

RITA FAN HSU LAI TAI'S ADDRESS

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council, Vice-Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of my fellow honorary graduates and myself, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to the University for conferring honorary degrees on us, and for the Orators' generous citations. We are a group of mixed talents, with different backgrounds, from different professions, and even speak different languages. But from this day onwards, there will be a strong bond between us, and that bond is 'The University of Hong Kong'.

Our University had advanced considerably since I was an undergraduate. The student population in those days was around 3,000; today, this figure stands at 23,400. In 1964, there were the Faculties of Arts, Science, Engineering, and Medicine, but the Faculty of Social Sciences was nowhere to be found. Fortunately, the University quickly established the Faculty of Social Sciences a few years later, otherwise, 4 of us on the stage today, including myself, will experience some difficulty in getting our degrees in Social Sciences. Over the years, our University moved towards the central stage of the academic world and gained recognition as one of the best known universities of the World, and in particular,

Asia. Credit must be accorded to the University Council, successive Vice-Chancellors, staff and Alumni of our University, for their untiring efforts over the years. I have every confidence that our University will achieve further heights under the leadership of our current Council Chairman and Vice-Chancellor.

As Hong Kong faces the international financial crisis, many of our graduating students are worried about their job prospects. Rightly so. They have many questions on their mind. Some of these questions will no doubt be related to how the United States and European governments can control the spread of the crisis and revive their respective economies. For such questions, I defer to my learned fellow graduate, Dr Lam Shan Muk, whose analysis of financial issues is widely read and well respected. If the graduating students' main concern is about not getting the desired job and pay, perhaps what happened to our 1969 Civil Engineering graduates may be of interest.

In the summer of 1969, the construction industry in HK was at a standstill, and there were simply no new projects. I was working in the University Appointments Service as a careers counsellor at the time. Many of the new graduates who came to talk with me expressed

