CHAPTER 1

The Winding Down of a Colony

When Sir Edward Youde died suddenly of a heart attack during a visit to Beijing, the press phoned me to ask who I thought should be his successor. Somewhat in shock at the sad news, I replied, "Why talk of his successor before Sir Edward is even buried?" But as the reporter persisted in getting a reply, I said rather curtly, "The only person I think suitable is Sir David Wilson".

I did not know Sir David personally but had learned from reports that he was a Chinese scholar, a diplomat, and a person who had shown wisdom and understanding in the negotiations between China and Britain on the return of sovereignty in 1997. I also knew that Sir David had served the Hong Kong Government and was familiar with its problems.

The outpouring of grief for Sir Edward was overwhelming and special offices had to be set up to cater for the crowds from all walks of life who wished to sign the condolence books for the man who had exhausted himself travelling to Beijing and Britain from Hong Kong in spite of the fact that he was depending on a heart pacemaker.

David Wilson was, in fact, appointed Governor. He lent dignity to the post, was cultured, friendly, and carried on the dedicated work of his two predecessors, Youde and MacLehose.

Negotiations on the return of sovereignty had not been easy from the start. China had for many years been isolated because western countries disapproved of her political system. Any country that did not adopt the American cliché "Democracy and human rights" had been shunned since the beginning of the Cold War. Moreover, there were colonials in Hong Kong who regarded the colony as their own private fiefdom, and they were not going to hand it back to China if they could avoid doing so.

The fact is that the lease of the New Territories, unlike Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula, was due to expire in 1997. To separate the leased land from the remainder had become impossible because all road networks and building projects as well as services, spanned the whole territory. Margaret Thatcher had tried to bargain for them separately, but there was no way that China would permit her land to remain a colony, land that had been wrested from her by force of arms followed by unequal treaties. All other British colonies could join the Commonwealth, but Hong Kong would revert entirely to China.

There is no doubt that Britain was conniving to keep Hong Kong and trying to persuade as many local people as possible to call for a further thirty years under British administration, while changing only the flag denoting sovereignty in 1997.

I myself was approached no doubt to join in the connivance. I had lived in Hong Kong for over three decades and was on the troublemakers' list because I had fought against corruption, and called for a more democratic system in order to obtain justice for the underprivileged. It was therefore with great surprise that I received an invitation to lunch from someone who must have hated my work, one who had never before invited me to anything. The invitation was to have lunch with Simon
Keswick of Jardines, the former drug kings. To my surprise I was the only guest, though two from his company attended the lunch in his plush office. I soon discovered the purpose of this unprecedented courtesy. Mr. Keswick told me that he did not want China to take back Hong Kong. As I was well-known among the Hong Kong Chinese people, he wanted to know if I could do anything to help to prevent the changeover. Of course I have no such power over the local people, even if I had agreed with the proposal, which I did not. I reminded Mr. Keswick that Hong Kong was Chinese territory and that even if some local people did not like their government, they were patriotic to their country and would never agree to such a proposal, nor would I engage on such a project. I likened the proposal to a British person who might dislike his government if it was communist, and asked if, in that case, Mr. Keswick would call the Germans to help him oppose his own government. He agreed that in fact he would do so. After such a shocker of an answer, I felt I had nothing more to say, but I did wonder later if others had been approached, and whether this had anything to do with the so-called democratic party that seemed to spring up out of nowhere. It's only a thought, but obviously something was going on to try to stop Hong Kong being returned to China.

It was about the same time that two junior members of the Urban Council told me that they had been approached by two Chinese members of the Legislative Council. The Urban Councillors were going on a trip to London on Urban Council business, and were advised while there to speak up to Members of Parliament in favour of retaining British Administration in Hong Kong for another thirty years. The two asked me what to do, since they loved their country and felt unable to betray China. I advised them to ignore what they had been asked to do and follow their own consciences, which I believe they did.

This movement for retaining the administration of Britain in Hong Kong was stepped up when Richard Luce, the British Minister for Hong Kong, came here for meetings with various groups. He met with the Urban Council, and I attended the meeting. He pretended that there were Hong Kong people seeking the retention of British administration, and asked the members of the Council one by one what their views were on the issue. It was embarrassing for some members to answer because they were Government appointees, though half were elected members, including myself. Some replied halfheartedly that they agreed with the proposal, while a few remained silent. When it came to my turn I told Mr. Luce frankly that such a proposal would not work. China had been humiliated for a century and a half, and no Chinese was proud of that fact, no Chinese could really agree with retaining colonialism, nor would the Chinese Government agree. I told him he was wasting his efforts. In summing up the meeting, Mr. Luce announced that everyone except Mrs. Elliott (as I was then) had agreed that the British should be given thirty more years administering Hong Kong. He would certainly have conveyed the message to London that everyone was in favour of the proposal. The British people would never know the strength of feeling of patriotic Chinese. Those who would have preferred British colonialism are undoubtedly very few, regardless of their political views on China.
When Margaret Thatcher visited China in 1982, flushed with her
arguable victory in the Falklands, she seemed to imagine that
the Hong Kong people were begging for British help, just as she
had convinced Britain that the people of the Falklands all
wanted British rule. On that point, I once had a phone call
from a man I had never met, telling me that he was British, had
lived for many years in the Falklands, and that the only people
who had wanted a war with Argentina were the rich British sheep-
farmers, most of whom were domiciled in Britain but wanted to have
their property protected. The local Falklanders, he said, wanted
only to live in peace whoever ruled them. I have no way of proving
that to be true, but it makes sense, and it is a fact that many
British people also opposed that war, believing it to be a step
forward to re-election of the Conservative Party in the next
election.

This was the combative mood in which Margaret Thatcher went to
her war of words with China. She agreed that the lease of the
New Territories would end in 1997, but insisted that Hong Kong
Island and Kowloon Peninsula had been ceded in perpetuity and
were not subject to return to China at the end of the lease.
The Chinese remained adamant. China had been forced into unequal
treaties which she had never accepted and never would. In fact
they had already been patient for a century and a half, and
former Premier Zhou Enlai had made it clear twenty years earlier
that all of the occupied territory would be returned to China
"when the time is ripe". It had long been considered that that
meant 1997, but now that the time was near, Britain was having
second thoughts. Margaret Thatcher played up the legal aspects.
The west will never understand that Asians consider ethical
principles above legal jargon.

When the talks were over Margaret Thatcher visited Hong Kong and
reported on her talks in Beijing. She seemed totally out of
touch with the general feeling in Hong Kong, and assured the people
that she would stand by the treaties on Hong Kong and the
peninsula. When I heard her speech I could hardly believe my
ears, she was so far from understanding local people, and I just
gasped at the stupidity of imagining she could "do a Falklands"
here. The stock market slumped to its lowest in years, the
Hong Kong dollar had to be pinned to the United States dollar,
and it took years to recover the blow to the economy. At that time
the stock market was so sensitive that it was said that if Deng
Xiaoping sneezed, the stock market dived down. Mrs. Thatcher
certainly shook it. When she returned to Britain, I wrote to
her, reminding her that she had some legal knowledge. I told
her, if a robber entered her home, put a gun at her head and demanded
her to hand over her treasures, no doubt she would hand them over
to save her life. But would she later agree that those stolen
treasures belonged to the robber? She was doing the same in her
dealings with China. The land was stolen and should be returned.
Of course she did not reply, but if she even saw the letter, I
hope she considered the principle was the same, treaty or no
treaty.

To show her great 'concern' for the people of Hong Kong, I must mention
that while she was broadcasting her support for her "British
subjects" in Hong Kong, her government was passing a law to make
sure that those British subjects would never have the right to live in Britain. The Hong Kong British passport was to be replaced and Hong Kong-born people would henceforth bear the title "British National Overseas". I would call that using the people to support one's cause, then dumping them when the cause was won. In this case, the cause did not win, but the change of passport and nationality became a bitter issue when people who had held British citizenship all their lives suddenly found that under no circumstances were they wanted in Britain. Some did not care about going to Britain: they were just furious at the deceit.

The Chinese side was frustrated at the attitude of the British Government. Deng Xiaoping had made it as easy as possible with his concept "one country two systems", which virtually gave what Britain claimed she wanted, that is, no change in the administration of Hong Kong, except that all senior posts would be occupied by Chinese nationals residing in Hong Kong. Even British civil servants would be allowed to remain in their posts, except at the most senior level, that being necessary for national security. If only everyone concerned had looked at the historical record, that China had not broken any international agreements, the transition would have gone by without notice except in the change of flag, change of Governor and a few other senior civil servants. Unfortunately there were some among the local people who for their own personal or political reasons, were determined to mistrust everything China said, determined to confront China on every possible issue.

At about this time, early 1984 in fact, I was in Beijing and met the then Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office. He was extremely disappointed at the attitude of the British Prime Minister, and those Hong Kong people who were running to London to take instructions there. I expressed my sympathy, but told the Director, Ji Pengfei, not to be too concerned because the final negotiations would be with Sir Geoffrey Howe, and that although I was no admirer of his political party, I felt sure he would be fair and reasonable. In fact, so he was, and soon a Joint Declaration was signed in draft in Beijing by the Prime Ministers of the two countries. Apparently, Margaret Thatcher had at last seen the light and accepted that China would resume sovereignty over the whole territory in 1997.

When the draft Joint Declaration was made public in Hong Kong that year, it was received with euphoria, though somewhere in the woodwork lodged a few sworn opponents of China who later emerged as an opposition party and remains so today.

The next item on the agenda in winding up the colony was the Basic Law for Hong Kong, which was a matter for China to enact. Unlike the colonials, the Chinese set up a Basic Law Consultative Committee in Hong Kong, to get input by local people who would carry out the administration of Hong Kong when it became a Special Administrative Region of China. Various organisations voted in members to join the consultations, and a few, including myself who did not belong to any particular organisation, were invited by appointment. As a British person, one who had fought like an opposition against corruption and injustices in Hong Kong, I did not expect to be invited, and the fact that I was would suggest that China did not object to critics, or outspoken democrats.
Discussion on the constitution for Hong Kong in the Basic Law continued for about four years in Hong Kong. Every word of the Joint Declaration was carefully combed through in order to make sure that it would preserve the laws and way of life of Hong Kong. What surprised me was the willingness with which China listened to and accepted almost all if not all proposals made by the Hong Kong members, in an obvious attempt to stick to the "one country two systems" promise. When members decided that Hong Kong residents of foreign nationality and holding foreign passports should be allowed to become members of the Legislative Council holding up to twenty percent of the seats, I expressed the view that, as practised elsewhere, only people of Chinese nationality should sit on the law-making body. I felt that, in the unlikely event that China and some other country might be at war, there would be a conflict of interest for the foreign member. I am sure such a war is not going to happen, but I was speaking of a principle applying everywhere. Yet China eventually agreed to twenty percent of foreign nationality being allowed to be members of the Legislative Council. In the 1998 elections, foreign nationals were limited to standing for election only in certain functional constituencies where they are likely to have a special interest. I think that is a step in the right direction. My contention is that any person who wishes to take up responsibility in the legislature should at least be willing to take up the nationality of that country. Others may differ from my views of course.

When the Consultative Committee had completed its scrutiny on the Basic Law, the matter then had to be passed to a law drafting committee. The Basic Law Drafting Committee, which met in China, included several members from Hong Kong, among them, Martin Lee, a senior barrister, and Szeto Wah, a school headmaster. Szeto Wah was known as a leader in the field of education, chairmain of a teachers' union. He had pushed mainly for better salaries and conditions for teachers. I half-heartedly supported him but felt he should have pushed harder for better education for children as his first priority; however, one may argue that better-paid teachers may produce better teachers for children to reap the benefit. However, I did support better conditions for teachers, especially those in non-subsidised schools which in earlier times gained little or no assistance from the Government. Some teachers did not support Szeto Wah because many were "pro Taiwan", while Szeto was sometimes dubbed a communist, though how true that was I do not know. I would not have objected to his politics whichever side he was supporting so long as he did not use his influence on young people, but that is merely because I think children should be left free to choose their own religious and policial beliefs. I once almost lost my school licence because of Szeto Wah's activities, though he was not to blame. He had arranged a union meeting to discuss the possibility of holding a strike for, as far as I remember, better pay. Because in those days, the 1970s, there was very little freedom of demonstration, no organisation would allow him to use their premises for his meeting, and outdoor demonstrations were illegal. Szeto asked me if he could use our school building, just newly completed. As it was to be on a Sunday and there would be no students around, I agreed. The building was packed that day. The mistake was mine. I did not realise that a school built on
Government land must get Government permission to allow it to be used other than for school purposes. It was a genuine oversight, but, quite rightly according to rules, I was wrong, and received a warning that if that should happen again, the school licence would be cancelled. I made sure that I would not break the rules a second time. I still have a 'thank you' certificate from Szeto Wah, who was in later years to be supported many times by me until he turned against me because I would not support him in confrontation with China. Szeto believes in freedom for himself and his party, but does not permit the same freedom to others with different views. He is a person with strong views, but little human feeling, and saves his emotions for his outbursts against China on every possible issue. I would call him a demagogue rather than a democrat.

Martin Lee, Szeto's leader in the political party set up when the return to China was imminent, is a totally different person. Outwardly he is charming and friendly, but there is no doubt about it that he is the 'éminence gris', the schemer of party policy, one who seldom joins a demonstration himself but for which his party is well qualified to organise. However he is in the forefront in debate in the Legislative Council, when his lawyer training comes into action; then he forgets he is not in court defending or prosecuting an accused person.

Martin had also been a leader in the legal field, otherwise he would not have become a Queen's Counsel. He was at one time the chairman of the Bar Association. However, I do not think anyone heard him speak about politics under the colonial government until the matter of the return of sovereignty was raised. He then suddenly appeared on the scene under the name "democrat".

I had never known Martin as a democrat. I had for three decades been calling for democratic representation, even only two members by direct election to begin with, and had met with many interested persons, but Martin was never among them. Some lawyers had assisted me in my fight for justice, against corruption, and for free legal aid for defendants, often in those days framed up by police, but Martin was never among them. As a lawyer, he must have known about the scandalous Deportation and Detention Tribunal Rules under which whistle-blowers on corruption and drug trafficking could be and sometimes were, imprisoned without a proper trial, without defence, without witnesses except for one or two police, and even eventually deported. Those rules were abolished only in June 1995, probably more as a move against China rather than against injustice.

Martin Lee must also have been aware that during the spill-over of the Red Guard movement in China, workers and young students were being arrested merely for talking together in groups of three or more. Some were imprisoned for a year or more merely for talking in a small group. I attach a complaint made by some of them at that time, just to inform readers of the situation.

It may well be that at that time Martin Lee was not yet a lawyer, though he would be about thirty years old. But he must have known, as it appeared in the press, that a magistrate at that time ordered parents to slap their children in the face for alleged unlawful assembly. He must have known, if he read the newspapers, that one magistrate called some girl students "dirty gutter rats" for the same reason. We in school were told to report to the police if any students passed out leaflets, and no doubt they would have received the same treatment. I refused to do so, and we had no
problem in our school, though we were aware that some teachers were taking opposite sides in the conflict. No one heard Martin Lee's voice at that time mentioning freedom of speech or assembly, or even complaining about unlawful detention of young people.

In fact, in the early 1980s, when Martin first appeared as a convert to democracy, he was asked on television why he had suddenly taken up that cause. I heard his reply, and it was something like this: "Well, when I was young, I was too busy making money. Now I have enough money, I can spend some time on politics." That answer may sound acceptable to some, but to myself, who had seen such appalling injustices in the 1950s to the 1970s until Lord MacLehose looked into those injustices, it would indicate a lack of fundamental democratic principles. How does one suddenly become a democrat? That would be possible if the people had been living under a just system and suddenly found themselves under an unjust system. The colonial system had never been just, though it improved considerably under MacLehose in the mid-nineteen-seventies. Martin's answer is on a par with Chris Patten's entry into politics; he called political campaigns "great fun" and decided to join whichever party answered his application first. And having received the reply of the Conservative Party first, he became the scourge of the Labour party and of socialism. Of course, one can change party affiliation on principle, but Patten's choice was purely, on his own admission, based on opportunity. As to Martin's sudden change, I admit that it grates on me when he puts his hand to his heart and says, "Democracy, I love you!" I real fighter for democracy sees people, not idols with feet of clay to worship.

From the time of his conversion to democracy, his colleagues on the Legislative Council with different views from his own were dubbed "pro-China". In fact, why should we be anti-China? China is the homeland of the local Chinese people and to me is mother-in-law because my husband is Chinese. The appellation "pro-China" does give us the right to call him and his party "anti-China", by the same token, yet they object to that name. As a member of the Basic Law Drafting Committee one can only imagine what went on in meetings. He was said to have been totally obstructive; likewise was his second-in-command, Szeto Wah. He himself complained that not one of his Hong Kong colleagues (apart from Szeto) agreed with him. Standing up for a principle is admirable, but to insist that everyone else is out of step except oneself calls for some introspection. Dictators are made of such stuff.

I was a member of the Legislative Council only a short time in 1988 when I discovered how little respect Martin Lee had for any of his colleagues. In those days we spoke in debates in alphabetical order according to seniority. With the Governor as President, most members stayed in the Chamber through most of the meetings, and in any case a quorum was essential. Martin would invariably arrive a minute or two before it was his turn to speak, make a very long speech, wait a minute or two and then disappear until it was time for the vote. He therefore could not have listened to anyone else's arguments, neither did he respect them. I became so angry with this practice that I began to leave the meeting as soon as he began to speak, and return as soon as he had finished, then stay to hear every other speaker. He probably never noticed that I did so, but it gave me some satisfaction to treat him as he treated others.
These then were the two who obstructed the Basic Law drafters every step of the way. No doubt at times they were right, but no one can claim to be right all the time, that everyone is out of step except themselves and that anyone who does not agree must be betraying Hong Kong. At least they had their reward because they could easily convince the Hong Kong public that they were standing up for Hong Kong, and as the meetings were in camera, and not too many people understood the Basic Law anyhow, they set themselves up as heroes and gained political capital for elections. True democracy cannot grow in the soil of ignorance, which is probably why Winston Churchill (of whom I was never a fan) said "Democracy is the best of all bad systems". I think he was right there, though today it might, because of the corrupt manipulation everywhere, be called "the worst of all good systems". Blatant examples of corruption can be seen all around us in Asia, and, less visible but even worse in the west. Anyone who doubts this should read the actual statistics on corrupt elections in a book by Charles Lewis, founder and director of "The Center for Public Integrity" based in Washington D.C. The book is entitled, "The Buying of the President", though it refers to various Presidents and States Governors in their involvement with corporate donations with strings attached.

In June 1989, a blow fell on everyone, and a million people, including myself, went to Happy Valley to mourn. To me it was a terrible blow, and to my husband even worse because he is Chinese and had great hopes for his country. Some went to blame. I went to weep as did many others. But to some it seemed like a godsend in propaganda. The militant screaming of a group I was told called themselves the April Fifth Group poured cold water on my emotions, which covered the deaths of students, workers and included police and soldiers. I could not believe what had happened. My husband and I had watched the television just before midnight in a state of great anxiety, and I had told my weeping husband not to worry, the guns would not be used. But I had hardly uttered those words when gunshots rang out. We shut off the television and sank down in despair. With only the western press to keep us informed, it was impossible to know who started the violence first, but from the screens it seemed to be the army, and on this we all made our judgments. The picture even now is not clear, but what does seem clear is that the whole country could have been in a state of revolution, and the victims, as always happens during a revolution, would be the people rather than the politicians. The changes in Russia may have inspired the student demonstrators, but now it is the Russian people who can show us what suffering may come from a sudden change that has been more like a dictatorship than a democracy. Russia had only recently changed to "democracy" and the students had called for their country to follow Gorbachev's example. They were not to know the aftermath of that change, when Yeltsin took over the new democracy and fired on his Parliament Building.

Those who blamed China, such as the United States, actually supported the violence and dictatorship of Yeltsin. They supported the violence of Suharto by supplying arms to kill the people of East Timor. Hypocrisy reigns among pseudo democrats who use that title to deceive the people. And news, not truth, comes to us through the hypocrites. China did not claim to be democratic and that is the unforgivable sin in the eyes of the west. Just claim to be democratic, organise a corrupt election for which
friends in the United States will supply funds, as in the case of Nicaragua, and you then have a licence to kill as many people as you wish, preferably with arms bought from America, as in Palestine where children holding only stones may be shot or dragged off to prison. There is a price to pay, of course: allow your economy to be controlled by your "democrat" friends. Since China adamantly refused to adopt western politics, her treatment for the sad 1989 tragedy has been given full publicity year after year, while the millions killed elsewhere have been forgotten. I am not suggesting that any of these killings should be forgotten. They should provide us with an unforgettable lesson towards our fellowmen. Nor should these killing be used as political propaganda to stir the emotions of the people at every election to vote for any party. Yet in the 1998 elections, I saw that the candidate in my district where I vote had hung up a black banner, reminding voters of that sad event, while at the same time calling upon voters to cast their votes for him. To my perhaps simple mind, that is using the dead to one's own advantage. I found it disgusting.

I have noticed that in all propaganda about Tienanmen Square, pictures are seen of the brave young man who stood in front of an army tank, no doubt pleading with those inside not to harm the people. This picture is meant to be critical of China. Yet there is another side to it that is never mentioned. If the army had really wanted to kill, why did the driver of the tank move from side to side, as we saw in the picture, to avoid knocking the young man down? Why did it stop when he was nearest to it if the intention was not to avoid killing him? The answer is, of course, that people see in a picture like that just what they want to see, but who knows the truth? Truth does not figure in propaganda: it is the first victim of war, as someone has said.

Ostensibly, the lesson of the Cultural Revolution had not yet been learned. In 1984 I had visited, by invitation, the city where I had lived in China during the civil war, the city where I was living when the People's Liberation Army entered and just after the Nationalist Army had left. I could not recognise the poverty-stricken city I had seen on arrival in 1948. Every road and building looked new. I was taken to meet a man who had lived there at the same time as I had been there, and was free to ask him whatever I liked, because I could still speak a little Putonghua. I questioned him about the Cultural Revolution. He enthused, "That will never happen again. We know what is right and what is wrong. We will never make that mistake again." I believe that is true, because the leaders of today themselves were mostly victims of those unhappy days. I do not think Tienanmen Square was a relapse into those days, but that it was an effort to save the country which the leaders considered, rightly or wrongly, might disintegrate, with much worse bloodshed. No doubt Hong Kong would have been also at risk. I feel sorry for those who gave the order to shoot. I could, myself, not do so under any circumstances. I find it hard to judge others for something I would not have the courage to do if the circumstances required it. The question is, of course, was it required? Those here who seek the truth probably do not know the answer. Those who do not care to find out the truth will certainly answer "No". It is enough for them that it was the Chinese government, so prejudice, not truth, gives the answer.
Whatever the truth of the matter at Tienanmen Square may be, it was through shock and fear that many residents began to prepare to emigrate, some with legal passports and others with any kind of passport from any country willing to issue them. Those who had no means to emigrate began to worry about their livelihood if all the rich left and took their businesses with them. I heard taxi drivers moaning the fact that if all the rich people left they would have no business. Panic had set in, and some way had to be found to calm the atmosphere. One Legislative Councillor put it correctly when she said, "Our economy is bleeding to death because everyone is leaving." Then began an effort to try to prevent people from emigrating. It was considered that if Britain would offer British passports to all Hong Kong-born residents, these residents would remain until 1997 to see how things went. If not, they would rush abroad to obtain right of abode by residing in some other country until they had full residence there, after which they would probably return to Hong Kong to wait and see what happened in 1997. That would usually mean being away about five years, and it was considered that most would then not return to Hong Kong.

Later that year, 1989, some Legislative Councillors visited Britain requesting that British passports be issued to all Hong Kong-born people, not that they intended to immigrate in Britain, but to give them a safety-net to encourage them to stay in Hong Kong and only use the passports if things went badly wrong in 1997. In fact, very few relished the idea of living in Britain, because of the weather, the food, and, at that time, the difficulty in finding employment. Mrs. Thatcher's promise to take care of the Hong Kong people had evaporated and there was an outcry in Britain against allowing Hong Kong Chinese to immigrate. Instead, the Foreign Secretary offered a laughable palliative: he would introduce a Bill of Rights into Hong Kong legislation, and try to get a more democratic system through the Basic Law. It was ridiculous, because if China had really returned to the excesses of the Cultural Revolution, no law in Hong Kong would survive. The offer was dubbed a sop. However, even the tears of Baroness Dunn did not succeed in moving Britain on that passport issue. Britain then came up with another proposal that would have helped to destroy the economy of Hong Kong rather than save it: Britain would offer right of abode in Britain to selected families under certain conditions. Those conditions would give British citizenship to the youngest, brightest and richest Hong Kong people, leaving out the elderly, the weaker, and the less successful. In other words, Britain would rob Hong Kong of her most talented. The proposal raised a storm in Hong Kong, while in China it raised retaliation. Anyone who accepted this offer, China said, would not be given right of abode in Hong Kong. In fact, there was scarcely a rush for the privilege. When things calmed down in China, the rush to emigrate died down, until eventually many even began to return to Hong Kong where their prospects were better. Others found ways of getting their "green cards" (the gateway to citizenship abroad) without ever staying in the countries to which they were supposed to have emigrated.
China meanwhile had begun to mend her fences. Deng Xiaoping pushed for faster economic changes, and southern China soon became almost as prosperous as Hong Kong. The lessons that the students had taught by their demonstrations were not lost, though the more strident of their leaders were punished. Some of them had already escaped abroad where some of them admitted that they had misjudged the seriousness of the situation or had gone a bit too far. They were young, and young people are easily carried away with idealism, or may be misguided by older people not so idealistic. One CIA member admitted that he had had a hand in the student uprising and no doubt there were others who should not have interfered in the affairs of China. A principle I hold very strongly is that we may criticise our leaders, our government, and demonstrate against them peacefully, but we have no right to do so in any other country but our own. I admire some democrats who speak up for their own people, but my admiration turns to mistrust if I find they are engaging the services of other countries to demonstrate on their behalf. Those foreign demonstrators seldom know anything about the issue, and simply shout slogans to indicate their ignorance.

Events since World War II have shown that anyone who wishes to oppose his own country has only to use the name "democrat" to obtain assistance from the United States, and the CIA has interfered again and again in every part of the world. The change of sovereignty in Hong Kong had given a golden opportunity to those who plan to rule the world economically, setting up an economic rather than a territorial empire. It is sad to see young people falling into the trap of attempting to put their own interests in the hands of the enemies of their country without realising that they are risking bringing ruin on themselves and their country. They should learn the wisdom: "Know yourself and know your enemy". Sometimes enemies come dressed up in the clothes of friendship.

All the events I have mentioned brought division in our community. And when our last Governor came, he could not have done a better job in tearing us apart from the day he arrived, until the day he left surrounded almost entirely by his own kind, ironically to the strains of "Rule Britannia", as the colonials sailed away through the waves that were no longer within their domain.

In one of my speeches in the Legislative Council, I reminded members of the fable which can give us all a lesson, whether we live in Ireland, Palestine or Bosnia, or in fact any part of the world. It is a simple story of the wind and the sun, who were arguing as to which was the stronger. As they argued, a man came along the road wearing an overcoat. The wind and the sun decided to compete to decide who was the stronger: it would be the one who could force the man to take off his coat. The wind began first. It blew and blew, and the harder it blew the more the man clung on to his coat. At last the wind gave up, and it was the sun's turn. The sun shone and shone, so hot that the man threw off his coat. A simple story. Yet the truth has been shown time and time again. Perhaps Mr Clinton had not heard the story when he thought he could stop Muslim fundamentalists from bombing American embassies. He could get the sun in on the act by ceasing the policy of double values. Certain it is that Chris Patten could have been a wonderful last Governor if he had learned just a little about diplomacy instead of pugnacity.
* A Letter of Protest

1967

by relatives of patriotic Chinese unreasonably detained in the Mount Davis concentration camp by the Hongkong British authorities

We, all of us relatives of the patriotic Chinese who are being unjustifiably detained in the Mount Davis concentration camp, boiling with rage, accuse the Hongkong British authorities of persecuting our relatives with fascist measures.

Our relatives were all illegally kidnapped by police and special agents sent by the Hongkong British authorities after the outbreak of the May Upheaval and have since been unreasonably kept under detention and subjected to political persecution. They consistently love our motherland, love our great leader Chairman Mao. At their different posts, they have worked and made their contributions to the community. But the vicious Hongkong British authorities persecuted them just the same. "When our relatives were abducted, some of them were working as usual at their places of work, others were resting or sleeping in their homes or walking in the street. Is it guilty to work, to rest, to sleep or to walk in the street? Though the Hongkong British authorities have kidnapped our relatives and held them in detention for a long period, they have failed even to conjure up a single charge against them. Take the following example to illustrate the lawlessness of the Hongkong British authorities. Liu San, Chairman of the Stone-cutters' Union, was abducted from his home in the middle of the night by the Hongkong British police and special agents. Trumped-up charges were brought up against him in the 'court'. But as the judge could not convict him, he had to have him released. But no sooner had Liu San come out of the 'court' than he was seized by agents of the 'special branch' and thrown into the concentration camp. Thus one who had been acquitted and released by the 'court' was abducted by the 'special branch'. This fact brought to light, to the full, that the 'laws' of the Hongkong British authorities are all devices to deceive the people. They had long ago become odious, but now the last fig-leaf was torn off them by none other than the Hongkong British authorities themselves.

Another well-known incident happened on March 14 this year when, to persecute Fu Chi and Shih Hui, the Hongkong British authorities deported them in a vain attempt to create a precedent. With the support of the Government and people of the motherland and the support of the four million Chinese compatriots in Hongkong and Kowloon, the couple waged a gallant fight setting their feet firmly on the Lowu Bridge. This not only foil the 'deportation' plot of the Hongkong British authorities but also landed them in a fix. At that time, the Hongkong British authorities were forced to declare through a loudspeaker that Fu and Shih were 'released'. But on March 15, just as the patriotic film couple were on their way home, they were abducted for the second time by Hongkong British police and special agents at Sheungshui and were again put in the concentration camp. This fact showed that the 'laws' as well as the words from the mouth of the Hongkong British authorities were nothing more than lies.

This is how our relatives were thrown by the savage Hongkong British

* It should be remembered that this protest was written at a time of strong patriotic emotion inspired by Chairman Mao Zedung, and that many of those imprisoned in Hong Kong had taken no part in the violence that had spilled over from China.

(Elsie TU)
authorities into the dark concentration camp where they have been detained for long period and subjected to shocking maltreatments and tribulations.

First of all, we accuse the Hongkong British authorities of launching political persecution against our relatives.

All our relatives are workers or Chinese from all walks of life who fervently love our motherland and our great leader Chairman Mao. To be patriotic is a sacred right which is inviolable. Yet the Hongkong British authorities have gone so far as to deprive our relatives of their freedom of reading the brilliant writings of our great leader Chairman Mao. We have repeatedly lodged protest against this and we have demanded that the camp authorities should hand over Chairman Mao's writings and 'Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung' to our relatives. But this has been refused. Furthermore, patriotic newspapers, magazines and books are also banned in the camp. European officers and agents inside the concentration camp often deliberately cursed and insulted our great socialist motherland and our great leader Chairman Mao. They frenziedly attack the patriotic workers and our patriotic compatriots. By flagrantly showing hostility towards our great motherland, its 700 million people and the four million Hongkong compatriots, the Hongkong British authorities have belied also their talks about the Sino-British relationship and easing the Hongkong situation. Their real intention, on the contrary, is to worsen the Sino-British relationship and intensify the tension in Hongkong. All this has fully exposed the reactionary nature of the Hongkong British authorities.

Following our great leader Chairman Mao's instruction: 'We must not show the slightest timidity before a wild beast', our relatives have waged a tit-for-tat struggle against the enemy. Under the most difficult conditions, they persist in studying Mao Tse-tung's thought. Although they are in the dark prisons, they cherish in their hearts their motherland and keep in their mind the whole world. They are immensely confident that we shall win and the Hongkong British authorities will be defeated. In fact, the Hongkong British authorities' plot of political persecution has since long been bankrupt.

The tortures imposed on our relatives mentally and physically by the Hongkong British authorities will stir the blood of anyone who so much as hears about them. What we make public here is only a fraction of these atrocities. But they are enough to lay bare the Hongkong British authorities' fascist nature.

The concentration camp is located at Mt Davis on Victoria Road in the West Point of Hongkong Island. From outside, you may not know that inside it is like a dark hell. The inmates are imprisoned separately in Block B and C in the compound. There are twelve what are called 'sealed rooms' in Block B. Each of the cells, a few feet square, has only a small hole which is closed all the time except when food is brought in, and a noisy ventilation fan which keeps roaring around the clock. For a long period the cells were each lighted day and night by a 100 candle-power lamp. Two patriots are detained in such small cells. There they do not know whether it is day or night, rain or shine. In these 'sealed rooms', our relatives are subjected to the roaring of the fan and the irritating light from the bulb. More air being drawn out than let in, the cells are so suffocating that our relatives have to lie on the floor to get the fresh air filtering through the door gaps. Under such living conditions deliberately brought about, it is difficult for our relatives to have proper rest and they suffer from insomnia. They said that they were able to withstand all this only because Mao Tse-tung's thought had given them the will to fight. Otherwise it would have only been a matter of days for them to crack under the strain. The
warders once said that no one could live in such cells for more than three
months. So they have to acknowledge that it is a miracle for some of our
relatives who have now been detained there for nearly a year. In fact, this
is no miracle. It is the strong power of Mao Tse-tung's thought.

The interrogation under tortures which our inmates were subjected to
in the concentration camp is hardly conceivable for those who have not
gone through them. Let us cite a few examples. One of our relatives was
stripped and interrogated day and night for a few days. Others were
beaten up time and again at the interrogation till they fainted. Then they
were doused with cold water and interrogation was resumed when they
came to themselves. Yet others were interrogated continuously for nearly
20 days without sleep. Some of them were forced to stand up after they
dosed off for only half an hour. During the winter, some of our relatives,
with no warm clothing, were interrogated in air-cooled rooms. Others were
taken around the camp blind-folded in a deliberate attempt to terrorize
them. Last winter our relatives were made to take cold showers at five
o'clock each morning, and many of them became ill. . . . Having been
beaten up, quite a number of our relatives were wounded but were given
no medical care. Similar examples on maltreatment are too numerous to
list.

As far as living conditions are concerned, the agents never let go any
chance to persecute the inmates. For a long time they were not given
enough to eat. Their meals consisted of rice mixed with sand, sprouted
potatoes and sometimes stale fish. Many of our relatives contracted disease
because of malnutrition. When they fell sick, a European doctor in the
camp nicknamed 'miracle doctor' would attend them. He was so nick-
named because a single glance is enough for him to know whether one is
ill or not, or what kind of disease one is suffering from. In most cases,
he would prescribe nothing. One of our relatives was examined by the
'doctor' for more than ten times. But he was never given a single pill.
When at times the doctor does prescribe, what he gives is almost always
limited to the same two kinds of pills no matter what the patient is suffer-
ing from. Thus some of our relatives have become weaker and weaker.

Going to the lavatory, taking a bath, or having a wash—all provides
opportunities for the warders to torment our relatives. When one wants to
go to the lavatory one has to ask the warders to let one out. The warders
often take their time to make the inmate suffer. Or he sets a strict time
limit when he does let the inmate out. Even in hot weather, the inmates are
sometimes not allowed to bathe or wash themselves.

The camp authorities have concocted all sorts of devices to humiliate
or torture our detained relatives. Those in Block C, for example, were
handcuffed when they were brought out of their cells to walk through an
open space to meet their visitors. This was said to be done 'for security's
sake'. What sophistry! The camp is guarded by troops, police, secret agents,
Ghurkas, police dogs, plus high walls and wired barriers. And there are
a total of nine locked doors between Block C and the entrance of the
camp. Isn't there enough 'security'? Or is it that our relatives could
fly or disappear through the ground? This in one way also illustrates the
Hongkong British authorities' cowardice and lack of confidence. Standing
by our relatives, we have waged resolute struggle against the handcuffing
of our relatives. But up till now, the camp authorities, pleading 'regula-
tions', have not yet discontinued this practice.

All the above-mentioned is only a few instances of the fascist atrocities
which the camp authorities have imposed on our relatives. They are too
many to put all on paper. But we keep an account of all the outrages and will certainly settle the account with the Hongkong British authorities. They will not be allowed to deny these sinful deeds they have committed and they can never escape the responsibility for having committed them.

Why do the Hongkong British authorities persecute, maltreat and torture our relatives in this way? It is only because they love our motherland, love our great leader Chairman Mao, oppose to the national oppression and political persecution launched by the Hongkong British authorities. In order to safeguard our national dignity and defend Mao Tse-tung’s thought, our detained relatives keep reminding themselves of Chairman Mao’s instruction: ‘This army has an indomitable spirit and is determined to vanquish all enemies and never to yield. No matter what the difficulties and hardships, so long as a single man remains, he will fight on.’ Knowing well that ‘wherever there is struggle there is sacrifice’, they look death in the face. Taking the heroes in the novel ‘Red Cliff’ as their models, they brave death, suffering and tortures and withstand one after another the frenzied attacks mounted by the enemy. They have smashed to smithereens the Hongkong British authorities’ evil designs. We are proud of having such relatives! They are the fine sons and daughters of the Chinese nation. Their spirit encourages us to courageously stand up and carry on our struggle against the Hongkong British authorities.

However, our relatives, and all those Chinese patriots illegally arrested and thrown into the dark prisons by the Hongkong British authorities, are still suffering. This is what we and all patriotic Chinese cannot acquiesce in. Time and again we have talked with the departments concerned of the Hongkong British authorities. We have lodged protests with them and put demands to them. But up to now, the Hongkong British authorities have been trying to put the matter off and refuse to settle the problems promptly.

We, relatives of the patriotic Chinese unjustifiably detained in the concentration camp, appeal to all Chinese patriots and all those who have a sense of justice to join us in denouncing and condemning the serious fascist atrocities committed by the Hongkong British authorities in violating human rights, undermining the normal work and life of the community, and impairing the running of patriotic establishments and normal business concerns and carrying out political persecution. This illegal persecution launched by the Hongkong British authorities have prevented our relatives from performing their normal work. Many of our relatives are executives or staff members of trade unions, societies or schools. By depriving them of their liberty, the Hongkong British authorities have caused the organisations concerned enormous losses. Some of our relatives have their own businesses to look after. The detention of Tang Ping-ta, for one example, has brought great losses to his business. Our families have been placed under abnormal conditions. Children fail to see their parents; wives and husbands have been separated. Who has given the Hongkong British authorities such right to do whatever they please? We appeal to the Chinese patriots and to people with a sense of justice to support the following demands we put forward:

1. Release all the patriotic compatriots unjustifiably detained in the concentration camp and the dark prisons;
2. Compensate them for their losses suffered mentally and physically and in their work or their businesses;
3. Give proper medical care to those who have been wounded and who have become invalid because of assaults and maltreatments administered by the Hongkong British authorities.
4. Immediately stop maltreatments and safeguard personal safety.