

## Ma's mango strip talk appalling

Written by Taipei Times Editorial  
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Several Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) lawmakers have proposed amendments to the Act Governing Relations Between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area (兩岸人民關係條例) — which some have dubbed “amendments targeting Chinese Communist Party (CCP) agents” — in an effort to prevent people from propagandizing for Beijing, thereby undermining security.

However, what if the biggest CCP agent in the nation is a former president?

Former president Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), at a seminar he held on Saturday, accused President Tsai Ing-wen's (蔡英文) administration of exploiting “dried mango strips” — a wordplay on “a sense of the nation's impending doom” — and urged Tsai to acknowledge the so-called “1992 consensus.”

Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) in his “Message to Compatriots in Taiwan” on Jan. 2 changed the definition of the fictitious “1992 consensus” to just “one China,” under which there are “two systems” — a formula which he proposed for Taiwan to fulfill his aim of “unifying the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.” The “different interpretations” component in the older version of the “consensus” was altogether discarded.

As such, it was astounding that Ma had the cheek to urge Tsai to acknowledge the “consensus.” Like so many DPP politicians have repeatedly pointed out — and Ma just as stubbornly ignored — the “consensus” no longer has any space for the survival of the Republic of China, which, in effect, means no room for the survival of Taiwan.

Put simply: If Tsai took his advice, she would be committing treason.

No less appalling was Ma's audacity to state that the “consensus” was reaffirmed during his meeting with Xi in 2015 — during which he infamously shrank from mentioning the “different interpretations” part to Xi and therefore ended up asserting, to Beijing's advantage, the “one China” component of the “consensus.”

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Is Ma trying to safeguard his legacy by deliberately ignoring Xi's ambition to annex Taiwan? Or is he pushing for unification like so many people had accused him of doing even when he was still in office? Had he made the remarks in 2016, it would have seemed like the former. Now, it appears that the latter is more plausible.

In his speech, Ma used every trick in the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) book to slam Tsai, including the criticism that Tsai had lost seven of Taiwan's diplomatic allies, while he only lost one during his time in office.

Ma credited this to a "diplomatic truce" his administration had with Beijing, which shows that he is either hopelessly naive or outright deceiving to not have realized that Beijing was simply "boiling the frog slowly."

Ma's cross-strait policy relied on opening up the nation's economy to China in exchange for uncertain prosperity.

If the KMT were still in power, China would be able to significantly increase its leverage over Taiwan's economy, and by the time it has the nation by the throat, Ma would likely wake up one day to find that the nation's diplomatic allies have been reduced to zero.

Ma can tout how cordial cross-strait relations were during his terms all he wants, but the public should be reminded that close ties with China simply means that Taiwan is one step closer to being assimilated and absorbed by its large neighbor, as the CCP will only ever have one goal no matter who Taiwan's president is — to annex Taiwan.

So in reply to the topic of Ma's seminar — "Where did the dried mango strips come from?" — the answer should be self-explanatory.

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