

Emboldened Police Car Runs Down Two Anti-Ma Ying-jeou Protesters in Taipei

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The current Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) President Ma Ying-jeou had promised that he would return the streets to the people after his election. But as always with the hypocritical Ma, one must watch what he does rather than what he says. During the People's Republic of China (PRC) Chen Yunlin's visit, Taiwan witnessed how thousands of police were mobilized to forcibly prevent legitimate protest. Police manhandled citizens wanting to display the national flag or trying to get near the hotel where Chen was staying as Ma sought to cozy up to China. Later a record store was shut down because it was playing Taiwanese songs. Its crime was that it was a half-block away from another hotel where Chen Yunlin was having tea with KMT bigwigs.

The police officer in charge of that shut down, Lee Han-ching, was given an oral reprimand for being overzealous, but no one was surprised when a week later he was given a promotion. All this continues to encourage the police to act harshly with any dissident voices against Ma's government. They know that Ma will close one eye to their abuses of power and at the same time utter platitudes on his concerns for democracy and the rights of the people.

The latest incident of police abuse will be more difficult to gloss over. After the anti-Ma Ying-jeou protests on May 17, two elderly protesters were run down by a speeding police car. The two were crossing the street in a guarded area where no cars should have been. The officer driving the car made no effort to stop and probably would have kept going if the nearby crowds had not surrounded the car. This was no grazing of a pedestrian; it was an out and out hit. One of the men was flipped into the air and came down breaking the windshield of the car. Both men are in critical condition and if they die, a case could be made for manslaughter. Is Ma trying to re-establish a KMT police state? Taiwan citizens wait to see how the Ma and KMT stalwart, Mayor Hau of Taipei, will try to explain away this one.

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