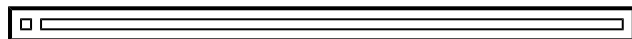


The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

The human body is an amazing machine, with certain internal parts, being able to regenerate themselves. But there is a limit to which, when reached, the human body is unable to cope. Then, the body gets sick and, in some cases, it dies. Diet and exercise, it has been proved, over and over again, are essential to health. There is no such thing as good health and bad health. There is only health: Health means, by definition, good health, free from disease, the body, being in sound condition. Health, however, is dependent on a number of factors, one of which is sustenance – food; nourishment; etc. It is about this matter of food, actually, that brings me to write this letter. When I go to certain supermarkets, I am shocked at the way in which certain food items are handled by the staff. In the mornings, for instance, at one particular supermarket, located just off Queensway Plaza, between 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m., bread and cakes are delivered. The deliveries take place by the bread and cakes, being placed on open plastic trays, piled one atop another, and parked beside empty and full boxes (of this and that), placed in the public corridor, by the side of the supermarket. Some of the boxes, clearly being the property of the supermarket, are full of rubbish. The cakes are not covered so, of course, flies, vermin and any other living insects get the first bite of the bread and cakes. The staff of the supermarket puts these same cakes and breads in bins, which have fitted to them, little plastic doors. Some of the time, however, these doors are left open so that the flies and other vermin can continue feeding. Would you consider that this is hygienic? I did not talk to the staff of the supermarket because it appears that they are not trained in matters, relating to hygiene. I consider that this matter is deserving of immediate attention because that which I have described to you is open for everybody to view in the mornings. I would be interested to learn how many people get stomach problems after ingesting the bread and cakes, left out in the open for any passing person to view and, perhaps, to cough and/or sneeze into the plastic trays, laden with bread and cakes. Further, since I know that the staff of the supermarket permits deliveries of bread and cakes in a method that I would consider deplorable, what about deliveries of other foodstuffs? It stands to reason that the management of the supermarket is as lax in respect of other foodstuffs as it is in respect of the case of deliveries of the bread and cakes in the manner described, herewith.



The Government of Hongkong is insistent on employing methods to dissuade people from using plastic bags. The Government claims that its action is required for this and that. But the Hongkong Government has never mentioned about promoting the production of bio-degradable bags in Hongkong. This type of bag can be produced to have a limited life of, say, one month or so. I watched a television show, recently, and the inventor of a bio-degradable material, used in the manufacture of household furniture, stated that, if his furniture were to be buried in the earth, within a period of less than one year, it would become part of the soil and would help to replenish it with nutriment, the result of the bio-degradable materials, used in the production of his furniture, disintegrating. The point, here, is that bio-degradable plastics do exist. It appears that there is no reason that Hongkong people should not be permitted to use bags, made of this type of material, without having to be penalised by the Hongkong Government that is imposing a 50-cent fine per

plastic bag upon customers of certain shops.

*Plastic bags aside, what about improving the standards of food handling in the same shops that are being forced, by the Hongkong Government, to charge 50 cents per plastic bag, used by customers? Nothing is being done, it seems, about the matter of improving the modus operandi of food handlers at supermarkets. I enclose, My Dear Grandchild, 2 photographs of the bread and cakes, taken at intervals of 45 days, just to prove the points that I have made above. Now, I ask you, what is more important: The general health of the populace; or, imposing a 50-cent fine for a person, having his/her groceries, sheathed in a plastic bag at a supermarket? What is very apparent, in respect of the matter of the deliveries of bread and cakes to the supermarket that I have described, is that the Hongkong Government is turning a blind eye on this important matter. In my opinion, the supermarket should be fined, heavily, for permitting this disgraceful situation. The Government should be proactive not reactive – especially in the matter of food handling. It is well known that rats carry the plague. There is a flea, called commonly, a plague-flea. This is, in Latin, the *Xenopsylla Cheopsis*. This little flea is able to transmit the plague bacillus, *Yersinia Pestis*, from rats to humans. The Great Plague of London, between 1664 and 1666, killed more people than any other epidemic, with approximately 68,500 burials of plague victims, being recorded during its 18-month course. That catastrophe was a wake-up call for what was, at that period in British history, one of the most-important capital cities of the world. The British Government of the 17th Century, aside from being very stupid, did not understand the importance of hygiene; and, it permitted rats to infest all parts of the city. It was only after more than 68,500 people had been buried because of the plague-flea that the British Government of the day determined to do something about the situation.*

Now, is the Hongkong Government going to follow the path of the British Government of the 17th Century?

Talk to you, next week.

Chief Lady

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