



## BUCKINGHAM PALACE

30<sup>th</sup> March 2020

*Dear Curie,*

During these difficult and unprecedented times, I think we have all had time to reflect on both our personal and professional lives. In my case, I think it is fair to say that it has made me look at what and who is truly important; it was these thoughts that prompted me to write to you. There is no urgency or action points related to this letter so please read it at your leisure and accept it as a personal note from me to you - I am sorry it is so long (very British)!

It was Wednesday 23rd October last year when you and I first made contact after an introduction from TD. The amusing thing is that you didn't reply for nearly 11 hours and in your response, you apologised for the tardiness of your reply. Little did I realise that this would be the one and only time to date that you were late! It was one day later that I met you and Andrew at the Corinthia Hotel for the first time. Immediately, I learned of a whole new level of obsessive confidentiality and a slightly different way of communicating. To be honest, as you may be aware, I have had a couple of dealings with businesses in China and quite frankly, they were not good experiences - it is also the main reason that I do not have a Chinese member in my golf club. Therefore, I have to say that I was both suspicious and reticent to get involved but felt duty-bound through my total loyalty to TD. Who could have ever expected that we would be in contact either directly or indirectly on an almost daily basis for what is now just over five months?

So much has changed since that afternoon tea at the Corinthia. We have dealt with the aftermath of a hugely ill-advised and unsuccessful television interview; we have wisely navigated our way around former Private Secretaries and we have found a way to carefully remove those people who we don't completely trust. Moreover, in what originally seemed like a lost cause, you have somehow managed to not only salvage but maintain and then incredibly, enhance the reputation of my principal in China. Under your guidance, we found a way to get the relevant people unnoticed in and out of the house in Windsor; we orchestrated a very powerful verbal message of support to China at a Chinese New Year's dinner and between the three of us, we have written, amended and then always agreed a number of letters at the highest level possible.

As two very different cultures come together, I have to say that I have learned an extraordinary amount. I have always lived by punctuality and am often frustrated by the tardiness of so many people I meet, irrelevant of who or what they are. You bring a completely new level to timekeeping - I aim to be at every meeting at least 15 minutes before it starts and without exception, you are already there! Communication is much more precise and clearly to the point; it is not generally how we do it but I think we can learn a lot from this directness. Of course, this can't be the case with communication from my principals but I think Andrew and I completely understand each other now which makes any correspondence much easier to compose now.

After this short amount of time, I feel an unusual bond of friendship, trust, support and loyalty. If you think about the huge number of messages that we have passed between presidents, ambassadors, different royal families and very senior business people, we have always found the optimal solution without dispute and always cognisant of our different cultures. I do think that this is an extraordinary achievement and further emphasises the depth of understanding and respect we have between us.



I also hope that it is clear to you where you sit with my principal and indeed his family. You should never underestimate the strength of that relationship. Without overstatement, I think it is fair to say that I know him better and talk to him more than anyone else at the moment so please be assured that outside of his closest internal confidants, you sit at the very top of a tree that many, many people would like to be on. Over the last few months, I have (possibly been partially responsible for) and watched numerous people disappear from his network either because they are simply not true to their word or they are 'red carpet chasers'. I could list several high-profile and well-known names who are no longer around us and there are a very small number left - you remain as one of those and you continue to show total support and loyalty. I also hope you fully understand what your invitation to his birthday party meant; this was not an engagement or an exclusive dinner. This was strictly his and his family's personal life that very, very few people have the privilege to ever be part of. Moreover, remember that you were originally invited to their house and therefore on the much smaller original guest list. Despite press reports to the contrary, I know for a fact that there were very few people who were not able to make it.

It would also be amiss for me to not mention Andrew in this letter. I think he has been the conduit to my better understanding of the Chinese way of doing things and equally, through me, he has been a conduit for you to better understand how our royal family operates. I don't think there is any doubt that Andrew and I have built a very close and trusted relationship and we both completely understand each other - far be it for me to say, but I think we work incredibly well together. (In fact, I called Andrew on Friday last week because we hadn't spoken on Thursday and I wondered whether everything was ok; I think this was the first day, including weekends, that we hadn't spoken since January.) He is an absolute credit to you and your company; in addition, he represents you exceptionally well in front of my principal and his family.

I also know and hugely appreciate the ongoing efforts of those others I have met in your organisation, either in person or over the telephone, like Jia and Jerry, who are equally important as to why we are in this strong position together. Although I have never met or spoken to Jean, I know how crucial she was in the early days of forging your relationship with my principal and I have no doubt that her input today continues to be crucial to our success.

Sadly, we are currently encountering some difficult and prohibitive times but there is no doubt that despite everything going on around us, we have formed a solid and unbreakable base with all the respective parts in place for an extremely powerful (perhaps unparalleled) entity at the highest level possible. This stands us in great stead moving forward. I hope you agree that this would simply have not been possible without the depth of trust, friendship, loyalty and support that we have all built up with each other over these last few months.

Keep safe my friend and I look forward to further enhancing our and our countries already deep and formidable friendship.

*with warmest personal regards,*

*Dominic.*

**Dominic Hampshire**  
Senior Adviser to HRH The Duke of York