

Dr. the Honourable John Joseph Swaine, B.A., C.B.E., LL.D., Q.C., J.P.

In its unprecedented growth over these last forty-five years Hong Kong has been fortunate in having the right kind of people in the right place, wherever and whenever they were needed. Dr. John Joseph Swaine is one of these people.

After graduating with a degree in Arts from the University of Hong Kong, John Swaine joined the Hong Kong civil service as an Administrative Officer, and served in that capacity for 5 years, including a year of post-graduate study at Cambridge University. He resigned from that post in order to fulfil a deeply felt ambition to become a barrister. He read law at Lincoln's Inn and was called to the Bar in 1960. He has been practising as a barrister since that time, and was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1975.

His profession was quick to recognize his sense of fairness and his professional judgment. He was elected as a member of the Committee of the Hong Kong Bar Association and also served as its Secretary. He served on the Supreme Court Rules Committee and was appointed a Commissioner of the High Court. The quiet, firm and conscientious way, in which he was able to respond to the needs of his profession, soon became known outside that profession and he was appointed in 1974 to membership of the Public Service Commission as well as a diverse number of other public bodies.

Today, the Honourable John Swaine is known as much for his key role in the Legislative Council as for his distinction as a Queen's Counsel in his own exacting profession. His service in the Legco commenced in 1980 and was only interrupted by his appointment to the Executive Council from 1988-1991. In 1991 Lord Wilson asked him to return to the Council as Deputy President. When His Excellency the Governor announced in October 1992, that it was time to separate the functions and

membership of Exco and Legco, his fellow Legislators elected the Honourable J. J. Swaine to the Presidency of the Council in February 1993. That made him the first elected President of the Legco in the history of Hong Kong. Here again, his impartiality, his firmness, his sense of fairness and his independent judgment have won him the plaudits of his fellow members and of experienced outside observers as well as of members of the general public.

What may be less well-known is the significant contribution Dr. John Swaine has made to Hong Kong's tertiary education system as Deputy Chairman of the UPGC in 1984 and as Chairman from 1985-88. That period covered the consolidation of the large scale expansion in the tertiary sector, which had been planned in the late seventies and early eighties. Under his leadership the UPGC began to involve Hong Kong's own academics more extensively in its own membership and committee structures than before. It also formed its first Lingnan Sub-Committee, under whose aegis the College was to become recognised by the UPGC in 1991. John Swaine is a man whom people over a wide range of Hong Kong's professional life have learnt to trust. But it is characteristic of his style of leadership that he is also seen to trust the people he works with. That is a rarer quality, but one which is clearly indispensable at this stage of the Hong Kong's development.

After nine years of service as a Steward of the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club, he was elected as its Chairman in 1993. Since the Jockey Club is Hong Kong's leading charitable institution with benefactions which cover a wide range of targets, including tertiary institutions, that post has brought and will continue to bring new challenges and opportunities, for which his services to the law, to education, to the public service, and to the Legislative Council have prepared him well. It was his strong interest in campus life for students that will surely have been a most significant factor in persuading the Jockey Club to make the crucial and very generous contribution which will provide 500 additional hostel places for our students, when we

move to our new campus in Tuen Mun. That will ensure that the College will be able to accommodate no fewer than three quarters of its student population on campus, and will eventually become a fully residential institution.

In nominating Dr. John Swaine for the award of our first Doctorate in the Humanities, the College wishes to honour the breadth as well as the depth of his contribution to the society in which we live. Your Honour, it is with great pleasure that I present to you the Honourable John Joseph Swaine, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Doctor of Laws, Queen's Counsel and Justice of the Peace, for the award of a Doctorate of Humanities *honoris causa*.