

Chang says Ma has been ‘hijacked’

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Former Mainland Affairs Council deputy minister Chang Hsien-yao speaks at a press conference in Taipei yesterday, at which he denied accusations that he was a spy. **Photo: Liao Chen-huei, Taipei Times**

Former Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) deputy minister Chang Hsien-yao (陳希賢) yesterday called on President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) to “take care of himself” because Ma has been “hijacked” by a handful of people and deceived into believing allegations against him fabricated by those people.

Chang held a news conference in Taipei yesterday, his first since he reportedly tendered his resignation from the council on Thursday last week, a move the Executive Yuan said on Saturday was due to “family reasons.”

He told reporters that “a small group of people” have been “spreading allegations and arbitrarily accusing him [of being a spy] without proper investigation and trial.”

Since Tuesday, there have been a number of media reports claiming that Chang was under suspicion of leaking information to China before undertaking cross-strait negotiations. The Chinese-language *United Daily News* alone ran four stories yesterday, all quoting anonymous officials or “sources” as saying or implicating that Chang had leaked national secrets.

One story’s headline said the Ministry of Justice’s Investigation Bureau “suspects that Chang has been recruited as a Chinese Communist Party [CCP] spy.”

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"The task force revealed that the information Chang had leaked was related to concerns about national security, and the leaks had gone on for a long time with a plan in mind, a crime that could be seen as intentional," the story said.

Another *United Daily News* story cited "an informed source" as saying Chang's case might have to do with "disclosing our baseline too early [to China], which led to a collapse of negotiations for a meeting between Ma and Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) at APEC."

"After reading the newspaper this morning, I felt that [the accusations of being a spy for the CCP] amounts to a White Terror era in the 21st century, since during the White Terror in this country in the past century, those who had different opinions were persecuted and labeled as political enemies and red spies," Chang said at the news conference.

All cross-strait negotiations, in public or in private, that he had taken part in had followed the instructions of the president, the former and the current secretary-general of the National Security Council (NSC) and the Mainland Affairs Council minister, he said.

"All I did was follow orders," he said. "If I am to be put under investigation, then I should not be the only one subjected to such a move."

The Straits Exchange Foundation and the Mainland Affairs Council staff "must be agitated now with these charges and cross-strait relations likely to return to a freezing point," he said.

"How can cross-strait negotiations proceed if the appointed representative is colluding with [China]? Cross-strait mutual trust will be lost and the negotiation mechanism has been damaged," he said.

Chang then said that Ma should "take care of himself, [because] he has been deceived and hijacked."

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He reiterated a comment made earlier in the week — that he plans to disclose the full truth, “for self-protection,” but cannot do so now.

“I cannot expose it now as it would constitute a leak of information, but I will go to the prosecutors to clarify the issue,” he said.

Chang said he believes that Taiwan is a democratic country with rule of law, where it is impossible for “a small group of people” to spoil the institution.

“They might have suppressed the Investigation Bureau into submission, but they cannot deceive the prosecutors, the courts and the public,” he said.

When asked whether the “small group of people” he referred to included NSC Secretary-General King Pu-tsung (金溥聰), Chang only reiterated his distress about the allegations.

Asked whether he had been contacted by the Investigation Bureau or prosecutors before his resignation, Chang said no.

He nodded his head when asked if Mainland Affairs Council Minister Wang Yu-chi (王郁琦) had lied when he said he had told Chang on Thursday last week about the suspicion over information leaks.

Quizzed by reporters later in the day about Chang’s remarks, Wang said that he felt regretful and puzzled by his comments.

As of press time last night, the council had not formally commented on Chang’s press conference.

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