



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1980

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SENIOR CITIZENS REQUIRE MORE GOVERNMENT HELP

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THERE IS AN URGENT NEED TO BUILD MORE CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES FOR +SENIOR CITIZENS+ WHO IN THEIR WORKING LIFETIME HAVE CONTRIBUTED SUBSTANTIALLY TO THE PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG, DR THE HON HARRY FANG TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ELDERLY HAD BEEN DELAYED BECAUSE OF A LACK OF SUITABLE SITES.

+AT LEAST 1 000 PATIENTS WHO SHOULD BE CARED FOR IN INFIRMARIES OR CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES ARE STILL OCCUPYING HOSPITAL BEDS WHICH ARE BADLY NEEDED FOR THE VERY ILL.+

HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED COULD MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO SET ASIDE SUITABLE SITES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUCH HOMES AND CENTRES FOR OLD PEOPLE.

+MUCH IS BEING DONE TO ASSIST THE ELDERLY OF LIMITED MEANS,+ DR FANG SAID, +BUT WE MUST NOT FORGET THOSE OF MIDDLE-INCOME BACKGROUND WHO ARE INELIGIBLE FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND WHO DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO EXISTING FACILITIES BECAUSE OF LIMITED SUPPLY.+

MANY OF THESE HAVE NO FAMILIES TO TURN TO, SOME ARE IN RELATIVELY GOOD HEALTH AND OTHERS REQUIRE PERSONAL CARE.

HE QUESTIONED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER SUPPORTING SCHEMES FOR THIS GROUP SIMILAR TO THE CHINA COAST COMMUNITY PROJECT BY PROVIDING EITHER A LOAN OR LAND AT CONCESSIONARY PREMIA.

THESE SENIOR CITIZENS WOULD PAY FOR THEIR OWN KEEP, HE ADDED.

DR FANG OBSERVED THAT THE AGEING POPULATION WAS BECOMING MORE AND MORE OF A PROBLEM IN HONG KONG.

STATISTICS SHOW THAT THOSE OVER THE AGE OF 60 ARE REACHING 10 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL POPULATION AS COMPARED WITH ONLY 4.5 PER CENT IN 1971.

THIS, HE SAID, WAS RECENTLY EMPHASISED BY THE BRITISH MEDICAL TEAM WHICH CAME TO HONG KONG TO ADVISE ON WHETHER CONTINUED FULL RECOGNITION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE MEDICAL TRAINING IN HONG KONG.

+IN THEIR REPORT THEY HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT MORE TIME BE DEVOTED TO THE TEACHING OF GERIATRICS.

+IN THE CARE OF THE ELDERLY, IT IS HOPED THAT GOVERNMENT CAN PUT MORE EMPHASIS ON GERIATRIC HEALTH CARE BY INITIATING FOR EXAMPLE SCHEMES SIMILAR TO THE SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE.+

/DR FANG

DR FANG ALSO COMMENTED ON SEVERAL OTHER ASPECTS RELATING TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF HONG KONG PEOPLE.

ON THE EXPANSION OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, HE NOTED THAT THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE SERVICES WOULD BE IMPROVED AND STRENGTHENED DURING THE COMING YEAR.

HOWEVER, HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER CHANGING THE ADMINISTRATION, AT LEAST IN THE MAJOR HOSPITALS, TO A CORPORATE BOARD SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT REPRESENTING AND EMBRACING THE HEADS OF ALL CLINICAL AND SUPPORTIVE UNITS.

UNDER SUCH A SYSTEM, HE POINTED OUT, A CHAIRMAN MIGHT BE ELECTED FROM AMONG THEM TO ACT AS THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, AND THE HOSPITAL SECRETARY SHOULD BE UPGRADED AND MADE RESPONSIBLE TO THE CHAIRMAN AND THE BOARD.

TURNING TO PUBLIC HEALTH, DR FANG EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE MASSIVE INFLUX OF IMMIGRANTS HAD NOT ONLY OVERSTRETCHED OUR SOCIAL SERVICES, BUT CARRIED WITH IT THE THREAT OF AN OUTBREAK OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

HONG KONG, HE NOTED, HAS FOR MANY YEARS ENJOYED THE GOOD FORTUNE OF AN ABSENCE OF EPIDEMICS WHICH HAS ALLOWED US TO DISPENSE WITH STRINGENT HEALTH CONTROLS AS INOCULATIONS AND VACCINATIONS.

HE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES TO AVOID ANOTHER PANIC SUCH AS THE RECENT RABIES SCARE AND GIVE ALL RECENT IMMIGRANTS A DEGREE OF HEALTH SCREENING AND IF POSSIBLE SOME BASIC HEALTH EDUCATION.

REGARDING JUVENILE CRIMES, DR FANG DISAGREED WITH RECENT COMMENTS FROM LEADING SOCIAL WORKERS WHO PUT THE BLAME OF THE UPSURGE ON COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION.

IN HIS OPINION, THE PROBLEM LIES IN THE VERY STRONG ACADEMIC SLANT OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND THE PRESSURE OF WORK.

HE WONDERED WHETHER SOMETHING COULD BE DONE IN THIS AREA +SO THAT YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT ACADEMICALLY INCLINED CAN BE USEFULLY ENGAGED IN PURSUITS WHICH CAPTURE THEIR INTEREST AND HARNESS THEIR ENERGIES+.

ON REHABILITATION SERVICES, DR FANG SUGGESTED THAT THE REHABILITATION DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE MIGHT TAKE OVER THE ROLE OF CONSIDERING APPEALS ON SUBVENTION MATTERS FROM VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHICH PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES.

DR FANG THEN TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE HEALTH OF THE WORKFORCE.

AN INJURED WORKER OR HIS FAMILY, HE SAID, HAS TO GO THROUGH SEVERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS INCLUDING THE MEDICAL, SOCIAL WELFARE, LABOUR AND LEGAL AID DEPARTMENTS, AND SOMETIMES THE COURTS, BEFORE HIS IMMEDIATE NEEDS CAN BE MET AND COMPENSATION PAID.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE PRESENT PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES BE STREAMLINED AND CENTRALISED UNDER ONE STATUTORY BODY SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE CANADIAN WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION BOARD.

+THIS BOARD NOT ONLY ADMINISTERS ITS OWN INSURANCE AND COMPENSATION SCHEMES BUT IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION OF THE INJURED WORKERS.+

COMMENTING ON THE PROVISION OF KERBS ALONG PAVEMENTS IN CENTRAL FOR THE CROSSING OF WHEEL-CHAIR PERSONS, DR FANG HOPED THAT THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS WOULD AMEND THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE TO GIVE BUILDERS THE PRIVILEGE OF AN INCREASE IN THE BUILDING VOLUME, WHEN THEY PROVIDE ACCESS FOR WHEEL CHAIRS SUCH AS RAMPS, WIDER CORRIDORS AND BIGGER TOILETS.

+THIS WILL BE A MOST FITTING GESTURE DURING THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS IN 1981,+ HE SAID.

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GOVERNMENT +U+ TURN IN TRAINING POLICY DEPLORED
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UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, DR THE HON FRANCIS TIEN, TOOK THE GOVERNMENT TO TASK TODAY FOR MAKING A +TURNABOUT+ IN ITS POLICY ON INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.

HE SAID A REGRETTABLE FEATURE OF ALL THIS WAS THAT THOSE WHO SUPPORTED, OR INDEED ENCOURAGED THE GOVERNMENT ON ONE POLICY, FOUND ANOTHER WAY WAS TO BE DEVELOPED.

+FOR RATHER THAN A LEVY, THE FINANCING OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING WILL BE A CHARGE ON GENERAL REVENUE.

+A NEW TRAINING AUTHORITY WOULD TAKE ON A ROLE SIMILAR TO THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE FINANCED WITH A GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION IN THE FORM OF A BLOCK GRANT.+

DR TIEN RECALLED THAT DURING THE 1970'S THE GOVERNMENT APPEARED TO ACCEPT A POLICY ON INDUSTRIAL TRAINING WHICH AT THAT TIME +SEEMED WISE TO MANY HONOURABLE MEMBERS+.

IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT TRAINING IS A VITAL AND AN IMPERATIVE PART OF OUR INDUSTRIAL PRESENT AND FUTURE, AND NO ONE WOULD DENY THIS, HE SAID.

+MOST COUNTRIES BELIEVE THAT INDUSTRY SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PAY A VARIABLE LEVY IN ORDER TO TRAIN PERSONS IN THE VARIOUS FIELDS OF INDUSTRY TO WHICH THEY BELONG.

+ON GROUNDS OF PRINCIPLE, I AM ON RECORD AS HAVING ACCEPTED THIS UNIVERSALLY-ADHERED-TO PRACTICE.+

THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ALSO FELL IN WITH THIS LINE OF THINKING, DR TIEN CONTINUED, AND HAD FORMULATED A GENERAL GUIDELINE WHEREBY EDUCATION WAS THE PROPER PROVINCE OF GOVERNMENT WHILE TRAINING WAS THE PROPER PROVINCE OF INDUSTRY.

IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE TRAINING COUNCIL WAS THE BEST BODY TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON ALL MATTERS CONCERNING INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.

+WE SUBSCRIBE TO THE IDEA OF A GENERAL LEVY- IT WAS OUR WAY OF PAYING IN A VERY MATERIAL SENSE SOMETHING MORE THAN LIP-SERVICE. OUR SCHEME WAS BOTH FLEXIBLE AND OPEN.

+NOW, HOWEVER, POLICY IS APPARENTLY SET ON A NEW COURSE AND PROPOSES A STRAIGHT BLOCK GRANT.

+I MIGHT PUT IT THIS WAY: THE GOVERNMENT HAS EFFECTED SOMETHING WHICH EVEN MRS THATCHER HAS AVOIDED -- IT HAS EFFECTED A 'U' TURN.+

DR TIEN CONCLUDED BY BORROWING A FEW WORDS FROM SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL, MODIFIED TO APPLY TO THE ENTERPRISE OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING: +A FEW MISGUIDED PEOPLE SEE IT AS A TARGET TO BE SHOT, OTHERS AS A COW TO BE MILKED, BUT A FEW AMONG US SEE IT AS A STURDY HORSE PULLING THE WAGGON OF INDUSTRY.+

BUT HE ADDED: +I WILL AGREE TO SUPPORT THE MOTION BECAUSE I AM AT LEAST PLEASED THAT A FIRM DECISION ON A MATTER OF SUCH IMPORTANCE HAS AT LAST BEEN TAKEN.+

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STUDENTS NEED GOOD INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS

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THE HON ALEX WU CALLED ON TEACHERS TO EXERCISE A GREATER GOOD INFLUENCE ON THEIR STUDENTS.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, HE QUESTIONED HOW MANY OF THE STUDENTS PASSING THROUGH OUR SCHOOLS NOWADAYS WOULD LOOK BACK ON TEACHERS +WHO WERE MORE THAN CHANNELS OF INFORMATION, WHO INSPIRED RESPECT, ADMIRATION AND EMULATION.+

HE SAID MAYBE THIS +MR CHIPS+ CONCEPT WOULD BE THOUGHT TO BE SOMETHING FOR THE ELITE, TOO FANCY FOR THE WORKADAY TASKS OF PUSHING A MILLION AND A HALF CHILDREN THROUGH THE SYSTEM.

+MAYBE, BUT WE NEED NOT ACCEPT THAT TEACHERS IN HONG KONG HAVE NO PART TO PLAY IN FORMING THE CHARACTER OF THEIR PUPILS.

+OUR CHINESE CONCEPT OF EDUCATION ACCEPTS THAT CORRECT BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES CAN AND SHOULD BE INCULCATED AND THAT THIS IS A PROPER PART OF EDUCATION,+ HE SAID.

MR WU WAS COMMENTING ON THE TWO-FOLD INCREASE IN CRIMES COMMITTED BY YOUNGSTERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF SEVEN AND 15.

HE HOPED THE STUDY INTO JUVENILE CRIME BY THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WOULD GIVE US SOME DIRECTION FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ACTION.

BUT MEANWHILE, HE SAID, HE COULD NOT HELP WONDERING HOW THIS FRIGHTENING DEVELOPMENT RELATES TO THE STATE OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM.

/QUOTING

QUOTING STATISTICS, MR WU SAID THERE WERE 620 BOYS AND 38 GIRLS PROSECUTED FOR VIOLENT CRIMES ALONE- 17 BLACKMAILERS WERE AGED UNDER 13 AND ANOTHER 65, INCLUDING FIVE GIRLS, WERE AGED UNDER 16.

+WHATEVER THE TRUTH, I DON'T THINK WE CAN ACCEPT THAT WHEN MORE OF OUR CHILDREN ARE IN SCHOOL THAN EVER BEFORE MORE OF THEM THAN EVER ARE INVOLVED IN CRIME.

+WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION?

+IT BRINGS US BACK SHARPLY TO THE KEY ELEMENT IN EDUCATION: THE CHARACTER OF THE MAN OR WOMAN IN FRONT OF THE BLACKBOARD,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, MR WU SAID, HE HAD NO DOUBT THAT MANY TEACHERS WERE CONCERNED WITH THE MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILDREN IN THEIR CHARGE OR ELSE WE WOULD BE IN A MUCH WORSE SITUATION.

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND HEADMASTERS MUST BE CONSCIOUS OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY AND EVERY TEACHER MUST RECOGNISE A CLEAR AND POSITIVE DUTY TO LEAD STUDENTS TO TRUE STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR.

+I WOULD GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT IN THE SYSTEM OF HONOURS AND AWARDS BY WHICH WE RECOGNISE INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY WE MIGHT PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION OR EVEN CONSIDER A SPECIAL FORM OF RECOGNITION FOR THOSE WHO DISPLAY A TRUE SENSE OF THEIR VOCATION,+ HE SAID.

MR WU BELIEVED IT WAS THE RIGHT TIME TO TEACH +MANDARIN+ IN OUR SCHOOLS. IT WOULD BE AN ADVANTAGE IN THE TEACHING AND APPRECIATION OF WRITTEN CHINESE AND IT WOULD HELP TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THE WRITTEN LANGUAGE AND OUR SPOKEN CANTONESE, HE SAID.

IN A WIDER CONTEXT, IT WOULD PUT US IN THE MAINSTREAM OF CHINESE CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HE NOTED.

HE SUGGESTED THAT, AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT, THE INTERPRETATION FACILITIES NOW AVAILABLE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO ALLOW MEMBERS TO SPEAK IN +MANDARIN+.

MR WU ALSO REGRETTED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD NOT EXEMPTED HONG KONG STUDENTS FROM THE STEEP FEE INCREASE WHICH WAS APPLIED TO OVERSEAS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

WHILE APPRECIATING THAT THE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE IN ADMISSIONS TO OUR OWN UNIVERSITIES WOULD BE INCREASED BY ONE PER CENT, MR WU CONTENDED THAT WE WOULD STILL FACE A SERIOUS SHORTFALL IN PLACES.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO SUBSIDISING HONG KONG STUDENTS STUDYING IN BRITISH UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNICS.

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CALL FOR INVESTIGATION INTO JUVENILE CRIME
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UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, THE REV THE HON JOYCE M. BENNETT TODAY CALLED FOR A MULTI-PRONG INVESTIGATION INTO THE UPSURGE OF JUVENILE CRIME.

SHE SAID ALTHOUGH THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WAS ASKED TO UNDERTAKE A THOROUGH STUDY OF BOTH THE STATISTICS AND CAUSES OF THE UPSURGE, SHE BELIEVED GREATER DEPTH TO THE ENQUIRY COULD BE ACHIEVED BY THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT'S SOCIAL SERVICE BRANCH WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE POLICE AND MAGISTRATES TO GET TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE IN THE COUNCIL, MISS BENNETT SAID: +LET US NOT COVER UP WITH ELEGANT WORDS THE MEANING OF THIS EXPRESSION JUVENILE DELINQUENCY.

+OUR SOCIETY IS FACED WITH A RISE NOT ONLY OF PICKPOCKETING AND PETTY THIEVING, BUT ALSO WITH AN INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP OF TRIAD SOCIETIES AND CRIMES OF VIOLENCE.

+WE MUST MAKE AN ALL-OUT DETERMINED EFFORT TO DISCOVER THE FACTS BEHIND THESE CRIMES.+

SHE ALSO FELT THAT IT WAS TIME TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF JUVENILE COURTS AND THE NUMBER OF MAGISTRATES DEALING WITH JUVENILE OFFENDERS AS SHE WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT MAGISTRATES IN THESE COURTS MAY DEAL WITH UP TO 40 CASES IN ONE DAY.

SHE STATED THAT OUR MAGISTRATES WERE NOT DEALING WITH MACHINES OR ROBOTS, BUT WITH HIGHLY INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN, EACH OF WHOM PRESENTED A COMPLEX FAMILY BACKGROUND.

+THE MAGISTRATE RELIES CONSIDERABLY ON PROBATION OFFICERS FOR THEIR REPORTS ON THE YOUNG OFFENDERS.

+THEY WILL REPORT ON THEIR RELATIONSHIPS AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL AND THEIR SUITABILITY FOR THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS.+

BUT SHE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE PROBATION SERVICE AT THE END OF MARCH 1980 WAS 30 PER CENT UNDER STRENGTH WITH 27 VACANCIES.

IN A RECENT RECRUITMENT EXERCISE, SHE ADDED, 20 APPLICANTS WERE OFFERED THE POST OF ASSISTANT SOCIAL WORK OFFICERS, BUT ONLY ABOUT TEN ACCEPTED.

+IS MORALE LOW IN THE PROBATION SERVICE AND AMONG THE STAFF IN THE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS?

+DO THESE STAFF FIND THEIR TASKS IN THESE CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS OVERWHELMING AND HOW MANY PSYCHOLOGISTS CAN THEY CALL ON TO SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF CHILDREN?+ MISS BENNETT ASKED.

/UNDOUBTEDLY

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UNDOUBTEDLY, SHE CONTINUED, STAFF IN RESIDENTIAL HOMES REQUIRE ADDED INDUCEMENTS TO COMPENSATE FOR THEIR IRREGULAR WORKING HOURS - AT NIGHT, AT WEEKENDS AND ON HOLIDAYS.

+THE STAFFING OF RESIDENTIAL HOMES AND INSTITUTIONS REQUIRES REAL DEDICATION AND DEVOTION.

+I HAVE SPOKEN ON THIS SUBJECT IN 1976 AND 1978 AND STILL WAIT FOR IMPROVEMENTS.+

COMMENTING ON SERVICES PROVIDED BY PROBATION OFFICERS, MISS BENNETT QUESTIONED WHETHER FURTHER THOUGHT HAD BEEN GIVEN TO ATTACH SOCIAL WORKERS FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT TO POLICE STATIONS TO ASSIST THE POLICE IN WORKING WITH THE PARENTS AND FAMILIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN FOR QUESTIONING.

+WHEN A PARENT HAS TO ATTEND THE POLICE STATION FOR THE FIRST TIME BECAUSE OF MISDEEDS OF HIS CHILD, HE IS OPEN TO RECEIVE HELP. BUT IT HAS TO BE PROVIDED WITH A PROMISE OF LONG-TERM REFERRAL TO A SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCY.

+IT IS ESSENTIAL TOO THAT THESE TROUBLED CHILDREN SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH ONE AND THE SAME WELFARE OFFICER OVER A SUFFICIENTLY LONG PERIOD OF TIME FOR THE CHILD TO RECOGNISE THE WELFARE OFFICER AS A LONG-TERM FRIEND.+

MISS BENNETT NOTED SHE WAS RECENTLY MADE AWARE THAT MANY OF THE CHILDREN, LABELLED AS 'SLOW LEARNERS' BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, HAD SERIOUS BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS THAT HAD LED TO DELINQUENCY.

THERE HAS BEEN NO SPECIAL PROVISION FOR EXTRA SOCIAL WORKERS TO WORK WITH SLOW LEARNING CHILDREN BEING EDUCATED IN ORDINARY SCHOOLS- SHE SUGGESTED THAT STUDIES BE MADE IMMEDIATELY OF THE REASONS WHY THESE CHILDREN ARE BACKWARD.

+THIS IS A PRE-REQUISITE IF WE ARE GOING TO STEM THIS INCREASE IN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY.+

SHE EMPHASISED THE CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY- SHE THOUGHT THAT GOVERNMENT MUST MORE STRENUOUSLY TACKLE THE POSSIBILITY OF IMMEDIATELY RAISING THE QUALITY OF OUR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES.

SHE CALLED ON THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO ACTIVELY PROMOTE A MORE MODERN APPROACH TO LEARNING IN OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

+IT MAY WELL BE THAT WE SHOULD BE ENQUIRING INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF A MORE OPEN-ENDED EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

+SOME COUNTRIES HAVE INTRODUCED A VOUCHER SYSTEM BY WHICH NOT ALL THE NINE YEARS OF EDUCATION HAVE TO BE TAKEN CONSECUTIVELY.

+THE YOUNG PERSON IS ALLOWED TO STOP STUDYING FOR A YEAR OR MORE AND RETURN WHEN OLDER AND MORE READY TO ACCEPT THE SCHOOLING PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT.+

/MISS BENNETT

MISS BENNETT CONSIDERED THAT CHILDREN CLASSIFIED AS BAND FIVE AT THE END OF PRIMARY SCHOOL SHOULD RECEIVE SOME TYPE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION.

THEY PROBABLY NEED A FAR MORE ACTIVE APPROACH TO STUDY- THEY REQUIRE THE SMALLER CLASSES AT PRESENT LIMITED TO SLOW LEARNERS IN ORDINARY SCHOOLS. THEY NEED MORE SPACE AND MORE EQUIPMENT- THEIR TEACHERS NEED TO HAVE SPECIAL SUPERVISION IN DEALING WITH THEM, SHE SAID.

+CLEARLY WE NEED TO DEVELOP MORE RAPIDLY THE QUALITY OF OUR EDUCATION- WE NEED TO DIVERSIFY FURTHER ITS CONTENT TO INCLUDE FAR MORE OF A VOCATIONAL NATURE- WE MUST VASTLY INCREASE OUR SUPPORTING SERVICES IF OUR NINE YEARS OF FREE AND COMPULSORY SCHOOLING ARE TO HAVE ANY PROPER VALUE AND MEANING.

+THE CHILDREN OF HONG KONG DESERVE THESE IMPROVEMENTS. THE QUALITY OF OUR FUTURE SOCIETY DEPENDS UPON THEM,+ SHE ADDED.

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GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE NEEDED TO HELP INDUSTRY
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE INITIATIVE TO COUNTERACT THE DRIFT OF CAPITAL FROM INDUSTRY TO THE PROPERTY MARKET.

THE CALL CAME TODAY FROM THE HON S.L. CHEN WHO SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THAT DURING THE PAST TWO OR THREE YEARS, VAST AND INCREASING AMOUNT OF CAPITAL HAD BEEN SIPHONED OFF FROM INDUSTRY.

+TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THERE HAVE BEEN INCIDENTS WHERE LARGE AND HITHERTO PROFITABLE FACTORIES HAVE SUCCEDED TO THE TEMPTATION OF QUICK PROFITS, BY REALISING THEIR LAND ASSETS IN PREFERENCE TO CONTINUING MANUFACTURING.

+THIS IS A VERY SAD AND DANGEROUS STATE OF AFFAIRS AND IF THE TREND IS ALLOWED TO CONTINUE UNCHECKED, WE MAY SOON FIND THAT INDUSTRY WILL HAVE CEASED TO BE THE 'ENGINE OF OUR ECONOMY'.

+THIS IS A REAL THREAT TO OUR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING,+ HE WARNED.

MR CHEN THEN CALLED FOR THE CREATION OF A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION TO ASSIST INDUSTRIES -- A PROPOSAL PUT FORWARD BY THE HON LI FOOK-WO AND TWO FORMER UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS IN THE 1979 BUDGET DEBATE.

AS THE BUDGETTED SURPLUS IS LIKELY TO BE EXCEEDED AGAIN THIS YEAR, MR CHEN PROPOSED TO CHANNEL SOME OF THE VERY HUGE SURPLUSES ACCUMULATED OVER THE YEARS INTO +WEALTH CREATING ACTIVITIES+.

/BUT HE

BUT HE EXPECTED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD AGAIN ARGUE THAT THERE WAS NO CASE FOR SUBSIDISING INDUSTRIES.

+I WILL AGREE WITH THE ARGUMENT IF THE SUBSIDY IS APPLIED GENERALLY.

+THE ARGUMENT IS NO LONGER COGENT IF THE PROPOSAL IS FOR ASSISTING INDUSTRIES WHICH WOULD BENEFIT THE ECONOMY OF HONG KONG, THAT IS THOSE INDUSTRIES WHICH WOULD ASSIST IN RAISING THE LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY, UPGRADING HONG KONG'S PRODUCT AND ENHANCING HONG KONG'S IMAGE AS A MANUFACTURING BASE,+ HE SAID.

HE CITED THE HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATES CORPORATION AS A CASE IN POINT WHERE LOW COST INDUSTRIAL LAND WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO ASSIST SUCH DESERVING INDUSTRIES.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL FINANCE CORPORATION IS ONLY A LOGICAL PARALLEL, HE SAID.

ON THE SUBJECT OF MANPOWER RESOURCES, MR CHEN WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO PROCEED WITH THE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING SCHEMES AND LOOKED FORWARD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING MACHINERY.

ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT ENTIRELY HAPPY WITH THE PRINCIPLE THAT SUCH TRAINING SCHEMES SHOULD BE FINANCED FROM GENERAL REVENUE, HE SAID NEVERTHELESS THAT IT WAS CERTAINLY A BIG STEP FORWARD IN PRODUCING MORE TRAINED MANPOWER +WHICH WE CANNOT DO WITHOUT IF WE WERE TO SUSTAIN THE TECHNOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF OUR ECONOMY+.

HE ALSO LINKED THE NEED FOR INDUSTRIAL TRAINING TO THE PROVISION OF TERTIARY EDUCATION, PARTICULARLY TECHNICAL EDUCATION:

+I NOTE THAT THE THREE PER CENT GROWTH RATE FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION AT THE TERTIARY LEVEL SET BY THE WHITE PAPER ON SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION IS NOW SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND THAT THERE IS A LIKELIHOOD THAT IT MAY BE INCREASED AS AN INTERIM MEASURE TO FOUR PER CENT.+

HE HOPED THAT IN THE OFFICIAL REVIEW, A SUITABLE BALANCE WOULD BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEMANDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

+AND IT MUST ALSO ENSURE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY IN THE 1980'S WILL NOT BE INHIBITED BY A SHORTAGE OF HIGH LEVEL TECHNOLOGICAL MANPOWER.+

IN THIS RESPECT, MR CHEN ASKED THAT OPPORTUNITIES BE CREATED FOR +THE LARGE NUMBER OF HIGHLY MOTIVATED PEOPLE IN BOTH COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY+ TO MEET THE INCREASING DEMAND MADE UPON THEM BY ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY.

THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO, BECAUSE OF UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES, WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE A FULL COURSE OF FORMAL EDUCATION.

HE THOUGHT THAT PART-TIME OR EXTERNAL DEGREE OR ASSOCIATESHIP COURSES WOULD BE A SUITABLE MEANS OF MEETING THIS NEED.

TURNING TO THE COST OF TERTIARY EDUCATION, MR CHEN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO ADJUST THE PRESENT STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME TO REFLECT THE FULL COST SO THAT NO DESERVING STUDENT CAPABLE OF BENEFITTING FROM HIGHER EDUCATION WOULD BE DEPRIVED OF SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY.

AT PRESENT, HE NOTED, TERTIARY EDUCATION IN HONG KONG IS HEAVILY SUBSIDISED AND ALL STUDENTS, RICH AND POOR, ARE SUBSIDISED MORE OR LESS TO THE SAME DEGREE.

HE CONSIDERED THIS TO BE +SOCIALY INEQUITABLE+.

+WELL-TO-DO STUDENTS MUST PAY THE FULL COST OF EDUCATION, AND THIS I THINK IS NOT ONLY SOCIALY MORE EQUITABLE BUT ALSO WOULD ENABLE MORE PLACES TO BE PROVIDED IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A GIVEN SUM OF MONEY.+

AS REGARDS THE GROWTH RATE OF THE GDP, MR CHEN SAID THE PROJECTED NINE PER CENT WAS AMONG THE HIGHEST IN THE WORLD AND PROBABLY UNPARALLELED WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS IN ASIA.

+FOR INDUSTRY TO DEVELOP AT THIS PACE, THE NEED FOR THE SUPPORT OF A SOUND AND EFFICIENT INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS ONLY TOO OBVIOUS.

MR CHEN THEREFORE URGED THAT TOP PRIORITY BE GIVEN TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION'S PROPOSALS TO STRENGTHEN OUR EXISTING INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO BETTER CO-ORDINATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MAJOR INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS, SUCH AS THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE, THE FEDERATION OF HONG KONG INDUSTRIES AND THE CHINESE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION.

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SHIFTING ROLE OF UNOFFICIALS

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UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SHOULD BE INVITED TO EXERCISE A SUPERVISORY-CUM-MONITORING ROLE OVER THE PERFORMANCE AND NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL OR GROUPS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, THE HON LYDIA DUNN SAID.

SHE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE GREATER USE MADE OF UNOFFICIALS IN RECENT YEARS IMPLIES THAT THEIR ROLE IS SHIFTING FROM BEING PURELY ADVISORY TO BEING QUASI-EXECUTIVE.

SHE BELIEVED THIS TO BE APPROPRIATE AS +IT HARNESSSES THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ASSIST WITH THE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX TASKS OF GOVERNMENT+.

IT ALSO PREPARES THE WAY FOR WHAT MISS DUNN BELIEVED SHOULD BE THE NEXT STAGE IN THE PARTICIPATION OF UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS IN THE PROCESS OF GOVERNMENT.

+THAT STAGE SHOULD PROVIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS TO BE INVITED TO EXERCISE A SUPERVISORY-CUM-MONITORING ROLE OVER THE PERFORMANCE AND NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS OR GROUPS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS.+

BUT MORE IMPORTANT, MISS DUNN STRESSED, THE EFFECT OF SUCH APPOINTMENT WOULD BE TO BLUNT THE ARGUMENT, PUT FORWARD ON PURELY POLITICAL GROUNDS, THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN ELECTIVE ELEMENT IN THE HIGHER COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THE ADMINISTRATION MORE ACCOUNTABLE.

+I SAY THIS BECAUSE, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, WHETHER WE BELIEVE IN AN ELECTIVE SYSTEM OR NOT, WHAT WE ARE ALL CONCERNED WITH IS THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED IN THE WAY I HAVE SUGGESTED.+

THE GROUND RULES FOR SUCH A ROLE AND LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE CHIEF SECRETARY AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY SPELLED OUT, SHE SAID.

+BUT, FOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS TO HAVE SUCH A ROLE AS OF AGREED RIGHT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE GROWING TENDENCY FOR THEM TO DEVELOP SPECIALISED INTERESTS, WOULD INJECT MEANING INTO THE UMELCO SYSTEM OF STANDING AND AD HOC GROUPS, AND WOULD COMPLEMENT THE EFFORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT AND THE ANNUAL PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE EXERCISE.

+IT IS TRUE THAT THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT IS CONCERNED THESE DAYS WITH MUCH MORE THAN VERIFYING THE ACCOUNTS AND CHECKING THAT EXPENDITURE HAS BEEN PROPERLY AUTHORISED.

+BUT I THINK THE ASSISTANCE OF UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS SHOULD HELP TO ENSURE THAT MONEY REALLY IS WELL SPENT AND TO PREVENT WHAT MAY BE EQUALLY DAMAGING, NAMELY, UNDERSPENDING.+

/THE TRADITIONAL

THE TRADITIONAL FUNCTIONS OF UNOFFICIALS, SHE POINTED OUT, HAD BEEN GENERALLY TO SERVE ON STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES AND TO SERVE ON AD HOC COMMITTEES TO WHICH SPECIFIC TASKS HAVE BEEN REMITTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

AS REGARDS THE WAY IN WHICH UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAVE DISCHARGED THEIR DUTIES, THERE HAD BEEN THREE DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PAST DECADE.

- * WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE UMELCO OFFICE AND THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF UNOFFICIALS, POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS AND DRAFT LEGISLATION CAN NOW BE SUBJECT TO IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION BY AD HOC GROUPS,
- * UNOFFICIALS HAVE DEVELOPED AN APPEALS FUNCTION IN THE DISCHARGE OF WHICH THEY HAVE ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THEIR RECORDS,
- * THE CONTROL EXERCISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OVER PUBLIC EXPENDITURE HAS BEEN EXTENDED FROM THE AUTHORISATION OF VOTE PROVISION THROUGH FINANCE COMMITTEE TO SURVEILLANCE OF THE PERFORMANCE OF CONTROLLING OFFICERS THROUGH THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

AT THE SAME TIME, SHE CONTINUED, THE ADMINISTRATION'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS UNOFFICIALS GENERALLY HAS UNDERGONE A SUBTLE CHANGE: FROM ONE OF TOLERANT ACCEPTANCE TO A VAGUE FEELING THAT THE TIME HAS COME TO TAKE A POSITIVE VIEW OF THEIR POTENTIAL ROLE.

SHE NOTED THAT THE NUMBER OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES ON WHICH UNOFFICIALS SIT HAS INCREASED TO THE POINT WHERE THEY COMPRISE 75 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF 300 AND ARE CHAIRMEN OF ABOUT HALF.

+THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A GREATER USE OF UNOFFICIALS ON COMMITTEES CHARGED WITH SPECIFIC TASKS OF AN INVESTIGATIVE AND EVEN EXECUTIVE NATURE- AND THERE IS NOW A READY ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF A COMMITTEE NEED NOT NECESSARILY BE THE OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUBJECT.

+PERSONALLY, I BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE AN AUTOMATIC BIAS IN FAVOUR OF UNOFFICIALS AS CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES UNLESS THERE IS A SELF-EVIDENT REASON IN FAVOUR OF OFFICIALS.+

FOR INSTANCE, SHE SAID, THOSE ADVISORY COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED TO GUIDE RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR STATUTORY DUTIES -- SUCH AS THE TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD AND THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD -- CLEARLY MUST BE CHAIRED BY THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS AND THE COMMISSIONER OF LABOUR RESPECTIVELY.

IN ADDITION, THERE ARE SOME TASKS REMITTED TO COMMITTEES WHICH INVOLVE SUCH CLOSE SUPERVISION OF THE PREPARATORY WORK BY THE CHAIRMAN THAT AN UNOFFICIAL COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO DEVOTE THE NECESSARY TIME TO IT ON A CONTINUING BASIS.

MISS DUNN ALSO CALLED FOR THE HIVING-OFF OF CERTAIN GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

+THE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES NOW COVERED BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR IS SUCH THAT I THINK IT IS HIGH TIME THE GOVERNMENT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED SUGGESTIONS, WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE IN THIS COUNCIL IN THE PAST, TO HIVE OFF SOME OF THEM TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

+I AM THINKING PARTICULARLY OF THOSE ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE REGARDED EVEN WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AS BEING OF A COMMERCIAL NATURE BUT, CLEARLY, ARE NOT RUN AS EFFICIENTLY AS THEY MIGHT BE.+

CITING EXAMPLES, SHE ASKED: +WHY DOES THE COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORT, WITH HIS WIDE RANGING STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY DUTIES, HAVE TO RUN THE LION ROCK TUNNEL AND CAR PARKS AND RUN THEM BADLY?

+WHY CANNOT MANAGEMENT FRANCHISES FOR THESE INSTALLATIONS BE SOLD BY PUBLIC TENDERS?+

SHE SAID CIVIL SERVANTS ARE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATORS WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE BUT WHEN THEY HAVE TO MANAGE ENTERPRISES ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS, THEY ARE CAUGHT BETWEEN CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS AND ATTITUDES ON THE ONE HAND AND THE DICTATES OF BUSINESS PRINCIPLES ON THE OTHER.

+THE RESULT IS OFTEN UNSATISFACTORY,+ SHE SAID.

OTHER POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR HIVING OFF, SHE CONTINUED, WOULD INCLUDE THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY, THE WATERWORKS, AND GARBAGE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

SPEAKING ON LAND PRODUCTION, MISS DUNN NOTED THAT THE OUTLOOK FOR BOTH PRODUCTION AND SALES OF RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND IN THE THREE YEARS 1981-82 TO 1983-84 IS QUITE GOOD ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE A DEGREE OF MISMATCH BETWEEN SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

BUT SHE CONSIDERED THE LEAD TIME FOR LAND PRODUCTION IS AT LEAST THREE YEARS, ASSUMING THERE IS NO +SLIPPAGE+.

SHE THEREFORE CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCORD CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS SUFFICIENT FUNDS IN THE CAPITAL ACCOUNT IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS SO AS TO ENSURE THAT LAND PRODUCTION IN THE SECOND HALF OF THIS DECADE IS ADEQUATE FOR OUR NEEDS.

+OF COURSE, THIS IS SPECIAL PLEADING, BUT THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IS UNLIKELY TO ALLOW THE SIZE OF THE CAPITAL ACCOUNT AS A WHOLE TO GROW TOO FAST AND SO, BECAUSE I DO BELIEVE LAND PRODUCTION MUST HAVE AN ABSOLUTE PRIORITY, I FEEL THAT SPECIAL PLEADING IS JUSTIFIED.

+AND IT IS AT LEAST ARGUABLE THAT A FAILURE TO ACCORD LAND PRODUCTION AN ABSOLUTE PRIORITY IN PAST YEARS HAS BEEN DAMAGING TO OUR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING,+ MISS DUNN ADDED.

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LAND LAW NEEDS REVIEW
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THE HON PETER C. WONG CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO SET UP A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF THE LEGISLATION RELATING TO LAND IN HONG KONG.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR WONG SAID THE SIGNIFICANCE OF APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION BECOMES MORE APPARENT WHEN ONE REALISES THAT CURRENTLY THERE ARE SOME 180 000 TRANSACTIONS RELATING TO LAND PER YEAR AND THE NUMBER IS FAST GROWING.

+OBVIOUSLY, PRIORITY MUST NOW BE GIVEN TO THIS VERY IMPORTANT, NON-CONTROVERSIAL AND LONG OVERDUE LEGISLATION.+

MR WONG ADMITTED THAT LAND LAW IS AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT AND COMPLICATED SUBJECT.

OUR LEGISLATION ON LAND, SAID MR WONG, IS NOT ONLY FRAGMENTARY BUT LEAVES SEVERAL IMPORTANT AREAS VAGUE AND OFTEN CONFUSING.

+RATIONALISATION OF OUR LAND LAW MAY NOT MEAN MUCH TO THE MAN IN THE STREET, BUT IT IS CERTAINLY IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, SINCE IT WILL, AMONG OTHER BENEFITS, REDUCE DISPUTES AND LEGAL FEES.+

IT IS NOT GENERALLY REALISED THAT HONG KONG DOES NOT HAVE A LAW OF PROPERTY ORDINANCE SUCH AS THE ENGLISH LAW OF PROPERTY ACT 1925, HE SAID.

HOWEVER, PROPOSALS FOR A LAW OF PROPERTY BILL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE LAST 25 YEARS.

A NUMBER OF DRAFT BILLS HAVE EMERGED AND A NOTABLY SUBSTANTIAL ONE WAS PREPARED IN 1973 ONLY TO BE REJECTED.

+IN 1977 AND 1978 DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT AND THE LAW SOCIETY RESULTED IN YET ANOTHER DRAFT BILL.

+THIS WAS CONCISE AND CONTAINED A NUMBER OF USEFUL PROVISIONS.

+BUT WHEN THE DRAFT BILL WILL BE FINALISED CAN ONLY BE A MATTER FOR SPECULATION, ASSUMING THAT IT WILL NOT SUFFER THE SAME FATE AS ITS PREDECESSORS.+

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF OVERDUE LEGISLATION CITED BY MR WONG WAS THE STAMP ORDINANCE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS NOW OVER TWO YEARS SINCE A PROPOSAL TO 'TIDY UP' THE ORDINANCE WAS ANNOUNCED IN 1978.

A SPECIALIST HAD BEEN APPOINTED TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE INTENTION TO REVISE THE ORDINANCE WAS AGAIN MENTIONED IN 1979. BUT SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN A DEAFENING SILENCE, HE SAID.

MR WONG

MR WONG SAID THE DELAYS IN PRODUCING LEGISLATION MAY BE DUE TO THE STAFF SHORTAGE AND WORKLOAD OF THE LAW DRAFTING DIVISION OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT.

+THERE IS A TENDENCY TO TAKE THE WORK OF THE LAW DRAFTING DIVISION FOR GRANTED.

+THE DRAFTING OF LEGISLATION IS A SPECIALISED AND DIFFICULT TASK.

+IT NOT ONLY TAKES TIME IF MISTAKES ARE TO BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM BUT REQUIRES A HIGH DEGREE OF LEGAL EXPERTISE.

+IT REQUIRES LAWYERS OF HIGH INTELLECTUAL CALIBRE WHO ARE PREPARED TO SPECIALISE IN LEGISLATIVE DRAFTING AT THE EXPENSE OF A CAREER IN A MORE EXCITING AREA OF LEGAL PRACTICE.+

HE QUESTIONED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WAS PAYING SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO THE NEED TO RECRUIT SPECIALIST LAW DRAFTSMEN AND PROVIDING REALISTIC REMUNERATION AND CAREER PROSPECTS FOR THOSE THAT IT WAS ALREADY FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE RECRUITED.

NOTING THAT THE POST OF SOLICITOR GENERAL WAS ABOLISHED SINCE THE SPRING OF LAST YEAR, MR WONG SUGGESTED: +PERHAPS IT IS NOW TIME TO TAKE STOCK OF THE SITUATION, AND IF NECESSARY CONDUCT A REVIEW OF THE ORGANISATION STRUCTURE AND STAFFING OF THE DEPARTMENT.+

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SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION PROBLEM REQUIRED

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THE HON WONG LAM TODAY REPEATED AN EARLIER APPEAL TO THE GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

+I HOPE THERE WILL SHORTLY BE A NEW BREAKTHROUGH AND A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM, SO AS TO REDUCE THE PRESSURE EXERTED BY ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ON HONG KONG, AND THAT ALL DEVELOPMENT PLANS ALREADY DRAWN UP WILL CONTINUE AT THEIR FORMER PACE TO IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

MR WONG, SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SAID HONG KONG WAS BEING AFFECTED BY THE RAPID INCREASE OF POPULATION WHICH HAD MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PLANS TO ACHIEVE THEIR DESIRED OBJECTIVES.

ATTRIBUTING THE MAIN REASON FOR THIS POPULATION GROWTH TO THE EXCESSIVE INFLUX OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, MR WONG SAID: +WE MUST ACT WITH DETERMINATION, COURAGE AND CAUTION TO OBTAIN A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION WITH THE UNDERSTANDING OF ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.+

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE GREEN PAPER ON DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, MR WONG SUPPORTED THE PROPOSAL TO SET UP DISTRICT BOARDS THROUGHOUT HONG KONG, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES WHICH HE SAID WOULD HAVE A DESIRABLE EFFECT ON EVERY ASPECT OF HONG KONG'S FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT WITH THE CONSTANT DEVELOPMENT OF OUR SOCIETY AND CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES, THE GOVERNMENT NATURALLY HAS TO UNDERTAKE MORE RESPONSIBILITIES.

+TO DECENTRALISE PART OF THE POWER OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO THE LOCAL LEVEL SO THAT CIVIL SERVANTS CAN IMPROVE GOVERNMENT SERVICES ON A DISTRICT BASIS THROUGH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS IS A NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM,+ HE SAID.

+ON THE OTHER HAND,+ HE CONTINUED, +WITH THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS, DRASTIC INCREASE IN THE POPULATION OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, AND WITH MORE FACILITIES PROVIDED AND PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE PEOPLE BECOMING EVER MORE COMPLEX, THE PEOPLE, 'OLD' OR 'NEW', ARE FERVENTLY CONCERNED WITH GOVERNMENT'S ADMINISTRATION.

+TO ESTABLISH SPECIAL COMMITTEES TO PROVIDE THEM WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO AIR THEIR VIEWS IS THEREFORE MOST PRESSING,+ HE ADDED.

TURNING TO INCREASING JUVENILE CRIMES MR WONG SAID THIS WAS A MATTER OF GRAVE CONCERN.

HE HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD GIVE GREATER SUPPORT TO CERTAIN PERMANENT ORGANISATIONS SUITABLE FOR JUVENILE PARTICIPATION, SUCH AS THE JUNIOR POLICE CALL AND SCOUTS, SO THAT THEIR ACTIVITIES COULD BE KNOWN TO MORE YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FUNCTIONS BROUGHT INTO FULL PLAY.

THESE ORGANISATIONS, MR WONG BELIEVED HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PREVENTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM GOING ASTRAY.

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LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION PROBLEM
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THE ONLY EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM MEASURE TO SOLVE THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT PROBLEM IS THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUANGDONG AREA IN WHICH HONG KONG MUST TRY TO CONTRIBUTE ALL IT CAN, DR THE HON RAYSON HUANG TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THIS COULD PROVIDE THE MEANS OF FULFILLING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPIRATIONS OF THE WOULD-BE IMMIGRANTS IN A LEGITIMATE WAY WITHIN THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENT.

DR HUANG STRESSED THAT IF THE INFLUX WAS ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, EVEN AT A REDUCED RATE, IT WOULD IMPOSE AN INTOLERABLE STRAIN ON OUR RESOURCES.

/+IN THE

+IN THE SHORT TERM, WE MUST ENSURE THAT ADEQUATE MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO STEM THE FLOOD AND TO PROVIDE PHYSICAL DETERRENTS SUFFICIENT TO MAINTAIN OUR STABILITY.

+IN THE LONG TERM, HOWEVER, PHYSICAL RESTRAINT MUST BE RECOGNISED AS ULTIMATELY INEFFECTIVE: PROBLEMS OF THESE DIMENSIONS CANNOT BE SOLVED WITH A WIRE FENCE AND PATROL BOATS.

+I ENTIRELY AGREE THAT THE PROBLEM MUST BE EXAMINED JOINTLY BY THE GUANGDONG AUTHORITIES AND OURSELVES AND BY THE BRITISH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS.+

DR HUANG PREDICTED THAT THE PROSPECT FOR HONG KONG IS ENCOURAGING AND CHALLENGING AS WE MOVED INTO THE 1980'S.

HE NOTED THAT WE ARE ACHIEVING A MARKED DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR INDUSTRIAL BASE AND ADDING NEW SCOPE TO OUR RANGE OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITIES.

A FIRMER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR REQUIREMENTS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS BEING REACHED AND SOCIAL WELFARE PROVISION IS GRADUALLY BEING EXTENDED INTO AREAS OF NEEDS.

+I AM CONFIDENT THAT IF WE PURSUE THESE GOALS AND IMPLEMENT THESE PROGRAMMES PROPERLY WE WILL MEET NOT ONLY OUR INTERNAL NEEDS BUT ALSO BE ENABLED TO PARTICIPATE IN AND MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAMMES OF CHINA,+ DR HUANG SAID.

TURNING TO OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM, DR HUANG THOUGHT IT +SHOULD BE SO CO-ORDINATED AND STRENGTHENED AS TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY MANPOWER BASE ON WHICH THE PROGRAMME FOR THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ECONOMY MUST BE BUILT+.

HE POINTED OUT THAT SOME PROGRESS HAD ALREADY BEEN ACHIEVED IN IMPROVING THE SYSTEM, PARTICULARLY IN THE ATTEMPTS TO BROADEN THE CURRICULUM, TO MAKE IT LESS DEPENDENT ON ROTE LEARNING AND TO RELATE IT TO THE EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES OF A RAPIDLY CHANGING SOCIETY- BUT THERE ARE STILL CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED.

HE HOPED THAT, IN THE OVERALL REVIEW OF EDUCATION WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR THE COMING YEAR, THE REAL PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES WOULD NOT BE SIDE-STEPPED SO AS TO ACHIEVE A SUPERFICIAL ABSENCE OF CONTROVERSY.

+FOR MANY OF THE OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION, WHICH ARE NO LESS URGENT FOR BEING OUTSTANDING, ARE EXTREMELY CONTROVERSIAL AND SOME OF THESE STILL AWAIT RESOLUTION.+

ONE SUCH PROBLEM OF GRAVE DIFFICULTY AND LYING AT THE ROOT OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IS THE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE TO BE USED FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN, HE SAID.

+IF HONG KONG IS TO MAINTAIN ITS POSITION AS AN INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, ITS CITIZENS MUST BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT SUCH COMMUNICATION IS NOT MERELY AMONG OURSELVES, BUT WITH CHINA, AND WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD.

+THE ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN FORMS I TO III IN ANGLO-CHINESE SCHOOLS WHICH ARE NOW THE MAIN STREAM OF SECONDARY EDUCATION MUST BE REHEARSED FINALLY AND DEFINITELY AND A DECISION MUST BE TAKEN,+ DR HUANG URGED.

ON UPPER SECONDARY LEVEL EDUCATION, HE CRITICISED THAT THERE WAS STILL A GOOD DEAL OF +UNTIDINESS+ ABOUT THE SYSTEM WHICH LED TO A WASTAGE NOT ONLY OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES BUT OF MANPOWER YEARS.

+AT PRESENT WE HAVE A NUMBER OF DIFFERENTLY TIMED SYSTEMS LEADING TO UNIVERSITY GRADUATION, SYSTEMS WHICH DO NOT MESH PROPERLY WITH EACH OTHER AND LEAD TO WASTED YEARS ON THE PART OF SOME STUDENTS AND CONFUSION AND BEWILDERMENT ON THE PART OF MOST OTHERS.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE TWO YEARS OF FORM VI EDUCATION IS THE LAST STAGE OF FORMAL EDUCATION AND MUST BE A COMPLETE, INTEGRATED COURSE IN ITSELF AIMED AT GIVING THE STUDENTS A LIBERAL EDUCATION, A PREPARATION FOR LIFE.

BUT SIXTH FORM EDUCATION IN HONG KONG, HE SAID, IS HAVING TO BE TOO MANY THINGS AT THE SAME TIME — APART FROM THE LIBERAL EDUCATION IT IS SUPPOSED TO IMPART, IT HAS TO SERVE, TAKEN IN WHOLE OR EVEN IN PART, AS PREPARATION FOR ENTRY INTO TWO UNIVERSITIES WITH DIFFERENT DURATIONS OF DEGREE COURSES, AND USING TWO DIFFERENT LANGUAGES OF INSTRUCTION.

DR HUANG NOTED THAT SOME STUDENTS, ACCUSTOMED TO THE USE OF ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN THE ANGLO-CHINESE SCHOOLS, COMPLETE THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM AND ENTER ONE UNIVERSITY USING THE SAME MEDIUM.

OTHERS, HOWEVER, FROM THE SAME STREAM ATTEND A YEAR OF THEIR SIXTH FORM COURSE IN ENGLISH AND THEN ENTER THE OTHER UNIVERSITY, SWITCHING THEIR MEDIUM OVER TO CHINESE.

YET OTHERS COMPLETE BOTH YEARS OF SIXTH FORM WORK AND THEN FOLLOW FOUR YEARS OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION, THUS DEFERRING THEIR GRADUATION BY AN UNNECESSARY PERIOD.

+THE PATCHWORK ELEMENT THUS STILL PERSISTS, CAUSING IMMENSE CONFUSION AND CONCERN, AND RESULTING IN A WASTE OF EFFORT AND RESOURCES WHICH HONG KONG CAN ILL AFFORD,+ DR HUANG SAID.

AS REGARDS MIDDLE LEVEL STUDIES, HE WELCOMED THE EMPHASIS GIVEN BY THE GOVERNOR IN HIS OPENING ADDRESS ON THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND PLANS ON THEIR EXPANSION, ESPECIALLY AS THE CHANGING EMPHASIS RESULTING FROM THE DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAMME IN INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE HAD GIVEN US A FRESH PERSPECTIVE IN OUR NEEDS IN TECHNICAL TRAINING.

HE THOUGHT THAT THE RECENT INFLUX OF UNSKILLED LABOUR COULD BE TURNED TO SERVE A GOOD PURPOSE IF THEY WERE GIVEN SOME TRAINING AND PROPERLY UTILISED TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF MANPOWER FOR OUR EXPANDING INDUSTRY.

TRAINING FACILITIES FOR OUR EXISTING WORKFORCE SHOULD BE EXPANDED WHILE MORE ATTENTION SHOULD BE PAID TO THE NEED FOR A SOLID INFRASTRUCTURE OF SKILLED SUPPORT AT THE TECHNICAL AND CRAFTSMAN LEVEL.

+IN DOING THIS WE WOULD ALSO BE FULFILLING THE ASPIRATIONS OF OUR YOUNGER GENERATION TO ACQUIRE THE EXPERTISE BY WHICH THE QUALITY OF LIFE CAN BE UPLIFTED,+ DR HUANG ADDED.

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COMMUNICATION ESSENTIAL BETWEEN
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND DISTRICT BOARDS

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A TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION CHANNEL HAS TO BE OPENED UP AND MAINTAINED BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND DISTRICT BOARDS IF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM IS MEANT TO PRODUCE RESULT, THE HON CHARLES YEUNG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS WOULD ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMMES, POLICIES AND DECISIONS TO BE FULLY EXPLAINED AND UNDERSTOOD BY THE BOARDS AND THE PEOPLE ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE ASPIRATIONS AND SENTIMENTS OF THE PUBLIC TO BE READILY KNOWN AND CONSIDERED BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ON THE OTHER.

MR YEUNG SAID THIS IN COMMENT ON THE GREEN PAPER ON DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS +THE FIRST MAJOR STEP OF IMPLEMENTING GOVERNMENT'S EFFORT TO CONSULT ITS PEOPLE TO ASCERTAIN THEIR WISH ON THE FORMAT OF A GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY+.

THOUGH DISTRICT BOARDS ARE PRIMARILY INTENDED TO BE ADVISORY IN NATURE, HE SAID, IT IS ESSENTIAL THEY CARRY THE INHERENT RIGHT TO REQUIRE THE GOVERNMENT AND INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS TO EXPLAIN THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAMMES AND TO RESPOND TO THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE BOARDS SHOULD ALSO BE VESTED WITH CERTAIN DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY, AS IS THE EXISTING PRACTICE OF FUND ALLOCATION FOR DISTRICT ACTIVITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+THIS IS TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS ENOUGH INDUCEMENT FOR PEOPLE OF THE RIGHT CALIBRE TO GIVE UP THEIR TIME AND ENERGY TO PARTICIPATE IN LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO ENTRUST THEIR WELFARE TO THEM.

+OBVIOUSLY, GOVERNMENT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FULFILL ALL THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE OR TO ACCOMPLISH THEM AS SPEEDILY AS THE PEOPLE WISH.

/+HOWEVER

+HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO RESPOND TO DISTRICTS' EXPECTATIONS MAY LEAD TO DESPAIR AND INDIGNATION.

+DELAY IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION MAY LEAD TO FRUSTRATION AND DISSATISFACTION,+ MR YEUNG SAID.

HE THEREFORE SUGGESTED THAT DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE GIVEN A WELL DEFINED LEVEL OF DECISION-MAKING POWER WHICH SHOULD BE SUPPLEMENTED BY A RIGHT OF DIRECT ACCESS TO A HIGHER AUTHORITY IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

+THIS AUTHORITY SHOULD BE ABOVE THE DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL WITH THE POWER TO MAKE SPEEDY DECISIONS TO IMPLEMENT GOVERNMENT POLICY.

+THIS AUTHORITY, IF APPOINTED, SHOULD BE CHARGED WITH THE DUTY TO FORM AN EFFECTIVE CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE AND IT MAY BE ASSISTED BY AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAWN FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS,+ HE ADDED.

MR YEUNG ADVISED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD INTRODUCE UNOFFICIAL ELEMENTS TO SUCH ADVISORY COMMITTEES BUT STRESSED THAT THE ULTIMATE POLICY DECISION WOULD REMAIN WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

ON THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS, HE SAID: +TO PROVIDE A SPEEDY REMEDY FOR THE GENERAL LACK OF BASIC FACILITIES IN THE DISTRICTS, IT IS ADVISABLE TO ALLOCATE A CERTAIN SIZABLE FUND EITHER FROM THE GENERAL REVENUE OR FROM LOCAL RATES TO DISTRICT BOARDS FOR CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE ON CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL PROJECTS PURSUANT TO THE ORDER OF PRIORITY ACCORDED BY DISTRICT BOARDS.

+AN ANALOGY MAY BE DRAWN FROM THE URBAN COUNCIL WHICH HAS UTILISED ITS FUND VERY SUCCESSFULLY IN THIS DIRECTION.+

AS REGARDS THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM, MR YEUNG AGREED WITH THE GREEN PAPER THAT MEMBERS SHOULD BE ELECTED BY A PARTICULAR GEOGRAPHICAL AREA SO THAT THEY WOULD CONCENTRATE THEIR ATTENTION AND ENERGY ON THE WELL-BEING OF THEIR RESPECTIVE CONSTITUENCIES.

HOWEVER, HE SAID HE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND WHY THERE COULD NOT BE A SINGLE ELECTION ON A CONSTITUENCY BASIS IN THE URBAN DISTRICTS AS ENVISAGED IN THE GREEN PAPER, PRODUCING ELECTED MEMBERS TO SERVE DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE URBAN COUNCIL WHICH WERE MEANT TO SERVE THE SAME PEOPLE.

ON THE ROLE OF THE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, MR YEUNG SAID THE PRESENT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM HAS PROVED TO BE A USEFUL FORUM FOR INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CO-ORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS IN THE DISTRICTS.

BUT HE POINTED OUT THAT A DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HAS ITS INGRAINED SHORTFALL IN ITS ABILITY TO PRODUCE QUICK AND RESPONSIVE ACTION TO THE NEED OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

+IN ORDER TO MAKE IT A MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ORGAN, THESE COMMITTEES SHOULD BE FURTHER CHARGED WITH THE DUTY OF PLANNING AND INITIATING LOCAL PROGRAMMES FOR SUBMISSION TO DISTRICT BOARDS FOR CONSULTATION AND DELIBERATION AS WELL AS ADVISING THEM ON THE FEASIBILITY AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATION OF THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS.

+THEY SHOULD BE MADE ANSWERABLE AND DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TO THE SINGLE HIGHER AUTHORITY WITHIN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO WHICH DISTRICT BOARDS WOULD BE ACCESSIBLE.

+THIS COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH AND CONCENTRATION OF TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY WILL CERTAINLY CUT THROUGH THE MORASS OF RED-TAPE AND TO MAKE GOVERNMENT MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE PUBLIC,+ MR YEUNG SAID.

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PROFITEERING SPIRIT NOT IN HONG KONG'S INTEREST
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THERE ARE GROWING TENDENCIES TOWARDS PROFITEERING, GAMBLING AND EXCESSIVE SPECULATION BY HONG KONG PEOPLE, THE HON ANDREW SO WARNED.

SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, MR SO SAID THE ACHIEVEMENTS ATTAINED BY HONG KONG TODAY REFLECTED THE INGENUITY OF ITS PEOPLE, THEIR ENTERPRISING SPIRIT AND THEIR HARD-WORKING ATTITUDE.

+HOWEVER, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THEIR SPIRIT AND ATTITUDES ARE BEING GRADUALLY ERODED BY THE GROWING TENDENCIES TOWARDS PROFITEERING, GAMBLING AND EXCESSIVE SPECULATION, EXPRESSED BOTH AS A STATE OF MIND AND BEHAVIOUR.

+IT WOULD NOT BE HARD TO IMAGINE THE CONSEQUENCES IF THESE TENDENCIES ARE LEFT UNCHECKED.+

MR SO STRESSED THAT HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC LIFELINE RESTS WITH PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS, NOT REAL ESTATE- AND ITS FATE IS IN THE HANDS OF ITS INDUSTRIOUS PEOPLE, NOT PROFITEERING SPECULATORS.

HE NOTED THAT IN ADDITION TO THE GOLD AND STOCK BOOM IN THE FINANCIAL MARKETS, THE RECENT SPECULATION IN PRE-COMPLETED FLATS WAS ALSO ALARMING.

PEOPLE INDULGING IN SUCH ACTIVITIES INCLUDE NOT ONLY FINANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMPANIES, AND THE RELATIVELY BETTER-OFF, BUT ALSO +PROFESSIONAL QUEUERS+.

+NOT ONLY DO THEY BID UP THE PRICE OF FLATS, THEY ALSO CHANGE THE PRINCIPLE 'FROM BUILDING HOUSES FOR THOSE WHO NEED SHELTERS' TO 'BUILDING HOUSES FOR SPECULATORS' .+

/+THE DRASTIC

THE DRASTIC RISE IN RENTS OF COMMERCIAL PREMISES IN GENERAL HAVE MADE MANY SHOPS CEASE OPERATIONS, OBSERVED MR SO.

+IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE LARGE SUPPLY OF COMMERCIAL PREMISES EXPECTED IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS WILL CAUSE A FALL IN COMMERCIAL RENTS IN THE FUTURE.

+YET UNFORTUNATELY, RENT AND PRICES RARELY FOLLOW THE PHYSICAL LAW OF GRAVITY — WHAT GOES UP DOES NOT NECESSARILY COME DOWN.

+THE BUSINESS BOOM IN REAL ESTATE AND PROPERTY BENEFITS ONLY A HANDFUL OF FINANCIAL SYNDICATES AND PROPERTY OWNERS.+

GIVEN THAT THE HONG KONG ECONOMY IS RELATIVELY FREE AND LAISSEZ-FAIRE, SAID MR SO, WE MUST NONETHELESS TRY TO PUT THE SYSTEM ON THE RIGHT COURSE IF IT IS FOUND TO BE ENDANGERING THE PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD AND THE ECONOMY ITSELF.

HE BELIEVED THAT PROPER MEASURES COULD BE FOUND TO CONTROL THE EXCESSIVE SPECULATIVE ACTIVITIES IF THERE WAS A WILL.

COMMENTING ON THE AUCTIONING OF CAR REGISTRATION NUMBERS, MR SO SAID THE NUMBERS WHICH MEAN NOTHING SPECIAL TO OUTSIDERS, SUCH AS +28+, +168+, +338+, ALWAYS SCORE RECORD HIGH PRICES AT PUBLIC AUCTIONS.

+ALTHOUGH AUCTIONING THESE REGISTRATION NUMBERS HAS ALREADY BROUGHT NEARLY \$15 MILLION TO THE WELFARE FUNDS OF HONG KONG, WE HAVE TO CONSIDER WHETHER IT IS WORTH CONTINUING IF IT IS FOUND TO BE INDIRECTLY ENCOURAGING AN UNHEALTHY WAY OF THINKING.+

ON GAMBLING, MR SO NOTED THAT THE TOTAL BETTINGS OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB LAST YEAR AMOUNTED TO \$6 400 MILLION WHILE THE BETTINGS ON SEPTEMBER 21 THIS YEAR ALONE WERE OVER \$101 MILLION.

+THE OFF-COURSE BETTING CENTRES IN HONG KONG, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES ARE ALWAYS CROWDED WITH PEOPLE AND THERE ARE CASES OF SCALPING IN RACING BADGES ON HORSE-RACING DAYS,+ HE SAID.

+THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT IS TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THIS TENDENCY, TO GET AT THE ROOT OF THIS STATE OF MIND AND BEHAVIOUR, TO REVIEW WHETHER IT HAS INDIRECTLY ENCOURAGED SUCH ACTIVITIES AND THEN TRY ITS UTMOST TO REMEDY THE SITUATION.+

MONEY ITSELF IS INSIGNIFICANT, MR SO MAINTAINED, BUT THE HARM IT MAY CAUSE TO THE MIND AND SOUL IS DANGEROUS BECAUSE THE NEW HONG KONG, WHICH THE GOVERNOR HAS PUT IN SO MUCH EFFORT TO BUILD, RELIES ON THE HONG KONG PEOPLE TO PERFECT IT.

THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY - HONG KONG'S SUCCESS STORY
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IN THE LAST 20 YEARS HONG KONG'S ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY HAS GROWN FROM ABOUT 100 WORKERS PRODUCING CHEAP TRANSISTOR RADIOS TO MORE THAN 90 000 PEOPLE - OR ABOUT TEN PER CENT OF THE WORKFORCE - EARNING OVER \$6-1/2 BILLION FROM EXPORTING THE MOST SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS.

MR BILL DORWARD, DIRECTOR OF TRADE INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, OPENING THE HONG KONG ELECTRONICS SHOW '80 TODAY SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE DIVERSITY OF THE APPLICATION OF ITS TECHNOLOGY IT WAS NO LONGER MEANINGFUL TO TALK SIMPLY ABOUT THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY.

+WHILE LAST YEAR RADIOS STILL ACCOUNTED FOR NEARLY HALF OF LOCAL PRODUCTION- AND COMPONENTS, CALCULATORS, SEMI-CONDUCTORS AND INTEGRATED CIRCUITS MADE UP MUCH OF THE REST- THE TOY INDUSTRY, ONCE SIMPLY PLASTIC AND DRY CELL BATTERIES, IS NOW INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON INTEGRATED CIRCUITS FOR EVERYTHING FROM CHILDREN'S TOYS TO CHESS SETS,+ MR DORWARD SAID.

+ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC GROWTH SECTORS IS THE ELECTRONIC WATCH INDUSTRY. LAST YEAR IT EARNED \$2-1/4 BILLION IN EXPORTS. IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR IT SHOWED AN ASTOUNDING GROWTH RATE OF NEARLY 70 PER CENT OVER THE FIRST HALF OF 1979.+

LARGELY SPURRED ON BY THE ELECTRONIC WATCH INDUSTRY'S SUCCESS, THE FRONTIERS OF THE INDUSTRY CONTINUE TO BE PUSHED OUT, HE SAID.

+THERE ARE THREE WAFER DIFFUSION PLANTS IN PROCESS OF BEING ESTABLISHED IN THE RELATIVELY CLEAN AND VIBRATION FREE SURROUNDINGS OF THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AT TAI PO.

+THIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE BACKWARD INTEGRATION PROCESS WILL FURTHER REDUCE THE DEPENDENCE OF HONG KONG INDUSTRY ON IMPORTED COMPONENTS.+

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING CONSEQUENCES OF THE STEADY UPGRADING OF THE INDUSTRY, MR DORWARD SAID, HAS BEEN THE REVERSE BRAIN DRAIN.

+HONG KONG-BORN ELECTRONICS ENGINEERS HAVE BEEN TRICKLING BACK FROM SELF-IMPOSED EXILE IN SILICONE VALLEY, CALIFORNIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES. THEY SOUGHT EMPLOYMENT ABROAD SOME YEARS AGO, HAVING FOUND THEMSELVES OVERQUALIFIED FOR HONG KONG'S INDUSTRY AT THAT TIME.

+THIS SEEMS TO ME A VALUABLE SOURCE OF EXPERIENCE WHICH LOCAL INDUSTRY SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE ABLE TO TAP IN FUTURE,+ HE SAID.

HONG KONG'S ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY HAS MORE OVERSEAS PARTICIPATION THAN ANY OTHER MAJOR SECTOR.

+IT HAS MANY EXCELLENT EXAMPLES OF JOINT PARTICIPATION BY LOCAL AND OVERSEAS INTERESTS, AND IT UNDOUBTEDLY HOLDS THE POTENTIAL FOR MANY MORE.

+IF THE DAY EVER COMES WHEN KING CLOTHING IS DETHRONED FROM HIS POSITION AS HONG KONG'S LEADING INDUSTRY, THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND WHO THE USURPER WILL BE,+ CONCLUDED MR DORWARD.

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COMMUNITY-BUILDING IN LOWER WONG TAI SIN
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A LARGE-SCALE COMMUNITY-BUILDING PROJECT ENTITLED +LOWER WONG TAI SIN -- ALL ABOARD FOR THE EIGHTIES+ WILL BE HELD IN THE NEXT THREE MONTHS.

THE PROJECT IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE CITY DISTRICT OFFICE, HOUSING DEPARTMENT, URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE, POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE, LOWER WONG TAI SIN AREA COMMITTEE AND HONG KONG YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (WONG TAI SIN SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRE).

THE PURPOSE IS TO HELP RESIDENTS OF LOWER WONG TAI SIN TO UNDERSTAND THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE ESTATE AND TO STIMULATE THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

THE PROJECT WILL INCLUDE EIGHT PROGRAMMES: A VOLUNTEER TRAINING COURSE, EXHIBITIONS, A QUIZ ON LABOUR LAW AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE, MOBILE THEATRE PERFORMANCE, PAINTING COMPETITION FOR YOUNGSTERS, DRAWING COMPETITION FOR YOUTHS, TALENT SHOW FOR THE ELDERLY, AND A COMMUNITY SEMINAR.

DETAILED INFORMATION ON THESE PROGRAMMES MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CITY DISTRICT OFFICE (WONG TAI SIN) ON TEL. 3-222261 OR THE YWCA (WONG TAI SIN CENTRE) ON TEL. 3-283115.

A PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT THE CLOSE OF THE PROJECT ON DECEMBER 14.

MOST OF THE PRIZES WILL BE SPONSORED BY LOCAL ORGANISATIONS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

AN OPENING CEREMONY TO MARK THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE PROJECT WILL BE JOINTLY OFFICIATED BY MR STEPHEN SELBY, CITY DISTRICT OFFICER (WONG TAI SIN), OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND LEADERS OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AT 8 PM ON FRIDAY (OCTOBER 24) AT PLAYGROUND NO. 6 NEXT TO BLOCK 15, LOWER WONG TAI SIN ESTATE.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THE EVENT.

THIRD YUEN LONG CHILDREN'S SINGING CONTEST
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THE THIRD YUEN LONG CHILDREN'S SINGING CONTEST IS TO BE HELD NEXT MONTH.

THE LOCAL TOWN HALL MANAGEMENT AND DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD ARE ORGANISING THE CONTEST AS PART OF THEIR JOINT EFFORTS TO PROMOTE MUSIC IN THE NEW TOWN.

THE CONTEST IS OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN LIVING OR STUDYING IN THE DISTRICT. THERE WILL BE FIVE CLASSES OF COMPETITION FOR JUNIOR SOLO, JUNIOR GROUP-SINGING, SENIOR SOLO, SENIOR GROUP-SINGING AND INSTRUMENT PLAYING.

THE JUNIOR EVENTS ARE CONFINED TO CHILDREN AGED FROM SIX TO NINE AND THE SENIOR EVENTS TO CHILDREN AGED FROM 10 TO 13. ANY CHILD AGED FROM SIX TO 13 CAN TAKE PART IN THE INSTRUMENT PLAYING COMPETITION.

THE PRELIMINARIES WILL BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 8 AND 9. THE GRAND FINAL WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, AT THE TOWN HALL.

THE SIX CONTESTANTS OR TEAMS WITH THE HIGHEST SCORES IN EACH CLASS WILL BE AWARDED TROPHIES OR PRIZES.

WELL-KNOWN MUSICIANS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO BE ADJUDICATORS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR YUEN LONG TOWN HALL SAID THE CHILDREN'S SINGING CONTEST HAD BECOME AN IMPORTANT ITEM IN THE LOCAL CULTURAL CALENDAR.

THERE WERE ABOUT 200 PARTICIPANTS IN 1978 WHEN THE EVENT WAS FIRST HELD, BUT THE NUMBER INCREASED TO NEARLY 300 LAST YEAR. +WE ARE EXPECTING EVEN MORE ENTRANTS THIS TIME,+ HE SAID.

HE URGED TEACHERS AND PARENTS TO ENCOURAGE THEIR STUDENTS AND CHILDREN TO ENTER THE CONTEST.

THE GRAND FINAL PROGRAMME WILL INCLUDE PERFORMANCES BY THE DISTRICT'S CHILDREN'S CHOIR, WHICH IS ALSO FUNDED BY THE DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD. LEAFLETS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO INVITE THE CONTESTANTS AND CHILDREN AMONG THE AUDIENCE TO JOIN THE CHOIR.

ENTRY FORMS FOR THE SINGING CONTEST ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE TOWN HALL. THEY MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED BY THE END OF THIS MONTH.

OTHER CULTURAL ACTIVITIES BEING HELD JOINTLY BY THE DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD AND THE TOWN HALL IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR INCLUDE A YOUTH TALENT QUEST AND A BALLET CLASS.

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VOCAL RECITAL AT FRIDAY MUSIC HOUR
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SOPRANO PENELOPE CHAN WILL PERFORM AT THE +FRIDAY MUSIC HOUR+ ORGANISED BY THE MUSIC OFFICE AND THE BRITISH COUNCIL AT 5.30 PM ON OCTOBER 24 AND 31.

THE FIRST RECITAL WILL BE GIVEN AT THE BRITISH COUNCIL (255 HENNESSY ROAD, 4TH FLOOR) AND THE SECOND AT THE MUSIC OFFICE WEST KOWLOON SUB-OFFICE (157 PRINCE EDWARD ROAD, TUNG PING BUILDING, 3RD FLOOR).

MISS CHAN WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY MISS WONG KIN-YU AT THE PIANO.

MISS CHAN DEVELOPED HER VOCAL TALENTS UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF MISS LEE BING, A LOCALLY DISTINGUISHED MEZZO-SOPRANO. IN EARLIER YEARS SHE PASSED WITH DISTINCTION GRADE 8 IN BOTH SINGING AND PIANO, THE ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC. IN 1975 SHE WAS THE FIRST-PRIZE WINNER OF THE ART SONG OPEN CLASS IN THE HONG KONG SCHOOLS MUSIC FESTIVAL, AND SINCE THEN HAD OBTAINED A NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.

A TEACHER BY PROFESSION, MISS CHAN CONDUCTS THE CHOIR IN HER CHURCH AND IS ACTIVE IN THE HONG KONG ORATORIO SOCIETY.

SHE HAS BEEN FOR THREE YEARS THE LEADER OF ITS SOPRANO SECTION AND ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WAS SELECTED TO SING AS SOLOIST.

SHE PARTICIPATED IN THE 1980 ARTS FESTIVAL PRESENTATION OF OFFENBACH'S +CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS+ IN THE ROLE OF ESPERANZA AND GAVE A RECITAL IN THE CITY HALL THEATRE LAST MONTH.

MISS WONG KIN-YU PURSUED MUSIC STUDIES AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC, LONDON, WHERE HER TEACHERS WERE DOUGLAS HAWKRIDGE (ORGAN) AND GEOFFREY PRATELY (PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT). THERE SHE WAS AWARDED THE FREDERICK KEENE AND HENRY RICHARDS PRIZES FOR ORGAN PERFORMANCE. SHE HAS GIVEN ORGAN RECITALS AND PERFORMED IN MANY CONCERTS AS ACCOMPANIST.

THE PROGRAMME FOR THE TWO FRIDAY CONCERTS WILL INCLUDE FOLK SONGS, OPERA EXCERPTS, LIEDERS AND CHINESE ART SONGS.

FREE ADMISSION TICKETS ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT THE BRITISH COUNCIL LIBRARY AND OFFICES OF THE MUSIC OFFICE (HONG KONG ARTS CENTRE 9TH FLOOR, AND 157 PRINCE EDWARD ROAD). ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TEL. NO. 3-819204.

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DEATH SENTENCE COMMUTED
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THE GOVERNOR, AFTER TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE ADVICE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, HAS DECIDED THAT THE DEATH SENTENCE PASSED ON CHUM SIK-CHANG ON JANUARY 21, 1980 SHOULD BE COMMUTED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT.

CHUM SIK-CHANG, AGED 28, WAS FOUND GUILTY OF MURDERING LAU CHAK-MO IN A SHAM SHUI PO FLAT ON MARCH 2, 1978.

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1980

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS AT HARBOUR TUNNEL EXIT

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN WAN CHAI FROM 9.30 PM ON FRIDAY (OCTOBER 24) TO 6 AM THE FOLLOWING MORNING FOR ROAD REPAIR WORKS IN THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL AREA.

THE NORTH POINT EXIT ROAD LEADING FROM THE TUNNEL TO THE WATERFRONT SECTION OF GLOUCESTER ROAD EASTBOUND WILL BE CLOSED. MOTORISTS CAN USE THE EXIT ROAD TO HAPPY VALLEY INSTEAD.

THREE CROSS HARBOUR BUS ROUTES WILL BE DIVERTED WHEN LEAVING THE TUNNEL. ROUTES 102 AND 106 WILL GO VIA THE HAPPY VALLEY EXIT OF THE TUNNEL, THE CANAL ROAD FLYOVER, MORRISON HILL ROAD, TIN LOK LANE, HENNESSY ROAD AND YEE WO STREET.

AIRPORT COACH SERVICE NO. 200 WILL BE DIVERTED VIA THE CENTRAL EXIT OF THE TUNNEL, GLOUCESTER ROAD, FENWICK STREET AND HENNESSY ROAD.

TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS

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SECTIONS OF TWO ROADS IN SHA TIN WILL BE DESIGNATED RESTRICTED ZONES FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (OCTOBER 25).

THEY ARE ROAD P1 BETWEEN LION ROCK TUNNEL ROAD AND ROAD P6, AND ROAD P6 BETWEEN ROAD P1 AND ROAD P2.

MOTOR VEHICLES EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS LOADING OR UNLOADING BETWEEN 7 AM AND 12 MIDNIGHT DAILY.

ALSO FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY, A SPEED LIMIT OF 30 MILES PER HOUR WILL BE IMPOSED ON CHUNG HUM KOK ROAD AND ALL ITS BRANCH ROADS INCLUDING HORIZON DRIVE, CAPE ROAD, CAPE DRIVE, CHING SAN LANE AND OTHER UNNAMED ACCESS ROADS.

TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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