

The KMT shows its true colors

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
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On Monday, Sun Yat-sen School president Chang Ya-chung (張亞中) announced his intention to seek the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) nomination for next year's presidential election.

At his side was former KMT Central Policy Committee director Alex Tsai (蔡正元), who only days ago accused KMT Legislator Chiang Wan-an (張萬安) of naivety for supporting President Tsai Ing-wen's (蔡英文) "four musts" and criticizing the "one country, two systems" formula that Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) reiterated in a speech on Wednesday last week.

The question of naivety, or at least of political connivance intentionally disguised as naivety, is interesting.

In her New Year's Day address, Tsai Ing-wen delivered her "four musts": that China must recognize the existence of the Republic of China (ROC); respect Taiwan's values of democracy and freedom; resolve cross-strait differences in a peaceful and equitable manner; and engage in negotiations with the government or an institution with a mandate from the government.

Why would Alex Tsai object to Chiang supporting positions seemingly so natural for a sovereign government to hold in its engagement with another? The answer, of course, is that, like the rest of his party, he does not regard cross-strait relations as being inter-governmental in nature.

The KMT's biggest objection to the "four musts" concerns the final one: the KMT, yet to divest itself of its party-state pretensions, would much prefer to deal directly with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) than to allow the democratically elected government of Taiwan to do so.

Chiang should be applauded for acknowledging points of potential consensus within Taiwan's toxically divisive politics. He was also right in saying that "Taiwan is not Hong Kong" and that most Taiwanese would not find the "one country, two systems" formula applied there acceptable in Taiwan.

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It is not simply a question of whether most Taiwanese would find it acceptable: The larger concern would be what Beijing would do to those who did not, were it ever to annex the nation.

Chang's proposals are at the deeper blue end of the spectrum; he is deemed an antidote to the business-as-usual candidates of former New Taipei City mayor Eric Chu (蔡其昌), who has already put his hat in the ring, and KMT Chairman Wu Den-yi (吳敦義), also rumored to be considering a run.

Chang is open about seeking a peace treaty with Beijing, based upon the premise of "one China, with each side having its own constitutional government," and said that, as Taiwan and China are "brothers of one family," that "it would be natural to explore the option of unification."

What Chang is proposing is a radical departure from the Democratic Progressive Party's "flight" from China's "embrace" and the KMT's continued avoidance of the issue, with its adherence to simply maintaining the cross-strait "status quo."

There is no need to be naive on this point, nor to suppose that Chang is being so, either. His proposals play right into the hands of the CCP, as they are the thin end of the wedge that will make eventual unification all that much easier. Even his suggestion of constitutionally changing the political system from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary system seems tailor-made to making a "transition" easier.

Alex Tsai, sitting next to Chang during the announcement, and with his jibe at Chiang that the so-called "1992 consensus" is a peaceful way for Taiwan to achieve parity with China, is no fool, either. He would know full well that there would be no parity with China.

One has to wonder what Chang, Alex Tsai and the KMT think would happen to them and the party itself when their "big brother" comes rolling in.

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