

The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I am a gossip-monger. I live in the realm of gossipdom. And I love it! I can't help it. It is my nature. Being a woman, I enjoy a little titillation, especially when it comes to learning about people, and, especially, I like to gossip about movie stars and moguls. That is the reason that I was especially interested when I learned that, at the funeral of Mr Henry Fok Ying Tung (), my favourite personality was absent as a pallbearer. I am referring, of course, to Mr Li Ka Shing (), the richest man in Asia and, perhaps, in the entire world. Mr Henry Fok Ying Tung received what could only be described as a State Funeral, orchestrated by Beijing. He was said to have been a 'renowned patriot' and an 'intimate friend' of the Chinese Communist Party of China. His pallbearers at the funeral parlour in Hongkong were:

- 1. Mr. Tung Chee Hwa (), the Former Chief Executive of Hongkong;*
- 2. Mr Rafael Hui Si Yan (), Acting Chief Executive;*
- 3. Mr Zheng Wan Tong (), Secretary General, Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference;*
- 4. Mr Gao Si Ren (), Central Government Liaison Office;*
- 5. Mr Zhu Wei Qun (), Vice Director Communist Party United Front Department;*
- 6. Mr Chen Zuo Er (), Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, Deputy Director;*
- 7. Mr Tsang Hin Chi (), National People's Standing Committee member;*
- 8. Mr Stanley Ho Hung Sun (), Delegate of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference;*
- 9. Mr Lee Shau Kee (), Delegate of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; and,*
- 10. Mr Paul Chu Ching Wu (), President, University of Science and Technology.*

But where was my idol, Mr Li Ka Shing? This funeral was of the utmost importance. There are not many of them, you know. People of the ilk of Mr Henry Fok Ying Tung do not die very often, I am happy to say. More than 1,100 people were in attendance at this showcase of Hongkong and Beijing dignitaries. But the Great Man was not given the prominence which he so rightly deserves, in my opinion! Don't tell me that the above 10 pallbearers have more money than Mr Li Ka Shing because I just, don't believe it. I scanned the reports of the funeral and all that I read was that Mr Li Ka Shing came for a short time, only, bowed in reverential respect, and, then, left the funeral home. He did not even give a little speech! The funeral service lasted a full 90 minutes, but Mr Li Ka Shing was only present for a very short period of time. Shame! Shame! Shame! I mean, of course, shame to the organisers of the funeral to have forgotten my idol, the Great Man of Hongkong, who has given away more money to China than any other living person, today. Where was the respect that was due to this Great Man?

Putting on my gossip cap, I thought and thought how it was that my idol was not among the most important

dignitaries at this PRC State funeral, held in Hongkong. I came up with the gossip suggestion that this matter of the PCCW Ltd, the company which was, until recently, chaired by the Number Two Son of the Great Man, may have been the reason that Mr Li Ka Shing was excluded as a pallbearer, assuming that he was excluded, that is. Mr Richard Li Tzar Kai () was a little naughty in that PCCW Ltd, the largest, fixed-line telecommunications company of Hongkong, could have been passed to foreign interests had not the Government of China stepped in to stop it happening. In China, one is expected to control one's children who, in turn, are expected to follow the 8 Confucian principles for living: Love (); Filial Piety (); Loyalty (); Kindness (); Trustworthiness (); Righteousness (); Harmony (); and, Peacefulness (). I am not suggesting that Mr Li Ka Shing and/or his son, Mr Richard Li Tzar Kai, have been remiss, but, sometimes it happens that people misunderstand the actions of another and such misunderstandings can lead to unpleasantness. If this is the case with Mr Li Ka Shing, I sincerely hope that the bridges can be mended, smartly, because Hongkong and China need the Great Man's money and his moxie in making more money to be spent in China and Hongkong. As I see the situation with regard to Mr Richard Li Tzar Kai and the sale of the 23-percent interest of the Issued and Fully Paid-Up Share Capital of PCCW Ltd via his controlling interest in the Singapore-listed company, Pacific Century Group Holdings Ltd, he only wanted to earn a few more billion dollars for himself in a similar fashion to that of his father. That there was a little faux pas in that political considerations were not considered, fully, by Mr Richard Li Tzar Kai when he determined to offload his controlling interest in PCCW Ltd is neither here nor there, and the Great Man should not have had to suffer due to the small errors of his greedy Number Two Son. But, today, things have been righted and Mr Li Ka Shing has agreed to buy nearly 12 percent of PCCW Ltd in order to save the day. That being so, the Great Man should be restored to his rightful place in China and Hongkong. Of all of the pallbearers, in my opinion, the Great Man should have been at the head of the line, helping to carry the casket that contained Mr Henry Fok Ying Tung. Anyway, he is much better looking than Mr Tung Chee Hwa.

It, always, saddens me when I hear of somebody that I know, having transmigrated to that other world. I shall follow that path, too, but I am going to leave a will which stipulates that I want the Great Man to be one of my pallbearers. I shall feel a little bit more secure as I float in the clouds in the knowledge that, in death, the richest man in my home town touched my coffin in the same way that he has touched my gossip heart.

Talk to you next week.

Chief Lady

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