



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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REVENUE BILL A SANE, MODERATE COMPROMISE -- SIR JOHN
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THE FINAL OUTCOME FROM CONSULTATIONS ON THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 WAS +A SANE AND MODERATE COMPROMISE THAT SERVES THE INTERESTS OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY,+ THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING JUST BEFORE MOVING SOME AMENDMENTS AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING OF THE BILL, SIR JOHN EXTENDED HIS GRATITUDE TO THE HON PETER POON AND THE HON RITA FAN ON THEIR SPEECHES ON THE BILL AND TO THE UMEICO COMMITTEE IN GENERAL FOR THEIR CONSTRUCTIVE AND PROFESSIONAL APPROACH TO THE BILL.

THE BILL, HE SAID, HAD BEEN SUBJECT TO THE CLOSEST EXAMINATION SINCE IT WAS PUBLISHED IN JULY LAST YEAR, AND SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS HAD BEEN INTRODUCED IN RESPONSE TO MANY RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO UMEICO AND THE ADMINISTRATION BY THE BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY.

+THIS HAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS AND THE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE THAT UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ARE PLAYING IN EXAMINING NEW LEGISLATION,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

HE AGREED THAT THE BILL REPRESENTED +A REASONABLE BALANCE+ BETWEEN THE NEED ON THE ONE HAND TO INCREASE THE POWERS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE TO COMBAT TAX AVOIDANCE AND ON THE OTHER TO ENSURE THAT THERE WERE SUFFICIENT SAFEGUARDS TO PROTECT THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF TAXPAYERS.

SIR JOHN SAID THAT THE COMMISSIONER WOULD BE ISSUING PRACTICE NOTES COVERING THE NEW LEGISLATION +HOPEFULLY BEFORE THE END OF APRIL,+ DESIGNED TO REFLECT THE LAW BOTH IN LETTER AND SPIRIT.

HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT SECTIONS 61A AND B WOULD ONLY BE USED TO STRIKE DOWN BLATANT AND CONTRIVED SCHEMES WHERE THERE WAS +A CLEAR AND DOMINANT TAX AVOIDANCE PURPOSE.+

+IT IS NOT THE INTENTION TO USE THE LAW TO PENALISE GENUINE COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS HE PROPOSED, SIR JOHN SAID THEY WERE RELATIVELY MINOR AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 16(2)(F) AND COMPRISED THREE REFINEMENTS TO THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH INTEREST PAID BY CORPORATIONS WOULD BE DEDUCTIBLE FOR PROFITS TAX PURPOSES.

THE MOST IMPORTANT, HE SAID, WAS AMENDMENT TO SECTION 16(2)(F) (III).

/THIS, HE

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THIS, HE SAID, WOULD EXTEND DEDUCTIBILITY TO INTEREST PAID WHERE THE MONEY BORROWED ORIGINATED IN THE ISSUE BY AN ASSOCIATED CORPORATION OF MARKETABLE, THOUGH UNLISTED, +COMMERCIAL PAPER.+

+THIS IS THE LOGICAL REFINEMENT TO THE EXTENSION TO SECTION 16(2) PROPOSED IN THE BILL AND SHOULD HELP FOSTER HONG KONG'S POSITION AS A MAJOR FINANCIAL CENTRE,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

OTHER REFINEMENTS WERE MINOR CHANGES TO ENSURE THAT THE SECTION COULD APPLY TO ISSUES BY CORPORATIONS WHOSE ORDINARY BUSINESS WAS NOT THE RAISING OF FUNDS, AND TO TREAT EQUALLY ISSUES WHICH WERE MARKETABLE IN APPROVED FINANCIAL CENTRES WITH THOSE WHICH WERE MARKETABLE IN HONG KONG, HE SAID.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR THE UMELCO SUPPORT, SIR JOHN SAID: +BOTH THEY AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE ARE WISE ENOUGH NOT TO BE UNDULY PERTURBED BY THE SNARLING OF VARIOUS VESTED INTERESTS AS THEY PROWL THROUGH THE JUNGLES OF OUR TAX LAW,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

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TAX BILL DEMONSTRATES SUCCESS OF CONSULTATION

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THE INTRODUCTION OF THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 WAS DESCRIBED AS A DEMONSTRATION OF SUCCESSFUL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION AT THE RESUMED DEBATE OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE HON PETER POON SAID THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, THE UMELCO AD HOC INLAND REVENUE REVIEW PANEL AND THE PUBLIC THROUGH REPRESENTATIONS HAD RESULTED IN A PIECE OF LEGISLATION WHICH HE FELT WAS BOTH +ACCEPTABLE AND SUITABLE TO HONG KONG+.

+THE NEW LEGISLATION WILL GO A LONG WAY TO REDUCE TAX AVOIDANCE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH HAVE HITHERTO BEEN CONSIDERABLE UNDER OUR SIMPLE TAX LAW,+ HE SAID.

MR POON SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE BILL IN ITS PRESENT FORM WOULD BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE THREE MAIN OBJECTIVES.

+FIRSTLY, IT IS RELATIVELY SIMPLE AND CONFORMS WITH HONG KONG'S TAX PHILOSOPHY.

+SECONDLY, IT GIVES THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE ADEQUATE POWER TO TACKLE TAX-AVOIDANCE SCHEMES OR TRANSACTIONS.

/+LASTLY, BUT

+LASTLY, BUT JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, IT CONTAINS SUFFICIENT SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ABUSE OF POWER BY THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT,+ HE SAID.

MR POON SAID IT WAS ENVISAGED THAT THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE WOULD EXERCISE HIS POWER UNDER SUCH ANTI-AVOIDANCE LEGISLATION MAINLY AGAINST BLATANT TAX-AVOIDANCE SCHEMES OR CONTRIVED TRANSACTIONS.

THE NEW SECTIONS 61A AND 61B WERE BOTH SUBJECT TO THE OVERRIDING REQUIREMENT THAT THE 'SOLE AND DOMINANT MOTIVE' WAS TAX-AVOIDANCE AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT AFFECT GENUINE BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS OR TRANSACTIONS NOT ENTERED INTO PRINCIPALLY WITH TAX AVOIDANCE MOTIVE, OR PROPER DEDUCTIONS OR ALLOWANCES UNDER THE INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE, HE NOTED.

AS FAR AS LEASING WAS CONCERNED, HE SAID THE NEW SECTION 39E WOULD ONLY AFFECT THE TWO TYPES OF TAX-BASED LEASING MENTIONED THEREIN, WHICH IF UNABATED, WOULD CONTINUE TO RESULT IN HUGE TAX DEFERRAL AND POSSIBLY IN SOME CASES EVENTUAL LOSS OF REVENUE TO THE GOVERNMENT.

+I HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY THE COMMISSIONER THAT IF THE BILL IS PASSED, THE ANTI-AVOIDANCE PROVISION WOULD BE USED WITH PROPER DISCRETION AND ONLY WHEN IT IS REALLY NECESSARY.

+I BELIEVE THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF SUCH PROVISIONS IS OF GREAT VALUE IN PROTECTING OUR TAX REVENUE.

+THERE SHOULD BE NO FEAR THAT WE WILL CREATE A TAX MONSTER. OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE MUCH MORE DRASTIC AND COMPLICATED ANTI-AVOIDANCE LEGISLATION,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THE PRACTICE NOTES ON THE NEW LEGISLATION CONTAINING GENERAL GUIDELINES INCLUDING TAX CLEARANCE PROCEDURES SHOULD BE ISSUED BY THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

EARLIER IN HIS SPEECH, MR POON RECALLED THAT THE BILL WAS PUBLISHED IN DRAFT FORM IN JULY 1985 AND AN UMELCO AD HOC INLAND REVENUE REVIEW PANEL WAS FORMED SOON AFTER TO STUDY THE BILL AND TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIONS.

THE GROUP RECEIVED OVER 40 REPRESENTATIONS AND HELD MEETINGS WITH INTERESTED PARTIES AND THE ADMINISTRATION RESULTING IN THE GROUP MAKING A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE DRAFT BILL.

PRACTICALLY ALL THESE RECOMMENDATIONS HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATION.

THE BILL IN ITS PRESENT FORM WAS PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 17, 1986 AND A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP WITH MR POON AS THE CONVENER WAS FORMED TO STUDY IT.

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EIGHT REPRESENTATIONS HAD SINCE BEEN RECEIVED AND THE GROUP HAD CAREFULLY STUDIED ALL THE SUGGESTIONS MADE AND HAD HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION.

APART FROM THE MINOR AMENDMENT TO CLAUSE 4 OF THE BILL ON DEDUCTIONS ALLOWED IN RESPECT OF INTEREST ON DEBENTURES OF SIMILAR INSTRUMENTS, MR POON SAID IT WAS FELT THAT THERE WERE NO NEW EVIDENCE OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD JUSTIFY FURTHER AMENDMENTS.

ALSO SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION, THE HON RITA FAN SAID SHE BELIEVED THE BILL WAS NEEDED FOR HONG KONG.

SHE COMPLIMENTED THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY FOR THE LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING AND CO-OPERATION THEY ACHIEVED IN THE FORMULATION OF THIS BILL.

HOWEVER, SHE NOTED THAT THOUGH THE OBJECTIVE OF THE BILL WAS WELL SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNITY, THERE WERE STILL CONCERNS AMONG THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY THAT SECTION 61A AND B MIGHT BE APPLIED IN SUCH A MANNER THAT GENUINE COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS COULD BE CAUGHT, THUS RESULTING IN COMPLICATIONS AND UNFORESEEN LIABILITIES.

SHE SAID IT WOULD EASE PEOPLE'S DOUBT IF THE ADMINISTRATION WAS ABLE TO CONFIRM THAT GENUINE INTRA-GROUP REGROUPINGS OR INTER-COMPANY TRANSFER OF PROFIT WOULD NOT BE CAUGHT BY THESE SECTIONS UNLESS THERE WAS A CLEAR TAX AVOIDANCE PURPOSE.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT THE OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION TO BE MADE WAS IN THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT'S PRACTICE NOTES.

THE PRACTICE NOTES WERE ACCORDED A HIGH STATUS BY THE PROFESSIONALS AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND WERE CONSIDERED TO BE THE RULES OF THE GAME, MRS FAN OBSERVED.

+IF THE RULES ARE NOT CLEAR, OR THE RULES ARE NOT SEEN AS FAIR AND EQUITABLE, THEN THE PRUDENT BUSINESSMEN SIMPLY WILL NOT PLAY THE GAME.

+ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE RULES ARE PERCEIVED TO REFLECT THE ACTUAL LAW, BOTH IN LETTER AND IN SPIRIT, THEN THE CONFIDENCE OF THE BUSINESSMEN WILL BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED BOTH LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY,+ SHE SAID.

+IF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY PERCEIVES AND ACCEPTS THESE NOTES AS REASONABLE, EQUITABLE AND CLEAR, THEN ANY LINGERING DOUBTS ABOUT THE INTENTIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION FOR ENACTING THESE ANTI-TAX-AVOIDANCE LEGISLATION CAN BE EFFECTIVELY REMOVED,+ SHE ADDED.

BILL MAKES FRAUDS FROM BANKS CRIMINAL
* * * * *

NEW PROVISIONS TO BRING THE FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY OF OBTAINING CREDIT BY DECEPTION FROM BANKS OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES CLEARLY WITHIN THE AMBIT OF THE CRIMINAL LAW WERE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE THEFT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID THAT IN THE COURSE OF PROSECUTING COMMERCIAL CRIMES, HIS CHAMBERS HAD ENCOUNTERED DIFFICULTIES UNDER THE EXISTING LAW IN DEALING WITH CERTAIN FRAUDULENT TRANSACTIONS CARRIED OUT FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING CREDIT FROM BANKS OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.

HE GAVE A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF A PERSON DISHONESTLY AND BY DECEPTION INDUCING A BANK TO LEND HIM SOME MONEY. THE PROCEEDS OF THE LOAN ARE TRANSFERRED TO AN ACCOUNT IN HIS NAME IN THAT BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY. THE PERSON THEN DISBURSES THE AMOUNT OF THE LOAN FROM HIS ACCOUNT.

+IN ITS PRESENT FORM, OUR VIEW IS THAT THE THEFT ORDINANCE DOES NOT CLEARLY MAKE SUCH FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY ILLEGAL,+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS SAID IT WAS, OF COURSE, AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 17 OF THE THEFT ORDINANCE TO OBTAIN DISHONESTLY PROPERTY BELONGING TO ANOTHER BY DECEPTION.

+BUT IN MY EXAMPLE, THE SUM WHICH FORMS THE LOAN OBTAINED FRAUDULENTLY IS CREATED AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY AND THE FRAUDULENT BORROWER COME TO AN AGREEMENT. SO IT IS NOT THOUGHT APPROPRIATE TO CHARGE AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 17.

+ALTHOUGH IT IS ALSO AN OFFENCE UNDER SECTION 18 OF THE THEFT ORDINANCE TO OBTAIN DISHONESTLY AN OVERDRAFT BY DECEPTION, THE BETTER VIEW IS THAT THE NEW LOAN, IN MY EXAMPLE, DOES NOT FALL TO BE DEALT WITH AS AN OVERDRAFT.

+NOR ARE ANY OF THE PROVISIONS IN THE THEFT ORDINANCE, SUCH AS THE OFFENCE OF OBTAINING SERVICES BY DECEPTION, PROCURING THE EXECUTION OF A VALUABLE SECURITY BY DECEPTION OR FURNISHING FALSE INFORMATION, THOUGHT TO FIT THE KIND OF TRANSACTION IN MY EXAMPLE,+ HE SAID.

THE BEST COURSE THEREFORE, MR THOMAS SAID, WAS TO ENACT NEW PROVISIONS TO MAKE THESE AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES CRIMINAL, AS THEY SHOULD BE.

+CLAUSE 2 OF THIS BILL MAKES IT AN OFFENCE TO OBTAIN BY DECEPTION CREDIT FROM BANKS OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES. CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL CREATES A NEW OFFENCE FOR A PERSON DISHONESTLY TO PROCURE BY DECEPTION THE MAKING OF AN ENTRY IN THE RECORD OF A BANK OR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY,+ HE SAID.

/MR THOMAS

MR THOMAS SAID THE OPPORTUNITY WAS ALSO TAKEN IN THE BILL TO PERMIT HIGHER LEVELS OF PENALTY FOR CERTAIN OFFENCES IN THE EXISTING THEFT ORDINANCE.

THESE INCLUDE : FALSE ACCOUNTING, MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS BY COMPANY DIRECTORS AND SUPPRESSION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS.

+IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE EXISTING MAXIMUM PENALTY OF SEVEN YEARS' IMPRISONMENT FOR THESE OFFENCES BE INCREASED TO 10 YEARS TO REFLECT THE TRUE SERIOUSNESS OF THESE OFFENCES,+ HE SAID.

EXPERIENCE IN HONG KONG SHOWED THAT THE COMPLEXITY AND SCALE OF THE FRAUDS INVOLVED IN SUCH OFFENCES OFTEN WARRANTED A HIGHER PENALTY THAN WAS PRESENTLY PRESCRIBED.

+THE PROPOSALS WILL PUT THE MAXIMUM LEVEL FOR THESE OFFENCES ON A PAR WITH OTHER OFFENCES OF A SIMILAR NATURE IN THE ORDINANCE,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE LAW SOCIETY, THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG HAD BEEN CONSULTED ON THE BILL.

THE LAW SOCIETY SUPPORTED THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED, WHILE THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW FACULTY OFFERED A NUMBER OF DETAILED COMMENTS ON THE BILL WHICH HAD SINCE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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HIGHER MAXIMUM PENALTY SOUGHT FOR FRAUDULENT OFFENCES
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A BILL SEEKING TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IMPOSED ON A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF THE OFFENCE OF CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD FROM SEVEN YEARS' IMPRISONMENT TO 14 YEARS WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID THE REASON FOR THE PROPOSAL WAS THAT A MAXIMUM OF SEVEN YEARS WAS CLEARLY OUT OF LINE WITH THE PENALTIES PRESCRIBED IN OTHER ORDINANCES FOR COMPARABLE OFFENCES INVOLVING FRAUD.

+FOR INSTANCE,+ HE SAID, +UNDER THE CRIMES ORDINANCE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR MAKING A FALSE ENTRY IN A BANK BOOK WITH INTENT TO DEFRAUD IS LIFE IMPRISONMENT AND THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR FORGING A VALUABLE SECURITY IS 14 YEARS' IMPRISONMENT.

/+THE OFFENCE

+THE OFFENCE OF HANDLING STOLEN GOODS UNDER THE THEFT ORDINANCE, WHICH COULD INCLUDE MONEY OBTAINED BY DECEPTION, HAS A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF 14 YEARS.+

THE MAXIMUM PENALTIES FOR OTHER FRAUDULENT OFFENCES UNDER THE THEFT ORDINANCE SUCH AS OBTAINING PROPERTY BY DECEPTION WERE GENERALLY IN THE REGION OF 10 YEARS, MR THOMAS SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AS CONSPIRACIES TO DEFRAUD OFTEN INVOLVED THE COMMISSION OF SEVERAL SUCH FRAUDULENT OFFENCES, A HIGHER PENALTY WAS CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE.

+INDEED, IN A RECENT CASE OF CONSPIRACY TO DEFRAUD WHICH INVOLVED IN EXCESS OF \$30 MILLION, THE MAXIMUM PENALTY WAS IMPOSED AND THE JUDGE CRITICISED THE FACT THAT THE POWER OF THE COURTS WAS LIMITED TO A SEVEN-YEAR TERM OF IMPRISONMENT,+ HE NOTED.

MR THOMAS SAID THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW SOCIETY HAD BEEN CONSULTED AND HAD NOT OBJECTED TO THE PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PENALTY.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED THAT CONCERN HAD BEEN EXPRESSED BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE BAR THAT THIS PROPOSAL MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE GREATER USE OF THIS OFFENCE BY PROSECUTORS WITH THE CONSEQUENT RISK THAT CONSPIRATORS MIGHT RECEIVE HIGHER SENTENCES THAN THEY DESERVED.

MR THOMAS ASSURED THAT THE PROSECUTORS WOULD CONTINUE TO ADVISE THAT THE MOST APPROPRIATE OFFENCES SHOULD BE CHARGED.

+ANYHOW, THE COURTS SHOULD IN EVERY CASE IMPOSE THE SENTENCE WHICH THEY THINK TO BE APPROPRIATE TO THE PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES, SUBJECT ONLY TO THE MAXIMUM,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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CHANGES TO TREATMENT OF ADDICTS PROPOSED
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CHANGES TO THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TREATMENT OF DRUG ADDICTS WERE CONTAINED IN A BILL INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID THE BILL WAS BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF A WORKING GROUP APPOINTED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES IN 1984 TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRES ORDINANCE AND ASSOCIATED TREATMENT PROGRAMMES FOR DRUG ADDICTS.

/HE SAID

HE SAID THE FIRST PROPOSAL IN THE BILL WAS TO REDUCE THE MINIMUM DETENTION PERIOD OF A PERSON DETAINED IN AN ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRE FROM FOUR MONTHS TO TWO MONTHS.

EXPERIENCE HAD SHOWN THAT MANY DRUG ADDICTS RESPONDED RAPIDLY TO TREATMENT AND DID NOT NEED TO BE DETAINED FOR AS LONG AS FOUR MONTHS, HE SAID.

AS REGARDS THE SECOND PROPOSAL, MR THOMAS SAID THAT AT PRESENT, THE ORDINANCE PROVIDES THAT IF A PERSON IS SENTENCED TO IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING TWO YEARS WHEN HE IS ALREADY THE SUBJECT OF A SUPERVISION ORDER, OR RECALL ORDER, MADE BY THE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES, OR A DETENTION ORDER, THAT ORDER IS SUSPENDED FOR THE DURATION OF THE PERIOD OF IMPRISONMENT BUT AGAIN TAKES EFFECT WHEN THAT PERIOD EXPIRES.

THE BILL SOUGHT TO REDUCE THE MAXIMUM PERIOD OF IMPRISONMENT FROM TWO YEARS TO NINE MONTHS.

MR THOMAS SAID THIS AMENDMENT WAS CONSIDERED NECESSARY BECAUSE AN ADDICT WHO SERVED A PRISON SENTENCE OF LONGER THAN ABOUT NINE MONTHS TENDED TO BECOME STIGMATISED AS A PRISONER.

+HE TENDS TO BE LESS WILLING TO CO-OPERATE DURING AFTER-CARE, AND FURTHER DETENTION IN A DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRE PRODUCES LITTLE IN THE WAY OF IMPROVED BEHAVIOUR.

+RETURNING SUCH A PERSON TO A TREATMENT CENTRE, OR TO SUPERVISION, AFTER NINE MONTHS OR MORE OF IMPRISONMENT IS GENERALLY FOUND TO BE UNPRODUCTIVE,+ HE SAID.

THE THIRD PROPOSAL SOUGHT TO ENSURE THAT A PERSON RELEASED FROM A TREATMENT CENTRE BUT SUBSEQUENTLY RECALLED WOULD IN MOST CASES HAVE THE BENEFIT OF FURTHER SUPERVISION WHEN RELEASED THE SECOND TIME.

MR THOMAS SAID THERE WAS NO PROVISION AT PRESENT FOR A PERSON RELEASED FROM RECALL TO BE PROVIDED WITH FURTHER SUPERVISION AND SO A PERSON WAS DEPRIVED OF SUPERVISION AT THE TIME WHEN HE WAS POSSIBLY MOST IN NEED OF IT.

FINALLY, IF A PERSON WHO WAS THE SUBJECT OF A SUPERVISION ORDER WAS BROUGHT BEFORE A COURT ON A CRIMINAL MATTER AND PLACED ON PROBATION, THE LAW AT PRESENT PROVIDED FOR DUAL SUPERVISION, BY BOTH THE COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

+THIS IS CLEARLY AN UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION OF EFFORT AND A WASTE OF RESOURCES. SO THE BILL PROVIDES THAT IN SUCH CASES THE SUPERVISION ORDER MADE UNDER THE DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRES ORDINANCE WILL LAPSE.+

MR THOMAS TOLD LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS THAT THESE WERE ALL VALUABLE CHANGES TO THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TREATMENT OF DRUG ADDICTS AND DESERVED SUPPORT.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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MOVE TO IMPROVE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL JURISDICTION

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A BILL WHICH SEEKS TO INCREASE THE JURISDICTION OF THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL AND TO AMEND THE TIME LIMITS FOR HEARING A CLAIM WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE JURISDICTION OF THE TRIBUNAL BE INCREASED FROM \$5 000 TO \$8 000 TO MAKE THE ADVANTAGES OF THE TRIBUNAL'S SERVICES MORE WIDELY AVAILABLE.

+THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE LAW SOCIETY HAVE AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN INCREASE IN THE TRIBUNAL'S JURISDICTION,+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS SAID THE EXISTING LIMIT OF \$5 000 HAD APPLIED SINCE FEBRUARY 1982 AND THE PAST FOUR YEARS HAD SEEN SOME CHANGE IN THE VALUE OF MONEY.

+AND MEANWHILE THE JURISDICTION OF THE DISTRICT COURT, WHERE CLAIMS IN EXCESS OF \$5 000 HAVE TO BE LODGED, HAS INCREASED FROM \$40 000 TO \$60 000.+

AS REGARDS THE TIME LIMITS, MR THOMAS SAID THE LAW AT PRESENT REQUIRED THAT A DATE FOR THE HEARING OF A CLAIM SHOULD BE FIXED NOT EARLIER THAN 10 DAYS NOR LATER THAN 60 DAYS AFTER THE FILING OF THE CLAIM, UNLESS THE PARTIES OTHERWISE AGREED.

HE SAID THAT IN PRACTICE SUCH AGREEMENT WAS SELDOM REACHED AND IT HAD BEEN POINTED OUT BY THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, WITH SUPPORT FROM THE CONSUMER COUNCIL AND THE HONG KONG TOURIST ASSOCIATION, THAT TOURISTS WHO CAME TO HONG KONG FOR SHORT VISITS SHOULD HAVE SOME MEANS OF OBTAINING QUICK REDRESS AGAINST MALPRACTICES BY UNSCRUPULOUS RETAILERS.

+SUCH A RETAILER IS NOT LIKELY TO AGREE THAT THE 10 DAYS SHOULD BE ABRIDGED. CONSEQUENTLY, THE TOURIST WILL NOT HAVE HIS CLAIM HEARD BEFORE HE LEAVES HONG KONG.

+THE REMOVAL OF THE 10-DAY LIMIT WILL ALLOW CLAIMS TO BE HEARD QUICKLY WHEN THAT IS APPROPRIATE, AS IN THE CASE OF A TOURIST'S COMPLAINT,+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS ADDED THAT THE WORKLOAD OF THE TRIBUNAL WAS SUCH THAT IT HAD DIFFICULTY IN ALWAYS MEETING TO 60-DAY LIMIT FOR THE HEARING OF A CLAIM.

+IT IS PROPOSED, THEREFORE, THAT THIS LIMIT BE EXTENDED TO 90 DAYS, WHICH WILL ACCOMMODATE BOTH THE EXISTING WORKLOAD AND THE INCREASE IN WORKLOAD, ANTICIPATED FROM THE INCREASE IN JURISDICTION.

/+ON THE

+ON THE OTHER HAND, THE 90-DAY TIME LIMIT WILL ENSURE THAT CLAIMS ARE HEARD WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME.+

MR THOMAS SAID THERE WERE A NUMBER OF OTHER MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE BILL INCLUDING THE PROVISION FOR DEPUTY ADJUDICATORS TO BE APPOINTED.

+THE BILL IS A USEFUL MEASURE TO UPDATE AND IMPROVE THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY A TRIBUNAL THAT HAS EARNED ITS PLACE IN OUR SYSTEM FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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CHINESE NAME OF COUNCIL TO BE CHANGED
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THE CHINESE NAME OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL WILL BE CHANGED TO GIVE A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF ITS NATURE OF WORK AND TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONFUSION WITH THE CHINESE NAME OF DISTRICT BOARDS, THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE REGIONAL COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, MR CHEUNG SAID IN THE 11 MONTHS SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL, MANY PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY NEW TERRITORIES RESIDENTS, COULD NOT CLEARLY UNDERSTAND THE WORK AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL AND SOME NEW TERRITORIES VILLAGERS EVEN MIXED UP ITS WORK WITH THAT OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS.

+ALL THESE ARE DUE TO THE CLOSE RESEMBLANCE OF THE CHINESE NAME OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL TO THAT OF THE DISTRICT BOARD,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID IF THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE TWO BODIES SHOULD LEAD TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC'S MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL, THE DISCHARGING OF ITS DUTIES WOULD DEFINITELY BE HAMPERED TO A CERTAIN EXTENT.

MR CHEUNG EXPLAINED THAT THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL WAS MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES OF THE NEW TERRITORIES.

HE SAID THE NEW CHINESE TITLE WOULD ACCURATELY REFLECT THE CLOSE RESEMBLANCE OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AND THE URBAN COUNCIL IN THE NATURE AND PROVINCE OF THEIR WORK.

+THIS WILL CONTRIBUTE GREATLY TO HELPING THOSE PEOPLE WHOM THE REGIONAL COUNCIL WILL SERVE - THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN THE NT - TO UNDERSTAND THE COUNCIL'S WORK AND ITS SERVICES,+ HE SAID.

FURTHERMORE, THE NEW CHINESE TITLE WOULD HELP THE GROUP OF NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS WHO WOULD BE JOINING THE COUNCIL IN APRIL TO UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THE OBJECTS OF THE COUNCIL'S SERVICE AND THE NATURE OF ITS WORK IN ORDER TO DISCHARGE THEIR DUTIES AS MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, MR CHEUNG ADDED.

LASTLY, MR CHEUNG SAID THAT SINCE THE CHANGE OF THE CHINESE TITLE COULD BETTER REFLECT THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN ITS NATURE OF WORK AND THAT OF THE URBAN COUNCIL, HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP AND CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO TO PROVIDE SATISFACTORY SERVICES AND FACILITIES TO RESIDENTS OF HONG KONG, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN ALSO SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, SAYING THAT SINCE THE SETTING UP OF THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL, MEMBERS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL HAD MET INFORMALLY ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON MATTERS OF COMMON INTEREST FALLING WITHIN THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH COUNCILS.

HE SAID THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL WHICH WOULD FORMALLY SET UP THE REGIONAL COUNCIL FROM APRIL 1 SHOULD ENABLE MEMBERS OF BOTH COUNCILS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR RELATIONSHIP EVEN FURTHER AND TO CO-ORDINATE ACTIVITIES ON A TERRITORY-WIDE BASIS.

ALSO PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY WAS THE URBAN COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN SAID IT WOULD ENABLE THE URBAN COUNCIL IN FUTURE TO ORGANISE OR SPONSOR CULTURAL AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES IN THE JUBILEE SPORTS CENTRE AND OTHER VENUES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES FOR THE FOUR MILLION RESIDENTS LIVING IN THE URBAN AREA.

IT WOULD ALSO ENABLE THE NEW REGIONAL COUNCIL AND THE URBAN COUNCIL TO JOINTLY CO-OPERATE IN SPONSORING SPORTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMES, EITHER IN THE NEW TERRITORIES OR THE URBAN AREA, AND ALSO IN BUILDING AND OPERATING FACILITIES SUCH AS A STAFF TRAINING CENTRE.

+ARRANGEMENTS SUCH AS THESE PROVIDED UNDER THE NEW ORDINANCE ARE VERY DESIRABLE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE RECREATIONAL, CULTURAL AND OTHER MUNICIPAL SERVICES FOR THE HONG KONG PUBLIC, BEARING IN MIND THE NEED TO BE COST-EFFECTIVE,+ MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE URBAN COUNCIL WOULD ALSO BE EMPOWERED TO SUPPORT OR SPONSOR WORTHWHILE CULTURAL OR SPORTS PROJECTS INVOLVING LOCAL PARTICIPANTS WHO MIGHT HAVE TO PERFORM OUTSIDE OF HONG KONG.

/THANKING MR

THANKING MR CHEUNG AND MR CHEONG-LEEN FOR THEIR SUPPORT ON THE BILLS, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, SAID HE AGREED THAT THE NEW CHINESE NAME OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL WOULD REFLECT MORE ACCURATELY THE NATURE AND THE SCOPE OF WORK OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL.

+I ALSO AGREE THAT THE CONSTANT EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AMONGST MEMBERS OF BOTH THE REGIONAL AND URBAN COUNCILS ON MATTERS OF COMMON INTEREST FALLING WITHIN BOTH COUNCILS' RESPONSIBILITIES IS INDEED IN THE BEST PUBLIC INTEREST,+ HE SAID.

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OIL POWERS FOR USE ONLY IN +EXTREME CRISIS+
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THE GOVERNMENT HAD CERTAIN POWERS IN RELATION TO OIL SUPPLY AND PRICE, BUT HAD NEVER USED THEM, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE SAID TODAY.

AND HE DID NOT ENVISAGE THE POWERS BEING USED, +EXCEPT IN TIMES OF EXTREME CRISIS,+ HE SAID.

HAVING SAID THAT, HE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE WAS NOT SURPRISED AT THE GENERAL UNHAPPINESS THAT DEVELOPED OVER THE OIL COMPANIES' GYRATING PRICING POLICIES IN THE 48 HOURS AFTER THE BUDGET SPEECH.

+AND I WOULD ENCOURAGE THEM TO IMPROVE THEIR PUBLIC RELATIONS,+ SIR JOHN SAID, ADDING:

+NO DOUBT A FURTHER DECREASE IN PRICES IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL ASSIST.+

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY THE HON RITA FAN CONCERNING OIL PRICES, SIR JOHN SAID ALSO THAT IT WAS NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY +TO SEEK TO INFLUENCE THE LEVEL OF OIL PRICES OR INDEED ANY OTHER COMMODITY.+

BUT THE GOVERNMENT DID HAVE POWERS IN RELATION TO OIL SUPPLY UNDER THE OIL (CONSERVATION AND CONTROL) ORDINANCE (CAP. 264) INTRODUCED AT THE TIME OF THE 1979 WORLD-WIDE OIL SHORTAGE.

THE ORDINANCE ENABLED THE DIRECTOR OF OIL SUPPLIES, WHO IS THE DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, TO CONTROL, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE SUPPLY AND USE OF OIL AND ALSO TO REGULATE THE PRICE AT WHICH OIL MIGHT BE SOLD. BUT THE POWERS WERE FOR USE ONLY IN EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES, HE SAID.

/THE MAJOR

THE MAJOR OIL SUPPLIERS IN HONG KONG, IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET, SET THE PRICES OF OIL PRODUCTS BASED ON COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT SUCH FACTORS AS THE IMPORT PRICE, COST OF OPERATION AND, OF COURSE, PROFIT, HE SAID.

+IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO INTERVENE IN THE WORKINGS OF THE FREE MARKET ECONOMY, OR FORMALLY TO COMMENT ON THE REASONS FOR OIL PRICE FLUCTUATIONS.

+NATURALLY WE ENCOURAGE COMPETITION WHICH IS THE PROPER ENEMY OF MONOPOLIES,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

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SEARCH AND RESCUE CENTRE PLAN NEARLY READY
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THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WOULD BE CONSULTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ABOUT SETTING UP AN INDEPENDENT SEARCH AND RESCUE CENTRE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID TODAY.

STUDY OF THIS PROPOSAL BY THE MARINE COURT OF INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF THE OSPREY HAD BEEN PROTRACTED BECAUSE OF THE MANY ISSUES INVOLVED AND BECAUSE THE FINDINGS OF THE RECONVENED COURT OF INQUIRY, WHICH MIGHT TOUCH ON THE QUESTION, WERE NOT YET AVAILABLE, MR THOMAS SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN, MR THOMAS SAID:
+IT IS TRUE THAT CONSIDERATION OF THIS IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATION HAS TAKEN LONGER THAN THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE LIKED. BUT WE ARE NEARLY THERE.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE COURT'S REPORT IN JULY 1984, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY PROMPTLY ESTABLISHED A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY THE RECOMMENDATIONS. THE WORKING GROUP COMPRISED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MARINE DEPARTMENT, CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT, ECONOMIC SERVICES BRANCH, THE ROYAL HONG KONG AUXILIARY AIR FORCE, THE ROYAL NAVY, THE ROYAL AIR FORCE AND THE MARINE POLICE.

THE WORKING GROUP, HE SAID, HAD SINCE ENDORSED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL THE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COURT RELATING TO SEARCH AND RESCUE.

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EMPLOYEE MEDICAL BENEFITS TO BE REVIEWED
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THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE WOULD CONDUCT A REVIEW INTO THE SCOPE OF AND THE FORM IN WHICH EMPLOYEE MEDICAL BENEFITS WERE CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

WHEN THAT REVIEW HAD BEEN COMPLETED, CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN WHETHER TO RECOMMEND THAT THE LAW BE AMENDED TO EXEMPT ALL SUCH BENEFITS FROM SALARIES TAX, HE SAID.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON RITA FAN, SIR JOHN SAID THAT SO FAR AS MONEY DEVOTED TO THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL BENEFITS WAS CONCERNED, A CASE COULD BE MADE FOR EXCLUDING SUCH BENEFITS FROM THE CHARGE TO TAX.

AT THE SAME TIME, HE SAID, IT MUST BE RECOGNISED THAT TO SELECT NOW ONE TYPE OF BENEFIT FOR EXEMPTION, SUCH AS MEDICAL BENEFITS, WOULD CREATE A DIFFERENCE IN TREATMENT UNDER THE LAW BETWEEN AN EMPLOYEE WHO WAS PROVIDED WITH SUCH A TAX-FREE BENEFIT AND ANOTHER WHO WAS NOT BUT WHO RECEIVED SOME OTHER BENEFIT OF EQUAL VALUE AND WAS CHARGED TO TAX ON ITS VALUE.

SIR JOHN SAID THAT IN PRINCIPLE AN EMPLOYEE SHOULD BE LIABLE TO SALARIES TAX NOT ONLY ON HIS MONTHLY CASH REMUNERATION BUT ALSO ON ANY FRINGE BENEFITS HE RECEIVED FROM HIS EMPLOYER.

HOWEVER, THE ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES IN ATTEMPTING TO PUT A VALUE ON EVERY BENEFIT RECEIVED BY EMPLOYEES WOULD FAR OUTWEIGH THE EXTRA BENEFIT TO BE OBTAINED FROM ASSESSING SUCH BENEFITS TO TAX, HE SAID.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THE GOVERNMENT HAD FOR MANY YEARS FOLLOWED THE PRINCIPLE ESTABLISHED IN THE UK OF TAXING ONLY THOSE EMPLOYEE BENEFITS WHICH WERE RECEIVED IN OR WERE CONVERTIBLE INTO CASH, HE SAID.

+THIS POLICY IS APPLICABLE TO MEDICAL BENEFITS PROVIDED TO EMPLOYEES BY THEIR EMPLOYER,+ HE SAID.

SIR JOHN SAID THAT WHERE THOSE MEDICAL SERVICES WERE PAID FOR DIRECTLY BY THE EMPLOYER NO LIABILITY TO SALARIES TAX WOULD ARISE. THIS BENEFIT WAS ONE WHICH WAS NOT CONVERTIBLE INTO CASH.

ON THE OTHER HAND, HE SAID, WHERE AN EMPLOYER GAVE A CASH REIMBURSEMENT TO HIS EMPLOYEE FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES ALREADY PAID OR WHERE AN EMPLOYER DISCHARGED A LIABILITY FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE EMPLOYEE THIS WAS REGARDED AS A BENEFIT RECEIVED IN OR CONVERTIBLE INTO CASH WHICH WAS CHARGEABLE TO SALARIES TAX IN THE HANDS OF THE EMPLOYEE.

/ON THE

ON THE PASSAGE AND BAGGAGE ALLOWANCES WHICH HAD BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THE CHARGE TO SALARIES TAX SINCE 1947, SIR JOHN SAID THE REASON FOR THIS EXCLUSION, WHEN FIRST INTRODUCED, APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN TO ASSIST HONG KONG BUSINESSES TO OFFER TERMS AND CONDITIONS LIKELY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN THE OVERSEAS STAFF NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BUSINESS METHODS AND TECHNIQUES.

HE NOTED THAT IN RECENT TIMES THERE HAD BEEN A GROWING TENDENCY FOR LOCALLY RECRUITED STAFF TO BE ALSO GIVEN PASSAGE ALLOWANCES TO TAKE LEAVE OUTSIDE HONG KONG.

IN HONG KONG THE INCLUSION OF A TAX-FREE PASSAGE ALLOWANCE IN THE OVERALL SALARY PACKAGE HAD BECOME SO WELL ESTABLISHED THAT SIR JOHN SAID THAT HE WAS MOST HESITANT TO DISTURB THE EXISTING SITUATION.

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RECRUITMENT OF QUALIFIED LAWYERS NOT A PROBLEM
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO DIFFICULTY AT THE MOMENT IN RECRUITING QUALIFIED LAWYERS TO THE PUBLIC SERVICE, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING A QUESTION BY DR THE HON DANIEL TSE, MR HENDERSON SAID HOWEVER THE FINANCIAL REWARDS OF PRIVATE PRACTICE WERE TOO ATTRACTIVE TO RETAIN THEIR SERVICES IN MANY CASES ONCE THEY HAD BEEN TRAINED AND HAD ACQUIRED GREATER EXPERIENCE.

HE NOTED THAT THE DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED BY THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT AS MENTIONED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IN HIS SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR RELATED TO THE RETENTION OF LOCAL LAWYERS IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THEY HAD ACQUIRED THE EXPERIENCE NECESSARY FOR SENIOR POSITIONS AND, AT THE SAME TIME, KEEPING EXPERIENCED EXPATRIATE LAWYERS UNTIL THIS STAGE WAS REACHED.

NEVERTHELESS, MR HENDERSON SAID, THE ADMINISTRATION TRIED TO KEEP THE DEMAND FOR LAWYERS UNDER REVIEW +IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT WE PRODUCE SUFFICIENT TRAINED LAWYERS TO MEET OUR NEEDS+.

IN THE LIGHT OF SUCH REVIEWS THE GOVERNMENT HAD ASKED THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASED INTAKE OF LAW STUDENTS OVER AND ABOVE ITS NORMAL EXPANSION TARGET TO ACHIEVE AN EXPANSION TO 150 PLACES PER ANNUM IN THE CURRENT 1985-88 TRIENNIUM, HE SAID.

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG HAD HOWEVER DECIDED THAT IT COULD NOT ACHIEVE THIS WITHIN THE PERIOD IN VIEW OF THE LIMITATION OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR THIS TRIENNIUM, MR HENDERSON SAID, ADDING THAT THE UNIVERSITY'S PROJECTIONS FOR THE 1988-91 TRIENNIUM WOULD NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL THE END OF THIS YEAR.

/HOWEVER, HE

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD AGAIN ASKED THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG THAT THE ANNUAL INTAKE OF THE LAW FACULTY BE EXPANDED TO 150 DURING THE 1988-91 TRIENNIUM AS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED FOR THE PRESENT TRIENNIUM.

+WHETHER OR NOT FURTHER INCREASES ARE WARRANTED WILL DEPEND ON THE DEMAND FOR LAWYERS IN THE 1990S AND THAT WILL BE KEPT UNDER REVIEW OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

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POLLUTION CONTROL EFFORT TO AFFECT ALL
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THE PROPOSED NEW MEASURES FOR THE CONTROL OF POLLUTION CAUSED BY ANIMAL WASTE WILL BE APPLIED TO THE WHOLE TERRITORY IN THREE PHASES OVER NINE YEARS AND EVENTUALLY ALL OF THE 9 100 LIVESTOCK KEEPERS WILL BE AFFECTED, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON TAI CHIN-WAH, MR CHAMBERS SAID IMPROPER DISPOSAL OF ANIMAL WASTE BY LIVESTOCK FARMERS HAD ALWAYS BEEN A PROBLEM.

IN ITS ATTEMPT TO COMBAT POLLUTION CAUSED BY ANIMAL WASTE, THE GOVERNMENT HAD EMBARKED ON A NUMBER OF PILOT SCHEMES TO SEE HOW THE COLLECTION SERVICES COULD BE IMPROVED, HE SAID.

+PILOT SCHEMES AT FANLING AND HUNG SHUI KIU WERE INITIATED BY THE FORMER NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT IN 1978 AND 1982 RESPECTIVELY FOR THE PURPOSES OF OBTAINING PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND INFORMATION ON COSTINGS FOR FUTURE PLANNING,+ MR CHAMBERS SAID.

+THESE EXPERIMENTS SHOWED THAT COLLECTION OF ANIMAL WASTE BY CONTRACTORS IS WORKABLE BUT TO BE COST-EFFECTIVE ITS IMPLEMENTATION WOULD REQUIRE THE FULL CO-OPERATION OF LIVESTOCK FARMERS.

+TERRITORY-WIDE PROVISION OF COLLECTION SERVICES WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT BE AN ECONOMIC PROPOSITION. THE TWO PILOT SCHEMES HAVE BEEN TERMINATED,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS NOTED THAT ANOTHER PILOT SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED IN 1982 AT PAT HEUNG BY THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT AS PART OF THE PROGRAMME UNDER THE CLEAN HONG KONG CAMPAIGN.

+THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE SCHEME WAS TO PROVIDE RAW ANIMAL MANURE AS INPUT TO THE NGAU TAM MEI COMPOSTING PLANT IN AN EFFORT TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF RECYCLING ANIMAL MANURE,+ HE SAID.

/+THE SCHEME

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+THE SCHEME IS STILL IN OPERATION BECAUSE OF ITS SPECIAL NATURE= THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN EITHER THE SCALE OR COVERAGE OF THE COLLECTION SERVICES,+ HE ADDED.

MR CHAMBERS SAID DETAILS OF THE LIVESTOCK POPULATION WERE NOT GATHERED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AND SO YEAR ON YEAR STATISTICS WERE NOT AVAILABLE.

HE SAID ACCORDING TO THE LAST COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF LIVESTOCK FARMS CARRIED OUT IN 1979, THERE WERE 1 360 FARMS REARING 6.7 MILLIONS OF CHICKENS AND 4 200 FARMS REARING 554 950 PIGS.

+PARTIAL SURVEYS, INFORMED GUESSWORK AND REFERENCE TO DATA ON LOCAL PRODUCTION SUGGEST THAT THE POPULATION IS DIMINISHING AND THAT, CERTAINLY IN THE CASE OF PIGS, THE CURRENT POPULATION IS LESS THAN IT WAS IN 1979,+ MR CHAMBERS SAID.

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WORKERS PROTECTED BY RADIATION REGULATIONS * * * * *

WORKERS HANDLING RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES BEING MOVED WITHIN HONG KONG WERE PROTECTED BY REGULATIONS PROVIDING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE AMOUNT OF RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES HAD TO BE WITHIN ACCEPTABLE SAFETY LIMITS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON. JOHN CHAMBERS TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY DR. THE HON CONRAD LAM, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT IN ADDITION, INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY REGULATIONS SET DOWN STANDARDS OF SAFETY WHICH PROVIDED AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF CONTROL OF RADIATION HAZARDS TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, TRANSPORT WORKERS, PROPERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRANSPORT OF RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES.

+THESE REGULATIONS,+ HE SAID, +RELATE TO THE TRANSPORT OF RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES BY LAND, SEA AND AIR. THEY ARE APPLIED INTERNATIONALLY AND EXPORTERS MUST COMPLY WITH THEM BEFORE THEY ARE ALLOWED TO EXPORT RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES. THESE SAFEGUARDS PROVIDE THE NECESSARY PROTECTION TO LOCAL WORKERS HANDLING RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES ON ARRIVAL.+

OUTLINING EXISTING HONG KONG CONTROL ON RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES, HE SAID THAT AN IMPORTER HAD FIRST TO OBTAIN A LICENCE FROM THE RADIATION BOARD WHICH CONTAINED CERTAIN CONDITIONS TO BE MONITORED BY THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT AS NECESSARY.

/WITH THE

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WITH THE RADIATION BOARD LICENCE, THE IMPORTER HAD THEN TO APPLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE FOR AN IMPORT LICENCE UNDER THE IMPORT (RADIATION) (PROHIBITION) REGULATIONS.

BUT BEFORE ISSUING THE LICENCE, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE HAD TO BE SATISFIED THAT THE IMPORTER WAS A LICENSED COMPANY APPROVED BY THE RADIATION BOARD TO DEAL WITH RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES.

IN ADDITION, AN IMPORTER HAD ALSO TO OBTAIN A SPECIAL REMOVAL PERMIT FROM THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

BOTH THE IMPORT LICENCE AND THE REMOVAL PERMIT HAD TO BE PRESENTED TO THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPARTMENT BEFORE SHIPMENT WAS RELEASED.

THE SAME CONTROLS APPLIED FOR TRANSHIPMENT, HE SAID.

WITH REGARD TO ANOTHER QUESTION, HE SAID THAT THE NUMBERS OF SHIPMENTS INVOLVING IMPORTATION OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS INTO HONG KONG DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS WERE: 565 IN 1985, 519 IN 1984 AND 582 IN 1983.

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ASBESTOS RISK FROM COMPLETED BUILDINGS LOW
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THE HEALTH RISK FROM COMPLETED BUILDINGS CONTAINING ASBESTOS-RELATED PRODUCTS IS VERY LOW, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON HO SAI-CHU, MR CHAN SAID THAT DESPITE THE LOW RISK ASBESTOS-RELATED MATERIALS WOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE LIST OF PERMITTED MATERIALS UNDER THE BUILDING REGULATIONS.

+UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS, IN COMPLETED BUILDINGS WHICH CONTAIN ASBESTOS-RELATED PRODUCTS, THE HEALTH RISK IS VERY LOW,+ HE SAID.

+FOR EXAMPLE, IN HONG KONG, THE HIGHEST RECORDED LEVELS SO FAR ARE THREE NANOGRAMS PER CUBIC METRE OF AIR WHICH IS WELL WITHIN THE SAFE LEVELS OF 7 000 NANOGRAMS PER CUBIC METRE AS LAID DOWN IN THE CODE OF PRACTICE ISSUED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT. (A NANOGRAM IS A BILLIONTH OF A GRAM.)

+THIS IS NOT TO SAY THE GOVERNMENT IS IN ANY WAY COMPLACENT ABOUT THE SITUATION. THE USE OF LOOSE, FRIABLE ASBESTOS BUILDING PRODUCTS SUCH AS SPRAYED ACOUSTIC PLASTER OR THERMAL LAGGING IS NOT NOW ALLOWED IN GOVERNMENT BUILDING CONTRACTS,+ HE ADDED.

/LAST YEAR,

LAST YEAR, A PRACTICE NOTE WAS ISSUED TO AUTHORISED PERSONS AND REGISTERED STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS STRONGLY WARNING THEM AGAINST THE USE OF ASBESTOS MATERIALS IN NEW BUILDINGS, AND RECOMMENDING PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES FOR THE SAFETY OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

THE NEW REGULATIONS BAN THE USE IN ANY FORM OF THE MORE HARMFUL BLUE AND BROWN ASBESTOS AND TOTALLY PROHIBIT THE SPRAYING OF SUBSTANCES CONTAINING ASBESTOS, MR CHAN SAID.

+FURTHERMORE, AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING REGULATIONS ARE IN HAND TO EXCLUDE THE USE OF ALL ASBESTOS RELATED MATERIALS FROM PERMITTED MATERIALS UNDER THE REGULATIONS. THESE ARE EXPECTED TO COME INTO EFFECT BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR.+

THE GREATEST POTENTIAL DANGER FROM ASBESTOS, ACCORDING TO MR CHAN, WAS TO WORKERS INVOLVED IN MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION OR DEMOLITION PROCESSES.

IN SUCH OPERATIONS, WHEN THE MATERIAL WAS SUBJECT TO PULVERISATION, HIGH IMPACT, OR WHEN IT WAS WORKED IN A LOOSE STATE, ASBESTOS FIBRES COULD BE FREELY RELEASED INTO THE AIR IN LARGE AMOUNTS.

HE SAID THE NEW FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (ASBESTOS) SPECIAL REGULATIONS 1986 WOULD SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH OF WORKERS UNDER THESE CONDITIONS.

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RESTRICTIONS AGAINST FREE MARKET NOT PART OF POLICY
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RESTRICTIONS THAT WOULD WORK AGAINST THE PRINCIPLE OF A FREE MARKET OR WOULD HINDER THE GROWTH OF HONG KONG AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE WOULD NEVER BE PART OF GOVERNMENT'S LONG TERM POLICY, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON DAVID LI, SIR JOHN SAID THAT THE SECURITIES COMMISSION WAS VERY CONSCIOUS THAT THE UNIFICATION OF THE FOUR EXCHANGES, THE MOVE TO A NEW TRADING FLOOR, THE INTRODUCTION OF A DIFFERENT TRADING SYSTEM AND THE ADDED DIMENSION OF INCREASED INVOLVEMENT OF BANKS, HAD GIVEN RISE TO GENUINE FEARS AND CONCERN BY SECTORS OF THE STOCK-BROKING INDUSTRY.

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, HE SAID, THE SECURITIES COMMISSION HAD ACCEPTED, AS A TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT, THE LIMITED TRADING RESTRICTIONS FOR NEW ENTRANTS TO THE MARKET PLACE TO ALLOW BREATHING SPACE FOR THOSE WHO WERE ALREADY IN THE MARKET TO ADJUST TO THE NEW REGIME.

/SIR JOHN

SIR JOHN SAID HE ENVISAGED THESE RESTRICTIONS BEING REMOVED 18 MONTHS AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT OF TRADING ON THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE UNLESS, UPON REVIEW BY THE COMMISSION, IT CONSIDERED THAT THERE WERE COMPELLING REASONS FOR NOT DOING SO.

+THE SECURITIES COMMISSION AND I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT A FREE AND OPEN STOCK MARKET MUST BE OUR ULTIMATE GOAL,+ HE ADDED.

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WAYS STUDIED TO DEAL WITH FALSE BURGLAR ALARMS
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS LOOKING INTO WAYS TO DEAL WITH SOME OF THE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE FALSE SOUNDING OF BURGLAR ALARMS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG CONCERNING +THE FREQUENT FALSE SOUNDING OF BURGLAR ALARMS AT NIGHT IN DENSELY POPULATED URBAN AREAS, WHICH DISTURBED THE PEACE OF NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS.+

+THE GOVERNMENT FULLY APPRECIATES THAT BURGLAR ALARMS CAN CAUSE SERIOUS NOISE NUISANCE. FALSE ALARMS ARE ALSO A SERIOUS WASTE OF POLICE MANPOWER,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

OPTIONS BEING EXAMINED TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION, MR THOMAS SAID, WERE:

- * INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ENABLE THE COURTS TO FINE THE OCCUPIER OF PREMISES FOR EACH FALSE ALARM,
- * A BAN ON AUDIBLE ALARMS ALTOGETHER ON PREMISES WHICH INCLUDE RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION,
- * EMPOWERING THE POLICE TO INVESTIGATE THE CAUSE OF FALSE ALARMS, TO INSPECT ALARM SYSTEMS AND TO ORDER IMPROVEMENTS,
- * REGULATION OF THE DESIGN AND SPECIFICATION OF AUDIBLE ALARM SYSTEMS, AND
- * REQUIRING ALARM SYSTEMS TO BE FITTED WITH AN AUTOMATIC CUT-OFF MECHANISM TO OPERATE AFTER A FIXED PERIOD.

THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WOULD SOON BE ASKED TO CONSIDER THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF ALL THESE OPTIONS.

ON ANOTHER POINT RAISED BY MR TAM, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SAID THAT NO STATISTICS WERE AVAILABLE ON THE FALSE SOUNDING OF AUDIBLE ALARMS AT NIGHT.

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AS FOR RESPONSE, POLICE WENT IMMEDIATELY TO THE PREMISES WHEN AN ALARM WAS SOUNDED. IN FALSE ALARMS AND WHEN PREMISES WERE LOCKED, THE POLICE WAITED UNTIL THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PREMISES COULD BE FOUND TO SWITCH OFF THE ALARM.

UNFORTUNATELY, HE SAID, IT COULD TAKE SOME TIME TO FIND THE PERSON, PARTICULARLY AT NIGHT, HE SAID.

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VICE PREMISES PROPOSED SCHEME BEING RE-EXAMINED
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RE-EXAMINING A PROPOSED SCHEME ON THE CONTROL OF VICE-ASSOCIATED ESTABLISHMENTS WITH THE AIM OF PROVIDING A QUICK, SIMPLE AND CHEAP METHOD TO ENABLE PEOPLE MOST DIRECTLY AFFECTED TO PROTECT THE QUALITY OF THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENT, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON JACKIE CHAN, MR THOMAS SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD FOR SOME TIME BEEN STUDYING THE BEST MEANS OF PROVIDING SOLUTIONS TO THE REAL PROBLEMS POSED BY THE ACTIVITIES OF PROSTITUTES IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS.

MR THOMAS SAID HE RECOGNISED THAT ORDINARY DECENT RESIDENTS COULD BE SERIOUSLY ANNOYED AND GRAVELY EMBARRASSED BY VICE ACTIVITIES ON THEIR STAIRCASES AND NEAR THEIR HOMES.

+TO MEET THESE CONCERNS, THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE IN JUNE 1984 ENDORSED A PROPOSAL BY A WORKING GROUP ON VICE-ASSOCIATED ESTABLISHMENTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL NUISANCE TO INTRODUCE A SCHEME ENABLING THE MAGISTRATES' COURTS TO CLOSE DOWN PREMISES WHICH CAUSE A NUISANCE OF THIS KIND FOR, SAY, SIX MONTHS,+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS NOTED THAT THE POWER WOULD ONLY BE EXERCISED IF A COMPLAINT WAS MADE TO THE COURT BY A NUMBER OF RESIDENTS OR BY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS, MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES OR OWNERS' CORPORATIONS.

MR THOMAS SAID DISTRICT BOARDS AND DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEES WHO HAD BEEN CONSULTED ON THE SCHEME HAD SUPPORTED IT IN PRINCIPLE BUT RAISED A NUMBER OF MATTERS WHICH NEEDED FURTHER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION.

THE PROBLEMS INCLUDED THE ELUSIVE NATURE OF SOME NUISANCES ASSOCIATED WITH PROSTITUTION= THE DIFFICULTIES OF SUBSTANTIATING COMPLAINTS= THE NEED TO STRIKE A FAIR BALANCE BETWEEN THE SUPPRESSION OF A NUISANCE AND THE LOSS THAT MAY FALL UPON THOSE HAVING A LEGAL INTEREST IN THE PREMISES= AND THE FACT THAT FEAR OF RETALIATION MAY DETER SOME PEOPLE FROM MAKING USE OF THE LEGISLATION.

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THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN RE-EXAMINING THE PROPOSED SCHEME IN THE LIGHT OF THE SUGGESTIONS AND WORKING OUT THE DETAILS OF HOW THE SCHEME COULD BE IMPLEMENTED EFFECTIVELY, MR THOMAS SAID.

+SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL LEGAL DIFFICULTIES, THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,+ HE ADDED.

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ACTION BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE BUILDING MANAGEMENT
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THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING ACTION ON THREE INTER-RELATED FRONTS TO IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT OF MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN, MR LIAO SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS WORKING ON THREE FRONTS WHICH INVOLVED DEEDS OF MUTUAL COVENANT, THE MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS (OWNERS INCORPORATION) ORDINANCE, AND ASSISTANCE TO MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS.

HE SAID THAT FROM EARLY THIS YEAR, ALL DEEDS OF MUTUAL COVENANT RELATING TO NEW NON-INDUSTRIAL LEASEHOLD GRANTS REQUIRED TO CONTAIN A NUMBER OF STANDARD CLAUSES AIMED AT IMPROVING THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMON AREAS IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS.

+WORK IS IN HAND TO AMEND THE MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS (OWNERS INCORPORATION) ORDINANCE TO MAKE THE FORMATION OF OWNERS' CORPORATIONS EASIER AND TO SET OUT CERTAIN MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES TO BE OBSERVED BY THE CORPORATION'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE,+ HE ADDED.

+IN ADDITION, THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN TO WAYS BY WHICH TENANTS' PARTICIPATION IN BUILDING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS MAY BE INCREASED.+

MR LIAO POINTED OUT THAT AS A RESULT OF EFFORTS BY DISTRICT OFFICES, AN AVERAGE OF SOME 200 OWNERS' CORPORATIONS AND 60 MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES HAD BEEN FORMED IN PRIVATE MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS ANNUALLY, OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS.

ON ASSISTANCE TO MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS, HE SAID THE ESTABLISHMENT IN 1985 OF BUILDING MANAGEMENT CO-ORDINATION TEAMS IN EASTERN AND YAU MA TEI DISTRICTS HAD PROVED TO BE A SUCCESS.

+THERE HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE 61 BUILDINGS WHICH HAVE BENEFITTED FROM THE TEAMS' ASSISTANCE.

/+PLANS ARE

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+PLANS ARE IN HAND TO SET UP TWO MORE TEAMS IN 1986-87, ONE OF WHICH WILL WORK ON MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS.

+WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THESE MEASURES WILL RESULT IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS,+ MR LIAO SAID.

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WIDER PUBLIC ROLE IN ADVISORY BODIES POSSIBLE
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POSSIBLE WIDER PUBLIC REPRESENTATION, AND TRIMMED OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION IN GOVERNMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES WERE AMONG PROPOSALS IN THE SEPTEMBER 1985 REVIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ADVISORY NETWORK, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES SAID TODAY.

THE REVIEW, CONDUCTED BY THE GOVERNMENT EVERY TWO YEARS, EXAMINED THE TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION AND REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE 370 BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, HE SAID.

THIS WAS TO PROVIDE AN INFLOW OF NEW IDEAS, AN ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE AND A MORE EVEN DISTRIBUTION OF WORK AMONG THOSE APPOINTED TO THE BODIES, HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS ROSANNA TAM, SIR DAVID ALSO SAID A FURTHER MEASURE PROPOSED, FOLLOWING THE EXPANSION IN SIZE AND THE CHANGED COMPOSITION OF LEGCO, WAS TO STRENGTHEN THE LINKS BETWEEN BOARDS AND COMMITTEES AND THE COUNCIL.

+WHEN THE TERMS OF OFFICE OF A COMMITTEE EXPIRES, THE OPPORTUNITY WILL BE TAKEN TO INTRODUCE CHANGES TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES WHICH I HAVE JUST MENTIONED,+ HE SAID.

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LYRICS WERE NOT OBJECTIONABLE, LEGCO TOLD
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LEGAL ADVICE ON THE LYRICS OF ONE LOCAL ALBUM INDICATED THAT THE LYRICS DID NOT FALL WITHIN THE CURRENT OBJECTIONABLE STANDARDS AS LAID DOWN BY THE COURTS, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LEE YU-TAI CONCERNING GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS INDECENT LYRICS IN POPULAR SONGS REGULARLY AIRED ON TELEVISION AND RADIO, SIR DAVID SAID THAT HE WAS AWARE OF PRESS STATEMENTS THAT THE LYRICS OF A FEW LOCAL POPULAR SONGS WERE +OF DUBIOUS PROPRIETY.+

BY LAW, HE SAID, THE BROADCASTING OF INDECENT LYRICS WAS AN OFFENCE, IN THE SAME WAY AS WAS THE PUBLICATION OF AN INDECENT ARTICLE.

AND THE COMMISSIONER FOR TELEVISION AND ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING, HAD ISSUED CODES OF PRACTICE WHICH MAKE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO PROGRAMME STANDARDS AND PROHIBIT THE BROADCAST OF ANY MATTER, INCLUDING LYRICS, CONSIDERED OBSCENE, VULGAR, INDECENT OR PROFANE.

IN PARTICULAR, THE COMMISSIONER REQUIRED HIGHER STANDARDS IN RESPECT OF PROGRAMMES WHICH MIGHT REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO ATTRACT THE ATTENTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS.

TO DATE, THE COMMISSIONER HAD BEEN SATISFIED THAT THE LYRICS WHICH HAD DRAWN ADVERSE PUBLIC COMMENT HAD NOT BREACHED THE CODE OF PRACTICE, SIR DAVID SAID.

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CONTENTS OF NEWSPAPER ADS MONITORED DAILY
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THE CONTENTS OF NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS, INCLUDING ADVERTISEMENTS, WERE MONITORED DAILY TO ENSURE THAT THEY DID NOT CONTAIN MATTER OF AN INDECENT, OBSCENE OR REVOLTING NATURE WHICH COULD BE PROSECUTABLE, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PAULINE NG, SIR DAVID SAID THAT NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS WERE CONTROLLED BY SECTION 3(1) OF THE OBJECTIONABLE PUBLICATIONS ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 150.

/HE SAID

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HE SAID THAT OF 65 REGISTERED NEWSPAPERS IN HONG KONG, FIVE REGULARLY PUBLISHED ADVERTISEMENTS ON VIDEO TAPES.

+THE ADVERTISEMENTS NORMALLY CARRY NO MORE THAN THE TITLES OF THE TAPES FOR RENTAL OR TEST VIEWING, WHICH IN THEMSELVES ARE NOT PROSECUTABLE,+ SIR DAVID SAID.

IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, TWO NEWSPAPER EDITORS WERE VERBALLY WARNED ABOUT THE CONTENT OF SUCH ADVERTISEMENTS, RESULTING IN SOME IMPROVEMENT, HE ADDED.

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EVENTS ORGANISED FOR WORLD HEALTH DAY

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THE CENTRAL HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAS ADOPTED THE WORLD HEALTH DAY THEME - 'HEALTHY LIVING: EVERYONE A WINNER' FOR ITS MAJOR HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN 1986, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN ON GOVERNMENT'S PLANS TO COMMEMORATE WORLD HEALTH DAY ON APRIL 7, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE CAMPAIGN WOULD EMPHASISE THE IMPORTANCE OF A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND PROMOTE THE ADOPTION OF SENSIBLE PATTERNS OF LIFE TO ATTAIN HEALTH.

HE SAID WORLD HEALTH DAY MARKED THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMING INTO FORCE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION IN 1948.

+SINCE 1950, A PUBLIC HEALTH THEME WITH AN APPROPRIATE SLOGAN HAS BEEN CHOSEN EACH YEAR FOR WORLD HEALTH DAY AND MEMBER STATES AND TERRITORIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO ORGANISE EVENTS RELATED TO THE THEME THROUGHOUT THE YEAR,+ HE SAID.

THE EVENTS TO BE ORGANISED IN HONG KONG THIS YEAR INCLUDED A SLOGAN COMPETITION, A HEALTH CARNIVAL, DISTRICT EXHIBITIONS AND AUDIO-VISUAL SHOWS AT HEALTH EDUCATION CENTRES.

POSTERS AND LEAFLETS WOULD ALSO BE DISTRIBUTED AND THERE WOULD BE MEDIA PUBLICITY, HE ADDED.

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RATS PROBLEM IN PUBLIC ESTATES WILL REDUCE
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HOUSING DEPARTMENT STAFF REGULARLY CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS FOR PUBLIC HOUSING TENANTS ON THE PROPER DISPOSAL OF FOOD WASTE AND REFUSE, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON FRED PANG YUK-LING, SAID AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, MR PANG SAID THAT AS RATS WERE ATTRACTED TO WHERE FOOD WAS EASILY AVAILABLE, COOKED FOOD CENTRES IN PUBLIC ESTATES WERE REGULARLY INSPECTED TO ENSURE THAT OPERATORS KEPT THEIR PREMISES IN A HYGIENIC CONDITION AND THE COMMON AREAS OF THESE CENTRES WERE ALSO CLEANSSED THOROUGHLY EVERY DAY BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT.

MR PANG SAID THAT WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF TENANTS, THE ASSISTANCE OF THE PEST CONTROL ADVISORY SECTION OF THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BRANCH AND THE CONTINUING EFFORTS OF HOUSING DEPARTMENT STAFF, THE PROBLEM OF RATS IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES WILL GRADUALLY REDUCE.

+IN ITS EFFORTS TO PREVENT THE INFESTATION OF RATS, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT LIAISES CLOSELY WITH THE PEST CONTROL ADVISORY SECTION OF THE MUNICIPAL SERVICES BRANCH WHICH ASSISTS IN OFFERING ADVICE AND CO-OPERATION TO THE DEPARTMENT,+ MR PANG EXPLAINED.

AS PLANTED AREAS TEND TO PROVIDE HIDING PLACES FOR RATS, MR PANG SAID THESE AREAS IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES WERE REGULARLY CLEARED AND TRIMMED, HOLES IN OPEN GROUNDS SEALED OR SCREENED, AND CHEMICAL FERTILISERS USED.

+FURTHERMORE, THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING SUGGESTIONS BY THE PEST CONTROL ADVISORY SECTION ON THE DESIGN OF FLOWER BEDS AND LANDSCAPED AREAS TO FURTHER INHIBIT THEIR USE BY RATS,+ HE ADDED.

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SPECIAL FEATURES IN LIGHT RAIL FOR DISABLED

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SPECIAL FACILITIES WERE DESIGNED IN THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT — LRT — SYSTEM FOR THE DISABLED, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

AMONG THEM WERE RAMPS FOR ACCESS AT ALL LRT STOPS, A LEVEL PLATFORM SO THAT PASSENGERS NEED NOT CLIMB UP OR DOWN WHEN BOARDING OR ALIGHTING FROM THE VEHICLES, SPACE IN EACH VEHICLE FOR A WHEELCHAIR PASSENGER, AND A PUBLIC ADDRESS FACILITIES AT ALL STOPS.

AND AS A SAFETY MEASURE FOR THE BLIND, THE TEXTURE OF THE PLATFORM EDGE OF THE LRT WOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE PLATFORM SURFACE, HE SAID.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS BY THE HON POON CHI-FAI, HE SAID THAT AVAILABLE FIGURES SHOWED THERE WERE 3 200 BLIND AND PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSONS LIVING IN YUEN LONG AND TUEN MUN, BUT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF DISABLED PERSONS USING THE LRT COULD BE HIGHER IF VISITORS WERE INCLUDED FROM OTHER AREAS.

AS FOR THE REHABILITATION BUS SERVICES OPERATED BY THE HONG KONG SOCIETY FOR REHABILITATION, HE SAID THE SOCIETY DID NOT KEEP A RECORD OF WAITING TIME FOR INDIVIDUAL APPLICATIONS.

THE +REHABUS+ FLEET, HE SAID, HAD 21 VEHICLES RUNNING 19 ROUTES, WITH A SEATING CAPACITY OF 228, WHICH MATCHED THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED PASSENGERS.

THERE WAS A WAITING LIST OF ABOUT 60 FOR THE SERVICE.

TWO MORE BUSES WERE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE LATER THIS YEAR, BUT THOUGH THIS WOULD HELP TO MEET THE DEMAND, IN CASES WHERE ROUTES WERE OVERSUBSCRIBED OR WHERE NEW ROUTES WERE OPENED, IT WAS DOUBTFUL WHETHER DEMAND COULD BE COMPLETELY MET. THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE SOME PERSONS WHOSE REQUIREMENTS COULD NOT BE CATERED FOR BY THE SYSTEM.

+WE ARE THEREFORE EXAMINING ALTERNATIVES FOR THOSE WHOSE NEEDS CANNOT BE MET BY THESE ARRANGEMENTS,+ HE SAID.

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HIGHER PENALTIES FOR LATE TRADE DECLARATIONS

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED A MOTION TO INCREASE THE PENALTIES FOR LATE DECLARATIONS UNDER THE IMPORT AND EXPORT (REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS AND TO RAISE THE MINIMUM CHARGE FOR THE AD VALOREM LEVY TO RECOVER THE COST OF COLLECTION.

IN MOVING THE MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, THE HON E.P. HO, SAID THE EXISTING PENALTIES FOR LATE DECLARATIONS WERE SET IN 1976 AND SINCE THEN THE PERCENTAGE OF LATE DECLARATIONS HAD ALMOST DOUBLED.

HE SAID THIS ADVERSELY AFFECTED THE ACCURACY OF HONG KONG'S EXTERNAL TRADE STATISTICS AND IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO DEPLOY CONSIDERABLE STAFF RESOURCES TO DEMAND LODGEMENT AND TAKE FOLLOW-UP ACTION.

+SIMILARLY, THE PRESENT MINIMUM CHARGE OF \$2 FOR DECLARATIONS NOT EXCEEDING \$4 000, WHICH WAS SET IN 1966, WOULD NEED TO BE REVISED TO COVER THE COLLECTION COST WHICH IS NOW ESTIMATED AT \$4.78 PER DECLARATION.

+THE PROPOSED REVISION WILL ONLY AFFECT DECLARATIONS OF A VALUE BELOW \$10 000 AS THE BASIC RATE OF THE AD VALOREM LEVY AT 50 CENTS PER \$1 000 VALUE ABOVE THE MINIMUM WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED,+ MR HO SAID.

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TWO DEGREE COURSES VALIDATED FOR BAPTIST COLLEGE

WITH THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE UK COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL ACADEMIC AWARDS (CNAА), THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE WILL START TWO VALIDATED DEGREE COURSES THIS YEAR, THE HON WONG PO-YAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TABLING THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT 1984-85 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR WONG SAID THAT THE CNAА HAD RECOMMENDED TO THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE (UPGC) THAT THE DEGREE COURSES OF COMBINE SCIENCES AND SOCIAL WORK HAD BEEN VALIDATED AND COULD START IN SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR.

MR WONG SAID HE ANTICIPATED THAT MORE DEGREE COURSES WOULD BE SUCCESSFULLY VALIDATED IN THE NEXT AND COMING YEARS.

HE NOTED THAT 1984-85 WAS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE COLLEGE'S HISTORY A FULL YEAR UNDER UPGC FUNDING AND THEN OUTLINED A NUMBER OF POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS ACHIEVED.

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FOR THE APPROVED CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN WHICH WOULD ADD FIVE NEW BUILDINGS, FUNDING HAD BEEN RECEIVED FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PLANS FOR THE FIRST THREE BUILDINGS TO BE USED FOR STUDENT AMENITIES, THE COMMUNICATION COURSE AND INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES.

MEANWHILE, SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND ACADEMIC STAFF HAD IMPROVED QUANTITATIVELY AND QUALITATIVELY, HE SAID.

+THE NEWLY-CREATED SENIOR POSITIONS OF THE TWO VICE-PRESIDENTS AND FOUR FULL-TIME FACULTY DEANS WERE FILLED, AND THE NUMBER OF SENIOR ACADEMIC POSTS WAS INCREASED BY 15 PER CENT DESPITE THE ZERO GROWTH,+ HE ADDED.

MR WONG ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE STOCK OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH EQUIPMENT HAD INCREASED, PARTICULARLY IN THE SCIENCE COURSES AND IN COMPUTING WHILE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY HAD BEEN EXPANDED.

HE SAID THAT THE COLLEGE LIBRARY HAD RECEIVED A COLLECTION OF 10 000 ADDITIONAL BOOKS AND 200 NEW TITLES IN PERIODICALS AND HAD ACQUIRED A COMPUTERISED LIBRARY AUTOMATION SYSTEM.

+IN ADDITION TO THE FULL-TIME ACADEMIC COURSES, THE COLLEGE'S DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION HAS CONTINUED TO GROW IN RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY DEMANDS FOR OPEN EDUCATION,+ HE ADDED.

AS A MEMBER OF BOTH THE COLLEGE'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND ITS COUNCIL, MR WONG SAID THAT THE COUNCIL WAS PLEASED WITH THE GOOD PROGRESS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE, AND ABOVE ALL, WAS SATISFIED THAT AN EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WAS IN PLACE TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC FUNDS ALLOCATED TO THE COLLEGE WERE SPENT IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAYS.

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CITY POLYTECHNIC TO FURTHER ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY
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THE CITY POLYTECHNIC WAS FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH IN A NEW HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION, IF ACADEMIC CREDIBILITY WAS TO BE ESTABLISHED AND ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE APPROPRIATE CALIBRE ATTRACTED, THE HON S.L. CHEN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHEN WAS SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WHEN HE TABLED THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CITY POLYTECHNIC AND ITS 1984-85 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS.

+ALREADY A SOLID RESEARCH BASE IS BEING DEVELOPED WITH THE ALLOCATION OF \$1 MILLION BY THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE, AND THE LINKS BEING FORGED WITH INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS ARE PRODUCING EXTERNALLY-FUNDED RESEARCH INITIATIVES, INCLUDING ONE GRANT OF \$500 000,+ HE SAID.

ACADEMIC CREDIBILITY WAS ALSO ESTABLISHED BY GAINING RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE BY OTHER INSTITUTIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE OUTSIDE HONG KONG IN THE WIDER INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC COMMUNITY, HE ADDED.

MR CHEN NOTED THAT LINKS WITH INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WERE DEVELOPING RAPIDLY, AND CONTACTS WITH INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA, WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED AS EARLY AS 1983 HAD SINCE INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.

HE PAID AN ESPECIAL TRIBUTE TO HIS PREDECESSOR SIR S.Y. CHUNG, CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE FOR THE SECOND POLYTECHNIC, AND SUBSEQUENTLY THE FIRST CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG DURING THE CALENDAR YEAR 1984.

MR CHEN POINTED OUT THAT THE SPEED AT WHICH THE CITY POLYTECHNIC WAS ESTABLISHED WAS TRULY REMARKABLE AND PROBABLY UNIQUE IN THE HISTORY OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS.

IT TOOK ONLY TWO YEARS AND THREE MONTHS FROM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO THE ENROLMENT OF THE NEW POLYTECHNIC'S FIRST STUDENTS, HE SAID.

MR CHEN ATTRIBUTED THE TREMENDOUS ACHIEVEMENT TO THE SHEER DRIVING FORCE OF SIR S.Y. COUPLED WITH HIS FIRM LEADERSHIP AND COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE TASK IN HAND, HIS ENTHUSIASM AND SENSITIVITY.

HE ADDED THAT IT COULD BE FAIRLY SAID THAT THE EFFORTS OF SIR S.Y. AND HIS PLANNING COMMITTEE HAD ENABLED HONG KONG TO PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MANY MORE YOUNG PEOPLE TO RECEIVE THE ADVANCED TECHNICAL EDUCATION WHICH WOULD BE VITAL TO THE FUTURE WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITY.

EARLIER IN HIS SPEECH, MR CHEN GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE CITY POLYTECHNIC SINCE ITS FOUNDATION ON JANUARY 1, 1984, AND POINTED OUT THAT THE AVAILABILITY OF THE PERMANENT CAMPUS IN KOWLOON TONG WOULD PROVIDE THE IMPETUS FOR A FURTHER SUBSTANTIAL EXPANSION TO 8 000 FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STUDENTS BY 1990-91.

DURING THE FIRST ACADEMIC YEAR, EIGHT COURSES WERE OFFERED AND THEY WERE ALL PLANNED IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ADVISORS AND DESIGNED TO MEET THE COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF HONG KONG, HE SAID.

NOTING THE HIGH DEMAND FOR THE COURSES OFFERED, MR CHEN SAID THE TREND HAD CONTINUED INTO THE CURRENT SESSION WITH AN APPLICATION-TO-PLACE RATIO OF ALMOST 13 TO 1 IN SOME COURSES.

+THE LEVEL OF COURSES WAS EXTENDED THIS YEAR TO INCLUDE A POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA, AND THE POLYTECHNIC HAS HIGH HOPES OF EXTENDING THIS FURTHER NEXT OCTOBER WHEN IT EXPECTS TO OFFER ITS FIRST DEGREE COURSES.

+IN KEEPING WITH THE ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE, THESE COURSES HAVE A FEATURE UNIQUE IN HONG KONG IN THAT THEY ARE BASED ON THE MODULAR STRUCTURE WHICH ENABLE BOTH THE FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME COURSES TO HAVE SIMILAR COURSES CONTENTS AND LEAD TO THE SAME AWARDS,+ HE SAID.

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PLACES SET FOR CU MEDICAL INTERNS
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THERE SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT INTERN POSTS TO ABSORB MEDICAL STUDENTS FROM THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY, GRADUATING THIS SUMMER IN THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT UNDER SECTION 9 OF THE MEDICAL REGISTRATION ORDINANCE, THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG AND THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG HAD THE AUTHORITY TO APPROVE INTERN POSTS FOR MEDICAL GRADUATES UNDERGOING THE REQUIRED ONE YEAR RESIDENCY TRAINING, MR CHAMBERS SAID.

THE UNIVERSITIES WERE ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INSPECTION, ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION OF HOSPITALS APPROVED FOR THE PURPOSES OF INTERNSHIP TRAINING.

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FUNDS APPROVED FOR GOVT SERVICES
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A MOTION BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SEEKING FUNDS ON ACCOUNT TO ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO CARRY ON EXISTING SERVICES BETWEEN THE START OF THE NEW FINANCIAL YEAR ON APRIL 1 AND THE ENACTMENT OF THE APPROPRIATION BILL, WAS APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

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FIVE BILLS PASSED
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FIVE BILLS - THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE REGIONAL COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE URBAN COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE HONG KONG ARTS CENTRE BILL 1986 WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

FOUR OTHER BILLS - THE DRUG ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE THEFT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 - WERE READ A SECOND TIME AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO MARCH 19.

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GOOD MANAGEMENT HELPS AVOID LABOUR DISPUTES
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MANY INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES WOULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IF MANAGEMENT HAD TAKEN THE APPROPRIATE MEASURES BEFORE THE PROBLEMS AROSE, A SENIOR LABOUR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

CHIEF LABOUR OFFICER, MR CHOW TUNG-SHAN, WHO HEADS THE LABOUR RELATIONS DIVISION, SAID INDUSTRIAL CONFLICTS WERE OFTEN THE RESULT OF BAD MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND THE WAYS IN WHICH MANAGEMENT STAFF ENFORCED THESE POLICIES.

MR CHOW WAS SPEAKING AT A CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION CEREMONY ORGANISED FOR PARTICIPANTS WHO HAD SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE TRAINING COURSES ON LABOUR RELATIONS RUN BY THE DEPARTMENT

+A COMPANY POLICY WHICH TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION THE INTERESTS OF BOTH MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES IS LESS LIKELY TO GIVE RISE TO DISAGREEMENTS AND CONFLICTS,+ HE SAID.

+LIKEWISE, MANAGEMENT POLICIES WHICH ARE FORMULATED WITH INPUTS FROM WORKERS WILL BE MORE PRACTICABLE AND MORE READILY ACCEPTED BY THE EMPLOYEES.+

MR CHOW SAID MANAGEMENT STAFF SHOULD BE TRAINED IN LABOUR RELATIONS AND MUST SEEK TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATIONS WITH THE WORKERS.

HE ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE BENEFIT SCHEMES AND URGED THAT EMPLOYERS SHOULD PLAN TO SET UP THEIR OWN COMPANY PROVIDENT FUND SCHEMES.

+THESE BENEFIT SCHEMES ARE VITAL NOT ONLY FOR THE EMPLOYEES, BUT ALSO FOR THE COMPANY AS THEY WILL INDUCE LOYALTY FROM WORKERS AND CUT DOWN LABOUR TURNOVER RATE,+ HE ADDED.

THE CERTIFICATE COURSES ON LABOUR RELATIONS, HELD FROM OCTOBER 1985 TO JANUARY 1986, WERE RUN BY THE DEPARTMENT'S LABOUR RELATIONS PROMOTION UNIT AND WERE DESIGNED FOR EMPLOYERS, MANAGEMENT STAFF, TRADE UNION OFFICIALS AND INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES.

THE COURSES COVERED THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE, THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE, INDUSTRIAL SAFETY, EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES.

A TOTAL OF 151 PEOPLE ATTENDED THE COURSES AND 142 OF THEM WERE AWARDED CERTIFICATES.

MR CHAN SAID THE COURSES WERE WELL-RECEIVED BY BOTH MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES AND THE DEPARTMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO RUN SIMILAR COURSES.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1986

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FEATURES OF EEC MANDATE FOR TALKS SET OUT

REFERRING TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF AN AGREED MANDATE YESTERDAY FOR THE RENEGOTIATION OF THE BILATERAL TEXTILES AGREEMENT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF TRADE, EEC, MR JOSEPH WONG, SAID THAT THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE EEC MANDATE INCLUDE:

- * REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS (WHICH DOES NOT AFFECT HONG KONG);
- * MAINTAINING EXISTING PRODUCT COVERAGE;
- * USING 1986 QUOTA LEVELS AS A BASIS FOR CALCULATING THE NEW QUOTA LEVELS;
- * NO CUTBACKS IN QUOTAS;
- * REDUCTION IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF QUOTA RESTRICTIONS IN RESPECT OF ALL SUPPLIERS BY 25 PER CENT (DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS VARY BETWEEN SUPPLIERS);
- * GROWTH RATE FOR SO-CALLED DOMINANT SUPPLIERS (HONG KONG, MACAU, SOUTH KOREA, TAIWAN) IN SENSITIVE CATEGORIES OF BETWEEN 0 - 1 PER CENT (4 - 6 PER CENT FOR OTHER SUPPLIERS);
- * AUTOMATIC TRANSFER OF QUOTAS BETWEEN REGIONS UP TO A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE (2 - 12 PER CENT OVER 4 YEARS).

THE CURRENT HK-EEC TEXTILES AGREEMENT WILL EXPIRE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR AND NEGOTIATIONS FOR A SUCCESSOR AGREEMENT WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

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DATE SET FOR HK-U.S. TEXTILE TALKS

BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND THE UNITED STATES ON THE TERRITORY'S TEXTILE EXPORTS TO THE U.S. WILL START ON MARCH 19, A TRADE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID IT WAS NOT CLEAR AT THIS STAGE HOW LONG THE DISCUSSIONS WOULD LAST BUT IF NECESSARY, THEY COULD BE EXTENDED TO RUN THROUGH MARCH 20 AND MARCH 21.

/THE DIRECTOR

THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, WILL LEAD THE HONG KONG TEAM WHICH WILL INCLUDE THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TRADE (MULTILATERAL AND NORTH AMERICA), MR PAUL WONG, AND THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF TRADE (NORTH AMERICA), MR ROBERT FOOTMAN.

THE U.S. TEAM WILL BE LED BY AMBASSADOR CHARLES CARLISLE, THE CHIEF TEXTILES NEGOTIATOR IN THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE'S OFFICE. IT WILL ALSO INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. STATE, COMMERCE AND LABOUR DEPARTMENTS.

THE TALKS ARE BEING HELD IN RESPONSE TO A U.S. REQUEST FOR BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HONG KONG. THE REQUEST WAS MADE LAST MONTH BY AMBASSADOR CARLISLE TO THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR E.P. HO, DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON.

THE EXISTING HONG KONG-U.S. BILATERAL TEXTILES AGREEMENT DOES NOT EXPIRE UNTIL THE END OF 1987.

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TSUEN WAN TIN HAU TEMPLE GARDEN OPENS
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RESIDENTS IN TSUEN WAN WILL HAVE ONE MORE PLACE TO SPEND THEIR LEISURE FROM TODAY (WEDNESDAY) FOLLOWING THE OPENING OF THE 7 000-SQUARE METRE TSUEN WAN TIN HAU TEMPLE GARDEN.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE GARDEN, THE DIRECTOR OF REGIONAL SERVICES, MR TONY HAMMOND, SAID THE GARDEN CONTAINED A MULTI-GAMES PITCH, LANDSCAPED AREAS, A CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA, AN AMPHITHEATRE AND A SERVICE BUILDING.

PARKLIGHTS AND FLOODLIGHTS ARE ALSO PROVIDED TO ENABLE THE FACILITIES TO BE USED IN THE EVENING.

HE SAID THE PROJECT BUILT AT A COST OF ABOUT \$3.8 MILLION, WAS PART OF A CONTINUING PROGRAMME TO PROVIDE MORE AND BETTER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FOR THE POPULATION OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL AREA.

OTHERS WHO TOOK PART IN THE OPENING CEREMONY INCLUDED THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT COMMITTEE OF THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL, MR CHAN LAU-FONG; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD, MR CHAU HOW-CHEN; THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER (TSUEN WAN), MR S. J. CHAN; THE PROJECT MANAGER (TSUEN WAN), DR E. G. PRYOR, AND THE PROJECT ARCHITECT, MR SUNNY YEUNG.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1986

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CALL TO APPLY EARLY FOR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS
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THE PUBLIC IS ADVISED THAT THEY SHOULD APPLY FOR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS NOW IF THEY WISH TO TRAVEL ABROAD DURING THE EASTER HOLIDAYS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE TRAVELLING OUTSIDE HONG KONG GREATLY INCREASED DURING THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, AND IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT APPLICATIONS FOR PASSPORTS OR CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY BE MADE EARLY TO AVOID LAST MINUTE RUSH.

+IT NORMALLY TAKES 10 WORKING DAYS TO ISSUE SUCH DOCUMENTS IF APPLICATIONS ARE MADE IN THE HEADQUARTERS BUT LONGER IF MADE AT BRANCH OFFICES,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

+RE-ENTRY PERMIT AND DOCUMENT OF IDENTITY FOR VISA PURPOSES ARE NORMALLY ISSUED ON THE SAME DAY BUT DELAY IS LIKELY IF THERE ARE MANY APPLICANTS COMING AT THE SAME TIME.

+BY APPLYING EARLY, IT WILL NOT ONLY SPREAD THE WORKLOAD OF THE DEPARTMENT BUT ALSO GIVE APPLICANTS EXTRA TIME TO MEET ANY FURTHER VISA PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS WHERE NECESSARY,+ HE ADDED.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TEL 3-7333111.

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NEW COMPANY TO SERVE INDUSTRY
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A GOVERNMENT-ASSISTED COMPANY TO PROVIDE HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY WITH A PRODUCT DESIGN, INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE WILL BE OFFICIALLY OPENED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR E.P. HO AT 11 AM ON MONDAY (MARCH 17).

THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NEW COMPANY -- HONG KONG DESIGN INNOVATION COMPANY LIMITED -- WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE COMPANY'S PREMISES AT ROOM 1007, WEST WING, 10TH FLOOR, TSIM SHA TSUI CENTRE, 66 MODY ROAD, TSIM SHA TSUI EAST.

IT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A TEA RECEPTION AND A MEET-THE-MEDIA SESSION. ON THE PANEL TO ANSWER QUESTIONS WILL BE THE DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, MR K.Y. YEUNG; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMPANY, MR CHRISTOPHER CHENG; THE VICE-CHAIRMAN, MR MICHAEL FARR, AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MR DOUGLAS TOMKIN.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1986

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DB TO DISCUSS BILLIARD SALOONS CONTROL
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KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS WILL MEET TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO DISCUSS AN URBAN COUNCIL CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT ON CONTROLS ON PUBLIC BILLIARD SALOONS AND PRIVATE BILLIARD CLUBS.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, DR PATRICK HASE, WILL BE PRESENT TO LISTEN TO MEMBERS' VIEWS.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS A REPORT PREPARED BY A WORKING GROUP FORMED UNDER THE BOARD TO LOOK INTO THE URBAN COUNCIL'S PROPOSED HAWKER AND MARKET POLICIES.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE A PROPOSAL TO FORMULATE REGULATIONS TO MONITOR OIL PRICES, AND PROGRESS REPORTS BY THE BOARD'S THREE COMMITTEES.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD AT 2.15 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 141 KAU PUI LUNG ROAD, TO KWA WAN.

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PENG CHAU BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES DECLARED DANGEROUS
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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DECLARED THE REMAINING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES AT 105 AND 105D WING ON STREET ON PENG CHAU ISLAND TO BE DANGEROUS OR LIABLE TO BECOME DANGEROUS.

ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT BUILDING SURVEYOR NUMEROUS BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ON THE LOT WERE CLOSED ON JANUARY 30, 1986 UNDER AN EMERGENCY ORDER FOLLOWING A FIRE THREE DAYS EARLIER.

OTHER BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES ON THE LOT, ALL SINGLE OR TWO STOREYS IN HEIGHT, WERE NOT AFFECTED BY THE CLOSURE ORDER. HOWEVER, FURTHER INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT THEY WERE EITHER IN AN ADVANCED STATE OF DILAPIDATION OR IN A STATE OF DISREPAIR.

SOME OF THE ROOF COVERINGS HAD BEEN BLOWN AWAY IN NUMEROUS PLACES AND THERE WERE PARTIAL COLLAPSES OF ROOFS IN SOME OF THEM.

/SOME GABLE

SOME GABLE WALLS SHOWED MOVEMENT CRACKS AND OTHER WALLS SHOWED VERY WEAK BLOCKWORK.

IN ADDITION, A FEW REINFORCED CONCRETE BEAMS AND LINTOLS WERE VERY DETERIORATED WHILE LARGE PIECES OF SPALLED CONCRETE AND INFILLING BRICKWORK HAD FALLEN OFF IN A NUMBER OF LOCATIONS.

+WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE TWO BUILDINGS NEAR THE MAIN ENTRANCE WHICH WERE CONSIDERED LIABLE TO BECOME DANGEROUS, ALL THE REMAINING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES WERE CONSIDERED TO BE DANGEROUS. IT IS THEREFORE NECESSEARY TO CLOSE AND TO DEMOLISH THEM ALL IN ONE OPERATION,+ HE SAID.

A NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A CLOSURE ORDER IN VICTORIA DISTRICT COURT AT 9.30 AM ON APRIL 16, 1986 WAS POSTED ON THE BUILDINGS TODAY.

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ROOFTOP STRUCTURES TO BE CLOSED
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THE BUILDING AUTHORITY IS SEEKING THE CLOSURE OF FIVE ILLEGAL STRUCTURES ON THE ROOFTOP OF A SIX-STOREY BUILDING AT 13-19 KAM FONG STREET, MONG KOK, SO THAT THEY CAN BE REMOVED.

A NOTICE OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A CLOSURE ORDER IN THE KOWLOON DISTRICT COURT AT 9.30 AM ON APRIL 30, 1986, WAS POSTED ON THE STRUCTURES TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THIS FOLLOWS THE OWNERS FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ORDERS ISSUED UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE IN JANUARY 1985 TO DEMOLISH THE STRUCTURES.

DEMOLITION WORK WILL BE CARRIED OUT AS SOON AS THE CLOSURE ORDER IS OBTAINED.

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SPORTS SCHEME FOR SAI KUNG REMOTE VILLAGES
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THE REGIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS INTRODUCED A SPORTS SCHEME TO ENABLE YOUNGSTERS IN REMOTE VILLAGES IN SAI KUNG TO TAKE PART IN RECREATION AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE RSD'S DISTRICT LEISURE MANAGER (SAI KUNG), MR CHARLES CHU, AT A MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY) OF THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT COMMITTEE OF THE PROVISIONAL REGIONAL COUNCIL.

UNDER THE REMOTE VILLAGE SPORTS SCHEME, 10 TO 12 SUCH EVENTS ARE ORGANISED EACH YEAR AT PLAYGROUNDS OR OPEN SPACES CLOSE TO THE VILLAGES. THEY ARE DESIGNED FOR 80 TO 100 YOUNGSTERS AT A TIME.

MR CHU SAID A TOTAL OF 36 NEW PROJECTS WOULD BE ORGANISED BY THE RSD FOR THE WHOLE OF SAI KUNG FROM APRIL TO JUNE. THEY ARE EXPECTED TO ATTRACT SOME 2 150 PARTICIPANTS.

ON ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE, THE RSD'S DISTRICT HYGIENE SUPERINTENDENT (SAI KUNG), MR LAI MAN-HANG, TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT TWO ANTI-MALARIA GANGS WERE ENGAGED IN ANTI-MALARIA WORK IN THE DISTRICT.

+THEIR WORK INCLUDES MAKING WEEKLY VISITS TO ALL POSSIBLE MOSQUITO BREEDING PLACES, SUCH AS ALONG STREAMS, ABANDONED PADDY-FIELDS AND CULTIVATION PLOTS AND IN VILLAGES,+ MR LAI SAID.

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AWARDS FOR POSTER DESIGN WINNERS

THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PRESENTED PRIZES TO WINNERS IN THE DEPARTMENTAL COURTESY POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION.

THE COMPETITION IS PART OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE COURTESY OF FRONTLINE STAFF IN THE DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC.

GROUP WINNERS ARE MRS KWONG FUNG YIN-HA, MR LAU WING-KEUNG AND MR LEUNG KA-LOK.

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SEMINAR ON SECURITY IN INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT STAFF OF INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS IN TSUEN WAN WILL LEARN MORE ABOUT SECURITY AT A SEMINAR ON FRIDAY (MARCH 14).

OFFICERS FROM THE POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT WILL BRIEF PARTICIPANTS ON SECURITY MATTERS IN INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS AT THE SEMINAR TO BE HELD IN THE CULTURAL ACTIVITIES HALL OF TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL AT 8 PM.

FACTORY OWNERS AND WORKERS IN THE DISTRICT HAVE ALSO BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND THE SEMINAR, ORGANISED BY THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE.

THERE WILL BE A DISPLAY OF SECURITY EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE SEMINAR TO BE HELD AT 8 PM ON FRIDAY IN THE TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL.

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REVIEW OF YOUTH YEAR

A PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD IN THE GIS PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM AT 4 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO REVIEW THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR.

IT WILL BE CHAIRED BY MRS SELINA CHOW, CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ON 1985 INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR (CCCIYY). OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CCCIYY WHO WILL BE PRESENT ARE MR J.P. LEE, MR HOWARD YOUNG, MRS ROSANNA TAM AND MRS PAMELA CHAN.

THE PANELISTS WILL SPEAK ON THE WORK OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SUB-COMMITTEES AND WILL INTRODUCE TWO MAJOR PUBLICATIONS COMPILED BY THE CCCIYY.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EVENT.

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PRESS CONFERENCE ON TV QUIZ
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DETAILS OF A WEEKLY TELEVISION QUIZ PROGRAMME WILL BE ANNOUNCED BY THE PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY (HONG KONG AND KOWLOON), MR GREGORY LEUNG AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

THE PROGRAMME, AIMED AT PROMOTING CIVIC EDUCATION AND ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AMONG STUDENTS, IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, ROTARY INTERNATIONAL 345 AND RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG.

STARTING LATER THIS WEEK, THE 13-EPIISODE PROGRAMME WILL BE SCREENED ON BOTH ATV AND TVB CHINESE CHANNELS.

THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD AT NOON AT THE LOBBY OF THE BROADCASTING HOUSE, 30 BROADCAST DRIVE.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM ROTARY INTERNATIONAL 345, DR JOSEPH WONG, AND THE HEAD OF GENERAL PROGRAMME SECTION OF RTHK, MR JOHNNY MING.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

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TV PROGRAMME ON KWAI CHUNG, TSING YI
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A SPECIAL TELEVISION PROGRAMME FEATURING THE KWAI CHUNG AND TSING YI DISTRICT WILL BE SHOWN ON THE CHINESE CHANNEL OF ATV AT 9.35 PM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 15).

THE PROGRAMME IS JOINTLY PRESENTED BY THE KWAI CHUNG AND TSING YI DISTRICT BOARD AND ASIA TELEVISION LIMITED.

APART FROM SONGS AND DANCES, THE SHOW WILL INTRODUCE SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE DISTRICT, THE MONUMENTS, TRADITIONAL VILLAGES, AND RESIDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME.

/THE PROGRAMME

THE PROGRAMME WILL BE RECORDED AT THE JU CHING CHU COLLEGE IN TAI PAK TIN STREET ON FRIDAY (MARCH 14) AT 8.30 PM. FREE ADMISSION TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE KWAI CHUNG AND TSING YI DISTRICT OFFICE AND ITS SUB-OFFICES.

A CEREMONY TO MARK THE OPENING OF THE PROGRAMME WILL BE HELD AT 8 PM. IT WILL BE OFFICIATED BY DISTRICT COMMISSIONER (TSUEN WAN), MR CHAN SUI-JEUNG.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY AND THE RECORDING OF THE PROGRAMME.

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EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD TO MEET

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A PROPOSAL TO RESUME TWO PRIVATE STREETS IN THE EASTERN DISTRICT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

DURING THE MEETING, BOARD MEMBERS WILL ALSO BE INFORMED OF A \$2.5 MILLION PROJECT FOR THE WIDENING OF SHAU KEI WANG MAIN STREET EAST AT THE SECTION BETWEEN KAM WA STREET AND MIU TUNG STREET FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE TRAFFIC REQUIREMENTS.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE AN INFORMATION PAPER ON URBAN COUNCIL INDOOR LEISURE FACILITIES PLANNED FOR EASTERN DISTRICT AND THE BOARD'S FINANCIAL REPORT.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICE ON THE FIRST FLOOR, 880-886 KING'S ROAD.

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TUEN MUN, MONG KOK TRAFFIC CHANGES
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THE SPEED LIMIT ON CASTLE PEAK ROAD IN TUEN MUN, FROM A POINT ABOUT 55 METRES NORTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH TUEN SHING STREET AND A POINT ABOUT 175 METRES SOUTH OF ITS SOUTHERN JUNCTION WITH TSING HOI CIRCUIT, WILL BE REDUCED FROM THE EXISTING 70 KILOMETRES PER HOUR TO 50 KILOMETRES PER HOUR WITH EFFECT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MARCH 14).

MEANWHILE, FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 15), YIM PO FONG STREET SOUTHBOUND IN MONG KOK, BETWEEN ITS JUNCTION WITH ARGYLE STREET AND A POINT 130 METRES SOUTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION, WILL BE DESIGNATED A RESTRICTED ZONE FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM AND FROM 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY.

NO VEHICLES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS WITHIN THE RESTRICTED AREA.

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BUS-LANE IN CENTRAL SUSPENDED
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FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (MARCH 14), THE EXISTING 7 AM TO 10 AM AND 4 PM TO 7 PM DAILY BUS ONLY LANE RESTRICTION ON THE EASTBOUND KERBSIDE LANE OF CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL FROM A POINT ABOUT 46 METRES EAST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH HARBOUR VIEW STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 188 METRES EAST OF THE SAME JUNCTION WILL BE LIFTED FOR ABOUT TWO MONTHS.

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TUEN MUN WATER CUT
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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO CERTAIN PREMISES IN TUEN MUN WILL BE TURNED OFF FROM 1 PM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 15) TO 8 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY FOR MAINS WORK.

THE AFFECTED PREMISES ARE BOUNDED BY TSING WAN ROAD AND LUNG MUN ROAD, FROM PUI TO ROAD TO LUNG KWU TAN, INCLUDING LUNG KWU TAN, TAP SHEK KOK, SIU LANG SHUI, MONG HAU SHEK, SHEK KOK TSUI, PAK KOK, SHAN SHEK WAN AND TSING SHAN TSUEN.

SIU HONG COURT, BUTTERFLY ESTATE, PAK KOK TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA, WU KING ESTATE, MELODY GARDEN, SIU HEI COURT AND CASTLE PEAK BOYS'S HOME ARE ALSO AFFECTED.

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