



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1975

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U.K. URGED TO GIVE HONG KONG FREE HAND  
IN DEATH PENALTY  
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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESPECT THE VIEW OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND GIVE THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT COMPLETE AUTONOMY IN CARRYING OUT THE DEATH PENALTY.

THIS WAS STATED IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, DR. THE HON. CHUNG SZE-YUEN, WHEN HE OPENED THE DEBATE ON A MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS ON OCTOBER 8.

DR. CHUNG SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT IN TRADE RELATIONS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS, HONG KONG ALREADY HAD COMPLETE AUTONOMY TO DEAL WITH COMMERCIAL MATTERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS BEST INTEREST, AND HE FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT HONG KONG SHOULD HAVE THE SAME FREEDOM IN CARRYING OUT THE DEATH PENALTY.

+WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, 99 PER CENT OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE GENUINELY BELIEVE THAT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE DETERRENT TO THE CHINESE AGAINST COMMITTING VIOLENT CRIME.

+WE KNOW WHAT WE BELIEVE AND THIS PROBABLY EXPLAINS WHY PRACTICALLY ALL THE COUNTRIES IN THE EAST HAVE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT,+ HE SAID.

HE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE TIDE OF VIOLENT CRIME AND NOTED THAT CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON SUCH AS MURDERS, MANSLAUGHTER AND SERIOUS ASSAULTS, HAD RISEN FROM 1,982 CASES IN 1971 TO 4,425 CASES LAST YEAR -- AN OVERALL INCREASE OF 123 PER CENT OR A COMPOUND RATE OF 30 PER CENT PER ANNUM.

IN THE CASE OF ROBBERIES, HE SAID, THE SITUATION WAS EVEN WORSE. FROM 5,132 CASES IN 1971, ROBBERIES HAD RISEN TO 12,765 CASES IN 1974, REPRESENTING AN OVERALL INCREASE OF 150 PER CENT OR A COMPOUND RATE OF 36 PER CENT PER ANNUM.

AND THESE FIGURES, HE POINTED OUT, DID NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CASES THAT WERE NOT REPORTED AND HE BELIEVED THAT THEIR NUMBER WAS PROBABLY NOT INSIGNIFICANT.

ALTHOUGH THE RATE OF INCREASE HAD SLOWED DOWN THIS YEAR, THE CRIME FIGURES WERE STILL FAR TOO HIGH AND HE WONDERED WHETHER HONG KONG WAS DOING ALL THAT SHOULD BE DONE.

IT WAS GENERALLY FELT, DR. CHUNG SAID, THAT HONG KONG WAS NOT PUTTING ENOUGH EMPHASIS ON THE FEAR OF PUNISHMENT AS AN EFFECTIVE DETERRENT TO VIOLENT CRIME.

/IT WAS OFTEN .....

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IT WAS OFTEN SAID THAT THE TERMS OF IMPRISONMENT, WITH CERTAIN EXCEPTIONS, WERE GENERALLY TOO LENIENT= THAT THERE WAS ALMOST A COMPLETE ABSENCE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT= AND THAT THE MATERIAL STANDARD OF THE PRISONS WAS EVEN BETTER THAN INMATES COULD FIND OUTSIDE.

+THE MOST FRUSTRATED REMARK, HOWEVER, IS: 'WHY CAN'T OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT BE ALLOWED TO CARRY OUT THE DEATH PENALTY?'+

ANOTHER MAJOR CONCERN OF THE COMMUNITY, DR. CHUNG CONTINUED, WAS THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY.

HE NOTED THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIAL HISTORY, DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN 1975 WOULD BE LESS THAN THOSE IN PREVIOUS YEAR -- PROBABLY BY ABOUT FIVE TO TEN PER CENT -- +UNLESS THERE IS A MIRACLE BETWEEN NOW AND THE YEAR-END.+

AND ALTHOUGH THE TREND OF TRADE STATISTICS HERE WAS IMPROVING, HE DID NOT EXPECT ANY SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE IN THE ECONOMY DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

DR. CHUNG POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG RELIED HEAVILY ON ITS EXPORT-ORIENTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES WHICH EMPLOYED NEARLY HALF THE LABOUR FORCE AND HE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD EXERT EVERY EFFORT TO REMOVE DISCRIMINATORY RESTRICTIONS AND TREATMENT BY ANY COUNTRY ON HONG KONG'S PRODUCTS.

+IN THE ABSENCE OF NATURAL MATERIAL RESOURCES AND BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, WE IN HONG KONG HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CONTINUE TO RELY PRINCIPALLY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR EXPORT-ORIENTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES,+ HE STRESSED.

HE EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, AND NOTED THAT ONE WAY OF ACQUIRING TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW WAS TO ATTRACT OVERSEAS COMPANIES TO ESTABLISH NEW TECHNOLOGICAL INDUSTRIES IN HONG KONG.

IN MANY RESPECTS, DR. CHUNG SAID, HONG KONG HAD MANY ATTRACT- IONS FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT -- LOW CORPORATION TAXES= A HARDWORKING, INTELLIGENT, ADAPTABLE AND PRODUCTIVE LABOUR FORCE= MINIMAL GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE AND MAXIMUM ECONOMIC FREEDOM= GOOD SUPPORTING SERVICES= AND MINIMAL LABOUR STRIKES AND DISRUPTION.

ON THE DEBIT SIDE, HOWEVER, INDUSTRIAL LAND WAS SCARCE AND EXPENSIVE, FACTORY BUILDING COSTS AND RENTALS HIGH, AND THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF SKILLED CRAFTSMEN, MIDDLE-LEVEL TECHNICIANS AND EXPERIENCED HIGH-LEVEL MANPOWER. HONG KONG WAS AWARE OF THESE SHORTCOMINGS AND MEASURES WERE BEING TAKEN TO OVERCOME THEM.

/ON THE POSSIBLE .....

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ON THE POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR. CHUNG SAID THERE WAS ALREADY QUITE A SPREAD OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE AMONG THE UNOFFICIALS, BUT +THERE APPEARS TO BE A NEED TO INCREASE DIVERSIFICATION OF THEIR SOCIAL BACKGROUND.+

HE NOTED THAT ALL THE UNOFFICIALS, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, HAD SPENT CONSIDERABLE PERIODS OF TIME IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE BEFORE THEIR APPOINTMENT TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND HAD PROVEN THEIR ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE PUBLIC GOOD.

THIS, HE FELT, WAS A SPECIAL AND ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENT FOR ANY FUTURE UNOFFICIAL MEMBER.

DR. CHUNG THANKS THE GOVERNOR FOR HIS REMARKS ON THE WORK OF THE UNOFFICIALS AND SAID THE UNOFFICIALS WERE NOT AN OPPOSITION PARTY +NOR ARE WE A BUNCH OF RUBBER STAMPS.+

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CALL FOR MORE EMPHASIS ON QUANTITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
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THE HON. LEE QUO-WEI TODAY CALLED FOR A RETHINK ON THE APPROACH OF PROVIDING SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND SUGGESTED THAT MORE EMPHASIS BE PLACED ON QUANTITY RATHER THAN ON QUALITY OF SERVICES SO AS TO ACHIEVE GREATER USE OF LIMITED FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEBATE, MR. LEE SAID THERE WAS ROOM IN CERTAIN AREAS -- NOTABLY SOCIAL SERVICES -- FOR QUANTITATIVE EXPANSION BY MORE INTENSIVE USE OF RESOURCES ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED.

HONG KONG COULD NOT SPEND MORE THAN IT COULD EARN, HE SAID, +AND IF EXPANSION CAN BE ACHIEVED BY INCURRING SOME SACRIFICE TO THE QUALITY OF STANDARDS OF SERVICES INVOLVED, WE SHALL HAVE TO ACCEPT IT AS A FACT OF LIFE,+ HE SAID.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, HE ADDED, THE COMMUNITY WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT LOWER STANDARDS JUST AS MANY PEOPLE HAD ACCEPTED CUTS IN WAGES IN A PERIOD OF UNDER-EMPLOYMENT.

HE SAID HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT HONG KONG HAD BEEN OVER-QUALITY-CONSCIOUS, AND EFFORTS TO IMPROVE QUALITY IN SOME AREAS AT THE EXPENSE OF QUANTITY HAD NOT BEEN TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED IN VIEW OF THE BUOYANCY OF REVENUE IN THE LATE SIXTIES AND EARLY SEVENTIES.

+HOWEVER, UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS ONLY REASONABLE TO CONSIDER PUTTING GREATER EMPHASIS FOR THE PROVISION OF MORE SERVICES AND MAKE THEM AVAILABLE TO MORE PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

HE EMPHASISED HIS POINT BY QUOTING A SAYING OF CONFUCIUS +THE CONCERN IS NOT WITH INADEQUACY, BUT BEING UNABLE TO GIVE EVENLY TO ALL.+

ONE AREA WHERE MORE MIGHT BE ACHIEVED AT SOME EXPENSE TO QUALITY WAS SECONDARY EDUCATION, MR. LEE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT UNIT COSTS FOR JUNIOR SECONDARY TECHNICAL PLACES WERE MORE EXPENSIVE BY ABOUT \$100 PER PLACE THAN A JUNIOR SECONDARY GRAMMAR PLACE AND A PREVOCATIONAL PLACE WAS \$79 CHEAPER THAN A GRAMMAR SCHOOL PLACE.

+SHOULD WE NOT THEN CONSIDER CONCENTRATING ON PREVOCATIONAL RATHER THAN TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THOSE WHO ARE UNLIKELY TO MAKE THE SCHOOL CERTIFICATE?+

/AND IF .....

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AND IF HONG KONG COULD NOT AFFORD THE 150 ADDITIONAL SCHOOLS NEEDED AT \$5 MILLION A PIECE, +IS IT NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE USE OF THE SPARE CAPACITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR THE PROVISION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES?+ HE ALSO ASKED IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF EACH CLASS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS FROM 40 PUPILS TO 45 WHICH IS THE STATUTORY PERMITTED LIMIT.

ANOTHER AREA WHERE MORE EMPHASIS COULD BE PLACED ON QUANTITY RATHER THAN QUALITY WAS RECREATION FOR WHICH THERE WAS A COMMITMENT OF \$27 MILLION TO DEVELOP FACILITIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE.

+COULD THESE FUNDS BE USED TO OPEN UP MORE EXTENSIVE COUNTRYSIDE AREAS IF QUALITY WERE LOWERED, FOR INSTANCE, BY REDUCING THE EMPHASIS ON THE CONCRETING OF PATHS AND ROADS, AS WELL AS ON BUILDING OF BRIDGES, BUT INSTEAD SIMPLY REMOVING EXCESSIVE UNDERGROWTH FROM PATHS, SIGNPOSTING THEM AND PROVIDING LITTER BINS?+

MR. LEE SAID HE PERSONALLY COULD SEE NOTHING WRONG WITH RUDIMENTARY PICNIC AREAS, PROVIDED THERE WERE MORE OF THEM.

HE ALSO ASKED IF THE GOVERNMENT COULD BUILD THE INDOOR STADIUM EARLIER THAN IT WAS NOW POSSIBLE IF REDUCED STANDARDS COULD BRING THE PRICE BELOW THE \$68 MILLION ALLOWED IN THE ESTIMATES.

MR. LEE SAID SOME OF THE QUESTIONS ALSO APPLIED TO EXPENDITURE ON HOUSING, MEDICAL, PUBLIC WORKS AND MANY OTHER ITEMS.

+IF AFFIRMATIVE ANSWERS COME UP AFTER THOROUGH CONSIDERATION AND ARE FOLLOWED UP, BY POSITIVE ACTION, I BELIEVE SOME QUANTITATIVE EXPANSION COULD CONTINUE TO BE MADE, BUT WITH SLIGHT MODIFICATION IN QUALITY, THUS ACHIEVING GREATER USE OF OUR RESOURCES,+ HE SAID.

MR. LEE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT A REVIEW BE MADE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE TO FIND OUT WHERE THE GOVERNMENT COULD AIM AT SLIGHTLY LOWER STANDARDS IN SOME POSTS FOR WHICH INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATIONS ARE INSISTED. +I BELIEVE THAT IN SOME CASES, A REDUCTION IN QUALITY MAY NOT ONLY ACHIEVE SAVING, BUT ALSO HELP RECRUITMENT,+ HE ADDED.

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DEVELOPMENT OF N.T. APPLAUDED

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THE HON. OSWALD CHEUNG WELCOMED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TERRITORIES AS PART OF A LARGER METROPOLIS INTEGRATING THE URBAN AND RURAL AREAS, BUT EMPHASISED THE NEED TO MAINTAIN GOOD COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH ALL PARTS OF IT.

HE ENVISAGED THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TOWNS WOULD MEAN THAT THE HERITAGE OF NATURAL BEAUTY WOULD BE SHARED BY ALL, AS PART AND PARCEL OF A GREAT METROPOLIS.

+SOON THERE WON'T BE ANY DIVISION OF THE PEOPLE INTO THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES AND OTHERS, THEY ARE BEING INTEGRATED INTO ONE,+ HE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

EACH OF THE NEW TOWNS, WITH THEIR INFRASTRUCTURE OF ROADS, DRAINS, INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, HE SAID, WOULD CONTRIBUTE IN SOME UNIQUE WAYS TO THE WELLBEING OF THE METROPOLIS — LAND FOR HOUSING TO MAKE CONDITIONS OF LIVING LESS INTOLERABLE, INDUSTRIAL ESTATES, CONTAINER PORTS, A SECOND UNIVERSITY, EACH SURROUNDED BY COUNTRY PARKS.

+A VERY IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THIS CONCEPT,+ HE SAID, +IS THAT THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE ABLE TO CIRCULATE FREELY AND AMPLY THROUGH ALL PARTS OF IT.+

HE WAS GRATIFIED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHARED THE CONCEPT OF GOOD COMMUNICATIONS AND CITED AS EXAMPLES THE NETWORK OF HIGHWAYS AND FLYOVERS LINKING KWUN TONG AND KWAI CHUNG, THE SECOND LION ROCK TUNNEL, AND THE DOUBLE TRACKING OF THE RAILWAY TO SHA TIN.

HE WAS ALSO PLEASED WITH THE RAPID EXPANSION OF TELEPHONE AND POSTAL SERVICES AND THE RAPID FERRY SERVICES BETWEEN TSUEN WAN AND CENTRAL AND BETWEEN KWUN TONG AND CENTRAL.

+TOMORROW I SEE THE SECOND BEACON HILL RAILWAY TUNNEL, THE HIGHWAY TO CONNECT SHATIN WITH TSUEN WAN, THE COASTAL HIGHWAY FROM THE NEW RACE COURSE TO THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE IN TAI PO, THE TUNNEL TO ABERDEEN, THE BRIDGE TO LEI YUE MUN, THE CUT OUT OF THE BOTTLENECK IN TSUEN WAN WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LINK BETWEEN KWAI CHUNG ROAD AND TUEN MUN ROAD.+

NONE OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS, MR. CHEUNG SAID, WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE VERY CLOSE COLLABORATION EXISTING BETWEEN THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, THE FINANCE BRANCH, AND THE SPECIAL DUTIES DIVISION IN THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

MR. CHEUNG WELCOMED THE RECENT DECISION TO GIVE FAIR COMPENSATION TO OWNERS OF LAND REQUIRED FOR DEVELOPMENT AND OBSERVED THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAD BEEN FORTUNATE IN THE COMMISSIONERS AND NOW SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

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PUBLIC ASSISTANCE: 'FINANCIAL COMMITMENT MUST BE MET'  
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS A DUTY TO LOOK AFTER THE LESS WELL OFF MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACCEPT THE HEAVY FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO HELP THEM THROUGH THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME, THE HON. ROGER LOBO SAID TODAY.

+IN MY VIEW IT IS MONEY WELL SPENT,+ HE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEBATE.

MR. LOBO WARNED, HOWEVER, THAT IF THE SCHEME WAS TO BENEFIT THOSE FOR WHOM IT WAS INTENDED, IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THE CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION WAS STRICTLY ENFORCED. +OTHERWISE, AS HAS HAPPENED ELSEWHERE, ABUSES WILL OCCUR WITH DEVASTATING RESULTS.+

HE FELT ALSO THAT MANY OF THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE NOT UP TO STANDARD OR ECONOMICALLY RUN, AND AGREED THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO EVALUATE THEIR WORK SO AS TO ENSURE THAT THERE WAS NO DUPLICATION OF EFFORT.

+WHERE EVALUATION SHOWS THIS TO BE THE CASE,+ HE SAID, +THE ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO MERGE THEIR OPERATIONS WITH A VIEW TO RAISING STANDARDS AND, AT THE SAME TIME, REDUCING COSTS.+

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, SHOULD RE-EXAMINE DEFERRED SOCIAL WELFARE PROJECTS SO AS TO ESTABLISH A REVISED LIST OF PRIORITIES. HE WANTED HIGHEST PRIORITY GIVEN TO THE CHILD CARE CENTRES ORDINANCE WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BECAUSE OF LACK OF FUNDS.

ON THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY, MR. LOBO WELCOMED THE DECISION TO PROCEED WITH THE PROJECT AND SAID IT WOULD DO MUCH TO ENHANCE HONG KONG'S REPUTATION ABROAD AND OUR OWN CONFIDENCE, IN THE FUTURE.

HE APPEALED TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT AND PATIENCE DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY AND URGED THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION TO REDUCE INCONVENIENCE TO THE PUBLIC AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

IT WAS VITALLY IMPORTANT, HE STRESSED, THAT THE PUBLIC BE KEPT FULLY INFORMED ON WHAT WAS BEING DONE AND WHY IT WAS BEING DONE SO AS TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS SUCH AS IN THE RECENT CASE INVOLVING THE REMOVAL OF A FOOTBRIDGE IN LUNG CHEUNG ROAD.

/ON LAW AND ORDER .....

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ON LAW AND ORDER, MR. LOBO SAID VIOLENT CRIME WAS NOT ONLY WORRYING LOCAL RESIDENTS BUT ALSO BECOMING A MATTER OF CONCERN TO VISITORS, PARTICULARLY THOSE FROM NEIGHBOURING TERRITORIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

+THIS IS A DISTURBING TREND WHICH COULD VERY EASILY SPREAD TO OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD AND ADVERSELY AFFECT OUR TOURIST INDUSTRY UPON WHICH OUR ECONOMY RELIES SO HEAVILY,+ HE SAID.

MR. LOBO ALSO CALLED FOR EARLY PROVISION OF ELECTRICITY AND MAINS WATER IN SQUATTER AND CERTAIN LICENSED AREAS WHERE, HE SAID, LIVING CONDITIONS WERE AT BEST +PITIFUL+.

HE ALSO ASKED FOR CONFIRMATION THAT THE PROPOSED DETOXIFICATION CENTRES WOULD BE A SUPPLEMENT -- NOT A SUBSTITUTE -- TO THE METHADONE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME WHICH, HE FELT, WAS USEFUL AS ITS DEPENDANTS WERE LESS ANTI-SOCIAL AND CAPABLE OF EARNING THEIR OWN LIVING.

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DEATH PENALTY: THREE-YEAR TRIAL PERIOD ADVOCATED

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THE HON. MRS. JOYCE SYMONS TODAY ASKED WHY THE CARRYING OUT OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN HONG KONG COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR A TRIAL PERIOD OF ABOUT THREE YEARS AS A POSSIBLE MEANS TO DETER VIOLENT CRIME.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SHE SAID: +SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND TO THE COMMONWEALTH SINCE THE WAR, SO MUCH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO HONG KONG TO DECIDE FOR ITSELF IN MATTERS OF TRADE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE MATTER BEING SERIOUSLY RECONSIDERED CANNOT BE RULED OUT.+

THE ORDINARY MAN IN THE STREET, SHE SAID, COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE DEATH PENALTY SHOULD NOT BE IMPOSED AND CARRIED OUT IN CERTAIN CASES, NOR THE CONTENTION THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD AND COULD DO NOTHING IN ALLOWING HONG KONG TO DECIDE THIS FOR ITSELF.

MRS. SYMONS NOTED THAT WHILE THERE APPEARED TO BE LITTLE DEFINITE PROOF ANYWHERE THAT THE DEATH PENALTY COULD BE A DETERRENT, +EQUALLY THERE IS LITTLE PROOF THAT IT CANNOT BE SUCH.+

+WE KNOW THAT WE ARE NOT PARTICULARLY BLOODTHIRSTY,+ SHE SAID, BUT MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT VIOLENT CRIME COULD BE GREATLY REDUCED WITH AN EFFECTIVE DEATH PENALTY.

+THE INABILITY TO DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH MURDERERS, THE HIGH STANDARD OF OUR PRISONS, AND THE INADEQUACY OF MANY SENTENCES HAVE MOST CERTAINLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE RATHER CAVALIER ATTITUDE TOWARDS VIOLENT CRIME AND DISTASTEFUL CRIME LIKE RAPE, AND MASS-RAPE AT THAT,+ SHE SAID.

SHE WONDERED WHETHER HONG KONG COULD EXPECT MORE VIOLENCE NOW THAT BIG NARCOTIC GANGS HAD BEEN SMASHED AND SMALL OPERATORS SCATTERED, BUT IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS APPREHENSION, SHE SAID, THERE WAS THE GREATEST ADMIRATION FOR THE GOVERNMENT SERVANTS CONCERNED IN DEALING SO EFFECTIVELY WITH DRUG PEDLARS.

MRS. SYMONS DID NOT SHARE THE APPREHENSION, HOWEVER, THAT THE POWERS OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION WERE TOO WIDE AND OPEN TO ABUSE. SHE WAS GRATIFIED TO HEAR FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE THAT HIS FORCE WAS NOT BEING DEMORALISED AND THAT IT WOULD BE FURTHER EXPANDED.

IN THE CARE OF THE YOUNG, MRS. SYMONS TOLD PARENTS TO FACE UP TO THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND NOT TO EXPECT THE GOVERNMENT TO DO EVERYTHING.

/THE WHOLE .....

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THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY MUST BE VERY MUCH MORE PUBLICLY DISCUSSED AT ALL LEVELS AND IN ALL SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY, SHE SAID, AND PARENTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AND EXPECTED TO REASSERT THEIR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES, +INSTEAD OF KEEPING THEIR CHILDREN TRAPPED IN FRONT OF TELEVISION SETS.+

SHE ADDED, HOWEVER: +THE TENDENCY OF MANY PARENTS TO LOOK TO GOVERNMENT FOR SUPERVISORY HELP BEYOND THE NORMAL NUMBER OF LIFE-GUARDS OR PLAYGROUND OR PARK ATTENDANTS IS A PROBLEM THAT HAS TO BE FACED.+

MRS. SYMONS LOOKED FORWARD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MORE COUNTRY PARKS AND STRESSED THAT THE PRESERVATION OF OUR BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE AND COASTAL AREAS MUST BE RECOGNISED AS THE CIVIC DUTY OF EVERYONE.

SHE CONSIDERED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES +THE NATURAL RIGHT OF OUR YOUNG CITIZENS - NOT MERELY SOMETHING HELPFUL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME.+

SHE ALSO REJECTED THE NOTION THAT FORM I EDUCATION SHOULD BE PROVIDED AS A SOCIAL MEASURE TO STOP SCHOOL DROPOUTS FROM TURNING TO CRIME. +WE SHOULD EDUCATE THEM BECAUSE IT IS OUR BOUNDED DUTY TO DO SO, AND THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHT TO EXPECT AND RECEIVE IT.+

ON HOUSING, MRS. SYMONS SAID THAT WITH THE INEVITABLE DELAY IN THE HOUSING PROGRAMME IT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED NOW HOW IT COULD BE DETERMINED THAT THE VAST NUMBERS TO BE REHOUSED ARE THE WORST OFF IN FINANCIAL AND HUMAN TERMS.

SHE WONDERED HOW EFFECTIVELY THE GOVERNMENT WAS COPING WITH THE QUESTION OF UNDERSTANDING ITS TENANTS AND WHAT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS WERE ON TENANTS CROWDED BY THE HOUSSANDS INTO A SMALL AREAS.

+I FEEL THIS IS THE TIME TO THINK ABOUT THE NEW TOWNS AS PLACES WHERE PEOPLE, PEOPLE NOT HUMAN CREATURES WILL LIVE, AND NOT MERELY AS SOME UNITS HOWEVER IMPROVED TO WHICH APPLICANTS WILL BE DECANTED,+ SHE SAID.

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MORE EMPHASIS ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT URGED

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MORE EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO DEVELOP THE POTENTIAL OF HONG KONG'S YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE OVERALL BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY, THE HON. PETER WILLIAMS SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+HONG KONG'S BIGGEST CHALLENGE,+ HE SAID, +ARE THE PROBLEMS OF ITS BIGGEST ASSET -- THE MASS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH INCREASING EDUCATION, BORN HERE, BELONGING HERE AND WITH NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

+WE MUST NOT MERELY MAINTAIN BUT INCREASE OUR CONTACTS WITH THEM, OCCUPY THEM PROFITABLY, AND INSTILL IN THEM A PRIDE OF PLACE AND A TRUE SENSE OF BELONGING TO HONG KONG.+

MR. WILLIAMS WAS ALSO IN FAVOUR OF ACCELERATING THE PROMOTION OF LOCAL OFFICERS TO MORE SENIOR POSTS IN THE GOVERNMENT.

+THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE IN STANDARDS BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THESE YOUNG MEN WILL MEASURE UP TO THESE STANDARDS,+ HE SAID, ADDING +AND LET US NOT BE AFRAID OF PUSHING AHEAD THE VERY BRIGHT AT AN EARLY AGE.+

HE SAID IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT IT WAS THESE YOUNGER LOCAL MEN WHO WOULD BE MOST RESPONSIVE TO THE CHANGING ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR OF THE POPULATION WITH SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE.

HE NOTED THAT THE CITY DISTRICT OFFICER SCHEME HAD BEEN A REMARKABLE NURSERY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG ADMINISTRATORS AND THE BREADTH OF THEIR EXPOSURE WOULD BE OF IMMENSE VALUE TO THEM.

+IT IS INDEED EXCITING TO SEE THESE YOUNG MEN GROWING IN CONFIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE OVERNIGHT AS THEY HAVE SUCCESSFULLY MET THE CHALLENGE OF THIS EXACTING JOB,+ HE SAID.

AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF WORLD RECESSION, MR. WILLIAMS SAID THAT WHILE THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE CUT BACKS EVEN IN URGENTLY NEEDED PROJECTS, EFFORTS TOWARDS YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPING MUTUAL AID AND AREA COMMITTEES MUST NOT SLACKEN BUT RATHER INCREASED.

CUTS ACROSS THE BOARD, HE SAID, MAY REDUCE EXPENDITURE TO WITHIN FUNDS AVAILABLE +BUT IT IS A CRUDE METHOD THAT DOES NOT MAXIMISE OUR OUTPUT AND HAS POTENTIAL DANGERS.+

/IN DIFFICULT .....

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IN DIFFICULT TIMES, HE ADDED, IT WAS PEOPLE THAT MATTERED MOST. +ANYTHING WHICH OBTAINS A POSITIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PEOPLE IS MONEY WELL SPENT AND GIVES US EXTRA VALUE FOR OUR DOLLAR.

ONE OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE, HE SAID, WAS THE FORMATION OF MUTUAL AID AND AREA COMMITTEES WHICH WERE NOT ONLY EFFECTIVE IN THEIR SECURITY ROLE BUT COULD WELL BRING FORWARD TO PUBLIC NOTICE MEN AND WOMEN WHO COULD SHOULDER MORE CONSIDERABLE COMMUNITY BURDENS.

THIS WAS ALSO TRUE IN THE CASE OF SOCIAL WELFARE, HE ADDED. +IT IS IN THIS AREA ABOVE ALL THAT THERE MUST BE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR HARNESSING THE VOLUNTARY ENERGIES AND EFFORTS OF INDIVIDUALS TO THE COMMON GOOD.+

MR. WILLIAMS DID NOT SHARE THE VIEW THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS +REMOTE, MONOLITHIC AND LACKING IN UNDERSTANDING.+

BUT HE STRESSED THAT TO DEMONSTRATE THIS CONCERN AND TO MAKE LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVE REQUIRED THE CLOSEST CONTACT WITH ALL LEVELS OF SOCIETY. IN THIS REGARD, HE EMPHASISED THAT THE EFFORTS OF THE HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, THE INFORMATION SERVICES AND RADIO HONG KONG SHOULD NOT BE DIMINISHED THROUGH GENERALISED ECONOMY CUTS.

+INDEED THERE IS A REASONABLE CASE FOR STRENGTHENING OUR EFFORTS, FOR UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST GOVERNMENT BE FORCED TO SPEAK WITH A MUTED VOICE AT THIS TIME,+ HE SAID. THIS DID NOT ONLY APPLY WITHIN HONG KONG BUT ALSO OVERSEAS WHERE HONG KONG SHOULD MAKE ITS VOICE HEARD TO COUNTER UNFAIR AND UNINFORMED CRITICISM.

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SECONDARY EDUCATION ALLOWANCE URGED  
FOR POOR FAMILIES  
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THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN TODAY RENEWED HIS PLEA FOR A SECONDARY EDUCATION ALLOWANCE FOR POORER FAMILIES AND SUGGESTED A MODIFIED SCHEME TO ENABLE CHILDREN FROM SUCH FAMILIES TO RECEIVE AT LEAST THREE YEARS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLING.

HE ESTIMATED THAT THE REVISED SCHEME WOULD COST ABOUT \$3.5 MILLION A YEAR -- FAR LESS THAN THE ESTIMATED \$15 MILLION UNDER A PREVIOUS SCHEME HE PROPOSED LAST MAY WHICH WAS CONSIDERED TOO COSTLY AT THE TIME.

OUTLINING HIS REVISED PROPOSALS IN COUNCIL, MR. CHEONG-LEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE NEW SCHEME SHOULD BE INITIALLY RESTRICTED TO STUDENTS ENTERING FORMS II AND III AND WHOSE FAMILY INCOME DID NOT EXCEED \$1,000 A MONTH. THE ALLOWANCE TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WOULD BE \$25 A MONTH AND WOULD APPLY TO ELIGIBLE FAMILIES WHO SPENT MORE THAN 30 PER CENT OF THEIR INCOME ON EDUCATION.

IN HIS ORIGINAL PROPOSALS LAST MAY, MR. CHEONG-LEEN ENVISAGED AN ALLOWANCE SCHEME FOR STUDENTS ENTERING FORMS II, III AND V AND WHOSE FAMILY INCOME DID NOT EXCEED \$2,000.

MR. CHEONG-LEEN SAID THE MONEY TO PAY FOR THE REVISED SECONDARY EDUCATION ALLOWANCE SCHEME COULD BE RAISED BY EFFECTING SAVINGS IN ANNUAL TRAVELLING SUBSIDY TO STUDENTS.

HE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SPENT AN ESTIMATED \$22 MILLION A YEAR IN SUBSIDISING STUDENTS TRAVELLING ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT. OF THIS AMOUNT, \$19 MILLION WAS TO REIMBURSE THE THREE MAJOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMPANIES, WHILE THE REMAINING \$3 MILLION WENT TO THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY.

DURING THE 1974/75 ACADEMIC YEAR, HE WENT ON, THE TWO BUS COMPANIES AND THE TRAMWAYS COMPANY HAD ISSUED A TOTAL OF 403,966 MONTHLY TICKETS AND FREE PASSES COMPARED WITH A TOTAL ENROLMENT OF 370,573 STUDENTS STUDYING IN SECONDARY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS, THREE-YEAR PRACTICAL SCHOOLS, AND VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES.

WHILE SOME STUDENTS GENUINELY NEEDED TWO DIFFERENT PASSES OR MONTHLY TICKETS, HE SAID, THERE COULD BE MANY STUDENTS WHO DO NOT BUT STILL OBTAINED THEM.

+THE COST TO GOVERNMENT PER FREE PASS/MONTHLY TICKET AS WELL AS THE MACHINERY FOR ISSUING SUCH FREE PASSES AND MONTHLY TICKETS SHOULD THEREFORE BE REVIEWED SO AS TO ACHIEVE ECONOMY AND ELIMINATE WASTE IN THIS DIRECTION,+ HE SAID.

LIKE OTHER SPEAKERS BEFORE HIM, MR. CHEONG-LEEN ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER LAW AND ORDER.

/THE VIOLENT .....

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THE VIOLENT CRIME COMMITTEE HAD DONE MUCH USEFUL WORK, BUT MUCH MORE REMAINED TO BE DONE +ESPECIALLY IN THOSE AREAS WHERE FURTHER ACTION CAN RESTORE IN A COMPARATIVELY SHORT TIME A STRONGER MEASURE OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE,+ HE SAID.

IN THIS REGARD, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE SYSTEM OF REPORTING CRIME BE MADE AS SIMPLE AND CONVENIENT AS POSSIBLE, AND THAT MORE ATTENTION BE PAID TO CONTINUOUS AND RAPID EXPANSION OF MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES WHICH HAD ALREADY PROVED THEIR WORTH.

HE ALSO CALLED FOR THE SETTING UP OF FIGHT VIOLENT CRIME COMMITTEES IN EACH DISTRICT, INCLUDING THE NEW TERRITORIES, WITH RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THEM.

ON THE ENVIRONMENT, MR. CHEONG-LEEN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO STEP UP CONTROL OF ALL TYPES OF POLLUTION AS WELL AS TO PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. HE RENEWED HIS PLEA FOR A ZOOLOGICAL PARK IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD ENLIST THE SUPPORT OF A NON-PROFIT-MAKING ORGANISATION IF IT COULD NOT FIND THE FUNDS FOR IT.

HE EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE SLOW PACE IN THE REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF THE OLDER MARK I AND II ESTATES AND NOTED THAT AT THE PRESENT RATE IT COULD TAKE UP TO 20 YEARS TO COMPLETE, INSTEAD OF THE ORIGINAL TARGET DATE OF 1982.

HE SAID THE SUB-STANDARD CONDITIONS OF THESE ESTATES MADE IDEAL BREEDING GROUNDS FOR CRIME AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW THE PROGRAMME TO SEE IF AN IMAGINATIVE APPROACH COULD BE ADOPTED TO COMPLETE IT QUICKLY WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT GROUPS, IF NECESSARY.

ON CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, MR. CHEONG-LEEN WANTED A BETTER DEFINED POLICY ON THE ALLOCATION OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES OF ALL KINDS IN HONG KONG.

HE ASKED IF IT WAS NOT TIME FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE MORE SUPPORT TOWARDS FOSTERING TRADITIONAL CHINESE PERFORMING ARTS, SUCH AS ACROBATICS, DANCING AND OPERA. HE ALSO ASKED IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH A CLEAR-CUT POLICY AS TO WHETHER CHINESE MARTIAL ARTS COULD BE PRESERVED AS A MEANS OF PHYSICAL RECREATION, AND TO INTRODUCE CONTROLS TO ELIMINATE UNDESIRABLE ASPECTS.

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GOVT SEEKS AUTHORITY TO GUARANTEE MTR LOANS  
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WAS TODAY ASKED TO AUTHORISE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO GRANT GUARANTEES, ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT, IN RESPECT OF REPAYMENT OF LOANS AND OTHER INDEBTEDNESS INCURRED BY THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION.

DEBATE ON THE MOTION WAS ADJOURNED TILL TOMORROW. IF ACCEPTED, IT WILL CLEAR THE WAY FOR THE \$5,800 MILLION MASS TRANSIT PROJECT TO PROCEED.

IN MOVING THE MOTION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID IT WAS PROPOSED THAT FINANCE FOR THE PROJECT WOULD BE MADE UP FIRSTLY, OF EXPORT CREDITS GRANTED BY THE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF THE CONTRACTORS, AND SECONDLY, OF OPEN MARKET FINANCE, INCLUDING LOANS IN VARIOUS FORMS RAISED LOCALLY AS WELL AS OVERSEAS.

TOGETHER, THE FUNDS FROM ALL THESE SOURCES WOULD AMOUNT TO HK\$5,000 MILLION AND WOULD BE IN ADDITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S EQUITY CONTRIBUTION OF HK\$800 MILLION SET ASIDE IN THE MASS TRANSIT FUND.

AS REGARDS EXPORT CREDITS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID IT SHOULD PROVE POSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE BETWEEN 40 AND 50 PER CENT COVER OF THE TOTAL VALUE OF ALL INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTS OVER A TEN-YEAR PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1980 AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF INTEREST OF 8-1/4 PER CENT PER ANNUM. THIS MEANT THAT THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF EXPORT CREDIT FINANCE AVAILABLE WAS LIKELY TO BE ABOUT HK\$2,000 MILLION.

AS TO OPEN MARKET FINANCE, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID IT WOULD BE THE STRATEGY OF THE CORPORATION TO SEEK LONG OR MEDIUM TERM LOANS FROM THE MARKET AT TIMES WHEN THESE ARE AVAILABLE ON FAVOURABLE TERMS.

IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES AS THEY ARISE, HOWEVER, FINANCE MUST BE AVAILABLE TO MEET PAYMENTS FOR CONTRACTS AS THEY BECOME DUE. THIS WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE SYNDICATED STANDBY FACILITIES WHICH HAD BEEN NEGOTIATED WITH ONE LOCAL AND ONE OVERSEAS BANKING SYNDICATE.

FIRST, HE SAID, A SYNDICATE OF LOCAL BANKS WOULD PROVIDE FACILITIES TO THE CORPORATION OF UP TO HK\$500 MILLION AND, SECONDLY, A CONSORTIUM OF OVERSEAS BANKS WOULD PROVIDE SIMILAR FACILITIES UP TO THE US DOLLAR EQUIVALENT OF UP TO HK\$2,000 MILLION.

/IN ADDITION .....

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IN ADDITION, THERE WERE PROVISIONS FOR A FURTHER HK\$500 MILLION OF CREDIT FROM TWO LOCAL BANKING SYNDICATES TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO LOCAL CONTRACTORS TO HELP FINANCE CONTRACTS WHICH THEY MAY WIN. THIS FACILITY IS, IN EFFECT, A LOCAL SUPPLIER CREDIT TO THE CORPORATION.

+TAKEN TOGETHER WITH EXPORT CREDITS AND THE LOCAL SUPPLIERS' CREDITS, THE STANDBY FACILITIES WILL BE SUFFICIENT IN THEMSELVES TO ENABLE THE CORPORATION TO MEET ALL ITS CONTRACTUAL LIABILITIES DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PERIOD,+ MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID.

HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE CORPORATION WOULD FROM NOW ON BE SEEKING FAVOURABLE OPPORTUNITIES TO GO TO THE OPEN MARKET FOR LONG TERM FUNDS AND, TO THE EXTENT THEY ARE SUCCESSFUL, SOME OF THESE STANDBY FACILITIES WOULD NOT NEED TO BE DRAWN.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID THE AUTHORITY HAD REASSESSED THE VIABILITY OF THE WHOLE PROJECT AND ESTIMATES, TOGETHER WITH A REASSESSMENT OF THE FARE STRUCTURE AND OTHER REVENUE, CONFIRMED THAT THE TOTAL REVENUE LIKELY TO BE GENERATED -- WHEN SET AGAINST CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATING COSTS AND FINANCING CHARGES -- WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MAKE THE SYSTEM VIABLE.

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H.K. TO BORROW EQUIVALENT OF US\$20 M. FROM ADB  
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HONG KONG IS TO RECEIVE A LOAN EQUIVALENT TO US\$20 MILLION FROM THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK TO FINANCE A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE COST OF THE HK\$190 MILLION SHA TIN SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT (STAGE 1).

THIS WAS ANNOUNCED TODAY BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, WHEN HE MOVED A MOTION UNDER THE LOANS (ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK) ORDINANCE TO ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO RAISE THIS LOAN.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED AND THE A.D.B. WAS PREPARED TO MAKE THE LOAN IN VARIOUS CURRENCIES. THE LOAN WOULD BE REPAYABLE OVER TEN YEARS FROM MARCH 1, 1981 AT AN INTEREST RATE OF 9-1/2 PER CENT PER ANNUM CHARGEABLE ON THE AMOUNT OF THE LOAN WITHDRAWN AND THE OUTSTANDING BALANCE. THERE WAS ALSO A COMMITMENT CHARGE OF 3/4 PER CENT, HE SAID.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID HE REGARDED THE TERMS SATISFACTORY AND THE LOAN ITSELF WOULD EASE THE TASK OF FINANCING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SHA TIN SEWAGE TREATMENT PROJECT (STAGE 1) ESTIMATED TO COST \$190 MILLION.

HE SAID THAT WHILE THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE TAKING PLACE, PLANNING FOR THE PROJECT, INCLUDING DRAWING UP OF DETAILED TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS WERE PROGRESSING SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND IT WAS EXPECTED THAT INVITATIONS FOR TENDERS FOR THE PROJECT WOULD BE ISSUED IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 1975/76.

THE AIM OF THE MOTION, WHICH WAS APPROVED, WAS TO AMEND THE FIRST AND SECOND SCHEDULES OF THE LOANS (ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK) ORDINANCE WHICH ENABLES THE GOVERNMENT TO RAISE LOANS FROM THE A.D.B. FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS LISTED IN THE FIRST SCHEDULE.

INITIALLY, THE FIRST SCHEDULE OF THE ORDINANCE AUTHORISED THE GOVERNMENT TO BORROW AN AMOUNT EQUIVALENT TO US\$21.5 MILLION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEA WATER DESALTING WORKS AT LOK ON PAI.

THERE ARE PROVISIONS IN THE ORDINANCE FOR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO AMEND THE SCHEDULE BY RESOLUTION TO AUTHORISE THE RAISING OF FURTHER LOANS.

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SEPTEMBER CONSUMER PRICE INDICES  
SHOW SLIGHT INCREASE

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FOODSTUFFS COST SLIGHTLY MORE LAST MONTH DUE TO AN INCREASE IN THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE OF FRESH VEGETABLES FOLLOWING A SUBSTANTIAL DROP IN LOCAL SUPPLY, ACCORDING TO THE NEW CONSUMER PRICE INDICES ISSUED TODAY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

BOTH THE 'A' AND 'B' INDICES, WHICH COVER HOUSEHOLDS WITH MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE OF \$400 - \$1,499 AND \$1,500 - \$2,999 RESPECTIVELY, STOOD AT 109 - TWO POINTS HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS ADVANCED BY FOUR POINTS IN THE 'A' INDEX WHILE IN THE 'B' INDEX, IT ROSE BY THREE POINTS.

IN THE 'A' INDEX, THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICE OF SALT WATER FISH DECLINED AS A RESULT OF A RISE IN ITS SUPPLY.

IN THE 'B' INDEX, THE INDEX FOR HOUSING ROSE BY ONE POINT WITH THE INCREASES IN RENTS OF PRIVATE POST-WAR-BUILT DWELLINGS. HOWEVER, A DROP OF ONE POINT WAS RECORDED IN THE INDEX FOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE LOWER PRICES OF MEN'S AND WOMEN'S OUTERCLOTHING.

MOVEMENTS IN THE INDICES FOR OTHER SECTIONS OF COMMODITY AND SERVICE WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

MEANWHILE, THE OLD GENERAL CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR SEPTEMBER STOOD AT 194, SIX POINTS HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

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