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Speech by Governor at luncheon
by Centre for European Policy Studies
Brussels today (Friday)

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Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

First of all, thank you very much indeed for that gracious introduction and for sliding over so rapidly some of the main elements in my obituaries which have been written in the last few months and somebody asked me yesterday what sort of things I'd been called and I said, "Well, I guess the worst," I said, "is a 'sly lawyer'." So, they said, "But, isn't that a contradiction in terms?"

However, it's extraordinarily nice to be here today. I asked you when we were coming in how long I should speak for - it reminded me of the very first speech I gave to the Rotary Club in my constituency when I was a member of Parliament, and I asked the president as we were going into to lunch, "How long would you like me to speak for?" And, he replied, "Well, you go on as you like, but we'll leave at 2:15."

You said, chairman, that I should speak for 15 or 20 minutes and then give you the opportunity to ask questions, though that is not mandatory, and we can all knock off earlier if you'd prefer.

A few weeks ago, the Financial Secretary in Hong Kong, delivered our annual budget statement. And it was a statement which would have been greeted with, to put it mildly, some envy in most treasuries, finance ministries of the world. He announced that we were expecting once again a rate of growth of GNP between 5 and 6 %. Our growth rate over the last two decades has averaged 8%, but it's now settled down at around 5 to 6. He announced that we would be cutting our already low taxes, in his budget. But at the same time, he would be increasing substantially investment, capital investment, in our infrastructure and increasing expenditure on our social and educational priorities and he announced at the same time that as well as cutting taxes and increasing expenditure, we'd be leaving larger reserves than we'd previously predicted to China when China resumes sovereignty of Hong Kong in 1997. He also predicted, with I think a degree of modesty because we may already have achieved some of the targets that he mentioned, that over the next year or so our per capita GNP would exceed, or certainly come close to those of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Italy. He announced huge increases in private sector, as well as public sector investment, a large percentage increase in our exports and re-exports, confirming us as the tenth largest trading community in the world. And, he was also able to point to signs of social progress. Those who think that Hong Kong is just an economic success story, have got it wrong, because we can point to substantial social progress as well: our health indicators are in many respects better than those in a number of Community member states. For example, our child mortality rates are lower than those in the United States, United Kingdom, or Australia.

We have falling class sizes, we have plans within a couple of years for about a quarter of the relevant age group to go on to tertiary education. We have a very large and continuing public housing program at the same time as we can point to increasing home ownership with, I hope, getting on for two-thirds of our community homeowners by the end of the decade.

It's an extraordinary story of economic and social success, and I think that it's reasonable to ask, what accounts for that story, what accounts for that success in Hong Kong? I believe there are three reasons for that success. First of all, we have, as the chairman observed, practised the lessons of an open market economy more faithfully than most for longer than most. We have been believers in free trade. We have no tariffs on imports into Hong Kong and look forward to the day when everyone else can say the same. We have very low taxes. We've kept prudent control over public expenditure, which has enabled us, which some regard as a paradox, to increase public expenditure precisely because we've got the economic growth which can pay for it. Even with an increasing of social welfare programs, we'll be containing public expenditure to around 18 or 19% of our GNP. So far as business is concerned, we've followed the adage of minimum interference and maximum support. So, we've followed all those lessons, which I'm delighted to learn, others themselves are also following today.

A second reason for our success is our geographical, as well as our economic position. Hong Kong stands at the gateway to China. It stands at the crossroads of Asia. So, it's at the heart of what the OECD has recently confirmed is the most rapidly growing regional economy in the world. A regional economy which is growing partly by winning larger markets in the rest of the world, but partly by what it sells within the region. About half the increase in trade is trade between communities within the Asian region itself. And, of course, we benefit hugely from the opening up of the Chinese economy, one of the most important and significant developments in our global economic history in the last few years. I think it's fair to say that not only do we benefit from that opening up, but we also contribute significantly to it as well. About 70% of the external investment which goes into China goes through Hong Kong. About 80% of the investment that goes into Guangdong goes in from Hong Kong. So, we have an important symbiotic relationship with Guangdong and with Southern China as a whole. If you look at Hong Kong alone, it represents, as an economy about 19% of China's GNP. If you look at Hong Kong and Guangdong together, they represent about 29% of China's GNP.

There is a third reason for Hong Kong's success and it's the reason which I wanted to dwell on most today. We see Cantonese Shanghainese entrepreneurialism operating in a free society, under the rule of law. And that produces an astonishing chemistry, which has been in my judgement and that of most others, responsible for Hong Kong's success. China, as all of you know, is committed to implementing the historic concept of one country (that is, China), two systems. Our system, the system in Hong Kong, isn't just a capitalist economic model, it's capitalism operating within a framework which is set up specifically in terms in the joint declaration, the treaty that was signed

between Britain and China, launched at the United Nations, guaranteeing Hong Kong's way of life for 50 years after 1997.

I think that it's apparent to most of us that not only does Hong Kong's economic prosperity sustain its way of life, but that its way of life helps it to sustain its economic prosperity and its stability. The discussion, I will use a word which is appropriate I think for the language used by the Hong Kong government, the discussion going on between Britain and China and the Hong Kong community at the moment, is about how we can best implement the joint declaration, and, to come to specifics, its about how we can secure a credible Legislative Council as part of the essential framework for Hong Kong, as I have described. I'm not, I must apologise to some of you, attempting some great step forward towards democracy. I don't deserve some of the headlines which are sometimes given me in the press outside Hong Kong. What we're attempting to do is to provide arrangements for clean and fair elections in 95. Believing that it's important to the rule of law in Hong Kong that there should be a broadly-based, and, to repeat myself, a credible Legislative Council.

Hong Kong is, to that extent, totally different from the other dependent territories for which Britain has on the whole been responsible. There, we have been preparing communities for independence. We've done so by providing them with Westminster or Washington-style democracy, Canadian-style democracy, with the rule of law, independent courts, and with a clean and honest bureaucracy. And we've put those ingredients on the launch pad, we've lit the touch paper, and hoped that the satellite would blast off into independent orbit. That isn't the situation, that isn't the problem or challenge that we face in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, we've been preparing a community for the resumption of Chinese sovereignty in 1997. And that has affected, among other things, the whole question of democratisation. I don't think that anybody would seek to argue that we've been in a situation in which China has been pressing us to go faster with democratisation and we as the sovereign power have been denying that rapid growth. I put the point very delicately and very diplomatically. But I am pleased that within the last decade, we have reached an agreement with China about the increasing democratisation of Hong Kong. There's no dispute about the pace of that democratisation. There is an argument now, a discussion now, about the precise way in which the quasi-democratic Legislative Council should be elected in 1995.

We put forward, last October, proposals for those 1995 elections and they were proposals. They weren't a fait accompli, they weren't decisions made by the British government on behalf of the people of Hong Kong, they were proposals that we put forward, on the basis of wide-ranging discussions with political and community leaders in Hong Kong. And, we put them forward for discussion. When I went to Peking in October, I stressed that we would like to discuss those matters with Chinese officials, and when I left Peking, the proposal was that we should some forum with meetings between Foreign Ministers of the Joint Liaison Group, which deals with day-to-day diplomatic matters between China, Britain, and Hong Kong, that we should use some other forum for continuing the discussions. However, the Chinese

position then changed and China then proposed that we could only have discussions about political development in Hong Kong, provided that I threw overboard the proposals that I'd already made. And, that was by and large the Chinese position through the winter. It was accompanied by a good deal of rhetoric and a good deal of the colourful language mentioned by the chairman. That was the position through the winter, as we turned our proposals into legislation. In February, the day before we were to publish that legislation, China responded to our latest suggestion that we should have talks with them about my proposals, by saying that would be a good idea. The day before, therefore, we were to publish our bill on political development, we received a response from Chinese officials, suggesting that there should be talks about talks. And, those talks about talks, which we would have liked to conclude sufficiently rapidly, to begin the real talks on the 24th of February, went on for a number of weeks.

We were prepared, we were very happy to talk to Chinese officials on the basis for which they argued when they responded to us at the beginning of February. We were prepared to have talks on the basis of the joint declaration, on the basis of convergence with the basic law, which is the mini-constitution which China has agreed for Hong Kong after 1997, and on the basis of any relevant understandings or agreements between our governments. Unfortunately, those talks about talks broke down on three issues.

Firstly, even though we'd been talking about talks for several weeks, we were still unable to agree a date when real talks should take place or even to agree a date when we could announce a date for talks to begin.

Secondly, unfortunately, we had not reached agreement with China on one other matter, which in my view, we should be able to agree pretty rapidly. And that was on the secrecy of talks. There was no disagreement between us that the content of the talks, while they were taking place, should be confidential, should be secret like other, or like most other diplomatic exchanges. But, what we found difficult to believe that it was possible, as Chinese officials were urging us to actually hold the talks in secret. I didn't see how we could send officials off to the airport in Hong Kong to travel up to Peking if stopped at the airport to explain that they were off to see their mother-in-law or off for some other domestic purpose. It seemed to me impossible that we could actually keep the holding of talks a secret between Britain and China, but I don't, honestly think that is a very serious issue.

The third matter, which was more important, was the position of Hong Kong government officials in the British Team. And that introduced a totally new precondition for talks, not something which has prevented talks on other matters, like the negotiation of the joint declaration for the last decade or more. And unfortunately, that disagreement remains ^{the} position today. I think it's, perhaps, useful for me to remind you, before underlining our position on this issue, I think it's important for me to remind you that it was Britain, not China, that

proposed the talks and it has been China, not Britain, which has argued for preconditions.

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We are, today, prepared to talk on the basis proposed by China. That is, on the basis to which I've referred. We have no doubt, whatsoever, that those talks have to be held between the sovereign powers - between the present sovereign power, Britain, and the future sovereign power, China. The distinguished Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Li Peng, said earlier this week, the talks must be between Britain and China. There is no argument, whatsoever, between us on that. It is wholly conceded, all round, that the talks should be between Britain and China. We would send to the talks a representative - our ambassador in Peking - supported by officials to discuss the 1994 District Board and the 1995 Legislative Council elections on the basis of the text proposed at the beginning of February by Chinese officials. We're prepared to accept all that.

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What we're not prepared to accept is that the members of the British Team should be divided into two classes, those who are British government officials and those who are Hong Kong government officials. I think China would regard it as impertinent if I was to choose China's team at any talks with the United Kingdom. I don't know why it is that this new precondition, new in the history of relations between Britain and China, but I'm bound to say that I don't think it's very helpful. I hope that we can get round this snag. I hope that we can get 'round this difficulty. I hope we can get 'round this precondition which has not been raised by the United Kingdom, but has been raised by China. I hope we can get 'round those problems, I hope we can embark on real talks about political development in Hong Kong. I say that with, to borrow a phrase, "complete sincerity." If I hadn't wanted talks, I wouldn't have been arguing for talks for the last six months. But, while I say that with complete sincerity, I recognise, as I'm sure others do, that any talks would be extremely difficult. If it's as difficult as it has proved to get talks started, to get talks finished on a satisfactory basis would clearly be an even greater challenge, but I hope it's a challenge to which Britain and China can in due course rise, so that we can agree arrangements for the 1995 elections which enable us to discharge our obligations in China honourably (in Hong Kong) with China, honourably and competently.

I think that if we have these discussions, China will certainly want to answer three very simple questions. First of all, what are China's proposals for the 1995 Legislative Council elections? I know the adjectives, I know the names that are being called, but it would be useful after about three million words, just to have one or two words about positive, constructive proposals for the 1995 elections from China, I think the people of Hong Kong deserve that.

Secondly, I think that China will want to tell the Hong Kong community, and others, whether it is prepared to have arrangements in 1995 for fair elections, that is arrangements which may produce a Legislative Council some of whose members China doesn't much care for. That is, after all, in the nature of a fair electoral process.

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And, thirdly, there is another question. Would China be prepared to allow anyone who was elected in 1994 and who accepted the basic law (the mini-constitution for Hong Kong after the transfer of sovereignty), would China be prepared to allow anyone who was elected in 1995 to travel through the transition in 1997 to the end of the Legislative Council in 1999? Or is it China's position that some people, even if they're fairly elected, and even if they accept the basic law, can be thrown off the Legislative Council at the time of the transfer of sovereignty in 1997? Those are all serious and important questions, and one reason why I very much hope that we have talks is so that we'll be able to discuss the answers to those questions over the coming months. I think that would be a better way of spending a spring in Peking rather than inventing new forms of denunciatory language for the new China news agency.

They are difficult issues, the ones that I've described, but they're issues which I believe can and will and should be solved successfully. And, when I consider whether or not they'll be solved successfully, I do bear in mind that the old and wise advice that nobody ever made any money by betting against Hong Kong.

One final point that I'd like to make to this international audience. Chinese officials very often, when I or others make a speech like this, Chinese officials very often accuse us of internationalisation, of internationalising Hong Kong, as though anyone from the United Kingdom or from the Hong Kong government should take a vow of silence about Hong Kong and its development. I don't think that's a very wise or a very strong argument, and of course, it's not an argument which China applies to itself. I don't remember when Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, a few months ago, made some remarks which were wrong, ^{IN MY VIEW} critical about political development in Hong Kong, I don't remember Chinese officials denouncing him for internationalising the issue. The rest of the world, the Community, individual members of the Community, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, countries in the Asian region, the rest of the world recognises that the successful implementation of the joint declaration of the treaty between Britain and China is a matter for Britain and China. But, one can't expect the rest of the world not to be interested in whether there is successful implementation of the joint declaration. After all, Hong Kong is a priceless asset for the world, a tribute to the energies of free men and women, operating in a free society and in a free market economy. The rest of the world wants to see Hong Kong doing well today, and the rest of the world will want to see Hong Kong, after 1997, making a huge contribution to China's success, as China plays a dominant, and we must all hope, a responsible and a constructive role on the world stage. It's important, in my judgement, I say this again unequivocally, it's important for the whole world that China succeeds and succeeds spectacularly in the huge task which Chinese leaders have taken on, transforming their economy. And, I think it is important for the world as well that Hong Kong, before 1997 and after 1997, as part of China, succeeds, too.

Thank you very much.

Responses during the discussion period

1. Chinese officials have said again and again, not just in recent weeks, but well before that, too, that they wish to cooperate to secure the well-being and the prosperity of Hong Kong. They've said again and again, over issues like the airport, over other capital investment issues, over grants of franchises and contracts, they've said repeatedly that they want to cooperate, that they don't want to see linkage between political matters and economic and trade matters. So, I guess that if there were to be any linkage, there would be questions for those officials to answer. If there is a disagreement, which I would like to see us resolve over political matters, I can't for the life of me see how it's best pursued by attempting to undermine the well-being, the livelihood of the people in Hong Kong. After all, in 1997, everyone knows that China resumes sovereignty of Hong Kong. Let me give you a very practical example - we're doing our best to fulfil our side of the bargain in a memorandum of understanding to complete the airport, the new airport which everybody knows is necessary and everybody knows will be built before 1997. Now, if the completion of the airport is delayed, what it will mean is some impact on the future GNP of Hong Kong and some diminution of the revenues which will come in future to Hong Kong. It doesn't particularly hit the British governor of Hong Kong today, except that the British governor of Hong Kong would like to see the airport completed as soon as possible. So, I don't think, to borrow a phrase, "That there is much to be said in life FOR going around dropping boulders on one's own foot."

There is one other matter that I must address. I have argued, and will continue to argue, passionately, against the politicisation of trade, the politicisation of international investment decisions. I would find it curious if, with me making that point and United Kingdom government Ministers making that point, Chinese officials were to take the contrary point of view. After all, there is a huge Chinese surplus in its trade balance with the United Kingdom. As I recall, a trade surplus in China's favour of about half a billion pounds. Further than that, in two or three weeks time, I'll be in Washington, arguing the case, as strongly as I can, for the continuation of most favoured nation status for China in its dealings with the United States. I'll be arguing that Congress and the new administration, whatever their concerns, should not politicise that trading relationship with China. It may be a little more difficult to put that argument, if while I'm putting that argument about US-China trade, some Chinese officials are putting a different argument about trade with other parts of the world. We know very well what the obligations are, of membership, of international fora which seek to regulate free and fair trade in a sensible way. We know, for example, what is required of all those who are members of GATT, and the requirements of membership of GATT certainly do not include the politicisation of trade.

2. I don't think that Sir David Akers-Jones' views have changed much down the years, and I think those who know him would concede that point. What I hope, is that when he, or others, and I saw a picture of

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him in the paper this morning going off to Peking and I was delighted to see him clutching his British passport, I don't think that one should regret anybody operating as an advisor to China. I just hope that they give fair advice, I hope that they give it fearlessly, and I hope that Chinese officials listen. I think the broader the spectrum of advice that China listens to, the better. There are some people in Hong Kong who've regretted that there isn't a single, directly elected legislature among all those that are advising China. Well, I'm sure that China, in due course, will want to make up that gap. In the meantime, Sir David Akers-Jones and all others will I hope give China good advice and I hope that advice will be, will include to cooperate with the Hong Kong government and the United Kingdom to implement successfully the joint declaration, and I hope that advice will also be to take seriously what the joint declaration says about Hong Kong's incomparable way of life.

3. That's a proposal which has been put to me on a number of occasions by some legislators and by others. The view that I've arrived at is that I don't want to do anything which will enable our Legislative Council to think that it can duck out of its responsibilities to pass the legislation to put in place election arrangements for the 1994 and 1995 elections. I'm a little suspicious of referendums as a populist device, which I think may be an argument which is now slightly more popular in Europe than it would have been a few months ago. I think that there is sometimes a danger of a referendum enabling legislatures to cop out of their responsibilities. Nevertheless, were there a referendum today, and were it to give the proposals put forward by the government the same sort of margin^Y support as they enjoy^{OF} in opinion polls, I'd be delighted. POSITIVE

4. Yes, I think that there is a strong view in Hong Kong in favour of trying to resolve our disagreements around the table and I must say that is a view which I support, myself, otherwise, I wouldn't have been pressing for talks. I think that had we accepted China's precondition for talks, there would have been a great deal of criticism, justifiably, from some of the political parties to which you refer. The, I suppose one could say, conservative business party with a small "c" and a small "b", which just to confuse people calls itself the Liberal party, with a large "L", or is going to call itself the Liberal party, the leader of that party, the day before I published the bill, said unequivocally on a radio programme that he thought the question of Hong Kong Government officials as part of the British team was not something which China should have raised and that China should back off from that particular matter. I'm not sure whether that's the same point of view that he's expressing, now that he's a China adviser.

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5. As you can imagine, having endured a number of years in the House of Commons, hasn't meant that I'm super-sensitive to verbal abuse. I have been slightly surprised, but I guess I should recognise that what has been said about me in the past few months is as nothing compared to what has been said about some of the present leaders in China and in the past by other officials, so I'M IN good company, perhaps I should say. I don't honestly think that abuse impresses anybody very much. There is an expression which football managers use about playing the man, rather than the ball, and I think people usually play the man rather than the ball when they haven't got better arguments. I would very much like to be able to engage in a constructive discussion and dialogue with Chinese officials. The fact that

I've been called names, when that dialogue begins, which I'm sure in due course it will, the fact that I've been called names won't have any effect on the way that I conduct such a dialogue. But, as you suggested, given that the House of Commons is so often like an annual meeting of the mother's union, I'm fairly used to some of these slings and arrows. I've been called a number of things in my time and I dare say that the thesaurus of abuse hasn't yet been closed.

6. I think that when people talk about misunderstandings between us and China that perhaps the most important misunderstanding is about the nature and causes of Hong Kong's success, as I tried to argue earlier. Hong Kong, I repeat, hasn't just been successful because it's applied capitalism. Adam Smith, who has been, if you like, sort of Hong Kong's patron saint, was a moral philosopher and he wasn't just writing about a capitalist structure, he was writing about a way of life of which such a structure was a part. When people make economic decisions for themselves, they inevitably want to make other decisions, too, and there is plenty that I could say about the relationship between economics and political structure, but just to show how many of the diplomatic skills of judicious self-restraint I've learned, I'd better leave it at that. Except, to say this, first of all, while I don't believe that pluralist structures are a necessary precondition for economic growth, nor do I hold the view that pluralist political structures prevent economic growth, which is sometimes argued by one or two leaders in Asia. If that were the case, please explain on one side of a piece of paper, Japan and Germany. Secondly, I don't believe that there is a mechanistic relationship between economic growth and political change, but on the other hand, I'm sure that economic growth in South Korea, in Taiwan, and elsewhere, has political consequences. It's not for me to assert what those political consequences should be, and it's not for me to predict what they might be in Asian countries or other countries, but I think all those things are pretty clear from our own experience.

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7. The Community is one of our most important trading partners, responsible for about 13% of our overall trade, and it's been growing, getting on towards 20% in the last year, it grew by about 16%. So, it's a very important economic relationship, and I would hope that what we were able to achieve with the Community, we would be able to achieve sooner rather than later with the ancient countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Speaking for myself, not as a governor of Hong Kong, but as a concerned European citizen, I very much hope that before too long when we refer to the relationship between Hong Kong and the ^{MEMBERS} European Community, we're referring among others to the countries ^{OF THE} of Central and Eastern Europe which are at present outside the European Community. The sooner that through your efforts, and through our opening of our doors and windows, your part of our single market, the better. And I don't say that, if I may revert to a former personality, I don't say that because I am a politician who believes that there is a distinction between widening and deepening in the Community. I think widening has always meant, does mean today, and will always mean a deepening too, but that is as much as I'm going to get involved in all that today. I've noticed that there is a debate on all these matters

in the United Kingdom just at the moment. I haven't been part of it and I haven't greatly missed it, though I do have strong views to put against other people's prejudices. Thank you very much, indeed, for asking me today. End of Transcript.

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POLITICS SHOULD SEPARATE FROM TRADE ISSUES: GOVERNOR

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, SAID HE WOULD CERTAINLY BE ARGUING AGAINST ALLOWING POLITICS TO DETERMINE TRADE ISSUES WHEN HE WENT TO THE UNITED STATES, AS HE WAS IN EUROPE.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER A MEETING WITH THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, SIR LEON BRITTAN, IN BRUSSELS YESTERDAY (THURSDAY), THE GOVERNOR SAID HE WOULD BE SURPRISED IF CHINESE OFFICIALS TRIED TO LINK TRADE AND POLITICS.

"AFTER ALL CHINA HAS A HUGE TRADE SURPLUS WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM - IT IS NOT AS THOUGH IT WAS THE OTHER WAY ROUND," HE NOTED.

"SECONDLY, WE KNOW VERY WELL THAT IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, IN THE GATT, IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL TRADE FORA PEOPLE TRY VERY HARD, IT'S PART OF THE REGULATIONS, TO AVOID POLITICISING TRADE," HE ADDED.

"AND I WOULD HOPE THAT CHINESE OFFICIALS WOULD SEE THE ADVANTAGE OF THAT, NOT LEAST WHEN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THINGS LIKE MFN STATUS FOR CHINA," HE SAID.

ASKED ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF HIS OVERSEAS TRIPS, MR PATTEN SAID: "OVER THE YEARS GOVERNORS HAVE TRAVELLED TO A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD.

"HONG KONG IS THE 10TH LARGEST TRADING COMMUNITY IN THE WORLD. THAT MEANS THAT WE HAVE IMPORTANT TRADING AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS AROUND THE WORLD, AND I WANT TO SEE THOSE RELATIONS GROW AND PROSPER."

HE ADDED THAT THE REST OF THE WORLD WAS CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN HONG KONG AND RECOGNISED THAT IT WAS PRINCIPALLY A MATTER FOR BRITAIN AND CHINA.

ON THE QUESTION OF INTERNATIONALISING THE SINO-BRITISH DISPUTE, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "HONG KONG IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TRADING COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD, AND IF PEOPLE DON'T THINK THAT THAT INVOLVES ARGUING THE CASE FOR HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS AROUND THE WORLD, THEN THEY DON'T HAVE A VERY GOOD IDEA OF HONG KONG'S SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM INTERESTS."

ON THE MEETING WITH SIR LEON, THE GOVERNOR SAID THEY DISCUSSED THEIR MUTUAL INTEREST IN SEEING AN EARLY AND SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE URUGUAY ROUND.

"I STRESSED AGAIN HONG KONG'S COMPLETE COMMITMENT TO FREE TRADE, AS I WILL BE DOING WHEN I GO TO WASHINGTON NEXT MONTH, AND WE ALSO TALKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY AND PROSPECT OF ESTABLISHING AN EC OFFICE IN HONG KONG," HE SAID.

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REPORT OF COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO WITNESS PROTECTION

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A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN CONFIRMED TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT MR JUSTICE KEMPSTER HAD SUBMITTED HIS REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR ON THE FINDINGS OF HIS INVESTIGATIONS INTO WITNESS PROTECTION IN THE CASE OF VIETNAMESE MIGRANT NGUYEN VAN-BAU, WHOSE MURDER TRIAL WAS ABORTED LAST OCTOBER.

"ARRANGEMENTS ARE NOW BEING MADE FOR THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THE REPORT TO BE PRINTED. IT WILL BE PUBLISHED ON APRIL 8. THE FULL CHINESE VERSION OF THE REPORT WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AS SOON AS THE NECESSARY TRANSLATION WORK IS COMPLETED," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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TRANSFER OF APPOINTMENT AUTHORITY WILL ENHANCE DISTRICT BOARD'S ROLE

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THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAKING APPOINTMENT TO LOCAL COMMITTEES TO THE DISTRICT BOARDS (DBs) IS INTENDED TO ENHANCE THE ROLE OF DBs AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN DISTRICT AFFAIRS, PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY (HONG KONG AND KOWLOON), MR C C WAN, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

AT A MEETING WITH A GROUP OF DB MEMBERS, MR WAN SAID THE PROPOSAL WAS AN ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT AND DID NOT REQUIRE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES.

"SINCE IT INVOLVES THE DBs, IT IS LOGICAL TO PUT THIS TO THE BOARDS FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION - JUST LIKE FUND APPROPRIATION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE," HE SAID.

ASKED TO EXPLAIN THE MECHANICS OF THE PROPOSAL, MR WAN POINTED OUT THAT DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL DISTRICTS, THESE LOCAL COMMITTEES MAY INCLUDE THE SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMME ORGANISING COMMITTEES, CIVIC EDUCATION COMMITTEES, INDUSTRIAL LIAISON COMMITTEES, KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN CAMPAIGN ORGANISING COMMITTEES, MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES OF COMMUNITY HALLS AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES AKIN TO PARTICULATR DISTRICTS.

"UNDER THE PROPOSAL, APPOINTMENT TO THESE LOCAL COMMITTEES WILL BE MADE ON THE ADVICE OF DBs. UNDER SECTION 20(A)(1) OF THE DISTRICT BOARD ORDINANCE, DBs ARE TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT 'ON MATTERS AFFECTING THE WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLE IN THE DISTRICT' AND THIS CAN INCLUDE APPOINTMENT TO THESE LOCAL COMMITTEES," HE SAID.

MR WAN NOTED THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS MET WITH DIFFERENT RESPONSE FROM DBs. MOST HAVE ACCEPTED IT, BUT A FEW HAVE DECLINED THE OFFER. THESE DIFFERENT REACTIONS REFLECT THE INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCE OF DIFFERENT DBs.

"DBs ARE OF COURSE FREE TO DECIDE ON THIS MATTER AND I AM SURE THAT DB MEMBERS WOULD OPT FOR A FORM OF ARRANGEMENT WHICH THEY CONSIDER TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THESE LOCAL COMMITTEES AND THE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN DBs AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS," HE SAID.

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PUBLIC VIEWS SOUGHT ON RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY

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THE GOVERNMENT IS INVITING PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE FINDINGS OF THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STUDY, WHICH PRESENTS PROPOSALS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEM IN HONG KONG UP TO 2011.

SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (FRIDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, EMPHASISED THAT THIS WAS A LONG-TERM PLANNING STUDY AND THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ONLY TAKE A VIEW ON THE FINDINGS AFTER THE PUBLIC HAS BEEN CONSULTED.

THE STUDY PROPOSES THAT PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF A WESTERN CORRIDOR FROM LO WU VIA KAM TIN TO THE URBAN AREA, AND A MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY (MTR) EXTENSION TO TSEUNG KWAN O. BOTH LINES ARE RECOMMENDED FOR COMPLETION BY 2001.

THE WESTERN CORRIDOR WOULD ACCOMMODATE THREE RAIL SERVICES:

- * A FREIGHT LINE RUNNING FROM LO WU, THROUGH KAM TIN AND TSUEN WAN, TO A RAIL FREIGHT STATION IN KWAI CHUNG. THE LINE WOULD FACILITATE TRANSPORTATION OF CONTAINERS BETWEEN THE BORDER AND THE CONTAINER PORT, THUS RELIEVING THE ROAD SYSTEM;
- * A NEW LONG DISTANCE PASSENGER SERVICE TO CHINA TO BE CONNECTED INITIALLY TO LO WU AND LATER POSSIBLY TO LOK MA CHAU. THIS WOULD REDUCE JOURNEY TIMES FOR TRAVEL TO CHINA AND WOULD PROVIDE EASIER ACCESS TO HUANGGANG AND FUTIAN IN SHENZHEN; AND
- * A SUB-REGIONAL LINE FROM TIN SHUI WAI AND YUEN LONG TO THE URBAN AREA. THE NEW LINE WOULD PLACE YUEN LONG WITHIN 30 MINUTES TRAVELLING TIME OF CENTRAL AND TUEN MUN ABOUT 40 TO 50 MINUTES, USING THE LRT AS A FEEDER SERVICE.

THE STUDY EXAMINED AN ALTERNATIVE COASTAL ALIGNMENT FOR A PASSENGER SERVICE CONNECTING TUEN MUN AND TSUEN WAN, BUT THIS WAS FOUND TO BE A FAR LESS COST-EFFECTIVE OPTION.

BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULT TERRAIN, THE CONSIDERABLY LONGER COASTAL LINE WOULD COST MORE THAN TWICE AS MUCH AS THE RECOMMENDED ALIGNMENT TO YUEN LONG. MOREOVER, A COASTAL SERVICE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO SHARE THE SAME TRACK WITH CROSS BORDER FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICES.

WITH REGARD TO THE PROPOSED MTR EXTENSION FROM LAM TIN TO TSEUNG KWAN O, THE PROGRAMME DEPENDS ON THE POPULATION BUILD-UP OF TSEUNG KWAN O.

BASED ON CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PLANS, THE TSEUNG KWAN O EXTENSION SHOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN 2001 WHEN THE POPULATION OF THE NEW TOWN IS EXPECTED TO REACH 250,000, WITH PLANS TO REACH 360,000 BY 2011.

FOR THE EASTERN PART OF THE TERRITORY, A NEW EAST KOWLOON ROUTE MIGHT BE BUILT IN THE LONGER TERM, LINKING MA ON SHAN, TAI WAI, DIAMOND HILL, AND THE PROPOSED SOUTHEAST KOWLOON RECLAMATION.

THE ROUTE WOULD BE VERY EXPENSIVE AND IS UNLIKELY TO BE REQUIRED BEFORE 2011.

ON HONG KONG ISLAND, THE STUDY CONSIDERS THAT BASED ON CURRENT LAND USE ASSUMPTIONS, A NEW RAIL SYSTEM RUNNING FROM THE AIRPORT RAILWAY STATION IN CENTRAL, THROUGH THE CENTRAL AND WANCHAI RECLAMATION, TO TIN HAU COULD BE NEEDED BY 2011.

LOW PRIORITY IS GIVEN TO A PROPOSED SOUTH HK ISLAND LINE LINKING ABERDEEN WITH ADMIRALTY BECAUSE THE PLANNED ROAD NETWORK SHOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT CAPACITY TO CATER FOR FUTURE TRAVEL DEMAND.

OTHER LONG-TERM OPTIONS WITHOUT PROPOSED DATES FOR IMPLEMENTATION INCLUDE:

- * AN OUTER WESTERN CORRIDOR TO CONNECT HK ISLAND, LANTAU, TUEN MUN AND TIN SHUI WAI;
- * A SECOND FREIGHT RAIL LINE TO SERVE THE FUTURE PORT DEVELOPMENT ON LANTAU; AND
- * A LAM TIN - MA TAU KOK LINK ACROSS THE PROPOSED SOUTHEAST KOWLOON RECLAMATION.

MR LEUNG SAID: "BECAUSE THIS IS A STRATEGIC STUDY, THE PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBJECT TO MORE DETAILED FINANCIAL AND ENGINEERING STUDIES AT A LATER STAGE.

"THE ROUGH INDICATION OF COSTS PROVIDED IN THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT IS THEREFORE VERY PRELIMINARY."

MR LEUNG ALSO SAID: "THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP HAS BEEN INFORMED OF THE STUDY BECAUSE MOST OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS, IF AGREED, WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED AFTER 1997. CONSULTATION WITH THE CHINESE SIDE WILL BE NECESSARY ON ALL THE STUDY PROPOSALS.

"WE WILL OF COURSE ALSO FULLY CONSULT THE CHINESE SIDE BEFORE ENTERING INTO ANY CONTRACT ON THE RAILWAY PROJECTS," HE ADDED.

MR LEUNG INVITED THE PUBLIC TO GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON THE STUDY BEFORE THE END OF JUNE.

THE CONSULTATION PAPER IS AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION AT ALL DISTRICT OFFICES, LICENSING OFFICES AND PUBLIC VEHICLE SECTION OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

COPIES WILL ALSO BE SENT TO INTERESTED GROUPS AND BODIES.

WRITTEN COMMENTS SHOULD BE SENT BEFORE JUNE 30 TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG.

ANTI-DUMPING ACTIONS AGAINST PRODUCTS FROM CHINA

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THE TRADE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS OF THREE ANTI-DUMPING CASES AGAINST PRODUCTS FROM CHINA.

AFTER AN ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW, COVERING THE PERIOD DECEMBER 12, 1990 TO JANUARY 31, 1992, THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) DETERMINED THAT THE CASH DEPOSIT RATE FOR SODIUM THIOSULFATE FROM CHINA WILL BE 148.42 PER CENT.

"THESE DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS, WHEN IMPOSED, SHALL REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL PUBLICATION OF THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE NEXT ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRADE DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED.

IN A SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, THE U.S. INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION (ITC) ANNOUNCED THE INSTITUTION AND SCHEDULING OF A FINAL ANTI-DUMPING INVESTIGATION ON CERTAIN COMPACT DUCTILE IRON WATERWORKS FITTINGS FROM CHINA.

THE INVESTIGATION IS TO DETERMINE WHETHER AN INDUSTRY IN THE U.S. IS MATERIALLY INJURED, OR IS THREATENED WITH MATERIAL INJURY, OR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDUSTRY IN THE U.S. IS MATERIALLY RETARDED, BY REASON OF IMPORTS OF THESE PARTICULAR PRODUCTS FROM CHINA.

MEANWHILE, THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA INITIATED AN ANTI-DUMPING INVESTIGATION INTO IMPORTS OF SODIUM CARBONATE FROM CHINA.

THE PRODUCTS UNDER INVESTIGATION ARE CLASSIFIABLE UNDER THE TARIFF CLASSIFICATION HSK 2836.20.0000 OF TARIFF SCHEDULES OF KOREA.

THE TRADE DEPARTMENT CALLED ON COMPANIES THAT MAY HAVE A LEGITIMATE INTEREST IN THE RESULT OF THE INVESTIGATION TO COMPLETE A QUESTIONNAIRE AND RETURN IT TO THE KOREAN AUTHORITIES FOR CONSIDERATION BY APRIL 18 THIS YEAR.

A COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS AVAILABLE FOR READING IN THE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BRANCH, OTHER REGIONS DIVISION OF TRADE DEPARTMENT, 18TH FLOOR, TRADE DEPARTMENT TOWER, 700 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON.

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7 RECLAMATION FOR SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT APPROVED

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THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAS GIVEN AUTHORISATION FOR THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO RECLAIM 3,160 SQUARE METRES OF LAND FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SEWAGE SCREENING PLANT AND AN ASSOCIATED ACCESS ROAD WITHIN AN AREA OF 2.05 HECTARES OF FORESHORE AND SEABED AT ROCKY BAY, SHEK O.

THE PROPOSED SHEK O SEWERAGE SCREENING AND TREATMENT WORKS AIM TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF WATERS IN THE SOUTH OF HONG KONG ISLAND BY PROVIDING SEWERAGE FACILITIES TO COLLECT, TREAT AND DISPOSE OF SEWAGE FROM DEEP WATER BAY, REPULSE BAY, CHUNG HOM KOK AND SHEK O AREAS.

IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE WATER QUALITY THERE, IN PARTICULAR ROCKY BAY, WOULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED ONCE THE SEWERAGE FACILITIES ARE IN PLACE.

THE URBAN COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER RE-OPENING ROCKY BAY BEACH AS SOON AS THE WATER QUALITY THERE HAS BEEN IMPROVED TO THEIR SATISFACTION.

THE PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD WILL FACILITATE THE REMOVAL OF RUBBISH AND FLOTSAM ACCUMULATED IN THE BAY, AND IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE AND HYGIENE OF THE AREA.

THE WORKS ON PROPOSED SEWERAGE PROJECT IN SHEK O IS EXPECTED TO START IN NOVEMBER AND TAKE ABOUT TWO YEARS TO COMPLETE.

IN REACHING ITS DECISION, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT ALL THE RELEVANT FACTORS, IN PARTICULAR, THE LOCAL CONCERNS OVER CLEARANCE OF THE SQUATTER AREA IN THE VICINITY.

THE COUNCIL NOTED THAT THE DESIGN OF THE SEWERAGE FACILITIES HAD BEEN MODIFIED TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF SQUATTER STRUCTURES TO BE CLEARED FROM 250 TO 18.

MOREOVER, IN ORDER TO MINIMISE ANY POSSIBLE ADVERSE IMPACTS ON THE SURROUNDING, APPROPRIATE MITIGATION MEASURES, COMPRISING THE USE OF ACOUSTIC SCREENS AND SILT CURTAINS AND LANDSCAPING OF THE SEWAGE SCREENING PLANT, WILL BE SPECIFIED IN THE DESIGN AND WORKS CONTRACTS.

THE EXTENT OF THE AREA AFFECTED IS DESCRIBED IN A NOTICE OF AUTHORISATION PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY (FRIDAY).

ANY PERSON WHO CONSIDERS THAT HIS INTEREST, RIGHT OR EASEMENT IN OR OVER THE FORESHORE AND SEABED INVOLVED WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE UNDERTAKING MAY SEND WRITTEN CLAIM FOR COMPENSATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS AND LANDS WITHIN ONE YEAR FROM TODAY.

HE SHOULD STATE IN HIS SUBMISSION THE SUM OF MONEY WHICH HE IS WILLING TO ACCEPT AS FULL AND FINAL SETTLEMENT OF HIS CLAIM, AS WELL AS THE PARTICULARS WHICH SUBSTANTIATE HIS CLAIM.

THE NOTICE, IN BOTH ENGLISH AND CHINESE, TOGETHER WITH ITS RELATED PLAN, IS POSTED AT THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT SURVEY AND MAPPING OFFICE, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD AND AT THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OFFICE, SHOP 25, GROUND FLOOR, MEI FUNG COURT, 7-11 NAM NING STREET, ABERDEEN.

THE PLAN CAN ALSO BE BOUGHT FROM THE SURVEY AND MAPPING OFFICE.

LAND TO BE RESUMED FOR LANDFILL DEVELOPMENT

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL RESUME PRIVATE LAND LOTS WITH A TOTAL AREA OF ABOUT 26,500 SQUARE METRES AT TIN HA WAN, TSEUNG KWAN O, FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTHEAST NEW TERRITORIES LANDFILL, IT WAS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE LOTS COMPRISE 1,440 SQUARE METRES OF BUILDING LAND AND 25,063 SQUARE METRES OF AGRICULTURE LAND.

WORKS ON THE SOUTHEAST NEW TERRITORIES LANDFILL ARE EXPECTED TO START IN AUGUST TO ENABLE THE NEW FACILITY TO TAKE OVER FROM THE EXISTING LANDFILL AT TSEUNG KWAN O WHEN IT IS EXHAUSTED NEXT YEAR.

THE DESIGN, BUILDING AND OPERATION OF THE LANDFILL WILL BE CARRIED OUT BY A SINGLE CONTRACTOR TO ENSURE UNITY OF RESPONSIBILITY.

AFTER THE LANDFILL IS CLOSED, THE SAME CONTRACTOR WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR RESTORATION AND AFTER-CARE OF THE SITE FOR A FURTHER 30 YEARS.

THE RESTORED SITE, INCLUDING THE SMALL AREA OF LAND BORROWED FROM THE CLEARWATER BAY COUNTRY PARK, WILL BE PROPERLY LANDSCAPED AND BE AVAILABLE FOR USE BY THE PUBLIC WHEN THE WORKS ARE COMPLETED.

THE LANDFILL IS ONE OF THE THREE STRATEGIC LANDFILLS CURRENTLY BEING DEVELOPED TO HANDLE SOLID WASTE.

A FULL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) IN CONNECTION WITH THE LANDFILL WAS COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER 1990, AND MEASURES HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED TO SAFEGUARD THE INTEREST OF COUNTRY PARK USERS DESPITE THE TEMPORARY "ENCROACHMENT" INTO THE COUNTRY PARK.

THESE MEASURES WILL INCLUDE TREE PLANTING ALONG THE EASTERN PERIMETER OF THE LANDFILL AND TEMPORARY RE-ALIGNMENT OF THE HIKING TRAIL.

STRICT ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS SPECIFIED IN THE TENDER WILL BE MET BY THE CONTRACTOR.

THE CONTRACT WILL ALSO COMPLY WITH THE PERFORMANCE MEASURES GOVERNING AIR QUALITY, NOISE, LEACHATE SEEPAGE, GAS CONTROL, ODOUR AND LITTERING.

THESE STANDARDS ARE MUCH MORE STRINGENT THAN THOSE WHICH HAVE BEEN APPLIED FOR SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL.

IT HAS ALSO BEEN PROPOSED TO DEVELOP WASTE TRANSFER STATIONS WHERE THE WASTE DELIVERED BY SMALL COLLECTION VEHICLES WOULD BE COMPACTED INTO LARGE CONTAINERS FOR TRANSPORT TO THE LANDFILL.

THIS MEASURE WILL HELP REDUCE THE TRAFFIC IMPACT ON THE SURROUNDING ROADS CAUSED BY THE NEW LANDFILL.

THE LANDFILL, WHEN COMMISSIONED NEXT YEAR, IS EXPECTED TO SERVE MAINLY AS A DISPOSAL CENTRE FOR PRIVATELY COLLECTED WASTE FROM THE URBAN AND SOUTHEAST NEW TERRITORIES AREAS. IT WILL HAVE A TOTAL CAPACITY OF ABOUT 39 MILLION TONNES.

TOGETHER WITH THE TWO OTHER STRATEGIC LANDFILLS BEING PLANNED, THE SOUTHEAST NEW TERRITORIES LANDFILL WILL PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY ACCEPTABLE AND COST-EFFECTIVE DISPOSAL FACILITY WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

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NEW ABERDEEN INTERCHANGE BOOSTS TRAFFIC CAPACITY

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THE INTERCHANGE AT THE JUNCTION OF ABERDEEN PRAYA ROAD AND TIN WAN PRAYA ROAD WOULD INCREASE THE TRAFFIC CAPACITY TO COPE WITH GROWING DEMAND FROM THE WAH KWAI PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT KELLETT BAY, THE REGIONAL HIGHWAYS ENGINEER (HONG KONG REGION) OF THE HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT, MR WONG WAH-LUN, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY).

SPEAKING AT A TREE-PLANTING CEREMONY TO MARK THE COMPLETION OF THE INTERCHANGE, MR WONG SAID THE WORK STARTED IN JUNE 1990 AND TOOK 34 MONTHS TO COMPLETE AT A COST OF \$88 MILLION.

"IT INVOLVES THE CONSTRUCTION OF A GRADE-SEPARATED INTERCHANGE TO REPLACE THE SIGNAL CONTROLLED JUNCTION AT ABERDEEN PRAYA ROAD AND TIN WAN PRAYA ROAD.

"ALSO, A NEW FOOTBRIDGE NETWORK WAS BUILT TO COMPLETELY SEGREGATE PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR TRAFFIC THERE. A SECTION OF ABERDEEN PRAYA ROAD WAS WIDENED FROM DUAL TWO-LANE TO DUAL THREE-LANE TRAFFIC," HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, THE WORK COVERS RECONSTRUCTION OF AN OPEN AIR CAR PARK ADJACENT TO THE ABERDEEN WHOLESALE FISH MARKET, AND PROVISION OF A PUBLIC CAR PARK NEAR YUE KO STREET, BUS LAYBYS AND TRAFFIC SIGNAL IMPROVEMENT AT SHEK PAI WAN ROAD.

"A SPECIAL FEATURE OF THE PROJECT IS EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPE WORKS COSTING ABOUT \$4 MILLION TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT."

THIS INVOLVES THE PLANTING OF 660 TREES AND 16,500 SHRUBS OF A GREAT VARIETY OF SPECIES OVER AN AREA OF 7,300 SQUARE METRES, THE PAVING OF 7,000 SQUARE METRES OF FOOTWAY WITH COLOURED PRECAST CONCRETE BLOCKS AND THE PROVISION OF 1,800 METRES OF RUBBLE FACED PLANTER WALLS.

"THESE CONTRIBUTE TO THE CREATION OF AN ATTRACTIVE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS IN THE ABERDEEN AREA," HE SAID.

OTHER GUESTS OFFICIATING AT THE CEREMONY INCLUDED THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD, MR HUI YUNG-CHUNG; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD, MR MAN HON-MING; THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OFFICER, MRS ROSANNA URE; AND THE DIRECTOR OF CHINA FUJIAN CORPORATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TECHNO-ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION, THE CONTRACTOR FOR THE PROJECT, MR ZHU LIN-MIN.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 1993

- 19 -

PUBLIC URGED TO REGISTER AS VOTERS

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WAN CHAI DISTRICT OFFICER, MR PETER MANN, SAID TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT HE EXPECTED MORE WOULD REGISTER AS VOTERS THIS YEAR AS HONG KONG PEOPLE ARE BECOMING MORE POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS.

SPEAKING AT A TREE-PLANTING CEREMONY AT THE ILLUMINATION TERRACE IN TAI HANG ROAD, HE ALSO URGED ELIGIBLE VOTERS TO REGISTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HE DESCRIBED THE GREENING EFFORT AT THE TERRACE AS "UNIQUE" SINCE THE TREES WERE IMBEDDED INSIDE A PRIVATE PROPERTY, NOT ON PAVEMENT OR CENTRAL ROAD DIVIDER.

BUT THE GREENING EFFECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT IS JUST AS GOOD AS THE PLANTS WILL BE PUT UP NEAR THE ROAD.

"I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO A 'GREAT LEAP FORWARD' IN OUR DISTRICT IF OTHER PRIVATE DEVELOPERS FOLLOW SUIT," HE SAID.

TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO TOOK PART IN A SIMILAR TREE-PLANTING PROJECT IN THE AFTERNOON AT WAN CHAI SPORTS GROUND, MR MANN SAID HE HOPED THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO JOIN OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS.

TODAY'S EVENTS WERE ORGANISED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WAN CHAI "GREENING FOR THE CHEST" ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND THE DISTRICT OFFICE.

A TOTAL OF \$103,478 WAS RAISED FOR THE COMMUNITY CHEST TODAY.

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PUBLIC URGED TO PLANT FOR A GREEN CAUSE

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MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO HAVE YET TO TAKE PART IN THIS YEAR'S COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING SCHEME ARE URGED TO DO SO BEFORE IT CLOSES BY THE END OF THIS MONTH.

FROM NOW UNTIL APRIL 25, PLANTING SITES IN SIX COUNTRY PARKS WILL BE OPEN ON SUNDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAY.

THESE COUNTRY PARKS ARE: TAI MO SHAN, SHING MUN, QUARRY BAY, PAT SIN LENG (HOK TAU), SAI KUNG (PAK TAM CHUNG) AND SOUTH LANTAU (NGONG PING).

ALL THESE ENVIRONMENTAL-CONSCIOUS CITIZENS NEED TO DO IS TO COME TO A COUNTRY PARK AND PUT THE PREPARED SEEDLINGS INTO THE GROUND WITH THE TOOLS PROVIDED AT THE SITES.

THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT (AFD) STAFF WILL BE THERE TO HELP, IF REQUIRED.

COMMENTING ON THIS YEAR'S COMMUNITY TREE PLANTING SCHEME, AN AFD SPOKESMAN SAID SINCE THE START OF THE SCHEME ON MARCH 14, A TOTAL OF 9,480 TREE SEEDLINGS WERE PLANTED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

/THE SAI

FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 1993

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THE SAI KUNG COUNTRY PARK SITE IN PAK TAM CHUNG TOPPED THE LIST WITH 4,050 TREE SEEDLINGS PLANTED.

THE SPOKESMAN EXPECTED THAT THE NUMBER OF TREES PLANTED UNDER THE SCHEME THIS YEAR WOULD EXCEED LAST YEAR'S 32,000 IF THE PRESENT PACE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IS MAINTAINED.

HE SAID THE DEPARTMENT WAS ENCOURAGED TO NOTE THAT MANY COMMUNITY GROUPS, PARTICULARLY THOSE ADVOCATING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, HAD TAKEN AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE SCHEME.

HE ALSO SAID THE AIM OF THE SCHEME WAS TO PROMOTE PUBLIC PROTECTION AND CARE ON VEGETATION THROUGH PHYSICAL INVOLVEMENT IN PLANTING.

"WHY NOT SPARE SOME TIME AND COME OVER TO THE COUNTRY PARKS AND DO THE PLANTING YOURSELVES FOR A GREEN CAUSE?" HE URGED.

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MOBILE EXHIBITIONS ON HK'S SEWAGE STRATEGY

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A SERIES OF MOBILE EXHIBITIONS WILL BE STAGED AT PROMINENT SHOPPING ARCADES AND PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATE SHOPPING CENTRES IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS TO PROMOTE HONG KONG'S SEWAGE STRATEGY.

THE FIRST IN THE SERIES WILL BEGIN ON SATURDAY (APRIL 3) AT TUEN MUN TOWN PLAZA AND OI MAN SHOPPING CENTRE IN HO MAN TIN.

ORGANISED BY THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS BRANCH, THE EXHIBITION AIMED AT AROUSING PUBLIC CONCERN OVER THE WATER POLLUTION PROBLEM IN THE HARBOUR AND THE NEED FOR AN ULTIMATE SOLUTION.

"PICTURES AND CARTOONS WILL BE DISPLAYED TO HIGHLIGHT THE SERIOUS WATER POLLUTION PROBLEM THAT ENDANGERS OUR ENVIRONMENT AND THREATENS PUBLIC HEALTH," A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD DEVELOP AN OVERALL SEWAGE STRATEGY TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM.

"THIS INVOLVES THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NETWORK OF UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - THREE METRES IN DIAMETER AND 22 KM IN LENGTH AT A DEPTH OF 150 METRES TO COLLECT SEWAGE FROM THE URBAN AREA FOR TREATMENT," HE SAID.

THE EXHIBITION AT ATRIUM OF TUEN MUN TOWN PLAZA WILL BE HELD TOMORROW AND ON SUNDAY (APRIL 4), BEGINNING FROM 10 AM TO 7 PM.

THE EXHIBITION WILL ALSO BE HELD ON THE SECOND FLOOR, OI MAN SHOPPING CENTRE, HO MAN TIN, FROM TOMORROW TO MONDAY (APRIL 5). THE EXHIBITION OPENS FROM 9 AM TO 6 PM.

/THE EXHIBITION

THE EXHIBITION WILL BE HELD:

VENUES -----	DATE -----	TIME -----
TAK TIN SHOPPING CENTRE, LAM TIN	9.4.93 - 12.4.93	9AM - 6PM
SHUN TAK CENTRE	10.4.93 - 11.4.93	10AM - 7PM
NEW TOWN PLAZA	15.4.93 - 16.4.93	10AM - 7PM
CITYPLAZA	17.4.93 - 18.4.93	10AM - 7PM
CHEUNG FAT SHOPPING CENTRE, TSING YI	17.4.93 - 18.4.93	9AM - 6PM
LANDMARK	20.4.93 - 22.4.93	10AM - 7PM
NEW WORLD CENTRE	24.4.93 - 25.4.93	10AM - 7PM

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NO MAIL DELIVERY ON CHING MING

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THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR M PAGLIARI, ANNOUNCED TODAY (FRIDAY) THAT THERE WOULD BE NO MAIL DELIVERY ON CHING MING FESTIVAL, WHICH FALLS ON MONDAY (APRIL 5).

A SPECIAL MAIL DELIVERY WOULD BE PROVIDED ON APRIL 9 (GOOD FRIDAY). NO DELIVERY WOULD BE MADE ON APRIL 10, 11 AND 12.

ALL POST OFFICES WOULD BE CLOSED DURING THE CHING MING AND EASTER HOLIDAYS.

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PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL LOTS TO BE RESUMED FOR SEWERAGE PROJECT

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THE GOVERNMENT IS TO RESUME PORTIONS OF EIGHT PRIVATE AGRICULTURAL LOTS IN TA KWU LING, NEW TERRITORIES, FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SEWER AND AN UNDERGROUND PUMPING STATION ALONG PING CHE ROAD, IT WAS GAZETTED TODAY (FRIDAY).

THE LAND TO BE RESUMED HAS A TOTAL AREA OF 885.4 SQUARE METRES.

IT WILL BE REVERTED TO THE GOVERNMENT THREE MONTHS AFTER THE GAZETTING OF THE RESUMPTION NOTICE.

WORKS FOR THE PROJECT IS PROGRAMMED TO START IN JULY.

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,150
REVERSAL OF LAF	NIL
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	2,150
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-580
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,570
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 112.9 *-0.4* 2.4.93

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.85 PCT	14 MONTHS	2405	5.50	102.41	3.31
1 MONTH	2.80 PCT	17 MONTHS	2408	4.375	101.20	3.50
3 MONTHS	2.86 PCT	20 MONTHS	2411	4.625	101.51	3.68
6 MONTHS	3.07 PCT	23 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.59	3.89
12 MONTHS	3.33 PCT					

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 13,705MN

CLOSED 2 APRIL 1993

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