



WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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DRASTIC INCREASE IN AIR FREIGHT

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, SIR DENYS ROBERTS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE AMOUNT OF CARGO HANDLED AT THE AIRPORT HAD RISEN ALMOST FIFTY TIMES DURING THE LAST 19 YEARS.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE HONG KONG AIR CARGO TERMINAL, HE SAID THAT LAST YEAR 14 PER CENT OF HONG KONG'S IMPORTS AND 26 PER CENT OF ITS EXPORTS, BY VALUE, WERE CARRIED BY AIR.

SIR DENYS PREDICTED THAT THE TERMINAL, WITH ITS MECHANICAL HANDLING SYSTEMS, WOULD BE ABLE TO HANDLE ALL AIR CARGO UNTIL ABOUT 1985.

HE DESCRIBED THE TERMINAL AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE COULD COMBINE IN A JOINT VENTURE.

FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THE COLONIAL SECRETARY'S SPEECH :-

+IT IS BOTH AN HONOUR AND A PLEASURE TO OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING OF THIS MAGNIFICENT NEW AIR CARGO TERMINAL, WHICH WILL PROVIDE HONG KONG WITH FACILITIES FOR THE HANDLING OF AIR FREIGHT AS EFFICIENT AS THOSE AVAILABLE ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

+I NEED NOT REMIND YOU THAT HONG KONG LIVES BY TRADING AND THAT WE CAN NEVER AFFORD TO LAG BEHIND OUR COMPETITORS IN THE PROVISION OF EFFECTIVE METHODS OF HANDLING, DESPATCH AND RECEIPT OF THE GREAT VARIETY OF MANUFACTURED GOODS WHICH WE EXPORT, AND OF THE RAW MATERIALS WHICH WE IMPORT.

+IN THE PAST, OUR TRADE WAS CONDUCTED ALMOST ENTIRELY BY SEA. INDEED, AS RECENTLY AS 1956, ONLY 3115 TONS OF CARGO WERE HANDLED AT THE AIRPORT. BY 1975, THIS HAD RISEN ALMOST FIFTY TIMES. LAST YEAR, 14 PER CENT OF OUR IMPORTS AND 26 PER CENT OF OUR EXPORTS, BY VALUE, WERE CARRIED BY AIR.

+NOT ONLY THE VOLUME OF OUR FREIGHT, BUT THE METHODS OF HANDLING IT HAVE CHANGED DRAMATICALLY. IN 1956, THE TYPICAL FREIGHTER WAS A +DAKOTA+, WHICH CARRIED ABOUT 5 TO 6 TONS OF FREIGHT AT A MAXIMUM SPEED OF ABOUT 200 M.P.H. NOW THE BOEING 747F, THE BIGGEST OF THE PRESENT GENERATION OF FREIGHTER AIRCRAFT, CAN CARRY OVER 100 TONS OF CARGO AT NEARLY 600 M.P.H.

/+INEVITABLY,

+INEVITABLY, OUR METHODS OF HANDLING CARGO AT THE AIRPORT HAVE HAD TO CHANGE AS WELL. WHEN THE FIRST AIR CARGO BUILDING WAS OPENED IN 1963, EACH AIRLINE AND AIR CARGO AGENCY OCCUPIED A SEPARATE AREA AND ALL FREIGHT WAS DEALT WITH BY MANUAL METHODS. THE BUILDING WAS ADAPTED, PATCHED AND EXPANDED SEVERAL TIMES, UNTIL IT REACHED ITS MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SIZE IN 1971, WHEN ITS CAPACITY WAS ABOUT 70,000 TONS A YEAR, A TOTAL WHICH WAS EXCEEDED IN 1972. FURTHER SPACE, SOME OF IT UNSATISFACTORY AND SUFFERING FROM THE USUAL DEFECTS OF UNPLANNED EXPANSION, HAD TO BE FOUND IN OTHER PARTS OF THE AIRPORT.

+AS LONG AGO AS 1966 THE CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE TO STUDY OUR FUTURE CARGO HANDLING REQUIREMENTS. THIS COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT THE EXISTING TERMINAL WOULD BE INADEQUATE BY THE MID 1970S AND RECOMMENDED A +CONSOLIDATED+ TERMINAL, WHICH WOULD ENSURE A MORE ECONOMICAL USE OF THE SCARCE LAND AVAILABLE AND SHOULD REDUCE OPERATING COSTS.

+A CONSORTIUM WAS ESTABLISHED, COMPOSED OF SWIRE, JARDINE, KOWLOON WHARF, WHAMPOA AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT. THIS CONSORTIUM CREATED THE HONG KONG AIR CARGO TERMINALS LIMITED, TO PLAN, CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE THE TERMINAL. BUILDING BEGAN IN OCTOBER 1974 AND BY THE END OF 1975 THE IMPRESSIVE STRUCTURE WHICH WE SEE TODAY HAD BEEN COMPLETED AND THE MECHANICAL HANDLING SYSTEMS INSTALLED. IN PARALLEL, THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDED THE NECESSARY EXTRA AIRCRAFT AND VEHICLE PARKING BAYS, TAXIWAYS AND ROADWAYS AND AN OFFICE BLOCK TO HOUSE THOSE ENGAGED IN THE AIR CARGO BUSINESS.

+DANGEROUS THOUGH IT HAS OFTEN PROVED TO PREDICT THE GROWTH OF AIR TRAFFIC, WE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVE THAT THIS TERMINAL WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE ALL AIR CARGO UNTIL ABOUT 1985. THEREAFTER, THE PRESENT FACILITIES WILL HAVE TO BE EXPANDED AND LAND HAS BEEN RESERVED FOR THIS TO BE DONE, TO MEET OUR NEEDS IN THE LATE 1980S AND THE 1990S.

+WE ALREADY POSSESS ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST MODERN AND EFFICIENT SHIPPING CONTAINER PORTS AT KWAI CHUNG. THIS BUILDING ADDS TO OUR TRANSPORT SYSTEM A SUPERB COMPLEX FOR THE HANDLING OF AIR FREIGHT. THIS IS FURTHER EVIDENCE, IF ANY BE NEEDED, OF THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE GOVERNMENT ATTACH TO THE SPEEDY, SECURE AND RELIABLE DESPATCH AND RECEIPT OF FREIGHT. IT IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE CAN COMBINE IN A JOINT VENTURE WHICH IS IN THE INTERESTS OF BOTH OF THEM, IN A MANNER WHICH ASSURES THE SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT, BUT LEAVES THE ADMINISTRATION OF IT IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO KNOW BEST HOW TO RUN A PRODUCTIVE BUSINESS.

+IN CONCLUSION, MAY I OFFER MY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS PROJECT= TO THE PLANNERS, THE ARCHITECTS, THE CONTRACTORS AND THE WORKERS. THEY ALL HAVE GOOD CAUSE TO BE PROUD OF THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABOURS.

+MR. BLUCK, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I WISH THIS COMPANY, AND ALL WHO WORK HERE, ABUNDANT SUCCESS IN THE FUTURE, AND HAVE PLEASURE IN DECLARING THIS TERMINAL OPEN.+

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MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE (THIRD PARTY RISKS) (AMENDMENT) BILL
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DR. THE HON. CHUNG SZE-YUEN TODAY EXPRESSED SURPRISE AND DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE ACCIDENT INSURANCE ASSOCIATION WOULD NEED AT LEAST A YEAR BEFORE IT COULD PROVIDE COMPULSORY THIRD PARTY INSURANCE FOR PASSENGERS IN MOTOR VEHICLES.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE (THIRD PARTY RISKS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE NOTED THAT AFTER ALL, RATES AND ENDORSEMENT FOR PASSENGER INSURANCE WERE AT PRESENT ALREADY AVAILABLE.

HE QUESTIONED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ASK THE ASSOCIATION TO EXPLAIN WHY IT WAS NECESSARY TO TAKE SO LONG TO IMPLEMENT THE SCHEME.

DR. CHUNG ALSO SOUGHT CLARIFICATION FROM THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT ON WHETHER PASSENGERS IN +PAK PAIS+, THOUGH ILLEGAL, WOULD BE COVERED BY THIS AMENDING BILL.

ON THE QUESTION OF ENSURING THAT NO VEHICLES WILL BE LICENSED WITHOUT A VALID THIRD PARTY INSURANCE, HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE COULD STILL BE MOTOR CARS WITHOUT EFFECTIVE INSURANCE.

+THIS IS POSSIBLE BECAUSE AT THE TIME OF INITIAL LICENSING OR SUBSEQUENT RENEWAL OF TRANSFER, THE REQUIREMENT IS FOR THE OWNER TO PRODUCE AN INSURANCE CERTIFICATE VALID AT THAT TIME. THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR THE VALIDITY PERIOD OF THE INSURANCE POLICY TO RUN IN PARALLEL WITH THAT OF THE VEHICLE LICENCE.+

HE FELT THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE PROTECTION OFFERED TO THE THIRD PARTY BY IMPOSING THE REQUIREMENT THAT THE PERIOD OF VALIDITY FOR BOTH THIRD PARTY INSURANCE AND VEHICLE LICENCE SHOULD COINCIDE WITH EACH OTHER.

IN REPLY, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. JAMES ROBSON SAID THE ACCIDENT INSURANCE ASSOCIATION HAD EARLIER ON INDICATED THAT IT WOULD REQUIRE A MINIMUM OF 12 MONTHS IN ORDER TO ADJUST PREMIUM RATINGS, WORDING OF POLICIES AND THE LIKE.

BUT ANOTHER MORE IMPORTANT POINT WAS THAT FROM THE DATE OF ENACTMENT OF THE NEW LEGISLATION, A STEADY STREAM OF THIRD PARTY INSURANCE RENEWAL NOTICES WOULD BE ISSUED, REFLECTING THE NEW LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR PASSENGER INSURANCE, +AND IT IS ONLY WHEN THE ADDITIONAL PREMIA ARE PAID THAT THE ADDITIONAL INSURANCE WILL BE EFFECTIVE.+

HE SAID IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE POSSIBLE FOR INSURANCE COMPANIES TO ISSUE ENDORSEMENTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER ENACTMENT TO ALL POLICY-HOLDERS AT ONE FELL SWOOP.

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ON THE STRENGTH OF PAST EXPERIENCE, HOWEVER, THE ASSOCIATION WARNED THAT WHILE MANY POLICY-HOLDERS WOULD PAY FOR THE NEW ENDORSEMENT, MANY OTHERS WOULD NOT.

FOR PRACTICAL REASONS, MR. ROBSON SAID A YEAR'S DELAY IN BRINGING THE NEW LEGISLATION INTO FORCE WAS NEEDED.

CLARIFYING THE POSITION OF +PAK PAI'S+, HE SAID PASSENGERS IN THESE VEHICLES WOULD NOT BE COVERED BY THE LEGISLATION.

+SINCE PASSENGER COVER WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ARRANGED UNDER A COMMERCIAL VEHICLE POLICY, UNDECLARED USE OF A PRIVATE CAR FOR CARRIAGE OF PASSENGERS FOR HIRE OR REWARD WOULD CONTRAVENE THE 'USE' CLAUSE OF THE INSURANCE POLICY- AND CONTRAVENTION OF THIS CLAUSE WOULD INVALIDATE THE POLICY.+

REFERRING TO DR. CHUNG'S PROPOSAL WHICH REQUIRES THE PERIOD OF THE VALIDITY OF THE THIRD PARTY INSURANCE POLICY AND THE VEHICLE LICENCE TO COINCIDE WITH EACH OTHER, MR. ROBSON SAID THIS HAD ALREADY BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE ACCIDENT INSURANCE ASSOCIATION AND THERE WERE SOME DIFFICULTIES.

+BUT THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT IS RE-OPENING DISCUSSION WITH THE ASSOCIATION TO DISCUSS WHETHER THESE CAN BE OVERCOME.+

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LICENSING OF CANTEENS TO BE STUDIED

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THE URBAN COUNCIL HAS DECIDED TO RE-EXAMINE THE CASH FOR AMENDING THE LAW SO AS TO REQUIRE FACTORY AND SCHOOL CANTEENS BE LICENSED AND SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH REQUIREMENT STIPULATED UNDER THE FOOD BUSINESS BY-LAWS.

THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. F.K. LI, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS TODAY IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR. THE HON. HARRY FANG ON GOVERNMENT ACTION TO GUARD AGAINST FOOD POISONING IN THESE CANTEENS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT CANTEENS IN SCHOOLS AND WORKPLACES ARE NOT SUBJECT TO LICENSING UNDER THE FOOD BUSINESS BY-LAWS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES ORDINANCE.

HOWEVER, SCHOOL CANTEENS WERE INSPECTED REGULARLY BY SCHOOL HEALTH INSPECTORS, WHILE ADVICE ON HEALTH MATTERS WERE GIVEN, ON REQUEST, TO OPERATORS OF FACTORY CANTEENS BY URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF.

THE URBAN COUNCIL HAD RECENTLY DECIDED THAT A CODE OF PRACTICE ON HYGIENIC FOOD HANDLING SHOULD BE ISSUED TO OPERATORS OF THESE CANTEENS, HE ADDED.

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STEPS TO BRING MORE AGRICULTURAL LAND INTO CULTIVATION
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POSITIVE STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO BRING MORE AGRICULTURAL LAND INTO CULTIVATION AND TO HELP FARMERS TO INCREASE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY IN TERMS OF MARKETABLE CROPS, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. DEREK JONES SAID TODAY.

HE TOLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE AIM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S AGRICULTURAL POLICY, AS WITH ITS INDUSTRIAL POLICY, WAS NOT TO PROVIDE PROTECTION OR SUBSIDIES TO CUSHION THE FORCES OF THE MARKET.

+IT IS RATHER TO ENCOURAGE PRODUCERS TO MAXIMISE PRODUCTION OF THESE CROPS WHICH CAN BE SOLD ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS WITH IMPORTS AND WHICH CAN THUS BE OF ADVANTAGE, NOT ONLY TO THEMSELVES, BUT TO THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.+

HE WAS REPLYING THE HON. JOHN BREMRIDGE WHO ASKED WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS PLANNING TO ENCOURAGE THE CULTIVATION OF AGRICULTURAL PLOTS WHICH ARE LYING FALLOW, AND THE MORE INTENSIVE CULTIVATION OF THOSE PLOTS PRESENTLY UNDER-UTILISED.

MR. JONES POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE JUST OVER 30,000 ACRES OF AGRICULTURAL LAND IN HONG KONG, OF WHICH ABOUT 30 PER CENT OR ABOUT 9,000 ACRES WERE LYING FALLOW.

A FURTHER 12 PER CENT OR ABOUT 3,600 ACRES WAS UNDER-UTILISED, THAT IS, IT WAS GROWING PADDY OR FIELD CROPS INSTEAD OF VEGETABLES AND OTHER MARKET GARDEN CROPS. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE AVERAGE GROSS RETURN PER ACRE FROM VEGETABLES WAS NOW ALMOST 11 TIMES THAT FROM RICE GROWING, AND, INDEED, RICE AND OTHER FIELD CROPS WERE NOW TOTALLY UNECONOMIC TO GROW IN HONG KONG AT PRESENT COSTS OF PRODUCTION IN RELATION TO THE COST OF IMPORTS.

MOST OF THE FALLOW LAND WAS PREVIOUSLY USED FOR GROWING RICE. SOME OF IT WAS ON THE EDGES OF TOWNS AND TOWNSHIPS AND WAS NOW LARGELY IN SPECULATIVE HANDS WITH A VIEW TO SALE AT ENHANCED VALUES TO MEET URBAN DEVELOPMENT. +IN OTHER WORDS, THIS LAND IS NOW LARGELY SEMI-URBAN IN CHARACTER AND CAN HARDLY ANY LONGER BE CONSIDERED, DE FACTO, AS AGRICULTURAL LAND.+

MUCH OF THE REMAINING AREAS OF FALLOW LAND, HE SAID, WAS PERFECTLY SUITABLE FOR GROWING VEGETABLES OR FRUIT, BUT THE VILLAGERS WHO OWN IT WERE OFTEN RELUCTANT TO SWITCH TO THE MORE TECHNICALLY DEMANDING MARKET GARDEN CROPS.

+THEY ARE USUALLY NOT WILLING TO LEASE THE LAND TO IMMIGRANT FARMERS WHO ARE NOW THE MAIN VEGETABLE GROWERS AND WHO WOULD, IN MANY CASES, BE VERY READY TO CULTIVATE MORE OF THIS LAND.+

HE SAID THESE WERE CERTAINLY THE MOST PROMISING AREAS TO BRING BACK INTO CULTIVATION AND THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT WAS MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO PERSUADE THE OWNERS TO DO SO IN FIVE DIRECTIONS.

FIRSTLY, THROUGH ITS EXTENSION WORK, THE DEPARTMENT IS SEEKING TO PERSUADE THE VILLAGERS TO TAKE ON VEGETABLE CULTIVATION. HE TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT ALREADY OVER 12,000 ACRES, OR MORE THAN 40 PER CENT OF ALL AGRICULTURAL LAND, BOTH UTILISED AND UNUTILISED, WAS UNDER VEGETABLES AND THIS WOULD BE EXPECTED TO GROW TO AT LEAST 16,500 ACRES, OR 55 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL, BY THE MID-80S.

SECONDLY, THE DEPARTMENT IS ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MIXED ORCHARDS OF SHORT-TERM, MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG-TERM FRUIT TREES. THIS SORT OF DEVELOPMENT COULD HAVE A GOOD FUTURE IN HONG KONG CONDITIONS AND THE DEPARTMENT IS NOW RUNNING A NUMBER OF DEMONSTRATION ORCHARDS AND IS PRODUCING PLANTS FOR SALE.

THIRDLY, THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, IS EXAMINING WAYS OF OVERCOMING THE RELUCTANCE OF LAND OWNERS TO LEASE TO TENANTS TRAINED IN MARKET GARDENING.

FOURTHLY, THE INTENSITY OF CULTIVATION REQUIRED IN GROWING VEGETABLES CAN LEAD TO A SHORTAGE OF LABOUR. TO HELP TO OVERCOME THIS, THE DEPARTMENT IS DEMONSTRATING AND POPULARISING THE USE OF SMALL MECHANICAL CULTIVATORS. ABOUT 2,000 OF THESE MACHINES ARE NOW IN USE AND MANY HAVE BEEN FINANCED BY LOAN FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

LASTLY, THE DEPARTMENT IS ENCOURAGING THE USE OF MORE UP-TO-DATE SYSTEMS OF IRRIGATION AND THE USE OF HERBICIDES TO REPLACE HAND-WEEDING OF CROPS, BOTH OF WHICH CAN ALSO SAVE CONSIDERABLE LABOUR AND INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY.

MR. JONES ADDED THAT A FURTHER DEVELOPMENT WHICH THE DEPARTMENT WAS ENCOURAGING ON SUITABLE LAND WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FISH PONDS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT OVER 3,500 ACRES WERE NOW UNDER FISH PONDS COMPARED WITH LESS THAN 500 ACRES IN 1956 AND THE TREND WAS CONTINUING.

HE ALSO REFERRED TO THE LAST TYPE OF FALLOW LAND IN RELATIVELY REMOTE AREAS NOT SERVED BY MOTORISED ROADS. THIS TYPE OF LAND COULD NOT BE USED FOR MARKET GARDEN CROPS BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTY OF TRANSPORT TO MARKETS.

THE GREATER PART OF THIS LAND, PREVIOUSLY USED FOR RICE GROWING IN THE OLD DAYS, HAD BEEN ABANDONED AND THE MORE ABLE-BODIED MOVED AWAY FROM THEIR VILLAGES TO SEEK OTHER EMPLOYMENT.

THE PREVIOUS INACCESSIBILITY OF THESE AREAS WAS, HOWEVER, BEING REDUCED AS THE GOVERNMENT DEVELOPED NEW ACCESS ROADS, MOSTLY IN ASSOCIATION WITH WATER DEVELOPMENTS, HE SAID.

THE HIGH ISLAND WATER SCHEME, IN PARTICULAR, COULD IN DUE COURSE OPEN UP CONSIDERABLE AREAS TO MOTORISED TRAFFIC. AS THIS HAPPENED, IT COULD WELL BE THAT MUCH HITHERTO FALLOW LAND WILL BE OPENED UP TO THE PRODUCTION OF MARKETABLE CROPS, ALTHOUGH THE ALTERNATIVE POSSIBILITY OF THE USE OF CONSIDERABLE PARTS FOR PROPERLY MANAGED RECREATIONAL PURPOSES WILL ALSO NEED TO BE CATERED FOR. +

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HEUNG YEE KUK ELECTIONS
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THE HEUNG YEE KUK WILL HOLD ITS REGIONAL ELECTIONS TO FILL 21 SEATS OF SPECIAL COUNCILLOR FOR THE 22ND TERM OF OFFICE TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

THE KUK IS THE STATUTORY ADVISORY BODY TO THE GOVERNMENT ON ALL MATTERS AFFECTING THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE ELECTIONS, TO BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES LAID DOWN IN THE HEUNG YEE KUK ORDINANCE, WILL TAKE THE FORM OF SECRET BALLOT.

THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR. DAVID AKERS-JONES, WILL ACT AS THE RETURNING OFFICER.

THERE ARE SEVEN SEATS FOR EACH OF THE THREE ELECTORAL DISTRICT IN TAI PO, INCLUDING SHA TIN, YUEN LONG INCLUDING TUEN MUN AND SOUTHERN DISTRICT WHICH COMPRISES SAI KUNG, ISLANDS AND TSUEN WAN.

THIRTY-ONE CANDIDATES — 10 FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT, 10 FOR TAI PO AND 11 FOR YUEN LONG — WILL COMPETE FOR THE SEATS.

THE ELECTORATE IS MADE UP OF 89 PEOPLE, COMPRISING THE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN OF ALL RURAL COMMITTEES AND 18 NEW TERRITORIES UNOFFICIAL JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

THREE SEPARATE ELECTIONS FOR EACH ELECTORAL DISTRICT WILL BE HELD AS FROM 9 A.M. TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AT THE HEUNG YEE KUK OFFICE, 47 CUMBERLAND ROAD, KOWLOON.

THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTIONS WILL BE ANNOUNCED BY THE RETURNING OFFICER IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE VOTES HAVE BEEN CHECKED AND COUNTED.

ADMISSION TO THE ELECTION ROOM WILL BE RESTRICTED TO ELECTION OFFICIALS, CANDIDATES, ELECTORS AND THE PRESS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE WELCOME TO SEND YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE ELECTION.

THEY SHOULD IDENTIFY THEMSELVES TO ELECTION OFFICIALS (WITH PRESS CARDS OR OTHER SIMILAR IDENTIFICATIONS) ON ARRIVAL AT THE ELECTION ROOM. THEY WILL THEN BE ISSUED WITH LAPEL BADGES, ENABLING THEM TO ENTER THE ELECTION ROOM.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND CAMERAMEN WILL NOT BE ADMITTED DURING THE POLLING AND THE COUNTING OF VOTES, BUT THERE WILL BE NO OBJECTION TO PHOTOGRAPHS BEING TAKEN OUTSIDE THE ELECTION ROOM WHEN THE PROCEEDINGS ARE OVER.

MR. DONALD STRANGE, PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST THE PRESS.

METHADONE DETOXIFICATION FOR DRUG ADDICTS
TO BEGIN NEXT MONTH

METHADONE MAINTENANCE TREATMENT FOR DRUG ADDICTS HAS PROVED TO BE ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT METHODS AS IT ENABLES ADDICTS TO RECEIVE TREATMENT WHILE AT THE SAME TIME TO BE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED.

THIS IS THE CONCLUSION DRAWN AFTER THREE YEARS OF EXPERIMENT BY THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, ACCORDING TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (MEDICAL), DR. K.F. CHAN.

STATISTICS SHOWED THAT OVER 90 PER CENT OF THE 1,500 DRUG ADDICTS WHO JOINED THE PILOT SCHEME IN 1972 HAD BEEN WORKING WHILE RECEIVING THEIR DAILY DOSAGE OF METHADONE, HE TOLD THE LION'S CLUB OF VICTORIA THIS AFTERNOON.

DR. CHAN EXPLAINED THAT THE FOUR METHADONE MAINTENANCE CENTRES WERE OPEN DAILY FROM 7.30 A.M. TO 9.30 P.M. SO THAT THE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED ADDICTS COULD GET THEIR METHADONE EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER WORK.

ANOTHER ADVANTAGE OF METHADONE TREATMENT WAS THAT THE EFFECTS OF HEROIN OR MORPHINE, WHETHER BY INHALATION OR INJECTION, WERE OF SHORT DURATION AND AN ADDICT MUST TAKE THE DRUG SEVERAL TIMES A DAY WHEREAS A SINGLE APPROPRIATE DOSE OF METHADONE COULD LAST 24 HOURS, HE ADDED.

THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAID UP TO THE END OF APRIL, 6,588 ADDICTS HAVE REGISTERED WITH THE FOUR CENTRES - EASTERN STREET HEALTH CENTRE ON THE ISLAND, ROBERT BLACK HEALTH CENTRE IN SAN PO KONG, HO MAN TIN HEALTH CENTRE IN KOWLOON AND LADY TRENCH POLYCLINIC IN TSUEN WAN.

THE DAILY ATTENDANCE AVERAGED 2,000, OF WHICH ABOUT 60 PER CENT CAME TO THE CENTRES BEFORE 8 A.M. OR AFTER 6 P.M., HE SAID.

DR. CHAN MENTIONED VARIOUS MEASURES NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD AGAINST THE POSSIBLE ABUSE OF METHADONE.

ONE SUCH MEASURE IS THAT THE ADDICT HAS TO RETURN DAILY AND INGEST THE SOLUTION IN THE PRESENCE OF STAFF OF THE CENTRES - A MEASURE WHICH OBTVIATES THE POSSIBILITIES OF BLACK MARKET OR OVERDOSE.

ANOTHER EFFECTIVE MEASURE IS THAT ON REGISTRATION, THE ADDICT IS MEDICALLY EXAMINED TO ENSURE THAT HE IS A GENUINE DRUG ADDICT.

DR. CHAN POINTED OUT THAT IN OTHER COUNTRIES THERE WERE REPORTED CASES OF PERSONS PRETENDING TO BE DRUG ADDICTS AND JOINING THE PROGRAMME JUST TO GET THE METHADONE.

IN VIEW OF THE SUCCESS OF THE METHADONE MAINTENANCE SCHEME, A NEW METHADONE DETOXIFICATION CENTRE WILL COME INTO OPERATION EARLY NEXT MONTH, HE SAID.

EXPLAINING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN METHADONE MAINTENANCE AND METHADONE DETOXIFICATION, DR. CHAN SAID THE MAINTENANCE METHOD WILL LAST FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD WHILE IN DETOXIFICATION THE DOSE OF METHADONE IS GRADUALLY REDUCED OVER A PERIOD OF TIME.

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POWER TO ARREST WITNESS
CALL FOR SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE
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THE HON. JOHN BREMRIDGE TODAY CALLED FOR RIGOROUS SAFEGUARDS AGAINST THE MISUSE OF THE PROPOSED POWER TO ARREST AND DETAIN A WITNESS.

SEVERE PENALTIES, HE SAID, MUST BE PROVIDED IN CASE OF ABUSE.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 WHICH EMPOWERS A COURT OR MAGISTRATE TO ISSUE A WARRANT FOR THE ARREST OF A PERSON WHO IS BOUND TO ATTEND COURT TO GIVE EVIDENCE, AND TO REQUIRE A CASH DEPOSIT AS A CONDITION OF ADMISSION TO BAIL.

+ONE BAD CASE OF IMPROPER, UNLAWFUL, OR MALICIOUS USE OF SUCH POWERS, OR THREAT OF ITS USE, WILL PUT AT PERIL OUR POLICY OF ENCOURAGING THE ORDINARY CITIZEN TO COME FORWARD TO GIVE EVIDENCE AND CO-OPERATE WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, AND MAY BRING THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE INTO DISREPUTE,+ MR. BREMRIDGE SAID.

+FURTHER,+ HE SAID, +UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ASK THAT, TO MARK THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROCESS, THE POWER TO ISSUE THE WARRANT BE GIVEN ONLY TO THE HIGH COURT AND ON THE APPLICATION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, AND THAT THE PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING THE WARRANT SHOULD FOLLOW THAT WHICH IS STIPULATED IN ENGLAND.+

HE FELT THAT THE POWER TO ARREST AND DETAIN A WITNESS, AS DISTINCT FROM AN ACCUSED PERSON, COULD BE A SERIOUS INFRINGEMENT OF THE LIBERTY OF THE SUBJECT, AND WAS HARDLY CALCULATED TO ENCOURAGE PERSONS WHO MIGHT HAVE MATERIAL EVIDENCE TO GIVE TO VOLUNTEER TO MAKE STATEMENTS TO THE POLICE, OR TO BE A WITNESS.

+IT MAY INDEED BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, AND BRACE AN EXISTING AND STRONG NATURAL PREFERENCE NOT TO GET INVOLVED WITH THE LAW. IN VIEW OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS GOVERNMENT MAY WISH TO REFLECT WHETHER THEY WISH TO PURSUE THIS MATTER. NO CASE FOR ITS NECESSITY HAS BEEN MADE OUT.+

HE ADDED THAT IF THIS POWER OF ARREST OF WITNESSES WAS TO BE MADE PART OF THE LAW, IT MUST BE ENSURED THAT IT WAS ONLY TO BE USED IN THE CLEAREST CASES, WHERE THERE WAS THE PLAINEST EVIDENCE THAT A POTENTIAL WITNESS WOULD LIKELY ABSCOND- THAT BAIL BE FREELY AVAILABLE IN REASONABLE SUMS, EITHER IN CASH OR BY BOND, AND ON REASONABLE CONDITIONS AS TO FREEDOM TO TRAVEL- AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH A WITNESS COULD BE DETAINED SHOULD BE METICULOUSLY DEFINED.

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DEBATE ON MAGISTRATES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 ADJOURNED

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UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY DECLINED TO SUPPORT A PARTICULAR SECTION OF THE MAGISTRATE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 THAT SEEKS TO GIVE THE CROWN THE RIGHT TO PREVENT A DEFENDANT FROM PLEADING GUILTY BY LETTER.

SPEAKING ON THEIR BEHALF DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, THE HON. ROGER LOBO SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION WHICH ENABLES A DEFENDANT TO PLEAD GUILTY BY LETTER WAS TWOFOLD, NAMELY TO REDUCE THE CONGESTION OF CASES IN COURTS, AND TO DO AWAY WITH THE INCONVENIENCE FOR A DEFENDANT TO ATTEND A COURT IN PERSON WHEN THE ONLY QUESTION IS THE FINE WHICH IS TO BE IMPOSED.

HE SAID THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS BELIEVED THAT THIS PARTICULAR AMENDMENT WOULD BE A RETROGRADE STEP, AND THEY DID NOT FIND CONVINCING THE REASONS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ADVANCED FOR INTRODUCING THIS PROPOSAL WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

IT MIGHT BE RIGHT THAT A COURT SHOULD NOT PROCEED, WITHOUT GIVING THE DEFENDANT AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD, TO DISQUALIFY HIM FROM DRIVING UPON CONVICTION FOR A THIRD OFFENCE.

+AN APPROPRIATE CLAUSE CAN BE DRAFTED FOR SUCH PURPOSE, THOUGH PREFERABLY THE DEFENDANT SHOULD BE WARNED THAT THE COURT MAY PROCEED TO DISQUALIFY HIM IN HIS ABSENCE IF HE DOES NOT APPEAR, WITHOUT MAKING IT OBLIGATORY FOR HIM TO ATTEND. TO BE GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD IS A FAR CRY FROM COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE.+

MR. LOBO ADDED THAT THE UNOFFICIALS WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT, OF NARROW SCOPE, TO DEAL APPROPRIATELY WITH THE PROBLEM OF DISQUALIFICATION ON A THIRD CONVICTION FOR A TRAFFIC INFRINGEMENT.

TURNING TO ANOTHER CLAUSE OF THE BILL, HE SAID IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IF THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF COSTS WHICH MIGHT BE AWARDED AGAINST THE COMPLAINANT WHO FAILED TO APPEAR IN COURT WHEN REQUIRED TO DO SO WAS SET A MUCH HIGHER FIGURES, SAY \$5,000.

HE STRESSED THAT ONLY A MUCH HIGHER FIGURE THAN THE PRESENTLY PROPOSED LIMIT OF \$500 COULD ACT AS A DETERRENT.

THE DEBATE WAS FURTHER ADJOURNED.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

- 11 -

WIDER CONTROLS ON NIGHT PILING ON THE WAY

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NEW LEGISLATION IS BEING DRAFTED TO EXTEND AND WIDEN THE SCOPE OF THE BAN ON NIGHT PILING TO COVER OTHER NOISY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT, THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD SAID TODAY.

HE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IT WAS HOPED THAT AN AMENDING BILL WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

MR. MCDONALD SAID THE BILL WOULD NOT ONLY PROLONG THE PRESENT 8 P.M. - 6 A.M. RESTRICTION ON NIGHT PILING BY TWO HOURS, BUT WOULD ALSO APPLY THE PROHIBITION TO OTHER NOISY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT SO THAT ALL SUCH OPERATIONS WOULD BE BANNED BETWEEN 7 P.M. AND 7 A.M.

IN ADDITION, IT WOULD PROVIDE FOR A TOTAL BAN OF SUCH OPERATIONS ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS FROM THE HON. LI FOOK-WO, MR. MCDONALD SAID IT WAS NOT CONSIDERED PRACTICABLE AT THIS TIME TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO MAKE THE USE OF QUIETER PILING EQUIPMENT MANDATORY, DUE TO A LACK OF SUCH EQUIPMENT IN HONG KONG.

+THE FEW FIRMS WHICH HAVE PILE-BORING EQUIPMENT DO NOT POSSESS A SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF RIGS TO CARRY OUT ALL THE PILING WORK REQUIRED BY MY ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE, TO SAY NOTHING OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF OTHER OFFICES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OR OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR,+ HE SAID.

OF THE ESTIMATED 15 PILING FIRMS IN HONG KONG, HE NOTED, 12 WERE EQUIPPED ONLY FOR PERCUSSIVE PILING OPERATIONS.

HE SAID : +BORED PILING, WHICH IS CONSIDERABLY LESS NOISY THAN PERCUSSION PILING, IS ALREADY WIDELY USED IN FOUNDATION WORKS IN HONG KONG, BUT THE SYSTEM IS NOT SUITABLE FOR EVERY TYPE OF PROJECT.+

AND WHILE THERE WERE OTHER TYPES OF PILING EQUIPMENT WHICH WERE QUIETER IN OPERATION THAN NORMAL PERCUSSION SYSTEMS, NO SUCH EQUIPMENT HAD BEEN TESTED IN HONG KONG CONDITIONS NOR WERE THEY AVAILABLE HERE, HE SAID.

MR. MCDONALD NOTED THAT THE PROBLEM OF NOISE CREATED BY PILING OPERATIONS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED FOR SOME TIME IN VARIOUS GOVERNMENT BRANCHES AND DEPARTMENTS AND IN THE NOISE POLLUTION SUB-COMMITTEE OF EPCOM, BUT THERE WAS NO QUICK AND EASY SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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TOWN CENTRE FOR EACH NEW TOWN
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A TOWN CENTRE HAS BEEN PLANNED FOR EACH OF THE THREE NEW TOWNS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THESE PLANS, HE ADDED, WOULD INCORPORATE SUCH FEATURES AS SEPARATION OF VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS, SHOPS, OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AND THE NORMAL THINGS ONE WOULD EXPECT TO FIND IN THE CENTRE OF A TOWN.

IN REPLY TO THE HON. ALEX WU ON PLANS AND FACILITIES IN THESE TOWN CENTRES, HE SAID SPACE WOULD, OF COURSE, BE SET ASIDE FOR CULTURAL AND CIVIC BUILDINGS.

HE RECALLED THAT IN 1973, THE PUBLIC WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WAS INFORMED THAT NO BUILDINGS IN THIS RANGE WOULD BE PUT FORWARD IN THE ABSENCE OF APPROVED POLICY.

+A MEMORANDUM IS THEREFORE IN PROCESS OF PREPARATION FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON GENERAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE PROVISION OF CULTURAL FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES GENERALLY, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE NEW TOWNS.+

MR. AKERS-JONES POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD BE AGAINST THIS OVERALL POLICY ENDORSEMENT THAT INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS WOULD ENTER THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME. +BUT CONSTRUCTION OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO FOLLOW AN APPROVED POLICY AND KEEP IN STEP WITH THE NEEDS OF EACH TOWN COMMUNITY INSOFAR AS OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES WILL PERMIT,+ HE SAID.

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FIRST LADY CLERK TO LEGCO
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BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING WAS ADJOURNED THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON, THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, DR. THE HON. S.Y. CHUNG, ON BEHALF OF ALL THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS, THANKED THE CLERK TO THE COUNCIL, MR. KENNETH WHEELER, FOR HIS HELP AND COURTESY DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS.

MR. WHEELER WILL SHORTLY PROCEED ON OVERSEAS LEAVE AND WILL TAKE UP A NEW APPOINTMENT ON RETURN.

DR. CHUNG ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME MRS. LOLLY TSE, THE FIRST LADY CLERK TO THE COUNCIL.

HE SAID HE WAS SURE MRS. TSE WOULD BE ABLE TO +DEMONSTRATE THE EQUALITY OF THE SEXES, AT LEAST IN HER PERFORMANCE OF THE DUTIES OF THAT OFFICE.+

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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LICENSING SYSTEM FOR CYCLISTS TO BE CONSIDERED

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CLOSELY MONITOR CYCLE ACCIDENTS OVER THE MONTHS AHEAD AND THEN CONSIDER THE USEFULNESS OF SETTING UP A LICENSING SYSTEM FOR EITHER CYCLISTS OR BICYCLES OR BOTH, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. JAMES ROBSON SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. ROGER LOBO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. ROBSON SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, DID NOT CONSIDER IT NECESSARY, AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, TO REGISTER OR LICENSE CYCLISTS, OR TO INTRODUCE OTHER CONTROLS TO PREVENT AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS INVOLVING BICYCLES.

WHILE THE GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE INCREASING NUMBER OF CYCLISTS INVOLVED IN TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS AND WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT A LICENSING SYSTEM WOULD ASSIST IN IDENTIFYING OFFENDERS, HE SAID THESE ACCIDENTS SEEMED TO BE CAUSED MAINLY BY THE LATTER'S INEXPERIENCE RATHER THAN THEIR DISREGARD FOR THE LAW.

THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM, HE ADDED, WAS TO INCREASE THE EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION TO CYCLISTS BY THE POLICE, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE ROAD SAFETY ASSOCIATION.

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EFFECT OF AIRCRAFT NOISE ON SCHOOLS

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THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY THAT AIRCRAFT NOISE OVER KOWLOON CITY DID NOT SERIOUSLY INTERFERE WITH TUITION IN SCHOOLS IN THE AREA.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. PETER WILLIAMS ON THE EFFECT OF SUCH NOISE ON SCHOOLS, MR. TOPLEY SAID THERE WERE 57 SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT AND THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE AIRCRAFT NOISE DID DISTURB TUITION.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE MATTER WAS CONSIDERED IN SOME DETAIL BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION LAST YEAR AND IT WAS ESTABLISHED THAT THE DURATION OF DISTURBANCE FROM FLIGHT-PATH NOISE WAS ABOUT 18 MINUTES PER DAY, MOST OF THIS IN THE AFTERNOON.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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SUFFICIENT AMBULANCES TO MEET DEMAND
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THE NUMBER OF AMBULANCES IN THE AMBULANCES DIVISION OF THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS SUFFICIENT TO MEET EXISTING DEMAND, THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. F.K. LI, TOLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR. THE HON. HARRY FANG, HE SAID: +AT THE END OF 1975, THERE WERE 91 AMBULANCES, OF WHICH 74 WERE OPERATIONAL AND 17 WERE FOR RESERVE AND TRAINING PURPOSES. EIGHT NEW AMBULANCES HAVE JUST BEEN DELIVERED AND TWO OF THESE ARE RESERVE VEHICLES.+

MR. LI SAID THERE WERE 19 VACANCIES IN THE APPROVED ESTABLISHMENT OF 488 FOR THE OPERATIONAL AMBULANCES, AND 37 ADDITIONAL POSTS WERE BEING SOUGHT FOR THE NEWLY ARRIVED VEHICLES.

+ACTION IS NOW IN HAND TO RECRUIT ADDITIONAL STAFF TO FILL THE EXISTING 19 VACANCIES AND FOR THE ANTICIPATED 37 NEW POSTS,+ HE ADDED.

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BILLS PASSED
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SIX BILLS, INCLUDING THE MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE (THIRD PARTY RISKS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, PASSED THROUGH THEIR COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE OTHER BILLS PASSED WERE THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, THE STAMP (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, THE DISTRICT COURT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 AND THE PROBATION OF OFFENDERS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976.

THREE OTHER BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READING. THEY WERE THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976, THE MIDWIVES REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1976 AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1976.

DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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LEGAL AID APPLICATIONS
LIMIT OF DISPOSABLE INCOME TO BE RAISED

THE GOVERNMENT AGREES THAT THE MAXIMUM LIMITS OF DISPOSABLE INCOME AND DISPOSABLE CAPITAL USED IN THE MEANS TEST FOR LEGAL AID APPLICATIONS IN CIVIL CASES OUGHT TO BE RAISED, BOTH TO KEEP PACE WITH A GENERAL INCREASE IN THE LEVEL OF WAGES AND ALSO TO MAKE MORE PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. GARTH THORNTON, TOLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS TODAY IN REPLY TO THE HON. MISS KO SIU-WAH WHO ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD RAISE THESE LIMITS.

+HOWEVER,+ HE ADDED, +THIS DESIRABLE OBJECTIVE HAS TO BE CONSIDERED AGAINST CONFLICTING CLAIMS ON THE RESOURCES OF THE GOVERNMENT.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE LIMITS FOR CIVIL CASES WERE INCREASED IN 1972 TO \$700 A MONTH FOR DISPOSABLE INCOME, AND \$4,000 FOR DISPOSABLE CAPITAL.

FOR CRIMINAL CASES AND APPEALS, HE SAID THE LIMIT OF MONTHLY DISPOSABLE INCOME WAS AT PRESENT \$1,500, AND DISPOSABLE CAPITAL \$10,000. +IT IS NOT PROPOSED AT PRESENT TIME TO ALTER THESE LIMITS.+

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RECOMMENDATIONS BY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO HKTC

GOOD PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE HONG KONG TELEPHONE COMPANY, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. DEREK JONES, SAID TODAY.

IN PARTICULAR, HE SAID A PROFIT CONTROL SCHEME HAD NOW BEEN AGREED WITH THE TELEPHONE COMPANY AND A REPORT WOULD SHORTLY BE MADE TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL.

IN REPLY TO THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, HE PROMISED THAT A FULL STATEMENT ON THE POSITION WOULD BE MADE TO THE COUNCIL WITHIN ONE MONTH.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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SWIMMING POOLS FOR N.T. TOWNS
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THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY THAT A SWIMMING POOL COMPLEX WOULD BE BUILT IN SHA TIN BY 1980 AND ANOTHER ONE IN TUEN MUN BY 1982.

AT PRESENT, HE SAID, THERE WAS ALREADY A SWIMMING POOL COMPLEX WITH A TOTAL OF SEVEN POOLS IN TSUEN WAN, BUILT WITH FUNDS PROVIDED BY THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, AND +THE DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES FOR OTHER POOLS ELSEWHERE IN THE TOWN AS THE POPULATION RISES TO 850,000+.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. Q.W. LEE, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID THE FUNDAMENTAL AIM OF EACH NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WAS TO PROVIDE A BALANCE OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

SWIMMING POOLS, HE ADDED, WERE ONE OF THE AMENITY ITEMS INCLUDED WITHIN EACH PROGRAMME, TO BE PROVIDED IN STEP WITH THE BUILD-UP IN POPULATION.

+PLANNING STANDARDS PROVIDE FOR ONE FULL SWIMMING POOL COMPLEX FOR 500,000 PEOPLE, AND ALLOWANCE HAS BEEN MADE ON THAT SCALE IN OUR TOWN PLANS.+

REFERRING TO THE OLDER TOWNS, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID THERE WERE AT PRESENT ITEMS FOR SWIMMING POOLS INCLUDED WITHIN THE WORKS PROGRAMME AT FANLING, YUEN LONG AND TAI PO.

HE SAID HE PERSONALLY SHOULD LIKE TO SEE PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO FANLING AND ACCORDINGLY HE HAD SUGGESTED RECENTLY THAT THE ITEM IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME FOR THE FANLING POOL BE UPGRADED TO ENABLE DETAILED PLANNING TO START.

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DETENTION OF VEHICLES FOR INSPECTION

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STAFF SHORTAGE AND LIMITED FACILITIES ARE THE MAJOR CAUSES FOR DELAY IN INSPECTING VEHICLES DETAINED UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC (CONSTRUCTION AND USE) REGULATIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. JAMES ROBSON TOLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS ANSWERING A QUESTION FROM THE HON. JOHN BREMRIDGE ON WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE THAT 51 VEHICLES WERE BEING DETAINED FOR INSPECTION AT THE VEHICLE POUND ON MAY 5 AND THAT THEY HAD BEEN THERE FOR PERIODS OF UP TO 16 DAYS.

ADMITTING THAT THERE WAS A DELAY, MR. ROBSON SAID MANY OF THE 51 VEHICLES WERE INVOLVED IN FATAL OR SERIOUS INJURY ACCIDENTS OR WERE SUSPECTED OF BEING DEFECTIVE.

AT PRESENT, THE THREE MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTORS SECONDED FOR DUTY WITH THE POLICE WERE INSUFFICIENT IN NUMBER TO DEAL WITH THE INCREASING VOLUME OF VEHICLE INSPECTIONS REQUIRED.

+THREE ADDITIONAL MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTOR POSTS WERE APPROVED IN DECEMBER 1973 BUT THESE HAVE YET TO BE FILLED. THERE IS ALSO A LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES WHICH CAN BE INSPECTED AT EXISTING FACILITIES IN POLICE POUNDS,+ HE ADDED.

REFERRING TO MR. BREMRIDGE'S SECOND QUESTION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF REDUCING THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED PERIOD OF DETENTION TO 18 HOURS, MR. ROBSON SAID HE COULD HOLD OUT NO PROMISE UNTIL THE POLICE HAD ITS FULL COMPLEMENT OF VEHICLE INSPECTORS AND IMPROVED VEHICLE INSPECTION FACILITIES.

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AMENDMENTS TO ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE

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DRAFT LEGISLATION PROPOSING TO AMEND THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE TO FOLLOW THE UNITED KINGDOM PROCEDURE OF DISPENSING WITH THE MANDATORY ISSUE OF NOTICES OF INTENDED PROSECUTION AFTER A ROAD ACCIDENT IS BEING PREPARED, THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. GARTH THORNTON, DISCLOSED TODAY.

IT IS EXPECTED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL WITHIN A FEW WEEKS, HE SAID IN REPLY TO THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

+IF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT IS APPROVED, IT IS HOPED THAT THE BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED THIS SESSION,+ MR. THORNTON ADDED.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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TOPLEY TO OPEN EXHIBITION

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR. KENNETH TOPLEY WILL OPEN A SOCIAL STUDIES PROJECT EXHIBITION IN THE HALL OF THE GRANTHAM COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ON FRIDAY MORNING.

THE PRIMARY AIM OF THE TWO-DAY EXHIBITION IS TO ACQUAINT TEACHERS WITH A VARIETY OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS PRODUCED BOTH LOCALLY AND OVERSEAS RELATED TO THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

THE EXHIBITION IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE ADVISORY INSPECTORATE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION.

AMONG THE EXHIBITS TO BE DISPLAYED ARE SLIDES, FILMS, CASSETTE TAPES, PHOTOGRAPHS, DIAGRAMS, TEACHERS' GUIDES AND PUPILS' WORK.

HEADS AND TEACHERS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL STUDIES ON A MONITORED AND VOLUNTARY BASIS ARE INVITED TO VISIT THE EXHIBITION BETWEEN 11 A.M. AND 12 NOON ON THE FIRST DAY.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO SEE THE EXHIBITS ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON AND THE WHOLE OF SATURDAY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO HAVE THE OPENING CEREMONY COVERED AT 11 A.M. ON FRIDAY.

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GOVERNOR TO VISIT ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE

NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, WILL VISIT THE HONG KONG ISLAND AREA HEADQUARTERS OF THE ST. JOHN AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION AND BRIGADE AT 2, TAI HANG ROAD, CAUSEWAY BAY, AT 8 P.M. TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SEND A REPORTER/AND PHOTOGRAPHER TO COVER THE EVENT.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 12, 1976

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WATER SUPPLIES TO VILLAGES
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MORE VILLAGES IN REMOTE AREAS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES ARE TO BE PROVIDED WITH PIPED WATER SUPPLY DURING THE NEXT TWO YEARS, THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, ANNOUNCED TODAY.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. MCDONALD SAID WORKS HAD ALREADY BEGUN ON A TWO-YEAR PROGRAMME TO EXTEND MAINS WATER SUPPLIES TO ADDITIONAL VILLAGES IN THE SHA TIN, TAIPO, TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG AREAS.

+CONSIDERATION IS NOW BEING GIVEN TO A FURTHER EXTENSION OF THE SCHEME TO PROVIDE SUPPLIES TO OTHER SMALLER VILLAGES NOT AT PRESENT COVERED BY THE PROGRAMME ITEM,+ HE ADDED.

MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT WORK ON THE CURRENT PROGRAMME BEGAN IN MID-APRIL AND WAS PROGRAMMED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRIORITIES SET BY THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

+THE WORKS,+ HE SAID, +WILL PROVIDE PUBLIC STANDPIPE SUPPLIES AND WILL MAKE ALLOWANCE FOR INDIVIDUALLY METERED HOUSE CONNECTIONS FOR EACH VILLAGE INCLUDED IN THE SCHEME.+

ALLOCATION OF FORM I PLACES
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NOTE TO EDITORS:

A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE ALLOCATION OF FORM I PLACES FOLLOWING THE RECENT SECONDARY SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAMINATION WILL BE HELD AT 11 A.M. TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, LEE GARDENS, HYSAN AVENUE, THIRD FLOOR, CAUSEWAY BAY, HONG KONG.

AMONG THOSE SPEAKING AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (EXAMINATIONS), MR. BASIL BOARD, AND THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (PRIMARY), MR. LAM TAT-LAU.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT.

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