

Eye on Washington by Nicholas F. Benton

Taiwan braces for the Solarz treatment

Another U.S. economic and strategic ally in the Asian theater has been targeted by Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.) for the same treatment of harassment and intimidation that has already caused the fall of the government of the Philippines and is closing in on the same achievement for South Korea.

Solarz's chief political backers are Syrian-mafia families based in Brooklyn with ties to the Soviet KGB. On May 7, Solarz announced that he, in collaboration with liberal Republican Jim Leach of Iowa, has introduced a House Concurrent Resolution demanding "human rights"—namely, the legalization of opposition parties—in Taiwan.

Currently, while independents are allowed to run for public office in Taiwan and there are independent newspapers which criticize government policy, new political parties are not allowed because in almost every case, serious opposition to the ruling government has been run by agents-of-influence of the People's Republic of China.

This is a security question for this tiny island, given that P.R.C. officials are on record repeatedly stating that a military invasion of Taiwan is "not out of the question" for them.

Rep. Mark Siljander (R-Mich.) testified at the hearing, raising in particular concern about the anticipated sale of an "avionics modernization

package" to the P.R.C., which, while it would not significantly enhance the P.R.C.'s military balance with the Soviet Union, would represent a tip in their favor in the narrow Formosa Strait that separates Taiwan from the Chinese mainland by less than 100 miles.

This pending \$500 million arms sale would enhance China's F-8, a twin-engined, delta-wing, high-altitude interceptor, and would include airborne radar, navigation equipment, a heads-up display, mission computer, air-data computer and data bus, and would give the P.R.C. the capabilities of 50 all-weather, day-night modified F-8s.

All U.S. allies in the region fiercely oppose the sale, including Japan, South Korea, the ASEAN nations, and, of course, Taiwan.

In addition, since this would represent a security threat to Taiwan, American business confidence in Taiwan would be undermined. Taiwan is the U.S.'s sixth-largest trading partner, engaged in \$22 billion of two-way sales last year. This has helped fuel the so-called economic miracle in Taiwan which has seen the tiny island enjoy annual growth rates close to 10%.

It is vital to the U.S. farm sector, for example, that Taiwan consumes more soybean and corn per capita from the United States than any other nation in the world.

Siljander said that he tried to block the arms deal to the P.R.C. by introducing two resolutions into Congress, one calling for stopping the sale altogether, and the other calling for giving Taiwan an equivalent arms package to balance out the effect.

He said he had dropped his legislation after a visit from the State Department, which provided him with "classified information," that, he said, satisfied him that Taiwan's security would not be undermined by the deal.

He confessed that he "didn't get everything he wanted" out of the discussion, but went along with it.

Kicking our friends in the teeth

The relevant question was put to Solarz by Rep. Don Burton (R-Ind.), "Why, since the so-called human-rights violations in Taiwan are not nearly as egregious as those in the P.R.C., shouldn't it be more of a priority to pass a resolution condemning the P.R.C.'s record, than to harass Taiwan?"

Solarz said that resolutions have limited power, but that they do bear more weight on our allies than on our enemies.

"Exactly the point," Burton replied, "and because of this policy, we are finding ourselves with fewer and fewer allies. We kick them in the teeth, and let the totalitarian regimes go untouched."

"I happen to believe that the more democratic a government is, the more stable it is," Solarz replied.

Representative Toby Roth (R-Wisc.) then chimed in, noting that the most stable government in the world is the most totalitarian—namely, the Soviet Union.

Solarz exposed his true disdain for democracy, when he denigrated the pro-Marcos demonstrations that have been occurring in the Philippines by saying they were the protests of people attending a shoe-sales convention, who were upset that they had lost their number-one client.

Finally, Roth pointed out that the new Solarz-Leach resolution against Taiwan was completely politically motivated, since Congress had already fully expressed its concern for human rights in that country in a resolution passed as part of the Foreign Aid Authorization Act last July.