Police staged a large-scale anti-riot exercise before the Legislative Council elections. Policemen in anti-riot gear set off smoke grenades and tackled “rioters” at the Fan Ling Police Tactical Unit headquarters, a clear show of force. On election day, more than 4,000 policemen were said to have been deployed to deal with any potential disturbances.

Clearly, after Occupy Central and the street riots in Mong Kok, the police was not “掉以轻心” (diaoy3 yi3 qing1 xin1) with keeping order during the elections. “掉” is “to lose,” “to discard,” “to drop,” “以” is “to use as,” “with,” “轻” (qing1) “light,” “slight in degree,” “without due consideration,” “belittle,” and “心” “the heart,” “mind,” “intention.” “轻” (qing1) in this idiom refers to “轻率” (qing1 shuai4), meaning “rash,” “hasty,” “reckless,” “unthinking,” “thoughtless.” Literally, “掉以轻心” (diaoy3 yi3 qing1 xin1) is “to drop a light heart.”

The idiom means “to lower one’s guard,” “to treat something lightly,” “to take something lightly.” The idiom describes the attitude of failing to give due weight and consideration to a serious matter. It can be used as advice.

When your friend receives a letter from the Inland Revenue Department giving the final warning over the payment of outstanding tax, and your friend ignores it, you can tell him: “This is not a matter for you to ‘掉以轻心’ (diaoy3 yi3 qing1 xin1).”

When someone has a fever for three weeks and still refuses to see a doctor, you can also caution him not to “掉以轻心” (diaoy3 yi3 qing1 xin1).

**Terms containing the character “轻” (qing1) include:**

- 轻松 (qing1 song1) – relaxed
- 轻视 (qing1 shi4) – to belittle; to disdain
- 轻微 (qing1 wei1) – slight; trifling
- 轻敌 (qing1 di2) – to underestimate the enemy