

Tamkang Forum Took to the Podium again

On November 13, Tamkang Forum took to the podium again. They invited Prof. Su Chi, former Director of Mainland Affairs Council, R.O.C. and Mr. Lin Chia-cheng, honorary trustee of Trans-Asia Airways and a member of Board of Trustees, TKU, to discuss the overall impact of Taiwan's accession to WTO in terms of her relationship with Mainland China. From a long-term perspective, Dr. Su alleged, it helps boost the relations between Taiwan and China. However, from the incident of recent APEC meeting, we can tell that "ire" is the right word to denote the prevalent mood of the commanding officials in Beijing and it also reflects the political distance between the two "nations". After Taiwan joining WTO, Mainland China will certainly detract from giving favorable treatment to Taiwan merchants, so-called "Tai Shang". But many leading businessmen will "migrate" into the heartland of China, and so, it becomes imminent that we should try to re-open talks with them. And, the sooner we strike a deal (a treaty) with them, to protect the interests of "Tai Shang", so to speak, the better.

Mr. Lin Chia-cheng suggested the DPP government to ease off their restrictions on Mainlanders to come here for sightseeing purposes. There are in general 2 million Mainland Chinese who went to Thailand for fun every year. The money that has fattened the pocketbook of Thai merchants is tremendous: 200 billion Renminbi which, converted into Taiwan currency, would be 800 billion Taiwan dollars. What if we could re-direct the revenue into our account? Mr. Lin asked an interesting rhetorical question.

Dr. Wei Wou, Dean, College of International Studies, believed that the vision of "One China" is inevitable to happen in the future. We must forsake our ideological bias and seek a way out by holding talks with

them. Maybe we should change the title of both nations into something neutral, such as “The Democratic Republic of China” instead of Republic of China or People’ s Republic of China.

Dr. Chen Ting-kuo, Dean, College of Management, tried to analyze the situation from the economic point-of-view. The accession of China and Taiwan to WTO can be compared to small fish and shrimps jumping into big lakes or even oceans. It chimes in happily with China’ s recent slogan “to connect with the railroad of the world, to step side-by-side with the globe according to the international by-laws, etc.” So, if we resist this trend, we will suffer and pay later. We should sum up enough courage to face the challenge.

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