

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

TWENTY-SEVENTH CONGREGATION

Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa

A Citation

The Honorable Lydia Dunn, CBE, JP

Were the economy of Hong Kong a ship sailing forth in international trade wind, then Miss Lydia Dunn would undoubtedly have been the skysail atop the mainmast, where it can catch wind most easily and efficiently. Whether in a breeze or a gale, whether on a run or close-hauled, we can always look up to find it correctly trimmed and well filled, making the ship fly towards the distant horizon.

To rise to the top would not have been easy, but judging from the feat of Miss Dunn, it does not seem too difficult either. Born and brought up in Hong Kong, she went through St. Pauls' Convent School and then the University of California at Berkeley, where she obtained a BS in business administration. After returning to Hong Kong she joined Swire & MacLaine Limited as an administrative trainee, rose in ten years to export manager and then director, and within another ten was made Senior Director of the Swire Group as well as Chairman of several subsidiary companies, thus joining the inner circle of one of the oldest and biggest hongs of Hong Kong. It would be naive to imagine luck or chance counts much in the fiercely competitive trading world, where only true talent and hard work can made one rise, the success of Miss Dunn probably being no exception. However, her immense strength which must be the envy of many of the presumably stronger sex makes the move up the ladder seem so effortless, that one cannot but be held in admiration and amazement.

In Hong Kong recognised talents are always relentlessly sought after. Thus during the past several years she has been appointed director by several major corporations such as the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, the Mass Transit Railway Corporation, and the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation, and has also been appointed to the Legislative Council and the Executive Council as well as numerous other consultative and public bodies, either as member or chairman. Surely it would have taken the most resolute and resilient workaholic merely to survive the kind of schedule entailed by such heavy commitments, not to mention savouring it and thriving on it like Miss Dunn.

The most important contribution made by Miss Dunn towards the economy of Hong Kong is probably through her work with the textile and garment industries on manpower training, trade organisation and overseas market development, especially her efforts for liberalising international textile trade. Following the footsteps of several noted community leaders, she was appointed the Chairman of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council in 1983, to look after the promotion of export trade which is the lifeline of Hong Kong. In that position she will now surely find a worthy challenge in keeping up the momentum of the Hong Kong economy while it is about to tack onto a different course in shifting winds. Apart from trade, land is another important factor in the economy of Hong Kong to which Miss Dunn has made considerable contribution, mainly as chairman during the 1980-83 period on several public committees responsible for land policy and its implementation. She was made a Justice of the Peace in 1976, an Officer of the Order of British Empire in 1978 and then a Commander of the Order of British Empire in 1983.

Also concerned with the promotion of higher education, Miss Dunn was invited by this University to join the University Council in 1978, served as Chairman of the Appointments Board from 1979 to 1982, and became the University Treasurer as well as the Chairman of the Finance Committee in 1982. She is presently also the Chairman of the dental teaching hospital of Hong Kong University.

Mr. Chancellor, in recognition of her public service, especially her efforts towards trade and economic development, and in recognition of her contribution towards the higher education of Hong Kong, may I request your Excellency to confer upon Miss Lydia Dunn the Degree of Doctor of Laws honoris causa.

October 18, 1984