

# TARGET

## Intelligence Report

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T U E S D A Y

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### OF VIRTUE, VICE, AND PHILOSOPHICAL PURSUITS

There was a time, not so very long ago, that the concept of noblesse oblige was well understood and appreciated.

The lower classes of society understood it, only too well, and, in fact, they espoused it for that which they had been led, in aeons past, to believe that which was to be expected of those who firmly embraced it – because it was in their own best interests so to do.

But, sadly, it could be held, today, that this 1849 French phrasal noun is all but relegated to history where, for the most part, it has been buried.

Even in polite society, where one would expect to be in the company of the intelligentsia and, as such, one was induced to behave in an accepted socially correct fashion, as well as, presumably, that that is where these two words – noblesse oblige – should be bathed in the glory of yesteryear.

But it is not to be.

In today's world, commonly used terms include:

Virtue – behaviour, exemplifying high moral standards; a particular moral excellence; and,

Vice – a moral fault or weakness in a person's character; moral depravity or corruption.

Religious zealots are known to have declared, in defence of known felons who have been incarcerated for lengthy periods due to their proven perpetration of acts that are contrary to the criminal code of the day, like to engage in words to the effect:

*'Hate the sin; but love the sinner.'*

But can sin subsist without the able exercise of the sinner?

The noun, 'sin', is defined as being: An immoral act, considered to be a transgression against divine law; moral depravity or corruption.

Thus, the word, ‘*sin*’, has very little real meaning to those who declare themselves as being adherents of philosophical pursuits, such adherents, preferring to distant themselves from commonly accepted beliefs in man, based, not on scientific evidence and or on adduction, but evincing fear in those who fail to accept the existence of the divine source that had been responsible for everything that ever was, and ever that shall be.

In times of adversity, such as a violent storm that is said to have been responsible for the deaths of numerous residents of an island, derivatives of the word, ‘*adduction*’, is often used as proof positive of divine intervention with regard to those who survived nature’s ravages.

However, disregarded by the religious zealots are those residents of the island, who were known to have openly renounced the acceptance of the commonly held belief of divine intervention – and they were spared of the ravages that had taken the lives of the devout!

Philosophically inclined thinkers make the claim that ‘*sin*’ is a strictly religious word, having the meaning, such as breaking the bounds of religious or moral law: It is distinct and separate from philosophy: ‘*the love of wisdom*’ (from Greek: Philo + Sophia).

### **This Is That Which Transpired In Bygone Days**

In the 2020 calendar year, the human populations of the Western World, especially, experienced numerous social upheavals, one after another, but there were, running through these upheavals, certain common denominators.

Religion never entered into any one of the equations with regard to these social upheavals, however.

The most startling of these social upheavals, during calendar 2020, as well as those of preceding years, those that stunned a great many people in most parts of the Western World, were in The United States of America, The Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, and The Kingdom of Thailand.

### **The African-American Problem**

In The United States of America, it was, for the most part, the inequality of the African American with their white American counterpart, whereby, for centuries, the African American had never been given anywhere near the equal opportunities of their white American counterparts.

As history has recorded, from 1526 until 1867, about 10.70 million African slaves arrived in that which was then known as ‘*the Americas*’ where they were sold as human chattels at public auctions.

The barbaric Atlantic Slave Trade flourished for about 341 years as some 12.50 million African slaves, all of whom had been kidnapped by sailors of the worst kind from their humble homes, mainly from East Africa, had been shipped from Africa, to Europe, and then transhipped to the Americas.

In the Americas, they were put to work in the fields, engaged in manual work, in menial duties, looking after the residences of their white masters, and were treated on a par with domesticised beasts of burden – not as human beings, at all.

In many parts of The United States of America, today, it is well known and, (sadly) accepted that not all the 286,646,000 million white Americans treat their 44,354,000 African-American counterparts as being imbued with the same rights and privileges as is their due in accordance with The Constitution of The United States of America.

Hence, the African-American has, historically, been treated as a lower class of American citizen – and, in many parts of the country, especially in the south, they are, still, treated as such.

And, for the most part, the African-American is well aware of his/her position in the social order of the largest, single economy of the world.

Police brutality toward the late Mr George Floyd, on June 4, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was the spark that touched off the riots throughout The United States of America, resulting in tens of millions of white Americans and African-Americans, taking to the streets, throughout many parts of the country.

(However, there is , and continues to be, quite a number of white Americans, who honestly maintain that the African-American has every right to be treated as an equal with them.)

In Minnesota, especially, rioters attacked police, burned buildings in Minneapolis and in other major cities of the State, also, and demonstrated their ire in various ways, even to the extent of perpetrating robberies, openly, and causing massive damage to the cities' infrastructure.

The call went out: '*Remember George Floyd!*', the African-American who died due to suffocation at the hands of a white American policeman who kneeled on the neck of his hapless victim until George Floyd had expired after having repeatedly yelling out in desperation: '*I cannot breathe!*'

And, while the suffocation of this African-American citizen of The United States of America continued for about eight-plus minutes, two other policemen looked on, saying nothing, and offering no assistance to the victim!

These riots were race-related.

#### The Massive Problems In The Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China

Between 2019 and 2020, hundreds of thousands of residents took to the streets of the 416 square miles, that formerly constituted the British Crown Colony of Hongkong until the territory was handed back to the People's Republic of China on July 1, 1997.

These residents were demanding, inter alia, freedom.

Initially, the riots started with protests against the Fugitive Offenders Amendment Bill, introduced by the Hongkong Government on or about March 29, 2019.

If enacted, it would have permitted the extradition of those people, accused of having perpetrated acts, contrary to the laws of Hongkong, to jurisdictions with which Hongkong did not have extradition agreements, including the People's Republic of China and Taiwan.

The Bill was, eventually aborted.

By that time, however, quite a number of people of the former British Colony realised that, taking to the streets of the territory, and making demands of the Government of the day, could bring the Administration to heel.

This attracted a large number of youthful men and women of the territory and, spurred on by certain people, in whom the leaders of certain movements had obtained some respect of the youths, the stentorian calls went out: '*Give Hongkong Freedom!*' and '*Free Hongkong!*'

Some of the members of certain, former Hongkong political organisations appealed, personally, to the Government of The United States of America for assistance.

They went to the extent of visiting Washington, D. C., and talking to certain Sitting Senators.

But all to no avail.

The hundreds of thousands of Hongkong men, women and children, some as young as still in their teens, rallied with their elder student leaders, running roughshod through the streets of Hongkong, some looting shops, destroying whatever they chose or got in their way, bringing the underground railway system to a halt, in some cases, trying to kill or maim (and sometimes, succeeding) those curious passers-by who dared to look askance at their criminal actions, throwing Molotov Cocktails, bricks, and iron bars at the police and into their headquarters' buildings, and, generally, committing complete mayhem in the territory.

When it was determined in Beijing, the Capital City of the People's Republic of China, and the political seat of power in the country, that enough was enough, as far as Hongkong was concerned, The Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (中華人民共和國香港特別行政區維護國家安全法), was passed by The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China at Beijing, on June 30, 2020.

The Hongkong National Security Law, as it came to be known, was frightening, described by people, engaged, directly or indirectly, in fermenting and encouraging the continuation of the social unrest, as being draconian in that, it was possible that one could spend a lifetime in prison if found guilty under certain provisions of this newly enacted law.

Armed with The Hongkong National Security Law, the Hongkong Police Force rounded up many of the ringleaders of the riots as well as some of their '*assistants*', much to the chagrin of the youthful, so-called '*freedom fighters*' – many of whom are, today, languishing in cells, provided by the Hongkong prison system.

The ‘assistants’, in some cases, turned out as being business tycoons who supplied logistical support to those, willing to become involved in the social unrest.

The social unrest was, in the main, the result of ill-informed youthful ‘tools’ that were manipulated to do the bidding of those who had ulterior motives, more than likely for selfish reasons because that which was being demanded was impossible to be achieved, in part or in whole.

These riots were politically motivated.

### The Tricky Problem In The Kingdom of Thailand

On Wednesday, November 25, 2020, youthful Thai protestors gathered in Bangkok, the Capital City of Thailand, demanding that King Maha Vajiralongkorn surrender his wealth, known to be in excess of \$US40 billion.

One day earlier, a number of the protest leaders had been summoned to face charges of insulting the monarchy, under the 15<sup>th</sup> Century lèse-majesté law.

To be found guilty of insulting the monarchy of Thailand can result in an accused, spending up to 15 years in a Thai prison.

In late February 2020, there had been demonstrations in Thailand, targeting the Administration of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha.

The demonstrators demanded that the Prime Minister must resign, post-haste.

There followed demands for a reformation of the Thai Monarchy.

On Monday, August 3, 2020, student groups, once again, made demands for a reformation of the Thai Monarchy and, in those demands, the student leaders publicly criticised King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

On that same Monday, two student groups publicly raised demands to reform the Thai Monarchy, breaking the long taboo of publicly criticising it.

On Monday, August 10, 2020, ten demands were published by the students, numbering between 20,000 and 100,000, for a reformation of the Thai Monarchy.

On Saturday, September 19, 2020, another massive rally saw a similar number of protesters out on the streets of Bangkok, this time, openly challenging King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

On Wednesday, October 14, 2020, there was another mass protest on the streets of Bangkok and it was, then, determined by the Thai Government that a ‘severe’ state of emergency existed, citing, as the rationale, the blocking of a royal motorcade.

Emergency powers were extended to the Thai Government of the day in addition to those already given by the Emergency Decree since March.

Protests, however, continued despite the Government's ban, prompting a crackdown by members of the Thai police on Friday, October 16, using water cannons.

The Thai Government's responses to the students' demands had included filing criminal charges against the perpetrators, using the Emergency Decree; delaying tactics; the deployment of military information warfare units; media censorship; the mobilisation of Pro-Government and royalist groups that had accused the protesters of receiving support from foreign governments and/or foreign, non-governmental organisations as part of a global conspiracy against Thailand; and, the deployment of thousands of police on the streets of the country's capital city.

The government had, also, ordered university chancellors to prevent students from demanding reforms of the Thai Monarchy; and, to identify student protest leaders.

Protests since October, when King Maha Vajiralongkorn had returned to the country from Germany, have resulted in the deployment of the military, riot police, and mass arrests.

The unrest in Thailand was politically motivated.

### **Virtue And Vice**

In the United Kingdom, today, as well as in times, belonging to another period of history, as the practical direction of affairs is placed in The House of Commons where voting determines which political party is to obtain the reins of power, oratorical skills have come to be the great passport to greatness.

In a Cabinet Minister, efficiency in debate is the one cogent aspect that is needful.

But power, alone, in a debate, is not statesmanlike wisdom, though it may coexist with it; on the contrary, the education and habits which produce it are often fitted to preclude the acquisition of that practical acquaintance with affairs that is the only sure foundation of beneficial legislation.

That which is required of a statesman is not just wisdom, but, in the statements, presented, the ability to discern the proper course, and patriotism, in order to correct evils, but national support in order to counteract the aristocratic influence that may attempt to govern the state for the benefit, chiefly, of the privileged classes.

It is legend that when a conflict is once begun, when irretrievable faults have been committed on the one side, unpardonable crimes, perpetrated on the other, the period of instruction to the statesman is past; it is the soldier, who is then to learn greatly to dare, the citizen, nobly to endure.

Having the ability, correctly, to calculate the likely prescience in respect of the determination of a prospective action, may well mitigate collision between opposing forces, strongly and resolutely, embedded within a social order.

Periods of study are well spent in the advance of freedom with regard to understanding the depths of differences of social evils, the moral sins that alienate the different classes of society from each other, or disable them for the discharge of their duty: The long-continued

causes, which, inducing a thirst for change on the one side, and a disability to resist on the other, at length bring about an irretrievable convulsion.

In that stage, the malady is still susceptible of cure; the diseased parts may be healed, the festering wounds closed; but if this period is allowed to elapse without the proper remedies, being applied, it is very generally a very doubtful matter whether any human wisdom can, at a future stage, avert a catastrophe.

Selfishness and oppression, executed by individuals of a certain class, individuals who are deemed, rightly or wrongly, to have obtained power – for their own sake – tyrannical extractions, invidious privileges of those, who consider themselves to be members of the noble class, due to wealth or political influence, the obstinate retention in one age of the institutions, originating in the necessities and suited to the circumstance of another, are commonly considered as being amongst the prime causes of social unrest that, if left unchecked, have the ability to lead to revolution.

It should, perforce, be held that most revolutions are the result of the diseased state of national mind; the spirit that gives rise to its issues from the selfish recesses of the turbid heart; it is wholly distinct from the passionate love of freedom that springs from generous affections, and is founded in the noblest principles of man's nature.

The latter is based on virtue, the former on vice; the latter on the love of freedom, the former on the passion of licentiousness; the latter on generosity, the former on selfishness.

Hypocrisy is the invariable characteristic of the revolutionary principle; it borrows the glow of generosity in order to cover the blackness of selfishness; ever using the language of freedom, it is ever prompting the actions of despotism.

The lover of freedom is willing, if necessary, to sacrifice himself for his country; the revolutionist has seldom any other object but to sacrifice his country to himself; but, if he is able to elevate his own fortunes, he is ever willing to fall down and worship the most frightful tyranny that ever decimated mankind.

If one would take the time to ascertain the causes of the establishment of liberty in any country that is, today, or existed yesterday, one must look for them in the circumstances that have produced, in the general mind, a predominance of virtue over vice; the secret springs of revolution are to be found in those that have given vice an ascendancy over virtue.

Petty crimes of little consequence, perpetrated on a society, as with petty divisions, perpetrated in respect of party politics, can never bear the nomenclature of serious acts, contrary to the laws of the day; while individuals, deserving of incarceration, have first to be adjudged guilty of felonious acts, in accordance with existing statutes.

In the words of Publius Aelius Traianus Hadrianus Augustus (January 24, 76 A.D. – July 10, 138 A.D.):

*'Morals are matters of private agreement; decency is of public concern.'*

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