



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1974

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DAILY GUIDE TO WHOLESALE PRICES AND SUPPLY OF BASIC FOOD
COMMODITIES

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TENANTS FACE BRIGHTER PROSPECTS
SAYS RATING AND VALUATION COMMISSIONER

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THOSE SEEKING OR LIVING IN PRIVATE DOMESTIC TENANCIES NOT SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT RENT CONTROL FACE A MUCH MORE ENCOURAGING PROSPECT THIS YEAR, ACCORDING TO THE COMMISSIONER OF RATING AND VALUATION, MR. RAYMOND FRY.

ADDRESSING THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TODAY, MR. FRY NOTED THAT AS A RESULT OF GOOD SUPPLY OF NEW ACCOMMODATION IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, THERE WERE AT THE END OF LAST YEAR JUST OVER 10,000 VACANT DOMESTIC UNITS, WHICH WAS THE HIGHEST VACANCY POSITION SINCE 1968.

THE CURRENT TIGHT MONEY SITUATION, HE SAID, WAS BEGINNING TO AFFECT DOMESTIC RENTS AND THIS WAS SHOWN BY A REDUCTION IN THE ASKING RENTS IN ADVERTISEMENTS.

MR. FRY BELIEVED THAT THERE WOULD BE A GENERAL LOWERING OF RENTS IN LARGE AND MEDIUM FLATS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

IN HIS OPINION, THE EASING OF THE RENT SITUATION IN HONG KONG WAS PARTLY DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE GOVERNMENT CEASED TO REFUND RATES ON EMPTY DOMESTIC PREMISES AS FROM JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR AND +THIS WILL BE AN INDUCEMENT TO LANDLORDS GETTING THEIR PREMISES OCCUPIED QUICKLY AND AT THE GOING RATE, WHATEVER THAT HAPPENS TO BE+.

MR. FRY SAID THERE SEEMED TO BE AMPLE ACCOMMODATION OF THE LARGE AND MEDIUM TYPES TO MEET THE DEMAND BOTH THIS YEAR AND NEXT.

NEVERTHELESS, AS FOR THE SITUATION AFTER 1975, HE FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT. IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GAUGE REQUIREMENTS, WHICH WERE VERY MUCH BOUND UP WITH THE ECONOMY, THE NET INFLOW OF OVERSEAS NATIONALS AND MAJOR DEVELOPMENT WORKS SUCH AS THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY, ALL OF WHICH +INCREASE THE DEMANDS ON HONG KONG'S INFRA-STRUCTURE AND, IN PARTICULAR, ACCOMMODATION+.

REFERRING TO THE SUGGESTION RECENTLY MADE BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT ENGAGE IN JOINT SCHEMES WITH PRIVATE DEVELOPERS TO PRODUCE ACCOMMODATION FOR ITS USE, MR. FRY SAID THAT THERE WERE ALSO SOME COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS WHO COULD AND SHOULD DO MORE IN THIS DIRECTION.

+THE PROSPECTS FOR TENANTS ARE INEXTRICABLY BOUND UP WITH THE PROSPECTS FOR LANDLORDS,+ HE OBSERVED, POINTING OUT THAT UNLESS DEVELOPERS COULD SEE PROSPECTS FOR FAIR PROFITS, IT WOULD BE HARD TO GET THE NEW ACCOMMODATION WHICH WAS SO VITAL TO IMPROVING THE LIVING STANDARDS OF ALL INHABITANTS IN HONG KONG.

ON THE SHORT-TERM POSITION OF OFFICE ACCOMMODATION, MR. FRY WAS LESS OPTIMISTIC.

ALTHOUGH THE SPACE FOR OFFICE ACCOMMODATION COMPLETED LAST YEAR REPRESENTED A SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT ON 1972, THERE HAD BEEN A CONTINUING DEMAND FOR OFFICE ACCOMMODATION IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS CENTRES, AND THIS HAS TENDED TO KEEP RENTS ON AN UPWARD COURSE, HE NOTED.

WHILE HE

WHILE HE FELT THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY EASING OF THE PRESSURE ON OFFICE SPACE UNTIL NEXT YEAR, THE COMMISSIONER WAS NEVERTHELESS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR TENANTS IN 1975 AND 1976 +LOOK VERY GOOD INDEED+. HIS OPTIMISM WAS SUPPORTED BY THE FACT THAT COMPLETIONS IN THESE TWO YEARS WOULD TOTAL OVER SEVEN MILLION SQUARE FEET, WHICH FAR EXCEED THE RATE OF SUPPLY OF PREVIOUS YEARS.

+SO THE LONG-TERM POSITION FOR TENANTS LOOKS FAIRLY PROMISING,+ HE SAID.

AS FOR THE LOCATION OF OFFICE ACCOMMODATION, THOUGH HE FELT THAT THERE WERE CERTAIN TYPES OF BUSINESS WHICH MUST BE CENTRALLY LOCATED, HE BELIEVED THAT RE-LOCATION IN A PERIPHERAL AREA FOR SOME WOULD NOT ONLY BE ADVANTAGEOUS ON RENT BUT ALSO POSSIBLY BE JUST AS CONVENIENT AS REGARDS TRAVEL, WORKING CONDITIONS AND COMMUNICATION.

TURNING TO FACTORY PREMISES, HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A LITTLE LESS SPACE THIS YEAR THAN LAST YEAR, DEMAND APPEARED TO SLACKEN OVER THE YEAR AND THERE NOW SEEMED AMPLE SPACE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENT OF NEW TENANTS.

WHILE THERE HAD BEEN SOME UPWARD MOVEMENT OF RENTS OVER THE YEAR, IT HAD BEEN VERY SLIGHT AND TOWARDS THE END OF THE YEAR THERE WERE DEFINITE SIGNS OF A DOWNTURN, THOUGH THIS HAPPENED IN SUCH AREAS AS CHAI WAN AND KWAI CHUNG.

+I WOULD EXPECT SOME FURTHER DRIFT DOWN IN RENTS THIS YEAR,+ MR. FRY PREDICTED, +BUT HOW FAR THIS GOES IS VERY MUCH DEPENDENT ON THE ECONOMY GENERALLY.+

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT UNLESS THERE WAS A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN DEMAND FOR FACTORY PREMISES THIS YEAR, THERE SHOULD BE PLENTY AVAILABLE FOR TENANTS, AND THE PROSPECTS FOR 1975 WERE SIMILAR.

AS REGARDS SHOP PREMISES, MR. FRY ENVISAGED THAT WITH THE COMPLETIONS IN 1974 AND 1975, IT WOULD MEAN AN EXCESS OF SUPPLY OVER DEMAND FOR A YEAR OR TWO.

DESPITE A CONTINUING UPWARD TREND IN SHOP RENTS FOR MOST OF 1973, HE NOTED THAT THERE WERE NOW SIGNS OF A SLOWING-DOWN OF THE TREND AND THAT SOME DOWNTURN COULD BE EXPECTED.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUPERMARKETS AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING AREAS, MR. FRY OBSERVED, WAS BEGINNING TO HAVE SOME EFFECT ON RENTS IN THE OLD SHOPPING CENTRES, AS +PEOPLE REALISE THAT SHOPPING CAN BE BOTH EASIER AND CHEAPER 'OUT OF TOWN'+.

NOTE TO EDITORS: COPIES OF THE FULL TEXT OF MR. FRY'S SPEECH
----- ARE BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

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TEST TRANSMISSION FOR RTV ENGLISH SERVICE

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO ENABLE TELEVISION VIEWERS TO TEST THEIR RECEIVING CHANNEL FOR THE RTV ENGLISH SERVICE WHICH IS STARTING NEXT MONDAY (APRIL 22).

ON THE REQUEST OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY, A TEST CARD WILL BE TRANSMITTED DURING NORMAL PROGRAMME HOURS TOMORROW (SATURDAY) AND ON SUNDAY, SO THAT VIEWERS CAN PRE-TUNE THEIR SETS.

THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS FOR THE NEW SERVICE WILL BE OPERATED:

RECEIVING AREA	TRANSMITTER	CHANNEL
NORTH HONG KONG) KOWLOON)	TEMPLE HILL	27
TA KWU LING) SHEUNG SHUI) TAI PO) TOLO)	CLOUDY HILL	55
NORTH LANTAU) CASTLE PEAK TO) TAI LAM CHUNG) LOK MA CHAU) YUEN LONG) SHEK KONG)	CASTLE PEAK	44
POKFULAM) REPULSE BAY) SOUTH BAY)	LAMMA	55
TSUEN WAN) TSING LUNG TAU) TSING YI) KWAI CHUNG)	GOLDEN HILL	45

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE AUTHORITY SAID VIEWERS ON THE PEAK WHO ARE STILL WATCHING TVB JADE ON THE OLD CHANNEL 27 TRANSMITTED FROM LAMMA MIGHT EXPERIENCE SOME TEMPORARY INTERFERENCE FOR THE TWO-DAY TEST.

IN THIS CASE, THEY SHOULD CHANGE TO THE NEW LAMMA CHANNEL 49 WHICH HAS BEEN TRANSMITTING SINCE APRIL 1.

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FIVE BUILDINGS IN WESTERN CONDEMNED

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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY TODAY DECLARED NOS. 67 AND 69 WING LOK STREET TO BE IN A DANGEROUS CONDITION, AND NOS. 43, 45 AND 45A AND B BONHAM STRAND LIABLE TO BECOME DANGEROUS.

THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT BUILDING SURVEYOR SAID THESE PRE-WAR BUILDINGS HAD BEEN UNDER OBSERVATION FOR SOME TIME AND A DETAILED INSPECTION WAS MADE FOLLOWING A REPORT OF FRESH MOVEMENT.

IT WAS FOUND THAT MOVEMENT HAD OCCURRED IN THE WALLS OF BOTH NOS. 67 AND 69 WING LOK STREET AND AS THESE WERE ALREADY FRACTURED IT IS CONSIDERED THAT THERE IS RISK OF FAILURE LEADING TO A COLLAPSE, HE SAID.

FRACTURES IN THE PARTY WALLS OF THE REMAINING BUILDINGS TOGETHER WITH SOME BULGED BRICKWORK INDICATE THAT THERE IS A RISK OF FAILURE DURING OR AFTER THE DEMOLITION OF THE ADJOINING DANGEROUS BUILDINGS. A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF DECAYED TIMBER WAS ALSO OBSERVED, HE ADDED.

NOTICES OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR CLOSURE ORDERS IN VICTORIA DISTRICT COURT AT 9.30 A.M. ON MAY 22, 1974 WERE POSTED TODAY. AS NO. 69 WING LOK STREET IS ALREADY VACANT NO CLOSURE ORDER WILL BE NECESSARY.

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ESTATE DUTY EXEMPTION LIMIT TO BE RAISED

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A BILL DESIGNED TO IMPLEMENT ONE OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S BUDGET PROPOSALS ON TAX RELIEF BY RAISING THE EXEMPTION LIMIT FOR ESTATE DUTY FROM \$200,000 TO \$300,000 IS PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S GAZETTE.

THE ESTATE DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1974, WHICH IS TO BE INTRODUCED TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SHORTLY, SIMPLY SEEKS TO ABOLISH THE EXISTING FIRST PLATFORM - NOW ATTRACTING DUTY AT FIVE PER CENT - FOR ESTATES VALUED BETWEEN \$200,000 AND \$300,000.

THE RATES OF ESTATE DUTY, WHICH NOW START AT SIX PER CENT, REMAIN UNCHANGED FOR ESTATES VALUED IN EXCESS OF \$300,000.

THIS BILL ADDS A NEW SCHEDULE SETTING OUT THE RATES OF DUTY PAYABLE IN RESPECT OF ESTATES OF PERSONS DYING ON OR AFTER APRIL 1 THIS YEAR.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, POINTED OUT IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH THAT THE ABOLITION OF THE FIRST PLATFORM WOULD POSSIBLY COST THE GOVERNMENT MORE THAN \$1 MILLION IN REVENUE IN THE NEW FINANCIAL YEAR.

HE ADDED THAT IN 1972/73, WHILST ESTATES VALUED BETWEEN \$200,000 AND \$300,000 CONTRIBUTED ONLY 2.6 PER CENT TO THE TOTAL DUTY ASSESSED, THEY REPRESENTED OVER 20 PER CENT OF THE NUMBER OF ESTATES ASSESSED.

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ADDITIONAL TEN PER CENT SURCHARGE PROPOSED
ON LATE PAYMENTS OF EARNINGS AND PROFITS TAXES

MANUFACTURERS ARE BEING ENCOURAGED TO RE-EQUIP AND UP-GRADE THEIR PLANT AND MACHINERY UNDER A NEW BILL WHICH SEEKS TO INCREASE THE INITIAL ALLOWANCE FROM ONE FIFTH TO ONE QUARTER OF THE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE INVOLVED, FOR THE YEARS OF TAX ASSESSMENT BEGINNING APRIL 1 THIS YEAR.

ANOTHER MAIN PURPOSE OF THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1974, GAZETTED TODAY, IS TO DISCOURAGE LATE PAYMENTS OF EARNINGS AND PROFITS TAXES BY IMPOSING A FURTHER SURCHARGE OF UP TO TEN PER CENT ON TAX IN DEFAULT FOR SIX MONTHS.

THE BILL, TO BE TABLED AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SHORTLY, IS DESIGNED TO AMEND THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE SO AS TO IMPLEMENT THE BUDGET PROPOSALS BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ON PLANT AND MACHINERY AND ON SURCHARGES.

IT EMPOWERS THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE TO ADD A FURTHER SURCHARGE OF UP TO 10 PER CENT TO ANY AMOUNT OF TAX IN DEFAULT, INCLUDING THE ORIGINAL FIVE-PER-CENT SURCHARGE, SIX MONTHS AFTER THE DATE ON WHICH THE TAX WAS DUE FOR PAYMENT.

THIS MEASURE IS TO COME INTO EFFECT FROM JULY 1 THIS YEAR.

BUT TO ENSURE THAT ANY TAX IN DEFAULT FOR MORE THAN SIX MONTHS BEFORE JULY 1 IS NOT EXEMPTED FROM THIS PROVISION, THE BILL ALSO ENABLES THE COMMISSIONER TO LEVY THE SURCHARGE OF UP TO TEN PER CENT IN THESE CASES EVEN THOUGH THE DUE DATE MAY BE BEFORE JULY 1.

BESIDES RAISING THE LEVEL OF INITIAL ALLOWANCE FROM ONE FIFTH TO A QUARTER, THE BILL WILL ALSO AMEND THE ORDINANCE TO MAKE SIMILAR PROVISION FOR PLANT AND MACHINERY ACQUIRED UNDER A HIRE PURCHASE AGREEMENT. THE INCREASE OF THE INITIAL ALLOWANCE WILL BE AT A COST OF \$10 MILLION TO THE REVENUE.

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NEW NAME FOR ESTATE POST OFFICE

THE POST OFFICE TODAY ANNOUNCED THAT THE NAME OF THE LO FU NGAM POST OFFICE IN THE LOK FU HOUSING ESTATE IN KOWLOON WILL BE CHANGED TO LOK FU POST OFFICE AS FROM MAY 1, 1974.

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TRAINING COURSE FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

PRACTISING KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS WHO ARE PROFESSIONALLY UNTRAINED WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTAIN QUALIFIED STATUS BY ATTENDING A TWO-YEAR PART-TIME IN-SERVICE TRAINING COURSE ORGANISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

THE COURSE, WHICH IS FREE, WILL BEGIN IN OCTOBER WHEN 50 CANDIDATES WILL BE ADMITTED. THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION WILL BE CANTONESE. LECTURES WILL BE GIVEN AT THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION OR OTHER GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS FROM 4 P.M. TO 7 P.M. TWO OR THREE TIMES A WEEK DURING TERM TIME. DEMONSTRATION AND CRITICISM LESSONS WILL BE CONDUCTED ONCE A WEEK FOR 20 WEEKS IN THE MORNING IN KINDERGARTENS.

APPLICANTS MUST HAVE A HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION OR ITS EQUIVALENT, SPEAK CANTONESE FLUENTLY AND HAVE A GOOD CHARACTER AND SUITABLE PERSONALITY. THEY MUST ALSO BE FULL-TIME PERMITTED TEACHERS IN KINDERGARTENS WITH A MINIMUM OF THREE YEARS' SUITABLE TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN APPROVED SCHOOLS IN HONG KONG.

IN A CIRCULAR TO HEADS OF ALL KINDERGARTENS AND SCHOOLS WITH KINDERGARTEN CLASSES, THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS), MR. ARTHUR BROWN, INVITED APPLICATIONS FROM UNTRAINED PRACTISING KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS.

APPLICATION FORMS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS IN LEE GARDENS, CAUSEWAY BAY, OR FROM THE DEPARTMENT'S KOWLOON SUB-OFFICE ON THE 6TH FLOOR OF THE KOWLOON GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN NATHAN ROAD.

ALL APPLICATIONS TOGETHER WITH PHOTOSTAT COPIES OF TEACHING PERMITS ISSUED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE SENT TO THE ORGANISER OF THE COURSE OF TRAINING FOR KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS, MISS FRANCES HON, BY JUNE 29, 1974.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

EACH CANDIDATE MUST ATTEND AT LEAST 80 PER CENT OF ALL LECTURES BEFORE SITTING FOR THE FINAL EXAMINATION.

ON PASSING THE EXAMINATION, THE TEACHERS WILL BECOME +QUALIFIED KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS.+

THEY WILL THEN BE ELIGIBLE FOR ADMISSION TO THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S REGISTER OF TEACHERS IF THEY HAVE FIVE YEARS' TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN HONG KONG SCHOOLS.

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FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN MID-LEVELS BUS SERVICE

BUS PASSENGERS ARE GETTING A BETTER AND MORE EFFICIENT SERVICE SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MID-LEVELS TRAFFIC SCHEME LAST TUESDAY, AND THIS MEANS THAT THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME ARE BEING MET.

PROVISIONAL ANALYSIS OF SURVEYS CARRIED OUT BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT REVEAL THAT BUS FREQUENCIES ON ALL ROUTES USING THE BUS PRIORITY LANE HAVE IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY.

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR. PETER LEEDS, SAID TODAY: +THE BUSES ARE NO LONGER BEING HELD UP BY CONSTANT TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THIS PART OF THE MID-LEVELS WITH THE RESULT THAT WAITING TIME FOR BUS PASSENGERS HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED.+

+IN SOME CASES IT HAS MEANT THAT THE BUSES ARE ACTUALLY RUNNING TO SCHEDULE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SOME YEARS.+

MR. LEEDS POINTED OUT THAT THE ENTIRE SCHEME WAS AIMED AT IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES AND THIS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED. BUT THE INITIAL DIFFICULTIES WHICH HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED BY OTHER ROAD USERS HAS BEEN AGGRAVATED BY DRIVERS FAILING TO SELECT THEIR CORRECT LANE ON COTTON TREE DRIVE.

+WE ARE TRYING TO ENCOURAGE MOTORISTS TO LEAVE THEIR CARS AT HOME AND TO SWITCH TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT -- HENCE THE BUS PRIORITY SCHEME.+

FROM NEXT MONDAY (APRIL 22), THE BUS SERVICES WILL BE FURTHER IMPROVED WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW ROUTE 23B FROM NORTH POINT TO PARK ROAD. THE SERVICE WILL OPERATE ON A 10-MINUTE FREQUENCY AND IS BEING INTRODUCED ON MONDAY TO COINCIDE WITH THE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS AFTER THE EASTER HOLIDAYS.

IT WILL GIVE PEOPLE LIVING IN THE CAINE ROAD-BONHAM ROAD AREA A DIRECT LINK WITH NORTH POINT -- A SERVICE WHICH HAS NOT BEEN AVAILABLE SINCE THE SCHEME CAME INTO OPERATION.

MR. LEEDS' STATEMENT WAS ENDORSED BY THE TRAFFIC MANAGER OF THE CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY, MR. LYNDON REES, WHO SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN A +BIG IMPROVEMENT+ IN BUS FREQUENCIES.

AS FAR AS ROUTE 13 TO KOTEWALL ROAD IS CONCERNED, MR. REES SAID THAT PEOPLE WERE NOW ADJUSTING TO THE NEW SERVICE.

+ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE FEATURES IS THAT WIVES ARE DRIVING THEIR HUSBANDS TO THE TERMINUS (AT THE JUNCTION OF KOTEWALL ROAD AND CONDUIT ROAD) AND THEN MEETING THE BUS AGAIN IN THE EVENING. THIS IS A MOST WELCOME TREND AS IT IS KEEPING THE CARS AWAY FROM THE CONGESTED CENTRAL DISTRICT,+ HE ADDED.

/+ALREADY

+ALREADY ROUTE 13 IS CARRYING AN AVERAGE OF 6,000 PASSENGERS A DAY WHICH IS FAR MORE THAN WE ANTICIPATED AND A MOST ENCOURAGING START TO THE SERVICE..... AND MOST OF THE PEOPLE ARE NEW BUS PASSENGERS.+

MR. REES SAID SOME PASSENGERS WERE COMPLAINING THAT IT WAS TAKING THEM LONGER TO GET HOME BECAUSE THE BUSES WERE FORCED TO MAKE A BIG DETOUR. BUT HE STRESSED THAT THE JOURNEY TIMES WERE MORE THAN OFFSET BY THE INCREASED FREQUENCY AND THE REDUCED WAITING TIME AT BUS STOPS.

BUS DRIVERS HAVE ALSO GENERALLY WELCOMED THE NEW SCHEME; THEY HAVE POINTED OUT THAT DRIVING CONDITIONS HAVE IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY. THERE IS LESS OF A STRAIN BECAUSE NOW THEY HAVE AN UNINTERRUPTED DRIVE WHEREAS BEFORE THEY HAD TO CONTEND WITH OTHER VEHICLES STOPPING AND STARTING.

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MARCH G.C.P.I. UP FOUR POINTS

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THE GENERAL CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR MARCH 1974 WAS 187, FOUR POINTS (OR 2.2 PER CENT) HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE PREVIOUS MONTH.

THIS WAS DUE MAINLY TO AN INCREASE OF FOUR POINTS IN THE INDEX FOR FOODSTUFFS, ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

THE INDEX FOR FUEL AND LIGHT ADVANCED BY 20 POINTS WHILE THAT FOR MISCELLANEOUS GOODS ADVANCED BY 14 POINTS.

AN INCREASE OF 10 POINTS WAS RECORDED IN THE INDEX FOR ALCOHOLIC DRINK AND TOBACCO WHILE AN INCREASE OF 3 POINTS WAS RECORDED IN THE INDEX FOR TRANSPORT AND VEHICLES.

RISES OF 1 POINT EACH WERE RECORDED IN THE INDEX FOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR AND THE INDEX FOR DURABLE GOODS. MOVEMENTS IN THE INDEXES FOR OTHER SECTIONS OF COMMODITY AND SERVICES WERE INSIGNIFICANT.

COMPARED WITH THE PREVIOUS MONTH, THERE WERE INCREASES IN THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF RICE AND FRESH VEGETABLES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF SALT WATER FISH AND POULTRY DROPPED.

AS TO NON-FOOD ITEMS, THE INCREASE IN THE INDEX FOR FUEL AND LIGHT WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO INCREASED CHARGES FOR ELECTRICITY AND THE FULL EFFECT OF THE UPWARD REVISION IN THE PRICES OF KEROSENE AND LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS AT THE END OF FEBRUARY.

FOLLOWING AN INCREASE IN DUTIES, THE PRICES OF ALCOHOLIC DRINK AND TOBACCO WERE RAISED.

THE RISE IN THE INDEX FOR MISCELLANEOUS GOODS WAS MAINLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO HIGHER PRICES FOR CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS.

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TRANSPORT PROBLEM MORE COMPLEX - BUT CAN BE SOLVED

THE RECONSTITUTED TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE GOT DOWN TO WORK IN EARNEST TODAY WITH THE CHAIRMAN, MR. JAMES ROBSON, EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE THAT THE PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED.

ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE'S FIRST FORMAL MEETING, MR. ROBSON CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THE TASK WOULD NOT BE AN EASY ONE AS HONG KONG'S TRANSPORT PROBLEMS WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY SEVERE AND COMPLEX.

NEVERTHELESS, HE FELT THAT THE PROBLEMS WOULD BE MET AND SOLVED IF THE NEW T.A.C. MAINTAINED THE REPUTATION OF THE ORIGINAL COMMITTEE FOR HARD AND CONSTRUCTIVE WORK.

AS SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, PART OF MR. ROBSON'S RESPONSIBILITIES CONCERN THE CO-ORDINATION OF ALL TRANSPORT MATTERS.

UNLIKE THE OLD COMMITTEE, THE NEW T.A.C. WILL ADVISE THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL INSTEAD OF THE GOVERNOR.

+OUR ADVICE WILL THUS GO DIRECTLY TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT DECISION-TAKING AND WILL CONCENTRATE ON MATTERS OF IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES,+ SAID MR. ROBSON.

THE TECHNICAL AND DETAILED ASPECTS OF TRANSPORT PLANNING AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, HE ADDED, COULD BE LEFT IN THE HANDS OF RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WORKING IN CONSULTATION WITH ONE ANOTHER.

THE RECONSTITUTED COMMITTEE IS COMPOSED OF A POOL OF EXPERTS AND PEOPLE EXPERIENCED IN TRANSPORT MATTERS. THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ARE MRS. ELSIE ELLIOTT, AN URBAN COUNCILLOR AND A MEMBER OF THE PREVIOUS T.A.C., MR. G.R. ROSS, UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, MR. STEPHEN WONG, REPRESENTING THE NEW TERRITORIES, AND MRS. GRACE HO AND MR. ALAN MCFARLIN, BOTH ACKNOWLEDGED TRANSPORT EXPERTS.

+IN MY JUDGEMENT,+ COMMENTED MR. ROBSON, +THIS NEW T.A.C. PROVIDES THE CORRECT MIX OF EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE, WITH WHICH TO MEET THE EVER INCREASING CHALLENGE OF PROVIDING DECENT PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES IN A TERRITORY SUCH AS OURS, WHICH AS FAR AS PUBLIC TRANSPORT IS CONCERNED, MUST BE UNIQUE.+

REFERRING TO HIS APPOINTMENT AS CHAIRMAN OF THE NEW COMMITTEE, MR. ROBSON EXPLAINED THAT THIS SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED AS THE FINAL PATTERN +BUT RATHER AS A TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT TO BE REVIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE AND CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES.+

MR. ROBSON

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ACCOUNTANTS HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN
DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY

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HONG KONG WILL NEED MORE GOOD ACCOUNTANTS IN INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND FINANCE, AND IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE IF DEVELOPMENT IS TO KEEP A PACE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, MR. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID TODAY.

+THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG AS AN INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ECONOMY HAS NOW REACHED THE POINT WHERE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT CAN NO LONGER DEPEND ONLY ON INTELLIGENT INDUSTRIOUSNESS,+ HE TOLD A PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY GATHERING AT THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC.

+IF THE HONG KONG ECONOMY IS TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND AT A RAPID RATE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ARE GOING TO NEED TO USE MUCH MORE SOPHISTICATED TECHNIQUES,+ HE STRESSED, ADDING:
+ACCOUNTANTS CAN DO MUCH TO PROVIDE THESE TECHNIQUES.+

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WAS OFFICIATING A PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY FOR STUDENTS OF THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC, THREE OF WHOM SWEEP THE FIRST THREE PLACES OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS EXAMINATION HELD IN HONG KONG LAST DECEMBER. A TOTAL OF 1,600 STUDENTS FROM MANY COUNTRIES SAT FOR THE EXAMINATION.

IN FIRST PLACE WAS MR. TSE YUE-KEUNG, IN SECOND MR. CHU YAN-YUEN AND MISS WONG MEI-SIM IN THIRD PLACE.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY COMMENDED THEM FOR THEIR REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE AND SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT THEIR SUCCESS HAD BEEN IN THE ACCOUNTANCY FIELD +FOR ACCOUNTANCY IS GOING TO BE A PROFESSION OF EVEN GREATER IMPORTANCE FOR HONG KONG THAN IT HAS BEEN HITHERTO.+

MR. HADDON-CAVE POINTED OUT THAT WITH NEW LOW-PRICE EXPORTING COUNTRIES IMPROVING THEIR PERFORMANCE, HONG KONG INDUSTRIALISTS WILL ONLY MAINTAIN A COMPETITIVE EDGE IF THEY PLACE INCREASING EMPHASIS ON CAREFUL PLANNING TO ACHIEVE THE MOST EFFICIENT USE OF MATERIALS AND MANPOWER AND IF THEY INTRODUCE IMPROVED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS BACKED BY GOOD QUALITY ACCOUNTING SERVICES.

+THESE SERVICES,+ HE SAID. +WILL DEPEND ON THE SUPPLY OF ACCOUNTANTS OF TECHNICAL ABILITY AND, ABOVE ALL, IMAGINATION, WHO ARE PREPARED TO WORK IN INDUSTRY AND TO EDUCATE INDUSTRIALISTS AS TO THEIR WORTH IN TERMS OF HARD DOLLARS AND CENTS.+

HONG KONG, HE WENT ON, WOULD CONTINUE TO GROW AS A BANKING, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL CENTRE AND HERE TOO +ACCOUNTANTS WILL HAVE THEIR PART TO PLAY TO BUILD UP CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG AS AN HONEST, EFFICIENT AND RELIABLE PLACE IN WHICH TO INVEST.+

/THE FINANCIAL

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY NOTED THAT THERE WAS ALSO A POSITIVE AND GROWING ROLE FOR ACCOUNTANTS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES BECOMING MORE SOPHISTICATED AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS MORE EXPENSIVE, HE SAID, THE COLONIAL SECRETARIAT WAS DEVELOPING ITS FINANCIAL PLANNING UNIT AND COST CONTROL FACILITIES FOR WHICH HIGH QUALITY STAFF, INCLUDING ACCOUNTANTS, WERE NEEDED.

+IT IS THE NATURE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE - AND RIGHTLY SO - THAT THE FINANCIAL REWARDS ARE NOT AS DRAMATIC AS THEY CAN BE FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

+BUT THE WORK OF ACCOUNTANTS IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IS, AND WILL BE STIMULATING AND CHALLENGING,+ HE SAID.

NOTE TO EDITORS: COPIES OF THE FULL TEXT OF THE FINANCIAL
----- SECRETARY'S SPEECH ARE BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1974

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REBUILDING PROGRAMME PLANNED FOR PRIVATE SLUM PROPERTIES

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THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO PROVIDE INITIAL LOAN FUNDS FOR THE RE-DEVELOPMENT OF DILAPIDATED AND SLUM-TYPE PRIVATE PROPERTIES WHICH, FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, ARE NOT REDEVELOPED BY PRIVATE DEVELOPERS.

THIS WAS REVEALED TODAY BY THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY, MR. MICHAEL CLINTON, IN HIS CAPACITY AS VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG SOCIETY AT THE HANDING-OVER CEREMONY OF PHASE III OF THE SOCIETY'S LOK MAN SUN CHUEN ESTATE.

MR. CLINTON DESCRIBED THE SCHEME AS AN EXCITING ONE BUT SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO GIVE FURTHER DETAILS. THESE WOULD BE ANNOUNCED WHEN DEMOLITION AND REBUILDING OF SLUM PROPERTY BEGINS, HE SAID.

LOK MAN SUN CHUEN IS THE HOUSING SOCIETY'S 14TH AND LARGEST ESTATE SO FAR.

IT COMPRISES 3,676 FLATS -- INCLUDING 911 COMPLETED FOR PHASE III -- WHICH TOGETHER ACCOMMODATE UP TO 23,500 PERSONS.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SOCIETY'S PROGRESSIVE POLICY OF PROVIDING INTEGRATED FACILITIES, MR. CLINTON NOTED, THE ESTATE INCLUDES SHOPS, A CLINIC, MARKET STALLS, A KINDERGARTEN, A DAY NURSERY, YOUTH CLUBS, PLAYGROUNDS, CARPARKS AND SEVERAL FLATS SPECIALLY ALLOCATED FOR ELDERLY PERSONS.

+THERE ARE STILL SOME FACILITIES LACKING,+ SAID MR. CLINTON, +AND WE HOPE IN FUTURE ESTATES, IN CO-OPERATION, WHERE APPROPRIATE, WITH THE GOVERNMENT, TO ENSURE THAT MORE FACILITIES AND AMENITIES ARE PROVIDED SUCH AS SUPER-MARKETS, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, AND SPACE FOR LIGHT INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOPS.+

HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT MOST OF THESE FACILITIES CAN ONLY BE JUSTIFIED IN THE LARGER ESTATES.

MR. CLINTON SAID THE RENTS, VARYING FROM \$114 TO \$265 A MONTH FOR FLATS FROM 267 SQ.FT. TO 516 SQ.FT. WERE MUCH BELOW PRIVATE RENTS AND WERE IN EFFECT HEAVILY SUBSIDISED BY THE TAXPAYER.

+THIS IS RIGHT AND PROPER,+ HE SAID, +BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT IF SOME TENANTS BECOME MORE AFFLUENT THEY SHOULD MOVE OUT TO PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION TO MAKE WAY FOR THOSE POORER FAMILIES WHO ARE REALLY IN NEED OF LOW-COST HOUSING.+

HE COMMENDED THE WORK OF THOSE WHO HELPED IN BUILDING AND MANAGING THE NEW ESTATE AND WISHED THE TENANTS PROSPERITY AND HAPPINESS.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

COPIES OF THE FULL TEXT OF MR. CLINTON'S SPEECH ARE AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION IN THE G.I.S. PRESS BOXES.

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FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1974

FIREMEN SWOOP ON MONGKOK BUILDING

OFFICERS FROM THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU SPENT MOST OF TODAY IN A MONGKOK BUILDING LOOKING FOR FIRE HAZARDS.

IN A SURPRISE OPERATION MOUNTED IN STRICTEST SECRECY, 20 OFFICERS SWOOPED ON THE BUILDING 22-22A CHERRY STREET THIS MORNING AND UNCOVERED A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT HAZARDS INCLUDING BLOCKED EXITS, PLASTICS FACTORIES AND STRUCTURES IN OPEN COMMON AREAS.

A TOTAL OF 352 FLAT UNITS WERE CHECKED AND 29 FIRE ABATEMENT HAZARD NOTICES SERVED. THE OCCUPANTS WILL BE GIVEN FROM TWO TO EIGHT WEEKS TO PUT THE HAZARDS RIGHT, ACCORDING TO THE NATURE OF THE HAZARD. FAILURE TO COMPLY COULD LEAD TO COURT ACTION.

THE SEARCH OF THE 15-STORY BUILDING WAS MOUNTED IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS FROM OCCUPANTS ABOUT THE DANGERS SHOULD A FIRE OCCUR.

THE 20 OFFICERS, COMMANDED BY MR. LI KWOK-CHOI, DIVISIONAL OFFICER (COMPLAINTS AND PROSECUTIONS), WERE SPLIT INTO FIVE TEAMS EACH OF WHICH WAS GIVEN AN AREA TO SURVEY. THE OPERATION BEGAN AT 9.30 A.M. AND CONTINUED TILL LATE AFTERNOON.

FACTORIES SERVED WITH NOTICES MUST EITHER CLOSE OR CHANGE THE PRODUCT THEY ARE MANUFACTURING TO SOMETHING WHICH DOES NOT POSE A FIRE RISK.

A NUMBER OF THE HAZARDS WERE PASSED TO THE BUILDING'S INCORPORATED OWNERS' ASSOCIATION FOR ACTION. REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE ASSOCIATION WERE PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE OPERATION.

THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU CONDUCTS THOUSANDS OF INVESTIGATIONS EACH YEAR LOOKING FOR FIRE HAZARDS IN BUILDINGS, FACTORIES, CINEMAS AND OTHER PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT.

A FIRE SERVICES SPOKESMAN SAID: +WE URGE THE PUBLIC TO REPORT TO US IMMEDIATELY ANY FIRE HAZARDS WHICH THEY SEE.+

NOTE TO EDITORS:

----- COPIES OF A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN DURING THE OPERATION ARE BOXED FOR COLLECTION.

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1974

CONSUMER ADVISORY SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING PRICES WERE REALISED TODAY (FRIDAY) AT SALES UNDER THE RICE CONTROL SCHEME AND AT THE VEGETABLE MARKETING ORGANISATION WHOLESALE MARKET AND THE FISH MARKETING ORGANISATION WHOLESALE MARKET AT CHEUNG SHA WAN, KOWLOON:

SUPPLIES AND WHOLESALE PRICES OF RICE

RICE CONTROL SCHEME

GRADE	AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLY	WHOLESALE PRICE (\$/CATTY)
		AVERAGE
<u>CHINA RICE</u>		
- OLD CROP		-
SEE MEW		
- NEW CROP	GOOD	2.12
- OLD CROP		-
S.C. JIEN		
- NEW CROP	GOOD	2.06
PO NGAI	GOOD	-
CHU CHU	GOOD	-
<u>THAI RICE</u>		
100% WHOLE	GOOD	2.03
10-15% BROKENS	GOOD	-
A1 SUPER EXTRA	GOOD	-
A1 SUPER	GOOD	-
WHOLE GLUTINOUS	GOOD	-
U.S. RICE	GOOD	1.94
AUSTRALIAN RICE	GOOD	1.92
PAKISTAN RICE	GOOD	-
TAIWAN RICE	GOOD	-

/SUPPLIES AND

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1974

SUPPLIES AND WHOLESAL PRICES OF MARINE FISH

(CFMO CHEUNG SHA WAN WHOLESAL FISH MARKET)

SPECIES	AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLY	WHOLESAL PRICE (\$/CATTY)		
		HIGH	LOW	MODE
GOLDEN THREAD	GOOD	3.40	2.80	2.30
BIG-EYES	GOOD	2.80	0.70	1.80
SQUID	NORMAL	4.00	2.20	3.20
HAIR-TAILS	NORMAL	1.00	0.50	0.75
LIZARD FISHES	LIMITED	2.60	1.20	2.20
CROAKERS	LIMITED	1.80	1.10	1.40
CONGER-PIKE-EELS	LIMITED	1.90	1.40	1.70
MELON COAT	--	--	--	--
BREAMS	NORMAL	3.80	2.30	3.20
YELLOW BELLY	GOOD	1.70	0.60	1.10
MACKERELS	NORMAL	2.80	2.20	2.50
RED GOAT FISH	SCARCE	2.20	1.10	1.50
FORK-TAIL	LIMITED	1.70	0.80	1.00
HORSE-HEAD	GOOD	5.00	2.60	4.00
MELON SEED	--	--	--	--
POMFRETS	SCARCE	9.00	6.50	8.50
GARROUPAS	NORMAL	7.00	5.00	6.00
YELLOW CROAKER	--	--	--	--

/SUPPLIES AND

FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1974

SUPPLIES AND WHOLESALE PRICES OF LOCALLY PRODUCED VEGETABLES

(V.M.O. CHEUNG SHA WAN WHOLESALE VEGETABLE MARKET)

TYPE OF VEGETABLE	AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLY	WHOLESALE PRICE (\$/CATTY)		
		HIGH	LOW	MODE
FLOWERING CABBAGE	NORMAL	1.60	0.50	1.20
WHITE CABBAGE	GOOD	0.50	0.10	0.30
CHINESE LETTUCE	GOOD	0.50	0.10	0.30
WATER SPINACH	GOOD	1.40	0.20	0.80
CHINESE KALE	LIMITED	1.20	0.30	0.80
STRING BEANS	---	---	---	---
SPRING ONION	GOOD	0.80	0.20	0.50
SPINACH	LIMITED	1.00	0.30	0.70
WATER ORESS	LIMITED	1.00	0.20	0.60
LEAF MUSTARD CABBAGE	NORMAL	0.60	0.20	0.40
CHINESE SPINACH	NORMAL	1.00	0.20	0.60
TOMATO	LIMITED	1.60	0.60	1.20

SUPPLIES AND WHOLESALE PRICES OF SWINE

(ALL SOURCES)

AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLY - GOOD

WHOLESALE PRICES OF PORK (\$/PICUL-LIVE WEIGHT) - 305 (AVERAGE)

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