

Organized crime still at the heart of the KMT

Written by Chen Mao-hsiung 陳毛雄
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As the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) prepares for its chairperson election, there have been reports of large numbers of “nominal” members — people recruited to the party just to vote for a particular candidate. Some reports have said that gang members are suspected to have recently been joining the KMT, including a man accused of beating a police officer to death outside a nightclub in 2014.

KMT Chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu (洪秀柱) said that the KMT would not allow gangsters to join the KMT party or accept any recommendations for gangsters to join.

She also said that the party would not accept “nominal” members.

A political party should certainly distance itself from criminal activity or gangs, but it should do so by making a clean break instead of trying to hoodwink voters. If the KMT wants to cut itself off from organized crime, it must first distance itself from former president Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國).

On Oct. 15, 1984, China-born US writer Henry Liu (劉亨利), who used the pen name Chiang Nan (蔣南), was assassinated in the garage of his home in Daly City, California, by Bamboo Union gang members.

The Ministry of National Defense’s Military Intelligence Bureau, which was ruled by Chiang following the death of his father, Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石), had recruited Chen Chi-li (陳奇立), the first boss of the Bamboo Union, for the assassination.

Chen took two hit men — Wu Tun (吳敦) and Tung Kuei-sen (董桂森) — to the US to carry out the plan to weed out “traitors.”

Chiang Ching-kuo’s purpose in recruiting Bamboo Union members was to use them to deal with members of dangwai (黨外, “outside the party”) opposition groups, but the first thing they did was assassinate Liu. This incident shattered the KMT’s public image and that of Chiang

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Ching-kuo.

However, the recruitment of organized crime members did not start with Chiang Ching-kuo — his father did the same.

According to Tu Shun-an (鄧錫安), the eldest grandson of former Shanghai crime boss Tu Yueh-sheng (杜月笙), in Chiang Kai-shek's early days, before he won wealth and power, he went to Shanghai, where somebody arranged for him to meet Tu.

At the meeting, Chiang Kai-shek “presented a red card,” meaning that he applied for member initiation. Later, Chiang Kai-shek used Tu's gangland power to eliminate his opponents.

Tu also did quite a lot for China during its war of resistance against Japan, but as soon as the war was over, Chiang Kai-shek, concerned about his image, distanced himself from Tu.

Later, Tu would say that Chiang Kai-shek used him as a chamber pot, clinging on tight when he was needed, but hiding him away when he was finished.

The Chiangs were both masters at using organized crime to their advantage. In view of their criminal connections, if the KMT wants to cut its ties with gangs, it must first distance itself from the Chiangs. Strangely, all the prospective KMT chairperson candidates have been trying to attract votes from pro-unification forces, who are alien to Taiwan, by honoring Chiang Ching-kuo as an icon; some even sobbed as they paid their respects on the anniversary of Chiang Kai-shek's death, and they present themselves as his disciples.

However, one KMT chair candidate is trying to polish his image by distancing himself from organized crime connected with Chiang Ching-kuo.

Chiang Kai-shek once used Tu as a chamber pot, and now this candidate is treating the Chiang family the same way. Could this be karma?

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