

Lai's safe stance on independence

Written by Chen Chi-nung 陳其南
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Hoping to address concerns about the direction he is to take the party, newly elected Democratic Progressive Party Chairman William Lai (賴清德), the self-described “political worker for Taiwanese independence,” officially set out his views on the matter.

For Lai, Taiwan is already a sovereign, independent nation, so there is no need to declare independence. Furthermore, the core issue of cross-strait problems derives from the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) military intimidation of Taiwan.

That Taiwan and the Republic of China (ROC) are inseparable is a pragmatic advocacy of Taiwanese independence that still recognizes the “status quo.” Given the CCP regime's inherent unreliability and its ambitions to infiltrate the entire world, democratic countries have begun to reach out to Taiwan to establish friendly relations.

The ROC does not have diplomatic relations with most countries, but there is mutual support economically and in national defense. The international community has not abandoned Taiwan, and the countries supporting it are becoming more open and forceful in that regard.

The US does not support Taiwanese independence per se, but recognizes its sovereignty. Taiwan is a democratic nation with US backing and presents the most legitimate push-back to the CCP regime.

The ROC came to Taiwan with US approval, and this support allowed Taiwan to resist annexation by the CCP.

Lai has not abandoned a commitment to Taiwanese independence, and it is not right for commentators to accuse him of doing so. They should recognize that the idea of Taiwanese independence has been intentionally stigmatized by the CCP and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), and acknowledge that Taiwan has been independent for a long time.

In this way, the CCP cannot claim that it can legitimately annex Taiwan through force.

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