

## New face needed for NT\$200 bills

Written by Martin Oei 000

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Following the introduction of the NT\$200 bill, very few people have chosen to use it. One reason for the low adoption rate is that Chiang Kai-shek's (蔣介石) image is on the bill and as a form of silent protest many Taiwanese have avoided using it.

As a result of Chiang's actions following the 228 Incident in 1947 he is known as a butcher in Taiwan.

Outside the Houses of Parliament in London there stands a statue of Oliver Cromwell. When it was first erected, the statue put the cat amongst the pigeons and it still provokes debate to this day, not least because Cromwell, when he assumed the role of lord protector, killed a great number of people.

We can say for certain that Cromwell's image would never appear on a British bank note.

Although Scotland and Northern Ireland both have the authority to issue their own bank notes and coinage, those issued by the Bank of England are the most widely used in the UK. They feature images of Britain's most noted academics and greatest political leaders.

Of the bills in circulation, the £5 bill carries an image of World War II leader and recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, former British prime minister Winston Churchill, while the £10 bill has an image of Jane Austen, who wrote *Pride and Prejudice*. The £20 bill features an image of Adam Smith, the "father of economics" and author of *The Wealth of Nations*.

Taiwan should use similar criteria when selecting an image to replace Chiang on its NT\$200 bill.

Democracy advocate Deng Nan-jung (鄧南靖) is acknowledged by all Taiwanese as the "father of free speech" in Taiwan. Without his sacrifice of self-immolation in 1989, the nation would not enjoy the freedoms it does today.

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If the new NT\$200 bill were to feature Deng's portrait, this would not only provide tangible evidence of transitional justice, it would also resolve the issue of the public's reluctance to use the bill.

If Taiwanese were reminded daily of Deng's sacrifice, Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Kaohsiung mayoral candidate Han Kuo-yu (韓國瑜) and his ilk would not be able to get away with their shameful argument that freedom of assembly should be restricted to prioritize economic growth.

Despite Germany having the strongest economy of any European nation, German citizens frequently take to the streets en masse to protest against the extremist Alternative for Germany. Striking workers are also a common occurrence in Germany, yet none of this has affected the nation's economy.

I would like to ask New Taipei City Deputy Mayor Hou You-yi (侯友宜) — who is also the KMT's New Taipei City mayoral candidate in next Saturday's elections, and whose actions indirectly led to Deng's death in 1989 — how he would view the substitution of Chiang for Deng on the NT\$200 bill.

Hou was never prosecuted for the criminal liability of his vile actions.

Taiwanese society is very forgiving. In other nations where transitional justice has been implemented, someone such as Hou would not have been allowed to get off scot-free, let alone participate in an election.

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Translated by Edward Jones

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