



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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SPEECH BY THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN,
AT THE FREEDOM FORUM DINNER HELD IN
THE REGENT HOTEL TODAY (FRIDAY)

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CHAIRMAN, THAT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN TALLER THAN MY PREDECESSOR FOR MANY YEARS. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

I WAS IMMENSELY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR DESCRIBING ME AS THE MAIN NEWS STORY OF THE WEEK. NORMALLY, THAT ACCOLADE GOES TO MY DAUGHTERS. I WAS ALSO GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR REFERRING TO MY PAST, AND IN PARTICULAR TO THE ACCIDENTAL WAY THAT I GOT INTO POLITICS VIA THE CAMPAIGN OF JOHN LINDSAY IN 1965, IN NEW YORK, WHICH SAVED ME FROM THE BBC, OR THE BBC FROM ME. I ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT MY MAIN JOB IN THAT CAMPAIGN WAS TO COVER THE CONSERVATIVE - THOUGH I SAY VERY QUICKLY, IT'S NOT THE SAME AS A BRITISH CONSERVATIVE - THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE IN NEW YORK, MR WILLIAM BUCKLEY. AND BUCKLEY OFFERED, I THINK, DURING THAT CAMPAIGN, ALMOST THE BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER HEARD FOR A WINNER IN AN ELECTION. ASKED, DURING THE CAMPAIGN, WHAT HE WOULD DO, IMPROBABLY, IF HE WERE TO WIN AND BECOME MAYOR OF NEW YORK, HE REPLIED, QUICK AS A FLASH: "I'D DEMAND A RECOUNT." ANYWAY, THAT WAS MY INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS, AND I GUESS INDIRECTLY, IS WHY I STAND IN FRONT OF YOU THIS EVENING.

I WAS ALSO VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE TRIBUTES THAT YOU READ OUT, PARTICULARLY THE TRIBUTE FROM THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY. I HAVE TO SAY THAT THE DAY THAT SOMETHING FROM THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY ABOUT ME SOUNDS FLATTERING, WILL BE THE DAY WHEN I START TO WORRY A LITTLE BIT. BUT MAYBE THINGS WILL GET BETTER AND MAYBE THINGS WILL IMPROVE, AND MAYBE ONE DAY I'LL ENJOY AN ENCOMIUM FROM THAT BASTION OF A FREE PRESS.

IF ANY OF YOU HAVE READ THE NEWSPAPERS, OR WATCHED THE TELEVISION OR LISTENED TO THE RADIO IN THE LAST FEW DAYS, YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT I'VE BEEN IN PEKING. MY MAIN PURPOSE IN PEKING WAS TO SET OUT FOR CHINESE OFFICIALS, AND TO DISCUSS WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS, MY PROPOSALS FOR SAFEGUARDING THE PROSPERITY, THE STABILITY, THE WAY OF LIFE, THE HUMAN RIGHTS, OF HONG KONG, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER 1997.

HONG KONG IS OFTEN SPOKEN OF IN INTENSELY MATERIALISTIC TERMS, AND MAYBE THAT'S NOT ALTOGETHER SURPRISING. HONG KONG IS ONE OF THE GREATEST, ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR, ECONOMIC SUCCESS STORIES IN THE LAST CENTURY. THIS IS A COMMUNITY WHICH HAS PULLED ITSELF UP BY ITS OWN BOOTSTRAPS IN THE LAST 40 OR 50 YEARS, SO THAT TODAY, IN TERMS OF TRADE WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD, THIS IS THE TENTH MOST IMPORTANT COMMUNITY GOING. IF WE CAST OURSELVES FORWARD TO 1997, THEN WE SEE OURSELVES OVERTAKING LARGE NUMBERS OF THE OECD, BOTH IN TERMS OF OUR INCOME PER HEAD AND IN TERMS OF OUR TRADING COMPETITIVENESS.

IT'S A COMMUNITY WHICH WILL HAVE A KEY ROLE IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF ASIA IN GENERAL, AND CHINA IN PARTICULAR. I DON'T THINK IT'S AN EXAGGERATION TO SEE HONG KONG PLAYING, IN RELATION TO THE CHINESE CENTURY, THE SAME SORT OF ROLE THAT NEW YORK PLAYED IN RELATION TO THE AMERICAN CENTURY. I THINK WE HAVE THAT SORT OF ROLE AS A TRIGGER OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN THE SURROUNDING AREAS.

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AS AN ECONOMIC SUCCESS STORY, WE'VE PRODUCED SUBSTANTIAL RESOURCES WHICH HAVE ENABLED US ALSO TO TRANSFORM THE PROSPECTS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG IN SOCIAL TERMS. WE'VE SEEN A REVOLUTION IN THE CONDITION OF PEOPLE'S HOUSING. WE'VE SEEN A REVOLUTION IN THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. MOST OF MY SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THEIR MID TO LATE 40'S, WERE AT UNIVERSITY AT A TIME WHEN ONLY A FEW HUNDRED YOUNG PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WENT TO UNIVERSITY. NOW, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT 14,000 OR 15,000 A YEAR, A SITUATION IN WHICH GETTING ON FOR ONE IN FIVE OF 17-20 YEAR-OLDS WILL BE IN HIGHER EDUCATION. WE'VE SEEN A TRANSFORMATION IN OUR HEALTH INDICATORS, SO NOW THE CHILD MORTALITY RATES IN HONG KONG ARE LOWER THAN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, LOWER THAN IN AUSTRALIA, SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER THAN IN THE UNITED STATES. WE'VE SEEN A TREMENDOUS INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE, AN INVESTMENT WHICH IS GOING TO CONTINUE - WHATEVER THE NOISES OFF. AND WE'VE STARTED TO SEE A GREAT INVESTMENT IN CLEANING-UP OUR ENVIRONMENT AS WELL. AND ALL THAT WILL HAPPEN DESPITE THE POLITICAL BALLYHOO. NONE OF THAT NOISE IS GOING TO MAKE THIS COMMUNITY, OR ITS GOVERNMENT, INERT.

SO HONG KONG IS AN ECONOMIC AND A SOCIAL SUCCESS; AND IT'S SOMETHING ELSE AS WELL. HONG KONG IS AN OPEN SOCIETY, IT'S A TOLERANT SOCIETY, IT'S A FREE SOCIETY, AND THE CONTINUANCE OF THAT OPENNESS, THAT TOLERANCE AND THAT FREEDOM, ARE GUARANTEED IN THE JOINT DECLARATION SIGNED BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CHINA.

DO THOSE QUALITIES, DO THOSE VALUES OF FREEDOM AND TOLERANCE AND OPENNESS, STAND APART FROM HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SUCCESS? THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUSLY, NO. CERTAINLY, HONG KONG'S STABILITY AND PROSPERITY HELP TO SUSTAIN OUR WAY OF LIFE, THAT'S ABUNDANTLY TRUE. BUT IT'S ALSO TRUE THAT OUR WAY OF LIFE HELPS TO SUSTAIN OUR PROSPERITY AND OUR STABILITY. AND THOSE WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT, DON'T UNDERSTAND HONG KONG.

I THINK THE GREATEST OF MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHERS IS KARL POPPER, WHOSE TWO VOLUME WORK, 'THE OPEN SOCIETY', IS CERTAINLY THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK IN MY LIFE. AND HE WROTE, WITH THAT IMMENSE CLARITY WHICH HAS MADE HIM SUCH A GREAT EDUCATOR OF POLITICIANS OVER THE YEARS: "WE MUST PLAN FOR FREEDOM AND NOT JUST FOR SECURITY, IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAT ONLY FREEDOM CAN MAKE SECURITY SECURE." IF POPPER HAD BEEN GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG - A POST WHICH HE MIGHT HAVE TURNED DOWN - BUT IF HE HAD BEEN GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG, HE MIGHT HAVE SAID: "WE MUST PLAN TO PRESERVE OUR WAY OF LIFE AND NOT JUST OUR PROSPERITY, FOR IT IS OUR WAY OF LIFE WHICH WILL MAKE PROSPERITY SECURE."

AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR WAY OF LIFE IS FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. THAT, I THINK, IS ONE OF THE JEWELS IN OUR CROWN. IT'S SOMETHING THAT SETS HONG KONG APART FROM MANY OTHER COMMUNITIES IN ASIA. IT'S SOMETHING THAT SETS HONG KONG APART FROM MANY OTHER COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE AND THE REST OF THE WORLD. WE HAVE 70 DAILY NEWSPAPERS, WE HAVE 600 MAGAZINES, THREE TV-STATIONS, THREE RADIO-STATIONS. WE HAVE A PRESS, A MEDIA, WHICH IS DIVERSE, WHICH IS VIGOROUS, AND WHICH IS FREE. FREE TO REPORT, FREE TO COMMENT, FREE TO CRITICISE, FREE, FOR EXAMPLE, TO CRITICISE THE GOVERNOR. THIS WEEK, ONE OF THE - I DON'T THINK THIS IS AN OUTLANDISH TRIBUTE - THIS WEEK ONE OF THE PRO-PEKING NEWSPAPERS IN HONG KONG PUBLISHED, DOUBTLESS BY PUBLIC DEMAND, A SPECIAL PULL-OUT SUPPLEMENT REPRINTING ALL ITS MOST VIGOROUS ATTACKS ON THE GOVERNOR'S DEMOCRATIC SYMPATHIES. WHAT IS MY REACTION TO THAT? I'LL TELL YOU MY REACTION TO THAT: THREE CHEERS FOR A FREE PRESS! I'M SURE - OR I HOPE I'M SURE - THAT THE NEWSPAPER IN QUESTION WOULD BE THERE FIGHTING IN THE LAST DITCH FOR THE RIGHT OF OTHERS TO EXPRESS WHATEVER VIEWS THEY LIKE IN DUE COURSE, FOR EXAMPLE, AFTER 1997.

ONE REASON FOR TAKING THAT VIEW IS THAT A FREE PRESS MAKES GOVERNMENT BETTER AND THEREFORE, IN A SENSE, STRONGER. IT HELPS TO ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT RETAINS ITS MORAL AUTHORITY. TOM STOPPARD, WHO HAS ARGUED SO ELOQUENTLY FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, PUT THE POINT VERY WELL: NO MATTER HOW IMPERFECT THINGS ARE, IF YOU HAVE A FREE PRESS, EVERYTHING IS CORRECTABLE, AND WITHOUT IT, EVERYTHING IS CONCEALABLE. AND A FREE PRESS MAKES A COMMUNITY STRONGER AND HEALTHIER. WHAT IT GIVES US IS DIVERSITY IN UNITY. PRECISELY, BECAUSE WE CAN EXPRESS EVERY POINT OF VIEW, WE ARE MORE STABLE, MORE UNITED, MORE SECURE. I REGARD A FREE PRESS AS A SIGN OF STRENGTH, NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS.

OF COURSE IT'S DESIRABLE THAT FREEDOMS ARE EXERCISED WITH RESTRAINT. I'M A PECULIAR ENGLISH BEAST, AN OLD FASHIONED ENGLISH TORY WHOSE FAVOURITE POLITICAL WRITER WAS EDMUND BURKE, WHO MADE THAT POINT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISING FREEDOMS WITH PERSONAL RESTRAINT. THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE, IF YOU LIKE, BETWEEN LIBERTY AND LICENCE. SOMETIMES, YOU KNOW AND I KNOW, THAT JOURNALISTS IN NEWSPAPERS, IN TELEVISION STATIONS, IN RADIO STATIONS, GO TOO FAR; GO TOO FAR IN INVADING PEOPLE'S PRIVACY, GO TOO FAR IN SENSATIONALISING EVENTS. BUT IN MY JUDGMENT, IT'S NOT THE JOB OF POLITICAL LEADERS TO TRY TO STOP THEM, AND I WANT TO UNDERLINE THAT. I THINK ALL THAT IS PART OF THE PRICE WE PAY FOR A FREE PRESS AND A FREE SOCIETY. BUT A FREE PRESS, ITSELF, SHOULD ARGUE THE CASE FOR RAISING STANDARDS, NOT DESCENDING INTO THE GUTTER. I THINK, AND I WANT TO MAKE THE POINT VERY STRONGLY, THAT THAT IS A JOB FOR THE JOURNALIST'S PROFESSION, NOT A JOB FOR POLITICIANS.

/FORTUNATELY, THAT

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FORTUNATELY, THAT QUESTION OF STANDARDS - AND I DON'T JUST SAY THAT BECAUSE I AM GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG - IS NOT AN ISSUE IN THIS COMMUNITY. NOT AN ISSUE IN THE SAME WAY THAT IT HAS BEEN, I THINK, IN THE UNITED STATES, NOT AN ISSUE IN THE SAME WAY THAT IT HAS BEEN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. BUT AN ISSUE THAT WE DO HAVE IN HONG KONG, IN COMMON WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, IS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER WE SHOULD INTRODUCE HERE, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION LEGISLATION, AND IT'S A SUBJECT ON WHICH THERE IS A BOISTEROUS AND WHOLLY LEGITIMATE DEBATE. I'M BOUND TO SAY THAT I HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE VALUE OF DECLARATORY LEGISLATION, THOUGH I WAS, IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE MINISTER WHO PUT INTO LAW PEOPLE'S RIGHTS TO INFORMATION ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY. I THINK GENERAL DECLARATORY LEGISLATION SOMETIMES HAS THE OPPOSITE EFFECT OF WHAT WAS INTENDED. BUT I AM PREPARED, IN HONG KONG, TO LOOK AT THE ISSUE AGAIN, TO LOOK AT THE ISSUE WITH MY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WHICH HAS ON IT A COUPLE OF THE BEST AND MOST DISTINGUISHED LAWYERS IN THIS COMMUNITY, AND I ALSO WANT US TO REVIEW THE LAWS WHICH OUR JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION HERE IN HONG KONG, THINKS MIGHT BE IN BREACH OF OUR RECENT BILL OF RIGHTS.

I GUESS THAT THE PURPOSE OF THIS EVENING'S DINNER IS TO CELEBRATE THE VALUES REPRESENTED BY A FREE PRESS, AND I'M DELIGHTED TO BE WITH YOU HERE TO DO EXACTLY THAT. AND I'M DELIGHTED, AS WELL, TO BE ABLE TO POINT TO THE VITALITY OF OUR FREE PRESS IN HONG KONG. POLITICAL LEADERS IN A FREE SOCIETY ARE BOUND TO YOU IN THE PRESS BY AN UMBILICAL CORD, SO WE SHOULDN'T GRUMBLE WHEN YOU SCOURGE US FOR OUR FAILINGS, OR EVEN SCOURGE US FOR WHAT WE THINK ARE OUR VIRTUES. AFTER ALL, WE ARE ALL OF US IN PUBLIC LIFE A LITTLE LIKE MAE WEST. "IT'S BETTER", SHE SAID, "TO BE LOOKED OVER THAN TO BE OVERLOOKED." I DON'T THINK THERE'S A BETTER MOTTO FOR A POLITICAL LEADER IN A FREE SOCIETY. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

QUESTION: GOVERNOR, SOME OF OUR PARTY CAME THIS MORNING FROM BEIJING AND DURING OUR STAY THERE WE HEARD NOT AN IMPOLITE WORD UNTIL YOUR NAME WAS MENTIONED. I SUPPOSE THAT WAS NOT SURPRISING BUT ON RETURNING HERE - WE STAY HERE ONLY A FEW HOURS, AS YOU KNOW - WE HEARD QUITE A DIFFERENT REACTION WHEN YOUR NAME WAS MENTIONED. WE'VE HEARD TWO THINGS IN THESE LAST COUPLE OF HOURS. ON THE ONE HAND, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO EXPRESS THEIR GREAT ADMIRATION AND SUPPORT FOR YOU, AND I WAS NOT SURPRISED BY THAT. I WAS SURPRISED BY THOSE WHO HAVE SAID IN THESE LAST FEW HOURS: DOES HIS GOVERNMENT REALLY MEANT IT? WHY DID HIS GOVERNMENT WAIT SO LONG? WILL HIS GOVERNMENT STAY THE COURSE? WILL THEY PUSH FOR THESE DEMOCRATIC VALUES? I PUT THOSE QUESTIONS TO YOU, NOT BECAUSE HAVING READ ABOUT YOU AND LISTENED TO YOU TONIGHT I DOUBT THEM, OR THE ANSWER TO YOU, BUT I PUT THEM TO YOU SO THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESPOND TO THOSE WHO HAVE RAISED THEM.

/GOVERNOR: I'LL

GOVERNOR: I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S GOING TO DECIDE THAT ISSUE IN THE NEXT WEEKS AND MONTHS. IT'S NOT THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG, WHOSE VIEWS ARE AS THEY HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED. I DON'T WISH TO PASS-THE-BUCK BUT IT'S GOING TO BE AN ISSUE WHICH IS DECIDED BY THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, AND BY THEIR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. I'VE GOT NO DOUBT THAT THE PROPOSALS I HAVE PUT FORWARD REPRESENT A MODEST AND SENSIBLE INCREASE IN THE ABILITY OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS ASTONISHINGLY SOPHISTICATED AND SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY TO RUN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS. A LOT OF PEOPLE WILL CRITICISE ME - INDEED, I CAN SEE AT LEAST ONE OF THEM HERE THIS EVENING - FOR NOT GOING FURTHER. NOT MANY PEOPLE WILL CRITICISE ME FOR HAVING GONE TOO FAR. BUT IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS THERE WILL BE A LOT OF WHAT THE 'SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST' HAS CALLED "BACKGROUND MUSIC". EXAMPLE: NOTHING I'VE SAID IS ENCOURAGING SOCIAL TURMOIL OR INCITING POLITICAL INSTABILITY. WHAT SOME PEOPLE MAY BE TRYING TO DO IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS IS PRECISELY THAT.

BUT I THINK THAT THE PEOPLE OF THIS COMMUNITY ARE VERY CALM AND VERY THOUGHTFUL AND VERY RELAXED ABOUT THESE ISSUES. I THINK THEY DO RECOGNISE THAT THEY'RE ENTITLED TO BE TREATED AS GROWN UP. I THINK THEY DO RECOGNISE THAT THEY'RE ENTITLED TO THE SAME RESPECT IN CONDUCTING THEIR OWN AFFAIRS IN GOVERNMENT THAT THEY GET IN CONDUCTING THEIR OWN AFFAIRS IN THE MARKET PLACE. AND I THEREFORE THINK THAT SOME OF THE OLD FASHIONED NOISES AND TACTICS THAT WE'LL GET OFF-STAGE WON'T MAKE ALL THAT MUCH DIFFERENCE IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS, AND THAT PEOPLE WILL TAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURE IN PERHAPS A MORE RELAXED AND THOUGHTFUL WAY THAN MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED A FEW YEARS BACK.

I THINK IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE IN HONG KONG FOR MORE THAN ABOUT FIVE MINUTES WITHOUT BEING INTENSELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION, AND INTENSELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT WHAT A COMMUNITY CAN DO WHEN IT SETS ITS MIND TO PARTICULAR OBJECTIVES. AND I THINK THAT IS SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG UNDERSTAND, AND I THINK, ACTUALLY, IT'S SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE BEYOND HONG KONG UNDERSTAND AS WELL. I DON'T WANT TO FIND MYSELF GOING BEYOND WHAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WANT TO ACHIEVE FOR THEMSELVES. I THINK, IF ANYTHING, I'M LAGGING SLIGHTLY BEHIND.

JOHN QUINN: GOVERNOR, YOU HAVE BEEN QUOTED AS AGREEING WITH WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE THAT, "SWEET ARE THE USES OF ADVERSITY". IN THE WAKE OF YOUR TRIP TO BEIJING, CAN YOU TELL US WHAT WE CAN EXPECT NEXT, AND WHEN, IN THIS WHOLE PROCESS?

GOVERNOR: WELL, MAYBE YOU SHOULD HAVE INVITED THE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW CHINA NEWS AGENCY IN HONG KONG THIS EVENING TO GIVE A SPEECH ON THE FREE PRESS, TO TELL YOU WHAT WE CAN EXPECT NEXT. LET ME TELL YOU WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG. I'VE SAID THAT I'M VERY HAPPY TO GO ON DISCUSSING THE PROPOSALS THAT I'VE PUT FORWARD ABOUT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, BUT THAT IT'S EASIER TO DISCUSS PROPOSALS WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T JUST CRITICISE BUT WITH PEOPLE WHO WILL PUT ALTERNATIVES FORWARD.

A FRIEND OF MINE WAS SAYING TO ME THE OTHER DAY THAT HE WAS ONCE STOPPED BY THE POLICE AND HE DIDN'T HAVE THE FAINTEST IDEA WHY THEY'D STOPPED HIM WHEN HE WAS DRIVING HOME AT NIGHT. AND HE PUT DOWN THE WINDOW AND THE POLICEMAN LOOKED IN AND HE SAID TO THE POLICEMAN, "WHAT'S WRONG?", AND THE POLICEMAN SAID, "YOU MUST KNOW, WE STOPPED YOU." AND THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG FEELS, OCCASIONALLY, A BIT LIKE THAT. HE PUTS FORWARD PROPOSALS ON FINANCING AIRPORTS, ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, AND ONE GROUP OF PEOPLE SAY, "THAT'S NO GOOD, YOU CAN'T DO THAT." AND THE GOVERNOR, WHO'S A VERY INNOCENT, GENIAL FELLOW, SAYS, "WELL, WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?", AND THEY SAY, "YOU MUST KNOW WHERE YOU'VE GONE WRONG. GO AWAY AND COME BACK WITH SOMETHING ELSE." THAT'S NO WAY TO CO-OPERATE, THAT'S NO WAY TO DEMONSTRATE - WHAT'S THE PHRASE? - PUBLIC SINCERITY. WE'VE ACTUALLY GOT, IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A SERIOUS DIALOGUE ABOUT HONG KONG'S FUTURE, TO BE ABLE TO LOOK AT ALTERNATIVES.

IN GOOD FAITH, I TRIED TO FIND WHAT I BELIEVE TO BE A POINT OF BALANCE IN THE COMMUNITY. NOT GOING NEARLY AS FAR AS SOME WANTED, GOING MAYBE A LITTLE FURTHER THAN SOME OTHERS WANTED, BUT IF I'VE GOT IT WRONG, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO SAY, "YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'VE DONE WRONG." PEOPLE ACTUALLY HAVE TO PUT FORWARD AN ALTERNATIVE AND MAYBE, MAYBE THE NEXT STEP, IS THAT PEOPLE WILL PUT FORWARD AN ALTERNATIVE - OR MAYBE NOT.

QUESTION: GOVERNOR, THE PRESS HERE HAS DESCRIBED YOUR STYLE AS QUITE DIFFERENT THAN YOUR PREDECESSOR. WOULD YOU PLEASE TELL US HOW YOUR STYLE AND YOUR APPROACH MIGHT HAVE AN IMPACT ON YOUR TERM HERE AS GOVERNOR, AND IN PARTICULAR ON THE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHINA?

GOVERNOR: I DON'T THINK ONE SHOULD PERSONALISE THESE THINGS TOO MUCH. I'VE BEEN LONG ENOUGH IN POLITICS, AND I'VE LOST ENOUGH ELECTIONS, TO KNOW THAT ONE SHOULDN'T PUT TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON INDIVIDUALS OR ON STYLE OVER SUBSTANCE. BUT MAYBE SOMETIMES STYLE AND SUBSTANCE SORT OF COME TOGETHER AND INFUSE ONE ANOTHER, AND I THINK CONCEIVABLY THAT'S TRUE WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT WHAT LIES AT THE HEART OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, THAT IS, THE NOTION OF ACCOUNTABILITY. I FEEL VERY STRONGLY THAT I HAVE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT I AM ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. AND ONE REASON WHY I HAVE TO DO THAT PARTICULARLY STRONGLY, IS THAT I HAVE NO DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY OF MY OWN. I WAS APPOINTED, I WASN'T ELECTED. I DEAL WITH POLITICIANS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WHO WERE ELECTED. I DEAL WITH POLITICIANS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WHO ARE THERE BECAUSE OF YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE. SO I HAVE TO ESTABLISH MY OWN MORAL AUTHORITY AND LEGITIMACY AS WELL, AND I THINK I CAN ONLY DO THAT BY SHOWING THAT I'M ACCOUNTABLE; AND THAT MAY HAVE AN AFFECT ON MY STYLE.

THE ONLY THING I WOULD ADD IS THAT, ARGUABLY, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE SAR GOVERNMENT, AFTER 1997, WILL HAVE GREATER DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY THAN ME. BUT I HOPE THAT WON'T MEAN THAT HE DOESN'T, OR SHE DOESN'T, FEEL THE NECESSITY OF DEMONSTRATING ACCOUNTABILITY - BOTH ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC. AND ALL THOSE THINGS ARE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHETHER YOU WEAR A COLONIAL HAT WITH FEATHERS ON THE TOP OR DO SOME OF THE OTHER THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN TRADITIONAL FOR GOVERNORS OF THIS DEPENDENT TERRITORY AND OTHERS. AT ROOT, I AM A POLITICIAN, AND THAT'S A VERY VULGAR THING, AS YOU KNOW. THOUGH I BELIEVE THAT POLITICS, AS JOHN BUCHAN SAID, IS AN HONOURABLE ADVENTURE.

QUESTION: MR PATTON, I REFER TO THE FIRST PERSON WHO CENTRED YOUR QUESTION - I DIDN'T CATCH YOUR ANSWER. I THINK THE QUESTION WAS: WILL BRITAIN BE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE DEMOCRACY FOR HONG KONG IN RETURN FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH CHINA?

GOVERNOR: WELL, I IMAGINE WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER OR FOREIGN SECRETARY WOULD SAY, WERE THEY HERE, IS THAT THEY HOPED THEY COULD SEE BOTH THE PROMOTION OF GREATER DEMOCRACY IN HONG KONG AND GOOD RELATIONS WITH CHINA. YOU'LL HAVE NOTICED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER, YESTERDAY, MADE A STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS WHICH WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE OF WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING AND THE POLICIES THAT I'VE BEEN PUTTING FORWARD. I DON'T THINK THAT ANYONE WILL BE ABLE TO SLIP A PIECE OF TISSUE-PAPER BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG AND HIS FRIENDS AND FORMER COLLEAGUES IN THE CABINET OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. I THINK IT WOULD BE FOOLHARDY OF ANYBODY TO TRY TO DO SO. BUT WHAT I AM MORE CONCERNED ABOUT IS ATTEMPTS TO SLIP TISSUE-PAPER BETWEEN ME AND THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, BUT I DON'T BELIEVE THAT ON THESE MATTERS THERE IS EVEN A MILLI-OUNCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MY VIEWS AND THE VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

SPEAKER: GOVERNOR, YOU BEGAN EARLY THIS DAY, IN BEIJING. WE'RE SO GRATEFUL THAT YOU WOULD COME AND SHARE WITH US TONIGHT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

ON BEHALF OF THE FREEDOM FORUM TRUSTEES, I AM PLEASED TO PRESENT TO YOU THIS CRYSTAL GLOBE. THIS GLOBE DOES TWO OR THREE THINGS AT ONE TIME: ONE, IT'S A PERFECT WAY FOR OUR TRUSTEES TO END OUR SIX-NATION TOUR, TO REINFORCE FREE PRESS, FREE SPEECH AND FREE SPIRIT. IT ALSO HELPS US IN THE UNITED STATES, AT A TIME WHEN WE'RE TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER TO LOOK INWARD OR OUTWARD, TO LOOK OUTWARD AND TO ASIA AND TO HONG KONG. AND THEN FINALLY, PERHAPS, WITH YOUR BOLD LOOK AT THE FUTURE, PERHAPS THIS MIGHT BE A CRYSTAL-BALL AS WELL. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

GOVERNOR: THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED FOR THAT GIFT. IT COMES, WITH YOUR REMARKS ABOUT A SOCIETY AND A COUNTRY ABOUT WHICH I FEEL MORE PASSIONATELY THAN ANY OTHER. ONE OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP WHICH I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE WHEN I WAS A YOUNG MAN, IS THAT I HAVE GROWN UP A FIRM AND COMMITTED AMERICOPHILE. I HOPE THAT YOU'LL REMEMBER THAT WHEN FROM TIME TO TIME OVER THE NEXT YEARS, YOU READ ABOUT ME LOBBYING ENERGETICALLY IN THE UNITED STATES IN FAVOUR OF FREE TRADE, OPEN TRADE - WHICH FRANKLY, MATTERS MORE TO THIS COMMUNITY, ARGUABLY, THAN ALMOST ANY OTHER ISSUE. SO WHEN I'M DOING THAT AND OCCASIONALLY SEEMING RATHER DEMOTIC, JUST REMEMBER THAT THE WORDS ARE COMING FROM SOMEBODY WHO HAS AN UNQUALIFIED ADMIRATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE VALUES THAT YOU'VE REPRESENTED FOR THE LAST 200 YEARS.

OBLIGATION TO KEEP WORK ON AIRPORT GOING: GOVERNOR

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT HIS OBLIGATION WAS TO DO WHAT HE COULD TO KEEP WORK GOING ON THE NEW AIRPORT PROJECT.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS ON HIS RETURN FROM AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO PEKING, MR PATTEN SAID: "THAT'S WHAT I THINK CHINA WOULD EXPECT OF ME AND IT'S CERTAINLY WHAT HONG KONG WOULD EXPECT OF ME. PEOPLE IN HONG KONG KNOW VERY WELL THAT THERE WILL BE AN AIRPORT, THAT IT WILL BE A VERY GOOD AIRPORT WHEN IT'S COMPLETED."

ASKED ABOUT COMMENTS THAT CHINA WOULD NOT ALLOW AIRCRAFT TO FLY OVER IT'S AIRSPACE IF HONG KONG WENT AHEAD WITH THE AIRPORT PROJECT WITHOUT CHINESE APPROVAL, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "I THINK IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT AS RAPIDLY AS WE WOULD LIKE UNLESS WE DID SO AS PART OF AN OVERALL AGREEMENT WITH CHINA AND CHINESE OFFICIALS."

"SO I'M NOT SURE THAT THE QUESTION OF CHINESE AIRSPACE ACTUALLY COMES INTO MATTERS. I THINK IT'S SOMEWHAT ACADEMIC," HE SAID.

"IF OTHER PEOPLE, AND I'LL HAVE TO GO ON SAYING THIS, HAVE ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING THE AIRPORT BETTER, IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO US ALL; VERY HELPFUL TO EVERYONE IN HONG KONG FOR THEM TO PUT THOSE IDEAS FORWARD," HE ADDED.

"I THINK THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WOULD BE VERY SURPRISED IF ALL THAT WE WERE TO HEAR WAS CRITICISM AND NOT ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS ON THE AIRPORT OR MUCH MORE IMPORTANT, POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT," MR PATTEN SAID.

"I HAVEN'T INVENTED THE FACT THAT I HAVE TO BRING FORWARD ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 1995 ELECTIONS. I HAVE TO DO THAT," HE SAID.

"IF PEOPLE DON'T LIKE MY PROPOSALS I THINK PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WOULD EXPECT THEM TO PUT FORWARD THEIR OWN PROPOSALS, THEIR OWN ALTERNATIVES. ANYWAY WE'LL HAVE TO CONSIDER THESE QUESTIONS IN A CALM AND SENSIBLE WAY AND GO ON SHOWING THAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG ARE WHOLLY CAPABLE OF DISCUSSING THESE MATTERS RATIONALLY AND INTELLIGENTLY IN A RESTRAINED AND RESPONSIBLE WAY," HE ADDED.

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR'S PRESS CONFERENCE
HELD IN BEIJING TODAY (FRIDAY)

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I'VE GOT A STATEMENT TO READ AND THEN I'M HAPPY TO ANSWER ONE OR TWO QUESTIONS. BUT I'M BRIEFING THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TOMORROW AND THAT'S WHERE I'LL OBVIOUSLY HAVE A MORE POINTED OPPORTUNITY OF ANSWERING QUESTIONS.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK MY HOSTS, PARTICULARLY THE HONG KONG AND MACAU OFFICE, FOR LOOKING AFTER US SO WELL THIS WEEK, AND FOR MAKING ALL THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS. I'D PARTICULARLY LIKE TO THANK DIRECTOR LU FOR HIS COURTESY. I'M EXTREMELY PLEASED TO HAVE MET HIM AT LAST. WE SHALL HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO DO WITH EACH OTHER OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

WE'VE SPENT A GOOD DEAL OF TIME TOGETHER THIS WEEK; HE KNOWS ME BETTER AND I KNOW HIM BETTER, AND I THINK WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS BETTER, AS WELL. IT'S HARDLY A STATE SECRET THAT WE DID NOT SEE EYE TO EYE ON EVERYTHING, BUT I RATHER DOUBT THAT ANYONE THOUGHT THAT WE WOULD. WE'VE BEEN IN MEETINGS WITH MINISTERS AND SENIOR OFFICIALS FOR SOME 10 HOURS; WE'VE DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF ISSUES ON THE HONG KONG AGENDA, AS WELL, OF COURSE, AS MY PROPOSALS FOR POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG.

LET ME START WITH THE ISSUES ON WHICH I THINK WE'VE MADE SOME PROGRESS. BOTH SIDES AGREED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION AND MAXIMUM CONTINUITY FOR HONG KONG'S EXCELLENT CIVIL SERVICE. IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN CIVIL SERVANTS' UNDERSTANDING OF CHINA, I PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAINING COURSE IN PEKING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IT WILL, I HOPE, PROVIDE LANGUAGE TRAINING IN MANDARIN AND HELP PARTICIPANTS TO ESTABLISH CONTACT AND GET A BROAD UNDERSTANDING OF CHINA. DIRECTOR LU HAS ACCEPTED THIS SUGGESTION IN PRINCIPLE. THE TWO SIDES WILL BE DISCUSSING HOW TO GET THE COURSE UP AND RUNNING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. OUR AIM IS THAT ALL LEVEL OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS TAKE PART IN IT BY THE 30TH JUNE 1997.

WE DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF SECURITY ISSUES, INCLUDING CROSS-BORDER CRIME AND SMUGGLING. IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN OUR JOINT EFFORTS TO COMBAT SMUGGLING AND RELATED SECURITY ISSUES, I HAVE PROPOSED:

- (1) CO-ORDINATED OPERATIONS AGAINST SMUGGLING,
- (2) BETTER COMMUNICATION AND SHARING OF INTELLIGENCE BETWEEN SECURITY FORCES,
- (3) SUSTAINED ACTION BY GUANGDONG, IN CONCERT WITH HONG KONG, AGAINST SMUGGLING, AND
- (4) EARLY AGREEMENT ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HONG KONG AND GUANGDONG WATERS, WHICH CAN THEN BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH BUOYS, SO AS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF INADVERTENT INCURSION.

/WE DISCUSSED

WE DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF ISSUES ON THE AGENDA OF THE JLG, INCLUDING AIR SERVICE AGREEMENTS, DEFENCE LANDS, AND RIGHT OF ABODE. WE BOTH HOPED THAT THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP WOULD CONTINUE THE GOOD PROGRESS MADE IN THE LATEST JLG TALKS IN LONDON.

NOW TO ISSUES ON WHICH WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN US. ON THE AIRPORT: I MADE IT CLEAR THAT MY LEGACY TO HONG KONG WOULD NOT BE JUDGED BY WHETHER I LEFT IT WITH A NEW AIRPORT. SUCCESS OR FAILURE IN 1997 WILL NOT BE JUDGED BY WHETHER I FLY OUT OF A NEW AIRPORT BUT BY WHETHER HONG KONG'S WAY OF LIFE IS INTACT AND SET TO CONTINUE TO BE INTACT. WE HAVE, AS YOU KNOW, PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS ON THE AIRPORT THAT COVER A SPECTRUM OF POSSIBLE WAYS OF FUNDING IT, THE LATEST ONE BASED ON CHINESE PROPOSALS, BUT WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO HIT ON THE FORMULA THAT THE CHINESE SIDE WILL ENDORSE. NOTHING NEW EMERGED FROM OUR TALKS THIS WEEK. I MADE IT PLAIN THAT THERE WAS A LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF IDEAS WE COULD COME UP WITH, ALTHOUGH WE WOULD BE WILLING TO DISCUSS ANY THE CHINESE MIGHT HAVE. AN AGREEMENT WITH CHINA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE THE BEST WAY FORWARD, OTHERWISE WE SHALL JUST HAVE TO BUILD AS MUCH AS WE CAN. BUT LET ME REPEAT, THIS AIRPORT WILL BE BUILT, NOT BECAUSE IT SERVES BRITISH INTERESTS IN ANY WAY, BUT BECAUSE HONG KONG NEEDS IT AND HONG KONG WILL GET IT.

THE BULK OF OUR DISCUSSION HAS BEEN ON MY PROPOSALS FOR POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG. I REITERATED THAT MY PROPOSALS WERE MADE IN HONG KONG AFTER 12 WEEKS OF CONSULTATIONS RIGHT ACROSS THE COMMUNITY. I BELIEVE THEY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF MOST PEOPLE IN HONG KONG. I BELIEVE THEY MEET THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG FOR A MODEST - A MODEST - INCREASE IN DEMOCRACY, AS WELL AS MAXIMUM CONTINUITY AND A SMOOTH TRANSITION. DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 1995 ELECTION HAVE TO BE PUT IN PLACE WELL BEFORE THEN. THEY ARE NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE BASIC LAW. THE PROPOSALS I HAVE PUT FORWARD ARE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE BASIC LAW.

WE HAD SOME VIGOROUS DISCUSSIONS; MAJOR DIFFERENCES REMAIN BETWEEN US. THE DIFFERENCES HAVE NOT WIDENED THIS WEEK AND NOR, FRANKLY, CAN I SAY THEY HAVE NARROWED. I MADE IT PLAIN THAT I AM ENTIRELY HAPPY TO DISCUSS MY PROPOSALS AT ANY TIME, WITH ANYONE, ANYWHERE. I WOULD WELCOME IT IF THOSE WHO'VE CRITICISED MY PROPOSALS CAME UP WITH ALTERNATIVES. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 1995 ELECTION MUST BE OPEN, FAIR AND HONEST, AND COMMAND THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

WE AGREED THAT OUR CONSULTATIONS WOULD CONTINUE IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP. CONSULTATIONS MEANS CONSULTATIONS, HOWEVER. AT THE END OF THE DAY, TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE, LEGISLATION HAS TO BE PUT BEFORE LEGCO IN THE NEW YEAR.

SCM POST: WHILE CHINA HAS YET TO COME UP WITH SWEEPING PROPOSALS REGARDING THE AIRPORT PROJECT, SWIRE GROUP'S CHAIRMAN, PETER SUTCH HAS COME UP WITH AN IDEA THAT A PRIVATE SECTOR CONSORTIUM ... (INDISTINCT). DO YOU THINK IT'S A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE THAT HE'S SUGGESTED?

/GOVERNOR: WELL

GOVERNOR: WELL, ANYTHING THAT MR SUTCH SAYS, IS BOUND TO HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY THOUGHT ABOUT. HE IS ONE OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS LEADERS IN HONG KONG AND I WOULD BE VERY HAPPY TO TALK TO HIM OR ANY OTHER BUSINESS LEADERS, ABOUT ANY PROPOSALS THEY MIGHT HAVE FOR FINANCING AND CONSTRUCTING THE AIRPORT. SO IF MR SUTCH OR OTHERS WANT TO COME AND SEE ME TO TALK ABOUT THAT PARTICULAR ISSUE, I'LL BE DELIGHTED TO MEET THEM.

HK ECONOMIC TIMES: THE CHINESE SIDE HAVE INDICATED THAT IN 1987 WHEN TIMOTHY RENTON WAS VISITING CHINA, BOTH SIDES HAD REACHED A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT ON THE CONSTITUTION - HONG KONG'S CONSTITUTION - ELECTIONS FOR INSTANCE - DIRECT ELECTIONS. WHICH TAKES THE SECOND POINT AND THE CHINESE SIDE ALLEGED THAT YOUR PROPOSALS HAVE DEPARTED FROM THAT TYPE OF COMMITMENT. WOULD YOU DENY THAT THAT IS TRUE?

GOVERNOR: WELL, I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT WHATEVER MAY HAVE BEEN SAID TO YOU IN CORRIDORS OR BARS, NOBODY, IN OVER 10 HOURS OF DISCUSSIONS, HAS MENTIONED THE NAME OF TIMOTHY RENTON TO ME. IF YOU TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE ISSUE OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE FOR 1995, THE ONE THING THAT IS ABSOLUTELY CLEAR ABOUT THE BASIC LAW -- NO, LET ME RE-PHASE THAT -- ONE OF THE THINGS THAT IS ABSOLUTELY CLEAR ABOUT THE BASIC LAW IS THAT IT DOESN'T SPECIFY THE COMPOSITION OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE FOR 1995. YOU ONLY HAVE TO LOOK IN THE BASIC LAW TO SEE THAT'S ABSOLUTELY PLAIN. SO THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUTTING FORWARD PROPOSALS ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE, HIMSELF -- THE COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, HIMSELF -- THE ELECTION COMMITTEE, HIMSELF -- I'LL GET IT RIGHT IN A MOMENT. THE ELECTION COMMITTEE - THE FOURTH TIME! AND IF ANYBODY HAS ANY PROPOSALS, THEMSELVES, TO PUT FORWARD ON THAT, I'D BE DELIGHTED TO HEAR THEM. BUT EVEN THOUGH TIMOTHY RENTON IS AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE OF MINE, HIS NAME WAS NOT, ALAS, MENTIONED DURING OUR DISCUSSIONS THIS WEEK.

QUESTIONER: BUT HASN'T HE GIVEN ANY COMMITMENT?

GOVERNOR: NO.

QUESTION: SO FAR ALL THE ... (INDISTINCT) CHINESE SIDE (INDISTINCT) ... CALL IT A DAY ... GO AHEAD ON BOTH THE AIRPORT AND YOUR PROPOSALS ... (INDISTINCT).

GOVERNOR: NOBODY - LET IT BE SAID - DURING MY DISCUSSIONS THIS WEEK HAS CALLED ME NAMES. I HAVE BEEN CALLED A VARIETY OF NAMES BY SOME OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FREE-PRESS - UNDERLINED "THE FREE-PRESS" - IN HONG KONG. SOME HAVE CALLED ME A DICTATOR, OR IMPLIED THAT I'M A DICTATOR; SOME HAVE IMPLIED THAT I'M TRYING TO WEAKEN STRONG EXECUTIVE-LED GOVERNMENT. I THINK IT'S DIFFICULT TO BE BOTH AT THE SAME TIME BUT EASIER FOR JOURNALISTS TO CLAIM THAT I'M BOTH AT THE SAME TIME. I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY POINT IN RESPONDING TO NAME-CALLING.

/WHAT I'M

WHAT I'M HAPPY TO RESPOND TO ARE PROPOSALS, AND I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT DURING THE COURSE OF CONTINUING DISCUSSION, WE CAN SEE SOME PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD RATHER THAN JUST CRITICISMS. I REPEAT THAT THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG IS OBLIGED TO PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS FOR THE 1995 ELECTIONS ON THE NINE NEW FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES, ON THE VOTING METHOD FOR DIRECTLY ELECTED SEATS, ON THE ELECTION COMMITTEE - I GOT IT RIGHT THIS TIME. THE GOVERNOR HAS TO PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS ON THOSE THINGS BECAUSE THOSE ARRANGEMENTS AREN'T AT PRESENT MADE. IF ANYONE, I REPEAT, HAS OTHER PROPOSALS, LET THEM MAKE THEM.

QUESTION: DID YOU COME AWAY FROM YOUR TALK THIS WEEK CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF OPPOSITION THAT CHINA IS NOW.....AVOID BEING CRITICAL... WHATEVER (INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: HONG KONG OBSERVES A VERY CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL STABILITY AND SOCIAL STABILITY IN HONG KONG WHICH IN FACT IS CONTINUING.

QUESTION: (INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: THE JOINT DECLARATION MAKES IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT WE SHOULD BE COMMITTED TOGETHER FOR ORDERLY AND GRADUAL PROGRESS AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M SUGGESTING. I AM NOT SUGGESTING SOME HELTER-SKELTER PROGRESS. I'VE ACTUALLY PROPOSED A DIFFERENT ROUTE TO THE INTRODUCTION OF DIRECTLY ELECTED - TO THE INTRODUCTION OF AN ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF DIRECTLY ELECTED SEATS. SO NOBODY, I THINK, CAN SUGGEST THE MODEST PROPOSALS THAT I'VE PUT FORWARD, WHICH ARE BEING CRITICISED BY MANY PEOPLE FOR NOT GOING FAR ENOUGH, AS BEING DISORDERLY OR TOO RAPID. THEY ARE WHOLLY IN LINE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE JOINT DECLARATION.

WHAT IS ALSO TRUE ABOUT THE JOINT DECLARATION IS WE ARE COMMITTED, QUITE PROPERLY, TO CONSULTING ONE ANOTHER MUCH MORE AS WE MOVE TOWARDS 1997 TO WORKING MORE SUCCESSFULLY TOGETHER AS WE WORK TOWARDS 1997 AND I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT WE'LL BE ABLE TO DO THAT. IN ORDER TO DO THAT SUCCESSFULLY IT'S NOT ENOUGH JUST TO MAKE CRITICISMS. PEOPLE HAVE TO PUT OTHER PROPOSALS ON THE TABLE.

QUESTION: HAVE YOU BEEN EXPECTING THAT RESPONSE FROM CHINA....(INAUDIBLE).

GOVERNOR: WELL, I DON'T READ AS EXTENSIVELY THE PAPERS WHICH HAVE CRITICISED ME IN HONG KONG AS PERHAPS I SHOULD, BUT I WAS AWARE THAT CERTAIN CRITICISMS WERE BEING MADE, THOUGH I WASN'T ENTIRELY SURPRISED AT THE ARGUMENTS THAT I'VE BEEN EXCHANGING OR DEALING WITH THIS WEEK; BUT I CAN'T SAY THAT ANYTHING NEW FEATURED IN OUR DISCUSSION; I'M NOT SURE THAT ANYTHING, ANY NEW ARGUMENTS CAME FORWARD TO SURPRISE OR CONCERN ME, BUT I LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSIONS CONTINUING AND I HOPE THAT THEY LEAD TO A SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION.

QUESTION: YOU SEEM A BIT FED UP THOUGH.

/GOVERNOR: I'M

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GOVERNOR: I'M NOT REMOTELY FED UP. I'VE JUST BEEN GOING AROUND THE FORBIDDEN CITY, I'VE HAD A TERRIFIC MORNING.

QUESTION: WE ARE ACTING ON PROPOSALS FOR A DIFFERENT ROUTE IF CRITICISED BY MR ZHOU NAN FOR OPEN CHALLENGE TO THE SINO-BRITISH RELATIONS.

GOVERNOR: I'M NOT CHALLENGING ANYONE. I'M TRYING TO UNDERTAKE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG TO SEE THAT ITS INSTITUTION PROVIDES A STRONG EXECUTIVE-LED GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS PROPERLY ACCOUNTED TO A MORE BROADLY-BASED LEGISLATURE. THAT IS WHAT I'M OBLIGED TO DO, THAT IS WHAT I'M OBLIGED TO DO UNDER THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THAT'S WHAT I'M OBLIGED TO DO IN ORDER TO ENSURE A SMOOTH TRANSITION. IT ISN'T CHALLENGING THE STABILITY OF HONG KONG TO PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS WHICH PLAINLY CARRY THE SUPPORT OF A VERY LARGE SECTION OF OPINION IN HONG KONG.

QUESTION: SIGNING THE TREATY THEY'D NEVER AGREED TO, HOW WILL YOU KNOW WHAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WANT YOU TO DO? THERE IS NO REAL RESPONSE IN HONG KONG?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THAT THERE HAS BEEN A GOOD DEAL OF EVIDENCE OVER THE LAST WEEKS, EVEN FROM OPINION POLLS THOUGH I HAVE NOT ENDURED BY PAST THE MOST SLAVISH ADMIRER OF OPINION POLLS, THAT THERE IS A LOT OF SUPPORT FOR WHAT I'VE PUT FORWARD, BUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT YEAR IS THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL HAVE TO TAKE A DECISION ON THE LEGISLATION WHICH IS EVENTUALLY PUT BEFORE THEM AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REPRESENTS THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

QUESTION: CHINESE... HAS REPEATEDLY SAID THAT...RIGHT TO AFTER 1997 (INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: I THINK THAT THE HONG KONG PEOPLE HAVE MADE A SPECTACULAR SUCCESS OF EVERYTHING THEY'VE DONE. I THINK WHATEVER PROPOSAL ARE EVENTUALLY PUT TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND AGREED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL FORM THE BASIS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FROM 1995 ONWARDS. I'M SURE THAT THEY WILL WORK SUCCESSFULLY AND IT ISN'T MY EXPERIENCE THAT PEOPLE EVER WANT TO CHANGE THINGS THAT WORK SUCCESSFULLY, BUT YOU WERE RIGHT IN YOUR ANALYSIS OF WHERE THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES AFTER 1997 LIE; BUT, I REPEAT, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT'S COMMONLY THE PRACTICE TO CHANGE THINGS THAT WORK WELL. PEOPLE IN HONG KONG ARE PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF TAKING A GREATER SHARE IN MANAGING THEIR OWN AFFAIRS IN A WAY WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE, MATURE, RESTRAINED WITH STRENGTH, SENSIBLE.

QUESTION: YOU SAY THAT....(INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: I HOPE THAT EVERYONE WHO CRITICISES WILL RECOGNISE THAT IT'S NOT JUST ENOUGH TO CRITICISE. THAT, WHAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG EXPECT IS TO HAVE ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD AND THAT GOES FOR EVERYONE WHO HAS CRITICISED.

/QUESTION: I

QUESTION: I NOTICE THAT... TO BUILD THE AIRPORT.. WITHOUT CHINA...WHERE WILL THE MONEY COME FROM.....?

GOVERNOR: THE MONEY WILL HAVE TO BE AGREED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND WE WOULD DO AS MUCH AS WE CAN BUT I REPEAT, IT'S IN MY JUDGEMENT, A SECOND BEST OPTION, BUT I AM UNDER AN OBLIGATION TO DO AS MUCH AS I CAN TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT AND THAT'S WHAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG EXPECT OF ME AND THAT'S WHAT I WILL DO, BUT I WILL HAVE PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITIES, I'M SURE, FOR EXPLORING OTHER OR ADDITIONAL WAYS FORWARD.

QUESTION: (INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT ANYBODY WOULD BE THAT FOOLISH AS TO REGARD THAT SENSIBLE POLICY. IT'S CONCEIVABLY THE SORT OF THING WHICH SOME JOURNALISTS WRITE, BUT I DON'T HONESTLY THINK THAT IT IS A POLICY THAT WE WOULD EXPECT FROM SENSIBLE, GROWN UP PEOPLE.

QUESTION: CHINESE SIDE.....(INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: I THINK WE BOTH AGREE THAT IT'S SENSIBLE TO GO ON TALKING AND I REPEAT WHAT I'VE SAID ALREADY, THAT IT WILL BE EASIER TO GO ON TALKING AND, IF RATHER THAN JUST FACING CRITICISM WE CAN SEE SOME ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS.

QUESTION: (INAUDIBLE)

GOVERNOR: I SAID EARLIER THAT I BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING THAT WORKS, AND WORKS WELL FOR HONG KONG, WILL SURVIVE THROUGH 1997 AND BEYOND; AND I HAVE NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT THE GOVERNING INSTITUTION OF HONG KONG WORKING WELL WILL SURVIVE BEYOND 1997. I DON'T RECALL EXCEPT YOUR PREMISE BECAUSE IT WILL BE DISCOURTEOUS OF ME TO DO SO.

QUESTION: AFTER YOUR VISIT.... DO YOU THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO HOLD A REFERENDUM ON.....(INAUDIBLE).

GOVERNOR: IT'S NOT ON MY AGENDA. IT WAS SUGGESTED BY, I THINK A MEMBER OF THE CRC IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WHEN I FIRST ANSWERED QUESTIONS THERE. THE CRC AND OTHERS MAY CONTINUE TO PRESS ME TO HOLD A REFERENDUM, BUT MY PRESENT INTENTIONS ARE, IN DUE COURSE, TO PUT LEGISLATION IN FRONT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. I'VE HEARD QUITE A LOT OF ARGUMENT EXPRESSED AGAINST THE IDEA OF HOLDING A REFERENDUM AND, BY AND LARGE, I THINK IT'S FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO MAKE UP ITS MIND WHEN LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS COME BEFORE IT.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

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GOVT-LEGCO COMMITTED A FORUM FOR DISCUSSIONS

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THE IDEA OF THE GOVERNMENT-LEGCO COMMITTEE WAS TO PROVIDE A FORUM WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO DISCUSS WITH MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL, THE PRIORITIES FOR LEGISLATION, UP-COMING MOTIONS, AND TO ANSWER QUESTIONS, THE DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID FORD, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER A DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE SUBJECT, SIR DAVID SAID:

"I SAID THAT WE WERE FAIRLY RELAXED ABOUT THE NUMBERS THAT MIGHT BE ON THE COMMITTEE, AND I THINK MEMBERS FELT THAT IT WAS GOING TO BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO SELECT MEMBERSHIP OF THIS COMMITTEE FROM WITHIN THEIR OWN NUMBERS; THERE WAS A FEELING THAT SOME PEOPLE WOULD BE LEFT OUT."

"I MADE THE POINT THAT IT WOULD NOT BE IN ANY WAY A SUPER LEGCO; IT WOULD NOT BE A MINI EXCO; THAT IT WOULD HAVE NO CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION; IT WAS SIMPLY AN INFORMAL GATHERING IN WHICH MEMBERS COULD EXCHANGE VIEWS ABOUT GOVERNMENT BUSINESS," HE SAID.

"I'VE HEARD THE VIEWS OF MEMBERS AND I'VE NOW AGREED THAT I WILL TAKE BACK THOSE VIEWS AND DISCUSS THEM WITH THE GOVERNOR AND WE'LL DECIDE WHERE TO GO FROM HERE," HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID SAID IF MEMBERS FELT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A FEW MORE MEMBERS THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE HAPPY TO CONSIDER IT.

"I THINK IF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DO NOT WISH TO PURSUE THIS IDEA OR IF THEY FIND IT TOO DIFFICULT, THEN CLEARLY WE WOULD NOT GO TO THE WALL ON THIS PROPOSAL.

"IT IS NOT A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE FOR US, IT'S SIMPLY A CONVENIENT FORUM WHICH WE THOUGHT MEMBERS WOULD APPRECIATE OF HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY OF DISCUSSING THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMME WITH THE ADMINISTRATION. BUT IF MEMBERS FIND IT IS TOO DIFFICULT TO MANAGE THEN OBVIOUSLY WE WOULD NOT WISH TO GO AHEAD WITH IT," HE SAID.

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ANOTHER AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME CONTRACT AWARDED

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS AWARDED A \$205.3 MILLION CONTRACT TO FRANKI-AOKI JOINT VENTURE TO RELOCATE THE HONG KONG FERRY SHIPYARD FACILITY FROM ITS EXISTING SITE AT TAI KOK TSUI TO A NEW SITE NAMED NGAU KOK WAN ON THE NORTHERN SHORE OF TSING YI ISLAND.

THE RELOCATION OF THE SHIPYARD IS REQUIRED TO MAKE WAY FOR THE WEST KOWLOON RECLAMATION, ONE OF THE 10 KEY PROJECTS UNDER THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME (ACP).

THE WORKS WILL INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FULLY OPERATIONAL SHIPYARD, WHICH WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH A SHIPLIFT AND SHIP TRANSFER SYSTEM, TOGETHER WITH ANCILLARY BUILDINGS SUCH AS OFFICES, TRANSFORMER ROOM AND CONTROL ROOM.

THE CENTRAL TENDER BOARD YESTERDAY (THURSDAY) APPROVED THE AWARD OF THE FIXED PRICE LUMP SUM CONTRACT TO THE HONG KONG - JAPANESE CONSORTIUM, WHICH SUBMITTED THE LOWEST TENDER, AFTER CONSIDERING SIX BIDS WHICH RANGED FROM \$205.3 MILLION TO \$267.1 MILLION.

THIS BRINGS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED CONTRACTS AWARDED ON THE ACP TO 19, WITH A TOTAL VALUE OF OVER \$19 BILLION, SAID A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN.

"ALL 19 CONTRACTS WERE AWARDED WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT'S ESTIMATES," HE SAID.

WORKS WILL START IN MID NOVEMBER AND IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN ABOUT 16 MONTHS.

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RETIREMENT PROTECTION PROPOSALS ANNOUNCED

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A CONSULTATION PAPER CONTAINING PROPOSALS FOR A COMMUNITY-WIDE RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM HAS BEEN PUBLISHED FOR THREE MONTHS' PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

OUTLINING THE MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (FRIDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR JOHN CHAN, EMPHASISED THAT THE PROPOSALS WERE BEING PUT FORWARD FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ONLY AT THIS STAGE, AND AS YET NO DECISIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN.

THE CONSULTATION PAPER WAS PREPARED BY THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP ON RETIREMENT PROTECTION.

HE SAID THE NEW SYSTEM WAS DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE LIVELIHOOD OF ALL FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES AFTER RETIREMENT.

"IT IS NOT A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND, BUT IS RATHER A SYSTEM UNDER WHICH PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT SCHEMES ARE OPERATED BY BANKS, TRUSTEES, INSURANCE COMPANIES OR INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYERS, AS IS THE CASE AT PRESENT," MR CHAN SAID.

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"WHAT WE ARE RECOMMENDING IS THAT ALL EMPLOYEES IN FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT UNDER THE AGE OF 65 SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN A RETIREMENT PROTECTION SCHEME UNLESS THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTED.

"EMPLOYEES AGED 65 AND ABOVE, AND THEIR EMPLOYERS, COULD PARTICIPATE ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS.

"THOSE EXEMPTED WOULD INCLUDE EMPLOYEES ALREADY COVERED BY APPROVED, EXISTING SCHEMES AS LONG AS THESE OFFER BENEFITS AT LEAST EQUAL TO THOSE UNDER THE PROPOSED NEW SYSTEM."

NON-RESIDENTS WHO ARE WORKING TEMPORARILY IN HONG KONG ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM IF THEY ARE NOT ALREADY COVERED BY SIMILAR SCHEMES IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES.

SUCH WORKERS WILL BE ABLE TO WITHDRAW THEIR ACCRUED RETIREMENT BENEFITS UPON THEIR PERMANENT DEPARTURE FROM HONG KONG.

AS REGARDS THE MINIMUM LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTION, THE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT IT SHOULD BE SET AT 10 PER CENT OF BASIC SALARY.

THIS LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTION IS NECESSARY IF THE SYSTEM IS TO PRODUCE A LEVEL OF RETIREMENT BENEFIT THAT WOULD ENABLE THE RETIREE TO MAINTAIN A REASONABLE STANDARD OF LIVING, MR CHAN NOTED.

HE ADDED THAT A FIGURE HIGHER THAN THAT CAN BE ARRANGED BY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EMPLOYER AND HIS EMPLOYEES.

MR CHAN SAID THE CONTRIBUTION MAY BE PAID EITHER BY THE EMPLOYER ALONE, OR PARTLY BY THE EMPLOYER AND PARTLY BY THE EMPLOYEE.

"WHERE AN EMPLOYEE'S CONTRIBUTION IS REQUIRED, THEN THIS SHOULD NOT EXCEED FIVE PER CENT OF HIS SALARY, OR FIVE PER CENT OF \$15,000, WHICHEVER IS THE LESS," HE ADDED.

IN THE CASE AN EMPLOYEE CHANGES JOB, THE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDED THAT THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM THE MINIMUM LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTION MUST BE TRANSFERRED TO HIS NEW EMPLOYER, OR REMAIN FROZEN IN THE PREVIOUS EMPLOYER'S SCHEME, OR BE LOCKED IN A SEPARATE ACCOUNT INDEPENDENT OF BOTH EMPLOYERS.

"WITHDRAWAL OF BENEFITS EACH TIME AN EMPLOYEE CHANGES JOB WILL DEFEAT THE PURPOSE OF A RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM," MR CHAN SAID.

THE WORKING GROUP ALSO CONSIDERED THAT BENEFITS ARISING FROM THE STATUTORY MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION SHOULD NOT NORMALLY BE PAID OUT BEFORE THE AGE OF 65, EXCEPT IN SPECIFIC CASES.

HOWEVER, IF AN EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATES IN AN EXISTING OR NEW SCHEME WHICH ALLOWS FOR RETIREMENT BELOW THE AGE OF 65, HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO WITHDRAW, AT THAT EARLIEST AGE, THAT PART OF HIS RETIREMENT BENEFITS WHICH EXCEED THE BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE MANDATORY MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION IN RESPECT OF SERVICE AFTER THE IMPLEMENTATION DATE OF THE SYSTEM.

/THE PAYMENT

THE PAYMENT OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS COULD BE IN THE FORM OF EITHER A LUMP-SUM, A MONTHLY PENSION, OR A COMBINATION OF BOTH.

TURNING TO THE QUESTION OF SECURITY OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS, MR CHAN SAID THE WORKING GROUP CONSIDERED THAT THE GENERAL AREAS OF CONCERN REGARDING THE ISSUE WOULD BE DEALT WITH BY THE OCCUPATIONAL RETIREMENT SCHEMES BILL.

"HOWEVER, AS AN ADDITIONAL SAFEGUARD, WE ARE RECOMMENDING THAT APPROPRIATE CRITERIA SHOULD BE LAID DOWN FOR INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO BECOME TRUSTEES," HE SAID.

"THERE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTIONS THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE A FINANCIAL GUARANTEE TO COVER ANY LOSSES WHICH MAY BE CAUSED TO BENEFICIARIES BY THE FAILURE OF RETIREMENT SCHEMES.

"THE WORKING GROUP DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS. PROVIDING A GUARANTEE WOULD REQUIRE THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ON AN IMMENSE CONTINGENT LIABILITY, WHICH WOULD NOT BE PRACTICABLE.

"IN ADDITION, IF A GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE WAS PROVIDED, IT COULD ENCOURAGE AGGRESSIVE OR UNSCRUPULOUS FUND MANAGEMENT."

THE WORKING GROUP ALSO REJECTED SUGGESTIONS THAT PUBLIC FUNDS SHOULD BE USED TO AUGMENT BENEFITS PAYABLE UNDER THE PROPOSED RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM.

"THE GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY PROVIDING A PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME, A SPECIAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE SCHEME AS WELL AS OTHER BENEFITS SUCH AS COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY.

SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF FUNDS BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, A PACKAGE OF IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE MADE TO THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME, WHICH WILL BE RENAMED THE COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME, FROM JULY 1 NEXT YEAR.

"THESE BENEFITS WILL REMAIN IN PLACE EVEN AFTER THE RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM HAS BEEN INTRODUCED, AND AS THEY ARE PROVIDED THROUGH GENERAL REVENUE AT MINIMAL OR NO COST, THEY MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION," MR CHAN STRESSED.

APART FROM THE CONSULTATION PAPER ENTITLED "A COMMUNITY-WIDE RETIREMENT PROTECTION SYSTEM", THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO PREPARED A SIMPLE GUIDE WHICH CONTAINS ALL THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP.

COPIES OF THE CONSULTATION PAPER AND THE SIMPLE GUIDE ARE AVAILABLE AT THE DISTRICT OFFICES OF THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, BRANCH OFFICES OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND POST OFFICES.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO SEND THEIR VIEWS IN WRITING TO THE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY (SD), EDUCATION AND MANPOWER BRANCH, 12TH FLOOR, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, WEST WING, HONG KONG, ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 31 NEXT YEAR.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR NEW AIRPORT LAND LINK

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THE LANTAU FIXED CROSSING, WHICH WILL BE ONE OF THE WORLD'S LONGEST SUSPENSION BRIDGES, WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH A COMPREHENSIVE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

SUITABLE CONTRACTORS ARE INVITED TO APPLY FOR PREQUALIFICATION TO TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF THE TRAFFIC CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM AT THE LANTAU FIXED CROSSING (LFC) AND PART OF ROUTE 3 AT TSING YI AND KWAI CHUNG.

THE GOVERNMENT ENGINEER OF PORT AND AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT BRANCH OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, MR KAM CHAN-YIU, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO PROVIDE FAST AND CONVENIENT ACCESS TO NORTH LANTAU.

"HOWEVER, IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED FOR THE PROPER MANAGEMENT OF THESE ROADS," HE ADDED.

WORKS FOR THE CONTRACT WOULD INVOLVED THE PROVISION OF TRAFFIC SIGNS AND LANE SIGNALS AND ITS COMPUTERISED CONTROL FOR THE BETTERMENT OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AS WELL AS THE INSTALLATION OF AUTOMATIC INCIDENT DETECTION AND CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION SURVEILLANCE FOR TRAFFIC MONITORING AND INCIDENT DETECTION.

OTHER FACILITIES SUCH AS RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS, EMERGENCY TELEPHONES, PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM TOGETHER WITH ALL NECESSARY SUPPORTING FACILITIES WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED UNDER THE CONTRACT.

THERE ARE 10 PROJECTS UNDER THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME (ACP).

THE LFC AND ROUTE 3 ARE TWO OF THE SEVEN ACP PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS.

THE OTHER THREE ACP PROJECTS - THE NEW AIRPORT AT CHEK LAP KOK, THE AIRPORT RAILWAY AND THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING - ARE OPENED TO PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN VARYING WAYS.

MR KAM SAID THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE LFC AND PART OF ROUTE 3 WOULD COVER A TOTAL OF 16.7 KILOMETRES OF ROADWAY, BRIDGES AND TUNNEL WHICH FORMED THE IMPORTANT LAND LINK TO THE NEW AIRPORT.

A NOTICE OF PREQUALIFICATION INVITATION WAS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

PREQUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS ARE OBTAINABLE FROM THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT'S CONSULTING ENGINEERS AT 38TH FLOOR, METROPLAZA TOWER 1, 223 HING FONG ROAD, KWAI FONG. ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TEL 428 8866.

PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BEFORE NOON ON NOVEMBER 27 (FRIDAY).

FOLLOWING THE PREQUALIFICATION EXERCISE, THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT WILL INVITE TENDERS FROM THE PREQUALIFIED TENDERERS IN MARCH NEXT YEAR.

DIRECTOR OF MARINE ORDERS INQUIRY INTO SHIP COLLISION

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THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, MR TONY MILLER, TODAY (FRIDAY) APPOINTED A NAUTICAL SURVEYOR TO CARRY OUT A PILOTAGE PRELIMINARY INQUIRY INTO THE COLLISION INVOLVING THE GERMAN CONTAINER SHIP "DSR ATLANTIC" AND THE TAIWANESE CONTAINER SHIP "UNI-HUMANITY" HALF A MILE SOUTHEAST OF TSING YI ISLAND.

THE SURVEYOR IS CAPTAIN CHEUNG TAI-KEE.

THE PURPOSE OF THE INQUIRY IS TO ESTABLISH THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT SO THAT THE PILOTAGE AUTHORITY WHO IS THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE, CAN DECIDE WHETHER A BOARD OF INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE CONVENED.

A REPORT ON THE INQUIRY WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE PILOTAGE AUTHORITY IN TWO MONTHS.

THE COLLISION OCCURRED AT ABOUT 9.30 PM YESTERDAY (THURSDAY) BETWEEN THE PILOTED 34,200-TONNE "DSR ATLANTIC" WHICH WAS HEADING FOR THE KWAI CHUNG CONTAINER TERMINAL AND THE PILOTED 12,200-TONNE "UNI-HUMANITY".

THE LATTER WAS DEPARTING HONG KONG FROM A BUOY SOUTH OF STONECUTTERS ISLAND. NO INJURY WAS REPORTED.

THE "DSR ATLANTIC" LATER CONTINUED TO PROCEED TO THE CONTAINER TERMINAL AND THE "UNI-HUMANITY" WAS TOWED TO WESTERN ANCHORAGE NORTH OF KAU YI CHAU.

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BANKING LICENCE GRANTED TO HYAKUJUSHI BANK

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A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT THE HYAKUJUSHI BANK LTD HAD BEEN GRANTED A BANKING LICENCE TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN HONG KONG.

THE HYAKUJUSHI BANK LTD IS THE 44TH LARGEST BANK IN JAPAN, AND RANKS 244TH IN THE WORLD IN TERMS OF CAPITAL.

PRIOR TO THE GRANTING OF THE BANKING LICENCE, THE BANK OPERATED A REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE AND A DEPOSIT-TAKING SUBSIDIARY IN HONG KONG. THE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE WILL BE UPGRADED TO A BRANCH.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE CONTINUING INTEREST OF FOREIGN BANKS IN ENTERING THE LOCAL MARKET REFLECTED HONG KONG'S CONTINUED IMPORTANCE AS A MAJOR INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE. THE LICENCE FOR THE HYAKUJUSHI BANK IS THE THIRD BANKING LICENCE GRANTED IN 1992.

THERE ARE NOW 162 LICENSED BANKS IN HONG KONG, OF WHICH 132 ARE INCORPORATED OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY.

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RECLAMATION AND LANDFILLING WORKS AT NIM WAN

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THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO CARRY OUT RECLAMATION AND LANDFILLING WITHIN AN AREA OF ABOUT 44.40 HECTARES OF FORESHORE AND SEA-BED AT NIM WAN, TUEN MUN TO PROVIDE LAND FOR THE INSTALLATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES FOR WEST NEW TERRITORIES (WENT) LANDFILL, PHASE II.

THE EXTENT OF THE AREA AFFECTED WAS DESCRIBED IN A NOTICE OF AUTHORISATION GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE WORKS WILL START AT THE END OF THIS YEAR.

THE NOTICE, IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE, TOGETHER WITH ITS RELATED PLAN CAN BE SEEN AT THE SURVEY AND MAPPING OFFICE, BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG (WHERE COPIES CAN BE PURCHASED ON ORDER) AND AT THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT OFFICE, SECOND FLOOR, TUEN MUN GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 1 TUEN HI ROAD, TUEN MUN, NEW TERRITORIES.

ANY PERSON WHO CONSIDERS THAT HIS INTEREST, RIGHT OR EASEMENT IN OR OVER THE FORESHORE AND SEA-BED INVOLVED WILL BE INJURIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THIS UNDERTAKING MAY DELIVER TO THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS AND LANDS A WRITTEN CLAIM FOR COMPENSATION ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 22 NEXT YEAR.

HE SHOULD STATE IN HIS SUBMISSION THE SUM OF MONEY WHICH HE IS WILLING TO ACCEPT IN FULL AND FINAL SETTLEMENT OF HIS CLAIM AND SHOULD SUBMIT SUCH PARTICULARS WHICH HE POSSESSES TO SUBSTANTIATE HIS CLAIM.

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DIRECTOR OF TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT LEAVES FOR SPANISH CONFERENCE

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THE DIRECTOR OF TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT, MR CHOW CHE-KING, WILL LEAVE FOR MADRID, SPAIN THIS (FRIDAY) EVENING TO ATTEND THE 16TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING AND NEW TOWNS.

MR CHOW WILL PRESENT A PAPER ENTITLED "INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING FOR NEW TOWNS IN HONG KONG" AT THE CONFERENCE WHICH RUNS FROM SUNDAY (OCTOBER 25) TO THURSDAY (OCTOBER 29).

MORE THAN 40 PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD WILL ATTEND THE CONFERENCE.

THE NEXT ANNUAL CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN HONG KONG NEXT YEAR.

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OBJECTIVES OF METHADONE TREATMENT PROGRAMME EXPLAINED

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THE METHADONE PROGRAMME IS THE LARGEST AND MOST POPULAR TREATMENT INSTITUTION IN HONG KONG.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR NARCOTICS, MR KEN WOODHOUSE, AT THE LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF ADMIRALTY TODAY (FRIDAY).

HE SAID IN 1991, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ADMISSIONS TO ALL OF OUR TREATMENT INSTITUTIONS WAS OVER 14,000; THE METHADONE PROGRAMME ACCOUNTED FOR NEARLY 10,000, OR 70 %, OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ADMISSIONS.

THE USE OF METHADONE FOR THE TREATMENT OF DRUG ADDICTS ON AN OUT-PATIENT BASIS STARTED IN HONG KONG IN LATE 1972.

SINCE THEN, THE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN EXPANDED TO COPE WITH INCREASES IN DEMAND, MAKING IT THE LARGEST OF THE TREATMENT PROGRAMMES IN HONG KONG.

THERE ARE NOW 25 METHADONE CLINICS IN HONG KONG, FOUR ON HONG KONG ISLAND, 13 IN KOWLOON AND EIGHT IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS, BUT IT IS STILL WIDELY MISUNDERSTOOD AND NOT GENERALLY SEEN FOR THE SUCCESS THAT IT IS, MR WOODHOUSE SAID.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF METHADONE TREATMENT IS TO PROVIDE DRUG ADDICTS WITH A READILY ACCESSIBLE, LEGAL, MEDICALLY SAFE AND EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUE ILLICIT SELF-ADMINISTRATION OF HEROIN.

MR WOODHOUSE ALSO EXPLAINED THAT METHADONE PERMITS PATIENTS TO WORK AND TO ACHIEVE SOME SORT OF SOCIAL STABILITY AS A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY.

IT IS PARTICULARLY USEFUL BECAUSE IT ENABLES THOSE SUFFERING FROM DRUG DEPENDENCY TO BE EMPLOYED GAINFULLY AND THUS REGAIN A RELATIVELY NORMAL LIFE FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES; IN FACT, ABOUT 65% OF THE PATIENTS ATTENDING METHADONE CLINICS ARE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED, HE SAID.

ALL THE 25 METHADONE CLINICS ARE IN OPERATION SEVEN DAYS A WEEK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND, DURING TYPHOON, 12 CLINICS REMAIN OPEN TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY TREATMENT.

MR WOODHOUSE SAID THE OBJECTIVE WAS TO ENSURE THAT, AT ALL TIMES, PATIENTS HAD RECOURSE TO METHADONE TREATMENT AND WERE NOT FORCED BACK ONTO DRUGS.

PATIENTS ATTENDING THE METHADONE TREATMENT PROGRAMME MAY OPT FOR EITHER DETOXIFICATION OR MAINTENANCE TREATMENT, ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY CHOOSE THE LATTER.

/THESE SHOULD

THESE SHOULD NOT BE LOOKED ON AS MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE OPTIONS, BECAUSE, IN PRACTICE, PATIENTS VARY FROM ONE MODE OF TREATMENT TO THE OTHER, DEPENDING ON THEIR DEGREE OF MOTIVATION.

MEDICAL STAFF IN THE METHADONE CLINICS ADMINISTER THE APPROPRIATE DOSAGE OF METHADONE ACCORDING TO THE PATIENT'S CONDITIONS.

THIS VARIES BETWEEN ABOUT FIVE AND 100 MILLIGRAMMES. METHADONE IS ADMINISTERED IN A LINCTUS, OR SYRUP, WHICH, UNTIL RECENTLY, WAS ORANGE-COLOURED. WE HAVE RECENTLY CHANGED THE COLOUR TO GREEN.

SOCIAL WORKERS AT THE CLINICS HELP PATIENTS BY PROVIDING COUNSELLING AND REFERRAL SERVICES FOR APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE.

THE PATIENTS' CONDITION IS CLOSELY MONITORED AND PATIENTS WHO DEMONSTRATE THEIR DETERMINATION TO SHED THEIR DRUG ADDICTION ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN IN-PATIENT DETOXIFICATION PROGRAMMES.

"BY PROVIDING PATIENTS WITH A LEGAL, READILY AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVE TO HEROIN, THE METHADONE TREATMENT CENTRES HELP REDUCE THE DEMAND FOR DRUGS," HE ADDED.

IN RECENT YEARS, THE METHADONE TREATMENT PROGRAMME HAS ALSO PROVED TO HAVE PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN CONTROLLING THE SPREAD OF AIDS AMONG THE INTRAVENOUS DRUG POPULATION.

WHILE THERE HAS BEEN AN EXPLOSION OF AIDS AMONG DRUG ABUSING POPULATION IN ALL OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, THE PROPORTION OF AIDS VICTIMS AMONG DRUG ABUSERS IN HONG KONG IS VERY LOW, MR WOODHOUSE SAID.

OUT OF THE 310 CONFIRMED AIDS OR HIV POSITIVE CASES IN HONG KONG, ONLY SIX ARE DRUG ABUSERS.

MR WOODHOUSE POINTED OUT THAT THE TOTAL COST OF OUR METHADONE TREATMENT PROGRAMME IS ABOUT \$21 MILLION PER ANNUM; WHEN COMPARED TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG ADDICTION TO THE COMMUNITY THE COST OF TREATMENT IS INSIGNIFICANT.

"HONG KONG HAS BEEN PRAISED INTERNATIONALLY FOR ITS COMPREHENSIVE, AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO TREATMENT SERVICES.

"WHILE THE GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN THESE SERVICES FOR THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM DRUG DEPENDENCY, THEIR SUCCESSFUL OPERATION WILL INEVITABLY BE BOOSTED BY THE SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMUNITY," HE SAID.

NEW SEWAGE PIPELINE IN TOLO HARBOUR

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THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SUBMARINE PIPELINE FOR THE TOLO HARBOUR EFFLUENT EXPORT SCHEME.

THE SCHEME IS PART OF THE TOLO HARBOUR ACTION PLAN WHICH IS AIMED AT REDUCING POLLUTION CAUSED BY RED TIDES IN THE HARBOUR.

WORKS WILL INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SIX-KILOMETRE-LONG WELDED STEEL SUBMARINE PIPELINE AND AN ASSOCIATED WELDED STEEL PIPELINE ON TAI PO AND SHA TIN RECLAMATIONS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT TODAY (FRIDAY) SAID: "WHEN CONSTRUCTION WORKS ARE COMPLETED, A PUMPING STATION WILL PUMP TREATED SEWAGE EFFLUENT FROM TAI PO SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS THROUGH THE SUBMARINE PIPELINE TO SHA TIN SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS.

"THE COMBINED TREATED SEWAGE FROM SHA TIN AND TAI PO WILL THEN BE PUMPED THROUGH A TWIN PUMPING MAIN AND THEN GRAVITATE THROUGH A 7.4-KILOMETRE-LONG TUNNEL TO KAI TAK NULLAH AND FINALLY DISCHARGED TO VICTORIA HARBOUR."

CONSTRUCTION WORKS ARE EXPECTED TO BEGIN IN JANUARY NEXT YEAR AND WILL BE COMPLETED BY JANUARY 1995.

TENDER FORMS AND FURTHER PARTICULARS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CONSULTANT ENGINEERS OF THE PROJECT, BALFOURS-HASWELL, 10TH FLOOR, 1 KOWLOON PARK DRIVE, TSIM SHA TSUI, KOWLOON.

TENDER OFFER WILL CLOSE AT NOON ON DECEMBER 4.

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GOVT REVISES CONTRIBUTION TO TAVA SCHEME

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THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS APPROVED A PROPOSAL FOR REVISING THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE (TAVA) SCHEME FROM ONE-THIRD TO ONE-FIFTH OF ITS COST WITH EFFECT FROM OCTOBER 21 THIS YEAR.

THE SCHEME AIMS TO PROVIDE SPEEDY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS OR THEIR SURVIVING DEPENDANTS REGARDLESS OF THEIR MEANS OR THE FAULT ELEMENT IN THE ACCIDENT.

IT IS FINANCED FROM THREE SOURCES: VEHICLE OWNERS, DRIVERS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION WAS FOR COVERING PEDESTRIAN NEGLIGENCE IN TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SCHEME IN 1979, THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN CONTRIBUTING ONE-THIRD OF ITS COST AS IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT SOME 30-35 PER CENT OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS FROM 1973 TO 1977 HAD BEEN CAUSED BY PEDESTRIAN NEGLIGENCE.

"RECENT TRAFFIC ACCIDENT STATISTICS, HOWEVER, SHOW THAT FROM 1978 TO 1990, THE PERCENTAGE OF ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY PEDESTRIAN NEGLIGENCE RANGED FROM 20.3 PER CENT TO 25.7 PER CENT ONLY," THE SPOKESMAN NOTED.

"AS THE PERCENTAGE OF ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY PEDESTRIAN NEGLIGENCE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLY LOWER THAN THE EARLIER FIGURES OF 30-35 PER CENT, WE CONSIDER THAT THERE IS A CASE TO REVISE THE CONTRIBUTION FROM GENERAL REVENUE TO THE SCHEME TO REFLECT MORE ACCURATELY THE PEDESTRIANS' PART IN CAUSING TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS."

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE SAVINGS ACHIEVED WOULD BE USED TO IMPROVE SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES AND THAT THE REVISION WOULD NOT AFFECT THE LEVEL OF PAYMENT TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS.

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FORESTS AND COUNTRYSIDE ORDINANCE TO BE UPDATED

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THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO AMEND SOME PROVISIONS OF THE FORESTS AND COUNTRYSIDE ORDINANCE TO BRING THEM IN LINE WITH THE PRESENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE FORESTS AND COUNTRYSIDE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1992 WHICH SEEKS TO INTRODUCE THE CHANGES HAS BEEN GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

ONE OF THE MAJOR CHANGES PROPOSED IS THE REMOVAL OF COLLECTIVE LIABILITY IMPOSED ON INHABITANTS OF ANY VILLAGE OR AREA COMMITTING AN OFFENCE OF FELLING, CUTTING, BURNING, DAMAGING OR DESTROYING TREES ON GOVERNMENT LANDS.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID SUCH A FORM OF COLLECTIVE LIABILITY WAS UNDESIRABLE UNDER THE PRESENT SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND SHOULD THEREFORE BE ABOLISHED.

INSTEAD, THE BILL SUGGESTS THE ADDITION OF A NEW PROVISION TO SPELL OUT MORE CLEARLY THE ACTS PROHIBITED IN FORESTS AND PLANTATIONS, MAKING IT AN OFFENCE TO FELL, CUT, BURN OR DESTROY ANY TREE OR GROWING PLANT.

HOWEVER, FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH PURPOSES, ACTS SUCH AS CUTTING GRASS AND REMOVING TURF OR EARTH ARE SOMETIMES REQUIRED.

THE BILL THEREFORE PROPOSES THAT THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES BE EMPOWERED TO ISSUE SPECIAL PERMITS FOR SUCH ACTIVITIES.

TO ENHANCE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LEGISLATION, THE BILL SEEKS TO REPEAL THE PROVISION ON POWER OF ARREST AND SUBSTITUTES IT WITH MORE DETAILED PROVISIONS ABOUT POWERS OF INSPECTION, SEARCH, ARREST AND SEIZURE BY AUTHORISED OFFICERS.

ON THE LEVEL OF FINES, THE MAXIMUM FINE FOR THE OFFENCE, WHICH WAS LAST REVISED IN 1948, WILL BE RAISED FROM \$2,000 TO \$25,000.

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A MAXIMUM FINE OF \$10,000 WILL ALSO BE INTRODUCED FOR THE OFFENCE OF ASSAULTING, RESISTING OR OBSTRUCTING ANY AUTHORISED OFFICER IN THE EXECUTION OF HIS DUTY UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 4.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO WISH TO COMMENT ON THE AMENDMENTS CAN SEND IN THEIR VIEWS TO THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT ON 12TH FLOOR, CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 393 CANTON ROAD.

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NEW CHARGES AT AIRPORT CAR PARKS

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A NEW SCALE OF FEES WILL BE INTRODUCED AT SOME OF THE PUBLIC CAR PARKS AND SPECIAL CAR PARKS AT KAI TAK AIRPORT FROM NOVEMBER 1, 1992, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE RATE FOR THE FIRST TWO HOURS OF PARKING AT THE PASSENGER TERMINAL MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK AND THE CARGO TERMINAL CAR PARK WILL BE ADJUSTED FROM \$12 TO \$13 PER HOUR.

"TO DISCOURAGE LONG-TERM PARKING AT THESE TWO CAR PARKS WHICH ARE OFTEN OVER-SUBSCRIBED, THE PARKING FEES FROM THE THIRD HOUR ONWARD WILL BE DOUBLED I.E. \$26 PER HOUR," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE HOURLY RATE AT THE CONCORDE ROAD CAR PARK, WHICH MAINLY PROVIDES PARKING FOR AIRPORT TENANTS AND THEIR VISITORS, REMAINS UNCHANGED AT \$12.

THE MONTHLY PARKING FEES OF THE SPECIAL CAR PARK SPACES RESERVED FOR AIRPORT TENANTS AND EMPLOYEES AT ALL THREE CAR PARKS WILL BE INCREASED FROM \$1,200 TO \$1,250 FOR A PRIVATE CAR AND FROM \$1,600 TO \$1,650 FOR A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE.

"AIRPORT CAR PARKING CHARGES ARE MAINTAINED AT A COMPARABLE LEVEL TO CAR PARKS AT OTHER PRIME LOCATIONS IN HONG KONG.

"THIS DISCOURAGES CASUAL PARKING BY NON-AIRPORT USERS SO THAT GENUINE AIRPORT USERS, PARTICULAR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, WILL HAVE PARKING SPACES AVAILABLE TO THEM WHEN THEY VISIT KAI TAK," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE IN TIN WAN ESTATE

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THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO CLOSE TIN WAN NEW STREET PERMANENTLY FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF TIN WAN ESTATE.

A NOTICE CONCERNING THE PROPOSED WORK IS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE PLAN AND SCHEME CAN BE SEEN BY MEMBERS AT:

* CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL, HONG KONG;

* THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, HONG KONG SOUTH, SOUTHRON CENTRE, 20TH FLOOR, 130 HENNESSY ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG; AND

* THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OFFICE, SHOP 25, GROUND & SECOND FLOOR, MEI FUNG COURT, ABERDEEN, HONG KONG.

ANY PERSON OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSAL MUST SEND HIS OBJECTION IN WRITING TO REACH THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT NOT LATER THAN DECEMBER 22, THIS YEAR.

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF TIN WAN ESTATE IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 1995/96. IT WILL EVENTUALLY PROVIDE 2,724 RENTAL AND 700 HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME FLATS FOR ABOUT 12,750 PEOPLE.

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YUK YAT STREET EXTENSION PROPOSED

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THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO CONSTRUCT YUK YAT STREET EXTENSION LINKING THE EXISTING BAILEY STREET AND CHI KIANG STREET TO EASE TRAFFIC ON TO KWA WAN ROAD AND TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC CIRCULATION IN HUNG HOM NORTH.

THE WORKS COMPRISE THE CONSTRUCTION OF 240 METRES OF YUK YAT STREET EXTENSION AND ASSOCIATED FOOTPATHS, RECONSTRUCTION OF PART OF CHI KIANG STREET AND YUK YAT STREET, AND CLOSURE OF PART OF THE EXISTING CARRIAGEWAY AND FOOTPATH OF BAILEY STREET, SUNG ON STREET, YUK YAT STREET AND CHI KIANG STREET.

A NOTICE CONCERNING THE PROPOSED WORKS IS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE PLANS AND SCHEME OF THE PROPOSED WORKS CAN BE SEEN AT:

* CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL;

* KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICE, FIRST FLOOR, 141-143 KAU PUI LUNG ROAD, KOWLOON CITY; AND

/* DISTRICT LANDS

* DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE/KOWLOON WEST, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI
CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, YAU MA TEI.

ANY PERSON OBJECTING TO THE PROPOSAL MUST SEND HIS OBJECTION
IN WRITING TO REACH THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT NO LATER THAN
DECEMBER 22 THIS YEAR.

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HANDOVER OF NEW POLICE LAUNCH
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THE GOVERNMENT IS FULLY CONFIDENT THAT THE NEW POLICE LAUNCH
PL 51 WOULD MEET THE COMMAND AND PATROL NEEDS OF TODAY'S MARINE
POLICE.

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MARINE (GOVERNMENT FLEET), MR PETER
CRISP, SAID THIS TODAY (FRIDAY) DURING A HANDOVER SIGNING CEREMONY ON
BOARD THE FIRST OF SIX MARINE POLICE COMMAND/PATROL LAUNCHES AT THE
GOVERNMENT DOCKYARD IN CANTON ROAD, KOWLOON.

THE CEREMONY WAS OFFICIATED BY MR KEN CAPORN, PROJECT
MANAGER OF THE AUSTRALIAN SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRIES (WA) PTY. LTD (ASI),
WHICH WAS AWARDED A \$301 MILLION CONTRACT FOR THE BUILDING OF THE SIX
LAUNCHES.

ALSO PRESENT WAS THE CHIEF STAFF OFFICER (ADMINISTRATION AND
SUPPORT) OF THE MARINE POLICE, MR JOHN PETTENGELL.

MR CRISP SAID: "WE ARE CONFIDENT BECAUSE WE CARRIED OUT A
WORLDWIDE MARKET SEARCH TO FIND THE MOST SUITABLE VESSEL.

"WE INVESTIGATED PATROL BOATS IN SERVICE IN NORTH AMERICA,
EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTHEAST ASIA, AUSTRALIA AND THE SOUTH
PACIFIC AS WELL AS SURVEYING THE LOCAL MARKET.

"BUT AFTER OUR EVALUATION WE CONCLUDED THAT ASI WOULD GIVE US
THE BEST BOAT AND THE BEST VALUE-FOR-MONEY."

AFTER HER SEA TRIALS IN FREMANTLE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, PL 51
SAILED TO HONG KONG UNDER HER OWN STEAM IN LATE SEPTEMBER.

MR CRISP SAID THE LAUNCH, THE FIRST TO BE DELIVERED, WAS THREE
MONTHS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE. HER FIVE SISTER SHIPS WILL BE DELIVERED AND
COMMISSIONED AT A RATE OF ONE A MONTH FROM EARLY NEXT YEAR.

"BY THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR, ALL SIX WILL BE IN SERVICE WITH
THE MARINE POLICE REGION.

"WE ARE SURE THAT THE SIX NEW FAST PATROL LAUNCHES WHICH HAVE
A DIVISIONAL COMMAND CAPABILITY WILL BE EXTREMELY VALUABLE IN THE
FIGHT AGAINST CRIME IN HONG KONG WATERS."

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273 VMS GO HOME

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A GROUP OF 273 VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS TODAY (FRIDAY) RETURNED TO VIETNAM UNDER THE UNHCR'S VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME.

COMPRISING 112 MEN, 68 WOMEN, 42 BOYS AND 51 GIRLS, THEY WERE THE 129TH BATCH TO GO BACK UNDER THE PROGRAMME.

THE GROUP BROUGHT TO 9,821 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS WHO HAVE RETURNED VOLUNTARILY THIS YEAR, AND TO 23,700 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNEES SINCE THE PROGRAMME STARTED IN MARCH 1989.

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GOVERNOR TO BRIEF LEGCO ON CHINA VISIT

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, WILL BRIEF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON HIS VISIT TO CHINA AT A SITTING OF THE COUNCIL AT 10.30 AM TOMORROW (SATURDAY).

HE WILL ALSO INVITE AND ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE VISIT.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY OF THE LEGCO CHAMBER.

THEY MAY RESERVE SEATS BY CALLING 869 9492.

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TENDERS INVITED FOR CAR PARKING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE DESIGN, SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF A CAR PARKING AND TICKETING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR PHASE 1 OF THE CHEUNG SHA WAN WHOLESALE MARKET.

THE SYSTEM WILL INCLUDE SIX INGRESS BOOTHS WITH MAGNETIC CARD DISPENSERS, FOUR EGRESS BOOTHS WITH AUTOMATIC CARD RECEIVERS AND 12 ASSOCIATED COMPUTER SYSTEMS.

TENDER FORMS AND FURTHER PARTICULARS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DEPARTMENT'S CONTRACT SECTION, ROOM 811, EIGHTH FLOOR, 98 CAROLINE HILL ROAD, CAUSEWAY BAY, HONG KONG.

TENDERS SHOULD BE PLACED IN THE PUBLIC WORKS TENDER BOX AT THE LIFT LOBBY ON 34TH FLOOR, QUEENSWAY GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 66 QUEENSWAY, HONG KONG, BEFORE NOON ON NOVEMBER 20.

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1992

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CIVIL AID SERVICES TO OPEN TSEUNG KWAN O OFFICES

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THE CIVIL AID SERVICES (CAS) WILL OPEN ITS DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND CADET UNIT HEADQUARTERS AT THE KING LAM ESTATE COMMUNITY CENTRE IN TSEUNG KWAN O ON SUNDAY (OCTOBER 25).

THE NEW OFFICES WILL HELP CAS ADULT AND CADET MEMBERS SERVE THE GROWING POPULATION IN THE AREA.

THE CHAIRMAN OF SAI KUNG DISTRICT BOARD, MR WILLIAM WAN HON-CHEUNG, WILL OFFICIATE AT A CEREMONY AT 11 AM ON SUNDAY TO MARK THE OPENING OF THE OFFICES.

AFTER THE CEREMONY, CAS MEMBERS WILL PRESENT A BAND PERFORMANCE AND A LION DANCE AS WELL AS DEMONSTRATE BICYCLE-RIDING AND RESCUE SKILLS.

A COUNTER WILL BE SET UP ON THE DAY TO RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN CAS.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION

OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,780
REVERSAL OF LAF	-280
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	1,500
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	NIL
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,500
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER TWI 111.1 *-0.4* 23.10.92	

/HONG KONG

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1992

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS		HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS				
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	3.41 PCT	13 MONTHS	2311	6.25	102.28	4.08
1 MONTH	3.31 PCT	16 MONTHS	2402	5.50	101.50	4.35
3 MONTHS	3.33 PCT	19 MONTHS	2405	5.502	101.56	4.50
6 MONTHS	3.44 PCT	22 MONTHS	2408	4.375	99.66	4.62
12 MONTHS	4.04 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 10,602 MN

CLOSED 23 OCTOBER 1992

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