

**PUBLISH OR PERISH ?
OR,
PUBLISH TO PLEASE ?**

Those erudite statements, purported to have emanated from the office of the Premier of the Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), statements, amounting to a veiled warning to the free Press of the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), *'Do Not Publish Support Of Taiwan's Independence Stance, or Else ...'*, are ominous, and are, without question, aimed at laying down the law with regard to what the PRC Government expects from its outposts -- especially from the relatively newly re-acquired HKSAR.

Premier Li Peng is purported to be furious over statements, uttered by the President of Taiwan, Mr Lee Teng Hui, who is determined to make it known, and felt, that Taiwan will only negotiate with the PRC Government, over any matter, on a State-to-State basis.

This means that President Lee Teng Hui wants it known, internationally, that Taiwan is a sovereign, independent state; and, it is not part of the PRC, and definitely, not a province of the PRC, as Premier Li Peng and every other member of the National People's Congress maintains.

That Taiwan is, and always has been, a territory of the PRC since 1662 is unquestionable.

Since the late Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek and 2 million of his supporters fled to Taiwan in 1949, just one step ahead of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), under the command of the late Comrade Chairman Mao Ze Dong, along with all the PRC *'goodies'* that he could *'take'* onto US Air Force C47 cargo aircraft and naval vessels, under his control, Taiwan has, always, tried to consider itself to be a sovereign state, separate from the PRC.

However, the Taipei Government and the Beijing Government both recognised the reality of the situation, years ago: Taiwan, Quemoy and Matsu are territories, belonging to the Government of the PRC.

The question since about the late 1960s: How could reunification of Taiwan and the PRC be effected, allowing both sides not to lose face?

The PRC Government has, strenuously, denied that the Government of Taiwan is a separate and sovereign state; and, it will never tolerate such a notion.

With the assistance of the US Government, Taiwan has prospered under the rule of the Nationalist Party, the ruling political party of Taiwan.

Martial Law was only lifted in 1991, following 38 years of despotic rule.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek termed this 38-year period as being a period of emergency rule.

He vowed, year after year, right up to his death, that he would return to the PRC as the victorious conqueror, at the head of his army of about 500,000 troops.

Meanwhile, on the Fujian Coast, the PLA had an army, waiting for the Generalissimo, numbering, at one time, more than 5 million troops.

While he was the chief despot of the island and of its 22 million human population, the Generalissimo was, also, very popular and widely revered, especially among the military.

Without the US Seventh Fleet and financial aid from the US, Taiwan, more than likely would have folded, decades ago.

The free Press of Taiwan would never think of publishing anything against the ruling political party, or any member in good standing in the party. And to mention the Generalissimo, except in the fondest and most reverent terms, could well bring disaster for any newspaper, or journalist, on the island.

The rule of law in Taiwan is equal to the law by rule in the PRC. So, the 2 entities, whatever political history may determine, have a great deal in common.

Officially, both the PRC and Taiwan are democracies, with the PRC, claiming to have a Constitution which is more democratic than the US Constitution, while Taiwan has, always, claimed to be democratic, but, due to the ever-present threat of invasion from the PLA, has had to forgo democracy in favour of a paternalistic autocracy.

If there is a major difference between Taiwan and the PRC, other than the populations of the 2 areas, of course, it is that the PRC executes more criminals, relatively speaking, than does the Taiwanese Government – which does not publish the number of its public executions as widely as does the PRC Government.

However, it was well known, when the Generalissimo was alive, that anybody found committing a crime within the immediate proximity of the Generalissimo, or his residence, when he was in residence, faced summary execution at the hands of very experienced army sharpshooters.

It used to be well known that justice, metered out to foreigners in Taiwan, was no justice at all – except if a senior member of the Taiwan Judiciary discovered an immediate increase in his Swiss bank account.

Only recently, the world was treated to an example of this type of justice, following a foreign mogul, being incarcerated in Taiwan for doing business in the manner of the past 4 decades.

Getting back to Premier Li Peng, however, there is a parallel to be drawn from his recent statements to the HKSAR free Press and what, just recently, happened in Russia.

Petersburg Television had its plug pulled by the official Press ‘*watchdog*’ of the Russian Federation, The Press Ministry.

It appears that Petersburg Television went so far as to mock liberal Russian politicians and, to top it off, it ridiculed President Boris Yeltsin.

This, in Russia today, is a real no-no.

It was reported that Press Minister Mikhail Lesin accused Petersburg Television of having thrown down ‘*the demonstrative gauntlet*’, following a direct warning from The Press Ministry that it did not approve of this muckraking programme.

Petersburg Television serves, roughly, the same population as the HKSAR, coincidentally.

This is the first time since the breakup of the old Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) that a major television station has been closed by the Russian Government.

Now that the die has been cast, it is unlikely that this will be the last occasion of a television station, or a newspaper, for that matter, to be shut down for any reason just so long as it is deemed, by the powers-that-be at a particular time, that it is not in the interests of the Russian Government and the Russian people to have a medium continue to propagate information which is not complimentary, or consistent with, Russian Government dogma.

One may be inclined to recall Pope Gregory IX and his Catholic Europe of the 13th Century when, to speak evil of the Church, was to write one’s own death warrant.

The Government of the PRC, with regard to Press freedoms, is not very different from the Government of the Russian Federation, with the lone exception that the PRC Government makes no bones about controlling the free Press, or at least, obliquely controlling it.

Taiwan, on the other hand, maintains that its media does enjoy freedom, and the Government does promote the concept of a free Press; and, it worships its free Press.

But, at the same time, the Taiwanese Press is loath to criticise the Government, outright, or, for that matter, a senior Taiwanese Government official -- unless with express permission, of course.

Trying to control the free Press is like mental masturbation.

But working the old machine by hand is far from being truly satisfying, in spite of the fact that, from time to time, there could be ejaculation of a close kind.

In many respects, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Government of the PRC, and the Government of Taiwan all have at least one thing in common: They are all children of the same corn -- young, immature corn which, to most Western civilisations, is tough to chew, insipid, and/or quite unpalatable.

If one dresses up a jester to look like a king, the jester will remain a jester; and, the courtiers of the reigning monarch, as well as all the subjects within the monarchy, will recognise the jester for that which he is: A living, walking joke.

Clothes do not make the man, but has anybody ever seen a successful naked man?

The immature governments of these 2 countries, and the one '*separate state*' -- Taiwan -- all seem to think that control of the free Press is vital ... and is possible.

Like children with a new, complicated electronic toy, a toy with a line of buttons, knobs and switches, these governments throw the switches, twiddle the knobs, push the buttons, and think that they are playing, correctly, with the new and complicated toy.

In reality, they are just fiddling with the controls, making little to no difference in the toy's functions, and, definitely, not activating the movements of the toy -- nothing more.

History has proved, over and over again, that governments cannot stop people from thinking for, as sure as little children are conceived in the womb, so are ideas born in the minds of people, people who reject the concept of man, not having the faculty to think, independently.

If a government wishes to have its population follow an edict, the people must want to follow that edict, not out of fear, but out of acceptance of the principles, underlying that edict.

But, if procreation among the homo sapiens of a territory is to be discouraged, then it is necessary that males must be separated from females.

Man's innate propensity to be free, like his powerful sexual urge, means that he will seek, always, to discharge his semen and sperm -- his aspirations, embodied in free thought -- into a fertile orifice of a female's vagina -- his community, and the collection of communities which make up his civilised society.

The Government of the Republic of India tried, years ago, under successive Administrations, to institute mandatory birth control, forcibly sterilising both males and females, willy nilly, on an assembly line basis.

In just about every little town, village, and hamlet in that country, a squad of sterilisation technicians stood by, unloading busloads and truckloads of unwilling males and females who, with a snip here and an injection there, found themselves, in a matter of minutes, sterile eunuchs of the State.

Nothing is more powerful in the makeup of man than his urge to procreate; and, to try to deprive him of that natural function is to court danger of a very close kind.

And there is nothing more powerful in man than his requirement to create – which means that he must think.

The alternative: A world of robots or half-wits.

-- **E N D** --