

White Wolf incident needs firm response

Written by Huang Di-ying 黃帝英

Wednesday, 20 June 2018 05:32

National Taipei University of Education Experimental Elementary School caused an uproar after it invited China Unification Promotion Party founder Chang An-le (張安樂), known as the “White Wolf,” onto the stage at its graduation ceremony on Friday last week to bestow the Mayor’s Award.

The school that evening posted an apology on its Web site, and the city’s Department of Education said that it would more strictly monitor such events.

From a legal point of view, the principal inviting Chang to give the award to the school’s highest-scoring graduate was not just a case of administrative neglect, but a breach of the Educational Fundamental Act (教育基本法).

Since the principal broke the law, the Control Yuan should impeach her and take corrective measures against the department.

According to Article 2, Paragraph 2 of the act: “The purposes of education are to cultivate modern citizens with a sense of national identity and international perspectives by fostering the development of wholesome personality, democratic literacy, ideas of rule of law ... humanities virtues, patriotic education [and] native soil care ... and enhancing respect for basic human rights.”

The government and educational institutions are duty-bound to ensure that students are educated in accordance with the law, but the school’s invitation to Chang to confer the prize was completely contrary to the act and was therefore illegal.

Chang was sentenced by a US court to 15 years in prison for his criminal activities. Not long after he was released and deported to Taiwan, he fled to China after the Taipei District Prosecutors’ Office issued a warrant for his arrest under the Organized Crime Prevention Act (組織犯罪防制法).

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Is Chang's shocking record really the right kind of lesson the school should use to inculcate its graduates with a "wholesome personality ... ideas of the rule of law and humanities virtues"?

If the department does not apportion blame correctly, would it be right to conclude that it plans to engage in "cooperative education" with gangsters?

Even if Chang's criminal record and gangster background were set aside, he is chairman of the China Unification Promotion Party, which wants Taiwan to be absorbed into the People's Republic of China.

According to Article 6, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Educational Fundamental Act: "Education shall be based on the principle of impartiality. Schools may not engage in promotional or other activities for any specific political group."

In what sense does the school's invitation to the leader of this particular party comply with the principle of impartiality?

Chang calls for unification with China. How does that comply with the basic educational tenets set out in Article 2 of the act — "democratic literacy, ideas of rule of law ... patriotic education [and] native soil care" — which are intended to "cultivate modern citizens with sense of national identity and international perspectives"?

The school's blatant contravention of the Educational Fundamental Act has drawn a storm of protest from the public.

The Control Yuan and the departments responsible for supervising the school should determine who is to blame and take the appropriate measures. Only by so doing can they teach the students a proper understanding of democracy and the rule of law.

Huang Di-ying is a lawyer and vice chairman of the Taiwan Forever Association.

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Translated by Julian Clegg

Source: [Taipei Times - Editorials 2018/06/20](#)