

**Speech of Hon. Leung Shing at the Launching Ceremony of the
Law Society Magazine "Views of eminent personalities and
News from the Society" at the University of Mauritius - 3 April
2003**

Professor Fagoonee,
Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Mauritius

Mr Rosario Domingue,
Head of Department of Law of the University

President and Members of the University of Mauritius
Law Society

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am deeply honoured to have been invited to address this august gathering today. And I say these words with utmost sincerity because I know I am before a group of dynamic, capable and enthusiastic students imbued with the idealism of youth tempered with the pragmatism of the 21st century.

I know that each cohort of law students at the University is "trié sur le volet" and selected according to very rigorous and exacting criteria. I know that, in the peaceful and idyllic atmosphere prevailing at Le Réduit, you are encouraged by your dedicated lecturers to develop your legal thinking and legal skills with a view to becoming the law practitioners of tomorrow.

However, I would like to urge you today to go even further in your quest for knowledge of the law. I would like you, members of the Law Society and law students, to understand the law and the legal system by going back to the sources of law, by challenging whatever has for years been taken for granted and now has to be revisited, by endorsing, clarifying and improving what deserves to be retained. I encourage you to absorb, dissect and be conversant with the writings of the world's greatest jurisprudential scholars and with the landmark judgments of eminent judges,

including Mauritian judges. But, at the same time, I urge you to debate on law reform and new challenges which the legal system has to face, and, in particular, to keep abreast of trends and developments in communication and information technology, not only to help Government and the judiciary revolutionise the way in which the justice system works everyday but also to be equipped to respond to challenges posed by new crimes and criminals armed with increasingly sophisticated technology, by problems caused by the Internet and E-Commerce, to give but a few examples.

I am the first to recognise that I may myself have to undergo further training to be able to cope with emerging legal quandaries. In fact, I strongly believe that there is a case for making judges' and lawyers' legal education broader and multi-disciplinary and to institutionalise continuing legal education for members of the legal profession in order that they can understand and deal with the ever-changing profile

and complexity of cases. But, of course, this subject in itself can stimulate some lively debate and some deep reflection among judges, practitioners, academics and law students.

To conclude, dear friends, I would urge you to play your roles fully as members of the legal fraternity, by enhancing legal scholarly work, by raising public awareness and stimulating legal literacy through initiatives such as the publication of the Law Society Magazine, by organising and participating in debates on matters of legal interest and especially on emerging new legal challenges.

You will be pleased to know that, as a mark of my recognition of the important contribution of the University of Mauritius to the field of law in Mauritius, I have recently appointed Dr Daniel Fokkan, Mr. Narsinghen and Mr. Domingue to the Law Reform Commission and that is the first time three academics have been appointed to the Commission. The Law

Reform Commission has, among its statutory functions, the preparation of a comprehensive programme of law reforms and the review of any area of the law which I may refer to it with a view to its systematic development and reform. The Commission will be encouraged to invite representations from, and to consult people, representing a broad range of interests.

One should never lose sight of the truism that the legal system reflects the values of the community which it serves and that it has to be used as a functioning social instrument.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear Friends

I shall end here by expressing the humble wish that I have given you some food for thought..... and some material for debate.

I wish you well in your studies and in your professional careers, and thank you for your attention.