

**Hong Kong's New CE Goes Calling  
Asia Sentinel  
March 27, 2012  
By Our Correspondent**

***C Y Leung rattles critics in his first act -- to say thanks to Beijing's representative***

Hong Kong's Chief Executive-elect, C.Y. Leung has lost no time in confirming his critics' view of him, alarming many who had preferred him to the non-too-bright rich kid Henry Tang.

Just a day after his election Leung hastened to the Liaison Office of the Hong Kong & Macau Affairs Office, Beijing's representative in the territory. It was just his second meeting after the election and followed one with the current Chief Executive Donald Tsang. It took precedence over meeting other senior Hong Kong figures including the chief justice and the president of the Legislative Council.

Leung must have known that such a visit, particularly after the Liaison Office played such an active role in swinging votes his way, would cause concern among millions of Hong Kong people. Yet he went ahead anyway, suggesting that he cared more about being seen as grateful to Beijing and anxious to take instructions than listening to the concerns of local people. Many had been alarmed that the Liaison Office's actions during and even before the election were undermining the territory's One Country-Two Systems principle and the notion that Hong Kong People rule Hong Kong.

The most-often expressed concern about Leung before the election was that behind the façade of an articulate, caring middle-class professional lay a hard-nosed Communist apparatchik. His commitment to change and a degree of reform was, it was claimed, a means to achieve popularity and then use that to push through illiberal measures and slow the advance towards genuinely representative government. That has yet to be seen in practice but his rushing off to pay respects to the Liaison Office suggests that obedience to the party and the central government organs is in his blood.

He explained the visit as necessary to make arrangements to visit Beijing for his formal appointment. However, there is no rush for that given that he does not assume office until July 1. He could easily have waited several days or communicated otherwise with the Liaison Office. For his growing body of critics he added insult to injury by suggesting that it was also necessary to push ahead with implementation of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement with the mainland and Hong Kong's role in the national 12th 5-year plan. If those are his economic priorities he appeared, said critics new and old, to understand very little about the actual economic challenges facing Hong Kong but cared a lot about showing Beijing what a good toady he was.

However inadequate a figure Chief Secretary for Administration Henry Tang was, whom Leung disposed of handily in the chief executive selection process, he was at worst a weak-willed, spoiled brat opportunist, but one who at least never believed either in Communist party ideology or methods.

Leung now has a doubly difficult task convincing the growing numbers who once voiced support for him, let alone long-time critics, that he is not the dedicated authoritarian and

promoter of One-Country patriotism.

Maybe he truly is the long-disguised party hack who, according to Tang, wanted to use tear gas on the estimated 500,000 peaceful demonstrators protesting a proposed anti-subversion measure on July 1, 2003 and would surely do next time the masses demonstrate, however peacefully, against an unelected and unrepresentative government.

It is hard to imagine a worse start for Leung than cozying up to the Liaison Office. For most Hong Kong citizens, this is an even greater sin than cozying up to the property tycoons. They proved that in 2003.

Copyright © 2005 - 2012 Asia Sentinel.

Source: [http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=4370&Itemid=173](http://www.asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4370&Itemid=173)