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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPER DEVELOPMENT IN TAIWAN
SINCE THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW

THESIS

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This study reviews the changes in Taiwan's newspaper industry during its current period of transition. Contemporary newspaper development in Taiwan after the lifting of martial law in July 1987 is evaluated in relation to transformations in the newspaper marketplace, journalistic practices, labor relations, and freedom of expression.

This study concludes that changes in Taiwan's newspaper business are closely related to changes in the country's political atmosphere. The lifting of the Ban of Newspaper brought freedoms for which journalists had fought for decades; however, journalistic quality has not improved at the same speed. Changes will continue in the journalism industry; whether it grows in a healthy way is a topic for future study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The mass media monitor society, mirror social phenomena, and reproduce messages. History, cultural heritage, form of government, and the nature of the economic system act as factors that affect the look of the mass communication system in each specific national or regional application.

Taiwan's unique political background has conditioned the course of its communication development. The government announced a mobilization order in 1942, and the entire country entered the so-called "Time of Emergency" period while the civil war between the Communists and the Nationalists became worse. During 1948 the Kuomintang government instituted martial law in Taiwan, and in 1949 the government of the Republic of China lost the war and retreated from the mainland to the other side of the Strait. Taiwan, plus the islands of Quemoy and Matzu, became the only domain of the Kuomintang government. The Communists attempted to extinguish the Nationalists by bombing the islands heavily during the early 1950s, planning to replace KMT authority and become the only party in the country.

While defending the island against mainland China's attack, the government had to defuse the severe conflicts that erupted between the native Taiwanese, who migrated to the island centuries earlier, and the mainlanders, who had just moved in. In order to maintain political stability and social order, the government, based on the declaration of martial law, instituted a few tentative articles to cope with the situation. This edict restricted forms of communication that the government believed were capable of creating subversion, including publication, broadcast, political congregation, and institutional organization.

In addition to martial law, the Publishing Law Execution Bylaws and the Publishing Law, promulgated respectively in 1942 and 1958, also hindered the development of Taiwan's newspapers by limiting the number of published pages and publishing plants available to each existing newspaper and by preventing the establishment of new papers. This has been known as the "Ban of Newspaper" that for decades stifled the growth of Taiwan's newspaper business and journalistic practice.

This situation changed as the result of a decision by the late president Chiang Ching-Kuo who revealed his plan for abolishing martial law and deregulating the establishment of political parties to the president of Washington Post, Mrs. Katharine Graham, on October 8, 1986. He believed that in order to meet the needs of a new era, it

was necessary to do so. Consequently, on July 15, 1987 the martial law was annulled.

Through a knowledge of Taiwan's political and newspaper background, one may better understand the present status of this industry and the problems it has been confronting. This study analyzes contemporary newspaper development in Taiwan since the lifting of martial law.

Problem

The problem of this study is to evaluate contemporary newspaper development in Taiwan after the lifting of martial law in July 1987.

Purpose

The purposes of this study are (1) to provide a perspective by which one may understand the contexts in which newspapers operate in Taiwan, (2) to describe the structure of Taiwan's newspaper industry, and (3) to examine current problems of Taiwan's papers.

Limitation of the Study

The study examines Taiwan's recent newspaper development as a whole. Changes in each individual newspaper are not discussed. However, examples will be cited.

Methodology

This study takes the form of historical and descriptive

analysis. Major sources include books, periodicals, newspapers, government documents, and interviews with Taiwanese newspaper personnel and journalism scholars. Questions considered include: the effects of the lifting of martial law on the development of newspapers; whether the overall newspaper quality has been improved in the post-martial law era; whether journalism personnel's practices, working attitude, and professional ability have changed during this period; whether competition among newspapers during the new phase is healthy and normal; problems newspapers are facing now; changes in distribution procedures; readers' reactions to the so-called chaos period; and what press regulations are needed.

Review of Literature

The study of Taiwan's recent newspaper development has been very limited and is restricted primarily to other graduate theses. Most of the theses completed in Taiwan pertinent to the press deal with a specific newspaper and/or a particular news event, instead of observing the overall phenomenon. "Analysis of Editorials of Economic Newspapers," by Wan Tseng, National Chen Chih University, 1988, focuses on the editorial policy of the Economic Daily and Commercial Times; "Analysis of Information News Trend in Major Newspapers," by Fen Chu Ten, National Chen Chih University, 1987, studies the new trend of most of the

newspapers in reporting information news; "Analysis of Journalists' Attitude toward Press Medium," by Wen Ping Chang, National Chen Chih University, 1988, analyzes how press personnel see this medium. Another thesis written by Sunwoo Nam, "A Comparative Study of Freedom of the Press in Korea, Taiwan, and Philippines in the 1960s, University of Wisconsin, 1969, is a useful source of background material but is understandably out-of-date. International Press Institute Reports, September 1963 and November 1964, also have some information regarding Taiwan's press situation; however, those articles were released in the mid-Sixties and are no longer precise enough to describe its current status.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will be helpful:

Import Substitution: The early phase of Taiwan's economy, from 1950 to 1962; major economic transactions involved the importing of materials for agriculture and basic needs.

External Orientation: The second phase of Taiwan's economy, from 1963 to 1980; product export dominated the economy. Taiwan's experience turned into a "miracle" during this period.

Take-off: According to Professor W.W. Rostow, after a country's net investment comprises more than 10 percent of

the national income, the country can be regarded as having satisfied the necessary condition for "take off."

Living-room Factory: Family businesses during the Sixties and Seventies which could not afford to buy or lease a factory manufactured products in the family home. This small-to-medium-sized enterprise is the root of Taiwan's economy.

Ban of Newspaper: This regulation, promulgated by Administrative Yuan in 1951, prevented the establishment of new papers and restricted the number of published pages and publishing location of each existing newspaper.

Party Newspaper: Papers which reflect the perspective of a particular political party. Central Daily is a good example; run by the Kuomintang, it reflects the government's opinion. The Minchin Daily is the paper associated with the Democratic Progressive Party. This type of newspaper may or may not get financial support from the party it speaks for.

The Chaos Period: The first year after the lifting of Ban of Newspaper, in which competition among newspapers was out of control, and the quality of journalistic practice and journalists' morale dropped sharply. Many readers refused to buy newspapers because it was widely believed that papers were making news rather than reporting it.

Direct Jurisdiction City: A special municipality under the direct jurisdiction of the central government like a province. There are 13 Direct Jurisdiction Cities, Taipei

and Kaohsiung are two of them.

Subsidiary Pages: Soft news pages, a main part of today's newspaper, which contain various information such as arts, fashion, entertainment, cultural activities, medical knowledge, consumer information, cooking, gardening, travel, and counselling.

Daily: Papers printed during midnight and published in the morning.

Evening Paper: Papers printed in daytime and published in late afternoon.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into four chapters. Chapter I involves the mechanics of the study: statement of the problem, purposes of the study, limitation of the study, methodology, review of literature, definition of terms, and organization of the study. Chapter II describes the background of Taiwan's society, economy, and newspaper. Chapter III contains a discussion of the current problems the press is confronting. Chapter IV summarizes and draws conclusions.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

By the end of the 1940s, the Republic of China had suffered nearly four decades of political instability. Following the collapse of the Ching Dynasty in 1911, China experienced years of internal political strife created by regional military cliques, or warlords. When the country was finally consolidated under Chiang Kai-Shek's Nationalist (Kuomintang) Government in the mid-1930s, China was invaded by Japan in 1937.

From 1895 through World War II, Taiwan itself was in the hands of the Japanese. According to most estimates, allied bombing destroyed between 40 and 50 percent of Taiwan's industrial infrastructure.

At war's end, the bitter civil war between the Nationalists and the Chinese Communist Party (formed in Shanghai by Mao Tze-Tong during the early 1920s with the assistance of the Soviet Union), which flared initially before the Japanese invasion, began again in earnest. In 1949 the Nationalist Government was forced to leave mainland China and established itself on Taiwan. Few nations in this century have suffered as much devastation as the Chinese in terms of social and economic destruction and dislocation

caused by internal and external warfare. During the war, inflation was out of control and the economy slumped dramatically.

During the early phase of the Nationalist Government's administration on Taiwan, major tensions between the native Taiwanese who had migrated to the island in the past and the mainlanders who had just moved to Taiwan erupted so frequently that the government had to use force at times to put down the conflicts. To seek a foundation for stable development was the number one task of the Kuomintang government after it retreated to Taiwan. The former Director-General of the Government Information Office, Dr. Shaw Yu-ming, pointed out that "[t]he government of ROC on Taiwan has never sought to achieve economic progress at the expense of political and social stability."¹

Political stability is one of the key elements that has enabled the subsequent development of Taiwan's economy, as Yuan-Li Wu has argued:

"...given the proper domestic environment and incentives and certain external economic conditions, self-sustained economic growth in a stable political environment is entirely possible even in an island economy that is heavily populated, poorly endowed with natural resources, and subject to severe hostile international pressures."²

¹ Yu-Ming Shaw, Beyond the Economic Miracle (Taipei: Kwang Hwas Publishing Company, 1990), 19

² Yuan-Li Wu, Becoming An Industrialized Nation, ROC's Development on Taiwan (New York: Praeger, 1985), 3

In addition to its pursuit of political stability, the Taiwanese government has demonstrated an economically interventionist character internally ever since 1949. K.T. Li said in his book on Taiwan's development that government policy is defined as "intervention or involvement in the functioning of the market system."³ In fact, many scholars consider "the government's effectiveness in formulating and implementing appropriate policies to be an indispensable ingredient"⁴ in Taiwan's successful development because those policies map out the direction of the kind of market economy desired, and are enormously important to both public and private businesses as far as the national priority is concerned.

The 1950s was the infant period, both politically and economically, of Taiwan's development, during which the island was extremely dependent on foreign aid received from the United States in the form of direct grants and military aid. The U.S. provided a major share of the total imports needed by the whole country, and also supplied defense material to forestall the Communist Chinese claim that Taiwan would be restored to the mainland by force.

During the so-called import-substitution period, the

³ K.T. Li, The Evolution of Policy Behind Taiwan's Development Success (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 29

⁴ M. Shahid Alam, Governments and Markets in Economic Development Strategies, Lessons from Korea, Taiwan, and Japan (New York: Praeger, 1989), 3

50s, most of the imports were raw materials for agriculture and basic industries, such as food processing, textiles, and footwear. At that time, certain measures fulfilled in the government's land reform efforts did lay a solid foundation for a successful agricultural industry, including a reduction of farm rent, sale of public land, and the land-to-the-tiller program.⁵

Taiwan's cheap and better-educated labor force and the Chinese spirit of industriousness instituted the basic framework of early economic development. Aided by the government's other policies, such as currency reform, interest rate reform, and foreign exchange reform, the economy gradually marched into a more stable stage in the late 1950s, and since then a big share of Taiwan's economic activity shifted from import to export trade.

The government's decision moving the economy through labor-intensive export industries (e.g., textile, food processing, footwear) during the late 1950s and early 1960s was not an easy one, because both the inward- and outward-looking policies were not optimistic. The domestic market was too small and too saturated to guarantee sustained growth, and the foreign market's availability was uncertain. However, because the government urgently needed foreign

⁵ Shirley W.Y. Kuo, Gustav Ranis, and John C.H. Fei, The Taiwan Success Story: Rapid Growth with Improved Distribution in the Republic of China 1952-1979 (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), 49

exchange earnings to finance import capital, the export promotion strategy was adopted. Imports heavily financed by U.S. aid had decreased to 10 percent of total imports by 1964, one year before the aid was terminated, down from more than 40 percent in 1957.⁶ Agricultural surplus made more room for the development of export trade, which centered on light manufacturing industries, and inevitably provided more nonagricultural employment opportunities. Due to the large-scale expansion of the export market, Taiwan's economy approached the "take off" stage in 1963.⁷

Many consider that Taiwan's "economic miracle" essentially resulted from selecting the right strategy.⁸ Li has suggested that "the experience of Taiwan indicates that the requirement of good policy is, in large part, to move through time unmistakably in the general direction of liberalization."⁹ The structural transition from import-substitution to export-orientation strongly encouraged the emergence of the small-and-middle-sized manufacturing businesses, which started as "living-room factories" in the early 1960s and dominated Taiwan's export trade throughout

⁶ Ibid., 25

⁷ Walter Rostow, The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960),

⁸ Cal Clark, Taiwan's Development (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 174

⁹ Li, Policy Behind Taiwan's Development Success, 23

the Sixties and the following decade. Exports of agricultural products decreased from 92 percent of total exports in 1952 to 9 percent in 1979, while exports of industrial products increased from 8 percent to 91 percent.¹⁰

During the 1970s, more capital- and skill-intensive industries, such as petrochemicals, metals, and machinery, increased relatively. By the time of the termination of U.S. aid, Taiwan was almost on its own in terms of supporting the whole country's basic needs and blueprinting its development stages, which advanced from agriculture to light manufacturing industry, and within industry, from a labor-intensive mode to more advanced technological areas.

The government's Ten Major Projects, including six transportation projects, three heavy industry projects, and one nuclear power generation project, began in 1973. These public sector construction projects not only met their designated objectives, but also served as an important stimulant to the domestic economy by generating numerous job opportunities and absorbing private sector investment.

While the economy was growing, two oil crises occurred in the mid and late Seventies. In addition to dealing with the worldwide economic problems caused by the oil crises, Taiwan also had to face a series of political frustrations,

¹⁰ Kuo, Ranis, and Fei, Taiwan's Success Story, 23

such as losing its seat in the United Nations and in most international financial and political institutions (including the World Bank, the World Health Organization, UNESCO, the International Atomic Energy Agency), and losing the diplomatic recognition from a majority of nations, including the United States.

The United States' switching its official recognition from the Republic of China to the People's Republic of China in 1978 not only brought an unimaginable impact to the morale of the people on Taiwan, but also placed the nation in a political limbo. As a result of these setbacks, the ROC authority was forced to reorganize the structure for managing its international affairs, including establishing less than official forms of diplomatic and consular representatives, and to find alternative means to continue its international business transactions.

Fortunately, neither the economic nor the political stability of the nation was eroded by the outflow of capital from Taiwan caused by the gloomy political future. Instead, the flow of direct investment from abroad considerably increased a few years later when the island proved itself to be an ideal investment environment.

It was understood by most economists in Taiwan that the only way to increase the competitiveness of ROC products was through advancement in technology and the industrial structure, so as to produce and export higher quality and

more sophisticated products which utilized more skilled labor and less unskilled labor. The government made every possible effort to transform the labor-intensive light industries into skill-intensive heavier industries during the late Seventies and early Eighties in order to keep up with the competitiveness in the international market.

Special institutions were established to accelerate the development of high tech products. Take the Hsinchu Science-based Industrial Park, for instance. Founded in 1980, it was the first organization of its kind in Asia, exclusively designed for high technology industries, propelling and serving Taiwan's high technology activities and development. In the park, a number of scientific research institutions are engaged in the development of industries, such as electronics, computer systems, precision instruments and high tech materials. Other "think tanks," like the Industrial Technology Research Institute, founded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs; China Productivity Center, sponsored by the government as well as industries; and China Technical consultants were set up for the purposes of carrying out basic research projects for industries, offering technology to local firms, promoting better management, supplying industrial information and services, providing managerial and technological training, and prompting productivity. The government's commitment in raising the level of high tech has been manifested in the

fact that "Taiwan has taken greater interest than most developing countries in providing technical and market information to private economic agents."¹¹

A recent issue of the Free China Journal reports that "Digital Equipment Corp. of the U.S., enticed by the fast-growing and versatile infrastructure of Taiwan's information industry, has announced plans to upgrade its operations on the island by basing its worldwide personal computer design and production center here."¹² The development of Taiwan's technology has already led the economy to an internationally favorable identity; as the Far Eastern Economic Review points out, Taiwan firms, with their "significant technological expertise," are leading the way toward brand-name recognition.¹³ The U.S.-based Wharton Economic Forecasting Associates also predicted late last year that the island's economic growth rate will be the highest of the Four Little Asian Dragons by 1993. Even the world economic tycoon, Japan, is worrying that it will fall behind in the technological competition with these four little countries, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, by the year of 2000. "Japanese firms have long feared their

¹¹ Alam, Governments and Markets in Economic Development Strategies, 61

¹² Allen Pun, "Digital Bases Worldwide Computer Center in ROC," The Free China Journal 9 (March 1992):1

¹³ "Taiwan Erases 'Workshop' OEM Label as Know-how Technology Expand," The Free China Journal 8 (October 1991): 8

Asian counterparts' price competitiveness, but a new threat is their fast-developing technology," says Ryuei Shimizu, professor of business administration at Keio University in Tokyo.¹⁴ Many economic analysts from abroad give high marks to Taiwan's economic vitality. Beyond this rapid internal economic development, Taiwan's government has indicated its willingness to share the nation's hard-earned wealth with needy, friendly countries through the Republic of China's own US\$1 billion International Economic Cooperation Development Fund.¹⁵

The improved economic and political situations undoubtedly upgraded the living standard of the average Taiwanese citizen. The state has been moved forward by endless business activities and extensive contacts with the outside world, and channels of communication in both public and private sectors have come to play an indispensable role in the people's daily life. As a result, the demand for information, ranging from billion-dollar computerized transactions to the living room entertainment provided by the mass media, has immensely increased, and so has the public's dependence on these resources.

The development of the economy stimulated the quantity

¹⁴ Konosuke Kuwabara, "Asia's 'Tigers' Will Pounce," Japan Economic Journal printed in World Press Review 36 (December 1989):22

¹⁵ "ROC's Stake in Europe Growing," The Free China Journal 8 (October 1991):6

and quality of Taiwan's communication industries, and the nine-year mandatory education system further improved the literacy of the public. Accelerating economic progress propelled the emergence of specialized newspapers, magazines, television, and radio stations in the Sixties and Seventies. The Taiwanese mass media grew with the economy as a whole. The island's daily newspaper circulation of 710,000 in 1960 increased to 3,500,000 by 1980, one copy for every five people.¹⁶

In his book on journalistic practices in developing nations, Lloyd Sommerlad says that the dissemination of news and information is by no means the only objective of the press in developing countries;¹⁷ this alludes to the fact that the daily newspaper's potential power for political indoctrination, has never been neglected in the two Chinas. Both the mainland Chinese and the Taiwanese government have a history of strict control of the mass media, which each party sees as an absolutely vital part of its information arsenal for as long as the severance exists.

In mainland China, an authoritarian country with a controlled economy and media under official direction, the primary aim of the press is also that of the whole

¹⁶ ROC Journalism Yearbook, Taipei Journalist Association (Taipei, 1981), 17

¹⁷ Lloyd Sommerlad, The Press in Developing Countries (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1966), 55

administration system, which is to persuade the public of the government's particular viewpoint; as Lloyd Sommerlad says, "[t]he press in mainland China is one of the very powerful instruments used by the authorities for the purpose of mass persuasion."¹⁸

Taiwan's press freedom has been seriously debated ever since the Nationalist retreated to the island. Starting in 1951, the government stopped issuing licenses to applicants who intended to publish a newspaper. Reasons given were that Taiwan's paper market had reached its saturation point and that the whole country was saving material, including pulp, to strengthen its sustaining ability. The regulation promulgated by Administrative Yuan prevented the establishment of new papers and restricted the number of pages and the publishing location of each existing newspaper. This order has been known as the "Ban of Newspaper" and has handicapped Taiwan's newspaper development for thirty-six years.

Although there was no official censorship of the mass media before 1987, the country's politically sensitive status did provide an opportunity for the government to authorize the police and certain agencies to prohibit or suspend the distribution and circulation of newspaper and/or other types of publications that have divergent political

¹⁸ Ibid., 9

stands. Critics from both overseas and domestic sources have questioned whether there is real press freedom in Taiwan.

Late president Chiang Ching-kuo's liberal administration on Taiwan served as a landmark in Chinese history, although his father, Chiang Kai-shek, was honored as one of the makers of Taiwan.¹⁹ In order to push political development to match the economic progress, Chiang Ching-kuo had long planned the procedure untying the existing restrictions that handicapped the country's improvement, and announced the lifting of martial law on July 15, 1987. Before this announcement, Prime Minister Yu Kuo-Hua had already instructed the Government Information Office in February to reconsider the issues of newspaper registration and the page limitation and to establish a new set of regulations that would be more appropriate for the industry in the new environment.²⁰ On December 1, 1987 the GIO formally announced the abolishment of the "Ban of Newspaper" effective January 1, 1988. This meant that new papers could be established without any restrictions on published pages or facility location.

The "Ban of Newspaper" in fact included three restrictions: no new registration certificates to establish

¹⁹ William G. Goddard, The Makers of Taiwan (Taipei: China Publishing Co., 1963), 144-163

²⁰ Executive Yuan Meeting on February 5, 1987 in Taipei.

papers were available, papers were limited to three unfolded pages, and printing facilities had to be located in the same area the paper was distributed.²¹

During the thirty-six years of the "Ban of Newspaper," politicians, scholars, and journalists had questioned the legitimacy and the necessity of the ban. When asked what the grounds were, offices concerned always cited four ostensibly applicable laws. They are as follows:

In the National General Mobilization Order of 1942, Articles 22 and 23 stated, "After the law is in effect, the government can, when it is necessary, restrict and stop the establishment of newspapers and news agencies, and make the correspondent reports and other printed materials in a certain form. When it is necessary, the government can confine people's speech, publication, authorship, correspondence, congregation, and organization within a certain limit."²²

In the Martial Law document of 1948, Article 11 cited, "Within the area where martial law is in force, the highest commander has the authorization to carry out the following duties: stopping petitions for congregation, organization, and demonstration; suspending speech, lecture, news

²¹ Tso Chin Chang, "Number of Pages and Licensing of Newspaper," United Daily News, 13 July 1981, 2

²² Taipei City Hall News Bureau, Publishing and Mass Communications Businesses Regulation Collections (Taipei: Taipei City Hall News Bureau, 1982), 107

magazine, book, announcement, poster, and other form of publication that undermines military concerns; dismissing the mentioned congregation and demonstration petition when it is necessary."

In the Publishing Law Execution Bylaws, announced in 1952, Article 27 indicated, "During war time, province governments and direct jurisdiction cities should adjust the numbers of newspaper and magazine based on economical principle and central government's order when supplies as planned paper and other printing materials for publications."²³

In the Publishing Law of 1958, Article 27 prescribed, "Paper and other printing materials should be supplied as planned by the office in charge according to the actual need."

Another related regulation restricting newspaper development was an administrative order, promulgated by Executive Yuan in June 1951, which stated, "Taiwan's newspapers and magazines have reached the point of saturation. In order to economize paper, registrations for newspapers and magazines should be strictly limited."²⁴

A brochure, "Questions and Answers Regarding the Ban of Newspaper," published by Kuomintang's Central Youth Affairs

²³ Ibid., 12

²⁴ Weichien Shi, Ban (Taipei: Four Seasons Publishing Company, 1981), 267

Commission, carried a similar rationale: "...According to Taiwan's present situation, paper material is in short supply, the enemy is staring at us with a hostile attitude. Should the ban be lifted, the shortage would become worse. Meanwhile, our country is at its most critical moment, either sustaining or perishing. It is indeed a special period for the government. For the sake of preventing malignant competition, disagreement, and permeation of Communist theory, it should be an indispensable and applicable measurement to impose certain restrictions on the newspaper industry, thus avoiding an over-saturated situation."²⁵

The British government had taken over the vast private newspaper and magazine businesses of Great Britain when World War II broke out, and "[i]t was up to the government to decide, in terms of its view of the national interest, the economic level of press operation."²⁶ In the context of post-1945 Taiwan, some argued that the country was still in what amounted to a state of war, and that the measures the government took were analogous to those of the British government.

To sum up from the above-mentioned laws and opinion,

²⁵ Central Youth Affairs Commission, Questions and Answers Regarding the Ban of Newspaper (Taipei: Central Youth Affairs Commission), 4-5

²⁶ J. Edward Gerald, "The British Press Under Government Economic Controls," Journalism Quarterly 32 (Fall 1955): 405

the government justified the Ban of Newspaper for the following reasons: 1) a shortage of paper and printing materials, 2) the saturated market, and 3) the fear of the possibility that newspapers would be used by the Communists as a propaganda tool.

Scholars and journalists have argued that these official reasons were too weak to justify the long-term restriction of newspapers, and a significant number of them have argued that the only concern of the government was its fear that the medium might fall into the enemy's hands.²⁷ Some said that the "Ban of Newspaper" in Taiwan was similar to Singapore's "Subversive Publication Ban" under its Internal Security Act because the governments had the same motive -- defending the country against Communist sabotage.²⁸ However, the Kuomintang government never admitted this point.

According to the Journalism Yearbook of ROC, there were 31 newspapers in the free China area (including the islands of Quemoy and Matzu) in 1971.²⁹ That number did not change until after January 1, 1988.

The "Ban of Newspaper" not only stifled newspaper

²⁷ Chan Lee, "Ban of Newspaper and Its Solution," Journalism Study 39 (May 1987): 11

²⁸ Han Su, "Press Freedom in Three Asian Countries," Journalism Study 40 (February 1988): 43

²⁹ Taipei Journalist Association, Journalism Yearbook of ROC (Taipei: Taipei Journalist Association, 1981), 49

development for some thirty years, but also greatly distorted the country's image. After the International Press Institute's investigation of Taiwan's press freedom in 1960, it reported, "...Nationalist China has made no visible progress towards a free press."³⁰ Taiwan's journalists and journalistic scholars were not permitted to join the International Journalism Association in Tokyo on the basis that Taiwan still had a lot to learn about press freedom. This constituted one of the reasons people concerned fought violently for the abolishment of the ban. A few years earlier, when the criticism from overseas grew sufficiently intense, President Chiang Kai-Shek was forced to outline the conditions for freedom of the press in Taiwan in an interview, stating that "...I understand the importance of developing fully the provisions in the Constitution of the Republic of China guaranteeing freedom of speech and freedom of the press, just as quickly as conditions will permit."³¹

It also may be forcefully argued that the "Ban of Newspaper" was promulgated in the context of an early-1950s economic and political situation that stabilized and was overtaken by events long before 1987. Furthermore, since the number of registration certificates was limited to 31,

³⁰ Albert Axelbank, "The Shackled Press of Formosa," IPI Report 9 (September 1963): 6

³¹ Howard R. Long, "Chiang Kai-Shek Outlines Conditions For Freedom of Press in Formosa," The Quill 46 (July 1958): 8

the two dailies with the most financial support, United Daily News and China Times, kept purchasing the papers with financial problems to become the dominant dailies in the industry. The News is part of a media conglomerate that includes two other daily newspapers, the Economic Daily and Min Sheng Pao; an evening paper, United Evening News; the English language China Economic News Service; a publishing company; a bimonthly magazine, China Tribune; two other magazines, United Monthly and United Literature; and two newspapers published for overseas Chinese, the World Journal in the United States and the Europe Journal published in Paris. The Times is the flagship of an organization that includes another daily, Commercial Times; an evening paper, China Times Express; a business monthly; two general weekly magazines, Times Weekly and Times News Weekly; a publishing company; a transportation company; and the China Times Weekly published in New York.³² Both are family-run corporations which have transferred ownership and control to children of the original owners. It has been argued that this form of ownership, while common in Chinese business practice, is inappropriate for the mass media, which have certain obligations in the public sector.

In view of all the negative influences and the shortcomings the ban had brought to the country and the

³² "The Two Duel," The Commonwealth Magazine (November 1987):

industry, scholars and journalists have never stopped their efforts in the past thirty-six years appealing to the government for a reform that would bring positive changes to the newspaper environment in Taiwan.

CHAPTER III

THE NEW ERA

Long before the formal announcement lifting the "Ban of Newspaper" on December 1, 1987, intense competition among newspapers had become obvious. The instruction given by the Executive Yuan during its early February meeting already signaled that the ban would be lifted and major changes would come soon.

The year 1987 was critical not only to Taiwan's political transition but also to newspaper development. The number of newspapers had remained at 31 since 1951, but now the scramble was on. Two newspapers having financial problem either ceased publication (Min Tzu Evening news) or were sold (China Daily News). Hence, the total number of newspapers initially was reduced to 29 in this year.³³

Those with sufficient financial support prepared to carve out a niche in the new market. The warm-up actions included massive recruitment of reporters, editors, and management personnel; attractive offers to lure away employees of other organizations; the development of on-the-job training and overseas study programs; importing modern

³³ Government Information Office, ROC Publishing Year Book, China Publishing Company (Taipei, 1989), 91.

printing facilities and computerizing the type-setting process; and constructing new buildings to expand current operations. At this point, the industry had already entered the early phase of the so-called "Chaos Period."

In order to encourage healthy competition, the Government Information Office invited professionals and scholars in late February, 1987, to form a research committee to determine and evaluate the elements necessary for successful newspaper operation in the new era, and to set up the principles that would guide all papers leading up to the time when restrictions were lifted. By May, the committee's research proposed guidelines involving the protection of press freedom, defining the public interest, avoiding monopoly situations, and ensuring healthy economic development.

The Government Information Office accepted these principles and gathered representatives of newspapers nationwide to study the problems each newspaper (including the well-established ones) was expected to face, and to discuss possible solutions. After this conference, GIO announced the lifting of the ban on December 1, 1987, effective on January 1, 1988. This decision ended almost four decades of government control over the development of Taiwan's newspaper industry.

In Taiwan, the newspaper business has long been tied up with the country's sensitive political situation. The new

policy not only meant a new freedom of expression and business practice in the field of journalism,, but also served as a symbol of a new political atmosphere, a loosening of government authority (itself with echoes through thousands of years of Chinese history). Ultimately, the lifting of the "Ban of Newspapers" may have more impact on the future of political freedom in Taiwan than on the newspaper business per se.

As mentioned in Chapter II, Taiwan's press freedom has been seriously debated ever since the Nationalist retreated to the island. The government insisted that all newspapers, being public information media, toe the government line as far as national security policy is concerned, and it always defended its position and pointed out that press freedom, as guaranteed by the constitution, had not been restricted despite the threat of Communist subversion. The government said there was no press censorship. In fact, foreign correspondents were free to send out anything they wanted to. However, the real threat to Taiwan's free press was the maze of the laws and regulations (such as the National Mobilization Law, the National Emergency Edict, the Publication Law, and Publication Bylaw) journalists had to watch and the complications they would receive if they violate the rules. All journalists sentenced and newspapers suspended in history were charged with sedition or harboring Communist. During 1950s and 1960s, most newspaper writers

deliberately palyed down some vital political issues and national policies in order to avoid possible supression. Entering the Seventies and the Eighties, the focus on Taiwan's political sensitivity gradually shifted to the development of the economic strength, which indirectly brought higher defensive power to the island. As soon as the martial law was lifted in July 1987, all the related laws became invalid, and all the authorized governmental institutions that used to convict journalists and suspend newspapers no longer had control over the industry. The threat from the fear of violating the rules no longer existed. The real freedom of press expected for decades eventually arrived. New papers have come out everyday, coverage of various protests and anti-government speeches has become routine. It is a new environment for the industry, and the development of journalism is having a new direction.

On the same day of the GIO announcement, Yang Ju-Der, the president of the Taipei City Newspaper Union, Chang Chia-Hsiang, the president of the Taiwan Province Newspaper Career Association, and Lee Jui-Piao, the president of Kaohsiung City Newspaper Association, made a common declaration (Taipei and Kaohsiung are Direct Jurisdiction Cities which are considered equal to a province), stating an eight-point agreement effective on January 1, 1988. This agreement designated the real changes for the industry after

the lifting of the ban and outlined the rules of the game for the future:

(1) Point size of the characters in a news story cannot be smaller than number six or new number six, but characters for commercial ads are not restricted to this rule; columns for classified ads should decrease from the current 32 to 34 columns per page to 28 or 29 columns, and point size is enlarged about 15 percent. How big is a number six character? It's one ninth of an inch. The new number six character has thinner lines. Most newspapers have been using number six point characters except the two big newspaper, which put in more stories and ads by shrinking the size of the characters.

(2) The maximum number of pages will be six, and the minimum will be one. The reason for picking six is because the printing machine can only print three pages at a time; it will be most cost-effective to print six if more pages are allowed. However, it is not easy for small newspapers to publish three more pages without increasing their workforce, including reporters, artists, and editors. Therefore, each newspaper will have a flexible choice on the number of pages of its publication.

(3) The ratio of advertisements to news stories is not restricted, since advertisements are part of newspaper content, and necessary for modern society. If a newspaper is more salable with more ads than stories, that is the readers' choice.

(4) The Government Information Office will accept registrations of establishment of new papers as of January 1, 1988 without restrictions of the number of pages.

(5) Two representatives from each of the three paper associations plus three scholars recommended by GIO will form a nine-member committee to study the newspapers' self-disciplinary function. This committee will not replace the Press Council, but will study the possibility of authorizing it as a punitive institution to curb the industry from violating the rules.

(6) The different editions of each newspaper have

to stay as they are now, and cannot increase although the number of pages increases. Because the number of pages published is limited to three, the same newspaper prints different editions with local advertisements or stories to meet the demand of the readers in a specific region. This technique has been employed by almost every newspaper, and the different editions of one newspaper have reached as many as 17 pages. This situation will be prevented from getting worse in the new era.

(7) Paper price will be cautiously negotiated by newspaper associations according to pages published and reported to supervising offices. The initial recommended prices are four, six, and eight New Taiwan dollars for papers of one, two, and three pages respectively. Nine to ten dollars for a four-page paper, ten to eleven for a five-page issue, and eleven to twelve for a six-page paper.

(8) An existing newspaper needs to apply for another certificate if it hopes to distribute and print in a different place. The paper also needs to indicate which edition it is on the first page.³⁴

The Government Information Office became the sole supervisor of the newspaper industry after the lifting of martial law; previously, other offices, such as the Cultural Affairs Department, police stations, Garrison Command, and the Information Bureau, were authorized to monitor newspapers for "anti-government" stories. Due to the shifting of responsibilities, the Government Information Office has been charged with overseeing all published materials in the country, including newspapers, books, magazines, films, cassette tapes, records, as well as

³⁴ Hong-Chiun Wang, "What has been deregulated?," interview by Shu-Mei Chen, Sinorama, no.13 (January 1988): 13-17.

similar items imported from mainland China. This change has resulted in an increase in GIO's workforce by 90 employees; those people are allocated to inspection centers at airports, harbors, export processing areas, and post offices nationwide. GIO has continued to experience a manpower shortage and has been forced to wrestle with out-of-date regulations and laws.

GIO's currently proposed special projects, presently under evaluation and discussion by experts and scholars include a Journalists Law, Approval of Magazine Reporters, and Reinforcing National Press Council's Function. The second of these, while not directly involving the newspaper business, is symptomatic of the current atmosphere of change. In Taiwan, magazines are not allowed to have "reporters," although they do have people carrying out duties such as covering news stories, writing articles, and conducting interviews. Those people have not had an identity as reporters since the late 1950s when a group of "yellow magazines" took the advantage of the medium to conduct a lucrative business with an emphasis on sex and crime. This situation helped to prompt a revision of the Publication Law, through which government administrators provided a series of warnings, suspensions, and outright bans to magazines that "spread immorality" to the society. This revision, executed by Executive Yuan, was based on Article 23 of Taiwan's Constitution: All the freedoms and

rights enumerated in the preceding Articles shall not be restricted by law except by such as may be necessary to prevent infringement upon the freedom of other persons, to avert an imminent crisis, to maintain social order, or to advance the public welfare. Hence, magazines could not get a Reporter's Certificate for those who worked for them as reporters. This restriction has long been protested by the magazine industry and scholars. It is now eliminated and a new law is in process.

THE NEW CHANGES

I. REGISTRATION INCREASE

Starting from January 1, 1988, registrations for new papers and news agencies kept growing. By the end of October 1988, there were 82 new registered newspapers, 76 of which were morning papers, and six were evening papers. By the end of April 1988, there were 84 new news agencies, including 53 in Taipei, 13 in Kaohsiung, and 18 in the Province area.³⁵

Although the figures have been growing since the lifting of the Ban, some of the registered papers were not really in business at all. Take the year of 1990, for example. Among the 325 registered papers, only 155 were

³⁵ Shaw Yu-ming, "Service, Guidance, and Administration of Domestic Mass Communication Businesses," Journalism Magazine 8 (December 1988): 62

published regularly.³⁶ Some of the papers went out of business shortly after they entered the industry because of either financial or organizational problems. As of May 1991, there were 216 newspapers in Taiwan, most of which were privately owned. Nearly all the papers were based in western Taiwan, particularly in Taipei.³⁷ The total daily circulation of all dailies is approximately 5.7 million copies, somewhat higher than before the press liberalization measures. The circulation is 61.7 papers per 100 households -- an average of 16.1 newspapers per 100 persons.³⁸ Taiwan does not use the U.S. Audit Bureau of Circulation system, so the circulation number is calculated by the amount of paper consumed in an entire year.

Newly registered newspapers could be categorized into five types: 1) those established by an existing paper, (for example, China Times Express by China Times, United Evening News by United Daily News, and The Independence Morning Post by The Independence Evening Post); 2) those established by a news agency (such as Finance & Economic Times by Liberty News Agency, and Min Chuan Times by Min Chuan News Agency); 3) those established by politicians, economists, and

³⁶ Government Information Office, The Republic of China Yearbook (Taipei, 1990), 2

³⁷ Government Information Office, The Republic of China Yearbook (Taipei, 1992), 313

³⁸ *bid.*, 314

business people (Capital Morning News, Chan Ching Investing News, and Wealth News; 4) those established by enthusiastic journalists (Taiwan Li Pao); 5) those established by a paper-player such as Ko Tzu-Hai, who registered 49 newspapers, none of which was issued regularly.³⁹

After the lifting of the Ban, a new trend emerged in the industry -- the growth of special-purpose newspapers. Many of the new papers concentrate on specialties such as finance, the economy, the stock market, and real estate, and some of these have succeeded in taking a sizable share of the market. Their ultimate goal is to bring the reader up-to-date financial information and educate the public on techniques on making money; therefore, these papers share the same target audience. Besides the originally existing Economic Daily News and Commercial Times, the newer Chan Ching Investing News, Finance and Economic Times, Fortune Daily News, and Wealth News belong to this category. The newsstand prices of these papers (from NT\$30 to NT\$70) are not only higher than general-interest papers (NT\$8 to NT\$12), but also fluctuate according to the booms and slumps of the stock market. With a stable readership, these papers have been doing very well.

The other kind of new special-purpose paper is the children's newspaper. Gwoyeu Ryhbaw had been the only paper

³⁹ Tseng Yen-Ching, "Who Survive Among The New Papers?" Wealth Magazine (January 1988): 125

for children during the past forty years. Its characteristic was that the phonetic symbols of each character were printed beside the word so that the young people could enjoy reading it. Since 1988, a number of new children's newspapers, including National Language Times, Children's Daily News, and Hsiao Yin Daily News, have been established. The fierce competition in this part of the market has influenced children's ability to receive new knowledge in ways that have yet to be measured.⁴⁰

The evening newspaper market had been shared by three papers, Ta Hua Evening News, Min Tzu Evening News, and The Independence Evening Post, which maintained a peaceful competition for some thirty years. In 1987, before the elimination of the Ban, Min Tzu Evening News went out of business due to the death of its owner and critical financial difficulties. Subsequently, Ta Hua Evening News' long-brewing problems emerged. The fact that its president was involved in a Communist spy case in the late Seventies tremendously affected the operation and the morale of this paper. Added to the accumulated financial problems it had had, Ta Hua's circulation gradually decreased in the Eighties. Although a few business groups tried to take it over, no negotiation succeeded. At the end of 1988, Ta Hua

⁴⁰ Tang Hai-Hong, "Newspaper Competition After the Lifting of the Ban," in Journalism Yearbook (Taipei: Taipei Journalist Association, 1991), 81

Evening News officially ceased publication. Its printing facilities were transferred to The Great News now in February 1989. The remaining Independence Evening Post took the advantage of this market situation and adopted new strategies in operation, including boldly making more liberal speeches and neglecting government's prohibition to send reporters to mainland China clandestinely to enlarge its circulation.

Replacing Min Tzu Evening News and Ta Hua Evening News were China Times Express and United Evening News, published by the two dominant dailies, China Times and United Daily News. These two evening papers came with name recognition and the financial support of their parent dailies, quick information and low price (NT\$5 then, now is NT\$8), they grabbed almost three fourths of the market share. United Evening News was established in February 1988, and China Times Express followed in March. At present, the evening paper market is still occupied by three papers, with the older The Independence Evening Post facing great threat of strong competition.

In the daily newspaper market, besides the special interest papers and the two dominant dailies, there are also a few significant papers, some old some new, such as Liberty Times, The Independence Morning Post, The Great News, and Min Sheng Pao. Privately owned, these papers distinguish themselves from the rest by voicing their own opinions, most

of which are not in accordance with the government's. Min Sheng Pao usually does not take any political stand, providing mainly soft news and useful information for Taiwanese pressured by daily life. Fighting against all the new papers, Min Sheng Pao once became one of the most popular old papers in the crowded market. However, the two big dailies still take up to 70 percent of the market share.⁴¹

Compared with privately owned newspapers, the circulation of government-sponsored and institutional newspapers has declined from their previously dominant position. These six newspapers, Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News and Taiwan Shin Wen Daily News (owned by Taiwan Province government), Youth Daily News and Taiwan Daily News (run by the military), and Central Daily News and China Daily News (supported by the KMT), today only account for 13.97 percent of the market.⁴² This decline has occurred because the institutional newspapers are editorially restrained by their responsibility to promote the government's voice and policies; as a result, they have become less competitive among newspapers which feature more

⁴¹ J.C. Jai, Media Manager of United Communications Group of Taipei, interview by author, 17 February 1993, Dallas, telephone.

⁴² Lee Nai-Hsiung, "The New Menu for Newspapers," Economic Tribune Monthly, 20 January 1988, 20.

diverse perspectives and information.⁴³

Among all newly established newspapers, some only existed for a short period of time, ranging from a couple of months to fourteen months. Their problems varied: some were under-capitalized, some encountered severe internal disagreement among partners, and some closed business because of the inexperience of reporters. Personnel recruitment constituted a major problem for the entire industry, including the new papers and the existing ones, during the preparation period before the lifting of the Ban.

II. THE WAR WITHOUT GUNFIRE: RECRUITMENT

Long before the announcement of the removal of the Ban, newspapers had begun their preparation to compete with one another. The first measure taken was to grab more supporting technical personnel front line fighters (i.e., reporters and editors than were actually needed), including both veterans in the industry or new cadets from school. The idea of mass recruitment stemmed not from journalistic necessity but from business strategy.⁴⁴ The motivation for each paper was to lock up as much talent as possible in an attempt to put the competition at a disadvantage. In a

⁴³ Tang Hai-Hong, "The Competition Among Newspapers After the Lifting of the Ban," in Journalism Yearbook (Taipei: Taipei Journalist Association, 1991), 82.

⁴⁴ Chen Shu-Mei, "The Rise and Down in Today's Newspaper Market," Sinorama, January 1988, 12

three-month period from February to April 1987, the two big dailies employed 116 new reporters, editors, and translators.⁴⁵

The recruitments were made in two ways: one was to lure away the employees of another paper with attractive offers (the so-called "digging talent policy"), and the other was to hire university graduates from the fields of Chinese, Politics, History, Journalism, and Mass Communications. The former was the dominant trend because it saved the trouble of providing training programs to the newly employed before sending them out on assignments. Many papers made special offers to those who transferred from other institutions, which created a tension between the old staff and the newcomers. Gradually, the invisible gap had a negative effect on worker morale, which in turn affected both the industry and the readers in many ways.

Just as the newspaper industry had been restricted for decades, so were the employment opportunities in the business. In the new era, though, it was considered normal that people who were not satisfied with their original employer to seek a new surroundings. Newly established papers provided many opportunities. People switched organizations for reasons including more opportunity for self-fulfillment, a more promising future, promotion, and

⁴⁵ Ibid., 11

incompatibility with old colleagues. The mass recruitment has lowered the average age of editors and reporters to 25 to 30 years⁴⁶ from late forties. Junior reporters could be promoted to senior positions overnight; as Lin Sheng-Fen, Director of China Times Express, said, "It's too flattering for me to be a Director at such a young age."⁴⁷ He was an editor at 39, and became Chief Editor and Director in 1988 when 42.

It was common practice for experienced professional to be hired in administrative positions by their new employers, while reporting assignments were allocated to those who just entered the newspaper business from college. Lacking sufficient practical training, many of these freshman reporters began to inject too much personal perspective into their reporting. It was argued that many of their stories violated two of the fundamental canons of journalism, objectivity and fairness. This problem with inexperience, generated by the suddenly wide-open marketplace, presented problems for the journalistic integrity of the Taiwanese press. "A newspaper involves a teamwork. It will not work without equally experienced reporters as part of the team,"

⁴⁶ Yang Hsiao-Ping, "Newspaper's Recruitment," Global View Monthly 20 (January 1988): 38

⁴⁷ Lee Se, "Newspapers Become The Target of Criticism," Commonwealth, 1 July 1990, 14.

United Daily News Chief Editor Liu Chang-Pin commented.⁴⁸

Job-hopping and the influx of novice reporters created other problems in the industry as well. Each paper had its own distinctive style and specific emphases. Reporters hired from other newspapers had little time to adjust themselves to the nature of the new paper in terms of writing style and the angle of perspective.⁴⁹ Switching jobs made the newly-on-board strangers to the existing staff, and this generated obstacles in cooperation and communication. Take the situation faced by The Independence Evening Post, for instance. Its original 40 reporters knew few of the 70 newcomers. Improving communication among colleagues suddenly became a priority.⁵⁰ This phenomenon was repeated within the organization of almost every newspaper taking part in the recruitment war.

The recruitment war also revealed the big gap between journalism education and the newspaper industry: support was far less than demand in terms of hiring specially trained personnel. Short of professional journalists, a few papers had to share employees and operate with part-time editors and reporters. Before the lifting of the Ban, newspapers hired part-time employees in order to save costs. The

⁴⁸ Ibid., 40

⁴⁹ Tseng Jui-Cheng, "How To Establish Newspaper's Credibility," Global Views Monthly, 1 January 1988, 35.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 36

reason some papers are still doing so in today's market is that they cannot recruit enough qualified journalists.⁵¹

THE ROLE OF THE REPORTER

The urgent demand for even minimally qualified personnel weakened the professional expectation that journalists would be objective, responsible, and accurate in their reporting. In the newly competitive environment, newspapers struggled to attract as many readers as possible, and a few editorial gatekeepers shifted their emphases from these principles; at times, it became a paramount importance that reporters were writing stories that sold newspapers. Many reporters tried to single themselves out and to boost the sales of their newspaper by sacrificing or twisting facts. Consequently, sometimes each paper had its own version of the same event. That was why a big share of readers felt that "reading newspapers was like watching Rashomon,"⁵² and cried out that "Mr. Reporter, your name is Seeking The Truth!"⁵³ The comparison of four newspapers' coverage over a farmers demonstration could serve a good example. Central Daily used 15 pictures of the farmers,

⁵¹ Szu Hen, "Shortage of Qualified Manpower After The Lifting of The Ban," The News Mirror Weekly, 26 February 1990, 40.

⁵² Feng Chien-San, "Reading Newspapers Was Like Watching Rashomen," The Journalist 64 (May 1988): 72-74.

⁵³ Lin Ho, "Mr. Reporter, Your Name Is Seeking The Truth," Central Daily News, 1 September 1988, 3.

quoted officials 19 times and non-official three times, and described the protesters as mobs 19 times in its 39 related stories. United Daily News used nine pictures of the farmers and three of the police, quoted 21 times, 16 official and 5 non-official. China Times had five pictures of farmers and seven of police, quoted 24 times, seven of which were non-official. These two papers described the public as demonstrators. In The Independence Morning Post, 10 pictures of police hitting people and four of fled farmers were used. It quoted non-official 16 times and official 11 times. After reading these papers, the public was still perplexed about what really had happened. Central Daily News condemned the riot, China Times and United Daily News reported that the demonstration brought damage to the society, The Independence Morning Post chided the government and the police for not listening to the farmers. The situation became similar to stories Stephen Bates accounted in his book "If No News, Send Rumors."⁵⁴ Besides these problems, some reporters became involved in an event out of their sympathy for one of the parties involved, and switched from neutrality to advocacy. They did not report, but directed the event.⁵⁵ Take the Lanyu islet protest, for

⁵⁴ Stephen Bates, If No News, Send Rumors (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985)

⁵⁵ Yang Chi-Hong, "The Crises When Reporters Directed The News," Central Daily News, 24 May 1988, 16.

example. People living on Lanyu disagreed a government project building a plant processing nuclear electricity material remainders, and started a demonstration in front of City Council. The organizers of this event were a reporter of The Independence Evening Post and an editor of a magazine. Some reporters of China Times and China Times Express also led demonstrations for issues of environmental protection and consumer benefit. The complications of recruitment not only turned the industry's employment market into a chaotic situation, but also considerably jeopardized journalist's ethics. This helps to explain the drastic decline in newspaper subscriptions after the lifting of the Ban.⁵⁶

The social role of journalists in Taiwan has long been debated by professionals and the public because there has been no standard list of "Dos and Don'ts" to follow. This has led the Government Information Office to consider establishing a Journalist Law in July 1988, which defines the qualification to be a journalist and professional rules to follow, basically an ethic code for journalists. A few of the measures for violators are still under evaluation. Due to some journalists' irresponsible attitude in reporting, the journalism industry has been labelled "The

⁵⁶ Yang Mon-yu, "Newspapers' Transcript After The Lifting of The Ban," Global Views Monthly, 15 July 1988, 139.

Manufacturing Industry,"⁵⁷ or "The Garbage Industry," producing and creating news out of nothing, and skewering its perceived enemies without regard to accuracy and fairness.

Taiwan's journalism industry fought hard for press freedom for decades, but once its dream came true it suddenly forgot its larger responsibilities. A few overseas journalistic scholars visiting Taiwan found out that "...the journalism industry fully enjoys the freedom of speech, but ignores its professional morality. It enjoys the privileges without discharging its obligations."⁵⁸

The mass media in Taiwan in recent years also have become embroiled in political campaigns due to the fact that some journalists are closely involved with various partisan political groups; some have even run for elected office. In 1989, there were five journalists registered as candidates for the national legislative election, one from China Television Company, one from Central Daily News, and three from China Times. A great number of reporters were listed by various candidates as campaign assistants or designers of campaign literature. It was not unusual for an editor with particular allegiances to instruct his reporters to slant

⁵⁷ Lee Se, "Newspapers Become The Target of Criticism," Commonwealth, 1 July 1990, 13.

⁵⁸ Chang Tso-Chin, "Who Can Supervise Reporters?" Global Views Monthly, 15 September 1988, 12.

their reporting of a favored candidate's policies. For example, Liberty Times and The Independence Evening Post had more coverage on candidates of DPP than other papers during the election period. Two of the journalist candidates, one a newspaper reporter and the other a TV anchorwoman, argued that, since all other candidates were using media to get publicized, there was no reason why they should not use the privilege of their position to their own advantage (for instance, being interviewed by colleagues or reading news stories in front of the camera).⁵⁹ It has been pointed out that journalists have always been involved with politics, and in previous eras journalists sometimes lost their jobs because of political ties.⁶⁰ In the post-1987 period, the ethically dubious maneuvers and affiliations of some journalists became increasingly evident to the public.

The abuse of its newfound freedom by some members of the Taiwanese journalism industry has revealed serious ethical problems. Some critics have argued that this unhealthy state of affairs within the "Fourth Estate" is the social order of the entire nation. Whether there is a limit to freedom of expression and how to control the present situation are the questions asked most. Huang Nien, Chief Editor of United Daily News, has acknowledged that it is

⁵⁹ Tsao Yu-Fen, "The Three-Face Eve in The Election War -- Reporters," Global Views Monthly, 15 November 1989, 141.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 137.

very difficult to determine what to write and what not to.⁶¹ To alleviate these problems in the future, it has been argued that the government and the journalism profession itself should reinforce journalism education and on-the-job training in order to produce working journalists who are attuned to the demands and expectations of the new era.

THE LABOR UNION MOVEMENT

Martial law prohibited all types of demonstrations, strikes, political congregations, and social movements. In the post-martial law period, all kinds of protest lines have filled Taiwan's streets, including farmers' demonstrations, student movements, a bus drivers' strike, and political protests. Labor struggles within the newspaper industry have also added one more feature to the already dazzling changes in the journalistic environment. Lacking experience in handling this sort of situation and not willing to reveal these internal struggles to the public, newspapers deliberately avoided reporting on the industry's labor conflicts, particularly the two big dailies, until they were compelled to do so (the two biggest dailies were

⁶¹ Huang Nien, "Journalism's Bottom Line Is in Mind," interview by Yu Wen-Huei (15 May 1989), Global Views Monthly, no. 36 (May 1989): 105.

especially implicated in this practice).⁶² Hence, the reliability of stories again became a question to readers, and this situation once again reflected the newspaper business's struggle with its professional morality.

The first established journalism labor contract was signed with the United Daily News on March 27, 1988.⁶³ This was followed by the establishment of unions in other organizations, including China Times, Central Daily News, Economic Daily News, The Independence Evening Post and the three television companies. The organizing of media labor unions was more complicated than that of other industries since it covered all different occupations, such as technical personnel, reporters, editors, marketing representatives, actors, and management officials. The fact that each group had its own needs made it more difficult to conduct negotiations and achieve agreement with management.

The management of United Daily News did not have any severe conflict with its employees; the second generation ownership welcomed the establishment of the union. However, both sides proved stubborn at the negotiation table. The daily is still having problem with its employees regarding six working principles which were instituted without

⁶² Su Shuan-Yin, "The Missing News -- Newspaper's Labor Movement," The News Mirror Weekly, 14 November 1988, 16.

⁶³ Yang Chen, "The Surge of Newspapers' Labor Movements," The News Mirror Weekly, 14 November 1988, 6.

notifying the union first.

China Times' labor union was established in September 1988, although it started organizing at about the same time as the union at United Daily News. Compared with China Times, United Daily News's labor problem has been moderate. For instance, the Times had a painful conflict with its union employees when management fired three reporters responsible for labor event news; ownership eventually had to place a half-page advertisement in its own paper to explain the history of the whole matter. It was the only paper which made such a public declaration regarding its labor problem.

Government-supported newspapers have experienced labor unrest, too. Take Central Daily News, for example. After the lifting of the Ban, the daily computerized its printing process. This meant that those who did manual typesetting would lose their jobs once the people operating computers finished their training program. This generated the birth of Central Daily News's labor union. Fortunately, the daily promised to reassign the manual workers so that the possible conflict was avoided.

In another variation, most of the members of The Independence Evening Post's union were reporters; therefore, it did not encounter as many problems as other papers where printing and technical personnel formed the majority of union membership. The Post's liberal style was the main

reason that attracted reporters to the paper, but its less competitive salary level has meant that the rate of personnel turnover is high.

A union is the primary tool for workers to voice their discontent, and the majority of workers will make the most out of it. However, some people have promoted the idea that if management fail to provide a satisfactory response to workers' request, all the unions in different businesses should work together to boycott newspaper operations. This trend forms another invisible problem in the development of newspaper in the new era. Scholars and journalists have called for a common agreement that the union system is for solving problems instead of creating them. Using the system in a positive way will help to accelerate development and improve the efficiency of the industry. Using it as a tool for revenge will only damage the industry.

INNOVATIONS IN LAYOUT AND CONTENT

The most direct influence on the readers among the changes of the post Ban period was the new "look" of each newspaper; this constituted one of the reasons that subscription dropped. The number of printed pages increased from three unfolded pages to six, and in some instances eight. However, readers' time did not increase accordingly. Also, since newspapers were also trying to figure out the most attractive page layout to stimulate circulation,

regular features jumped from page to page in an erratic fashion that was sure to confuse readers. Annoyed by the increased temporal demands, and unable to easily find the coverage they wanted, many readers eventually gave up the new newspapers and turned to television.⁶⁴

Letters to the Editor, Mainland China Update, and Stock Analysis were the three most prominent increases and, not coincidentally, most popular features in almost every newspaper.⁶⁵ Before the increase of the number of pages, the space allocated for news and advertisement was insufficient. After the increase of the number of pages, the additional space has been filled by news and opinion regarding government policies, the education system, elections, the economy, community affairs, social security, consumer problems, and entertainment.

Mainland China news made its debut in each newspaper immediately after the lifting of martial law; this feature proved wildly popular with readers, among whom many were originally from Mainland China. It emerged typically began as a column designed for people looking for missing families or relatives in either Taiwan or the PRC. This was the result of the relaxation of travel restrictions between the

⁶⁴ Yang Mon-Yu, "The New Transcript After The Lifting of The Ban," Global Views Monthly, 15 July 1988, 138.

⁶⁵ Lai Kuang-Lin, "Newspaper Development in The Eighties," in Journalism Yearbook (Taipei: Taipei Journalist Association, 1991), 69.

two countries after the lifting of martial law; the prospect of families being reunited after forty years made this a hot topic, which in turn helped the Mainland China Update page grow rapidly. After this initial wave of human interest subsided, and as contact with the Mainland has increased in other areas, the feature has expanded to include current news of Mainland political, economical, and social developments, investment analysis, cultural activities, and cooperation and conflicts between the two governments.

The Stock Analysis page is also one of the indispensable parts of today's newspapers. The only difference among papers is the volume of this kind of news; some devote more than one page to market news and others less than a page, depending the focus of the newspaper.

The new style of page layout is the most obvious change among all that influenced readership. Traditionally, articles in newspapers ran from top to bottom and right to left. After the Ban, a variety of layouts were experimented with. Some proved acceptable and popular, such as the horizontal style of United Evening News,⁶⁶ but some return to or maintained the original format.

One of the new layouts, with 12 to 14 columns per page and 12 to 14 characters per column, has partially replaced

⁶⁶ Tang Hai-Hong, "Newspaper Competition After The Lifting of The Ban," in Journalism Yearbook 1991 (Taipei: Taipei Journalist Association, 1991), 78.

the old format, which contained 20 columns with nine characters in each column, and allows more space between columns. United Evening News has eight horizontal columns from left to right, and each column has 14 characters. Min Sheng Pao has adopted the same style, but has only seven columns, with 13 characters each. Its vertically designed nameplate, moved from the right upper corner to the left, takes a column space. The horizontal layout is comparatively more popular than the conventional one;⁶⁷ however, the lack of standardization also generates the problem that some papers run headline from left to right and some from right to left. A number of papers, such as China Times, Central Daily News, Economic Daily News, The Independence Evening Post, The Commons Daily, Liberty Times, Taiwan Times, and United Daily News use both vertical and horizontal headlines on the same page in an attempt to draw more readers, however, they merely make their paper look busy. More colors are used on papers than ever before. Slanted and irregularly shaped photographs, transformed characters, and humorous drawings make the subsidiary pages one of the most popular parts of many papers. Generally speaking, with all the changes and competition newspapers present a more dynamic and diverse look than before.

Another innovation, one which actually predated the

⁶⁷ Chou Chu-Tzu, former Editor of The Independence Evening Post, Interview by Yujen Chen, 2 December 1992.

lifting of the Ban, was the computerization of typesetting process. The traditional manual typesetters were replaced by the Off Line Systems of Japan's Sha-Ken, Morisawa, and Motoya; British Monotype; and Ultrasetter from Mainland China. United Daily News pioneered the computerization trend in September 1982, which was a great shock to the industry.⁶⁸ The papers which followed included China Times, The Independence Evening Post, Taiwan Times, Taiwan Daily News, Youth Daily News, Liberty Times, The Commons Daily, and Gwoyeu Ryhbaw. The second wave of the computerization trend was generated by Central Daily News when it computerized its entire page layout in November 1988.

The mainframe of the computerized layout system contains a 68020 Central Processing Unit, which is equipped with 4 megabyte memory chips and 72 megabyte disk space. A specially designed key is attached to the keyboard for on-screen editing. After all stories are entered, the computer automatically collates and saves them in the composing machine. An editor works with a specially trained composer on-screen. When composing the whole page layout, a worksheet is set on the right upper corner, where various functions can be chosen with a mouse. A Full View that

⁶⁸ Wei Han, "Computerization of Typesetting and Page Layout," in Journalism Yearbook (Taipei: Taipei Journalist Association, 1991), 93.

covers all 14 columns is available for the editor to see how the page looks, and a Readable View, which can enlarge the content and show only five columns on screen, allows the editor to do detailed editing work. Once the command of a complete page is sent, a connected lasercomp machine immediately prints out the whole page on photo paper, which is delivered to the printing department.

Computerization has accelerated the pace of newspaper development and become part of the fierce competition within the industry. Many reporters are also equipped with simple computerized tools when they go out hunting stories. Central Daily News overseas edition editor Hu Yu-Ray describes how computerization has helped the industry. "Reporters are better armed today. Whenever something happens, they rush to the site, gather enough information, then find a place to write their story directly into a word processor, print it out and fax it back to office when every minute counts."⁶⁹ As of mid 1991, though, Central Daily News was the only newspaper to employ this full computerized system to produce its paper.

ADVERTISEMENTS

As W.B. Reddaway says in Economic Journal, "A newspaper proprietor is really producing two different products, and

⁶⁹ Hu Yu-Ray, Interview by Ralph Mak, Editor of Dallas Chinese News, 13 November 1992 in Taipei.

selling them in two different markets: he is selling 'copies' of the newspaper to readers, and selling 'advertising space' to advertisers."⁷⁰ In Taiwan, despite the addition of other two major competing media, radio and television, newspapers with the increased number of pages have still maintained a strong hold on local and national advertisers. Many people are worried whether newspapers would drastically increase the amount of space devoted to advertisements after the lifting of the Ban. The newspapers themselves tried to "educate" their readers by proposing the concept that the information provided by newspapers includes advertisements, and that this form of information may be as important as that which is labelled news.⁷¹ The argument was that everyday life for the average person is full of economic activities, and exchanges, and that the efficient movement of "information" involving goods and services stimulates the growth of various businesses in Taiwan's national and local communities, and therefore benefit everyone. Since insufficient advertising space is a chronic problem, separating some of the advertisement pages and fitting in regional ads is still a popular policy in most of newspapers

⁷⁰ W.B. Reddaway, "The Economics of Newspapers," Economic Journal 73 (August, 1963): 201.

⁷¹ Kao Huei-Yu, Reporting Group Chief at United Daily News, "Fair Competition and Natural Elimination," Journalism Magazine 7 (June 1988): 19.

to handle the overflow.

For decades, television and newspapers have been the two most popular media that absorb most of the advertising revenues in the market. The total amount spent for advertisement in 1986 was 228.5 billion NT dollars, of which newspaper took a 39.9 percent share.⁷² The records of the Advertising Agency Association showed that newspaper advertisement took 43 percent of the total amount spent on advertising in 1987.⁷³ This income is concentrated disproportionately in the hands of a relatively small number of papers. According to one authority, "85 percent of advertisements go to the major newspapers in Taiwan, and the number of those major newspapers only counts 30 percent in the industry."⁷⁴ China Times and United Daily News, together with their member papers, took 78 percent of the total newspaper advertisements (17 billion in all) in 1989.⁷⁵ This situation remains largely unchanged; one media professional recently estimated that "almost 65 percent of advertisements in this area are with China Times

⁷² Chang Wo-Fon, "The Elimination of The Ban and The Development of Advertising," Excellence, September 1987, 171.

⁷³ "Battle for the Survival of the Fittest," New Economy Week, June 1988, 11-15.

⁷⁴ Yen Po-Chin, "Newspaper and Television Competition Over Advertising After The Lifting Of The Ban," Journalism Magazine 7 (December 1987): 22.

⁷⁵ Tiao Man-Peng, "The Two Bigs' Competition," Commonwealth, 1 July 1990, 26.

and United Daily News.⁷⁶ Advertising volume and revenues, it seems, are closely related to circulation. It does not seem likely that the current trend will change soon, and it is strongly believed that lack of advertising income constitutes one of the reasons that some newly founded papers cannot survive.

III. CURRENT STATUS OF MAJOR NEWSPAPERS IN TAIWAN

Central Daily News

Founded in 1928 in Shanghai and reestablished in March 1949 in Taipei, Central Daily News has been one of the dominant papers in Taiwan in terms of its representation of the government. The paper is sponsored by KMT and its uncompromising tone and the pro-KMT image distinguish itself from the rest of the papers. An incremental acquisition of new facilities during the Seventies and steady expansion and computerization in the Eighties already resulted in a domestic circulation of more than one million today. The paper's overseas circulation reaches five continents and islands in the three oceans to meet the goal: Where there is Chinese, there is Central Daily News. Because of its KMT background, Central Daily News automatically bears a certain weight of social responsibility. Its advertisements are screened for exaggerated claims before going to print. Its

⁷⁶ J.C. Jai, Media Center Manager at United Communications Group, Telephone interview by author, 12 February 1993.

reporting of social events and criminal stories is more conservative than other newspapers because of the paper's semi-official status. Central Daily News has a Public Service Division in its Managing Department to listen to readers' problems and receive complaints.

China Daily News

In February 1946 China Daily News reopened in Tainan. Its headquarters moved to Taipei in 1948, and a North Taiwan Edition was added to its circulation, which covered the whole island. China Daily News was the first news institution funded by the KMT and local individuals, and also the first paper that allowed its employees to hold stock in the company. In 1987, China Daily News withdrew from the northern market and combined its North and South Editions a single edition circulating only in southern Taiwan. Its new edition has five unfolded papers, i.e., 20 pages, and is known for advocating consumer movements and its coverage of social activities.

China Times

This paper was called Cheng Hsin News when it was founded in Taipei in 1950. Beginning in 1968, the paper operated under its present name. Over the past forty years, it has become one of the two dominant private newspaper corporations in Taiwan, with around four thousand employees in its three newspapers (China Times, Commercial Times, and China Times Express), four weeklys (China Times Weekly,

America's China Times Weekly, Investment Information Weekly, and Four Seasons News), and three cultural business units. Its current circulation reaches 1.15 million readers (China Times is the only paper in Taiwan that joins ABC system), 70 percent of which are regular subscribers, and 30 percent retail; 500,000 copies are distributed in the north, 400,000 copies in central Taiwan area, and 200,000 in the south market.⁷⁷ It is very much a general-interest newspaper; its 11 unfolded pages (15 for weekend) cover international news, domestic politics, economic and investment information, society, culture, art, athletics, and entertainment news. Its beliefs "freedom, democracy, love for the nation; openness, rationalism, seeking improvement" are the guidelines of its style. China Times was once the bitter rival of United Daily News, but the hostile relationship between the papers has gradually improved, and their editorial tones are closer now.⁷⁸

Economic Daily News

This is Taiwan's oldest special-interest newspaper; its business focus covers international market trends, new products, trade, patent technology, special manufacturing ideas, and business opportunities. Established in April

⁷⁷ Huang Chao-Sung, Editor-in-Chief of China Times, Telephone interview by author, 13 April 1993.

⁷⁸ Lee Fu-Dien, "How The Legal Structures Influence The Reunion," symposium held at Chinese Community Activity Center, Richardson, Texas, 6 April, 1993.

1967, Economic Daily News becomes the first spin-off from United Daily News's flagship. Increasing from eight pages in the late Sixties to the current 32 pages, the paper's stated goal is to generate a positive atmosphere for the nation's industries and to function as a spokesman for all kinds of businesses. Its importance to the local business community may be measured by the fact that almost every company on the island subscribes this paper.

Gwoyeu Ryhbaw

Gwoyeu Ryhbaw has been the only children's newspaper to include phonetic symbols beside the characters. The main reason for establishing this paper in 1948 in Taipei was to promote the use of the Mandarin Chinese dialect at official occasions. With the help of mass education and promotion through vehicles such as Gwoyeu Ryhbaw, Mandarin became the official language of Taiwan. During its earliest phase, the paper was in deep financial trouble and experienced personnel problems, and suffered under the turbulent political situation, it almost fell. After its board of directors was set in 1949, the operation gradually stabilized. It currently has more than 400 employees, a Publishing Department which handles children's books, a Mandarin Service Department and Language Center helping the government promote Mandarin education, a correspondence school, and a phonetic symbol printing factory. Gwoyeu Ryhbaw is registered with the GIO as a non-profit public

service organization, making it unique among Taiwan's major newspapers, most of which are for-profit businesses. It sustains itself through subscription and advertising revenue, and does not receive financial support from the government or any organization. The paper is published in a tabloid size, 16 pages daily. All the news reported is considered educationally significant, and the stories are told in a colloquial style. Because of the special function of Gwoyeu Ryhbaw, some parts of the paper have been used as instruction materials in schools in southeast Asia, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Macao. The paper has been studied by researchers from institutions such as Harvard University and the University of Tokyo.

The Independence Evening Post

Established in 1947, The Independence Evening Post now is Taiwan's oldest evening newspaper. Before the birth of Liberty Times, this paper was the most liberal voice in the industry. It was suspended twice in the early 1950s because of its outspoken style. In the most recent decade, The Independence Evening Post has been an enthusiastic promoter of local (Taiwanese) culture by publishing books, holding seminars and symposiums, and publishing articles. In September 1987, this paper became the nation's center of attention when it illegally sent two reporters to Mainland China to interview one of the Tienanmen student leaders; this led to an ethical controversy when one of the reporters

revealed the hiding place of the student leader when he was captured by the Mainland Public Safety Bureau. The Independence Evening Post is still one of the most liberal papers, and has a critical attitude toward the KMT in its editorials written by both overseas and domestic scholars, most of whom are advocates of the island's independence. The paper currently publishes 20 pages daily, which is the most among the three evening papers. Three fourths of its circulation comes from the Taipei metropolitan area, and the rest from other major cities on the island. It is still the largest evening newspaper in Taiwan.

Keng Sheng Daily News

Founding a newspaper in east Taiwan during the time the island was just restored from Japanese control was not easy. Established in 1947 in Hua Lien, Keng Sheng Daily News is the oldest newspaper in east Taiwan. The goals of founder Hsieh Yin-I were to help the local people understand Chinese history and culture, to improve democracy, and to develop the eastern part of the country. Keng Sheng Daily News was established through completely private funding. An earthquake in 1951 crumbled its office, printing factory, and the staff's dormitory, which made the tough beginning more difficult. Due to the founder's perseverance, new buildings were constructed one by one, the operation became stable, and the number of pages increased from six to 16. The paper had a significant impact on the local government

and regional construction projects. Its editorials usually focus on what should be done to make the east prosperous, with a regional perspective on social issues, government policies, and cultural activities. Of its circulation, 74 percent is in east Taiwan, and the rest comes from the west and the south.

Labor Times

Labor Times is another kind of professional newspaper established after the lifting of the Ban; it is also the first paper designed for the nation's 6.3 million workers. Established on Labor Day of 1989, Labor Times provides various information for the working population, such as interpretations of relevant laws and regulations, coverage of more than 2,000 labor unions and government labor offices, publicizing employment opportunities, arranging labor entertainment programs, holding talent and creativity competitions, reporting on special training projects, and honoring outstanding workers. The newspaper also supports a telephone hotline for workers with employment-related questions and problems. In order to better serve its readers, Labor Times established a national information network, through which a representative from each union reports on a regular basis. This information exchange not only enriches the paper's contents but also improves communication among unions.

Liberty Times

This was formerly the Liberty Daily News, changing its name in 1988 to Liberty Times. Chief Editor, and President, Yen Wen-Shuan is an aggressive journalist; under his leadership, Liberty Times is regarded bold in its criticisms of government. The paper also claims that it is the one that the highest regard for the will and the right of the 20 million people in Taiwan (it has been nicknamed "The Second Voice). Together with The Independence Evening Post, Taiwan Times, and Min Chung Daily News, Liberty Times is categorized as a member of the pro-Democratic Progressive Party group of papers. It publishes 28 pages daily, and adds more on occasion. According to Survey Research Taiwan, Liberty Times was the only paper whose circulation increased after the lifting of the Ban. It now has 500,000 subscribers covering mainly central and north Taiwan markets. "No political interference is good news for the industry," its President states.⁷⁹

Media News

Media News is the newspaper issued by the students and faculty members of the Mass Communication Department at Min Chuan Girls College. It was formerly an on-campus magazine called Min Pao established in November 1982. Two years later it became a tabloid weekly. In April 1987 Min Pao

⁷⁹ Yen Wen-Shuan, President of Liberty Times, Telephone interview by author, 14 April 1993.

formally registered with GIO as a weekly for sale on the market. During early November 1989, the name was changed to Media News and was published every three days (and printed with recycled materials). With a focus on journalistic ethics, Media News questions the industry's professional standards and criticizes corruption in journalism. It serves as a watchdog over Taiwan's mass media industries and attempts to curb the wrong doings of journalists and media corporations.

Stock Market Times

Taiwan was once called the "Republic of Casino" when its stock market went wild during the mid 1980s. Hundreds of thousands of people, including homemakers, factory workers, company clerks, and students, plunged into the market, which led to widespread, overheated scramble for quick wealth. In response to this unhealthy trend, Stock Market Times was established in August 1989, with a goal of blunting the blind enthusiasm of novice investors and educating people with correct investment strategies. It analyzes not only market trends but the companies which issue stocks to provide investors useful information before they risk their capital. Stock Market Times and Labor Times belong to the same owner, who also owns a general purpose newspaper, King Light Daily, and a news agency, USA News.

Taiwan Li Pao

This is another college-based newspaper established by

an outstanding journalist, Cheng She-Wo, who passed away in April 1991. Mr. Cheng, the pioneer of Chinese tabloid newspapers, once owned papers in Peking and Shanghai. He moved to Taiwan and founded World Journalism College, devoting his whole life to journalism education. Since Mr. Cheng insisted on a free press, Taiwan Li Pao does not have any specific political stand; it claims to reflect the public's opinion without outside interference. The tabloid size paper has a full page devoted to opinions and comments from readers. Representatives selected from the subscriber base form a committee to guide the paper and make sure it follows the principle of serving the public without prejudice. Taiwan Li Pao has a daily circulation of more than 15,000; its 32 pages cover international and domestic news, education, culture, campus news, technology, entertainment, and the arts. Because of its small format, it is widely believed that Taiwan Li Pao will become the most popular newspaper among mass transportation commuters.

Taiwan Times

Taiwan Times is one of the biggest newspapers in the south Taiwan area. The newspaper's certificate had been transferred a few times before the establishment of Taiwan Times in 1971 in Kaohsiung. Taiwan Times is a privately owned newspaper without specific political affiliations. After falling on hard times economically in the late 1980s, Taiwan Times was reorganized and started over. It currently

employs more than 1,000 employees and publishes 28 to 32 pages daily. It has three administrative offices in Taipei, Taichung, and Tainan for regional operation, and also has branch office in Hong Kong and Tokyo. Taiwan Times invites overseas and domestic scholars and professionals to take part in a writing committee designed to improve the quality of its contents.

United Daily News

United Daily News is the other mainstream paper in the industry. Dating back to 1951, the paper was a combination of three papers, until 1957, when United Daily News became the registered title of the combined edition. The development history of this big newspaper is similar to others; it was short of financial support in the beginning, moving from place to place, renting offices and printing facilities. United Daily News did not have its own building until 1959, after which it began to grow steadily. In 1967, the company's first affiliated newspaper, Economic Daily News, was founded. The second affiliated newspaper, World Journal, was established in 1976 in New York and San Francisco, stimulating the overseas Chinese newspaper market. The Journal now has almost 500 employees in major cities in the United States. In 1978, the company founded Taiwan's first (and still its only) lifestyle newspaper, Min Sheng Pao. This paper had a new look because of the nature of its content, which included a variety of "soft" news

covering the arts, entertainment, cultural activities, consumer information, athletics, outdoor life, and travel. Min Sheng Pao has been a big hit since it provides a concentrated source of information that is useful in people's daily life. Another Daily News paper, Europe Daily News, made its debut in Paris in 1982. The publisher, the daughter of the owner, was awarded "Chevalier des lettres et arts" by the French Council Chairman for the paper's achievements in cultural exchange. In 1986, World Journal moved into Thailand market. United Daily News' most recent venture, United Evening News, joined the family in February 1988.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

The power of mass media lies partly in their access to the public, which is also one reason that governments worldwide have attempted to use the media as political instruments. The lifting of martial law in Taiwan marks the starting point of a new historical era for the country and for Taiwan's journalistic profession. Today's newspapers face a political and economic environment dramatically different from that faced by the island's first papers forty years ago. The lifting of the Ban brought freedoms for which journalists had fought for decades; at this moment, they are still trying to establish the parameters of that freedom. Even before the "Ban of Newspaper" was lifted, Carl Goldstein wrote in World Press Review, "The conditions under which the press operates in Taiwan today are far more relaxed than they were ten or twenty years ago, giving journalists hope that the liberalizing trend will continue."⁸⁰ Reporters on the country's mainstream dailies who once wrote secretly for the opposition press can now criticize the government in bylined stories in their own

⁸⁰ Carl Goldstein, "Partial Freedom in Taiwan," World Press Review 33 (March 1986): 58.

papers, and can go directly to official sources, who now feel more comfortable about granting interviews. Coverage of anti-government demonstrations has become routine, and readers accustomed to a virtual blackout on news from mainland China now receive detailed reports on its affairs.⁸¹ As has been seen, journalism's working environment has been greatly improved; however, the progress of journalistic quality has not been equally rapid. The newspaper industry still has a long way to go towards defining and living up to its social responsibilities to become a real "fourth estate." "Among newspapers, there is more competition than contact," an experienced journalist comments in reference to the persistent demand for profits within the business.⁸² It might be argued that the industry's growing maturity will be measured through its capacity for self-discipline involving the ethics of journalists and management personnel.⁸³

Taiwan's National Press Council consists of journalists, retired journalists, scholars of journalism, and legal experts. It regularly assesses the quality of media production, and encourages the media to adhere to high

⁸¹ Margot Cohen, "Taiwan's Press Breaks Loose," Columbia Journalism Review 27 (September/October 1988): 16.

⁸² Yen Wen-Shuan, President of Liberty Times, Telephone interview by author, 14 April 1993.

⁸³ Chang Tso-Chin, "Who Can Discipline Reporters?" Global Views Monthly, 15 September 1988, 12.

journalistic standards. In addition to publishing a monthly journal, the council has also set up a channel of communication between the public and the media in its ten-minute "News Bridge" program, which is jointly aired on the three television stations every week. Although the Council promotes ethical standards through its constitution and the Code of Ethics of Chinese Journalists, it does not have statutory authority to punish violators.

Fortunately, some newspapers have realized the seriousness of the current problems in the industry and have established official editorial guidelines. Central Daily News set up an Editing Practice Examining Group with a Semi-monthly Editing Study to oversee the paper's quality and learn from mistakes made by both reporters and editors. In view of the widespread perception that the newspaper industry has abused the freedom it so recently earned, Taiwan Shin Wen Daily News in Kaohsiung has become the first paper in Taiwan to introduce Ombudsman system to operate its paper under readers surveillance of its readers.⁸⁴ It accepts the public's criticism in order to better achieve its mandate of public service. Taiwan Shin Wen Daily News also hopes that other newspapers will follow this example or create other self-disciplinary measurement to improve the entire industry.

⁸⁴ Chang Tu-Wang, "The First Ombudsman in Domestic Media," The News Mirror Weekly, 22 January 1990, 14.

Over the last quarter century especially, Taiwan has moved a long way towards becoming a developed country. Economically, the nation has the second highest foreign exchange deposit in the world; politically, it has turned itself from a one-party state into a country that has 65 registered political parties. It now enjoys unprecedented press freedom. Changes will continue in the journalism industry, whether professional improvement will proceed at the same speed is uncertain. Topics for future study would most profitably monitor this development, to investigate whether the industry grows in healthy ways with the freedom it has, whether the two dominant dailies come to monopolize the entire industry, and whether journalism education meets the demand of the changing world of journalism.

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