

Dealing with dirty cooking oil cash

Written by Chin Heng-wei 陳恆偉
Friday, 07 November 2014 07:33

In the Bible, Jesus says: “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

It is a familiar saying and has spawned many similar phrases: “Politics is politics and economy is economy”; “politics is politics and the law is the law”; and even: “Art is art and administration is administration.”

The most recent is “education is education,” which was used by National Sun Yat-sen University in an attempt to deflect concern that they had received money from Ting Hsin International Group (鼎新國際).

Three students blew the whistle in a letter to the Liberty Times (the Taipei Times’ sister newspaper), saying that the lion’s share of contributions to the university came from Ting Hsin. Last year, the group made 52 percent of donations to the college and this year it increased to 65 percent.

In addition, over the past five years, the company invested NT\$160 million (US\$5.2 million) in an Asia-Pacific Human Resources Management master’s course and another NT\$6 million in Yu Kwang-chung Lectures and setting up a Ting Hsin Humanities and Arts Center.

The well-connected poet Yu Kwang-chung (余光中) has also taken money from Ting Hsin. In the past, the company helped Yu advertise his books and praised him for “writing poetry with his right hand, prose with his left and literature with both hands.”

Today, it would probably be more appropriate to say that Yu “flatters Ma with his left hand, China with his right and takes dirty money with both hands.”

Now that all hell has broken loose, Yu keeps quiet and continues to take the money, while National Sun Yat-sen University president Yang Hung-duen (楊洪德) not only refuses to come clean, he also uses the phrase “education is education” as a fig leaf.

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An honorary doctorate recently bestowed by the university on Ting Hsin chairman Wei Ying-chiao (魏英敫) — and not to his brother, senior Ting Hsin executive Wei Ying-chun (魏英椿) — is an example of Yang's behavior and his notion that “the money is clean” and “sincerity is important, and so is ethics” indicates that he does not want to give up the Ting Hsin money. It is shameful to talk about education, sincerity and ethics in this way, and the public can only shake their heads in disbelief.

By comparison, Academia Sinica has not become involved with Ting Hsin.

Ruentex Corp chairman Yin Yen-liang (殷衍良) has spoken publicly in defense of Wei Ying-chiao, saying: “He is not a bad person.”

Yin has also tried to help the Wei brothers to put things right by serving as the chairman of a food safety reform committee funded by a NT\$3 billion donation from Ting Hsin as the Wei brothers try to use Academia Sinica in the same way they used National Sun Yat-sen University to clear their names.

When Yin called Academia Sinica president Wong Chi-huey (翁志輝) to ask for help, the call lasted just a minute.

“If the source of the money is not clean, then we will not offer any help,” Wong said.

A few days ago, Wong made it clear that he thinks the resources behind Ting Hsin's food safety reform committee are “not legitimate.”

Wong even said he felt tarnished after seeing a photograph of himself and Yin at the Tang Prize award ceremony posted on a bulletin board at Academia Sinica, saying: “It mixes my name in with the food safety scandal” — a slap in the face for Yu and Yang.

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Ting Hsin's money is not clean, that much has already been determined. Was the honorary doctorate legitimate just because it was given to Wei Ying-chiao rather than Wei Ying-chun? The whole Wei family attended the award ceremony and although it was Wei Ying-chiao who wore the mortarboard, all the glory fell on Ting Hsin. In addition, it was Wei Ying-chiao and not Wei Ying-chun who established the food safety reform committee.

So why did Wong say that the committee's funding was "not legitimate?"

It should not be forgotten that Ting Hsin in practice is the "Wei family group," so when separating Wei Ying-chiao from Wei Ying-chun to cover that connection, it seems Yang forgot the meaning of his own name: "great sincerity."

Such a practice does not work, just like you cannot cover up tainted cooking oil — which even Changhua County Deputy Chief Prosecutor Huang Chih-yung (黃智勇) called "feces" — by talking about "sincerity" and "morals."

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Translated by Perry Svensson

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