

Ma, Lien hire attack dogs for dirty work

Written by James Wang 王健

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Both President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), who also serves as Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) chairman, and former vice president and KMT chairman Lien Chan (連戰) have impressive educational pedigrees, having been educated in the US.

And yet, for the benefit of the Taipei mayoral candidacy of Sean Lien (連戰), a third-generation heir to the Lien political and financial dynasty, the two men have somehow persuaded two legislators to risk their reputations to do their political dirty work for them. One legislator is acting as Sean Lien's campaign chairman, while the second is a popular pundit whose sole focus lately has been Sean Lien's political rival.

It is easy to imagine that both Ma and Lien Chan will say that this is all above board and perfectly legal, and that legislators are free to act as they please and can defend themselves, as the Republic of China Constitution says nothing to prohibit them from punditry or playing the political attack dog.

Legislators, they would also say, have the right and the freedom to take on other jobs if they so wish.

The powers-that-be treat the rules of democracy with contempt, adhering only to the party-state ideology. They demonstrate a lack of respect for legislative independence and the elevated role legislators in their positions as elected representatives of the public, and encourage them to neglect their main duties. It is a disgrace.

Meanwhile, the legislators have no self-respect and are negligent in their clearly defined constitutional responsibilities.

The indulgent resorting to political thuggery, with veins bulging and spittle flying, is debasing to the institution of the legislature.

Members of the US Congress who appears on TV do so for one of two reasons: They are

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either being interviewed or they are discussing a specific issue, representing the party to which they are affiliated. They are not paid extra for their allotted tasks of keeping tabs on the government or of communicating with the electorate. They do not confuse their roles or become pugnacious political commentators.

In something of a miraculous political turnaround, the pundit, a KMT legislator, previously known for voicing her opinions on political talk shows and occasionally taking issue with what her own party was doing, has suddenly come out fighting in Sean Lien's corner. God only knows what the KMT did to get at her, but there she has been on TV, sharp-tongued and bullish.

Perhaps she was reluctant to do the fighting for Sean Lien, but she has denied that her decision to do so has anything to do with the Liens' fortune. She says that knowledge is a form of wealth in itself, and so she is wealthier than the Lien family, and would not be influenced by their money.

She might want to define wealth in this way, but it does not wash.

Lien senior and junior are both well-educated and they also have prodigious wealth. She cannot use this to gloss over the fact that she has turned into the Liens' attack dog.

The KMT has bull-headed chairmen and it employs bull-headed thugs to do its dirty work.

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Translated by Paul Cooper

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