

## *The Betty Letters*

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*This has not been reported, anywhere, and you will not read it in the local newspapers, but The Consulate of The United States of America, located on Garden Road, has been re-enforced to resemble an impregnable Fortress. Black iron bars, rising about 15 feet, at least, festoon the outer perimeter of the Consulate, having been driven down into a rock wall which is at least 15 feet high. Behind the outer rock wall, there is the second line of defence: Another rock wall. Barriers have been erected to prevent the entrance or egress of any motor vehicle. I have not entered this Fortress, but it is clear that, once a person has entered into this prison-like enclosure, one would not be able to exit it except without express permission of the US Government authorities or their designates. In fact, it would not be incorrect to state that the Fortress is very frightening from its outer appearance because, aside from the iron bars, having been painted black, with sharp iron spikes, hanging from the top of the bars, there are, also, multiple cameras, panning the entire area, outside the Consulate along with very strong lights, illuminating the outer perimeter of the entire enclosure. I could continue with a description of this Fortress, but suffice it to state that this imposing structure exudes fear and trepidation. For what other reason would the Government of the United States reinforce its Consulate in Hongkong to this extent, having spent, I estimate, many tens of millions of dollars ... unless fear was the main reason. I questioned some of my friends as to the reason that the American diplomats would be so afraid that, while in Hongkong, they felt the need to build high stone walls around themselves, impregnated with sharp, black iron bars and spikes at the top of the bars, around their centre of activity in the territory, bearing in mind, of course, that Hongkong is one of the safest places in Asia, today. According to The Frog, my husband, Bo-Bo, he said that I did not know the half of it. It seems that the American Consulate is well-stocked with all kinds of armaments, located in various parts of the building. And in the bowels of the Fortress, there are all kinds of very heavy killing machines. Naturally, US Marines are stationed in the Fortress and, naturally, they practise their art of killing on a very regular basis. I do not know much about guns and things like that, other than that which I have seen in the movies, but I can imagine what the Americans have at their disposal in the event of an attack on their Hongkong Fortress.*

*This leads to the question as to the reasons that the Americans in Hongkong have determined to adopt the posture that they could be the subject of a siege and, in order to repel any would-be invaders, they are ready, willing and able to fight off any and all attackers. The United States of America, sadly, is not the most-beloved of countries in the world, yet, at the same time, this Land of The Free and The Home of The Brave is among the most-generous countries of the world, today, and, most likely, the most-generous country in the history of the world. Being the most-advanced and wealthiest country of the world, it is only human nature that the inhabitants of the United States become somewhat proud of that which they have achieved and this, unfortunately, often leads to arrogance – as one notes from the speeches of US President George W. Bush: ‘You are either with us or against us ...’. While the United States has spawned some of the most-outstanding statesmen, men of science, of letters, of art, of music, and of philosophers in history, it seems to me that the average American is quite ignorant about many things, especially about philosophy. Misreading the signs on the invasion of Iraq on March 21, 2001, the result of this catastrophic error was to create an even bigger mess than the one that existed under the tyrannical rule of President Saddam Hussein and his family of rapists and cutthroats. I am certain that the United States did not plan the current state of affairs in Iraq, but the resultant effect is indicative of the level of incompetence of the Bush Administration. After ‘liberating’ Iraq, as the invasion was termed, President George W. Bush stated that he was anxious to democratise the country, leading to the democratisation of the entire Middle East. It was an ambitious enterprise, but the one factor that this good Christian man forgot was that the people of the Middle East, for*

the most part, do not, really, understand the meaning of a democracy and the ramifications on the citizenry of such a system of government. They know the word, democracy, of course, but that is, just about, all that they do know about democracy. When one's belly is full, when love abounds, when a man can walk down any street of his town without fear of his neighbour, planning something felonious, then, and only then, can he turn his thoughts to such lofty concepts of democracy. Subtract from that equation any one of the above attributes and that same man will be concerned as to: (1) His ability to obtain his next meal; (2) His inability to his inalienable right to happiness; and, (3) His innate fear of his neighbour. How can such a man think of anything else under such circumstances? The American missionaries of the 19th Century, missionaries who came to the Middle Kingdom in order to try to convert the 'heathens' into the ways of Christianity, knew fully well that the way to conversion was through the stomachs of the heathens. To this end, they gave to all would-be converts, bowls of rice, or noodles and other staple foods. In short, they fed the heathens, first. The missionaries were inundated with would-be converts as a direct result of this 'bribery' of the innocents of China. Oddly, the Chinese people have, always, been a religious race, but they have, historically, believed in pantheism not monotheism. One has to ponder: Is monotheism superior to pantheism? That is the theme of another letter so let us not dwell on that subject, today. The lesson to be learned from the 19th Century American missionaries is that, first, they studied, fully, the situation before embarking on their crusades; they gained an understanding of the population with which they would be dealing; they learned the language of the country; they understood, at least to some extent, the financial plight of the population; and, then, they acted in a manner which gave the missionaries the best chance of achieving their stated goal of conversion of pantheists to monotheism.

Throughout the history of the United States, there has been no real and abiding foreign policy because it seems to change almost as quickly as I change my knickers. How can there be a viable foreign policy when the leaders of the country include perjurers, licentious individuals who take delight in extracting sexual favours from ladies who are enamoured by their lofty office, only, flout a lack of knowledge even of the leaders of countries, with whom they are supposed to hold friendly relations, and encourage, out of design or ignorance, acts that are contrary to the laws of the land? Democracy may not be the best form of government of the world, but it is the best that has been formulated thus far in the history of man. But, as with any motor car, no matter how well may a vehicle be engineered, without an adequate supply of fuel, that vehicle will not run. It seems to me the 'fuel' for the Government of the United States is knowledge. And this is, sadly, lacking, as far as I can determine. The American electorate has, for some years, voted into office many of the wrong kind of people. The democratic system has failed to place the country in strong and knowledgeable hands. The Clinton Administration nearly resulted in the impeachment of the President, who was proved to have been a perjurer who fornicated with a female employee – in the White House while the President's wife was in residence under the same roof! What kind of example do such acts send to the ordinary man and woman in The Land of The Free and The Home of The Brave? Is that the kind of foreign policy that one would want to export? While President Bill Clinton is, unquestionably, an intelligence man, he is, also, lacking in moral fortitude. This he has demonstrated and his legal peers have censured him for his past acts, which we deemed not to have been in keeping with his position as a solicitor of a US Court of Law. In the case of President George W. Bush, the current President, he has not been seen to have been fornicating while holding the highest office in the world, but he is terribly lacking in knowledge of the world, the philosophy of the peoples of the world, and the religious considerations that cause people to act in a certain manner when under stress. Terrorism can only thrive when it is perceived by certain people that that is the only way forward. People do not like to commit suicide, but, when pushed to extremes, that is what they are capable of doing, as President George W. Bush has learned, during his tenure of office.

What is needed in the United States of America is a think-tank, comprised of a number of erudite and learned thinkers from many walks of life, not just from academia. The members of this think-tank should be there for life, if they so desire to stay as a part of this organisation. The think-tank must not be part of the Government of the United States of America, but an interdependent organisation of the United States' Government, not subject to coercion of any kind. Determinations of this think-tank should be submitted to the President of the United States for his, and his advisers' consideration, but such determinations should have no legal foundations, being only determinations, based upon research and extrapolations and/or interpolations from such research.

When I tossed this idea at The Frog, he sat up and emphatically stated that, in fact, he is part of just such a think-tank in Beijing! In his dreams, only! For what reason did I marry a Frog?

Talk to you, next week.

*Chief Lady*

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