

Reuters and Associated Press get it wrong on Taiwan's history

Written by Michael Richardson
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Recent news service reports from Reuters on the \$6.4 billion weapons sale from the United States to the Republic of China in-exile on Taiwan have distorted the 20th Century history of the island.

Reuters, in an explanation why such a large weapons buy is needed, mentions the People's Republic of China claims to Taiwan but tells readers that the island has been "self-governing" since the 1949 Chinese civil war.

Reuters refers to the Republic of China as Taiwan and completely fails to mention Japanese ownership of the island until ratification of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952 in its reports.

Meanwhile, the Associated Press is busy telling readers the "two sides" split in 1949 without a word that Nationalist Chinese control of Taiwan after World War II was courtesy the U.S. Navy's Seventh Fleet in October 1945.

Somehow, the news organizations seem to have forgotten Japan's colonial occupation of Taiwan, or Formosa as the island was commonly called, and totally ignore any ownership claims of the native islanders.

If Reuters and Associated Press reporters and editors were to brush up on their history lessons they would learn that Japan owned Taiwan by treaty for the first half of the 20th Century, not China.

The reporters would also learn that the people of Taiwan did not choose to live under the Republic of China and practice self-government. Instead, the ROC was forced on the island by military force and maintained by harsh and brutal martial law.

The news agencies would also learn that Taiwan's native peoples, long-called "savages" and other pejorative names, have been discriminated against on their own island by the occupation governments.

In 1949, when Chiang Kai-shek's defeated Kuomintang troops fled to Taiwan after losing China to the Communists, there were not "two sides" but three--the two Chinese combatants and the ignored, oppressed Taiwanese people.

In 1949, after the United States imposed the Kuomintang army on Taiwan, the island was not self-governing by the people; instead, Taiwan was controlled by a cruel dictatorship.

Reuters and AP staffers that want just a summary can study last year's decision by the District of Columbia U.S. Court of Appeals in the case *Roger C.S. Lin, et al vs. United States of America*. The federal appellate court found the residents of Taiwan to be "stateless" and living in "political purgatory" that infects their daily lives.

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