

## The absurd, delusional 'one China' propaganda

Written by Peng Ming-min 彭明敏

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President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) failure to bring up "each side having its own interpretation" as part of the "one China" framework during his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping (習近平) has sparked fierce criticism. However, if he had mentioned it, would Taiwanese have been content? Fixating on this term to avoid saying "one China, same interpretation" is only trading one delusion for another.

"One China, with each side having its own interpretation," means that the government of Taiwan is the government of China and therefore has sovereignty over China. This is as delusional as the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) claim that it has sovereignty over Taiwan. Both claims are out of touch with reality and the principles of law.

The Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) has been trying very hard to make a case for its continued sovereignty over China and has said that it only lost jurisdiction over China, as if sovereignty and jurisdiction were separable. Sovereignty and jurisdiction are two sides of the same coin and are inseparable. Having sovereignty is the same as having jurisdiction and not having one is the same as not having the other.

When the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed in 1895, "sovereignty," which is a modern term, had yet to be coined. Hence "governance" was used to convey the same meaning. The only exception to the rule occurs during war time, when territories of a country are temporarily occupied by enemy forces, resulting in a temporary separation between sovereignty and administrative power.

For example, when the government of former French president Charles de Gaulle fled to the UK, France was administered by another government, but after the war ended, everything was back to normal and sovereignty was once more synonymous with jurisdiction.

Since its exile to Taiwan, the KMT has abolished the Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion (動員戡亂時期臨時條款) and signed many agreements with the CCP. The official meeting between leaders from both sides signifies the end of the war between the KMT and the CCP, the KMT's acknowledgment of its defeat and its recognition of the CCP as the legitimate government of China.

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To argue for Taiwan's sovereignty over China is pointless; it was used to mislead the public, who are too close to the situation, but it would not fool many in the international community.

Taiwanese officials dare only say they come from "Taiwan" or, at most, "Chinese Taipei" and the "Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu" when they are abroad. They dare not say they are from the Republic of China (ROC). Taiwanese should understand the absurdity of "one China, with each side having its own interpretation."

Ma told Xi that the ROC Constitution does not recognize two Chinas, "one country, two systems" or Taiwanese independence. However, does the same Constitution condone the annexation of China by those the KMT used to refer to as "Communist thieves"?

The Declaration of Self-Salvation of the Taiwanese People published in 1964 said: "That there is one China and there is one Taiwan has long been an ironclad fact."

It also said: "For several years, right and wrong in China are decided by two parties only, namely the KMT and the CCP. Real intellect is rendered powerless. We have to free ourselves from the bondage of right and wrong determined by these two parties. Moreover, we must relinquish the dependency mentality in relation to these two regimes. We must choose another way, apart from the KMT and the CCP, from within Taiwan, the way to self-emancipation."

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

Translated by Ethan Zhan

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