



## *The Betty Letters*

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*Politics makes for some strange bedfellows, would you not agree? The United States Government, while it maintains a stance of free trade, internationally, has determined to re-impose a quota system on the Government of the Motherland on imports of certain apparel and textiles. The rationale, employed by the Government of the United States, is that United States's producers of similar products to those, being produced and exported to the United States by the Motherland, are suffering because they cannot compete, effectively. The United States Government claims that about sixteen thousand workers have been sacked since the beginning of this year due to the expanding imports of Chinese-produced [textiles and garments](#). While the imports of Chinese-manufactured apparel and textiles to the United States marketplace are good for the economy of the world's only real superpower, at the same time, it is the death knell, sounding for certain American companies, producing similar apparel and textiles in the south of the United States. It is here that politics comes to the fore because it is not politically expedient to have home-grown industries die, or suffer a slowdown or slow death, due to the United States's Administration's determination not to protect those industries and their workers, engaged in these industries. It is here that the United States's Administration is faced with a choice: Act, unilaterally and contrary to the spirit of the World Trade Organisation's rules; or, permit creative destruction to run its course. Ironically, many of the Chinese entities, exporting their products to the United States, are Sino-Joint Ventures, with funding, being provided, in part or entirely, by United States multinationals.*

*The stance of the Chinese Government on this matter is, simply put, that it is permitted to export its products to the United States marketplace and the European Union in accordance with the provisions of the **World Trade Organisation**, of which the Motherland is a full member. Both the European Union and the United States have, now, joined hands in trying to find a solution to what these economic powerhouses see as a festering economic sore to their respective economies. They want to find a solution to this problem in order to protect their respective industries from the ravages of the economic fires, burning in the Motherland, those fires, having been lit by the industriousness of the people of the most-populous country in the world. The European Union, last Wednesday, said it would give the Chinese Government until the end of this month to come to heel ... or it would hoist up the standard of punitive tariffs. Then, on June 1, the European Union will take this matter to the World Trade Organisation for adjudication. The European Union, as with the United States, is claiming that cheap garments, such as T-shirts, etc, are destroying a large part of the garment-making industries of the European Union.*

*Talk about employing double standards! The United States Government is trying to find an excuse – actually, any excuse – to impose more punitive tariffs on the Motherland's imports into The Land of The Free and The Home of The Brave. But, the other day, the Administration let the proverbial cat out of the bag: Mr Carlos Gutierrez, the United States Government's Commercial Secretary, stated, officially, that his Government was determined to demonstrate its support of America's textile manufacturers and their employees. So much for the concept of free trade!*

*On another topic, I see that Legislative Councillor Chim Pui Chung is throwing his hat into the ring in an attempt to be the new Chief Executive of Hongkong in July. I, for one, will vote for him. One recalls that the late Deng Xiao Ping, the former Paramount Leader of the PRC, spent time in prison, too, you know. Of course, in the case of Deng Xiao Ping, he was not incarcerated in a Chinese prison for fraud, as was The Honorable Chim Pui Chung. However, it is said in the analects of Confucius that no man is, always, good, in the same way that no government can, always, be bad. But man must strive to act for the good of all, as far as is possible, and to support the government of the day, as far as it is possible, because, loyalty has its own rewards. Also, cash flows from political power in the same way that water flows from high to low. I am not, entirely, sure what this means, but Confucius, just like The Honorable Chim Pui Chung, is smarter than I so I bow to that intelligence. Along this road, also, I note that one of the many logical fallacies of the democratic system, especially as practised in Hongkong, is that felons and crooks may be voted into power if there is a sufficient number of people, willing to vote them into office. The Honorable Chim Pui Chung, of course, is no longer a crook, having served his sentence in 1998 where he spent ten months behind bars. Anybody who can bounce back, in the manner of this man, is guaranteed to be good Chief Executive Councillor because he knows how to meet adversity without surrendering, completely, his honour. When he forged those share certificates, back in the middle of 1980s, it took the Hongkong Government a very long time to take action against this businessman, whose background is hardly conducive to a high position in the hierarchy of any religious order, Western or Eastern. But the point is that he knows how to do things, good, bad and smugly, having vast experience. That is exactly what is required of a good politician. As far as I am concerned, a vote for Legislative Councillor Chim Pui Chung is a vote for forward- thinking people of Hongkong. Every dog should have its day, you know. So bark, loudly and long for Chim Pui Chung!*

*Love you,*

*Chief Lady*

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