

movement has long-term radical implications, which some conservatives have grasped more quickly than liberals have. It makes the claim that investment decisions should be shaped by moral criteria and that citizen groups should have a voice in them—a step toward economic democracy. When President Reagan contemplates what to do to make the Sandinistas cry uncle, he would be unwise to bet that this new wave is only spring fever. □

■ THE MURDER OF HENRY LIU

# In Taiwan, Many Questions Remain

PATRICK SMITH

Taipei

**B**efore he was murdered last October in the garage of his Daly City, California, home, Henry Liu was best known here by his pen name, Jiang Nan, under which he wrote gossipy books and articles critical of Taiwan's leaders and the ruling Kuomintang Party. In the ensuing months, as the killing ballooned into the most damaging political scandal of the island's postwar history, it was revealed that Liu was a trained intelligence agent who allegedly worked for Taipei and Beijing and possibly for Washington. Last month in Taipei, in the trials of those accused of murdering him, Henry Liu the traitor eclipsed Jiang Nan, author of an embarrassing biography of President Chiang Ching-kuo. Although the killers were convicted, a large question went unanswered: Was their target Liu the double agent or Nan the dissident author?

Ever since the Taipei regime admitted that government intelligence agents were involved in Liu's death, the case has been a *cause célèbre*. Revelations of close links between the local underworld and the extensive and politically influential intelligence community have shaken public confidence in the Chiang regime. Because Liu, an American citizen, was murdered in California, the affair also focused unwelcome attention on Taipei's clandestine operations in the United States. On April 16 the House of Representatives passed a resolution calling for the extradition of the guilty parties, and the incident has strained ties between Taipei and Washington, although not as severely as many press reports have suggested.

For Taiwan's government, the most serious ramifications of the case have been domestic, however. Liu's critical writings on the island's ruling family appeared at a time when the issue of presidential succession was much on people's minds. President Chiang is 76 years old and a diabetic. Many here wondered if the motive for the killing was to silence Liu—that it was not the work of some rogue intelligence officers, as had been portrayed. Laying those rumors

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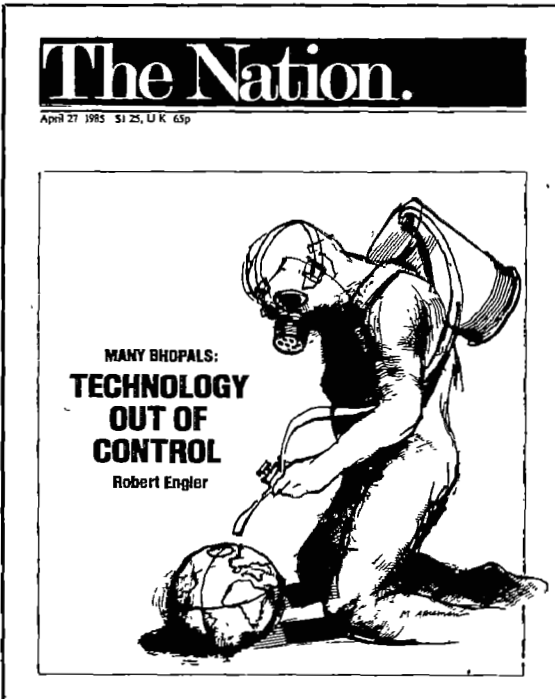
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The main participants in the debate were: Walter Schneir and Miriam Schneir, authors, Invitation to an Inquest; Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, authors, and Sol Stern, research assistant, The Rosenberg File: A Search for the Truth; and Elizabeth Holtzman, moderator. There were also questions and comments from Michael Meeropol, Morton Sobell, Marshall Perlin, James Weinstein, Victor Navasky and others.

A complete record of this extraordinary event can now be purchased in transcript or cassette. Transcripts are available for \$24 each; cassettes are \$19 each. There are special discounts on orders of five or more. Send check or money order, payable to The Nation, to: "Rosenbergs," The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011 (a project of The Nation Institute).

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of higher involvement to rest has been the government's top priority, yet after the verdicts were in, the doubters were not silenced.

That comes as no surprise. At the trial of the murderers, on April 9, only three witnesses besides the defendants were heard, and no material evidence was introduced by the prosecution. After seven hours of testimony, a Taipei district court convicted two prominent members of the local underworld. Ten days later a military court in a suburb of the capital found three senior intelligence officers guilty—one of ordering the crime, and the others as accessories. No witnesses were called, and key evidence against the defendants was not introduced. Obvious contradictions in the defendants' stories went unexplored, and no attempt was made to ascertain if others were implicated.

Sentencing was swift. Chen Chi-li and Wu Tun, both members of Taiwan's Bamboo Union crime syndicate, received life imprisonment for shooting Liu. Vice Adm. Wong Hsi-ling, the former head of the Defense Intelligence Bureau, received the same sentence for instigating the crime, and his two assistants, Maj. Gen. Hu Yi-min and Col. Chen Hu-men, were given terms of two and a half years each. Taiwan's legal system is based on the European system. There are no juries, and the judge performs an investigatory role, questioning witnesses and seeking evidence outside the courtroom if necessary. Many observers thought the proceedings reeked of summary justice. "These are show trials," said one local reporter. "We'll never know who Jiang Nan was or why he was killed."

The story that emerged in court was this. Last year, Wong recruited Chen Chi-li and two other members of the Bamboo Union (the third suspect, Tung Kuei-sen, is believed to be hiding in the Philippines) and gave them a crash course in political warfare tactics. Whether Wong ordered the murder of Liu remains in dispute; the testimony was conflicting. But before the two gang leaders boarded a plane for the United States last September, Wong's deputies had supplied them with copious background material on Liu, including his daily schedule and a blueprint of his suburban house.

Chen, the reputed leader of the gang, testified that he had acted out of patriotism. Liu was a traitor and deserved to die, he said. During the trial, the semiofficial press in Taipei published a running tribute to Chen's sterling character, written by his wife.

But what was Wong's motive? Establishing that was essential to the prosecution's case, and government lawyers theorized that he had ordered the killing for personal reasons. According to this version, last year Wong learned that Liu possessed damaging information of an unknown nature relating to the admiral's years as chief of Taiwan intelligence operations in the United States during the 1970s. Wong was tipped off to this when he somehow obtained copies of letters Liu had written. The admiral had him killed to silence him. Because he was not acting in an official capacity, the prosecution was not required to raise the question of involvement by people higher up in the government.

Although that story cannot be dismissed out of hand, it contains many gaps. Why, for instance, did Wong offer Liu

\$20,000 to tone down criticisms of the Chiang family in a new edition of his biography? Apparently most of that sum, more than officials of Wong's rank usually earn in a year, was paid. But where did it come from? Did Wong want Liu killed, or merely "taught a lesson," as he insisted at the trial? The court did not resolve that question, finding that he had acted out of "unspecific intent." Then there is the matter of Liu's letters. The government claimed they had been lost, and it relied on out-of-court testimony as to their contents. Defense attorneys' protests against admission of that evidence provided the only lively moments in the soporific seven-hour session on April 9.

More intriguing were allegations in the local press that Wong offered Liu an additional \$80,000 not to publish a biography he had written of K.C. Wu, a former governor of Taiwan and a prominent political opponent of Chiang. Before Wu was sent into exile (he died last year), he had accumulated a great deal of evidence on corruption, human rights violations and other abuses of power by the regime in the 1950s; Liu's book would presumably have revealed some of that material. When he was governor, Wu was known as Mr. Democracy, while Chiang, who was then overlord of the island's intelligence apparatus, was called Mr. Spy.

Few people have seen Liu's biography, and the prospects of its ever being published are uncertain. Just before he was killed, Liu had provided a dissident magazine in Taipei with several excerpts, but the issues containing the articles were banned. The regime's sensitivity in the matter suggests that Liu's writings critical of Chiang were not irrelevant to his death.

Sources in Taiwan's small but vocal opposition certainly believe they were not. They contend that if the courts had followed the trail of evidence, it would have led them to the island's First Family. Wong, they say, has had a long relationship with the Chiangs, going back to his service as aide-de-camp to the President's father, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, on the mainland. Bamboo Union leader Chen Chi-li was a classmate of Chiang Hsiao-wu, the President's son, age 40, who is head of the Chinese Broadcasting

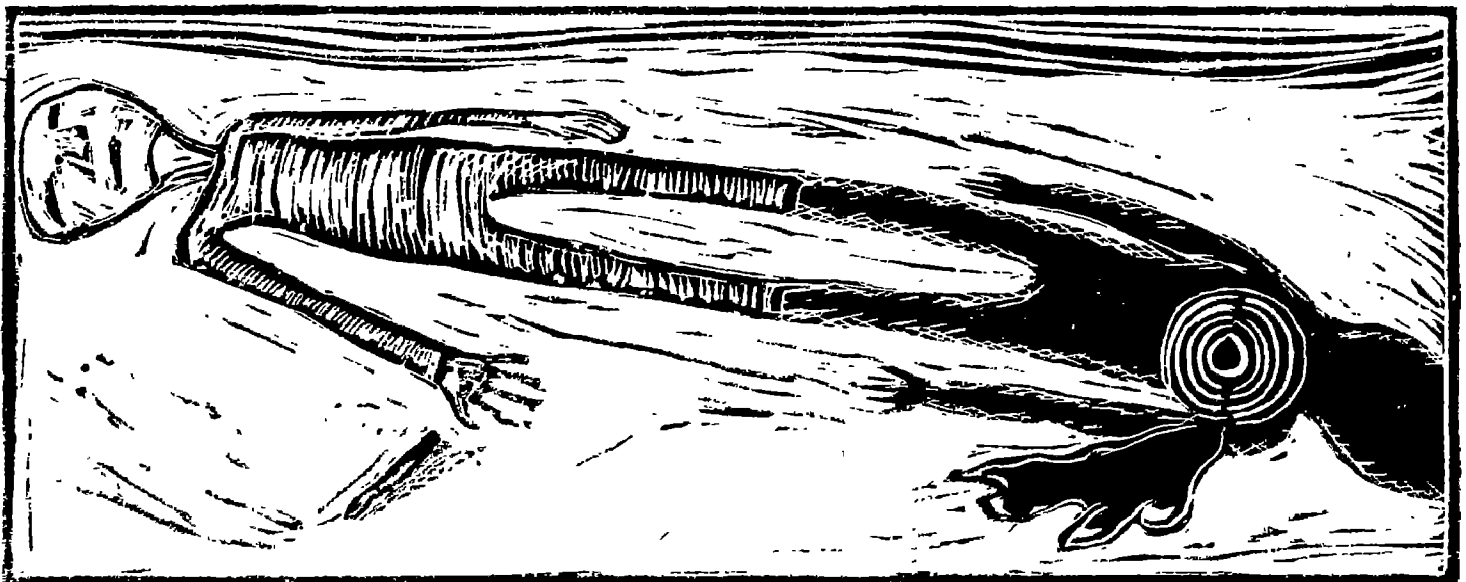
Company. The younger Chiang, these opposition sources assert, is an influential figure in the security apparatus. Also, he and Chen were seen together at dinner parties before the murder.

Several Kuomintang officials share the suspicions of the opposition figures that Liu's murder was politically motivated, as does Helen Liu, the victim's widow. But their suspicions remain just that. The younger Chiang has on two occasions vehemently denied that he had any association with either Chen or members of the intelligence services. According to senior party officials, he is extremely sensitive about suggestions that he was in any way involved in the crime.

Party loyalists dismiss the opposition's charges as opportunism. The dissidents, they say, are trying to put an end to the Chiang dynasty by smearing the President and his son. With Chiang's age and health a concern, there is no doubt some truth to those accusations, and no hard facts have surfaced to buttress the opposition's claims of a judicial whitewash. Nevertheless, the rumors are still circulating, as are stories of higher involvement and hints of circumstantial evidence to support them. One thing is certain: the trial has failed to put the rumors to rest.

That failure must be considered a missed opportunity. During the pretrial investigations, there was strong popular sentiment for a complete disclosure of the facts surrounding the murder. Many of the island's 19 million people saw the proceedings as a chance to make a clean break with some unsavory incidents in the country's past. By fully airing the evidence, the regime might have repudiated a tradition of political assassinations and collaboration with crime syndicates that goes back to the Kuomintang's years in power before the Communist revolution. The government might also have served notice that it would bring the eight security agencies under tighter control and make them more accountable.

Members of the younger generation, particularly reformers and technocrats in the party, regard the ideological battle with Beijing as an embarrassment. Yet it remains an obsession of older mainlanders, who, though a minority, dominate the underworld and the government. After a series



of violent riots five years ago in Kao-hsiung, south of the capital, the government began to employ gang members in its surveillance program. The Bamboo Union, the island's largest gang, has grown from a few hundred members in 1979 to more than 10,000 today as a result of this "patronage." At the same time, official efforts to bring younger people into the government have proceeded slowly. The Liu trials underscored the differences in outlook between the Kuomintang old guard and those who are no longer interested in settling scores with Mao Zedong's successors and who demand a more democratic future.

The regime clearly intended to make the trials a showcase of Taiwan justice. The island's newspapers gave them voluminous coverage. Opposition legislators, legal authorities and foreign correspondents had full access. The court martial of Wong and his associates was open to the public, the first time in Taiwan's history that a military trial had been so conducted. After it ended, a legal expert called the evidence complete and the presentation thorough. By conducting the trials correctly, the regime also hoped to deflect calls from the U.S. Congress for extradition of the culprits.

But the government's overriding security concerns undercut this strategy. The regime could not permit a full-blown exposé of the extensive overseas activities of the intelligence agencies and of their unholy alliance with the crime syndicates. A more important inhibition was the fear of alienating the security services. That fear will undoubtedly be a major consideration when the verdicts come up for automatic review. Although a higher court will hardly reverse them, the sentences may be reduced. Reforms in the intelligence bureaucracy are unlikely. The official view is that none are needed because Wong and company were merely out-of-control operatives settling a private grudge.

Washington appears mostly unmoved by all of this. Democrats in Congress have demanded extradition and are threatening to re-examine U.S. military sales to Taiwan, scheduled to total \$760 million in fiscal 1985. The State Department has officially requested that the accused face a U.S. court. Don't wait for it. From here, the Reagan Administration and Washington's Taiwan lobby seem as eager as Taipei to limit the fallout from the Liu murder. Burnishing the image of offshore justice is clearly a lower priority than preserving the island's political stability, and with a transfer of power from Chiang *père* to Chiang *filis* more or less imminent—since the development of younger political leadership has been unsuccessful—the United States is likely to put its money on someone named Chiang.

Who was Jiang Nan and why was he killed? Good questions. But Ronald Reagan's Washington appears about as anxious to answer them as Taipei's prosecutors have shown themselves to be. □

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## ■ LETTER FROM NORTH CAROLINA

# Between the Races, The Past's Shadow

KATHERINE FULTON

*Greensboro*

**N**o one who's heard the story ever forgets it. Charles Drew, the famous Howard University surgeon who pioneered the development of blood plasma and blood banks, died because of discrimination. The eminent black doctor whose very existence challenged the premise of segregation bled to death in 1950 when a "whites only" North Carolina hospital refused to treat him after an automobile crash.

The tale of his death took root in black culture and spread like kudzu. But it is a myth, a morality tale based on something that never happened. The truth is that white doctors did everything they could to save Drew's life; there are blacks and whites who swear to it.

Like all myths, this one survives for a reason, as Spencie Love, a young historian who is writing a book on the Drew legend, has shown. The myth about Drew's death dramatizes the larger truth of four centuries of injustice. I repeat it here because the simple story of blacks battling against white racism is exactly what liberals and leftists, black and white, expect to hear about the South, especially about Jesse Helms's North Carolina. And because the truth—not just about the Drew story but also about blacks and whites thirty-five years later—is not that simple.

Two recent North Carolina stories help illustrate this. One is a story of the white community, the other of the black. Yet they are similar: each involves a national political figure who evokes deep feelings about the race issue; each shows how progress is slowly being made; and each shows how we are often mired in the past at the expense of the future.

Last October, Ronald Reagan traveled to Charlotte, where court-ordered busing for school desegregation was born, and declared that the Democrats "favor busing that takes innocent children out of the neighborhood school and makes them pawns in a social experiment that nobody wants. We've found out that it failed." The enthusiastic and overwhelmingly white crowd responded with silence.

"You were wrong, Mr. President," the respected daily *The Charlotte Observer*, wrote the next day. "If you had set out deliberately to upset the people of this community, you couldn't have come up with a more disturbing statement." Charlotte's "proudest achievement is its fully integrated public school system." Indeed, the National Education

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