



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1979

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WORKING PARTY SET UP TO LOOK INTO
HOUSING FOR FAMILIES JUST ABOVE \$5 000 LIMIT
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A GOVERNMENT WORKING PARTY HAS BEEN SET UP WITH THE AIM OF ARRANGING AN ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF SUPPLY OF FLATS FOR PEOPLE WHOSE HOUSEHOLD INCOME IS IMMEDIATELY ABOVE \$5 000 A MONTH.

THIS WAS ANNOUNCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON. ALAN SCOTT, DURING A LENGTHY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOUSING.

MR. SCOTT IS CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING PARTY.

HE SAID: +WE ARE WORKING TO IDENTIFY THE TARGET GROUP OF HOUSEHOLDS, AND THE PRESENT AND FORECAST PRODUCTION LEVEL OF THE TYPE OF FLATS WHICH APPROXIMATELY MATCH THE TARGET GROUP IN TERMS OF INCOME AND AFFORDABILITY- AND, MOST IMPORTANT, HOW PRODUCTION CAN BE INCREASED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

+WE SHALL AIM TO ARRANGE AN ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF SUPPLY OF FLATS AT REASONABLE PRICES — PERHAPS ALONG THE LINES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME — MANAGED BY AN APPROPRIATE AGENCY.+

MR. SCOTT SAID THAT THE LEVEL OF PRODUCTION +MUST BE SUCH AS TO HAVE A REAL IMPACT ON DEMAND,+ BUT POINTED OUT THAT THIS DEMAND WOULD BE RELATIVELY SMALL COMPARED WITH THE PUBLIC HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAMMES.

MORTGAGE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE LEFT TO INDIVIDUAL PURCHASERS. THE WORKING PARTY'S PROPOSALS, WHEN FINALISED, WOULD BE PUT TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL, BUT ALREADY SOME SITES HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED SUITABLE FOR FLATS BETWEEN 70 AND 100 SQ. METRES IN SIZE, HE SAID.

MR. SCOTT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS LOOKING INTO THE FEASIBILITY OF RE-DEVELOPING 17 OF ITS OWN SITES USED FOR RESIDENTIAL PURPOSES.

THESE RE-DEVELOPMENTS WOULD BE DONE BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR, WITH THE PROVISIO THAT PARTS OF THE RE-DEVELOPED BUILDINGS WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS OWN HOUSING PURPOSES.

BY THIS MEANS, 1 600 EXTRA GOVERNMENT QUARTERS MIGHT BE PROVIDED, THEREBY CONSIDERABLY REDUCING THE PRESSURE OF GOVERNMENT LEASING REQUIREMENTS ON EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.

ON OTHER HOUSING TOPICS MR. SCOTT SAID:

PUBLIC HOUSING:

THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME WILL THIS YEAR REACH ITS HIGHEST EVER OUTPUT OF 35 000 FLATS, AND IS +SETTLING INTO TOP GEAR FOR WHAT WILL BE A LONG RUN.+

/MR. SCOTT

MR. SCOTT REPEATED THAT THE PROGRAMME HAD BEEN LEAST AFFECTED BY THE CUTS IN PUBLIC SPENDING ANNOUNCED IN THE BUDGET, AND THAT WHEN ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE CAPACITY OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PERMITTED, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HOPED TO INCREASE OUTPUT.

HOWEVER HE WARNED THAT ABOUT 250 000 PEOPLE HAD ENTERED HONG KONG LEGALLY OR ILLEGALLY SINCE JANUARY LAST YEAR, THAT MANY WOULD BRING RELATIVES FROM CHINA OR MARRY HERE, AND THAT BY THE MIDDLE OR LATE 1980'S THE REAL IMPACT MIGHT BE AROUND HALF A MILLION PEOPLE, MOST OF THEM ELIGIBLE FOR PUBLIC HOUSING UNDER PRESENT POLICIES.

ON THE SUBJECT OF BETTER-OFF PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS CONTINUING TO ENJOY SUBSIDISED HOUSING, MR. SCOTT REVEALED THAT THE HOUSING AUTHORITY RECENTLY DECIDED THAT TENANTS OF MARK I AND MARK II RESETTLEMENT UNITS WOULD NO LONGER BE ELIGIBLE TO TRANSFER VOLUNTARILY TO BETTER FLATS IN OTHER ESTATES IF THEIR INCOME WAS DOUBLE THE CURRENT INCOME LIMIT FOR PUBLIC HOUSING.

HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME (HOS):

ON A SUGGESTION THAT THE PROPORTION OF HOS FLATS TO RENTAL FLATS BE RAISED TO 50 OR 70 PER CENT, MR. SCOTT SAID HE AGREED THAT THE PROPORTION SHOULD BE RAISED, BUT NOT BY SUCH A GREAT AMOUNT, SINCE +THE BULK OF OUR EFFORT MUST CONTINUE TO GO TOWARDS THE LOWEST INCOME GROUP, WHO ARE THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION.+

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, PLANS ARE NOW WELL ADVANCED TO TRANSFER TO THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME A NUMBER OF FLATS IN RENTAL ESTATES WHICH ARE UP TO HOS STANDARDS.

PRIVATE-SECTOR RENTS:

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER, HE SAID, THERE WERE ABOUT 863 000 DOMESTIC PREMISES IN HONG KONG, 422 000 IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND 441 000 IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

OF THE 441 000 +PRIVATE+ PREMISES, ONLY 43 000 ARE NOT OWNER-OCCUPIED OR UNDER RENT CONTROL -- THAT IS, LESS THAN 10 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL.

A GROUP UNDER MR. SCOTT RECENTLY HAD LOOKED AGAIN AT THE COMPLICATED QUESTION OF AN EXTENSION OF RENT CONTROL -- AND LOOKED SYMPATHETICALLY AND THOROUGHLY AT IT -- BUT CONCLUDED THAT WHAT MIGHT BE DONE WOULD NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT BENEFICIAL EFFECT TO OUTWEIGH THE DAMAGE THAT IT MIGHT DO.

ELABORATING, MR. SCOTT SAID: +THE GOVERNMENT MUST BE RESPONSIVE AND SYMPATHETIC, BUT IT MUST ALSO BE SURE THAT ANY PROPOSED IMMEDIATE PALLIATIVE IS EFFECTIVE AND OPERATES EQUITABLY, AND THAT THE MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS WILL NOT OUTWEIGH ITS SHORT-TERM VALUE.+

SUMMING UP, HE AGREED WITH THE STATEMENT OF DR. RAYSON HUANG THAT +RENT CONTROL CAN ONLY BE A TEMPORARY MEASURE, AND FOR THE LONG TERM THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION TO AN INCREASED PRODUCTION OF HOUSING, AND TO THIS GOVERNMENT MUST WITHOUT DELAY ADDRESS ITSELF.+

LAND SPECULATORS:

MR. SCOTT SAID THAT +AS STRONG AS OUR FEELINGS ARE ABOUT THEM, WE HAVE TO FIND A BALANCE BETWEEN THE FREEDOM OF COMMERCIAL ACTION WHICH HAS ALLOWED HONG KONG TO DEVELOP OVER THE YEARS, AND THE EXCESSIVE DEGREE OF CONTROL WITH WHICH OTHER GOVERNMENTS HAVE STIFLED THEIR ECONOMIES AND LIMITED DEVELOPMENT.+

AFTER REVIEWING VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS — AND POINTING TO THE LOOPHOLES IN EACH — MR. SCOTT SAID THAT WITH +ENORMOUS RELUCTANCE+ NO SCHEME WAS PRESENTLY BEING INTRODUCED TO CURB SPECULATION, BUT ADDED: +I WOULD BE VERY GLAD TO HEAR FROM ANYONE IN THIS COUNCIL OR OUTSIDE IT WHO HAS PRACTICAL, EFFECTIVE PROPOSALS WHICH WILL BE EXAMINED AT ONCE.+

SUMMING UP, HE SAID THAT THE +BASIC AND DURABLE LONG-TERM ANSWER IS TO INCREASE THE HOUSING STOCK.+

TO HELP ACHIEVE THIS THE GOVERNMENT WAS PRESSING ON WITH THE PUBLIC HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAMMES, LOOKING AT WAYS TO HELP HOUSE PEOPLE JUST ABOVE THE \$5 000-A-MONTH BRACKET, WORKING ON RE-DEVELOPING 17 OF ITS OWN RESIDENTIAL SITES AND ADDITIONALLY HAD SPEEDED UP THE DEVELOPMENT OF SITES FOR HIGH-CLASS HOUSING, 13 MORE OF WHICH HAD NOW BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH A POTENTIAL TO PRODUCE AN ADDITIONAL 2 400 LARGE FLATS.

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TALKS UNDERWAY TO IMPROVE BUS SERVICES

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THE GOVERNMENT IS HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MANAGERMENTS OF KMB AND CMB ON THE EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF BUS SERVICES, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. DEREK JONES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR. JONES SAID THE TALKS COVERED FIVE MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT. THEY ARE THE PURCHASE OF MORE NEW BUSES= IMPROVEMENTS IN MAINTENANCE AND THE ORDERING OF SPARE PARTS= THE RECRUITMENT OF DRIVERS AND MECHANICS= THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE DEPOT FACILITIES= AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE IN THE TWO COMPANIES.

SPEAKING IN THE RESUMED ANNUAL DEBATE, HE SAID: +THE COMPANIES HAVE RESPONDED BY AGREEING ORDERING PROGRAMMES FOR AS MANY AS 874 NEW BUSES BETWEEN NOW AND MID-1981, AND BY EXAMINING WITH US THEIR PLANS IN THE OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN.+

/HOWEVER

HOWEVER, MR. JONES WARNED THAT IF THE MUCH NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS IN BUS SERVICES WERE TO BE INTRODUCED, SOME INCREASES IN BUS FARES WOULD BE INEVITABLE. BUT HE WAS SURE THAT +THE PUBLIC WILL ACCEPT THIS PROVIDED THAT THEY OBTAIN A BETTER AND MORE RELIABLE SERVICE.+

MR. JONES ALSO NOTED THAT STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE TRAFFIC SITUATION ALONG THE NORTH SHORE OF HONG KONG ISLAND.

+HERE THERE IS NO EASY PANACEA FOR IMPROVEMENT. WE MUST WORK WITHIN THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AND IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS MUST TAKE TIME,+ HE SAID.

IN THE SHORT TERM, MR. JONES SAID, THE GOVERNMENT HAD SET UP AN ACTION GROUP TO RECOMMEND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND OTHER MEASURES TO BRING SOME RELIEF.

IN THE MEDIUM TERM, THE FEASIBILITY OF A LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM TO REPLACE THE TRAMS HAD BEEN CONSIDERED AND THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE PUT FORWARD FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, HE SAID.

+THEREAFTER, THE ISLAND EASTERN CORRIDOR ROAD WILL BE ANOTHER EXPENSIVE NECESSITY AND FURTHER ROAD WORKS ARE ALSO BEING PLANNED,+ HE SAID.

+ALL THIS AND MORE IS BEING TIED TOGETHER IN AN ISLAND CORRIDOR STRATEGY WHICH WILL BE KEPT UNDER CONTINUOUS REVIEW,+ HE ADDED.

REPLYING TO THE HON. LI FOOK-WO'S COMMENT ON LAND PRODUCTION, MR. JONES SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS DOING THE NECESSARY PLANNING NOW BOTH TO SUSTAIN AND TO INCREASE ITS LAND PRODUCTION PROGRAMMES.

+THIS WILL NOW NEED TO BE ENCOMPASSED IN FLEXIBLE LONG TERM STRATEGIC PLANNING TO LINK TOGETHER, NOT ONLY THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF LAND PRODUCTION, BUT ALSO THE POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SERVICES WHICH WILL GO WITH IT TO PRODUCE THE MAXIMUM ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFIT WITHIN THE LIMITS OF OUR RESOURCES,+ HE SAID.

MR. JONES SAID A NEW STRATEGIC PLANNING UNIT WOULD SHORTLY BE SET UP IN THE LANDS DIVISION OF THE ENVIRONMENT BRANCH TO LOOK AFTER THIS ASPECT OF THE WORKS.

HE ALSO ASSURED MR. LI THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR OPPORTUNITIES OF SELLING UNFORMED LAND TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT.

+THERE ARE TWO PRIVATE HOUSING ESTATES IN SHA TIN WHICH WERE DEVELOPED BY THIS METHOD,+ MR. JONES SAID.

+THE GREATER PART OF THE LAND IN SOUTH AND WEST TSING YI HAS ALSO BEEN FORMED BY THE OWNERS OF THE LOTS. AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE WE EXPECT TO LET EARLY NEXT YEAR A TENDER FOR A RECLAMATION ON AP LEI CHAU FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT,+ HE ADDED.

/MR. JONES

MR. JONES ALSO AGREED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LESS URBANISED AREAS, SUCH AS THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES AND THE SIZEABLE PRIVATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS NOW BEING UNDERTAKEN IN THE SAI KUNG AREA.

COMMENTING ON THE HON. WONG PO-YAN'S SUGGESTION FOR CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS, MR. JONES NOTED THAT SOME FLATTED FACTORY DEVELOPERS HAD ALREADY SHOWN CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF UNITS SUITABLE FOR SMALLER FACTORIES.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALSO RECENTLY BEEN SELLING SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF INDUSTRIAL LAND WITH A CONDITION THAT 20 PER CENT OF THE FLOOR SPACE MUST BE CONSTRUCTED IN UNITS OF LESS THAN 75 SQUARE METRES.

+THIS HAS GENERALLY BEEN WELL ACCEPTED BY DEVELOPERS AND IT SHOULD CERTAINLY RESULT IN CONSIDERABLY BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SMALL INDUSTRIALIST WHEN THESE UNITS COME ON THE MARKET,+ MR. JONES SAID.

ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, MR. JONES AGREED WITH THE HON. DAVID NEWBIGGING THAT UNLESS REMEDIAL ACTION WAS TAKEN AT A RELATIVELY EARLY STAGE, THE DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT FROM COMPLETELY UNCONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT COULD BUILD UP TO A POINT WHERE +WE EITHER HAVE TO ACCEPT SERIOUS DETERIORATION OR TAKE REALLY DRASTIC ACTIONS TO COUNTER IT.+

+ALL MAJOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS NOW ARE REQUIRED TO AGREE DETAILED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UNIT (EPU) AND DETAILS CAN BE WRITTEN INTO LEASE AND OTHER CONDITIONS,+ HE SAID.

MR. JONES POINTED OUT THAT FIVE NEW PIECES OF LEGISLATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ARE BEING PREPARED. THE WASTE DISPOSAL BILL HAD ALREADY BEEN PRESENTED BEFORE THE COUNCIL WHILE THE OTHER FOUR - THE WATER AND AIR POLLUTION BILLS, THE NOISE AND VIBRATION BILL AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT BILLS - WERE EXPECTED TO BE PRESENTED THIS SESSION.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE BILLS, BEFORE PRESENTATION, WOULD BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED NOT ONLY BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPCOM) BUT ALSO THE MAJOR INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS.

+THE BILLS ARE LARGELY ENABLING BILLS AND THE DETAILED REGULATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER THEM, WHICH WILL LAY DOWN STANDARDS, WILL NOT BE DRAFTED UNTIL DETAILED MONITORING AND MEASURING WORK ON THE STATE OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN ALL PARTS OF HONG KONG HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN,+ MR. JONES SAID.

+THIS WILL BE THE JOB OF THE EPU WHICH WILL BE GRADUALLY EXPANDED OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT THREE YEARS TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK. DEPARTMENTAL CONTROL AND ENFORCEMENT UNITS WILL ALSO BE STRENGTHENED,+ HE SAID.

+AS A RESULT OF THIS WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO FINE TUNE OUR CONTROLS SO AS TO HAVE THE LEAST DAMAGING EFFECT UPON INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC LIFE GENERALLY,+ HE ADDED.

MR. JONES SAID IT WAS ALSO PROBABLE THAT THE WORK OF THE EPU WOULD LEAD TO MORE ECONOMICAL MEANS OF CARRYING OUT CERTAIN ENVIRONMENTAL FUNCTIONS FOR WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WAS RESPONSIBLE.

+AS A WATCHDOG OVER ALL THIS ACTIVITY, THE EPCOM HAS RECENTLY BEEN STRENGTHENED AND INDUSTRIAL REPRESENTATIVES HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN THE COMMITTEE,+ HE SAID.

+SPECIAL COMMITTEES ARE ALSO NOW BEING APPOINTED UNDER THE MAIN COMMITTEE TO HELP KEEP UNDER REVIEW ALL THE MAJOR ASPECTS OF POLLUTION,+ HE ADDED.

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GOVERNMENT TO SET UP WORKING PARTY
TO STUDY SOCIAL WELFARE MANPOWER

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL SET UP A WORKING PARTY TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE MANPOWER SITUATION IN THE SOCIAL WELFARE FIELD, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON. THOMAS LEE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN THE ANNUAL DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. LEE SAID THE AIM WOULD BE TO DEVISE A LONGER TERM STRATEGY IN PROVIDING MORE TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS.

THE WORKING PARTY WILL QUANTIFY AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE THE PRESENT MANPOWER SHORTAGE, THE EXTRA DEMANDS OVER THE NEXT DECADE, AND THE NUMBER OF TRAINED STAFF TO BE PROVIDED BY VARIOUS MEANS, HE SAID.

MR. LEE POINTED OUT THAT IN SPITE OF THE EFFORTS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE, THE SUPPLY OF TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS WAS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE LIMITED.

HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT THE EXERCISE MUST BE CARRIED OUT TO BOOST TRAINED MANPOWER AND ALL OTHER POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES MUST BE LOOKED INTO.

+IF WE ARE TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMANDS FOR SOCIAL WORK SERVICES ARISING FROM THE GROWING EXPECTATION OF OUR SOCIETY, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ALL POSSIBILITIES, EVEN IF THEY ARE LESS THAN IDEAL.

+THE TIME WILL SOON COME WHEN WE MUST CONSCIENTIOUSLY CHOOSE BETWEEN ACCEPTING THE LESS IDEAL AND DELAYING OR FOREGOING PROJECTS OR SERVICES WHICH HAVE BEEN ON OUR PLAN TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.+ HE SAID.

MR. LEE SAID THERE WERE THREE MAIN WAYS TO BOOST TRAINED MANPOWER AND STEPS HAD ALREADY BEEN TAKEN IN THESE DIRECTIONS.

THE FIRST, HE SAID, IS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS BEING TRAINED, AND THERE HAVE BEEN INCREASES IN INTAKES OVER THE PAST YEARS IN VARIOUS TRAINING INSTITUTIONS.

/HE SAID

HE SAID HE INTENDED TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF EXPANDING THE SUPPLY FURTHER WITHIN APPROVED STUDENT TARGET LEVELS FOR THE COMING TRIENNIUM.

HOWEVER, HE SOUNDED A NOTE OF WARNING, POINTING OUT THAT SOCIAL WORK TRAINING WAS INTENSIVE AND THAT THERE WAS A LIMIT TO THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SUPPLY OF STUDENTS COULD BE INCREASED.

THE SECOND WAY, MR. LEE SAID, IS TO MAKE BETTER USE OF EXISTING MANPOWER AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT IS MAKING GOOD PROGRESS IN THIS BY IMPLEMENTING A REVIEW OF WELFARE GRADES TO MAXIMISE THE USE OF TRAINED STAFF.

+BY THIS MEANS, A TOTAL OF 96 POSTS PREVIOUSLY FILLED BY GRADUATE SOCIAL WORKERS WILL EVENTUALLY BE FILLED BY STAFF NOT REQUIRING SOCIAL WORK TRAINING, AND A FURTHER 87 BY TRAINED NON-GRADUATES,+ HE SAID.

THE THIRD WAY IS TO REDUCE THE RATE OF WASTAGE IN THE SOCIAL WORK FIELD, WHICH CAN BE ACHIEVED BY IMPROVING CONDITIONS OF SERVICE, HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE SUGGESTION BY DR. THE HON. HO KAM-FAI TO EXTEND THE PROVISIONS OF THE WELFARE CLASS REVIEW TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR, MR. LEE EXPLAINED THAT THE REVIEW BASICALLY INVOLVED THREE CHANGES, THE FIRST OF WHICH WAS TO SPLIT DEPARTMENTAL STAFF INTO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL SECURITY STREAMS.

THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR BECAUSE SOCIAL SECURITY IS ENTIRELY A GOVERNMENT PROVISION, HE SAID.

THE SECOND CHANGE INVOLVED, HE SAID, IS A REVISION OF SALARY SCALES FOR CERTAIN RANKS TO REFLECT CHANGES IN DUTIES.

+THE GOVERNMENT AGREES IN PRINCIPLE THAT WHERE STAFF IN SUBVENTED AGENCIES ARE DOING SIMILAR DUTIES WITH SIMILAR QUALIFICATIONS, THE REVISED PAY SCALES SHOULD APPLY,+ HE SAID.

SUBJECT TO THE PROVISION OF FUNDS, IT IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUBVENTION TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN 1980-81 TO ENABLE THEM TO DO SO, HE SAID.

THE THIRD CHANGE INVOLVES A NEW GRADE OF SOCIAL WORK ASSISTANT TO BE FILLED BY NON-GRADUATE TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS, AND HE INTENDS TO CONSIDER IT IN GREATER DETAIL IN THE COMING REVIEW OF THE FIVE YEAR SOCIAL WELFARE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAMMES LAID DOWN IN THE WHITE PAPERS ON SOCIAL WELFARE AND REHABILITATION, MR. LEE SAID THE TARGET COULD BE MET.

HE SAID GOOD PROGRESS WAS BEING MADE IN THE FIELDS OF SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, PERSONAL SOCIAL WORK AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE, REHABILITATION FACILITIES AND SOCIAL SECURITY.

ON THE VALUE OF INVOLVING ELDERLY PEOPLE IN VOLUNTARY WORK, MR. LEE SAID HE ENTIRELY AGREED WITH DR. HO, POINTING OUT THAT THE USE OF VOLUNTEERS INVOLVING ALL AGE GROUPS WAS WIDELY PRACTISED IN MANY FIELDS OF SOCIAL SERVICES, BOTH BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.

+I DO NOT MYSELF THINK THAT A CENTRAL RECRUITMENT AGENCY IS REQUIRED ALTHOUGH, IF ONE IS DESIRED, THE ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICES SEEMS WELL PLACED TO CARRY OUT THE TASK,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID SOME VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ARE ALREADY MAKING USE OF THE NETWORK OF OLD PEOPLE'S CENTRES TO ENLIST THE SUPPORT OF ELDERLY VOLUNTEERS.

+I AM CONFIDENT THAT WITH THE EXPANSION OF SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY, MANY MORE WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF TAPPING THIS VALUABLE SOURCE OF VOLUNTEERS,+ HE SAID.

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OIL POLICY COMMITTEE FOCUSING ATTENTION ON STRATEGIC RESERVES
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THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON. DAVID JEAFFRESON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE OIL POLICY COMMITTEE HAS NOW TURNED ITS ATTENTION TO THE QUESTION OF STRATEGIC RESERVES AS PHYSICAL SHORTAGE OF OIL IS OVER.

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY THE HON. ALLEN LEE AT THE ANNUAL DEBATE, MR. JEAFFRESON PROPOSED THAT ONCE THE COMMITTEE HAD DEALT WITH THAT ISSUE IT SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF PROPAGATING PERMANENT WAYS OF SAVING FUEL, SUCH AS BETTER INSULATED BUILDINGS AND MORE EFFICIENT ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE COMMITTEE HAD EARLIER BEEN MAINLY CONCERNED WITH THE WORLD SHORTAGE OF OIL PRODUCTS AND HAD ADOPTED PRIORITIES FOR MAINTAINING SUPPLIES I.E. ELECTRICITY FOR INDUSTRY, OIL FOR INDUSTRY AND ELECTRICITY FOR DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS.

ON THE PROPOSALS BY THE HON. S.L. CHEN AND THE HON. P.Y. WONG ON THE SETTING UP OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND A REFINERY AS LONG TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE ENERGY PROBLEM, MR. JEAFFRESON ASSURED THAT +THE GOVERNMENT IS VERY MUCH ALIVE TO BOTH POSSIBILITIES AT THE PRESENT TIME.+

TURNING TO STATISTICS ON HONG KONG'S INVISIBLE TRADE RAISED BY THE HON. DAVID NEWBIGGING, MR. JEAFFRESON SAID THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS HAD COMPLETED THE FIRST SURVEY OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF SERVICES AND THE RESULT WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR ANALYSIS AT THE END OF THE MONTH.

+HE IS ALSO TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY OF ANOTHER SURVEY TO COLLECT STATISTICS ON EXPENDITURE BY HONG KONG RESIDENTS TOURING ABROAD,+ HE SAID.

/HOWEVER

HOWEVER, HE SAID, WHETHER OR NOT THE RESULTS OF THESE SURVEYS WOULD BE PUBLISHED+ DÉPEND ON HOW CONFIDENT WE ARE OF THEIR RELIABILITY, GIVEN THAT THEY REPRESENT OUR FIRST DIRECT EFFORTS TO ENTER INTO WHAT IS IN STATISTICAL TERMS A VERY DIFFICULT AND SENSITIVE AREA.+

IN REPLY TO THE HON. ALLEN LEE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING TO THE CONTINUING CAPABILITY OF HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR, MR. JEAFFRESON FULLY AGREED WITH HIM AND SAID: +THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION WILL BE DEVOTING A FULL CHAPTER TO THE SUBJECT IN ITS REPORT.+

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PACE OF NT DEVELOPMENT HAS NOT FALTERED
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THE PACE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW TERRITORIES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS HAS NOT FALTERED AS THE EVIDENCE IS THERE FOR ALL TO SEE, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR. AKERS-JONES SAID IN A FEW YEARS THE NEW TOWNS WITH THEIR VASTLY IMPROVED SURROUNDINGS WOULD BE AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT AND IT WAS ENCOURAGING TO SEE THAT +THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW TOWNS ARE BEGINNING TO UNITE TOGETHER TO TACKLE THE BESETTING PROBLEMS OF OUR SOCIETY AND TO BUILD A NEW LIFE FOR THEMSELVES.+

HE WAS REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN THE ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEBATE ON THE MOTION OF THANKS TO THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS.

REVIEWING THE SUPPLY OF LAND AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID PROPOSALS FOR EXPENDITURE ON DETAILED SITE INVESTIGATION AND DESIGN WORK FOR AN EXTENSION OF SHA TIN UP THE EASTERN SIDE OF TIDE COVE TO WU KWAI SHA AND ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF JUNK BAY WOULD BE PUT TO THE PUBLIC WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS WEEK.

+THESE TWO AREAS COVER SOME 460 HECTARES - OVER A THOUSAND ACRES - WITH A POTENTIAL POPULATION OF OVER 350 000,+ HE SAID.

+IF ALL GOES WELL, AND I CAN SEE NO REASON WHY IT SHOULD NOT, FORMED LAND WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM 1983-84 ONWARDS, SOME TWO YEARS BEFORE THE TIME ENVISAGED BY MR. LI FOOK-WO, AND AT A TIME WHEN THE SUPPLY OF LAND IN PRESENT DEVELOPMENT AREAS IS BEGINNING TO DRY UP.+

MR. AKERS-JONES SAID +THE PROPOSITION THAT WE ARE SHORT OF LAND IS AN OVER SIMPLIFICATION.+

THERE WAS A VAST POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT IN MANY PARTS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES OUTSIDE THE CONFINES OF THE PRESENT PROGRAMME.

+WE HAVE BEGUN A DEVELOPMENT STUDY OF THE PLAINS AROUND YUEN LONG, BUT THERE ARE OTHER POSSIBILITIES- FOR EXAMPLE, I BELIEVE THERE IS SCOPE TO EXTEND TUEN MUN NEW TOWN NOT ONLY EASTWARDS TOWARDS TAI LAM, BUT ALSO WESTWARDS BEYOND TAP SHEK KOK- AND, TO MY MIND, IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO THINK OF EXTENDING SHA TIN AROUND THE NORTH OF MA ON SHAN TOWARDS THREE FATHOMS COVE.

/+IN SHORT

+IN SHORT WE ARE NOT RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS OR LAND,+ MR. AKERS-JONES SAID.

FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, WHEREVER PRACTICABLE, THE GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGED PRIVATE INITIATIVE IN TAKING PART IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. BECAUSE OF THIS A NUMBER OF LARGE PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES THAT HAD BEEN APPROVED DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS AT VARIOUS PLACES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WOULD LEAD TO THE PRODUCTION OF SOME 9 000 HOUSES AND FLATS IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

SOME OF THESE PROJECTS WOULD HELP TO RELIEVE THE PRESSURE AT THE UPPER END OF THE HOUSING MARKET.

MR. AKERS-JONES ALSO TOUCHED ON THE LETTER B EXCHANGE SCHEME.

WHILE HE AGREED WITH MR. HU FAT-KUANG THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD INCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF COMBINING THE PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION SCHEME OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME WITH A LETTER B EXCHANGE, HE NEVERTHELESS POINTED OUT THAT IT MIGHT JUST BE TOO COMPLICATED TO MIX THE TWO OBJECTIVES.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS EXPLORING ALL POSSIBLE MEANS TO REDUCE ITS LETTER B COMMITMENT AND ADDED: +AS WE MOVE INTO THE 1980S, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER GREAT DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AHEAD OF US, WE SHOULD NOW EXAMINE THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THOSE DEVELOPMENTS AND THE EXPECTATIONS OF PRESENT LAND OWNERS AND THE WAY THE SYSTEM IS NOW WORKING.+

ON THE SUGGESTION BY THE HON. S.L. CHEN TO DEVELOP NEW TOWNS INTO SELF-CONTAINED COMMUNITIES WITH SUFFICIENT JOB OPPORTUNITIES AND ADEQUATE AMENITIES, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID NO MATTER HOW EVEN THE BALANCE WAS THE NEED TO EXPAND THE EXISTING TRANSPORT NETWORK BETWEEN THE TOWNS, AS THE POPULATION, INDUSTRY AND GENERAL SOCIAL ACTIVITY INCREASED WAS INESCAPABLE.+

HE SAID: +OUR DEVELOPMENT PLANS PROVIDE SUFFICIENT EMPLOYMENT FOR THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WE EXPECT IN EACH PLACE, BUT LOCAL SUPPLY AND DEMAND DO NOT ALWAYS MATCH THE WIDER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DYNAMICS OF THE SITUATION.

+I BELIEVE THAT AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WE ARE FOLLOWING THE CORRECT DEVELOPMENT SEQUENCE BY TRYING TO KEEP DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS SOMEWHAT AHEAD OF THE GROWTH OF POPULATION IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT.+

TURNING TO THE SUGGESTION THAT PRIVATE NON-PROFIT MAKING ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO PROVIDE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR. AKERS-JONES POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO LACK OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND THAT THE RESPONSE HAD BEEN MAGNIFICENT.

HE CITED AS EXAMPLES A NUMBER OF PROJECTS WHICH HAD BEEN OR WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH GENEROUS DONATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC.

+IF DONORS COME FORWARD WITH PRIVATE FUNDS, THEY CAN REST ASSURED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL RESPOND, HAPPILY AND QUICKLY, IN FINDING A SUITABLE SITE OR PROJECT,+ HE SAID.

ON THE SUBJECT OF PRIVATE INTEREST AND DONATIONS FOR NEW BUILDINGS, HE SAID HE WISHED THERE WERE MORE INTEREST IN PRESERVING SOME OF THE OLD - THE RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE THAT WAS ALL TOO QUICKLY DISAPPEARING IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+SPEAKING FROM THE NEW TERRITORIES, AND EXPRESSING A SOMEWHAT PAROCHIAL VIEW, THIS SEEMS TO ME FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN MAINTAINING THE OCCASIONAL RELICS OF NINETEENTH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE IN THE URBAN AREA,+ HE SAID.

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NEW PWD OFFICE TO CO-ORDINATE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENTS
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THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) HE WILL SHORTLY BE RECOMMENDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTH EAST KOWLOON DEVELOPMENT OFFICE TO EXAMINE THE NEED FOR CO-ORDINATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR WORKS IN THE AREA.

HE WILL ALSO RECOMMEND THE SETTING UP OF A SMALL UNIT TO EXAMINE THE NEED TO CO-ORDINATE THESE WORKS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE URBAN AREA.

THE MOVE FOLLOWS THE COMPLETION OF A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT BY A SENIOR OFFICER OF THE PWD WHO WAS APPOINTED IN FEBRUARY ON A TEMPORARY BASIS TO RESEARCH A PROPOSAL TO ASSESS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A CO-ORDINATION TEAM TO SERVE THE NORTH EAST KOWLOON AREA.

MR. MCDONALD WAS SPEAKING IN THE RESUMED ANNUAL DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

REPLYING TO A POINT RAISED BY THE HON. ROGER LOBO, HE SAID :
+THE PWD'S PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAMS, OPERATING ON A SYSTEM OF PACKAGED DEVELOPMENT, HAVE BEEN HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL IN PLANNING AND CO-ORDINATING ACTIVITIES IN THE NEW TOWNS BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE ASSUMED THAT THIS TYPE OF ORGANISATION IS NECESSARILY THE BEST ARRANGEMENT FOR EVERY SITUATION.+

ON THE SUGGESTION BY THE HON. LI FOOK-WO THAT AS THERE HAS BEEN AN EASING OF PRESSURE ON THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FOLLOWING THE SLOW-DOWN IN GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE IN 1979 INCREASED EXPENDITURE ON LAND PRODUCTION AND ALL RELATED INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS IS UNLIKELY TO OVER-EXTEND THE INDUSTRY, MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT TO-DATE THERE HAS BEEN NO APPARENT EASING OF PRESSURE.

+ADMITTEDLY FEWER CONSENTS FOR PRIVATE BUILDING WORKS OF ALL TYPES WERE GIVEN DURING THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR THAN WERE GIVEN DURING THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD LAST YEAR BUT THIS CAN ONLY BE TAKEN AS AN INDICATION OF SOME LESSENING OF PRESSURE BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE FUTURE - PROBABLY DURING NEXT YEAR,+ HE SAID.

+HOWEVER, THE INDUSTRY HAS STILL TO CONTEND WITH THE VERY HIGH LEVEL OF ACTIVITY GENERATED BY THE CONSENTS GIVEN OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1979

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+AS FAR AS GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON CONSTRUCTION IS CONCERNED THERE HAS BEEN NO REDUCTION IN LEVEL. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN A RE-PHASING OF PROJECTS IN THE PROGRAMME-THE ACTUAL EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC WORKS NON-RECURRENT ITEMS WILL REACH AN ALL-TIME RECORD IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR.+

MR. MCDONALD REITERATED THAT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO EASING OF PRESSURE AND +EMPLOYMENT IN THE INDUSTRY HAS INCREASED OVER LAST YEAR'S LEVEL AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS CONTINUE TO RISE.+

REFERRING TO A SUGGESTION BY THE HON. F.K. HU THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO CONSTRUCTING PUBLIC HOUSING ON GOVERNMENT SITES WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE ONLY GROUND FLOOR USE, HE SAID :
+IN FACT, COMPARATIVELY FEW SITES ALLOCATED TO DEPARTMENTS ARE DEVELOPED FOR GROUND FLOOR USE ONLY AS, AT LEAST IN RECENT YEARS, CONSIDERATION IS ALWAYS GIVEN TO JOINT-USER ARRANGEMENTS TO TRY TO MAXIMISE SITE UTILISATION.

+HOUSING, EITHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, IS ONE POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL USE CONSIDERED FOR INCLUSION AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL ALTHOUGH OF COURSE SOME SITES ARE TOO SMALL TO SUPPORT HOUSING OR ARE IN AREAS WHERE HOUSING OR ADDITIONAL HOUSING WOULD BE UNSUITABLE OR UNDESIRABLE.+

MR. MCDONALD EXPLAINED THAT HOUSING CANNOT SIMPLY BE PUT INTO EVERY AVAILABLE AREA AS THE INFRA-STRUCTURE AND NECESSARY AMENITIES IN MANY AREAS ARE ALREADY FULLY UTILISED AND THE INTRODUCTION OF FURTHER RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION WOULD OVERLOAD THEM.

HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE SITES WHERE A COMBINATION OF HOUSING WITH GOVERNMENT USES HAS PROVED VIABLE.

+ONE EXAMPLE IS THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY DEPOT SITE AT SHA TIN WHERE FLATS AND A COMMERCIAL COMPLEX WILL BE BUILT BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE ON A PODIUM OVER THE DEPOT,+ HE SAID.

+IN THE URBAN AREA, A SITE IN OI KWAN ROAD, WAN CHAI, IS BEING DEVELOPED WITH GOVERNMENT AND URBAN COUNCIL OFFICES ON THE LOWER FLOORS WITH HONG KONG HOUSING SOCIETY FLATS ABOVE. THE HOUSING SOCIETY IS ALSO CONSTRUCTING BLOCKS OF FLATS OVER A MARKET IN THE SAI YING PUN AREA.+

HE REASSURED MR. HU THAT CONSIDERATION IS GIVEN TO INCLUDING HOUSING TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM USE OF GOVERNMENT SITES WHEREVER IT IS POSSIBLE AND SUITABLE.

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GOVERNMENT SHARES LOCAL MANUFACTURERS'
CONCERN ABOUT USA MARKET

THE GOVERNMENT SHARES THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY LOCAL MANUFACTURERS AND TRADERS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES MARKET, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO TEXTILES AND APPAREL EXPORTS, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, THE HON. LAWRENCE MILLS TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS AT THE ANNUAL DEBATE, MR. MILLS SAID THE CONCERN HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE KNOWN TO THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION AND +DESPITE THREE ROUNDS OF CONSULTATIONS ON OUR EXPORTS OF APPAREL TO THE UNITED STATES, WE HAVE AS YET BEEN UNABLE TO FIND COMMON GROUND.+

+OUR EFFORTS ARE CONTINUING, AND THIS COUNCIL WILL BE AWARE THAT MR. DORWARD IS NOW IN WASHINGTON WHERE TOMORROW HE WILL SEE THE UNITED STATES SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, MR. REUBEN ASKEW, TO REITERATE OUR CONCERN AND SEEK A FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH TALKS WITH THE USA MIGHT BE RESUMED,+ HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON PROPOSALS BY THE HON. WONG PO-YAN ON EXPORT PROMOTION, MR. MILLS SAID THAT WHILST HE DOUBTED THE NEED TO INCREASE RESOURCES, HE AGREED WITH THE NEED FOR MEASURES TO ENHANCE OUR EXPORT CAPABILITY.

+THE GOVERNMENT AND TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS ARE ALREADY ACTIVE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ATTRACT NEW EXPORT CAPABILITIES TO HONG KONG THROUGH INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION, BY SEEKING NEW SKILLS AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES FROM OVERSEAS, AND THROUGH SUCH BODIES AS THE HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATES CORPORATION.

+BUT MORE COULD BE DONE AND THERE IS A NEED FOR GREATER CO-ORDINATION OF OUR EFFORTS. WHEN THE REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION IS COMPLETED, I WOULD EXPECT THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROVIDE US WITH GUIDANCE ON HOW BEST TO PROCEED IN THIS FIELD,+ MR. MILLS SAID.

REPLYING TO THE HON. FRANCIS TIEN'S REMARKS ON THE NEED FOR MANUFACTURERS TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT THEIR PRESENT PATTERN OF PURCHASING RAW MATERIALS, MR. MILLS SAID A SELLING MISSION FROM THE US TEXTILE INDUSTRY HAS BEEN OFFERED EVERY ASSISTANCE DURING ITS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO HONG KONG.

+SINCE JANUARY THIS YEAR THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL'S HEAD OFFICE HAS RECEIVED OR ASSISTED 51 INCOMING MISSIONS FROM OVERSEAS INTERESTED IN SELLING RAW MATERIALS TO US.

+IN ADDITION, MANY HONG KONG PARTICIPANTS IN THE MORE THAN 50 PROJECTS ORGANISED BY THE TDC THIS YEAR, HAVE INTERESTS IN THE PURCHASE OF RAW MATERIALS.

+THE TDC ALSO OFFERS A TRADE ENQUIRIES SERVICE TO ASSIST IN LOCATING SOURCES OF RAW MATERIALS OVERSEAS. THIS IMPORTANT WORK OF THE TDC WILL CONTINUE, AND THE TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT WILL DO ALL IT CAN TO ASSIST,+ HE SAID.

HK/AUSTRIA TEXTILE TALKS TO RESUME IN EUROPE NEXT MONTH
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CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND AUSTRIA ON THE FUTURE OF THE BILATERAL TEXTILE AGREEMENTS WERE ADJOURNED TODAY (WEDNESDAY) FOLLOWING THREE DAYS OF INCONCLUSIVE TALKS IN HONG KONG.

CONSULTATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO RESUME IN EUROPE NEXT MONTH.

ANNOUNCING THIS TODAY, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT SAID THE CURRENT AGREEMENTS WOULD RUN UNTIL JANUARY 31 NEXT YEAR.

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DOCUMENT OF IDENTITY FOR VISA PURPOSES
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THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT WILL START ISSUING FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) A NEW TRAVEL DOCUMENT CALLED +DOCUMENT OF IDENTITY FOR VISA PURPOSES+, TO REPLACE THE PRIVATELY ISSUED +DECLARATION OF IDENTITY+ SWORN BEFORE A NOTARY WHICH IS WIDELY USED BY RECENT IMMIGRANTS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SAID EXISTING DECLARATIONS OF IDENTITY ENDORSED WITH A HONG KONG VISA WILL REMAIN VALID UNTIL THE VISA EXPIRES.

HE STRESSED THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR HOLDERS OF DECLARATIONS OF IDENTITY TO SWITCH TO THE NEW DOCUMENT OF IDENTITY, UNTIL THEY REQUIRE A NEW RE-ENTRY VISA.

THE FEE FOR THE DOCUMENT OF IDENTITY FOR VISA PURPOSES IS \$60 FOR 44 PAGES AND \$120 FOR 92 PAGES.

THE RE-ENTRY VISA FEE, WHICH IS PAYABLE IN ADDITION IF THE HOLDER INTENDS TO RETURN TO HONG KONG, REMAINS UNCHANGED AT \$32.

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SCHEME TO HELP DEPENDANTS OF FIREMEN KILLED IN ACTION
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THE FIRE SERVICES HAS INTRODUCED A SCHEME TO HELP WIDOWS AND OTHER DEPENDANTS OF FIREMEN WHO HAVE BEEN KILLED WHILE FIGHTING FIRE OR IN ACTION AT OTHER CALAMITIES.

A FIRE SERVICES SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SINCE THE DEATH OF SENIOR FIREMAN HUI YAU FUK LAST SEPTEMBER, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS HAVE DONATED A TOTAL OF \$180 000 TO THE WELFARE FUND, APART FROM DIRECT DONATIONS TO THE WIDOW WHO HAS ALSO RECEIVED FINANCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND FIRE SERVICES FOLLOWING HER HUSBAND'S DEATH.

+THIS SUM OF MONEY HAS BEEN PLACED ON DEPOSIT IN A SUB-ACCOUNT OF THE FIRE SERVICES WELFARE FUND AND THE INTEREST EARNED WILL BE USED TO PAY WIDOWS OR DEPENDANTS A REGULAR MONTHLY GRANT TO SUBSIDISE THEIR OTHER INCOME,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE WIDOWS OF SENIOR FIREMAN HUI YAU FUK AND FIREMAN WONG PONG WONG WOULD BE THE FIRST TO BENEFIT FROM THE SCHEME COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 1979.

SENIOR FIREMAN HUI DIED FROM INJURY RECEIVED WHILE FIGHTING A DANGEROUS GOODS GODOWN FIRE IN KING LAM STREET ON SEPTEMBER 21, 1979.

FIREMAN WONG WAS KILLED IN A GAS EXPLOSION IN DAIMARU DEPARTMENT STORE IN CAUSEWAY BAY IN 1972.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT AT SHA TIN RACE COURSE

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DETAILS OF A PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMME AT THE SHA TIN RACE COURSE WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE GIS THEATRE ON FRIDAY (NOVEMBER 16) AT 11 A.M.

PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR. BARRIE WIGGHAM- THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB, GENERAL R.B. PENFOLD- THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE HONG KONG PHILHARMONIC, MR. JOHN DUFFUS, AND THE MUSIC ADMINISTRATOR, MRS. ELIZABETH WONG.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE CONFERENCE.

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SUSPENSION OF TRAM SERVICES IN HAPPY VALLEY

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TRAM SERVICES FROM HAPPY VALLEY TO KENNEDY TOWN AND SHAUKIWAN WILL BE SUSPENDED AT 11.30 P.M. ON NOVEMBER 17 (SATURDAY) AND NOVEMBER 24 (SUNDAY) TO FACILITATE CONSTRUCTION WORK AT THE CANAL ROAD EXTENSION.

ON BOTH DAYS THE LAST TRAM FROM HAPPY VALLEY TO SHAUKIWAN WILL BE AT 11.24 P.M. AND THAT TO KENNEDY TOWN WILL LEAVE WITHIN SECONDS.

THE LAST TRAM FROM SHAUKIWAN TO HAPPY VALLEY WILL LEAVE AT 10.26 P.M. AND THAT FROM KENNEDY TOWN AT 10.46 P.M.

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