



中文基本功

學習西方的先驅不在香港 興中會的創立也不在香港

一月六日晚上八時卅分後，收聽香港電台「香港歷史系列」，覺得有兩點值得商榷：主持人列舉香港開埠以後學習西方的人物，認為中國人學習西方的先驅在香港，此其一。主持人說孫中山在香港創立興中會，此其二。

按：香港開埠，指英軍在一八四一年佔領香港後開始城市建設。香港第一份介紹西方的中文報紙《遐邇實珍》創刊於一八五三年。王韜所辦的《循環日報》，要求借鑒西方，改革中國政治，它是一八七四年創辦的。他和稍後的一些華籍知名人士，該是中國人在香港學習西方的先驅人物。但更早的，有三位則全不在香港。

第一位龔自珍（一七九二—一八四一），浙江人，自稱「避席畏聞文字獄，著書都為稻粱謀」，其實為文深入揭露清朝專制的罪惡，主張「更法」、「改圖」，改變貧富差距，一八三一年，他第一次提出「頒製西洋奇器」（應用西方技術創造中國沒有的器械）的主張。

第二位林則徐（一七八五—一八五〇），福建人。一生事業最受關注的是來廣東禁鴉片，並領導軍民擊退英國侵略；

被忽視的是他的「放眼世界」。開戰前，他已組織翻譯班子，將英國人所著《世界地理大全》譯成《四洲志》，將另一部英人著作《中國人》摘譯成《華事夷言》，將瑞士人所寫《各國律例》譯了一部分。一八四一年鴉片戰爭剛打完，他於被謫伊犁途中，遇到老友魏源，將上述資料交給對方，叫他寫一本介紹西方的書。

第三位魏源（一七九四—一八五七），湖南人。早年即與龔自珍、林則徐成為好友，受他們影響。林介紹他參兩江總督裕祿戎幕。他奉命審訊一名英國間諜時，獲得對方提供有關英國的歷史、地理、經濟、政治等材料，配合林則徐所供給的材料，於一八五三年寫成《海國圖志》五十卷，提出向西方學習先進技術，強調「善師四夷」；後增補為一百卷。盛讚美國和瑞士的民主政體，稱前者的憲法「奕世而無弊」，後者則是「西土桃花源」。

至於孫中山一八四九年創立興中會，在檀香山（今夏威夷）而非香港。到第二年，香港才有「興中會」機構。 容若



Budget could have been more "sweet"

Financial Secretary John Tsang Chun-wah yesterday delivered the 2011-12 Budget, which drew particular attention. For, before its delivery, there had been wide speculation that the government would have huge fiscal surplus this year in a time when citizens were suffering from inflation.

It was thus **only to be expected** (when John Tsang reported) that Hong Kong's comprehensive surplus in last fiscal year reached \$71.3 billion, with financial reserves growing to \$591.6 billion -- equivalent to 23 months of government expenditure. From any perspective, this is a rather surprising and exciting figure. Such huge reserves are made thanks to higher-than-expected growth in incomes from profit tax, salaries tax, stamp duties on stock and housing transactions and land sales. What have made such strong growth possible are the global economic recovery and our country's continuous strong economic development. Hong Kong's unique advantage to benefit both "internally and externally" is really envious.

To **work out** a budget with barely enough fiscal income is like to "cook a meal with little rice". But it may be even a worse headache to work out a budget when there is huge surplus. This appeared to be particularly true in Hong Kong this time when there were numerous expectations and **yearnings for** "distribution of candies" with some people even explicitly calling out for "giving each person \$10,000". Under such circumstances, it posed a challenge to one's wisdom and savvy on how to draw an accurate demarcation between upholding the principle of "financial prudence" and satisfying public demands and how to keep a balance between long-term development and immediate relief. The answer given by John Tsang yesterday is above the passing mark. First of all, under the principle of "financial prudence" he has made good use of the huge reserves with the courage to sharply increase input into education, medical care, social welfare, infrastructure, culture and sports. In the coming fiscal year, the recurrent expenditure of the government will reach \$242 billion, up 8% from last year. Of the total, 56% will be spent on medical care, education and social welfare, in a fundamental commitment to promoting long-term economic development and improving the quality of citizenship. This will eventually benefit all citizens.

On the other hand, there are of course a series of relief measures (in the Budget) to help ease the pressure of inflation. No matter how much input the government would make into basic public finances, public attention on this Budget will still focus on the issue of "distribution of candies". After the delivery of the Budget, a general reaction is that: some "candies" are indeed offered which however do not taste so "sweet".

Let's first have a look at the "candies" distributed by the Budget: Waiving rates subject to a ceiling of \$1,500 per quarter; Granting each residential electricity account a subsidy of \$1,800; Paying two months' rent for public housing tenants; Providing an extra allowance to Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients, equal to one month of the standard rate CSSA payments; Providing an extra allowance to Old Age Allowance and Disability Allowance recipients, equal to one month of the allowances; Increasing the allowance for maintaining dependent parents/grandparents and children by 20 per cent; Issuing \$5 inflation-linked retail bonds or iBond; Making a one-off injection of \$6,000 into Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) accounts of all

workers. Total expenditure **amounts to** well over \$40 billion. It is thus absolutely unreasonable and irrational to say our "God of Fortune" is too "miserly" who cares little about people's hardships and refuses to distribute "candies". The series of relief measures are **in accord with** the principle of helping those who suffer the most severe hardships and thus are most in need of help, with an intention to take into consideration of the interests and benefits of various sectors. However, there is no tax refund or deduction, and one can only spend the \$6,000 injected into his MPF after retirement. In this regard, citizens in general do not feel very satisfied.

Obviously, the Financial Secretary's emphasis on saving some money for citizens for their future use is not affirmed by the public. Likewise, people prefer having an immediate tax refund to waiting for 10 or 20 years to enjoy the \$6,000. It seems the "God of Fortune" fails to understand people's mentality that they are more eager to have the rebate for their immediate disposal so that they can have some cash in hand in a time of hardships.

If the Budget, while focusing on making good use of reserves to promote development and for relief, could have also shown more tender feelings and concerns for citizens so as to improve the relationship between people and government by ironing out some of people's grievances, then this Budget with principle and reason would have become more successful and popular. Regrettably, John Tsang has failed to achieve this.

24 February 2011

WORDS AND USAGE :

① (Only) to be expected (idiom) - Be likely to happen, be quite normal. (意料之中，可以預料)

Examples: 1. You can't learn a foreign language in a week, it's not to be expected. 2. A little tiredness after taking these drugs is to be expected.

② Work sth out (phrasal verb) - To think of something; to plan something. (制定，擬定，策劃)

Examples: 1. We must work out a better method to save energy. 2. I'll work out our schedule.

③ Yearn for sb/sth (phrasal verb) - To want someone or something very much, especially when this is difficult to get. (yearning is the noun of yearn) (渴望，特別希望得到)

Examples: 1. The sailor yearned for home. 2. After such a long winter, she yearned for warm sunshine.

④ Amount to sth (phrasal verb) - To add up to something; to result in a final total of something. (總計，共計)

Examples: 1. My income last year amounted to \$220,000. 2. The cost of the tour amount to well over \$5,000.

⑤ In accord with (sb/sth) (idiom) - Agreeing with someone or something. (符合，一致)

Examples: 1. I am in complete accord with you about the policy changes. 2. What he has done is not in accord with your instructions.

觸景立畫 (Touching the scene and drawing) - An illustration of a family in a modern apartment with a caption: 安家樂業一直是中國人的傳統信念。香港從當年一個小漁村成為今天的國際化大都市，香港人居住的房屋也有了翻天覆地的變化。從最初木屋區、徙置區，到後來的唐樓、早期公屋，再到今天的新式居屋，香港政府一直致力為市民提供溫馨的安樂窩。 聖公會油塘基顯小學 張志傑

Soho Diary - A four-panel comic strip about a boy asking a dog for modeling advice. Panel 1: 'SO e-DOGO'S YOUR MODEL?' Panel 2: 'EMAIL TO UNCLE COMBO: e-Doggo's a good model (image attached). We can make use of his special quality and go into modeling business.' Panel 3: 'THE REPLY: Talk to your mom. She's a designer. She works with models.' Panel 4: 'A REQUEST: It's too difficult to talk to her. Can u do that for me?'

Nourishing Seafood (2)

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At Lake Victoria, the same businessman saw heaps of 'gold sand'. This time it was fish maw. The fishermen there were killing fish, making fillets for the European markets. They threw away what was inside the fish belly and let it decompose biologically.

That part of the fish, called fish maw (魚鰾，花膠)，is the fourth item on the list, right after shark fin. The Hong Kong businessman told the African fishermen he would buy those leftovers if they sun-dried them probably. He knew it would be easier to do business with those fishermen as they were already working with foreigners and knew the rules of the game.

What is the fifth item on the list? No, there are only four. They are in a class of their own in Chinese culture. It is fair to say that at least some of them are regarded as 'uneatable' in other cultures.

I suspect that the story of shark fin might be similar to that of fish maw. Perhaps it was also a leftover.

Some Chinese sea nomads sold the meat of the shark and ate the unmarketable fin themselves, as it had no taste by itself. Later, the wealthy businessmen found most of the sea nomads very healthy even when they grew old. They started to look into what the sea nomads ate. In Hong Kong, shark meat, as well as shark skin, are now served in some Chinese restaurants. They are regarded as anti-cancer food.

In Iceland, one of the famous local delicacies is preserved and fermented shark meat. A businessman said when I asked for it: "people in Iceland like this very much, but foreigners don't accept the taste. I give you a bit to try first. If you don't like it, don't buy it." The businessman, as well as other Icelanders I met, looked young and healthy. The shark meat dish might have contributed to their youthful look. However, they don't eat shark fin. A research should be conducted on the Icelandic way of eating shark meat. I think there is a strong link between food and health in a cold place like Iceland.

預算案有利發展還應更「甜」

財政司司長曾俊華昨日發表二〇一一至一二財政年度預算案。由於事前盛傳庫房「水浸」，加上市民正身受物價上漲之苦，令到這份預算案的發表倍受關注。

果然不出各方所料，本港過去一個財政年度綜合盈餘達到七百一十三億，整體財政儲備增至五千九百一十六億，相當於政府二十三個月的開支。無論從任何角度看，這都是一個相當令人驚喜的數字。巨額盈餘的得來，得益於利得稅、薪俸稅、股票及樓宇交易印花稅以及實地收入都錄得遠高於預期的大幅增加，而增長的背後，是全球經濟復蘇以及國家經濟持續強勁增長，本港「內外兼享」的優勢簡直令人驚嘆。

一份「缺水」的預算案固然「難為無米炊」，但一份「水浸」的預算案可能更令「當家的」頭痛，特別是當無數期望、等待的目光一齊投向「派糖」焦點，連「每人派一萬元」都提出來的時候，如何準確掌握審慎理財原則與順應民意訴求的界線，如何擺正長遠發展與眼前紓困的關係，的確是一件相當「考工夫」和具挑戰性之事。曾俊華昨日交出來的這份答卷，分數是在及格線之上：首先是審慎理財的原則下，充分善用有巨額盈餘這一迴旋空間，敢於大幅增加對教育、醫療、社福、基建和文體事業的投入，來年政府的經常開支 recurrent expenditure 達到二千四百二十億，比去年增加百分之八，其中百分之五十六用於醫、教、福三大項，從根本上為推動經濟長遠發展和提高市民質素作出了承擔，最終全體市民均會受惠。

另一方面，當然就是一系列針對通脹壓力的利民紓困措施了。不



財政司司長曾俊華上週發表最新財政年度預算案，推出總體開支達400多億的利民困措施

管政府在基本公共開支方面作出多大投入，市民大眾評價這份預算案的焦點還是會落到「派糖」問題上。昨日預算案曝光後，市民大眾的反應是：「糖」是吃到了，但卻不怎麼「甜」。

首先，以昨日預算案派出的「糖」來說：寬免差餉每季一千五、電費補貼全年一千八、公屋住戶免租兩個月、綜援及生果金出「雙糧」、調高供養父母祖父母及子女免稅額百分之二十、推出「與通脹掛鈎」債券，還有向三百萬「打工仔」強積金戶口每人注入六千元，總體開支達到四百多億。如果這樣還要說財爺「孤寒」，不體恤民困、不肯「派糖」，那是無論如何也說不過去的。一系列寬減免措施，符合向最困難、最有需要者伸出援手的宗旨，亦體現了均衡兼顧、惠及各階層的用心。但措施不包括退稅以及六千元注入強積金要到退休之年才能領取，則市民大眾的反應就不是那麼滿意了。

顯然，財政司司長強調要為市民未來多留一點儲蓄，這一說法並沒有得到市民的認同；同樣，市民大眾寧願接受眼前的退稅，不願意等十年、二十年才去「享受」那六千元，他們更願意由自己來支配回饋、在拮据日子好不容易手頭可以多一筆現金的心情，看來也非財爺所能明白。

預算案如果能夠在善用盈餘、推動發展、利民紓困的同時，再能夠體現一點對市民大眾的溫情和關心，從而促進市民和政府之間的關係，化解一些「民怨」，那這份有原則、有理據的預算案一定會更成功、更得人心的。但很可惜，這一點曾俊華沒有做到。

2011/02/24 大公報社評

政府可用行政手段調控經濟

財政司司長曾俊華發表新年度財政預算案已有一周時間，各方對於高通脹預期下，政府是否應給予老百姓更多實惠、如何分配的問題爭持不下。對於政府來講，保持宏觀經濟增長與穩定等宏觀經濟目標方面的重要職能。在所有發達工業社會中，這種混合經濟都是通過政府運用稅收、支出和貨幣管理計劃來調控總體經濟的運行。

根據薩繆爾森 (Paul A. Samuelson) 在其著作《經濟學》(Economics) 中的觀點，當市場經濟出現問題時，單單依靠「看不見的手」是無法調節市場供需平衡的。此時，政府需要動用行政手段干預。(見附表)

附表概括了當今政府所起的經濟作用。該表說明了政府在提高效率、促進更加公平的收入分配和追求經濟的增長與穩定等宏觀經濟目標方面的重要職能。在所有發達工業社會中，這種混合經濟都是通過政府運用稅收、支出和貨幣管理計劃來調控總體經濟的運行。

通識記憶體

Table with 3 columns: 市場經濟不靈, 政府干預, 政府重要的政策應對. Rows include: 不公平 (收入再分配, 收入和支持轉移支付), 宏觀經濟問題 (商業周期, 低經濟增速), 貨幣政策, 財政政策.