



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Thursday, April 12, 1973

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GOVERNMENT COMMENTS ON THE LATEST STATEMENT ISSUED
BY THE JOINT SECRETARIAT OF THIRTEEN EDUCATIONAL BODIES

Commenting on the statement issued by the Joint Secretariat of thirteen Educational Bodies last night, a Government spokesman said today:

Church leaders, leading members of the community and, above all, parents, have advised Certificated Masters not to support the boycott action proposed by the Joint Secretariat for tomorrow.

An elected leader of the teachers has said that his members are not going to support the boycott and are opposed to such action.

It is difficult to believe that the Joint Secretariat represents the views of all Certificated Masters. Teachers are responsible people who obviously have the interests of children at heart since they chose teaching as a profession. We cannot and do not believe, therefore, that they would wish to associate themselves with the action proposed by the Joint Secretariat, which must be condemned by all right thinking people.

The inexplicable changes in the attitude of the Joint Secretariat, as reflected in their public statements during the last week, must call into question both their sincerity, motives, and indeed their objectives.

In their statement issued on April 7 they are on record as saying: "We solemnly declare that, if the Government accepts the following four recommendations to improve education in Hong Kong, we are willing to cancel the scheduled strikes on April 13, May 2 and May 3, and the boycott of the Secondary Schools Entrance Examination", and that "we are ready to undergo personal sacrifices for the sake of the common good".

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These points were reiterated in a personal letter to the Colonial Secretary.

The Government responded positively to this statement and accepted that the general objectives behind their proposals are in line with government policy. It promised that the Board of Education, which has all three church leaders as members, would carefully consider the points made by the Joint Secretariat, and Mr. P.C. Woo the Chairman of the Board has said that the Board would be happy to discuss the proposals with them.

The Government statement was welcomed by church and civic leaders yesterday. On the other hand, the Joint Secretariat has chosen to ignore its substance and has simply dismissed it.

Despite their earlier assurances the Joint Secretariat yesterday set aside previous undertakings and decided to go ahead with further boycott action.

In view of this one can only conclude that the Joint Secretariat is determined to take militant action for its own sake. We deplore the anxiety so inflicted on children and parents alike.

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PROPOSAL TO TEMPORARILY SUSPEND PUBLIC ISSUES

The Securities Advisory Council today considered a proposal for a temporary suspension of public issues for about one month due to the effect the tremendous over-subscriptions were having on the distribution of available liquidity within the banking system.

The proposal was fully considered by the Council at its meeting this morning and, although it was not in favour of a complete suspension, it had no objection for the time being to lengthening substantially the time between public offers.

The Council this afternoon conveyed its views to the Financial Secretary who accepted them.

The Commissioner for Securities subsequently met the Chairmen of the four exchanges and informed them accordingly.

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SMOOTH OPERATION OF MATERNITY SERVICES

Alternative Arrangements Working Well

Dr. G.H. Choa, Director of Medical and Health Services, said this morning that maternity services operated smoothly in the clinics kept open last night.

In rural districts and on the outlying islands, conditions were also mostly normal.

Dr. Choa said that, for the time being, urban maternity services would continue to be available only at the following clinics:

On Hong Kong Island: Clinics at Shaukiwan and Aberdeen, and Tang Shiu Kin and Tsan Yuk hospitals.

In Kowloon: Clinics at Li Kee (Kowloon City), Wang Tau Hom, Li Po Chun (Sham Shui Po), Kwun Tong and Cheung Sha Wan, and Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

In the New Territories, only two of the 10 maternity clinics have been closed. These are the Lady Ho Tung, at Shek Wu Hui, and the Kam Tin Clinic.

On outlying islands, normal maternity services have not been disturbed, because of the presence of resident doctors and nurses.

"These arrangements will continue so long as a number of midwives refuse to work on call duties," Dr. Choa said.

He emphasised that only the maternity sections of eight clinics have been closed to enable the department to repost midwives to shift duty elsewhere so that normal maternity services could be maintained. There are 27 maternity clinics in all.

Notices have been displayed in all clinics giving details of the alternative maternity services available.

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GUARD AGAINST IMPOSTERS--HOUSING DEPARTMENT WARNS

The Housing Department today warned applicants for public housing to be on guard against people impersonating government officials and demanding tea money or advance rents to guarantee accommodation.

In the past few months, several cases have been reported where people who had applied for public housing had been visited by a man who claimed to be a government officer. In return for tea money, he promised early processing of their applications.

A spokesman for the Housing Department said today that anyone who is approached in this manner should contact the department or the police immediately and in no case should they pay any money.

"We charge no fee for processing applications," he said.

"The impersonator is trying to cheat innocent people of their money."

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NEW WAY OF TIPPING REFUSE

The Government is to employ a new method of refuse tipping at Gin Drinkers Bay in Kwai Chung with an aim to form a piece of land for recreational use.

A spokesman for the Public Works Department said the method, known as controlled tipping, calls for the spreading of refuse in layers.

"As tipping proceeds, each layer will be covered with inert material and, at the end of each day all working faces will be sealed off so as to contain noxious smells, control vermin and to eliminate health and fire hazards," he added.

The covering material will be obtained principally by the excavation of suitable earth from areas in Kwai Chung used specially for this purpose.

Ash from incinerators will also be used when it becomes available.

To ensure the systematic disposal of refuse, delivered to the dump by sanitary and inoffensive methods, access roads and drainage will have to be built.

Tenders for the construction work and the controlled tipping of refuse at Gin Drinkers Bay are now being invited.

The project is expected to begin next month and last for a period of 18 months with the option of an extension of 12 months.

The works have been designed and will be supervised by the Development and Airport Division of the Civil Engineering Office, Public Works Department.

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N.T. LOTS FOR SALE

Two lots of Crown land on the outlying islands are to be sold by public auction in the District Office, Islands, next Tuesday (April 24) at 2.30 p.m.

The first lot, located on Peng Chau, has an area of 4,000 square feet and is for private residential purposes. The upset price is \$60,000.

The second lot with an area of 2,500 square feet is located at Mui Wo, Lantau Island and is for non-industrial use. The upset price for this lot is \$75,000.

Full particulars and conditions of sale may be obtained at the New Territories Administration, North Kowloon Magistracy, Tai Po Road and the District Offices of Yuen Long, Tsuen Wan, Tai Po and Sai Kung.

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CHOLERA QUARANTINE RESTRICTIONS CANCELLED

The Director of Medical and Health announced today that cholera quarantine restrictions imposed against arrivals from Jerusalem and from the Indonesian Ports of Makasar, Tjirebon, Sorong and Tjilatjap have now been removed.

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NEW TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR APPRENTICES UNDERWAY

A new apprentices training workshop is to be built this year to meet the need for more properly trained artisans and technicians for government departments.

Construction work on the new workshop, which will be located in the electrical and mechanical office complex at Caroline Hill Road, is expected to start in August for completion towards the end of next year.

It will provide accommodation for more than 100 apprentices and will have more facilities than the present workshop in the Old Whitfield Barracks in Kowloon.

The Government has been operating a modern apprenticeship scheme for craftsmen and technicians since 1969.

According to Mr. E.M. Laishley, Superintendent of Apprentices, 480 technical and craft apprentices were presently undergoing training, and he anticipated that by February next year 640 would be taking the course.

The first group of 93 is expected to complete the course by September 1974.

Technical apprentices receive four and a half years of theoretical training leading to the Higher Certificate of Engineering at the Hong Kong Polytechnic.

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Prospective technical apprentices must be between 16 and 18 years of age and completed Form 5.

Craft apprentices are taught such trades as fitting, welding, machining, automobile and diesel repairing, sheet metal work and electricians.

They must be between the age of 14 and 15 and must have completed Primary 6.

Their training lasts four years during which they have to attend lectures at the Morrison Hill Technical Institute one day and two evenings a week for theoretical training.

All apprentices must first have one year's basic training in the use of hand tools and machines and are then placed in various Government Departments for 'on the job' training.

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POOL CLOSURE

The Morrison Hill Swimming Pool will be closed to public use on Saturday (April 14) from 12.45 p.m. to 6.15 p.m.

During this period, the Hong Kong Sports Association for the Physically Handicapped will be using the pool for its swimming gala.

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EXPORT OF RESTRAINED TEXTILES TO BRITAIN

The Director of Commerce and Industry today issued a notice to exporters concerning export of restrained textiles to Britain.

The notice gives details of the allocations under Phase I of the High Hong Kong Cost Content Scheme, 1973 for the export of restrained textiles to Britain.

Details of the introduction of Phase II of the scheme from 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 24, 1973 are also given.

Copies of the notice have been sent to trade associations and companies on the Department's mailing list for Notice to Exporters, Series I (Britain).

Anyone wishing to have advance information of the notice may contact the following officers of the Department:-

Mr. H.P. Lee - Trade Officer
Tel. No. 5-443144

Mr. C.K. Ng - Industry Assistant
Tel. No. 5-430719

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Release time: 7.30 p.m.