



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

It occurs to me that most people look better clothed than unclothed, most of the time. Except for babies and very young people, of course. While I maintain that my female form is only a little changed from that which it was when I was in my teens, for many of my peers, I have noted the changes that have taken place in their bodies. Oh, yes, the sagging and the flagging and the wobbling and the hobbling, all have not gone unnoticed. When I read that the Motherland had permitted naked swimmers at certain locations, I was shocked. I confirmed with Julie Zhu in Beijing that the facts that came across Grandpa's desk were accurate. It seems that Lin'an City, at Zhejiang Province, has formally opened up naked swimming areas for both sexes. What next? I asked Grandpa whether or not Hongkong would follow suit. He had just finished his morning ablutions and just mumbled out the word 'shallow' to my question. (You, really, would not like to see Grandpa without his clothes, I can assure you) You know, my dear, we have some very odd people in Hongkong and they might get it into their heads to try to have some of our beaches open to naked swimmers unless I do something very quickly. But the question is, of course: How can I nip this drive for nakedness in its bud? Fat is fat – and it is not nice to view on an adult male or female. We all start with the same lithe bodies, but it is what we do with our bodies over the years that will, eventually, determine its eventual form. My curves have changed little over my few years on this earth, but I am in the minority, you understand. Not everybody is as controlled as I am. Grandpa is more than a little overweight and it is not possible for him to lose that mass of fat around his mid-section because it has been there for so many decades. The trouble with most men is that they have very little self-control, especially when it comes to food. Shanghainese food is very fatty, as you know, so one would think that people, such as Grandpa, would be fastidious, especially in their eating habits. And this is the point of this letter: Rather than proscribing nakedness in Hongkong, I thought that, if there were a plethora of it, if people saw a lot of horrible things, such as fat men and fat women, wondering here and there, it would occur to reasonable people that clothes can make a man or a woman, not wobbly hobbly. It is said that clothes do not make a man or a woman, but I ask you: Have you ever seen a successful naked man or woman? I need not wait for an answer. A law, to be effective, must be enforceable. If a law is not enforced, then, it ceases to be a law although it may remain on the statute books. Look at the situation in the United Kingdom, today, where there is, on the statute books, the law which states, inter alia: 'Anybody found defacing a public bridge may be deported for life.' That means, for people who do not know their history, that if a person is found with a piece of chalk, writing graffiti on a public bridge, a bobby has the right to arrest that person and, following a successful trial before a Magistrate, the offender may be sent to Australia for life. But there has never been a conviction of this type for the past few centuries and no policeman of today would even consider trying to enforce this archaic law. If people do not like a law, they will rebel in the fullness of time. Insurgency is the only real problem in Iraq, these days, as many people refuse to accept the laws that are being foisted and then promulgated upon them by the Interim Administration, put in place by the US Government. Whether or not the Interim Administration of Iraq is good or bad is immaterial, because many of the Muslim clergy view it as being a tool of the Americans. What is taking place in Iraq is a lesson for all of us: Appearances, you see, are everything. Well-made clothes can give the appearance of a man or a woman to be

that which she or he could never be without the clothes. Such a concept, that is, promoting the idea of people, wearing well-made clothes, is good for the Hongkong economy, as well as maintaining social decorum.

Let each and every man and woman go forth and multiply ... their clothes!

God bless us, one and all.

The Chief Lady of Hongkong

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