

The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

Does Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee () think that she is a movie star? Does she think that she is a model? Is she potty? I am much better looking than she and I don't have a photographer in tow in order to snap my likenesses when I go to take tea in swank Hongkong hotels. I don't have public relations people, putting out handouts about my movements, or about this or that. Whom does this retired Hongkong Civil Servant think she is? Or, is it that somebody else, or somebody with his finger on the button of a moderately powerful piece of political machinery, thinks that she has some qualities about which I and my friends know nothing? The other day, I was taking tea in the lounge of a so-called, 6-star hotel in Pacific Place when, who should appear, but Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee, along with a small entourage, comprising a male photographer, a lady, and another, rather burly looking person whom I could not recognise or fathom his position within this small, motley group of people (actually, he could well have been a security guard or something like that, come to think of it). Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee and this lady sat down at a table next to mine and, at first, I did not realise this fact because I pay little attention to such people, especially to ladies who, in my opinion, are very unattractive and, as such, offer little to no competition to me when I determine to be seen in public, and especially in 6-star hotel lounges, wearing exclusive dresses, produced by famous couturières. But, then, I became terribly disturbed when this photographer, obviously in her, or her backers', employ, started snapping photographs of this former Hongkong Government Civil Servant. He was disturbing me, during the conversation that I was having with my friend, and that was the chief reason that I took note of this silly situation. This photographer was on his knees, next to my table, and I was not quite certain if he was trying to look up my dress or do something else that was equally as naughty (but I do have shapely legs, I hasten to add). As it turned out, the photographer was taking foreshortened photographs of Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee as she was seated, legs carefully crossed, showing off her spindly lower appendages, talking to the lady with whom she had entered the hotel. The entire situation was especially disturbing to me because ... well, look at Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee and, then, look at me. I ask you: Who is better looking – mop top or me? When I, finally, recognised Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee and put one and one together, it struck me that this lady was in the process of, what the Australians would call, 'salting the mine'. In this case, Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee was getting her photographs taken while the going for her was still reasonably good because the earlier that she had her likenesses on film, the better it would be for her. You understand what happens with age, My Dear Grandchild, don't you: Things start to sag, from one's cheeks to one's cheeks. Not everybody is as blessed as I, you well know, because the years have hardly changed my appearance, I am happy to state, even my hair is still as black as the head delegates at the National People's Congress. Now, I suppose that you are going to ask me as to the reason that she wants to get her photographs taken, today. Is that correct? It is because, in my opinion, she is going to enter the race to be the Chief Executive of Hongkong in due course. If she does not run against the existing Chief Executive, Mr Donald Tsang Yam Kuen (), it will be the next time around. The photographs that she is having taken, today, will be used years later when time ravages her looks even more. I can fully understand the reason that Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee would be a potential choice of Beijing as Hongkong's Chief Executive, either to replace Donald Tsang Yam Kuen or to succeed him, because she has a history of being a good servant, a political prostitute, if you will.

Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee was educated at The University of Hongkong where she managed to obtain a Bachelor of Arts Degree. She entered Hongkong Government service in 1975 as an Administrative Officer. She was appointed to the post of a Director of The Industry Department in September 1995. Her advancement, then, took off, spectacularly. In August 1996, Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee was appointed to the

post of Director of Immigration and, about 2 years later, she was appointed as Secretary of Security. In this position, you may recall, she championed the cause of Beijing, in September 2002, with the introduction of a Bill, now popularly known as Article 23 of The Basic Law of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. This started a brouhaha like no other. In case you have forgotten, this was the proposed controversial piece of legislation which, if it had been passed into law, would have ushered in the laws, relating to treason and other nation-security offences. For certain, this horrible piece of legislation would have restricted freedoms in the territory. That was the purpose of the proposed legislation. At the time that Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee introduced this prospective law, she tried hard to bulldoze it through the Legislative Council, but had to back down when some 500,000 people marched through the streets of Hongkong in protest of Article 23. That, as I recall, was on July 1, 2003. The Hongkong Government was forced to recant. On July 25, 2003, Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee resigned from all posts in the Hongkong Government, thus ending 28 years of being a servant of the people of the territory. After quitting her position in the Hongkong Government, she went back to school in order to obtain a Master of Arts Degree from Stanford University. When she returned to Hongkong on or about June 28, this year, surprisingly, she started to talk about Universal Suffrage. I would call this a major change of tack. Whereas, under the First Chief Executive of Hongkong, Mr Tung Chee Hwa, Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee was very much in tune with the Government's *modus operandi*, suddenly, on her return to Hongkong in June, this year, armed with a Master of Arts Degree, she advocated a policy that, clearly, Beijing does not, at this time, at least, subscribe. This contrasts, markedly, with what she publicly said on October 28, 2002, at The City University of Hongkong in defence of the Tung Chee Hwa () Government's proposals to push through Article 23 of The Basic Law. She said, among other things:

'Hitler came to power by democratic election and he killed 7 million Jews. One-person, one-vote is no panacea.'

Today, she, also, appears to be advocating the idea of a bicameral system of government, that is, 2 legislative chambers, having 2 separate and distinct, law-making assemblies, such as the House of Commons and House of Lords in Great Britain. Oddly, when she was somewhat of a female powerhouse in the Tung Chee Hwa Government, she was known to have been instrumental in prosecuting protesting students, using The Public Order Ordinance as her 'bible' of the day. Because of her apparent duty of fidelity to Beijing, she is, still, held in high esteem in the Capital City of China, I am told.

Such chutzpah has this lady! Does she imagine that, by making a 180-degree turn to the right, the people of Hongkong will forget her history? Does she think that, by changing her hairstyle so that it no longer resembles the head of a mop, and by taking some artistic photographs of herself, she will be acceptable to the vast majority of people of Hongkong? Of all of the prospective candidates for the job of the Chief Executive of Hongkong, in my opinion, she is the worst of the mediocre bunch. I do not like Donald Tsang Yam Kuen, also, because he does not see very far down the political and financial road and what his present policies will visit upon the people of Hongkong in due course. Donald Tsang Yam Kuen has little idea as to what he is doing and the ramifications of his officious acts, and, in my opinion, he is like that proverbial frog in the well: It can only see a little patch of light, shining into the well, but the frog thinks that that is the entire world. He is very dangerous in his officiousness. Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee is, in some respects, similar to Donald Tsang Yam Kuen because she, too, has little idea as to what this territory needs and to what the people of Hongkong would like to aspire. But there is no question in my mind that both of these people have a good idea as to what is required of them ... as far as Beijing is concerned. And, I dare say that they make every attempt to placate their Beijing masters because, by not doing so, it would come to mean the end to their political careers. As a civil servant in the causes of Beijing, I am certain that Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee will be good little political prostitute, but it will be for the benefit of Beijing, firstly, her benefit, secondly, and, sadly, nothing for Hongkong and its population.

Well, I must go. I am having my second fitting of my new autumn wardrobe. I must look my best just in case somebody wants to take my photograph, you know.

Talk to you next week.

Chief Lady

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