



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BASIC TENETS OF SOCIAL SYSTEM VITAL - FANG
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IF THE MUCH AVOWED OBJECTIVE OF HONG KONG'S CONTINUED STABILITY AND PROSPERITY WAS TO BE ACHIEVED, IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO PRESERVE THE BASIC TENETS OF THE TERRITORY'S SOCIAL SYSTEM, DR THE HON HARRY FANG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

LEADING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON +SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+, HE SAID, +OUR SOCIAL SYSTEM HAS TAKEN MANY YEARS TO EVOLVE AND IT HAS BEEN WELL TRIED.

+LET US BE ALLOWED TO BUILD ON THIS FOUNDATION SO THAT OUR GENERATION AND FUTURE GENERATIONS TO COME CAN CONTINUE TO HELP HONG KONG GROW AND PROSPER. IN THIS, LIES OUR BEST GUARANTEE FOR THE FUTURE.+

HE BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE THE WISH OF ALL IN THE COMMUNITY THAT THE BEST FEATURES OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM SHOULD BE MAINTAINED.

+THESE MIGHT BE DESCRIBED AS OUR WORK ETHOS, INGENUITY AND CREATIVITY, TOLERANCE AND NON-VIOLENCE AND 'POSITIVE NON-INTERVENTION' ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT HONG KONG'S PHILOSOPHY OF HARD WORK HAD SERVED THE TERRITORY EXCEEDINGLY WELL AND HAD TO CONTINUE TO BE THE CORNERSTONE OF ITS PROSPERITY AND GROWTH IN FUTURE.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT HARD WORK ON ITS OWN WAS NOT ENOUGH AND THERE HAD TO BE KNOWLEDGE THAT ONE COULD KEEP THE JUST REWARDS OF ONE'S TOIL AND LABOUR.

+HONG KONG IS FILLED WITH SUCCESS STORIES OF MEN AND WOMEN OF VERY HUMBLE BEGINNINGS WHO HAVE MADE IT TO THE TOP THROUGH THEIR OWN EFFORTS.

+SOCIAL MOBILITY HAS PROVIDED THE DRIVING FORCE AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH MOBILITY IS POSSIBLE IN HONG KONG MUST SURELY BE ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE FEATURES OF OUR SOCIETY.

+WE MUST ENSURE THAT OUR FUTURE SOCIAL FRAMEWORK WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SCOPE FOR SUCH MOBILITY.

+THE BEST GUARANTEE LIES IN THE PROVISION OF AN ADEQUATE AND PROGRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, WHICH ENCOURAGES FREE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT TO THE BEST OF ONE'S ABILITY, AND FREEDOM IN THE SUBSEQUENT CHOICE OF WORK,+ HE SAID.

DR FANG ADDED THAT INITIATIVE, ENTERPRISE AND CREATIVITY HAD PLAYED NO LESS A PART IN HONG KONG'S ACHIEVEMENTS.

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+THE UNLIMITED SCOPE FOR THESE QUALITIES TO FIND EXPRESSION IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MORE ENDURING AND COMMENDABLE HALLMARKS OF OUR CAPITALISTIC SOCIETY AND WE NEED FEEL NO SHAME IN ACKNOWLEDGING THIS,+ HE SAID.

NOTING THAT THE MEETING OF EAST AND WEST HERE HAD ALLOWED HONG KONG TO DRAW ON THE BEST OF DIFFERENT CULTURE, HE SAID, +PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR COMMUNITY AND I HOPE THAT THE FUTURE WILL ALLOW US TO RETAIN AND NURTURE OUR COSMOPOLITAN OUTLOOK.

+THIS CAN ONLY BE POSSIBLE IF INDIVIDUALS, WHATEVER THEIR ETHICAL BACKGROUND, CAN BE ASSURED THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE A USEFUL ROLE TO PLAY IN HONG KONG AFTER 1997.+

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, HE SAID, +FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS ONE OF THE BEST MEANS OF KEEPING ANY GOVERNMENT ON ITS TOES AND A RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT WILL ENCOURAGE SUCH EXPRESSIONS AS A WAY TO PROGRESS.

+TAKE AWAY THIS FREEDOM AND YOU WILL HAVE DISTRUST, DIVISIVENESS AND APPREHENSION -- THE VERY STUFF THAT INSTABILITY BREEDS ON.+

DR FANG SAID HE WAS PERSUADED THAT THE BEST SOCIAL SYSTEM IN THE WORLD REQUIRED A JUDICIOUS GUIDING HAND OF THE GOVERNMENT, OR WHAT HE CALLED +POSITIVE NON-INTERVENTION+.

+IT IS NOT EASY TO KNOW WHEN TO INTERVENE AND WHEN NOT TO -- AND THERE ARE MANY OCCASIONS WHEN WE HAVE GOT IT WRONG,+ HE SAID.

CONCEDING THAT THESE HITS AND MISSES WOULD CONTINUE, HE ADDED, +BUT BY AND LARGE WE HAVE NOT DONE BADLY AND I BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT AND MEET THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE WEAK, THE NEEDY, THE SICK AND THE HANDICAPPED WITHOUT, HOWEVER, STIFLING INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES AND INDEPENDENCE. LET THE STRONG LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES.+

HE BELIEVED THAT +FREEDOM+ WAS THE KEY WORD AND ONE WHICH HAD ALWAYS TO BE KEPT IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS TO DECIDE HONG KONG'S FUTURE.

+FREEDOM HAS BECOME SECOND NATURE TO US ALL AND IT IS ALL TOO EASY TO TAKE IT FOR GRANTED. BUT EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE SHOULD SERVE TO REMIND US THAT FREEDOM CAN JUST AS EASILY BE WRESTED FROM ONE THROUGH THE DECREES OF MEN.

+FREEDOM OF CHOICE IS WHAT HAS MADE HONG KONG AND THERE WILL BE NO QUICKER ROAD TO INSTABILITY AND EROSION OF CONFIDENCE THAN TO SUBORDINATE THE FREE WILL OF MEN TO THE DICTATES OF THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE WARNED.

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RIGHT TO CHOOSE TYPES OF EDUCATION MUST BE PRESERVED
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REV THE HON PATRICK MCGOVERN STRESSED THE NEED TO PRESERVE PARENTS' RIGHT TO DECIDE WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION THEIR CHILD SHOULD HAVE.

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON +SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+, FATHER MCGOVERN SAID, +UNABLE IN MODERN SOCIETY TO ENGAGE FULL-TIME IN ACADEMIC EDUCATION THEMSELVES, PARENTS IN SO FAR AS THEY CAN IN AN IMPERFECT WORLD, EXPRESS THEIR PREFERENCES BY THEIR CHOICE OF SCHOOL.+

+WHILE I AGREE THERE IS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM, I ALSO AGREE THAT THE BASE ON WHICH IT IS BUILT IS CORRECT,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG HAD A BROAD CURRICULUM, INCLUDING KNOWLEDGE OF RELIGION FOR THOSE WHO WANTED IT, AND SCOPE FOR WHAT MANY PARENTS WITH NO RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION WANTED -- A SOUND FOUNDATION IN ETHICAL, MORAL AND CIVIC PRINCIPLES.

+THESE PARENTS' RIGHTS, EXPRESSED THROUGH THEIR CHOICE OF VOLUNTARY BODIES AND AIDED BY GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION, MUST BE PRESERVED, AND I HOPE, IMPROVED IN THE YEARS AHEAD,+ HE SAID.

ANOTHER RIGHT WHICH HE FELT MUST BE GUARANTEED IN THE AGREEMENT AND BASIC LAW WAS THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE AND BE A MEMBER OF FREE TRADE UNIONS.

+BY FREE I MEAN FREE FROM THE DOMINATION OF ANY POLITICAL PARTY,+ HE SAID.

ELABORATING FURTHER ON WHAT HE MEANT BY THE WORD +FREE+, HE SAID, +I HAVE NEVER ADVOCATED THAT TRADE UNIONS SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN POLITICAL LIFE.

+IT IS THE DUTY OF A GOOD UNION TO USE ITS INFLUENCE, AND IF NECESSARY ITS POWER, TO ADVISE OR PRESSURISE GOVERNMENTS TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS IF GOVERNMENTS ARE NEGLECTING THEIR DUTY IN THAT FIELD.

+THAT IS OF COURSE A POLITICAL ACTIVITY. BUT IT IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM BEING DOMINATED BY A POLITICAL PARTY.+

+THE DANGER IN TOO CLOSE A CONNECTION WITH A PARTY IS THAT THE WORKERS AND THE POWER OF A UNION WILL BE USED FOR THE POLITICAL PURPOSES OF THE PARTY RATHER THAN THE PROTECTION OF THE UNION MEMBERS,+ HE ADDED.

+IN A NON-MARXIST COUNTRY, FOR EXAMPLE, THE UNIONS CAN BE USED EITHER TO DISRUPT THE ECONOMY AND THUS TRY TO OVERTHROW THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT, OR BY FUTILE STRIKES MAKE THE WORKERS SO DESPERATE AND POOR THAT THEY RESORT TO VIOLENCE, AND FROM THE MARXIST POINT OF VIEW, RIPE FOR REVOLUTION,+ HE SAID.

/WITHIN A

WITHIN A MARXIST COUNTRY, THE UNION WAS UNDER THE STRICT CONTROL OF THE PARTY, AND BY AND LARGE, WAS USED TO ENFORCE DISCIPLINE, SOMETIMES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FACTORY SECURITY OR THE MILITIA, HE STATED.

+THIS, AS FAR AS I CAN GATHER, IS STILL SO IN CHINA FOR EXAMPLE, IN SPITE OF THE REFORMS AND SEPARATION OF POWERS WHICH ARE NOW BEGINNING AS A RESULT OF THE 10TH NATIONAL CONGRESS OF UNIONS IN OCTOBER 1983,+ HE SAID.

+SUCH CONTROL AND PRESSURE FROM A POLITICAL PARTY IS OF COURSE CONTRARY TO THE WHOLE IDEA OF THE FREEDOM IN WHICH UNION MEMBERS CAN DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT THEY WANT, BALANCED OF COURSE IN A FREE SOCIETY BY DUE REGARD FOR THE RIGHTS OF OWNERS AND THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY,+ HE SAID.

HE CONCEDED THAT IN HONG KONG THE FREE UNION MOVEMENT WAS STILL VERY WEAK DUE TO A VARIETY OF REASONS.

+BUT EVEN IF NOT EXERCISED, THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE IS THERE AND MUST BE PROTECTED IN THE FUTURE - OTHERWISE THE FREEDOM TO WORK IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF ONE'S CHOICE, AND ALL THOSE OTHER WORKERS' RIGHTS PROTECTED BY FREE UNIONS, WILL BE ENDANGERED,+ HE SAID.

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SOCIAL WELFARE PROVISION MUST BE PRESERVED - HO
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IF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION AFTER 1997 INTENDED TO KEEP THE CURRENT LIVING STANDARDS AND LIFESTYLE OF THE PEOPLE UNDISTURBED, IT WAS IMPERATIVE AT LEAST TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING SOCIAL WELFARE PROVISION, DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI SAID IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE TODAY.

TO THIS END, HE ADDED, CERTAIN CONDITIONS HAD TO BE KEPT OR MET AND THESE CONDITIONS SHOULD BE ENSHRINED IN THE AGREEMENT OR THE BASIC LAW.

THESE CONDITIONS ARE:

- * THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT MUST RECOGNISE THE TENETS OF INDIVIDUAL DIGNITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS, SO THAT THE WISHES AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN WOULD NOT BE SUBORDINATED TO POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ENDS;
- * THE PROVISION OF WELFARE SERVICES IS TO MAXIMISE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN POTENTIAL RATHER THAN TO SERVE POLITICAL OBJECTIVES;

/* VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

- * VOLUNTARY AGENCIES MUST BE RECOGNISED AND ALLOWED TO OFFER THEIR SERVICES FREELY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR SPONSORS' BELIEFS IN AND JUDGMENT OF SOCIAL PRIORITIES, WITHOUT INTERVENTION FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ; AND
- * A DEFINITE COMMITMENT MUST BE MADE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES TO SUPPORT VOLUNTARY-SECTOR WELFARE SERVICES BY WAY OF SUBVENTION OR FUNDING OF SERVICES.

ELABORATING ON THE ROLE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, DR HO SAID, +A STRONG AND DYNAMIC VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNCTIONING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE DIFFERENT SORTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES IS INVARIABLY IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY.+

+IT WILL NOT ONLY EXPAND THE SCOPE AND RANGE OF SOCIAL WELFARE PROVISION BY MOBILISING MANPOWER AND FINANCE WHICH MAY OTHERWISE HAVE LAID DORMANT, BUT ALSO SERVE TO HARNESS THE CREATION OF A CARING AND SELF-RELIANT COMMUNITY SPIRIT,+ HE ADDED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE CONCEPT OF VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION WAS NOT RESTRICTED TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT PRESENT THERE WERE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF LOCAL PEOPLE SERVING ON GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIVE - ADVISORY BOARDS AND ON EXECUTIVE - MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES OF SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, MAKING SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY.

HOWEVER, ENTHUSIASM FOR VOLUNTARY ACTIVITY WAS BEING DAMPENED BY THE UNCERTAINTIES SURROUNDING 1997, DR HO SAID.

HE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO WASTE NO TIME IN THE SEARCH FOR NEW WAYS AND MEANS OF EXPLOITING THIS VAST POOL OF HUMAN RESOURCES.

HE ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE TO GIVE THE PEOPLE THE RIGHT TO FREE CHOICE IN EMPLOYMENT.

+WHEN A MAN IS ABLE TO CHOOSE HIS OWN JOB, HE WILL READILY HOLD HIMSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS PERFORMANCE AND MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO IMPROVE IT.

+THESE QUALITIES OF SELF-DISCIPLINE AND INITIATIVE ARE VITAL TO THE SUCCESSFUL OPERATION OF A FREE ENTERPRISE.

+FURTHERMORE, THIS FREE CHOICE OF EMPLOYMENT RELEASES HUMAN TALENT AND HARNESSES PRODUCTIVITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE ECONOMY,+ HE SAID.

DR HO POINTED OUT THAT ARTICLE 23 OF THE UNITED NATION'S UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROCLAIMS THIS FREEDOM AS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT.

+I THEREFORE URGE THAT THE AGREEMENT OR THE BASIC LAW SHOULD EMBODY A PROVISION IN SUPPORT OF THIS FORM OF FREEDOM AS A PLEDGE OF THE BELIEF OF SUPREMACY OF MAN OVER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS,+ HE SAID.

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PRESS FREEDOM CONTRIBUTES TO PROSPERITY - CHOW

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FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA HAD BEEN A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR TO HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY AND STABILITY AND WAS BY NOW AN +INHERENT PART OF OUR EXISTENCE+, THE HON SELINA CHOW SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+IT IS NOT A PRIVILEGE BUT A RIGHT THAT WE SHOULD ALL GUARD JEALOUSLY,+ SHE STRESSED.

MRS CHOW WAS SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON +SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+.

+APART FROM AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN, HONG KONG UNDOUBTEDLY ENJOYS THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF FREEDOM IN THIS REGARD IN THE WHOLE OF ASIA,+ SHE SAID.

SHE BELIEVED THAT SUCH FREEDOM WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE TOLERANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH, DESPITE ITS BEING CONSTITUTIONALLY COLONIAL, HAD ACKNOWLEDGED AND RESPECTED THE ROLE OF A FREE PRESS AS AN ESSENTIAL MIRROR OF PUBLIC OPINION IN HONG KONG'S UNIQUE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM.

+THIS POLICY OF LEAST GOVERNMENTAL INTERFERENCE HAS ENABLED OUR PRESS TO DEVELOP ACCORDING TO MARKET DEMANDS,+ SHE SAID.

AS A RESULT, SHE SAID, HONG KONG HAD A +VERY VIBRANT AND COMPETITIVE+ PRESS COMPRISING 68 NEWSPAPERS WITH A TOTAL CIRCULATION OF 1 550 000 A DAY.

IN ADDITION, MILLIONS OF VIEWERS AND LISTENERS WERE SERVED BY TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTS.

TURNING TO HOW THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA NEEDS TO BE PRESERVED OR DEVELOPED AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF 1997, SHE POINTED OUT THAT THE SIZE OF THE MEDIA SHOULD NOT BE ARBITRARILY TAMPERED WITH BY FUTURE AUTHORITIES.

+MANY BELIEVE THERE IS SAFETY IN NUMBERS, FOR HEALTHY COMPETITION FUNCTIONS AS CHECKS AND BALANCES WITHIN THE PROFESSION WHILE OFFERING A CHOICE TO THE PUBLIC,+ SHE SAID.

+JOURNALISTS ARE ALSO KEEN TO POINT OUT THAT THE PRESENT HEALTHY MARKET SITUATION COULD BE UPSET AND UNEMPLOYMENT UNNECESSARILY CREATED SHOULD GOVERNMENT IN FUTURE STEP IN TO CUT DOWN THE NUMBER,+ SHE ADDED.

MRS CHOW MAINTAINED THAT THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA AS THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE MUST NOT ONLY BE UPHELD BUT BE ALLOWED ROOM TO DEVELOP FURTHER.

+IT SHOULD BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE TO MONITOR SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH INFORMED, RESPONSIBLE AND OBJECTIVE COMMENTARY AND CRITICISM WITHOUT FEAR OF PERSECUTION,+ SHE SAID.

/SHE STRESSED

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SHE STRESSED THAT THERE MUST NOT BE PRESSURE OF CENSORSHIP, VISIBLE OR INVISIBLE, BY THE STATE AND THERE MUST BE NO ADMINISTRATIVE, LEGAL OR FISCAL DETERRENT TO THE DISSEMINATION AS WELL AS RECEPTION OF NEWS.

SHE CALLED ON MEMBERS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION IN THEIR STUDY OF THE HONG KONG LAW IN THE CONTEXT OF 1997, TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE SO AS TO PREVENT ANY RETROGRESSION OF THE FREEDOMS OF THE MEDIA THAT HONG KONG HAD COME TO TAKE FOR GRANTED.

+CONCERN HAS BEEN VOICED BY MANY JOURNALISTS ABOUT THE CONTROL OF PUBLICATIONS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE, WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO CHAPTER 268 WHEREBY THE GOVERNMENT IS GIVEN EXTENSIVE POWER,+ SHE SAID.

BUT SHE ADDED THAT IN REALITY, THE GOVERNMENT HAD ADOPTED AN EXTREMELY LIBERAL ATTITUDE AND HAD ONLY TAKEN ACTION WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY THREATENED.

+THERE IS ANXIETY, HOWEVER, THAT THIS PRACTICE COULD END IF THE STATE SHOULD AT SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE CHOOSE TO ADHERE TO THE LETTER OF THE LAW, AND CONSEQUENTLY THE FREEDOM THAT IS BEING ENJOYED BY THE MEDIA COULD BE SERIOUSLY UNDERMINED, OR WORSE STILL, COMPLETELY STIFLED,+ SHE SAID.

+THE SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT COULD PROVIDE MUCH ASSURANCE IF IT WERE TO CONTAIN SPECIFIC MENTION TO THE EFFECT THAT PRESENT PRACTICES WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE BEYOND 1997,+ SHE ADDED.

SHE ALSO BELIEVED THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE DOUBLE STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO FOREIGN AND LOCAL JOURNALISTS AND JOURNALISM.

+IN OTHER WORDS, THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG MUST BE PRESERVED.

+ANYTHING LESS WILL THREATEN THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL PROFILE OF HONG KONG IN THE WORLD ARENA, AND JEOPARDISE OUR POSITION AS A COMMUNICATION, TRADE AND FINANCE CENTRE,+ SHE SAID.

ON THE ADVOCATION OF THE JOURNALIST ASSOCIATION TO SET UP A MEDIA COUNCIL, SHE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA WHICH, SHE SAID, WAS PROPOSED NOT ONLY AS A MEANS TO SELF-REGULATE AND UPGRADE THE STANDARD OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM BUT ALSO AS A SAFEGUARD AGAINST DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTERFERENCE OF THE FREE MEDIA.

SHE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE A MOVE TOWARDS THE SETTING UP OF SUCH A COUNCIL AS A MATTER OF PRIORITY.

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SAFEGUARD OF PROPERTY RIGHTS SOUGHT
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THE HON CHAN YING-LUN EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT WOULD INCLUDE DETAILED PROVISIONS FOR THE SAFEGUARD OF LOCAL PEOPLE'S RIGHTS OF OWNING PRIVATE PROPERTIES.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON +SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+ IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (TUESDAY).

HE OBSERVED THAT APART FROM WORKING TO SATISFY THEIR BASIC NEEDS OF CLOTHING, FOOD, HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION, HONG KONG PEOPLE ALSO WORKED TO ACCUMULATE WEALTH.

+THE DRIVE TO ACCUMULATE PERSONAL WEALTH CAN BE TRACED TO A BASIC RIGHT IN HONG KONG - OWNERSHIP OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES,+ HE SAID.

+TO ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO OWN PROPERTIES, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE LAW SAFEGUARD THEIR OWNERSHIP OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES.

+KNOWING THAT THE PROPERTIES ARE OWNED BY NO ONE BUT THEMSELVES, THEY WOULD DEVELOP A SENSE OF BELONGING, A FEELING OF CLOSENESS AND SAFENESS AND WOULD DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO WORKING DILIGENTLY IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVING CONDITIONS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IT WAS THE PEOPLE'S EFFORTS IN SEEKING A BETTER LIVING THAT CREATED THE HONG KONG ECONOMIC MIRACLE WHICH ASTONISHED OUTSIDE PEOPLE.

FACED WITH THE 1997 ISSUE, THE HONG KONG PEOPLE WERE +DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESERVATION OR OTHERWISE OF THEIR OWNERSHIP OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES AFTER 1997, THE PROBLEM OF LAND TENURE AND THE QUESTION OF THE RIGHT OF INHERITANCE,+ HE SAID.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT +SHOULD ENSURE FUTURE PROSPERITY BY SAFEGUARDING WITHIN POSSIBLE MEANS THE OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTIES AFTER 1997, BECAUSE THE LIMITATION OF TENURE MIGHT SHAKE UP THE CONFIDENCE OF POTENTIAL PROPERTY BUYERS.+

+AT THE SAME TIME, THE RIGHT OF OWNING PRIVATE PROPERTIES OF INVESTORS, ESTATE DEALERS AND SMALL OWNERS SHOULD BE SAFEGUARDED,+ HE SAID.

+IF THE PEOPLE ARE CERTAIN THAT THIS RIGHT WOULD BE MAINTAINED AND THAT THE RIGHT OF INHERITANCE TO PROPERTIES WOULD BE PRESERVED, THEIR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE WOULD BE MORE DEFINITE, THEIR GOALS, CLEARER AND THEIR MINDS, MORE AT EASE, THUS HELPING CONSIDERABLY IN BRINGING PEACEFULNESS AND STABILITY TO THE COMMUNITY,+ HE ADDED.

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NEED FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM STRESSED
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IT WAS THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY, NOW AND IN FUTURE, TO PROTECT ACADEMIC FREEDOM, THE HON MRS RITA FAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (TUESDAY).

IT HAD ALSO TO ALLOCATE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION, AND TO REFRAIN CONSCIENTIOUSLY FROM POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND INDOCTRINATION, SHE SAID.

SHE WAS SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

+ONLY WITH SUCH FREEDOM, CAN OUR STUDENTS BE EXPOSED TO DIFFERENT IDEAS, MATERIALS, ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS WHICH CUT ACROSS GEOGRAPHICAL, RACIAL AND POLITICAL BARRIERS= AND THUS, DEVELOP TOLERANT AND UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDES TO OPPOSING VIEWS,+ SHE SAID.

+IN THIS WAY, WE CAN CONTINUE TO RETAIN THE HETEROGENEOUS OR RATHER COSMOPOLITAN, CHARACTERISTIC OF OUR CITIZENS, WHO CAN LIVE IN HARMONY AND PURSUE THE COMMON OBJECTIVE OF 'PROSPERITY', 'STABILITY' AND 'FREEDOM',+ SHE ADDED.

IN HONG KONG, SHE SAID, THERE WAS AN EXISTING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE.

SHE SAID THAT THE UPGC WAS AN INDEPENDENT BODY CONSISTING OF DISTINGUISHED ACADEMICS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND WELL KNOWN LOCAL FIGURES WHICH WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION CONFIRMED THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS RELATIONSHIP AND THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION MADE BY UPGC WHICH WAS NOT PART OF THE GOVERNMENT, SHE SAID.

+THE SYSTEM HAS WORKED, AND THERE IS EVERY REASON FOR IT TO BE MAINTAINED AND DEVELOPED,+ SHE SAID.

THE EXTENT OF HONG KONG'S ACADEMIC FREEDOM, SHE SAID, WAS ALSO REFLECTED BY THE FACT THAT THERE WERE SCHOOLS PROMOTING DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, PHILOSOPHIES, AND EVEN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES.

+I SEE VALUE IN PRESERVING THIS FREEDOM, BECAUSE IT IS THE ESSENCE FOR DEVELOPING AN OPEN AND TOLERANT ATTITUDE AMONG HONG KONG PEOPLE WHICH FORMS THE BASIS FOR A STABLE AND HARMONIOUS SOCIETY.

+MOREOVER, ACADEMIC FREEDOM ENSURES BETTER INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND MOTIVATION OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE HIGHER STANDARD AND QUALIFICATIONS, WHICH WILL EQUIP THEM TO CONTRIBUTE MORE EFFECTIVELY TOWARDS THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG,+ SHE SAID.

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EDUCATION OF YOUTH FOR FUTURE URGED
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WHEN THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, ATTENTION SHOULD ALSO BE PAID TO THE YOUNGER PEOPLE AND THEIR EDUCATION, THE HON PAULINE NG SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING ON THE +SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+ IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE TODAY, MRS NG TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE HUMAN FACTOR WAS ESSENTIAL IN DETERMINING WHETHER HONG KONG COULD +OUTPACE ITS PRESENT ACHIEVEMENTS+, IN THE FUTURE.

THE+ THEREFORE, WHEN WE CONSIDER THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO TRY OUR BEST TO CONSTRUCT A REASONABLE FRAMEWORK WHICH WILL ENABLE THE NEXT GENERATION TO KEEP THE PRESENT MERITS AND SUCCESS FACTORS AND PERPETUATE THEM,+ SHE SAID.

IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT FAMILY, SCHOOL AND CIVIC EDUCATION BE PROVIDED TO ENABLE THE YOUNGER GENERATION TO KNOW THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY, THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF AN INDIVIDUAL TOWARDS SOCIETY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIETY, MRS NG SAID.

THERE SHOULD THEREFORE BE NO DELAY, SHE SAID, IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION.

TO FOSTER THE YOUNGER GENERATION AND TO HELP THEM GIVE FULL PLAY TO THEIR POTENTIAL SO THAT THEY MAY CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIETY ARE THE IMPORTANT TARGETS WHICH WE MUST AIM FOR,+ MRS NG SAID.

SHE SAID THAT THE UPGC WAS AN INDEPENDENT BODY CONSISTING OF DISTINGUISHED ACADEMICS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND WELL KNOWN LOCAL FIGURES WHICH WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING.

NO ONE SHOULD BE DEPRIVED OF EDUCATION RIGHTS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER+ * * * * * THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS RELATIONSHIP AND THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION MADE BY UPGC WHICH WAS NOT PART OF THE GOVERNMENT, SHE SAID.

WITH THE APPROACH OF THE 1990'S, HONG KONG SOCIETY WOULD UNDERGO CERTAIN CHANGES, THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN SAID TODAY. THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON +SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+.

BUT NO MATTER WHAT THE CHANGES MAY BE, NO ONE SHOULD BE DEPRIVED OF THE RIGHT OF EDUCATION ON ACCOUNT OF HIS FAMILY SOCIAL OR RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND,+ HE SAID.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION MUST BE TO PROMOTE SOCIAL JUSTICE, TO CULTIVATE WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM AND TO CARRY FORWARD THE CHINESE CULTURAL HERITAGE, HE SAID.

EDUCATION SHOULD
MORE EFFECTIVELY TOWARDS THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG,+ SHE SAID.

EDUCATION SHOULD ALSO PRODUCE THE MANPOWER FOR THE PROMOTION OF THE ECONOMY SO AS TO ENSURE HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY, STABILITY AND PROGRESS IN THE FUTURE, HE ADDED.

+THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN HONG KONG MUST BE SUBJECT TO AN OVERALL REVIEW AND MUST DEVELOP ALONG THE LINES OF THESE LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES SO AS TO MEET FUTURE NEEDS,+ HE SAID.

THE NEEDS, HE ADDED, INCLUDED DEMAND FOR NEW TECHNOLOGY, APPLICATION OF PUTONGHUA, THE USE OF BOTH THE CHINESE AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES, THE CULTIVATION OF LOCAL TALENTS AND AN ENHANCEMENT OF POLITICAL AWARENESS AND CIVIC-MINDEDNESS.

+TO IMPLEMENT THE 'HONG KONG PEOPLE ADMINISTER HONG KONG' PROPOSAL, WE MUST TRAIN UP PEOPLE WITH TALENTS SO THAT HONG KONG MAY CONTINUE TO CATCH UP WITH THE TRENDS OF THE WORLD,+ MR YEUNG SAID.

HE DESCRIBED YOUNG STUDENTS IN HONG KONG, ESPECIALLY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES, AS +FUTURE PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY+.

HE URGED THEM TO SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO SEEK KNOWLEDGE SO THAT THEY MIGHT HELP ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A BETTER SOCIAL SYSTEM IN HONG KONG.

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FREEDOM SEEN AS ESSENCE OF HK SOCIETY
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FREEDOM IS THE ESSENCE OF HONG KONG SOCIETY WHICH HAS CARRIED THE TERRITORY TO GREAT HEIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENT AND ENABLED IT TO OVERCOME ENORMOUS DIFFICULTIES, TO THE ENVY AND ADMIRATION OF THE WORLD, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, HE QUOTED THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WHO HAD SAID A FEW WEEKS AGO: +THERE CAN BE NO SOCIETY IN WHICH THE STRONG ARE HELD IN CHECK AND THE WEAK PROTECTED, IN WHICH PERSONAL FREEDOM EXISTS ALONGSIDE THE FORCE AND POWER NECESSARY FOR GOOD ORDER AND GOVERNMENT, WITHOUT LAWS TO DECLARE RIGHTS AND DUTIES, AND COURTS TO MAKE THEM EFFECTIVE.+

MR AKERS-JONES SAID THAT THESE WERE THE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM, OF SOCIAL EQUALITY AND OF THE LAW WHICH BOUND THEM TOGETHER.

+THESE ARE THE PRINCIPLES WHICH THE CHINESE AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENTS ARE SEEKING TO PRESERVE AS THEY WORK STEADILY TOWARDS AGREEMENT, TO ENABLE 'THE CONTINUATION' AS SIR GEOFFREY HOWE SAID 'OF A SOCIETY WHICH ENJOYS ITS OWN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND DISTINCT WAY OF LIFE'.

/+WITH AN

+WITH AN AGREEMENT REACHED AND CONTAINING THESE ASSURANCES OF CONTINUING FREEDOMS AND CONTINUING SYSTEMS, WE CAN GO ON TO BUILD THIS REMARKABLE PLACE INTO A GREAT CITY OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY,+ HE SAID.

ON THE SOCIAL SYSTEM IN HONG KONG, HE SAID IT WAS FROM THESE ELEMENTS OF THE SOCIETY WHICH DR THE HON HARRY FANG AND OTHER LEGCO MEMBERS HAD DESCRIBED IN THEIR SPEECHES TODAY THAT THIS UNIQUE COMMUNITY HAD GROWN.

+AND THERE IS A DIRECT CORRELATION BETWEEN OUR SOCIAL SYSTEM AND THE FACT THAT WE ENJOY A LEVEL OF PROSPERITY WHICH IS AMONG THE HIGHEST IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD AND WHICH IS BEGINNING TO OVERTAKE MANY OF THE HITHERTO RICHER, DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WITH VAST NATURAL RESOURCES AT THEIR DISPOSAL.

+HONG KONG HAS NO RESOURCES BUT ITS FIVE MILLION PEOPLE; SO IT IS WITHIN OUR SOCIAL SYSTEM THAT MUST LIE THE SECRET OF ITS SUCCESS; AND AT THE HEART OF THAT SYSTEM LIES THE FREEDOM WHICH HAS BEEN EMPHASISED SO ELOQUENTLY BY THE PREVIOUS SPEAKERS,+ HE SAID.

FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE, HE SAID, THERE WAS AN EDUCATION SYSTEM GUIDED BY POLICIES WHICH HAD BEEN FREELY DEBATED BY THE PEOPLE AND BY MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL AND WHICH WERE EXPRESSED IN WHITE PAPERS CONFIRMING THESE POLICIES.

+SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ARE LARGELY PROVIDED, GUIDED AND SUPERVISED BY ORGANISATIONS WHICH ARE FREE, WITHIN THE LAW, FROM GOVERNMENT CONTROL OR INTERVENTION, AND WE OWE A GREAT DEBT TO THE MANY ORGANISATIONS, CHURCHES AND OTHER BODIES WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED AND ARE CONTRIBUTING SO MUCH TO THE INSTRUCTION AND MORAL EDUCATION OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

+SO, THERE YOU HAVE, IN THIS SINGLE FIELD, FREEDOM TO DEBATE, FREEDOM OF CHOICE, FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE,+ MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

LOOKING AT OTHER FEATURES OF THE SOCIETY, MR AKERS-JONES SAID THESE SAME FREEDOMS WERE AT WORK, BINDING THE SYSTEM TOGETHER WITH INVISIBLE LINK; NOT THE LINKS OF EXCESSIVE RULES AND REGULATIONS AND AN OPPRESSIVE BUREAUCRACY.

+OUR SCHEMES OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND WELFARE, AND OUR MEDICAL SCHEMES HAVE BEEN DEvised, AFTER TAKING THE ADVICE OF THE PEOPLE THEY AFFECT, AND ARE SIMILARLY ENSHRINED IN GUIDING POLICY DOCUMENTS DEBATED IN THIS CHAMBER.

+OURS IS A YOUNG SOCIETY AND ONE WHICH HAS GROWN BY ROUGHLY ONE MILLION PEOPLE EVERY TEN YEARS. IN IT THERE IS GREAT SOCIAL MOBILITY WITH FREEDOM OF OPPORTUNITY AND JUST REWARDS FOR HARD WORK.

+OUR WORKERS ARE FREE TO WORK WHERE THEY WILL AND TO JOIN TOGETHER TO ORGANISE, TO BE A MEMBER OF TRADE UNIONS AND TO PROTECT THEIR RIGHTS.

/+WE ENJOY

+WE ENJOY FREE SPEECH, ARE FREE TO CRITICISE AND CONDEMN AND TO PRAISE.

+EACH DAY AN AVALANCHE OF WORDS AND INFORMATION, IN THE PRESS AND ON THE AIR, OF EVERY SHADE OF OPINION ENSURES A LIVELY DEBATE AND ENABLES THE MEN AND WOMEN OF HONG KONG TO DECIDE THINGS FOR THEMSELVES AND TO FORM THEIR OWN OPINIONS,+ MR AKERS-JONES SAID.

THERE WERE ALSO THE FREEDOM TO OWN PROPERTY AND THE FREEDOM OF OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM, HE SAID.

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LIFE TERM FOR ARMS OFFENCES BACKED
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THE POSSESSION, AND PARTICULARLY THE USE, OF FIREARMS AND CONVERTED OR IMITATION FIREARMS IN THE FURTHERANCE OF A CRIME WAS VERY SERIOUS, THE HON CHARLES YEUNG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IT OFTEN LED TO THE DEATH OF, AND INJURY TO, MEMBERS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND INNOCENT BYSTANDERS, WHOM THE LAW WAS COMMITTED TO PROTECT, MR YEUNG SAID.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984.

+THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE HAS, THEREFORE, RECOMMENDED STIFFENING THE PENALTY FOR POSSESSION AND USE OF FIREARMS SO THAT OFFENDERS MAY BE IMPRISONED FOR LIFE, THUS PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY FROM HEINOUS AND HARD CORE CRIMINALS AND AT THE SAME TIME PROVIDING DETERRENT TO 'WOULD BE' OFFENDERS,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE OBJECT OF THE BILL WAS TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE.

+SPECIFICALLY, IT SEEKS TO AMEND THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE BY INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR OFFENCES INVOLVING THE USE OF FIREARMS OR IMITATION FIREARMS IN CRIME AND BY MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO CONVICT A PERSON OF THE LESSER ALTERNATIVE OFFENCE OF SIMPLE POSSESSION UNDER THE ORDINANCE, IF THE PROSECUTION SHOULD FAIL TO PROVE A GRAVER CHARGE OF POSSESSION OF IMITATION FIREARMS WITH CRIMINAL INTENT,+ HE SAID.

+IN THIS CONTEXT, THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF MAXIMUM PENALTIES FROM 14 YEARS TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR SERIOUS CASES OF THE POSSESSING, CARRYING OR USING OF FIREARMS WITH CRIMINAL INTENT OR WITH INTENT TO ENDANGER LIFE OR FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESISTING ARREST, IS MOST APPROPRIATE AND HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL,+ HE ADDED.

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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TATTOO LAW PROTECTS YOUTHS
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TATTOOS ARE DIFFICULT TO ERASE AND THE DAMAGE THEY HAVE CAUSED TO THE SKIN IS PERMANENT, THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE TATTOOING OF YOUNG PERSONS BILL 1984, MR CHAN SAID, +HENCE THIS PIECE OF LEGISLATION IS NECESSARY TO PROTECT THE YOUTHS FROM DOING SOMETHING, WHICH IS IRREVOCABLE, ON THE IMPULSE OF CONFORMITY OR TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH THE BAD COMPANY THEY KEEP.+

MR CHAN NOTED THAT TATTOOING HAD A LONG HISTORY DATING BACK TO ABOUT 2000 BC.

IN THE MODERN TIMES TATTOO WAS USED FOR IDENTIFYING RELEASED CONVICTS, ARMY DESERTERS, AND INMATES OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS, AS WELL AS FOR MEMBERSHIP IDENTIFICATION IN THE UNDERWORLD, HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT VOLUNTARY TATTOOING WAS ABSENT IN MOST OF CHINA, POSSIBLY DUE TO THE CONFUCIAN TEACHING +DO NOT INJURE OR DAMAGE ONE'S BODY, HAIR AND SKIN AS THESE ARE BEQUEATHED BY ONE'S PARENTS. TO OBSERVE THIS IS THE FIRST STEP TO FILIAL PIETY.+

THE YOUNGER GENERATION SHOULD BE EDUCATED THROUGH A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN ON THE UNDESIRABLE IMPLICATIONS OF TATTOOING AS WELL AS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SKIN CANCER OR HEPATITIS WHICH MIGHT RESULT FROM UNSTERILISED NEEDLES AND CARCINOGENIC PAINTS, HE SAID.

ALSO SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG PROPOSED TO MAKE IT AN OFFENCE TO TATTOO A YOUNG PERSON UNDER THE AGE OF 18 UNLESS THERE WAS CONSENT FROM HIS PARENTS OR WHERE THERE WERE ADEQUATE REASONS.

+IN FACT, A SIMILAR ACT WAS PASSED IN THE UK AS EARLY AS 1969 WHICH AIMS AT RESTRICTING THE TATTOOING OF MINORS UNTIL THEY REACH THE AGE OF CONSENT WHEN THEY HAVE A MATURE MIND TO MAKE SUCH A FATEFUL DECISION,+ HE SAID.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE ISSUE WAS NOT A QUESTION OF LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE PERSONAL INTEREST AND TASTE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

+WE HOPE ONLY THAT THEY WILL UNDERSTAND ONCE A TATTOO IS MADE, IT IS IRREMOVABLE AND THE STIGMA MAY AFFECT THEM FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES,+ HE SAID.

AS FOR THOSE ALREADY TATTOOED, MR CHEUNG EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THEY WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY SOCIETY, AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THEM.

/+IN PARTICULAR,

+IN PARTICULAR, THE TATTOOED YOUNG OFFENDERS SHOULD NOT LOOK DOWN UPON THEMSELVES. SOCIETY IS WILLING TO WELCOME THEM BACK IF THEY ARE DETERMINED TO REFORM THEMSELVES,+ HE ADDED.

HE ALSO URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO FORMULATE A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL EDUCATION SO AS TO PREVENT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM GOING ASTRAY.

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RULES ON TRANSACTIONS DISCLOSURE BEING FINALISED
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STATUTORY RULES REQUIRING LISTED PUBLIC COMPANIES TO MAKE KNOWN DETAILS OF ANY AGREEMENT REGARDING A MATERIAL TRANSACTION AFFECTING THEM, COULD BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE SECURITIES COMMISSIONER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE HONG KONG FEDERATION OF STOCK EXCHANGES AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, IS IN THE PROCESS OF FINALISING THE DRAFT RULES UNDER SECTION 14 OF THE SECURITIES ORDINANCE, MR JACOBS SAID, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG.

THESE DRAFT RULES SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION IN A FEW MONTHS' TIME.

+WE HOPE THAT THEY MAY BE BROUGHT INTO EFFECT BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

UNDER THESE RULES, AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY A COMPANY WILL ALSO HAVE TO BE CLEARED BY THE EXCHANGE AND THE COMMISSIONER FOR SECURITIES PRIOR TO ITS PUBLIC RELEASE, HE EXPLAINED.

+THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES THE IMPORTANCE OF TIMELY DISCLOSURE OF COMMERCIAL INFORMATION FOR A HEALTHY AND INFORMED STOCK MARKET,+ HE SAID.

FOR THIS REASON, HE ADDED, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL LAST SEPTEMBER HAD ENDORSED IN PRINCIPLE THE SECURITIES COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING DISCLOSURE OF SHAREHOLDINGS AND COMMERCIAL INFORMATION.

AND THE COMMISSION HAD THUS BEEN ASKED TO DRAFT THE STATUTORY RULES, HE EXPLAINED.

ON THE ISSUE OF INSIDER DEALING, MR JACOBS SAID THAT THE OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR SECURITIES MONITORS SHARE PRICE MOVEMENTS DAILY.

+WHENEVER THERE IS AN INDICATION THAT INSIDER DEALING OR ANY OTHER IMPROPER TRADING PRACTICE HAS TAKEN PLACE IN RELATION TO THE SECURITIES OF A PUBLIC LISTED COMPANY, INVESTIGATIONS ARE INITIATED,+ HE SAID.

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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NEW LEGAL AID SCHEME WELCOMED
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THE INTRODUCTION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY LEGAL AID SCHEME FOR THE +SANDWICH CLASS+ UNDER THE LEGAL AID (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, WAS WELCOMED TODAY BY THE HON MARIA TAM.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MISS TAM SAID THAT THE SCHEME HAD RECEIVED THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND HAD RECEIVED FAVOURABLE PUBLIC RESPONSE.

+THIS IMAGINATIVE AND YET PRACTICAL LOAN SCHEME WILL BE REPAID BY SUCCESSIVE AND SUCCESSFUL LITIGANTS TO MAKE IT, ONE DAY, SELF-FINANCING,+ SHE SAID.

+ALTHOUGH IT IS AT PRESENT AVAILABLE ONLY IN CASES OF PERSONAL INJURY, IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO MAKE LEGAL JUSTICE AVAILABLE TO MANY OF THE UNPROTECTED ONE-THIRD OF OUR POPULATION IN THE YEARS TO COME,+ SHE ADDED.

AT PRESENT THE LEGAL AID SCHEME IN CIVIL CASES WAS ESTIMATED TO COVER TWO-THIRDS OF THE POPULATION OF HONG KONG.

IN 1981, SHE SAID, THE WORKING PARTY ON THIS SCHEME REPORTED THAT BETWEEN APRIL 1980 AND MARCH 1981, 13 754 INDIVIDUALS APPLIED FOR LEGAL AID, OF THESE 5 756 WERE SUCCESSFUL, LEAVING 7 998 CASES UNAIDED= AND OUT OF THESE 7 998 CASES 1 709 WERE REFUSED BECAUSE THE APPLICANTS HAD FAILED THE MEANS TEST, ALTHOUGH THE CASES HAD MERITS.

SHE SAID THAT FROM HER EXPERIENCE IN GIVING WARD CONSULTATION SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC, SHE HAD COME ACROSS CASES IN WHICH PEOPLE SOUGHT LEGAL ASSISTANCE BECAUSE THEY FAILED THE MEANS TEST FOR LEGAL AID EVEN THOUGH THEY COULD NOT AFFORD TO ENGAGE PRIVATE SOLICITORS AND COUNSEL TO PURSUE THEIR LAWFUL ACTION FOR DAMAGES FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT OR COMMON LAW DUTY.

SHE THANKED THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR GIVING HIS ATTENTION TO +THE WORTHWHILE SCHEME+.

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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LAW GIVES SUFFICIENT DETERRENT TO USE OF +SOFT+ DRUGS
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THERE ARE SUFFICIENT DETERRENT EFFECTS IN THE CURRENT LEGISLATION REGARDING THE USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC OR +SOFT+ DRUGS IN HONG KONG, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GORDON MORTIMER, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, MR MORTIMER SAID, +TO CURB THE INCIDENCE OF ABUSE OF PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS, A WORKING PARTY WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1983 TO LOOK INTO THE CONTROL OF PSYCHOTROPIC AND NON-OPIATE NARCOTIC SUBSTANCES.+

AN INTERIM REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY, HE SAID, WAS SUBMITTED TO THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS FOR CONSIDERATION IN MID-AUGUST.

CONTRAVENTION OF THE PHARMACY AND POISONS ORDINANCE, WHICH STRICTLY CONTROLS LOCAL USE OF PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS, IS PUNISHABLE BY A FINE OF \$10 000 AND 12 MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT, HE SAID.

+WHERE THERE IS EPIDEMIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF WIDESPREAD ABUSE OF A SUBSTANCE IN OTHER COUNTRIES OR WHEN THE ABUSE OF A SUBSTANCE IN HONG KONG APPEARS TO BE INCREASING, THE SUBSTANCES CONCERNED ARE LISTED IN PART I OF THE FIRST SCHEDULE TO THE DANGEROUS DRUGS ORDINANCE.

+THE MOST STRINGENT CONTROLS ARE APPLIED AND OFFENCES UNDER THE ORDINANCE CARRY SEVERE PENALTIES EXTENDING TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT,+ MR MORTIMER SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AMONG THE 11 301 PERSONS REPORTED TO THE CENTRAL REGISTRY OF DRUG ABUSE IN 1983 AS ACTUALLY ABUSING DRUGS, ONLY 0.4 PER CENT OR 45 PERSONS WERE REPORTED AS ABUSING PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS, MAINLY CANNABIS.

OF THESE 45 PERSONS, 22 WERE UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE.

IN 1983, A TOTAL OF 73 PERSONS UNDER 21 WERE PROSECUTED FOR UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS.

PENALTIES IMPOSED BY THE COURT FOR SUCH OFFENCES RANGE FROM A FINE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED DOLLARS TO SEVERAL MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT, HE SAID.

FIGURES FOR 1981 AND 1982 WERE NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE A BREAKDOWN BY AGE WAS NOT MADE UNTIL 1983, HE ADDED.

TO COMBAT THE ILLEGAL USE OF +SOFT+ DRUGS BY YOUNGSTERS, STAFF OF THE NARCOTICS DIVISION GIVE TALKS TO JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 13 AND 15 ON THE DANGERS OF DRUG ABUSE.

THE HELP OF PARENTS, TEACHERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS IN STEERING YOUNG PEOPLE AWAY FROM DRUGS WAS ALSO BEING SOUGHT, HE ADDED.

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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WAGE PROTECTION LEVY BACKED BY UMELCO
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IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT WORKERS' WAGES SHOULD BE PROTECTED IN RECEIVERSHIP CASES AND THAT WORKERS BE PAID SWIFTLY, THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN, SAID TODAY.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, WHICH PROVIDES FOR A LEVY OF \$100 TO BE IMPOSED ON BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES FROM OCTOBER 1 THIS YEAR, TO FINANCE THE OPERATION OF THE PLANNED +PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND+.

REFERRING TO CRITICISM ABOUT A FLAT LEVY OF \$100 BEING IMPOSED ON A CERTIFICATE, REGARDLESS OF SIZE OF THE BUSINESS, MR CHAN SAID THAT THIS HAD BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE UMELCO +WORKING GROUP ON PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY WORKERS OF COMPANIES IN RECEIVERSHIP+ AND FOUND TO BE THE SIMPLEST WAY OF DEALING THE MATTER.

OTHER SLIGHTLY MORE EQUITABLE METHODS OF RAISING A LEVY WERE CONSIDERED BUT WOULD ENTAIL MUCH MORE WORK AND ADDED COSTS TO THE PUBLIC PURSE, HE SAID.

+AFTER TAKING ALL FACTORS INTO CONSIDERATION, WE BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE BEST METHOD AVAILABLE, BEARING IN MIND THE TIME FACTOR AND THE NEED TO GET THE FUND ESTABLISHED QUICKLY,+ MR CHAN SAID.

SPEAKING ALSO IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG SAID THAT THE UMELCO GROUP HAD LOOKED INTO VARIOUS METHODS OF RAISING THE LEVY AND HAD CHOSEN +A BALANCE BETWEEN EQUITY AND SIMPLICITY+.

HE SAID THAT THE CURRENT SUGGESTIONS EMBODIED IN THE BILL WERE THE BEST +TO GIVE AN EARLY START TO SUCH A NOBLE CAUSE+.

HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE REVIEWING THE RATE OF LEVY, INCLUDING THE QUESTIONS OF BRANCH CERTIFICATES IN THE FUTURE.

HE SUPPORTED THE BILL, HE SAID, +IN ORDER TO ENABLE FIRST PAYMENTS FROM THE PROTECTION OF WAGES IN INSOLVENCY FUND TO BE MADE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.+

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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NO CHANGE TO ROAD PRICING SCHEME
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THE ELECTRONIC ROAD PRICING SCHEME WOULD BE CARRIED OUT AS SCHEDULED EVEN THOUGH THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED PRIVATE CARS HAD DROPPED, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON ANDREW SO, MR SCOTT SAID THE NUMBER OF THESE CARS HAD DECLINED FROM 218 570 ON MAY 1, 1982 TO 192 245 ON JULY 1 THIS YEAR.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS CONTRACTUALLY COMMITTED TO THE PILOT SCHEME.

+IT HAS BEEN REPORTED RANDOMLY BY SOME TRAVELLERS THAT THE DURATION OF PEAK HOUR CONGESTION IN SOME LOCATIONS IS ON OCCASIONS NOT AS BAD AS IT USED TO BE; BUT THIS SMALL IMPROVEMENT IS NOT YET SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO BE QUANTIFIABLE,+ HE SAID.

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MOST CLEARANCES CARRIED OUT SMOOTHLY
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IN GENERAL NO MAJOR DIFFICULTIES HAD BEEN ENCOUNTERED IN THE 404 ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCES CARRIED OUT UNDER THE AUSPICES OF DISTRICT BOARDS OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON CHAN NAI-KEONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (TUESDAY).

MR CHAN, IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHAN YING-LUN, SAID 3 248 PEOPLE HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN THESE CLEARANCES, OF WHOM 849 WERE RESETTLED.

HE SAID MOST OF THE CLEARANCES WERE CARRIED OUT SMOOTHLY WITHOUT INCIDENT.

ONLY IN A FEW EXCEPTIONAL CASES WAS RESISTANCE ENCOUNTERED.

THE POLICY AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING THESE CLEARANCES HAD RECENTLY BEEN REVIEWED, MR CHAN SAID, AND CONSIDERATION WAS NOW BEING GIVEN TO EXTENDING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCES THE SAME EX-GRATIA COMPENSATION AND REHOUSING THAT APPLIED TO DEVELOPMENT CLEARANCES.

THIS WOULD MEAN THAT COMPENSATION AND REHOUSING WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO SUCH CLEAREES PROVIDED THEY MET THE USUAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.

+THIS WOULD, I HOPE, ENSURE THAT FUTURE CLEARANCES PROCEED EVEN MORE SMOOTHLY,+ MR CHAN CONCLUDED.

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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NOTE ON REVENUE LAW EXPECTED TO BE READY SOON
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THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE HOPES TO BE ABLE TO ISSUE THE DEPARTMENTAL INTERPRETATION AND PRACTICE NOTE ON THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1984 BY THE END OF AUGUST, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DOUGLAS BLYE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR BLYE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON PETER POON, WHO WAS ASKING WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE THIS NOTE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

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NINE BILLS PASSED
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NINE BILLS WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THEY ARE: THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1984, THE RATING (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1984, THE LEGAL AID (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1984, THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1984, THE LIMITATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AND THE TATTOOING OF YOUNG PERSONS BILL 1984.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY).

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TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1984

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PRESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR SIR GEOFFREY HOWE'S VISIT
JULY 26-27, 1984

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A NUMBER OF PRESS FACILITIES ARE BEING ARRANGED FOR MEDIA TO COVER THE VISIT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, WHO IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN HONG KONG ON THURSDAY, JULY 26, AND DEPART FOR PEKING ON FRIDAY, JULY 27.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WILL NEED SPECIAL ACCREDITATION TO COVER SIR GEOFFREY'S PUBLIC FUNCTIONS. PRESS LAPEL BADGES WILL BE ISSUED BY GIS TO ACCREDITED JOURNALISTS.

APPLICATION FORMS FOR ACCREDITATION FOR EACH FUNCTION WILL BE BOXED TONIGHT (TUESDAY) FOR COLLECTION. EDITORS ARE REQUESTED TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORMS, RETURN THEM AND COLLECT THEIR BADGES FROM THE DUTY OFFICER, GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES, 6TH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL, AFTER 4 PM TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY).

EDITORS ARE REQUESTED TO NOTE THAT NOMINATIONS DO NOT AUTOMATICALLY MEAN THAT BADGES WILL BE ISSUED TO EVERY REPRESENTATIVE. UNLIMITED SPACE IS NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE.

BECAUSE OF CROWD CONTROL AND SECURITY REQUIREMENTS, THERE WILL BE FIXED PRESS POSITIONS TO COVER SIR GEOFFREY'S PUBLIC FUNCTIONS. WHERE POSITIONS CANNOT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL, PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE PROVIDED BY GIS AND FILM FOOTAGE MADE AVAILABLE BY RTHK.

BADGES WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE FOLLOWING AND EXACT TIMINGS WILL BE GIVEN LATER:

THURSDAY, JULY 26

ARRIVAL AT KAI TAK, 3 PM (APPROX)

FRIDAY, JULY 27

ARRIVAL AT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES FOR EXCO MEETING AND MEETING WITH UMELCO, 9 AM (APPROX)

DEPARTURE FROM CGO, 12.50 PM (APPROX)

DEPARTURE FROM KAI TAK FOR PEKING, 2.50 PM (APPROX)

PRESS ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SECOND VISIT BY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, ON JULY 31 AND AUGUST 1 WILL BE ISSUED LATER.

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'FUTURES CONTRACT' DEFINED IN NEW BILL
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A COMMODITIES TRADING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, WHICH SEEKS TO FACILITATE THE REORGANISATION OF THE HONG KONG COMMODITY EXCHANGE LTD AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A STOCK INDEX FUTURES CONTRACT IN THE REORGANISED EXCHANGE WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE NEXT WEEK.

THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A FINANCIAL FUTURES MARKET, ANNOUNCED IN MAY THIS YEAR, HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY POTENTIAL MARKET USERS AND WILL BE CONTINGENT UPON THE PROPER REORGANISATION OF THE EXCHANGE.

AN OVERALL REVIEW OF THE COMMODITIES TRADING ORDINANCE IS ALSO UNDERWAY AND A MAJOR AMENDMENT BILL TO IMPROVE CONTROL OVER COMMODITIES TRADING AND FUTURES TRADING GENERALLY IS EXPECTED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL NEXT SESSION.

THE AMENDMENT BILL TO BE PUBLISHED NEXT WEEK PROVIDES NEW DEFINITIONS FOR THE TERMS 'COMMODITY' AND 'FUTURES CONTRACT' WHICH WILL ALLOW A FUTURES CONTRACT BASED ON THE HANG SENG INDEX TO BE TRADED ON THE COMMODITIES EXCHANGE WHEN BOTH THE SECURITIES COMMISSION AND THE COMMODITY TRADING COMMISSION ARE SATISFIED THAT THE NECESSARY SAFEGUARDS TO PROTECT THE INVESTING PUBLIC HAVE BEEN INSTITUTED BY THE REORGANISED EXCHANGE.

THE BILL ALSO ALLOWS THE COMMODITIES TRADING COMMISSION TO HAVE MORE MEMBERS TO COPE WITH ITS ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES. IT FURTHER WIDENS THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXCHANGE COMPANY BY LIFTING SHARE-HOLDING RESTRICTIONS ON LICENSED BANKS AND DTCS AND THEIR DIRECTORS OR EMPLOYEES, AND ON PRACTISING SOLICITORS AND PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS. HOWEVER, THE AMENDMENTS LIMIT CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP TO COMPANIES WHICH ARE INCORPORATED IN HONG KONG AND ENGAGED SOLELY IN FUTURES TRADING. BANKS AND DTCS, THE POTENTIAL MAJOR USERS OF THE FINANCIAL FUTURES MARKET, WILL THEREFORE BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REORGANISED EXCHANGE THROUGH THEIR SUBSIDIARIES.

THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 10 AND IS EXPECTED TO RECEIVE ITS THIRD READING ON NOVEMBER 7.

ANYONE WHO WISHES TO COMMENT ON ITS PROVISIONS MAY WRITE TO UMELCO, AT SWIRE HOUSE, 12TH FLOOR, CHATER ROAD, OR TO THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, AT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, LOWER ALBERT ROAD, HONG KONG.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA CHANGE ENDORSED

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TODAY ENDORSED THE SECURITIES COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGING THE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF HONG KONG LTD (UNIFIED EXCHANGE). IT ALSO DIRECTED THAT LEGISLATION TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE INTRODUCED IN TIME FOR THE OPENING OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE NEXT YEAR.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT UNDER THE STOCK EXCHANGES UNIFICATION ORDINANCE, CORPORATIONS AND FIRMS ARE DISQUALIFIED FROM MEMBERSHIP. DIRECTORS AND EMPLOYEES OF A LICENSED BANK OR DTC ARE ALSO DISQUALIFIED, AS ARE PRACTISING LEGAL PROFESSIONALS AND ACCOUNTANTS UNLESS THEY WERE MEMBERS OR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE FOUR EXCHANGES BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE STOCK EXCHANGES UNIFICATION ORDINANCE.

IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE, THE SECURITIES COMMISSION SET UP A SPECIAL COMMITTEE IN FEBRUARY 1983 TO REVIEW THE MEMBERSHIP ISSUE. THE COMMITTEE FOUND THE MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA IN THE ORDINANCE AT VARIANCE WITH THE EXISTING MEMBERSHIP SITUATION. THE COMMISSION, AFTER HAVING WIDE CONSULTATION WITH THE FINANCIAL SECTOR AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, RECOMMENDED THE REMOVAL OF THE EXISTING DISQUALIFICATIONS AND THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA MORE IN LINE WITH THE PRESENT DAY NEEDS OF THE SECURITIES INDUSTRY.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT IN FUTURE THERE WILL BE THREE TYPES OF TRADING ENTITIES FOR THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE -- INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, CORPORATE MEMBERS AND PARTNERSHIPS, AND TWO TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP -- INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE.

THE CRITERIA FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED THOUGH A THREE-YEARS' EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT WILL BE IMPOSED. ANY HONG KONG CORPORATION WHOSE ONLY BUSINESS IS STOCKBROKING MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP. SUBSIDIARIES OF CORPORATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE OF BANKS AND DTCS, SET UP FOR THE PURPOSE OF STOCKBROKING BUSINESS WILL BE REQUIRED TO HAVE SEPARATE MANAGEMENT AND SEPARATE OFFICES.

STRINGENT FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS AND DETAILS OF ADMISSION WILL BE SET OUT IN THE ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE.

ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IS THAT MEMBERS OF THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE WILL IN FUTURE BE ALLOWED TO FORM PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EXCHANGE OR LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-MEMBERS.

/THE SPOKESMAN

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THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT UPON THE CREATION OF THE NEW TRADING ENTITIES, THE ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP WILL BE ABOLISHED AND +DEEDS OF TRUST+ WILL NO LONGER BE ALLOWED.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE RELAXATION ON TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP OF MEMBERS WILL PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE SECURITIES MARKET.

THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WILL REQUIRE AMENDMENTS TO THE SECURITIES AND STOCK EXCHANGES UNIFICATION ORDINANCES AND TO THE SECURITIES (DEALERS, INVESTMENT ADVISERS AND REPRESENTATIVES) REGULATIONS AND SECURITIES (ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT) REGULATIONS. STOCK EXCHANGE COMPENSATION FUND REGULATIONS WILL ALSO HAVE TO BE PREPARED. THE SPOKESMAN ANTICIPATED THAT THE AMENDING LEGISLATION WILL BE ENACTED IN EARLY 1985.

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VIEWS TO BE SOUGHT ON TRANSPORT VIABILITY
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THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO INVITE PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF ALL MODES OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AT THE END OF THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR ALAN SCOTT, DISCLOSED TODAY.

FOR OVER A YEAR, HE SAID, THE TRANSPORT BRANCH HAD CLOSELY EXAMINED QUESTIONS SUCH AS THE COMPARISON BETWEEN MTR AND BUS FARES, THE COMMUNITY'S DIRECT AND INDIRECT CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE TOTAL COSTS OF PROVIDING MTR AND BUS SERVICES AND THE OVERALL ECONOMIC BENEFITS.

SPEAKING AT THE LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF HONG KONG, MR SCOTT POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMMITTED TO ENSURING ADEQUATE, INTEGRATED PUBLIC TRANSPORT, WITH A REASONABLE CHOICE AND LEVELS OF FARES.

HE NOTED: +BUT IT IS FAIR AND NECESSARY THAT THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE SHOULD BE AWARE OF WHO IS PAYING FOR WHAT.

+IT IS OUR AIM BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR, TO PUBLISH A PAPER ON THESE ISSUES FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION WITH A NUMBER OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION.+

HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PRESENT TASK OF TRANSPORT BRANCH AND TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WAS TO ASSIST THE COMMUNITY AT ALL LEVELS, IN PARTICULAR AT DISTRICT BOARD LEVEL, TO UNDERSTAND THE BROAD ISSUES AS WELL AS THE LOCAL ISSUES BEFORE THEY TOOK A VIEW ON TRANSPORT MATTERS.

/MR SCOTT

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MR SCOTT TRACED THE TRANSPORT STUDIES COMMISSIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT SINCE 1960.

DESPITE ALL THE STUDIES, HE SAID, THE LOCAL TRANSPORT SITUATION WAS NOT AS GOOD AS HE LIKED IT TO BE -- MAINLY DUE TO COMPETITION FOR RESOURCES AND NATURAL POLITICAL HESITATION TO IMPOSE ALL THE DESIRABLE MEASURES OF CONTROL.

+WE HAVE TO DECIDE HOW BEST TO HUSBAND OUR PRESENT RESOURCES TO OPTIMISE THE ROAD NETWORK IN DIFFERENT WAYS SO THAT WE CAN PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY TRAFFIC FLOW FOR HONG KONG IN THE CONTINUING FUTURE.+ HE ADDED.

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NEW CHALLENGE TO DB MEMBERS

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DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS WILL FACE A NEW CHALLENGE AFTER NEXT YEAR'S ELECTIONS BECAUSE THEY STAND THE CHANCE OF BEING SELECTED TO THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OR EVEN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEW TERRITORIES, MRS RITA LAU, SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

+THESE DB MEMBERS WILL THEN SERVE NOT ONLY THEIR OWN DISTRICTS, BUT ALSO THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE WHEN THEY SIT ON THE HIGHER COUNCILS.+

MRS LAU WAS SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ORGANISED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO ANNOUNCE PLANS TO HELP PROMOTE THE COMING VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN.

+NEXT YEAR'S ELECTIONS WILL MARK A NEW ERA IN DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION BECAUSE BY THEN, ELECTED SEATS OF THE BOARDS WILL BE INCREASED AND THE CHAIRMEN OF THE BOARDS WILL BE ELECTED AMONG THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS.

+THESE CHANGES WILL INCREASE THE REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE BOARDS AND FURTHER PROMOTE THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY,+ SHE SAID.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY DB MEMBERS TO THE COMMUNITY IN THE PAST THREE YEARS WAS EVIDENT AND MRS LAU URGED ALL ELIGIBLE VOTERS TO SUPPORT THE DISTRICT BOARDS BY REGISTERING AS VOTERS.

SHE SAID A SIX-WEEK VOTERS REGISTRATION EXERCISE WOULD START IN THE MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH.

+HOWEVER, THE SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT IN MAKING DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION A SUCCESS,+ MRS LAU ADDED.

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SPREADING THE DB MESSAGE
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A TWO-PHASE PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN LAUNCHED TO ENCOURAGE ELIGIBLE VOTERS TO REGISTER FOR THE MARCH DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS.

THE FIRST PHASE NOW UNDERWAY IS AIMED AT INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF DISTRICT BOARDS. IT IS HOPED THAT THROUGH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BOARDS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY, MORE PEOPLE WILL BE MOTIVATED TO REGISTER AS VOTERS.

PUBLICITY MATERIAL FOR THIS PHASE COMPRISES A POSTER, A SERIES OF TEN TELEVISION SLIDES, AND SUPPORTING RADIO MESSAGES.

FIRST PHASE PUBLICITY WILL LAST UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF NEXT MONTH. WHEN REGISTRATION STARTS ON AUGUST 15, PUBLICITY WILL TAKE A NEW TURN, URGING PEOPLE TO REGISTER DURING THE SPECIFIED PERIOD AND STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING.

MEANWHILE, WIDE-RANGING ACTIVITIES AT DISTRICT LEVEL TO PUBLICISE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DISTRICT BOARDS AND TO PROMOTE REGISTRATION ARE BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

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JOB-FINDING FOR MENTALLY DISABLED
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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL BE HELPING TO FIND EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE MENTAL DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND EX-MENTALLY ILL.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY THAT THE NEW UNDERTAKING, WAS BEING TAKEN OVER FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT'S JOB PLACEMENT UNIT.

IT WOULD BE AN EXTENSION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S SELECTIVE PLACEMENT SERVICE (SPS).

THE SPS HAD PREVIOUSLY CATERED ONLY FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED, INCLUDING THE BLIND, THE DEAF AND THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED, HE ADDED.

THE NEW PLACEMENT SERVICE FOR THE MENTALLY DISABLED WILL OPERATE FROM EAST ASIA COMMERCIAL CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, TEXACO ROAD, TSUEN WAN AS FROM JULY 30, AND FROM THE HONG KONG OFFICE OF THE SPS AT DOMINION CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, QUEEN'S ROAD EAST, HONG KONG IN ANOTHER TWO MONTHS' TIME.

/ALL CASES

ALL CASES OF THE MENTALLY DISABLED REGISTERED WITH THE JOB PLACEMENT UNIT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING THOSE NOT YET PLACED IN EMPLOYMENT, WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THE SPS AT THE END OF JULY.

ORGANISATIONS WISHING TO REFER MENTALLY DISABLED PERSONS FOR EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE SHOULD CONTACT THE SELECTIVE PLACEMENT SERVICE AFTER JULY 30. TO FACILITATE SMOOTH OPERATION AND TO AVOID INCONVENIENCE, THEY SHOULD MAKE PRIOR APPOINTMENTS ON TELEPHONE 0-4988444, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

EMPLOYERS ARE WELCOME TO CONTACT THE SPS THROUGH THE SAME NUMBER.

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REGISTER-TO-VOTE DRIVE ON
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STAFF OF A LOCAL BANK TODAY PLEDGED THEIR FULL SUPPORT TO NEXT YEAR'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS BY FIRST REGISTERING AS VOTERS.

THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LIU CHONG HING BANK, MR LIU LIT-FOR.

A MOBILE REGISTRATION TEAM FROM THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE VISITED THE BANK'S HEAD OFFICE THIS MORNING TO EXPLAIN THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, DISTRIBUTE PUBLICITY HANDOUTS AND FILL IN REGISTRATION FORMS FOR THE BANK STAFF.

THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MR KIM SALKELD, WHO HEADED THE TEAM SAID: +SIMILAR BULK REGISTRATION IS MOST WELCOME. OUR MOBILE TEAM WILL PROVIDE THIS KIND OF SERVICE AS AND WHEN SUCH REQUESTS ARE RECEIVED.+

POINTING OUT THIS IS PART OF A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES ORGANISED TO PUBLICISE AND PROMOTE THE CURRENT REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN, HE URGED EMPLOYERS IN THE DISTRICT TO RESPOND TO THE DRIVE.

HE ALSO APPEALED TO RESIDENTS IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN TO SUPPORT HOUSEHOLD VISITS BEING MADE BY DISTRICT OFFICE STAFF AND TEMPORARY COMMUNITY ORGANISERS TO HELP ELIGIBLE VOTERS TO REGISTER.

+THE VISITS WILL LAST UNTIL THE END OF SEPTEMBER, HOPEFULLY COVERING ALL RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN THE DISTRICT,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT MOST VISITS WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN THE EVENINGS FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF RESIDENTS.

LETTERS WITH THE DATE AND TIME OF SUCH VISITS WILL BE SENT TO INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLDS A COUPLE OF DAYS IN ADVANCE, AND POSTERS WILL BE PUT UP INSIDE BUILDINGS TO REMIND RESIDENTS.

ENQUIRIES OR CONFIRMATION OF THE VISITS CAN BE MADE AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE OR BY TELEPHONING 5-450868.

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MARINE POLICE BASE TO BE EXPANDED

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A \$956 221 PILING CONTRACT HAS BEEN AWARDED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN ADMINISTRATION BLOCK AT ABERDEEN MARINE POLICE BASE.

THE 16-STORY BLOCK WILL OCCUPY A 900-SQUARE-METRE SITE AT SHAM WAN ROAD AND IS PART OF A PLAN TO EXPAND THE BASE.

FACILITIES WILL INCLUDE OFFICES, A RADIO AND RADAR ROOM, WORKSHOPS, ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT HOLDING AREAS, BARRACKS, CHANGING ROOMS, A DINING ROOM, A RECREATIONAL ROOM, A STOREROOM AND LAUNDRY.

PILING WILL START NEXT MONTH AND BE COMPLETED IN DECEMBER.

THE CONTRACT HAS BEEN AWARDED TO FRANKI CONTRACTORS LIMITED BY THE ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE OF THE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

TENDERS FOR THE BLOCK'S SUPERSTRUCTURE, WHICH WILL TAKE 18 MONTHS TO BUILD, WILL BE INVITED LATER THIS YEAR.

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VILLAGE CLEANSING CONTRACT AWARDED

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THE NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT TODAY AWARDED A \$20 000 CONTRACT FOR CARRYING OUT CLEANSING SERVICES ON AP CHAU TO A LOCAL AGENT.

THE CONTRACT, GOOD FOR EIGHT MONTHS FROM AUGUST 1, WAS SIGNED BY THE DIRECTOR OF NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES, MR DAVID WEEKS, AND THE CONTRACTOR, MR CHAN SAU-TUNG.

MR WEEKS SAID THIS CONTRACT WAS ANOTHER STEP FORWARD IN INVOLVING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN VILLAGE CLEANSING.

THIS CLEANSING SCHEME IS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY OTHER SIX VILLAGES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. THEY ARE : WANG TOI SHAN IN YUEN LONG, LUNG KWU TAN IN TUEN MUN, HANG HAU IN SAI KUNG, CARE VILLAGE IN TAI PO, CHUNG MEI RESITE VILLAGE IN KWAI CHUNG AND TAI LONG WAN TSUEN ON LANTAU ISLAND.

MR WEEKS SAID THAT GOOD RESULTS HAD BEEN ACHIEVED IN THESE VILLAGES.

HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT AT AP CHAU, THE USE OF A PRIVATE CONTRACTOR WOULD ALSO GIVE A BETTER AND MORE COST-EFFECTIVE SERVICE.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE CONTRACT SIGNING CEREMONY WERE THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SHA TAU KOK RURAL COMMITTEE, MR YIP SHING, AND THE STAFF OFFICER (CLEANSING) OF THE NTSD, MR LAM CHUNG-HUEN.

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CLEARWAY HOURS IN TAI KOO SHING SHORTENED
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FROM 10 AM ON THURSDAY (JULY 26), THE URBAN CLEARWAY HOURS OF SEVERAL ROAD SECTIONS IN TAI KOO SHING WILL BE SHORTENED.

THE NEW HOURS WILL BE FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM AND FROM 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY.

THE SECTIONS ARE :

- * TAI KOO SHING ROAD FROM A POINT ABOUT 20 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI WING AVENUE TO A POINT ABOUT 60 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI FUNG AVENUE ;
- * TAI WING AVENUE FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI KOO WAN ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 25 METRES SOUTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION; AND THE SAME ROAD FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI KOO SHING ROAD TO A POINT ABOUT 20 METRES NORTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION; AND
- * TAI KOO WAN ROAD FROM A POINT ABOUT 50 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI FUNG AVENUE TO A POINT ABOUT 40 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI WING AVENUE.

NO VEHICLES OTHER THAN FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS DURING THE RESTRICTED PERIODS WITHIN THESE ROAD SECTIONS.

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TRAFFIC MEASURES AT CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD
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FROM 10 AM ON THURSDAY (JULY 26), SPECIAL TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IN FORCE AT CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS, TO FACILITATE CONSTRUCTION WORK.

UNDER THE ARRANGEMENTS, THE FOLLOWING WILL BE BANNED :

- * LEFT-TURN MOVEMENT FROM CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD NORTHBOUND INTO YEN CHOW STREET WESTBOUND.
- * RIGHT-TURN MOVEMENT FROM YEN CHOW STREET WESTBOUND INTO CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD NORTHBOUND.
- * RIGHT-TURN MOVEMENT FROM CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD SOUTHBOUND INTO YEN CHOW STREET WESTBOUND FOR ALL VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES.

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WORK ON WATER STREET
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WORK WILL START TOMORROW ON RECONSTRUCTING A SECTION OF WATER STREET BETWEEN THIRD STREET AND CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST.

A SECTION OF THE FOOTPATH FOR EXISTING COOKED FOOD STORES WILL BE WIDENED SO THAT A TWO-LANE CARRIAGEWAY CAN BE PROVIDED.

THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE OF THE ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT HAS AWARDED A \$3.2 MILLION CONTRACT TO CHUEN HING CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LIMITED FOR THE WORK.

WHEN THE WORK IS COMPLETED IN 15 MONTHS, VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE AREA WILL BE SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED.

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