

Former adviser calls on premier to quit

Written by Taipei Times

Tuesday, 13 September 2016 08:55 -

Former presidential adviser Koo Kwang-ming (辜鴻銘) yesterday called on Premier Lin Chuan (林錫山) to resign, the second such call from the pan-green camp in two weeks.

“Lin can make an excellent adviser, but is not leadership material,” Koo said in a radio interview while talking about President Tsai Ing-wen’s (蔡英文) Cabinet picks.

It was a severe mistake to appoint Lin as premier and it would harm Tsai’s authority if he is not replaced immediately, Koo said.

“Although some do not think Lin is unqualified, it will cause greater damage if his replacement is delayed until it becomes absolutely necessary,” he said.

Koo said his opinion about Lin’s appointment is the same as that of former national policy adviser Wu Li-pei (吳麗培), who on Aug. 30 said that there would be “no tomorrow for Tsai” if the premier does not step down.

Tsai’s approval rating would continue to fall without a timely Cabinet reshuffle, he said.

The Tsai administration cannot excuse its flagging approval ratings by saying it just took office recently, Koo said.

“What about the four months before it assumed office [in May], and the four years before that?” Koo asked, adding that Tsai’s decision would not have been challenged if she had planned the Cabinet appointment after the presidential election in January.

Tsai does not like “senior politicians to interfere” with her presidency and administration, but this style of governance will negatively affect her administration, as a government that only listens to a small group of people would turn away supporters, he said.

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Tsai should not compromise her ideals for re-election prospects, but should do whatever she can to leave a memorable legacy, he said.

Koo, who had earlier suggested that Tsai serve only one term, said that her two predecessors did not carry out necessary reforms in a bid to be re-elected and ended up with bad reputations.

Koo also expressed his disapproval of the rumored appointment of People First Party Chairman James Soong (宋楚瑜) as the representative to this year's APEC leaders' summit in November.

The alleged appointment would not benefit Taiwan, he said, adding that Beijing would not welcome the appointment either.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's (习近平) previous meeting with Soong and former vice president Lien Chan (連戰) was a planned strategy, but such a meeting is not guaranteed at the APEC, Koo said.

"I do not mean to judge Soong, but is there not a better candidate?" he asked.

Former vice president Annette Lu (呂秀蓮) would be a "dangerous" candidate to lead the APEC delegation, because her behavior and speech might "embarrass" the nation, Koo said.

It is preferable to select a businessperson, regardless of party affiliation, to lead the delegation, he said.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2016/09/13](#)