HONGKONG ADVENTIST HOSPITAL REVISITED : WHO IS BIASED ? WHO IS THE LIAR ? WHO IS THE SENSATIONALIST ?

TARGET has been accused by Hongkong Adventist Hospital of having a *'bias* (sic) *perspective of our institution* (meaning Hongkong Adventist Hospital)*, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.'*

The accuser is Mr Jeremy Low, Director of Marketing and Planning, Hongkong Adventist Hospital.

Mr Low responded to TARGET's report of Wednesday, November 24, 1999, Volume One, Number 144.

This TARGET report was based and compiled, completely, on published information, emanating from Hongkong Adventist Hospital and The Matilda Hospital (on The Peak).

TARGET noted, at the time of compiling the report, that Hongkong Adventist Hospital, an institution, which makes no bones about being religious, had adopted certain seemingly anomalous determinations with regard to its charges and advance payments.

TARGET deduced that staying at Hongkong Adventist Hospital was far more expensive than staying at any 5-star hotel in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Further, TARGET noted that in-house doctors' fees at Hongkong Adventist Hospital were based on the type of accommodation that a patient requested at the time of being admitted.

TARGET said, about this state of affairs: *'Clearly, it pays not to be a VIP, unless one is religiously inclined and wants to make a sizeable donation to one's favourite Church.'*

Further, TARGET was surprised to see that those patients without a valid Hongkong Identity Card were charged a much higher rate, in respect of deposits at the time of admission.

TARGET suspected that this was due to the Administration of Hongkong Adventist Hospital, being concerned that those patients without a valid Hongkong Identity Card might try to renege on paying the hospital's fees and those of the doctor's – which is not unreasonable.

However, it appeared to indicate to TARGET, also, that, perhaps, Seventh Day Adventists are just as suspicious as are heathens and sinners: Evil be to him who evil thinks.

TARGET concluded its November 24 Report by stating:

> *'All this puts a slightly different complexion and meaning on the word, "religion", doesn't it?*
>
> '*Should a hospital, devoted to the Healing Ministry of Christ, be more intent on showing a profit than in performing a service for mankind?*
>
> *'Should a religious hospital (such as Hongkong Adventist Hospital), a hospital with a strict mandate to heal those in need, one domiciled in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, determine that it must follow the modus operandi of health-care institutions, which are more inclined to look at the Bottom Line than consideration of their reason for bein*

'Would Christ have driven out the moneylenders in this temple of learning, too?'

On Tuesday, November 30, 1999, Mr Jeremy Low sent TARGET this communication, via e-mail:

> *To the Writer of Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, Don't Get Sick, For God's Sake:*
>
> *I am very disappointed at your bias perspective of our institution, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Due to your lack of wholistic understanding of private healthcare in Hong Kong and the church organization, you have selectively criticized our institution without clearly understanding our operation and mission of the Hospital and the Seventh-day Adventist Church Organization as a whole.*
>
> *Since the writer of this article did not identify him or herself, and also isolated the Hospital in the presentation, all these show the lack of integrity of TARGET. In fact, it was never the intent of the writer in that article to allow any debate but to damage our well-established reputation in the Hong Kong and China community.*

As the Public Relations and Marketing Director of the Hospital, I am opened for any dialogue or public debate on what you have written in your article and would be more than glad to establish proper viewpoints. Your transparency is solicited.

> *I am looking forward to your response to my challenge. If we do not hear any response, our assumption is that TARGET is another gazette of sensationalists and liars in which your intentions are never to the building a better responsible society but to encourage hatred among people who has read your article.*

(TARGET has not studded the copy with *'sics'* but has been faithful in reproducing Mr Low's communication without comment or corrections)

TARGET's Editor, Mr Raymonde Sacklyn, responded on December 2, 1999 – within 2 days of receipt of Mr Low's communication, in the following terms:

> *To: Mr Jeremy Low,*
> *Director of Marketing and Planning*
> *Hongkong Adventist Hospital*
>
> *Fm: Raymonde Sacklyn*
> *Editor*
> *TARGET Newspapers Ltd*
>
> *Date: December 2, 1999*
>
> *Subject:* ***Accepting The Challenge***
>
> *Dear Mr Low,*
>
> *I am in receipt of your communication of November 30, 1999 for which I am most grateful.*

In order to clarify TARGET's previous article, in which Hongkong Adventist Hospital was mentioned, we would appreciate having the answers to the following questions:

1. *Would you please inform TARGET as to the reputation which your hospital enjoys in 'the Hongkong and the China community'? (TARGET assumes that your use of your term, 'China community', means that Hongkong Adventist Hospital has a reputation in the People's Republic of China as well as in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China)*
2. *What is the philosophy of your hospital in respect of charges for your services?*

3. *For what reason does your hospital differentiate, with regards to fees, between patients in possession of a valid Hongkong Identity Card and those who are not in possession of a valid Hongkong Identity Card?*
4. *What is the basis for your charges?*
5. *Are your hospital charges less than, equal to, or greater than charges, which are made by other non-Governmental hospitals in Hongkong?*

6. *Has any member of your hospital staff ever been accused and found guilty of a criminal act in Hongkong? If so, may we have the details, please?*
7. *Please name the gazette/gazettes 'of sensationalists and liars' in Hongkong. (reference is made to the final paragraph of your communication with TARGET, which states, inter alia: 'If we do not hear any response, our assumption is that TARGET is another gazette of sensationalists and liars …'.*

I look forward to receiving your replies to the above 7 questions in order to expand and to explain more fully of the work of your institution.

Since TARGET has accepted your challenge and has responded within three days of receipt of your communication, may we request the same courtesy?
In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to thank you for the time that you have taken in reading and studying TARGET's report, which relates in part to your hospital. We hope that it was instructive and helpful.

Raymonde Sacklyn
Editor

After an interval of 6 days, Mr Jeremy Low sent TARGET this reply:

Dear Mr Sacklyn:

After reading through your letter and newsletter again, I am still puzzled why you have selected to criticize the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Hong Kong Adventist Hospital. The Hospital is a small 110 bed and has been operating for the last 28.5 years, and Seventh-day Adventistism has been existing for the more than 130 years, a relatively small body as you have pointed out. There are many other religious private healthcare providers or religion in Hong Kong you could have chosen to criticize, but you did not.

Before I provide privilege information to your questions, could you please be honest with me? The following are some of my questions:

1. *What is(are) your ulterior motive(s) in writing that article? Did you write that article?*

2. *Why have you chosen to compare us to Matilda Hospital? Why didn't you compare us with Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital, Canossa Hospital, Baptist Hospital, Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital, Precious Blood Hospital, St. Teresa Hospital or St. Paul Hospital?*

3. *What is your understanding or knowledge of private healthcare in Hong Kong? Are you aware of the differences between the hospitality and healthcare provider industry or even among private hospitals?*

4. *Do you know much about the Hong Kong private hospital charging system? Are you aware that hospitals cannot control of doctors' fees in Hong Kong?*

5. *Could you explain your understanding or application of the concept of the healing ministry of Jesus? Are you a Christian? Do you belong to any religious organization?*

I need to know the answers to the above questions. Thank you for your patience.

Jeremy Low

(TARGET has made no corrections to the original because, otherwise, TARGET would have more *'sics'* than readable copy)

It is said that one way to avoid answering a question, or a number of questions, is to ask more questions – as Mr Low has demonstrated.

TARGET felt obliged to respond to Hongkong Adventist Hospital in order that subscribers do not jump to the wrong conclusions as to TARGET's motives, which have already been explained.

Also, TARGET maintains that it shall not sacrifice an ideal for a personality – even Mr Jeremy Low's personality.

But TARGET repeats: *'Don't get sick, for God's sake!'*

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