



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

History has proved, over and over again, that the most bellicose country may not, necessarily, prevail over an adversary whose defence is philosophically or theosophically based. The first monotheist is generally credited to have been Amenhotep IV, also known as Akhenaton (which the Jews would debate, of course, even though some of the nomadic Arabs, who determined to embrace monotheism, came about seven hundred years after the murder of Akhenaton. Those Semites – Shem, son of Noah – call themselves Jews, today, you know). Akhenaton reigned in Egypt from about 1353 BC to 1337 BC. He only permitted the cult of the sun god, Aten, of whom Nefertiti, his wife, was a devoted worshipper. After he established his new religion, he changed his name from the royal designation, Amenhotep IV, to Akhenaton, meaning ‘Aten is satisfied!’. (Sound familiar: ‘(Allah (God) is Great!’?) He fought bitterly against the powerful priests who attempted to maintain the worship of the Egyptian state god, Amon. This religious revolution had a profound effect on Egypt. A new religious literature developed. This blossoming of culture, however, did not continue after Akhenaton's murder by the priests of the old polytheistic religion of the country. Akhenaton's beliefs are, partially, alive today in Christianity, Islam, Judaism, etc, etc, etc. You cannot kill an idea by the sword, the gun, or an oppressive political regime, you understand, My Dear Grandchild. The Romans of the First Century A.D. learned this lesson when Jewish Zealots revolted against Roman rule between 66 A.D. and 73 A.D. The Romans stormed Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but the Jewish Zealots, numbering about one thousand men, women and children, withdrew from Jerusalem to the remote mountain top, known as Masada (in Hebrew, Masada means ‘fortress’). It took the Roman Tenth Legion about two years to recapture Masada – and, then, the defending Jews, realising that Masada was about to be overrun, all committed suicide rather than be captured and be subjugated by the Romans, if they were not slaughtered, first. While I do not condone suicide, the Jews, who decided to take their own lives rather than by subjugated to the tyranny of Rome of the First Century After Christ, it certainly is a very pointed reminder of the power of thought, be it acceptable or unacceptable at a certain time in the history of man. I know that I have written to you about Amenhotep IV and Masada in previous letters, but these historic events haunt me and constantly remind me that man, since he first discovered that he was a toolmaker rather than just a forager of food, a hunter if you will, has been unable to learn the lessons of history.

There is no doubt in my mind that democracy will prevail over all other kinds of political regimes in the world, today, because it is the best form of government to have evolved over the centuries. It has its flaws, of course, but it is still the best. Tyranny cannot compete with the concept of the exercise of the inalienable rights of man. There are, in this world of ours, peoples who prefer dictatorial forms of government. Catholicism, immediately, comes to mind because the Catholics of the world owe their allegiance to the Pope in Rome, whose word is universal law. God bless them! Islam is dogmatic, too, as the United States of America has discovered in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, etc, etc, etc. The United States of America has lost a number of wars over the years, although The Land of The Free and The Home of The Brave does not like to admit its military defeats. There was the Korean conflict, which festered from 1950 to 1953, when North Korea invaded South Korea and the parochial war graduated into a limited world war in which nineteen other countries sided with the United States which, arrogantly, decided that it could unite the Korean Peninsula by force of arms. Eventually, a truce was signed in 1953, ending the terrible conflict which had claimed the lives of some three million, Koreans, Chinese, and Americans, mainly. And, some fifty three years later, there is still bitterness between North and South Korea and, of course, North Korea's hatred of

the United States of America. There is no question in my mind, too, that North Korea's Government, under Premier Kim Jong Il, is tyrannical – in fact, Kim Jong Il may be completely mad – but the way to victory in this country is not by force of arms because the twenty three million human inhabitants of this country will fight any invading force: They know only the teachings of their 'Great' leader, Kim Jong Il. Further, one must assume that North Korea has some nuclear capability and, should Kim Jong Il unleash his nuclear dogs of war, the death toll of World War I and World War II might appear in the history books as being minor in comparison to the death and destruction which a North Korean nuclear holocaust could embrace. One remembers the date of August 6, 1945, when the US dropped the world's first atom bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, killing, outright, nearly one hundred and thirty thousand Japanese civilians, making homeless another one hundred and seventy seven thousand people and flattening about sixty percent of the entire city. In terms of the percentage of the population, which was killed on that horrible day in August, it was of the order of about thirty eight percent.

Then, there was the Vietnamese conflict in which the United States became involved for a period of some eight years. Another horrible mistake by the US Administration! This was a struggle, aimed at preventing Communism to dominate the entire Vietnamese Peninsula. The United States employed saturation bombing of parts of the country. Its forces fought hand-to-hand battles with the Vietnamese, but, after two successive United States' Administrations, the strongest nation of the world was beaten and, eventually, a truce had to be signed, thus ending the bloody years of fighting, which are estimated to have cost some twelve million people, dead or wounded. What the Americans did not realise – or paid scant attention if it had been realised – was that the history of Vietnam is one of domination by one bellicose power after another, from China's domination, to the French Government's domination, to Japan's domination, during World War II, and, then, along came the Americans in 1965. From the Vietnamese people's point of view, they were fighting for their own freedom.

In all of the above examples – and I could write a tome about such mistakes of history – it is clear that force of arms has never won the day, at least, not permanently. Rome was destroyed from within not from without. Tyranny will, ultimately, destroy itself because, people can only be tolerant of their plight up to a certain point and, then, they will revolt against oppression. Misery may like company, but there is a breaking point in the events of man: There has, always, been a breaking point; and, there, always, will be a breaking point. The United States has many very brilliant people – I do not consider President George W. Bush to be one of them, however – but these very brilliant people do not seem to be able to come to terms with the lessons of history: The way to a lasting peace is via philosophy not by jingoism and bellicosity. There is no problem in today's world, or tomorrow's world, to which there is no solution. Military intervention, however, is akin to putting a band aid over a piece of gangrenous tissue in the hope that the gangrene will not spread throughout the body and, eventually, kill the patient. Mohandas Gandhi, the Indian thinker and, eventually, the leader of this country, who led India out from under the yoke of colonialist Great Britain, did so using the philosophical concept of passive resistance. He did not believe in violence. He won. Today, India is a good friend of Great Britain. At one point, not that many years ago, Great Britain was considered an arch enemy of India. Today, India is a democratic country and is the second-largest, most-populous country in the world. It is destined to be the world's third largest economy in a matter of a few decades.

The power of thought, you see, My Dear Grandchild, is more potent than any weapon that man can produce. This has always been the case; it is unlikely, ever, to change.

Talk to you next week.

Chief Lady

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