

It is unfortunate that Taiwan has a neighbor across the Taiwan Strait that wants to annex it, but, even more frustrating, Taiwanese also have to put up with people who echo China's rhetoric and intended to intimidate Taiwanese into obedience.

On Friday, while attending a book launch by former Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Culture and Communications Committee director-general Lee Chien-jung's (李顯宗), former Mainland Affairs Council chairwoman Su Chi (蘇起) said that the number of young Taiwanese who identify with Taiwanese independence ideals would "reduce sharply to 20 percent from the perceived 70 or 80 percent" if the US factor were removed and if China were to invade.

Saying that Taiwan's safety is a prerequisite to independence, Su said "this kind of Taiwanese independence is not a courageous independence, but one built on a foundation of false security."

At a time when China is stepping up efforts to intimidate Taiwan, such as the passage of the Chinese aircraft carrier the Liaoning through the Taiwan Strait on Wednesday last week and the People's Liberation Army Air Force training missions that circled Taiwan's airspace over the past few months, it is incomprehensible that a former Taiwanese official would promote China's power and prestige, distorting and neglecting mainstream public opinion.

However, Su's claim to fame is making up the term "1992 consensus," so it may not be that surprising.

As numerous polls in recent years have indicated, the latest of which was released last month by the Taiwan Thinktank, there is a growing number of people who refer to themselves as "Taiwanese," with the increase especially notable among younger people.

Su has incorrectly interpreted that such people's identity would crumble if the US factor were removed and China invaded.

## Spouting Chinese propaganda

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As New Power Party Legislator Hsu Yung-ming (許毓仁) said, Su's argument stems from "old world thinking" that regards Taiwanese independence as hinging on US ability and support, not to mention that Taiwanese are not as easily scared as Su implies.

Su and Beijing should be reminded of the 1996 incident when China fired missiles off the coast of Taiwan in an obvious attempt to scare Taiwanese into not voting for Lee Teng-hui (李登輝), a presidential candidate Beijing did not favor. The election result made Taiwanese proud: Not only did Lee win, but he did so in a landslide and became Taiwan's first democratically elected president. Taiwanese showed their wisdom and courage by rejecting Chinese bullying with their votes.

KMT Chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu (洪秀柱), KMT Vice Chairman Hau Lung-bin (郝龍斌) and former vice president Wu Den-yih (吳登益) all recently announced they would run for the position of KMT chairperson. All have said they are disciples of former president Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國), but they do not abide by Chiang's "three noes" policy — no contact, no negotiation and no compromise — when it comes to dealing with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Su's latest remarks were tantamount to being a mouthpiece for China. If he dared to make such a statement during the Martial Law era under Chiang's rule, he would have been condemned for spreading CCP propaganda.

It is no secret that Beijing wishes to aggravate Taiwanese anxiety and it is a shame that there are people in Taiwan who — intentionally or unintentionally — play China's game.

If anything, the real peril facing Taiwan is not China's threats or its saber-rattling, but Taiwanese's own lack of self-confidence.

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