

Why Does Taiwan's Ma Ying-jeou Not Want to End China's Civil War?

Written by Jerome F. Keating Ph.D.
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A frequent joke that comes up in the United States is when those who are from the Southern States are at a party with those who are Northerners and the Southerners claim that the Civil War never ended. It happens when discussions turn regional and political; thus someone will inevitably say, "Save your Confederate dollars my friends, the South will rise again." The joke is accepted by all since it provides a humorous way to avoid the potential tension and hostility that can arise when politics as well as religion are discussed. In Taiwan, however, any such past Civil War jokes linked to China's and not Taiwan's past are not a way of relieving potential tension, but the result of its current president and some others living in a bygone age and not being able to let go of it. Why? This is what Taiwanese need examine as the 2012 elections approach.

For starters, begin with how Taiwan's Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) continues to try to push its 100 year party celebration on Taiwan. This effort calls for a serious and analytical examination of the past. Is it not true for example that China's Civil War began in the very first year of the republic's abortive inception when the 1911 republicans could not get past Yuan Shi-kai's army and had to compromise with him? This led Yuan to strive to fulfill his own emperor tendencies. True, he forced the Qing Emperor to step down, but then he started a never-ending struggle between a variety of power hungry warlords and warlords in sheep's clothing to try to grab all the marbles. Democracy never came to China. Taiwan, of course as part of the Japanese Empire was a spectator through all of this. But as for the so-called Republic of China (ROC) in this on-again, off-again struggle such a republic was in reality never realized. In 1949, any such dream did finally end with the Chinese Communist party (CCP) defeating the KMT and proclaiming the birth of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), as one of the many contenders in this past struggle over the aborted Republic of China lost because under its rule, it had created the Republic of Corruption (ROC). Thus Mao, a power hungry autocrat of the CCP per suasion, was able to convince the people to drive the KMT off the continent. Fortunately for the KMT, but not for the Taiwanese, the KMT was able to run to the still undetermined post WWII Taiwan which it then occupied. With martial law and a one-party state the KMT then set up what some call the Republic of Carpetbaggers (still ROC) in exile.

Lee Teng-hui tried to end all this back in 1991 when he terminated the "Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion" and forced the KMT legislators, National Assembly etc., all elected way back in 1947, to retire. With redefined boundaries, Taiwan finally started on its way to a democratic country. It fully achieved this in 1996 when all the citizens elected their president for the first time. Lee subsequently proposed all future dealings with PRC China be done under state-to-state auspices and that idea was continued by

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the next president Chen Shui-bian. Why then, Taiwanese must ask, has the current president Ma Ying-jeou, returned the party to party days of the Civil War when the KMT and the CCP claimed competing interpretations of what was and who ruled a so-called "one China"?

Numerous other questions arise that Taiwanese must examine. Why does Ma continue to promote the fabricated "1992 consensus"; with the CCP and the KMT each having their own interpretation of "one China"? Why should Taiwanese celebrate a stillborn ROC which in reality is only 100 years of the KMT's checkered and corrupt past? What does the CCP hope to gain by seeming to accept this fabricated consensus? The CCP won the Civil War and after many struggles got Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT kicked out of the United Nations. Why does it tolerate this second bogus interpretation? Does it also want to disenfranchise the Taiwanese who finally won the right to democratically elect their leaders in 1996?

Other items come up as Taiwanese examine the current situation. Was not the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) forced on it by Ma? ECFA never had the proper Legislative Yuan examination and approval. What about the issues of transitional justice and the dinosaur judges of its KMT martial law days? Ma tries to claim that corruption lay with Taiwan's past president, but the Bribe Payers Index (BPI) states that Taiwan made no progress in stopping bribery or corruption under four years of Ma. The KMT flag, and the KMT Constitution are things that need to be changed, but they can wait their turn. First the people must rid themselves of those who live in a bygone era and still hanker for the KMT's surreal dream of what constitutes "one China." Taiwanese need to elect a Taiwan-centered president who envisions a Taiwan that is really part of the Twenty-first Century.

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