

**BOWING WITH THE WIND WITH NPCD LEE**

It must have been a delight to many to learn, recently, that the Government of Chief Executive Tung Chee Wah is studying the possibility (which means, of course, the probability) of drafting new, or complementary, legislation to cover the prospects of somebody in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), perpetrating acts of subversion or secession.

But nobody would want to see the HKSAR try to opt out in an attempt to establish a new nation on the arsehole of the PRC.

It was in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century that there was a call in the Canton (now called, Guangzhou) Region of China for the establishment of a free and independent country, independent, that is, of the Peking (now Beijing) Capital City Government in an attempt to end the Ching Dynasty (now, the Qing Dynasty).

Since northern Chinese people have always maintained that southern China comprises, mainly, rebel elements, the proposed new HKSAR legislation will give northern China the teeth it needs to bite down hard on the rebels of Guangzhou and the HKSAR.

It is interesting to note, however, that a Deputy of the National People's Congress, Mr Allan Lee Peng Fei, is one of the lead parties, who is pushing the hardest to enact this new legislation.

National People's Congress Deputy (NPCD) Lee claims that the HKSAR Government has failed, under its mandate, to enact new laws to prohibit acts of treason, secession, sedition and subversion, in accordance with Article 23 of The Basic Law of the HKSAR.

It may be equally interesting to note that it was NPCD Lee who, in the late 1940s, fled to Hongkong in order to escape, what he called, the oppressive regime of the late Chairman Mao Tse Tung (now called Mao Ze Dong).

Since coming to the (former) colony of Hongkong, NPCD Lee has done very nicely, thank you very much, and now he can afford to wear silk shirts with gold cuff links – which is hardly in keeping with the ethic of the Communist Party of the PRC, to say the least.

Article 23 has very wide executive powers and, since the definitions of many terms in the PRC Government leaves a lot to be desired, the theft of State (HKSAR) secrets may mean, for instance, a reporter, talking secretly to an official of The Stock Exchange of Hongkong Ltd, and ascertaining the closing price of a red chip, prior to it being announced, officially, by The Stock Exchange reporting system, and, then, the reporter, publishing the information in his newspaper – without proper authority or reasonable excuse.

Investigative journalists need to be especially wary if they intend to practise their art in the HKSAR – particularly with the likes of NPCD Lee, lurking in the wings, waiting to pounce on them with his newly proposed, bristling piece of barbed legislation.

Foreign political parties, trying to conduct any kind of political meeting in the HKSAR, could, also, fall on rocky ground should NPCD Lee have his way.

This would be especially true if it were deemed that some of the things that the parties were expostulating could be construed, by NPCD Lee and his merry men, as being subversive – whether or not they were subversive.

As it is, the HKSAR is fast following the lead of the PRC Government, and is conducting its affairs along the lines of what is best for the PRC, rather than what is best for the HKSAR – which is, probably, in keeping with the thinking of NPCD Lee, in any event.

It should, also, be noted that NPCD Lee is no longer a Legislative Councillor since it appears that the ungrateful electorate of the HKSAR doesn't want him as a law-maker – which is, probably, all for the best.

NPCD Lee has been described as an outspoken gentleman with many ideas.

Lamentably, most of these ideas appear to be susceptible to sudden and unexplained change, as the spirit moves him – or when an ethereal spirit determines to move him, which, again, may be, just about, the same thing.

There is, however, one thing that nobody can deny about NPCD Lee: He is as straight and honest as any politician, with an empty portfolio, can be under the present circumstances.

On the one hand, it is noted that he works for the Beijing Government; and, on the other hand, he is a Minister without portfolio in the HKSAR Government.

When Mr John Bremridge (later, Sir John Bremridge) sat in the Legislative Council while holding down the position of Chairman of the Swire Group of Companies in Hongkong, he made no bones in saying, to anybody: 'I am the loyal opposition to the Hongkong Government.'

Later, he was elevated to the rank of Financial Secretary and was given, for services rendered to the Crown, a knighthood.

NPCD Lee can hardly claim to be the loyal opposition to the HKSAR Government, or the Beijing Government, for that matter, since, if anything, he is the epitome of the modern, loyal, sycophant extraordinaire.

Proof of this assertion was noted just last week when, in an apparent about-face, NPCD Lee suggested that it would not be a wise idea for the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress to try to re-interpret The Basic Law of the HKSAR with a view to making changes with regard to the perceived fear in the HKSAR that one million-odd PRC residents would seek to pull up PRC stakes in order to live in the HKSAR.

This followed the determination of the Court of Final Appeal which upheld a lower Court's Right-of-Abode ruling, a ruling which, in essence, left the door wide open for a second generation of PRC residents to have the right to live in the HKSAR.

NPCD Lee, rightly, suggested that, if the Standing Committee were given half a chance, it would make a political decision, with regard to The Basic Law of the HKSAR, on behalf of the PRC Government – which is the normal thing to do in the PRC if one wants to be a successful politician.

The about-face, to which TARGET is alluding, is that, first, NPCD Lee attacks the Government of the HKSAR for not drafting legislation to protect NPCD Lee's beloved country (the one from which he fled in the 1940s); and, then, he states that he prefers not to have one of his beloved country's highest political committees consider a re-interpretation of one article of The Basic Law ... after everybody in the HKSAR's highest court has made a valid and definitive interpretation of that article.

In order to protect the PRC, NPCD Lee would ask the HKSAR to draft draconian laws to control certain aspects of free speech in this society, but, at the same time, he would ask that there be no interference from the PRC in respect of the mini constitution of the HKSAR.

Ah, well! For some people, it appears that bowing with the wind of change comes very naturally.

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