

Emphasize Public Welfare and Ignore Personal Grudges

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Lu Yijian from the Northern Song Dynasty was the Prime Minister during Renzong's reign and was given the prestigious title of "Xuguogong."

Fan Zhongyan was an adviser to the emperor. Fan's political views were different from Lu Yijian's, so he often criticized Lu Yijian.

One day, Lu Yijian said to Emperor Renzong, "Fan Zhongyan is virtuous and talented; the government should give him more responsibility. He is capable of holding much higher positions than his current one." Fan was then promoted to higher positions.

Renzong thought that Lu Yijian was an exceptionally noble person. People commented that Mr. Lu was very generous and forgiving because he did not bear grudges. Mr. Fan thanked Mr. Lu and said, "I have offended you often in my dealings in public affairs, and you still recommended me for promotions." Mr. Lu said, "How could I dwell on the past?"

Fan Zhongyan managed an area of Yanzhong and was the commander in the war against the kingdom of Xixia. He wrote a letter to Yuanhao of Xixia to try to resolve the

conflict. When Yuanhao replied with an arrogant letter, Mr. Fan burned the letter at the height of his anger. The officer in charge thought that Mr. Fan should not have written a private letter to an enemy and then destroy the reply without authorization. He then suggested to the government that Mr. Fan be punished according to martial law. The emperor asked Lu Yijian what to do. Mr. Lu said, "Just give him a light punishment," so Fan was demoted one level.

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