

**THE HONGKONG
GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:
THE END OF A DYNASTY**

The Divine Right of Succession at The Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce has come to an end.

The Dynasty of the British Divine Right of Succession is dead!

Long live the Tung Chee Chen Dynasty!

There can be no question about this for, with the April election of Mr Tung Chee Chen to the rank of Chairman of The Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce, it means that the British dominance over The Chamber, whereby Brits were automatically 'elected' to its Chairmanship, has come to a screeching halt.

In the not-too-distant past, the Chairman of The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Ltd had his turn at bat, after the Chairman of the Swire Group of Companies -- in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), only -- had finished his turn at the crease.

And so it went on, with the Chairmen of The Hongkong and China Gas Company Ltd, Swire Pacific Ltd, Hutchison International Ltd (when it was in the hands of the late Sir Douglas Clague and could be considered completely British, of course), The Hongkong Land Company Ltd, Jardine Matheson and Company Ltd, Wheelock Marden and Company Ltd (when Mr John Marden was trying to control that publicly listed company), Cable and Wireless HKT Ltd, and so on, all having their turns at trying to steer The Chamber along its chosen course.

Historically, The Chamber's members elected the heads of top British companies, operating in the HKSAR, to fill the top slots in The Chamber,

And the system worked very well. It was fondly called: *'The Old Boys' Club'*.

There was a similarity, in the old days of electing the Chairman of The Chamber, to the way in which the Council of Cardinals elected a new Pope.

The major difference between The Chamber's election and that of the Council of Cardinals was that there never was the necessity of burning anything, allowing the world to see the smoke, emitting from the Vatican's chimney, thereby signifying that a new earthly messenger from God had arrived to lead the Catholics of the world.

This efficient manner of managing The Chamber, in days of yore, caused many non-British residents of the HKSAR, mistakenly, to think that The Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce was, in fact, The British Chamber of Commerce.

The ethnic Indians of the HKSAR, especially, were totally confused about the situation, especially since there has never been an ethnic Indian elevated to any high post in The Chamber.

Then, again, the ethnic Indians of the HKSAR are, usually, confused about most things.

But, then again, the ethnic Indians of the HKSAR do have their own Indian Chamber of Commerce so that, in truth, there is no reason in the world that they should sit in positions of power at The Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce ... it just may confuse the poor dears, in the same manner that the Government of the Republic of India, historically, has a confused situation in the management of its affairs.

After all, having ethnic Indians of the HKSAR, sit in positions of power in The Chamber,

could upset the delicate balance for which The Chamber has been so well known since the middle of the last Century.

The thinking, that The Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce was the British Chamber of Commerce, was, always, completely wrong; and so, now that Mr Tung Chee Chen is the Chairman of The Chamber, this fallacious nomenclature can be forgotten, forever.

In an exclusive interview with one of the members of The Chamber, TARGET has learned that Chairman Tung Chee Chen may consider changing the name of The Chamber to: The Specific HKSAR Chamber of Commerce.

There is a good argument for executing this change because, as everybody and his cat knows, Mr Tung Chee Chen is the brother of the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Mr Tung Chee Hwa.

All hail the Great Leaders !

As such, in the event of any kind of a ticklish problem within The Chamber, or a problem with any of its members, Chairman Tung Chee Chen can just make a quick telephone call to 'Big Brother' in order to obtain immediate assistance and/or advice.

This is likely to be a definite improvement over the Old Boys' Club since it was never very likely that the Queen of England would come to the aid of The Chamber in the days, prior to the advent of the PRC Government, taking back Hongkong.

Everybody was so happy to learn of the great things to come, with the outcome of The Chamber's election in April, including Mr Tung Chee Chen – it has been said that it was a complete shock to him when the votes were counted -- that, as soon as Mr Tung Chee Chen was elected to the post of Chairman of The Chamber, officially, he hastily held a Press Conference, and told the world that his ascension to the Purple of Office would not lead to a conflict of interest with regard to his powerful, political brother.

It is not too often these days that such honesty is made manifest in a public statement.

One group of Brits was said to have uttered the call: *'Three Cheers For Chairman Tung Chee Chen!'*

Chairman Tung Chee Chen must be considered the personification of the Chinese virtue of humility. One cannot help but admire him. Even the Brits, who lost the election, admitted that fact.

'And he has a good, Chinese face,' remarked one Brit to a TARGET reporter. *'We could never match that.'*

Having a little political clout would not be a bad thing for the Chairman of The Chamber, but one supposes that appearances speak louder than telephone calls ... or, should that read: *'Telephone calls speak louder than appearances?'*

Chairman Tung Chee Chen has been a member of The Chamber for more than a decade, now, so it could be said that he has *'gone to school'*, having learned the way of a chairman by watching his (British) betters in the hot seat.

In his first address to the world, Chairman Tung Chee Chen got off to a bad start, however, because he referred to most of the members of The Chamber as being small and medium (sized) enterprises.

HSBC Holdings plc is one of the largest banking groups in the world, today, and the Swire Group of Companies, internationally, along with the Jardine Matheson Group of Companies, with its many subsidiaries – Dairy Farm, Hongkong Land, etc – can hardly be considered small or medium sized: They are world class.

And Chairman Tung Chee Chen's little company, Orient Overseas (International) Ltd, can hardly be considered small or medium sized.

But, one supposes that, when most 'enterprises' are compared with the Governments of the HKSAR and the PRC, they could be considered small or medium sized.

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