

Where does the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) sense of entitlement — its belief that it should hold power throughout the nation, at all levels of government — come from? Is it from its glowing record?

Looking at the popularity of its representatives at city and county government levels, it becomes evident that their administrations are consistently rated near the bottom. The KMT mayoral candidates for Taipei and Keelung are harping on about change and transformation, as if their own party had not been responsible for the situation in those cities.

Where does it come from?

The most fundamental — and preposterous — reason is that the KMT believes that the Republic of China (ROC) is its own. What happened to the opening couplet of the ROC national anthem, in which it establishes the aim of the party to be the “Three Principles of the People?”

Even now, the KMT claims the ROC belongs to it, to govern as it sees fit. The party believes that the ROC would founder with any other party at the helm. It is always seeking to indoctrinate its members to see others — and other parties — as the enemy, and it refuses to accept that the history of China has moved on, or that the party itself has been changed by history.

Now the KMT mayoral candidates for Taipei and Greater Taichung are in trouble, the party is coming out with the dubious logic that the ROC itself is in danger if a non-KMT candidate is elected. In Taipei, when independent mayoral candidate Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) said that he is standing for Taipei mayor in the ROC, his KMT rival Sean Lien (連戰) retorted that Ko does not believe in the ROC and asked him exactly what he meant when he referred to the ROC.

It was hardly surprising that somebody answered him: “I would like to see you talk about the ROC when you are standing in front of [Chinese President] Xi Jinping (習近平).”

Hubristic, self-entitled KMT must be voted out

Written by Lee Min-yung 李敏勇

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There was no response.

The ROC was overthrown by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in China in 1949 when the former was under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石), but continued to survive in Taiwan after it was grafted into the nation by the KMT.

Since then, the KMT — this foreign-power-in-exile — has thrust its legacy on people from other parties who were pushing for the introduction of democracy. Every time an election comes around, they shout until they are red in the face in defense of the ROC.

Twenty years ago, New Party cofounder Jaw Shaw-kong (Jaw Shau-kong), then-Taipei mayor Huang Ta-chou (黃大洲) — representing the KMT — and the Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) tussled for the position of Taipei mayor in a hard-fought campaign. Chen emerged victorious, and yet the ROC in Taiwan failed to crumble. It was the KMT who, when it lost its hold on the central government in 2000, went begging to Beijing, until its big beasts fell like flies at the feet of the communists.

In the recent APEC summit in Beijing, special envoy former vice president Vincent Siew (宋楚瑜) cut a lonely figure, even more so than Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying (梁振英), as it was not even clear exactly what he was representing.

What does the rallying cry: “Do your own bit to save your own nation” (為自己的國家盡一份力) mean to him? The meaning seems quite apparent to me. It is time for the KMT to step aside and be replaced by those who have hopes and dreams for the nation and who are willing to work to save it.

The work can begin with small steps. First, the local elections. Then the legislature. On to the presidential election. Taiwan has a hope only if it can effect structural change in how it is governed.

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