

# THIS IS HOW I VIEW THE “ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS” POLICY

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## **Natural catastrophes, human disasters, national weakness, and poverty of people**

The Chinese race has a written history of over four thousand years. It has fifty-six ethnic groups of people. In their long coexistence they have been harmonious but also competitive. They have gradually developed into a mutually reliant relationship. “*Records of History*” is a book of general Chinese history. Its essential philosophy is that all the races are descendants of [Yan and Huang]. Historically, *Emperor Yan* was [*Shen Nong Shi*]. *Emperor Huang* was [*Xuan Yuan*]. The tombs of the emperors are in Shaanxi. Every year, there are overseas Chinese returning to China to visit their ancestors’ tombs to pay humble respect to their ancestors.

The *Xia Dynasty* was established in 2698 B.C. when *Emperor Xia Yu* was enthroned. The *Shang Dynasty* was established in about 1200 B.C.. The *Zhou Dynasty* was established in 1116 B.C.. Historians named the period between 722 B.C. to 481 B.C. as *East Zhou* and for the 142 years within this period the historians called them the “*Years of Spring & Autumn*”. The Emperor lost control of the country and the lords competed for power and waged wars against one another. There had been more than 300 relatively major wars. At the end of the “*Spring Autumn*” period there remained over 10 states only. The result of wars taken place between 403 B.C. and 221 B.C., the so-called “*Warring States*” period, had left only seven states competing for supremacy. *Emperor Qin Shi Huang* conquered the six states and established a unified empire. More than 2100 years had elapsed since then to the time of the establishment of The People’s Republic of China. There had been stability and unity for only one-fifth of the time. Of the 2100 years, four-fifth was in turmoil and instability. In the recent Chinese history, from the later period of the Qing Dynasty when the Opium War took place, China had been subjected to internal distress and external harassment. The Chinese people were treated as lowly as ants. The nation had been subjected to as many as eight invasions and had been forced to sign more than one thousand one hundred unequal treaties. More than 2 million square kilometres of land and more than 4 billion taels of silver had been ceded. China had become the “inheritance of a sick man” subject to wanton aggression. During the time of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, China was subjected by natural catastrophes and human disasters. Tens of millions of people died in civil wars. A large number of people had to leave their families behind and to migrate to foreign countries. In Calgary, Canada there was an exhibition called the “100 years of Overseas Chinese” showing that in 1860 there were about 7000 Chinese

labourers in British Columbia and in 1880 more than 18,000 Chinese labourers had been recruited to work for the construction of the East-West Pacific Railway. The Chinese labourers had to work very hard. For the construction of every mile of the CPR Railway, four Chinese labourers lost their lives. In his "History of the Chinese Civilization" the former vice-president of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Zheng De Fa said that he had talked with one of his friends about the history of the development of Singapore. He said that in the 62 years from 1860 to 1922, there had been more than 10 million ethnic Chinese in Singapore. But at the end of the year 1922, only about three hundred to four hundred thousand Chinese remained in Singapore. How many ethnic Chinese had died for the development of Singapore? In that 200 sq. km. small island, there were Chinese blood and sweat in every square inch of the territory.

It can be seen from the history of China that it was only after the establishment of The People's Republic of China, the Chinese people have been able to stand up against anything that may happen and the Chinese people have truly found the road to modernization only after the Chinese government adopted the policy of reform and opening up. It was only after the resumption of the sovereignty of Hong Kong to China that the national disgrace which had been in existence for over a hundred years was finally erased. These three important events are closely related to the survival and the long term benefit of the nation. They are the result of the long time hardship bravely borne by the Chinese people and their incalculable sacrifice together with their persistent search for modernization.

**Without a strong motherland, it would not be possible for the smooth resumption of sovereignty**

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 1997, the sovereignty of Hong Kong was formally resumed to its motherland. It was an important event not only to China but well recognized all over the world. I personally watched the lowering of the British flag and the raising of the flag of the People's Republic of China and the flag of the Hong Kong SAR. It was a great event. Had China been what she was fifty years ago when the country was split into many war-lord controlled regions, the economy was down at the bottom, people had great difficulty in maintaining a decent livelihood, and the government had to borrow from foreign countries, the resumption of Hong Kong's sovereignty to China would have been a completely different matter. Before the resumption of Hong Kong's sovereignty to its motherland, a foreign correspondent predicated that "Hong Kong will surely die." They expected to witness "Blood and Fire" after Hong Kong's reunification with China. They anticipated robbery and social turmoil. Their anticipation was not without ground. The history of massacre when India and Pakistan split into two separate countries and the recent serious trouble in Kosovo and East Timor have shocked the world. The smooth reunification of Hong Kong with China and the realization of the "One Country, Two Systems" are not god-sent. The days before and after the reunification were and will not be peaceful. Difficulties and uncertainties will arise from time to time. Some of the foretellers expect the "One Country, Two Systems" to fail. They even

foretell that Hong Kong will gradually “dry up”. They observe and exaggerate some negative factors. They are very reminiscent of the time past. The “Letters Patent” and “Royal Instruction” linger in their memory. They indulge themselves in the memory of treading on the heads of the Chinese people. They fail to understand and are unwilling to accept the fact that the Chinese people no longer live in the time when they had to look up to other people and allow themselves to be humiliated. The Hong Kong people can determine the prospect of Hong Kong because they have the backing of a strong motherland.

Hong Kong is at present the port for commercial intercommunication between inland China and the international markets. It is the meeting point of the Chinese society and other international societies. It is also the pivot point of communication between the thirty million overseas Chinese and their kinsfolk in China. Hong Kong is also the melting point of Chinese and western economies. The prosperity and stability of Hong Kong have always been dependent on the economy, technology and personnel of the inland. Resources have always been dependent on outside factors. It is said “Guests coming in like clouds. Resources coming in broadly everywhere.” The principal efficacy of Hong Kong is in its accumulation and dispersion of goods. There is a saying: “A place of production is not as important as a place of accumulation.” The factors that make Hong Kong a world-known city are its advantageous geographic position, its highly efficient services, its close relationship with regions of commerce all over the world, its fair and transparent legal system and its civilized systems of management.

### **Aim high to realize the “One Country Two Systems”**

Hong Kong is to put into practice the “One Country, Two Systems” policy after its reunification with the motherland. What would Hong Kong be like after its reunification with the motherland? Hong Kong compatriots had their doubts and worry. After the establishment of The People’s Republic of China, there had been political turmoil one after another. Examples are many, including the “Three-Antis, Five-Antis”, the “Land Reform”, the “Suppress Bandits, the Oppose Local Despots”, the “Great Leap Forward”, the “Countryside Campaign for Steel Casting”, the “Anti Rightists”, the “Cultural Revolution”, the “Rustication (going to the countryside)” etc.

We people in Hong Kong do not understand and are deeply frigtened. In 1982, Hong Kong residents of various sectors of the society went to Beijing to meet the leaders of the central government to reflect on the thoughts and worries of the Hong Kong compatriots. Although Hong Kong and inland China is separated only by a bridge (Lo-Wu Bridge), the modes of living are very different.

There are differences in habits of living and cultural concepts. Hong Kong is practising market economy. It had been under British control for over a hundred years. What would Hong Kong be like after its reunification with China? It would be falsehood if we denied that we did not

worry. The Central Government of China successfully and clearly declared that Hong Kong should carry out the policy of the “One Century, Two Systems”, “Hong Kong people govern Hong Kong” and “Remaining unchanged for 50 years”. What is the “One Country, Two Systems” after all? Some say that the “One Country, Two Systems” is “Horse racing continues” and “Ball-room dancing continues” and the mode of the economy would not change. But doubts and worries continued to be in the minds of people. Those who had the means were prepared for migration to foreign countries. On the day of the resumption of the sovereignty of Hong Kong to China, we witnessed the lowering of the British flag and the raising of the Chinese flag. Chris Patten returned to Britain. Mr. Tung Chee Hwa was appointed the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China. The resumption of the sovereignty of Hong Kong to China was indeed a peaceful and smooth event. We can see for ourselves that 2 years and 3 months after the reunification of Hong Kong with China, that the Central Government has seriously implemented the policy of “One Country, Two Systems”. The mode of living of the Hong Kong residents remains the same as before. At Happy Valley and Shatin, the race courses are packed as usual. In 1998, the total betting amounted to 80 billion Hong Kong dollars. The names of Queen’s Road, Pottinger Street, Queen Mary Hospital, remain the same. No change has affected the 180,000 civil servants. Government personnel carry out their duties as before. The Special Administrative Region Government enjoys more power of self-determination than previously when important matters had to be referred to the British Government in London. In order to protect the benefits of the Hong Kong residents, the officials of the SAR Government are able to propose ideas different from those of the Central Government and to deal effectively with matters without consulting the Central Government. With these considerable changes, the SAR Government is still able to maintain stability. This makes some people feel that they have “dropped their eye glasses”, meaning failing in their expectation. They have to admit that Hong Kong is able to maintain its original systems. They have come to believe that the future of Hong Kong will be better. They believe “Hong Kong will be better to-morrow”. In the recent couple of years, there have been quite a number of emigrants who have returned to live and work in Hong Kong. This is because Hong Kong gives them a better chance of getting ahead. After the resumption of its sovereignty to China, Hong Kong has been able to maintain a good prospect of future development.

After its reunification with China, Hong Kong has been confronted with some major and minor problems such as the impact of the economic turmoil in Asia, the bird-flu, the slaughter of over one million chickens, the chaos at the new International Airport on the day of its opening to the public, the promotion of mother-tongue teaching, the right of abode of children born to Hong Kong residents in inland China, the request for interpretation of the “Basic Law” by the Central Government, etc. etc. These issues greatly confused the public. There is a saying: “The grandpa has the grandpa’s reasons.” and “The grandma has the grandma’s reasons.”. The problem has been due to some news media which have mixed up what is right and what is wrong. The fore-going issues would not have happened at the time when Chris Patten was Governor? Take the construction of new Chek Lap Kok International Air Port for example. Who made the decision on the location?

Who had the power in the construction? Who had the power of running the airport? Who was the boss of the air-cargo terminal? The public knew that it was not the fault of the SAR Government. Mr. Tung was only the scapegoat. To hold the SAR Government fully responsible was neither right nor fair. As to the promotion of mother-tongue teaching, it is not only biased and prejudicial for a Chinese not to know his own national language, but will do great harm to his descendants. Overseas Chinese in foreign countries take all possible means to make their descendants not to forget their mother tongue. Whichever country they reside, the Jewish people always educate their children in the Hebrew language and consider it an honour to be well-versed in the language. Why should we be prejudicial to or even hateful of teaching in the mother tongue? !

### **Reform and opening up on the road to modernization**

At present China takes economic development as the centre of its policy and is steadfastly on the road of reform and opening up. Using economic development as a basis, the changes taken place in all the regions of the country can be clearly seen. Such important matters as the improvement of people's livelihood, the elevation of the integral power of the nation, cultural and educational development, the ability to confront natural disasters, effective environmental protection were all previously unable to be dealt with. There was no courage even in thinking of dealing with them. The sayings were: "To the poor, everything is sorrowful.", "What is the use of crying aloud when looking up to the sky above and down on the earth below?". "Sold like pigs", that is selling oneself to work in a foreign country, to places in Africa and Brazil, in the region along the Amazon, trying to find the "Region of Peach Blossom." I visited Russia in 1997. It is a huge country spanning across Europe and Asia. From the Black Sea to the Bering Sea, the sun always shines on this immense country. The country is rich in natural resources such as diamond, gold, petroleum, iron, coal, forest, grassland etc. It can be said that they have everything. The country also stands on the front line of technology. In arts and culture, there have been great Russian geniuses such as Tolstoy, Pushkin, Tchaikowsky and Galina Ulanova. The Russians also excel in military affairs. In the Second World War against fascism, they had such great successes as the safe-guard of Stalingrad, the conquest of Berlin and the elimination of the Japanese "Kando Army". All these great accomplishments have left an everlasting memory to all people of the world. But such a great country became divided all of a sudden. I believe the fundamental cause was poverty. The country's economy was not well managed. The Ruble was several times depreciated. The country had to borrow to meet its expenditure. The USSR with its glorious past had degenerated into such a state that made people feel sorrowful for this great nation.

The realization of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy was dependent upon the Reform and Opening Up and the outstanding success of the economic development of the country. Last year our 1.2 billion people had a total savings amount of over 8,000 billion RMB and the country had a total reserve of over 140 billion US dollars. It can be seen that the livelihood of the Chinese people has undergone a fundamental change. The steady development of economic

reconstruction and the popularization and elevation of cultural education can now be guaranteed. The real strength of our economy and its our power to compete have increased. In the past, the Chinese people had to look up to other people for favour. Now we can truly stand up against any unreasonable suppression of other people. The Chinese people now have complete power and strength to defend themselves.

“One Country, Two Systems” is a wise decision of China. From the historical viewpoint and the prevailing conditions, the decision is beneficial to the development of China and to Hong Kong. In more than two years, the Central People’s Government has steadfastly endorsed the “One Country, Two Systems” policy. It has given full support and trust to the Special Administrative Region Government of Hong Kong and its Chief Executive Mr. Tung Chee Hwa. Foreign opinions including those of the United States and Great Britain also give recognition of the success of the “One Country, Two Systems” policy. It is an excellent example for the solution of conflicts historically inherited, between countries and regions.

For China, the road to modernization is not smooth and steady. To come out from several thousands years of shutting up is a great matter like changing one’s bones and flesh. Success or failure depends on the person who takes up the venture. The progress of a nation depends on the quality of its people. There is a saying: “Rivers and mountains can change readily but it is difficult to change one’s character.” The elevation of potentiality or changing of their life conception cannot possibly be accomplished within a short period of time. In the past 50 years, we have been able to witness the great changes and the fast development of our country. In every area there is a step by step improvement in progress. I firmly believe that our country has the determination and the ability to erase the defects of our present society. The road is not straight. Many of the existing problems and difficulties cannot be resolved within a short period. But the country is really on the road of development and progress. The Chinese nation will have a high moral standard and a new modern, scientific and cultural outlook to live in friendly relationship with all the rest of the people of the world.

### **Bringing Guangdong & Hong Kong closer and building a stable and prosperous Hong Kong**

People have different conceptions of the resumption of the sovereignty of Hong Kong to its motherland. Some people even take “Two Systems” and “One Country” as being opposite to each other. But without “One Country” how is it possible to have “Two Systems”? Had Hong Kong stayed away from “One Country”, it could not have been stable and could not have been prosperous. Take its economy for example. Hong Kong has an area of a little over 1000 square kilometres, most of it mountainous. It lacks natural resources. It has to get water from inland China. Hong Kong’s present position in the world owes to the backing of inland China. It has become one of the ports of accumulation and distributions of goods and products of the world. Its superior geographical location and its more than a century’s experience of marketing together with

its high transparency without special political rights plus a good system of control, have made it one of the most important sea-ports of the world. In the handling of the Guagnan Holding Ltd. case for example, the managing director and those responsible for handling the funds of the company were arrested and the case was treated in accordance with the law governing such matters and the case was publicly disclosed. Had there been no effective system of control and lack of distinction between commercial enterprises and government, commercial enterprises would have collapsed and the economy of the country would not have been able to further develop. Hong Kong should continue to develop its market economy and to make it better.

The important thing at present is to understand better the relationship between “One Country” and the SAR Government. In addition to historical and political reasons, the British Government of Hong Kong of the past had adopted numerous controls. Patriotic conduct was considered criminal. Social groups and associations which favoured China were closed. People close to China were arrested. Students who graduated in patriotic schools were prevented from getting employment. Open and underhand methods were used to isolate the patriots. Such traditional good conducts as diligence, self-strengthening, friendly compassion were destroyed. Young people were prevented from understanding the history of their own country. Brutal, pornographic and immoral items were frequently broadcast to the destruction of morality. Young people were led to learn to be “Smart but idle”, “Quick money” “Get the day’s freshest,” “Gamble,” “Get ashore, no matter how, and become a fairy” In October, 1994 the former prime minister of Singapore, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew pointed out the influence of Confucianism on Singapore by saying: “From the experience of working for Singapore especially during the unforgettable hard time in the years 1959 to 1969, made us firmly believe that if the people of Singapore had not been influenced by Confucianism, we would not have been able to overcome all the difficulties and hardship that confronted us. A healthy society, good relationship between people and society and between family members should all be built upon a foundation of high moral standard.” Of course, matters historically inherited cannot be resolved in a short period of time. With the trust and power given by the Central Government, the Hong Kong SAR Government should not have any reservation in guarding and carrying out resolutely the “One Country, Two Systems” policy. The stability and prosperity of Hong Kong is closely related to those of the interior of China, especially Guangdong Province. As the saying goes “One’s prosperity is the other’s prosperity” and “One’s injury is the other’s injury.” The relationship is as close as blood and flesh. We must understand that Hong Kong is a superior seaport. People come to Hong Kong not just because Hong Kong has a first-class airport. They do not come to see the “Big Buddha”, Shatin Tai Wai, Repulse Bay, and the Wet Ground of Mai Po. They want to be in Hong Kong in order to have a view of inland China. It was the same in the past and is the same today. In Guangdong, there are more than seventy thousand outside entrepreneurs engaging nearly ten million workers. The total amount of exports exceeds 40% of that of the whole of China. The Pearl River Delta is the world’s largest region for reprocessing with imported raw materials. It is in the neighborhood of the five provinces of Hunan, Jiangxi, Guizhou, Yunnan and Guangxi. The delta is rich in human and land resources. It is also

rich in income from tourism. In the region north of Guangdong Province, there are famous tourist spots such as Zen's ancestral Ancient Zhuji Lane of Nanxiong, Meiling, Danxia Mountain of Renhua, ancient forest Encircling Building of Hakka Fengdu Tower belonging to the Tang Dynasty.

Along the Pearl River there are countless numbers of scenic spots. Hong Kong is situated close to the mouth of the Pearl River. Why not take full advantage of the favourable geographical location and the favourable economic relationship with the interior? For more than a century, Hong Kong has been an important city for the overseas Chinese entry to and exit from the interior. In Shamshuipo and North Point many of the overseas Chinese have left their footprints. Hong Kong is their second birthplace. Hong Kong today should continue to further develop its ability to act as a pivot for the intercommunication of Chinese overseas and those in the interior. It should also develop further its relationship with the Guangdong Province. All these are important policies to safe-guard the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. I hope my friends of the commercial circle and in general, people of the Hong Kong society, and the SAR Government can render their understanding and constructive criticism of my thoughts. Most of the friends who have come from various places of the world have good knowledge of Hong Kong and great care for Hong Kong. I hope what I have said is not too far-fetched and disappointing. Thank you.