

**FORMER VICE-PRESIDENT ANNETTE LU'S BOOK LAUNCH:
*MY FIGHT FOR A NEW TAIWAN: ONE WOMAN'S JOURNEY
FROM PRISON TO POWER***

Notes for remarks by Hon. David Kilgour, JD. at media conference

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It is an honour to speak about Ms. Lu's latest book (co-written with Ashley Esarey, a Chinese-speaking American political scientist), published by the University of Washington Press. I've been reading it with great interest in every spare moment since Friday evening and managed to finish it last night.

Permit me to stress the following about an excellent work of history:

The foreward by the renowned former Harvard law professor Jerome Cohen's is probably as favourable as any book is going to receive from him. He clearly admires and likes Ms. Lu enormously since they met at the law school in 1977, when she began her master of laws (LLM), and the current president of Taiwan appears to have been studying there at about the same time. Cohen mentions, as does the book, that Mr. Ma as a Nationalist Party official later "played a key role" in winning the author's release after she "had served five years of the twelve-year term to which she had been sentenced for advocating Taiwan independence." Cohen adds that Lu later "became the second-highest leader of the freest people and most democratic government ever spawned by China's political-legal culture..."

The introduction by her co-author makes important points, including:

- Taiwan is an “independent nation-state in everything but name.” (Some years ago, I recall looking up a Federal Court of Canada case, which declared that under our law Taiwan is a sovereign and independent country.)
- After centuries of colonial rule by the Dutch, Spanish, the Manchus and Japanese, many Taiwanese hoped in 1945 that rule by Chiang Kai-shek’s K.M.T. then espousing democracy would be better, but the early 1947 slaughter by his soldiers of “Taiwan’s elite by Chinese soldiers, creat(ed) deep rifts between ‘mainlanders’ and Taiwan-born residents and contribut(ed) to the rise of the Taiwan Independence Movement overseas.”
- Later in the book, Ms. Lu adds additional details: “Under orders to eliminate resistance...the troops dragged intellectuals from their homes and herded them together for mass executions. Thousands disappeared and an entire generation was silenced. The Taiwanese uprising and the ensuing massacre carried out by Chinese soldiers is known as the “2-28 Incident”, named for the first day of the Taiwanese protests on February 28, 1947.” I presume that no Taiwanese had anything to do with terming mass murder an “incident”.

The first chapter of the book should warm anyone’s heart. On March 18, 2000, Ms. Lu addressed the media after she and Chen Shui-bian won the election narrowly but with more than 82 percent of eligible voters casting votes: “Today...the people of Taiwan have spoken, and their voice, so long muted, has sung out for the world to hear...To China’s leaders, I wish to extend an

invitation to leave behind past conflict...The historical enmity between the Nationalists and the Chinese Communist Party need no longer poison the relationship between Taiwan and China...Taiwan became the first country in the world with a Confucian cultural heritage to elect a woman vice president...In 1994...I stood alongside Mr. Nelson Mandela on that election day when he cast his vote...Today, with this election, we may joyfully proclaim the birth of a new Taiwan...in which women and men are equal and free. A Taiwan in which democracy has come to full flower for all the world to see.”

The rest of the first section of the book focuses on the author’s upbringing, which is interesting, especially as she weaves a good deal of Taiwanese and world history into her narrative. For example, she explains how President Franklin Roosevelt gave Taiwan to Chiang Kai-shek after the Allied victory to discourage him from negotiating a separate piece with Japan.

Her observations about working with the Executive Yuan Council under the KMT in the early 1970s is revealing. On page 50, one of her superiors insists that “The law is a tool in the service of politics.” As Ms. Lu notes, “In other words, enforcing the law only mattered inasmuch as it served Nationalist political objectives. Even the people charged with upholding the law didn’t respect it.”

Speaking personally, I sometimes wonder if this thinking still prevails in some KMT circles. When, for example, former Lee Teng-hui, was charged criminally long after his years as president, I wondered if it didn’t have mostly to do with the fact that he had quit the KMT. Prosecutors and police in rule of law countries of course are to act without fear or favour and not in the presumed interests of any political party.

Time is short, so let me single out only a few other features of the work:

Chapters 5 and 6: Human Rights Riot and Patriotism Imprisoned

After President Chiang Ching-kuo suspended the election indefinitely in early 1979, Lu gave her famous speech to about 70,000 demonstrators in front of the *Formosa Magazine*, which cost her 1,933 days in prison. Her talk ended with, “I gave up my degree prospects at Harvard and the opportunity for comfort in the United States in order to join the Dangwai (democracy) struggle.” The other day, I visited her cell at Human Rights Museum here in the city and the military court-room where the Kaohsiung Eight trial was held.

Chapter 7: In Search of Destiny

The founding of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in September, 1986 and the lifting of martial law in 1987 after 38 years are outlined. Her visits to South Korea and Japan are of interest. So too is the Lu-founded Clean Election Foundation to stop the KMT candidates from buying votes. I found the book’s description of finally getting the parliamentarians elected in China in 1947 out of the Legislative Yuan in Taipei fascinating. Her visit with party-state officials in China is also described.

Chapter 8: Knocking at the Gate of the UN

Henry Kissinger and some other Americans understandably do not emerge well from this. We follow the author’s valiant campaign to win a place for Taiwan in the UN system. We follow the pressure President Jiang Zemin in Beijing attempted to put on Taiwan’s voters in their first direct presidential election, including

the firing of missiles near their two largest container ports. Among other things, it caused the DPP and KMT to realize that their own differences were, in Lu's words, "much smaller than those between Taipei and Beijing". Lee Teng-hui was elected resoundingly and asked Lu to serve as a presidential advisor.

Chapter 9: Political Trash

The main value of this chapter is perhaps to remind readers that the author has municipal government experience and did an exemplary job as chief executive of Taoyuan County.

Chapter 10: The Glorious Revolution

Many issues come to fruition in the description of the election of Lu and Chen as first DPP heads of the government of Taiwan. I found it one of the most insightful of the entire book. This time, it was Chinese premier Zhu Ronghi pressuring voters not to elect the "wrong candidate", to which Lu replied that in seeking to force Taiwanese to accede to his wishes it was clear that the party-state really sought "one country, one system" under one-party misgovernance..

Epilogue

It deals candidly with allegations of corruption by Chen and his family and his subsequent conviction and although written in the third person Ms. Lu clearly accepts responsibility for every word of it. It points out that while in office she "maintained a distance from Chen Shui-ban's family, kept watch on her personal finances, and avoided conflicts of interest. It also notes that "the judiciary's treatment of Chen Shui-bian after he left office seemed tailored for the persecution of the former president, as the courts had not ruled similarly in other cases in which Taiwanese

politicians had been suspected of graft. The transition from power to prison took a tremendous toll on (him). While serving the first four years of a twenty-year sentence, Chen developed severe depression, non-typical Parkinson's disease, a speech disorder, and sleep apnea. He attempted suicide in 2013.”

In short, the book is a tour de force. Thank you.
