



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I think that many people have forgotten that the cost of good manners is nothing. Good manners are inexpensive, you know. Among their many positive attributes, good manners tend to foster a great deal of good will among all those who come in contact with an individual, displaying his knowledge of this beneficial social quality. It is clear that the cost of good manners is well worth the effort expended by an individual. However, in Hongkong, it is clear that many people have forgotten the importance of good manners. In the Legislative Council Chamber, for instance, one sees and hears of elected lawmakers, practicing bad manners in the Chamber in order to try to bring about what they consider to be required in accordance with the mandate, handed to them by those who voted them into power. The cost of those bad manners is high, I suggest to you. This is because bad manners do not foster good will among men and, perhaps more importantly, poor manners rarely have the desired, intended effect and tend only to spawn uncouth responses in the minds of reasonable men. Take, for instance, Legislative Councillor Leung Kwok Hung, also known popularly as 'Long Hair'. During his stint as a Legislative Councillor, what has he, constructively, achieved? I suggest to you that the answer is next to nothing. What he has managed to do is to demonstrate to the electorate and most, reasonably minded people that (a) he is ineffective in his role as a Hongkong lawmaker and (b) he has forgotten much of the teachings of his family when he was growing up. I am sure that the present mien of this Legislative Councillor was not the result of his nurture, but something else, something that should be foreign to civilised man. The number of times that Legislative Councillor Leung Kwok Hung has been ejected from the Legislative Council Chamber is legend. If he does not take his assigned seat in the Legislative Council Chamber in order to listen to the proceedings, how can he be effective in his position as representing the people of Hongkong? He is vulgar, vain and pretentious, in my opinion, but, more important, he cannot perform the task of representing 'all' of the people of Hongkong because of the way in which he goes around, trying to be that which he is not: A Legislative Councillor with the interests of the people, foremost in his thinking. He could be effective, even with his unkempt long hair and crude ways, simply by asking the right questions in Legislative Council meetings. He could ask, as an example, for what reason were various Hongkong ministers appointed and what are their bona fides. Such simple questions may well result in obtaining the necessary ammunition to indicate to the people of Hongkong something that they may not have understood. If the first question does not bear fruit, a supplementary question(s) may be asked, resulting in obtaining a cache of ammunition to be used at a later date. It is said that honey is much better at attracting bees than vinegar. Likewise, good manners beget good manners. Good manners permeate the fabric of those who experience its lasting effects, resulting in influencing people by simple example. The best intentions of man may well be negated by poor presentation. Nowhere is that lesson more evident than the presentation in Hongkong of Legislative Councillor Leung Kwok Hung. He is a sad testament to the intelligence of those who voted him into office. The constructive accomplishments of this man could be written on the sharp end of a knitting needle. What a pity it is that the energy of this man has not been harnessed and, then, directed at an assigned target in a manner, almost guaranteed to produce constructive results. The very fact that he does not understand this simple truth suggests, strongly, that he does not possess the intelligence and or the wit for him to sit in the Legislative Council in order to represent, not just his constituents, but the entire human population of the territory.

Hurling insults at other members of the Legislative Council and or at the Chief Executive is guaranteed to erode the efficacy of this man. The term, 'The Honorable Legislative Councillor ...' is supposed to mean, just that. If a Legislative Councillor is not honourable, then, he has no right to sit as a member of the Legislative Council. The Chief Executive of Hongkong, Mr Donald Tsang Yam Kuen, may well be an absolute moron, but, nevertheless, he is the head of the Hongkong Government. As such, he should be treated with the utmost respect, not for himself, but for the office which he represents. It is well accepted that the former President of the United States, Mr George W. Bush, was not very effective in managing the affairs of the largest single economy of the world, and his foreign policy – or the lack of it – has been roundly criticised. Even so, respect must be afforded to his office. Say what you will about the man who sits in the Oval Office of the White House, but speak not ill of the concept of democracy and the man who has been installed to lead that democracy for a period of time as well as to defend the principles, laid down by the Founding Fathers of that democracy. One salutes the office of the President, not the man who, for a short period time in history, is the custodian of the precepts upon which the government was formulated. The same, to a great extent, is true of the Chief Executive of Hongkong. He may well be a dunce, but he will not be sleeping in Lower Albert Road for very long because the people will not permit it. They will, sooner or later, rise up and demand that he be replaced. While he does sleep in that house on Lower Albert Road, however, it is incumbent on us, all, to respect the government that he represents. What government does Mr Leung Kwok Hung represent? Destructive criticism is cheap and, more often than not, it serves no real purpose and may thwart any valuable intent of he who utters it.

My Dear Grandchild, I have aimed my barbs, today, at just one Legislative Councillor, only, because he is such a prime and available target. But, I assure you, there are a number of Legislative Councillors who are just as contemptible and qualify as aptly as does Mr Leung Kwok Hung.

Talk to you, next week.

Chief Lady

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