



## *The Betty Letters*

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*I was thinking about President George W. Bush's dream of democratising the Middle East: It is a wonderfully mad idea. It reminds me of the time when I was a little younger and my mother offered me the choice of ice cream or chocolates. I said, 'Yes, please,' because I liked them both so much. But I did not get both. In fact, I got neither one because mommy said that I was being too greedy. Which allowed me to coin the axiom: 'Confusion leads to mistakes.' It was unfair for mommy to give me two choices: She should have known that I would not be able to make the correct decision. She gave me one too many options; and, I did not know how to choose. Which leads me to the second axiom that I have coined: 'Too many choices results in the inability to select, anything'. In Canada, there is socialised medicine: Socialised medicine is no medicine, at all, I always say, because medical practitioners in Canada get paid the same money, whether or not they work hard. So, they do as little as possible, of course. That is human nature, and medical practitioners can be just as lazy as civil servants and/or politicians. So, it will be, as it has been for some years, for the Palestinians of the West Bank: They will take a leaf out of the book of the Canadian medical practitioners: Do as little as possible ... or, even less – which is difficult to imagine, mind you. As soon as the Arab residents of the West Bank learn of the US President's Grand Plan to democratise all of the Middle East, with the West Bank and the other territories, now occupied by Palestinians, being part of the Grand Plan, they will be asked to down their AK-47 assault rifles and rocket launchers and rush to what is left of their toilets in order to flush away their dynamite and plastique explosives. They will, also, have to disband the training camps for terrorists and the 'patriotic' suicide bombers (what a waste of good-looking men!). As for the hatred that they bear for the Jews, that, of course, is supposed to be blown away with the first desert windstorms, following the democratisation of the land. It is difficult for me to imagine all this taking place, but the US President seems convinced that it will happen. Who am I to argue with such a Great Man?*

*In China, we have had democracy for many years, since 1948, in fact. To tell the truth, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China is more democratic than the representative form of democracy, practised in the US. Grandpa practises democracy in Hongkong, you know. He was even voted into power in a very democratic manner. At the second election for his post, nobody dared to run against him, so powerful is he. Regardless of his personal feelings, however, he has to follow orders from Beijing. Which brings me to my third axiom: 'Beijing proposes, Grandpa disposes'. All of the residents of Hongkong, with the exclusion of the European gypsies, who live on the islands, such as Lamma, Lantau, Peng Chau and etc, have a say, or as many says as they like. But, as in our home, there are those who have a say and those who have a tell. I permit Grandpa to have as many says as he can conjure up in his little mind – which is not many, by the way – but, at the end of the day, I have my say, too. And my say is, in reality, a tell. That is that! In China, it is the same: People have as many says as they like, and there is a special wall in Beijing where they can put up their says on a board. They are encouraged to sign their says, too, along with a contact address so that, if needs be, the necessary people can talk to them, face to face, to understand, fully, their ideas. At the end of the day, however, the Government of China has its tell after scanning all the says: It tells the people of the Chinese democracy what is what and what is not what. The many*

*delegates to the Nations People's Congress, which meets once and year, all have their says; and, they are encouraged, also, to let their leaders know about what they want to say in advance of them, saying the says. In that way, before an election takes place, it is well known as to the result of the election. It is such a simple and pragmatic approach to government – and it is very democratic, too. When Mr George W. Bush ran for the Presidency of the US against the then Vice President, Mr Al Gore, nobody knew of the outcome after the polls had closed; and, everybody was quite concerned and confused (Axiom Number One) as to who was the real winner, even many weeks after the votes had been counted. This is very bad for the population of any country or territory because it leaves the proletariat in a quandary – which could be damaging for a country. The salt of the earth should not have to think too much because that would just confuse them, even further. It is said that when the frontal lobe is not exercised, it loses part, or all, of its function: If you do not use it, you lose it. Mr Al Gore still maintains that he was diddled out of the job of President of the United States, but, because of the democratic system of the US, a silly judge, who knew nothing of politics, gave the seat of office to Mr George W. Bush, the son of the 41<sup>st</sup> President of the US, Mr George Herbert Bush. As we Chinese like to say: 'Where there is one bush, there is, always, another'. Had it not been for the democratic system, practised in the United Nations, the war between the US and Iraq would have been started much earlier. And, then, all the killing would have been over very smartly. As any surgeon will tell you, it is better to have just one slice of the scalpel, than two slices.*

*Look at Afghanistan, today. The only part of the country that is under democratically elected control of a semblance of government is Kabul, the Capital City. The rest of the country is ruled by he who has the most soldiers and the most guns and sticks of dynamite/plastique, etc. The tribesmen of Afghanistan, living in the high hills, have been ruled by warlords for so many years that they have an understanding with them: They pay homage to the warlords, from time to time, and the tribesmen are permitted to live in peace, without any fear of another warlord, from a neighboring hill, swooping down to ravage land under some other warlord's control. This is not to be confused with the Italian-style of Mafia because this is the Afghani-style of paternalistic democratic dictatorship, also known as Afghanistic. This is, in essence, another form of democracy because, after all, the tribesmen, by their very actions or non-actions, tacitly, accept their warlords as the big, towel-on-the-head bossmen. Again, I remind you of Axiom Number One: 'Confusion leads to mistakes'. The simplicity of the Afghani system of government in the hills in the north of the country leads one to conclusion that the pragmatic approach to government is the only logical approach. What is the use of a US-style of democracy, hundreds of miles away from the nearest copshop? The US Government kicked out the former, fundamentalist Taliban Government of Afghanistan and replaced it with a democracy in Kabul, but that system of government is only working in a very small part of the country. But the human population of Afghanistan is about thirteen million, not just the million or so people of Kabul. The US Army is still in the country and the duly elected President has to be guarded, day and night, by specially trained US soldiers, armed with very big guns. So, here is a democratic government that works only by the use of the passive force of arms. And this brings me my fourth axiom: 'He who has the most guns, wins the day'. The only country in the world, today, that is no threat to anybody is The Vatican – because it only has a handful of Swiss Guards, who are armed with spikes and swords, which are hardly a match for an AK-47 or an M-16 semi-automatic rifle. If you want to have voice in the world, then, you must acquire heavy weaponry, first.*

*I have to go now. Talk to you later.*

*Love you,*

*Chief Lady of Hongkong*

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