



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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LONG-TERM MEDICAL AND SOCIAL WELFARE PLANNING TO CONTINUE
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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE ITS POLICY TO MAINTAIN A LONG-TERM APPROACH TO PLANNING IN THE MEDICAL AND SOCIAL WELFARE FIELDS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES WAS PLANNED ON A TEN-YEAR BASIS, WITH AN ANNUAL REVIEW BY THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

THIS REVIEW, HE EXPLAINED, PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW PROJECTS TO BE ADDED, OR THE SCOPE OF THE PROGRAMME TO BE REVISED IN THE LIGHT OF CHANGING NEEDS RESULTING FROM SUCH FACTORS AS AN INCREASE OR RE-DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION, CHANGES IN DISEASE PATTERN, USAGE RATES AND ADOPTION OF NEW PLANNING STANDARDS.

APART FROM EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING INSTITUTIONS, THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ENVISAGED THE BUILDING OF FIVE NEW HOSPITALS OF OVER 1 300 BEDS EACH AND SOME 20 NEW CLINICS AND POLYCLINICS OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS, MR BARNES SAID.

+EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO ENSURE THAT THESE PROJECTS SHOULD PROCEED AS PLANNED BUT OBVIOUSLY ANY CAPITAL PROGRAMME OF THIS MAGNITUDE HAS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF HONG KONG AND THE COMPETING DEMANDS FOR AVAILABLE FISCAL RESOURCES,+ HE ADDED.

AS EXAMPLES OF FORWARD PLANNING FOR SOCIAL WELFARE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, MR BARNES CITED 2 000 NEW CARE AND PROTECTION PLACES AND 22 NEW MULTI-SERVICE CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY, 16 NEW COMMUNITY HALLS AS WELL AS 13 000 ADDITIONAL NURSERY PLACES.

ON THE ISSUE OF HANDICAPPED PEOPLE, MR BARNES REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS MAKING +EVERY ATTEMPT+ TO PROVIDE NECESSARY RESOURCES TO MEET NEEDS IN THE PREVENTIVE, CURATIVE AND REHABILITATION FIELDS.

HE COMMENDED THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES FOR THEIR SKILL AND DEDICATION IN PROVIDING SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES, AND MR BARNES SAID THAT THEIR WORK WAS ESSENTIALLY COMPLEMENTARY TO GOVERNMENT EFFORTS.

RESPONDING TO THE HON WONG LAM'S VIEW THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT INVOLVE ITSELF WITH THE ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL WELFARE POLICIES, MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING AN ADEQUATE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM AND CERTAIN SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES, PARTICULARLY THOSE REQUIRED BY LAW.

+THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO RELINQUISH THESE SERVICES TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR. INDEED IN CERTAIN AREAS OF WORK IT IS CLEARLY IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC, THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD IMPLEMENT POLICIES DIRECTLY,+ MR BARNES SAID.

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ON A CONTRIBUTORY SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME, HE RECALLED THAT THE FINDINGS OF AN OPINION SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES CONFIRMED THAT SUCH A SCHEME WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT TO APPLY.

HE ADDED THAT IT WAS ALSO FOUND THAT A COMPULSORY SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEME WOULD +UNDERMINE OUR WELL-ESTABLISHED NON-CONTRIBUTORY SOCIAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS.+

+ALTERNATIVE PLANS ARE THEREFORE BEING DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE EXTENDED SICKNESS BENEFITS AND DEATH GRANTS FOR INCORPORATION IN LEGISLATION.

+MEANWHILE, THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME MUST REMAIN THE CENTRAL PILLAR OF OUR SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, AS MUST OUR APPROACH OF CONCENTRATING ASSISTANCE ON THE MORE VULNERABLE GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY,+ MR BARNES SAID.

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MEDICAL PRIORITY FOR NEEDY STRESSED
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THE UNDER-PRIVILEGED CLASS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL FACILITIES, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR THE HON K.L. THONG, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR THONG POINTED OUT THAT THE NUMBER OF BEDS IN THE GENERAL WARDS IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS HAD BEEN INCREASED TO 10 544, AS COMPARED WITH 221 BEDS FOR PRIVATE PATIENTS.

IT WAS GOVERNMENT POLICY THAT MEDICAL AND HEALTH FACILITIES BE PROVIDED TO ALL PEOPLE IN HONG KONG, PARTICULARLY TO THE LARGE SECTION WHO RELIED ON SUBSIDISED ATTENTION.

+UNDER THIS POLICY WHICH IS CLEARLY STATED IN THE 1974 WHITE PAPER ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, SUCH SERVICES ARE BASICALLY REGARDED AS AN IMPORTANT SOCIAL SERVICE AND THE MAJORITY OF THE PUBLIC ARE ONLY REQUIRED TO PAY NOMINAL CHARGES WHICH ARE NOT AT ALL RELATED TO RECOVERY OF COST,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, FOR THE BETTER-OFF SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY WHICH MADE USE OF THE SMALL NUMBER OF BEDS IN THE PRIVATE WARDS OF GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS, IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO RECOVER THE FULL OR PARTIAL COST OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED.

A DECISION WOULD SOON BE TAKEN ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER SUCH PATIENTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE SUBSIDISED, HE ADDED.

COMMENTING ON REMARKS BY SOME UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ABOUT THE COSTING OF SERVICES, DR THONG SAID THAT THE REVIEW OF MANY FEES AND CHARGES WAS TIME-CONSUMING AND WAS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT MEDICAL TREATMENT AND LABORATORY INVESTIGATIONS WERE CONTINUOUSLY CHANGING AS NEW TESTS AND IMPROVED TECHNIQUES WERE INTRODUCED.

+FOR THIS REASON, CHARGES FOR THESE ITEMS WERE NOT UPDATED BECAUSE IT IS THE INTENTION TO COST AND UPDATE THE CHARGES FOR BETTER AND MORE ADVANCED TECHNIQUES,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT NEW CHARGES FOR PRIVATE PATIENTS WOULD BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY.

A NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM INTRODUCED SHOULD MAKE THE WORK ON FEES AND CHARGES EASIER, HE SAID.

BUT DUE TO THE POLICY OF ACCORDING PRIORITY TO THE UNDER-PRIVILEGED, IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO BECOME SELF-FUNDING, HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON THE FALLING PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE AS COMPARED TO EXPENDITURE IN THE DEPARTMENT BETWEEN 1979 AND 1983, DR THONG EXPLAINED THAT THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT WAS A SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT PROVIDING A NON-PROFIT MAKING SERVICE.

HE SAID THAT THE REVENUE RAISED FROM THE BULK OF THE PATIENTS IN THE GENERAL WARD WAS NOMINAL, WHILE FULL OR PARTIAL COST WAS RECOVERED FROM A COMPARATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PRIVATE BEDS.

IT WAS QUITE INAPPROPRIATE TO COMPARE THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, WHICH WAS NOT A BUSINESS CONCERN, HE SAID.

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ADDITIONAL HELP FOR NEEDY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES CONSIDERED
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REQUESTS BY VOLUNTARY WELFARE AGENCIES FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS WOULD BE GIVEN +SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION+, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REFERRING TO CONCERN EXPRESSED EARLIER IN THE BUDGET DEBATE BY THE HON F.K. HU ON THIS POINT, MR CHAMBERS EXPRESSED FULL AGREEMENT THAT AGENCIES SHOULD BE GIVEN ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO DISCHARGE THEIR CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGERIAL FUNCTIONS.

MR CHAMBERS POINTED OUT THAT +IN FACT, ALL AGENCIES RECEIVED INCREASED LEVELS OF SUPPORT LAST YEAR+.

SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN TO PROVIDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO ANY AGENCY EXPERIENCING GENUINE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY, HE SAID.

/COMMENTING ON

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COMMENTING ON MR HU'S REFERENCE TO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES FACED BY SOME AGENCIES OPERATING SOCIAL CENTRES AND MULTI-SERVICE CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY, MR CHAMBERS REITERATED THAT THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY REAL FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN THIS AREA.

AFTER THE 1982/83 ALLOCATIONS, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED ONLY TWO APPEALS FROM THE 30 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES RUNNING SOME 70 SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY AND BOTH WERE SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED, HE SAID.

+NOR IS THERE ANY INDICATION THAT THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE VALUABLE SERVICES WILL BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED, SINCE THE PLANNED PROVISIONS FOR 1983/84 HAVE ALL BEEN TAKEN UP BY THE AGENCIES,+ HE SAID.

+I SHALL HOWEVER BE HAPPY TO CONSIDER AN APPEAL FROM ANY INDIVIDUAL AGENCY WHICH CAN SHOW THAT IT IS UNABLE TO FUNCTION PROPERLY WITH THE FUNDS ALLOCATED,+ HE ADDED.

REFERRING TO THE REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT'S REMARKS ON SERVICES FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS, MR CHAMBERS EXPLAINED THAT AN EDUCATION ADVISER WAS SECONDED BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION TO STUDY SCHOOLING PROVIDED FOR INMATES IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT'S FIVE RESIDENTIAL TRAINING INSTITUTIONS, THE ADVISER WAS NOT DEALING ONLY WITH +ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS+, HE SAID.

+SPECIFICALLY HE IS REVIEWING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE INMATES, DESIGNING APPROPRIATE CURRICULUMS IN DIFFERENT HOMES TO MEET THESE NEEDS, INCLUDING ACADEMIC, PRACTICAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES, ADVISING ON SPACE AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS, AND DRAWING UP A STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT FOR EACH HOME,+ HE EXPLAINED.

IN DOING THIS WORK, THE ADVISER CONSULTED OTHER SPECIALIST OFFICERS IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING THOSE IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SECTION.

+I AM NATURALLY ANXIOUS THAT ALL THE EXPERTISE AVAILABLE IS BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THIS IMPORTANT AREA OF OUR WORK AND I SHALL BE HAVING FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH MY COLLEAGUE, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, WHEN THE EDUCATION ADVISER'S REPORT IS RECEIVED,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO DR HENRY HU'S SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE MORE GENEROUS IN DEALING WITH THOSE UNABLE TO LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES BECAUSE OF OLD AGE OR DISABILITIES, MR CHAMBERS SAID, +WE ARE VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE CHANGING SOCIAL PATTERN IN HONG KONG, AND THE PLIGHT OF MANY OF THE OLD AND DISABLED MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY AS WELL AS THE PRESSURES ON THOSE FAMILIES WHO HAVE TO LOOK AFTER THEM.+

+THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MOST NEED HELP AND THEY ARE THE PRIME TARGETS BOTH OF OUR SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES AND OF OUR DIRECT SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES.+

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SALE OF PUBLIC HOUSING FLATS

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THERE WERE SOME FINANCIAL BENEFITS IN SELLING PUBLIC HOUSING FLATS TO SITTING TENANTS BUT ITS FEASIBILITY HAD TO BE EVALUATED AGAINST A PUBLIC HOUSING POLICY OF EXTREMELY LOW RENTAL AND ALMOST COMPLETE SECURITY OF TENURE.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON DONALD LIAO, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO DR THE HON HARRY FANG AND THE HON ANDREW SO WHO HAD MADE THE PROPOSAL.

MR LIAO SAID THAT IF THE PURCHASE TERMS WERE TO BE MADE SUFFICIENTLY ATTRACTIVE, FLATS EVEN IN THE NEWER ESTATES WOULD HAVE TO BE PRICED AT A LEVEL FAR LOWER THAN THAT SUGGESTED BY DR FANG.

+THEREFORE, EVEN ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT SEVEN PER CENT OF EXISTING TENANTS WOULD BUY THEIR FLATS, THE REVENUE LIKELY TO BE GENERATED WOULD BE MUCH LESS THAN \$3.5 BILLION OVER SEVERAL YEARS.

+ANOTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION WOULD BE THE MANY SOCIAL PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH MANAGING BLOCKS WITH A MIXED POPULATION OF PRIVATE OWNERS AND PUBLIC TENANTS.

+ALTHOUGH THIS COULD THEORETICALLY BE OVERCOME BY EARMARKING COMPLETE BLOCKS FOR SALE, THIS WOULD INVOLVE MOVING OUT FAMILIES UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO BUY, LEADING TO MUCH DISRUPTION AND RESENTMENT.

+THE EXPERIENCE WITH THOSE RELUCTANT TO MOVE IN THE COURSE OF REDEVELOPMENT OF OLD ESTATES DURING THE PAST 10 YEARS HAS AMPLY ILLUSTRATED THE SORT OF PROBLEMS THAT WOULD ARISE.+

HOWEVER, MR LIAO ENTIRELY AGREED THAT WELL-OFF PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS SHOULD BE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGED TO BUY THEIR OWN HOMES, AND SAID THIS WAS ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME.

+THE PRESENT PRACTICE IS TO SET ASIDE 50 PER CENT OF HOS FLATS FOR SALE TO PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS, AND TO DATE SOME 10 000 NEW FLATS HAVE BEEN SOLD TO THIS GROUP.+

HE ALSO AGREED THAT IN THE CONTEXT OF HOUSING PRIORITIES, THE BALANCE BETWEEN HOS AND RENTAL FLATS NEEDED TO BE REVIEWED.

+WHILE THERE IS A CONTINUING HIGH DEMAND FOR PUBLIC RENTAL HOUSING, THERE IS ALSO A STRONG UNDERLYING DEMAND FOR HOME OWNERSHIP.

+THE FACT THAT THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR HOS FLATS HAS CONSISTENTLY EXCEEDED BY MANY TIMES THE NUMBER OF FLATS AVAILABLE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THIS TREND, AND WE ARE EXAMINING WAYS AND MEANS BY WHICH MORE FLATS CAN BE PROVIDED TO MEET THE ASPIRATIONS OF THOSE THE SCHEME IS DESIGNED TO BENEFIT.+

IN PUBLIC HOUSING PRODUCTION, MR LIAO SAID EFFORTS COULD NOT BE RELAXED DESPITE THE VERY LARGE OUTPUT OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS, AND HE GAVE ASSURANCE THAT IT WOULD AT LEAST BE MAINTAINED AT ITS CURRENT LEVEL FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR JUST COMPLETED, HE SAID PUBLIC SECTOR PRODUCTION AGAIN EXCEEDED THE TARGET OF 35 000 FLATS.

ON THE GOVERNMENT'S FLATTED FACTORY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME, MR LIAO SAID THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAD RECENTLY COMPLETED A REVIEW AND CONCLUDED THAT THE LARGE NUMBER OF VACANCIES IN EXISTING FLATTED FACTORIES SHOULD BE ADEQUATE TO MEET CLEARANCE DEMAND FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

+THEREFORE, FOR THE PRESENT NO FURTHER FLATTED FACTORIES SHOULD BE BUILT AFTER THOSE BLOCKS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION ARE COMPLETED.

+RECENT EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT ONLY A SMALL PROPORTION OF FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS WHICH ARE CLEARED CANNOT READILY FIND ACCOMMODATION IN PRIVATE FACTORIES AND NEED TO LOOK TO HOUSING AUTHORITY FLATTED FACTORIES FOR REPROVISIONING.

+IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF VACANCIES IN THESE FACTORIES, OPEN TENDERS ARE INVITED ON A REGULAR BASIS, THUS MEETING THE NEEDS NOT ONLY OF FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS DISPLACED BY CLEARANCE, BUT ALSO OF MANY OTHER SMALL FACTORY OPERATORS REQUIRING PURPOSE-BUILT UNITS.+

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+DIFFICULT OPERATION+ SUPPORTED
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THE POLICY TO CONTINUE WITH THE MANY PROGRAMMES DESIGNED TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HONG KONG IS A POSITIVE AFFIRMATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINED EFFORTS TO MEET INCREASED PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY BY THE HON PETER C. WONG, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, WHEN SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE SHIPPING AND PORT CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, WHICH WAS LATER PASSED.

MR WONG SAID THE +PRESENT EXERCISE+ WAS BUT ONE FACET OF THIS POLICY.

HE NOTED THAT THIS +DIFFICULT BUT LONG OVERDUE OPERATION+ WOULD BE +IMPLEMENTED IN A MANNER THAT WOULD CAUSE THE LEAST INCONVENIENCE AND HARDSHIP TO THE BOAT DWELLERS.+

MR WONG STRESSED THAT +CONFRONTATION SHOULD BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS.+

/+COURTESY AND

+COURTESY AND GOODWILL ON THE PART OF THE ADMINISTRATION ON THE ONE HAND AND THE UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION OF THOSE AFFECTED ON THE OTHER, WILL CERTAINLY GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS PREVENTING ANY UNPLEASANT INCIDENT WHICH MAY OTHERWISE OCCUR.

+THESE ARE ALSO NECESSARY INGREDIENTS ON WHICH THE SUCCESS OF THIS WORTHY OPERATION WILL DEPEND,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID THAT THE AD HOC GROUP OF UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAD CONSIDERED THE DRAFT BILL AND THE DRAFT REGULATIONS AND HAD ALSO MET THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE AND OTHER SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

+A NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS SUGGESTED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED IN THE BILL GAZETTED YESTERDAY AND WILL ALSO BE REFLECTED IN THE NEW REGULATIONS WHICH WILL COME INTO EFFECT IMMEDIATELY UPON THE ENACTMENT OF THE BILL.

+WE ARE SATISFIED THAT THE BILL AND THE NEW REGULATIONS WILL PROVIDE THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE WITH THE NECESSARY STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO REGULATE THE GROWING NUMBER OF DWELLING VESSELS IN THE TYPHOON SHELTERS, WHICH HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF MUCH CONCERN,+ HE SAID.

AS A START, THE NEW REGULATIONS WOULD ONLY APPLY TO THE TYPHOON SHELTERS AT YAU MA TEI, TSING YI, TUEN MUN AND CHEUNG CHAU.

MR WONG SAID DESIGNATING THE FOUR MOST DENSELY POPULATED TYPHOON SHELTERS AS PRESCRIBED AREAS WAS A GOOD START AND HE HOPED THAT CONTROL WOULD BE EXTENDED TO OTHER AREAS AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE.

+IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT A CLOSE WATCH BE KEPT ON AREAS NOT BROUGHT WITHIN THE AMBIT OF THE NEW REGULATIONS,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID THE NEED TO TAKE ALL THREE READINGS OF THE BILL AT ONE SITTING IN ORDER TO PREVENT A SUDDEN RUSH OF DWELLING BOATS INTO THE SHELTERS WAS FULLY APPRECIATED BY THE UNOFFICIALS. +HOWEVER, WE WOULD STRESS THAT ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD SUCH PROCEDURE BE ADOPTED,+ HE SAID.

THE HON P. JACOBS, SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, IN MOVING THE SHIPPING AND PORT CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE BILL WAS TO PROVIDE BETTER CONTROL OVER DWELLING VESSELS, AND THUS TO CONTAIN THE GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF SUCH VESSELS IN TYPHOON SHELTERS.

THIS WOULD BE ACHIEVED BY MEANS OF A LICENSING SYSTEM.

HE THANKED MR PETER C. WONG AND MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF UNOFFICIALS FOR THEIR CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE BILL AND THE REGULATIONS.

+A NUMBER OF VERY USEFUL AND PROPER AMENDMENTS WERE INCLUDED AS A RESULT,+ HE SAID.

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SQUATTING PROBLEM EXPLAINED

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THE ONLY SOLUTION TO THE FIRE AND HEALTH HAZARDS POSED BY ILLEGAL STRUCTURES IS THEIR COMPLETE REMOVAL, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR AKERS-JONES WAS REPLYING TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT ON MEASURES TAKEN TO ALLEVIATE SUCH HAZARDS AND TO PREVENT SIMILAR SQUATTING IN FUTURE.

HE EXPLAINED THAT BEFORE A SITE WAS HANDED OVER TO A PARTICULAR PARTY, THE LANDS AND HOUSING DEPARTMENTS WOULD CLEAR ALL ILLEGAL STRUCTURES AND OTHER ENCUMBRANCES.

ONCE THE SITE WAS HANDED OVER, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING IT FREE FROM ILLEGAL SQUATTING WOULD REST WITH THE GRANTEE OF THE LAND.

REFERRING TO THE RECENT BACK LANE CLEARANCE IN HANG ON STREET IN KWUN TONG TO MAKE WAY FOR THE NING PO COLLEGE'S EXTENSION, MR AKERS-JONES RECALLED THAT A CLEAR SITE WAS HANDED OVER TO THE SCHOOL IN FEBRUARY 1979.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE SCHOOL WAS UNABLE TO KEEP THE LAND CLEAR AND ILLEGAL STRUCTURES WERE BUILT ON IT AND ON THE CROWN LAND IN THE BACK LANE OF HANG ON STREET.

AFTER COURT BAILIFFS EXECUTING A WRIT OF RESTITUTION FOR THE SCHOOL HAD MET WITH STRONG RESISTANCE FROM THE SQUATTERS, THE SCHOOL SOUGHT THE ASSISTANCE OF THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT OFFICE, AND THE STRUCTURES ON THE LEASED LAND WERE CLEARED IN APRIL LAST YEAR.

+UNFORTUNATELY ONCE AGAIN THE CLEARED SITE WAS NOT FENCED OFF BY THE SCHOOL AND THE SQUATTERS SOON RETURNED TO REBUILD THEIR HUTS.

+THE SITUATION IN THE ADJOINING BACK LANE HAD DETERIORATED IN THE MEANTIME AND POSED A SERIOUS THREAT TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND HYGIENE TO THE NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS.

+THE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, WITH THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT BOARD, THEREFORE PLANNED ANOTHER OPERATION TO CLEAR ALL THE STRUCTURES.

+HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE COMMITMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED, THEIR CLEARANCE COULD NOT BE EFFECTED UNTIL MARCH 29 THIS YEAR,+ HE SAID.

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EDUCATION FACILITIES EXPANDING
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A PLAN FOR A FURTHER STAGE OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME WAS BEING EXAMINED AND, IF APPROVED WOULD ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO PHASE OUT ALL THE LESS SATISFACTORY BOUGHT PLACES, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON KENNETH TOPLEY, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MEANWHILE, WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE REMAINING 39 SCHOOLS IN THE PRESENT SECONDARY SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME, BOUGHT PLACES IN LESS SATISFACTORY SCHOOLS WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY REDUCED, MR TOPLEY SAID IN RESPONSE TO REMARKS BY REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT ON THE SUBJECT.

ON SPECIAL EDUCATION, MR TOPLEY REPORTED THAT THERE WERE SUFFICIENT SCHOOL PLACES FOR ALL BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN.

+BY 1984-85 OVER 92 PER CENT OF THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF MALADJUSTED CHILDREN WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A SPECIAL SCHOOL PLACE; AND BY 1987/88 ALL PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A PLACE,+ HE DISCLOSED.

THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT SHORTFALL, HE SAID, WAS IN PLACES FOR THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED.

ALTHOUGH THE 1982 REHABILITATION PROGRAMME PLAN REVIEW GAVE A SHORTFALL IN PROVISION OF 6 292, THE PLANNED PROVISION WOULD RESULT IN AN ADDITIONAL 5 620 PLACES FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS BY 1990, MR TOPLEY SAID.

ON DELAYS TO CAPITAL BUILDING PROJECTS, HE POINTED OUT THAT SPONSORS PLANNING NEW SCHOOL PROJECTS WERE ASSISTED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO ENABLE THEM TO COMPLETE THEIR PROJECTS +WITH ALL POSSIBLE SPEED+.

AS FOR PARTICULAR PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED, HE MENTIONED THE RECENT RESISTANCE TO CLEARANCE BY SQUATTERS IN KWUN TONG WHICH AROSE FROM THE NEED TO EXTEND A SECONDARY SCHOOL, ON WHICH WORK HAD BEEN DELAYED FOR NEARLY TWO YEARS.

THE HONG KONG SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF HAD ALSO BEEN DELAYED BECAUSE OF SQUATTERS ON PRIVATE LAND WHERE THE SCHOOL WAS TO BE REPROVISIONED, HE POINTED OUT.

OF THE 24 SPECIAL SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS IN THE CURRENT PROGRAMME, TWO HAD BEEN COMPLETED, 14 WERE PROCEEDING ON SCHEDULE AND ONLY EIGHT HAD BEEN DELAYED, MR TOPLEY SAID. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OFFICERS WERE WORKING CLOSE WITH THE SPONSORING BODIES TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS, HE SAID.

MR TOPLEY EXPRESSED DISAGREEMENT WITH THE HON WONG LAM'S CONTENTION THAT THE PROVISION OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS WAS A WASTE OF PUBLIC MONEY.

+WHEREAS THE GOVERNMENT IS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS AND SEEING THAT THEY ARE MET, IT NEEDS, ON OCCASION, A MEANS FOR DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM.

/+FOR INSTANCE,

+FOR INSTANCE, BY INTRODUCING THE ACTIVITY APPROACH IN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS, IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO DEMONSTRATE TO OTHERS, THE BENEFIT OF THIS LESS STRUCTURED APPROACH TO PRIMARY EDUCATION,+ MR TOPLEY SAID.

HE ADDED THAT SINCE 1965, IT HAD BEEN GOVERNMENT POLICY TO EXPAND EDUCATION THROUGH THE AIDED SECTOR, BUT WHERE THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE, GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS WERE CONSIDERED.

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POLYTECHNIC EXPANDING IN QUANTITY AND QUALITY
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THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC HAS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS, ACHIEVED UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH NOT ONLY IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS BUT ALSO IN THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON S.L. CHEN AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY. MR CHEN WAS PRESENTING THE TENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE POLYTECHNIC, COVERING THE ACADEMIC YEAR ENDING IN JULY, 1982.

THE NUMBER OF FULL-TIME STUDENTS EXPANDED NEARLY FIVE TIMES FROM 1 580 IN 1972 TO 7 506 IN 1982, MR CHEN SAID.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PART-TIME DAY-RELEASE STUDENTS ALSO INCREASED ABOUT FIVEFOLD DURING THE PERIOD -- FROM 1 030 TO 4 860 -- WHILE THE NUMBER OF THOSE ATTENDING SHORT FULL-TIME COURSES EXPANDED ALMOST 20 TIMES, FROM 120 TO 2 370.

THE POLYTECHNIC NOW HAS 21 TEACHING DEPARTMENTS, COMPARED WITH ONLY EIGHT IN 1972.

EACH YEAR, POLYTECHNIC GRADUATES WERE BEING OFFERED SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER SALARIES, WITH THE RATE OF INCREASE WELL ABOVE THAT OF INFLATION, MR CHEN SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT DESPITE THE RECESSION, THE AVERAGE STARTING SALARY FOR GRADUATES AT ALL LEVELS ACROSS THE POLYTECHNIC THIS YEAR WAS 15 PER CENT HIGHER THAN LAST YEAR'S AVERAGE.

FOR PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA AND HIGHER DIPLOMA GRADUATES, WHO FORM THE LARGEST GROUP, THE AVERAGE STARTING SALARY WAS MORE THAN 18 PER CENT OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S, MR CHEN SAID.

THESE FIGURES CLEARLY SHOWED THAT POLYTECHNIC GRADUATES WERE IN GOOD DEMAND AND THAT THE INSTITUTE HAD ACHIEVED NOT ONLY THE UNPRECEDENTED PLANNED GROWTH IN NUMBERS, BUT ALSO THE GROWTH IN QUALITY.

SPEAKING OF THE POLYTECHNIC DEGREE COURSES WHICH WILL BE INTRODUCED IN OCTOBER THIS YEAR, MR CHEN EXPLAINED THAT THE PROGRAMME, EVEN WHEN FULLY DEVELOPED BY THE EARLY 1990'S, WOULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 30 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STUDENTS.

+THE REMAINING 70 PER CENT OF THE POLYTECHNIC'S WORK WILL CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON THE PRODUCTION OF PROFESSIONAL AND HIGHER DIPLOMA GRADUATES, WHO ARE VITALLY IMPORTANT TO HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE YEARS AHEAD,+ MR CHEN SAID.

MR CHEN SAID HONG KONG NOW HAD A POLYTECHNIC WHICH WAS NOT ONLY VERY LARGE BY ANY STANDARD, BUT WAS ALSO A TRUE POLYTECHNIC IN THE SENSE THAT IT PROVIDED A WIDE VARIETY OF COURSES AT VARIOUS LEVELS IN DIFFERENT ATTENDANCE PATTERNS FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS OF ALL AGES.

+MOREOVER IT IS, I BELIEVE, A POLYTECHNIC WELL-TUNED TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY IT SERVES,+ HE CONCLUDED.

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LABOUR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS PEACEFUL

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LABOUR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS IN HONG KONG WERE ENCOURAGING AND REASONABLY PEACEFUL, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON J.N. HENDERSON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY). HE WAS REFERRING TO A SPEECH MADE EARLIER BY DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI ON THE IMPORTANCE OF HARMONIOUS LABOUR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONS.

HE SAID THE LABOUR RELATIONS SERVICE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD ACHIEVED A VERY HIGH SUCCESS RATE IN SETTLING MAJOR DISPUTES NOT INVOLVING INSOLVENCY, AND HAS SO FAR NOT HAD TO RESORT TO THE SPECIAL PROCEDURES PROVIDED IN THE LABOUR RELATIONS ORDINANCE.

MR HENDERSON POINTED OUT THAT THE ANNUAL FIGURES ON +WORKING-DAYS+ LOST DUE TO STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS (39 743 IN 1979, 21 069 IN 1980, 15 319 IN 1981 AND 17 960 IN 1982) WERE AS LOW AS COULD REASONABLY BE EXPECTED.

+IN FACT, THE FIGURE OF 17 960 WORKING-DAYS LOST IN 1982 COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH THE ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 22 558 WORKING-DAYS LOST IN THE PAST TEN YEARS (1973-1982) AND REMAINS VERY LOW BY INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS,+ HE NOTED.

REFERRING TO CONCERN EXPRESSED BY DR HO AT THE +DECLINING TREND+ IN RESOLVING LABOUR DISPUTES BY THE SERVICE, MR HENDERSON EXPLAINED THAT THE DECLINE MIGHT BE ATTRIBUTED TO A NUMBER OF FACTORS.

FIRSTLY, HE SAID, THOUGH EMPOWERED TO INTERVENE IN DISPUTES UNDER THE LABOUR RELATIONS ORDINANCE, THE LABOUR RELATIONS SERVICE OFFERED A CONCILIATION SERVICE ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS, AND IT WAS ENTIRELY UP TO EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO ACCEPT ITS SERVICE.

+OTHER MAJOR FACTORS THAT AFFECT CASE WORK INCLUDE THE INCREASE IN LABOUR LEGISLATION OVER THE PAST DECADE, THE ADDITIONAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS INTRODUCED IN RECENT YEARS, THE GREATER AWARENESS OF EMPLOYEES OF THEIR LEGAL ENTITLEMENTS, THE MORE LEGALISTIC STANCE TAKEN BY SOME EMPLOYERS IN DISPUTES, AND THE AVAILABILITY OF THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL AS A MEANS OF SETTLING CLAIMS DEFINITELY.

/+THESE ALL

+THESE ALL CONTRIBUTE, TO SOME EXTENT, TO A GREATER RESISTANCE AND RELUCTANCE OF THE PARTIES TO A DISPUTE TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES BY COMPROMISE AND AGREEMENT. IN OTHER CASES, THE NATURE OF DISPUTE, E.G. INSOLVENCY OF EMPLOYERS, IS SUCH THAT CONCILIATION IN ITSELF COULD NOT BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT,+ HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, THE REDUCTION IN CASES SETTLED IN THAT MANNER, MR HENDERSON CONTINUED, MUST BE SEEN IN ITS PROPER PERSPECTIVE. EVERY CASE OF DISPUTE RECEIVED THE ATTENTION AND ASSISTANCE OF THE LABOUR RELATIONS SERVICE, AND THE RATE OF SETTLEMENT COULD NOT BE TAKEN AS A MEASUREMENT OF THE AMOUNT OF EFFORT AND MANPOWER SPENT ON CONCILIATION, NOR OF THE VALUE OF THE SERVICE BEING RENDERED TO THE PUBLIC.

NEVERTHELESS, HE ASSURED DR HO THAT THE CONCILIATION WORK METHODS OF THE SERVICE WERE CONSTANTLY REVIEWED FOR IMPROVEMENT.

THE DEPARTMENT WAS ALSO CONSIDERING WHETHER EXPERIENCED OFFICERS IN THE LABOUR RELATIONS SERVICE SHOULD BE EMPOWERED, FOR EXAMPLE, TO MAKE RULINGS ON THE BASIS OF THE FACTS OF THE CASE AND DETERMINE THE CLAIM IN MINOR CASES, SUBJECT TO APPEAL.

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GOVERNMENT AWARE OF POLLUTION CAUSES * * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF THE TYPES OF POLLUTION CAUSED BY SUCH THINGS AS COOKED FOOD STALLS, VEHICLE REPAIR SHOPS, GOVERNMENT INCINERATORS, ELECTRICITY GENERATING STATIONS, AND AIRCRAFT TAKING OFF, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SOME OF THE EXAMPLES GIVEN PRODUCED MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF POLLUTION, HE ADDED.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG, MR BARNES SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IT WAS IMPRACTICABLE TO MONITOR THE PRECISE LEVELS OF POLLUTION IN EVERY CASE ON A PERMANENT BASIS.

COOKED FOOD STALLS, HE EXPLAINED, PRODUCED POLLUTION FROM THE REFUSE GENERATED, AND FROM THE GREASE PRODUCED IN THE COOKING PROCESS: BOTH OF WHICH CONSTITUTED A DISPOSAL PROBLEM.

THEY ALSO PRODUCE SMELLS, BUT THESE WERE NOT A MEASURABLE SOURCE OF AIR POLLUTION. THE FUELS USED, LPG OR KEROSENE, BECAUSE OF THEIR LOW SULPHUR CONTENT, CAUSED ONLY NEGLIGIBLE QUANTITIES OF AIR POLLUTION AND HAVE NOT BEEN THE SUBJECT OF POLLUTION COMPLAINTS.

THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY THE POLICY IS TO RELOCATE SUCH STALLS IN PROPERLY DESIGNED COOKED FOOD CENTRES WITH ADEQUATE FACILITIES FOR HANDLING THE WASTES WHICH THEY GENERATE.

MEANWHILE, USD STREET CLEANING TEAMS HAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO LOCATIONS IN WHICH COOKED FOOD STALLS OPERATE.

VEHICLE REPAIR SHOPS FREQUENTLY PRODUCE BOTH AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION IN THEIR IMMEDIATE VICINITY AND CAUSE OTHER INCONVENIENCES.

THE GOVERNMENT'S DIFFICULTIES IN TRYING TO ACCOMMODATE VEHICLE REPAIR SHOPS IN LOCATIONS WHERE THEY WOULD NOT POSE SUCH PROBLEMS HAD EARLIER BEEN OUTLINED IN THE COUNCIL, HE ADDED.

GOVERNMENT INCINERATORS, HE SAID, WERE SOURCES OF AIR POLLUTION.

+ALTHOUGH THEY WERE BUILT TO THE BEST U.K. STANDARDS PREVAILING AT THE TIME OF THEIR CONSTRUCTION THEY ARE NOW CONSIDERED TO BE IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT, AND ARRANGEMENTS ARE IN HAND TO ACHIEVE THIS.

+I SHALL BE GIVING DETAILS OF THIS PROGRAMME IN REPLY TO A LATER QUESTION,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT POLLUTION FROM ELECTRICITY GENERATING STATIONS COULD TAKE MANY FORMS.

+AIR POLLUTION CAN ARISE FROM COAL HANDLING, COAL STORAGE, THE TRANSPORTATION OF ASH AND FROM THE NORMAL COMBUSTION PROCESS.

+WATER POLLUTION CAN BE CAUSED BY HOT WATER DISCHARGES IN THE COOLING PROCESS AND FROM POOR HANDLING OF COAL OR ASH WHICH THEN FINDS ITS WAY INTO THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT. THE OLDER, OIL-FIRED POWER STATIONS AT TSING YI, AP LEI CHAU AND HUNG HOM ARE KEPT UNDER SURVEILLANCE BY THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND ARE GENERALLY OPERATING WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE CLEAN AIR ORDINANCE, WHICH MERELY CONTROLS AIR POLLUTION ARISING FROM THE COMBUSTION PROCESS.

+NEW LEGISLATION AIMS TO EXTEND OUR PRESENT CONTROLS TO INCLUDE AIR POLLUTION FROM SUCH SOURCES AS COAL HANDLING AND ASH HANDLING,+ HE SAID.

MR BARNES SAID THAT CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF THE NEW COAL-FIRED POWER STATIONS INDICATED THAT INTERNATIONAL AIR QUALITY STANDARDS WERE BEING COMPLIED WITH, AND THAT THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT REMAINED SATISFACTORY.

REFERRING TO POLLUTION ASSOCIATED WITH AIRCRAFT TAKING-OFF, HE SAID THIS PRIMARILY TOOK THE FORM OF NOISE.

+BECAUSE OF THE LOCATION OF THE AIRPORT THERE IS A BAN ON ALL AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 6.30 AM ALTHOUGH, IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, A TAKE-OFF MAY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THE AIRCRAFT DOES NOT FLY OVER THE KOWLOON PENINSULA.

+FLIGHTS OVER THE KOWLOON PENINSULA ARE FURTHER RESTRICTED BETWEEN 9 PM AND MIDNIGHT AND BETWEEN 6.30 AM AND 7 AM AND ARE ONLY PERMITTED WHEN WEATHER CONDITIONS OR UNSERVICEABLE NAVIGATIONAL AIDS PREVENT TAKE-OFFS VIA LEI YUE MUN. THE INTRODUCTION OF QUIETER AIRCRAFT BY INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES WILL ALSO HELP IN THIS REGARD,+ HE SAID.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY HAD GIVEN ASSURANCE THAT AIR POLLUTION FROM AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS AT KAI TAK WAS NOT A MAJOR PROBLEM, HE SAID.

PRECIPITATORS FOR INCINERATORS
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NEW TECHNOLOGY HAS ENABLED THE GOVERNMENT TO UNDERTAKE A PILOT SCHEME TO INSTALL ELECTROSTATIC PRECIPITATORS IN THE KENNEDY TOWN INCINERATOR.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES EXPLAINED THAT THE PRECIPITATORS WOULD BE INSTALLED IN TWO OF THE REFUSE BURNING LINES AT THE KENNEDY TOWN INCINERATOR, AT A COST OF \$8.5 MILLION.

THE OTHER THREE UNITS AT KENNEDY TOWN WOULD BE FITTED WITH PRECIPITATORS BETWEEN JULY 1984 AND OCTOBER 1985, SUBJECT TO PROVISION OF FUNDS, MR BARNES SAID. THIS WORK WOULD COST \$18 MILLION.

MR BARNES EXPLAINED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS THREE INCINERATORS - AT KWAI CHUNG, KENNEDY TOWN AND LAI CHI KOK.

THE KWAI CHUNG INCINERATOR, COMMISSIONED ABOUT FOUR YEARS AGO, HAS ELECTROSTATIC PRECIPITATORS WHICH WERE INCLUDED IN ITS DESIGN.

+I UNDERSTAND THAT SINCE ITS COMMISSIONING NO COMPLAINT HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC,+ HE SAID.

THE KENNEDY TOWN AND LAI CHI KOK INCINERATORS ARE MUCH OLDER PLANTS. WHEN BUILT, THEIR DESIGNED FLUE TEMPERATURES WERE TOO HIGH FOR ELECTROSTATIC PRECIPITATORS TO BE INSTALLED.

AS A RESULT OF NEW TECHNOLOGY, HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOW EMBARKED ON A PILOT SCHEME TO INSTALL PRECIPITATORS ON TWO OF THE FIVE REFUSE BURNING LINES AT KENNEDY TOWN.

IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SAY CONCLUSIVELY AT THIS STAGE HOW EFFECTIVE THIS WOULD PROVE, BUT THE INITIAL TEST RESULTS WERE SATISFACTORY AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE UNIT WAS COMFORTABLY WITHIN THE LATEST DUST EMISSION STANDARDS ADOPTED IN THE U.K. HOWEVER, A PREMATURE CORROSION PROBLEM HAD DEVELOPED AND WAYS OF OVERCOMING THIS WERE BEING STUDIED BY THE STAFF OF THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE MANUFACTURER AND THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, HE SAID.

THE EIGHT UNITS FOR LAI CHI KOK WOULD HAVE PRECIPITATORS FITTED BETWEEN LATE 1985 AND MID-1990, AT A COST OF \$116 MILLION.

HE SAID THE INSTALLATION PROGRAMME WAS ARRANGED TO MEET THE URBAN COUNCIL'S REQUIREMENT THAT ONLY TWO INCINERATION LINES SHOULD BE SHUT DOWN AT ANY ONE TIME FOR MODIFICATION WORK. IN THIS WAY AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF REFUSE DISPOSAL CAPACITY CAN BE MAINTAINED,+ HE SAID.

ACTION STEPPED UP AGAINST DRIVING OFFENDERS
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THE POLICE WERE STEPPING UP ENFORCEMENT ACTION AGAINST THE UNDESIRABLE UPWARD TREND IN OFFENCES OF DRIVING WITHOUT A VALID VEHICLE LICENCE OR DRIVING LICENCE, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+THIS WILL CONTINUE,+ HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HO KAM FAI, MR SCOTT SAID PROSECUTIONS FOR DRIVING WITH EXPIRED VEHICLE LICENCES TOTALLED 952 IN 1980, 921 IN 1981 AND 1 407 IN 1982.

+PROSECUTIONS FOR DRIVING WITH EXPIRED DRIVING LICENCES WERE 1 430 IN 1980, 1 739 IN 1981 AND 3 348 IN 1982.

+PROSECUTIONS FOR DRIVING WITHOUT A DRIVING LICENCE AMOUNTED TO 507 IN 1980, 496 IN 1981 AND 604 IN 1982,+ HE SAID.

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SYSTEM TO DEAL WITH PERSISTENT RECKLESS DRIVING
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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS SYSTEM IS THAT IT TACKLES UNSAFE DRIVING BEHAVIOUR DIRECTLY, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT, SAID IN MOVING THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS) BILL 1983 THROUGH A SECOND READING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

ROAD SAFETY STUDIES WORLDWIDE HAVE INDICATED THAT MOST ACCIDENTS ARE ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE SHORTCOMINGS OF ROAD USERS, RATHER THAN TO THE HIGHWAY ENVIRONMENT OR TO FAULTS IN VEHICLES, MR SCOTT POINTED OUT.

+THE INNOVATIVE AND IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS SYSTEM IS THAT IT IS NOT ONLY AIMED AT INFLUENCING THE BEHAVIOUR OF DRIVERS, BUT ALSO THAT BENEFITS SHOULD APPEAR IN THE SHORT TERM AND SHOULD PERSIST,+ HE SAID.

STATISTICS INDICATE THAT UNDER THE SYSTEM PROPOSED, ABOUT ONE-FIFTH OF DRIVING LICENCE HOLDERS WOULD ACCUMULATE SOME POINTS WITHIN THE THREE-YEAR PERIOD.

MOST OF THESE WOULD HAVE LESS THAN NINE POINTS, AND LESS THAN TWO PER CENT WOULD REACH THE LEVEL AT WHICH THEY WOULD BE LIABLE TO DISQUALIFICATION, MR SCOTT SAID.

+THESE FIGURES UNDERLINE THE OBJECT OF THE SCHEME: TO TACKLE THE PERSISTENT OFFENDER WHOSE RECKLESS BEHAVIOUR CREATES DANGERS AND PROBLEMS FOR THE MAJORITY OF RESPONSIBLE MOTORISTS AND OTHER ROAD USERS,+ MR SCOTT SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TILL THE NEXT SESSION ON APRIL 27.

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OUTDATED LAWS REMOVED FROM STATUTES BOOKS, AG SAYS
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THE GOVERNMENT IS ALERT TO THE NEED TO KEEP THE TOTAL BODY OF THE CRIMINAL LAW UNDER REVIEW TO ENSURE THAT THOSE PARTS OF THE LAW THAT HAVE OUTLIVED THEIR USEFULNESS ARE REMOVED FROM THE STATUTE BOOK.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JOHN GRIFFITHS, IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS BY THE HON LO TAK-SHING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR GRIFFITHS ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE POLICE FORCE IS THE PRINCIPAL AGENCY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT IN HONG KONG.

+THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE MONITORS ENFORCEMENT REQUIREMENTS AND DEPLOYS HIS RESOURCES AS APPROPRIATE TO MEET PARTICULAR PROBLEMS AT PARTICULAR POINTS IN TIME.

+THIS MONITORING TAKES PLACE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE COMMISSIONER'S DIRECTIVE TO HIS SENIOR POLICE COMMANDERS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES AND PRIORITIES. THE DIRECTIVES ARE RE-EXAMINED ANNUALLY TO DETERMINE LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES AND PRIORITIES,+ HE SAID.

+THE MOST RECENT DIRECTIVE ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 25 THIS YEAR SETS OUT THE BASIC POLICIES AS THEY RELATE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AS FOLLOWS:

- (A) TO ENSURE AN APPROPRIATE POLICE PRESENCE THROUGHOUT HONG KONG;
- (B) TO ADMINISTER AND MANAGE POLICE MANPOWER AND OTHER RESOURCES TO ENSURE THE BEST POSSIBLE RETURN FROM SUCH RESOURCES;
- (C) TO CULTIVATE AND DEVELOP PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE POLICE FORCE IN THE EXECUTION OF ITS DUTIES.

MR GRIFFITHS SAID THE DIRECTIVE LISTED THE PRIORITIES OF THE FORCE AND THE FIRST PRIORITY WAS THE PREVENTION AND DETECTION OF CRIME.

+IN TERMS, THE DIRECTIVE REQUIRES SENIOR POLICE OFFICERS TO KEEP THESE POLICIES AND PRIORITIES UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW AND SUPERVISION. THE COMMISSIONER MONITORS THE POSITION CONSTANTLY AND REPORTS THE SITUATION MONTHLY TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL. HE DECIDES HOW AND WHERE AND WITH WHAT PRIORITY AND IN WHICH AREA OF CRIME TO DEPLOY POLICE RESOURCES,+ MR GRIFFITHS SAID.

SOME OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS ALSO HAD RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ENFORCING ORDINANCES AND HERE, TOO, THERE WAS A CONSTANT MONITORING OF THE LAW AND ITS ENFORCEMENT BOTH AT A DEPARTMENTAL AND BRANCH LEVEL, MR GRIFFITHS SAID.

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COMMERCIAL CRIME FIGURES
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THE NUMBER OF INVESTIGATIONS UNDERTAKEN BY COMMERCIAL CRIME BUREAU WERE 809 IN 1980, 1 094 IN 1981 AND 1 149 IN 1982, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JOHN GRIFFITHS SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY THE HON WONG PO-YAN, HE SAID THE AMOUNT OF MONEY REPORTED LOST BY THEFT OR FRAUD IN THE CASES WERE \$108 286 004 IN 1980, \$151 299 883 IN 1981 AND \$258 098 082 IN 1982.

NO STATISTICS HAD BEEN KEPT ON THE NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTIONS BUT A STUDY OF THE POLICE FILES COULD BE UNDERTAKEN FOR AN ANSWER, HE SAID.

MR GRIFFITHS ALSO SAID THAT THE LAW IN A NUMBER OF AREAS WAS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW.

+FOR INSTANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS AND THE COMMISSIONER FOR SECURITIES ARE CURRENTLY REVIEWING THE POSITION UNDER THE ORDINANCE DEALING WITH DEPOSIT TAKING COMPANIES AND WITH COMMODITY TRADING.

+THE AREA OF THE LAW COVERING PYRAMID AND INERTIA SELLING IS ALSO UNDER EXAMINATION AT THE MOMENT.

+I ANTICIPATE IN DUE COURSE SOME AMENDMENT OF THE LAWS WILL BE FOUND NECESSARY IN EACH OF THESE AREAS,+ HE CONCLUDED.

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63 NEW OFFENCES CREATED IN 1981
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SIXTY-THREE NEW OFFENCES WERE CREATED BY ORDINANCES ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN 1981, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JOHN GRIFFITHS, SAID TODAY.

+A FURTHER 106 OFFENCES WERE CREATED BY SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION LAID ON THE TABLE OF THIS COUNCIL. THE FIGURES FOR 1982 ARE 78 AND 184 RESPECTIVELY,+ HE SAID.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LO TAK-SHING.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1983

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BILL TO DEAL WITH SEIZED MARICULTURE ITEMS

A BILL TO SIMPLIFY PROCEDURE FOR CLEARING MARICULTURISTS WAS INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME BY THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, THE HON JOHN RIDDELL-SWAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE BILL, THE MARINE FISH CULTURE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, WILL ENABLE THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES TO DISPOSE OF ITEMS SEIZED DURING CLEARANCE BY SELLING, DESTROYING OR OTHERWISE DISPOSING OF THEM AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE AFTER SEIZURE, HE EXPLAINED.

+THE OWNERS OF THE ITEMS SO DISPOSED OF ARE ENTITLED TO CLAIM THE PROCEEDS OF SALES, IF ANY, AFTER DEDUCTION OF THE EXPENSES INCURRED,+ HE SAID.

DR RIDDELL-SWAN FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT IN IMPLEMENTING THE MARINE FISH CULTURE ORDINANCE, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO RELOCATE LARGE NUMBER OF MARICULTURISTS. IN DOING SO, IT MIGHT ALSO BE NECESSARY TO SEIZE AND DISPOSE OF RAFTS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT USED IN MARICULTURE OPERATIONS.

THE PRESENT ORDINANCE, HE SAID, WAS NOT WELL SUITED TO LARGE-SCALE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS. THE PROCEDURES IN THE ORDINANCE AND THE REGULATIONS MADE UNDER IT WERE COMPLICATED AND TIME-CONSUMING, AND DID NOT, IN GENERAL PROVIDE FOR THE IMMEDIATE DISPOSAL OF SEIZED ITEMS.

+WITH ITS LIMITED RESOURCES AND STORAGE FACILITIES GOVERNMENT WOULD THEREFORE ENCOUNTER SERIOUS PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES IN HAVING TO HOLD AND SAFEGUARD SEIZED ITEMS, WHILE RUNNING THE RISK OF CLAIMS FOR DAMAGE OR LOSS OF PROPERTY.

+THAT PROBLEM WILL BE PARTICULARLY ACUTE IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF IMPLEMENTING THE ORDINANCE IN THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF MARICULTURISTS ARE INVOLVED,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE AN THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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MORE PEOPLE HELPED BY TAVA SCHEME

THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT PAID OUT MORE THAN \$24 MILLION TO HELP TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS OR THEIR DEPENDANTS IN THE 1981/82 FISCAL YEAR.

THE YEAR SAW A 24.3 PER CENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR, BRINGING THE TOTAL TO 6 169, ACCORDING TO THE 1981/82 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE (TAVA) FUND, WHICH WAS TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE REPORT ATTRIBUTES THE INCREASES TO REPEATED PUBLICITY PROGRAMMES, RELAXATION OF THE SICK LEAVE REQUIREMENT FROM SEVEN TO THREE DAYS, AND EFFORTS BY SWD WORKERS TO ASSIST VICTIMS, OR THEIR DEPENDANTS, WITH THEIR APPLICATIONS.

OF THE 6 169 APPLICATIONS RECEIVED, 497 INVOLVED DEATH, 4 824 SERIOUS INJURIES AND 848 SLIGHT INJURIES.

THE HIGHEST SINGLE PAYMENT OF \$32 900 WAS AWARDED TO A WIDOW AND HER FOUR DEPENDENT CHILDREN AFTER THE FATHER DIED IN A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT IN TUEN MUN ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

+THE WORST TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED, OCCURRED WHEN TWO COACHES CARRYING FACTORY WORKERS COLLIDED ON AUGUST 19, 1981 ON TSING YI ROAD, KILLING TWO PERSONS AND INJURING 59 OTHERS,+ THE REPORT NOTES.

THIS LED TO 61 APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE, 23 OF WHICH WERE FOUND TO BE ELIGIBLE.

DURING THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW, THREE APPEALS WERE LODGED WITH THE SOCIAL SECURITY APPEAL BOARD AGAINST DECISIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT BUT ONLY TWO WERE HEARD. THE DEPARTMENT'S DECISIONS IN THESE TWO CASES WERE UPHELD.

THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, WHICH ADVISES THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TAVA SCHEME AND THE FUND, HAD CONSIDERED A NUMBER OF ISSUES IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE SCHEME FURTHER.

THESE INCLUDED INCREASING THE PAYMENT RATES, REDUCING THE RATES OF LEVIES ON VEHICLES AND DRIVING LICENCES OR PERMITS, RELAXING THE SICK LEAVE REQUIREMENT FROM SEVEN TO THREE DAYS, EXTENDING THE SCHEME TO COVER TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS ON PRIVATE ROADS, AND A SEPARATE ASSISTANCE SCHEME FOR MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY AND KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY ACCIDENT VICTIMS.

THREE IMPROVEMENTS WERE MADE DURING THE YEAR.

FIRST, THE RATES OF PAYMENTS WERE RAISED BY AN OVERALL 35.2 PER CENT AND THE BURIAL GRANT BY 87.5 PER CENT, FROM \$1 600 TO \$3 000, GIVING MORE SUBSTANTIAL BENEFITS TO ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.

SECOND, THE ORIGINAL SEVEN-DAY SICK LEAVE QUALIFICATION WAS REDUCED TO THREE DAYS FOR INJURY CASES OCCURRING ON OR AFTER JANUARY 6, 1982 TO ENABLE MORE VICTIMS WITH MINOR INJURIES TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE.

THIRD, AN AMENDMENT TO REDUCE THE LEVIES ON VEHICLES, TRADE LICENCES AND DRIVING LICENCES OR PERMITS BY 60 PER CENT WITH EFFECT FROM MAY 1, 1982 WAS APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON JANUARY 6, 1982.

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MEMBERS THANKED FOR WORK ON BILL
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MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE, HEADED BY THE HON. F.K. HU, AND MEMBERS OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION, WERE CONGRATULATED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. JOHN GRIFFITHS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY FOR THEIR WORK ON THE BILLS OF EXCHANGE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983.

MR GRIFFITHS WAS MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, WHICH AIMS AT REMOVING UNCERTAINTY CONCERNING LIABILITY OF PERSONS WHO SIGN BILLS OF EXCHANGE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WILL RESUME ON APRIL 27.

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REPORT ON DRAFT ESTIMATES
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THE REPORT BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1983-84 WAS PRESENTED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

TABLING THE REPORT, THE HON THE CHIEF SECRETARY SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE SAID THAT AT THE REQUEST OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, THE MEETINGS THIS YEAR TOOK PLACE OVER FOUR AFTERNOONS, TWO MORE THAN USUAL, ENABLING MEMBERS TO EXAMINE THE DRAFT ESTIMATES IN GREATER DETAIL.

+INSTEAD OF THE PRECIS OF THE ORAL AND WRITTEN ANSWERS WHICH USUALLY MAKES UP THE OFFICIAL REPORT, WE HAVE THIS YEAR PROVIDED A MUCH FULLER ACCOUNT BY ATTACHING BOTH THE ORAL AND WRITTEN REPLIES TO MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AS ENCLOSURES TO THE REPORT.

+THIS IS AN EXPERIMENT WHICH I THINK WILL BE WELCOMED BY MEMBERS, THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC,+ SIR PHILIP SAID.

THIS NEW STYLE REPORT, HE SAID, PROVIDES A MUCH CLEARER INDICATION THAN PREVIOUSLY OF THE ATTENTION GIVEN BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO THE EXAMINATION OF THE DRAFT ESTIMATES, AND OF THE CARE TAKEN BY CONTROLLING OFFICERS AND THE FINANCE BRANCH TO RESPOND TO MEMBERS' ENQUIRIES.

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SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS APPROVED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A MOTION APPROVING SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS AMOUNTING TO \$530 MILLION FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1982-83.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID THAT THE MAJOR ITEMS INCLUDE \$246 MILLION FOR VARIOUS SALARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE AND STAFF OF SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS ARISING FROM THE 1982 PAY TREND SURVEY.

OTHER ITEMS INCLUDE \$124 MILLION TO MEET A RECURRENT GRANT TO THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL, \$19 MILLION TO MEET ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE DUE TO THE INCREASING NUMBER OF CLAIMS FROM CIVIL SERVANTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR DENTAL TREATMENT, AND \$17 MILLION TO MEET PAYMENTS OF EMERGENCY RELIEF GRANTS.

MR BREMRIDGE SAID THE SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION RESULTED IN A NET INCREASE OF \$246 MILLION IN EXPENDITURE, THE REMAINDER BEING OFFSET UNDER OTHER HEADS OF EXPENDITURE AND BY THE FREEZING OF FUNDS UNDER THE TWO ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS VOTES.

FINANCE COMMITTEE HAD APPROVED ALL THE ITEMS AND THE PURPOSE OF THE MOTION WAS SIMPLY TO SEEK THE COVERING AUTHORITY OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID.

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BILLS PASSED

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THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1983, AND THE SHIPPING AND PORT CONTROL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

A PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL, THE COUNCIL OF ST PAUL'S CO-EDUCATIONAL COLLEGE INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983 WAS ALSO PASSED.

THREE BILLS, THE BILLS OF EXCHANGE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS) BILL 1983 AND THE MARINE FISH CULTURE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983, WERE INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME. DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED TILL APRIL 27.

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FARE RISE, ONE-MAN OPERATION FOR LANTAU BUS
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS APPROVED A FARE INCREASE FOR THE NEW LANTAU BUS COMPANY, TOGETHER WITH THE COMPANY'S PROPOSAL FOR A ONE-MAN OPERATION PROGRAMME, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE VIABILITY OF THE BUS SERVICES ON LANTAU.

THE FARE RISE, AVERAGING ABOUT 35 PER CENT, WILL TAKE EFFECT FROM APRIL 20.

THE NEW LANTAU BUS COMPANY, WHICH LAST RAISED ITS FARES IN APRIL 1980, APPLIED IN JULY LAST YEAR FOR AN AVERAGE INCREASE OF ABOUT 44 PER CENT WITH EFFECT FROM OCTOBER THAT YEAR.

THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL FOUND THAT WHILE THERE WAS A NEED FOR AN INCREASE, BECAUSE OF THE RISE IN OPERATING COSTS SINCE 1980, IT SHOULD BE RESTRICTED TO AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 35 PER CENT.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT ACCORDING TO THE COMPANY'S FINANCIAL FORECAST, THE COMPANY WOULD SUFFER A LOSS OF ABOUT \$300 000 FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1983. THE REVISED FORECAST INDICATED EVEN BIGGER LOSSES FOR THE YEARS 1983-84 AND 84-85 IF THERE WAS NO FARE REVISION.

TO HELP REDUCE OPERATING COSTS AND STABILISE BUS FARES IN THE LONG TERM, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO APPROVED A PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF ONE-MAN BUS OPERATIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN STAGES BETWEEN JUNE 1, 1983 AND APRIL 1, 1984. HOWEVER, THIS WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE VIEWS OF THE ISLANDS DISTRICT BOARD, WHO WILL BE CONSULTED ON THE PROPOSAL AT ITS MEETING TODAY.

THE PROGRAMME INCLUDES THE INTRODUCTION OF A SHORT-DISTANCE ROUTE BETWEEN MUI WO AND PUI O, AND THE RETENTION OF TWO-WAY SECTIONAL FARES ON ANOTHER ROUTE BETWEEN MUI WO AND TAI O SO THAT COMMUTERS TRAVELLING SHORT DISTANCES WILL NOT HAVE TO PAY FULL FARES.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE APPROVED FARE SCALE ON MAIN ROUTES FROM MUI WO:

	<u>EXISTING</u>	<u>NEW</u>
<u>MONDAYS TO SATURDAYS</u>		
PUI O	\$0.80	\$1.00
TONG FUK	\$1.50	\$2.00
TAI O	\$3.00	\$4.00
<u>SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS</u>		
SHEK PIK	\$3.00	\$4.00
TUNG CHUNG	\$4.00	\$5.50
NGONG PING	\$6.00	\$8.00

LORD COCKFIELD VISITS ELECTRONICS FACTORY AND CONTAINER PORT

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE, LORD COCKFIELD TODAY (WEDNESDAY) VISITED AN ELECTRONICS FACTORY AND A CONTAINER TERMINAL IN KWAI CHUNG.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR E.P. HO AND THE SENIOR BRITISH TRADE COMMISSIONER, MR CHRISTIAN ADAMS, LORD COCKFIELD ARRIVED AT ELECTRONICS DEVICES LTD AT KWAI CHEONG ROAD WHERE HE WAS WELCOMED BY THE FACTORY'S MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR TOMMY ZAU.

THE FACTORY, ESTABLISHED IN 1969, IS A JOINT VENTURE BY HONG KONG AND THE NETHERLANDS' INTERESTS. IT MANUFACTURES A WIDE RANGE OF ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS SUCH AS SMALL SIGNAL TRANSISTORS, POWER TRANSISTORS, PROFESSIONAL MICRO-MINIATURE TRANSISTORS, HIGH FREQUENCY TRANSISTORS AND DIODES WHICH ARE BASIC COMPONENTS IN MANY ELECTRONIC INDUSTRIES SUCH AS TELEVISION, VIDEO TELEVISION AND RADIO.

MOST OF THE FINISHED PRODUCTS - AMOUNTING TO 1.3 BILLION UNITS A YEAR, OR 4.3 MILLION UNITS A DAY - ARE EXPORTED TO EUROPE, AMERICA AND THE FAR EAST, WHILE THE REMAINDER ARE FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION.

LORD COCKFIELD ALSO VISITED THE PREMISES OF MODERN TERMINALS LTD (MTL), PART OF THE KWAI CHUNG CONTAINER TERMINAL WHICH RANKS AMONG THE TOP THREE CONTAINER TERMINALS IN THE WORLD. HE WAS MET BY THE COMPANY'S MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR J.M.E. LEESE AND THE FINANCIAL DIRECTOR, MR W.S. PIRIE.

MODERN TERMINALS LTD, ESTABLISHED IN HONG KONG IN 1969, EMPLOYS NEARLY 1 300 STAFF. ITS TWO BERTHS, WITH LENGTHS OF 305 METRES AND 473 METRES, NOW ACCOMMODATE OVER 1 300 VESSELS A YEAR - OR BETWEEN THREE TO FOUR SHIPS A DAY.

THIRTY-NINE SHIPPING LINES USE THE COMPANY'S FACILITIES, WHICH COMPRISE TWO GROUND-LEVEL CONTAINER FREIGHT STATIONS AND A TWO-STORY FREIGHT STATION WHICH IS PART OF A TWELVE-STORY COMPLEX. THIS COMPLEX INCLUDES TEN STOREYS OF WAREHOUSE AREA AND OFFICES, AS WELL AS THE TERMINAL CONTROL ROOM.

DURING 1982, MTL HANDLED A TOTAL OF 664 360 TEUS (TWENTY-FOOT EQUIVALENTS, THE STANDARD MEASURE OF CONTAINER THROUGHPUT), AND ALSO 1 610 252 FREIGHT TONS THROUGH THE CONTAINER FREIGHT STATIONS. THE TERMINAL OPERATIONS ARE CONTROLLED BY AN ON-LINE 24-HOUR COMPUTER SYSTEM WHICH IS ONE OF THE LARGEST IN HONG KONG.

TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS FOR YAU MA TEI
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TWO PROPOSED PROJECTS COSTING A TOTAL OF \$26 MILLION TO IMPROVE THE TRAFFIC FLOW AND PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENTS IN YAU MA TEI WILL BE DISCUSSED BY DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AT A MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

THEY WILL COMMENT ON A \$15 MILLION SCHEME FOR THE WIDENING OF A SECTION OF CANTON ROAD BETWEEN KOWLOON PARK DRIVE AND JORDAN ROAD FERRY CONCOURSE.

THE SECOND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NETWORK OF PEDESTRIAN SUBWAYS AT THE JORDAN ROAD INTERSECTION WITH THE FERRY CONCOURSE, AT A COST OF \$11 MILLION.

AT THE MEETING, THE BOARD MEMBERS WILL BE BRIEFED BY A HOUSING DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL ON THE REHOUSING POLICY TOWARDS STREET-SLEEPERS, AND ALSO DISCUSS MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO ABATE FIRE HAZARDS IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA WILL INCLUDE THE BUILDING MANAGEMENT INTERIM REPORT, THE RESITING OF COOKED-FOOD STALLS INTO TEMPORARY CENTRES, KOWLOON HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAMME, AND THE DESIGN OF A LOGO FOR THE DISTRICT BOARD.