

Some Taiwanese politicians have seemingly taken it upon themselves to work on behalf of Beijing by intimidating Taiwanese with talk of the consequences of rejecting the so-called “1992 consensus.”

Former president Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) yesterday urged President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) to accept the “1992 consensus” “to steer cross-strait relations back on the right track,” adding that “disrespecting the 1992 consensus would make it hard for [other] matters later on; and future situations are hard to predict if we do not apply the brakes and swiftly accept the 1992 consensus.”

Ma said that Taiwan proposed the agreement in 1992 and that the “mainland has fully respected and accepted it” before trumpeting his modus vivendi and saying the Tsai administration’s refusal to accept the “1992 consensus” was the reason Panama switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing earlier this month.

If only such claims were true.

Ma never ceases to flabbergast the public with his brazenness by openly echoing China’s saber-rattling against Taiwan and the fear-mongering rhetoric of Beijing officials.

It is also amazing that Ma can tell bare-faced lies in public without embarrassment.

If China, as Ma said, fully respected and accepted the “1992 consensus,” which refers to an alleged understanding reached in 1992 between Taiwanese and Chinese representatives that both Taiwan and China acknowledge that there is “one China,” with each side having its own interpretation of what “China” means, then why did former Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits vice chairman and former Taiwan Affairs Office deputy director Tang Shubei (唐樹備) state publicly in 1998 that Taiwan’s claim that “there is ‘one China,’ with each side having its own interpretation of what ‘China’ means, does not fit reality”?

A US communication leaked in 2011 by WikiLeaks also clearly noted remarks by Chinese academic Zhou Zihuai (周志懷), who said that Taiwan's position of "each with its own interpretation" is intolerable to Beijing because it would be tantamount to the acceptance of two nations.

Despite this, Ma shamelessly touts the nonsensical "1992 consensus" as the backbone of solid cross-strait relations and threatens the government into accepting a nonexistent agreement.

Ma yesterday trumpeted his cross-strait policy, saying that his acceptance of the "1992 consensus" meant that during his term as president Taiwan lost no diplomatic allies and maintained a good rapport with Beijing, with less attempts to obstruct Taiwan's participation in international organizations.

Regrettably, Ma fails to see how Taiwan under his administration veered toward China's "one China" framework and that his so-called cross-strait achievements came at the expense of Taiwan's sovereignty, with the international community regarding Taiwan as part of China.

Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) once said that Taiwan's biggest problem is that there are too many people "telling bare-faced lies."

The "1992 consensus" is clearly one of those lies, and Beijing has time and again proven Ma wrong. His nonsense talk about the fictitious consensus is best ignored.

A public opinion poll yesterday showed that Tsai's approval rating has fallen to a record low in the wake of Panama severing diplomatic relations with Taiwan in favor of China.

While Ma might want to gain points from Tsai's dipping approval rating and say that his successor is doing a worse job than he had, the truth is that whenever Ma talks of his support for the "1992 consensus," people are glad that the nation is no longer under the leadership of a man who toes the Beijing line.

## Ma's political point scoring

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