

The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I was very impressed at the way in which the senior civil servants of Hongkong are starting to salt the political mine, so to speak. I have it from extremely reliable sources that Mr Henry Tang Ying Yen (), The Chief Secretary for Administration of the Hongkong Government, has sent e-mails to all of his Ministerial Secretaries, telling them they must cooperate with Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee (), to give her whatever she desires when they meet her, and to give her more than just a cup of tea. This is what I would call, being politically correct and proactive with regard to the future direction of Hongkong Government policies. According to Bo-Bo, my fat frog of a husband, Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee had 2 meetings, last Monday, one with Mr Stephen Lam Sui Lung (), The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, in the afternoon, following a morning meeting that Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee had with Mr Michael Suen Ming Yeung (), The Secretary for Education. Bo-Bo told me, secretly, that Messrs Suen and Lam requested the meetings. Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee, also, had a secret meeting with The Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Frederick Ma Si Hang (). However, I could not squeeze out of the 'frog', the essence of the meetings – other than a little wink from him in my direction. I need not elaborate, I am certain, because you and I know, exactly, what is the meaning of a wink from the 'frog'. Of course, there is the question as to whether or not Messrs Suen and Lam had received tacit approval for their private tête-à-têtes with Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee from the Chief Executive of Hongkong, Mr Donald Tsang Yam Kuen (). I take it that, in view of the special relationship that Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee has with the Beijing high-muck-a-muck, she does not require special permission in order to hold talks with senior, Hongkong Government civil servants on the basis of the principle of master and servant (or should that be 'mistress' and servant?). Being a woman and very much a nosy parker, I would have loved to have been able to overhear the conversations between Messrs Suen and Lam and Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee. Can you imagine how the conversation went? I can, actually, because, after being married to Bo-Bo for so many years, I understand how the Hongkong Government works.

There is little question in my mind that Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee will win the coming election for a seat in the Legislative Council, but there is the nagging question as to how badly will Mrs Anson Chan Fang On Sang () get tramped beneath the feet of the entourage of Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee. In fact, I feel a little sorry for Mrs Anson Chan Fang On Sang because she is known to have absolutely no support from Beijing in her quest to become an elected Legislative Councillor and, due to this fact, she is being ignored by the political movers and shakers to a very large extent. Politics in Hongkong is unlike politics in, say, the United States of America or the United Kingdom, because, as I have stated, umpteen times before, in Hongkong, those who run for office know full well as to the outcome of a political election even before the first vote has been cast. It is traditional, you know. Mrs Anson Chan Fang On Sang knows now, and must have known, prior to her decision to run for the post of Legislative Councillor, that she was unlikely to win this little by-election because Beijing had, already, made a determination as to who should sit in the Legislative Council of Hongkong come this December 2. Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee has been fully groomed for future high posts in the Hongkong Government and, because of her training as a loyal servant, and she, having demonstrated her willingness to do the necessary, she will, of course, follow the best course of action ... as indicated to her at the appropriate time and place. I think that I told you, more than one year ago, that Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee had been spotted on a number of occasions, having her photograph taken by professional photographers in a 5-star hotel at Pacific Place. Powers-that-be do not spend money on such things, normally, especially for a has-been. Further, it is highly unlikely that this lady was paying money out of her pocket for such things because, even if she had political ambitions, as far back as 2 years ago – and

there is nothing wrong with such ambition, mind you – we, all, know that there is no money in being a politician (of sorts) in Hongkong. (I am, naturally, excluding the well-known fact that members of the legal profession of Hongkong are able to make capital out of attaining political clout in the territory). That being completely understood, and, also, knowing full well that Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee is not a very wealthy lady, the next questions are:

(a) Who has been paying the wages/salaries of her retinue, over the past few years? and

(b) What is the purpose of the exercise?

When I asked these questions of Bo-Bo, there was just another little wink from the frog.

I have said this before and I shall say it again: 'I have never met a person that I did not like; but, at the same time, I have never met a politician that I really liked.' The trouble with politicians is that it is quite difficult for them to be honest, all of the time ... if at all. For the most part, they could be described as being political prostitutes, being quite willing to take whatever supine position is required when asked so to do. I would be willing to bet money that, if Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee is able to be very powerful in Hongkong – and I think that, if her health holds up, she will become very, very powerful – Article 23 will be reintroduced into the statute books of Hongkong, but this piece of draconian legislation, which will give teeth to Beijing to take immediate, decisive and definitive action against anybody, deemed to be, or likely to become, an enemy of the State, will be reintroduced without any apology from Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee, that time around.

Life is wonderful, don't you think?

Talk to you next week.

Chief Lady

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