



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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NO DEPARTURE FROM BILL'S INTENTION

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THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR RON BRIDGE, STRESSED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE AMENDMENTS TO THE PAID SICK LEAVE BILL PROPOSED BY THE UMELCO INVOLVED NO DEPARTURE FROM THE BILL'S ORIGINAL INTENTION TO PROVIDE MORE PROTECTION FOR EMPLOYEES SUFFERING FROM PROLONGED SICKNESS.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSED NEW 120-DAY MAXIMUM OF SICK LEAVE AND THE NEW MAXIMUM SICK LEAVE EARNING RATE OF FOUR DAYS A MONTH REMAINED UNCHANGED.

+WHILE THE MAIN AIM OF THE AMENDMENTS IS TO PROVIDE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST POSSIBLE ABUSES, THE SAFEGUARDS NOW PROPOSED ARE IN SOME WAYS LESS RESTRICTIVE AND MORE REALISTIC THAN THOSE INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL BILL AS GAZETTED,+ HE ADDED.

THANKING UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS FOR THE TROUBLE THEY HAD TAKEN IN EXAMINING THE BILL AND PROPOSING WORKABLE AMENDMENTS, MR BRIDGE SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW THE AMENDED BILL REPRESENTED A REASONABLE COMPROMISE BETWEEN SHARPLY CONFLICTING VIEWS AND HAD BEEN WELCOMED AS SUCH IN A NUMBER OF NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS.

+IF EXPERIENCE OF THE PRACTICAL WORKING OF THE NEW SCHEME PROVES THAT FURTHER CHANGES ARE NECESSARY, I WILL RECOMMEND FURTHER AMENDMENTS AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD,+ HE NOTED.

REFERRING TO CRITICISM BY EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATIONS OF THE WORKING OF THE BOARD, MR BRIDGE OBSERVED THAT ON A BOARD WHICH DEALT WITH CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS ON WHICH THERE WERE SHARPLY DIVIDED VIEWS, THERE WERE BOUND TO BE SOME TENSIONS.

+NEVERTHELESS THE BOARD DOES, IN MY VIEW, SERVE A USEFUL PURPOSE IN BRINGING TOGETHER EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES FOR A FRANK AND INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT BOTH SIDES WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT IT WITH A REASONABLE DEGREE OF TOLERANCE AND GOODWILL,+ HE NOTED.

LATER AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE, MR BRIDGE PROPOSED THAT THE BILL SHOULD COME INTO EFFECT ON NOVEMBER 1 THIS YEAR.

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AMENDMENTS WERE A COMPROMISE — T.S. LO

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THE HON T.S. LO SAID TODAY THAT THE AMENDMENTS TO THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1983, WHICH HE PROPOSED MOVING AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE, WERE MADE AGAINST THE BACKDROP THAT IN THE LONGER TERM THE INTERESTS OF EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE DO NOT CONFLICT BUT ARE IDENTICAL.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR LO SAID, +THESE AMENDMENTS ARE MADE WITHOUT THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON BUT MERELY THE INDUSTRY OF MAN.+

/+THEY REPRESENT

+THEY REPRESENT A TYPICAL HONG KONG COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE IMMEDIATE SHORT TERM INTERESTS OF EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE,+ HE ADDED.

MR LO OUTLINED THE OBJECTIVES OF THE AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS:

- * TO EXTEND THE PERIOD DURING WHICH SICK LEAVE IS EARNED AT TWO DAYS EACH MONTH FROM THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT TO THE FIRST 12 MONTHS;
- * TO MAKE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS BY INTRODUCING A FORM OF RETROACTIVE LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE RATE BUT ONLY THE RATE AT WHICH SICK LEAVE IS TO BE EARNED;
- * TO REMOVE THE HOSPITAL STAY REQUIREMENT FOR SICK LEAVE IN EXCESS OF 90 CONSECUTIVE DAYS OF CLAIMED SICK LEAVE; BUT TO PROVIDE THAT A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE CERTIFYING THE EMPLOYEE'S TREATMENT AT A HOSPITAL MAY BE REQUIRED BY THE EMPLOYER IF THE EMPLOYEE HAS TAKEN SICK LEAVE IN EXCESS OF HIS 36 DAYS ENTITLEMENT;
- * TO INCLUDE GOVERNMENT SPECIALIST CLINICS IN THE DEFINITION OF A HOSPITAL TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEDICAL CERTIFICATE REFERRED TO EARLIER TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY A BRIEF RECORD OF INVESTIGATION AND TREATMENT WHERE REQUIRED BY THE EMPLOYER;
- * TO REQUIRE EMPLOYERS TO KEEP A SICK LEAVE RECORD TO SHOW THE SICK LEAVE POSITION OF EACH EMPLOYEE;
- * TO DIVIDE SICK LEAVE ENTITLEMENT INTO 2 CATEGORIES: CATEGORY 1 TO CONTAIN THE SICK LEAVE EARNED UP TO 36 DAYS AND CATEGORY 2 TO CONTAIN THE SICK LEAVE EARNED OTHER THAN CATEGORY 1 UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 84 DAYS; AND
- * TO REQUIRE THE SICK LEAVE BE FIRST DEDUCTED FROM CATEGORY 1 AND FINALLY TO MAKE ALL CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS.

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UNOFFICIALS SUPPORT INCREASED SICK LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

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THE AD HOC GROUP OF THE UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS CONSIDERING THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 SUPPORTED THE PROPOSAL TO INCREASE SICK LEAVE ENTITLEMENT TO A MAXIMUM OF 120 DAYS, THE HON PETER C WONG SAID AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, MR WONG, CONVENER OF THE GROUP, SAID, +AFTER HEARING VIEWS FROM EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES, WE ARE SATISFIED THAT THE SPIRIT OF THE BILL IS NOT IN DISPUTE.

+THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT SICKNESS BENEFITS SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO COVER WORKERS WHO MAY BE SICK FOR LONG PERIODS.+

/TEN OTHER

TEN OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ALSO SPOKE AT THE RESUMED DEBATE.

THE HON T.S. LO, THE HON WONG LAM, THE HON F.K. HU, THE HON WONG PO-YAN, THE HON K.C. CHAN, THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG, THE HON MRS SELINA CHOW AND DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP SUPPORTED THE MOTION WHILE THE REV THE HON PATRICK MCGOVERN AND THE HON ANDREW SO ABSTAINED FROM VOTING.

MR WONG, SAID THE AD HOC GROUP AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, MADE THREE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT.

THE FIRST RECOMMENDATION IS TO DELETE THE HOSPITALISATION ELEMENT AS CONTAINED IN THE BILL.

+WE FELT THAT CONSIDERING THE CURRENT ACUTE SHORTAGE OF HOSPITAL BEDS, THIS PROVISION MIGHT WORK AGAINST WORKERS SUFFERING FROM SERIOUS ILLNESS BUT UNABLE TO GAIN ADMISSION TO HOSPITALS OR ARE REQUIRED TO STAY AT HOME FOR LONG PERIODS AFTER MAJOR OPERATIONS,+ MR WONG EXPLAINED.

THE SECOND RECOMMENDATION IS THAT ANY CLAIM BY A WORKER FOR SICKNESS BENEFITS IN EXCESS OF THE EXISTING MAXIMUM OF 36 DAYS WOULD HAVE TO BE SUPPORTED BY A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE FROM A HOSPITAL-BASED DOCTOR.

+AND IF SO REQUIRED BY HIS EMPLOYER, THE MEDICAL CERTIFICATE SHALL CONTAIN OR BE ACCOMPANIED BY A BRIEF RECORD OF THE INVESTIGATION CARRIED OUT AND THE TREATMENT PRESCRIBED BY THE MEDICAL PRACTITIONER,+ MR WONG SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS, 'HOSPITAL' WOULD BE DEFINED TO INCLUDE A GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE HOSPITAL OR SPECIALIST CLINIC.

MR WONG EXPLAINED THAT IN ESSENCE, THE 120 DAYS WILL BE DIVIDED INTO TWO CATEGORIES. CATEGORY 1 COMPRISES 36 DAYS WHICH A WORKER MAY CLAIM AS SICKNESS BENEFITS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CURRENT PROVISIONS.

CATEGORY 2 COMPRISES THE REMAINING 84 DAYS WHICH THE WORKER MAY CLAIM AS SICKNESS BENEFITS ONLY ON PRODUCTION OF A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE TO SHOW THAT HE HAS BEEN TREATED AS AN IN-PATIENT OR OUT-PATIENT IN A HOSPITAL.

MR WONG SAID, +WE CONSIDERED THAT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE EXISTING REQUIREMENTS THAT SICKNESS ALLOWANCE IS PAYABLE ONLY FOR SICK LEAVE OF AT LEAST FOUR CONSECUTIVE DAYS AND THAT SICKNESS ALLOWANCE IS AT TWO-THIRDS PAY, THE NEW COMPROMISE COMPRISING TWO CATEGORIES WOULD BE A SUFFICIENT SAFEGUARD AGAINST ANY POTENTIAL ABUSE ON THE INCREASED BENEFITS.+

THE THIRD RECOMMENDATION IS THAT THE SICK LEAVE EARNING RATE BE MODIFIED TO TWO DAYS PER MONTH FOR THE FIRST YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER, AND FOUR DAYS PER MONTH FROM THE SECOND YEAR ONWARDS, SO THAT THE MAXIMUM OF 120 DAYS WILL BE EARNED IN THREE YEARS.

MR WONG POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS EQUIVALENT TO THE TIME REQUIRED FOR THE CURRENT MAXIMUM OF 36 DAYS TO BE EARNED.

+REGARDING TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, THE ADMINISTRATION HAS CONFIRMED THAT SICK LEAVE ENTITLEMENT ACCRUED BY A WORKER BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE BILL WILL NOT BE AFFECTED AND THAT HIS SERVICE WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER WILL BE COUNTED IN CALCULATING SICK LEAVE BENEFITS AT THE RATE APPLICABLE TO HIS LENGTH OF SERVICE,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG EXPRESSED HIS THANKS TO THE 22 MEMBERS OF THE GROUP FOR THEIR CONCERTED EFFORTS AND VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION AND TO MR T.S. LO WHO HAS AGREED TO MOVE THE VARIOUS AMENDMENTS AGREED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION.

MR WONG SAID, +WE DO NOT PRETEND FOR A MOMENT THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS WE PROPOSED WOULD PRESENT A PANACEA.

+FAR FROM IT; WE ARE FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND COMPLEXITIES INHERENT IN THE MATTERS AT ISSUE.

+HOWEVER, WE HAVE PUT FORWARD A PACKAGE WHICH IN OUR VIEWS IS REASONABLE AND WORKABLE.+

SINCE THE REVIEW OF LABOUR LEGISLATION IS AN ON-GOING PROCESS, HE EXPRESSED THE BELIEF THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NO DOUBT INTRODUCE FURTHER AMENDMENTS, SHOULD PROBLEMS ARISE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW PROVISIONS.

HE RECALLED THAT THE BILL WAS INTRODUCED ON JULY 13, 1983 AND THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 27, WAS DEFERRED TO AUGUST 10 SO THAT ALL INTERESTED PARTIES AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC COULD HAVE MORE TIME TO STUDY THE BILL AND PRESENT THEIR VIEWS.

+IN THE LIGHT OF THESE CONFLICTING VIEWS, UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS DECIDED THAT THE BILL SHOULD BE FURTHER DEFERRED SO THAT THE REPRESENTATIONS PUT FORTH BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES COULD BE STUDIED THOROUGHLY.

+AS THIS COUNCIL WENT INTO RECESS AFTER AUGUST 10, THE EARLIEST DATE AVAILABLE FOR THE DEBATE TO RESUME IS TODAY. AS SCHEDULED, WE HAVE RESUMED DEBATE THIS AFTERNOON AND THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE BECAUSE WE CONTINUED OUR DISCUSSIONS AND CONSULTATIONS THROUGHOUT THE RECESS,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG STRESSED THAT THE DEFERMENT HAD PROVED TO BE FRUITFUL. UMELCO HAD RECEIVED A TOTAL OF 28 REPRESENTATIONS FROM EMPLOYERS' AND EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATIONS AS WELL AS FROM CONCERNED INDIVIDUALS.

+TO GIVE SOME IDEA OF THE EFFORTS PUT IN BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS, I NEED ONLY SAY THAT THE AD HOC GROUP HELD NO LESS THAN 16 MEETINGS DURING THE LAST TWO MONTHS,+ HE SAID.

TWO RELATED ISSUES WHICH DID NOT DIRECTLY AFFECT THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL HAD ALSO BEEN BROUGHT UP IN THE REPRESENTATIONS TO UMELCO.

THEY CONCERNED THE SETTING UP OF A COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS IN THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD.

THESE VIEWS HAD BEEN MADE KNOWN TO THE ADMINISTRATION, MR WONG SAID.

+EMPLOYERS MENTALITY+ CRITICISED

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UNOFFICIAL MEMBER REV HON PATRICK MCGOVERN WAS CRITICAL OF THE MENTALITY DISPLAYED BY EMPLOYERS OVER THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY), FATHER MCGOVERN SAID: +THERE WAS A PRESUMPTION, SOMETIMES OPENLY STATED, BUT MORE OFTEN IMPLIED, THAT CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS OF OUR WORKFORCE ARE ONLY WAITING FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE IN LARGE SCALE MALINGERING AT THE EXPENSE OF THEIR EMPLOYERS.

+THIS IS SIMPLY NOT GROUNDED ON FACTS UNDER OUR PRESENT LIMITED LEGISLATION.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT WHAT WAS GROUNDED ON FACT WAS WHAT HAPPENED IN SOME DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. MANAGEMENT, BY CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF DISTRUST, OF GRUDGING RELUCTANCE TO CONCEDE WORKERS RIGHTS WRECKED THE POSSIBILITY OF BUILDING UP DECENT AND HARMONIOUS INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, AND DROVE THE WORKERS INTO THEIR PRESENT STATE OF APATHY OR NON-COOPERATION.

NOT TO MENTION OF COURSE DRIVING THEM INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO ARE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO EXPLOIT THEIR DISCONTENT FOR +THEIR OWN UNDEMOCRATIC POLITICAL ENDS,+ HE ADDED.

FATHER MCGOVERN SAID: +DEJA VU OR NOT, I REPEAT THAT OUR HARDWORKING EMPLOYEES ARE FAR FROM THAT STAGE.

+BUT IF THE PRESENT INSENSITIVE ATTITUDE OF ORGANISED EMPLOYERS CONTINUES TO IMPLY THAT OUR WORKERS ARE A LAZY LOT OF POTENTIAL MALINGERERS, NOT TO BE TRUSTED WITH BETTER CONDITIONS, THEN THOSE EMPLOYERS DESERVE THE SORT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS THEY WILL GET.

+THEY WILL GET THEM BECAUSE, AS IN SOME DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THEY HAVE ASKED FOR THEM,+ HE SAID.

FATHER MCGOVERN SAID +THERE WAS A FURTHER INSULTING IMPLICATION IN SOME EMPLOYERS' ATTITUDE.+

+THE PURPOSE OF THIS BILL - TO MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR THE FEW WORKERS WHO MAY HAVE THE MISFORTUNE TO SUFFER A LONG ILLNESS - WAS ALMOST SMOTHERED IN AN FRANTIC ENDEAVOUR TO CLOSE POSSIBLE LOOPHOLES WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO ABUSE.

+THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT THE MEDICAL PROFESSION BY AND LARGE ARE ONLY TOO READY TO SIGN MEDICAL CERTIFICATES FOR OVER-LONG SICK LEAVE.

+THEY, NOT JUST A FEW, BUT AS A PROFESSION, ARE NOT TO BE TRUSTED, IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE MEANING OF REQUIRING HOSPITAL DOCUMENTATION.+

+IF I WERE A DOCTOR I WOULD BE VERY LOATHE TO WASTE ANY TIME COOPERATING WITH SUCH A SCHEME.+

/FATHER MCGOVERN

FATHER MCGOVERN SAID HE WOULD ABSTAIN FROM VOTING AT ALL FURTHER STAGES OF THE BILL IN ORDER NOT TO OPPOSE +WHATEVER GOOD IS LEFT IN THIS BILL.+

HE WENT ON +TO REGISTER HIS DISGUST NOT ONLY AT THE WAY THE BILL HAS BEEN MANGLED BY AMENDMENT, BUT BY THE DAMAGE THAT HAS BEEN AND WILL BE DONE TO HARMONIOUS INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AT THIS SENSITIVE TIME IN HONG KONG'S HISTORY.+

FATHER MCGOVERN POINTED OUT THAT THE CHANGES TO BE MADE BY AMENDMENTS WERE UNFAVOURABLE TO WORKERS:-

- * THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS PAID SICK LEAVE FROM 2 TO 4 FOR NEW WORKERS IS DELAYED FROM 3 MONTHS TO 12 MONTHS.
- * THE HOSPITAL CLAUSE, WHICH WAS DROPPED IN JULY, IS REINTRODUCED IN A LESS DEMANDING BUT MORE COMPLICATED AND DIFFICULT TO ADMINISTER FORM.
- * THE BASIC NON-HOSPITAL SICK LEAVE IS REDUCED FROM 120 OR 90 DAYS BACK TO THE PRESENT 36 DAYS.

ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE AD HOC GROUP, THE HON ANDREW SO, ALSO ABSTAINED FROM VOTING.

HE SAID HE HAD WELCOMED THE ORIGINAL BILL BECAUSE IT WAS IN ESSENCE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SICK WORKERS IN THE ABSENCE OF A COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME.

THE COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS SOUGHT TO PREVENT EMPLOYEES WHO WERE NOT GENUINELY ILL, FROM OBTAINING PAID SICK LEAVE, AND TO PROVIDE GREATER SICK LEAVE BENEFITS FOR WORKERS WITH LONGER SERVICE.

HE FELT HOWEVER THAT THERE WERE PROVISIONS IN THE EXISTING LEGISLATION TO FORESTALL ABUSE.

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AD HOC UNOFFICIAL GROUP MEMBERS SPEAK ON BILL

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SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS CONSIDERING THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SPOKE AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL.

HON WONG LAM, HON F.K. HU, HON WONG PO-YAN, HON K.C. CHAN, HON STEPHEN CHEONG, HON MRS SELINA CHOW AND DR HON HENRIETTA IP SUPPORTED THE MOTION.

MR WONG SAID THAT THE EXISTING PROVISION OF 36 DAYS OF ANNUAL PAID SICK LEAVE WAS +INSUFFICIENT FOR WORKERS SUFFERING FROM MORE CHRONIC OR SERIOUS DISEASES,+ AND IT WAS THEREFORE +IN PRINCIPLE VERY APPROPRIATE TO INCREASE PAID SICK LEAVE AT AN EARLIER DATE TO AFFORD BETTER PROTECTION TO WORKERS.+

THE BURDEN ON EMPLOYERS OF PROVIDING INCREASED PAID SICK LEAVE FOR WORKERS WAS +NOT AS GREAT AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN THOUGHT.+

MR WONG ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE INCREASE IN PAID SICK LEAVE WOULD BRING GREATER PRESSURE TO SMALLER FACTORIES, THROUGH +PRODUCTION COSTS, OR LONG SICK LEAVE TAKEN BY ONE OR TWO OF THEIR EMPLOYEES.+

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE INCREASE WOULD LOWER MOBILITY OF WORKERS AMONG FACTORIES +BECAUSE THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKERS WHO HAVE ACCUMULATED LONG PAID SICK LEAVE RESIGNING WILL BE DIMINISHED.+

+THIS WILL BE BENEFICIAL TO THE SMALL FACTORIES AND HELP TO CUSHION THE IMPACT OF THE NEW LEGISLATION ON THEM,+ HE SAID.

MR HU SAID THE BILL WAS CERTAINLY AN ENCOURAGING AND WELCOME MOVE TO HELP EMPLOYEES WHO, THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN, MAY BECOME VICTIMS OF SERIOUS ILLNESS AND THUS BE AFFECTED IN THEIR INCOME AND FAMILIES' LIVELIHOOD.

+HOWEVER, THIS SHOULD BE SEEN AS THE FIRST STEP IN THE RIGHT MOVE,+ HE SAID.

+IN DUE COURSE IMPROVEMENT SHOULD BE INTRODUCED TO OFFER FURTHER BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES, TO SAY 60 DAYS SICK LEAVE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR HOSPITALISATION, AND A FURTHER 60 DAYS WITH AN ELEMENT OF HOSPITALISATION,+ HE ADDED.

MR HU EXPRESSED CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF NON-MANUAL WORKERS NOT PROTECTED BY THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE.

+I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD LOOK INTO THIS ASPECT AND INTRODUCE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PROTECT THIS GROUP OF EMPLOYEES WHO ALSO MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE WELL-BEING OF OUR ECONOMY, AND SHOULD THUS BE ADEQUATELY LOOKED AFTER BY THEIR EMPLOYERS,+ HE SAID.

+WE THEREFORE NEED TO REVIEW THE MATTER REGULARLY AND MONITOR IT TO GIVE THE BEST POSSIBLE EFFECT.+

MR WONG PO-YAN POINTED OUT THAT IN THE AREA OF SICK LEAVE BENEFITS, THE NEED TO FIND AN EQUITABLE EQUILIBRIUM WAS OBVIOUS.

+IT WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, BE PRUDENT TO USE PROVISIONS OF OTHER COUNTRIES AS A YARDSTICK FOR COMPARISON AS EACH COUNTRY HAS ITS OWN SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM THAT PERTAINS TO ITS OWN INDIVIDUAL REQUIREMENTS,+ HE WARNED.

HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH WE HAD NO OFFICIAL STATISTICS THAT INDICATED CONCLUSIVELY THE PATTERN OF SICK LEAVE TAKEN BY EMPLOYEES IN RECENT YEARS, RESULTS OF SURVEYS CONDUCTED BY TRADE ASSOCIATIONS AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS CONFIRMED THAT THERE WERE WORKERS, THOUGH SMALL IN NUMBER, WHO REQUIRED SICK LEAVE IN EXCESS OF THE CURRENT PROVISION.

THE BILL AND AMENDMENTS TO BE MOVED WERE HONEST ATTEMPTS TO BALANCE THE INTEREST OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED, HE SAID.

MR K.C. CHAN SAID HE SUPPORTED THE AMENDMENTS USING THE +HOSPITAL+ ELEMENT TO SAFEGUARD ABUSE.

HE NOTED THAT GOOD EMPLOYERS ALSO SUPPORTED THE 120 DAYS BUT VOICED SOME CONCERN ON SAFEGUARDING ABUSE.

+AFTER ALL, IT IS THE EMPLOYERS WHO FOOT THE BILL. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT THAT WHEN WE VENTURE INTO SOMETHING NEW IN LABOUR LEGISLATIONS, WE SHOULD TRY TO ALLAY THEIR FEARS FIRST.

+OTHERWISE, THE RESISTANCE FROM EMPLOYERS WOULD HARDEN IF THEY FELT THAT NEW PROPOSALS ARE RAMMED DOWN THEIR THROAT.

+THIS IN THE END WOULD HINDER THE PROGRESS IN IMPROVING BENEFITS FOR EMPLOYEES IN THE FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

MR STEPHEN CHEONG DESCRIBED THE BILL AS +A VERY BALANCED PIECE OF LEGISLATION+ AND SAID THAT ITS PASSAGE WOULD MAKE ANOTHER STEP FORWARD IN THE PROGRESS OF OUR SOCIETY.

HE SAID, +SOME MIGHT DRAW THE CONCLUSION THAT THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE WERE THE RESULT OF EMPLOYERS' LOBBY.

+THIS DOES NOT REALLY GIVE JUSTICE TO MEMBERS WHOSE DELIBERATIONS ON THIS BILL HAVE BEEN BOTH EXTENSIVE AND THOROUGH.

+WE MUST NOT LOOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT THE SPIRIT OF THE BILL HAS NOT BEEN WATERED DOWN AT ALL BY ANY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS.+

MRS SELINA CHOW SAID THE MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC GROUP SUPPORTED THE SPIRIT OF THE BILL.

SHE SAID THAT THE JUMP FROM 36 TO 120 DAYS, THOUGH QUITE SUBSTANTIAL, WAS CONSIDERED REASONABLE AND SUCH EXTENSION WAS REGARDED AS PARTICULARLY NECESSARY FOR SERIOUS OR PROLONGED ILLNESSES.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT AS THE AMENDED BILL STANDS, OUT-PATIENTS OF HOSPITALS WOULD QUALIFY FOR ALLOWANCES TO WHICH THEY ARE ENTITLED SO LONG AS THEY CAN OBTAIN THE NECESSARY MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

+THIS MIGHT MEAN THAT INSTEAD OF PROTECTING THE EMPLOYEES WHO SUFFER FROM SERIOUS ILLNESSES, WE ARE ALLOWING THE POSSIBILITY OF MORE CASUAL SICK LEAVE FOR SUCH MINOR INDISPOSITION AS THE COMMON COLD TO INCREASE.

+THIS IS NOT A MATTER OF ABUSE, BUT MORE A MATTER OF WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE, AND IT IS UP TO EMPLOYEES TO GUARD AGAINST THE RELAXATION OF SELF-DISCIPLINE, WHICH COULD UNDERMINE PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY HITHERTO CHARACTERISTIC OF OUR WORK FORCE,+ MRS CHOW SAID.

DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP SAID THE BILL ALLOWED AN ILL WORKER, WHOSE FAMILY'S LIVELIHOOD DEPENDED ON HIS INCOME, TO RECOVER FROM HIS ILLNESS WITHOUT THE ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL BURDEN OF LOSS OF INCOME.

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+ALL DOCTORS ARE AWARE, THAT SUCH FINANCIAL BURDEN PROLONGS AN ILLNESS, WHETHER IT IS DUE TO THE ELEMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS OR OF PHYSICAL STRESS WHICH RESULTS FROM A PREMATURE RETURN TO WORK.

+IN THIS RESPECT, THIS BILL FACILITATES, THE ACCEPTANCE OF DOCTORS' ADVICE ON TREATMENT AND REST AS IT NOW BECOMES FINANCIALLY AND PRACTICALLY POSSIBLE TO DO SO,+ SHE SAID.

DR IP POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL HAD ASCENDED THE STATUS OF ANY DOCTOR REGISTRABLE IN HONG KONG.

DOCTORS WERE NOW GIVEN THE PRIVILEGE TO RECOMMEND AND THEN TO BE ACCEPTED BY LAW A TOTAL OF 120 DAYS SICK LEAVE, WITH TWO-THIRDS PAY, TO ANY ILL WORKER, SHE SAID.

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ORDINANCE WAGE CEILING NOW \$8 500
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON APPROVED A MOTION TO RAISE THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES IN THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE FROM \$7 500 TO \$8 500.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON RON BRIDGE, POINTED OUT THAT THE CEILING WAS BEING REVISED DUE TO AN INCREASE IN NOMINAL WAGES.

HE RECALLED THAT IN 1980 THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD SUGGESTED THAT THE WAGE CEILING SHOULD BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY AND THAT IT SHOULD BE REVISED WHERE NECESSARY.

THE LAST REVISION WAS IN MAY 1982 WHEN THE CEILING WAS RAISED FROM \$6 000 TO \$7 500.

MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT THAT A REVIEW MADE LAST MONTH INDICATED THAT THE MONTHLY LEVEL OF \$7 500 IN MARCH 1982 WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO \$8 200 IN MARCH THIS YEAR.

NOMINAL WAGES HAD CONTINUED TO INCREASE SINCE THEN, AND IT COULD BE ASSUMED THAT BY THIS MONTH A MONTHLY WAGE LEVEL OF \$8 500 WAS EQUIVALENT TO \$7 500 PER MONTH IN MAY 1982, HE ADDED.

IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT AFTER THE REVISION, ABOUT TWO PER CENT OF EMPLOYEES WOULD REMAIN OUTSIDE OF THE SCOPE OF THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE, MR BRIDGE SAID.

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EXCHANGE RATE DEPRECIATION EXPLAINED

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THE RECENT SHARP DEPRECIATION OF THE EXCHANGE RATE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR ARISES FROM EXTRANEIOUS FACTORS AND RUNS COUNTER TO THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY, WHICH IS BOTH FUNDAMENTALLY SOUND AND IMPROVING RAPIDLY, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON PIERES JACOBS SAID TODAY.

MR JACOBS WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW SO, WHO WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT MEASURES BEING TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT +TO CONTROL THE INCESSANT PRICE SPIRAL IN THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY+.

WHILE NOTING THAT HONG KONG HAD EXPERIENCED PRICE INFLATION, LIKE MANY OTHER PLACES, MR JACOBS POINTED OUT THAT THE AVERAGE RATE OF INFLATION IN TERMS OF THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX HAD BEEN FALLING IN THE PAST YEARS — FROM OVER 16 PER CENT IN 1980 AND 81 TO JUST UNDER 11 PER CENT LAST YEAR.

HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE NINE PER CENT INFLATION FORECAST BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR 1983 IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH +MIGHT PROVE A LITTLE OVER-OPTIMISTIC, HAVING REGARD TO THE RECENT SHARP DEPRECIATION OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR, WHICH WILL PUT UP THE PRICE OF IMPORTS+.

THERE WAS LITTLE THE GOVERNMENT COULD OR SHOULD DO IN THE CASE OF EXTERNALLY CAUSED INFLATION, AND GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION WOULD NOT BE DESIRABLE IN THE CASE OF DOMESTICALLY GENERATED INFLATION, HE SAID.

+IF THE GOVERNMENT WERE TO INTERFERE DIRECTLY WITH THE COST-PRICE STRUCTURE THROUGH PRICE CONTROLS OR SUBSIDIES, THE COST WOULD HAVE TO BE BORNE SOMEWHERE, EITHER THROUGH THE REDUCED PROFITABILITY OF FIRMS LEADING TO REDUCED INVESTMENT IN NEW PLANT AND EQUIPMENT, REDUCED AVAILABILITY OF CERTAIN GOODS AND SERVICES, OR INCREASED TAXATION, OR A REDUCTION IN THE FLEXIBILITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE ECONOMY GENERALLY, OR ALL TOGETHER,+ HE SAID.

MR JACOBS SAID SOME ACTION MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE WHERE INFLATION AROSE FROM EXCESSIVE CREATION OF CREDIT.

+THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY INDICATED IN HIS RECENT MID-YEAR REVIEW SPEECH THAT DISCUSSIONS OF POSSIBLE NEW MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE CONTROL OF MONEY SUPPLY WERE CONTINUING,+ HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, THE MONEY SUPPLY FIGURES DID NOT SUGGEST THAT THERE WAS MUCH DANGER OF FURTHER INFLATION FROM THIS SOURCE AT PRESENT.

REFERRING TO THE HONG KONG DOLLAR DEPRECIATION, HE SAID, +I AM UNABLE TO ELABORATE ON FURTHER STEPS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT TAKE BECAUSE THE MATTER IS STILL UNDER ACTIVE EXAMINATION, AND MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL.+

MR JACOBS SAID ALSO THAT THE GOVERNMENT+ HAS DONE MUCH IN CUTTING COSTS AND IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.+

/HE POINTED

HE POINTED OUT THAT SUBMISSIONS TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR INCREASES IN FEES FOR SERVICES HAD TO SHOW ALSO WHAT MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN TO CUT COSTS AND TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY PRIOR TO THE PROPOSAL.

ALSO, HE SAID, THE GOVERNOR HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO ALLOW FOR NO GROWTH IN THE CIVIL SERVICE FOR 1984-85, +EXCEPT WHERE IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PROVIDE STAFF FOR NEW FACILITIES AND WHERE SUCH STAFF CANNOT BE PROVIDED BY DEPLOYMENT.+

IN ADDITION, THE FINANCE BRANCH HAD INTRODUCED A PROGRAMME OF VALUE FOR MONEY STUDIES, AND HAD, TO DATE DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR, IDENTIFIED SAVINGS OF SOME \$60 MILLION IN ANNUALLY RECURRENT EXPENDITURE.

AS FOR PUBLIC UTILITIES, THEY WERE AS VULNERABLE AS ANYONE TO THE EFFECT OF INCREASED OPERATING COSTS.

+THE FINANCIAL MONITORING UNIT OF THE ECONOMIC SERVICES BRANCH OR THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT ARE IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMPANIES TO SATISFY THEMSELVES THAT THE COMPANIES DO, IN FACT, REVIEW THEIR OPERATING COSTS AND REDUCE THEM WHERE THEY CAN,+ HE SAID.

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PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL AMONG FOREMOST

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THE PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL IS ALREADY RECOGNISED AS ONE OF THE FOREMOST DENTAL TEACHING HOSPITALS IN THE WORLD, THE HON LYDIA DUNN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SHE MADE THE REMARK WHEN TABLING A REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HOSPITAL AND A STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE 1982-83 FINANCIAL YEAR.

MISS DUNN SAID, +IN THE PRINCE PHILIP DENTAL HOSPITAL, HONG KONG HAS AN INSTITUTION OF WHICH IT SHOULD BE PROUD.

+I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT THE HOSPITAL WILL MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY IN THE YEARS AHEAD.+

DURING THE YEAR THE HOSPITAL PROVIDED TRAINING FACILITIES FOR FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD YEAR STUDENTS READING FOR THE BACHELOR OF DENTAL SURGERY DEGREE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, AS WELL AS FOR A FULL RANGE OF DENTAL ANCILLARY STAFF.

+THE FIRST CLASS OF GRADUATES WILL COMPLETE THEIR STUDIES AND BE READY TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY IN EARLY 1985 AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED.

+THAT A PROJECT OF THIS MAGNITUDE IS REACHING FRUITION ON SCHEDULE IS DUE TO THE HARD WORK AND DEDICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND HOSPITAL STAFF, VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, AND, OF COURSE, THE DILIGENCE OF THE STUDENTS,+ SHE SAID.

MISS DUNN DESCRIBED AS +MOST IMPRESSIVE+ THE SUCCESS RATE OF THE UNDERGRADUATE DENTAL STUDENTS.

IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1982-83, 94 PER CENT OF THE STUDENTS SITTING THE FIRST BACHELOR OF DENTAL SURGERY DEGREE EXAMINATION AND 97 PER CENT OF THE CLASS SITTING THE SECOND DEGREE EXAMINATION PASSED AT THE FIRST ATTEMPT.

SUCH RESULTS CLEARLY EXEMPLIFIES THE ABILITY AND THE COMMITMENT OF THE DENTAL STUDENTS TO THEIR STUDIES - A FACT WHICH HAD RECEIVED THE COMMENDATION OF SEVERAL EXTERNAL EXAMINERS, SHE POINTED OUT.

+IT HAS THEREFORE BEEN PARTICULARLY DISTRESSING TO BOTH THE FACULTY AND THE STUDENTS THAT MOVES WERE MADE ON THE PART OF CERTAIN PEOPLE TO PETITION THE GENERAL DENTAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED KINGDOM TO WITHHOLD RECOGNITION AND REGISTRATION OF THE GRADUATES HOLDING THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DENTAL SURGERY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

+SUCH MOVES, PROMPTED BY MATTERS OVER WHICH THE STUDENTS HAD NO CONTROL WHATSOEVER, COULD HAVE JEOPARDISED THE FUTURE PROFESSIONAL CAREERS OF THESE YOUNG PEOPLE AND WERE MANIFESTLY UNFAIR TO BOTH THE STUDENTS AND THEIR TEACHERS.

+I AM, THEREFORE, HAPPY TO REPORT THAT THE GENERAL DENTAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED KINGDOM IS TAKING NO ACTION ON THIS PETITION,+ MISS DUNN SAID.

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SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR FUND BOARD * * * *

THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND BOARD HAS ACHIEVED CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN ITS SECOND YEAR OF OPERATION DESPITE THE SLOW-DOWN IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON RON BRIDGE, STATED THIS WHEN HE TABLED THE BOARD'S 1982 ANNUAL REPORT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN 1982 THE BOARD COLLECTED \$21 MILLION IN LEVY FROM THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY - SIX TIMES MORE THAN IN 1981.

LAST YEAR, COMPENSATION PAYMENTS FROM THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND AMOUNTED TO \$22 MILLION, THREE TIMES THE FIGURE FOR THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

WITH MORE CLAIMS, THE BOARD WAS UNABLE TO MAKE A SURPLUS AS FORECAST IN ITS PREVIOUS REPORT.

HOWEVER, IT WAS EXPECTED THAT WITH THE CASELOAD STABILISING AT THE PRESENT LEVEL AND A CONTINUING INCREASE IN LEVY INCOME FROM CONSTRUCTION WORK, THE BOARD SHOULD BE ABLE TO BALANCE ITS INCOME AND EXPENDITURE DURING THE COMING YEAR.

MR BRIDGE SAID THAT THE AMENDMENT ORDINANCE WHICH IMPOSES A PENALTY FOR LATE PAYMENT OF LEVY AND RAISES THE LEVEL OF FINES FOR SOME OFFENCES UNDER THE MAIN ORDINANCE HAD PUT THE BOARD INTO A MUCH STRONGER POSITION TO DISCHARGE ITS STATUTORY DUTIES.

HE THANKED THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENTS.

AMENDMENTS APPROVED

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THE LEGAL AID IN CRIMINAL CASES (AMENDMENT) RULES 1983 WERE APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE MOTION FOR APPROVAL, THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. GERALD NAZARETH, EXPLAINED THAT THE RULES HAD BEEN MADE BY THE CHIEF JUSTICE ON SEPTEMBER 15, AND EFFECT A NUMBER OF MINOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PRINCIPLE RULES, WHICH REGULATE THE GRANT OF LEGAL AID IN CRIMINAL CASES.

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ACTIONS TO COMBAT MALARIA

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AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE HAS BEEN SET UP TO FACILITATE THE UPDATING OF PLANS TO MEET ANY POSSIBLE OUTBREAK OF MALARIA, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON HENRY CHING TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI, MR CHING SAID THERE WERE 62 CASES OF MALARIA IN 1981 AND 80 CASES IN 1982. EACH FIGURE INCLUDED ONLY ONE INDIGENOUS CASE.

EIGHTY-ONE CASES OF MALARIA INCLUDING SIX INDIGENOUS ONES HAD BEEN REPORTED SO FAR THIS YEAR, HE REPORTED.

HE SAID THAT WHILE THE SIX INDIGENOUS CASES REPRESENTED AN OBVIOUS INCREASE, IN ABSOLUTE NUMBERS THEY DID NOT AMOUNT TO AN OUTBREAK.

THE SITUATION, HE ADDED, WAS BEING CAREFULLY MONITORED.

ON MEASURES TAKEN TO PREVENT THE TRANSMISSION OF THE DISEASE, MR CHING SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT WAS THE ACTION TAKEN AGAINST THE BREEDING OF VECTOR MOSQUITOES AND THE PROSECUTION OF PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR MOSQUITO BREEDING.

HE SAID THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS 20 ANTI-MOSQUITO TEAMS, COMPRISING 186 MEN, ENGAGED FULL-TIME THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY IN THE ELIMINATION OF MAN-MADE MOSQUITO-BREEDING CONDITIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE ON BUILDING SITES.

ANOTHER 20 TEAMS OF 275 MEN WORK TO PREVENT MOSQUITO BREEDING IN NATURAL CONDITIONS, SUCH AS FOUND IN STREAMS AND CATCHMENT AREAS, HE ADDED.

MR CHING SAID ADVICE WAS ALSO GIVEN TO OWNERS OF PRIVATE PREMISES TO AVOID THE CREATION OF POSSIBLE MOSQUITO-BREEDING GROUNDS.

THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAD ESTABLISHED A SPECIAL TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR CASE INVESTIGATIONS AND BIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF VECTOR MOSQUITOES, WHILE THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT WAS KEEPING CLOSE WATCH ON THE INCIDENCE OF MALARIA IN HONG KONG, MR CHING SAID.

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BILL TO MAKE PENSIONS ELIGIBLE FOR INCREASES
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THE PENSIONS (INCREASE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE HON MARTIN ROWLANDS SAID THE BILL SEEKS TO MAKE CERTAIN PENSIONS ELIGIBLE FOR PENSION INCREASES.

+FOLLOWING AN AMENDMENT TO SECTION 18 OF THE PENSIONS ORDINANCE IN JUNE 1980, MALE CHILDREN AGED OVER 18 AND FEMALE CHILDREN AGED OVER 21 OF SERVING OFFICERS WHO DIE AS A RESULT OF THEIR DUTIES MAY BE GRANTED PENSIONS UNTIL THEY REACH THE AGE OF 23, PROVIDED THEY ARE RECEIVING FULL TIME EDUCATION. +HOWEVER, NO PROVISION WAS MADE AT THE TIME FOR SUCH PENSIONS TO ATTRACT PENSION INCREASES,+ MR ROWLANDS SAID.

+THIS BILL REMEDIES THE POSITION BY MAKING SUCH PENSIONS ELIGIBLE FOR PENSION INCREASES, AS IS ALREADY THE CASE WITH ALL OTHER PENSIONS PAID TO DEPENDANTS OF FORMER OFFICERS,+ HE EXPLAINED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO NOVEMBER 9 OR 10.

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BILL TO GIVE BUILDING AUTHORITY MORE POWERS
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THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1983 WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON CHAN NAI-KEONG, SAID THE BILL SEEKS TO GIVE THE BUILDING AUTHORITY POWERS TO DEAL WITH BUILDING WORKS, IN THE SAME MANNER AS HE IS EMPOWERED TO DEAL WITH DANGEROUS BUILDINGS.

THESE WORKS INCLUDE SCAFFOLDING AND SHORING WHICH HAVE BECOME DANGEROUS AND OVER WHICH THERE IS CURRENTLY NO CONTROL.

MR CHAN SAID THAT THE NEW BILL ALSO SEEKS TO ENABLE THE BUILDING AUTHORITY TO OBTAIN THE CLOSURE OF A BUILDING, OR PART OF A BUILDING, WHICH IS NOT IN ITSELF DANGEROUS.

THIS IS TO ALLOW THE AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT WORK IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS STATUTORY POWERS, SUCH AS THE DEMOLITION OF UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES, WITHOUT DANGER TO THE OCCUPANTS OR TO THE PUBLIC, MR CHAN EXPLAINED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO NOVEMBER 9 OR 10.

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BILL AIMS TO EXTEND POWERS TO CREATE EASEMENTS
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THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY (LAND RESUMPTION AND RELATED PROVISIONS)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, WHICH AIMS TO EXTEND THE POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR TO CREATE EASEMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE CROWN, WAS INTRODUCED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON CHAN NAI-KEONG, SAID THE POWER WHICH SECTION 6 OF THE EXISTING ORDINANCE CONFERS IN RELATION TO LAND IN THE RAILWAY AREA AND FOR THE PURPOSES OF, AND INCIDENTAL TO, THE RAILWAY IS HELD TO BE ONLY SUFFICIENT TO ENABLE THE GOVERNOR TO CREATE COMMON LAW EASEMENTS.

+EXPERIENCE SINCE THE ORDINANCE WAS ORIGINALLY ENACTED IN 1974 HAS SHOWN, HOWEVER, THAT OTHER PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY RIGHTS ARE REQUIRED TO FACILITATE RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION. THESE CAN BE PROVIDED BY EXTENDING THE POWERS CONFERRED BY SECTION 6,+ MR CHAN SAID.

HE SAID THAT AN EXAMPLE OF PERMANENT RIGHTS WHICH MIGHT NEED TO BE CREATED BUT COULD NOT BE PROVIDED BY MEANS OF A COMMON LAW EASEMENT RELATED TO GROUND ANCHORS.

THESE, HE ADDED, WERE ENGINEERING DEVICES WHICH MADE USE OF THE UNDERGROUND STRATA OF NEIGHBOURING LAND TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO CONSTRUCTION BUT LEFT IRRETRIEVABLE MATERIALS PERMANENTLY IN THE GROUND AFTER THAT SUPPORT WAS NO LONGER REQUIRED.

+AN EXAMPLE OF TEMPORARY RIGHTS WHICH MAY BE NEEDED BUT CANNOT BE PROVIDED BY A COMMON LAW EASEMENT IS WHERE TEMPORARY AND EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF ACCESS TO A CONSTRUCTION SITE ON LEASED LAND ARE REQUIRED,+ HE SAID.

+THE EXISTING PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE IN RELATION TO COMPENSATION WILL BE EXTENDED BY MEANS OF CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO PROVIDE FOR COMPENSATION AS A RESULT OF THE CREATION OF ANY PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 6,+ HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO NOVEMBER 9 OR 10.

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BILL CLARIFIES RELATIONSHIP WITH MTRC
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A BILL CLARIFYING THE FINANCIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION, WAS READ A SECOND TIME BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SIR JOHN, MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, SAID THAT AS SOLE SHAREHOLDER THE GOVERNMENT IS IN EFFECT THE PARENT COMPANY AND THE CORPORATION ITS SUBSIDIARY.

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+IT IS THEREFORE APPROPRIATE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE CONTROL MECHANISMS WHICH ARE NORMAL BETWEEN PARENT AND SUBSIDIARY AND WHICH ARE NOT SET OUT SPECIFICALLY IN THE EXISTING LAW,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

HE EXPLAINED FURTHER THAT THE AMENDMENTS ENSURE THAT THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IS CONSULTED AND HIS APPROVAL OBTAINED BEFORE THE MTRC APPLIES ITS PROFITS IN ANY WAY, AND ALSO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT AND USE OF ANY GENERAL OR SPECIFIC RESERVE FUND REQUIRES THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WHO WILL HAVE POWER TO DIRECT THAT THE WHOLE OR PART OF THE MTRC'S PROFITS BE CARRIED TO RESERVE A SECTION WAS ALSO INCLUDED TO :

- (1) EMPOWER THE MTRC TO DECLARE AND PAY DIVIDENDS, AND
- (2) PROVIDE THAT MTRC MAY BE DIRECTED TO PAY AS DIVIDEND INTO THE GENERAL REVENUE THE WHOLE OR PART OF ANY PROFITS IN ANY FINANCIAL YEAR.

THE AMENDMENTS HAD BEEN AGREED WITH THE MTRC AFTER EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION AND DISCUSSION, SIR JOHN SAID.

DEBATE ON THE MOTION WAS ADJOURNED UNTIL NOVEMBER 9 OR 10.

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MTR LOAN GUARANTEED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY APPROVED A GOVERNMENT GUARANTEE TO THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION TO COVER THE PAYMENT OF A \$100 MILLION LOAN.

THE SUM BORROWED UNDER THIS GUARANTEE WILL BE USED TO FINANCE THE ISLAND LINE CONTRACTS FOR THE SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND COMMISSIONING OF DUAL MODE LOCOMOTIVES, ADDITIONAL ROLLING STOCK, AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL SYSTEM, CHILLERS, STATION AND TUNNEL ANCILLIARIES AND DEPOT SERVICES.

THIS BRINGS THE GOVERNMENT'S TOTAL GUARANTEE COMMITMENT IN RESPECT OF THE OUTSTANDING LOANS AVAILABLE TO THE MTR CORPORATION TO \$10 738 MILLION.

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FOUR BILLS INTRODUCED

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THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE FOLLOWING FOUR BILLS WERE INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME : THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, THE PENSIONS (INCREASE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1983, AND THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY (LAND RESUMPTION AND RELATED PROVISIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983.

DEBATE ON THESE BILLS WAS ADJOURNED TILL NOVEMBER 9 OR 10.

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INDUSTRIAL TRAINING FOR MORE PEOPLE

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CONSTRUCTION OF THE SECOND CLOTHING INDUSTRY TRAINING CENTRE SHOULD BE COMPLETED EARLY NEXT YEAR, AND A THIRD TRAINING CENTRE IS BEING PLANNED BY THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY.

THESE TWO EXPANSION PROJECTS WILL ENSURE THE ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF WELL-TRAINED MANPOWER FOR THE INDUSTRIES CONCERNED, THE HON FRANCIS TIEN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS SPEAKING WHILE TABLING THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR 1982.

+DESPITE THE WORLD-WIDE RECESSION IN 1982, THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY TRAINING CENTRE EXPERIENCED LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT FOR ITS TRAINEES,+ HE SAID.

AND THE RECENT BUSINESS UPTURN HAS PROMPTED THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH, AT FULL SPEED, A SECOND TRAINING CENTRE AT KOWLOON BAY, HE SAID.

MEANWHILE AN APPLICATION HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE GRANT OF A PIECE OF LAND ON HONG KONG ISLAND FOR THE THIRD CONSTRUCTION TRAINING CENTRE, HE ADDED.

THE AUTHORITY HAD ALSO DECIDED TO PROVIDE TRAINING COURSES FOR ADULT WORKERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

+THIS IS TO UPGRADE THEIR SKILL AND TO IMPROVE THEIR SAFETY KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES,+ HE SAID.

ALTHOUGH 1982 WAS A DIFFICULT YEAR FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY, ENROLMENT AT THE EXISTING TWO CONSTRUCTION TRAINING CENTRES WAS ENCOURAGING.

EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR THE TRAINEES WAS ALSO SATISFACTORY, THE REPORT STATED.)

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1983

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DUKE LEAVES FOR BANGKOK

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AFTER A MINOR FAULT IN HIS ANDOVER AIRCRAFT WAS CORRECTED, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH, LEFT FOR BANGKOK THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

THE AIRCRAFT RETURNED TO HONG KONG ABOUT ONE HOUR AND 15 MINUTES AFTER TAKE-OFF BECAUSE OF A FAULT IN ITS CABIN PRESSURE SYSTEM.

REPAIRS WERE CARRIED OUT BY ENGINEERS OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE AND THE AIRCRAFT LEFT AGAIN AT 12.30 PM.

THE DUKE WAS SEEN OFF AT THE AIRPORT BY THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE AIRPORT WERE: THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE; THE COMMANDER BRITISH FORCES, MAJOR-GENERAL DEREK BOORMAN; THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, SIR SZE-YUEN CHUNG; THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR ROGER LOBO; THE CONSUL-GENERAL OF THAILAND, MR PRABHATSORN SUNTHRARAKS; AND THE PRESIDENT OF WORLD WILDLIFE FUND, HONG KONG, SIR KENNETH FUNG.

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HRH INSPECTS GUARD

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HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH, THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING INSPECTED A GUARD AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE SHORTLY BEFORE HE LEFT HONG KONG.

THE GUARD, DRAWN FROM THE CORPS OF ROYAL ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS WAS ON DUTY THROUGHOUT HIS VISIT.

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BACK-UP SERVICES FOR ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY
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THE GOVERNMENT WILL PRESS AHEAD THROUGH THE NEW, RESTRUCTURED INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD, WITH WORK ALREADY UNDERWAY TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL BACK-UP SERVICES AND INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT FACILITIES FOR THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR E.P. HO, IN OPENING THE 1983 HONG KONG ELECTRONICS FAIR.

HE SAID: +AMONG OTHER THINGS, A TECHNO-ECONOMIC STUDY ON THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY HAS RECENTLY BEEN CONDUCTED WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHING A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE INDUSTRY AND MEANS OF COORDINATING RESOURCES TO PROMOTE COLLABORATIVE TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT. A WORKING GROUP WITH GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IS NOW CONSIDERING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT ON THE STUDY.+

MR HO SAID THAT THE IMPORTANCE AND THE FAST PACE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WAS PERHAPS MORE KEENLY FELT IN THE ELECTRONICS BUSINESS THAN OTHER MANUFACTURING SECTORS BECAUSE OF THE TECHNOLOGY-INTENSIVE NATURE OF THE INDUSTRY.

+IN THIS RESPECT, OUR INSTITUTES OF HIGHER EDUCATION ARE NOW BEGINNING TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN MEETING THE INDUSTRY'S NEEDS.+

AS A START, THE TWO UNIVERSITIES AND THE POLYTECHNIC ARE NOW ENGAGED IN THREE PROJECTS ON INTEGRATED CIRCUITS, SEMI-CONDUCTORS AND THE APPLICATION OF COMPUTERS IN THE DESIGN AND MANUFACTURE OF ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS.

IN ADDITION THE POLYTECHNIC HAD THIS YEAR INTRODUCED A FOUR-YEAR SANDWICH COURSE LEADING TO A DEGREE IN ELECTRONICS ENGINEERING.

MR HO ALSO CALLED UPON ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURERS TO GIVE GREATER SUPPORT TO THE ENGINEERING GRADUATE TRAINING SCHEME INTRODUCED EARLIER THIS YEAR BY THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL.

THE SCHEME WILL PROVIDE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRADUATES FROM ENGINEERING DISCIPLINES WITH PRACTICAL TRAINING ON THE SHOPFLOOR, THUS PROVIDING THEM WITH THE ESSENTIAL PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE, HE SAID.

DB MEMBERS LEARN FROM STUDY TRIPS

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OVERSEAS STUDY TOURS BY DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS WERE WELL WORTH MAKING PROVIDED MEMBERS WERE AWARE OF THEIR OWN LIMITATIONS AND WERE SELECTIVE IN THE IMPORTING OF NEW IDEAS, THE YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK DISTRICT OFFICER, MR WILFRED WONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR WONG WAS SPEAKING ON THE EXPERIENCES BOARD MEMBERS GAINED THROUGH THESE TRIPS AT A LUNCHEON GATHERING OF THE LIONS CLUB OF VICTORIA HONG KONG.

IN JUNE THIS YEAR, MR WONG AND 16 UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS FROM THE TWO DISTRICT BOARDS SPENT TWO WEEKS IN BRITAIN AND VISITED LONDON, BIRMINGHAM, MANCHESTER AND COVENTRY.

+NO DOUBT HONG KONG IS LAGGING BEHIND BRITAIN AS FAR AS THE EXTENT AND QUALITIES OF SOME OF THE GOVERNMENT SERVICES ARE CONCERNED.

+BUT IT WOULD ONLY BE APPROPRIATE IF WE ARE TO REGULATE THE PACE AT WHICH THE IMPROVEMENTS ARE TO BE ACHIEVED ACCORDING TO OUR OWN MEANS AND ABILITIES,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID BOARD MEMBERS HAD BROUGHT HOME SOME IDEAS THEY CONSIDERED WORTH FURTHER EXAMINATION IN THE HONG KONG CONTEXT.

ON HOUSING IMPROVEMENT, HE SAID IN BIRMINGHAM A LARGE PROPORTION OF FUNDS HAD BEEN ALLOCATED FOR IMPROVING OLD PRIVATE AND COUNCIL-OWNED HOUSES.

+THERE ARE COMPREHENSIVE SCHEMES IN HONG KONG TO IMPROVE AND REDEVELOP OLD PUBLIC HOUSING BUT NOT ENOUGH ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO PRIVATE BUILDINGS, PARTICULARLY MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS IN THE INNER URBAN AREAS,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID THE WARDEN SCHEME FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE IN BIRMINGHAM, IN WHICH WARDENS WERE EMPLOYED TO LOOK AFTER OLD PEOPLE IN PUBLIC HOUSINGS OR PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION, COULD BE CONSIDERED IN HONG KONG THROUGH VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION BY OWNERS' CORPORATIONS, MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES OR WELFARE ORGANISATIONS.

ON TRAFFIC, HE REFERRED TO THE TWO COMPUTERISED TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS IN COVENTRY WHICH HAD CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE REDUCTION IN DELAYS AND ROAD CONGESTIONS.

THE URBAN TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM IS BASED ON THE USE OF FIXED PLAN SIGNALS PRESET TO SUIT AVERAGE TRAFFIC CONDITIONS, WHILE THE SPLIT CYCLE OFFSET OPTIMISATION TECHNIQUE IS FULLY RESPONSIVE TO ON-STREET TRAFFIC DEMANDS AND REQUIRES NO PRE-CALCULATED SIGNAL TIMINGS.

MR WONG SAID THE +HOME-SCHOOL LIAISON OFFICER+ SCHEME, IN WHICH A TEACHER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FAMILY VISITS AND FOR KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH PARENTS, COULD HELP PROMOTE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN FAMILY AND SCHOOL IN EDUCATING THE STUDENTS.

HE SAID THE VISIT HAD ACHIEVED ITS OBJECTIVES AND ALL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS WHO TOOK PART AGREED THAT IT WAS MEMORABLE AND WORTHWHILE.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1983

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DBS HAVE STRONG LINKS WITH OTHERS
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STRONG LINKS HAVE ALREADY BEEN FORGED BETWEEN THE DISTRICT BOARDS AND OTHER CONSULTATIVE BODIES IN HONG KONG WITHIN THE SHORT SPAN OF A YEAR AND THIS TREND WILL CONTINUE, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE ADDED THAT WORK WAS IN HAND TO REVIEW THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATION TO CONSIDER WHETHER THEY MIGHT BE IMPROVED.

MR AKERS-JONES WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, THE HON WONG LAM, ON THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND MEASURES TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN LIAISON BETWEEN DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

+THERE ARE ALREADY STRONG DIRECT LINKS BETWEEN DISTRICT BOARDS AND THEIR MEMBERS WITH OTHER COUNCILS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, AND THESE ARE BEING STRENGTHENED,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IN THE NEW TERRITORIES THE BOARDS WERE LINKED DIRECTLY WITH RURAL COMMITTEES AND THUS WITH THE HEUNG YEE KUK AND IN THE CITY WITH THE URBAN COUNCIL.

IN ADDITION, THERE ARE 17 BOARD MEMBERS SERVING ON THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND ITS COMMITTEES, AND SOME MEMBERS ON THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS.

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REVISION OF LIQUOR LICENCE FEES FOR NT
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LIQUOR LICENCE FEES FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES WILL BE REVISED FROM NOVEMBER 1 THIS YEAR TO BRING THEM MORE INTO LINE WITH THOSE FOR THE URBAN AREAS.

THE REVISION IS THE FIRST IN 27 YEARS AND FOLLOWS CONSULTATIONS WITH THE LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES AND THE HEUNG YEE KUK.

THE NEW FEES FOR NT LIQUOR LICENCES WILL BE \$1 000 FOR ESTABLISHMENTS WITH A BAR AND \$500 FOR THOSE WITHOUT A BAR, COMPARED WITH THE EXISTING FEES OF \$500 AND \$250, RESPECTIVELY. NT CLUB LIQUOR LICENCES WILL ALSO BE REVISED FROM \$250 TO \$375.

COMMENTING ON THE REVISED FEES, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE INCREASES WERE NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH CLOSER UNIFORMITY BETWEEN NT AND URBAN LIQUOR LICENCE FEES.

HE POINTED OUT THAT EXISTING LIQUOR LICENCE FEES FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, SET IN 1956, WERE NOW ONLY ONE-THIRD OF THOSE IN THE URBAN AREAS.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1983

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ENTRIES INVITED FOR DRAWING CONTEST
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CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 16 ARE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN AN ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DRAWING COMPETITION WITH THE FINAL JUDGING BEING HELD IN INDIA.

THOSE WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THE SHANKAR'S INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMPETITION 1984 SHOULD SUBMIT THEIR WORKS THROUGH THEIR SCHOOL TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FOR PRELIMINARY SELECTION BEFORE DECEMBER 3.

THE COMMISSION OF INDIA WILL BE REPRESENTED IN THE LOCAL SELECTION, WHILE THE FINAL SELECTION WILL BE MADE BY A PANEL OF JUDGES IN INDIA.

EACH STUDENT CAN SUBMIT SIX PAINTINGS OR DRAWINGS, WHICH CAN BE PRESENTED IN ANY MEDIUM EXCEPT BLACK LEAD PENCIL, AS SPECIFIED BY THE ORGANISERS, AND MUST NOT BE MOUNTED. GROUP WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE ORGANISERS.

THE MINIMUM SIZE OF EACH DRAWING OR PAINTING IS 300 MM X 400 MM AND ENTRANTS SHOULD STATE ON THE BACK OF EACH ENTRY THEIR NAME, SEX, AGE AND DATE OF BIRTH, NATIONALITY, NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL, TITLE OF ENTRY AND THEIR ART TEACHER'S SIGNATURE TO CERTIFY THAT THE SUBMISSION IS THE ORIGINAL AND UNAIDED WORK OF THE ENTRANT DURING 1983.

ENTRIES SHOULD BE SENT TO THE INSPECTOR (ART), EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AT 4 PAK FUK ROAD, 4/F, HONG KONG. ENQUIRIES CONCERNING THE COMPETITION CAN BE MADE AT 5-621967.

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHUNG YEUNG FESTIVAL
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THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN KOWLOON FOR THE CHUNG YEUNG FESTIVAL ON FRIDAY AND SUNDAY (OCTOBER 14 AND 16):

- * THE 'NO WAITING' RESTRICTION ON CHING CHEUNG ROAD WILL BE ENFORCED THROUGHOUT THE FESTIVAL.
- * WING MING STREET WILL BE CLOSED TO ALL VEHICULAR TRAFFIC BETWEEN 7 AM AND 7 PM.
- * THE PARKING SPACES FOR GOODS VEHICLES IN KING LAM STREET, WING HONG STREET AND YU CHAU WEST STREET WILL BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED BETWEEN 7 AM AND 7 PM.
- * A TAXI STAND WILL BE TEMPORARILY SET UP AT YU CHAU WEST STREET, BETWEEN WING HONG STREET AND KING LAM STREET. THE PARKING SPACES THERE WILL BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED.

/THOSE GOING

THOSE GOING TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERY ABOVE CHING CHEUNG ROAD ARE ADVISED TO TRAVEL VIA CASTLE PEAK ROAD, YEE KUK WEST STREET AND KING LAM STREET. PARKING FACILITIES ARE LIMITED AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE URGED TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

THOSE VISITING THE HAMMER HILL CEMETERY SHOULD TRAVEL VIA LUNG CHEUNG ROAD, THE PO KONG VILLAGE INTERCHANGE AND PO KONG VILLAGE ROAD TO AVOID TRAFFIC CONGESTION.

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NOTE TO EDITORS :

ANTI-NARCOTICS DRIVE PLANNED

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A PRESS BRIEFING TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF THE FORTH-COMING ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN IN WONG TAI SIN WILL BE HELD TOMORROW (THURSDAY) MORNING.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE AND AN UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS, MR MICHAEL CHENG, WILL TALK ON THE LATEST SITUATION OF DRUG ADDICTION AND OFFENCES IN THE DISTRICT.

HE WILL ALSO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF THE EVENTS TO BE ORGANISED DURING THE TWO-WEEK ANTI-DRUG DRIVE.

REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE POLICE AND THE NARCOTICS DIVISION WILL ALSO BE PRESENT.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE BRIEFING AT 11.30 AM IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE WONG TAI SIN DISTRICT OFFICE, ON THE FOURTH FLOOR OF THE SAN PO KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING.

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SHAU KEI WAN MAINS WORK

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN SHAU KEI WAN WILL BE SUSPENDED FROM 11 PM ON SATURDAY (OCTOBER 15) TO 6 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY FOR LEAKAGE TESTS.

THE SUSPENSION WILL AFFECT PREMISES BOUNDED BY TAI ON STREET, SEA FRONT, SUN SING STREET AND SHAU KEI WAN ROAD.

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