

The Colonial Administrative Service.

It was in mid or late August 1945, shortly after the dropping of the two Atomic Bombs in Japan - hardly a month after I was "enlisted (20 Jul 45), granted an emergency commission as a 2nd/Lt in the Intelligence Corps and promoted on the same day to the temporary rank of a Captain", when I was given a pamphlet to read. The Pamphlet was designed to give some idea to serving servicemen, due soon to be demobilized, what jobs - in "civic street" - would be "in the market", which might suit their individual taste or temperament upon their returning to Civilian life on their being demobilized from the Armed Forces.

Listed amongst the many possibles, many were professional including doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, business executives etc. Of which one attracted my attention. It was listed as the Colonial Administrative Service, outlining briefly, that Cadets recruited to that service would normally be expected to serve in capacities such as a District Officer or an Administrative Officer in a Government Department in one of the many Colonies. It has attracted my attention because on reading the terms such as "Cadet" and "District Officer" a thought in my mind related almost immediately to a few friends I had recently made during the War in Free China; namely, (a) Major D.R.(Ronnie)

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Holmes, M.C., M.B.E., (afterwards, Sir Ronald Holmes, CMG, CBE in addition) who was for a time O.C., Advanced Headquarters, British Army Aid Group, Waichow, for some time my immediate superior officer, whose personal qualities I greatly admired and who very kindly wrote an extremely good testimonial in my favour; (b) Major E.B. (Eddie) Teesdale, M.C., who was for a time O.C., Hing Ning Regional Headquarters of the British Army Aid Group, who had impressed me by his excellent command of the spoken Cantonese language, and his immense popularity amongst his peers (who afterwards rose to become Hongkong's Colonial Secretary); (c) Bobbie Thompson (who later became Sir Robert Thompson, a World Authority on Communism"), a Cadet of the Malayan Civil Service, who was learning the Chinese Language in Hongkong, whom I met in Kukong. All three of them were former members of the "Z" Force (a secret organization established under the British Minister for Economic Warfare in 1941 to harass the enemy from behind the lines by a system of sabotage, espionage and intelligence) under Mike Kendall prior to the formation of the British Army Aid Group. Also (d) Mr. P.C.M. Sedgewich, a Cadet Officer, who was sent to Kukong, under the auspices of the British Embassy in Chungking, to pay "back pays" to ex Hongkong civil servants who were refugees stranded or otherwise working or wandering about in Free China.

On top of these three gentlemen, my mind was further associated with an outstanding celebrity in the

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person of Sir Cecil Clementi, who was a Cadet Officer serving in the New Territories as District Officer, North, way back in early 1905, who returned to become the Governor of Hongkong in 1925, in whose honour, I was "chosen", in my tender age of 9 year-old, as a member of a special choir to represent the students from schools in the New Territories, to sing a specially composed Song of Welcome, for a "Special Formal Welcome" at Taipo Market for his Triumphant and Glorious Return. Along with the thought of Sir Cecil Clementi, my mind also relates with several lesser dignitaries, who were personal friends of my father, including "Sunny Wood" who was for a time the Director of Education and later Secretary for Chinese Affairs; a Mr. de Martin, who was for a time a School Inspector, who later rose to become the Director of Education, who taught my father how to play the game of bridge, through which I too became initiated in the playing of the game of bridge in my relative youth age; and also a Mr Fraser, who was District Officer North at Taipo, who signed a special Court Order, confirming a "right of way" through "On Lok Tsuen" to my humble village of Shung Him Tong following our winning the case of an inter-village dispute some years ago.

I recall my father used to repeat many times to me, his admiring if not flattering description, generally of Cadet Officers as a class or group, that they were "men of decency and of honour and of noble ideal, with strong sense

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X of justice and self respect^s, as well as sense of devotion to
X duties, who were morally incorruptible and intellectually
honest. All these - personalities and words of praise - had
subconsciously developed within my own mind, into a subtle
desire - nay more like a long cherished dream - that one fine
day, I too may become a Cadet Officer, with all the ^{high ideals} perks
that go with the status. However, as I was reading the
pamphlet and as my mind was wandering over all the thoughts I
have just described, an unmistakable and glaring snag caught
my eyes, and sharply too. There was a restrictive clause
indicating that the Colonial Administrative Service were
X reserved exclusively to candidates who are British Subject^s of
X European Descent. Colonials^{Residents}, such like myself, who were
British Subjects, would not qualify even to apply. As I read
X such a racially bias or discriminatory restriction I felt as
if a pale of cold water had^{been} poured over my head flowing down
my neck with a chilling effect on the warmer parts of my
body. It had somehow struck my mind very deeply, so deeply
that I have not been able to get rid of it from my mind or my
memories.

Then in Nov 1945, when I have had some six weeks
service as Staff Officer, Grade III, Civil Affairs, British
Military Administration - (initially posted to assist the
Brigade Commander garrisoning in Kowloon, but later, without
formality, reassigned to be attached to work under Mr. John
Barrow, the District Officer to cope with the variety of

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problems relating to the Administration of the New Territories) - it was John Barrow, who one day initiated a private discussion with me about ^{on} my "future". He indicated then that it was his personal view that I would make a good District Officer, but that had been the preserve of a "Cadet Officer" in the Colonial Service. He wonder^{ed} if I had any intention of continuing to serve the Hongkong Government ⁱⁿ a capacity as a District Officer or the like, and if so, I must first of all apply to join the Colonial Service in the proper and appropriate way. He made it quite plain that he meant I should go through the usual competitive and pretty tough selection procedure. He was emphatic that I should not cherish the hope of entering from the "back door". In the course of the dialogue, I made it plain also that although the thought of joining the Colonial Administrative Service had occurred in my mind, I was discouraged to pursue the matter further simply on account of the fact that I had come across an "exclusion clause" in an War Office Rehabilitation Paper which would operate ^{active} ~~against~~ individuals like me, who were not of European Descent, even though I was a British Subject holding a King's Commission in the British Army, and had an M.B.E. For that reason, it had not been my conscious intention of becoming a peace time civil servant in a subordinate or other junior capacities, such as a clerk, or an interpreter, or a sub-inspector in the Police Force or a sub-inspector in the Sanitary Department. Whereupon, John Barrow, without even giving a chance to explain my position

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further, quickly dictated a minute worded as follows:-

" Capt. Paul K.C. Tsui, M.B.E., of the B.A.A.G., has been attached to me as Assistant District Officer since 1st October 1945. He understands that he is due for early demobilization.

" He is of great assistance to me (I will leave it at that...this is not the place to discuss his qualities) and I now request that he may be formally appointed A.D.O. in the War Establishment, dating from 1st October 1945.

"At the same time I must make it clear that this recommendation is with a view to the duration of the period of military Government only, and in nowise implies a recommendation that Capt Tsui should automatically be transferred to the civil establishment as A.D.O. when a civil Government takes over. It has always been a rule with British Civil Services that "back door" entry is barred, and my experience has taught me that this is proper. When the time comes Capt. Tsui can, if he wishes (which I gather is unlikely) apply at the front door, presumably by examination, for entry into the Civil Service.

sd. J. Barrow

D.O., N.T.,

9th November, 1945

I was given a copy of that minute for keep.

Sometime thereafter, I was given an Application Form for the Colonial Administrative Service to fill. Despite the stipulated (racial) restriction, I was encouraged to complete the Form, which I did. Not long thereafter - (? in March 1946) I was told that I would be flown to Ceylon to be interviewed by someone specially sent there from the Colonial Office in London to recruit ex-servicemen in the South East Asian Theatre due to be demobilized for appointment in the Colonial Service.

Flown on board a 4-engine Sunderland Sea Plane, were about a dozen others, including Major Raymond SH Lee, a Surgeon, RAMC., Lt.Col. Y.S. Wan, a Dentist, also of RAMC., Major Robertson, a Veterinarian, and several others mostly professionals. Although I had had the experience of flying short trips on a small seaplane - a "Sea Otta" - over the New Territories to places like "Kat O" or "Lantau", it was the first time that I flew on a 4-engine large seaplane like a Sunderland and across the Oceans to a far away place like Ceylon. In my Intelligence Officer's days, I had read about the Sunderland as an Aircraft specially designed for Anti submarine warfare. It was particularly good for rescuing crewmen of sunken ships stranded in the vast ocean. It has 4 engines and is spacious. It could fly very low, and could "land" virtually anywhere at sea. When landed at sea it

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floats like a boat. It has "exit" doors on both sides of the fuselage, rendering rescuing operations practical and easy.

The one we flew was in "war time" condition. It had bare metal walls with metallic ribs fully exposed with absolutely no "decor" or "finishings" of any sort. No "lining", no "panellings" not even "chairs" to seat the passengers. On the internal walls of the fuselage, were collapsable "metal frames", mounted with "canvas" or "plastic sheets", which could be used as "beds" for the wounded as necessary. We were simply seated severally on such "beds". Before boarding the plane, we were each given a inflatable life-jacket called the "May-West" - just in case ! There were "seat-belts" attached to the "beds" which we could use when the air got a bit bumping. I was not quite sure whether the plane was "pressurized" - as we were flying very low most of the time through-out the journey. So low that at times I felt we could almost touch the surface of the sea if we stretch our hands far enough. It did not fly very fast either. For the distance from Hongkong to Ceylon, we had to stop overnight at Rangoon in Burma on our way out, and did the same in Singapore on our way home. It was very noisy all the time, so noisy that we could hardly hear what the other was saying when we tried to speak to each other.

The plane took off very early in the morning. We had to spend the night before in a transit hotel on Chatham Road. We were waken up at 5.00 am before dawn to have our

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breakfast and taken by an Army Truck to the far end (Ngau Chi Wan end) of the then Kai Tak, where the R.A.F. headquarters was located. We took off at day break but stopped flying as early as about 4.00 pm in the afternoon. We had time to stroll around Rangoon in that evening, whence Major Raymond Lee and I contacted an old Hongkong University Graduate we knew - Dr. Goh Keng Lok - who lived and practised in Rangoon through out the war years. His father was a well known Chinese Merchant having an established business in the heart of Rangoon. When we met him, Dr. Koh had turned very religious if not philosophical. He was full of Buddha and Buddhism. He took us to visit the famous Pagoda in the heart of Rangoon, where he very piously knelt before the statute of Buddha. The hard time of the war years must have cut deep into his soul.

Apart from making us feeling drowsy, the some ten hours of flying each day under such conditions, occasionally caused my mind to wander un-cohesively or aimlessly about. Amongst the thoughts which came across my mind was my imagination of what it might have been like when the scholars of Ancient China who had to travel all the way to the Capital to sit for the "Metropolitan Examination" and if successful to further sit for the "Imperial Court Examination". That was the one and only proper way to win the honour of being admitted to "Han Lin Yuen" - the Imperial Academy - where the scholars would be assigned to do certain editorial/research

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work prior to given an appointment in the Civil Service. So many of them never made it ! I asked myself repeatedly "Would I make it" ?

We landed early in the afternoon somewhere in the heartland on the Island of Ceylon. I wasn't sure whether it was Kandy, the place where Lord Louis Monbatton, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in South East Asia, had his headquarters. I only recall, it took hours for the Army Truck to take us from where we landed to the City of Colombo, the capital city of Ceylon, where the Recruitment Interview was to take place. At Colombo, we were billeted in an "Officers Club" by the sea side, which was quite a pleasant place to stay - much better than a conventional hotel.

I was told the Recruitment exercise would take place in the Municipal Building - a unmistakable impressive looking building which houses the Municipal Government in downtown Colombo. When my turn was due, I was expecting to face with a formidable Selection Board each firing me with the least expected questions. To my surprise, I was conducted to a small cubicle, wherein was seated, only a single elderly Recruitment Officer. He impressed me to be quite mature, approachable rather than "formidable" ; probably ⁱⁿ at his late fifties. As we got started he further impressed me to be a kindly old man, rather soft spoken. Amongst the masses of papers he had before him, I spotted one which was the

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Application Form I had recently completed. He flipped through the papers in his file, and asked me a few questions to clarify certain particulars. He was interested to note that I had obtained a "War Time Degree" awarded by the University of Hongkong, and congratulated me for having won an M.B.E. I seemed over hearing him muttering unto himself, the War-time Degree coupled with the M.B.E. would compare favourably to a First Class Honours at Oxford or Cambridge.

He then went on to asked me what was the B.A.A.G., and what did I do in that organization. I explained briefly that it was an organization, which set as its main task, to assist "prisoners of war" held ~~in~~ captive in Japanese occupied Hongkong, with, as its side line, the collection of military intelligence for Allied Forces. I happened to have brought along with me, not only a C-in-C's Letter of Commendation - signed by General Auchinleck but also the 4 personal testimonials given to me by my 4 consecutive Superior Officers; Major J.D. Clague, Lt. Col. EDG Hooper, Major DR Holmes and Major RC Cooper. He read them very carefully and appeared quite impressed. I seemed to have heard him muttering unto himself, that the C-in-C's letter of Commendation would certainly compare favourably with a "Rugger Blue" or a "Rowing Blue" obtainable at Oxford or Cambridge; and the several personal testimonials of my superior officers would certainly compare favourably to the "Reference Letters" from Referees, usually obtainable from

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the Tutors at an Oxford or Cambridge College. He ended up by making the remarks : "I see that you obviously have been
x doing ^vvery interesting work, having quite an exciting time and done yourself very well !" Instead of asking me further questions with the view of testing my ability, he asked me if I had any question to ask him.

Whereupon I took the opportunity and raise the racist question of "exclusion" of candidates who are not British Subject "of European Descent" for appointment to Colonial Administrative Service. In response, he was rather surprised that I had raised the question. He responded saying in so far as he was concerned, "race" was not a question. He went on to say in the Civil Service in Ceylon
λ for instant^{ly}, many Ceylonese were holding appointments as administrative officers and some were holding quite senior and key positions and had proved themselves to be doing their jobs exceptionally well. In India, there were many Indians serving as Administrative Officers in the I.C.S. "It is the ability of the individual concerned that counts, not the race or colour of the individual." He then asked me where did I get the idea. I told him that I had recently read it from an official publication, released specially for Army Officers who were about to be demobilized - like myself - who might be looking for suitable peace time jobs. He then said he did not think I need to worry about that point, but he would nevertheless look into the matter and clear the way for me,

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if that still worried me. Having cleared the point I had been worrying about, I had nothing else to say. He ended up by saying "You will be informed of the result in due course".

We spent about a week in Colombo, partly to attend the Interviews, and partly treating it as our Rest and Recreation leave. I explored a bit of the City of Colombo, but was not too impressed by it. However, I did buy a pair of ear-rings set with two small pieces of red stones - (? ruby) - for my wife. I also bought for myself two sets of ribbons of my medals, which I had yet to claim. From the conversations I had had with Col. Wan and Major Lee, at that stage, I gained the impression that both of them had turned down the offer of a time scale appointment. I could quite understand, as Major Lee had been quite a gifted surgeon, who had held a teaching post in the Medical Faculty at the University of Hongkong prior to the outbreak of the War, and who additionally had performed many a surgical treatments in China during the War years. I could not see him accepting any appointment in the Government service at a level below the rank in the Directorate. In the case of Lt. Col. Y.S. Wan, x he was already quite advance^d in age, and had had quite a lucrative practice in Hongkong before the War. His main personal problem was that he was divorced, and had to share his "lucrative income" from his private practice with his x x divorced wife which he did not feel like. Further^{more} he was already a widely known and highly respected private

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practitioner in dentistry in Hongkong. Having held the rank of a Lt. Col. I could not see him accepting an appointment below the directorate level. In fact, the same might be said to the Veterinarian Robertson, who years thereafter held lucrative post of Hongkong Jockey Club's Club Veterinarian and Stable Manager for many years. His words were virtually law when the condition of a particular racing horse was in question.

We returned to Hongkong via Singapore, where we could not even get a room to spend the night. All the dozen of us had to spend several hours in the "lobby" of one of the Hotels, the name of which I do not now remember. Our plane took off in the small hours of the morning. We got back to Hongkong early in the afternoon. With the return from Rehabilitation Leave of the Civil Governor, Sir Mark Young, the British Military Administration came to an end at the end of March/April 1946. The Civil Authority took over. Soon Mr. J. Barrow was sent home on long leave. In his place, we first had Major E.B. Teesdale, and later Mr. Kenneth Keen, appointed as D.O., N.T. I continued to function as one of the A.D.Os. I had almost forgotten about the "Interview" I had had in Colombo, when some 6 months later, on **4th October 1946**, I was asked to report to Mr. Robert Minute, as Assistant Secretary (in charge of Personnel) on an urgent matter.

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Reporting to the then Colonial Secretary's Office known then as the C.S.O. rather than the Secretariat, I had to wait for my turn in the waiting room on the 1st floor. I recall meeting Major D.R (Ronnie) Holmes my former O.C. in Waichow on my way to the washroom. At the entrance, painted over the doorway in both English and in Chinese letters was the unmistakable indications to the effect "Europeans only". Ronnie Holmes spotted that and said to me : "I won't worry about that. You just ignored it. It will soon be erased" X X That brief exchange remains vividly in my mind ever since.

It was on 4th October 1946 that I received from the hands of Robert Minute, an official offer of a provisional appointment to the Colonial Administrative Service in terms as follows:

"I am directed to inform you that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has informed me that he has selected you for appointment to the Colonial Administrative Service subject to your being medically fit and to your successfully completing the first course at Oxford University which begins October 13th, 1946 and lasts for 15 months.

"While at the University you will receive a standard allowance payable to Administrative Cadets attending the course which, including vacation allowance

for Cadets from the Colonies, amounts to L28. 8s.8d per month.

"You will be paid prior to your departure an outfit allowance of L35.

"Passage by B.O.A.C. to the United Kingdom is being arranged for you at Government expense and you should be ready to leave Hongkong on the plane scheduled for 9th October.

"While on the course approved University fees will be paid for you. A dependants allowance will be paid to you for the maintenance of your family in Hongkong with effect from your date of departure. This allowance will be at the rate of L280 per annum plus high cost of living allowance appropriate to this figure, which at present is L140. Arrangement can be made for this to be paid into you account at the Chartered Bank.

"The Secretary of State for the Colonies has not informed me what salary you will be appointed at, when your appointment is confirmed. This question will no doubt be decided by the Colonial Office before you return to Hongkong.

doubt be decided by the Colonial Office before you return to Hongkong.

"Your release from the army has already been approved by ALFSEA and you should consult Major Sterling with regard to the matter.

I am, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,

(sd. Robert Minute)

for Colonial Secretary

Up to now, some 46 years thereafter, I am still not clear, whether the offer to me of an appointment in the Colonial Service was a direct result of the Interview I had had in Colombo, or was it on the strength of the personal recommendation of the then Governor, Sir Mark Young, who came to know me personally when he was very keen in visiting many parts of the New Territories, who repeated^{ly} insisted that I should act as his guide besides as his personal interpreter in many of his inspection/investigation tours (including once when the entire body of the Executive Council as well as the top brasses from the Armed Forces and the Director of Civil Aviation - were flown over the entire New Territories in search for a suitable site for building a new Airport). I

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recall the entire party was impressed by my knowledge of the geographical details of the New Territories, viewed from the air. Some months thereafter, when Sir Mark Young retired and returned to England, he made a specific point of visiting me at Queen's College, Oxford. He further extended me a personal invitation to have lunch with him in his house in (?) Surrey. He followed my career with great personal interest, for which I was indeed grateful. I recall my Supervisor at Oxford, Lt. Col. Drummond (rtd), who seemed to know Sir Mark Young very well, and who always spoke very highly of him as the famous Colonial Governor, used to speak to me about Sir Mark Young in terms as if I was Sir Mark's protege.

With the letter of offer in hand, I walked down by Battery Path to Central, on my way home intending to cross the Harbour by Star Ferry. It was still early in the afternoon. As I walked along Ice House Street, I thought of dropping in to say hallo to Capt. A.C. (Alec) Grieves, who was then working as a Press Officer in Government's Public Relations Office (the P.R.O., the predecessor of to-day's G.I.S. - Government Information Service). Alec was formerly a journalist, working as a junior editor for the South China Morning Post. Alec & I were close friends. We both saw service in the same unit with the B.A.A.G. in Waichow and at Ho Yuen, in Free China. We both worked as civilians for a
X long time, and did not received our Commission to the intelligence Corps until quite close towards the end of the

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War. My intention of dropping in to see him was just for a "chin-wag". On seeing him in his office, Alec asked how I had been getting on. I told him then that I had just had a offer of a provisional appointment to the Colonial Service subject to certain conditions. I had to go to England to do some further studies first. He asked to see my letter, and I let him see it. As he was reading the letter he was very excited and was saying: "Paul, this is great news ! It is history making ! You are the first ever local boy to have been offered an appointment to the Colonial Administrative Service ! You have broken down a well entrenched racial barrier ! You ought to be very proud of your achievement ! My congratulations ! We must make some publicity about this.

He then asked if I had a photograph of myself. I searched my pocket and there I happened to have one, which was recently taken by my former teacher, Peter Dragon, who x turned professional photographer. Alec grabbed it, and down he went, bashing on the keyboard of his type writer (with his two fingers like many other journalists did). Soon he produced a feature article and asked his Chinese Press Officer to have it rendered into Chinese. He then got on to his technical staff to have my photograph reproduced into grossy ones and arranged to have the photographs attached to copies of his article with an appropriate Headline to be distributed to the press and to be in time as leading press release story of the day for publication on the following

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day. He also got on to some one in Radio Hongkong, and arranged to have it included in the newscast that evening. I did not listen to the broadcast about myself over Radio Hongkong that evening, but many of my friends and relatives told me they did and congratulated me.

On the following day, I read with my own eyes, a front page news article about myself and the epoch making offer to a local boy of an appointment, hitherto reserved exclusively for Europeans only, to the British Colonial Administrative Service. Instantaneously, I became famous over night. I felt somewhat flattered. One of my uncles congratulated my mother with the comments as follows: "This is just like the news in ancient China, when a scholarly son of a humble country gentry from a remote corner of the Empire, scored the top mark at an Imperial Court Examination, and granted, by Royal Decree, the highly coveted Honourable Title of Chuang Yuan (), rendering him eligible for an appointment to high office in the Imperial Civil Service? It is the greatest Honour an ordinary commoner family could ever hope to achieve. If you are not a Christian and practise what was true to the Chinese Tradition, you should have a "Thanksgiving" to your Ancestors at your Family Ancestral Temple. Being a Christian, I presume you must have prayed a lot to your God and devoted a tremendous amount of love and hard work to have given birth and brought up such a wonderful son. I have no doubt you

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will thank your God appropriately. Anyway, you deserve our heartiest congratulations !"

Whatever what other people might have said, I had not yet broken down all the barriers. I had yet to go to England, a country I had never been before. There I had to yet to study for more than a year at the World famous University where they would not let people get away with its degree or diploma that easily. I was told I would have examinations to pass, besides earning the favourable reports of my tutors and supervisor. If for any reason, I failed to complete the course successfully, I gathered then that I would have to refund the expenses incurred, including the maintenance allowance payable to my wife and family in Hong Kong. The "scholarship" did not include provision for me to take my family along with me to England. Our Honey Moon had hardly been over, but once again and in Peace Time, I had to leave my wife and our baby girl, with one more on the day, behind in Hongkong.

However, way back some years ago in my school days, I recall reading some sort of a write up on the World famous Oxford University in England. I then cherished a dream that one day I might find my way to become enrolled as a student at that famous institution. Then as an undergraduate at Hongkong University, I was fascinated to have learnt that one of (my Professor) Hsii Ti-shan's degree was a B.Litt from

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X Oxford University. I was also curious to have learnt that a class mate of my sister Miss Katherine Lai, who won a highly coveted Boxers Indemnity Scholarship, opted to go to Oxford for a post-graduate degree in Philology. I also heard of other friends of my father who had returned from Oxford who spoke highly of the students' lives at Oxford. I also recall that one day in late 1942, when the War was far from over, and when I chanced ^{to have} had a private chat with my friend and O.C. Duggie Clague as to what we might do when the War was over, I told him I would love to have an opportunity of spending some time as a student at the Oxford University in England. Thus for me, the offer of a 15 month course of studies at Oxford University, along with the offer of a possible appointment to the Colonial Administrative Service, amounted not only to a most desirable bonus, but also as a dream came true. It was the Oxford part of the offer which delighted my heart most at the time. It could be likened to an assignment of a successful scholar at the Imperial Court Examination to a "research" or "editorial" post in the Han Lin Yuan (the Imperial Academy), pending substantive appointment to the Civil Service.

The B.O.A.C. plane which was supposed to carry me all the way from Hongkong to London, was a 4-engine flying boat. Outwardly, it looked exactly like the Sunderland which brought me some months ago to Ceylon for an Interview and subsequently brought me back to Hongkong. But inside the

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aeroplane, it was totally different. There were rows of comfortable soft chairs, two only on either side of the centre aisle. The seats were very spacious and comfortable, I had more than enough room to stretch my legs when I tried to take a good rest or to sleep. The internal decor were "plush" and "de luxe", and there was a sort of a conference room in the rear part of the cabin - with a conference table surrounded with soft seating bench rounding more than half the length of the circumference of the table, with a few turn stile stools on the outside of the table. The decor and fittings, to me, were obvious top class fit for carrying top-brasses. I speculated in my own mind that the plane might have been designed to carry big shots; such as Churchill, Roosevelt or the like to attend conference in Cairo or Yalta. However, the plane ^eflow rather slowly. We first had our first stop at Rangoon where we spent the first night. When we got as far as the Persian Gulf, the plane developed engine troubles. We had to stop twice in the Persian Gulf, first at Bahrain and then again at Basra to repair its engines which took hours at each such stop. Then we got stuck at Cairo for 4 days, where eventually we had to change plane to travel on an Army Transport - a York - to complete the last part of our journey.

My first ever landing in the country called England gave me a rather mixed feeling. It was a misty afternoon. The plane had to go through a very thick blanket of clouds which

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never seen, ^{ed} to end to reach a level where we could see land ! That part of the journey was bumpy and uncomfortable, in fact it was rather scaring for me. Glancing from the air, I could not believe my eyes that London looked so "country" like, rather than "city" like - presenting a sight of continuous and endless rows and rows of low rise two-storeyed or single-storey cottage type of houses. In no way as I had expected that it might at least have some medium high rise buildings like we had in Hongkong ! It was in mid afternoon, however, sun light could not get through the thick blanket of clouds, London looked not a bit cheerful ! I was not at all impressed ! I had never been in London before, I had no idea how to find my way round the maze like parts of Central London. It did not even know where I was going to spend the night on landing. It was a good thing that I made friends with another Army Officer, a captain, on the way. He very kindly acted as my guide when we landed in London. He brought me to an Officers' Club somewhere in downtown London, where he helped me to get a room in which to sleep for the night. The next day after having breakfast in the Club which I don't remember having paid for it, he taught me how to travel by "The Tubes", the Underground trains. In fact he took the trouble to walk me down the streets, through Trafalgar Square, then down a wide thorough fare passing by the Cenotaph, where he reminded me to salute - because I was X still in Uniform. Then passing by the Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament with its Big Ben, where he then

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pointed his finger to an old miserable looking building on one side of the road and said to me: "This is the White Hall.

X That is the Colonial Office^{USA} you are looking for ! Good luck, my boy !" That was the last I saw of him, I do not even remember what ~~was~~ his name, or which Army unit ~~was~~ he ~~was~~ serving.

My days at Oxford turned out to be a spell of really happy time. Not only was I once again enjoying a care free life of a university undergraduate, but the ready and easy access to a tremendous varieties of books, lectures, seminars, debates, discussions and conferences, as well as X the exposure to the fun~~s~~ and games of so many young people, were truly an eye opening and mind enlightening experience. The "Devonshire Course I" which I attended was designed mainly for young graduates freshly from Oxford or Cambridge, X who had opted to make the Colonial Service ~~as~~ a life-long career but had never before been to a Colony. Attending a full 3 terms course of lectures on Criminal Law and on Laws of Evidence, enhanced my intellect to a new dimension hitherto imperceptible, thus developing an interest in a new concept of Peace and Justice. Listening to lectures by World Level leading academics on Social Anthropology, on Colonial Economics, on International Trade, or Tropical agriculture, on Tropical nutrition, On Tropical medicine~~s~~ and irrigation~~s~~ and to the expositions of celebrated scholars on the historical, cultural, social, moral or even philosophical

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justification (rather than the more popular but much simplified degrading economic or military justification) for the British Colonial Empire were something entirely new - a new angle from which to see and perceive phenomena which had never occurred to my mind as possible or logical.

My special course of studies was not confined to Oxford. It extended to an additional One and half terms at the London School of Economics and Political Science and at the London School of Oriental and African Studies. Part I of the course at Oxford finishing at the end of May 1947. From June onwards, we were transferred to London, where we continued our pursuit of learning - partly on the British system of Local Government and partly on regional studies of the various parts of the Colonial Empire.

Getting acquainted with the day to day workings of the Local Governments in England was indeed an eye opener. Hitherto I had no idea how expensive it was to build a mile of road until I was shown a contract document for a part of a new Highway near London. Never before I bothered to find out how quickly domestic refuse accumulate^d in a municipality, or how difficult it was to find acceptable ways to dispose of them. Maps and plans of miles and miles of cobweb-like complex network of sewers laid underground in London apart, it was an eye opener and a unique experience indeed when we were taken to see how the gigantic Sewage Disposal Plant in

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Middlesex **worked** to cope with the enormous and endless amounts of sewage that kept coming out from the Metropolis called Greater London.

For those youthful Englishmen who had never been to a Colony, they had to be given a realistic idea that the area of a single Colony such as Nigeria, was larger than the British Isles and France put together. They would further be given a clearer idea that the Fiji Islands were somewhere in the mid Pacific and not in any part of the African Continent. Learning a language spoken by the natives in Northern Nigeria was in fact more an exacting and ~~a~~ sweating affair than a school boy learning ~~to~~ Greek for his Exam.

My times at Oxford and in London were certainly not all play and no work. At the end of the both parts of the course, I had to sit for my exams, and our supervisor had made it very plain that the standards expected of us was the equivalent of what were obtaining for the Honours School at the Bachelor level after three years as an undergraduate. In a little over a year's time we had to cram in what other students would normally take 3 years ! At the final examination and as expected, I did not score a Distinction (as a few of us did) which was accepted as equivalent to a First Class Honours. However I passed my exams and I was accepted as having successfully completed the course.

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On the 5th day of December 1947, I was offered a probationary appointment to the Colonial Administrative Service as an Administrative Officer in Hongkong. I embarked on board the S.S. "Empire Brent" leaving Glasgow on 12th December 1947, and was back in Hongkong on 24th January 1948, with effect from which date, my appointment was made public by an appropriate Gazette Notification. Two years thereafter, I was confirmed to the P.P.E. (permanent and pensionable establishment). In the letter confirming my permanent and pensionable appointment, I was reminded of my weakness in my English language, and told to make efforts to improve it. On the 25th day of April 1956 (some ten years after I received my first letter of offer and some two years after my returning from completion of my **Devonshire Course II** at Oxford), by a letter in the behalf of the Colonial Secretary, bearing the File # 2/13/4518/54, I was informed that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had enrolled me as a *member of Her Majesty's Oversea Civil Service*. I had some times wondered whether that was the last racial or racist barricade I had break down ?

In the course of my 25 years service, I was first promoted to the rank of a Senior Administrative Officer on 1 July 1959, then to Staff Grade C on 6 August 1961, then to Staff Grade B2 on 27 July 1965, then to Staff Grade B1 on 22 April 1969 and finally to Staff Grade A on 15 August 1970. Shortly after my being confirmed to the Permanent Pensionable

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Establishment, I was appointed a Justice of The Peace for Hongkong on 10 March 1950. Towards the end of my first spell (New Year 1968) of acting appointment in the post of Secretary for Chinese Affairs, I was conferred the Honour of an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. Shortly before my retirement (New Year 1973) I was promoted to the Dignity of a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. On my being appointed in May 1967 in an acting capacity as Secretary for Chinese Affairs, I was first sworn in as an acting Ex-Officio Member of the Executive ^{Council} (the equivalent of a cabinet rank post), concurrently a member of the Legislative and of the Urban Councils, In my capacity as the Secretary for Chinese Affairs (which post was renamed in Secretary for Home Affairs at the time when I acted, on a 2nd spell, as S.C.A.), and strictly according to protocol, I took precedence before the Financial Secretary, ranking after only 5 officials who took precedence before me; namely the Attorney General, the Colonial Secretary, the Chief Justice, the Commander of British Forces and the Governor, in the Hierarchy of the Hongkong Government. Subsequently in 1970, on my substantive promotion to Staff Grade A, I was appointed, in my own rights and in a personal capacity, a member of the Legislative Council (the equivalent of a Back Bencher) and of the Urban Council.

I am now drawing my pensions and enjoying my well earned retirement. If I live to the old age of beyond my 80,

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I sincerely hope that the Government of the day in Hongkong would honour its promise to continue to pay me my pensions. If so, I could then say loud and clear :

" All's well that ends well !"

Paul Tsui

Vancouver - February 29th, 1992

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