



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Wednesday, July 11, 1973

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PROBLEMS OF HOUSING TO BE STUDIED

An all-round view of housing -- both public and private -- will be taken by the Secretary for Housing, Mr. Ian Lightbody, when he moves into the Colonial Secretariat in September to formally take up his full duties under the new post.

Speaking to a meeting of the Lions Club of Victoria, Mr. Lightbody said the watch on developers and conditions in the private sector was a "pretty spasmodic" thing at present.

"This needs to be tightened up considerably so that our public housing plans can take full account of the potential and achievement of the private sector," he said.

Mr. Lightbody added that his new duties would include a complete view of housing as a whole problem, including ways and means of helping private developers to make their maximum possible contribution to the housing stock, the availability of mortgage finance to help families to buy their own flats and rent control among others.

Turning to estate management, he said that the ultimate aim was to extend the same standards of professional management as have been applied to the former Housing Authority's estates to the older public housing estates - formerly known as resettlement estates.

Speaking on the 10-year housing programme, Mr. Lightbody said, "it seems clear even now that speedier building methods must come into use if we are to hit our targets."

He said it could reasonably be assumed that the commitment to build on a large, continuing scale would provide the necessary incentive for new ideas and investment in the building contracting industry.

Note to Editors: Copies of the full text of the speech
 in English and Chinese are boxed this evening.

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SOPHISTICATED CONTRACTING FORCE NEEDED FOR HONG KONG

The Director of Public Works, Mr. A.S. Robertson, said tonight the disorganised and inefficient contractor would not be acceptable for the many large engineering projects now being planned by his department.

"We must have a sophisticated contracting force to achieve minimum guaranteed time schedules," he said.

Mr. Robertson, who was speaking at the Lu Pan Festival dinner of the Building Contractors' Association, said the trend was for "the rewards" to go to the contractor with a permanent professional and technical management team, with equipment and "know-how" and with a record of successful projects completed within the time schedule.

This pattern, he said, should be welcomed "for it implies more than merely doing things more speedily, efficiently and profitably; it implies doing things better; it involves that quest for excellence which should be at the centre of all our endeavours."

The Director said that the coming year will see a great deal of building work - private building is going on at an extremely rapid rate, the public housing programme in the new towns is beginning to accelerate, a start will be made on many large road projects and the mass transit railway will get under way.

All of these projects, he said, would call for a great effort from the building industry and if the benefits were to be seen - good sound economic buildings for the community and the assurance of a fair return for contractors - the industry must rise to the demands placed on it.

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There must be more effort spent on the careful planning of construction works to make the most rational and intelligent use of labour. This development, he thought, could best serve the interests of labour itself for it would put a premium on skills and training.

It does not mean that industry can simply bid higher for labour, he said.

Mr. Robertson went on: "By increasing productivity we can keep costs down and ensure a reasonable profit. Increased productivity can be achieved not only by better planning, but by the use of more equipment - large and small.

"Better planning can also save construction materials and expedite completion, again saving costs and assuring a fair return."

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DANGEROUS BUILDING IN KOWLOON

The Building Authority today declared 15 Yu Chau Street, Kowloon, to be in a dangerous condition.

In the course of routine inspection it was found that the reinforced concrete structure of this four-storey pre-war building was badly deteriorated and beyond reasonable repair.

Because there is a risk of partial collapse, notice of intention to apply for a closure order in Kowloon District Court at 9.30 a.m. on August 22 was posted today.

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NEW EVENING COURSE IN BRICKLAYING, PLASTERING AND TILING

The three-year part-time evening course in bricklaying, plastering and tiling will be run on a "module" basis at the Morrison Hill Technical Institute when classes commence next September.

"The new system," a spokesman for the Institute said, "is designed to make the course more attractive to potential apprentices by removing the rigidity of the old system, in which a student is required to complete an entire three-year course before a certificate can be awarded.

"Instead of learning at the same time all related skills required of a full craftsman trainees will, in future, be taught one skill at a time."

With the change in the training system, there has been a significant improvement in the number of applicants seeking admission to the new classes.

The spokesman pointed out that 107 applicants took the oral test last month. Compared with the number last year, it represented an increase of 400 per cent.

"The decision to change the training system has been taken in the light of last year's unsatisfactory enrolment. It also follows consultation with the Building Trades Industrial Committee of the Industrial Training Advisory Committee and the City and Guilds of London Institute which gives recognition to the course," he said.

The flexible system of module training could still meet the needs both of the industry and the individual while allowing a new entrant freedom to choose the programme that suited him best.

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"On completion of a module, which normally lasted a year, a student should be proficient enough to start working on building sites as a semi-skilled worker.

"Those who wish to receive another year of institutional training in a related skill, thus strengthening their earning powers, are more than welcome to carry on by attending another module," the spokesman added.

Completion of Modules 1 and 2, irrespective of order, will constitute a "lead-in" to Module 3 which concerns more advanced work and prepares students for the final examination conducted jointly by the Morrison Hill Technical Institute and the City and Guilds of London Institute.

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GRADUATION CEREMONY

Note to Editors: The Northcote College of Education will hold its graduation ceremony on Friday (July 13) afternoon in the Caritas Community Hall, Caritas House, Caine Road.

Professor S.L. Kong, Director of the School of Education of the Chinese University will address the gathering and Mrs. Kong will present the certificates and prizes. The ceremony begins at 4.30 p.m.

You are invited to send a reporter and photographer to cover the event.

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STUDENTS GOING TO BRITAIN SHOULD FIRST
CONTACT EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Students intending to go to Britain for further study are advised that the various university authorities there will not accept direct applications for first degree courses.

A spokesman for the Education Department said today that all direct applications are normally referred back to Hong Kong, resulting in unnecessary loss of valuable time on the part of the students.

He said the Overseas Students and Scholarships Section of the department should be consulted by these students for advice on the courses available and the requirements for entry to educational institutions.

"A great many students have already approached the section for assistance in processing applications for admissions to schools, colleges and universities in Britain."

The section is responsible for sending students' applications for entry to British Universities to the University Central Council on Admissions (UCCA), which is the central organisation for handling applications for first degree courses.

The spokesman emphasised the need to apply for university placement one full year in advance. Such applications must reach the Overseas Students and Scholarships Section by mid-September from students wishing to enter Oxford or Cambridge Universities and by mid-November for other universities.

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The last date for receipt of all applications by the University Central Council on Admissions is December 15, 1973 for entry in 1974.

Parents wishing to send their children to study in secondary schools in Britain should make application direct to the schools of their choice.

General information about schools, the courses offered, levels of fees and other details can be obtained from the section which has recently moved to Bonaventure House, 2nd floor, 91 Leighton Road, Hong Kong.

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WATER CUT IN KOWLOON CITY

Water supply to a number of premises in Kowloon City will be interrupted for five hours from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Friday (July 13) to enable a leakage test to be carried out.

The area affected is bounded by Prince Edward Road, Nga Tsin Wai Road, Nga Tsin Long Road, Carpenter Road and Sa Po Road.

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WARD OFFICES MOVE CLOSER TO THE PEOPLE

Three of the Urban Council's 14 ward offices are moving to new premises -- and nearer to the people they serve.

A spokesman for the council said today that the changes involved the ward offices at the North Point Housing Estate Office in Shu Kuk Street, Chai Wan Estate and the Housing Department Headquarters in Ma Tau Kok Road.

With effect from tomorrow (Thursday) the new addresses will be:

<u>New Address</u>	<u>New Ward Clerk</u>	<u>Urban Councillor</u>
Hawker Control Force Office, 20 Tong Shui Road, G/F. North Point.	Mr. AU Tong (Tel. No. 5-621948)	Mr. Kenneth T.C. Lo
Chai Wan Estate, Block 27, G/F., Wan Tsui Road, Chai Wan.	Mr. CHEUNG Yuen-chuen (Tel. No. 5-704567)	Mr. B.A. Bernacchi, O.B.E., Q.C.
Office at Yau Ma Tei Multi-storey Car Park Library	Mr. Philip Ho (Tel. No. 3-942824)	Mr. H.M.G. Forsgate Dr. Wong Pun-cheuk Mr. Charles C.C. Sin

The spokesman urged people to take their complaints and problems to these ward offices.

He said that Urban Councillors dealt with the individual problems of more than 9,000 people last year.

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These problems received the personal attention of the Councillors. Matters which did not come under the jurisdiction of the Council were similarly noted down and promptly passed to the right authority for action.

The ward system was introduced in 1965 and was designed to give members of the public an opportunity to discuss their problems at first hand with Urban Councillors.

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READJUSTMENT OF RMB HELPFUL TO LOCAL FOOD PRICES

The Financial Secretary, Mr. C.P. Haddon-Cave, today described as a "realistic move" the Bank of China's announcement of the re-adjustment of the rate between the RMB and the Hong Kong dollar.

The rate has been altered back to RMB 37.95 to HK\$100.

"I regard this as a realistic move so far as the exchange value of the Hong Kong dollar is concerned; and a helpful move in relation to local prices of foodstuffs and other imports from China," Mr. Haddon-Cave said.

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Release Time: 7.00 p.m.