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## Interview: Gen. T'eng Chieh

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# How we can overthrow the mainland China dictatorship

*This interview—Part IV in a series—was conducted by C.M. Lao, publisher of the Chinese Flag Monthly, in Taipei, June 14, 1989. General T'eng is an elder statesman of the Kuomintang party (KMT) in the Republic of China on Taiwan. He was a close adviser to Chiang Kai-shek, and is today Taiwan's leading military strategist.*

**Lao:** Your ideas about scoring a breakthrough in international relations, exploiting the enemy's retreat for our advance, and staying in touch with the realities of the situation are totally correct.

But how can we carry out these ideas? I still have several questions about the practical way to do this.

First of all, there are questions that are being asked by the overseas Chinese. Since Communist China has sent numerous professors and students to study at foreign universities, we need to focus on what they will do in the future. There are almost 100,000 professors and students sent by the Communists who are studying abroad. Most of them are totally disgusted with the Communist regime. Perhaps we can say that they will all become aggressive anti-Communists. Those 100,000 professors and students represent the intellectual elite of the mainland. Deng Xiaoping had hoped that they would constitute his capital investment for reconstructing the country. Now they have turned out to be a total loss for the Communist regime. Deng has lost all control over the intellectual elite. How painful that must be for him! With these people coming over to our side, this can help us to unite the overseas Chinese without any interference.

We can weld 30 million overseas Chinese into a powerful force. Our government should do what is necessary in this regard. So far our government has already announced that the mainland students studying abroad will be given aid, including first of all the opportunity of being given Republic of China passports, and also scholarships to defray their expenses. But in my view these two points will have only limited effect. I wonder whether you would have any suggestions about this question.

**General T'eng:** Those who have been leading the movement on the mainland will undoubtedly all be killed by the Communists. But the Communists will have no chance of eliminating the intellectual elite who are studying overseas. These latter will be the new leaders of all walks of life in mainland China when they go back in the future. Therefore, they are very precious. We have to make a careful plan to provide them with jobs and their daily needs, and this aid is an integral part of our leadership in the recovery of mainland China. How can we help them with their daily needs? This is a problem we should study.

What about their future? I don't think they have to join the KMT, but we have to assist them in creating a political organization of the right type, and then in winning over more and more Communists into this new political organization in order to take the place of the Communists. In my personal opinion, we have to assist them to choose the right path in political development, and we have to take this opportunity to lay a solid foundation for improving Chinese political institutions. Therefore, I sincerely hope that they will be able to create a party inspired by universal democracy under the Three Principles of the People. This will be the first step towards overthrowing the Communists and replacing the Communist regime.

The second step will be to guide China's march into universal democracy under the Three Principles of the People, thus fulfilling Dr. Sun Yat-sen's idea of having two parties alternately ruling the country. Dr. Sun Yat-sen's idea of a two-party system was modeled on the two-party system of the United States. The special character of the two-party system is that the two parties share the basic principles of democracy, obey the constitution, and only disagree with one another on their policy platforms and programs. Which party wins and which party loses is determined by the will of the people as expressed in elections. Everybody accepts the rules of the democratic game, and even today's loser can be a candidate at the next election. This competition is healthy and brings political progress. Therefore, the model of the

two-party system is the best political system. It is superior to a multi-party system, or to a single-party system.

My main point is how to help the mainland students abroad to organize a party in the spirit of universal democracy. After they have organized this political party, they should assume responsibility for uniting all the overseas Chinese. Within a certain period of time, they should organize the 30 million overseas Chinese into a single unit so that we can isolate Communist China in the international arena, especially in regard to their diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan. Let us take the diplomatic relations of the Communists with the United States, Japan, and other countries, and make them into an empty form without any content, and let us fill our own relations with these countries with substance even if we do not have formal ties with them. In this way we can secure practical support from all nations in our efforts to recover mainland China in a short time. All of this must be carefully planned by the KMT.

**Lao:** Your idea is brilliant and very far-reaching. Nobody else has thought about this. But some people may have questions about the name, Universal Democratic Party. Because some people say that if you want to use the word democracy, you should not put any adjectives in front of it. But you add an adjective meaning "universal" or "belonging to all the people." What does this mean? You have to give an explanation that people can understand easily.

**General T'eng:** Yes. Recently I saw an article published by a professor in the *China Daily News*. He wrote that putting an adjective in front of the word democracy is absolutely wrong. Actually, what he wrote is wrong. We have to realize that there must be an adjective in front of the word democracy. Otherwise, it will be totally unclear, because today everybody is talking about democracy, not only in the Western world, but even among the Communists. What the Communists are talking about is so-called classless democracy. What the West is talking about is capitalist democracy. What we are talking about is universal democracy under the the Three Principles of the People. It makes a great deal of difference which of these three kinds of democracy we are talking about. If you say only democracy, then it is not clear what sort of democracy you are talking about. Therefore, if we don't add an adjective in front of democracy, can we make our meaning clear? I have been emphasizing this quite often.

The democracy which Dr. Sun Yat-sen insisted on is universal democracy. This is entirely different from the democracy the Western world talks about, and of course it is even more different from what the Communists intend.

Democracy in the Western world started with Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu, etc. Basically democracy presupposes liberty and equality. According to the United States Constitution, democracy is also full of the spirit of liberty and equality. But in practice, things look different. Today

the Americans say democracy, but they don't mention equality. It has become a so-called pacifist democracy. Democracy only contains liberty, but no equality. Why is this? Average people are not concerned with this matter. It is because Western civilization started from the Greeks, and the Greeks were a business culture. Normally, merchants are selfish. They are utilitarians. Utilitarianism concentrates on the individual, and thus becomes individualism. If utilitarianism or individualism is practiced in a nation, the nation will be dominated by jingoism. This shows that Western culture is based on utilitarianism. The freedom and equality contained in democracy laid the foundation for rationalism. That means that within a party or group of people, individuals can live and share the same ideas according to their own choice. This is not individualism. But in the Western world they use the individual point of view to practice democracy, and naturally, equality is lost. Therefore, they only talk about liberty, and do not mention equality.

The Communist parties do exactly the opposite. From the classless point of view, they use equality to fight against capitalism. After they seize political power, the result of equality turns out to be a dictatorship, and people totally lose their freedom. Therefore, Communists never talk about freedom. The democracy they talk about is democracy without freedom.

Freedom and equality are human, rational choices. They must both be contained by democracy. Democracy in the West, without equality, and the democracy in the Communist countries, without freedom, are both fake democracy. The societies constructed using these kinds of democracy are both class societies. In one society, the bourgeoisie is the ruling class. In the other society, the classless class is the ruling class. These two are polar opposites. In a class society, with stress, fraud, extortion, etc., can there be harmonious social life? In a society without harmonious social life, how can people find happiness? Therefore, the class society is a society of suffering.

Today we are talking about revolution. What is to be revolutionized? The suffering and depravity of class society must be eliminated. The democracy Dr. Sun Yat-sen talked about is a democracy that contains both equality and freedom. It is a classless universal democracy which brings everybody the same equality and freedom. Universal democracy is the best medicine to kill the sickness of class society, and it is the rational choice of human nature. The future of all mankind points in this direction. Practicing universal democracy is an idea based on reason and supported by the KMT. We have been fighting for this and we have achieved it to a certain degree.

Since so many of the intellectual elite are studying overseas and have already turned away from the mainland regime, they have already turned away from the Communist tyranny. Where should they go in the future? Certainly they should not go back to the path leading to this sickness of class

democracy. They should march forward on the road of healthy universal democracy. If they do so, they can assume the burden of responsibility for dealing with the future of China. As for us, we should help them by insisting on this correct direction, not only helping them with daily needs, but also helping them to develop an optimistic future for the Chinese people. This is a very rare opportunity, so to join our hands and work together is the most important thing.

**Lao:** You have already pointed out the general direction that policy thinking in the KMT should follow. What about organizing—are there any further ideas that everybody should be aware of?

**General T'eng:** In its organizational form, this is a political party based on universal democracy. It should be organized as a united front of the whole people. But the entire people cannot be part of the united front. Only if the united front of the whole people can be formed so as to represent the whole people can it be fully developed. A political party is not an organization of the entire people, but is an organization which represents the entire people, and this representative role does not derive from the trust of the whole people. It is the political party working within the other organizations which earns the right to represent the entire people. How can the organizations function to represent the entire people? We need leaders from different walks of life to become members of the party. This is a question of people. How can people be represented? We need to have a policy that can represent the interests of the entire people. People and policy can represent the whole people and can make this party capable of constituting a party of the whole people. If we really do this, in the future we will practically have two KMT parties.

Who is going to rule? That all depends on whose policy can correspond best to the people's needs. The choice will be made strictly by the people. That will bring the political life of China into a system in which the political parties and the government can work closely together.

**Lao:** What is the quality of universal democracy? Should it be the same doctrine as the KMT? Would it be a revolutionary universal democratic party like the KMT?

**General T'eng:** Yes, it should be the same. This is because we are in a global anti-Communist war. Only if we can win a global victory can we really prevail. To win only in one part of the world is not final victory. In the quest for global victory, each nation must create its own universal democratic party. According to this effective standard, each universal democratic party should be a democratic fighting unit.

The quality of the democratic political parties in the West is such that they cannot represent the whole people. In addition, these are not combat parties. Therefore, they cannot defeat the Communists. You must realize that these democratic parties in the West are essentially peacetime parties, without any combat capabilities.

According to my creative strategic plan, we need to change these democratic parties into combat parties. If we employ these democratic combat parties against the Communist dictatorial combat parties, we will be in an advantageous position. Why? This is because a democratic combat party contains a self-governing potential, and the dictatorial combat party is disciplined by force, and cannot have this self-governing potential. There is a great difference between real self-government and discipline by force. You can see the obvious difference if you make your observations over the long run.

How can we change a democratic party into a combat party? We of the KMT already have a very good organizing principle. It is called democratic centralism. This is the principle that can change a pacifist democratic party into a combat party. This principle was designed by Dr. Sun Yat-sen personally, but the KMT has not implemented this principle in practice. Average people think that this principle is similar to Communist democratic centralism. Actually, there is a great deal of difference. Because the principle of an organization is only a method and an organization must be designed according to the task that it is supposed to fulfill, that also means its design corresponds to its doctrine. Democratic centralism is in line with the Three Principles of the People and with universal democracy, and it is not a dictatorial system.

The democratic centralism of the Communists derives from the essence of dictatorial Marxism-Leninism. It is not democratic. Therefore, Communist democratic centralism is totally different. In the free world, democracy is the goal and centralism is the method, whereas in the Communist world, centralized control is the goal and "democracy" is merely the means. Thus, as a matter of fact, the democratic centralism of the Communists is a dictatorship. In Marxism-Leninism, only certain classes can exercise political power, so the Communists will not let anybody talk about democracy. To fulfill the goal of class dictatorship there must be dictatorial control of the society from top to bottom.

In the West, the principle of democratic centralism is a reasonable way to exercise power, based on discussion and election in a completely democratic form. Power is centralized only to carry out decisions that have been made in this way. There are guarantees that the centralized power will only carry out democratic decisions. If democratic centralism in the West functions well, it can develop unity of purpose and concentrate the efforts of a society to meet the needs of all sorts of conflicts. In that case, democratic centralism would be the basis of a true democratic combat party.

**Lao:** We still have two important questions which have arisen among the overseas Chinese and which have a great deal of importance for our anti-Communist action in the future. The first is how to permit all the overseas Chinese to exert the maximum influence on the situation in mainland China. The second question is how to seize this opportunity to re-

build our international anti-Communist program on a new and higher level. Since the situation is very complicated, can you tell us how we can get to work on these two points?

**General T'eng:** Very well, I will answer the question about the overseas Chinese first. Fundamentally speaking, overseas Chinese are always anti-Communists. They are our main forces for the anti-Communist battle outside of China proper. According to our past experience, Communist China has a careful plan to infiltrate people into the overseas Chinese communities, under the cover of the diplomatic relations which they maintain. They use all possible ways to sabotage the anti-Communist movement in this overseas theater of conflict. So the efforts of the overseas Chinese are not yet sufficiently concentrated on targeting the Communists. As the situation changes today, it causes the enemy to retreat while we can advance. The enemy's elite are transformed into our allies. Even though the enemy can still maintain diplomatic relations with many countries, the enemy's diplomats are no longer working effectively. The diplomats who remain in the enemy's service, even if they want to advance the enemy's cause, are forced to be silent. Therefore, this is a great opportunity for us to unite the overseas Chinese with a minimum of interference.

How can we unite the overseas Chinese, and how can we organize them? In my book *Turning Defeat into Victory*, there is a special chapter which offers some general ideas about how to do this, and therefore I need not repeat these ideas here. Earlier in this interview, I have brought forth proposals, which I developed some time ago on how to assist the overseas Chinese professors and students after the defeat of the democracy movement by the Communists, since this was a defeat which I foresaw.

I would now like to mention a few more practical ideas. Realistically speaking, these professors and students urgently need to have an improved organizational life, so that they can be spiritually sustained by some organizational form. If their daily needs can also be taken care of by this organization, and if they can be totally integrated into this organization, then they will be totally devoted to the anti-Communist struggle. If we cannot create this kind of organization, the professors and students abroad will be put into an isolated situation. Under these circumstances, we should help them to create this political party at once. If we do not do so, we will never find an adequate way of solving all the problems the professors and students must face. The professors and students know the enemy better than we do, and they know how to confront the enemy and defeat him. Therefore, if the professors and students can create a suitable organization, then they will be able to help us to expose agents the enemy has infiltrated into the overseas Chinese community.

In addition, this will help to purify the overseas Chinese community and to make the organizations of the overseas Chinese stronger. Thus we can develop the total strength of the overseas Chinese community and allow each one of the

overseas Chinese to exert a direct anti-Communist influence on mainland China. This will bring us to a highly effective level of operations. If 30 million overseas Chinese can each exert an effective influence within mainland China, this is the practical way to conduct our political counter-attack on the mainland. In this way mainland China will be under political attack from outside as well as from within.

We should use all possibilities to cooperate with the anti-Communists within mainland China so as to create a highly efficient and systematic political attack from inside and outside the mainland. Even if we were unable to stay in cooperation with networks on the mainland, and if we were only able to fight the Communists by attacking targets of opportunity, even then the combination of the overseas Chinese community and the rebellious mainland population could still pose a threat to the Communists that could bring them to collapse. However, we must pay a lot of attention to those elite intellectuals, since they will play a decisive role in the anti-Communist movement because of their knowledge of intelligence networks and their mastery of the organizing process.

Therefore, no matter which way we choose, if we can unite all the overseas Chinese, that will give our enemy a knock-out blow.

*To be continued.*

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