

September 29, 1952

Despatch No. 159 from American Embassy Taipei to the Department of State, 'Comments on the Forthcoming Meeting of the Kuomintang by a Member of the Legislative Yuan'

Citation:

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Summary:

The despatch discusses the anticipated shifts in political influence ahead of the Kuomintang's October 10 convention, as analyzed by a Legislative Yuan member. The informant highlights four major factions within the party—CC Clique, Chen Cheng's group, Chiang Ching-kuo's faction, and independents—predicting Chiang Ching-kuo's rising dominance, though his influence remains veiled. The despatch also notes speculation regarding potential changes in the Prime Minister's position

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMERICAN EMBASSY, TAIPEI

159
DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REVIEWED BY: [Signature] DATE: September 29, 1952

REF :

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SUBJECT: Comments on the Forthcoming meeting of the Kuomintang by a Member of the Legislative Yuan.

A member of the Legislative Yuan who has been known to the reporting officer for many years dating back to graduate school at Columbia University, discussed frankly the present political line up of the Legislative Yuan and the prospective shift of political power anticipated as a result of the meeting of the delegates to the Kuomintang on October 10.

He said that an excellent indication of the political strength of factions within the Kuomintang was provided by the vote on the Legislative Yuan delegation to the party convention. The Kuomintang membership of the Legislative Yuan was assigned a representation of five delegates. The result of the balloting was a selection of two members of the CC Clique, one representative of Prime Minister CHEN Cheng, one representative of General CHIANG Ching-kuo, and one representative of the independents within the party. The informant, who is a member of the latter group, said that it comprised approximately 100 members of the Legislative Yuan, and that it was not as yet organized in any formal sense but represented generally those who were placing emphasis on the development of democratic government in China. He said that the election of one delegate to the party congress represented a substantial victory for this wing of the party which heretofore had not had any opportunity to test its strength.

It should not be assumed, however, that the proportions represented in the delegation from the Legislative Yuan would represent in any sense the proportion of the control of the delegates to the party convention. He said you might consider that there were today four distinct groups within the party - 1) the CC Clique, 2) the Chen Cheng group, 3) the Chiang Ching-kuo group and 4) the independents. He said that the two former cliques within the party had definitely given place to the new factions. With respect to the Chiang Ching-kuo faction, he said it was impossible to estimate its strength at the convention because Chiang Ching-kuo, following his Soviet training, operated pretty much in secret. The chances were, he said, that Chiang Ching-kuo controlled an even greater proportion of the delegates than he was now credited with controlling and that by the end of the meetings, he might well be the dominant influence in the party. As such, however, he would certainly act as the right arm of his father and would carry out the thinking and instructions of the President.

In any event, Chiang Ching-kuo must be regarded as the principal rising star on the Chinese political horizon, it was said.

HPJones:ms
REPORTER

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It was also reported that the Prime Minister would return to his office at the beginning of October, before the party meetings, but rumors still persisted that he would resign. If he did resign, it was indicated, the probable successor would be former Prime Minister Chang Chun, at present a special envoy of the President to Japan. He would be a generally popular choice, the informant added.

He did not believe that Chang Chun and Chiang Ching-kuo had anything in common - it was quite clear to him that if a successor were to be named, he would be the personal selection of the President.

The informant is a member of the Kuomintang but active as one of the leaders of the independent group in the Legislative Yuan.

Handwritten signature
Howard P. Jones

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