



中英社評

「退保」壓「長津」  
反對派何不食肉糜？

Modern version of  
"why not eat meat congee?"



▲行政長官梁振英表示，長者生活津貼為持續性扶貧措施

立法會財委會再一次令全港四十萬清貧老人失望！在經歷四個多小時的冗長發言後，到了晚上十一時會議原定休會時間，反對派議員堅持發言仍未完畢，結果，政府提交的「長者生活津貼」撥款申請繼上周五之後再一次未能付諸表決，要押後到十月九日再議，而即使屆時能通過，津貼的追溯期也會因此少了一個月。

有關「長者生活津貼」整件事態的發展，令人沮喪、更令人憤慨。特首梁振英自參選之日起，已一再強調要關顧弱勢社群、改善老人福利、生果金加倍。而反對派的阻撓完全無理。他們貌似公義，口口聲聲指責政府漠視貧窮問題、拒設「全民退休保障」，但立論卻似是而非、指鹿為馬，根本沒有觸及到問題的實質：二千二百元長者生活津貼到底是不是有必要、是不是「活命錢」？為什麼不予表決通過？包括昨晚在財委會上，黃毓民聲嘶力竭、青筋暴現的指罵勞工及福利局局長張建宗背棄老人、對不住老人，但眼前阻撓清貧老人每月領取二千二百元生活津貼的又是誰？是張建宗還是黃毓民？

反對派阻撓「長者生活津貼」的謬論之一，是政府為何不先推「全民退保」？這完全是強詞奪理的兩回事。「長者生活津貼」顧名思義，講的是長者、是老人，他們當然也是社會一分子，老人貧窮也是整體貧窮問題以及退休保障問題的一部分，但前者是局部、是急需，後者是全局、是長遠，反對派能夠否定眼前大批清貧長者要靠一千零九十元「生果金」當飯吃，要日日上街執紙皮、吃爛生果的事實麼？

「全民退休保障」目前連個影兒都還沒有，要社會形成共識，是不是由僱員、僱主、政府三方供款？要爭拗出一個結果，少則三五年、多則十年八載，絕非誇張，而眼前執紙皮、翻垃圾桶的老人不少已七老八十、風燭殘年，他們還要等到哪年哪月才可以盼到那三千元的「全民退保」？堅持此議的「公民黨」梁家傑，是不是「何不食肉糜」的晉惠帝？

古語有云：「勿以善小而不為，勿以惡小而為之」，眼前能夠讓四十萬清貧長者寬鬆一點、舒緩一下，手邊有個「閒錢」，又有什麼不應該？又有什麼不可以？負責推行這項政策的局長為什麼要在立會被黃毓民等人罵得狗血淋頭？議事堂內還有公義沒有？

毫無疑問，現行老人福利，以至整體扶貧政策和措施，並不完善；就如「長者生活津貼」夾在「生果金」和「長者綜援」之間，多少也有「架床疊屋」之嫌，而且行政費用也不在少數。長遠而言，政府必須要從整體經濟發展、政府財政收支和社會資源整合上制訂一套比較完整的社會福利政策，包括訂立「貧窮線」，確保生活在最底層、最有需要的弱勢社群得免於饑餓之虞。而「全民退休保障」儘管不易推行，這一屆政府也有必要逐步開展一些諮詢、醞釀等前期工作，未來醫療融資改革中推行的「全民醫保」應可提供一些經驗。

本港是一個公平、法治、自由、富裕的社會，眾多社會問題需要政府與民衆兩方面共同關心、攜手解決，而其中一個大前提是社會必須保持和諧、穩定。儘管眼前「長者生活津貼」的推行又碰到一波三折，梁振英政府也要堅定信心、福為民開，市民和長者會支持你們的。

31/10/2012 大公社評

The Legislative Council (Legco) Finance Committee has once again *let down* the 400,000 needy elderly people in Hong Kong!

When its meeting was about to be adjourned as scheduled at 11.00pm last night – after a long debate session of over four hours, opposition lawmakers insisted that the debate was not over. As a result, following last Friday, the meeting once again ended without a vote on the government's funding application for the Old Age Living Allowance (OALA). The next debate will be held no earlier than 9 November. Even when the funding is approved in the next meeting, the back-dating lump sum payment will have one month's less.

What is happening to the OALA scheme is not only frustrating but also outrageous. From the day when he began his election campaign, Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying has repeatedly stressed on caring for disadvantaged groups and improving welfare for the elderly by doubling the old age allowance. The opposition's obstruction is completely unreasonable. They appear as if they were righteous, blaming the government for ignoring the problem of poverty and refusing to introduce a universal pension system. While sounding as if right, their argument is in fact wrong, trying to *talk black into white*. It fails to get to the essence of the matter: Is the \$2,200 monthly allowance needed by the elderly as their "survival money"? Why not vote to pass the funding? At the Finance Committee meeting last night, Raymond Wong Yuk Man shouted hoarsely at the top of his voice, with blue veins standing out on his temples, accusing Secretary for Labour and Welfare Matthew Cheung Kin-chung of abandoning the needy elderly and *doing them a disservice*. But who on earth has obstructed the dispatch of the \$2,200 monthly allowance to the needy elderly? Matthew Cheung or Raymond Wong?

A fallacy used by the opposition to block the funding for OALA is: Why doesn't the government introduce a universal retirement protection system first? This is perverted logic to lump together two different things. By its name, OALA focuses on the elderly people, who are surely members of our society. Elderly poverty problem is also part of the overall poverty and retirement protection problem. But the former is just a part of the whole that needs to be dealt with urgently, while the latter as a whole needs a long-term solution. Can the opposition deny the fact that a great number of needy elderly people rely their living on the \$1,090 Old Age Allowance and have to pick up cardboards on streets and eat rotten fruit?

As for universal retirement protection, nothing has been done so far. Consensus should be formed in society on the funding. Should all three parties, employees, employers and the government make their due contributions? It is not an exaggeration to say that it will take three to five years at the minimum and eight to 10 years at the maximum to reach a consensus on this. But many of the elderly people now collecting cardboards and picking up damped food from garbage cans on streets are in their 70s or 80s, old and ailing like a candle guttering in the wind. How many years can they wait before receiving the \$3,000 universal pension? Isn't Alan Leong Kah-kit of the Civic Party who has maintained the fallacious argument just like Emperor Hui of Jin Dynasty. who asked: *"Why (starving people) not eat meat congee?"*

An ancient saying has it that "Never think any virtue trivial and so neglect it; never think any vice trivia and so practise it." How come the 400,000 needy elderly people should not be given a little bit more money right away, so they could live a little bit better off? What is wrong with this? Why should the secretary responsible for carrying out this policy have been bitterly cursed by Raymond Wong and his ilk? Is there still any justice in the Legco chamber?

No doubt, the existing welfare for the elderly and the overall poverty alleviation policies and measures are not perfect. Even the OALA is something in between the Old Age Allowance and Comprehensive Social

Security Assistance (CSSA) for the elderly, so there are arguably some overlaps and it also needs considerable administration fees. In the long run, the government must work out a set of more complete social welfare policies based on over economic development, the balance of government's fiscal income and expenditure and integration of social resources, including drawing a poverty line so as to *see to it that* the neediest disadvantaged groups living at the very bottom of society won't suffer from starvation. Although it may not be so easy to introduce universal retirement protection, the current administration should gradually start some preliminary works such as consultations and preparations. The "universal health care" to be introduced in the upcoming reform of medical care financing should be able to offer some experience in this regard.

Hong Kong is a just, free and wealthy society with the rule of law. Many social problems should be jointly concerned and solved by the government and public. A precondition for this is that social harmony and stability must be maintained. Although the OALA scheme has suffered a series of frustrations right now, the Leung administration must strengthen its resolve to seek happiness for the people. Citizens and the elderly will support you.

31 October 2012

Words and Usage

- Let sb down* (phrasal verb) – *To disappoint someone by failing to do what you agreed to do or were expected to do.* (使某人失望)
- Examples: 1.It's important our decision doesn't let down our customers.*  
*2.You will be there tomorrow – you won't let me down, will you?*
- Talk black into white* (proverb) – 英文習語中有不少與中文成語的意思不謀而合。  
*Talk black into white* (以白代白)就是「混淆黑白」、「指鹿為馬」。類似的說法還有：*Call the black white and white black*。
- Do sb/sth a disservice* (idiom) – *To do something that gives other people a bad opinion of someone or something.* (幫倒忙，傷害)
- Examples: 1.University rankings do a disservice to students.*  
*2.The fans have done the game a great disservice.*
- Why not eat meat congee?* – 「何不食肉糜」，出自《晉書·惠帝紀》：帝嘗在華林園，聞蝦蟆聲，謂左右曰：「此鳴者為官乎，私乎？」或對曰：「在官地為官，在私地為私。」及天下荒亂，百姓餓死，帝曰：「何不食肉糜？」其蒙蔽皆此類也。
- See to it* (that) (idiom) – *Be careful or certain to do something; make certain of something.* (確保)
- Examples: 1.We must see to it that all people are equal before the law.*  
*2. I should have seen to it that she was told.*

時事點睛

何不食肉糜

這段典故出自《晉書·惠帝紀》。晉惠帝司馬衷（259年生，306年逝於長安），是晉武帝司馬炎的次子，西晉的第二位皇帝。在其統治期間發生了八王之亂，西晉走向滅亡。

原文：帝嘗在華林園，聞蝦蟆聲，謂左右曰：「此鳴者為官乎，私乎？」或對曰：「在官地為官，在私地為私。」及天下荒亂，百姓餓死，帝曰：「何不食肉糜？」其蒙蔽皆此類也。

譯文：司馬衷曾經在華林園裡遊玩，聽到蛤蟆咕呱咕呱的叫聲，就對待從們說：「這叫喚的東西是官家的還是私人的？」侍從們說：「這叫喚的東西在官家地就是官家的，在私人地就是私人的。」到了天下災荒的年歲，百姓餓死，司馬衷竟然問「他們為什麼不吃肉粥呢？」他的昏聩痴頑都是這種樣子的。

勿以善小而不為

出自《三國志·蜀志傳》。三國時

古為今用

期劉備去世前給其子劉禪的遺詔中說：「勿以惡小而為之，勿以善小而不為。惟賢惟德，能服於人。」目的是勸勉他要進德修業，有所作為。不要認為壞事很小就去做，不要認為好事很小就不去做。這句話講的是做人的道理，惡，即使是小惡也不能去做，從小事開始防範，否則積少成多，也會壞了大事。善，即使是小善也必須要做，從小事做起，積小成大，也可成大事。

指鹿為馬

出自《史記·秦始皇本紀》。相傳趙高試圖要謀朝篡位，為了試驗朝廷中有哪些大臣順從他的意願，特地呈上一隻鹿給秦二世，並說這是馬。秦二世不信，趙高便藉故問各位大臣。不敢逆趙高意的大臣都說是馬，而敢於反對趙高的人則說是鹿。後來說是鹿的大臣都被趙高用各種手段害死了。指鹿為馬的故事流傳至今，人們一般用指鹿為馬形容一個人是非不分，顛倒黑白。



▲老伯為省錢，平時買十元飯盒

| 香港老人福利 |        |                      |
|--------|--------|----------------------|
| 老人福利   | 年 齡    | 內 容                  |
| 長者咭計劃  | 65歲或以上 | 優惠票價、折扣和優先服務         |
| 普通高齡津貼 | 65至69歲 | 收入及資產沒超規定限額，每月1000元  |
| 高齡高齡津貼 | 70歲或以上 | 每月1000元              |
| 長者生活津貼 | 70歲以上  | 每月2200元，經入息及資產申報才能申領 |
| 長者綜援   | 65歲或以上 | 需資產申報，金額不等，一般每月2555元 |

行政立法合作裨益香港

有議員和政黨與政府對退休保障的理念和準則不同，但目標一致，都是希望改善長者生活，向他們提供更好的財政支援，持不同意見的議員應求同存異，以務實態度，和以長者的福祉為依歸，通過建議，讓有需要長者及早受惠。期望長者生活津貼能在11月16日的財委會內即時通過。

行政長官梁振英

勞工及福利局局長張建宗

時人名句

香港面前有三個主要的民生問題，房屋、貧窮和老年社會。市民大眾都熱切期望政府能夠做實事。在過去四個月，新政府已推出多項措施，包括在7月16日宣布推動長者生活津貼等五項政策措施，和其後一系列的短、中期措施，應對社會積存已久的房屋問題，以及優化「鼓勵就業交通津貼計劃」。當中不少措施都需要立法會的支持才能推行，說明行政立法的合作是十分重要的。

時事英語

美國總統 非一人一票選出

第57屆美國總統選舉將於今天舉行。美國法律規定選舉年的11月首個星期一的翌日（the Tuesday after the first Monday in November）為選舉日。

美國憲法規定總統的任期為四年（He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years）。所以，從1792年起，凡可被四整除的年份即為總統選舉年。「每四年（一次）」英文可以說「every four years」，但也可用一個副詞quadrennially來表示。更常見的這類副詞有weekly、monthly、annually或hourly等，用它們來代替「every week」、「every month」等，可使文字更簡練。

美國現行憲法規定每位總統只能競選連任一次，即最多只能擔任兩屆，由美國開國元勳華盛頓（George Washington）立下。歷史上，也只有羅斯福（Franklin D. Roosevelt）曾四次當選總統（1933年就任，至1945年死於任上），當時美國正處於非常時期：經歷「經濟大蕭條」（Great Depression）和參加第二次世界大戰（World War II）。

美國總統大選是間接選舉。選民投票選出代表他們的選舉人（electors），再由這些選舉人組成的選舉人團（the Electoral College）去選出總統。每個州的「選舉人」數目等於該州在聯邦國會的參議員（Senator）和眾議員（Representative）人數之和。現時選舉人團總數為538（相當於100名參議員、435名眾議員加上哥倫比亞特區額外的3票），候選人須得到最少270張選舉人票才可當選。

理論上，每位選舉人應該將他的票投給他承諾支援的候選人，但實際上並非如此。因為除緬因州（Maine）和內布拉斯加州（Nebraska）以外，其他各州都採用「勝者全取」（winner-take-all）的制度，即把本州的選舉人票全部給予在該州獲得過半數普選票的總統候選人，而非按普選票得票比例分配選舉人票。選舉人在投票時也有可能違反承諾反向投票，成為所謂的「失信選舉人」（Faithless elector）。據統計，歷史上共出現過156位「失信選舉人」。

美國的總統選舉制度表明，並非「一人一票、直接選舉」才是民主。亦 然