



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

The 'appointment' of Mr Donald Tsang Yam Kuen to the post of Chief Executive of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) may well go down in the history books as being a masterly stroke by Beijing. By granting this career civil servant the right to wear the purple of office, it means that Beijing will be seen as putting in a 'local' to rule his 'province'. If Mr Donald Tsang should fail in his assigned task of governing the four hundred and sixteen square miles of the HKSAR, which is unlikely because he will only have the job for two years, Beijing will not lose face because it will be able to state that he was only put into the job as an interim measure while a more appropriate candidate for the job was being groomed. Beijing could go even further than this and state that the failure of Mr Donald Tsang only proves the adage that a 'local' cannot rule 'locally'. It is almost a rule in the PRC that a commanding general from the north will have a southern command; and, a commanding general from the south will have a northern command. The First Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, was a Shanghainese by birth, but he had spent so much time in the south that he had ceased thinking as a northerner. Hence, he failed in his task of administering the HKSAR. If, on the other hand, Mr Donald Tsang should succeed in the job as 'caretaker' of the HKSAR, with the people of territory, accepting him as their leader, then, Beijing will be able to take all of the credit for its nous and state that the One-Country, Two-Systems Government formula is working well and that the exception to the rule of reverse polar commands proves it. The democratic movement of the HKSAR cannot complain too vociferously about the appointment of this Hongkonger because such complaints would be seen by the rest of the world as, simply, rabble-rousing by an unruly mob. So, no matter what may be the outcome of the next few years, Beijing cannot be the loser. But Mr Donald Tsang could, well, find himself in a very sticky situation should he displease his masters in the Capital City of the PRC.

Looking at Mr Donald Tsang's pedigree, he has been a civil servant for the past thirty eight years, having been trained under British-born masters when the territory was known as Hongkong and was a colony of Great Britain. Prior to starting his career as a civil servant, he was a salesman. To his credit, in 1995, he was the first, ethnically Chinese person to hold the post of Financial Secretary of the territory. In short, he was born in Hongkong, trained in Hongkong under the British Colonial System of Government, and he has learned the virtues of obedience to his masters and diligence to his office. To his new masters, it is most important that Mr Donald Tsang is seen to be squeaky clean. Thus far, there appears to be no evidence of him, being the subject of public scorn, ridicule or contempt. This is a little different from the First Chief Executive of the HKSAR, who was the subject of hatred, ridicule and contempt, sometimes on a daily basis. Turning to the concept of democratisation of the HKSAR, Mr Donald Tsang has little to no knowledge of such a political process, but it stands to reason that he has studied the idea even though he has never experienced it throughout his sixty years. Having never experienced it and never having had to concern himself about democratic processes, no doubt, to this gentleman, it is just another textbook concept to be studied and understood, but that that is as far as one needs to go with it. Since it is well known that Beijing does not embrace the idea of having the HKSAR achieve democracy at this time in the territory's history, Mr Donald Tsang would not hesitate to concur with any such

determination of his masters since, to him, it would make perfect sense: For what reason should the people of the HKSAR need democracy when there is a paternal government, watching over the affairs of the territory for the benefit of all: Beijing and the HKSAR, in that order. Also, democracy is not, necessarily, the best form of government for all people's of the world, it could be reasoned. While it is highly unlikely that Mr Donald Tsang would utter such an idea, publicly, to anybody in the HKSAR, it is highly probable that he would let his thinking be known in Beijing. That, on the merit/demerit book of the PRC Government's records, would be listed as a definite star for this interim leader of the HKSAR. Another plus for Beijing by its appointment of Mr Donald Tsang as Chief Executive to run the territory, along with its seven million-plus human inhabitants, for the next few years, is that it sends a message to the people of Taiwan that to be one with Beijing has many more advantages and benefits than to stand alone, vacillating between the so-called Taiwan idea of democracy and the smoothly running political machine, called the Government of the PRC. It is legend in Taiwan, that, where-ever there is an election for high office, there are violent fights, even in the Taiwan Legislative Council Chamber, sometimes with a female delegate, attacking the Speaker of the House. Taiwan is viewed, internationally, as having a great number of uncivilised people, especially in its government. To the rest of the world, Beijing maintains, Taiwan and its politics are viewed as being primitive as well as being an insult to right-thinking Chinese people. Beijing can point to the smooth manner in which Mr Donald Tsang assumed the mantle of office of Chief Executive of the HKSAR – even without the need of any electioneering or even without the requirement for people to vote on the issue. It was simply a political appendage being inserted into a well-oiled sheath.

Beijing can point to its three decades of economic growth and challenge Taiwan and/or any other economy of the world to match its record of successes. It would be unfair to state, crudely, that Mr Donald Tsang has to suck up to his Beijing masters if he wants to keep his job, but, sadly, that is the situation, nevertheless. However, there is little difference to an American politician, sucking up to the electorate, or a key group of the perceived electorate, in order to obtain, or keep, his/her position to Mr Donald Tsang's pandering to the whims of the those who head the Government of the PRC at Beijing. One thing is definite: Beijing does not want to get bogged down in the political mire of the HKSAR: It wants to find somebody who can shoulder responsibility in accordance with the Mandate from Heaven (Beijing). And, for the time being, Mr Donald Tsang is that man.

All I can say is: Good luck, Donald!

Talk to you next week.

Chief Lady

***While TARGET makes every attempt to ensure accuracy of all data published,
TARGET cannot be held responsible for any errors and/or omissions.***

If readers feel that they would like to voice their opinions about that which they have read in TARGET, please feel free to e-mail your views to editor@targetnewspapers.com or targnews@hkstar.com. TARGET does not

guarantee to publish readers' views, but reserves the right so to do subject to the laws of libel.

 [Site Meter](#)