



Office of the Mayor
City of Los Angeles
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"A Responsibility to Lead"
Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong
October 13, 2006

Thank you, Leland, for that kind introduction.

**It is truly an honor to be here to address the Hong Kong
American Chamber of Commerce.**

**Some of what I have to say today is already well understood by
many of you.**

**Since its founding in 1968, the Hong Kong American Chamber of
Commerce has committed itself to strengthening the economic
ties between Asia and the United States.**

**And strengthening ties is what I hope to accomplish for my
beloved city today.**

Ladies and gentlemen,

**Mathematicians who study the dynamic relationships between
connected events, suggest that you can locate the first, incipient
stirrings of an Atlantic hurricane, in the barely perceptible**

beating of a butterfly's wings - half-a-world away - on the continent of Asia.

It's a mind-boggling idea.

One that in any other time, people would have found simply impossible to believe.

But we live in an age of globalism.

Never before in human history have we been more connected to one another.

Never before has the DISTANT been more INTIMATE.

Never before have we needed one another so much to succeed.

In the eyes of a one-year-old girl born here in Hong Kong, we can all see the barely perceptible beating of a butterfly's wings.

A life with the potential to touch and improve and enlighten the lives of millions of interconnected people all around the world.

We see the same human chain running through virtually everything.

We see it in pandemics like HIV, which emanated from sub-Saharan Africa to kill millions of people all over the globe.

We see it in our infinitely complex global economy. Our markets move together. Asia gets the flu. America catches a cold.

We see it in the way technology has transformed our lives - making everything increasingly instantaneous - breaking news crosses the world and back in the blink of an eye.

And we see it most powerfully, in what we are doing to our planet.

We see it in each and every one of our lives.

Most of us drive.

We all consume energy.

I certainly won't hide from the fact that in my country, our wings seem to be flapping much harder and beating much faster than in the rest of the world!

Together Americans use enough paper every year to consume 850 million trees.

We burn over 200 million gallons of gasoline a day—a quarter of the world's supply.

We're pumping close to 16 percent of the world's oil production into the tanks of our automobiles.

We may be the richest nation on earth.

We may be an undisputed world military power.

But we are also the earth's leading contributor to greenhouse emissions.

And I believe that my nation has been missing the opportunity - I believe we're failing our RESPONSIBILITY TO LEAD!

There is no greater embodiment - in either symbol or substance,

No deeper indication of our interconnectedness,

No more persuasive case for the principle of sustainability,

No issue with more meaningful moral and economic consequences... than that of global climate change.

We need to face it together.

Now, I've come to Asia to do business. But I also came here to say, that you can't be a great global city if you're not a great global citizen!

I know that in many of your minds Los Angeles be more synonymous with smog and sprawl, but we've made an historic commitment to cutting greenhouse emissions.

We're cleaning up our port.

We're leading the way in recycling.

We're getting 20% of our energy from renewables by the year 2010.

We're planting a million new trees.

And we're committed to making LA the cleanest and greenest big city in America!

I'm also proud to say that the State of California just made an historic commitment -- as the world's tenth-largest contributor to greenhouse emissions -- to honor the spirit of Kyoto and to dramatically cut our contribution to global warming!

You see, like our friends in Asia, we understand: Greening our city is not just good for the planet—it's good for business.

It will not only make Los Angeles more livable for people who reside there, it will attract the tourists we want to come and spend their money there.

We won't just improve our air quality and reduce our contribution to global warming and climate change.

We'll generate the kind of climate change we want--we'll change the business climate!

Creating the conditions in which the industries of tomorrow--like environmental engineering and green building and architecture--will take root and grow.

In turn, we'll help create high-wage jobs and build the green technology and expertise that we can share all around the world - and yes - that we can export to Asia!

But, I want to be honest with you.

There's a growing fear in my country about trade from abroad.

An increasing risk of turning inward.

Some of my political advisors didn't even think I should come to Asia.

They said it looks bad in the newspapers when a mayor travels overseas.

They said people will just focus on how much the trip costs.

They said my critics would stamp their feet and that the editorial writers will have a field day.

And I listened carefully to what they had to say.

And then I booked my ticket for Hong Kong!

You see,

I can see the beating of a butterfly's wings.

I know that I can't represent a global city like Los Angeles, if I don't represent Los Angeles around the world - and in places like Hong Kong!

Many people don't know that my city does over \$260 billion dollars in trade with Asia every year.

And we're the portal to the East. 43% of the cargo containers shipped to the United States of America arrive and are unloaded at our docks.

In 2005, approximately 150 billion dollars worth of trade with China, Korea, and Japan passed through the Port of Los Angeles alone!

And it doesn't stop there: the amazing volume of trade between our countries translates into over half-million jobs in Los Angeles.

And, with trade projected to triple - that's right, triple - within the next 20 years, even more jobs will be created, more trade will flow through our ports, if we continue work together with a sustainable vision of growth.

I'll tell you about the future I see: I want to make Los Angeles the city where the world comes together.

The financial and logistical bridge linking Asia and the Americas - the nerve center connecting investors with the import/export markets of China, Korea, Mexico, Japan, and beyond.

We're expanding our already-strong logistics sector and building on the enormous potential of our leading seaports and airports.

And we're daring to be the center of cutting-edge technology. In LA, we are blessed with some of the greatest research universities in the entire world. We are supporting UCLA and

USC in staking our city's claim in the fields of stem cell research, nanotechnology, and making LA a center of biotechnology.

We're supporting the growth of emerging sectors like new media with the vision of transforming LA into a "Digital City" where the technology and entertainment industries converge.

We want to make LA the undisputed North American capital of Cantonese media and entertainment.

And we're supporting traditional industries like film and television that have represented the heartbeat of our economy for a century. I've made filming on city property free. And we are pursuing a broader strategy to keep this vital industry in LA for the century to come.

Yes, I want to make Los Angeles the city where the world comes together, but LA will continue to reach out.

Earlier today, on behalf of the City of Los Angeles, I signed an economic cooperation agreement with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

This Agreement is not just about Los Angeles, or Hong Kong – it is about both of us, together, choosing to collaborate in this increasingly global economy.

Both Hong Kong and LA are more than great global cities. We both have economies that measure beyond that size of most nations.

Both are known as entertainment capitals.

Both are major trade gateways.

But together, we can do so much more.

You know, I tell people everywhere I go, that I see a future in which Los Angeles is the “Venice of the Twenty-First Century.”

The preeminent global capital linking the manufacturing powers of the East, to the emerging economies of the South.

And we’ll do that not just by promoting the movement and production of goods.

We’ll do it not just because we have the busiest ports.

Not just because we have the best-trained people.

Not just by leading in the manufacture of ideas and culture.

Not just by pioneering research and technology.

We’ll do because we can see those beating wings.

We’ll do it by engaging the world.

We’ll do it by finding new ways to broaden and deepen the already intricate connections between Los Angeles and Hong Kong.

And we’ll do it by working together—hand in hand—across the Pacific, with a shared vision of environmental sustainability and economic growth.

Thank you all for the honor of allowing me to speak.