

Chinese Voice 10 September 1997 issue

Contributed by Lachlan
Sunday, 22 July 2007

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- Editorial - Win, Lose and Di
- Oriental Arts Society 20
- Population Conference in November

EDITORIAL

WIN, LOSE AND DI

Steven Young

Saturday's Dominion featured a headline to the effect that our Treasurer Winston Peters had demanded an apology from our Ministry of Foreign Affairs for daring to reveal that he was again going to Hong Kong, to hobnob with Commonwealth finance ministers, and onto Beijing and Shanghai, and - sorry - out of the country, in the month of his sure-to-be-defeated referendum on compulsory superannuation. This demand is another unbelievable antic from a politician whom Chinese New Zealanders will never again trust after he shafted them for a short-term political gain during the last election by playing the race card in Howick. And not only Chinese New Zealanders. Following the litany of gratuitous insults from the NZ First party to New Zealanders in general, ranging from Tuku "Underpant\$" Morgan, to Robyn "Paris" McDonald to Tau "Welcome Alemein" Henare to Neil "Odometer" Kirton to Deborah "Condom" Morris, this referendum will have little to do with compulsory superannuation and everything to do with the credibility of Winston "Winebox" Peters and his party. (Need another three in the Cabinet?) Add the contributions of Michael "Svengali" Laws and Jenny Bloxham mysteriously resigning from the vice presidency, and the temptation to strike a blow against the political stranglehold of NZ First is almost irresistible. Asians in particular, already provident in their lives, will welcome the opportunity to hammer home one more nail into the political coffin of their worst enemy. The referendum will be lost, not on the merits of the arguments, but on the merits of its chief proponent. The serious question of superannuation will be deferred for another year or two until there is another, and more sensible, political realignment. Meanwhile current immigration policy, (and its negative effects on the economy), foreign investment policy and economic policy in general will languish until the Coalition Government learns how to cope with its internal ructions. Overseas, more focussed and disciplined governments continue to make vast economic strides each year. Who can blame new arrivals for wondering (in English) whether they have made a wise choice of destination?

It is a measure of the total command that Diana Princess of Wales exerted on the news media for 16 years that even an 85 year old Chinese woman, who arrived in NZ 45 years ago but still speaks no English, felt compelled to watch the TV coverage of the funeral alone until after 11.00pm last Saturday and understood nearly everything important: No, she didn't recognise any of the greats at the Abbey but she was looking out for "the other woman"; she thought Diana was beautiful and lively and thought Charles a fool for making his choice. She thought the Queen looked stiff and grim and mistook little Harry for Wills. Was there any more to understand?

Oriental Arts Society 20

Steven Young

The Oriental Arts Society of Wellington celebrates its 20th anniversary this month. Started in 1978 to study, appreciate and practise traditional Chinese art forms the group has been led from inception by Ping Ching Mabbett its founding teacher who has exhibited in NZ and overseas. Today, tutors include Master Jim Ko, Stan Chan, Helen Ngan and Joe Zhou.

In Chinese art, traditional subjects include bamboo, the peony flower, carp, landscapes and waterscapes. "The essence of Chinese traditional art is the simplicity of its forms and styles", explains a tutor. "But," the tutor continues, "The apparent simplicity is deceptive and belies the need for control of the medium which is only achieved by practice; for even if your hand stops, the flow of ink from your brush pen does not!" Calligraphy (writing) is an essential part of traditional Chinese art, and members study and practise to try to achieve the perfect balance of form, weight and fluidity of the strokes which, it is believed, requires clarity of thought and strength of character. Because of this, Chinese believe that painting and calligraphy express the inner qualities of the

artist, and conversely training in art and calligraphy is a form of moral exercise for every scholar.

Twentieth Anniversary Art Exhibition Opening Pansy Wong MP 5th, Season 6-12 October 1997. Shop 51, Queen's Wharf, President: Dollaine Young 388-3726.

Population Conference in November

Steven Young

A Population Conference will be held in November, to help determine a population policy for New Zealand, although there is little publicity to date. About one third of the Conference will deal with immigration (because the Conference arose out of the immigration debate during the election/coalition negotiations). Pansy Wong is to chair the ethnic section. Public submissions will be possible but there is a fee of \$750. Going.....?