



Poverty in the Midst of Affluence: How Hong Kong Mismanaged Its Prosperity

Leo F. Goodstadt

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Hong Kong is among the richest cities in the world. Yet over the past 15 years living conditions for the average family have deteriorated despite a robust economy, ample budget surpluses and record labor productivity. Successive governments have been reluctant to invest in services for the elderly, the disabled, the long-term sick, and the poor, while education has become more elitist. The political system has helped to entrench a mistaken consensus that social spending is a threat to financial stability and economic prosperity. In this trenchant attack on government mismanagement, Leo Goodstadt traces how officials have created a "new poverty" in Hong Kong and argues that their misguided policies are both a legacy of the colonial era and a deliberate choice by modern governments?not the result of economic crises. This book is highly relevant to the continuing debate about the efficiency of market forces in solving welfare "problems" and the claims put forward for the superiority of the private sector in meeting housing, health and educational needs.

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