



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL: 5-233191

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1981

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE WANTS BETTER RESPONSE	1
INTEREST RATES MUST FIND THEIR OWN LEVEL	2
ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION LAW SHOWS RESULT	3
NO APPARENT MOTIVE BEHIND BOMBING INCIDENTS	3
TOUGHER LAW ON FIREARMS	4
LABOUR LAW WAGE CEILING TO BE FURTHER RAISED	5
STRICTER ENFORCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION TRAINING LEVY	6
FAIRER DEAL FOR HK REGISTERED FOREIGN JUDGMENTS	7
CIVIL SERVANTS' HOME BUYING SCHEME READY FOR EXCO	7
WHITE PAPER ON PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY EDUCATION	8
SCOPE FOR BETTER NT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	8
MORE CULTURAL CENTRES FOR THE NT	9
FIVE BILLS PASSED THIRD READING	10
STATEMENT ON APPLICATIONS FOR BUS FARES INCREASE	10
HK HAS WITNESSED RECREATION AND SPORT EXPLOSION	14
APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR, ROYAL OBSERVATORY	16
SHA TIN TOWN CENTRE SITE GRANTED TO DEVELOPER	16
COMMUNITY BUILDING VITAL IN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT	17
ELDERLY COUPLES REVIVE MARRIAGE MEMORIES	20
CUSTOMS SERVICE HOLDS PASSING-OUT PARADE	21
CASTLE PEAK PAVILION TO BE OPENED ON FRIDAY	21
TWO MORE BUS-ONLY LANES ON KING'S ROAD	22
TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN KOWLOON	22

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1981

- 1 -

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE WANTS BETTER RESPONSE

* * * *

THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE IS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO ITS SECOND REPORT, THE HON LI FOOK-WO TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+WHEN I ADDRESSED THIS COUNCIL LAST JANUARY, I EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT MINUTE IN REPLY TO OUR SECOND REPORT WOULD BE AS SATISFACTORY AS THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO OUR FIRST REPORT.

+I REGRET THIS HOPE WAS NOT FULLY REALISED,+ HE SAID.

MR LI WAS SPEAKING AT THE TABLING OF THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1980 AND OF THE THIRD REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ON WHICH HE SERVES AS CHAIRMAN.

+AS THE MINUTE ITSELF INDICATED, ACTION ON VARIOUS MATTERS REMAINED OUTSTANDING, AND IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY FOR THE COMMITTEE TO MONITOR PROGRESS ON THESE ITEMS.

+AFTER MEETING TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT MINUTE WE OBTAINED A FURTHER PROGRESS REPORT, AND NOTE THAT FRESH INTERNAL INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED REGARDING THE FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES TO BE OBSERVED BOTH IN REGARD TO OUR REPORTS AND THOSE OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT,+ HE SAID.

MR LI NOTED THAT STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO ENSURE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ARE KEPT REGULARLY INFORMED OF PROGRESS ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS.

IN THEIR LATEST REPORT, MR LI SAID, THE UNOFFICIALS HAVE MADE TWO GENERAL CONCLUSIONS WHICH THEY BELIEVE +ARE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND TO THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE+.

THE FIRST REFERS TO DELAYS IN DECISION-MAKING AND INACTION IN THE CONDUCT OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

+I REGRET TO SAY THAT IN OUR EXAMINATION OF BRANCH SECRETARIES AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS WE WERE FREQUENTLY LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT PUBLIC BUSINESS IS OFTEN NOT PURSUED WITH A PROPER SENSE OF URGENCY,+ HE EXPLAINED.

+OUR SECOND CONCLUSION IS OF GENERAL COMPLACENCY TOWARDS THE EXTENT TO WHICH MATERIAL AND STAFFING DEFICIENCIES CAN BE OVERCOME, OR AT LEAST SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED, BY IMPROVEMENTS IN STAFF PRODUCTIVITY.

+WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE GOVERNMENT SEEK TO RAISE ITS PERFORMANCE IN BOTH THESE AREAS,+ MR LI SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/2

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1981

- 2 -

INTEREST RATES MUST FIND THEIR OWN LEVEL
* * * *

THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT CONSIDER TAKING STEPS TO EASE THE IMPACT OF THE PRESENT HIGH INTEREST RATES ON INDUSTRY, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON FRANCIS TIEN, SIR PHILIP SAID IT WAS +NO PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR ECONOMY FOR COST INPUTS TO BE SUBSIDISED+, EXCEPT INDIRECTLY WHERE SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS APPLY AS THEY DO, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE CASE OF PUBLIC HOUSING AND EDUCATION.

+BUT, EVEN IF WE HAD A CONVENIENT MECHANISM TO INFLUENCE THE COST OF BORROWING, THE BALANCE OF ADVANTAGE LIES IN ALLOWING INTEREST RATES TO FIND THEIR OWN LEVEL, WHICH THEY DO AS HONG KONG HAS AN OPEN ECONOMY, A FREELY FLOATING EXCHANGE RATE AND NO EXCHANGE CONTROLS,+ SIR PHILIP SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT PRESENT INTEREST RATES WERE NOT RELATIVELY HIGH WHEN COMPARED WITH INTEREST RATES ELSEWHERE, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE BY HISTORICAL STANDARDS.

+FOR OUR INTEREST RATES TO BE KEPT SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER THAN THE GENERAL LEVEL IN, SAY, NORTH AMERICA WOULD TEND TO CAUSE FUNDS TO BE MOVED OUT OF HONG KONG, THUS AFFECTING THE EXCHANGE RATE.

+THIS WOULD PARTICULARLY BE THE CASE IF THE LOWER INTEREST RATES IN HONG KONG MEANT THAT THE RETURN TO LENDERS IN HONG KONG WAS NEGATIVE IN REAL TERMS TO ANY SIGNIFICANT EXTENT.

+IN THE EVENT, THE RESULT WOULD PROBABLY BE THAT INDUSTRY WOULD FIND IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO BORROW AT ALL,+ SIR PHILIP SAID.

BESIDES, HE DOUBTED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY WAY OF ENSURING THAT LOANS EXTENDED ON SPECIAL TERMS WERE IN FACT USED TO FINANCE MANUFACTURING AND NOT OTHER ACTIVITIES.

HE CITED THE PREFERENTIAL INTEREST RATES ARRANGEMENT INTRODUCED IN 1979 BY CERTAIN BANKS. IT DEMONSTRATED THAT IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY PRECISELY LOANS THAT GENUINELY QUALIFIED FOR PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT AND TO ENSURE THAT SUCH LOANS WERE USED AS INTENDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/3

ANTI-ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION LAW SHOWS RESULT

* * * * *

THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF THE NEW IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION EFFECTIVE ON OCTOBER 30, 1980 IS REVEALED IN A DRAMATIC REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARRESTED ON ENTRY INTO HONG KONG.

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON WONG LAM.

THE DRAMATIC REDUCTION HAS BEEN ASSISTED BY THE EFFORTS OF THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, HE ADDED. +FOR EXAMPLE, IN SEPTEMBER 1980, 13 365 ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WERE ARRESTED ON ENTRY, REPRESENTING A DAILY AVERAGE OF 446 ARRESTS.

+IN DECEMBER THE MONTHLY TOTAL HAD FALLEN TO 716, A DAILY AVERAGE OF 23 ARRESTS,+ MR BARNES SAID.

THESE FIGURES, HE EMPHASIZED, WILL REMAIN LOW ONLY IF OUR MEASURES CONTINUE TO BE ENFORCED WITH THE UTMOST DETERMINATION AND PERSISTENCE. +THIS IS THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRM INTENTION,+ HE SAID.

IN HIS REPLY, MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT UP TO JANUARY 6 THIS YEAR THE POLICE HAD PROSECUTED UNDER THE LEGISLATION 2 220 PERSONS IN THE URBAN AREAS AND 639 PERSONS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES FOR NON-CARRYING OF IDENTITY DOCUMENTS. THIS WAS 0.05 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION.

+DURING THE SAME PERIOD, 145 PERSONS WERE REFERRED TO THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT BY THE POLICE FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY WERE SUSPECTED OF BEING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

+IMMIGRATION INVESTIGATIONS TO DATE HAVE ESTABLISHED THAT 49 OF THESE PERSONS WERE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA OR MACAU,+ MR BARNES SAID.

- - - - O - - - -

NO APPARENT MOTIVE BEHIND BOMBING INCIDENTS

* * *

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY MOTIVATION BEHIND THE BUS BOMBING LAST FEBRUARY AND THE RECENT BOMBING INCIDENT AT THE NEW WORLD CENTRE, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LYDIA DUNN, MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE BUS BOMBING IN FEBRUARY 1980 IN POLICE RECORDS AND TWO HOAX BOMB INCIDENTS RELATING TO BUSES IN JANUARY AND JUNE.

+NONE OF THESE INCIDENTS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ANY THREATS OF VIOLENCE OR DEMANDS FOR MONEY OR FOR ACTION IN SUPPORT OF ANY PARTICULAR CAUSE.

+IT IS THEREFORE DIFFICULT TO SPECULATE ON THE MOTIVATION BEHIND THEM,+ HE SAID.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1981

- 4 -

REFERRING TO THE RECENT INCIDENT AT THE NEW WORLD CENTRE, MR BARNES SAID IT WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH THE INCIDENTS INVOLVING BUSES.

+HERE AGAIN THERE IS SO FAR A LACK OF EVIDENCE AS TO MOTIVATION,+ HE SAID.

MR BARNES ADDED THAT THE CASE WAS UNDER ACTIVE INVESTIGATION BY THE POLICE AND IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR HIM TO MAKE ANY FURTHER COMMENT AT THIS STAGE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TOUGHER LAW ON FIREARMS

* * *

A REVISED ARMS AND AMMUNITION BILL WILL SOON BE CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO TIGHTEN CONTROL OVER FIREARMS AND IMITATION FIREARMS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR BARNES SAID THE PROVISIONS OF THIS BILL WOULD INCLUDE MEASURES TO TIGHTEN CONTROL OVER THE IMPORTATION AND LICENSING OF FIREARMS, THE POSSESSION AND USE OF IMITATION FIREARMS, AS WELL AS INCREASED PENALTIES FOR OFFENCES RELATING TO THESE ARMS.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED RESTRICTING THE SELLING OF TOY PISTOLS WHICH COULD BE CONVERTED INTO REAL FIREARMS, BUT THERE WERE PROBLEMS OF LEGAL DEFINITION AND ENFORCEMENT.

IT HAS CONCLUDED THAT MORE EFFECTIVE CONTROL CAN BE ACHIEVED BY IMPOSING HEAVY PENALTIES ON THOSE CONVICTED OF OFFENCES INVOLVING THE POSSESSION OR USE OF IMITATION FIREARMS OR THEIR CONVERSION INTO REAL FIREARMS, MR BARNES SAID.

LAST YEAR, IMITATION FIREARMS WERE USED IN 25 DETECTED ROBBERY CASES. PISTOL-LIKE OBJECTS (WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN REAL OR IMITATION) WERE USED IN 147 OTHER REPORTED CASES. REAL FIREARMS WERE USED IN EIGHT DETECTED AND 14 UNDETECTED CASES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/5

LABOUR LAW WAGE CEILING TO BE FURTHER RAISED
* * * *

IT IS STILL THE GOVERNMENT'S LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE TO REMOVE THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES IN THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE SO THAT ALL EMPLOYEES, WHETHER MANUAL OR NON-MANUAL, WILL BE BROUGHT UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE ORDINANCE.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON J.N. HENDERSON, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY WHEN HE MOVED THE SECOND READING OF THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, WHICH PROPOSES TO RAISE THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES FROM \$3 500 TO \$6 000.

HE RECALLED THAT AT THE LAST REVISION OF THE WAGE CEILING IN APRIL 1979 (FROM \$2 000 TO \$3 500) HE TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THE INCREASE WAS AN INTERIM MEASURE, AND UNDERTOOK TO REVIEW THE POSSIBILITY OF THE REMOVAL OF THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES FOR MOST, IF NOT ALL, PARTS OF THE ORDINANCE.

HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THIS PROPOSAL MET WITH CERTAIN OBJECTIONS FROM THE MAJOR EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS AS WELL AS SOME PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS, WHO FELT THAT IT MIGHT HAVE THE UNDESIRABLE EFFECT OF SETTING STANDARDS BELOW THE CURRENT NORM FOR HIGHER PAID EXECUTIVES AS WELL AS IMPOSING HEAVY FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS UPON SMALLER EMPLOYERS.

THE COMMISSIONER SAID THAT WHILE IT WAS STILL THE GOVERNMENT'S LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE TO REMOVE THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES, IN VIEW OF THE FAIRLY SMALL NUMBER INVOLVED, HE WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THIS POSITION.

HE ESTIMATED THAT AFTER THE WAGE CEILING IS RAISED TO \$6 000, ABOUT 35 000 EMPLOYEES OR JUST UNDER TWO PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, WOULD REMAIN OUTSIDE THE PROTECTION OF THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT SINCE THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE WAS ENACTED IN SEPTEMBER 1968, THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES IN THE ORDINANCE HAD BEEN AMENDED TWICE TO \$2 000 IN MARCH 1974 AND TO \$3 500 IN APRIL 1979 TO KEEP IT GENERALLY IN LINE WITH RISES IN WAGES AND WITH INCREASES IN THE COST OF LIVING. THE CURRENT REVISION IS BEING MADE FOR THE SAME REASON.

BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1968 AND MARCH 1980, THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN THE INDEX OF NOMINAL AVERAGE DAILY WAGES FOR WORKERS IN INDUSTRY WAS 378.6. +IT IS THEREFORE CONSIDERED TO BE APPROPRIATE NOW TO RAISE THE WAGE CEILING FOR NON-MANUAL EMPLOYEES TO SIX THOUSAND DOLLARS A MONTH.

+AS THE COST OF LIVING CONTINUES TO CHANGE, THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES THAT THE WAGE CEILING COULD BE REVISED, IF NECESSARY, IN THE FUTURE BY RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL,+ MR HENDERSON ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

STRICTER ENFORCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION TRAINING LEVY

AN AMENDMENT BILL WHICH PROPOSES TO IMPOSE A PENALTY FOR THE LATE PAYMENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION TRAINING LEVY AND TO ALLOW THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING AUTHORITY TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION RELATING TO LEVIABLE CONSTRUCTION WORKS TO THIRD PARTIES, WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON J.N. HENDERSON.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING (CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, HE SAID THE AMENDMENTS HAD BEEN RECOMMENDED BY THE AUTHORITY.

THE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING (CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY) ORDINANCE, MR HENDERSON EXPLAINED, STIPULATES THAT THE PAYMENT OF THE LEVY OR SURCHARGE MUST BE MADE WITHIN 28 DAYS OF THE CONTRACTORS RECEIVING NOTIFICATION FROM THE AUTHORITY, BUT DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR A PENALTY FOR LATE PAYMENT.

+THIS HAS LED NOT ONLY TO THE AUTHORITY LOSING INTEREST INCOME BUT ALSO TO IT INCURRING HIGHER ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.

+THE AUTHORITY HAS ACCORDINGLY RECOMMENDED THE INCLUSION OF A PROVISION FOR A PENALTY FOR THE LATE PAYMENT OF A LEVY OR A SURCHARGE AS WELL AS A FURTHER PENALTY WHERE THE LEVY OR SURCHARGE IS STILL OUTSTANDING THREE MONTHS AFTER THE EXPIRY OF THE PRESCRIBED PERIOD,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

THE PROPOSED INITIAL PENALTY IS FIVE PER CENT OF THE UNPAID LEVY OR SURCHARGE AND THE FURTHER PENALTY IS FIVE PER CENT OF THE TOTAL OUTSTANDING SUM.

THE AUTHORITY, IN ORDER TO PREVENT EVASION OF THE LEVY, MAY WISH IN THE FUTURE TO EMPLOY PROFESSIONAL QUANTITY SURVEYORS TO CHECK THE VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS WHERE IT SUSPECTS SUCH VALUE TO HAVE BEEN UNDERSTATED, HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, THE ORDINANCE STATES THAT THE CONSENT OF THE PERSON PROVIDING THE INFORMATION MUST BE OBTAINED BEFORE SUCH INFORMATION COULD BE DISCLOSED TO THIRD PARTIES.

THE BILL, THEREFORE, ALSO AMENDS THE ORDINANCE TO REMOVE THE NEED FOR OBTAINING SUCH CONSENT SO THAT THE PROCESS OF CHECKING CAN BE EXPEDITED, MR HENDERSON SAID.

THE AMENDMENT ALSO ALLOWS THE AUTHORITY TO DISCLOSE RELEVANT INFORMATION TO THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND BOARD TO ASSIST THE BOARD IN THE ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVY FOR THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 1981

- 7 -

FAIRER DEAL FOR HK REGISTERED FOREIGN JUDGMENTS
* * * * *

THE HONG KONG DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE FOR SUMS OF MONEY PROVIDED IN A FOREIGN JUDGMENT REGISTERED IN HONG KONG WILL BE CONVERTED AS PREVAILING AT THE TIME THE FOREIGN JUDGMENT IS REGISTERED AND NOT AT THE DATE OF JUDGMENT OF THE FOREIGN COURT.

THE FOREIGN JUDGMENTS (RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, WHICH PROVIDES FOR THIS CHANGE, WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON BY THE LAW DRAFTSMAN, THE HON GERALD NAZARETH.

+AS CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES CAN FLUCTUATE CONSIDERABLY, A PERSON IN WHOSE FAVOUR SUCH A JUDGMENT HAS BEEN GIVEN CAN BE SEVERELY PREJUDICED, IF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR DEPRECIATES SUBSTANTIALLY AGAINST THE CURRENCY IN WHICH THE JUDGMENT WAS EXPRESSED, + MR NAZARETH EXPLAINED.

HE ADDED THAT THE JUDICIARY, THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW SOCIETY HAD ALL BEEN CONSULTED ON THE BILL, DEBATE ON WHICH WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

CIVIL SERVANTS' HOME BUYING SCHEME READY FOR EXCO
* * * * *

THE COMPLEX AND FAR-REACHING HOME PURCHASE SCHEME FOR CIVIL SERVANTS HAS BEEN FINALISED AND WILL BE PUT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL NEXT MONTH.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE HON MARTIN ROWLANDS, IN HIS REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW SO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR ROWLANDS SAID IT HAD TAKEN RATHER LONGER THEN HE HAD EARLIER EXPECTED TO FINALISE THE SCHEME BUT ADDED THAT FIRM PROPOSALS WERE NOW READY.

HE TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THE SCHEME HAD GENERAL SUPPORT FROM STAFF AND THE SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE STAFF ASSOCIATIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN INCORPORATING THE PROPOSALS.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE PROPOSALS DRAWN UP ARE CAPABLE OF MODIFICATION TO MEET CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES.

MR ROWLANDS NOTED THAT FUTURE TRENDS IN PROPERTY PRICES AND INTEREST RATES WERE MATTERS FOR CONJECTURE, AND THEY DID NOT SEEM TO HIM LIKELY TO BE SUCH AS TO UNDERMINE THE VIABILITY OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME.

PROPERTY PRICES AND INTEREST RATES ARE ONLY TWO OF THE FACTORS WHICH WILL AFFECT ITS VIABILITY, HE SAID.

/OTHER NO

OTHER NO LESS IMPORTANT FACTORS INCLUDE:

- * THE LEVELS OF THE PROPOSED HOME PURCHASE ALLOWANCE,
- * AVAILABILITY OF MONEY NO LONGER REQUIRED BY THE OFFICER TO MEET RENT PAYMENTS,
- * AVAILABILITY OF SAVINGS AND OTHER FAMILY INCOME,
- * LOCATION AND TYPE OF PROPERTY TO BE PURCHASED,
- * TIMING OF AN OFFICER'S ENTRY INTO THE SCHEME, AND,
- * PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT, THE DEGREE OF PRIORITY WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICER ACCORDS TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF HOME OWNERSHIP.

- - - - O - - - -

WHITE PAPER ON PRE-PRIMARY AND PRIMARY EDUCATION
* * * *

THE WHITE PAPER ON PRIMARY EDUCATION AND PRE-PRIMARY SERVICES IS EXPECTED TO BE ISSUED TOWARDS THE LATTER PART OF THE CURRENT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SESSION.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON ERIC HO IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT IN THE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR HO ADDED THAT IT WOULD NOT BE PRACTICABLE TO IMPLEMENT ANY CHANGES TO PRIMARY 1 ENTRY BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1983, IN ORDER TO GIVE TIME FOR SCHOOLS AND PARENTS TO FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH THE WHITE PAPER PROPOSALS.

- - - - O - - - -

SCOPE FOR BETTER NT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
* * * *

THE GOVERNMENT IS EXAMINING THE SCOPE FOR IMPROVING EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES SAID TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FROM THE HON CHARLES YEUNG, WHO ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SAY IT WAS SATISFIED WITH THE ADEQUACY OF EXISTING ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO COPE WITH THE RAPID INCREASE OF POPULATION IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, PARTICULARLY IN THE PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES IN THE NEW TOWNS.

MR AKERS-JONES SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE ADEQUACY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

/MANY FACILITIES

MANY FACILITIES HAVE BEEN PROVIDED AND OTHERS ARE BEING CONSTRUCTED, BUT WE HAVE NATURALLY HAD TO CONCENTRATE IN THE PAST FEW YEARS ON THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF PROVIDING HOMES AND WORK AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN THESE RAPIDLY DEVELOPING AREAS, HE SAID.

+HOWEVER, BY A REMARKABLE COINCIDENCE, I SHALL NEXT WEEK BE EXAMINING WITH MY COLLEAGUES THE SCOPE FOR IMPROVING EXISTING FACILITIES, THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY FACILITIES, AND IN THE LONGER TERM THE GENERAL QUESTION OF PROVIDING MORE FACILITIES FOR INTENSIVE USE.

+IN THE MEANTIME THERE ARE CURRENTLY 123 ITEMS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME FOR THE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, AND MR YEUNG MAY BE ASSURED THAT WORK ON THESE ITEMS TAKES PLACE JUST AS SOON AS THEY CAN BE ACCORDED THE REQUISITE PRIORITY IN THE WORKS PROGRAMME,+ MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

- - - - - 0 - - - - -

MORE CULTURAL CENTRES FOR THE NT

* * *

THE PROVISION OF CONCERT HALLS, AUDITORIUMS AND CULTURAL CENTRES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES IS NOW BEING EXAMINED WITH A VIEW TO SUBMITTING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

THIS WAS SAID TODAY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES.

MR AKERS-JONES WAS REPLYING TO A REQUEST FROM THE HON CHARLES YEUNG FOR A STATEMENT ON WHETHER THERE WAS GOING TO BE A PROPER AND PURPOSE BUILT CONCERT HALL, AUDITORIUM OR CULTURAL CENTRE FOR SAI KUNG, TAI PO, FANLING, CHEUNG CHAU, MUI WO, TAI O AND YUEN LONG.

MR AKERS-JONES SAID HE WAS NOT ABLE TO ANSWER MR YEUNG'S QUESTION IN THE CATEGORICAL TERMS WHICH HE REQUIRED.

THE SUGGESTION, WHICH HAS BEEN SUPPORTED BY DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARDS, THAT WE SHOULD BUILD CONCERT HALLS AND RELATED FACILITIES IN TOWNS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, OTHER THAN THE THREE MAJOR CENTRES AT SHA TIN, TSUEN WAN AND TUEN MUN, IS NOW BEING EXAMINED WITH A VIEW TO SUBMITTING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, HE SAID.

+HOWEVER, THE RANGE AND CAPACITY OF THE FACILITIES TO BE PROVIDED REQUIRES CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND, IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, ANY PROPOSALS FOR THE TOWNS MR YEUNG HAS MENTIONED WILL DEPEND UPON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR THEM AND THEIR PRIORITY IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME,+ MR AKERS-JONES ADDED.

+CLEARLY, FOLLOWING THE OPENING OF TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL, OUR FIRST EFFORT MUST GO INTO BUILDING CENTRES AT SHA TIN AND TUEN MUN, AND I AM HOPEFUL THAT WORK WILL START IN THESE TWO TOWNS LATER THIS YEAR.

/+IN THE

+IN THE MEANTIME OTHER TOWNS AND DISTRICTS WILL BE SERVED BY SCHOOL HALLS AND COMMUNITY HALLS, SOME, BECAUSE OF GENEROUS PRIVATE DONATIONS, WITH IMPROVEMENTS SUCH AS AIR-CONDITIONING AND LARGER STAGES.

+THUS, BY THE END OF 1984, WE WILL HAVE A RING OF HALLS OF VARIOUS TYPES AROUND THE NEW TERRITORIES,+ HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

FIVE BILLS PASSED THIRD READING
* * *

FIVE BILLS PASSED THEIR THIRD READING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THEY ARE THE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1980, INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, REVISED EDITION OF THE LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, FIRE AND MARINE INSURANCE COMPANIES DEPOSIT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981, AND THE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1981.

- - - - 0 - - - -

STATEMENT ON APPLICATIONS FOR BUS FARES INCREASE
* * *

THE GOVERNMENT HAS REPLIED TO PETITIONS RECEIVED IN CONNECTION WITH APPLICATIONS FOR INCREASES IN BUS FARES BY KMB AND CMB.

THE REPLY, IN THE FORM OF A GENERAL STATEMENT, IS REPRODUCED BELOW:

THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT AS YET COMPLETED ITS INTERNAL EXAMINATION OF THE TWO COMPANIES' APPLICATIONS FOR FARES INCREASES. WHEN IT HAS DONE SO, THE ADVICE OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE WILL BE SOUGHT. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAS SAID PUBLICLY THAT THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC WILL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN FORMING THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MATTER.

/THE GOVERNMENT

THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ENSURING, SO FAR AS IT LIES WITHIN ITS POWER, THAT THE COMMUNITY IS PROVIDED WITH AN EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE BUS SERVICE. IN HONG KONG BUSES PROVIDE ONE OF THE CHEAPEST FORMS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND THEY COMPARE FAVOURABLY WITH THE COST OF SIMILAR SERVICES ELSEWHERE IN THE REGION. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE WRONG TO TAKE ANY COURSE OF ACTION WHICH MIGHT RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN THE STANDARD OF SERVICE.

BEFORE THE FARE INCREASES GRANTED TO THE TWO MAIN FRANCHISED BUS COMPANIES ON 3RD FEBRUARY 1980 CONSIDERABLE DISSATISFACTION WAS BEING EXPRESSED BY THE PUBLIC WITH THE STANDARD OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE COMPANIES. THE GOVERNMENT THEREFORE NEGOTIATED WITH THE COMPANIES A PROGRAMME OF IMPROVEMENTS. THESE WERE INCORPORATED IN FORMAL AGREEMENTS WHICH WERE SIGNED AT ABOUT THE TIME OF THE FARE INCREASES.

THE AGREEMENTS COVER FIVE MAIN AREAS WHICH ENCOMPASS ALL ASPECTS OF BUS SERVICES IN HONG KONG CONDITIONS. SPECIFICALLY THEY PROVIDE FOR :-

- FIRST PLANS FOR THE PURCHASE OF NEW BUSES AND SPARE PARTS RELATED TO ROUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES TO BE AGREED WITH THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT AND UPDATED ANNUALLY.
- SECONDLY IMPROVED FACILITIES FOR THE MAINTENANCE AND SERVICING OF BUSES.
- THIRDLY BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS AND WAGES FOR DRIVERS, MECHANICS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES AND THE RECRUITMENT OF MORE STAFF TO MAN AND MAINTAIN THE NEW BUSES.
- FOURTHLY THE PROVISION OF MORE DEPOT FACILITIES FOR THE PARKING, SERVICING AND REPAIRING OF BUSES.
- FINALLY TO REVIEW AND INTRODUCE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES OF THE COMPANIES.

THESE ARRANGEMENTS ARE DESIGNED TO ENSURE, NOT ONLY THAT ADEQUATE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE EXPANSION OF SERVICES ARE DRAWN UP, BUT THAT THEY ARE ALSO CONSTANTLY MONITORED AND REVIEWED AGAINST AGREED YARDSTICKS, SO THAT ENOUGH WELL-MAINTAINED BUSES ARE PUT INTO SERVICE TO IMPROVE FREQUENCIES AND TO INTRODUCE NEW ROUTES TO MEET ADDITIONAL DEMAND AS REQUIRED. BY THEIR VERY NATURE, HOWEVER, THE ARRANGEMENTS CAN ONLY BE FULLY IMPLEMENTED OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS, AS IT TAKES TIME TO ORDER AND ACCEPT DELIVERY OF NEW BUSES, TO BUILD ADDITIONAL DEPOT AND OTHER FACILITIES, TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN NEW STAFF AND TO IMPROVE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES.

/SINCE FEBRUARY

SINCE FEBRUARY, THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN CLOSELY MONITORING EACH COMPANY'S ADHERENCE TO THE AGREEMENTS. IN GENERAL, THE AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN ADHERED TO. THE EFFECT OF THE IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE SEEN IN A NUMBER OF WAYS. FIRST, BECAUSE OF IMPROVED STANDARD OF MAINTENANCE, MORE BUSES ARE AVAILABLE FOR SERVICES. SECONDLY, BECAUSE OF THE GROWTH IN THE SIZE OF THE FLEET WITH THE PURCHASE OF MORE BUSES, IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO EXISTING SERVICES, BOTH BY INCREASING BUS FREQUENCY AND CAPACITY AND THROUGH THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW WEEKDAY SERVICES (29 NEW ROUTES IN 1980). FURTHER SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS ARE PLANNED IN 1981 WHEN, ON THE BASIS OF CONFIRMED ORDERS, KMB'S FLEET WILL

EXPAND FROM JUST OVER 2 000 TO JUST UNDER 2 500 BUSES, AND CMB'S FLEET WILL EXPAND FROM ABOUT 950 TO ABOUT 1 050 BUSES.

THE COMPANIES MUST INITIALLY THEMSELVES FIND THE MONEY REQUIRED TO MEET THE IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION PROGRAMMES, EITHER THROUGH RAISING FUNDS FROM SHAREHOLDERS (WHO CAN FAIRLY EXPECT A REASONABLE RETURN ON THEIR INVESTMENT) OR FROM LOANS. IN PRACTICE, THEY FUND THE PROGRAMMES THROUGH A MIXTURE OF THE TWO SOURCES.

IN EXAMINING THE COMPANIES' APPLICATIONS FOR ANY INCREASE IN FARES THE GOVERNMENT IS CAREFUL TO ENSURE THAT THE PUBLIC OBTAINS VALUE FOR ITS MONEY AND THAT EQUALLY THE COMPANIES SHOULDER THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPROVING SERVICES.

THE COSTS WHICH THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC ARE EXPECTED TO PAY ARE EXAMINED BELOW: THESE COSTS FORM THE MAIN BURDEN OF THE PETITIONS SUBMITTED. THEY FALL INTO THREE MAIN CATEGORIES :-

- (A) THE COST OF RUNNING THE SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC, THAT IS THE WAGES OF DRIVERS, MECHANICS AND OTHER STAFF, FUEL, SPARE PARTS AND OTHER MAINTENANCE CHARGES-
- (B) FINANCIAL COSTS - PRINCIPALLY DEPRECIATION AND INTEREST ON LOANS- AND
- (C) A LIMITED LEVEL OF PROFITS FOR THE COMPANY, PART OF WHICH MAY BE USED TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION.

WITH REGARD TO CATEGORY (A), I THINK YOU WILL AGREE THAT THESE ARE CHARGES THAT SHOULD WITHOUT DOUBT BE MET BY THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC. THEY HAVE ALL BEEN INCREASING DRAMATICALLY IN RECENT YEARS, AND THIS TREND IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE. THE FACTORS INVOLVED INCLUDE HIGHER WAGES FOR DRIVERS AND MECHANICS AND THE SPIRALLING COST OF FUEL AND SPARE PARTS. IN 1981 WHEN, AS NOTED ABOVE, THE FLEET IN SERVICE WILL INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY RUNNING COSTS WILL OF COURSE FURTHER INCREASE.

/CATEGORY (B)

CATEGORY (B) IS DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN IN SIMPLE TERMS. BRIEFLY, THE CHARGE FOR DEPRECIATION, THE PURPOSE OF WHICH IS TO WRITE OFF THE COST OF ASSETS (PRINCIPALLY BUSES) OVER THEIR ESTIMATED USEFUL LIFE, MUST INCREASE AS A RESULT OF THE PROPOSED EXPANSION PROGRAMME OF BOTH COMPANIES. ALTHOUGH, IDEALLY, EXPANSION COSTS SHOULD BE PAID FOR BY INTERNALLY GENERATED FUNDS AND BY FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM SHAREHOLDERS, IN PRACTICAL TERMS THIS IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE AND COMPANIES MUST RESORT TO LOANS TO HELP PURCHASE SOME OF THEIR ASSETS. LOANS INVOLVE INTEREST CHARGES AND IT IS NORMAL COMMERCIAL PRACTICE THAT AT LEAST A PART OF SUCH INTEREST CHARGES SHOULD BE MET BY THE CONSUMER.

AS REGARDS PROFITABILITY, THAT IS CATEGORY (C) ABOVE, BOTH COMPANIES OPERATE UNDER SCHEMES OF CONTROL WHICH SET FIRM LIMITS ON THE LEVEL OF THEIR PROFITS. THE LEVEL OF PROFITABILITY IS CALCULATED ON THE BASIS OF THE AVERAGE NET FIXED ASSETS OF THE COMPANIES, USED SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUS OPERATIONS. WHILE BUSES AND BUILDINGS (E.G. DEPOTS) ARE DEPRECIATED OVER TIME, THE VALUE OF LAND USED FOR BUS OPERATIONS IS FIXED AT 1959 PRICES OR THE ACTUAL VALUE OF THE LAND AT THE TIME OF THE PURCHASE, WHICHEVER IS THE LATER. IN OTHER WORDS, THE BUS COMPANIES ARE NOT ALLOWED, UNDER THE SCHEMES OF CONTROL, TO REVALUE THEIR LAND ASSETS SO AS TO ACHIEVE A HIGHER LEVEL OF PROFITABILITY. THE ASSET BASE CAN ONLY BE INCREASED THROUGH FURTHER CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN THE BUS OPERATION; FOR INSTANCE BY BUYING MORE NEW BUSES OR BY EXPANDING DEPOT FACILITIES. THIS PROVIDES THE COMPANIES' SHAREHOLDERS WITH AN INCENTIVE TO INVEST FURTHER CAPITAL IN THE EXPANSION OF THEIR BUS OPERATIONS ON THE EXPECTATION OF REASONABLE, BUT NOT EXCESSIVE, PROFITS ON THEIR INVESTMENT. IN THIS REGARD ONE ASPECT TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS TO PAY ATTENTION IS THE LEVEL OF DIVIDEND PAYMENT MADE TO SHAREHOLDERS IN RELATION TO UNDISTRIBUTED PROFITS WHICH ARE PLOUGHED BACK INTO THE COMPANIES' BUS OPERATIONS.

IN CONSIDERING THE COMPONENTS IN THE ACCOUNTS AS CATEGORISED ABOVE, AND FOLLOWING THE SCHEME OF CONTROL, IT SHOULD BE EMPHASISED THAT THE MAJOR FACTORS PUSHING UP COSTS AND WHICH HAVE TO BE MET BY THE PASSENGERS FALL WITHIN HEADINGS (A) AND (B) ABOVE. IN CONTRAST, THE PROPORTION OF COSTS FALLING UNDER HEADING (C), THAT IS PROFITS, IS RELATIVELY SMALL.

FINALLY, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE INCREASES IN FARES SOUGHT BY KMB AND CMB ARE DIFFERENT. THE KMB FIGURES RANGE FROM 33 PER CENT TO 100 PER CENT DEPENDING ON THE ROUTE WHEREAS CMB ARE SEEKING INCREASES OF ABOUT 30 PER CENT. THE EFFECT OF THESE PROPOSALS, IF THEY ARE APPROVED, WOULD BE TO MAKE THE FARES CHARGED ON SIMILAR ROUTES APPROXIMATELY THE SAME ON BOTH SIDES OF THE HARBOUR.

HK HAS WITNESSED RECREATION AND SPORT EXPLOSION

* * * * *

HONG KONG HAS WITNESSED A RECREATION AND SPORT EXPLOSION IN THE LAST ONE OR TWO YEARS, THE COMMISSIONER FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR BARRIE WIGGHAM SAID TODAY.

WITH MORE LEISURE TIME AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE, THERE ARE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN MANY KINDS OF SPORTING ACTIVITIES, HE SAID, IN AN ADDRESS TO THE ROTARY CLUB OF HONG KONG ISLAND EAST.

MR WIGGHAM POINTED OUT THAT THE TASK OF ADVISING THE GOVERNMENT ON HOW THE SUPERVISION OF RECREATION AND SPORT BY GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES CAN BE IMPROVED AND EXPANDED WAS THE MAIN FUNCTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORT (CRS).

IN ADDITION THE COUNCIL ACTS AS THE CHANNEL FOR ADVICE TO THE GOVERNMENT ON FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO AMATEUR SPORT, AND MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT ON ANY SPECIAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES REQUIRED TO MEET LEISURE-TIME NEEDS, ESPECIALLY OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE COMMISSIONER NOTED THAT IT WAS ON THE ADVICE OF THE CRS THAT AT THE END OF 1974 THE GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED ITS RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE (RSS), THE AIM OF WHICH WAS TO PROVIDE HEALTHY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ORGANISED RECREATION.

OVER THESE YEARS, THE RSS HAS BECOME WELL ESTABLISHED AND THE VAST PROGRAMMES IT ORGANISED EVERY DAY NO LONGER NEED THE DETAILED SUPERVISION OF THE COUNCIL. AS A RESULT, THE COUNCIL IS ABLE TO DEVOTE MORE OF ITS TIME AND ENERGY TO THE SPORT ASPECT OF ITS FUNCTIONS, HE SAID.

+THE WIDER AND MORE IMPORTANT ISSUES RELATING TO SPORT IN HONG KONG ARE DEALT WITH BY THE FULL COUNCIL, BUT SOME OF THE MORE DETAILED OR TECHNICAL SUBJECTS ARE DELEGATED TO COMMITTEES,+ MR WIGGHAM EXPLAINED.

THERE ARE THREE SUCH COMMITTEES: THE COMMUNITY RECREATION COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE ON SAFETY IN OUTDOOR PURSUITS AND THE VETTING COMMITTEE.

THE COMMUNITY RECREATION COMMITTEE KEEPS TABS ON THE SERVICES, ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES PROVIDED FOR RECREATION AND SPORT, ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE- AND IN PARTICULAR, HAS ESTABLISHED CLOSE LIAISON WITH AMATEUR SPORTS BODIES TO ASSESS WHAT SUPPORT OR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THEY MAY REQUIRE.

THE COMMITTEE ON SAFETY IN OUTDOOR PURSUITS AIMS AT IDENTIFYING THOSE OUTDOOR PURSUITS WHERE APPROPRIATE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS NEED TO BE ESTABLISHED, AND ADVISING HOW THESE ARE TO BE IMPLEMENTED. IT HAS PRODUCED A VERY USEFUL BOOKLET IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE ENTITLED +STEPPING OUT - A GUIDE TO OUTDOOR RECREATION IN HONG KONG+ WHICH IS AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE.

THE VETTING COMMITTEE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT THE MONEY SET ASIDE BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE PROMOTION OF SPORT IS FAIRLY DISTRIBUTED AND PROPERLY SPENT.

APART FROM THESE COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND ACTION GROUPS ARE ALSO SET UP FROM TIME TO TIME, MR WIGGHAM ADDED.

THERE ARE TWO WORKING PARTIES IN SESSION AT PRESENT, ONE ON CAMPING, NOW AN EXTREMELY POPULAR PASTIME, AND ONE ON THE MAXIMISATION OF USE OF FACILITIES. IN THE PAST, THERE HAD BEEN WORKING PARTIES LOOKING INTO MOUNTAINEERING, AQUATIC SPORTS AND CYCLING, HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH THE CRS WAS AN ADVISORY BODY AND HAD NO FUNDS OF ITS OWN, IT ADMINISTERED THREE SOURCES OF FUNDS, NAMELY : THE PROMOTION OF SPORTS VOTE, THE SIR DAVID TRENCH FUND FOR RECREATION, AND THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL FUND.

+GOVERNING BODIES OF SPORT, AND TEAMS PARTICIPATING IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND CHAMPIONSHIPS OVERSEAS OR IN HONG KONG MAY APPLY TO THE COUNCIL FOR GRANTS FROM THE PROMOTION OF SPORTS VOTE. THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, THE COUNCIL HAS ABOUT \$1.2 MILLION AVAILABLE AND WE EXPECT MORE NEXT YEAR

+THE SIR DAVID TRENCH FUND FOR RECREATION WAS ESTABLISHED IN JANUARY 1970 WITH A DONATION OF \$3 MILLION BY AN ANONYMOUS DONOR, AND WAS RECENTLY ENLARGED BY A GRANT OF \$15 MILLION FROM THE LOTTERIES FUND.

+THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL FUND WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1974 THROUGH A VERY GENEROUS DONATION OF \$10 MILLION AGAIN FROM AN ANONYMOUS SOURCE. THIS FUND HAS BEEN DEVOTED MAINLY TO 'BRICKS AND MORTAR' TYPE PROJECTS. ALTOGETHER 78 SUCH PROJECTS HAVE BEEN HELPED WITH GRANTS FROM THE FUND, WHICH NOW UNFORTUNATELY IS ALMOST EXHAUSTED,+ MR WIGGHAM SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE CRS ADVISED THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH ITS CHAIRMAN, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, AND HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO WISH WHATSOEVER TO SET ITSELF UP AS THE SUPREME GOVERNING BODY FOR SPORT.

+BUT BECAUSE SPORT, AS WITH RECREATION, IS SO IMPORTANT TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS A VERY DEFINITE RESPONSIBILITY IN ENCOURAGING ITS DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

HE EXPLAINED THAT ONE PRACTICAL WAY IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS SUPPORT AND COMPLEMENT THOSE OF THE VARIOUS INDEPENDENT SPORTS BODIES WAS THE LINK BETWEEN THE RECREATION AND SPORT FUNCTIONS OF THE RSS IN THE COURSE OF WHICH NATURAL SPORTING TALENT CAN BE DISCOVERED.

THIS TALENT CAN BE ENCOURAGED AND NURTURED, THEN HANDED ON TO A CLUB OR THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE SPORT IN QUESTION.

+IN A SIMILAR WAY WE ARE BUILDING A THREE-WAY LINK BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT, THE NATIONAL SPORTS BODIES AND THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE, SO THAT BETWEEN US WE CAN PRODUCE THE INTERNATIONAL STARS OF TOMORROW.

/+ANOTHER OBVIOUS

+ANOTHER OBVIOUS FORM OF PRACTICAL ENCOURAGEMENT IS FINANCIAL. I HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED GOVERNMENT'S PROMOTION OF SPORTS VOTE, FUNDS FROM WHICH ARE USED TO HELP LOCAL TEAMS PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS. IN ADDITION, A NUMBER OF GOVERNING BODIES OF SPORT RECEIVE FUNDS TO EMPLOY A FULL-TIME ASSISTANT AND TO RENT OFFICE ACCOMMODATION,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THIS SCHEME WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 1976 AND HAD RECENTLY BEEN EXTENDED, ON THE COUNCIL'S ADVICE, TO INCLUDE 26 SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS, WHICH WERE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF MOVING INTO THE OFFICE BLOCK OF THE QUEEN ELIZABETH STADIUM, TOGETHER WITH THE AMATEUR SPORTS FEDERATION AND OLYMPIC COMMITTEE OF HONG KONG.

- - - - 0 - - - -

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR, ROYAL OBSERVATORY
* * * *

THE DIRECTOR OF ROYAL OBSERVATORY, MR G.J. BELL, WILL BE RETIRING FROM HIS PRESENT POST ON JANUARY 17, 1981.

HE WILL BE SUCCEEDED BY MR J.E. PEACOCK, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ROYAL OBSERVATORY, WHOSE PROMOTION HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS.

MR PEACOCK IS AGED 53. HE JOINED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN APRIL 1950 AS A SCIENTIFIC OFFICER. HE WAS PROMOTED TO SENIOR SCIENTIFIC OFFICER IN JULY 1963, AND TO HIS PRESENT RANK OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ROYAL OBSERVATORY IN AUGUST 1965. HE HAS ACTED AS DIRECTOR ON MANY OCCASIONS.

MR PEACOCK WAS APPOINTED AN OFFICIAL JUSTICE OF THE PEACE IN FEBRUARY 1968.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SHA TIN TOWN CENTRE SITE GRANTED TO DEVELOPER
* * * *

THE CONDITIONS OF GRANT FOR A SITE ON WHICH A MASSIVE COMMERCIAL COMPLEX IS TO BE BUILT IN WHAT WILL BE THE CENTRE OF SHA TIN NEW TOWN WERE SIGNED TODAY.

SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES, SIGNED FOR THE GOVERNMENT, WHILE MR T.S. KWOK, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, SIGNED FOR SUN HUNG KAI PROPERTIES, WHO WILL BUILD THE COMPLEX.

THE SITE, SITUATED BETWEEN THE RAILWAY STATION AND SHING MUN RIVER, MEASURES 26 230 SQUARE METRES. IT WAS DISPOSED OF THROUGH A LETTER B TENDER IN SEPTEMBER.

/DEVELOPMENT ON

DEVELOPMENT ON THE SITE WILL FORM THE +CORE+ OF THE TOWN CENTRE, EXPECTED TO BECOME THE REGIONAL SHOPPING AND CULTURAL CENTRE FOR THE EASTERN PART OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

IT CARRIES A BUILDING COVENANT OF \$163 MILLION TO BE FULFILLED WITHIN FOUR YEARS.

INCLUDED IN THE COMMERCIAL COMPLEX AREA WILL BE A BUS STATION FOR INTERNAL CITY ROUTES. ADJACENT TO THE RAILWAY STATION WILL BE A FURTHER BUS STATION FOR EXTERNAL SERVICES.

THERE WILL ALSO BE TWO 800-SEAT CINEMAS.

THE COMPLEX WILL BE AT THE HUB OF THE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE IN SHA TIN, LINKED ON TWO LEVELS TO THE RAILWAY STATION, WHICH IS CURRENTLY UNDER RE-CONSTRUCTION.

MORE THAN 400 000 PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO PASS THROUGH THE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE EACH DAY BY THE END OF THE DECADE WHEN THE NEW TOWN'S POPULATION IS PROJECTED TO REACH 750 000.

THE COMMERCIAL COMPLEX WILL BE THE SECOND OF FOUR PHASES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TOWN CENTRE FOR SHA TIN.

PHASES I AND III WILL BE MAINLY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDING HOMES FOR 40 000 TO 50 000 PEOPLE.

PHASE IV WILL INCLUDE OFFICE BLOCKS, A MAGISTRACY, A CULTURAL COMPLEX AND A TOWN PARK FRONTING SHING MUN RIVER.

THE GROSS COMMERCIAL FLOOR AREA OF THE COMPLEX WILL BE 90 655 SQUARE METRES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

COMMUNITY BUILDING VITAL IN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT * * * * *

THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPING A NEW TOWN CANNOT BE OVERCOME MERELY BY BUILDING SOCIAL FACILITIES; HUMAN CONTACTS AND WIDESPREAD LIAISON WORK ARE OBVIOUSLY OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE.

THIS WAS SAID TODAY BY THE DISTRICT OFFICER SHA TIN, DR PATRICK HASE, AT A MEETING OF SHA TIN ROTARY CLUB.

DR HASE SAID A HAPPY LIFE REQUIRED, OF COURSE, HEALTHY AND DECENT PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS.

BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, IT REQUIRED A SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR A SATISFYING FAMILY LIFE, AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH FRIENDSHIPS COULD FLOURISH AND IN WHICH INDIVIDUALS COULD RELATE TO A SMOOTHLY RUNNING AND POSITIVE COMMUNITY.

IT REQUIRED ALSO THE CAPACITY TO ALLOW INDIVIDUALS TO FULFIL THEIR SPIRITUAL AND MENTAL NEEDS.

/+IN SHORT

+IN SHORT, A HAPPY LIFE REQUIRES THAT A GENUINELY VIABLE COMMUNITY IS BUILT- THAT AS MANY RESIDENTS AS POSSIBLE ARE INVOLVED IN IT- THAT IT FULFILLS ALL THE NEEDS OF THESE RESIDENTS- AND THAT A COMMUNITY SPIRIT IS DEVELOPED DEEPER AND MORE WIDESPREAD THAN THE PUBLIC SPIRIT OF MERE INDIVIDUALS,+ DR HASE SAID.

HOW DID WE HOPE TO ACHIEVE THIS? HE ASKED.

+ABOVE ALL, OUR AIM MUST BE TO ASSIST AND ENCOURAGE GROUPS OF RESIDENTS TO FORM THEMSELVES INTO POSITIVE COMMUNITY GROUPS.

+NO COMMUNITY CAN BE BUILT FROM OUTSIDE- IT MUST GROW FROM WITHIN.

+ALL OUTSIDE AGENCIES CAN DO, AND ESPECIALLY GOVERNMENT, IS TO ASSIST BY ENCOURAGING AND BRINGING TOGETHER LIKE MINDED CITIZENS, TO HELP, IN OTHER WORDS, TO ESTABLISH THE SORT OF ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH COMMUNITY SPIRIT CAN GROW UP,+ HE SAID.

IT DOES NOT REALLY MATTER WHAT THE GROUP OF CITIZENS WISHED TO DO, HE ADDED.

ANYTHING (OTHER, OF COURSE, THAN THE OBVIOUSLY ILLEGAL OR ANTI-SOCIAL) WHICH A GROUP OF CITIZENS WISHED TO DO WOULD HELP TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY: THE VERY FACT THAT CITIZENS WERE WORKING SUCCESSFULLY TOGETHER AND WERE SEEN TO BE WORKING TOGETHER WOULD LEAD OTHER GROUPS TO DO THE SAME.

+NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS, AND ANY TRULY SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY GROUP WILL LEAD VERY QUICKLY TO AN EVER WIDENING AND DEEPENING CIRCLE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT,+ DR HASE SAID.

+OBVIOUSLY, THE THING THAT HAS TO BE DONE AS SOON AS A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF RESIDENTS' GROUPS IS FORMED IS TO ESTABLISH A SUITABLE STRUCTURE.

+CLEARLY, ANY INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTS' GROUP IS GOING TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IF IT IS IN CONTACT WITH OTHER GROUPS OF A SIMILAR NATURE, SO THAT BY JOINT ACTION WORK CAN BE DONE GREATER THAN ANY INDIVIDUAL ASSOCIATION COULD MANAGE ON ITS OWN, AND SO THAT DUPLICATION OF WORK CAN BE AVOIDED.

+IN THIS FIELD GOVERNMENT HAS, OF COURSE, A CLEAR ROLE TO PLAY.

+THE MOST IMPORTANT ORGAN WITHIN A NEW TERRITORIES NEW TOWN FOR CO-ORDINATING THE WORK OF LOCAL RESIDENTS GROUPS IS THE DISTRICT BOARD.

+THE DISTRICT BOARD WHICH WILL BE PARTLY ELECTED FROM 1982 ONWARDS IS DESIGNED TO REPRESENT ALL THE RESIDENTS OF THE DISTRICT AND TO COORDINATE THE WORK OF ALL LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS.+

DR HASE SAID IT WAS HOPED THAT BOARDS WOULD BECOME THE VERY HEART OF WORK IN THIS FIELD.

+NONETHELESS, IT IS CLEAR THAT A DISTRICT AS LARGE AS SHA TIN IS NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH THE JOB OF COORDINATION EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT SOME SUB-STRUCTURE OF SUB-ORDINATE AGENCIES.

/+WE NEED

+WE NEED THEREFORE TO ESTABLISH AREA COMMITTEES, APPROXIMATELY ONE FOR EACH AREA WITH 50 000 INHABITANTS, IN ORDER TO COORDINATE THE WORK OF RESIDENTS' GROUPS AT THE GRASSROOT LEVEL AND IN ORDER TO ACT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL AS THE AGENTS OF THE DISTRICT BOARD.

+WITHIN SHA TIN, AREA COMMITTEES WILL BE FORMED WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR IN ORDER THAT THIS NECESSARY GRASSROOT COORDINATION WORK CAN BEGIN - PREVIOUSLY TO THIS YEAR THE POPULATION HAD NOT RISEN TO THE POINT WHERE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE DISTRICT BOARD TO FUNCTION WITHOUT A SUB-STRUCTURE.+

DR HASE SAID ONCE THE REQUISITE STRUCTURE OF RESIDENTS GROUPS WAS FORMED, GOVERNMENT'S MOST IMPORTANT ROLE WAS TO ASSIST THE GROUPS TO WORK TOWARDS A CLEARLY DEFINED AIM.

THIS COULD BE MOST USEFULLY DONE BY ENCOURAGING THE GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE IN CAMPAIGNS OF A TERRITORY OR DISTRICT-WIDE NATURE, OR TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE PART IN WORK OF A RECREATIONAL OR CULTURAL NATURE.

THE ADVANTAGE OF ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS GROUPS TO WORK TOWARDS CLEARLY DEFINED CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES WAS THAT IT MADE IT EASIER FOR THESE GROUPS TO MEET WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS.

AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF WORKING FOR CAMPAIGNS, MEMBERS OF SUCH GROUPS WOULD HAVE A VERY WIDE RANGE OF CONTACTS AND FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIPS WITH SIMILARLY PUBLIC SPIRITED PERSONS IN OTHER GROUPS- ONCE THIS STAGE HAD BEEN REACHED, CAMPAIGN WORK BECAME OF LESS SIGNIFICANCE AS THE GROUPS WOULD HAVE MATURED INTO A SUFFICIENTLY ADVANCED STAGE THAT FUTURE COMMUNITY WORK COULD BE LEFT TO THEIR OWN DISCRETION.

AT THE SAME TIME, OF COURSE, CAMPAIGN WORK WAS ONLY ONE AMONG MANY USEFUL METHODS OF INTRODUCING ORGANISATIONS TO EACH OTHER- WE WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT THE ORGANISATIONS WOULD WORK ON SUBJECTS THAT THEY WERE THEMSELVES INTERESTED IN, EVEN THOUGH THIS WORK WAS NOT NECESSARILY PART OF OR CONNECTED WITH A RECOGNISED GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN.

+IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE SUCH HELP AS WAS POSSIBLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES,+ DR HASE CONTINUED.

EXAMPLES OF CAMPAIGN WORK WHICH COULD INVOLVE LARGE NUMBERS OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS WERE THE ANTI-NARCOTICS AND THE KEEP HONG KONG CLEAN CAMPAIGNS.

DR HASE SAID ALL THIS WORK INVOLVED A GREAT DEAL OF GOVERNMENT TIME PARTICULARLY IN THE INITIAL STAGES.

UNTIL THE RESIDENTS' GROUPS WERE FORMALLY ESTABLISHED, LIAISON STAFF OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN PRACTICE HAD TO DO A GOOD DEAL OF THE WORK. NONETHELESS IT WAS NOT OUR AIM THAT THIS SHOULD REMAIN SOLELY A DISTRICT OFFICE JOB.

+OUR AIM IS TO ASSIST AND ENCOURAGE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO FORM THEMSELVES INTO A VIABLE AND FUNCTIONING COMMUNITY.

+THE DISTRICT OFFICE WORK IS PURELY SECONDARY TO THIS AIM. IT CANNOT SUCCEED IF IT DEVELOPS AS A DISTRICT OFFICE JOB IN ITSELF.

- 20 -

+A HORSE WITH THREE LEGS CANNOT RUN= IF GOVERNMENT DOES NOT SEEK THE WHOLE-HEARTED COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF THE RESIDENTS ITS COMMUNITY BUILDING WORK WILL EQUALLY FAIL.

+WE MUST REMEMBER AT ALL TIMES THAT OUR LIAISON WORK IS WORK TO AN END AND NOT AN END IN ITSELF= ALTHOUGH IT IS CLEAR THAT SO MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE THAT THE DISTRICT OFFICE WILL HAVE A MAJOR COMMUNITY BUILDING ROLE TO PLAY FOR MANY YEARS TO COME,+ DR HASE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

ELDERLY COUPLES REVIVE MARRIAGE MEMORIES

* * * *

TWENTY ELDERLY COUPLES FROM TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG TODAY CHECKED INTO A HOTEL IN CENTRAL TO START A THREE-DAY +SECOND HONEYMOON+.

THEY ARE SPENDING TWO NIGHTS AT THE HILTON HOTEL TO REFRESH MEMORIES OF THEIR EARLY MARRIAGE TO ENRICH THEIR RELATIONSHIP AND TO HAVE MORE INSIGHT INTO MARITAL ADJUSTMENT.

THE SECOND HONEYMOON TRIP IS BEING ORGANISED BY THE TUEN MUN-YUEN LONG DISTRICT COMMITTEE ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION TO PROMOTE +HAPPY MARRIAGE, HAPPY LIFE+.

IT FORMS PART OF THE FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN ORGANISED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO FOSTER PROPER ATTITUDES TOWARDS ALL ASPECTS OF MARRIAGE.

BEFORE THE COUPLES CHECKED IN, A CEREMONY WAS HELD AT THE HOTEL IN WHICH THE REGIONAL SOCIAL WELFARE OFFICER (NEW TERRITORIES), MR HENRY AU, MADE AN OPENING ADDRESS TO WISH THEM HAPPINESS.

A COMMUNITY LEADER, MR KWOK WING-CHI, PRESENTED A CHEQUE FOR \$20 000 AS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE EVENT. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A LUNCH AT WHICH THE COUPLES EXCHANGED IDEAS ON MARITAL RELATIONSHIP.

MISS JOYCE CHAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE, SAID RESPONSE TO THE SECOND HONEYMOON TRIP WAS OVERWHELMING.

A MEMBER OF EACH PARTICIPATING COUPLE MUST BE AGED AT LEAST 60 YEARS, SHE SAID, AND THE CHARGE IS \$200 PER COUPLE.

SHE SAID THE SECOND HONEYMOON PROGRAMME FEATURED A VARIETY OF EVENTS WHICH WERE BOTH INFORMATIVE AND LEISURELY.

ON THE FIRST DAY THERE IS AN AFTERNOON TRIP TO THE SUNG DYNASTY VILLAGE IN LAI CHI KOK AMUSEMENT PARK, FOLLOWED BY AN EVENING FILM SHOW AND DISCUSSION SESSION ON GENERATION GAP.

ON THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS, THE COUPLES WILL GO ON OUTINGS TO THE OCEAN PARK AND THE HONG KONG SPACE MUSEUM, AND ATTEND A FILM SHOW AND DISCUSSION SESSION ON +MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AFTER MENOPAUSE+. THEY WILL ALSO ENJOY TOGETHER THE HARBOUR VIEW FROM THE PEAK.

- - - - 0 - - - -

CUSTOMS SERVICE HOLDS PASSING-OUT PARADE
* * * * *

THIRTY-FOUR PROBATIONARY CUSTOMS INSPECTORS AND 93 CUSTOMS OFFICERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR INDUCTION COURSES WILL TAKE PART IN A PASSING-OUT PARADE ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 10).

TAKING THE SALUTE AT THE PARADE, THE LARGEST EVER IN THE HISTORY OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE SERVICE, WILL BE THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, MR KEITH BROADBRIDGE.

THE PARADE WILL TAKE PLACE BEFORE SOME 400 GUESTS AT THE SERVICE'S TRAINING SCHOOL IN TAI LAM CHUNG, NEW TERRITORIES.

THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE TRAINING COURSES ARE DESIGNED TO GIVE RECRUITS A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE LAW IN RELATION TO THE DUTIES OF THE SERVICE, INCLUDING REVENUE COLLECTION AND PROTECTION= SUPPRESSION OF TRAFFIC IN NARCOTICS= DETECTION OF IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION OF PROHIBITED GOODS, AND PROTECTION OF COPYRIGHT.

THE INDUCTION COURSES ALSO INCLUDE TRAINING IN JUDO, THE USE OF FIREARMS AND METHODS OF SEARCHING ON LAND, SEA AND AT THE AIRPORT.

- - - - -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE PASSING-OUT PARADE OF 34 CUSTOMS INSPECTORS AND 93 CUSTOMS OFFICERS WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE TRAINING SCHOOL IN TAI LAM CHUNG AT 10.30 AM ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 10).

A GOVERNMENT COACH, AM 5606, WILL BE WAITING AT HUNG HOM FERRY PIER BETWEEN 8 AM AND 8.15 AM ON SATURDAY TO TAKE GUESTS AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES TO THE TRAINING SCHOOL AND LATER RETURN THE PARTY TO KOWLOON.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THE EVENT.

- - - - 0 - - - -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

CASTLE PEAK PAVILION TO BE OPENED ON FRIDAY
* * * * *

A PAVILION AT CASTLE PEAK WILL BE OPENED ON FRIDAY (JANUARY 9) AT 11.30 AM.

OFFICIATING AT THE CEREMONY WILL BE TUEN MUN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR BILLY LAM= PROJECT MANAGER, MR STAN BARDEN= AND MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND MEMBERS OF YOUR STAFF TO COVER THE EVENT. REPORTERS PLEASE MEET MR DONALD STRANGE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION PRESS UNIT EITHER AT KOWLOON PUBLIC PIER AT 10 AM OR AT TUEN MUN DISTRICT OFFICE AT 11.20 AM. TRANSPORT WILL BE PROVIDED TO TAKE THEM TO THE PAVILION WHICH IS SITUATED ON CASTLE PEAK ABOVE TSING SHAN TEMPLE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TWO MORE BUS-ONLY LANES ON KING'S ROAD
* * * *

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT TWO MORE SECTIONS OF THE WESTBOUND KERB-SIDE LANE OF KING'S ROAD WOULD BE MADE BUS-ONLY LANES FROM 7 AM ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 10).

VEHICLES EXCEPT OMNIBUSES AND THOSE WITH WRITTEN AUTHORITY WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THESE LANES FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM AND FROM 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY.

ONE SECTION EXTENDS 30 METRES WEST FROM A POINT 30 METRES WEST OF THE JUNCTION OF KING'S ROAD WITH KAM HONG STREET.

THE OTHER SECTION EXTENDS 35 METRES FROM A POINT 30 METRES WEST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH CHEUNG HONG STREET.

THE LANES WILL BE INDICATED BY TRAFFIC SIGNS AND CARRIAGEWAY MARKINGS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN KOWLOON
* * * *

A SECTION OF FIFE STREET BETWEEN NATHAN ROAD AND SAI YEUNG CHOI STREET IN MONG KOK WILL BE DESIGNATED A 24-HOUR URBAN CLEARWAY FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JANUARY 9).

MOTOR VEHICLES EXCEPT THOSE WITH WRITTEN AUTHORITY WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM STOPPING FOR PASSENGERS OR LOADING OR UNLOADING GOODS WITHIN THE CLEARWAY.

ALSO FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY, THE FOLLOWING TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE INTRODUCED IN SHAM SHUI PO TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW:

- * NORTHBOUND TRAFFIC ON NAM CHEONG STREET WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM TURNING RIGHT INTO WOH CHAI STREET EASTBOUND.
- * SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC ON NAM CHEONG STREET EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES MUST TURN LEFT INTO WOH CHAI STREET EASTBOUND.
- * THE COMPULSORY LEFT TURN FROM WOH CHAI STREET WESTBOUND INTO NAM CHEONG STREET SOUTHBOUND WILL BE RESCINDED.
- * NORTHBOUND TRAFFIC ON NAM CHEONG STREET WILL BE ALLOWED TO TURN RIGHT INTO BERWICK STREET EASTBOUND.
- * KMB ROUTE NOS. 36M AND 40M WILL USE NAM CHEONG STREET, BERWICK STREET, AND SHEK KIP MEI STREET FOR ACCESS TO THE BUS TERMINUS IN WAI CHI STREET.

- - - - 0 - - - -