

做一個好總統

How To Be a Good President



50
YEARS
From 1962
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易象乾教授口述·編輯部整理
Spoken by Dr. Ron Epstein
Compiled by Editor Staff

©1988年上人與老布希總統握手於三藩市中國城
In 1988, the Venerable Master shakes hands with
President Bush in San Francisco's Chinatown.

Wherever he was, with whomever he was dealing, in every waking moment, the Venerable Master was always trying to help people to understand themselves and to get on the right Path. It didn't have to be explicitly labeled Buddhism. For example, he did a lot of teaching of realtors while the Buddhist Association was looking for property. He was never just looking for property for temples, he was also trying to open up the minds and nourish the good qualities of the realtors with whom he was dealing. Although there were a lot of nice realtors, there were also a number of questionable ones. Sometimes he would really spin them around, just like in the traditional the gong an (公案) stories. They wouldn't know whether they were coming or going.

Another example was his teaching of politicians. People would introduce to the Venerable Master politicians who ranged on the political spectrum all the way from the far right to the far left. Some of the politicians had enough good roots so that they were fascinated by him and attracted to him. It was interesting to watch, because sometimes we'd get politicians who couldn't stand each other visiting the Venerable Master at the same time. They all had to behave themselves in the Master's presence.

Professor John Tsu, who was one of the highest ranking Chinese in President George H.W. Bush's presidential campaign and subsequent administration, had been introduced to the Venerable Master by Paul Cardinal Yubin. Professor Tsu had been Cardinal Yubin's secretary,

無論身在何處、與什麼人相處，上人都試圖幫助他們瞭解自己並走向正路，有時也不刻意標示這就是佛教。譬如在佛教總會尋找道場的時候，上人就曾經教化過很多房地產經紀人。上人從不曾只是為廟上找地，他還試圖讓和他打交道的房地產經紀人打開思維，並培養良好的品德。儘管有許多好的不動產經紀人，但也有很多有問題的人。上人與他們周旋，就好像你所讀過的公案一樣，他們還搞不清楚自己在幹什麼。

還有就是上人對政界人物的教化。這些人的政治理念從極左到極右的都有，有些有足夠善根的，就會被上人的風範所攝受。另外一個很有趣的事，就是有時一些意見相左的從政者，他們會同時來拜訪上人。在上人面前，他們都變得循規蹈矩。

祖炳民教授是老布希智囊團中排名最高的中國人，是于斌樞機主教介紹到上人這裏來的。他曾經是于樞機主教的秘書，後來曾擔任魯特格斯大學的歷史學教授以及美國教育部第九區教委委員。樞機主教把他介紹給上人，並告訴他應該幫助法界佛教大學。因此從那以後，他一直在努力幫忙。儘管

later had been a professor of history at Rutgers and then director of District 9 of the U.S. Department of Education. The Cardinal introduced him to the Master and told him that he should help with Dharma Realm Buddhist University. From that time on, he did just that. Although he was a devout Catholic, he became one of the chancellors of Dharma Realm Buddhist University.

Professor Tsu was very excited about introducing the Venerable Master to then Vice President George H. W. Bush. And so when the Vice-president was in San Francisco campaigning for president, there was a campaign march down Grant Avenue in Chinatown, with lots of local police and secret service protection. Professor Tsu took advantage of the opportunity and asked the Master to come down from Gold Mountain Monastery to the corner of Sacramento and Grant Streets. When President Bush, who was walking down Grant Street, approached the intersection, Professor Tsu asked him to walk over to meet the Master. That was the first time they met.

Later on that day, we went with the Venerable Master to the park in Chinatown, where they had set up a platform for President Bush to speak. A VIP area was fenced off, and there were lots of people standing outside of it, including a huge number of demonstrators. A number of us were allowed into the VIP area, and the Master was invited to sit on the platform with President and Mrs. Bush and important political figures from the Chinese community. They introduced the Master, but when he got up to speak, the organizers told him he was not scheduled to talk. The Master paid no attention whatsoever and went up to the microphone and spoke anyway. They tried to stop him, but President Bush said, "No, no, it's okay." I don't remember the exact words, but the gist of what the Venerable Master said, in Chinese, was this, "I just met President Bush, so I don't know whether he'd make a good president or not. But what I can tell you is that these are the qualities that would make a good president."

And then he went through the Six Great Principles of the City of the Ten Thousand Buddhas, one by one. As he went through these, the protestors who could understand Chinese started cheering, for obvious reasons. And then, one of the monks, who was translating for the Master that day, went up to the microphone to translate. Professor Tsu was embarrassed by what the Master had said and pushed the Dharma Master aside to translate himself, not what the Master had said, but what he thought the Master should have given as a standard campaign speech.

Even with the President of the United States, the Master didn't mince words. He would say whatever he felt was right. I think President H.W. Bush recognized that quality in him, liked him, and asked him for advice from time to time. He was the only Buddhist

他是一個虔誠的天主教徒，但他也是法界佛教大學的校長之一。

祖教授非常熱衷於將上人介紹給老喬治·布希。因此當老布希（當時還是副總統）到三藩市做總統競選活動時，在中國城的都板街有一個競選遊行，很多當地的警員和秘密保安人員也在裡面。祖教授特別把握這個機會，將上人請到唐人街和都板街的轉角來。當布希總統步行過都板街的十字路口時，祖教授請他走過去見見上人。這就是他們兩人第一次的見面。

當天稍晚，我們去了中國城的一個公園——花園角，那裏搭了個平臺以便布希總統講演，並特別用欄杆隔出一區貴賓席。很多人都站在那外面，包括龐大數量的示威者。我們一群人被批准進入貴賓席，上人則被邀請和總統、總統夫人，以及中國社區一些重要的華人政客坐在一起。他們把上人介紹給大家，正當上人準備要上台說話時，策劃人說時間表上沒有安排；可是上人也不在意，就逕自地走到麥克風前開始講演。他們想要阻止上人，但布希總統說：「不，沒關係的！」我不記得全部的內容，但我記得上人用中文講的重點是：「我剛剛才與布希總統見面，我不知道他是不是一個好總統；但是我可以告訴你們，怎麼才算是一個好總統。」

然後，上人就一條一條地講述了萬佛城的六大宗旨。當上人講述這些的時候，有些懂得中文的示威者就刻意地公然歡呼起來。之後為上人做翻譯的比丘法師，就走到麥克風前準備翻譯。祖教授對上人的演講感到非常尷尬，於是他把那位法師拉到一旁，自己站上去翻譯。可是翻的不是上人講的，而是他認為一般在競選活動時應該要講的話。

即使是和總統在一起，上人也不講彎曲附和的話，他只講自己認為正確的東西。我覺得老布希總統認識到了上人的特質，所以非常喜歡上人。從那以後，他就經常找上人諮詢一些事情。上人是唯一一位被邀請與其他達官顯貴坐在一起參加總統就職典禮的佛教代表，以及之後在國家大教堂舉行的祈福禮拜。在西方的佛教史上，這還是第一次。

正如之前提到的，除了政治人物，上人也教化房地產經紀人。無庸置疑，房地產經紀人有時會想

who was invited to sit with the important dignitaries at President Bush's inauguration ceremony. And he was the only Buddhist invited to the prayer service at the National Cathedral the morning after the inauguration. This was a first for Buddhism in the West.

As I already mentioned, in addition to politicians, the Venerable Master taught realtors agents as well. Of course, real estate agents are sometimes obsessed with their commissions and want to sell properties very fast. The Master would get them to be aware their attachments about their commissions by suggesting that they take less than what they were entitled to. It would look as if we were going to buy a property, then we weren't buying it, then we were buying it, then we weren't buying it. This would go on so often that actually, when we found the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas property, I was so cynical about the whole process that I had written it all off as the Venerable Master's mission to bring the Dharma to realtors. I simply did not believe that we were going to buy the property. The Venerable Master finally had to insist that I go with him to take a look at the property before I actually believed that we were going to buy it.

In those days, the Venerable Master had people looking for property that would be good sites for monasteries all the time. Some monks and laymen took a look at the place and then told the Venerable Master about it. He thought we should buy it. At that time, the Buddhist Association had very little money, and the property was so large, compared to the little building housing Gold Mountain Monastery on 15th Street, that he really had to talk everybody into it, which he did of course. But it was very difficult in the early years to make the payments on the property.

The Venerable Master was never one to ask for funds from anyone. The formal opening of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas was a very large event with over two thousand people attending—I think two thousand people stayed overnight. Numerous people just came for the ceremony, bus loads and bus loads of people, including a lot of Asian Buddhists who were very curious. At lunch that day, the first thing the Master did was publicly to put on notice some of the wealthy people who came to take a look, saying that they were not going to get VIP treatment, because at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas everybody is equal, and besides, he knew that their money was ill-gotten anyway.

Thus, he offended a number of potential wealthy donors, because he was always very straight with everyone. He never minced words, no matter how wealthy anybody was and no matter how much they could benefit the Buddhist association financially. The one lesson he taught us then was that you shouldn't be off by a hair's breadth in your practice, even if it seems that it is easier or expedient to do things another way. If it's not in accord with the Dharma, you don't do it.

獲得更多的傭金，而且希望盡快把目標物拋售出去。上人會要求他們抽取比應得傭金再少一些，讓他們警覺到自己對傭金的執著。有時看起來好像我們要買了，然後我們卻沒有買；之後我們又準備買了，但是後來我們還是沒有買。事實上這種事情經常持續發生。當我們真正找到萬佛城這塊地，我對整個進行過程十分悲觀，以至於我把這些都記錄下來，當作是上人對那些房地產經紀人的教化。我根本不認為我們能買下那塊地！最後上人硬拉著我，一起從舊金山北上來看這塊地。在那之前，我真的不相信我們會買下它。

其實，上人一直都在託人幫忙物色適合興建道場的好地方。一些比丘和在家居士會先去看看，然後回來報告給上人；後來他們看了這個地方，上人覺得我們應該買下它。那時佛教總會幾乎沒什麼錢，而這塊地又那麼大；相較於金山寺在十五號街的小樓房，上人真的必須說服大家，但還是很難在早期那時候湊夠錢來買地。

上人從不向任何人化緣。萬佛聖城的開光典禮有超過兩千人參加，算得上是一件大事，我估計差不多有兩千人在這裏過夜。很多人專程來參加這個法會，一車又一車的人，包括很多好奇的亞洲佛教徒。當天午齋的時候，上人做的第一件事就是要那些來這裏看看的有錢人注意。上人告訴他們，聖城沒有所謂貴賓招待，因為在這兒人人平等，另外他也知道他們的錢是用不正當的手段得來的。

一說完這話，上人得罪了不少會做大筆供養的有錢人，因為他對每個人都是很直心的。他從不拐彎抹角地說話，無論這個人是多麼有錢，或者多麼能在金錢上給予佛教總會幫助。上人要教我們的就是：不能在修行的路上走偏，那怕只差一根頭髮絲寬的距離——差之絲毫，謬之千里。即便那樣做會比較容易或者方便，但如果和佛法相違背，我們都絕不可以去做！