

**FRIENDS AND FOES IN HONGKONG:
IN WHOM SHOULD YOU PLACE YOUR TRUST ?**

Is Fame Your Spur ?

It is said that it is better to suffer a clever enemy than to enjoy a foolish friend.

The reason for this logic is obvious if one thinks it through, carefully: With a clever enemy, one can, just about, anticipate and calculate his acts under most conditions; with a foolish friend, however, one is never quite certain as to the fool's actions under differing circumstances and conditions.

Most residents of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) know fully well that Mrs Anson Chan Fang On Sang () does not suffer fools gladly.

She has a mind of her own and makes no bones about expressing her opinions.

That was her undoing when she was Hongkong's Chief Secretary under the First Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mr Tung Chee Hwa (): She talked too much and much too loudly and she let it be known of her displeasure at the manner in which her boss ruled the roost.

She was roundly criticised by Beijing for her lack of support of Mr Tung Chee Hwa and his determinations.

Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee (), on the other hand, is, in **TARGET**'s opinion, something of a political prostitute: She will bend according to the direction of the political wind, changing when needs be such.

Last Sunday, Mrs Anson Chan Fang On Sang and Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee squared off in a by-election for a Legislative Council seat.

Mrs Anson Chan Fang On Sang won the day by a wide margin.

What this by-election proved, if anything, was that Beijing's might was insufficient '*to buy*' the electorate.

The fervour for democracy in the territory could not be quashed by the might of the pro-Beijing forces.

Now, the question is whether or not this is the end of Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee as a politician in the HKSAR.

She has threatened to return to the fray at the next Legislative Council election!

In view of the motley bunch of Legislative Councillors, keeping seats warm in Council Chambers – there is at least one felon and at least one member of the wild bunch, minus his motorcycle – it may quite be possible for this lady to win a seat, one day.

It has been suggested, on a number of occasions, that Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee is being groomed to be the next Chief Executive of the HKSAR.

But Beijing, normally, does not like a loser.

Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee, today, has the reputation in Beijing as being unsuccessful in beating the knickers off her arch rival at a vital time in the history of politics in the territory.

What caused her to fail to beat her rival is, probably, her general demeanour.

Simply put, she is deemed not acceptable to the majority of the Hongkong electorate.

Clearly, many people do not want her to represent them.

To be fair to the lady, she cannot help being that which she is.

As a former, senior HKSAR Government official – she held the post of Secretary of Security – under the First Chief Executive, she had been used to being courted, wine and dined, and when she beckoned her underlings in the appropriate manner and fashion that befitted her station, they came running.

As a campaigner for a Legislative Council seat, however, she had to curry votes.

It was impudent of her backers, those of the colour of red and those others, of differing shades of pink, to force this petite lady to fall to such a lowly level as to hand out leaflets on street corners to complete strangers in order to beg them to vote for her – because she was ill-prepared for such currying acts.

TARGET (), only about one year ago, was taking tea at the Shangri-La Hotel lounge in Pacific Place and had the opportunity to observe Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee as she was being photographed by one of her retinue.

Actually, she appeared to look quite elegant as she was seated in an armchair, sipping tea and chatting with one of her friends (or Beijing advisers?).

She was heard to suggest to the photographer that accompanied her that she would look better if her likeness was taken from her left side and not her right side.

All ladies are vain, to a lesser or greater degree, but some ladies, it seems, are more vain than others.

Vanity is one of the innate attributes of female homo sapiens because the female has to attract the male of the species in order to obtain the attentions of a likely mate.

In the lower animal kingdom, the female of the species does it a little differently: It is known as presenting.

Mrs Regina Ip Lau Suk Yee prefers to do things a little differently, too: Fame is her spur.

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