

November 21, 1952

Despatch No. 261 from American Embassy Taipei to the Department of State, 'Monthly Political Report for September and October 1952'

Citation:

"Despatch No. 261 from American Embassy Taipei to the Department of State, 'Monthly Political Report for September and October 1952'", November 21, 1952, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Case Number F-1979-01277, US Department of State Virtual Reading Room.

<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/301264>

Summary:

The September-October 1952 political report highlights the Seventh National Congress of the Kuomintang, marking a significant structural and ideological shift with the adoption of reforms and the election of a youthful Central Committee. Chiang Ching-kuo's influence expanded, particularly at the working levels of the party, but he faced resistance at the top. Additionally, the report details the Overseas Chinese Affairs Conference, which aimed to unite overseas Chinese communities in support of anti-communist efforts and mainland recovery. This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Chun & Jane Chiu Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

Air Pouch
PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION
(Security Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

794a.00/11-2152

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : American Embassy, Taipei.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

REF :

261
REVIEWED BY: [Signature]
DATE: November 27, 1952
DATE: 11/28/52

58 For Dept. Use Only ml	ACTION FE	DEPT. I N F O	OLI IBS	REASON(S)
	REC'D DEC 1	OTHER		
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS				
DECLASSIFIED/RELEASABLE				

SUBJECT: Monthly Political Report for September and October 1952.

Summary

The Seventh National Congress of the Kuomintang met in Taipei on October 10 for a period of 10 days. The Congress marked the end of the special period of reform initiated by President CHIANG Kai-shek in his capacity as Party Director-General in 1950. A 32-man Central Executive Committee was elected to replace the Reform Committee, the Party Constitution revised and basic principles and theory for the struggle against Communism adopted. The work of the National Congress may be said to represent a new phase for the Kuomintang. With the reform completed, theory restated, and membership re-examined, under the leadership of a compact Central Committee, the Party is apparently ready to turn its back on the defeats of the past and has completed preparations for facing the future task of mainland recovery. In terms of personalities, the membership of the new committee represents in general the youthful and vigorous leadership of the Party. There is a heavier emphasis on military leaders, who comprise approximately one-third of the members. General CHIANG Ching-kuo's influence has increased, but up to the present time there is no reliable evidence that he has been able to take control of the Party organization.

Immediately following the close of the Kuomintang National Congress, a world-wide conference on Overseas Chinese Affairs opened. The conference, which in a sense represented the culmination of the work of Overseas Affairs Commission Chairman Dr. CHENG Yen-fen to develop a more positive policy, was held for the purpose of cultivating closer relations and support for the National Government by the overseas Chinese communities. Protection of overseas Chinese interests, encouragement of investment on Formosa, and united support in an anti-Communist front were discussed and a Chinese Overseas National Salvation Association formed. The reaction of the delegates to the conditions they found on Formosa was very favorable, and the response in general considerably better than had been anticipated by the Government here.

RTEW:ing:jp
REPORTER

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION

ACTION COPY - DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

DC/R
Central
Files

794A.00/11-2152

FILED

NOV 26 1952

HH

Following several months of preliminary negotiation, the Anti-Communist National Salvation Youth Corps was formed on October 31 and placed under the leadership of General Chiang Ching-kuo. The Corps, which is intended to encompass all youth organizations, will take in persons between the ages 15-30 and pay particular attention to ideological and military training. Considerable opposition has arisen in educational circles on the grounds of their lack of influence within the Corps and fear that it will result in divided authority upon the campus and disrupt school administration. There is some feeling that the present structure of the new Corps reflects too closely the weaknesses of the former San Ma Chu I Youth Corps and that this form has been adopted more to increase the personal position of General Chiang than to fit logically into the educational or Party organization.

Double Tenth Celebration

The 41st anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Republic was celebrated on Formosa on October 10 in the morning with an imposing military review led by President Chiang Kai-shek and in the afternoon by a mass rally in which an estimated 200,000 persons took part. The review lasted nearly four hours and was witnessed by high Chinese military and civilian officials and members of the diplomatic corps. Approximately 26,000 troops took part, including the 84th Division, a unit of cadets and students from the Air Force, Navy and Marines, a battalion of Armored Force, five battalions of artillery, and a small anti-aircraft unit. Observers agreed that the troops represented a considerable improvement over past years both in terms of appearance and equipment. In his speech on the observance of the Double Tenth, President Chiang pledged himself to the recovery of the mainland, and the building of a new China based upon the full realization of the Three People's Principles and the Five-Power Constitution.

The enthusiastic celebration of the Double Tenth here, and especially the impressive and well organized military show, were visible marks of the progress of the Chinese Government has made on Formosa in the past year. News reaching Taipei of the increased observance of the holiday on the part of Chinese communities overseas also heightened the impression of renewed confidence and hope. Editorial comment while emphasizing the importance of the celebration as a symbol of the progress made on Formosa and a proof of the words of President Chiang, "We are on our feet again", warned, however, that the great task ahead of recovering the mainland would require increased effort and sacrifice on the part of all.

Kuomintang Seventh National Congress

The Seventh National Congress of the Kuomintang, four years overdue, was opened by President Chiang Kai-shek as Party Director-General on October 10 in conjunction with the celebration of the "Double Tenth". The purpose of the Congress was to consolidate the work of the reform period initiated in 1950, terminate the period of the special Central Reform Committee and return the control of the Party to a regularly elected Central Committee, and prepare the Party structurally and ideologically for the accomplishment of the tasks of achieving an anti-Communist front and recovery of the mainland. 200 delegates had been elected to attend the Congress including representatives of the provincial Party organizations, mainland groups, overseas communities and headquarters and organizations of the Party. Elections for the various delegates (only the representatives of the mainland groups were appointed by the Party Headquarters) were preceded by considerable maneuvering which included the replacement of the Formosan Provincial Kuomintang Headquarters chairman by a supporter of General Chiang Ching-kuo¹. Many observers expressed the belief that the elections had been to a large degree arranged, and that the National Congress would consolidate the growing influence of the President's son and the eclipse of Premier CH'EN Ch'eng.

Following the opening address by President Chiang calling upon the National Congress to study and profit by the mistakes of the past, adjust the Party position to the demands of an anti-Communist front, and complete plans for the recovery of the mainland, the delegates heard reports on all phases of government and Party administration including reports by Premier Ch'en, Foreign Minister George YEH and Defense Minister KUO Chi-chao.² Both Premier Ch'en and Governor K. C. WU in private expressed pleasure at the youthfulness of the delegates as well as their interest in the proceedings and high record for attendance, averaging around 180 for all meetings. All sessions were held in secret, and only fragmentary accounts published in the newspapers.

According to Dr. CHANG Chi-yun, Party Secretary-General, the principal achievements of the Congress were (1) adoption of the "Basic Theory of Anti-Communism and Resistance to Russia", (2) revision of the Party Constitution, (3) adoption of the Party Platform and Guiding Principles during the anti-Communist period, and (4) the election of the new Central

1. Embdes 582, June 14, 1952, "Replacement of Taiwan Provincial Kuomintang Headquarters Chairman".
2. Embdes 234, November 13, 1952, "Report on Foreign Relations at the 7th National Congress of the KMT"; Embdes 238, November 14, 1952, Administrative Report to the Seventh National Congress of the Kuomintang".

Committee³. Most interest fixed upon the election of the Central Committee, where control of the Party would be centered. It was known that President Chiang wished to avoid a situation such as had developed in the 6th Central Executive Committee, which with its 500 members had become completely unmanageable and splintered into cliques, and to have in place a small, well-integrated body. The youthfulness of the 32 men elected (average age 46) and the relatively high percentage of military men (approximately 1/3) came, however, as something of a surprise. Most of the older and better known Party members were relegated to the 48-man Advisory Committee, nominated by President Chiang and accepted by the Congress.

The election of the members of the Central Executive Committee and the 16 alternates was made from a list of 96 candidates nominated by President Chiang. Although votes were cast in private, the method adopted, which according to one report was that the list of candidates was given to the delegates just prior to the actual balloting and left no opportunity for mutual consultation, has been criticized as undemocratic.⁴

There can be no question that the National Congress has left the Kuomintang in a stronger position both structurally and ideologically. The old Central Executive Committee was formally abolished and the extraordinary Reform Committee replaced by an elected body which is small and well-integrated. In selecting the new Committee, whose members included Premier Ch'en, General Chiang Ching-kuo, Governor Wu, General PENG Meng-chi, Legislative Yuan President CHANG Tao-fan, General SUN Li-jen and General WANG Shu-ming, the emphasis apparently was upon youth and vigor. Through the positions held by the members, the Committee unites within itself to a large extent control of the Party, Government, army and police. Within the Party as a whole, the re-registration of Party members is intended to complete the work of the reform period in eliminating dissident and incompetent Party members. Ideologically, the "Basic Theory of Anti-Communism and Resistance to Russia" reinterpreted the Three People's Principles of Dr. SUN Yat-sen in terms of the anti-communist struggle to form the basic theory for the Party. Dr. Chang Tao-fan, a member of the Standing Committee of the Central Executive Committee as well as President of the Legislative Yuan, has stated that the principal decision at the Congress was that every effort would be made and all other activities subordinated to the recovery of the mainland. The presence of the large number of military men on the Central Committee, as well as the inclusion of

3. Embassy despatch 240, November 17, 1952, "Comments of Kuomintang Secretary-General upon Party Seventh National Congress".

4. Embassy despatch 215, November 3, 1952, "Election of the Central Executive and Central Advisory Committees at the 7th Party National Congress".

guerrilla leaders such as CHENG Kai-min, MAO Jen-feng and General LI Mi among the alternates, reflects this decision as well as the increasing prestige and influence which the armed forces may be expected to have.

As for that interesting question "Chiang Ching-kuo or Ch'en Ch'eng?", there is not up to the present time any general agreement among observers. The question needs, however, to be placed in its proper perspective, as a struggle for supporters for the position of "heir apparent" rather than absolute control in any sense. The Generalissimo emerged from the Congress with his position unchallenged and even enhanced. Within the Central Committee, there are a majority of members of the so-called Youth Corps, many of whom are supporters of General Chiang, who may be considered to have succeeded in consolidating the gains he has made in the past two years. In the Standing Committee, however, he can definitely count only on his own vote. It is within the sections under the Central Executive Committee, the working level of the Party organization, where all observers agree that General Chiang's control is virtually complete. This would be in conformity with the method of operation of General Chiang noted in the army and in the organization of the new Anti-communist National Salvation Youth Corps in which he has recently been so active -- to build up strength at the lower levels and among the younger Party members without at the moment attempting to assume a more prominent position in the top ranks of the Party where opposition to him remains strong.

Overseas Affairs Conference

A conference on Overseas Chinese affairs opened in Taipei on October 21, immediately following the close of the Seventh National Congress of the Kuomintang.⁵ The meeting, which lasted 10 days, was attended by 246 delegates representing overseas Chinese communities in all parts of the world. It, in a sense, represented the culmination of the work of Dr. CHENG Yen-fen, begun last March with his appointment as Chairman of the Overseas Affairs Commission, to develop a more positive and vigorous approach to the problem of regaining the support of the 12.5 million overseas Chinese for the National Government. One of the first public references to the Congress came early in the fall from Presidential Representative CHANG Chun in Tokyo where he was trying to convince the Japanese of the importance of cooperating with the Chinese National Government in developing trade with Southeast Asia. As the suggestion apparently raised

5. Embassy Despatch 228, November 10, 1952, "Overseas Chinese Conference at Taipei"

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION
(Classification)

Page 6 of TAIPEI 261.

more amusement than interest among the Japanese, this aspect was not stressed in the Conference.

The new Kuomintang platform adopted at the Seventh National Congress, listed four aims with regard to overseas Chinese: (1) protection of the rights and interests of the overseas Chinese by the Chinese Government, (2) strengthening of the cooperation among the various organizations of overseas Chinese in order that they might contribute to the work of combating communism and Soviet imperialism, (3) assistance to overseas educational and cultural work and to youth who wish to return to Free China to study, and (4) encouragement to overseas Chinese capital and productive enterprises to come to Formosa. In addition to the discussion of ways and means for carrying into effect the above four aims, the Conference took as a principal theme the problem of how the overseas Chinese might aid the National Government to regain the mainland.

During the Conference, the delegates heard reports from government leaders on all phases of governmental activity stressing the improvements that had been made on Formosa. A total of 303 resolutions covering a wide variety of projects to support the Chinese Government's preparations for a counterattack against the mainland and to improve the situation of Chinese living abroad were passed. From October 26-29 the delegates toured military and industrial installations throughout the island. Important resolutions adopted included the organization of a Chinese Overseas National Salvation Association to guide and coordinate overseas Chinese anti-communist activities, the strengthening of economic warfare against the Chinese communists by commercial boycott and cessation of remittances to the mainland, and the establishment at Taipei of a publishing company to supply textbooks for overseas Chinese.

Although it will take some time before the extent to which the delegates are able to transmit their enthusiasm back to their local overseas communities can be judged, the Conference may still be accounted a success. Dr. Chang Tao-fan, President of the Legislative Yuan, told an Embassy officer that the number of delegates was approximately double what had been expected. He stated that they had shown enthusiasm for the progress made on Formosa and were eager to help the National Government to regain the mainland to an "unexpected" extent.⁶ The impetus behind the resolution calling for the subscription to the issuance of a US\$100 million interest-free bond issue by overseas Chinese came purely from the delegates themselves; actually

6. Embassy Despatch 233, November 13, 1952, "Legislative Yuan President's Comments on Kuomintang Affairs".

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION

both the Government and the Kuomintang made every effort to avoid the mistake of the Chinese communists of making heavy financial demands upon the delegates at the Conference. Although described as more of a "bear gesture" by Dr. Cheng Yen-fen, since strict exchange controls in most Southeast Asia countries will in any case prevent sizeable remittances to Free China, that the gesture was even made may be taken as a measure of the response of the delegates and consequently of the success of the Conference itself.

Anti-Communist and National Salvation Youth Corps

On October 31, in conjunction with the celebration of the birthday of President Chiang, the Anti-communist and National Salvation Youth Corps was formally inaugurated under the command of General Chiang Ching-kuo. The inception of the new organization is found in the speech delivered by President Chiang on the occasion of the celebration of Youth Day, March 29, 1952. The President called for the formation of a new youth corps which should satisfy "the general aspirations of the youth for a unified organization in the promotion of social, cultural and political reform". The Corps would be anti-communist and would unite all youth groups into a single organization.

Following the President's call, several months were spent in wrangling over how the Corps should be organized and, perhaps more important, who should control it. Premier Ch'en Ch'eng apparently at first opposed the whole idea on the grounds that a new organization was not necessary. When overruled on this, he wished to see the Corps placed under the Ministry of Education. An indication of how the wind was blowing came last May when the chairman of the Formosan Provincial Headquarters of the Kuomintang, through which much of the work of organizing the Corps would pass should it not be turned over to the educational authorities, was replaced by a supporter of General Chiang Ching-kuo. In July the organic principles for the organization of the Corps were announced in which it was placed definitely under the Political Department of the Ministry of National Defense (General Chiang).

During the late summer and early fall, formal inauguration of the Corps continued to be delayed. Based upon information reaching the Embassy, it appears that the delay was occasioned largely by strong opposition to the Corps which developed among many educators and a disagreement between Premier Ch'en and General Chiang over financing it. The Corps, which was to include youth from 15-30 years of age, was planned eventually to take in persons from all walks of life; in the initial stages, however, effort was to be concentrated upon the students in the middle schools and colleges. Educators were concerned, therefore,

over their own lack of influence within the organization and the possibility of a conflict over the diversion of the students' time between military and academic training; and the disruption of school administration. During September, General Chiang held a series of meetings with leading educators in an attempt to smooth over the differences; and at the end of the month, it was announced that the Corps would be formally organized on October 31 as part of the celebration of the President's birthday. As a final step in the organization and in order to provide initial members and cadre, the Chinese Anti-communist Resist-Russia Association, formed in 1950, formally disbanded on October 30 in order to join as a group.

The basic purpose of the new Youth Corps will apparently be the direction of the ideological and military training of its members. Dr. Chang Tao-fan has stated that the formation of the Corps is one of the measures the Kuomintang is taking to enlist the youth of Formosa in the forthcoming struggle for the mainland. As an organization, it invites comparison with the San Min Chu I Youth Corps which was formed in 1938 as a measure to rally support of the youth in the struggle against Japan. Later, the Corps, which was formally disbanded in 1948 and amalgamated with the Kuomintang, served principally as a clique within the Party and a source of power for the present Premier, Ch'en Cheng. An article in the magazine Free China on October 16, 1952, pointed out the ambiguity within the structure of the new Youth Corps which is neither under the established educational nor Party system and the possible dangers for both arising from this uncertainty. In the present form, the Youth Corps, regardless of what other similarities it may develop to its predecessor, will unquestionably serve to strengthen materially the position of the person in command, General Chiang Ching-kuo.

K. L. Rankin.