

Ma bids to repress national identity as policy fails: TSU

Written by Taipei Times
Monday, 26 May 2014 10:00 -

The recent defection of a scientist to China and the Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) bid to push through legislation on the free economic pilot zones reflect both the failure of President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) pro-China policy and his attempt to neutralize a strengthening Taiwanese national identity, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) said yesterday.

"Ma has realized that the rise of a Taiwanese identity would be the biggest roadblock on the path to eventual unification with China, which is why he wants to bring as many Chinese into the country as possible through the establishment of zones and passage of the cross-strait service trade agreement," TSU Chairman Huang Kun-huei (黃昆輝) told supporters in Greater Taichung.

Huang reiterated his party's opposition to the special statute governing the zones that is awaiting passage in the legislature, adding that the TSU had good reasons for its disapproval.

Taiwan's restrictions on Chinese imports and investment — which comply with WTO standards — are "crucial and legitimate because China remains an enemy state that has more than 1,000 missiles aimed at Taiwan," Huang said.

National security has been a prominent issue on the minds of Taiwanese, in particular among the pan-green camp, but Ma seems to not care about this, the TSU chairman said.

Huang said that instead of trying to bolster national security, the president is doing the exact opposite by relaxing restrictions on cross-strait investment and business in a bid to "water down Taiwanese's sense of national identity," especially after the Sunflower movement demonstrated that young Taiwanese have a strong sense of national identity.

"For example, Article 30 of the draft statute essentially constitutes a blank check to the Ministry of the Interior that would give it absolute authority to relax the requirements, procedures, limitations and extensions pertaining to all foreign businesspeople operating in Taiwan," Huang said.

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At an event in New Taipei City's Banciao District (板橋), TSU Secretary-General Lin Chih-chia (林錫山) — who is an aspirant in the New Taipei mayoral election in November — said that the service trade agreement and the economic zones project would “destroy Taiwan’s economy” by opening door to Chinese investment, labor and agricultural imports.

Lin also said that the defection of Chen Kun-shan (陳坤山), who had led the Center for Space and Remote Sensing Research at National Central University, was the latest evidence that Ma’s pro-China policy has failed to — as the president claimed it would — eliminate conflict across the Taiwan Strait.

Chen’s defection was part of the Chinese government’s “Thousand Talents Program,” which seeks to attract foreign scientists to China, and emphasized that Beijing has never abandoned its intention to annex Taiwan, Lin added.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2014/05/26](#)