

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

FORTY-FOURTH CONGREGATION

Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*

A Citation

Mr Wilson T S Wang, OBE, JP

It can hardly be denied that Hong Kong's phenomenal economic success over the past forty years must be attributed to the magic formula of "timeliness, geographical advantages and solidarity", as the Chinese saying has it. More specifically speaking, Hong Kong's ever-increasing industrial output could not have been achieved without its quality human resources. As a man with clear and admirable insight, Mr Wilson T S Wang set himself the task, as early as in the fifties, of developing human resources and paving the way for economic expansion in Hong Kong.

Mr Wang has since his early childhood been fascinated with the Hoover Dam, which was then one of the engineering marvels. In fact, he had set his sights quite early on a career in hydroelectric engineering. And indeed, things did turn out the way he wanted. Soon after he graduated from the University of Hong Kong in 1941 majoring in electrical engineering, he joined the Whampoa Dock. But Hong Kong soon came under Japanese occupation, and Mr Wang was forced to move to Guilin, where he continued to work in the same field at the Materiel Commission. Upon his return to Hong Kong in 1948, however, it dawned upon him that tapping the human resources was more urgent than developing hydroelectric power. Mr Wang thus went into language education and soon established his own school. Three years later, New Method College was founded -- albeit on a modest scale at this initial stage. Some forty years later, the College has expanded considerably, boasting several campuses in Hong Kong and Kowloon, and providing comprehensive education ranging from kindergarten to primary school, secondary school as well as matriculation courses, with both arts and science streams.

Mr Wang has been a sports enthusiast since he was young, doing particularly well in long-distance running and tennis. He played for teams representing both his school and his university. Mr Wang was also fully aware of the handicaps Orientals were under in physical stamina, and hence saw the need for the promotion of sports. He was, at different times, President of Tung Wah Athletic Association and South China Athletic Association. Moreover, Mr Wang was the founder of Hong Kong Cycling Association and Hong Kong Amateur Gymnastic Association. The two associations have over the years produced many talented gymnasts and cyclists, and Mr Wang must be given credit for their success.

Between 1955 and 1957, Mr Wang was made Principal Director of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, and has since maintained a close tie with the organization in promoting medical services as well as many forms of social welfare. It must be pointed out, too, that back in the fifties before compulsory education was implemented in Hong Kong, the Tung Wah Group had already taken the initiative in setting up six primary schools and providing free education for young children. The Group's budget also grew from one hundred million in the fifties to one billion in 1990, of which over one hundred million actually came from private donations. Over the years, Mr Wang has indefatigably served on the Group's budget committee. Apart from charities, Mr Wang also committed himself to public administration in his capacities as members of the Urban Council (1961-69) and the Legislative Council (1968-75).

Apart from his work at New Method College and the Tung Wah Group, Mr Wang also devotes both time and energy to tertiary education and, in particular to The Chinese University of Hong Kong. From 1959 to 1972, Mr Wang personally supervised the continuing developments of the United College in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of the College Board of Trustees. In recent years, Mr Wang has been paying special attention to medical education. Besides sponsoring the Distinguished International Professorships at the University, Mr Wang has made special contributions to the establishment of Visiting Professorships in Surgery and a Conference Fund for the organization of the annual international surgical symposium.

Mr Wang practises what he preaches. He has founded schools, promoted sports, encouraged academic exchange, and contributed generously to charities. Apart from these, Mr Wang also participated in the territory's administrative and legislative work. Mr Chancellor, may I request, therefore, that Mr Wilson T S Wang be awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

15th October, 1992