



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 1994

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GOVERNOR LEAVES FOR LONDON

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THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, WOULD BE ATTENDING A MEETING IN LONDON WITH OTHER MINISTERS TO CONSIDER THE PROGRESS OF THE LEGISLATION ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG AND THE NEXT STEPS WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED BY ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO TAKE.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS AFTER THIS MORNING'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING, THE GOVERNOR SAID THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT TO LONDON TONIGHT WAS TO GIVE EVIDENCE TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE, WHICH HAD TAKEN EVIDENCE FROM A NUMBER OF OTHERS AS PART OF THEIR ENQUIRY.

"I'LL OF COURSE BE HAVING ONE OR TWO OTHER MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS, WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, THE HOME SECRETARY AND OTHERS," MR PATTEN SAID.

"I'LL ALSO BE SEEING ONCE AGAIN SIR DAVID FORD, OUR COMMISSIONER IN LONDON, AND SIR ROBIN MCLAREN, WHO, I'M DELIGHTED, HAS RECOVERED FROM THE OPERATION WHICH HE HAD LAST NOVEMBER."

IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD INTRODUCE THE SECOND PART OF THE POLITICAL REFORM BILL IN PARALLEL OR IN A STEP-BY-STEP WAY, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "I THINK IT'S UNLIKELY THAT WE WOULD WANT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE LAST STAGE OF LEGISLATION WHILE THE PRESENT BILL IS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"I THINK IDEALLY WE'D WANT TO SEE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEAL WITH THAT BILL FIRST AND THEN MOVE ON TO NEXT ONE BUT WE NEED THIS BILL IN ORDER TO GET ON WITH DRAWING UP THE REGISTER OF VOTERS IN THE SPRING, IN APRIL.

"BUT I WANT TO PROCEED IN A SENSIBLE WAY, TAKE ONE STEP AT A TIME. I THINK THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL APPRECIATE THAT AND I THINK THE COMMUNITY WILL UNDERSTAND THAT."

ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE INCREASE IN CORRUPTION CASES, MR PATTEN SAID: "CORRUPTION IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM AND JUST AS MANY OFFICIALS HAVE SAID THAT IT IS A THREAT TO CHINA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY, SO IT'S A THREAT TO OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY AND WE HAVE A JOINT INTEREST WITH CHINA IN STAMPING IT OUT AND DEALING WITH IT RIGOROUSLY AND RUTHLESSLY.

"I DON'T THINK THAT YOU CAN EVER TOLERATE A LITTLE BIT OF CORRUPTION. I THINK THAT IF YOU ALLOW CORRUPTION TO COME SEEPING IN UNDER THE DOOR, IT VERY SOON STARTS TO DESTROY THE FOUNDATIONS OF A COMMUNITY OR A SOCIETY.

/"WE'RE PROPOSING

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"WE'RE PROPOSING TO TAKE A SUBSTANTIAL INITIATIVE WHICH I ANNOUNCED IN MY SPEECH TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, ON TRYING TO COMBAT CORRUPTION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IN BUSINESS.

"WE'VE GOT A CONFERENCE IN THE EARLY SPRING ON THAT ISSUE WHICH I'LL BE ADDRESSING, SETTING OUT SOME OF MY VIEWS AND THOUGHTS ON THAT. BUT IT IS AN AREA WHERE THE ICAC WANTS TO MAKE A BIGGER INITIATIVE AND WANTS TO SEE ITSELF WORKING MUCH MORE COMPREHENSIVELY WITH TRADE ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL FIRMS, NOT LEAST THROUGH THEM ADAPTING CODES OF PRACTICE."

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GOVERNOR SPEAKS TO PRESS AFTER EXCO MEETING

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GOOD MORNING. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE MORE CONVENIENT FOR YOU IF WE HELD MY PRE-DEPARTURE PRESS EVENT HERE AND NOW RATHER THAN DRAGGING YOU OUT TO THE AIRPORT THIS EVENING OR DRAGGING YOU UP TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE LATER THIS AFTERNOON. SO, WHILE OBVIOUSLY THERE MAY BE SOMETHING FOR SNAPPERS TO DO THIS EVENING, THERE WON'T BE ANYTHING TO REPORT, AT LEAST NOTHING THAT I SAY.

WE'VE HAD A GOOD DISCUSSION AT EXCO ABOUT ONE ISSUE WHICH I'D LIKE TO TOUCH ON BEFORE COMING TO MY VISIT TO LONDON. WE HAD A REPORT FROM THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE ABOUT THE CRIME FIGURES FOR 1993. WHILE ANY CRIME FIGURES ARE IN A SENSE UNACCEPTABLE, WE CAN TAKE SOME PLEASURE IN THE FACT THAT HERE IN HONG KONG, UNLIKE MOST OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, OUR CRIME FIGURES ARE GETTING BETTER. THE 1993 CRIME FIGURES WERE THE BEST THAT WE'VE HAD FOR TEN YEARS. WE HAD A FALL IN ALL CRIME OF ABOUT 1.8% 1993 OVER 1992, WE HAD A FALL IN VIOLENT CRIME OF ABOUT 6% IN 1993 OVER 1992. THOSE FIGURES DO REPRESENT, I THINK, A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT BY OUR POLICE AND THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CONGRATULATED THEM ON THE WORK THAT THEY'VE BEEN DOING. NOT SURPRISING THAT THEIR RECRUITMENT FIGURES REMAIN AS GOOD AS THEY ARE BECAUSE I THINK EVERYBODY WANTS TO JOIN A WINNING TEAM, BUT OBVIOUSLY THERE'S NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY, WE MUST SEE IF THIS YEAR'S FIGURES CAN BE MADE EVEN BETTER THAN LAST YEAR'S. I REPEAT THAT THERE ARE VERY FEW, IF ANY, COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD WHICH COULD POINT TO A TREND LIKE THIS AND OF COURSE, IT'S IN A WAY A REFLECTION OF OUR SOCIAL STABILITY AS A COMMUNITY.

THE MAIN PURPOSE OF MY VISIT TO LONDON TONIGHT IS TO GIVE EVIDENCE TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE, WHICH HAS TAKEN EVIDENCE FROM A NUMBER OF OTHERS. THEY STILL HAVE TO TAKE EVIDENCE FROM ME AND FROM THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, WHICH I THINK THEY'RE DOING IN EARLY FEBRUARY. THEY VISITED HONG KONG AS PART OF THEIR ENQUIRY, THEY ALSO VISITED PEKING AS PART OF THEIR ENQUIRY AND I'M SURE THEIR REPORT WILL BE AS USEFUL AS THE LAST ONE WHICH THEY PRODUCED.

/I'LL ALSO,

I'LL ALSO, WHILE I'M IN LONDON, BE ATTENDING A MEETING WITH OTHER MINISTERS TO CONSIDER THE PROGRESS OF OUR LEGISLATION ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG AND THE NEXT STEPS WHICH, IN DUE COURSE, WE WILL BE REQUIRED BY OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO TAKE. I DON'T THINK THAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT ANY DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS IN LONDON. THE POSITION IS ONE WHICH I THINK THE COMMUNITY WELL UNDERSTANDS. WE WANT TO GO ON TALKING WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS ABOUT THE THREE OUTSTANDING CONTENTIOUS ISSUES. WE'RE HAPPY TO GO ON TALKING UNTIL THAT MOMENT WHEN WE HAVE TO BEGIN LEGISLATING ON THE REMAINING MATTERS WHICH HAVE TO BE RESOLVED FOR THE 1995 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS. WE HOPE, I REPEAT, THAT TALKS CAN BE RESUMED. IF THAT'S NOT THE CASE THEN WE WILL HAVE TO TRY WITH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO PUT IN PLACE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH ARE ACCEPTABLE HERE IN HONG KONG, I HOPE FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

I'LL OF COURSE BE HAVING ONE OR TWO OTHER MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS, WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, THE HOME SECRETARY AND OTHERS. I'LL ALSO BE SEEING ONCE AGAIN SIR DAVID FORD, OUR COMMISSIONER IN LONDON AND SIR ROBIN MCLAREN, WHO I'M DELIGHTED HAS RECOVERED FROM THE OPERATION WHICH HE HAD, YOU WILL RECALL, LAST NOVEMBER; AND IT WILL BE VERY GOOD TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH BASE AGAIN WITH ROBIN AND TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH HIM ABOUT HOW WE CAN BEST WORK IN HONG KONG'S INTERESTS IN THE NEXT THREE AND A HALF YEARS.

QUESTION: DESPITE CHINESE REPEATED CLAIMS THAT IT SEPARATES POLITICS FROM ECONOMICS, THE CHINA DAILY RECENTLY QUOTED A SENIOR OFFICIAL AS SAYING THAT ECONOMIC SANCTION WILL BE IMPOSED ON BRITAIN BECAUSE OF THIS POLITICAL ROW. HAVE YOU HEARD ANY SIGN OF THIS AND WHAT COUNTER MEASURES YOU WILL TAKE ?

GOVERNOR: NO, I NOTE THAT PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN AND OTHER SENIOR LEADERS HAVE MADE IT ABUNDANTLY PLAIN THAT THEY BELIEVE THAT TRADE AND POLITICS SHOULD BE KEPT SEPARATE. THEY'VE MADE THAT FOR EXAMPLE VERY CLEAR IN THE CONTEXT OF MFN. IT WAS A POINT THAT PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN PUT WITH GREAT ELOQUENCE AND CLARITY TO PRESIDENT CLINTON WHEN THEY HAD THEIR IMPORTANT MEETING. I'M SURE I DON'T NEED TO LECTURE CHINESE OFFICIALS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING NOTE OF WHAT PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN SAYS. I'M SURE THAT THEY WOULD DO THAT NATURALLY AND I NOTICE THAT DIRECTOR LU PING MADE EXACTLY THE SAME POINT AS PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN HIMSELF YESTERDAY. I REPEAT WHAT I'VE SAID BEFORE, THAT THESE ARE SLIGHTLY SURPRISING REMARKS WHEN ONE SEES THEM, BECAUSE, AS I THINK IS WELL KNOWN, CHINA HAS PRETTY WELL A 2:1 TRADE SURPLUS WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM. CHINA IS ATTEMPTING TO JOIN GATT, AN APPLICATION WHICH HAS THE UNITED KINGDOM AND OF COURSE THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT AND COUNTRIES WHICH JOIN GATT, COUNTRIES WHICH ARE MEMBERS OF GATT, DON'T BEHAVE IN THE SORT OF WAY WHICH HAS BEEN SUGGESTED BY ONE OR TWO OFFICIALS. BUT I REPEAT THAT AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED THE WORD OF PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN STANDS.

/QUESTION:

QUESTION: GOVERNOR, WE NEED SOME INFORMATION BY ... USED ON A FREE PRESS. YOU SAID YESTERDAY THAT A FREE PRESS IS STRONGEST, WELL IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT A FREE PRESS BE ABLE TO CRITICISE GOVERNMENT. WE CAN NEITHER PRAISE OR CRITICISE YOUR GOVERNMENT BECAUSE WE DON'T ACTUALLY KNOW THE DETAILS OF EVEN THE LARGE THINGS THAT GO ON BETWEEN YOU AND CHINA. NOW QUITE APART FROM THE CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS, WOULDN'T IT BE A GOOD THING TO TAKE HONG KONG INTO YOUR CONFIDENCE ABOUT MANY OF THE BLOCKAGES THAT EXIST IN LEGCO AND OTHER PLACES, ALL THESE HUNDREDS OF ITEMS THAT NEED TO BE RESOLVED, AND IF THE CHINESE THINK THAT THAT WILL BE GREAT .. A CONFIDENCE, ISN'T THAT LIKE THEY'RE BREAKING WINDOWS AND YOU SHOULD GO AHEAD AND HAVE A SEAT BY THEM ANYWAY? ISN'T THAT THE WAY OF FREE PRESS IN FACT SHOULD BE USED? ... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION ?

GOVERNOR: I DIDN'T GET THE IMPRESSION FROM READING YOUR DISTINGUISHED COMMENTARIES ON HONG KONG OR READING THE MEDIA AS A WHOLE, I HOPE THAT PRAISE WASN'T TOO LETHAL, I DIDN'T GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF INFORMATION OR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE NATURE OF OUR AGENDA OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHINESE SIDE. I DIDN'T HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HONG KONG WAS DENIED INFORMATION ABOUT ALAS THE MANY PROBLEMS THAT WE'RE TRYING TO RESOLVE WITH CHINESE OFFICIALS BUT WE'RE IN A POSITION IN WHICH, WHETHER YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT ECONOMIC ISSUES OR POLITICAL, WE'RE HAPPY TO DISCLOSE MORE IF THE CHINESE SIDE THEMSELVES THINK THAT WOULD BE MORE HELPFUL AS WELL.

QUESTION: WHY WAIT FOR THEIR APPROVAL?

GOVERNOR: HOLD ON A MINUTE. BECAUSE WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS IS FOR US TO FIND SOLUTIONS IF POSSIBLE AND SOLUTIONS, IF YOU CAN MANAGE IT, ARE BEST ACHIEVED IF THE CLIMATE IS REASONABLY CORDIAL. IT ISN'T ALAS ALWAYS POSSIBLE.

I SET OUT IN MY SPEECH TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE JLG FOR EXAMPLE, SOME OF THE ISSUES WHICH REMAIN TO BE ALAS RESOLVED. WE'VE SET OUT IN THE PAST IN SOME DETAIL FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ISSUES IN THE JLG WHICH STILL HAVE TO BE RESOLVED AND I HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN PROVIDING MORE INFORMATION ON THOSE SORT OF MATTERS. THEY'RE PRETTY CLEAR NOW, ADAPTATION OF LAWS, LOCALISATION OF LAWS, AIR SERVICE AGREEMENTS, A GOOD DEAL OF MULTI-LATERAL BUSINESS, BUSINESS CONDUCTED WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES, WHETHER INVESTMENT PROTECTION OR VISA REGIMES. THOSE ARE ALL MATTERS THAT WE'VE GOT TO RESOLVE BETWEEN NOW AND 1997 AND I STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT BETWEEN NOW AND 1997, WE'LL HAVE CHINESE OFFICIALS PRESSING FOR MUCH MORE RAPID PROGRESS BECAUSE THEY'LL RECOGNISE THAT THAT IS IN HONG KONG'S INTEREST AND WHATEVER OUR OTHER ARGUMENTS MAY BE, I HAVE NO DOUBT AT ALL THAT DIRECTOR LU PING FOR INSTANCE, WANTS TO DO A GOOD JOB FOR HONG KONG.

QUESTION: GOVERNOR, DO YOU THINK THAT, ALTHOUGH YOU STATED THAT YOU WANTED THE TALK TO RESUME, DO YOU THINK THAT IT'S REASONABLE TO TABLE THE SECOND STAGE OF YOUR POLITICAL REFORM BILL TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AFTER THE PASSAGE OF THE FIRST STATE?

GOVERNOR: WELL, IF WE'RE NOT ABLE TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS AS WE WOULD LIKE THEN WE WILL HAVE TO DISCHARGE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES WITHOUT THERE HAVING BEEN AN AGREEMENT. I DON'T THINK THE COMMUNITY WILL BE SURPRISED BY THAT. WE'VE PROCEEDED IN AN ORDERLY AND SENSIBLE WAY IN THE PAST AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO IN THE FUTURE.

/QUESTION:

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, CAN YOU FURTHER ELABORATE THE TIME CONSTRAINT ON THE SECOND PART OF LEGISLATION BECAUSE YOU HAVE JUST SAID THAT TILL THE MOMENT THAT YOU HAVE TO DISCHARGE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TABLING THE BILL, IS IT THAT YOU HAVE TO DO THAT IN PARALLEL OR STEP-BY-STEP?

GOVERNOR: I THINK IT'S UNLIKELY THAT WE WOULD WANT TO GO AHEAD WITH THE LAST STAGE OF LEGISLATION WHILE THE PRESENT BILL IS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. I THINK IDEALLY WE'D WANT TO SEE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEAL WITH THAT BILL FIRST AND THEN MOVE ON TO NEXT ONE BUT, AS YOU KNOW, WE NEED THIS BILL IN ORDER TO GET ON WITH DRAWING UP THE REGISTER OF VOTERS IN THE SPRING, IN APRIL. BUT I WANT TO PROCEED IN A SENSIBLE WAY, TAKING ONE STEP AT A TIME. I THINK THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL APPRECIATE THAT AND I THINK THE COMMUNITY WILL UNDERSTAND THAT.

QUESTION: GOVERNOR, THAT MEANS THAT IS THERE ANY DEADLOCK IN THE FIRST PART OF THE LEGISLATION, THERE WON'T COME THE SECOND PART TO BE TABLED TO LEGCO?

GOVERNOR: NO I DIDN'T SAY THAT. I SAID IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT WE WOULD PROCEED WITH THE LAST STAGE OF THE LEGISLATION BEFORE WE COMPLETED THIS STAGE OF THE LEGISLATION. THAT'S ON THE ASSUMPTION OF COURSE THAT WE MAKE THE SORT OF PROGRESS WITH THIS STAGE OF THE LEGISLATION WHICH I THINK THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ITSELF EXPECTS.

QUESTION: IN TERMS OF CRIME, YESTERDAY THE HEAD OF ICAC SAID THAT AFTER 1993 CORRUPTION HAD INCREASED BY 44%

GOVERNOR: I THINK HE SAID REPORTED CASES OF CORRUPTION.

QUESTION: REPORTED CASES OF CORRUPTION HAD INCREASED BY 44%, WHICH OBVIOUSLY SHOWED, AND HE ALSO SAID THAT IT HAD A LARGE PART TO DO WITH BUSINESS THAT WAS COMING OVER IN CHINA AND INTO HONG KONG. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO TRY TO CURB THAT ? I UNDERSTAND THAT VIOLENT CRIME IS DOWN BUT CORRUPTION IS THE MAJOR FEAR THAT PEOPLE HAVE IN THE RUN-UP TO 1997.

GOVERNOR: CORRUPTION IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM AND JUST AS MANY CHINESE OFFICIALS HAVE SAID THAT IT IS A THREAT TO CHINA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY, SO IT'S A THREAT TO OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY AND WE HAVE A JOINT INTEREST WITH CHINA IN STAMPING IT OUT AND DEALING WITH IT RIGOROUSLY AND RUTHLESSLY. I DON'T THINK THAT YOU CAN EVER TOLERATE A LITTLE BIT OF CORRUPTION. I THINK THAT IF YOU ALLOW CORRUPTION TO COME SEEPING IN UNDER THE DOOR, IT VERY SOON STARTS TO DESTROY THE FOUNDATIONS OF A COMMUNITY OR A SOCIETY. WE'RE PROPOSING TO TAKE A SUBSTANTIAL INITIATIVE, AS YOU KNOW, WHICH I ANNOUNCED IN MY SPEECH TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, ON TRYING TO COMBAT CORRUPTION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, IN BUSINESS. WE'VE GOT A CONFERENCE IN THE EARLY SPRING ON THAT ISSUE WHICH I'LL BE ADDRESSING, SETTING OUT SOME OF MY VIEWS AND THOUGHTS ON THAT. BUT IT IS AN AREA WHERE THE ICAC WANTS TO TAKE A BIGGER INITIATIVE AND WANTS TO SEE ITSELF WORKING MUCH MORE COMPREHENSIVELY WITH TRADE ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL FIRMS, NOT LEAST THROUGH THEM ADAPTING CODES OF PRACTICE.

/QUESTION:

QUESTION: IS THE LATEST NUMBER SAID BY ICAC ALARMING?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THE LATEST NUMBERS WHICH I REPEAT WERE FOR REPORTS OF CORRUPTION, NOT ONLY ALARMED THE ICAC, BUT ALARMED THE COMMUNITY AND I SHARE THE COMMUNITY'S WORRY.

QUESTION: GOVERNOR, WHEN YOU FIRST CAME TO HONG KONG AND ON MANY OCCASIONS YOU MADE THE POINT THAT IT'S BETTER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS SOONER RATHER THAN LATER TO GIVE MORE TIME, MORE FLEXIBILITY, YET A NUMBER OF THINGS STILL TO BE HAPPENING LATER RATHER THAN SOONER, THE BILL IN LEGCO BEING ONE OF THEM. ARE YOU BEING FORCED BY CHINESE OR BY CIRCUMSTANCES TO ABANDON YOUR EARLIER APPROACH?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THAT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WOULD LIKE THE ARGUMENTS ABOUT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TO HAVE BEEN BEHIND US BY NOW. I WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE LIKED THAT TO HAVE HAPPENED. MAYBE IF WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO START DISCUSSIONS WHEN I SUGGESTED THEM IN THE AUTUMN OF 1992, IT WOULD HAVE HELPED US TO RESOLVE THESE MATTERS MORE RAPIDLY. I THINK WE'VE LEANT OVER BACKWARDS TO BORROW A PHRASE, TO SHOW HOW REASONABLE WE ARE TO TRY TO SECURE PROGRESS THROUGH AGREEMENT. THAT'S INEVITABLY TAKEN TIME BUT IT CAN'T TAKE INFINITY, WHICH IS WHY IN A MEASURED AND ORDERLY WAY WE'VE TAKEN THESE LEGISLATIVE MEASURES AND WHY WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE OTHERS IN DUE COURSE. BUT, I THINK THAT EVERYBODY RECOGNISES THAT WE'VE GOT TO GET THIS MATTER RESOLVED DURING THE COURSE OF THE SPRING AND SUMMER.

QUESTION: YOU HAVEN'T EXACTLY ANSWER THE QUESTION. HAVE YOU HAD TO MODIFY YOUR ORIGINAL APPROACH, YOUR DESIRE TO GET THINGS DONE SOONER RATHER THAN LATER. AND POINT TWO, RELATING TO JONATHAN'S POINT THAT WE DON'T GET INFORMATION WE CAN'T FIND OUT WHEN THE DEADLINE IS FOR THE MINI-BILL, FOR THE WHOLE BILL, FOR ANYTHING WHICH JUST KEEP COMING UP AND WE'LL NEVER GET INFORMATION.

GOVERNOR: BUT YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL THAT WHILE IT'S EXTREMELY CONVENIENT FOR YOU TO HAVE A DATE SO THAT YOU CAN PAINT CHINESE OFFICIALS OR HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS INTO A CORNER, IT'S NOT REMOTELY IN OUR INTEREST TO LET YOU DO SO. I MEAN, I ADMIRE YOUR JOURNALISTIC SPECULATION BUT THERE'S NO REASON AT ALL WHY I SHOULD MAKE LIFE MORE DIFFICULT FOR RESOLVING THESE MATTERS AND MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE COMMUNITY IN ORDER TO GIVE YOU A HEADLINE WHICH WOULDN'T FRANKLY LAST VERY LONG BUT WE GIVE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS WE CAN, GIVEN THAT OUR OVERALL OBJECTIVE IS, IF POSSIBLE, TO REACH AGREEMENT, NOT ONLY ON POLITICAL MATTERS BUT ON OTHER MATTERS AS WELL. AND I REPEAT WHAT I SAID EARLIER TO JONATHAN, I HAVEN'T NOTICED THAT THIS WAS AN INFORMATION STARVED COMMUNITY.

QUESTION: WHEN YOU CONSIDERED TO PUT THE REST OF THE PROPOSAL TO THE LEGCO ARE BASED ON WHAT CRITERIA YOU WILL PUT THE ORIGINAL ONE OR THE AMENDED ONE?

/GOVERNOR:

GOVERNOR: WELL, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF JUDGEMENTS THAT WE HAVE TO MAKE. WE HAVE TO CONSIDER WHICH OF THE PROPOSALS MAKE THE MOST SENSE IN TERMS OF DELIVERING ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH ARE FAIR AND OPEN. WE HAVE TO SEE WHICH, (HOLD ON, CAN YOU), BUT JUST BECAUSE BOTH ARE FAIR, IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU MIGHT THINK THAT ONE IS MORE FAIR OR EVEN MORE OPEN. SECONDLY, WE'LL HAVE TO REACH A DECISION ON WHICH SET OF PROPOSALS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO PEOPLE IN HONG KONG AND MORE LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. SO THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FACTORS THAT WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT. WE'LL ALSO, OF COURSE, HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY HAVE SAID IN THE PAST. AND WHAT'S INTERESTING IS THE SUPPORT WHICH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL GAVE TO THE ORIGINAL PROPOSALS THAT WE SET OUT AND THE SUPPORT WHICH WE'VE HAD IN THE COMMUNITY, ACCORDING TO MOST OPINION POLLS, FOR OUR PLANS PRETTY WELL CONSISTENTLY OVER THE LAST 18 MONTHS. BUT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FACTORS WE HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT AND I CAN ASSURE YOU WE WILL MAKE A SENSIBLE JUDGEMENT AND ONE WHICH I'M SURE THE COMMUNITY WILL BE ABLE TO ENDORSE IN DUE COURSE.

ONE MORE, THERE ARE SO MANY WHO HASN'T ASKED ONE. IT'S ONLY FAIR.

QUESTION: WILL THE BRITISH SIDE SUGGEST ANOTHER DATE TO RESUME THE TALKS?

GOVERNOR: WELL, WE'VE SUGGESTED THAT THE TALKS SHOULD BE RESUMED. SINCE OUR PROPOSAL FOR TALKS ON 17 AND 18 DECEMBER WAS TURNED DOWN, WE HAVEN'T SUGGESTED OTHER DATES. BUT WE REMAIN READY TO DROP EVERYTHING AND TRAVEL TO PEKING AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE, WHENEVER IT'S CONVENIENT TO THE CHINESE SIDE TO HAVE THE DISCUSSIONS. I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT THESE AND OTHER MATTERS CAN BE RESOLVED THROUGH DISCUSSION. I'M VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEMS RESOLVED THROUGH DISCUSSION, USING THE USUAL CHANNELS, THE CHANNELS THAT ARE ESTABLISHED BOTH UNDER THE JOINT DECLARATION AND UNDER THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, FOR EXAMPLE THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

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GOVERNOR SPEAKS AT LAUNCHING RECEPTION OF EASTERN EXPRESS

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DR MA, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

CAN I SAY HOW DELIGHTED I AM TO BE HERE AT THE LAUNCH OF THIS NEW NEWSPAPER AND I'D LIKE TO CONGRATULATE YOU, DR MA AND STEVE AND EVERYONE WHO'S BEEN INVOLVED IN PRODUCING A NEWSPAPER FROM THE DRAWING BOARD TO FIRST DUMMY IN SUCH A SHORT TIME. AS PREGNANCIES GO, THIS ONE HAS BEEN EXCEEDINGLY SHORT. IT'S, OF COURSE I KNOW, BEEN VERY EXCITING PREGNANCY, NOT LEAST FOR VIRTUALLY EVERY OTHER EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR IN HONG KONG. THERE WAS, I THINK, A SHORT PERIOD WHEN I WAS THE ONLY PERSON IN HONG KONG WHO WASN'T JOINING THE EASTERN EXPRESS. BUT I STILL HAVE HOPES.

WE ALL KNOW THAT HONG KONG IS A COMMUNITY WITH, PERHAPS, MORE NEWSPAPERS PER HEAD THAN ANYONE ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD. I READ THAT IN THE ECONOMIST MAGAZINE A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO SO IT MUST BE TRUE. NEWSPAPERS, A FREE PRESS ARE, OF COURSE, ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF A FREE SOCIETY, ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF AN OPEN SOCIETY, ONE OF THE HALLMARKS OF A SOCIETY AS SOPHISTICATED AND SUCCESSFUL AS HONG KONG. A FREE PRESS IS ALSO ONE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE VALUES OF A FREE SOCIETY. SO, ALL OF US SHOULD WELCOME THE ARRIVAL OF A NEW NEWSPAPER TO JOIN THE SPECTACULAR RANGE OF CHINESE LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS HERE IN HONG KONG AND THE OTHER TWO ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS AS WELL. I BELIEVE IN COMPETITION AND I AM SURE THAT NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS AND EDITORS DO AS WELL.

I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO READING THE EASTERN EXPRESS AS OTHER NEWSPAPERS FROM FEBRUARY 1. I AM SURE THAT THE EASTERN EXPRESS WHICH WAS BORN IN HONG KONG WILL NOT ONLY BE READ IN HONG KONG BUT WILL BE COMMITTED TO HONG KONG AND WILL SPEAK UP FOR HONG KONG EVEN SHOULD THAT MEAN, FROM TIME TO TIME, HEAVEN FORBID, SAYING SOMETHING CRITICAL ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT. JUDGING BY THE DUMMY, YOU ARE GETTING INTO YOUR STRIKE ALREADY ON THAT PARTICULAR FRONT.

BUT I AM VERY PLEASED TO BE HERE. I DO THINK THIS IS AN IMPORTANT OCCASION FOR THE MEDIA HERE IN HONG KONG WHERE I HOPE WE CAN BE FAIR TO BE NOT JUST THE BUSINESS CENTRE OF THE REGION BUT THE MEDIA CAPITAL OF THE REGION AS WELL. I MUSTN'T COME BETWEEN YOU AND TWO PRESIDENTS BUT I AM DELIGHTED TO BE SPEAKING AS IT WERE, IN THEIR COMPANY. AND I KNOW THAT THEIR ENDORSEMENT FOR A FREE PRESS WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME THIS EVENING. I DO CONGRATULATE ALL OF YOU AND WISH YOU WELL. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

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BAKERY PRODUCTS SAFE FOR CONSUMPTION

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THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ASSURES THE PUBLIC THAT BAKERY PRODUCTS AVAILABLE AT THE MARKET ARE SAFE FOR CONSUMPTION.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH RECENT INTERNATIONAL TREND OF PHASING OUT THE USE OF POTASSIUM BROMATE AS A FLOUR ADDITIVE, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HAS OBTAINED THE CO-OPERATION OF THE LOCAL FLOUR INDUSTRY THAT THEY WOULD TAKE ACTION TO REPLACE, BY FEBRUARY 1, 1994, THE USE OF POTASSIUM BROMATE IN FLOUR AT A MEETING THIS (TUESDAY) AFTERNOON.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID BOTH SIDES SHARED THE VIEW THAT THEY SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY.

HE SAID THE LOCAL FLOUR INDUSTRY WAS A RESPONSIBLE ONE AND HAD ALL ALONG FOLLOWED THE STATE OF THE ART PRACTICE TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND QUALITY OF THEIR PRODUCTS.

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EXCO ACCEPTS TWO HEALTH CARE REFORM OPTIONS

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THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE THE INTRODUCTION OF SEMI-PRIVATE ROOMS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND A CO-ORDINATED VOLUNTARY INSURANCE SCHEME SO AS TO OFFER MORE CONSUMER CHOICE IN THE PROVISION OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

THESE TWO OPTIONS IN THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT "TOWARDS BETTER HEALTH", PUBLISHED LAST YEAR, HAVE RECEIVED CLEAR COMMUNITY SUPPORT.

AS AN IMMEDIATE STEP TO GO AHEAD WITH THE TWO APPROVED OPTIONS, AN IN-HOUSE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE WILL BE SET UP SHORTLY.

"THE COMMITTEE, TO BE CHAIRED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, WILL COMPRISE THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY AND A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY," THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

SHE SAID ITS TASK WOULD BE TO REFINE AND FORMULATE DETAILED PROPOSALS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF SEMI-PRIVATE ROOMS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND A CO-ORDINATED VOLUNTARY INSURANCE SCHEME, INCLUDING PROPOSALS FROM THE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY.

THE COMMITTEE WILL ALSO STUDY THE FEE STRUCTURE FOR GENERAL WARDS IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS, HAVING REGARD TO PUBLIC MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE PERCENTAGE SUBSIDY APPROACH, AND HAVING REGARD TO THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THE PRINCIPLE OF COST AWARENESS AND THE CONCEPT OF PRICE MECHANISM IN THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.

/"AS REGARDS

"AS REGARDS THE PERCENTAGE SUBSIDY APPROACH, WE NOTE PUBLIC VIEW. UNFORTUNATELY, THE PUBLIC VIEW WAS FOUNDED ON THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE PERCENTAGE SUBSIDY APPROACH, PROBABLY DUE TO INADEQUATE DRAFTING.

"I WOULD LIKE HERE TO REAFFIRM THE UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDY APPROACH WHICH IS SIMPLE TO ADMINISTER AND FAIR TO CONSUMERS; IF ACCOMPANIED BY THE TARGET WAIVER SYSTEM, IT WOULD ENABLE THOSE WHO ARE LESS WELL OFF TO OBTAIN EXEMPTION IN AN OPEN AND FAIR MANNER. WE NEED TO UPHOLD THIS PRINCIPLE.

"AT THE SAME TIME, WE SHOULD ALSO BE REVIEWING AGAIN THE APPROPRIATE EXTENT OF SUBSIDY AND HOW BEST TO TARGET THOSE MOST IN NEED," MRS WONG STATED.

THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE SHOULD BEGIN ITS WORK DURING THE SPRING OF 1994.

FOLLOWING THIS, AN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY COMMITTEE, INCLUDING EXPERTS FROM NON-GOVERNMENT SECTOR, WILL BE APPOINTED TO ADVISE THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSALS DEVELOPED BY THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE AND TO MONITOR AND EVALUATE PROGRESS.

MRS WONG REITERATED THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF THE TWO OPTIONS WOULD NOT RESULT IN ANY ONE BEING DEPRIVED OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES BECAUSE OF LACK OF MEANS.

THE EXISTING WAIVER SYSTEM WILL BE RETAINED, SHE ADDED.

TURNING TO SEMI-PRIVATE ROOMS, MRS WONG EXPLAINED THAT THEY CONSTITUTED A STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN UNSUBSIDISED PRIVATE WARDS AND HEAVILY-SUBSIDISED GENERAL WARDS.

THEY AIM TO COMBINE GREATER PRIVACY, CONVENIENCE AND COMFORT WITH AFFORDABILITY.

IT IS INTENDED TO INTRODUCE SEMI-PRIVATE ROOMS ON A PILOT SCHEME BASIS IN SOME PUBLIC HOSPITALS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

"I WISH TO ASSURE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC THAT THEY WILL NOT REDUCE THE NUMBER OF EXISTING GENERAL WARD BEDS, OR DRAW AWAY RESOURCES FROM THEM," SHE SAID.

SHE ALSO SAID THE CO-ORDINATED VOLUNTARY INSURANCE APPROACH INVOLVED RELATIVELY LITTLE GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION.

IT CONSISTS OF A FRAMEWORK WHEREBY PRIVATE INSURANCE COMPANIES COULD COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER IN GREATER OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY TO USERS.

"HOWEVER, THE SCHEME WILL REQUIRE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DESIGNATED BODY TO APPROVE MEDICAL INSURANCE PLANS FOR PUBLIC SECTOR HOSPITALS SO AS TO ENSURE THAT THEY PROVIDE ADEQUATE COVERAGE AND ARE TRANSPARENT TO THE PURCHASER REGARDING WHAT IS COVERED AND PROVIDED," MRS WONG ADDED.

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THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON TOWARDS BETTER HEALTH WAS PUBLISHED IN JULY LAST YEAR FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS.

IT WAS WIDELY DISCUSSED BY ALL THE 19 DISTRICT BOARDS AND AT OVER 100 MEETINGS BETWEEN THE HEALTH AND WELFARE BRANCH AND VARIOUS COMMUNITY GROUPS.

WHEN COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK WAS COMPLETED AT THE END OF OCTOBER LAST YEAR, 494 SUBMISSIONS WERE RECEIVED.

OF THESE, 294 WERE FROM INDIVIDUALS, 45 FROM HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND 83 FROM VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS.

THE BRANCH ALSO RECEIVED THE RESULTS OF 33 SIGNATURE CAMPAIGNS, 13 SURVEYS AND SEVEN STATEMENTS FROM POLITICAL PARTIES.

IN ADDITION, THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT WAS EVALUATED BY AN INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION WHO COMMENTED FAVOURABLY ON THE GOVERNMENT'S PREFERRED COMBINATION OF APPROACHES.

THE CONSULTANT ALSO NOTED THAT THE PROCESS OF REFORM "IS HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION" AND THAT "HONG KONG OFFERS LESSONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS WHO ARE WORKING TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE IN OTHER COUNTRIES".

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URUGUAY PACKAGE WOULD ADAPT WELL LOCALLY

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE LOCAL TEXTILES SECTOR WOULD ADAPT WELL TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE URUGUAY ROUND PACKAGE.

SPEAKING AT THE TEXTILE INSTITUTE THIS (TUESDAY) EVENING, MR CHAU SAID THE URUGUAY ROUND OFFERED A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO END THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA) AND BRING TRADE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING GRADUALLY BACK TO THE MUCH MORE LIBERAL GATT RULES.

"THE URUGUAY ROUND TEXTILES AND CLOTHING TEXT PROVIDES FOR A GRADUAL 10-YEAR PHASE-OUT OF THE QUOTAS IN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATED UNDER THE MFA," HE SAID.

MR CHAU SAID THERE WERE TWO ELEMENTS TO THE PHASE-OUT - THE GRADUAL REMOVAL OF QUOTA RESTRICTIONS AND PROGRESSIVELY HIGHER GROWTH RATES.

THE 10-YEAR PHASE-OUT WILL BE DIVIDED INTO THREE STAGES FOR THREE, FOUR AND THREE YEARS RESPECTIVELY.

"AT THE START OF EACH STAGE EACH IMPORTING COUNTRY IS REQUIRED TO RETURN TO GATT RULES A RANGE OF PRODUCTS REPRESENTING A SPECIFIED PROPORTION OF ITS IMPORTS OF TEXTILES AND CLOTHING," HE SAID.

/MR CHAU

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MR CHAU ADDED THAT SINCE IMPLEMENTATION WOULD NOT BEGIN UNTIL 1995 AT THE EARLIEST, TEXTILES QUOTA WOULD REMAIN A FACT OF LIFE IN HONG KONG FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER 11 YEARS.

AS FOR THE IMPACT OF HIGHER GROWTH RATES, MR CHAU NOTED THAT IN PRACTICE, THAT WOULD MEAN HONG KONG'S AVERAGE QUOTA GROWTH RATE FOR THE U.S. MARKET WOULD INCREASE FROM ABOUT 1.8 PER CENT TODAY, TO TWO PER CENT THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF THE TRANSITION.

THE RATE WOULD BE 2.6 PER CENT FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, AND 3.3 PER CENT FOR THE FINAL THREE.

MR CHAU PREDICTED THAT KEY ELEMENTS OF THE INDUSTRY WOULD PROBABLY REMAIN IN HONG KONG, BUT LOW-SKILLED JOBS WOULD TEND TO MOVE TO LOWER-WAGE ECONOMIES AS A RESULT OF THE GATT PACKAGE.

HE ASSURED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PLAY ITS PART IN EASING THE PROCESS THROUGH SUCH INITIATIVES AS THE EMPLOYEES' RETRAINING SCHEME.

"THE TRANSITION AHEAD WILL BE GRADUAL," MR CHAU SAID.

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URUGUAY ROUND STRENGTHENS MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM

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THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE URUGUAY ROUND IS A CLEAR SETBACK FOR PROTECTIONISM, THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF TRADE, MR TONY MILLER, SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, HE SAID THE URUGUAY ROUND PROVIDED FOR A STRENGTHENED MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM WHICH WOULD FACILITATE FURTHER LIBERALISATION AND EXPANSION OF WORLD TRADE, GIVING A MUCH-NEEDED BOOST TO THE SLUGGISH WORLD ECONOMY.

A MAJOR STEP IN STRENGTHENING THE MULTILATERAL TRADE SYSTEM IS THE CREATION OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION (WTO).

THE WTO WILL HAVE A STATUS AND A PERMANENT CHARACTER COMPARABLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND THE WORLD BANK, HE SAID.

IT PROVIDES CLEARER RULES AND DISCIPLINES AND ENVISAGES A STRENGTHENED COMMON INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ENCOMPASSING THE GATT AND ALL THE AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATED UNDER THE URUGUAY ROUND.

"THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION WILL BE GOOD FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE, LIKE THE GATT BUT BIGGER AND BETTER AND MORE LIKELY TO PROMOTE TRADE AND PREVENT DISPUTES."

"WE HAVE WORKED HARD FOR THE CREATION OF THIS NEW AND STRONGER INSTITUTION," SAID MR MILLER. "AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO PLAYING AN ACTIVE PART IN IT."

/MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS NEED TO SEEK NECESSARY RATIFICATION AFTER THE MARRAKESH MINISTERIAL TO BE HELD IN APRIL THIS YEAR AND THE EARLIEST START DATE FOR WTO WILL BE JANUARY 1 NEXT YEAR.

DISPUTE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS STRENGTHENING THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM.

THE SYSTEM DEALS WITH TRADE DISPUTES AMONG WTO MEMBERS AND PRESCRIBES STRINGENT PROCEDURES AND TIME LIMITS COVERING ALL STAGES OF THE PROCESS.

"UNDER THIS SYSTEM, A MEMBER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FRUSTRATE THE DISPUTE SETTLEMENT PROCESS BY BLOCKING A DECISION, AS CAN HAPPEN AT PRESENT," HE SAID.

ON TRADE LIBERALISATION, THE PACKAGE PROVIDES FOR TARIFF CONCESSIONS AND THE PHASING OUT OF QUOTA RESTRICTIONS ON TEXTILES AND CLOTHING PRODUCTS OVER 10 YEARS.

"TARIFF CONCESSIONS AGREED WILL APPLY TO ALL ON MOST FAVOURED NATION (MFN) BASIS. FOR TRADERS, IT WILL MEAN TARIFF SAVINGS AND BETTER ACCESS TO WORLD MARKETS.

"THE MINIMUM SAVING TO HONG KONG IS ESTIMATED AT US\$420 MILLION A YEAR," MR MILLER SAID.

DURING THE 10-YEAR PHASING OUT OF TEXTILES QUOTA, SOME 51 PER CENT OF PRODUCTS WILL BE PROGRESSIVELY LIBERALISED.

IN ADDITION, GROWTH RATES OF QUOTA LIMITS ON PRODUCTS REMAINING UNDER RESTRAINT WILL BE GRADUALLY INCREASED.

THE PACKAGE WOULD ALSO EXTEND THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM FOR THE FIRST TIME TO TRADE IN SERVICES AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.

"AGREEMENT ON SERVICES IS A MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT WHICH BUILDS ON BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE GATT - MFN, NATIONAL TREATMENT, TRANSPARENCY AND STRONG DISPUTE SETTLEMENT SYSTEM.

"IT WILL OPEN UP POTENTIAL MARKETS FOR SERVICES EXPORTS AND PROVIDE GREATER DEGREE OF CERTAINTY FOR SERVICES EXPORTERS."

HONG KONG IS NOT A MAJOR EXPORTER OF SERVICES AT PRESENT BUT IS RAPIDLY EVOLVING FROM LIGHT MANUFACTURING CENTRE TO A FINANCIAL/TELECOMMUNICATION/TRANSPORT HUB PROVIDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO THE REGION.

SEVENTY PER CENT OF GDP NOW COMES FROM SERVICES AND THE PERCENTAGE IS INCREASING.

"WE SHALL CERTAINLY LOOK FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND MARKETS OPENED UP BY THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE IN SERVICES," HE SAID.

IN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY, THE AGREEMENT FOCUSES ON TRADEMARKS, COPYRIGHT, PATENT AND OTHER INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.

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IT PROVIDES FOR HIGHER STANDARDS OF PROTECTION AND COMMITMENT TO ENFORCEMENT, HE SAID.

FROM A MACRO ECONOMIC POINT OF VIEW, MR MILLER SAID THE PACKAGE ALSO BROUGHT UNQUANTIFIABLE BENEFITS - EASING OF BILATERAL TRADE TENSIONS AND ASSOCIATED POLITICAL BENEFITS; EXTENDING GATT RULES TO NEW AREAS THEREBY MAKING COMPETITION FAIRER AND MORE TRANSPARENT.

ACCORDING TO THE LATEST OECD STUDY ASSESSING THE BENEFITS OF THE ROUND BY 2002, NET WORLD WELFARE COULD BE US\$270 BILLION HIGHER, AT CURRENT PRICES, AND EXCLUDING GAINS FROM SERVICES.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WAS WORK TO BE DONE IN HONG KONG TO IMPLEMENT THE PACKAGE.

NEGOTIATIONS SUCH AS THOSE ON SERVICES ARE CONTINUING, AND NEW ISSUES ON TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT, COMPETITION POLICY ARE BEING IDENTIFIED, HE SAID.

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INTERIM REPORT ON MENTALLY HANDICAPPED
GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT

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SPECIAL PROCEDURES WILL BE INTRODUCED TO ASSIST MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT.

THIS WAS REVEALED BY MR JUSTICE MICHAEL WONG, CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING PARTY ON MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT, AT A MEET-THE-MEDIA SESSION HELD AT THE SUPREME COURT THIS (TUESDAY) AFTERNOON.

RELEASING THE FINDINGS OF THE INTERIM REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY, MR JUSTICE WONG SAID: "AN ADULT PERSON OF NORMAL INTELLIGENCE, WHO HAS NEVER APPEARED IN COURT PROCEEDINGS BEFORE, MAY FIND GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT A STRESSFUL EXPERIENCE. FOR A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON, THIS EXPERIENCE MUST BE EVEN MORE STRESSFUL AND PUZZLING."

"IT IS THEREFORE ESSENTIAL THAT IT BE EXPLAINED TO THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS (IN LANGUAGE APPROPRIATE TO HIM OR HER) THE COURT PROCEDURE BY A PERSON IN WHOM THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON CAN HAVE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE."

"THE COURT ATMOSPHERE AND SETTING SHOULD BE INFORMAL AND RELAXING TO MAKE THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS FEEL MORE AT EASE AND COMFORTABLE. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS WE CONSIDER SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS IN COURT PROCEEDINGS NOT ONLY NECESSARY BUT IMPERATIVE," HE EXPLAINED.

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THE 13 RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE WORKING PARTY ARE:

- * AFTER A CHARGE INVOLVING A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON EITHER AS THE DEFENDANT OR A WITNESS IS BEFORE THE COURT, THE PROSECUTION OR THE DEFENCE, AS THE CASE MAY BE, WILL SUBMIT TO THE COURT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT IDENTIFYING THAT THE DEFENDANT OR THE WITNESS IS A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON;
- * THE COURT WILL FIX AN EARLY DATE FOR THE TRIAL OF THE CASE;
- * AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE, A CANTONESE-SPEAKING JUDGE OR MAGISTRATE SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO TRY THE CASE;
- * THE PART OF THE CASE INVOLVING THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS GIVING EVIDENCE BE CONDUCTED IN CANTONESE IF THE PARTIES REQUEST AND THE COURT IS SATISFIED THAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE SO WARRANT;
- * THE COURT WILL HEAR THE EVIDENCE OF A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON IN A ROOM SIMILAR TO A JUVENILE COURT OTHER THAN THE COURTROOM IN WHICH THE COURT SITS;
- * ALL PERSONS OTHER THAN THOSE PERMITTED TO BE PRESENT BY THE COURT WILL BE EXCLUDED;
- * THE JUDGE AND COUNSEL WILL REMOVE THEIR WIGS AND GOWNS AND WEAR ORDINARY ATTIRE;
- * A SOCIAL WORKER, OR A SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS OR ANY SUITABLE PERSON APPROVED BY THE COURT MAY ACCOMPANY THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS AND SIT NEAR HIM OR HER WHILE THE WITNESS GIVES EVIDENCE PROVIDED THAT THE COURT AND COUNSEL WILL ENDEAVOUR TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO PROMPTING OR COACHING OF EVIDENCE;
- * THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS WILL BE ALLOWED COUNSELLING BY A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST OR A PSYCHIATRIST BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE EVIDENCE OF THE WITNESS;
- * THE COURT WILL CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY APPLICATIONS OR ON ITS OWN MOTION GRANT ADJOURNMENTS TO ALLOW A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED WITNESS TIME TO REST AND TO COMPOSE HIMSELF OR HERSELF BEFORE CONTINUING TO GIVE EVIDENCE WHENEVER CIRCUMSTANCE SO WARRANTS;
- * THE COURT AND COUNSEL OR SOLICITOR WILL ENDEAVOUR TO ENSURE THAT SIMPLE QUESTIONS ARE ASKED IN CROSS-EXAMINATION AND LONG AND COMPLICATED QUESTIONS OR QUESTIONS WHICH TEND TO CONFUSE, EMBARRASS OR MISLEAD THE WITNESS MUST BE AVOIDED;
- * A ROOM EACH IN THE SUPREME COURT AND THE DISTRICT COURT EQUIPPED AND MODIFIED WITH SETTING AND LAYOUT SIMILAR TO A JUVENILE COURT SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR USE WHENEVER NECESSARY; AND

- * THE JUDICIAL STUDIES BOARD SHOULD FROM TIME TO TIME ORGANISE LECTURES AND SEMINARS FOR JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES ON MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE.

MR JUSTICE WONG STRESSED THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRED THE CLOSEST CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE JUDICIARY, THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SUCH AS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS, THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT, ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.

"THE WORKING PARTY WILL CONTINUE TO EXAMINE OTHER AND MORE COMPLICATED PROPOSALS SUCH AS GIVING EVIDENCE BY A MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSON BY MEANS OF TELEVISION LINK, VIDEOTAPED RECORDINGS, DEPOSITIONS AND OTHER MEANS. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO COMPLETE OUR DELIBERATIONS AND HAVE OUR FINAL REPORT READY WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS," HE SAID.

THE WORKING PARTY WAS APPOINTED BY THE CHIEF JUSTICE, SIR TI LIANG YANG, IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR.

IT COMPRISED SEVEN MEMBERS: MR JOHN WOOD, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS; MR ALLAN CHOW, COMMISSIONER FOR REHABILITATION; MR ANTHONY CHAN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE (YOUTH AND REHABILITATION); MR MICHAEL LUNN, A BARRISTER RECOMMENDED BY THE BAR ASSOCIATION; MR T C FOO, A SOLICITOR RECOMMENDED BY THE LAW SOCIETY; DR SYLVIA CHAN, A PSYCHIATRIST IN PRIVATE PRACTICE; AND MR FRED LI WAH-MING, A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE WORKING PARTY IS TASKED TO EXAMINE WAYS AND MEANS BY WHICH MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE GIVING EVIDENCE IN COURT MAY BE HELPED IN ORDER TO MINIMISE ANY TRAUMA THEY MAY SUFFER THEREBY.

THE INTERIM REPORT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE CHIEF JUSTICE, WHO HAS ACCEPTED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME, THE CHIEF JUSTICE IS SEEKING THE VIEWS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO SEE HOW BEST THE RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE PAID TRIBUTE TO MR JUSTICE WONG AND MEMBERS OF THE WORKING PARTY FOR THEIR COLLECTIVE EFFORTS IN DRAWING UP THE INTERIM REPORT ON AN ISSUE WHICH IS OF CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC CONCERN.

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CHLORINE STORAGE MADE SAFER

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THE CHLORINATION HOUSE IN TSUEN WAN WATER TREATMENT WORKS HAS BEEN MODIFIED WITH MODERN DESIGN TO ENHANCE SAFETY OF CHLORINE STORAGE.

THIS WAS INDICATED TODAY (TUESDAY) BY THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF WATER SUPPLIES (SUPPLIES AND DISTRIBUTION), MR WATT CHI-NGONG, DURING A PRESS VISIT TO THE INSTALLATION.

"THE \$11 MILLION INSTALLATION IS AIMED AT MINIMISING THE RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE STORAGE AND HANDLING OF CHLORINE IN THE TREATMENT WORKS.

"WATER DISINFECTION BY CHLORINE IS THE MAIN METHOD OF CONTROLLING PATHOGENIC BACTERIAL AND VIRAL AGENTS.

"IN VIEW OF THE RISK ASSOCIATED WITH STORAGE AND HANDLING OF CHLORINE, VERY STRINGENT MEASURES AGAINST POSSIBLE LEAKAGE ARE REQUIRED TO ENSURE OPERATIONAL SAFETY," HE SAID.

THE MODIFIED CHLORINATION HOUSE HAS BEEN DESIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS OF A HAZARD ASSESSMENT STUDY ON TREATMENT WORKS COMMISSIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

THE MAIN FEATURES INCLUDE A CHLORINE SCRUBBING SYSTEM FOR REDUCING THE RISK OF LEAKAGE TO AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL BY UTILISING SODIUM HYDROXIDE AS NEUTRALISING AGENT TO REMOVE ANY LEAKED CHLORINE INSIDE THE HOUSE.

THE TSUEN WAN TREATMENT WORKS HAS A TREATMENT CAPACITY OF 318,000 CUBIC METRES PER DAY AND SUPPLIES POTABLE WATER TO PART OF TSUEN WAN, KWAI CHUNG AND TSING YI AREAS.

IN ORDER TO SAFEGUARD WATER QUALITY, SUFFICIENT STOCK OF CHLORINE HAS TO BE MAINTAINED FOR WATER TREATMENT. IT IS STORED IN LIQUID FORM UNDER PRESSURE IN 50-KILOGRAM STEEL CYLINDERS SECURELY PLACED INSIDE STEEL CAGES.

MR WATT SAID TRAINING COURSES ON PLANT OPERATIONS AND DRILLS WERE REGULARLY HELD TO REFRESH OPERATORS' ABILITY AND THEIR READINESS IN DEALING WITH EMERGENCIES.

"A VERY STRINGENT MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE FOR THE CHLORINE SYSTEM IS ALSO FOLLOWED TO ENSURE RELIABLE OPERATION OF EQUIPMENT.

"FURTHERMORE, A DIRECT ALARM LINK HAS BEEN CONNECTED TO THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT'S CONTROL CENTRE FOR THEIR PROMPT ACTION," HE ADDED.

MEMBERS OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD WERE BRIEFED ON THE MODIFIED INSTALLATION EARLIER TODAY, AND TAKEN ON A GUIDED TOUR OF THE OPERATION OF THE CONTROL ROOM AND GAS SCRUBBER ROOM IN THE CHLORINATION HOUSE.

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FIGURES ON FATAL CASES AT WORK RELEASED

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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT TODAY (TUESDAY) RELEASED FIGURES ON REPORTED FATAL CASES LAST YEAR CLASSIFIED UNDER THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE.

UNDER THE ORDINANCE, AN EMPLOYER IS REQUIRED TO REPORT THE INJURY TO OR DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE FOLLOWING AN ACCIDENT THAT OCCURRED IN THE COURSE OF EMPLOYMENT AND, WHICH IS DEEMED TO HAVE ARISEN OUT OF EMPLOYMENT, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT EXPLAINED.

"IN 1993, EMPLOYERS REPORTED A TOTAL OF 304 CASES UNDER THE ORDINANCE," HE ADDED.

AN ANALYSIS REVEALS THAT:

- * 92 CASES RESULTED FROM INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS IN HONG KONG;
- * 34 CASES RESULTED FROM ACCIDENTS AT SEA WHICH OCCURRED OUTSIDE HONG KONG;
- * 36 CASES OCCURRED WHILE EMPLOYEES WERE ON DUTY OUTSIDE HONG KONG;
- * 37 CASES RESULTED FROM TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS IN HONG KONG; AND
- * 17 CASES IN WHICH EMPLOYEES DIED OF NATURAL CAUSES.

"THE NUMBER OF CASES RELATING TO DEATH BY NATURAL CAUSES MAY GO UP AS EXPERIENCE SHOWS SOME 20 PER CENT OF REPORTED FATAL CASES UNDER THE ORDINANCE BELONG TO THIS CATEGORY," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"OF THE REMAINING 88 FATAL CASES, THE MAJORITY INVOLVED SERVICE WORKERS SUCH AS STEVEDORES, DELIVERY HANDS, SECURITY GUARDS AND CLEANSING WORKERS, AND FEWER THAN 10 EMPLOYEES WERE INVOLVED IN CLERICAL JOBS," HE ADDED.

EMPLOYERS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY ARE REQUIRED UNDER THE LAW TO REPORT AN ACCIDENT RESULTING IN DEATH OF AN EMPLOYEE TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR IN THE PRESCRIBED FORM (FORM 2) WITHIN SEVEN DAYS AFTER THE ACCIDENT.

IN RESPECT OF INJURY TO AN EMPLOYEE, THE REPORT SHOULD BE MADE WITHIN 14 DAYS.

ENQUIRIES ON EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT ON 733 2337.

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ORDERS-ON-HAND OF MANUFACTURERS IN NOVEMBER

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THE VOLUME OF ORDERS-ON-HAND FOR THE 200 LARGEST MANUFACTURERS DECREASED SLIGHTLY BY 2% IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR OVER A YEAR EARLIER, ACCORDING TO THE RESULTS OF A MONTHLY SURVEY RELEASED TODAY (TUESDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE VOLUME IS MEASURED IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF MONTHS THAT MANUFACTURERS WILL REQUIRE TO COMPLETE THE ORDERS OUTSTANDING AS AT THE END OF THE REFERENCE MONTH.

COMPARED WITH THE SAME MONTH IN 1992, ORDERS POSITION IN THE FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY DECREASED BY 10%. SLIGHT DECREASES WERE ALSO RECORDED IN THE TEXTILES AND WEARING APPAREL INDUSTRIES, BY 3% AND 1% RESPECTIVELY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, ORDERS IN THE PLASTIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRY AND THE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRY SHOWED LITTLE CHANGE.

COMPARED WITH THE PRECEDING MONTH, ORDERS FOR ALL THE MANUFACTURERS SURVEYED INCREASED SLIGHTLY BY 1%.

ORDERS POSITION INCREASED BY 8% IN THE TEXTILES INDUSTRY. AN INCREASE OF 2% WAS ALSO RECORDED IN THE WEARING APPAREL INDUSTRY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, ORDERS IN THE ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRY REPORTED LITTLE CHANGE. SLIGHT DECREASES WERE RECORDED IN THE FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY AND THE PLASTIC PRODUCTS INDUSTRY, BY 3% AND 1% RESPECTIVELY.

THE MONTHLY SURVEY COVERS A PANEL OF THE 200 LARGEST MANUFACTURERS CHOSEN BY REFERENCE TO THEIR EMPLOYMENT SIZES IN SEPTEMBER 1986.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT POINTED OUT THAT AS THE SURVEY SAMPLE COVERED ONLY THE LARGE COMPANIES, THE SURVEY RESULTS MIGHT NOT BE FULLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GENERAL SITUATION OF THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR.

NEVERTHELESS, THE SURVEY RESULTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE A USEFUL INDICATION OF THE DIRECTION OF CHANGE FOR MAKING A QUICK ASSESSMENT OF SHORT-TERM DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS SECTOR, HE SAID.

THE SURVEY REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 1993, AT \$5.50 A COPY, IS NOW ON SALE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL, AND AT THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS SECTION, 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI.

FOR ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE SURVEY RESULTS, PLEASE CALL THE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION STATISTICS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON TEL 805 6441.

/THE FOLLOWING

THE FOLLOWING TABLE SHOWS THE PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN ORDERS-ON-HAND:

INDUSTRY	ORDERS-ON-HAND IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES		
	AS AT THE END OF NOVEMBER 1993 (MONTHS)	CHANGE WHEN COMPARED WITH OCTOBER 1993 (%)	NOVEMBER 1992 (%)
ALL MANUFACTURERS SURVEYED	4.38	+1	-2
WEARING APPAREL	4.65	+2	-1
TEXTILES	2.11	+8	-3
PLASTIC PRODUCTS	2.63	-1	*
FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS	4.21	-3	-10
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS	5.79	*	*
OTHERS	3.82	*	-3

* CHANGES WITHIN +/-0.5%

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PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE IS BETTER THAN CURE

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PREVENTIVE MEASURES OF CHILD ABUSE IN THE FORM OF SUPPORT SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES ARE ESSENTIAL, MRS PATTEN SAID TODAY (TUESDAY).

"PREVENTION IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN CURE," SHE SAID, WHEN OPENING THE AGAINST CHILD ABUSE (ACA) CHUK YUEN CENTRE.

SHE SAID THERE HAD ALWAYS BEEN A CLOSE LINKAGE BETWEEN CHILD ABUSE AND PARENTS' FAILURE TO COPE WITH THE STRESS OF LIFE.

"HONG KONG IS KNOWN TO BE A VERY HECTIC CITY AND PEOPLE ARE SUBJECT TO ALL KINDS OF PRESSURES ARISING FROM MODERN URBAN LIVING," MRS PATTEN SAID.

SHE SAID THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD SHOULD ALWAYS BE THE PARAMOUNT CONCERN OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND THE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TEAMS INVESTIGATING CASES AND DECIDING ON THE ACTION TO BE TAKEN.

"IT IS VITAL THAT A CHILD'S SAFETY AND WELFARE SHOULD BE PUT FIRST," SHE ADDED.

THIS COULD BE ENSURED BY APPOINTING OFFICIAL SOLICITOR IN APPROPRIATE CASES OF CARE AND PROTECTION TO REPRESENT THE CHILD.

/AN INCREASE

AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF FOSTER PARENTS AVAILABLE WOULD ALSO GIVE SOCIAL WORKERS MORE FLEXIBILITY AND CHOICE IN DEALING WITH CASES OF ABUSE.

MRS PATTEN PRAISED THE ACA FOR ITS STRONG COMMITMENT TO COMBAT CHILD ABUSE SINCE IT HAD FIRST STARTED IN 1979.

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POLLUTION CASES RELEASED
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A TOTAL OF 56 CONVICTIONS WERE MADE IN THE COURTS IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR FOR BREACHING ANTI-POLLUTION LEGISLATION ENFORCED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT.

AMONG THEM, 25 WERE CONVICTIONS MADE UNDER THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE (APCO), 22 UNDER THE NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE (NCO), SEVEN UNDER THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ORDINANCE (WPCO) AND TWO UNDER THE DUMPING AT SEA ACT (OVERSEAS TERRITORIES ORDER) (DASO), A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID.

THE FINES IMPOSED RANGED FROM \$1,000 TO \$100,000. THE PENTA-OCEAN CONSTRUCTION CO LTD WAS FINED \$100,000 UNDER THE NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE FOR CARRYING OUT CONSTRUCTION WORK IN BREACH OF THE CONDITIONS OF A PERMIT.

AMONG REPEATED OFFENDERS, THE FANTA (CFC) CONSTRUCTION CO LTD WAS PROSECUTED FOR THE EIGHTH TIME UNDER THE DUMPING AT SEA ACT.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

THE LIST OF CONVICTED CASES AND THE ASSOCIATED FINES IMPOSED BY THE COURTS IN DECEMBER WILL BE FAXED.

ENQUIRIES ON SPECIFIC CASES CAN BE DIRECTED TO THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICERS:

APCO	MR FRANKLIN CHUNG	TEL: 594 6200
NCO	MS MABEL MAK	TEL: 594 6500
DASO	MR PAUL HOLMES	TEL: 755 3553
WPCO	MR MURRAY LUO	TEL: 415 9211

HOWEVER, ENQUIRIES ON GENERAL ISSUES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE DEPARTMENT'S MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT.

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 1994

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NO DYNAMITE OR POISON FISHING ALLOWED

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THE USE OF EXPLOSIVES OR TOXIC SUBSTANCES IN FISHING IS AGAINST THE LAW AND COULD MAKE OFFENDERS LIABLE TO HEAVY PENALTIES UPON CONVICTION.

THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT'S (AFD) SENIOR CAPTURE FISHERIES OFFICER, MR JOSEPH SHAM, ISSUED THIS REMINDER TODAY (TUESDAY) AFTER TWO FISHERMEN WERE EACH FINED \$4,000 BY A FANLING MAGISTRATE LATE LAST MONTH FOR SIMILAR OFFENCES.

UNDER THE FISHERIES PROTECTION ORDINANCE, THE USE OF DYNAMITES OR TOXIC SUBSTANCES INCLUDING CYANIDE IN FISHING IN HONG KONG WATERS IS PROHIBITED.

IT CARRIES A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF \$10,000 PLUS SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT UPON CONVICTION.

"APART FROM BREAKING THE LAW, SUCH ACT IS DETRIMENTAL TO FISHERMEN'S LONG-TERM INTEREST BECAUSE OF ITS ADVERSE EFFECT ON FISHERIES RESOURCES AND THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT," MR SHAM SAID.

MR SHAM THEREFORE URGED LOCAL FISHERMEN NOT TO ADOPT THIS FISHING METHOD BOTH IN HONG KONG AND OTHER TERRITORIAL WATERS.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT AFD AND THE MARINE POLICE WOULD CONTINUE TO STEP UP ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS AGAINST SUCH ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN LOCAL WATERS.

THE CASE WAS UNCOVERED ON NOVEMBER 21 LAST YEAR. ACTING ON INFORMATION, MARINE POLICE ARRESTED TWO FISHERMEN SUSPECTED OF USING EXPLOSIVES TO CATCH FISH OFF PAK SHA TAU TSUI, TOLO CHANNEL.

MR SHAM ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO CALL ON MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO REPORT FISHING OR OTHER ACTIVITIES USING EXPLOSIVES OR POISONS IN HONG KONG WATERS TO AFD OR THE MARINE POLICE SO THAT APPROPRIATE ACTIONS COULD BE TAKEN.

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TWO GROUPS RETURN TO VIETNAM

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TWO GROUPS OF 313 VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS TODAY (TUESDAY) RETURNED TO VIETNAM UNDER A VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES.

COMPRISING 111 MEN, 92 WOMEN, 57 BOYS AND 53 GIRLS, THEY WERE THE 196TH AND 197TH BATCHES TO GO BACK UNDER THE PROGRAMME.

THE TWO GROUPS BROUGHT TO 1,311 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE MIGRANTS WHO HAVE RETURNED VOLUNTARILY THIS YEAR, AND TO 39,924 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNEES SINCE THE PROGRAMME STARTED IN MARCH 1989.

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BUS FARE INCREASES ON LEGCO AGENDA

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WILL DEBATE A MOTION ON FARE INCREASES OF THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY AND CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY AT ITS WEEKLY MEETING TOMORROW (WEDNESDAY).

THE MOTION WILL BE MOVED BY THE HON LEE WING-TAT.

THREE SEPARATE AMENDMENTS TO THE MOTION WILL BE MOVED BY DR THE HON HUANG CHEN-YA, THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG AND THE HON MRS MIRIAM LAU.

THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO DEBATE ANOTHER MOTION ON RETIREMENT PROTECTION SCHEME MOVED BY THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI.

MEMBERS WILL RAISE 20 QUESTIONS AND CONSIDER SIX BILLS.

THREE OF THE BILLS WILL BE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. DEBATES ON THEM ARE DUE TO BE ADJOURNED.

THE BILLS ARE POST-RELEASE SUPERVISION OF PRISONERS BILL, CIVIL AVIATION BILL AND A PRIVATE BILL - HONG KONG CHRISTIAN COUNCIL INCORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993.

DEBATES ON THE OTHER THREE BILLS WILL BE RESUMED. THE BILLS WILL ALSO GO THROUGH THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND BE GIVEN A THIRD READING.

THEY ARE: FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL 1993, FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1993 AND PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1993.

IN ADDITION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY WILL PRESENT THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TRAVEL AGENTS' RESERVE FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 LAST YEAR.

THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS WILL PRESENT THE SECOND PERIODIC REPORT ON HONG KONG REGARDING ARTICLES 10-15 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO OBSERVE THE PROCEEDINGS FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY. THEY MAY RESERVE SEATS BY CALLING 869 9492.

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WATER CUTS IN TAI PO

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN TAI PO WILL GO OFF ON THURSDAY (JANUARY 20) AND FRIDAY BECAUSE OF WATER WORKS.

ALL THE PREMISES AT TING KOK ROAD, INCLUDING YUE KOK, KAU SHI WAI, LAU HANG, FUNG YUEN, TIN SAM, FUNG YUEN LO TSUEN AND THE GOVERNMENT QUARTERS IN HA HANG, WILL HAVE NO SUPPLY FROM 11 PM ON THURSDAY TO 6 AM THE NEXT DAY.

THOSE LOCATED ALONG THE SECTION OF LAM KAM ROAD FROM ITS ROUNDABOUT TO NG TUNG CHAI; THE SECTION OF TAI PO ROAD FROM WAI TAU TSUEN TO HO KA YUEN; AND THE SECTION OF TOLO HIGHWAY FROM HONG LOK YUEN TO KAU LUNG HANG, WILL HAVE NO SUPPLY FROM 10 PM ON FRIDAY TO 7 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY.

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 1994

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
TENDER RESULTS

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TENDER DATE	18 JAN 94	18 JAN 94
PAPER ON OFFER	EF BILLS	EF BILLS
ISSUE NUMBER	Q403	H456
AMOUNT APPLIED	HK\$5,580 MN	HK\$3,110 MN
AMOUNT ALLOTTED	HK\$1,200 MN	HK\$500 MN
AVERAGE YIELD ACCEPTED	2.92 PCT	3.08 PCT
HIGHEST YIELD ACCEPTED	2.93 PCT	3.08 PCT
PRO RATA RATIO	ABOUT 39 PCT	ABOUT 34 PCT
AVERAGE TENDER YIELD	2.96 PCT	3.10 PCT

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

TENDERS TO BE HELD IN THE WEEK BEGINNING 24 JANUARY 1994 -

TENDER DATE	24 JANUARY 94	25 JANUARY 94	25 JANUARY 94
PAPER ON OFFER	EF NOTES	EF BILLS	EF BILLS
ISSUE NUMBER	3701	Q404	Y485
ISSUE DATE	25 JANUARY 94	26 JANUARY 94	26 JANUARY 94
MATURITY DATE	27 JANUARY 97	27 APRIL 94	25 JANUARY 95
TENOR	3 YEARS	91 DAYS	364 DAYS
AMOUNT ON OFFER	HK\$500 + 100 MN	HK\$1,200 + 240MN	HK\$400 + 120MN
COUPON	4.6 PCT		

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 18, 1994

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HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION

OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,660
REVERSAL OF LAF	+2,340
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	4,000
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-1,955
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	2,045
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 127.3 *-0.1* 18.1.94

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS

EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.44 PCT	13 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.40	3.44
1 MONTH	2.59 PCT	16 MONTHS	2505	3.75	100.15	3.66
3 MONTHS	2.90 PCT	19 MONTHS	2508	4.625	101.22	3.86
6 MONTHS	3.07 PCT	22 MONTHS	2511	4.15	100.25	4.05
12 MONTHS	3.37 PCT	33 MONTHS	3610	4.20	99.22	4.55

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 15,041 MN

CLOSED 18 JANUARY 1994

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