



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1978

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TEXTILES AGREEMENTS BRING STABILITY

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HONG KONG HAS BEEN ASSURED OF FIVE YEARS' STABILITY IN ITS MAJOR MARKETS WITH THE SIGNING OF TWO MAJOR TEXTILE AGREEMENTS WITH THE E.E.C. AND THE UNITED STATES IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, MR. DAVID JORDAN SAID TODAY.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY FOR NEWLY-ELECTED OFFICE BEARERS OF THE FEDERATION OF HONG KONG GARMENT MANUFACTURERS.

MR. JORDAN SAID THAT THE FEDERATION WILL HAVE MUCH TO CONTRIBUTE TO HONG KONG'S EFFORTS IN MAKING THE BEST USE OF EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES, IN UP-GRADING HONG KONG'S PRODUCTS, AND IN DEVELOPING HONG KONG ITSELF AS A POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT MARKET.

MR. JORDAN POINTED OUT THAT IN 1977 THERE WAS SOME REDUCTION IN THE VALUE OF HONG KONG'S TOTAL CLOTHING EXPORTS AFTER THE DYNAMIC GROWTH THAT WAS ACHIEVED IN 1976.

+WE SAW TOO THE UNSETTLING EFFECTS OF HAVING TO NEGOTIATE TWO MAJOR TEXTILE AGREEMENTS AND SEVERAL SMALLER AGREEMENTS WITHIN A MATTER OF MONTHS, AS WELL AS HAVING TO IMPLEMENT THEM WITHIN AN EVEN SHORTER PERIOD.+

MR. JORDAN WAS IMPRESSED BY THE NUMBER OF FEDERATION MEMBERS WHICH NOW EXCEEDS 450. +SUCH A LARGE ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP IS HARDLY A PORTENT OF THE DEMISE OF THE HONG KONG TEXTILE INDUSTRY, WHICH SOME PEOPLE SEEM TO HAVE PREDICTED WOULD COME FOLLOWING OUR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EEC.+

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT, MR. LAM KUN-SHING, MR. JORDAN SAID THE GARMENT INDUSTRY AND ALL PEOPLE IN HONG KONG +HAVE DERIVED GREAT BENEFIT FROM MR. LAM'S ADVICE ON OUR COMPLEX EXPORT QUOTA SYSTEM AND IN THE NUMEROUS NEGOTIATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS WE HAVE HAD TO UNDERTAKE.+

MR. JORDAN PERFORMED THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY ONLY HOURS AFTER HIS ARRIVAL FROM LONDON WHERE HE ATTENDED ONE OF A REGULAR SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH HONG KONG'S REPRESENTATIVES OVERSEAS.

ALSO ATTENDING THE LONDON MEETING WERE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR. LAWRENCE MILLS, AND COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, MR. BILL DORWARD.

ON THE RETURN OF MR. JORDAN, THE ACTING DIRECTOR MR. BILL DORWARD RESUMES HIS POST AS COMMISSIONER OF INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, AND MR. ROY PORTER, THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER.

MR. PAUL WONG HAS BEEN APPOINTED ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TRADE, REPLACING MR. JOHN CHAN WHO IS ON LEAVE PRIOR TO TAKING UP A NEW POST IN THE GOVERNMENT.

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MORE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY REGULATIONS BEING CONSIDERED
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THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, MR. PETER WILLIAMS SAID TODAY THAT A NUMBER OF NEW INDUSTRIAL SAFETY REGULATIONS ARE BEING CONSIDERED AND WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SOON.

HE ALSO DISCLOSED THAT A WORKING PARTY COMPRISING OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS HAS BEEN SET UP TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ORDINANCE.

MR. WILLIAMS WAS SPEAKING AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE LIONS CLUB OF LION ROCK AT THE MANDARIN HOTEL.

HE GAVE A BRIEF RUN DOWN OF LABOUR LEGISLATION ENACTED DURING RECENT YEARS AND EXPLAINED WHAT THEY WERE INTENDED TO ACHIEVE.

MR. WILLIAMS TOUCHED ON FOUR AREAS -- INDUSTRIAL SAFETY, WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION, INDUSTRIAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT -- WHICH HE SAID WERE OF INTEREST TO EMPLOYERS AND EXECUTIVES.

ON INDUSTRIAL SAFETY, MR. WILLIAMS SAID THE LEGISLATION PRESCRIBED SAFETY STANDARDS AND MEASURES, SAFE METHODS AND PRACTICE IN WORKING IN INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

+THE OVERALL AIMS OF THESE STANDARDS AND MEASURES, + HE SAID, +ARE TO PROTECT WORKERS FROM INJURY, WORK PLACES FROM HAZARDS AND EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES FROM LOSS OF PRODUCTION AND OF EARNINGS DUE TO INJURIES AND MISHAPS.+

MR. WILLIAMS SAID THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ORDINANCE WAS AMENDED LAST MONTH TO RAISE THE NON-MANUAL WORKERS' WAGE CEILING FOR APPLICATION OF THE ORDINANCE FROM \$2,000 TO \$5,000 PER MONTH.

+IT MEANS, + HE SAID, +THAT NOW IN ADDITION TO ALL MANUAL WORKERS, NON-MANUAL WORKERS EARNING UP TO \$5,000 A MONTH ARE COVERED.+

+THE ORDINANCE NOW COVERS 98.9 PER CENT OF THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION.+

TURNING TO INDUSTRIAL TRAINING, MR. WILLIAMS SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD AN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING BRANCH WHOSE ROLE WAS TO HELP BRING ABOUT A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING GEARED TO THE DEVELOPING NEEDS OF HONG KONG.

THE APPRENTICESHIP ORDINANCE WHICH AIMED TO PROMOTE APPRENTICE TRAINING AND REGULATE THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OF APPRENTICES IN DESIGNATED TRADES, WAS BROUGHT INTO FORCE IN JULY 1976. IT REQUIRED EMPLOYERS OF YOUNG PERSONS BETWEEN 14 AND 18 YEARS OF AGE TO ENTER INTO CONTRACTS OF APPRENTICESHIP AND TO PROVIDE THEM WITH PROPER PRACTICAL ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AND COMPLEMENTARY RELATED TECHNICAL EDUCATION ON A DAY-RELEASE BASIS.

/TO ADMINISTER

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TO ADMINISTER THE ORDINANCE, THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT SET UP AN APPRENTICESHIP DIVISION IN JULY 1976. ITS DUTIES INCLUDE ADVISING AND ASSISTING EMPLOYERS IN THE TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OF APPRENTICES, REGISTERING APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS, ENSURING THAT TRAINING FOR APPRENTICES IS PROPERLY CARRIED OUT AND HELPING TO RESOLVE DISPUTES BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND APPRENTICES.

IN 1976, SOME 1,500 APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACTS WERE REGISTERED BY THE DIVISION, MR. WILLIAMS SAID.

REFERRING TO THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE, MR. WILLIAMS SAID IT MADE PROVISIONS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, FOR THE MANNER OF TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS, PROBATION, SUSPENSION FROM EMPLOYMENT, TEMPORARY LAY-OFF, WAGE PERIODS AND THE TIME, MANNER AND PLACE OF PAYMENT OF WAGES, DEDUCTION FROM WAGES, MATERNITY PROTECTION FOR WOMEN, PROVISION OF REST DAYS, SICKNESS ALLOWANCE, HOLIDAYS WITH PAY AND SEVERANCE PAY, AND LICENSING OF EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES.

SUMMING UP THE BENEFITS PROVIDED BY VARIOUS AMENDMENTS TO THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE SINCE 1975, MR. WILLIAMS SAID A WORKER NOW EARNS ONE PAID SICKNESS DAY FOR EACH MONTH OF SERVICE AND CAN ACCUMULATE UP TO 36 DAYS. HIS SICKNESS ALLOWANCE IS TWO-THIRDS HIS NORMAL WAGES.

IN THE CASE OF WRONGFUL DISMISSAL, HIS WAGES AND WAGES-IN-LIEU OF NOTICE ARE PROTECTED BY LAW= IN CASE OF BANKRUPTCY OF THE EMPLOYER, HE HAS PRIORITY OF CLAIM OVER ALMOST ALL OTHER CREDITORS. AND IF HIS EMPLOYER IS A SUB-CONTRACTOR, THE ARREARS OF WAGES WILL BE DEFRAIDED EVENTUALLY BY THE PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR.

IN TERMS OF REST AND HOLIDAYS, A WORKER IS NOW ENTITLED TO ONE REST DAY IN SEVEN DAYS, 10 PAID HOLIDAYS AND SEVEN DAYS PAID ANNUAL LEAVE PER YEAR, MR. WILLIAMS SAID.

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SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES CALLS FOR
MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HANDICAPPED
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THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, MR. E.P. HO TODAY CALLED ON ALL EMPLOYERS IN HONG KONG TO +SERIOUSLY CONSIDER+ HOW THEY CAN HELP THE GOVERNMENT PROMOTE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND THOSE AGED OVER 55 WHO HAVE LOST PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT.

HIS APPEAL CAME DURING A LUNCHTIME SPEECH TO PAST AND PRESENT CHAIRMEN AND DIRECTORS OF THE PO LEUNG KUK.

MR. HO SAID THAT ON FIRST ENCOUNTER WE TENDED TO JUDGE HANDICAPPED PEOPLE IN A NEGATIVE WAY; IN DOING SO WE FAILED TO SEE THAT THE MAJORITY HAD MANY MORE POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS AND, IN USING THESE IN EMPLOYMENT, COULD CONTRIBUTE TO A STABLE SOCIETY FOR US ALL.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS CURRENTLY LOOKING AT THREE WAYS IN WHICH IT COULD HELP THEM MORE EASILY TO LOCATE EMPLOYMENT.

+FIRSTLY, WE FEEL CONFIDENT THAT THE PRESENT VARIED SOURCES FOR PLACING SUCH PEOPLE IN EMPLOYMENT CAN BE STREAMLINED, THEREBY PROVIDING A MORE PROFESSIONAL AND EFFICIENT SERVICE,+ MR HO SAID.

+SECONDLY, WE REALISE THAT THE PUBLIC SERVICE, AS A MAJOR EMPLOYER IN HONG KONG, MUST CONTINUE TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY IN LOCATING SUITABLE JOBS FOR THOSE WHO ARE PHYSICALLY OR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED.

+THIRDLY, VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO PREPARE THE LESS ABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT IS ALSO BEING IMPROVED.+

FOR EXAMPLE, THE REHABILITATION WHITE PAPER PROPOSED THAT THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION SHOULD TAKE OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING TO THE DISABLED FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE SO THAT THE SAME PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OFFERED TO THE ABLE BODIED WERE AVAILABLE TO THEM.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FOR DISABLED AND MALADJUSTED SCHOOL CHILDREN WERE BEING EXPANDED AS RAPIDLY AS RESOURCES PERMITTED.

+THUS, OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS OR SO, WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO PREPARE THE MORE VULNERABLE MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY TO PARTICIPATE MORE PROMINENTLY IN ORDINARY EMPLOYMENT.+

BUT ALL THESE EFFORTS WOULD FAIL IF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE DID NOT SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT, MR. HO SAID.

+ONLY IF THERE IS AN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH YOU WILL WE SUCCEED. I THEREFORE APPEAL TO ALL EMPLOYERS IN HONG KONG TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER HOW THEY CAN HELP US IN PROMOTING JOB OPPORTUNITIES.

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+I WOULD ASK EMPLOYEES, TOO, TO BE SYMPATHETIC TO FELLOW WORKERS WHO ARE DISABLED.

+WE MUST ALL LEARN THAT THOSE WHO APPEAR TO BE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED USUALLY HAVE MANY MORE POSITIVE ABILITIES THAN THE MORE APPARENT NEGATIVE DISABILITIES.

+TO MENTION A FEW OF THE POSITIVE ADVANTAGES OF EMPLOYING THE DISABLED, THEY ARE USUALLY FOUND TO BE LOYAL WORKERS WHO STAY IN THEIR JOBS.

+AGAIN, BECAUSE THEY FEEL THEY HAVE TO PROVE THEMSELVES, THEY ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EMPLOYMENT, AND THIS MOTIVATION MAKES THEM BETTER WORKERS THAN THE INDIFFERENT ABLE BODIED.+

MR. HO SAID MANY COUNTRIES HAD ADOPTED LEGISLATIVE MEASURES FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS BY SETTING A QUOTA FOR EACH EMPLOYER. HE WAS NOT SUGGESTING THAT HONG KONG SHOULD PROCEED ALONG THAT ROAD AT PRESENT.

MR. HO WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE WORD WOULD SPREAD FROM THOSE EMPLOYERS WHO WERE HAPPY WITH THE DISABLED AND ELDERLY IN THEIR EMPLOY TO THE REMAINDER OF OUR EMPLOYERS WHO AT PRESENT WERE LESS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE.

+IF WE ALL ARE WILLING TO BE POSITIVELY INVOLVED, THEN WE WILL BE ENCOURAGING OUR DISABLED AND OUR ELDERLY TO BE INTEGRATED MORE FULLY WITHIN OUR SOCIETY, THEREBY MAKING HONG KONG A BETTER PLACE FOR US ALL TO LIVE AND WORK IN.

+I KNOW THE TASK FACING US IN SPREADING THIS MESSAGE IS NOT AN EASY ONE, AND THE PROCESS OF EDUCATING OUR EMPLOYERS WILL NOT BE SHORT.

+THAT IS WHY I AM ASKING YOU, THE LEADERS OF THE PO LEUNG KUK AND THE COMMUNITY, TO JOIN IN BEING THE STANDARD BEARERS IN THIS EDUCATIONAL AND EXAMPLE SETTING WORK,+ MR. HO ADDED.

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WEATHER FOR LAST MONTH
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THE WEATHER FOR LAST MONTH AS A WHOLE WAS QUITE SEASONABLE WITH RAINFALL, MEAN TEMPERATURE, CLOUD AMOUNT AND SUNSHINE ALL VERY CLOSE TO NORMAL.

ACCORDING TO THE WEATHER ROUND-UP FOR JANUARY RELEASED BY ROYAL OBSERVATORY TODAY THE HIGHEST TEMPERATURE OF THE MONTH WAS 24.4 DEGREES CELSIUS RECORDED ON JANUARY 13, WHILE THE LOWEST TEMPERATURE OF 6.9 DEGREES C. WAS RECORDED ON JANUARY 18.

THE AMOUNT OF RAINFALL FOR THE MONTH WAS 22.9 MM, WHICH IS 5.6 MM BELOW NORMAL.

DURING THE MONTH THERE WERE TWO COLD SPELLS AND THE STRONG MONSOON SIGNAL WAS HOISTED ON FIVE OCCASIONS TO WARN STRONG WINDS ASSOCIATED WITH OUTBREAKS OF THE WINTER MONSOON. LOW TEMPERATURE WARNINGS WERE ISSUED FROM JANUARY 16 TO 18 TO WARN FROST ON HIGH GROUND AND IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

TWO TROPICAL CYCLONES -- TYPHOON MARY AND TROPICAL STORM NADINE -- WERE REPORTED OVER WESTERN PART OF NORTH PACIFIC DURING THE MONTH. BOTH OF THEM DID NOT AFFECT HONG KONG.

AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE MONTH, A COLD FRONT PASSED THROUGH HONG KONG AND PUT AN END TO THE WARM AND HUMID WEATHER WHICH HAD PREVAILED AT THE END OF DECEMBER 1977.

IT WAS RATHER COLD AND DRY DURING THE FIRST SIX DAYS OF THE MONTH BUT BECAME PROGRESSIVELY MILDER.

ON JANUARY 12, AN EASTERLY AIRSTREAM FROM THE PACIFIC BEGAN TO INFLUENCE SOUTH CHINA AND THE WEATHER IN HONG KONG BECAME MUCH WARMER AND MORE HUMID. VISIBILITY WAS REDUCED TO A MINIMUM OF 200 METRES ON WAGLAN ISLAND ON THE MORNING OF JANUARY 14.

DURING THE MORNING OF JANUARY 16, AN INTENSE COLD FRONT ACCOMPANIED BY PERIODS OF RAIN AND ISOLATED THUNDERSTORMS PASSED THROUGH HONG KONG. WINDS FRESHENED RAPIDLY FROM THE NORTH AND TEMPERATURES DROPPED MORE THAN 10 DEGREES CELSIUS IN 24 HOURS AFTER THE PASSAGE OF THE COLD FRONT.

WEATHER WAS VERY COLD DURING THE NEXT SIX DAYS AND FROST WAS REPORTED IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE NEW TERRITORIES. IT WAS THE COLDEST ON THE MORNING OF JANUARY 18 WHEN MINIMUM TEMPERATURES OF MINUS ONE AND ZERO DEGREE WERE REPORTED AT TAI MO SHAN AND TATE'S CAIRN RESPECTIVELY. THE MINIMUM TEMPERATURE AT THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY WAS 6.9 DEGREES CELSIUS WHICH WAS THE LOWEST RECORDED IN THE MONTH.

/THE WEATHER

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THE WEATHER BECAME FINE AND SUNNY ON JANUARY 19 AND LASTED TILL JANUARY 27 WHEN HONG KONG WAS AGAIN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF A WARM AIRSTREAM FROM THE PACIFIC MAKING THE CONDITIONS CLOUDY AND MISTY.

ON THE EVENING OF JANUARY 28 ANOTHER COLD FRONT PASSED HONG KONG AND THE WEATHER BECAME COOLER AGAIN WITH CLOUDY CONDITION AND RAIN FOR THE REST OF THE MONTH.

DURING THE MONTH THE RED FIRE DANGER WARNING WAS ISSUED ON THREE OCCASIONS AND THE YELLOW FOUR TIMES. NO AIRCRAFT WERE DIVERTED FROM HONG KONG DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER.

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HIKING AND ROCK CLIMBING ACTIVITIES FOR WORKERS

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THE YOUTH WORK UNIT OF SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE OUTWARD BOUND (ALUMNI) ASSOCIATION HAVE JOINTLY ORGANISED A SERIES OF ROCK CLIMBING AND EXPEDITION ACTIVITIES FOR WORKERS AGE BETWEEN 18 AND 35.

THE ACTIVITIES WILL TAKE PLACE BETWEEN FEBRUARY 19 AND MARCH 19 IN THE NORTHEASTERN PART OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, SAI KUNG PENINSULA AND KOWLOON PEAK.

THE FEE FOR JOINING AN EXPEDITION IS \$5 AND FOR ROCK-CLIMBING IS \$10.

APPLICATION FORMS ARE NOW OBTAINABLE AT THE OFFICE OF YOUTH WORK UNIT, KOWLOON CENTRAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, TOP FLOOR, 405 NATHAN ROAD, OR ANY COMMUNITY CENTRES, YOUTH CENTRES AND ESTATE COMMUNITY WORK OFFICES OPERATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

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REGISTRATION TEAM TO OPERATE IN MUI WO
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A TEAM FROM THE REGISTRATION OF PERSONS OFFICE WILL CONDUCT REGISTRATIONS AT THE OFFICE OF MUI WO RURAL COMMITTEE FOR RESIDENTS AND PERSONS LIVING NEARBY FOR THREE DAYS FROM FEBRUARY 22.

DURING THESE THREE DAYS, REGISTRATIONS WILL BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 9.30 A.M. AND 4 P.M.

THE VISIT IS TO ENABLE PARENTS OR GUARDIANS TO REGISTER THEIR CHILDREN OR WARDS BETWEEN 11 AND 17 YEARS OF AGE FOR JUVENILE IDENTITY CARDS AND HOLDERS OF JUVENILE IDENTITY CARDS TO REGISTER FOR ADULT IDENTITY CARDS ON REACHING 18 YEARS OF AGE.

ALL PERSONS LIVING IN THIS AREA ARE REMINDED OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO REGISTER THEMSELVES AND THEIR CHILDREN FOR IDENTITY CARDS AND TO REPORT CHANGES OF EMPLOYMENT OR RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES, MARITAL STATUS, OR ANY OTHER PARTICULARS.

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