

China's new regulations for teachers pose a threat

Written by Koeh Ian-lim 柯煥麟

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On Jan. 8, the Chinese government announced regulations that would allow people from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau to apply for elementary and high-school teaching qualifications after passing Chinese tests. One of the conditions is that the candidate support the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and follow its guiding principles for education.

In response to the changes, Mainland Affairs Council Deputy Minister Chen Ming-chi (陳明池) on Jan. 11 emphasized that Taiwanese have freedom of movement and the council would not investigate or stop Taiwanese from taking advantage of the rules.

When China launched a policy last year to allow Taiwanese to apply for Chinese residence permits, the council did not respond by proposing strong countermeasures. China has followed up on the policy by allowing Taiwanese teachers to work at Chinese schools.

Surprisingly, not only has the council failed to register its opposition, it has approved of the policy. Is the council playing along with Beijing's attempts to realize the so-called "1992 consensus"?

While it is true that Taiwanese have freedom of movement, the government still needs to be absolutely clear that China is an enemy.

If a Taiwanese teacher moved to China to work and adhered to the CCP's policy to "liberate" Taiwan, surely that poses a risk to the nation? If they returned to take the civil servant examinations and work within Taiwan's state apparatus, surely chaos would ensue if they continued to carry out CCP policy?

The problem with so-called "stray," or non-tenured, teachers is a longstanding problem in Taiwan. As it is difficult for them to find permanent jobs in Taiwan, they might be forced to "go west" and accept jobs in China. The question is whether this would have a knock-on effect on Taiwan's education system.

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As a former student on a government scholarship at a national normal university in Taiwan, I am well aware that the government has invested a lot to cultivate students such as myself. The goal is to attract first-class talent to work at public schools to help cultivate outstanding students.

However, with China's teachers' qualification policy, it is easy to imagine that with Taiwan and China part of the "Sinosphere," non-tenured teachers working in China might turn into promoters of Taiwan's "liberation." That would make Taiwanese teachers in China the best campaigners for the "1992 consensus."

Is the council aware that this poses a risk?

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Translated by Eddy Chang

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