

## The DPP must stick to the path voters laid

Written by Chan Chang-chuan 陳昌川

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In January's presidential and legislative elections, President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) was elected with an absolute majority, and her party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), won an absolute majority of seats in the legislature.

The ringing endorsement meant that the electorate gave Tsai and the DPP complete control over the government, demonstrating the trust that voters have placed in Tsai for political, economic and social reform, as well as the expectation that the DPP would follow a path of reform.

Nevertheless, since the start of the DPP-majority legislature in February, and in the weeks since Tsai's inauguration on May 20, Premier Lin Chuan (林錫山) has been guilty of all manner of governing mishaps, and this has caused the public's faith in the government to rapidly dissipate. It has also caused people to question the government's reformist resolve.

Two years ago, when the "touch-screen" generation initiated the online invocation of "Taiwan will never heal until the Chinese Nationalist Party [KMT] falls," the phrase not only became ingrained in a very short time in mainstream opinion, but also became a rally call to secure votes against the KMT.

This rejection of the KMT, the thinking behind it and the movement that it created, helped Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) win election and facilitated the DPP's takeover of the central government.

There has been a clear path laid out by the DPP criticizing KMT policies from national identity, national defense, foreign relations, politics, economics, society, the environment and labor policy. When the DPP was in opposition and now that it is in government, voters have approved of a reformist blueprint to rid themselves of the KMT.

The easiest way for Tsai and the DPP to govern at this juncture is to adhere tenaciously to one principle. That is, in everything it does, and as far as possible, to divorce itself from the original elements and policies of the KMT, and demonstrate the biggest possible contrast with it.

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If it does that, it is sure to meet voters expectations of a DPP government, elected on a consensus of the necessity the KMT must be bought down. It would also dovetail nicely with the reality and principle of the alternation of political parties in a democratic political system.

Tsai has previously adopted a policy of seamless alignment to ensure that the nation's needs are met. Her DPP-led government has wanted matters to proceed as smoothly as possible, with seemingly no light between it and what has come before.

At the moment, she is careful to impress upon the public her government's intention to open all communication channels to seek consensus and proceed in the nation's interests, to maintain social justice and instigate reform that would be advantageous to future generations.

If there is a consensus in society about this, it derives from the idea that the government can govern along the lines of the ideas and vision that Tsai and the DPP promised at the time of the elections, and not in itself with the anti-reformist policies of the KMT era, and the people, events and things of the past that have been so soundly rejected by the electorate.

The reason the public wants to hear more dialogue and communication in society is to facilitate reform, not to delay it.

The government must not lose sight of its mission and should keep to the path of reform. People do not want to see another party getting in the way of what needs to be done, or losing its way again.

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Translated by Paul Cooper

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