



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I thoroughly applaud the actions of the Government of China in sending a couple of former senior members of one of the Motherland's most outspoken newspapers to jail. And another former employee of that newspaper is on his way to jail, also, it seems. There is no doubt that the third man will get it in the neck, as soon as the Court brings in a guilty verdict, which I am confident that it will. I just hope that there is no mucking about with lawyers, employing tactics, designed to stall the due process of our law and costing us a lot of money, which could be used for other things. Hongkong should follow the example of the Motherland on the principle that we must always recall, daily, that this is the political concept of One-Country, Two-Systems, as propounded by that late great leader of the Motherland, Paramount Leader Deng Xiao Ping. In fact, I do not understand the reason that Hongkong has not yet considered composing an Oath of Allegiance, similar to the one that the people of the United States of America recite, daily. Getting back to those horrible corrupt people, it was back in March, this year, that the matter of the Editors of The Southern Metropolitan Daily Newspaper first came to light and to my personal attention and, now, some months later, I have received the good news that these horrible people are in prison – where they deserve to be, of course. Even the defence lawyer agreed with the verdict of the Court. That lawyer will go places in the legal profession in China, now. According to my Beijing contacts, the former General Manager of The Southern Metropolitan Daily was sentenced by a Court in Southern Guangdong Province to twelve years in jail for embezzlement, and the former Editor-in-Chief was sentenced to eleven years in jail for corruption. The trial is still pending for another former top Editor of this newspaper. I bet he gets about twelve years in jail, too. You know, if there is one over-ripe banana in a bunch, it is a sure thing that the other bananas will be over-ripe in time, also. So, using my indefatigable logic, if two of the top men in The Southern Metropolitan Daily are over-ripe, in other words, they stink, then, the latest arrest of another Editor must be ripe for the picking, too – he must stink equally as bad as the others. Of course, these felons will say anything in Court in order to prevent the three judges from sentencing them, but we all know that the so-called bonuses, paid by certain corrupt newspaper bosses to informants, is only a ploy to cover up what is really happening. Newspapers should only report stories that are true and which the government can verify as being true. If the government says that the story is not true, that is that. The government knows what is up and what is down; and, it knows, also, that the citizens of the Motherland do not like to read negative reports because it just upsets them, quite unnecessarily. Stories should be positive, in any event, you know. If one loves the Motherland, then, one must believe in the Motherland and all that it says and does. Even in England, which claims, also, to be a democratic country, the trite expression is still used: 'Right or Wrong; Queen and Country!' The trouble with many journalists, especially those who have been corrupted by the West, is that they seem to think that just because they hold the pen, they can write anything they like. Grandpa was the target, recently, of an attack by a newspaper, you know, but I had a little talk with Barbara Zhu in Beijing and she assured me that there would never be a recurrence of such a thing. The cheek of these journalists! How can a son slap a father? Confucius would turn in his grave if he heard of such a thing!

You know, comparing China with Singapore is an interesting exercise, also, because, whereas in China, we shoot corrupt people in public arenas in order that it serve as a deterrent for others, who may be tempted to commit similar offences, in Singapore, killing felons is not considered as important as holding up the felons to be personifications of what can happen to everybody else, similarly inclined. Libel actions, Grandpa tells me, is the preferred way to bankrupt a person in Singapore and, then, jail him when he is unable to pay his debts. Debtors' prison is still on the statute books in Singapore, but, somehow, it is not used in Hongkong any more. Perhaps, we should consider reconstituting this old statute. Also, in Singapore, where the Lee Kuan Yew Family continues to hold sway over the population, the idea of continuity in government has its obvious appeal: One, always, knows what to expect on the morrow. Since Singapore was established in 1965, Paramount Leader Lee Kuan Yew has been cracking the whip over his subjects. And what a wonderful job he has done, too! Crack! Crack! Crack! Which tends to make me believe that having a one-man rule of government, just like in Hongkong, is a very democratic way to go. In November 1990, 'Emperor' Lee Kuan Yew stepped aside as Prime Minister after 31 years in office. His hand-picked successor, Mr Goh Chok Tong, had been groomed for the job for a number of years and, according to The Emperor, had effectively served as Prime Minister for 2 years, although his formal title was First Deputy Prime Minister. Emperor Lee Kuan Yew was elected term after term after term. The people of Singapore loved him so much that they would not allow him to step down. So you see, My Dear Grandchild, one can learn to love the person who holds the whip and who is not afraid to use it over the backs of naughty children. Now, Paramount Leader Lee Kuan Yew's son, Brigadier Lee Hsien Loong, will take up where Dad left off. Great stuff! Hongkong should follow the lead of Emperor Minister Lee Kuan Yew, who just happens to be Grandpa's very close friend – I mean, in addition to his other friends in Beijing, of course. When Grandpa wants to retire from his high office, I was wondering which of our children would follow him. The learning process, just like in Singapore, should start now, I think. I suppose it will fall on me, as usual, to groom one of our grandsons to take up Grandpa's whip of office. Decisions, decisions, decisions ...

Ah, life is difficult for leaders of men, is it not?

Love you, all, my children.

The Chief Lady of Hongkong

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