



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1975

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UNOFFICIALS COMMENT ON MTR SYSTEM

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THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DR. THE HON. CHUNG SZE-YUEN, TODAY REAFFIRMED HIS SUPPORT FOR BUILDING THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY SYSTEM BUT EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S OPTIMISM ABOUT THE TIMING AND COST OF THE PROJECT.

+I CANNOT REALLY BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD BE IN A POSITION TO CONFIRM THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM AND TO LET THE FIRST CONTRACTS IN AUGUST THIS YEAR,+ HE SAID.

DR. CHUNG WAS SPEAKING DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION BILL WHICH PROVIDES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MTR CORPORATION TO BUILD AND RUN THE RAILWAY.

THE HON. LO TAK-SHING ALSO SPOKE ON THE BILL AND GAVE NOTICE THAT HE WOULD BE VOTING AGAINST IT.

IN DR. CHUNG'S OPINION, THE COST OF THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM WOULD MORE LIKELY AMOUNT TO ABOUT \$6,000 MILLION INSTEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ESTIMATE OF \$4,900 MILLION +UNLESS THERE ARE DETERIORATIONS IN PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATIONS.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT PRICES OF MOST OF THE DIFFICULT AND UNCERTAIN CIVIL ENGINEERING CONTRACTS THAT ARE SCHEDULED TO BE CALLED IN AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR WOULD NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR OR EARLY NEXT, AND HE PRESUMED THAT THE PRICES FOR ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL CONTRACTS WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF 1976.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF \$2,577 MILLION, AT MID-1972 PRICES, FOR THE FIRST FOUR STAGES OF THE ORIGINAL INITIAL SYSTEM HAD ESCALATED TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT THE JAPANESE CONSORTIUM HAD BACKED OUT, EVEN AFTER SIGNING A LETTER OF INTENT, FROM A FIXED CONTRACT PRICE OF \$5,000 MILLION.

+TODAY, I DON'T THINK ANY REPUTABLE CONSORTIUM WOULD DARE TO QUOTE A PRICE LESS THAN \$7,500 MILLION FOR THE SAME INITIAL SYSTEM,+ HE ADDED.

+I THEREFORE CONSIDER THAT GOVERNMENT IS OVER-OPTIMISTIC ON THE FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF THE NEW S-SYSTEM,+ HE SAID.

DR. CHUNG RE-ITERATED HIS BELIEF THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR AN UNDERGROUND RAILWAY SYSTEM IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO SHIFT THEIR HOMES TO NEARBY SUBURBAN AREAS AND SO EASE THE EXTREME CONGESTION IN THE MAIN URBAN DISTRICTS.

/AT THE SAME TIME

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AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY +WOULD NOT REALLY BE SERVING ITS PURPOSE IF THE REMAINING STAGES FOR THE FULL SYSTEM WERE NOT EVENTUALLY BUILT.+

DR. CHUNG SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT SOME OF HIS UNOFFICIAL COLLEAGUES HAD CERTAIN VIEWS ON CLAUSES IN THE BILL CONCERNING THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF THE MTR CORPORATION AND THE CORPORATION'S POWERS TO DETERMINE FARES.

IT WAS FELT, HE SAID, THAT IN VIEW OF THE LARGE SUM OF PUBLIC MONEY INVOLVED IN THE MTR PROJECT, AT LEAST ONE OR EVEN TWO UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SHOULD BE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ON THE BOARD OF THE CORPORATION.

ON THE QUESTION OF FARES, DR. CHUNG SAID IT WAS RECOGNISED THAT THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL COULD OVERRULE THE CORPORATION'S DECISIONS IN THIS REGARD. +HOWEVER, IT IS BELIEVED THAT IN AN INCREASINGLY DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALLY CONSCIOUS SOCIETY LIKE HONG KONG, POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DETERMINATION OF MTR FARES, AND THAT IT WOULD BE MORE DESIRABLE TO FIX AND REVISE MTR FARES THROUGH OPEN DEBATE IN THIS COUNCIL RATHER THAN BY THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL IN CAMERA.+

IN PASSING, DR. CHUNG NOTED THAT ONE CLAUSE IN THE BILL DEALING WITH GUARANTEE BY GOVERNMENT WOULD BE AMENDED TO ENABLE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, RATHER THAN THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL, TO AUTHORISE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO GRANT GUARANTEE IN RESPECT OF THE MTR CORPORATION'S DEBTS.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

COPIES OF THE HON. LO TAK-SHING'S SPEECH ARE BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

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APPROPRIATION BILL PASSED AT LEGCO

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THE APPROPRIATION BILL 1975 WAS TODAY PASSED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WITH CERTAIN AMENDMENTS AND BECAME LAW.

DURING THE COMMITTEE STAGE, DR. THE HON. S.Y. CHUNG NOTED WITH CONCERN THAT THE TWO TECHNICAL INSTITUTES IN KWAI CHUNG AND KWUN TONG WOULD BE OPEN IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR ONLY ON RESTRICTED BASIS WITH 25 PER CENT OF THE STUDENT CAPACITY.

IN REPLY TO THE QUESTIONS RAISED ON THIS TOPIC BY DR. CHUNG, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SAID THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO OPERATE A NEW TECHNICAL INSTITUTE AT FULL STEAM FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS FROM THE DATE OF OPENING.

HOWEVER, BY CAREFUL RE-PLANNING, HE SAID, IT NOW APPEARS FEASIBLE TO INCREASE USAGE TO A SHADE OVER 30 PER CENT IN BOTH INSTITUTES.

REGARDING RECRUITMENT OF THESE INSTITUTES, MR. TOPLEY SAID THAT IT WILL BE CONCENTRATED ON PART-TIME DAY-RELEASE CRAFT COURSES SUBJECT TO DEMAND FROM INDUSTRY WHILE FULL-TIME AND EVENING CRAFT COURSES WILL ALSO BE OFFERED.

HE ADDED THAT IF DEMAND FOR PART-TIME DAY RELEASE COURSES IS INSUFFICIENT THEN MORE FULL-TIME COURSES WILL BE INTRODUCED WITH ONE OR TWO OF THESE AT TECHNICIAN LEVEL.

+WHEN THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES ARE FULLY DEVELOPED THEY WILL ALSO OFFER PART-TIME DAY RELEASE COURSES, FULL-TIME COURSES AND EVENING COURSES AT THE TECHNICIAN LEVEL,+ HE SAID.

IN REPLY TO THE POINTS RAISED BY THE HON. MISS KO SIU-WAH REGARDING THE CHILD CARE CENTRES BILL, THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. LI FOOK-KOW SAID THAT NO DATE HAS YET BEEN FIXED FOR THIS LEGISLATION TO COME INTO OPERATION.

ALTHOUGH THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE HAS BEEN PERMITTED AN INCREASE IN OVERALL STRENGTH THIS YEAR, MR. LI POINTED OUT THAT IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO SAY WHETHER OR NOT THE DIRECTOR WILL BE ABLE TO DEPLOY STAFF FROM OTHER DUTIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENFORCING THE LEGISLATION BY STRENGTHENING THE CHILD CARE ADVISORY SECTION.

+WHEN IT BECOMES APPARENT THAT STAFF CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE, APPROVAL WILL BE SOUGHT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NECESSARY POSTS,+ HE ADDED.

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DURING THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE APPROPRIATION BILL, MISS KO ALSO RAISED ANOTHER POINT REGARDING THE SUBVENTION FOR DAY NURSERIES.

IN REPLY, THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES SAID THAT SUBVENTED NURSERIES WILL BE ASSISTED ON THE ADVICE OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE UP TO A MAXIMUM RATE OF \$90 PER MONTH PER PLACE. +THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF \$10 OVER LAST YEAR'S RATE TO COVER INCREASED COSTS,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, NO ADDITIONAL ELEMENT HAS BEEN INCLUDED FOR IMPROVED STANDARDS AND NURSERIES WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN THEIR EXISTING STANDARDS FOR THIS YEAR.

HE FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT THE EFFECT OF THIS SUSPENSION IS THAT ANNUAL INCREASES IN SUBVENTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PHASED OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD COMMENCING FROM THE YEAR 1973-74 IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE CERTAIN AGREED IMPROVEMENTS IN STANDARDS WILL NOW TAKE SIX YEARS TO COME INTO EFFECT.

MR. LI ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASISE THAT SOCIAL WELFARE SUBVENTIONS ARE DISCRETIONARY AND AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE THE GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED NO COMMITMENT TO MAKE GOOD ANY REDUCTION OF AGENCIES' INCOME WHETHER FROM OVERSEAS DONATIONS OR ANY OTHER SOURCE. HOWEVER, HE ADDED, THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT FROM REVIEWING THE POSITION OF INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES.

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WORLD PRESS WILL FOCUS ON H.K. DURING ROYAL VISIT
SAYS DENIS BRAY
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THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR. DENIS BRAY, TODAY SPOKE AT LENGTH ON SOME OF THE THINKING THAT HAS GONE INTO THE PLANNING OF THE FORTHCOMING ROYAL VISIT TO HONG KONG.

HE SAID ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS THAT HAS TO BE BORNE IN MIND IS THAT FOR A SHORT WHILE HONG KONG WILL BE +UNDER THE EYES OF WORLD PRESS AND TELEVISION+. AND ASKED, +WHAT SORT OF A PICTURE DO WE WANT THE WORLD TO SEE?+

+THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE THING WE MOST WANT THE WORLD TO SEE IS THE EXHIBITION 'PROGRESS HONG KONG'. NEVER BEFORE HAS SUCH A COMPREHENSIVE DISPLAY BEEN MOUNTED OF WHAT IS MADE IN HONG KONG. NEVER BEFORE HAVE WE HAD SO MUCH TO SHOW.+

MR. BRAY, WHO WAS SPEAKING AT THE LIONS CLUB OF THE PEAK LUNCHEON, SAID THAT HONG KONG HAD COME A LONG WAY SINCE INDUSTRY DEPENDED ON +GREY CLOTH AND ENAMEL SPITTOONS+. +WE STILL MAKE THESE BUT FASHION GARMENTS, MODERN KITCHENWARE, ELECTRONIC GADGETS OF ALL SORTS, BEAUTIFUL BOATS AND FASCINATING TOYS WILL ALL BE SEEN AT THIS EXHIBITION.+

BUT, HE SAID, HONG KONG DID NOT EXIST FOR BUSINESS ALONE AND OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS ENORMOUS STRIDES HAD BEEN MADE IN SOCIAL POLICY.

+THE MOST STRIKING FEATURES OF OUR SOCIAL POLICY ARE NOT THE ABSOLUTE LEVELS OF SOCIAL SERVICES BUT THE RATE AT WHICH THEY ARE BEING IMPROVED,+ HE SAID.

IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SHOW THE QUEEN SUCH A WIDE FIELD SO ATTENTION HAD BEEN FOCUSED ON TWO BASIC SOCIAL SERVICES -- HOUSING AND EDUCATION.

+THE EARLIEST RESETTLEMENT HOUSING -- SO MUCH SOUGHT AFTER AT THE TIME AND TODAY SO INADEQUATE -- IS STILL THERE TO SEE AND SHE WILL SEE IT. WE ARE NOT HIDING IT FOR WE WANT TO SHOW HOW FAR WE HAVE COME -- TO CONTRAST WONG TAI SIN AND WANG TAU HOM WITH OI MAN WHERE SHE WILL SEE THE LATEST PATTERN OF ACCOMMODATION,+ HE SAID.

IN EDUCATION, THE PRINCIPLE EXHIBITS ARE THE CHILDREN THEMSELVES AS THOUSANDS WILL SEE AND GREET THE ROYAL COUPLE AND WILL THEMSELVES BE SEEN. BOTH UNIVERSITIES ARE ALSO INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAMME.

MR. BRAY SAID THE ROYAL VISIT WAS NOT JUST THE OCCASION FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS PRESENTATION ON A COLOSSAL SCALE. +IT WILL ALSO BE FUN.+

/NO OTHER EVENT

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NO OTHER EVENT WILL BE ENJOYED DIRECTLY BY SO MANY PEOPLE ALL AT ONCE THAN THE FIREWORKS DISPLAY.

AS PART OF THE DISPLAY, WHICH HAS BEEN DONATED, TWO LARGE AREAS OF LAND AT HUNG HOM AND WAN CHAI WILL BE OPENED FOR EVERYONE.

NOT ONLY WILL THEY BE GREAT PLACES TO WATCH THE FIREWORKS, PEOPLE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO ENJOY +FIREWORKS FAIRS+ AS THE AREAS WILL BE OPEN TO HAWKERS FROM ALL OVER HONG KONG. NO LICENCES WILL BE REQUIRED AND ABOUT THE ONLY CONTROLS WILL BE ASSISTANCE FOR THE HAWKERS TO ARRANGE THEMSELVES IN ROWS.

MR. BRAY POINTED OUT THAT MORE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN INVITED TO FUNCTIONS THAN EVER BEFORE ON A ROYAL VISIT BUT, EVEN SO MANY WHO HAVE GIVEN SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY COULD NOT BE FITTED IN.

+THIS IS A MATTER FOR REGRET BUT GUEST LISTS HAVE HAD TO BE REPRESENTATIVE NOT EXHAUSTIVE. ALL WALKS OF LIFE, ALL FIELDS OF SERVICE ARE REPRESENTED -- NOT EVERYBODY FROM EVERY WALK OF LIFE BUT SOME FROM MOST.+

REFERRING TO THE COSTS, MR. BRAY SAID IT WAS DOUBTED IF ANYONE WOULD EVER DO A PRECISE CALCULATION OF ALL THE COSTS AND ALL THE BENEFITS OF THE VISIT. +MONEY WILL BE SPENT BUT MOST OF IT WILL NOT BE TAXPAYERS MONEY+.

IN FACT PUBLIC FUNDS WILL GAIN ABOUT \$9 MILLION FROM THE SALE OF THE GOLD COINS STRUCK TO COMMEMORATE THE OCCASION. THE BIGGEST ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC MONEY WILL BE FOR THE EXHIBITION OF HONG KONG MANUFACTURED GOODS.

HE SAID THE FULL AMOUNT BEING SPENT BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE VISIT IS \$1.5 MILLION.

MR. BRAY ADDED: +I HAVE ALREADY SAID THE FIREWORKS DISPLAY IS DONATED. EVERY ITEM IN THE NATHAN ROAD PROCESSION IS SPONSORED. MILITARY BANDS HAVE TURNED OUT. FISHERMEN HAVE GIVEN A DAY AT SEA TO DISPLAY THEIR BOATS, SHOP-KEEPERS IN THE OCEAN TERMINAL HAVE CLOSED FOR A HALF-DAY. THE WAN CHAI AND HUNG HOM FIREWORKS FAIRS ARE JUST FUN IN A TYPICALLY HONG KONG WAY WHICH COSTS NOBODY ANYTHING THEY DO NOT WANT TO PAY. AND SO IT GOES ON. PEOPLE EVERYWHERE HAVE BEEN DOING WHAT THEY CAN TO MAKE THE OCCASION A SUCCESS.+

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MORE PROTECTION FOR ABRASIVE WHEEL WORKERS

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY APPROVED A SET OF NEW REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PROPER AND SAFE MANNER OF USING AND MOUNTING ABRASIVE WHEELS.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON. IAN PRICE, TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT SUCH WHEELS COULD CAUSE DEATH OR INJURY TO WORKERS IF USED WITH INSUFFICIENT CARE OR AT TOO FAST A SPEED.

IN MOVING THE RESOLUTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (ABRASIVE WHEELS) REGULATIONS 1975, MR. PRICE URGED MORE EMPLOYERS TO SEND THEIR EMPLOYEES TO ATTEND SPECIAL TRAINING COURSES, ORGANISED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT ON THE USE AND MOUNTING OF THE MACHINE.

HE SAID THAT IN THE EIGHT-MONTH PERIOD ENDING FEBRUARY THIS YEAR, THERE HAD BEEN 137 ACCIDENTS INVOLVING ABRASIVE WHEELS, AND INJURIES SUSTAINED VARIED FROM LACERATION OF FINGERS TO IMPAIRMENT OF VISION.

MR. PRICE SAID AN ABRASIVE WHEEL CONSISTS OF ABRASIVE PARTICLES HELD TOGETHER BY MINERAL, METALLIC OR ORGANIC BONDS, MOUNTED ON A POWER-DRIVEN SPINDLE.

+BY VIRTUE OF CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIAL, SUCH A WHEEL IS BRITTLE AND CAN BURST IF USED WITH INSUFFICIENT CARE OR AT A SPEED IN EXCESS OF THAT SPECIFIED BY THE MANUFACTURER.

+BECAUSE OF THE HIGH SPEED AT WHICH ABRASIVE WHEELS ROTATE, FRAGMENTS FROM BURST WHEELS FLY OFF WITH THE FORCE OF A PROJECTILE AND CAN CAUSE SERIOUS INJURIES AND EVEN DEATH.

+FURTHERMORE, ACCIDENTS CAN ALSO BE CAUSED BY CONTACT WITH, OR THE ENTANGLEMENT OF CLOTHING IN, A HIGH SPEED MOVING WHEEL OR SPINDLE,+ HE SAID.

THE REGULATIONS, EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY 1, 1976, GENERALLY DEAL WITH THE PERMISSIBLE SPEEDS OF ABRASIVE WHEELS AND SPINDLES, THE EXHIBITION OF NOTICES INDICATING THOSE SPEEDS, THE PROPER MOUNTING OF THESE WHEELS BY COMPETENT PEOPLE, AND THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE SAFETY MEASURES SUCH AS GUARDS, PROTECTION FLANGES AND MACHINE CONTROLS.

IN ADDITION TO IMPOSING CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS ON PROPRIETORS OF INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS WHERE ABRASIVE WHEELS ARE USED, MR. PRICE SAID THE REGULATIONS ALSO SET OUT CLEARLY THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES WORKING ON SUCH WHEELS, THUS PROVIDING THEM WITH ADDITIONAL PROTECTION.

MR. PRICE

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MR. PRICE STRESSED THAT THE NEED TO CONTROL THE USE OF THESE WHEELS WAS SELF EVIDENT FROM THE INHERENT DANGERS.

AN EXPLANATORY GUIDE IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE ON THE NEW REGULATIONS WILL BE SENT TO EMPLOYERS IN DUE COURSE, HE SAID.

SINCE THE REGULATIONS ARE TO BE EFFECTIVE FROM NEXT YEAR, MR. PRICE SAID THERE IS AMPLE TIME FOR EMPLOYERS TO MEET THE NEW REQUIREMENTS AND, WHERE NECESSARY, TO SEND THEIR WORKERS TO THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY TRAINING CENTRE FOR THE TRAINING COURSES.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT THE END OF 1974, IN ANTICIPATION OF THESE REGULATIONS, THE CENTRE HAD OFFERED 15 FREE ONE-DAY COURSES, BUT THE RESPONSE FROM INDUSTRY WAS MINIMAL -- ONLY TWO COURSES COULD BE HELD WITH A MERE SEVEN PARTICIPANTS.

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, HE SAID ANOTHER 35 COURSES HAD BEEN PLANNED AND HE HOPED THERE WOULD BE MUCH GREATER INTEREST.

+INFORMATION ON THESE COURSES HAS BEEN CIRCULATED TO ALL INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS EMPLOYING 50 OR MORE WORKERS,+ HE SAID.

+LETTERS HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE CHINESE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION AND THE FEDERATION OF HONG KONG INDUSTRIES REQUESTING THESE ORGANISATIONS TO HELP PUBLICISE THESE COURSES AMONG THEIR MEMBERS.+

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY ALSO APPROVED THE RELATED FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) REGULATIONS 1975 WHICH STIPULATES THAT CERTAIN PROVISIONS IN THE MAIN REGULATIONS GENERALLY CONCERNING THE FENCING OF DANGEROUS OR MOVING PARTS OF MACHINERY SHALL NOT APPLY TO ABRASIVE WHEELS -- WHICH ARE EXPRESSLY COVERED BY THE NEWLY-APPROVED REGULATIONS.

IN REPLY TO A POINT OF PRINCIPLE RAISED EARLIER BY DR. THE HON S.Y. CHUNG CONCERNING THE RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY PLACED ON A PROPRIETOR TO JUDGE THE COMPETENCY OF WORKERS, MR. PRICE SAID THAT THIS HAD ALREADY BEEN ACCEPTED IN HONG KONG IN OTHER SAFETY REGULATIONS SUCH AS THE CONSTRUCTION SITES SAFETY REGULATIONS, THE LIFTING APPLIANCES AND LIFTING GEAR REGULATIONS AND IN THE CARGO HANDLING REGULATIONS 6 (3).

REGARDING THE NEED FOR APPROPRIATE TRAINING COURSE, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY TRAINING CENTRE OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WAS MORE SUITED FOR PROVIDING THE COURSES THAN THE HONG KONG TRAINING COUNCIL WHICH HAD NO FACILITIES AND DID NOT ENGAGE IN TRAINING ITSELF.

HE ADDED

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HE ADDED THAT ON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE RUN BY THE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY CENTRE, A CERTIFICATE WOULD BE ISSUED AND THIS COULD BE REGARDED AS A CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY.

ALTHOUGH HE AGREED WITH DR. CHUNG THAT THERE WAS NO PROVISION IN THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS PROHIBITING THE SALE OR LETTING ON HIRE OF ABRASIVE WHEELS WHICH WERE NOT MARKED WITH THEIR MAXIMUM PERMISSIBLE SPEEDS, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR STRESSED THAT THIS WAS NOT AN OVERSIGHT.

+ANY SUCH PROVISION WOULD BE ULTRA VIRES THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE+, HE SAID, + BECAUSE IT HAS NO SECTION EQUIVALENT TO SECTION 17(3) OF THE U.K. FACTORIES ACT.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS SECTION ENABLES THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MAKE REGULATIONS PUTTING AN OBLIGATION ON ANYONE WHO SELLS OR LETS ON HIRE MACHINERY WHICH DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE U.K. ACT OR REGULATIONS AND WHICH IS FOR USE IN A FACTORY. MR. PRICE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT SUCH WIDE POWERS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED IN THE NARROW CONTEXT OF ABRASIVE WHEELS ONLY.

UNLIKE DR. CHUNG, THE COMMISSIONER SAW NO SPECIAL DIFFICULTY IN POLICING REGULATION 5 BECAUSE IT STATED CLEARLY THAT IT IS THE DUTY OF A PROPRIETOR TO SEE THAT NO UNMARKED WHEEL IS TAKEN INTO USE AFTER JANUARY 1, 1976. +TO DISCHARGE THAT DUTY, A PROPRIETOR MERELY HAS TO REFRAIN FROM BUYING UNMARKED WHEELS,+ HE ADDED.

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UNIFORM FINES FOR DISCIPLINARY SERVICES SOUGHT

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STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO PROVIDE UNIFORMITY IN THE AMOUNT OF MAXIMUM FINES WHICH MAY BE IMPOSED ON MEMBERS OF THE FIRE SERVICES, THE PREVENTIVE SERVICE AND THE PRISONS SERVICE, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON. L.M. DAVIES, SAID TODAY.

LEGISLATION COVERING THE DISCIPLINARY CODES OF THE PREVENTIVE AND PRISONS SERVICES WAS BEING EXAMINED, HE SAID, AND THE NECESSARY AMENDMENTS WOULD BE INTRODUCED SHORTLY.

MR. DAVIES WAS WINDING UP THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE FIRE SERVICE (AMENDMENT) BILL WHICH, APART FROM PROVIDING TOUGHER PENALTIES FOR CONTRAVENTIONS OF A FIRE ABATEMENT ORDER, RAISES THE MAXIMUM FINE THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES MAY LEVY ON A MEMBER OF THE SERVICES FROM \$50 TO ONE MONTH'S SALARY (EXCLUDING ALLOWANCES).

MR. DAVIES STRESSED THAT THE NEW MAXIMUM PENALTY WAS DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO GIVE AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS POSSIBLE IN SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE PUNISHMENT. THE FACT THAT A MAXIMUM FINE WAS DESCRIBED BY LAW DID NOT MEAN THAT THE MAXIMUM WOULD BE IMPOSED REGULARLY OR AS A MATTER OF COURSE.

+THE PROVISION SHOULD BE REGARDED AS MUCH AS A DETERRENT AS A MEANS OF PUNISHMENT,+ HE ADDED.

+ALTHOUGH IT IS PROPOSED TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF THE MAXIMUM FINE SUBSTANTIALLY THE NEW CEILING IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE A REAL ALTERNATIVE TO MORE SEVERE FORMS OF PUNISHMENT, INCLUDING DISMISSAL.

+TO THIS EXTENT, IT COULD BE SAID THAT THE AMENDED ARRANGEMENTS PROVIDE THE SERVICE WITH A MORE ADVANTAGEOUS DISCIPLINARY CODE THAN EXISTED BEFORE,+ HE SAID.

EARLIER, THE HON. LEE QUO-WEI URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO LOOK INTO THE LACK OF UNIFORMITY IN THE DIFFERENT DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS, AND SOUGHT AN ASSURANCE THAT THE MAXIMUM FINE WOULD ONLY BE APPLIED IN THE MOST SERIOUS CASES.

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DRIVERS MAY BE COMPELLED TO WEAR
SAFETY SEAT BELTS NEXT YEAR
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REGULATIONS REQUIRING ALL NEW VEHICLES TO BE FITTED WITH SEAT BELTS MAY COME INTO EFFECT ON JANUARY 1, 1976 AND THE FITTING OF SEAT BELTS IN ALL PRIVATE CARS MAY BECOME MANDATORY ABOUT A YEAR LATER.

+SOME FEW MONTHS AFTER THIS, IF PRESENT PROPOSALS ARE ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL, THEN, SUBJECT TO EXEMPTIONS, IT WILL BE AN OFFENCE TO DRIVE OR TRAVEL AS A FRONT SEAT PASSENGER IN A PRIVATE CAR UNLESS A SEAT BELT IS WORN,+ THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. G.C. THORNTON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, MR. THORNTON SAID PROPOSALS AIMED AT INCREASING THE SAFETY OF DRIVERS AND FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS IN PRIVATE CARS WERE BEING CONSIDERED AND DRAFT LEGISLATION TO BRING THEM INTO FORCE HAD ALSO BEEN PREPARED.

THERE WERE TWO DISTINCT FEATURES TO THE PROPOSALS - THE MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS TO FIT SEAT BELTS IN THE FRONT OF PRIVATE CARS, AND THAT SEAT BELTS MUST BE USED.

HOWEVER, MR. THORNTON ENVISAGED THAT THE REQUIREMENT THAT SEAT BELTS MUST BE WORN WILL NOT COME INTO EFFECT UNTIL SOME PERIOD OF TIME AFTER THE FITTING OF SEAT BELTS HAS BECOME COMPULSORY.

THIS, HE EXPLAINED, WOULD GIVE SOME TIME FOR THE PUBLIC TO GET INTO THE HABIT OF +BELTING UP+ AND TIME ALSO FOR EFFORTS TO BE MADE TO INFORM AND CONVINCED THE PUBLIC OF THE UNDOUBTED ADVANTAGES OF WEARING SEAT BELTS.

TO ENSURE THAT THE PROPOSALS FOR HONG KONG ARE AS USEFUL AND AS PRACTICAL AS POSSIBLE, THE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO MAKING A STUDY OF RECENT LEGISLATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

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'MINI CHEQUE' SYSTEM PROPOSED
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THE HON. WILSON WANG TODAY ADVOCATED A 'MINI CHEQUE' SYSTEM UNDER WHICH CHEQUES FOR A LIMITED AMOUNT WOULD BE EITHER EXEMPTED FROM STAMP DUTY OR SUBJECT TO A LESSER DUTY THAN THE PRESENT 30 CENTS.

SUCH A SYSTEM, HE FELT, WOULD HELP ENCOURAGE THE USE OF CHEQUES FOR SMALLER AMOUNTS -- A PRACTICE THAT WOULD BE WELCOMED BY THE TREASURY AS WELL AS THE POLICE AS THIS WOULD OFFER BETTER SECURITY.

MR. WANG MADE THE SUGGESTION WHEN COMMENTING ON THE STAMP (AMENDMENT) BILL WHICH GIVES LEGISLATIVE EFFECT TO BUDGET PROPOSALS INCREASING FIXED DUTY TO 30 CENTS ON CHEQUES AND ALLIED INSTRUMENTS.

THE BILL WAS PASSED BY COUNCIL ALONG WITH THREE OTHERS. THESE WERE: THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, THE MOCK AUCTIONS BILL, AND THE FIRE SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

SIX OTHER BILLS WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL FOR THEIR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. THEY INCLUDED THE BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL, THE BETTING DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL, THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL, THE ENTERTAINMENTS TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL, THE STAMP (AMENDMENT) (NO.2) BILL, AND THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

EXCEPT FOR THE LAST, ALL THESE BILLS ARE DESIGNED TO GIVE LEGISLATIVE EFFECT TO PROPOSALS MADE BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH.

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HONG KONG'S POPULATION ESTIMATED AT 4.33 MILLION
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THE ESTIMATED POPULATION AT THE END OF DECEMBER 1974 WAS 4,338,200, THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS SAID TODAY.

THIS IS AN INCREASE OF 118,900 OVER THE END-YEAR ESTIMATE FOR 1973. THE BALANCE OF BIRTHS OVER DEATHS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS WAS 61,552. THE REMAINDER OF THE INCREASE REPRESENTS THE BALANCE OF MOVEMENTS INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG, WHICH INDICATES A NET INFLOW OF 57,360 PERSONS OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS FOR 1974 WAS 83,581, 1,329 MORE THAN IN 1973. THE CRUDE BIRTH RATE WAS 19.7 PER THOUSAND POPULATION, VIRTUALLY THE SAME AS FOR 1973.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DEATHS FOR THE SAME PERIOD WAS 22,029 COMPARED TO 21,251 IN 1973. THE CRUDE DEATH RATE WAS 5.2 PER THOUSAND POPULATION= AGAIN, LITTLE CHANGE.

THE FIGURES OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS ARE BASED UPON EVENTS OCCURRING RATHER THAN UPON REGISTRATIONS MADE AND THEREFORE DIFFER SLIGHTLY FROM THOSE RELEASED BY THE REGISTRAR GENERAL.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1975

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CLOSE WATCH KEPT ON TRIAD ACTIVITY IN PRISONS
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SEVENTY-FIVE PER CENT OF HONG KONG'S PRISON POPULATION CLAIM ON ADMISSION TO HAVE SOME FORM OF TRIAD AFFILIATION OR GANG MEMBERSHIP, STATISTICS FOR 1974 SHOW.

THIS PERCENTAGE REPRESENTS ABOUT 5,850 OUT OF THE TOTAL PRISON POPULATION OF 7,800, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON. L.M. DAVIES TOLD COUNCIL TODAY IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN.

+THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT THE ACTUAL PERCENTAGE MAY BE HIGHER+, MR. DAVIES ADDED, NOTING THAT THREE PER CENT OF ALL ADMISSIONS HAD BEEN CONVICTED FOR MEMBERSHIP OF UNLAWFUL SOCIETIES.

+CONSTANT WATCHFULNESS IS MAINTAINED BY THE STAFFS OF INSTITUTIONS TO IDENTIFY PARTICULARLY ACTIVE GANG MEMBERS, AND WHERE NECESSARY THESE ARE SEGREGATED FROM THE MAIN PRISONER POPULATION,+ HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, ALL INFORMATION RECEIVED ON TRIAD ACTIVITY WITHIN PRISONS WAS REPORTED TO THE POLICE, INCLUDING ANY INDICATION OF SUCH ACTIVITY SUCH AS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE FINDING OF TRIAD WRITING.

+THE MAJOR DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING RELIABLE INFORMATION ON SUCH ACTIVITY LIES IN THE VERY HIGH DEGREE OF INMATE INVOLVEMENT,+ MR. DAVIES SAID.

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PROGRESS REPORT SOON ON SOCIAL CAUSES OF CRIME
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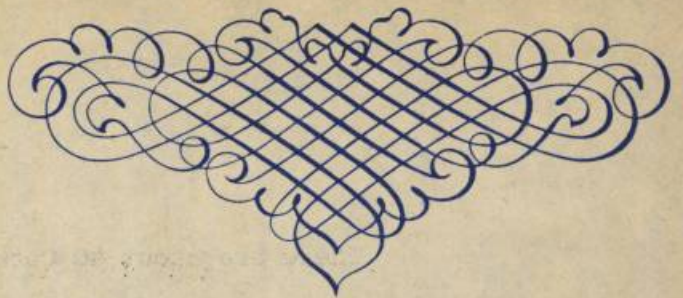
THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE SOCIAL CAUSES OF CRIME WILL PUBLISH ANOTHER PROGRESS REPORT WITHIN A WEEK.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. LI FOOK-KOW, IN A REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. MISS KO SIU-WAH IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. LI SAID THE REPORT WOULD NOT INCLUDE THE STUDY OF YOUNG OFFENDERS BY THE SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTRE OF THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY ALTHOUGH IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE RESEARCH PROJECT WAS NOW IN THE FINAL STAGES OF PREPARATION.

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ROYAL VISIT PRESS RELEASE



Wednesday, April 23, 1975

DUKE TO SEE TRAINEES AT OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL

More Than 2,500 Have Taken Courses Since Opening In 1970

The Duke of Edinburgh, a graduate of Gordonstoun School where physical challenge is incorporated into the curriculum as a means of developing character, will visit Hong Kong's Outward Bound School on May 5 to see some of the trainees at work.

The first Outward Bound School was set up in 1941 at Aberdovey, Wales, following consultations between Lawrence Holt, head of the Blue Funnel Line, and Dr. Kurt Hahn, founder and headmaster of Gordonstoun.

Mr. Holt was disturbed at the disproportionate loss of life among young seamen whose ships were sunk during World War II. A pattern had emerged which made plain that younger and physically better-equipped seamen died on board, in the water, in lifeboats and rafts, while the older, more experienced men lived.

From this it was reasoned that success in meeting a severe trial depended far more on attitude of mind than on brute physical prowess. Subsequent discussions between Mr. Holt and Dr. Hahn led to the organisation of the first courses which became the model for all future Outward Bound Schools everywhere.

Hong Kong's Outward Bound School, in ideal rugged terrain near Tai Mong Tsai, Sai Kung, was opened in 1970, as a result of substantial assistance mainly from the Hong Kong Government and the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club. Since then, 2,532 trainees have completed various courses lasting from a few days up to three weeks.

/There are

There are about 40 Outward Bound Schools throughout the world and they cater for all races and creeds. There is no religious or political bar, and anyone can attend, regardless of social status or educational background.

The main objective of all Outward Bound Schools is to help the young, and the not so young, discover and develop their own resourcefulness, ability and initiative. This is done by placing them in an unfamiliar but challenging situation.

The self-discovery awakens in them an awareness of their own potential, and encourages them to take a second look at the world in which they live. They re-assess the inhibitions, the lack of adventure, the indolence and dogmas of modern urban life, and come to realise that while formal education provides the knowledge and tools for a career, the Outward Bound training makes possible a balance in character development, hastens maturity, and enlarges ambition.

Hong Kong's Outward Bound School is administered by the Hong Kong Outward Bound Trust, a non-profit-making organisation. The school operates on the international format, but is autonomous, and designs its courses to fit the geography of its locale in the New Territories, and Hong Kong's environment.

The school distributes no profits, and aims at being as business-like as possible, with students' fees providing the main source of income. Trainees are sponsored by many Hong Kong Government departments, commercial firms, and banks. If a youth is without a sponsor, but is fired with an enthusiasm to join and improve himself for his own sake and the wider benefit of the community, his application is not ignored.

/The headmaster

The headmaster of Hong Kong's Outward Bound, Mr. J.W. Tucker, regards the coming visit of the Duke to the school as the most significant milestone in its short history. The Duke's Gordonstoun connection - Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, was also at Gordonstoun - will probably evoke memories when he sees some of the trainees in the middle of their deliberately arduous, yet ultimately rewarding endeavours.

Mr. Tucker is convinced of the benefit accruing to Hong Kong as a whole since the concept of Outward Bound was introduced here. A nucleus of tomorrow's leaders, possessing not only technical proficiency but also a hidden reservoir of strength, is already in the community's midst.

"And what is more, the early confusion about our purpose has given way to complete acceptance, and the result is that we are expanding," he says.