

It ain't just a show
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It's ten o'clock now. But the Halloween craze down in Ocean Park is still yet to end. While people find thrills in passing through the scary tunnels packed with surprises prepared by ghosts and vampires, we got a much bigger surprise here presented by the global economic turmoil this month. This means more layoffs by ailing companies, shrinking purchasing power among consumers in the markets, rise of dissatisfaction --- which the whole picture casts a dire future for our HK government to deal with.

Perhaps that's why our Chief Executive Donald Tsang today announced an unconditional raise on the old age allowance --- to stop further polarisation between the ruling authority and 60% of the ruled. Sarcastically, it was only when Tsang was about to have his fruits served after lunch then he suddenly realised the acuteness of the problems faced by the elderly and came into an applauded conclusion of "let's put the "Fruits' Money" up to a thousand to whoever reached 65". Bravo! Our opinions have finally been listened instead of been heard.

This reminds me of the experience after the participation of the joint-school Policy Address consultation at the near end September. Script's been prepared for the 6-min presentation on the assigned topic of social livelihood. Rehearse intensively so as not to drop lines. Constant improvements on how to make the character (Paul as old man heading to hospital, me as norm teen) sounds real. But above all it was the part thinking suggestions which require originality dreads me most - equally true is that I got a chance to practise creative thinking and critical insights which could in future apply to many fields of study. What's more, hard works will eventually pay off. It may not be an immediate response, neither will it be in face-to-face.

But if the person you are talking to is a political celebrity like Chief Executive Donald Tsang, all as a student could ask for would be nothing less than watching the news and speeches delivered by him, just to see if he's really listening to the "deeps" of our meticulously planned drama which was required to congregate issues concerning to an yet increasing 7 million citizens' livelihood within six minutes.

Yet after seeing today's night news round-up highlighting the raise in old age allowance, I could somehow feel that even a small voice would have been heard way across to such a high position of the Executive.

Here a boiled elderly issue has been temporarily solved. Let's hope that our Chief Executive would have enough empathy (and perhaps later comes up with a more logical sense of connection between fruits and old age allowance) for the victims -to-be in the coming economic crisis.

P.S. We later got invited to be allowed into the Legislative Council later in mid-October for the listening of the Executive's Policy Address. An unexpected surprise!

首先，我想藉此向校長與負責是次活動的老師們致以深深的謝意。倘若沒有其指導與驚人的耐性，我想那場長達六分鐘的街頭劇不會贏得曾特首的領首微笑，甚或末後熱烈的掌聲。

事緣於政府與東區聯校合辦的施政報告諮詢會，而對象竟然是中學生，也就是我們。而我校則抽中負責民生方面的議題，最後則由學生決定主要探討悲情城市天水圍以及長者邊緣化的社會問題，而表達的方法則由本來的「視像對話」改為以帶出創意性建議的街頭劇——問題不需要重申，報紙新聞自會天天照顧；建議必須新穎，否則與時事評論相若將老調重彈，失去了青年人一種「敢為」的火焰式的性格。

當演出圓滿結束的時候，故事原來還未曾翻到末頁，下文陸續有來：先是政府辦事處邀請學生至立法會聽曾特首的施政報告；然後在曾特首入席站著準備宣讀報告時梁國雄議員首發難問其知否一隻香蕉和一顆蛋現時在市場的價錢最後被勒令離場；接下來在曾特首「提升生果金至一千塊政府十分認同此水準」語音未畢黃毓民議員隨即跳起來喝道「到底肯不肯加生果金」而激動到擲蕉最後終於被拖走離場；終於在曾特首重申「危中有機」、「穩中求勝」、「小政府大市場」以及「成立專門小組」等政綱內容後幽默地添一句「今年立法會除了有新的面孔……還有些刺激的面孔」惹來一陣訕笑；截至今天，曾特首在午時與議員們敘餐爾後生果即將送上則妙生一念來個「無條件提升一千元生果金」，贏得滿座掌聲，云云。

今天，我很高興，因為政府始終是有在聆聽市民的意見而願意「無條件」地回饋社會資產予眾長者，尤其對獨居長者而言更是一種福音。(難道生果金的原意並不是扶老——而是基本收入的額外資助？什麼，基本收入？)

然而，猛回頭，我又不得不陷入惆悵，因為誰也不能夠保證，曾特首在敘餐時的「一時興起」，隨之而來的政策修改，這餐後助消化的生果呀，與那的**而且確**關係著長者一個月生計的生果金呀，這中間的邏輯性聯想，我想，即使是資深時事評論人，也會愣那麼一幾秒，然後搔一搔頭，艱難地嘗試解釋其中的奧妙。

奧妙。

這麼想吧，畢竟香港前景依然燦爛光明，經濟嘛就尚待復甦，我們的政府嘛，也就開始勤務到連飯後送至跟前的甜點水果也無暇——腦子裡無一刻是不想著如何使民望……不，是如何改善民生呀，兼顧民意呀，從而使民望……不，是社會走向更進步、健康，以及文明的未來。