

Members of KMT should dismiss the whole party

Written by James Wang 王健

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Certain supporters of the party-state system are just like junior-high school principals. Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu (洪秀柱) — who was actually head of student affairs in a previous life — is no exception.

Primarily trained to safeguard “political correctness” of thought and to suppress free speech, these individuals are especially good at launching political vendettas and identifying political dissent. If anyone dares question their opinions, or goes so far as to talk about freedom of speech, they are thrown out.

The first time the Taiwanese electorate sent the KMT packing, the party responded by firing its chairman. Following January’s presidential and legislative elections, the party fired a batch of its members for daring to challenge its central leadership, including former KMT spokesman Yang Wei-chung (楊偉中), who the party is determined to get rid of completely.

An organization that suppresses free speech in the name of upholding “discipline” is anything but a democratic party — and is not worthy of the support of anyone who believes in freedom and democracy. Those who were compelled — either directly or indirectly — to join the KMT during its party-state rule should not wait for the party to fire them, but rather take the initiative by firing the party.

Hung, the schoolteacher now at the helm of the KMT, called former president Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) “the Japanese who occupied the Republic of China’s Presidential Office” and said that Lee is still inflicting damage to Taiwan.

Really, who actually thinks that Lee is harming Taiwan? Who would even agree with her that Lee, who was legally elected president, was occupying the Presidential Office, in the sense of the word that Hung intended?

Following the controversy over self-proclaimed citizen reporter Hung Su-chu (洪素珠), who verbally abused elderly veterans, Hung Hsiu-chu — in her typical schoolteacher approach — reprimanded Hung Su-chu for being socially divisive, even though she is guilty of the same offense by turning the KMT into a veterans’ party and refusing to accept the results of

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democratic elections.

Her comments suggest that only those closely linked to veterans are entitled to be president. Following that logic, former president Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) could also be considered someone who “occupied” the Presidential Office — which is perhaps why he got into trouble and was thrown into jail.

Yang, who is on the verge of losing his KMT membership, of course understands the way his party works, having served as its spokesman.

For decades, the KMT maintained a party-state system by silencing political dissent with a carrot-and-stick approach. On one hand, it imposed across-the-board censorship of the media, strictly controlled education and suppressed free speech. On the other hand, it assimilated people into the party while restricting their freedom of speech.

With the advent of the Internet, that strategy no longer works. Young people have little reason to give up their freedom of speech to join a party that is going downhill — unless they are masochists.

How young people feel about politics can be described in the words of media commentator Clara Chou (周清). Once a KMT member, until the party revoked her membership, Chou has openly confronted the KMT by saying she is Taiwanese and supports freedom and democracy — the same holds true for Taiwan’s younger

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Translated by Tu Yu-an

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