



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979

CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

BRITAIN TO PURSUE ALL POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE RESETTLEMENT RATE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM HK	1
NEW LOITERING LAW WILL NOT RESULT IN UPSURGE OF PROSECUTIONS SAYS AG	3
AMENDMENTS TO LOITERING LAW A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT — T.S. LO	4
GEOTECHNICAL INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT ON MORE THAN 10,000 SLOPES	6
SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS FOR 1978-79	7
HIGHER LEVEL OF GOVT SUBVENTION FOR 85 VAS THIS YEAR	7
MEASURES TAKEN TO CONTROL CHINESE PATENT MEDICINE EFFECTIVE	8
GOVERNMENT TO TRAIN MORE SOCIAL WORKERS	9
ALL STREET SLEEPERS KNOWN TO SWD OFFERED HELP	9
LEGCO PAYS WARM TRIBUTE TO OUTGOING ATTORNEY GENERAL	10
BILLS PASSED	11
TWO PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED GIRLS TAKING FULL-TIME TECHNICAL COURSE	11
SPECIAL TRAINS TO RACE COURSE ON SATURDAY — SUNDAY	12
WATER CUT	13

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979

- 1 -

BRITAIN TO PURSUE ALL POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE
RESETTLEMENT RATE OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM HK

* * * * *

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL PURSUE ALL POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE THE RATE OF RESETTLEMENT OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG AND WILL KEEP THE MATTER UNDER CAREFUL REVIEW, THE CHIEF SECRETARY TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, THE HON. SIR JACK CATER SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS +SET A WELCOME LEAD IN JANUARY BY OFFERING TO RECEIVE 1,000 REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG.+

+HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IS ALSO SUPPORTING THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IN ITS APPEALS TO OTHER COUNTRIES TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF RESETTLEMENT PLACES AVAILABLE IN THIRD COUNTRIES,+ HE SAID.

FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD ALSO MADE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT ON OUR BEHALF REGARDING THE TRAFFICKING IN REFUGEES AND TO STRESS THE NEED TO COLLABORATE FULLY WITH THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES TO ACHIEVE AN ORDERLY OUTFLOW OF PEOPLE.

+THE SMALL BOAT REFUGEES PROBLEM IS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT AND TO SOLVE THIS WE WILL HAVE TO RELY HEAVILY ON THE DIPLOMATIC ACTION UNDERTAKEN ON OUR BEHALF BY HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT AND IN SUPPORT OF UNHCR,+ HE SAID.

HONG KONG HAS ALSO REMAINED IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE UNITED STATES CONSUL GENERAL AND ITS GOVERNMENT THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS IN WASHINGTON.

THIS IS BECAUSE MOST REFUGEES REGARDED THE U.S.A. AS THE RESETTLEMENT COUNTRY OF THEIR FIRST CHOICE AND TO DATE, THE US AUTHORITIES HAVE PROVIDED BY FAR THE MAJORITY OF RESETTLEMENT PLACES, HE SAID.

MEANWHILE, HE ADDED, HONG KONG REMAINS ALERT AND VIGILANT AND EXPLORES EVERY MEANS OF RESTRICTING THE FLOW OF REFUGEES HERE.

BOTH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND BRITISH DIPLOMATIC POSTS IN THE REGION HAVE HELPED TO DEVISE A SYSTEM AIMED AT IDENTIFYING AND LOCATING SUSPECTED VESSELS WHICH MAY BE ABOUT TO ENGAGE IN THE TRAFFICKING REFUGEES.

+AS A RESULT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE PRE-EMPTIVE ACTION AGAINST SOME SUCH SHIPS,+ HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, THE ROYAL NAVY SHIPS AND BOTH THE ROYAL AIR FORCE AND RHKAAF AIRCRAFT ALSO CARRY OUT SEA AND AIR RECONNAISSANCE.

/+RESETTLEMENT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979

- 2 -

+RESETTLEMENT IS NOT A PROBLEM FOR HONG KONG, NOR FOR THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST ASIA, TO SOLVE ALONE- THIS IS AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM REQUIRING CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL ACTIONS: IT DEMANDS, IT REQUIRES A MUCH GREATER EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD, AND ESPECIALLY ON THE PART OF THOSE WELL-ENDOWED WITH RESOURCES, WHO UNDOUBTEDLY COULD DO MORE TO HELP.+

THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID HE BELIEVES THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF AND PLAYS A ROLE IN THE TRAFFICKING OF REFUGEES.

REPLYING TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN AS TO THE POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT IN THE EXODUS, SIR JACK SAID +I HAVE NO DOUBT, AND I BELIEVE THAT THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT, THAT THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF AND IS PARTY TO THIS DISGUSTING TRADE IN HUMAN MISERY.+

HE ADDED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO IMPRESS ON THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT +AN ABHORRENCE OF THE POLICIES WHICH HAD DRIVEN SO MANY PEOPLE TO FLEE THAT COUNTRY OFTEN AT A GREAT RISK TO THEIR LIVES.+

ASKED IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER ISSUING VISITOR'S VISAS TO REFUGEES IMMEDIATELY UPON LANDING HERE SO THAT THEY COULD APPROACH UNHCR FOR RESETTLEMENT FORMALITIES OR OTHER AIDS, THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID ANY CHANGE IN THE PRESENT PROCEDURES WOULD NEED VERY CAREFUL CONSIDERATION.

SIR JACK SAID WHILE THE UNHCR HAD RESETTLED SOME 3,300 REFUGEES SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES EXPECTED TO BE RESETTLED IN THIRD COUNTRIES DURING THE COMING MONTHS WILL BE LESS THAN ORIGINALLY HOPED BECAUSE OF LACK OF FUNDS.

HE AGREED WITH THE HON. T.S. LO THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF THOSE RESETTLED WAS CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN FOUR PER CENT OF THE TOTAL NUMBERS COMING IN, FROM BOTH VIETNAM AND CHINA.

+IT'S A VERY, VERY SMALL FIGURE,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT AT PRESENT THERE IS A CERTAIN SLOWNESS IN THE UNHCR IN TAKING REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG AND IT IS HOPED THAT THIS MAY BE IMPROVED IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

+BUT WHAT IS REQUIRED IS A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF UNHCR PEOPLE HERE AND I MIGHT SAY IN MACAU TOO,+ HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/3

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979 .

- 3 -

NEW LOITERING LAW WILL NOT RESULT
IN UPSURGE OF PROSECUTIONS SAYS AG
* * * * *

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. JOHN HOBLEY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CRIMES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1979, WOULD NOT RESULT IN AN UPSURGE IN THE NUMBER OF PROSECUTIONS FOR LOITERING.

HE SAID HE WOULD SEE TO IT THAT THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WOULD BE WIDELY KNOWN AT ALL LEVELS IN THE POLICE FORCE AND AMONG OTHERS.

MR. HOBLEY POINTED OUT THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE HAD ALSO FINALISED THE GUIDELINES WHICH HE PROPOSED TO ISSUE IN RELATION TO THE CONSIDERATION OF CHARGES FOR ANY OF THE OFFENCES UNDER THE PROPOSED SECTION 160.

+THESE INSTRUCTIONS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY TACKLE THE POSSIBILITY OF ABUSE RIGHT AT THE OUTSET,+ HE TOLD THE COUNCIL.

+IN PARTICULAR, THE COMMISSIONER INTENDS TO DIRECT THAT A CHARGE FOR AN OFFENCE UNDER THE PROPOSED SECTION SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT UNLESS THE CASE HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BY A CID OFFICER OF AT LEAST THE RANK OF INSPECTOR. THIS MEANS THAT A CASE WILL ALWAYS BE CONSIDERED BY AN EXPERIENCED POLICE OFFICER.+

MR. HOBLEY EMPHASISED THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE AND HIS SENIOR OFFICERS WERE FULLY ALERT TO THE RISKS OF ABUSE AND +THEY HAVE TAKEN PROPER STEPS TO COMBAT THAT RISK.+

CONCERNING STEPS THAT COULD BE TAKEN WHEN THERE WAS ABUSE OF POLICE POWER, MR. HOBLEY SAID +WE MUST PLAINLY RELY ON THE MAJOR STEPS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN IN THE PAST TWO YEARS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPLAINT AGAINST POLICE OFFICE AND THE MONITORING ROLE PERFORMED BY THE UMELCO GROUP.+

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ADDED THAT THE COURSE THIS BILL HAD TAKEN WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE CONTINUOUS STRUGGLE ON THE ONE HAND TO UPHOLD THE FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND ON THE OTHER TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER IN THE GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

+I THINK IT CAN FAIRLY BE SAID THAT WE HAVE GOT THE BALANCE ABOUT RIGHT,+ MR. HOBLEY SAID.

ALTHOUGH THE BILL HAD AROUSED CONTROVERSY WHICH WAS EXPECTED, MR. HOBLEY SAID THERE HAD BEEN GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT THERE WAS A GANG PROBLEM WHICH MUST BE TACKLED.

HE SAID HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ON THE BILL HAD BEEN +INTENSE+ AND THERE WAS A FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE BILL AND THE PROBLEMS WHICH IT RAISED.

/REPLYING TO

- 4 -

REPLYING TO THE CONCERN RAISED BY THE HON. T.S. LO ABOUT POSSIBLE DELAY BETWEEN A PLEA OF NOT GUILTY AND THE TRIAL DATE, MR. HOBLEY SAID: +THE AVERAGE PERIOD BETWEEN THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF A DEFENDANT IN A MAGISTRATE'S COURT AND THE DATE FIXED FOR THE HEARING OF THE CASE WHEN THE PROCEEDINGS ARE DEFENDED IS ONE MONTH.+

HE ADDED THAT IN CUSTODIAL CASES THE USUAL PERIOD WAS SOMEWHAT SHORTER. +I RECOGNISE THE FORCE OF MR. LO'S POINTS AND I CAN SAY THAT TRIAL DELAYS WILL BE A MATTER OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO THE NEW CHIEF JUSTICE,+ HE SAID.

THE BILL, AFTER A NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS, WAS PASSED INTO LAW.

- - - - 0 - - - -

AMENDMENTS TO LOITERING LAW
A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT -- T.S. LO
* * * * *

THE CRIMES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL DEALING WITH THE LAW ON LOITERING WAS AMENDED IN THREE WAYS AND WAS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WITH THE AMENDMENTS:-

- * A PERSON WILL NOT COMMIT AN OFFENCE FOR LOITERING IF HE HAS A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION FOR HIS PRESENCE AT THE PLACE, THUS MAKING IT WRONG TO ARREST HIM UNLESS HE FAILS TO GIVE A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION OR ACCOUNT OF HIS PRESENCE AT THE TIME OF HIS ARREST-
- * THE OFFENCE OF OBSTRUCTING ANY PERSON WILL ONLY BE COMMITTED IF DONE WILFULLY AND NOT OTHERWISE, AND
- * THE MAXIMUM PRISON SENTENCE FOR LOITERING OR WILFUL OBSTRUCTION WILL BE SIX MONTHS INSTEAD OF TWO YEARS.

THE AMENDMENTS WERE MADE FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS AMONG UNOFFICIAL COUNCILLORS AND BETWEEN THEM AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. IN ADDITION, SECTION 27 OF THE PUBLIC ORDER ORDINANCE, WHICH THE UNOFFICIALS FOUND DURING THEIR DISCUSSIONS TO HAVE FAR WIDER POWERS THAN THOSE SOUGHT UNDER THE BILL, WILL BE REPEALED.

SPEAKING AT THE BILL'S SECOND AND THIRD READINGS TODAY, THE HON. T.S. LO, CONVENER OF THE GROUP OF UNOFFICIALS WHO STUDIED THE BILL, SAID IT HAD ATTRACTED WIDESPREAD CRITICISM FROM DIVERSE SEGMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY. THOSE KEEN TO STRENGTHEN THE LAW TO DEAL WITH THE LAWLESS THOUGHT IT WAS INADEQUATE. +THEY WOULD HAVE US AMEND THE LAW SO AS TO MAKE IT AN OFFENCE IF A PERSON IS MERELY FOUND IN THE COMPANY OF A KNOWN CRIMINAL.+ HE CONGRATULATED THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR REFRAINING FROM TAKING UP THIS CONCEPT.

+SECONDLY, THOSE INTERESTED IN REDUCING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE POLICE TO ABUSE THEIR POWERS, CONSIDER THE BILL TO BE BEREFT OF SAFEGUARDS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL.

/+THIRDLY,

+THIRDLY, THOSE FAMILIAR WITH THE OVERCROWDED CONDITION THAT IS HONG KONG HAVE BEEN QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT WHEN A PERSON'S HOME IS A SMALL CUBICLE, TO WISH TO GET OUT OF IT FOR A LITTLE AIR OR SPACE IS HARDLY REPREHENSIBLE.

+NONETHELESS, UNDER THE PRESENT LAW HE COULD BE ARRESTED FOR THAT AND UNDER THE ORIGINAL PROPOSED AMENDMENT SENT TO PRISON FOR TWO YEARS,+ HE SAID.

MR. LO SAID HE DID NOT DOUBT THE PACKAGE OF AMENDMENTS WILL NOT COMPLETELY SATISFY ALL CRITICS, BUT HE TRUSTED THAT THEY WILL AGREE IT REPRESENTS A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT ON THE ORIGINAL BILL.

+I WOULD ASK THEM TO ACCEPT IT IF ONLY IN THE SPIRIT OF GIVING AN ENCOURAGING VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN OUR IMPROVING POLICE FORCE,+ HE SAID.

MR. LO, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE DELAYS INVOLVED IN AWAITING TRIAL FOR LOITERING.

HE POINTED OUT THAT OVER A PERIOD OF 5-1/2 MONTHS, FROM NOVEMBER 1, 1978, OVER 2,500 DAYS WERE SPENT BY PERSONS ACCUSED OF LOITERING IN LAI CHI KOK RECEPTION CENTRE. NONE OF THESE DAYS WAS SPENT BY ANYONE CONVICTED OF ANY CRIME.

OVER A PERIOD OF ABOUT THREE MONTHS, FROM NOVEMBER 27, 1978 TO MARCH 10, 1979, SEVEN PERSONS ACCUSED OF LOITERING SPENT OVER 30 DAYS EACH IN THE RECEPTION CENTRE, AND THEY WERE SUBSEQUENTLY EITHER DISCHARGED OR ACQUITTED.

HE WAS AWARE THAT THE CONVICTION RATE FOR THOSE CHARGED WITH LOITERING WAS HIGH, BUT HE POINTED OUT THAT THE DELAYS WERE AN IMMENSE DETERRENT AGAINST ANYONE PLEADING 'NOT GUILTY', PARTICULARLY SINCE UNDER THE EXISTING LAW THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR LOITERING WAS ONLY THREE MONTHS.

+IT IS TRUE THAT THIS COMMENT WOULD NOT APPLY TO A PERSON ABLE TO RAISE BAIL. IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THIS MEANS NO MORE THAN THAT IT HAS BECOME A CRIME TO BE POOR.+ HE SAID.

WITH THE ENACTMENT OF THE PRESENT BILL, IT COULD BE PRESUMED THAT THE BACKLOG IN THE COURTS WILL INCREASE AND DAYS SPENT IN REMAND WILL LENGTHEN.

+UNLESS EITHER WE DRASTICALLY INCREASE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MAGISTRATES OR WE BECOME FAR MORE SELECTIVE IN DECIDING WHOM TO PROSECUTE, THE PRESENT BAD POSITION WILL SIMPLY GET WORSE,+ HE SAID. HE URGED THAT SOMETHING BE DONE ABOUT THE PROBLEM.

THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN AND THE HON. WONG LAM ALSO SPOKE ON THE BILL.

MR. CHEONG-LEEN SUPPORTED GIVING MORE POWERS TO THE POLICE TO ENABLE THEM TO DEAL MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH INDIVIDUALS OR GANGS WHO FRIGHTEN LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS BY THEIR BEHAVIOUR.

/HE SAID,

HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IT WILL BE INCUMBENT UPON THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE TO LAY DOWN PRACTICAL ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES TO MAKE SURE THAT THESE POWERS ARE NOT MISUSED OR ABUSED AT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL.

THIS ASPECT REPRESENTS A STRONG RESERVATION ON THE PART OF MANY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO SUPPORT THE BILL, HE SAID.

HE SUGGESTED MAKING AVAILABLE THE CHINESE TEXT OF THE BILL AS AMENDED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE POLICE FORCE AT THIS LEVEL, AND CIRCULATING IT WIDELY AT THE CDO AND N.T. DISTRICT BOARDS LEVELS, AS WELL AS AMONG THE MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES.

MR. WONG ALSO SUPPORTED THE BILL BUT POINTED OUT THAT THE POWERS GIVEN TO THE POLICE, IN THE HANDS OF LESS EXPERIENCED OFFICERS OR OFFICERS WHO HAPPEN TO BE NEGLIGENT, MAY EASILY RESULT IN UNJUSTIFIABLE INTERFERENCE WITH PERSONAL FREEDOM.

HE SUGGESTED THAT IF A POLICEMAN FINDS THE EXPLANATION GIVEN BY A PERSON SUSPECTED TO HAVE LOITERED UNACCEPTABLE, AND TAKES HIM BACK TO THE POLICE STATION, HE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY REFER THE CASE TO AN OFFICER OF INSPECTORATE RANK OR ABOVE AND GIVE HIS REASONS FOR NOT ACCEPTING THE EXPLANATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PERSON SUSPECTED OF LOITERING SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO REQUEST AN INTERVIEW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH THE SENIOR OFFICER TO EXPLAIN HIS CASE.

MR. WONG SAID SUCH SAFEGUARDS SHOULD BE GIVEN THE WIDEST PUBLICITY. IN ADDITION, HE THOUGHT A SET OF INTERNAL POLICE REGULATIONS SHOULD BE LAID DOWN TO PROVIDE FOR APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST ANY POLICEMAN WHO ABUSES SUCH POWERS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

GEOTECHNICAL INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT
ON MORE THAN 10,000 SLOPES
* * * * *

GEOTECHNICAL INSPECTIONS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT ON MORE THAN 10,000 SLOPES THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY WHICH WERE THOUGHT MIGHT AFFECT PUBLIC SAFETY AND PROPERTY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE HON. LYDIA DUNN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

FORTUNATELY THE CONDITIONS ON THE VAST MAJORITY OF THESE SLOPES WERE FOUND TO BE SATISFACTORY AND REQUIRED LITTLE OR NO REMEDIAL WORK, HE SAID.

HOWEVER, MORE DETAILED GEOTECHNICAL STUDIES WERE RECOMMENDED FOR THE REMAINDER AND THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT IS ENGAGED ON A PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMME OF INVESTIGATION OF THESE SLOPES.

+WHERE A DETAILED STUDY HAS SHOWN THAT THE STABILITY OF A SLOPE IS INADEQUATE, PREVENTIVE WORKS HAVE BEEN PUT IN HAND AS A MATTER OF URGENCY,+ MR. MCDONALD SAID.

+WHERE SUCH SLOPES LIE IN PRIVATE LAND, NOTICES HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE OWNERS INFORMING THEM OF THE SITUATION AND REQUIRING THEM TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO MAKE THE SLOPES SAFE.+

AS FAR AS FLOODING IS CONCERNED, HE EMPHASISED THAT +THERE ARE ALTOGETHER 25 KNOWN BLACKSPOTS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY WHICH ARE UNDER SPECIAL SURVEILLANCE AND FOR WHICH DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES ARE IN HAND OR ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION.+

HE REITERATED THAT EXPERIENCED PERSONNEL AND SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT WERE KEPT ON A 24-HOUR STAND-BY SYSTEM TO DEAL PROMPTLY WITH ALL BLOCKAGES AND FLOODINGS REPORTED TO THE DEPARTMENTAL CONTROL CENTRE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS FOR 1978-79

* * * * *

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED THE SCHEDULE OF SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS FOR THE THIRD QUARTER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1978-79 — OCTOBER 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 1978 — WHICH COVERS \$472 MILLION.

WHEN MOVING THE MOTION, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. HENRY CHING SAID \$323 MILLION WERE REQUIRED FOR PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS, MAINLY AS A RESULT OF MORE RAPID PROGRESS ON EXISTING PROJECTS AND THE UPGRADING OF 14 NEW PROJECTS TO CATEGORY A OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME.

+THIS SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS COVERED BY THE SCHEDULE RESULTED IN A NET INCREASE OF \$100 MILLION IN THE ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR, THE REMAINDER BEING OFFSET BY SAVINGS UNDER OTHER SUBHEADS OF EXPENDITURE AND BY THE FREEZING OF FUNDS PROVIDED UNDER HEAD 52 MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES SUBHEAD 100 ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS,+ HE EXPLAINED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

HIGHER LEVEL OF GOVT SUBVENTION FOR 85 AGENCIES THIS YEAR

* * * * *

THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON. THOMAS LEE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT 85 OF THE 100 VOLUNTARY WELFARE AGENCIES APPLYING FOR GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION FOR 1979-80 WOULD RECEIVE A HIGHER LEVEL OF SUBVENTION COMPARED WITH LAST YEAR.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE REV. THE HON. JOYCE BENNETT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. LEE SAID THAT OF THE 100 AGENCIES, FOUR WOULD RECEIVE MORE THAN THE AMOUNT THEY ASKED FOR, AND 19 WOULD GET 30 TO 50 PER CENT LESS THAN WHAT THEY APPLIED FOR.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT OF THESE 19 AGENCIES, 14 WOULD STILL RECEIVE A HIGHER LEVEL OF SUBVENTION COMPARED WITH 1978-79.

HE SAID THERE HAD BEEN NO CUTTING BACK OF EXPENDITURE, AND IN ALL CASES, THE SUBSIDY GIVEN WAS WHAT WAS ESTIMATED TO BE SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN EXISTING LEVELS OF SERVICE AND TO ENABLE NEW SERVICES OR BETTER STANDARDS OF SERVICE TO BE INTRODUCED WITHIN APPROVED GOVERNMENT POLICIES.

+IF DURING THE YEAR, THIS PROVES TO BE INSUFFICIENT, SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS MAY BE CONSIDERED,+ HE SAID.

MR. LEE EXPLAINED THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT COMMIT ITSELF TO GIVING AN AGENCY WHAT IT ASKED FOR BUT MUST HAVE REGARD TO A NUMBER OF FACTORS.

THESE FACTORS, HE SAID, ARE THE FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR ALLOCATION IN THE ONE-LINE VOTE, THE CAPACITY OF THE AGENCY, ITS OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME, EXISTING LEVELS OF SERVICES AND WHETHER PLANNED EXPANSION OR IMPROVED SERVICES ARE IN LINE WITH APPROVED PROGRAMMES AND ARE REALISTIC IN TERMS OF IMPLEMENTATION.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MEASURES TAKEN TO CONTROL
CHINESE PATENT MEDICINE EFFECTIVE
* * * * *

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT IN CONTROLLING CHINESE PATENT MEDICINES CONTAINING SUBSTANCES LISTED UNDER THE SCHEDULED DRUGS HAVE PROVED EFFECTIVE.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR. THE HON. K.L. THONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. WONG LAM.

SO FAR THIS YEAR LESS THAN THREE PER CENT OF THE SAMPLES TAKEN FROM MEDICINE SHOPS WERE FOUND TO CONTAIN DRUGS SCHEDULED UNDER THE PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS COMPARED WITH MORE THAN 30 PER CENT TAKEN OVER THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

DR. THONG EXPLAINED THAT SAMPLES OF CHINESE PATENT MEDICINES ARE TAKEN ROUTINELY FROM MEDICINE SHOPS, AND ALSO ON COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC, BY THE STAFF OF THE FORENSIC PHARMACY SECTION FOR ANALYSIS.

+STOCKS OF SUCH MEDICINES, IF FOUND TO CONTAIN SCHEDULED DRUGS, ARE SEIZED UNDER THE PROVISION OF THE PHARMACY AND POISONS ORDINANCE AND THE CASES ARE REPORTED TO THE POLICE WHO WILL NORMALLY INSTITUTE PROCEEDINGS WITH A VIEW TO PROSECUTIONS,+ DR. THONG SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979

- 9 -

GOVERNMENT TO TRAIN MORE SOCIAL WORKERS

* * * * *

THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON. THOMAS LEE, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SPOKE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS TO RECRUIT, TRAIN AND UTILIZE SUFFICIENT STAFF TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAMMES IN THE WHITE PAPER ON +SOCIAL WELFARE INTO THE 1980'S+.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, MR. LEE SAID ONE OF THE PLANS WAS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS IN VARIOUS TRAINING INSTITUTIONS WITH EFFECT FROM THE 1979-80 ACADEMIC YEAR.

HE SAID OTHER PLANS INCLUDED MAKING MORE ECONOMIC USE OF TRAINED MANPOWER IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WELFARE CLASS REVIEW WHICH WOULD RELIEVE MANY TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS FROM DUTIES INVOLVING MINIMAL SOCIAL WORK CONTENT.

THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF SOCIAL WORKERS WILL ALSO BE IMPROVED THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WELFARE CLASS REVIEW AS WELL AS THE REGIONALISATION OF THE DEPARTMENT WHICH WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PROMOTION PROSPECTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S STAFF, HE SAID.

MR. LEE SAID IN-SERVICE TRAINING COURSES FOR UNDER-QUALIFIED STAFF WOULD BE ORGANISED ON THE ADVICE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WORK TRAINING.

IN ADDITION, HE ADDED, GREATER USE WILL BE MADE OF PART-TIME WORKERS BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THOSE TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS, WHO FOR VARIOUS REASONS DO NOT WISH TO WORK FULL-TIME.

- - - - 0 - - - -

ALL STREET SLEEPERS KNOWN TO SWD OFFERED HELP

* * * * *

ALL STREET SLEEPERS KNOWN TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT ARE OFFERED HELP, WHETHER IN TERMS OF HOUSING, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OR COUNSELLING, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON. THOMAS LEE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS REPLYING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO A QUESTION BY DR. THE HON. HO KAM-FAI ABOUT MEASURES BEING TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO FIND HOMES FOR VAGRANT AND UNTIDY STREET SLEEPERS AND TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM TAKING TO THE STREETS AGAIN.

MR. LEE SAID THAT FOR THOSE WHO HAD NO HOME TO RETURN TO, THE DEPARTMENT ARRANGES PLACEMENTS IN A TEMPORARY SHELTER PENDING REHOUSING IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES IF THEY QUALIFY FOR COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING.

/OTHERS MAY

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979

- 10 -

OTHERS MAY BE REFERRED FOR HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION OR, IF THEY ARE OLD AND NEED PERSONAL CARE, TO OLD PEOPLE'S HOMES, HE SAID.

MR. LEE SAID THE DEPARTMENT COULD ONLY HELP THOSE WHO WERE WILLING TO ACCEPT HELP.

+UNFORTUNATELY, MOST OF THE STREET SLEEPERS IN THIS CATEGORY ARE UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH US, AND MANY ARE RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT ANY OFFER OF HELP,+ HE EXPLAINED.

+IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE IS LITTLE THAT WE CAN DO,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE DEPARTMENT WAS STUDYING A REPORT RECENTLY SUBMITTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON URBAN CONCERNS OF THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE WHICH MIGHT THROW NEW LIGHT ON HOW THE PROBLEMS OF STREET SLEEPERS SHOULD BE TACKLED IN FUTURE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LEGCO PAYS WARM TRIBUTE TO OUTGOING ATTORNEY GENERAL

* * * * *

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PAID WARM TRIBUTE TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. JOHN HOBLEY WHO IS RETIRING AFTER SIX YEARS AS MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL AND 26 YEARS OF SERVICES WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

IN EXTENDING HIS GRATITUDE THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID MR. HOBLEY HAS, THROUGH HIS DIFFICULT JOB, +SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE NOT ONLY A FIRST-CLASS LAWYER AND A MOST LOYAL AND EFFECTIVE MEMBER OF THIS COUNCIL, BUT ALSO A PERSONALITY OF GREAT QUALITY WHO WILL LONG BE REMEMBERED.+

THE GOVERNOR SAID HE NOTED THAT AN ATTORNEY GENERAL MUST CONSTANTLY RENDER HIS ADVICE AND BUILD HIS EDIFICE OF LEGISLATION IN A TRIANGLE BOUNDED BY WHAT IS LEGALLY SOUND, MORALLY RIGHT AND POLITICALLY POSSIBLE.

WHILE OUTSIDE THE TRIANGLE LIES CERTAIN CATASTROPHE, WITHIN THERE ARE ALSO FAULTS AND FLAWS AND MINES WHICH HE MUST AVOID, THE GOVERNOR SAID.

+IT IS A TASK WHICH REQUIRES NOT ONLY GREAT PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE AND A HIGH SENSE OF THE RULE OF LAW, BUT ALSO POLITICAL JUDGEMENT AND INGENUITY,+ HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR WISHED MR. HOBLEY AND HIS WIFE A HAPPY FUTURE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/11

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 1979

- 11 -

BILLS PASSED
* * * *

THREE BILLS WERE PASSED INTO LAW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY WERE THE AUDIT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1979, INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT)(NO. 5) BILL 1979 AND CRIMES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1979.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TWO PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED GIRLS TAKING
FULL-TIME TECHNICAL COURSE
* * * * *

TWO PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED GIRLS ARE LEARNING ALL ABOUT THE LIGHT CLOTHING INDUSTRY ALONGSIDE ABLE BODIED STUDENTS AT THE KWUN TONG TECHNICAL INSTITUTE.

FAN SO-NGOR AND LEUNG SIU-MEI, BOTH 19, ENROLLED AT THE INSTITUTE LAST SEPTEMBER WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

SO-NGOR IS PARTIALLY DEAF WHILE SIU-MEI IS SUFFERING FROM POLIO AND, ACCORDING TO A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, THEY ARE THE FIRST HANDICAPPED PEOPLE TO TAKE UP FULL-TIME TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

+BOTH GIRLS ARE DOING VERY WELL,+ A SPOKESMAN FOR THE INSPECTORATE UNIT FOR THE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF THE DISABLED SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEIR DETERMINATION AND PERSEVERANCE ARE CERTAINLY ADMIRABLE, HE SAID.

SIU-MEI, FOR INSTANCE, WALKS WITH THE HELP OF CRUTCHES AND TRAVELS BY BUS TO SCHOOL -- IT TAKES AN HOUR -- EVERY DAY.

SO-NGOR, ON THE OTHER HAND, COMMUNICATES WITH HER TEACHERS AND CLASSMATES THROUGH SIGN LANGUAGE AND LIP-READING.

IN SPITE OF THIS, BOTH GIRLS SAY THEY ARE +VERY HAPPY+ TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN A CRAFT -- PARTICULARLY ONE WHICH THEY LIKE.

SAID SIU-MEI: +I'VE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN CLOTHING WHICH IS WHY I ENJOY THIS COURSE VERY MUCH. IT ALSO MEANS THAT WHEN I FINISH MY COURSE, I'LL BE ABLE TO FEND FOR MYSELF AND NOT TO HAVE TO RELY OR BE A BURDEN ON OTHERS.+

SO-NGOR FEELS THE SAME, ADDING, +IT WILL MEAN THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO LEAD A NORMAL LIFE.+

/THIS IS

THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT THE INSPECTORATE UNIT IN THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION DIVISION IS SETTING OUT TO ACHIEVE BY INTEGRATING THE HANDICAPPED INTO THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES.

ABOUT 100 PLACES WILL BE OFFERED TO THE HANDICAPPED IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1979-80 WITH 50 OF THESE AVAILABLE AT THE LEE WAI LEE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE WHEN IT OPENS IN SEPTEMBER.

MEANWHILE, STAFF FROM THE UNIT HAVE BEEN VISITING VARIOUS SPECIAL SCHOOLS FOR THE HANDICAPPED TO FAMILIARISE THE STUDENTS WITH THE MANY OPPORTUNITIES OF FURTHERING THEIR STUDIES IN TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AFTER THEY GRADUATE.

THE UNIT'S ASSISTANCE TO HANDICAPPED STUDENTS DOES NOT END AFTER THE STUDENTS' ENTRY INTO THE INSTITUTES.

IN THE CASE OF SO-NGOR, ARRANGEMENT WAS MADE FOR A PERIPATETIC TEACHER FROM THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SECTION TO VISIT HER REGULARLY.

THE UNIT IS ALSO SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO FURTHER HELP DISABLED STUDENTS WHILE THEY ARE IN TECHNICAL INSTITUTES.

IT IS HOPED THAT WITH BETTER ORGANISED TECHNICAL TRAINING FACILITIES, HANDICAPPED PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO LEAD MORE SATISFYING AND INDEPENDENT LIVES AND, AT THE SAME TIME, MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SPECIAL TRAINS TO RACE COURSE ON SATURDAY - SUNDAY
* * * * *

THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY WILL OPERATE THREE SPECIAL PASSENGER TRAINS TO SHA TIN RACE COURSE STATION ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY.

THESE SPECIAL NON-STOP TRAINS WILL LEAVE KOWLOON STATION IN HUNG HUM AT 12.30 P.M., 12.51 P.M., AND 1.11 P.M. ON BOTH DAYS.

THERE WILL BE THREE SPECIAL TRAINS ON THE RETURN JOURNEY ON THESE TWO DAYS TO BRING PASSENGERS BACK FROM THE RACE COURSE STATION TO KOWLOON. IN ADDITION, KCR WILL RE-ROUTE THREE OF ITS SCHEDULED TRAINS VIA THE RACE COURSE STATION ON SATURDAY AT 6.12 P.M., 7.31 P.M. AND 8.21 P.M. TO PICK UP PASSENGERS.

THE RUNNING TIME OF THESE SPECIAL TRAINS IS 20 MINUTES AND THEIR TIMETABLES WILL BE DISPLAYED AT ALL RAILWAY STATIONS AND THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB'S OFF-COURSE BETTING CENTRES.

A KCR SPOKESMAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ENCOURAGED THOSE GOING BY PRIVATE CARS TO MAKE USE OF THE HUNG HOM MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK ABOVE THE KOWLOON STATION.

HE ALSO REMINDED PEOPLE GOING TO THE NEW TERRITORIES ON THESE TWO DAYS OF THE SLIGHT ADJUSTMENT OF THE TIMETABLES ON THEIR RETURN JOURNEYS TO THE URBAN AREA.

THE REVISED TIMETABLES BETWEEN 10.30 A.M. TO 11 P.M. ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY ARE:

SATURDAY -- FROM KOWLOON STATION: 10.57 A.M., 12.10 P.M.,
1.18 P.M., * 2 P.M.,
2.11 P.M., 3.05 P.M.,
4.04 P.M., 5 P.M.,
5.34 P.M., 6.17 P.M.,
6.59 P.M., 7.54 P.M.,
9.08 P.M. AND 11 P.M.

FROM LO WU STATION: 10.47 A.M., 11.53 A.M.,
12.58 P.M., 1.55 P.M.,
2.54 P.M., 3.49 P.M.,
4.29 P.M., 5.27 P.M.,
6.43 P.M., 7.30 P.M.,
8.17 P.M., AND 9.15 P.M.

SUNDAY -- FROM KOWLOON STATION: 10.57 A.M., 12.12 P.M.,
1.20 P.M., * 2 P.M.,
2.11 P.M., 3.05 P.M.,
4.04 P.M., 4.33 P.M.,
5 P.M., 5.34 P.M.,
6.17 P.M., 7.02 P.M.,
7.54 P.M., 9.08 P.M.
AND 11 P.M.

FROM LO WU STATION: 10.47 A.M., 11.53 A.M.,
12.58 P.M., 1.55 P.M.,
2.54 P.M., 3.49 P.M.,
4.29 P.M., 5.27 P.M.,
6.22 P.M., 6.58 P.M.,
7.53 P.M., AND 9.15 P.M.

* THROUGH PASSENGER TRAIN BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CANTON.

----- 0 -----

WATER CUT

THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES IN MONG KOK WILL BE SUSPENDED FOR SIX HOURS FROM MIDNIGHT TO 6 A.M. ON FRIDAY FOR NIGHT LEAKAGE TESTS.

THE AREA AFFECTED IS BOUNDED BY DUNDAS STREET, SHANGHAI STREET, SHANTUNG STREET, AND TONG MEI ROAD INCLUDING RECLAMATION STREET, CANTON ROAD, KAM LAM STREET, KAM FONG STREET AND SOY STREET.

----- 0 -----