**ERIC X. LEE - ‘A tale of two political systems’**

Watch the video on

<http://www.ted.com/talks/eric_x_li_a_tale_of_two_political_systems>

**Speech comprehension questions**

1. What are the two myths the speaker was told in his youth?

2. What is the third myth that came along?

3. What assumptions are made by dominant political theories of our time about a one party state-in particular Chinese communism and what how true are they according to the speaker?

4. How does the speaker counter these assumptions through the example of China?

5. What is the Party's Organization Department and how does it operate?

6. What role do patronage and merit play?

7. What does he believe about corruption in communistic and democratic systems?

8. What claim does he make about democracy in the end?

9. What claim does he make about the significance of China’s example?

10. What point is he making about legitimacy and competency.

11. What point is he making about dogmatic universalism and how is the example of China related?

12. On the basis of the above, what do you think the purpose is in giving this speech?

**Rhetorical techniques**

1. What introductory techniques is the speaker using to draw attention?

2. Comment on his use of presentation aids. What visual aids is he using and when. What, do you think he is trying to achieve?

3. The speaker is referring to his theories as “tales, myths, prospectuses that people buy”, “meta-narratives”, as a story “the Chinese didn’t buy this time”, “a story that became a best seller”. What is he implying through these names and how do they contribute to the cohesion of the speech?

4. The speaker is mainly using the ‘refutation strategy’. What is a ‘refutation strategy’ and how is it used here?

5. What kind of support does he provide for his arguments?

6. Give examples of strong contrast.

7. How does he establish credibility?

**Terminology practice**

**A. Match the words with their definitions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Meritocracy | A. Appointing persons to government positions on the basis of political support and work |
| 2. Sovereign | B. Replace |
| 3. Feudalism | C. Self-governing, independent, exercising supreme permanent authority |
| 4. Cadre | D. The outlook/ behavior of officials |
| 5. Officialdom | E. The right or privilege of voting |
| 6. Patronage | F. Formal accusation (usually by a grand jury), serious criticism  |
| 7. Suffrage | G. Praiseworthy |
| 8. Indictment | H. Political system of the 9th-15th century, in which vassals held land from a feudal lord and received protection in return for homage and allegiance. |
| 9. Supplant | I. A nucleus of trained personnel around which a larger organization can be built and trained |
| 10. Laudable | J. A system in which advancement in based on individual ability or achievement |
| 11. To vet | K. A person who provides capital for new/innovative commercial enterprises |
| 12. Venture capitalist | L. To subject to thorough examination/evaluation  |
| 13. Meta-narrative | M. A big story, a grand story usually an explanation about what happens in society |

**B. Fill in the blanks with the following words.**

**Hunky dory:** perfectly satisfactory

**mind-boggling**: intellectually/emotionally overwhelming, astonishing, bewildering

**Hubris:** arrogance, overbearing pride

**Wrench**: to twist/distort/break/extract, to pull at the feelings of emotions, distress

**Leaps and bounds** (for progress): with unexpectedly rapid progress.

**Mire:** a disadvantageous/difficult position Literally**:** wet soggy soil or mud

**To mire**: to hinder, entrap, to cause to become stuck

**Whopping:** exceptionally large

**mind-boggling curb dismal put downs dusk**

**leaps and bounds hubris wrenching polls recruit unprecedented mire mandatory alleviation panacea**

1. Governments have promised to \_\_\_\_\_ emissions to meet the target agreed for 2010.

2. We are entering the \_\_\_\_\_\_ of a new era.

3. The history of medicine shows that it can benefit from \_\_\_\_\_\_ changes.

4. Initially the task seemed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, how to sensibly integrate such a wealth of different material.

5. \_\_\_ performance of the stock market is bad news fro pension funds.

6. We’ve conducted a number of \_\_\_\_ to gauge the people’s attitudes on this.

7. Meanwhile, he continues to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ scientists to study the case.

8. The death sentence is still \_\_\_\_ in various countries in the world.

9. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the suffering of the poor should remain our main target in the future.

10. The judges are here to help so they will not be offering any sarcastic \_\_\_\_\_\_ to the contestants, like the ones in TV shows.

11. Her \_\_\_\_ prevented her from asking for help on the project, so it was late.

12. There is no single \_\_\_\_\_\_ for this country’s economic ills.

13. After years of troubles and wars, their economy is growing by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

14. The level of ambition is exceptional is not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

15. They slowly climbed out of the \_\_\_\_\_\_ through a little sacrifice and a lot of planning.

**C. Fill in the blanks with the correct derivative.**

1. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not-illusion) voters wanted an alternative to the two main parties.

2. Field workers worked \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not-tire) night and day to make a living.

3. Some political systems are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (operate) more flexible and \_\_\_\_\_\_ (adjust) than others.

4. According to a theoretical \_\_\_\_\_\_ (assume), a one-party system is \_\_\_\_\_ (inherit) incapable of self \_\_\_\_\_\_ (correct).

5. Many economic and political reforms of the present were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not-imagine) in the past.

6. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (enact) of new rules aimed at correcting previous \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not-function)

7. It is difficult to find \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (merit) political institutions nowadays.

8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Corrupt) is widespread and undermines the system and its moral \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (legitimate).

9. Telling people there is only one type of governance is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (not respond)

10. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Universal) should make way for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (plural)

11. The first king’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (succeed) managed to lift the country out of poverty.