

## **Speech by Senator Vivienne Poy**

### **University of Toronto Program (CCLA –NPC Visit)**

**June 5, 2009**

Your Excellency Mr. Zheng Silin, Vice Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress, members of the China-Canada Legislative Association, President Naylor, Consul General Zhu, my colleagues from the Parliament of Canada, members of the Faculty, ladies and gentlemen:

As Vice Chair of the Canada-China Legislative Association, it gives me great pleasure to welcome our friends from our counter part Association in China. The last time I welcomed a delegation from China at the University of Toronto was when I was Chancellor. Today, I am wearing two hats.

朱總領事，各位女士、各位先生；  
歡迎大家來多倫多大學訪問。

During my term as Chancellor of this great university, I worked towards greater friendship between the University of Toronto with China and Hong Kong.

I attended 2 convocations of the University of Toronto in Hong Kong for students who were not able to be in Toronto for their graduation. These were also attended by students from other parts of Asia, e.g. Singapore, and of course, many of their family members. These were very special convocations for everyone.

I would like to tell you about a very memorable 48 hour visit I made to Shanghai for the University a few years ago. It was a visit to our illustrious graduate, Dr. Chien Weizang who received his PhD in Mechanical and Industrial Engineering in 1942. He was then the President of Shanghai University, despite his advanced age. I think this could only happen in Chinese culture where our elders are highly regarded. Dr. Chien is one of the most respected mathematicians in the world. There was a lot of fanfare at the university. We had a very pleasant visit with Dr. Chien and members of his administration, and I presented him with an award of merit from the University of Toronto.

The same evening, the University held an alumni reception at the American Club, which has a fabulous view of Pudong. I was amazed at the number of our graduates who attended the event. Needless to say, I am always in awe at the caliber of graduates we have from China and Hong Kong.

加拿大是個多元文化的國家，多倫多大學是加拿大最大的高等學府。相信各位在校園內，一定注意到有許多來自國內的學生。多年來，我們培養了許多人才，為加拿大和中國社會做出各方面的貢獻。

During my term as Chancellor, I recognized the importance international students played in the University. Today, the enrolment from China is more than two thousand (2,100), and about 800 (759) from Hong Kong. Chinese students studying at the University of Toronto contribute so much to the success of our university. While many of these students will return to China, some of them stay in Canada, and they will help to build bridges between our two countries.

We have numerous ethnic Chinese associations in Toronto, but probably the most important one formed by the Chinese from mainland China, in 1992, is the Chinese Professionals Association of Canada (CPAC), which now has 24,000 members. It is a very active organization, with an important component for youth, which gives awards to outstanding students. As Honorary Patron of their Education Foundation, I also presented Senate certificates to the award winners.

Among the large number of Chinese students who study in Canada, those who decide to stay, join a large and growing demographic. In our last Census (2006), 1.2 million Canadians described themselves as being of Chinese heritage. For a number of years, Hong Kong and China have topped the list of source countries for immigrants. You need only look at the streets of the Toronto, and on campus of this University to realize the extent of ethnic Chinese presence here.

University of Toronto is a leading research university, and among many of our most prominent researchers is Lap-Chee Tsui, who has been snatched by the University of Hong Kong, and has been their Vice Chancellor for the past 7 years. He is best known for identifying the defective gene that causes cystic fibrosis. He also helped found Genome Canada, and for his many accomplishments, his name lives on in the University of Toronto, in the Giants of Biomedical Science Hall, where his bronze statute now stands alongside other legends in science.

There are many Chinese Canadians who were born in Canada who are now working in greater China. At the same time, there is sizable return migration of those who came here to study or to work. For both China and Canada, our people are our greatest resource, and they help to build strong ties between our two countries.

The two most famous Canadians in China are Norman Bethune, and Dashan. The Chinese people have long memories, and they will forever thank Norman Bethune, and remember him with the greatest respect.

And now, we have Dashan, whose name is Mark Rowswell, who lives in Toronto with his family. He has been, for many years, our best cultural ambassador, and I was so happy when he was recently named Commissioner General for the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 by our Foreign Affairs Minister.

I was recently in three different cities in New Brunswick, and learnt that the New Brunswick public school curriculum is being taught in two schools in Beijing and two schools in Shenzhen. At graduation, the students receive a Chinese, as well as a New Brunswick, high school diploma.

It was also in the news just a few years ago that China imports Canadian text books for their schools. I read that Chinese students are studying “Canadian English,” and that means Chinese students who use our text books will end up knowing a lot about Canada. This again will help to bring our two countries closer.

I understand that many of our Chinese guests know of the Rotman School of Management, since the school has been training officials from China over a number of years. We look forward to furthering our relationship in this regard.

You will be hearing from Prof. Joseph Wong on the work of the Asian Institute in its relationship with China. I want to add that the Chinese community in Toronto appreciates the outreach of the Institute in involving its members, and we have a most engaging relationship.

In closing, I trust all the members of the China-Canada Legislative Association are enjoying their visit to Toronto and to the University of Toronto.