

# Political Ko'tung and the Rise of the Democratic Progerssive Party in Taiwan:1984-1986

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*This paper presents a brief analysis of the process of Ko'tung (literally liaison, channel, good offices) between the Nationalist Party and the opposition groups under the auspices of four "neutral personages" in Taiwan in 1986. Primarily it deals with the strategy and maneuvers of the two antagonists, the efforts of the four well-known academics who soon became mediators, and the results of the enterprise. It will be argued that the mediators helped prevent a serious confrontation in a time of political polarization and contributed to the acquiescence if not the formal recognition of an opposition party. Of course, it could not, and did not guarantee a smooth transition to multiparty politics in Taiwan. The formation of the Democratic Progressive Party in September 1986, nevertheless, ushered in a new political era.*

**Keywords:** *Ko'tung, Tang-wai, Democratic Progressive Party, Neutral personages, intellectuals,*

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This paper presents a brief analysis of the process of Ko'tung (literally liaison, channel, good offices) between the Nationalist Party and the opposition groups under the auspices of four "neutral personages" in Taiwan in 1986. Primarily it deals with the strategy and maneuvers of the two antagonists, the efforts of the four well-known academics who soon became mediators, and the results of the enterprise. It will be argued that the mediators helped prevent a serious confrontation in a time of political polarization and contributed to the acquiescence if not the formal recognition of an opposition party. Of course, it could not, and did not guarantee a smooth transition to multiparty politics in Taiwan. The formation of the Democratic Progressive Party in September 1986, nevertheless, ushered in a new political era.

To a substantial degree, this paper draws upon a series of interviews this author did in Taiwan during the summers of 1989 and 1990. I had known many of the participants for years. Without their cooperation, this piece of work simply could not be done. Nevertheless, I have endeavored to be detached and objective in my assessment of what they had told me. I have interviewed the following persons, many of them several times.

Professor Chang Chung-tung 張忠棟

Ms.Chen Chu 陳菊

Mr.Chiang P'eng-chien 江鵬堅

Mr.Chiu I-ren 邱義仁

Mr.Fei Hsi-ping 費希平

Mr.Fu Cheng 傅正

Mr.Hsiao Tien-ts'an 蕭天讚

Mr.Hsieh Chang-ting 謝長廷

Professor Hu Fu 胡佛

Mr.Kang Ning-hsiang 康寧祥

Professor Li Hung-hsi 李鴻禧

Mr.Liang Su-jung 梁肅戎

Mr.Lin Cheng-chieh 林正杰

Ms.Lu Hsiu-lien 呂秀蓮

Mr.T'ao Bai-Ch'uan, 陶百川

Professor Yang Kuo-Shu 楊國樞

Mr. You Ching 尤清

This paper is taken from a larger and more detailed study, and it only describes and analyzes the events and persons in a nutshell. There is hardly any citation of the relevant theoretical literature ; nor extensive use of the studies of others scholars. By relying on interviews with most of the important participants, this study seeks to achieve a sense of intimate and sympathetic understanding. In turn this larger study is a companion piece to my earlier study of Intellectual Ferment to Political Reform in Taiwan, 1971-1973 Both are concerned with the role of the intellectuals in the process of political change in Taiwan.

## I From Political Polarization to Accommodation

The Nationalist rule in Taiwan in post World War II did not begin auspiciously. The administration under governor Chen Yi soon provoked a large scaled rebellion in 1947. It was suppressed with extreme brutality.<sup>1</sup> Since then the authorities exercised stringent control. While the economy was developing rapidly and standard of living gradually improved, political dissent was not permitted and the security apparatus was widely used to intimidate and suppress any challenge. In 1960, Lei Chen, a well-known Nationalist Party official , attempted to link up with influential Taiwanese social and political elites in forming an opposition party. He was framed and charged with harboring a Communist agent and sentenced to ten years in

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<sup>1</sup> The rebellion of 1947 was a taboo in Taiwan. For many years no discussion was permitted. For an early study of the rebellion, see George H.Kerr, Formosa Betrayed. Boston. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965. Also Lin Mu-sun, ed. February Revolution in Taiwan (in Chinese language), 1948, reprinted by Vanguard Publishing Company, Taipei,1990. For a new study,consult Wang Chian-shen et al. 1947:February 28-Revolution in Taiwan (in Chinese language). Vanguard Publishing Company, Taipei, 1990.

prison.<sup>2</sup> The embryonic opposition party did not see the light of day. In retrospect, Lei Chen's effort was the first move toward multiparty politics on Taiwan and has exercised a profound influence on the struggle for democratic rule in the following decades. After his release from prison in 1970, Lei was hailed by many intellectuals and political activists in the opposition camp as an elder statesman, and became a rally point for resisting the authoritarian rule of the Nationalist Party.

The 1970s, however, witnessed the appearance of a new type of opposition politicians. They were mostly young men in their twenties and thirties, well-educated, ambitious and energetic. They were skillful in using modern and sophisticated campaign techniques and in seeking support and sympathy from their constituencies. In the local elections of 1977, the opposition groups captured 22 seats in the Provincial Assembly and 4 posts of mayors and county magistrates. The election for the county magistrate in T'ao-yuan was particularly heated and controversial, leading to violent confrontations in Chung-li, and the rise of Hsu Hsin-liang as an important opposition leader.<sup>3</sup>

In 1978, in anticipation of greater gains in political campaigns and elections, the opposition politicians under the leadership of Huang Hsin-chieh, Shih ming-teh and others organized a Tang-wai (literally outside of the ruling party) Campaign Assistance Corps (Tang-wai chu-hsun t'uan) to mobilize and coordinate their efforts. Thus the term Tang-wai was widely used to designate the loosely organized opposition groups, mostly Taiwanese with grass root support. To the extent that the ruling party was identified with mainliners, it was seen as a foreign alien government.

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<sup>2</sup> Consult Fu Cheng, ed. The Case of Lei Chen, 3 volumes (in Chinese language), Taipei, 1989

<sup>3</sup> See Chang Fu-chung and Lin Cheng-chieh, Long Live Election: the True Record of Chung li Incident (in Chinese language) Taipei, n.d.

Around this time, it appeared that President Chiang Ching-kuo realized that some communication with the Tang-wai would be useful. Liang Su-jung, a party official who would again play an important role in liaison efforts in later years, and Kuan Chung were instructed to meet with the opposition leaders under the auspices of a native Taiwanese politician and entrepreneur Wu San-lien. Apparently, several meetings were held in 1978-1979. They were informal, without a well-defined agenda and without concrete results.<sup>4</sup> The process collapsed, when in December 1979, the demonstrations on the International Human Rights Day in Kao-hsiung turned into another confrontation between the Tang-wai and the government. Force was used to suppress the demonstrations. Within three days, the authorities systematically arrested all the important opposition leaders, with the noticeable exception of Kang Ning-hsiang. Hsu Hsin-liang, traveling in the U.S., delayed his return and attempted to rally opposition groups against the KMT. For many years Hsu advocated revolutionary warfare against the KMT. That is, until his dramatic return to Taiwan. The communication channel through Wu San-lien was used later by the family members of the imprisoned leaders to make complaints about their treatment.

The crackdown on the Kao-hsiung demonstrations referred to above, it should be noted, was the beginning of a systematic attack on the opposition groups which went on for five years and only ended in 1985. To a large extent, it was engineered by the military and security apparatus. The Central Committee which happened to be meeting on December 10-14, dispatched a five-man delegation composed of military and security police chiefs to see Chiang Ching-kuo and urged him to take firm actions against the opposition. T'ao Bai-ch'uan, Wu San-lien and the then Secretary General Chiang Yen-shih recommended leniency. Chiang's instructions were "only to the

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<sup>4</sup> Interview with Liang Su-jung, July 6, 1989; with K'ang Ning-hsiang, July 5, 1989; with Chen chu, July 6, 1989; with Lu Hsiu-lien, June 27, 1989.

extent that is necessary (to meet the contingency) ”.<sup>5</sup> In 1980, eight of the most important opposition leaders were put on trial by the military court and given lengthy prison terms; others by the judiciary.<sup>6</sup>

During the trial, the aged mother and two teen-aged daughters of Lin Yi hsiung , a Tang-wai leader , were brutally murdered. It was widely rumored that security agents committed the crime in retaliation of revelation of torture in custody by Lin. The whole island was shocked and lived in fear of terror. In the summer of 1981, Professor Chen Wen-cheng met his mysterious death on the campus of the National Taiwan University when he returned from the U.S. to visit his parents. The day before his untimely death, he was summoned to meet with officials of the Taiwan Garrison Command. Again, like the case of Lin Yi-hsiung's family, there was no lead to the case. At this writing, these two cases are still unsolved.

Then in 1984 , Henry Liu (Liu Yi-liang, per name Chiang Nan), an ethnic Chinese writer living in the U.S. and well-known for his biography of Chiang Ching-kuo, was gunned down in his residence in California. Soon it was revealed that the Chief of Defense Ministry Intelligence Bureau was the mastermind of the assassination. Under pressure from the U.S., he was given life sentence in Taipei. It was rumored that Chiang's second son Chiang Hsiao-wu was also implicated.

These series of assassination and murders testified to the tension and political polarization in Taiwan. Yet fear did not completely silence the opposition. Many family members, especially wives of the imprisoned leaders, defense lawyers and young activists emerged to carry on the struggle. And the society gave them sympathy and support. By 1980 when the supplementary elections for the Legislative Yuan was resumed, they had regrouped and

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with T'ao Bai-ch'uan, July 1, 1989. Also see his article in Mass Daily, December 2, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> See New Newsweek, ed. Ten Years Since the Mei-Li-tao (the Formosa) Incident (in Chinese language), Taipei, 1989

won a number of seats, gaining about 20% of the total number of the votes given. Their influence continued to grow. During the elections for county magistrates and city mayors in 1981, the opposition groups further coalesced and began to experiment with a "nomination system". They also proposed the idea of "check and balance", arguing that democratic rule must need balancing and constraints by the opposition groups. Without doubt, this was an important move in the rise of the opposition forces. In the elections, many of the defense lawyers for the Mei-Li tao Incident trial were elected.

To further consolidate their gains, the opposition camp proceeded to organize a "Tang-wai Electoral Support Association", the purpose of which was to nominate the candidates and help in their campaigns. Yet soon enough, the opposition groups were faced with division between those leaders elected to public offices and the young editors and writers of the Tang-wai journals. The latter groups had substantive influence over the Tang-wai mass media and were far more radical and inclined towards the idea of independence for Taiwan. They posed a challenge not only to the KMT but to their elders in the opposition camp. In the elections held in 1983 Kang Ning-hsiang was surprisingly defeated in his bid to be returned to the Legislative Yuan. To what extent can his defeat be attributed to attacks by the Young Turks is a moot question, but it can not be denied that the political maneuvers in the opposition camp had perceptibly become more complicated.

The KMT did not stand still either. It had stubbornly held on to the monopoly of political power. Nevertheless, a sense of impending crisis had already set in. It must be during the fall of 1985 that Chiang Ching-kuo came to the decision that a modus vivendi with the opposition was indispensable and could not be delayed any longer. He began to pursue political reforms seriously.

In August 1985, in an interview with Time magazine, Hong Kong branch, Chiang Ching-kuo indicated that he had not given any thought to the

presidential succession by any member of the Chiang's family.<sup>7</sup> Four months later, in a meeting to commensurate the inauguration of the Constitution, he elaborated his earlier statement to the effect that he would not permit any member of his family to succeed him, nor would he tolerate a military regime after his death.<sup>8</sup> To the extent that he backed up his words by appointing his second son and potential successor Chiang Hsiao-wu as the Deputy Commercial Counselor to Singapore, he had convinced many observers of his determination on political reforms.

At the Third Plenum of the ruling party's 12th Central Committee held in March 1986, Chiang Ching-kuo reaffirmed his commitment to democratic rule and urged further reform measures. From the Standing Committee of the Central Committee he appointed a 12-man task force to make recommendations. It was headed by former President Yen Chia-kan and former Vice President Hsieh Tung-min, a native Taiwanese politician, and included other important leaders.<sup>9</sup>

The task force submitted its recommendations in June. They were broad in scope and without any specificity, referring to some of the structural problems confronting Taiwan. To Chiang's credit, he instructed the Committee to formulate more detailed proposals concerning the streamlining of national security laws and providing a legal basis for civil associations. Apparently he was thinking of dealing with the Tang-wai political groups through a revised legal system.<sup>10</sup> Chiang also instructed that liaison with Tang-wai should be resumed. Thus the stage was set for the four "neutral personages" to serve as mediators.

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<sup>7</sup> Time, Asian Edition, September 2, 1985.

<sup>8</sup> See Republic of China Year Book, 1986 (in Chinese language), Taipei, p.235.

<sup>9</sup> China Times Weekly. (Shih-pao chou-k'an) # 85, Oct. 11-16, 1986, (in Chinese language).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



Chiang's move towards political reform, it would seem, was the result of a calculation that accommodation would be much more cost effective. His failing health probably also contributed to this momentous decision. And the scandals concerning the murder of Henry Lin and the collapse of the Tenth Credit Cooperative, Taiwan's largest credit society in February 1985 further weakened the legitimacy of the government. But it would be foolhardy to conclude that accommodation with the opposition forces was inevitable or without risks. In the pursuit of compromise, misunderstanding or sabotage was always a distinct danger.

## II The Mediation and the Mediators

Prior to the dramatic encounter in 1986, a crisis in 1984 brought with it an effort in mediation and a group of self-appointed mediators. In a sense, the mediation of 1984 led directly to that of 1986.

The focus of the crisis that led to the mediation in 1984 was the newly organized Tang-wai Public Policy Research Association. It was inaugurated on May 11, 1984 with Fei Hsi-p'ing serving as the Chairman and You Ching, Hsiah Chang-ting among others as members of the Board. Fei offered the position of Secretary-General first to Mr. Chiang p'eng-chien and then to Mr. Chen Shui-pein, but both declined. Finally he settled on Mr. Lin Cheng-chieh. Ostensibly, the Association was dedicated to policy studies and helping the legislators in the formulation of bills. Nevertheless, it was recognized by both the KMT authorities and the opposition leaders as a first step toward formation of an opposition party.<sup>11</sup> It was intended to be a

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<sup>11</sup> For the establishment of the Tang-wai Public Policy Research Association, see Independence Evening News, May 11, 1986, Taipei. Also see You Ching, New Party Saves Taiwan, (in Chinese language) Taipei, 1986. This book is primarily a collection of essays. Hsiah Chang-ting, The Democratic Progressive Party, (in Chinese language), Taipei, n.d.

successor to the "Tang-Wai Electoral Support Association", albeit, on a more elaborated and permanent basis. And it was not accidental that Fei Hsi-ping was elected as its chairman. He was a courageous mainlanders with long years of experience in political maneuvers. At that time he had already worked closely with the Tang-wai for some years and was committed to the organization of an opposition party.

Against this challenge, the authorities asserted that since the Association had not registered with the Ministry of Interior Affairs, it was illegal and would be persecuted according to law.<sup>12</sup> The opposition groups warned against the consequences to social harmony and political stability if the government took "repressive measures." In this stalemate, the self-appointed mediators seized their opportunity. They were four professors of the National Taiwan University: Hu Fu, Chang Chung-tung, Li Hung-hsi and Yang Kuo-shu. Generally labelled liberal, they had drafted a statement urging conciliation after the Kao-hsiung incident; it was rejected by all the newspapers.<sup>13</sup> Hardly a promising debut. Now they volunteered to Ko'tung in November when the government and the opposition groups were deadlocked. Professor Hu Fu, acting on behalf of his colleagues, approached both sides arguing that communication was indispensable in resolving the conflict. The Association welcomed this move of the professors, but the Nationalist Party officials declined their invitation.<sup>14</sup> Plainly they did not want to meet with opposition leaders under the auspices of the professors, thinking that by doing so, the Nationalist Party would formally confer legitimacy on an illegal organization. Nevertheless, Professor Hu continued to meet with both sides separately, with Hsiao Tien-ts'an, a Deputy Secretary General of the Central Policy Group acting on behalf of the ruling

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<sup>12</sup> Independence Evening News, Taipei, Nov.28,1984.

<sup>13</sup> See Ten Years Since Mei-li tao Incident, pp.112-13.

<sup>14</sup> Mass Daily, December 2, 1984.

party. By January 1985, a tentative agreement was reached: the Association would change its name to " Political Construction Research Association " and registered with the authorities. Some opposition leaders expressed the hope that the professors would choose to join them. No concrete result, of course, was reached . Indeed even the proposal of name change provoked a heated debate in the opposition groups. In a meeting of the Association convened to discuss the matter on January 12, the more militant activists apparently had the upper hand and an ambiguous communique was issued to the effect that the Association would not change its name, nor would it register with the Ministry of the Interior Affairs.<sup>15</sup> The stalemate continued .

For the elections in the end of the year, the opposition groups managed to agree on a list of candidates and won fairly handsomely, securing about 30% of the votes cast. In the city of Taipei , the opposition camp did even better, securing 40% of the votes given and all of its 11 nominees to the city council were elected. By January 1986, the opposition politicians were on the move again. The Association actively promoted the establishment of local branches in different cities. At one time, nine branch offices applied to the Association for recognition, with several hundreds well-known activists serving as founding members.<sup>16</sup> As this was recognized as a further step in the direction of organizing an opposition party, the Nationalist Party reacted with alarm. Again it threatened to crackdown, thus provoking a new crisis.<sup>17</sup>

At this juncture, the mediators resumed their efforts. But the stage and actors had changed substantially. First, Professor Chang, discouraged by the criticism of their previous efforts by the more militant faction of the opposition, decided to withdraw. Professor Hu invited Tao Bai-ch'uan, a highly respected former member of the Control Yuan and a close advisor to

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<sup>15</sup> For the debate at the meeting see Independence Evening News, January 11, 1985

<sup>16</sup> Taiwan Times Daily, April 25, 1986.

<sup>17</sup> Independence Evening News, April 18, 1986.

President Chiang Ching-kuo to serve as the nominal leader of the mediation team. Professors Yang and Li continued to serve on the team. Professor Li was especially close to many opposition leaders, and would serve as their advisors in political campaign in later years. Secondly, the ruling party was persuaded to designate high ranking officials to meet with opposition leaders openly under the auspices of the mediators.<sup>18</sup> The situation appeared to be more hopeful in contrast to the tension and suspicion of the previous months.

Without doubt, T'ao contributed substantially to this promising beginning. On April 29, 1986, Tao had a long talk with President Chiang. Referring to Presidents Washington and Jefferson, he discoursed on how Washington declined to create a dynasty and how Jefferson valued a free press more than a free government, not very subtle points at all. He also urged that to get on with reforms, it would be better [ if it were done ] earlier than later, taking initiative rather than being forced, and from above rather than from below. T'ao had the impressions that Chiang was not optimistic about multi-party politics; Chiang was prepared to entertain the idea of a 3 to 4 year transition period and that he would prefer to begin with a legislative act recognizing the legitimacy of political organizations.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, the stage was set. On May 10 in the Lai Lai Hotel, the four mediators invited the two sides to meet. The ruling party was represented by the three Deputy Secretary-Generals of the Central Policy Commission: Liang Su-jung, Hsiao T'ien tsan and Huang Kuang-ping. On the opposition side, eight leaders of different factions were selected to attend, including K'ang Ning-hsiang and You Ching, among others. Huang Tien-fu in the end declined to participate.

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<sup>18</sup> China Times Daily, May 24, 1986, Taipei. This is an interview with Tao on his expectation of the mediation.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Tao on July 1, 1989.

This first encounter lasted hours. It was reported that Chiang was anxiously awaiting the results at the presidential palace. There was a great deal of frank exchange and confrontation with the two sides accusing each other of being insincere. The government officials spoke of the integrity of the Constitution and urged the Tang-wai to take into account the unusual circumstances that made it impossible to conform to the high standards of the democratic nations in the enjoyment of rights and liberties. The opposition groups chose to present a long list of demands, ranging from the nullification of the Temporary Provisions of the Constitution and lifting of the martial law to that of moving towards a multiparty political system. However, a compromise was reached. A three point agreement drafted by Professor Hu was adopted.

1. The two sides pledge to the implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of China; as to concrete measures of constitutional rule, further consultation would be held;
2. The two sides agree to the establishment of the Tang-wai Public Policy Research Association and its local branches; however, as there is dispute on the question of registration and the name to be used, further consultation on these matters would be held;
3. The two sides agree that during the period of consultation, they would make efforts to contribute to political stability and harmony.<sup>20</sup>

To a substantial degree the compromise reached left something to be desired as to its specificity; yet it broke the deadlock and was received by the mass media and the society at large as such.<sup>21</sup> It made a serious confrontation by the two sides so much more difficult. Nevertheless, as will be detailed later, maneuvers and probings by both sides continued. They almost led to the collapse of the second meeting which was scheduled for

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<sup>20</sup> For example, China Times Daily, May 11, 1986.

<sup>21</sup> China Times Weekly, June 1-7, 1986. Also, editorial, United Daily, May 11, 1986.

May 24 with the Nationalist Party officials serving as hosts. At that meeting, hardly any concrete agreement was reached, with the two sides holding opposite positions on the questions of deleting the term Tang-wai from the name of the Association and that of registration with the Ministry of the Interior Affairs.<sup>22</sup> Soon, Professor Hu left for the U.S. for a short visit, and the process was suspended. He apparently intended to give both sides an opportunity to "cool off" and reflect on their next move. Yet it could be that the Tang-wai also used his absence as an excuse not to get on with the third meeting which was scheduled for June 7. It was postponed time and again.<sup>23</sup> Professor Hu Fu returned to Taiwan on July 27 and the four mediators again set to work. The KMT was eager to resume talks; yet the Tang-wai demurred.

On September 28, the opposition groups in a dramatic move announced the formation of the Democratic Progressive Party.<sup>24</sup> Again, in the face of confrontation and crisis, the mediators plunged themselves into saving the situation, acting in the words of Professor Hu as "firebrigade".<sup>25</sup> In the end, a serious conflict was averted and the ruling party acquiesced, if not recognized, the emergence of the opposition party.

### III The Strategies and Maneuvers of the Nationalist Party and the Opposition

That Chiang Ching-kuo had decided on a *modus vivendi* sometime in 1985 and began to take concrete reform measures in 1986 need not be doubted. He was not highly optimistic about multi-party politics. The basic strategy of the ruling party could be best described as to co-opt the

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<sup>22</sup> Times News Weekly, # 1, June 1-7, 1986.

<sup>23</sup> Taiwan Times Daily, June 5, 1986.

<sup>24</sup> China Times Weekly, # 84, Oct. 4-10, 1986.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

opposition leaders in a fairly gradual process of political reforms governed by laws. In as much as the legal process, i.e. making and amending laws had been and would have continued to be controlled by his party, Chiang could be certain that he would have substantial control of the process and thus perpetuated the Nationalist Party's domination as long as possible. If indeed he had a time table of 3-4 years in mind, he did not communicate this thinking to his subordinate party officials designated to meet with the opposition leaders.<sup>26</sup> Nor could it be asserted that he had not met with some opposition from his military and security apparatus. The series of assassinations and murders referred to above definitely indicated a subtle challenge to his authority. Moreover, after the May 10 meeting, a group of the Nationalist Party members referring to themselves as the Self-Help Action Committee soundly denounced Tao, Hu, Yang and Li, indirectly condemned Chiang's policy.<sup>27</sup> There were other dissenting voices. To what extent they were supported by the military it is difficult to say. Nevertheless, the security apparatus has not desisted from putting pressures on the opposition leaders. Several Tang-wai publications were summarily banned, and a number of cases pending against the opposition leaders were brought to an end with the court dutifully handing down prison terms. A few of the opposition leaders apparently were put under surveillance on a 24 hour a day basis. However, Chiang was powerful enough to survive the challenge. And, his move had the support of the society, especially the professional and intellectual classes.

If Chiang's instructions on talking to the opposition groups was ambiguously formulated, i.e., "on the basis of constitution and laws," the decision-making process was well-defined. The three Deputy Secretary-Generals of the Central Policy Commission was the contact point with the

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Liang Su-jung, July 6, 1989. Also, interview with Hsiao Tien-ts'an, July 7, 1989.

<sup>27</sup> The Committee distributed a pamphlet to this effect in early June; it was printed in Taiwan Times Daily, June 7, 1986.

opposition. They were part of an inter-agency unit, including the military and security apparatus. From time to time, this body would meet to talk things over. Above them the Secretary General of the Central Committee was put in charge, with the ultimate authority firmly in the hands of Chiang Ching-kuo.<sup>28</sup> At that time, the Secretary General Ma Shu-li was close to Chiang. And T'ao had access to both. Compared with opposition groups, the ruling party was much more experienced and hierarchically structured in their approach to deal with their opponents.

The opposition groups by contrast, were loosely connected. Since the Kao-hsiung Incident of 1979, their fortune has been volatile indeed. They have suffered severe setbacks as well as enjoyed rejuvenations. By 1986, the Tang-wai was composed of four distinctive elements: the opposition leaders serving prison terms (Kang Ning-hsiung being the most conspicuous exception); their family members, especially wives, many of whom were elected to public office; their defense lawyers, such as You Ching, Hsieh Chang-ting, etc., and lastly, the young professional campaign managers and assistants of the elected officials as well as the Tang-wai journalists. These young professionals were referred to by the mass media as Tang-kung (party workers or party cadres) and turned out to be more militant and radical, with many of them committed to Taiwanese independence.<sup>29</sup> They had come together in the Tang-wai Association of Editors and Writers. Now they were powerful enough to challenge the Tang-wai leadership and generally made it more difficult for any compromise with the ruling party. However, all these component parts of the opposition were united in their determination to oppose the Nationalist Party. The "main stream" leadership on the whole set their goal on political power, desiring to become the governing party,

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<sup>28</sup> Professors Hu and Yang suggested the existence of the interagency unit, Interview with Hu and Yang, June 16, 1989. Liang Su jung denied it.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Fu Cheng, July 4, 1989; also interview with Li Hung-hsi, July 4, 1989.



while the more militant and radical groups opted for ideological purity. To the extent that the different groups collaborated in facing the Nationalist Party in 1984-86, they were united in their guiding strategy, i.e. to use the opportunity and process of the Ko'tung through the mediators to bring about an opposition party. This, of course, did not mean that they had agreed on when and how to form a new political party. They were still faced with a formidable foe, and had been fully cognizant of the risks they took in opposing the Nationalist Party.

Nevertheless, the opposition camp was prepared to explore and exploit any opportune moment, any weaknesses in the Nationalist Party's position: thus the maneuvers and delays, appeals to the masses and taking to the streets in large-scale demonstrations. For example, the day before the first meeting on May 10, 1986, Hsieh Chang -ting and Chen Shui-pien announced the establishment of the Taipei branch office of the Tang-wai Public Policy Research Association, thus infuriating authorities.<sup>30</sup> Likewise, Kang Ning-hsiang scheduled the inauguration of the Capital Branch of the Association for May 17, in part in competition with Hsieh and Chen, as they each had their power base in the city of Taipei.<sup>31</sup> On May 19, on the 38th anniversary of the declaration of martial law in Taiwan, the opposition groups initiated a " May 19 green protest action " with several participants in the May 10 meeting taking part which ended up in a confrontation with the security police for many hours.<sup>32</sup>

Immediately the KMT reacted. In June, the libel case of the Pong-lai magazine was brought to an end and three opposition leaders, Huang Tien-fu, Chen Shui-pien and Li Yi-uang were sentenced to serve prison term. To condemn the verdict, they held mass meetings, attacking the KMT for

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<sup>30</sup> Times News Weekly, # 1, JUNE 1-7, 1986.

<sup>31</sup> Mass Daily, May 18, 1986.

<sup>32</sup> Times News Weekly, # 1, June 1-7, 1986.

using the judicial system for political purposes and mocking the Ko'tung process. In September, when Lin Cheng-chieh was convicted of violating the Public Officials Election and Recall Law promulgated in 1980, a series of protest actions were initiated, ending in a large-scale demonstration held to "send him off" to prison.<sup>33</sup> The accusation that the ruling party had used the judicial process for political gains certainly damaged the image of the Nationalist Party. Against this background, the opposition announced that only if the ruling party should agree to four new conditions, including the settlement of the pending cases of political prisoners and the permission of the television networks to cover the consultation process, would they resume the meeting with the Nationalist Party.<sup>34</sup> Obviously, the consultation was deadlocked again. Professor Yang Kuo-shu's comments were well-taken indeed: the Ko'tung process had been severely handicapped by mistrust on both sides, and the maneuvers and probings by the antagonists after the first meeting on May 10 surely did not help things a bit. But by this time, the pressures on the opposition groups to form an opposite party were rapidly mounting. They proved to be irresistible.

#### IV The Formation of the Democratic Progressive Party

The announcement of the formation of the Democratic Progressive Party on September 28, 1986 was dramatic and sudden. At 6:05 p.m. in a meeting convened to nominate the Tang-wai candidates for the December elections at the Grand Hotel in Taipei, Fei Hsi-p'ing declared that the opposition party formally came into existence.<sup>35</sup> It was the result of a confusing day of debate

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<sup>33</sup> Great China Evening News, September 20, 1986.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> China Times Weekly, # 84, October 4-10, 1986.

and negotiations. After the meeting had started in the morning, the agenda was amended, and the discussion of forming an opposition party was agreed to. There were two opinions: Fei, Kang and others argued for going slowly, for establishing first a preparatory committee; however, they were apparently outmaneuvered by Hsieh Chang-ting, Chu Kao-cheng and others who insisted that it would be more advantageous to form the new party right there and then. The arguments that it would be difficult for so many opposition leaders to come together in the near future and that by acting swiftly the KMT would be denied the opportunity to plan and counteract proved to have carried the day. In the excitement, and given the group dynamics, many candidates for the December elections were compelled to sign up as founding members of the new party. All together, one hundred and thirty two opposition leaders committed themselves, taking substantial risks if the Nationalist Party retaliated. There was, however, hardly any discussion of the party platform or party constitution. They were left for further study by a working group set up at the meeting.<sup>36</sup> Apparently, the formation of the new party was hastily and suddenly completed.

Appearances notwithstanding, however, serious preparatory work had already begun in early July when the Tang-wai Public Policy Research Association secretly set up a committee of ten to study and plan the formation of a new party. The members of this committee included Fei, You Ching, Hsieh Chang-ting, among others. Fei had just returned from a visit to the U.S during which he had met with many opposition organizations and discussed the formation of a new political party. Through the month of September until the very eve of September 28, several meetings were held and opposition leaders from many cities were consulted. The drafting of a party constitution and a party program were also moving along. In a dramatic meeting on September 19, You Ching argued that the time was ripe

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid; also interview with Fu Cheng, July 11, 1989.

for the inauguration of the new party. He presented a brief declaration and asked for endorsement. He first signed his name and the others followed. Hsieh proposed the name " Democratic Progressive Party " which was also agreed to.<sup>37</sup> On September 27, in a meeting to which twenty five opposition leaders attended, it was decided that a preparatory committee for the formation of a new party would be announced the next day.

Plainly, there were many factors that put pressures on the opposition leaders to form a new party as soon as possible. To begin with, the opposition leaders of different factions appeared to have vied with one another in presenting themselves as being determined to bring the new party into existence. For example, after the Tang-wai Public Policy Research Association in July set up its secret Committee of Ten to plan the formation of a new party, the Tang-wai Association of Editors and Writers also formed their own working group.<sup>38</sup> In July Kang Ning-hsiang proposed a " timetable on Democratic rule ", anticipating the formation of an opposition party in 1987; and on August 9 ,Kang and his Capital branch of the Association sponsored a mass meeting to explore and explain the formation of a new party.<sup>39</sup> All these activities could not but urge the opposition camp to greater efforts. Moreover, the elections scheduled for the end of the year provided an incentive to break the deadlock and face the KMT as an opposition party. Finally, the political dissident groups in the United States played a role. Under the leadership of Hsu Hsin-liang, a preparatory committee for a Taiwan Democratic Party was organized in May 1986 , giving the impression that he was guiding the movement in Taiwan from abroad.<sup>40</sup> If only to counteract this pressure , the need to get on with the task was appreciated by opposition leaders within the island.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid;also interview with Fei Hsi-p'ing, June 25,1989.

<sup>38</sup> China Times Weekly, # 84, October 4-10,1986.

<sup>39</sup> Mass Daily, August 7,1986.

<sup>40</sup> China Times Weekly, # 84, October 4-10,1986.

When the meeting at the Grand Hotel on September 28 was brought to an end, the news quickly spread through the city. Many opposition leaders were sure that the ruling party would respond with repressive measures and have them arrested immediately. The next day they met to discuss how to keep up the struggle. They were prepared to go to prison, and agreed on the second-echelon leaders to take over; none of the them advocated the use of force.<sup>41</sup>

For the ruling party, the announcement presented a challenge as well as a dilemma. To respond with a crackdown and force would risk political stability and social order. Yet, not to react could be seen as giving in. Indeed, only on September 26, i.e two days before Fei's announcement, Shih Chi-yang, the Minister of the Ministry Judicial Affairs, still insisted that if the opposition leaders persisted in organizing a new political party, they would surely be persecuted according to the law. It was reported that the KMT held four emergency meetings and Chiang Ching-kuo met with the leaders of the party, government, military and security apparatus to hear their opinions. As can be expected, some participants argued for a hard-lined position,<sup>42</sup> and the security apparatus was said to have submitted a list of 140 names to be used in a round-up. Yet no decision was made. Fortuitously, as a meeting between the three Deputy Secretary-Generals and the mediators had been scheduled to discuss the resumption of the mediation, Liang Su-jung sought instructions from Chiang. When he received words that the consultation should go on according to plan, Liang immediately telephoned Hu to confirm the engagement.<sup>43</sup> Hu proposed that the Nationalist Party should declare that since the opposition party was still being formed, it would not take any action but would continue with consultations. In the

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with Fu Cheng, July 11,1989.

<sup>42</sup> China Times Weekly, # 84, October 4-10,1989.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Liang Su-jung, July 6,1989. Also interview with Hu Fu and Yang Kao-shu, July 9,1989.

night of September 28, Hu and Fei had touched on this matter in their telephone conversation. Liang asked that if the ruling party were to make such a statement, could the opposition party be expected to keep silent and not refute the Nationalist Party publicly. Hu telephoned Fei Hsi-p'ing, and obtained his solemn word. At that point, a statement to that effect was drafted by Liang with the help of Hu.<sup>44</sup>

The crisis was averted.

## V Concluding Remarks

The decision by Chiang Ching-kuo to acquiesce in the formation of the new party could not help but dramatically change the contour of politics on Taiwan. The Nationalist Party from now on would find it difficult if not impossible to use force to crush the opposition camp. It would be, in a sense, reduced to fighting rear-guard battles. Thus, on the one hand, the KMT pretended to believe that the Democratic Progressive Party was still being in the preparatory stage, while on the other hand pushed through the reform measures, especially the abolition of the martial law and the revision of the law on civil organizations so as to permit the existence of opposition parties.<sup>45</sup> The bottom line was, as Chiang Ching-kuo made clear in his meeting with Mrs. Katherine Graham, the president of the Washington Post, that the new opposition party must obey the constitution, support the basic national policy of anti-communism and clearly sever any tie with the Taiwanese Independence Movement.<sup>46</sup> There was no turning back.

The opposition party could not turn back either. Vaguely they responded to Chiang's three conditions by stating that they were committed

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Independence Evening News, October 16, 1986.

<sup>46</sup> Independence Evening News, October 11, 1986.

to the constitution as well as opposed to any advocacy of violence in politics.<sup>47</sup> The thrust, however, clearly was to convene a National Party Congress as soon as they could manage, which they did in mid-November. The Congress started on November 10, 12:30 p.m. at a hotel in downtown Taipei and ended up in a tea house at 12:30 a.m. the next day. It adopted a party constitution, a 34 article "Basic Program" and a 139 article Action Program. There was some dispute concerning the party constitution. Nevertheless, the principle of national self-determination was agreed to, i.e. the future of Taiwan should be decided by all the residents in Taiwan. Furthermore, to the surprise of many delegates, Fei Hsi-p'ing was defeated by one vote in his bid for the presidency of the new party. Chiang P'eng-chien, a member of the Legislative Yuan who had been in charge of organization work for the National Party Congress, was elected to serve as the president.<sup>48</sup> It was definitely a signal of the intrigue and competition for power within the new party that would follow. But, all in all, the Congress heralded the beginning of a new chapter in the politics on Taiwan.

As for the four "neutral personages" turned mediators, their exciting and unusual experience was tainted with a sense of irony. They were primarily motivated by a sense of obligation to the nation in time of crisis. For Professor Hu, more-over, a commitment to democracy also played a part. As for T'ao, his admiration and friendship for Chiang Ching-kuo probably helped induce him to serve as a mediator. He said publicly that he had been deeply moved by the sincerity and dedication of his younger colleagues and simply could not refuse their request. They did not have any concrete agenda or proposal. They merely acted as a channel or a liaison. At the early stage of their endeavours, the opposition leaders were most appreciative of their offer, for to talk with the KMT on an equal basis was

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<sup>47</sup> Independence Evening News, October 16, 1986.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Fu Cheng, July 11, 1989. Also interview with Chen Chu, July 6, 1989.

definitely an improvement in their status and an opportunity for making political gains. But the pace of political maneuvers has overtaken them. By late 1986, the mediators were no longer needed. The politicians could take care of themselves from now on. Although the opposition leaders indicated to the mediators in mid-October that the third meeting would be held in the first week of November,<sup>49</sup> nothing came of it.<sup>50</sup> If the mediators thought that they had been used, which they did not, could it not be argued that their value and contribution lay precisely in being used by both sides, in the right time and place, and for a good cause. The democratization of politics on Taiwan owes them a debt.

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<sup>49</sup> United Daily, October 18,1986.

<sup>50</sup> United Daily, October 29,1986. Independence Evening News, October 28, 1986.



## 政治溝通與民進黨建黨：1984-1986

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### 中文摘要

這篇文章敘述並分析1984年到1986年間國民黨與黨外勢力溝通過程中參與協調的四位學者的表現與功能。在溝通中雙方既求妥協，不使對峙惡化；但也企圖主導變局。黨外力量尤有意利用溝通組成政黨。居間溝通的四位學者任重道遠，從中斡旋，對台灣民主化可說是盡了一份力量。

**關鍵字：**溝通、黨外、知識份子／學者、調停。