

PRC's new air routes merit tough response

Written by Peng Ming-min 彭明敏

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China's unilateral declaration of its new air routes in close proximity to the Taiwan Strait median line poses a serious threat to Taiwan's national and flight security, and is detrimental to cross-strait relations. However, the government's slow and weak response to such tyranny is even more frustrating.

Bullying of all kinds must be met with strong protest or counteractive measures. Faced with such invasive and barbaric actions by the Chinese, the government should respond appropriately, such as by ceasing all exchanges or talks with Beijing.

However, with the exception of lawmakers from both the ruling and opposition parties who expressed strong objections in the legislature, the Ministry of Defense has only said that it is opposed to the idea, the Civil Aeronautics Administration said it is unacceptable and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs opined that since the new routes are not actually in use yet, there is still room for changes to be made.

As for the president and the Executive Yuan, there is nothing but the sound of silence.

It is hard to believe that this is the same government that said it would go to war if necessary when addressing the dispute with Japan over fishing rights around the Diaoyutai Islands (釣魚台).

As for the Mainland Affairs Council, it is the weakest weakling of all, for it not only expressed no opposition whatsoever on this matter, but even defended China, saying that the follow-up of this issue should not affect other matters between Taiwan and China.

It is like someone just got punched in the gut, but instead of fighting back or asking the assailant to stop, just swallowed the insult and suggested that the punches did not hurt.

This is a reminder of Mainland Affairs Council Minister Wang Yu-chi's (王郁琦) first visit to China to meet Taiwan Affairs Office Director Zhang Zhijun (張志軍) in Nanjing, which the media had labeled the "meeting of the century."

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When the time to meet came, Zhang remained motionless with an impassive smile; Wang, on the other hand, quickly stepped forward, his face beaming, almost like a Pekingese greeting its master, and shook Zhang's hands eagerly.

Wang's despicable and contemptible manner could not have been more humiliating to Taiwanese. Kneeling before the Chinese whenever there is a chance to do so is typical of the Ma administration.

In recent years, China has attempted to change the "status quo" and consolidate the changes. Challenged, the government neither objected nor responded, but merely "negotiated" with the Chinese.

Once Chinese fallacies become facts, the eagerness for negotiation is only supplication from the weak to the strong for mercy so that the weak can be spared from misery.

The way the government dealt with this problem is to plead with the Chinese to inch the air routes westward. As a matter of fact, unless all the air routes are completely readjusted, simply moving the new routes westward will not solve the problem.

Can Taiwanese continue to tolerate such a government that lacks integrity, courage and competence?

Peng Ming-min was an adviser to former president Chen Shui-bian.

Translated by Ethan Zhan

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