

原住民族權利國際研討會

台北，台灣  
一九九三年十二月

**REPORT TO  
MAORI CONGRESS  
EXECUTIVE HUI  
ON VISIT TO TAIWAN**

**TE KAHA  
MARCH, 1994**

**Aroha Te Pareake Mead  
Convenor, Foreign Policy Committee**

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## THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF TAIWAN: THE HUMAN SACRIFICE FOR TAIWAN'S INDUSTRIALISATION

**Aroha Te Pareake Mead,  
Convenor, Foreign Policy Committee**

For some, good luck is winning Lotto or a bet at the races. Normally, that is certainly my definition, but on occasion something happens that so profoundly affects me, it makes me see the world and my life very differently. Whenever I travel overseas, I am always relieved to come home. I feel 'lucky' to be Maori and to live in Aotearoa. When I returned home from a 7-day visit to Taiwan in December of last year, I added another reason to feel lucky - I feel lucky just to be alive and to have most of my family alive.

Taiwan is not an 'easy' country to visit. It has a population of 21 million in a land area less than half the size of Aotearoa. The cities are overcrowded and highly polluted. It is also very expensive. For those who think of Taiwan as synonymous with the low-cost 'Made in Taiwan' products that we are so familiar with, those same products in Taiwan cost in equivalent New Zealand dollars, what we would pay for the top of the range produce.

The level of noise in city streets is almost deafening. In Taipei, most of the streets have 10 lanes of traffic, some streets up to 16 lanes. Motor scooters are very popular but they are also noisy, and a hazard to pedestrians. Noise is almost a characteristic of the cities of Taiwan. Every restaurant, shop, hotel lobby, taxi has music playing at a loud volume. I was told that Taiwan boasts the highest number of Mercedes and BMW vehicles per capita anywhere in the world. That will give you an idea of the wealth of Taiwan, but a visit to the communities of Taiwan's indigenous peoples confirms that Taiwan has many human rights problems, atrocities which are not just part of the past, but which still occur today. Taiwan's economy might qualify it as an industrialised country, but its human rights record and performance certainly doesn't.

### **Purpose Of My Visit To Taiwan**

In commemoration of the 1993 UN International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples, the party in opposition, the Democratic progressive Party (DPP) (Indigenous Affairs Committee) convened an International Symposium on THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. This was the first time in the country's history that this issue had been discussed at even a national level.

I was invited as one of four international speakers at the Conference. The other international guests were:

Prof. Howard Berman	Professor of International Law (USA)
Luingam Luithiu	Secretary-General, Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (Nagaland [India])
Mr. Hitano	Vice-President, Ainu Assoc. of Hokaido (Japan)

I represented Maori Congress as Convenor of the Foreign Policy Committee. The invitation was extended following a meeting held in Geneva (during the 11th Session of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples) July 1993 between myself and I. Chiang (Conference Organiser).

The political party currently in power (the KMT) are primarily Chinese advocating continued status for Taiwan as a republic of China. My hosts were the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). The DPP advocates full sovereignty for Taiwan, ending the dominance of China in Taiwan's affairs and striving for full membership in the United Nations. DPP membership comprises a considerable proportion of Taiwanese who under China's 38-year rule of martial law were persecuted, imprisoned and exiled for their outspoken views on the sovereignty of Taiwan. The DPP has also captured the hopes of Taiwan's indigenous peoples.

In their role as my hosts the DPP fully sponsored every aspect of my trip to Taiwan, which also included visits to the Cities and surrounding communities of Taitung, Kaoshiung, Hualien, Hoping and Taroko.

The DPP were generous hosts who ensured that the international visitors like myself were fully occupied from morning to day. They also encouraged and facilitated our meeting a wide variety of Taiwan's indigenous peoples in urban as well as rural environments. The level of their hospitality was very important to me. While I am used to being in countries who speak different languages, I was not familiar with different script. The language and the writing of Taiwan is Chinese. Street signs, restaurant menus, everything is in the Chinese language and script. As an English-speaking person I felt very vulnerable. Even if I had wanted to venture into a shop by myself, compulsive shopper as I am, it would have been a futile experience in communication. I was very grateful for the constant companionship I was provided with.

### International Symposium On The Rights Of Indigenous Peoples 原住民族權利國際研討會

The Conference on The Rights of Indigenous Peoples was extremely worthwhile. I felt very humbled but uncomfortable with the impression that the Conference participants (75% indigenous peoples) held of Maori as "the indigenous peoples who have succeeded". I therefore had to balance the concept of 'success' in international indigenous terms, with what the Treaty of Waitangi actually demands of Aotearoa. Sometimes, as I talked of Maori Congress, especially in the question periods, I felt a bit guilty that my answers were more indicative of what I see as the vision of Maori Congress rather than the reality.

At the Conference, I spoke on the International Personality of Aotearoa (APPENDIX A). I spoke in English and simultaneous translation into Mandarin Chinese was provided. Conference participants were encouraged by the concept of Maori Congress and the idea that tribes can come together on issues of common concern. The indigenous Taiwanese were particularly impressed that Congress had appointed a Convenor of Foreign Policy and that Iwi therefore considered it important to 'think and act globally.' I was told that the presence of a Maori Foreign Policy Convenor caused the organisers of a national land rights demonstration (organised for later in the week) to change their strategy and include sending a delegation to meet with the Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as the Ministers of Justice and the Legislature.

Following my presentation, two indigenous Taiwanese discussants commented on my paper (Mau-kuei Chiang and Iohanni Song Kuo-hsien). Their presentations were most informative as they examined the transferral of initiatives which have worked for Maori, to the situation in Taiwan. Attached is a copy of Mau-kuei Chang's paper.

The speaker chosen to talk about Taiwan's indigenous peoples, was a non-indigenous academic who spent an inordinate amount of time talking about himself, and his research. I found his presentation very difficult to 'swallow' and was moved to comment afterwards that his research was in danger of crossing the line of 'ethical research' because he was attempting to quantify how indigenous people actually FELT about issues. It became apparent that the struggle of indigenous rights in Taiwan is still in its infancy. Taiwan as a nation has only recently emerged from a 48 year rule of martial law and the ability of Taiwanese to raise concerns in a public forum without fear of persecution and imprisonment is a new phenomenon. 'Experts' on indigenous peoples at this stage are still academics. One would be hard pressed to find reports and publications on indigenous issues by indigenous authors.

The third speaker, Luingam Luithui, was an indigenous person from Nagaland (India/Thailand border.) He is also the Secretary-General of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP). Luingam presented a very moving account of the gross human rights atrocities currently occurring throughout Asia. He talked of mass slayings of indigenous peoples, dumping of toxic and nuclear wastes in tribal lands and many more horrifying situations.

The final international speaker, Professor Howard Berman, (who was referred to as 'Bermansan', and I was called 'Miss Aroha') spoke on the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Although over the years I have become very familiar with the Draft Declaration, I still learnt a great deal from Howard's presentation. Sometimes you can become so close to a subject that you forget or take for granted the obvious. Howard's talk certainly re-focused my own perspectives.

The Conference itself lasted for 2 days. The rest of my time in Taiwan was spent visiting indigenous communities.



Aroha Mend, Prof. Howard Berman

來自紐西蘭、印度、美國、日本等地的原住民專家及代表一連二天參加一項由民運黨主辦的「世界原住民權利研討會」，知名人士如下：(上圖，由左至右)亞洲原住民聯盟秘書長路易青、瑪琪、日本北海道協會理事長笹村二朗、(左圖，由左至右)紐西蘭原住民外交委員會召集人阿羅哈、聯合國原住民法律顧問霍德。(記者：李聲遠攝)

【台北】一項調查顯示，台灣原住民對於政府山地政策的整體評估給予正面評價的只有一成二，持負面看法的却高達四成。學者分析，

## 原住民對山地政策持負面看法 給予正面評價有一成二 負面評價高達四

政府在山地政策上不僅嚴重缺乏憲法所懷精神，甚至可以說是「違憲」的制定及推動山地政策。

在昨天召開的「世界原住民權利研討會」，中央研究院民族學研究所研究員暨一九八二年和一九九一年兩次對全台灣做的抽樣調查結果指出，山地及平地山當前遭遇的數個問題包括就業困難、經濟困難、人口外移和酗酒等。

暨海源表示，憲法第五條強調「各民族平等」；第七條又規定「中華民國人民男女、宗教、種族、階級、黨派，在法律平等」。這些條文是保障少數民族權益依據，但事實上他們却在政治、經濟和文化方面居於劣勢。

除此之外，暨海源強調，由於原住民住於偏遠及貧瘠的高山或離島地區，實條文更在基本精神上對他們有相關的保障政府許多有關山地行政的法規不僅都是令，更多不能符合憲法昭示的積極精神

Discussion note on "The International Personality of Aotearoa New Zealand, Indigenous Affairs Policies of the New Zealand Government and the Problems Facing Maori People" by Aroha Mead. The International Symposium on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, December, 1993, Taipei, Taiwan.

Discussant: Mau-kuei Chang, Research Fellow, Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

As a discussant of Mrs. Aroha Mead's paper on the international personality of Aotearoa, now known to the world as "New Zealand", I suggest we begin to appreciate her standpoints from three grounds:

First: The fact that Maori, people with Mana, and the historical tribal Maoridom was brought down by European colonizers and subjugated as today's "underclass" the New Zealand, and the fact that many from outside of <sup>the</sup> region failed to understand. In the article she blamed the government, representing the settler's interests and legacy, throughout the history for cheating the People out of their land, fisheries, and treasures (taonga). The signing of Waitangi Treaty, and its continuous violations since 1840 by the settler government institutionalize the tragic faith of many Maori today. Given this fact, and the "international" nature of the Waitangi Treaty, the Maori is entitled to a separate political entity, perhaps sides along the general parliament, or constitutes an "Upper House" of the parliament.

Second: The Rights of the Indigenous People in a global context. These would include the "Rights to be Ourselves" - meaning the right to have own heritage, dignity and choice; the "Rights to Cultural and Intellectual property of native resources" vis-a-vis the exploitation from tourist industries, large corporations, or states. And above all, "the Rights to political autonomy, if not self-determination" - including the right to protect the indigenous rights from being sold out by the government for the interests of international trade or trans-national company.

And, very importantly, Mrs. Mead reminds us the responsibilities we have following the rights we fight for. The responsibilities to our children, and descendants - to make a change today for a better future. (A true commitment for any social movement.)

Thirdly, How could indigenous people pull themselves out from this common tragedy? I think she presents us with very valuable lessons:

- 1) forming collective body to increase negotiation abilities.
- 2) demanding electoral reform that could increase the representativeness of the indigenous people.
- 3) preserving cultural roots and identity by adopting language nests (Kohahga Reo movement) for kindergarten children and expansion of this language-education system to full education.
- 4) act globally, sharing information and resources with other indigenous peoples throughout the world, building network and a larger community of world indigenous people.

Some of my own reflections:

- 1) Setting the historical record right, point the finger, find out the guilty party, identify the oppressor, the colonizer, the core

of the indigenous people's problem is one thing, to remove their oppression and to reconstruct a more just system for the future is another. Not only the former would be very difficult, for various reasons, the latter would be even much more difficult. It's success requires political and movement force, not just the "correct history" and mere declaration of human rights. If it should be political and movement, then how to strategy proper actions at proper historical conjuncture, weighing the odds for success, and hence pragmatism, would be crucial. For instance, for Taiwan's indigenous people, it would be very difficult for them to claim that they were the historical owner of the land - setting the history right, it would be even much more difficult to correct the misappropriation of their land for nearly four centuries of colonization by the Hanpeople. But, it would be less difficult, though still extremely hard, to demand for preservation of exclusive rights to hunt, to farm and to fish in *certain area*.

2) How to set proper strategy and move ahead wisely requires careful and creative thinking. The leaders of Indigenous people would be extremely important. Most of the indigenous people live near or somewhat above poverty level - excepting very few who might be well-off, and more and more of the indigenous people are settling in the urban area now, the leaders must cater to their daily needs, perhaps solving their daily problem as the movement's primary target. Without grass-root support without leadership.

3) The "language nest" idea is an excellent and viable idea for us to imitate.

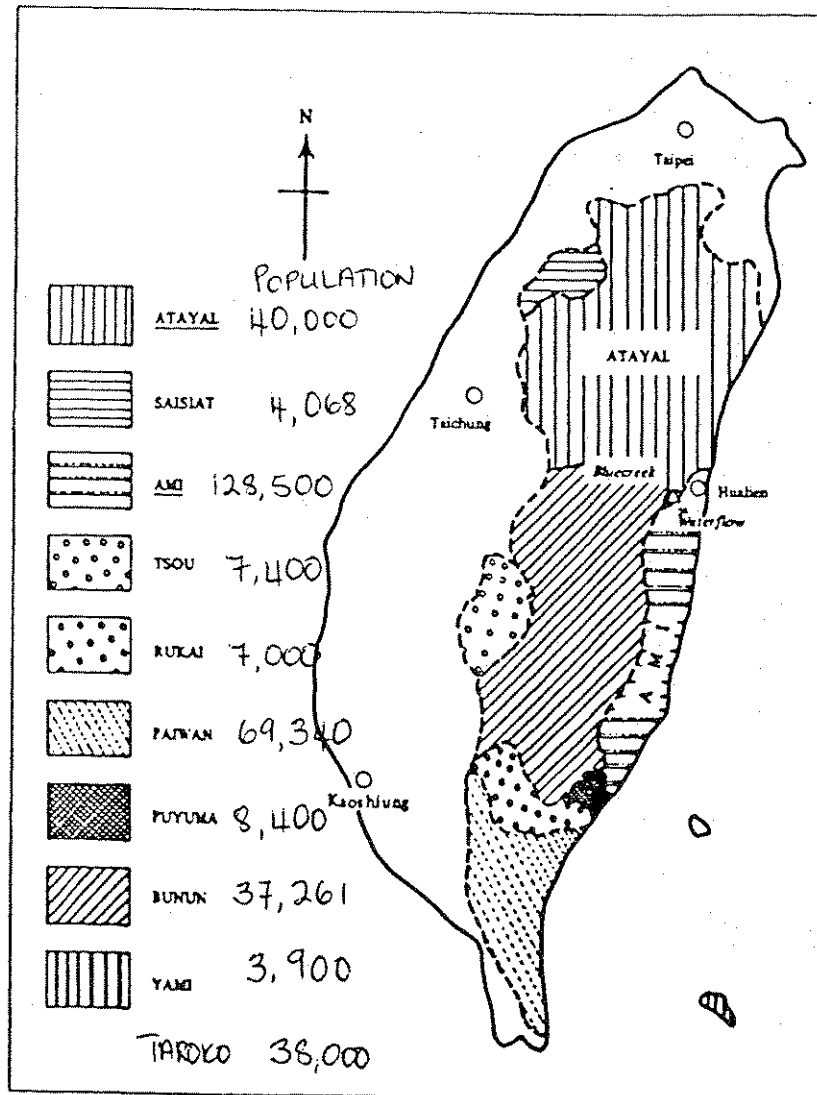
4) International cooperation would be very important. It help to increase the visibility of indigeneous problems (or, should I say the mainstream's soceity's problem?), legitimize the movement, increase awareness, and to build the pressure on the local authorities and dominant group. But we shall not forget winning grass-roots' support is at least equally important, if not more so.

## The Indigenous Peoples Of Taiwan

There are ten indigenous tribes remaining in Taiwan. They number less than 400,000 in a total national population of 21 million. Their ancestry spans some 6000 years and their history of colonisation is absolutely tragic. It is one of successive multi-colonisation by: Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese Manchurians, Japanese and the Chinese Han to name but a few. Imagine going through all of that, to eventually become only 1.8% of the national population.

In academic terms, they are part of the family of 'Austronesians' which is the same language group that Maori belong to. The names of the ten tribes are: **Tayal**, **Saisiat**, **Bunun**, **Rukai**, **Paiwan**, **Puyuma**, **Amis**, **Yami**, **Taroko** and **Tsou**. Each tribe has its own language and different historical accounts of their origins ranging from 2000-6000 years.

### *Culture, Self, and Adaptation*



Map 1: Settlement Areas of the Aboriginal Tribes in Taiwan.

Source: Institute of Ethnology,  
Academia Sinica, Taipei 1991

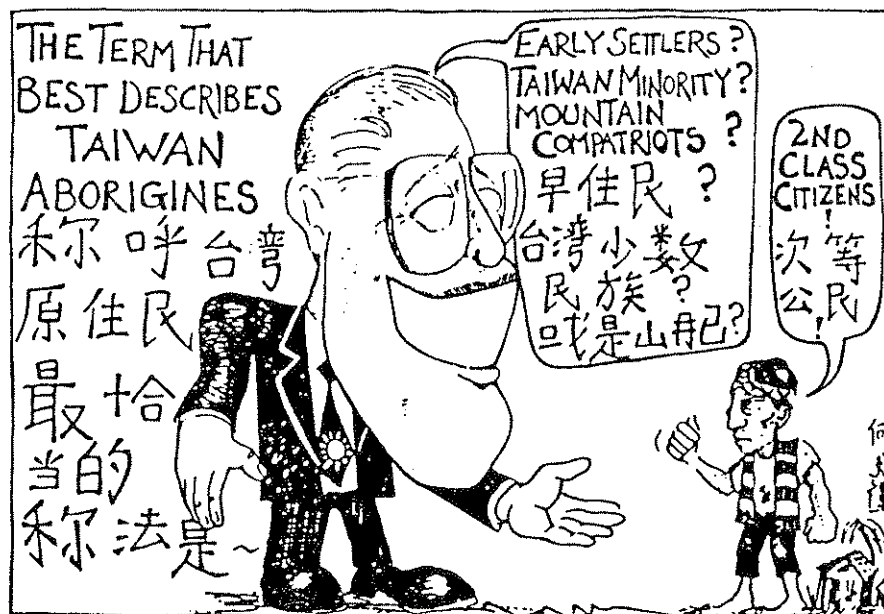
As an outsider, I found their definition of 'indigenous' very challenging, especially in light of the human rights violations that they had historically, (and still do) experience. For instance, one particular tribe was consistently portrayed to me as fully assimilated and therefore no longer 'indigenous' because other indigenous people (outside of that tribe) were convinced that no-one of the tribe spoke their original indigenous language. I couldn't help but wonder what Ngati Awa and other Iwi of Maori Congress hold as their 'bottom line' of being Maori.

The 'indigenous individuals' that I met were just like most of us. Hosts who extended hospitality far beyond their financial means, wonderful sense of humour and presence, love of music, arts and occasion, beautiful looking and filled with an uplifting sense of optimism and goodwill. [Their waiata (singing) is incredibly beautiful.]

65% of indigenous communities are Christian and many no longer practice traditional spiritual customs. Their Christian belief adds another dimension to their relationship with Chinese, 95% of whom are Buddhist. Of the indigenous people that I met, few were able to talk about a 'traditional spiritual link' with their tribal areas but perhaps this was due to the age group that we met with, 90% of whom were in the 25-45 age bracket.

I wasn't able to differentiate an indigenous person from any other Taiwanese but when I asked people if they could identify other indigenous peoples in a crowd, they were all insistent that not only could they tell that someone was indigenous, but also which tribe they were from.

I was never presented with a word that the nine remaining indigenous Taiwanese tribes used to describe themselves collectively. As far as I know, there is no equivalent word for 'tangata whenua'. In fact, during the International Conference one of the key issues was the right to be identified as 'indigenous' because currently government refers to them as 'mountain people', even if they are coastal or living inland. The term 'mountain people' is considered derogatory as it gives an impression of being uncivilised and therefore not 'normal'. Identity was a key issue not only because of the government's reluctance to acknowledge the historical status of the indigenous peoples, but also because government would not acknowledge even indigenous-language personal names. Everyone therefore had to have a Chinese name.



我們要有充份參與全國政治、  
經濟與社會各生活層面的權利

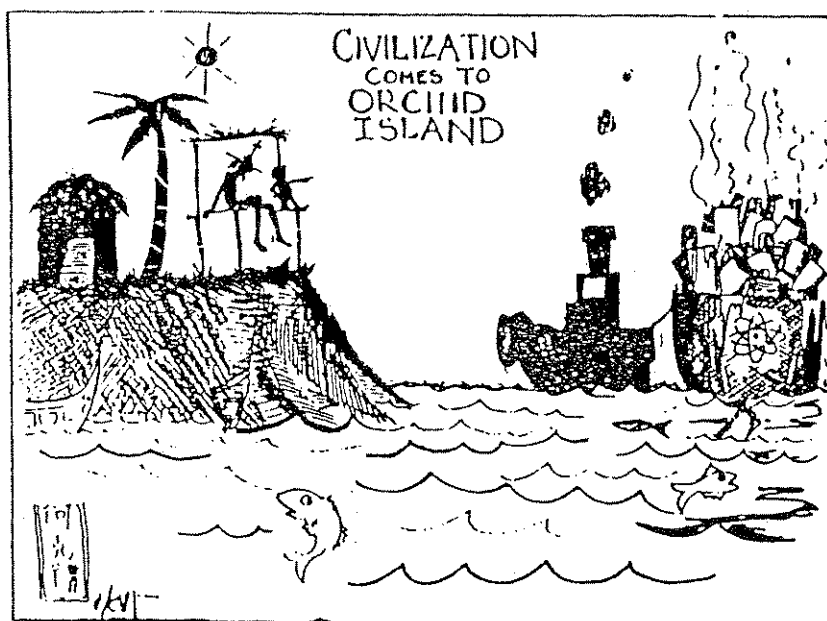


My time with Taiwan's indigenous peoples was an absolute eye-opener. On my last day as I summed up my impressions of Taiwan with Howard Bergman (US Professor of International Law) we both agreed that one would be hard pressed to find a country which would breach every Article of the Draft United Nations Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, but Taiwan would qualify for that unique and unacceptable position.

In my brief visit, these are some of the things I personally, saw, heard, and experienced:

### Nuclear Dumping on Tribal Lands

Off the coast of Southern Taiwan, Lanyu Island (also known as Orchid) is used as a nuclear waste dump. Lanyu has been the home of the YAMI people for over 1000 years. The YAMI still live and farm on that land. Parts of Lanyu are being developed by government for a tourist park, land recently confiscated from the YAMI. Tourism is a growing industry there (though it is hard to imagine that tourists would really want to visit an island with radioactive waste on it.)



基本權利  
我們擁有免於被同化的

*The right to be protected from cultural genocide*

### Police/Government Harassment (Land Rights Demonstration)

A peaceful land rights demonstration was organised to coincide with the Indigenous Conference. Approximately 5000 people participated, the majority indigenous peoples but also many Taiwan citizens who supported the rights of indigenous peoples. I met people who had been exiled for 15-20 years, who had been imprisoned on Lutao (Green Island) a former penal colony for political prisoners now being developed as a tourist coastal haven.

# The China Post

中國郵報

Saturday, December 11, 1993

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## Taipei march ends in standoff with police

Indigenous peoples from across Taiwan march in Taipei yesterday to mark the close of the United Nations Year of Indigenous Peoples. The

event later became a confrontation with police after protesters began to march on the Executive Yuan. Story, Page 16. — ERIC HSU, THE CHINA POST

**Indigenous peoples**

# March finishes with standoff

## Maori leader expresses uncertainty

By Christopher Bodeen  
Special to THE CHINA POST

A march commemorating the international day of indigenous people's rights ended in a five hour standoff between police and several hundred members of Taiwan's indigenous tribes last night.

No one was injured in the protest, which set several hundred riot police backed with water cannons against indigenous peoples and their supporters in front of the Control Yuan at the corner of Chungshan South Road and Chungshiao West Road in Taipei.

Protesters danced and sang traditional songs to raise flagging spirits on a cold night beside the highway overpass. The group, headed by young men armed with bamboo staves and flag staffs, were separated from police lines by a double barricade of barbed wire.

Events grew testy after a delegation of tribal leaders sent to deliver an official statement to the Executive Yuan was forced to wait more than an hour before being received by Assistant Secretary-General Liao Cheng-hao, whose position delegates considered too low in stature.

Another delegation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was received by Head of Information and Cultural Affairs Ouyang Jui-Hsiung, while another sent to the Legislative Yuan was received by lawmakers there.

"On this day, the last day of the United Nations Year of Indigenous Peoples, the Kuomintang government should show that they respect our presence," said organizer and Catholic priest Yohani.

The demonstrators had originally sought to march on the Executive Yuan, but were stopped

after leaving the legislature, where they had broken through police lines to rally at the front entrance. A series of later negotiations between officials of the Executive Yuan and march leaders accompanied by Democratic Progressive Party legislator Hung Chi-chang failed, who demands that either Premier Lien Chan or Vice Premier Hsu Li-teh personally accept the statement were turned down.

Earlier in the day approximately 1,500 indigenous peoples, many in traditional dress and their friends had marched under the banners of Taiwan's nine major tribes and organizations representing Buddhist clergy, labor, and Taiwan indigenous peoples. Amid snarling midday traffic at several major intersections, marchers received frequent waves and cheers of support.

Marchers chanted slogans, preeminent among them, "Oppose the occupation, fight for survival, give us back our land," the title of an ongoing campaign to reclaim lands lost to the national government since Japanese withdrawal in 1945.

Aroha C. Mead, Convener of the National Maori Congress International Division in New Zealand, who attended the march, called the situation in Taiwan "tragic" saying the challenges facing indigenous peoples here are "100 times worse than in New Zealand." Though Mead had advised leaders on means of advancing their agenda, she expressed uncertainty as to their effectiveness in Taiwan.

"You can examine the experience of other (indigenous) peoples and try to draw the best from them but at the end of the day you really have to just put together your own unique formula," Mead said.

The Protest organisers had been granted a permit but as soon as the permit time elapsed, the area where the protesters were meeting was cordoned off with barbed-wire on both sides so no protestor could leave and 4 rows of Police with helmets, shields and batons faced the crowds with the safety of the barbed wire on one side of them and a water cannon truck on the other side.

The Protestors comprised kaumatua (elders), women and children as well as men. The Police using a loudspeaker system, called out protestors by name and told them they were being observed and they should be careful not to take unnecessary risks.

A moment of irony occurred however when indigenous 'warriors' armed only with a simple bamboo rod, beat down the wall of barbed wire.

I was shocked by what I saw. It was however, just the beginning. Later in the evening, I was visited at my hotel by two officers identifying themselves as 'foreign security police' and was questioned for about 45 minutes about my motives for visiting Taiwan, my participation in the demonstration and comments I was reported to have said to people in the crowd! For those who think that international representation is uncomplicated, straightforward and safe, it is not like that at all.

Howard Berman (USA) was present throughout the Police questioning which helped in a pretty frightening situation. During the questioning I was threatened with being refused future entry into Taiwan. I was told that the Police would write to the NZ government and advise them that I had acted unlawfully. I was told in no uncertain terms to board a plane within 48 hours and leave Taiwan (permanently) and was reminded that the Police had photographs of me. I was also asked questions about who had invited me, what had I talked about with people. In all honesty, I was scared and for the remainder of my visit, I was always looking around to see if I was being followed. I just assumed that my Hotel phone had been tapped and only ever said in conversations home to my family, what I wanted the Police to hear.

A visiting Italian student, Fiorella, who spoke fluent Mandarin (and who I had met during visits to the UN WGIP in Geneva) stayed in my hotel room with me for the rest of my visit.

### Confiscation/Expropriation Of Traditional Tribal Lands

This practice is still a common occurrence. Not surprisingly, the few environmentally clean areas left in Taiwan are traditional tribal lands. As mentioned previously, the cities are highly over-populated and polluted.

"In Taiwan, almost all aboriginal land is 'government land', owned by the State which allows indigenous people to use it free of charge on semi-permanent lease. Strictly speaking then, when such land is allotted for other development there is no aboriginal land lost, since in law it was not theirs to begin with". (Source: Asian Consultation on Tourism and Aboriginal Peoples) Just about every community I met, has experienced within the past 10 years, confiscation, expropriation of their lands. Two examples include:

**Taroko Tribe:** Taroko lost the bulk of their traditional lands to the State for the establishment of the TAROKO NATIONAL PARK. They were refused access to their traditional burial and agricultural sites, denied the right to continue hunting in the mountains and advised that no new construction could occur within the boundaries of the Park. Since that time, they have witnessed numerous tourist development projects being constructed within Taroko by the State and Chinese developers.

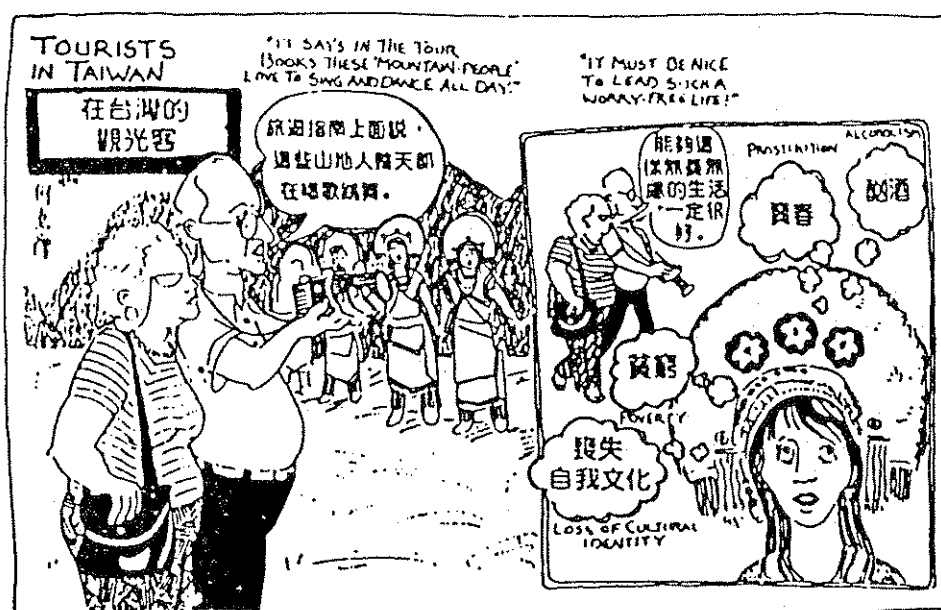
**Paiwan Tribe:** Paiwan lands are in the southern part of the central mountain ranges. I visited the village of SANTIMEN and it was undoubtedly the most beautiful community I saw in Taiwan. It afforded people a dignified standard of living, well constructed houses, gardens, and access to sun -all of these things are rare in Taiwan. The community is scheduled to be flooded in order to build another damn on the river (which already contains some 20 dams sourcing the river). The villagers have been forced to take up 'urban' sub-standard dwellings.

### Effects of Tourism

Tourism has certainly brought many negative facets into the lives and livelihoods of Taiwan's indigenous people. Taiwan tourist brochures go to great lengths to promote the appeal of visiting indigenous 'culture parks' and witnessing the 'mountain peoples harvest rituals'. The other side of the picture however, is that while the State is promoting the culture of indigenous peoples for tourism, it is also denying indigenous peoples the use of their languages, observance and promotion of their customs. Profits earned from 'aboriginal culture parks' rarely go back into the indigenous communities and indigenous people are employed in the lowest-paid positions.

**Prostitution, and particularly, Child Prostitution, is an even more tragic indicator of the values that tourism has brought into indigenous communities.**

It is actually devastating to hear the stories, visit the sites and witness forced urbanisation and dehumanisation of Taiwan's indigenous peoples.



我們要有受各種層次與形式的教育的權利

## The Human Sacrifice For Taiwan's Industrialisation

I was consistently told throughout my visit by indigenous and other Taiwanese that the Chinese government did not value human life. Every individual was expendable if it was 'for the country's good'.

I visited Taroko National Park a spectacular canyon on the southern coast of Taiwan. The Park originally belonged to the Taroko tribe but it was confiscated and made into a National Park (sound familiar?). The roadway is a remarkable feat of engineering. We were shown a monument commemorating the workers who had died building the road. We were told that the monument does not name the workers nor even mention the number who were killed (which is reputed to be in the 70-100 bracket). My translator sarcastically said that in the eyes of the Chinese government "these things are not important. The road was built, people died, aren't we generous to even acknowledge that people died".

We were also taken to the township of Hoping. Hoping is the site where government has expropriated the remaining lands of the Taroko 'mountain' people targeting the mountains for 100-years of future development. Taiwan prides itself as the world's leading supplier of cement. Hoping is where much of that cement is mined and manufactured. The air in Hoping is fatal. Within three hours, my lungs felt heavy, my eyes were watering and I really felt that I was endangering my health. There is dust everywhere. The few plants I saw in the township were covered with grey dust.

We met with locals in someone's house and the house had a fine layer of dust over every imaginable space. I was told of an M.D.'s 2-year battle to get permission from the Cement Factory Manager to bring an X-ray machine on site. The most basic of industrial safety precautions, such as face masks, hard hats, etc. are not used. They cost too much money! After finally getting permission, the MD was refused by indigenous and migrant workers to X-ray them. The reason given?

"We know what's inside our lungs, we know we are dying, but if you show a picture to our employer we'll be fired. This way at least we are able to provide for our families a little longer."

The 'owner' of the Cement Factory coincidentally happens to be one of President Lee's Advisory Team. The 100-development plans for Hoping do not include any period of replenishment or healing of the land.

Nganeko Minhinnick of Ngati Te Ata reminded me that NZ Steel's arrangement with Maoro is similar, 99 years of pure development. "By the time we get our land back, we won't be able to even plant a tree on it" says Nganeko.

While in Taipei, we were taken to the 'illegal village' where members of the 10 ten tribes are no longer able to farm, hunt and garden in their communities moved instead to the city to find work. The village I saw was unbelievably depressing. Members paid a fee to what was called the 'top house' occupied by Chinese Han People. The fee entitled them to run an electricity and phone line from the 'top house'. Every couple of years these villages were bulldozed by Taipei officials destroying all of the possessions of the occupants. They were

not given prior warning to vacate. The current 'head' of the village was a man in his 50s. He is handicapped in his legs as a result of working in the refrigeration unit of a large-scale fishing vessel. He told us that he was expected to work 12 hour days in the refrigeration unit without any breaks. His legs became severely deformed and he lost the strength in his hands. He was fired and not awarded any compensation. His employer did pay for the first two weeks of his eventual hospitalisation lasting several months.

I will never ever think the same way of a MADE IN TAIWAN bargain. There is a cost for Taiwan's industrialisation - it is human health and the dignity of Taiwan's indigenous peoples. To be forced to work in conditions which are causing slow death, to live in towns where the air is so polluted trees and flowers can't grow, to have to grow vegetables in land which is contaminated with radioactive nuclear waste, to be forcibly removed from environmentally clean tribal lands and made to live in sub-standard urban accommodation where people can't garden or hunt or fish, these are points which consumers need to bear in mind before we purchase Taiwan products.

### Conclusion

These are only some of the experiences I have brought back from Taiwan.

Finally, I wish to make specific mention of the personalities who took care of me during my visit to Taiwan. I am sending a copy of this article back to Taiwan so this is a thanks to them as well as sharing with you the kind of people I met.

Albert Lin was the main translator for the international visitors. Now teaching Physics in Canada, Albert was one of hundreds of Taiwanese exiled for his outspoken views on Taiwan's independence from China. He spoke English, French, Mandarin and Japanese. This visit was his first trip home in 25 years. His parents had died as had many other close members of his family. Albert Lin is an exceptional person who stretches the meaning of 'aroha' to its absolute limits. The english proverb about 'giving you the shirt off his back' was tailor-made for Albert. For example, I soon learned never to mention that I liked a particular thing because inevitably he would buy it. I once commented that I would like to buy carseat covers for my new car. The next day waiting in my Hotel Room was a box with a note "Dear Miss Mead, Albert Lin asked me to brought this car seat cover to you. I hope the color is favorite to you. Thank you for your concern of Taiwanese Aborigines."



Prof. Albert Lin, Mr. Hitano (Amu/Japan)

Bayung was one of my guides in my first three days in Taiwan. He spoke very little English but always ensured I was alright as we travelled together through Southern Taiwan. I discovered during the Conference that Bayung had been extremely ill while he was travelling with us. When we returned to Taiwan he was hospitalised for dehydration. He never indicated to us that he was not well or needed rest. Like so many of the people I met, he was self-less in his hospitality and sense of responsibility to the international visitors.

Fiorella, (the Italian translator) made my last nights in Taiwan less frightening by volunteering to stay with me. The Police incident was scary and just knowing that I had someone with me 24 hours a day to 'witness' any incident and also who could speak Mandarin was a great comfort.

I. Chiang, the Chairman of DPP's Indigenous Affairs Committee was my main host. He organised the Conference. I. Chiang, his wife Aafan Leka, their friend Tossi and Mokai another of our guides, these are all people I will never forget.

I presented to my hosts the DPP, and to I Chiang framed photographs of Maori art. I also took over 'We Are Aotearoa' T-Shirts and Te Maori Kits as koha for my guides.

Aroha Te Pareake Mead  
Convenor, Foreign Policy Committee  
February 1994



*Drawing by Yvonne Lin Mei-jung*



## O P I N I O N

# Taiwan Was Temporarily Part of China, but That Was Long Ago

**T**AIPEI — Recently, Beijing issued a policy paper reasserting China's claim to sovereignty over Taiwan. "Taiwan has belonged to China since ancient times," it said. China fails, however, to establish evidence of effective administration over the island of Taiwan before the 18th century. Even into the 19th century, China continued to deny its jurisdiction over Taiwan during numerous recorded confrontations with the United States and Japan. Taiwan became an official province of China only in 1887, and that status was rescinded eight years later when China ceded Taiwan to Japan "in perpetuity" in the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki.

Beijing glosses over this crucial detail of Taiwan's permanent cession to Japan and the subsequent 50 years of Japanese colonization. In language worthy of a Greek tragedy, the paper speaks of the Taiwanese people who, in 1895, "wailed and bemoaned the betrayal." Some may have been wailing, but others struggled to establish the Republic of Taiwan in 1949, the first republic in Asian history.

When the republic was suppressed within a year, the Japanese colonialists allowed the Taiwanese people a two-year period in which they could choose Chinese nationality and move to China. Only a tiny fraction of the population chose to do so. This fact offers meager evidence of genuine despair over the separation of Taiwan from China.

After World War II, the Japanese empire was dismantled but Taiwan was never legally reincorporated as part of China. The 1951 San Francisco treaty, in which Japan relinquished its sovereignty over Taiwan, did not specify to whom title to the island would be transferred.

Beijing has insisted that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China, but it has no grounds for claiming sovereignty over the island. The People's Republic of China, formed in 1949 when the Chinese Communist Party seized power, has never exercised a single day of control over the affairs of Taiwan. Likewise, while the

By Maysing Yang and Phyllis Hwang

Republic of China on Taiwan has exercised effective government since 1949, its control has never extended simultaneously to the mainland. Therefore, the government in Taipei has no authority to define the borders of China.

Clearly, the argument that Taiwan belongs to China has no grounds in historical fact or international law. The claim in Beijing's policy paper that Taiwan is an "inalienable part of China" simply reveals an inability to accept reality. Taiwan has existed separately from China for 98 years.

After almost a century of divergent political and economic experience, Taiwan and China have evolved into two distinct entities. Taiwan has emerged from 38 years of martial law under the Kuomintang as one of Asia's most prosperous economies and promising democracies. The people elected their own legislators in 1992, and may elect their own president as soon as next year. Taiwan has extensive, unofficial bilateral relations with

many countries and participates actively in international organizations. China does not have to worry about Taiwan declaring independence; it already has it.

Beijing's policy paper reveals a dangerous delusion among China's leaders. In the century since China ceded Taiwan to Japan, two world wars have been fought, governments have been toppled and rebuilt, and national boundaries erased and redrawn. Chaos would reign if Europe reorganized itself according to the borders that prevailed in 1895.

Yet China continues to invoke archaic territorial claims to achieve the ultimate goal of reunifying China and Taiwan, by force if necessary. As the world approaches a new millennium, we wait for China to emerge from the 19th century.

*Ms. Yang is the foreign affairs director of the Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan's largest political opposition group. Ms. Hwang is a party researcher. They contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.*

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