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## Conference Report

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# Chinese unity debated in Hong Kong

by Webster G. Tarpley

The unity of China has always been a central theme in that country's philosophical tradition, which is among the oldest and richest in the world. Already in the sixth century before Christ, the school of Confucius was dedicated to the philosophical and economic education of ministers and officials capable of providing enlightened and progressive administration in the various states of the Chinese world. The goal of Confucius, and of countless Chinese thinkers of later epochs, was to promote a peaceful, unified, and developing China as an alternative to oligarchism and the endless internal strife of the Spring and Autumn-Warring States periods.

Today, almost two years after the repression of the democracy movement in Tiananmen Square, a Chinese national dialogue seeking the peaceful reunification of this great nation has emerged. The status of Hong Kong as a British colony will be terminated in 1997, and the Portuguese presence in Macao will end two years after that. In Taiwan, the National Reunification Committee of the Republic of China (R.O.C.) on Feb. 23, 1991 proclaimed a set of "Guidelines for National Reunification," which foresee stages of "reciprocal exchange" and "mutual trust and cooperation" between Taipei and the People's Republic of China (Beijing) before a final stage of negotiation for reunification finally brings the two sides together. The R.O.C. is preparing to take up de facto diplomatic contact with the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) through the medium of the newly created Straits Foundation, a private institution. Such events in China fit within the context of a more general drawing together of the East Asian nations (exemplified by the Malaysian proposal for regional economic cooperation) under the impact of renewed Anglo-American colonial aggression masquerading as Bush's "new world order."

### Unification within two to three years?

According to Gen. Teng Chieh of Taipei, who was Gen. Chiang Kai-shek's right-hand man for many years, the Chinese situation has been completely transformed during the last 18 months. General Teng is a member of the R.O.C. National Assembly which has just completed approval of a series of constitutional amendments designed to terminate the measures of special mobilization necessitated by the period of communist insurrection. As a result, political life on

Taiwan will soon be fully normalized and a new National Assembly will be elected before the end of the year. By Dec. 31, General Teng, who has served as a deputy since 1948, will go into a well-deserved retirement. But in the meantime, General Teng predicts that national unity for China could come within as little as two to three years.

More important than the precise timing, is peaceful reunification, avoiding war. General Teng says that the problem is best understood by the oldest living generation of Chinese statesmen, such as Deng Xiaoping and himself. This generation is concerned with restoring unity before they depart from the scene. General Teng notes that while the R.O.C. is looking for areas of agreement with the P.R.C., there are still evident areas of conflict. Chief among these are Beijing's "four insists" or four cardinal principals: the socialist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought, and Communist Party leadership. In General Teng's view, these "four insists" must yield to the principle of multi-party democracy on the mainland. At the age of 87, General Teng is reaching out to the younger generation in Taiwan with a new movement of education and political action designed to familiarize youth with the teachings of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek. His goal is to recruit one person in a hundred, and ultimately to carry the new organization to the mainland.

Two figures provide a basis for the new unification dialogue: The first is Confucius himself, who wrote of the need to create "a great commonwealth" in that spirit of benevolence which informs all his thought. Confucius is honored in Taiwan and also in the P.R.C., where he has been mobilized to help fill the void left by the dwindling credibility of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought. The second unifying figure is Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the great revolutionary and father of modern China who has always been honored on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. There is a large memorial to him in eastern Taipei, which is matched by an even larger memorial hall in Canton, which was built with the contributions of the overseas Chinese at the beginning of the 1930s.

### Extraordinary participation

It is thus a sign of the times that the Hong Kong University, where Dr. Sun Yat-sen studied medicine, joined with the

Taiwan Normal University to co-sponsor an international conference on "The Thought of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the Twenty-First Century," which was held in Hong Kong from April 25-27. The conference was chaired by Prof. L.L. Chao of Taiwan Normal University and by Prof. Chiu Ling-yeong of Hong Kong University. One extraordinary aspect of the conference was its participation. During the 1980s in Hong Kong, it has not been exceptional to witness academic conferences involving both Hong Kong and the P.R.C. But this conference was remarkable because it was one of the very first to bring together the P.R.C., the R.O.C., Hong Kong, Macao—in short, the components into which China has been divided over the past four centuries. Inviting R.O.C. scholars to come to Hong Kong has its own symbolic content: Both for P.R.C. reasons and for British reasons, R.O.C. citizens have had to tread very lightly in the colony, and R.O.C. officials risk becoming *persona non grata* under certain circumstances even today. Participants came from Beijing, Shanghai, Canton, and other parts of the mainland, along with all of the leading R.O.C. universities. Other scholars came from Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Australia. From Europe came Prof. Paolo Santangelo of the Istituto Universitario Orientale of Naples and Prof. I-Chuan Wu-Beyens of Belgium's Louvain University. In an American delegation that included professors from Berkeley, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), and the University of Maryland, the Schiller Institute was represented by its U.S. president, Webster G. Tarpley, and by Mrs. Leni Rubinstein, of the Schiller Institute China Bureau.

The atmosphere of the conference would have been inconceivable a few short years ago. It must be remembered that in contrast to divided Germany, where the two German states had established virtually normal relations by the early 1970s, visits and dialogue between the P.R.C. and the R.O.C. were prohibitively difficult until last year. The conference was therefore remarkable for its overall positive and constructive tone: As General Teng had suggested, today's Chinese are seeking areas of common ground and dialogue. Among the scholars taking part, there was general acceptance of the idea that Dr. Sun Yat-sen, his writings, his economics, and his political ideas, are of primary importance for the future reunification of China.

### **Dr. Sun's method appropriate for today**

An example is the paper presented on the first day by Prof. Lin Chia-yeou, of the Canton (P.R.C.) Sun Yat-sen University, on "Thought and Ideas of Dr. Sun's Railroad Program." Referring to Dr. Sun's economic development plan for China published in the early 1920s, Professor Lin pointed out the centrality of the railroad to all of Sun's economic writings, where it functions as a symbol for modernization and industrialization. It is the railroad that allows goods to be freely distributed to producers and consumers. The railroad must be combined with the construction of ocean

ports and inland waterways so as to create a three-dimensional transportation network. Dr. Sun, to save China, was working for a political revolution and then an economic recovery pivoted on railroad building. This is because transportation was in his view the foundation of industry, and railroads are the basis of transportation. Because China is such a huge country, border lands like Sinkiang, Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria exist which are vast and have a tremendous potential for agricultural abundance, and the only reason that they are underdeveloped is because of the lack of railroads. Professor Lin pointed out that according to Sun, San Francisco is an example of an American city that was underdeveloped until the railroad was built. More broadly, the economic prosperity of the U.S. was based on the transcontinental railway linking the east coast with the west coast, which made possible immigration and the settling of the west. Dr. Sun's conclusion to apply the American experience for the benefit of China meant to concentrate on building port cities, railroads, canals, and water projects for irrigation.

Prof. Chen XiQi, also of the Canton Sun Yat-sen University (and the chairman of the Guangdong Province Society of Sun Yat-sen Studies), spoke on the relevance of Dr. Sun's ideas for the world of the future. According to Sun, revolution and economic development were the ingredients necessary to make China a most progressive nation in a very short time. To do this, China must learn to separate the good from the bad in Western models. An independent, strong, unified China, cooperating with the nations of the world on an equal basis, would be a factor promoting world peace. Other P.R.C. speakers included Prof. Chieu Chieh of the Canton Sun Yat-sen University, who spoke about the 1912-13 Canton republican newspaper, *Min Sheng Ri Bao*, which was important for the movement that Dr. Sun led. Prof. Ge Rong-jin, of the Department of Philosophy of the People's University of Beijing and an official of the China Confucius Society, presented a paper on cosmological and epistemological aspects of Dr. Sun.

### **Nationalism and reunification**

Professor Jang of the Canton Sun Yat-sen University observed that for Sun, the content of nationalism was very strongly anti-Manchism and anti-feudalism. While Sun was not a socialist, there are socialist elements in his thinking. Sun, he stressed, is seen on the mainland as a progressive, especially in his later phases when his anti-imperialist pronouncements became more explicit. There is therefore broad agreement in favor of Sun Yat-sen in both P.R.C. and R.O.C., but there are also differences of evaluation, including differences inside the P.R.C. One point that must be borne in mind is that the P.R.C. is a socialist society, although at a comparatively early stage of socialism. Further merits of socialism are still destined to emerge, said Jang, who expressed the view that the reunified China will maintain the socialist choice.

Another P.R.C. speaker, Professor Ding of Shanghai, recalled Dr. Sun's years of effort to break the power of the warlords that emerged in China after 1911. Ding was emphatic that reunification must be achieved by peaceful means. Taking note of the R.O.C. reunification guidelines, he proposed that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait learn from one another so as to fulfill Dr. Sun's perspective of nationalism. According to Ding, Deng Xiaoping after 1949 had proposed that the mainland society be democratized, but this proposal was not adopted, leading to a situation where during the early 1980s centralized control was excessive. According to Ding, too much scattering of power can also be a problem, and Dr. Sun would not have been happy with U.S.-style federalism. Professor Ding expressed agreement with recent remarks of Gen. Chiang Wego of the R.O.C. (the younger son of the late Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek) to the effect that Dr. Sun's real message is autonomy not at the provincial level, but at the lower or county level. The P.R.C. is seeking to improve the quality of management by enlarging the private sector, although some areas will remain in the state sector. A central point will be to normalize the state of Chinese society, which implies a reliance on Confucius.

Certain areas of disagreement had become obvious. A number of R.O.C. speakers rejected the idea that a future China would continue to respect the socialist choice of 1949. Most R.O.C. speakers tended to criticize the P.R.C.'s "four insists" as a genuine stumbling block to the progress of national dialogue. Professor Kao of the R.O.C. challenged the P.R.C. concept of modernization: What does it mean when Deng Xiaoping says that his plan is to make the P.R.C. a modern society by the year 2050? Does this mean the fulfillment of the four modernizations decided by the P.R.C. XIII National Assembly? The P.R.C. wants to reach a per capita income of \$2,000 by the end of the century? That is not an ambitious goal, but, is it feasible? An R.O.C. speaker recalled Deng's pragmatic remark that it does not matter what color a cat is, as long as the cat can catch mice. The cat that catches all the mice on the mainland is precisely the socialist system, he said, and this is what must be changed.

### **Unequal relations with U.S.**

An insightful R.O.C. speaker was Fu Kuen-chen, Associate Professor of Law at the National Taiwan University. Fu, who has published on issues of international law and who hosts a weekly discussion program on one of the three R.O.C. networks, presented a paper on "A Re-Unified China with Multi-Jurisdiction." Fu pointed out that the division of China has allowed the nation to be victimized in important ways, including by the United States. The U.S. approach to Taiwan is to consider the island a part of China when that suits U.S. interests, and to consider Taiwan an independent country when that favors the United States. This is possible because Taiwan has been on the one hand de-recognized by the United States Executive branch through the Carter China card of

1979, but at the same time recognized de facto by the U.S. Congress through the Taiwan Relations Act! One example cited by Fu is the August 1989 exchange of notes extorted by the Bush administration from Taipei, according to which the U.S. arrogates to itself the right to board Taiwanese fishing vessels and other ships in the north Pacific to monitor their salmon catch and other results of drift-net fishing. This bullying, imperialist policy is justified by Washington with the argument that since many of the salmon come from U.S. rivers, the United States retains, if not sovereignty over the salmon, at least a responsibility for the well-being of the species!

Fu also showed how the 1982 United Nations Law of the Sea treaty defines the ocean floor as part of the "Common Heritage of Mankind," but excludes Taiwan from participating in the management or exploitation of these resources. According to Fu, if the U.S.S.R. can have three votes in the U.N. General Assembly (with Belorussia and the Ukraine), why can't 1.22 billion Chinese have at least two votes, Beijing and Taiwan? The transitional solution offered by Fu is that "Taiwan should be simply treated as a part of a divided China—one China, divided into two parts. The situation is not that different from that of the formerly divided Germany, or the divided Korea." To meet the needs of Taiwan, Tibet, Macao, Hong Kong, and perhaps Outer Mongolia, Fu proposed "federalism with multi-jurisdiction," with due process and other clauses similar to those of the U.S. federal Constitution.

Another important R.O.C. contribution came from Prof. Richard H. Yang of the Sun Yat-sen University in Kaoshiung, who quoted from Dr. Martin Luther King to advocate a government of laws, and not of the caprice of persons, however powerful. According to Professor Yang, the R.O.C. must live up to this ideal by instituting a process of judicial review through the Council of Grand Justice, which could decide such matters as the terms of members of the National Assembly. Professor Mu of the R.O.C. talked about the reform of higher education in the spirit of Dr. Sun. Debate was wide-ranging, with one questioner asking if the problem of stable democracy in Latin America could be solved through the application of Dr. Sun's ideas.

### **Threat of the 'new world order'**

The dialogue for Chinese-Chinese rapprochement and cooperation does not occur in a vacuum. Obstacles that cannot be neglected are the new and virulent phase of Anglo-American aggressivity ushered in by the new world order and the Gulf war. At the same time, much of the world is in the throes of an economic breakdown crisis centering on the Anglo-American world, but which is also very severe in the P.R.C., where 100,000,000 persons are now thought to be unemployed, homeless, or otherwise "redundant" under present economic arrangements. These points were touched on in the remarks of Webster G. Tarpley of the Schiller

Institute, who spoke on the morning of the final day of the conference proceedings on a panel chaired by Prof. John Wong of the Institute of East Asian Philosophies of the National University of Singapore. The title of Tarpley's paper was "Dr. Sun Yat-sen's 'International Development of China' and the Economics of Asian Infrastructure Today." Tarpley began by noting that all persons of good will, be they motivated by Confucian benevolence or by Plato's concept of the Good, must support the perspective of Chinese unification as a factor for world peace and development. Since it has been stressed that the reunification must be peaceful, we must recall that Germany had accomplished peaceful reunification only to be faced by a war in the Middle East with the U.S. and U.K. taking the leading role in aggression and genocide. Therefore China must be alert to such outside threats.

### **Sun's infrastructure plan still valid**

Tarpley showed that not only the method, but many of the specific conclusions of Dr. Sun's 1921 infrastructure plan retained their validity for today. Noting Sun's rejection of Marx and Adam Smith, Tarpley placed Dr. Sun in relation to the Leibniz-Hamilton-Lincoln school of economics as a branch of physics, represented by LaRouche today. All the great continental states owe their national unity and development to railroads and related infrastructure, Tarpley showed, citing Lincoln and the transcontinental railroad, Cavour in Italy, Friedrich List in Germany and Austria, and the Trans-Siberian railroad. By contrast, underdevelopment in Latin America and Africa is closely related to the lack of a continental railroad grid. Sun is right in stressing the need for railroads, irrigation, and related infrastructure in such areas as Sinkiang, for it is here that China can increase her arable land for the purpose of increasing food production on the model of California's Imperial Valley. Today, the railways built should be magnetic levitation railways. If we judge from France, the U.S., and Taiwan, the P.R.C., with 1.2 billion people, would require between 240 and 600 nuclear reactors to attain full development. This would give China the economic power of ten Japans, which explains why the Anglo-Americans, who are already hysterical about one Japan, do all they can to block China's development.

### **'Productive Triangle' option reviewed**

Reviewing the past ten years of P.R.C. economic reforms, Tarpley showed how the P.R.C. emphasis on coastal development alone must leave vast areas of the Chinese hinterland in underdevelopment. The coastal Special Economic Zones, like the Texas-Mexico border-area *maquiladoras*, are based on the premise of cheap labor, meaning low skills, low productivity, and low real profits. In fact, the productivity of mainland labor has probably declined since 1949.

By contrast, Dr. Sun's method of building continental infrastructure in depth is the surest route toward increasing

the productivity of labor. Quoting a recent study by LaRouche, Tarpley showed how the Special Economic Zones add a new Wall Street-Adam Smith primitive accumulation on top of several decades of communist primitive accumulation, guaranteeing a bad result. In this regard, the R.O.C. unification guidelines, which also refer solely to cooperation in the economic development of southeastern coastal areas of China, need to be broadened.

But, it might be argued, where in today's world of economic depression could the P.R.C. hope to obtain the modern capital goods necessary for real development in the spirit of Dr. Sun. Reviewing the crisis of the Anglo-American financial structures, Tarpley directed the attention of the scholars to the potential of united Germany and of the newly emerging nations of central and eastern Europe, with reference to the U.S.S.R. Tarpley illustrated in detail the LaRouche Paris-Berlin-Vienna "Productive Triangle" proposal for investment in magnetic rail, nuclear power, canals, telecommunications, and small and medium-size companies, along with Japan, as the potential source of the capital goods a unified China will require in order to be viable. Such a Eurasian development perspective is coherent with repeated references by Dr. Sun to the Indo-European, Euro-African, and Eurasian scope that serious railroad building must attain.

In conclusion, Tarpley also addressed the question of population. Dr. Sun was an opponent of Malthus, since he looked forward to a doubling of the Chinese population under conditions of technological modernization, and this emphasis is also to be found in Chiang Kai-shek. Today, about half of the P.R.C. territory is virtually empty, with only about 50 million people. Taiwan and Hong Kong have both gone from underdevelopment to a labor shortage in less than two generations, showing what would happen on the mainland under conditions of in-depth development. So if there are not enough hats to go around, it is better to get more hats than to start chopping off heads.

According to one scholar, Beijing now says that its repeated references to the option of reunification of China by force of arms are to be understood not as a threat to the R.O.C., but rather as a warning to various nations outside of China who might seek to seize or annex Taiwan.

This conference was a significant international event in East Asia. Mrs. Rubinstein was interviewed by the *Central Daily News* and the *United Daily News*, two of Taipei's largest news organizations, as well as by the China Television Service of the R.O.C. The Hong Kong and Taiwan press and other media carried detailed accounts of the exchanges among the scholars. This conference was therefore a step forward in the Chinese national dialogue leading to a new phase of rapprochement and pacification in which the economic and strategic ideas of LaRouche are destined to play an important role. The conference organizers, and especially Prof. Chiu Ling-yeong of Hong Kong, deserve a vote of thanks.