

Speech by Dr. Rayson Huang

The Chief Executive Mr. C.H. Tung, Commissioner Yang Wenchang, Secretary General Zhao Guangting, Professor Lawrence Lau, Honourable Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank Mrs. Alice King and the Tung family for their invitation to be a speaker this evening. It is indeed my pleasure to be here today. Many old but good memories are flashing back. And my remembrance for my dear friend, the late Mr. C.Y. Tung, grows even fonder.

C.Y. was a world-renowned shipping magnate. I have been a humble teacher all my life. Since the 1950s, C.Y.'s career reached out from Hong Kong to the world. Southeast Asia was an important region for his career development. I happened to leave the States to take up a teaching post at the University of Malaysia. Then I started teaching in various places in the South Pacific for some years. In principle, the courses of our careers should not have coincided. As we all know, C.Y.'s maritime business astounded the world. Although I had not yet met with him, I did admire his success. His success in building up a shipping empire from scratch is legendary; and his dedication to education for others earned him worldwide respect. His enthusiasm for education also gave C.Y. and me a common language in the advancement of education.

In 1972, I came back to Hong Kong, and was appointed as the tenth Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong. I was the first alumni and the first Chinese to be the Vice-Chancellor in the University's sixty years of establishment. It was heard that, at that time, my appointment aroused certain attention in Hong Kong, and even in the Chinese community in Southeast Asia. It was not until I returned to Hong Kong that I became acquainted with C.Y. He and I became instant friends and we met frequently afterwards. Some of our meetings were on public occasions, but more of them were on private ones. He invited me to his Island Club a few times. We discussed many topics of mutual concern and I knew him better ever since.

At the beginning of the year when I started to serve at the University of Hong Kong, the *Queen Elizabeth (Seawise University)* was destroyed by a relentless fire. Yet, C.Y. was not deterred by this tragic setback to his education-at-sea project. Another liner was shortly converted to the *Universe Campus* and assumed its role. Students were enrolled from all over the world. They were privileged to live and learn together. During the oceanic tour, they would realize how "a thousand miles teaches more than thousand books". This was precisely C.Y.'s idea in education. I was fortunate enough to take part in the project. In January 1975, C.Y. invited me to the *Universe Campus* which was then docked in Florida in the United States, and joined the four-day academic conference. As the keynote speaker, I talked about the developmental relationship between international education and university education in Southeast Asia. The conference was exceedingly meaningful and gave me a great impression.

C.Y. was eight years older than me. We were said to be of the same generation. People of our generation grew up in a chaotic time. When we were young, we shared a common wish. We wished for the prosperity of our nation and our race. Many years afterwards, we strived for the modernization of China in different arenas. C.Y. was a remarkable man among us. He devoted his life to China's maritime business. He earned infinite prestige for the Chinese people. Today, C.Y.'s children present to the public their father's diaries which span over thirty years. Young people can now track the roads their ancestors traveled in the last century. They are also able to appreciate their arduous efforts in the pursuit of high goals. I believe C.Y. would wear a contented smile if he were here today.

Thank you very much indeed.