

Taiwan: Election Stolen To Provoke a Crisis?

by Leni Rubinstein

The only way to understand the current election crisis in Taiwan, is to see it in the context of the international financial, economic, and strategic crisis, as part of the eruption of a global “strategy of tension” to prevent a constructive “Eurasian” solution of that crisis. This strategy of tension is documented in this and recent issues of *EIR*; Taiwan is one of several of its flashpoints in Asia.

Although pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DDP) President Chen Shui-bian has received a Central Election Commission certificate confirming his re-election, the final outcome of the Presidential elections held in Taiwan on March 20 is still uncertain.

Chen Shui-bian won with a razor-thin margin—less than 30,000 votes, about 0.2%, out of over 13 million votes cast—while about 330,000 votes were declared invalid, a number several times higher than at previous elections. Adding to this odd picture was the strange shooting incident the day before the election, which superficially wounded Chen and his running mate, Annette Lu. Apart from drumming up sympathy votes, it also prevented between 40,000 and 200,000 military and police personnel from voting (they are traditionally supporters of the opposition parties), as they were put on an emergency alert—the number thus disenfranchised is currently being disputed. It should be noted that a former Air Force commander in chief, a former Army Commander in chief, and a former Navy commander in chief all publicly came out in support for the united opposition, the “Pan-Blue Alliance.”

The Pan-Blue opposition, represented by Lian Chan from the Kuomintang (KMT) and James Soong from the Peoples First Party (PFP), is filing two separate lawsuits with the High Court. The first challenges Chen’s victory and demands a recount, a demand that Chen, on March 27, agreed to comply with, under pressure from continued mass demonstrations. The High Court has received a notification from Chen that he agrees to the recount request, which might speed up the process. However, even if the recount produces results to Chen’s benefit, the election dispute might still not be over.

A second lawsuit demanding a nullification of the entire election, a move that could result in new elections, is expected to be filed in the next days. The Pan-Blue Alliance demands an investigation of the election-eve shooting incident, claiming

that it might have been rigged; an investigation of how many military and police personnel were prevented from voting; and an investigation into the 330,000 invalid ballots cast.

Rising Polarization Brings Geopolitical Threat

Observers in Taiwan contacted by *EIR* said that they fear the recount process and the challenges surrounding the election will be a dragged-out fight. Further, as the DDP has refused to create an independent and impartial task force to conduct an investigation, as demanded by the Pan-Blue Alliance, and instead is insisting that the investigations have to be conducted “within the system,” a truthful outcome is questionable.

As to “rubbing it in,” the DDP and its ally, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), are planning to hold two mass rallies on April 10 to celebrate their victory, one to be hosted by Chen Shui-bian, the other by Lee Teng-hui, founder of the TSU and Taiwan’s President prior to Chen Shui-bian.

The divisiveness within the population is greater than ever, spurred by the propaganda from the DDP, claiming that the island’s deteriorating economic situation is the fault of mainland China, and from constant public attacks on “mainlanders” (i.e., descendants of the people that came to Taiwan in 1948-49 together with KMT founder Chiang Kai-shek). An unresolved fight, leaving the situation hanging in limbo, would further this destructive process and make Taiwan more vulnerable for geopolitical manipulations.

In the four years that Chen Shui-bian has been in office, the DDP has taken control over the media, key positions in state-owned companies, and other key sectors; has launched over 100 bills to “reform” Taiwan’s financial, media, education, and banking sectors (mainly pushing for deregulation and “liberalization”); and has been promoting a “de-sinofication” of Taiwan. This is reflected in the efforts to change the curriculum in the schools, where, for example, the textbooks in history will emphasize that of the island of Taiwan, as separate from the history of China. From the 15th Century on, the history of China is now to be taught in Taiwan schools under the rubric of “world” history. Last Autumn, the Council for Cultural Affairs launched a “National Languages Development Law” which stipulates that Taiwan will have no specific official language. If passed, the law will allow district governments to decide their own common languages!

In his first interview after the March 20 elections, to the *Washington Post*, Chen Shui-bian, unfazed by the indecisive election results, stated his intent to write a new constitution for Taiwan, approve it in a referendum in 2006, and enact it by 2008. He further stated: “Right now, the people of Hong Kong are fighting for direct elections for their chief executive and general elections for the entire legislature, but the Beijing authorities are unable to consent. They even say, ‘Wait another 30 years and we will see.’ I think this is very ridiculous. For the 23 million people of Taiwan, this is the greatest warning and also the clearest signal.” The following day, Chen



Former Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui—an asset of anti-China circles in Japan and among Cheney's neo-conservative warhawks in the United States—has led provocations against mainland China and drawn current President Chen Shui-bian along into them. The current crisis over Chen's disputed re-election could become a cause of war.

was quoted by the BBC: "Taiwan is one country and the other side is another country, and neither exercises jurisdiction over the other."

These highly provocative statements should cause alarm, as any moves to sever Taiwan's legal ties with mainland China represent a *casus belli*, as repeatedly stated by senior Chinese officials.

Lee Represents Global Anti-China Circles

The continued destructive role of former President Lee Teng-hui—internally in Taiwan, and very importantly, as a puppet for anti-China circles in Japan—is largely ignored. Lee was instrumental in securing the election of Chen Shui-bian in 2000, and his role since then has been to issue one extreme and provocative proposal and statement after another, which then would be repeated by Chen Shui-bian in a radical, but—in contrast to Lee—seemingly more moderate fashion. A couple of examples suffice to illustrate the *modus operandi*.

In the beginning of the election campaign, Lee called a press conference in Taipei for Japanese journalists, in which he stated that he hoped that Taiwan could build itself into a democratic and independent nation in five years. "The R.O.C. [Republic of China] no longer exists, and Taiwan is not a part of Peoples Republic of China," Lee said. He called

for Taiwan to complete four tasks: legislate a referendum law; enact a new Taiwan constitution; compile history textbooks carrying correct contents; and, educate Taiwan's new generation about the imperative of building a new independent nation. Lee stressed that this agenda must be achieved by 2008-10, before China grows too strong. A few days later, Chen Shui-bian issued his proposal for a referendum and a new constitution.

At one election meeting, where Chen and Lee appeared together, Chen stated: "Although Taiwan is an independent, sovereign country, it has long been neglected by the international community. . . . Promoting a new constitution and letting the people ratify it through a referendum, is a necessary act to transform Taiwan into a normal, great country. . . . I believe that God granted the people of Taiwan the right of self-determination, the right for people to exercise their free will in deciding the future of our country." These provocative statements were then followed by Lee's "Scriptural" ravings; "The Israelites didn't acquire the promised land without reason, but they made a long-term effort, including experiencing the pains of war, to establish their nation. Likewise, people who identify with Taiwan must have great passion for this land. The campaign to change the country's name from Republic of China to Taiwan, reminds the Taiwanese that we need to build a normal country by constructing a new constitution. . . . The people of Taiwan have to acknowledge their love for this land, because nothing could replace it. God is with us, so there is no need to fear the threats from China."

As *EIR* has documented ("Puppet Emperor Lee Teng-hui," *EIR*, Jan. 21, 2000), Lee has published a number of books and speeches calling for the break-up of China, and continues to do so, playing the role of a puppet in echoing the policies and aspirations of the same Japanese factions used to launch the previous (1894 and 1930s) military aggressions against China. These factions fear the change in the military balance in regards to the South China Sea, if Taiwan were to pursue a path of peaceful reunification with mainland China.

Taiwan represents the key player to be used as a match to tinder, creating a strategic conflict between the United States and China, and thereby destroying the tremendous potential for economic development of Eurasia. The local election "brawl" in Taiwan must be seen in this larger perspective.

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