office, he launched several investigations on fraud in Taiwan's military weapon programs committed by military personnel, the "black gold" connection between former KMT legislators and organized crime figures, and political corruption schemes committed by government officials in public construction projects. In carrying out these investigations, President Chen is sending his message that the new administration

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will not tolerate any corruption and that all offenders will be punished regardless of their political connection and social status.26

B. Problems Facing the New Administration

In his inauguration speech, President Chen proclaimed that "the government should not necessarily play the role of a 'leader' or 'manager.' It should be the 'supporter' and 'service provider.'"27 As the new administration is shifting toward a policy of strengthening the people's quality of life, spending on social welfare programs takes up the biggest share in the proposed budget for fiscal year 2001. The US$9.7 billion appropriated for social welfare represents 18.8 percent of the total government expenditure projected for 2001. Proposed social-welfare spending is 20 percent higher than the amount budgeted for 2000.

However, budgetary restraints may create difficulties in the implementation of social welfare programs. CHEN Po-chih, chairman of the Council for Economic Planning and Development, says a tax hike will be unavoidable if the government decides to put the new welfare program into force. One economist warns, "[t]he existing national debt has almost reached the limit, and carrying out the proposed welfare schemes will only worsen the government's financial burden."28

Others worry about the lack of a long-term welfare policy. They call for the authorities to draw up a priority list on social welfare goals so that each area can be addressed as the budget permits. CHIU Hai-yuan, a member of the Taipei Association (known as Cheng She) that functions as a watchdog group, has openly expressed dissatisfaction with the new government because of its ineffectiveness and the slow pace of its reforms. In a news conference at the release of a report the Taipei Association on the first one hundred days of the new administration, Chiu said, "Chen was

26. As the anti-corruption campaign seems to imply the involvement of high ranking KMT officials, one conspiracy theory has emerged to suggest that the current attempt by the KMT party machine and other opposition party leaders to recall the president is intended to divert the nation's attention away from focusing on the corruption investigation. See <http://top.ms/2097>.
27. Id., p. 3.
elected for his reform ideals, and we feel obligated to push him to realize his campaign promises."^{29}

The biggest challenge facing Chen's new administration is a lack of support on the part of the legislature in the Legislative Yuan. Chen's DPP is a minority party in the Legislative Yuan, where the KMT still holds a majority of seats. Currently, the KMT retains its majority with 123 seats out of a total of 225, while the DPP has only 70 seats. Early indications show that members of the KMT legislators will block most of Chen's proposals in an attempt to make Chen look weak and ineffective. One news magazine reports, "the legislature changed the Cabinet's version of a bill to shorten the working week and did so in such a way as to pose a threat to local industry. It then revamped the executive's proposals for a senior citizens' welfare provision, making it prohibitively expensive in the process."^{30} The re-election of members of the Legislative Yuan is scheduled to be held in November 2001. Until then, the new administration will need strong support from the general public that would put pressure on the KMT-led legislature to cooperate with the new administration. "To establish a partnership relations with the people" as proclaimed in President Chen's Inauguration speech will be the key to his success in the management of the new administration.

One gets the impression that the DPP platform reads like that of a government backed by a majority party with an overwhelming mandate for change. Unfortunately, the DPP is still a minority party in the legislature, which does not have enough votes to pass such an ambitious platform. It would be interesting to see whether the Chen administration can govern by garnering bipartisan support.

President Chen owes his election victory to the people of southern Taiwan (see Table 6). Domestic policy, not the mainland China relations issue, will be more closely watched by this group of down-to-earth people from southern Taiwan. The restoration of social order and the implementation of universal welfare are the two keys that will ensure a harmonious society in Taiwan. Chen's legacy rests on his ability to promote and execute his domestic policy. Calling himself "the son of Taiwan," President Chen must rebuild Taiwan from a KMT-styled semi-authoritarian state to a "fair and just" nation under a new partnership with the people of Taiwan.

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As President Chen has taken office, people in the south are hoping that their voices will be heard in the halls of the central government. One reporter said, "[t]o them, Chen epitomizes the southern spirit." Chen promised during his campaign that the needs of the people of the south would not be neglected by the new administration. Two early indications that Chen intends to fulfill this promise are that he hosted a separate celebration in Kaohsiung the day after his May 20 inauguration ceremony at the Presidential Office in Taipei and a separate national Double-Tenth Day celebration on October 10, 2000 to recognize the founding of the Republic of China in 1912. Chen can be expected to pay more attention to the problems of quality of life in southern Taiwan than his predecessors ever did. Domestic policy in Chen's new administration undoubtedly will reflect such a new shift to "southern interests." Unfortunately, Chen's special attention to the south also has created a fear of splitting the country into two competing regions: south against north, a conspiracy of "one country two systems" within Taiwan itself.

V. TAIWAN'S BALANCING ACTS BETWEEN U.S. AND CHINA

Entering the 21st century, Taiwan continues to show sign of economic growth and political democratic maturity. Society in Taiwan has become more pluralist than before. Increase in national wealth and a peaceful political transformation from authoritarian to democracy have raised national pride and confidence. Yet, Taiwan is not free from problems.

In the international arena, Taiwan is facing the reality of becoming more and more isolated. China is blocking any attempt from Taiwan to rejoin international organizations. The number of countries that maintain diplomatic recognition of Taiwan is likely to decline as China's growing economic power begins to buy into the money diplomacy that Taiwan used to dominate. Without doubt, China will put strong political and military pressure on Taiwan to force it to the negotiating table for eventual reunification.

In the domestic sphere, the legitimacy and effectiveness of the new administration under President CHEN Shui-bian is likely to be challenged. Already, we have witnessed the ouster of Chen's first prime minister and campaign staged by two opposition parties of

the Kuomintang and the People’s First Party to hold a recall on the new president. Even in Chen’s own party, the Democratic Progressive Party, there is strong dissidence over Chen’s soft tone regarding Taiwan’s independence from China. Although Chen’s social welfare policies are welcomed, they face the serious problem of fund shortages.

The security of Taiwan will rest on Taiwan’s ability to continue its economic prosperity and to maintain stability with a high quality of life. China is not likely to launch any military attack on Taiwan if the people in Taiwan continue to show their strong support to the government and if they are satisfied with their way of life. Taiwan may also need to be watchful of the international atmosphere that might encourage China to risk using military force to attack Taiwan.

Four security scenarios may emerge in interactions between Taiwan and China in the future:

a) Cooperation: both sides cooperate in both economic and social programs, operating as two equal partners within the greater China economic region that includes Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Taiwan.

b) Competition: both sides agree to a workable game plan that regulates all aspects of interaction without discrimination and prejudice. They act as two competing interests sharing a common goal. This is the so-called “one country, two systems” format.

c) Exchange: fairness and equality are built into cross-Strait interaction for gaining their respective goals, which are self-defined. The exchange will follow the “one China, two governments” principle.

d) Conflict: open hostility either in military or politics guides interaction between the two sides. The aim is to destroy and to win. Taiwan declares independence and a full-scale war between the two sides will determine the outcome.

Among the above-mentioned four scenarios, conflict is the worst and most damaging to both China and Taiwan. Hopefully, leaders in both sides of the Taiwan Strait would not employ such a drastic option. Even worse is the strong possibility that open conflict between China and Taiwan will turn into worldwide confrontation and international war. It is clear that Taiwan security is indeed an international issue that requires international attention. James R. Lilley, a former U.S. ambassador to China, was right when he said in an interview, “China is dependent on the U.S. and Taiwan
for continued prosperity." But Taiwan's economy and security is dependent on the United States and China, as well. The triangular relation among the United States, China and Taiwan thus must be carefully managed if overt conflict and confrontation are to be avoided.

To maintain a balance among these three nations is not an easy task. Not only is there hostile tension between Taiwan and China, but relations between the United States and China are also in a state of mutual suspicion and mistrust. There is a clear-cut resentment between the United States and China. China feels the United States is siding with Taiwan and is intentionally looking down on China. The United States on the other hand believes China as a growing economic power needs to be contained. Table 7 summarizes the tension between the United States and China as of the summer of 2001.

Table 7. Opposing Views Between China and the United States*

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<tr>
<th>What China Resents About the U.S</th>
<th>What the U.S. Resents about China</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acts as self-appointed world police</td>
<td>Suppresses dissent and religion</td>
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<td>Arms the &quot;breakaway province&quot; of Taiwan</td>
<td>Allows massive software counterfeiting and copyright infringement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures Beijing on human rights, Falun Gong and much more</td>
<td>Rattles Taiwan and bullies its neighbors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holds up its own protectionist shield despite WTO and fair trade principles</td>
<td>Erects protectionist barriers against U.S. products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spying on China by CIA and the military</td>
<td>Steals industrial and military secrets through Chinese immigrants in U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally keeps China underdeveloped</td>
<td>Presents a potential threat to the U.S. dominance in world order</td>
</tr>
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Among the issues listed on the above table, China resents most the sale of military weapons by the United States to Taiwan. China sees the United States as the strongest barrier in its effort for reunification with Taiwan. To China, Taiwan represents a "breakaway province" that is needed to return to its motherland. In general, China's reunification effort today is built on two basic working principles:

(A) The first working principle is the insistence that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of China. China insists the United States and other nations abide by the 1972 Nixon Shanghai Communique that "there is only one China." When President Clinton visited China in June of 1998, he openly enunciated the U.S. "Three No's" policy on the Taiwan issue: 1) no support for Taiwan independence; 2) no support for "one China, one Taiwan" or "two Chinas;" and, 3) no support for Taiwan participation in organizations based on statehood. The United States hoped to build a "constructive strategic partnership" with China, while China saw the assurance from President Clinton as a ticket to further isolate Taiwan from international recognition and from declaring Taiwan independence. China is currently pressuring Japan and Great Britain to openly support the Three No's policy toward Taiwan.

(B) The second working principle is China's 1998 "Four Shall Nots" declared by Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Bureau through the New China News Agency. The "Four Shall Nots" consist of the following:

1) Taiwan shall not reject reunification on grounds of competition between social systems, if Taiwan wants to expand cross-Strait exchange and promote the prosperity of both sides.

2) Taiwan shall not beef up military preparations or provoke combatant sentiment.

3) Taiwan shall not continue to advocate wider international space and membership in the U.N.

4) Taiwan shall not block three direct links and cross-Strait economic exchange and cooperation.  

ZJANG Tze-ming's talk in Beijing to an AP reporter on August 25, 1998, summarized China's position well, he said that:

"Taiwan is an un-separable province of China."

"The Taiwan problem is the most sensitive question in U.S.-China relations."

"Our policy is very clear that the peaceful reunification must be built on a one-nation-two-system foundation; this is the same way as we took back Hong Kong."

"Beijing wishes China will be peacefully unified, but this problem can not be delayed too long without a solution."

"We will not guarantee not to use force. This is outright and it is aimed at the separationists who advocate Taiwan independence."³⁴

It is clear that China insists there be only one China and that China is the People’s Republic of China. Taiwan is part of China and does not share equal status with the authorities in Beijing. China also has made it known that the Taiwan problem is the most sensitive question in U.S.-China relations. Although the United States is under tremendous pressure from China, the United States simply cannot ignore the fact that Taiwan is a democratic state and is an important trade partner with the United States. Taiwan is also a very important information technology center in the world economy and the location of the Taiwan Strait as an open sea channel is crucial to Japan’s well-being. Any military conflict between Taiwan and China will create chaos in the world economy. China’s occupation of Taiwan, if successful, would make China the most feared enemy of the United States. Both Taiwan and the United States know the crucial necessity of maintaining balanced relations in this unpredictable triangular.

Although CHEN Shui-bian’s China policy was not appreciated by China, Mr. Chen apparently has gained some ground in U.S.-Taiwan relations. For instance, U.S. President Bush approved the sale of military weapons to Taiwan soon after the U.S. spy plane incident in April 2001 in direct opposition to China’s warning.³⁵ The U.S. Department of State also approved Mr. Chen’s stops in New York City on his way to Central American nations and in Houston before his return to Taiwan in May 2001. Moreover, the State Department also allowed members of the U.S. Congress to meet Mr. Chen while in these two cities. These actions are a clear departure from the previous position taken by President Clinton. The new development clearly demonstrates Taiwan is an undeniable part of the equation between the United States and China. Entering the 21st century, Taiwan is building its national security by promoting a full democratic state and by maintaining a balance between China and the United States. It is not an easy task in an era of uncertainty. Taiwan needs to be cautious, but optimistic.

³⁵. For a discussion of the U.S. spy plane incident and the sale of military weapons to Taiwan, please refer to the cover story entitled, “Seeing Red” in the Economist, April 7-13, 2001, p. 17 and “A Hint of the Cold War over the South China Sea,” pp. 41-42.
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