

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

THIRTY-THIRD CONGREGATION

Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa*

A Citation

Mr. Leung Kau Kui

It is often said that Hong Kong thrives on British institution and Chinese entrepreneurship. This is the kind of statement that will find few detractors in a city where the creation of wealth since the 1960's has been quite phenomenal and where the business community has exerted a visible influence over the affairs of the state. To the extent that Hong Kong has been stable and prosperous, both the Government and businessmen should be given most, if not all, of the credit.

To Government must go the credit for creating and maintaining an administration and a body of laws which do not discourage individual enterprise. To the businessmen of Hong Kong must go the credit of seizing the initiative and taking advantage of the freedom that is accorded the business community. There is today a great deal of debate, controversy even, over the future structure of our Government; most of the attention has been focused on the institution of government. But as one very wise philosopher once remarked, "In the final analysis, what really counts is not the strength of the institutions but the character of the people."

Mr. Chancellor, in explaining Hong Kong's success, much has been made of positive non-intervention. A factor that has not been given the prominence it deserves is the industry, intelligence and entrepreneurship of the Hong Kong people. Since 1949, we have attracted to these shores not only some of the best and brightest of the Chinese intelligentsia but also some of the best and brightest Chinese entrepreneurs, among them Mr. Leung Kau Kui.

A native of Shunde xian in Guangdong Province, Mr. Leung comes from a family that had made its reputation in the silver business for many generations. Under the tutelage of his father, Mr. Leung learned the trade from an early age and quickly established himself as a shrewd businessman in his own right. Success came to Mr. Leung very early in life. By his late twenties, he was already a prominent figure in the silver business in Guangzhou, Zhanjiang, Hankou and Changsha, as well as Hong Kong and Macao.

Hard work and a frugal disposition paid huge dividends. After the Second World War, Mr. Leung became the Assistant General Manager of Hang Seng Bank and later assumed responsibility for Dah Chong Hong in various cities in China. Today of course these two institutions are household names, but the early beginning of business enterprises cannot be easy. This would have been the experience of Mr. Leung as he travelled all over China and indeed the world to pursue the business expansion that he sought. In 1948 alone, he went to Hanoi, Saigon, Paris, Bangkok, Singapore, Pnom-penh and Vientiane in succession - at a time when overseas travel had not the comfort we enjoy today. As a result of his travels and his great effort, Dah Chong Hong's business operation grew from strength to strength, not only in Asia, but also in Europe and America. True to what Francis Bacon has said about wise men, Mr. Leung was able to make "more opportunities than he finds."

By the 1960's when Mr. Leung had reached sixty years of age, he began to spend more time in Hong Kong and was instrumental in building up Dah Chong Hong to the force it is today. The involvement of Mr. Leung's company in Hong Kong can best be seen in the names of the following subsidiaries and associated companies: Triangle Motors Ltd., Honest Motors Ltd., Reliance Motors Ltd., Dah Chong Hong (Motor Service Centre) Ltd., Art's Tailors Ltd., and Hang Dah Shipping Co., Ltd. Apart from its interests in Hong Kong, Dah Chong Hong has operations in the United States, Japan, Singapore and Canada. Mr. Leung is the Executive Vice Chairman of the group as well as a director of the Hang Seng Bank Ltd. and a director of the Miramar Hotel and Investment Co., Ltd.

Mr. Chancellor, it is sometimes said that local companies are not as supportive of charitable causes as are hongs and multinational companies which have set up business operations in Hong Kong. I think if one looks more closely at the list of donors of any major charity one cares to choose, one will find the names of many well-known local philanthropists. Only the donations are not made in the names of their respective companies but under their own names.

You will find, Mr. Chancellor, that such personal generosity has also marked the philanthropic benefaction of Mr. Leung Kau Kui. In the last thirty years, he has supported the establishment of numerous primary schools, one secondary college, a health clinic and a home for the aged. He has also donated a whole building to our sister university and contributed generously towards the construction of a new academic building on our campus. Outside of Hong Kong, Mr. Leung has supported the development of St. Hugh's College, Oxford and Zhongshan

University in Guangzhou. In his native district Shunde xian, he has made generous donations towards a county hall, a hospital, a secondary school, a primary school, a library and a number of silkworm nurseries.

Mr. Chancellor, for his contribution to our business community, for his abiding interest in helping the young, the old and the sick, I have the honour to present Mr. Leung Kau kui, banker, businessman and philanthropist, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa*.

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