

合 情 合 理

he2 qing2 he2 li3

When the government tabled a funding request to the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council (立法會財務委員會) for the proposed Innovation and Technology Bureau (創新及科技局), opposing lawmakers swamped the process with more than 1,000 motions to amend.

Chairman Chan Kin-por saw them as another stalling tactic, and allowed only 19. He told the meeting what he did was “合情合理” (*he2 qing2 he2 li3*).

“合” (*he2*) is “to agree with,” “in line with,” “to suit,” “情” (*qing2*) is “sentiment,” “feelings,” and “理” (*li3*) is “reason,” “logic.” Literally, “合情合理” (*he2 qing2 he2 li3*) is “in line with feelings, and in line with reason.” It means “fair and reasonable,” “sensible.”

The idiom is used to describe words, actions and decisions that are not only logical and reasonable, but also take care of the feelings of

Idiom by Lon Yan

those affected as well as take account of the actual situation.

Anyone holding power should act “合情合理” (*he2 qing2 he2 li3*), not only in line with the law or the rules. Having the power or legal right to act as you do would not make your action “合情合理.”

Using the power of one's position to fool everyone or blatantly do something that is wrong is “隻手遮天” (*zhi1 shou3 zhe1 tian1*), literally, “covering the sky with one hand,” or “trying to cover the eyes of everyone with one hand.” So Chan also added that he was not trying to “隻手遮天” (*zhi1 shou3 zhe1 tian1*).

Terms containing the character “理” (*li3*) include:

理由 (*li3 you2*) – a reason, a cause

理性 (*li3 xing4*) – rationality

理念 (*li3 nian4*) – idea

理想 (*li3 xiang3*) – a dream, an ideal