



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

Hongkong is a part of the motherland, as every loyal Chinese citizen appreciates. We waited a long time for this to happen, more than a century, in fact, and, today, it is a reality. For me and Grandpa, we are delighted that Hongkong, now known as the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), is part of the country of my forefathers. I am looking forward to the time that the HKSAR will be known as a province of my country so that, then, I shall have an even more exalted position; and, Grandpa will be known as Governor-General of Hongkong. I suppose, with Grandpa, being elevated to the post of Governor-General, I shall have my title changed to Madame Governor-General, or, perhaps, Goveror-Generaless? No matter, I shall tackle that title when it comes (I am very good at that type of thing, you know). Although it is well known in Hongkong that the territory is part of China, it appears that some members of the Fourth Estate do not appreciate what that entails.

Of course, I am sure that you heard about that unruly bunch of journalists, who were arrested in the Macau Special Administrative Region in the third week of January for interfering with the duties of members of the contingent of the Zhuhai gung an (the unarmed police of China, stationed at Zhuhai, on the border with Macau). Those five journalists – one is never sure when a journalist is a spy, you know – were only arrested for a couple of hours and, then, kicked out of the area. Those journalists were very lucky. I told Grandpa that that incident must not set a precedent. The journalists claimed that they were covering a pro-democracy protest in a square, located between the Immigration and Customs Buildings of Zhuhai and Macau. What cheek! Here we are, trying to reform both Hongkong and Macau, and here come the fourth-estate, troublemakers. According to Grandpa, it was only a minor matter and the Zhuhai gung an did not beat up the rabble, but only confiscated the photographs and notebooks of those horrible, nosy people. These journalists were very lucky because, in other countries, such as Iraq, during the days of President Saddam Hussein, they would have been shot to death for interfering with the workings of the State. People, working for newspapers, television and radio stations, regardless of where they are stationed, when they come to Hongkong and Macau, they must learn to observe the laws and the rules of the territories. Now, let me make this very clear to you so that you may pass it on to everybody that you know: We set the rules; you follow – without any comment. After all, are not soldiers supposed to follow the orders of their superiors? The British have a saying: Right or Wrong, King and Country. That saying still applies, today, and especially in Hongkong, Macau and China. We should alter the saying a little, however, and state: Right or Wrong, the Government, the Chief Lady of Hongkong, her designate, and the leaders in Beijing. And the chain of command should be exactly the way that I have put it. In England, it is exactly that way: The Queen; the Government of the Queen; and, then, her designates. So, for what reason should not Hongkong follow the same formula? In fact, the Queen of England and I employ the same greeting: The Back, Open-Hand Salute. Great minds think alike, you see. Anyway, getting back to the journalists, who were arrested on January 24, they seemed to have forgotten that the British have been thrown out from Hongkong; and, the corrupt Portuguese were kicked out of Macau. Did I ever tell you that the Portuguese Government, still, owes China tens of millions of dollars, that being the amount of money that they stole from the

coffers of the poor, struggling workers of Macau. By the way, I just had a wonderful thought: We should adopt The Internationale as the patriotic folk song of Hongkong and Macau. After all, we are Communists, aren't we? I happen to like the melody of The Internationale, actually. And, moving along those lines, it seems to me that journalists, who want to cover stories about Hongkong and Macau, should, first, submit their proposed stories to the appropriate Government Authorities, prior to sending the stories, where-ever the journalists want to send them. I note that many newspapers of Hongkong already have adopted that genre – without even being ordered so to do. My Confucius! I just realised: There is no appropriate Government Authority to vet proposed reports about Hongkong and Macau. What an oversight! I shall, of course, get the Legislative Council to pass an Amendment to Article 23 – that's the part about treason and sedition – to include a Department of Propaganda. We must be on the same wavelength with Beijing. Don't you agree? There is the question as to who would be the Secretary of this important department of Government though. Come to think of it, I could spare the time to become the first Propaganda Minister of Hongkong. I rather like the title, actually, because 'propaganda' sounds similar to 'propagator'. See the point? Who is better suited to the job than the Chief Lady of Hongkong? And, I would do the job for no payment. That would set the stage for some of the other Hongkong Ministers to follow my example. I must talk to Grandpa about this new idea of mine. I am confident that Mrs Deng Yu No would support me in the establishment of a Hongkong Propaganda Ministry. It is said that, behind every great man, there is a Great Woman. Do you think that I am being a little too proud? Well, it is late and I have a heavy schedule in the morning: I am going to be crowned 'Flower Queen' of Hongkong by the Hongkong Horticulturist Association. I do hope that the word, 'Queen', is not misunderstood.

Love you,

Chief Lady of Hongkong

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