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MAJOR DEVELOPMENT FOR TSUEN WAN
PLAN LINKED WITH MTR EXTENSION
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO COMBINE THE $4,100 MILLION EXTENSION OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY TO THE NEW TERRITORIES WITH A PLAN TO GIVE TSUEN WAN A NEW COMMERCIAL CENTRE AND HOMES FOR 30,000 PEOPLE.

A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY SHOULD PLAY A KEY ROLE IN THE PROGRAMME BY DEVELOPING A KOWLOON BAY TYPE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL COMPLEX ABOVE ITS TSUEN WAN DEPOT WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE CORPORATION BOARD. THE COMPLEX WILL BE BUILT ON A SEVEN HECTARE PODIUM ABOVE THE DEPOT AND WILL PROVIDE 4,000 FLATS FOR ABOUT 20,000.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAD APPROVED THE LOCATION OF THE MTR DEPOT AND TERMINUS AT NORTH TSUEN WAN, WHICH IS COMPATIBLE WITH AN EXISTING GOVERNMENT PLAN TO DEVELOP 30.5 HECTARES OF LAND BETWEEN SHING MUN ROAD AND ROUTE TWISK NORTH OF CASTLE PEAK ROAD AS PART OF THE NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT.

NORTH TSUEN WAN WILL BE DEVELOPED IN A MODERN BALANCED WAY WITH HOUSING, SCHOOLS, LARGE COMMERCIAL AREAS, NEW ROADS, RECREATIONAL AREAS, A CLINIC, AN AMBULANCE DEPOT AND OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

IN ADDITION, SURFACE TRANSPORT WILL BE INTEGRATED WITH THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY AT TSUEN WAN STATION BY THE PROVISION OF A BUS STATION, PUBLIC LIGHT BUS AND TAXI STANDS AND A MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

ON ADJACENT SITES ALONG CASTLE PEAK ROAD THE GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL LOTS AVAILABLE TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS TO BUILD HOMES FOR A FURTHER 10,000 PEOPLE.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE LOCATION OF THE MTR DEPOT AT NORTH TSUEN WAN INSTEAD OF KWAI CHUNG, AS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED, WOULD BENEFIT BOTH THE COMMUNITY AND THE ECONOMY.

+THE 10.6 HECTARES OF LAND WHICH HAD BEEN RESERVED AT KWAI CHUNG FOR THE MTR WILL NOW BE AVAILABLE FOR SALE FOR MUCH NEEDED SERVICES FOR THE CONTAINER PORT, WHICH HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS ONE OF THE BUSIEST IN.THE WORLD,+ HE SAID.

+OVERALL THIS IS A MUCH MORE EFFICIENT USE OF LAND FOR TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN,+ HE ADDED.

IN ORDER TO MAKE WAY FOR THE NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAD ALSO APPROVED THE PHASED RESUMPTION UNDER THE CROWN LANDS (RESUMPTIONS) ORDINANCE OF ABOUT 21 HECTARES OF LAND AT NORTH TSUEN WAN.

/THE RESUMPTION .....

THE RESUMPTION OF THE FIRST TWO PHASES WAS ANNOUNCED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE TODAY AND PLANS CAN BE SEEN AT THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT OFFICE. IN ADDITION FOUR TENEMENT BLOCKS AND A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE AREA ARE TO BE RESUMED UNDER THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY (LAND RESUMPTION AND RELATED PROVISIONS) ORDINANCE - KNOWN AS THE MTR ORDINANCE. THIS WILL BE DONE BECAUSE THE BLOCKS WOULD NOT OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE NORTH TSUEN WAN DEVELOPMENT AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED.

THE SPOKESMAN DESCRIBED THE DEVELOPMENT AS THE BIGGEST SINGLE PROJECT UNDERTAKEN IN THE TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN.

+OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE PROGRAMME WILL GIVE A COMPLETELY NEW LOOK TO AN AREA THAT IS NOW STUDDED WITH THOUSANDS OF OFTEN SUBSTANDARD AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS RESIDENTIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SQUATTER STRUCTURES WHICH SPRANG UP IN THE EARLY POST-WAR YEARS,+ HE SAID.

+THE MTR EXTENSION TO TSUEN WAN IS SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION BY THE END OF 1982, BY WHICH TIME MANY OF THE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS ARE EXPECTED TO BE WELL ADVANCED.+

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT TWO HISTORICAL LANDMARKS IN THE AREA WOULD BE PRESERVED AND INCORPORATED AS IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

+THE ORIGINAL PART OF THE SAM TUNG UK VILLAGE, WHICH WAS BUILT IN THE LATE 18TH CENTURY, WILL BE RETAINED AND RENOVATED, POSSIBLY USED AS HOMES FOR OLD PEOPLE OR A MUSEUM. ITS PRESENT INHABITANTS ARE BEING MOVED TO NEW HOMES UNDER THE REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME.

+THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY TIN HAU TEMPLE IN THE AREA WILL ALSO BE KEPT AND RESTORED AND MADE A FEATURE OF AN OPEN SPACE AMENITY.+

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT ABOUT 12,000 PEOPLE WOULD BE AFFECTED BY THE RESUMPTION FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY IN NORTH TSUEN WAN.

HE EMPHASISED THAT NO ONE WOULD BE LEFT HOMELESS BY THE DEVELOPMENT. ALL FAMILIES ELIGIBLE WOULD BE OFFERED PUBLIC HOUSING IN TSUEN WAN DISTRICT AND THOSE WHO ARE INELIGIBLE WOULD BE OFFERED ACCOMMODATION IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PAY A WIDE VARIETY OF STATUTORY AND EX-GRATIA COMPENSATION.

A NUMBER OF OLD VILLAGES WOULD BE AFFECTED. +BUT SITES HAVE ALREADY BEEN RESERVED IN THE LOCALITY TO BUILD NEW VILLAGE HOUSES PROVIDING COMFORTABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR THOSE AFFECTED,+ HE SAID, +AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL MEET THE COST OF BUILDING THEM.+

HE ADDED THAT THE CLEARANCE OF THE AREA WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN SIX STAGES, THE FIRST AROUND THE MIDDLE OF THIS YEAR AND THE LAST EARLY IN 1980.

/IN ORDER TO .....

IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT THE RAILWAY EXTENSION TO TSUEN WAN AN IMPORTANT STEP WAS TAKEN TODAY WHEN THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPOSITED THE RAILWAY AREA PLAN FOR THAT SECTION OF THE RAILWAY BETWEEN LAI CHI KOK BAY AND TSUEN WAN IN THE LAND OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MTR ORDINANCE.

THE SECTION OF THE RAILWAY EXTENSION LINKING LAI CHI KOK BAY TO THE NEW TOWN WILL HAVE FIVE STATIONS - LAI KING, KWAI FONG, KWAI HING, TAI WO HAU AND TSUEN WAN - AND WILL FORM THE FINAL STAGE OF THE 10-STATION 10.5 KILOMETRE LINE FROM PRINCE EDWARD STATION.

THIS SECTION WILL BE SEVEN KILOMETRES LONG, MOSTLY UNDERGROUND WITH ABOUT THREE KILOMETRES AT GROUND LEVEL OR OVERHEAD.

ONE SECTION OF THE OVERHEAD LINE WILL PASS THROUGH KWAI FONG HOUSING ESTATE, THE LAYOUT OF WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO ALLOW THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY TO PASS THROUGH IT.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THIS OVERHEAD SECTION WILL BE ENCLOSED TO REDUCE NOISE.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY THROUGH KWAI CHUNG FROM LAI CHI KOK BAY TO THE DEVELOPMENT AREA AT NORTH TSUEN WAN WOULD REQUIRE THE REMOVAL OF PART OF A LARGE TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA AT HA KWAI CHUNG AND A SMALL ONE AT KWAI HING. CERTAIN COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SHORT TERM TENANCY AGREEMENTS WOULD NEED TO BE CANCELLED AND SOME OTHER INDUSTRIAL TENANTS WOULD ALSO BE AFFECTED. ALL AUTHORISED DOMESTIC TENANTS IN THE TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA WILL BE OFFERED PUBLIC HOUSING. ADDITIONALLY, EASEMENTS WILL BE NEEDED IN A NUMBER OF LOCATIONS.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT AS WELL AS GIVING THE GOVERNOR THE POWER TO ORDER RESUMPTIONS OR EASEMENTS, THE MTR ORDINANCE ALSO EMPOWERS THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO REQUIRE THE OWNER OF ANY BUILDING IN THE RAILWAY AREA TO REMOVE ANY OBJECT OR STRUCTURE WHICH IS ATTACHED TO OR PROJECTS FROM THE BUILDING IF HE CONSIDERS ITS REMOVAL NECESSARY FOR THE PURPOSE OF BUILDING THE RAILWAY. IN ADDITION THE MTR ORDINANCE GIVES THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS THE RIGHT TO INSPECT AND CARRY OUT REMEDIAL WORKS IN PROPERTIES WITHIN THE RAILWAY AREA AND WITHIN 70 METRES THEREOF.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY DOES NOT MEAN THAT REDEVELOPMENT OF SITES ADJACENT TO THE RAILWAY AREA WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY FROZEN. HOWEVER, AS A SAFEGUARD AGAINST POSSIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND THE RAILWAY WORKS, THE BUILDING AUTHORITY, WHO IS THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, HAS THE POWER UNDER THE MTR ORDINANCE TO REFUSE APPROVAL OR TO MODIFY BUILDING PLANS IF HE CONSIDERS THEY ARE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY.

/A NUMBER OF .....

A NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY STREET ALTERATIONS WILL BE NECESSARY TO FACILITATE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY AND WHEN THE DETAILS OF THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE FINALISED APPROPRIATE STATUTORY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

AS WITH THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM CLAIMS CAN BE MADE IN RESPECT OF ALL BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY MTR CONSTRUCTION. ADDITIONALLY OPERATORS OF SMALL SHOPS AND BUSINESSES WHOSE TRADE IS AFFECTED CAN APPLY FOR MONTHLY PAYMENTS UNDER THE +ADVANCED PAYMENTS OF COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF BUSINESS DUE TO STREET CLOSURE+ SCHEME.

ALL CLAIMS UNDER THE MTR ORDINANCE SHOULD BE MADE IN WRITING TO THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS. THE TIME LIMIT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS IS IN MOST CASES ONE YEAR AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE EVENT AS LAID DOWN IN THE MTR ORDINANCE.

COPIES OF THE RAILWAY AREA PLAN MAY BE INSPECTED FREE OF CHARGE DURING OFFICE HOURS AT THE ENQUIRY SUB-OFFICES, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES, WEST WING, GROUND FLOOR= THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, 19TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING= ALL CITY DISTRICT OFFICES AND THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT OFFICE AND ITS TOWN MANAGEMENT OFFICES AT HOI PA STREET, TSUEN WAN, AND IN KWAI CHUNG.

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APPOINTMENTS OF SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE AND DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION

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TWO SENIOR GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENTS WERE ANNOUNCED TODAY, BOTH TO TAKE EFFECT ON MARCH 20, 1978. MR. MARTIN ROWLANDS, AGED 52, WILL BECOME SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE. MR. RON BRIDGE, AGED 45, WILL BECOME DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION.

MR. ROWLANDS, WHO HAS BEEN DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION SINCE 1974, JOINED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT 25 YEARS AGO. HIS PREVIOUS APPOINTMENTS HAVE INCLUDED DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES, PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT COLONIAL SECRETARY (SOCIAL SERVICES) AND DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS.

MR. BRIDGE JOINED THE HONG KONG ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE IN 1957. HE HAS WORKED IN THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH FOR OVER SIX YEARS, AND HAS BEEN SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE SINCE LAST AUGUST.

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SIR ANTHONY ROYLE COMMENDS HOUSING ACHIEVEMENTS IN HONG KONG

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SIR ANTHONY ROYLE, M.P. (CONSERVATIVE) WAS BRIEFED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, MR. ALAN SCOTT, ON HONG KONG'S HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME, WHEN HE CALLED AT THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HEADQUARTERS THIS MORNING.

SIR ANTHONY, WHO HAD VISITED HONG KONG SEVERAL TIMES AND LAST LOOKED CLOSELY AT THE HOUSING SCENE IN 1969, COMMENDED THE GREAT EFFORTS BEING MADE TO CATCH UP ON HOUSING NEEDS IN HONG KONG.

HE IS NOW ON A FOUR-DAY PRIVATE VISIT HERE TO RENEW OLD ACQUAINTANCES AND UPDATE HIMSELF ON DEVELOPMENTS IN RECENT YEARS.

AFTER A GENERAL BRIEFING ON HOUSING PROGRESS, SIR ANTHONY VISITED HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME EXHIBITION CENTRE AT THE OI MAN COMMERCIAL COMPLEX WHERE HE SHOWED KEEN INTEREST IN THE VARIOUS PROJECTS OF THE SCHEME.

HE SAID: +I BELIEVE THAT THE OPPORTUNITY TO OWN ONE'S HOME IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CURRENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME IN HONG KONG.+

HE LATER TOURED THE MA CHAI HANG SQUATTER AREA AND SAW THE LIVING CONDITIONS WHICH HONG KONG'S GIANT HOUSING PROGRAMME IS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE IN THE COMING YEARS.

HE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH INTERIM IMPROVEMENTS, SUCH AS THE PROVISION OF PROPER ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES ARE BENEFICIAL, THE AIM REMAINS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR SUCH GROUPS OF THE COMMUNITY.

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LEGISLATION PROPOSED TO SUPERVISE AND CONTROL OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS

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THE GOVERNMENT IS PROPOSING LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE NEW CONTROLS OF SUPERVISION OVER OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS.

THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION, WHICH IS CONTAINED IN THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978, IS DESIGNED TO PREVENT LARGE SCALE OIL SPILLAGES FROM EXISTING AND NEW OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS.

ONE CLAUSE IN THE BILL, WHICH IS PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, RE-DEFINES +BUILDING+ TO INCLUDE OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS AND ALSO SPELLS OUT THE MEANING OF OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS.

ANOTHER ENABLES REGULATIONS TO BE MADE BY THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL TO PROVIDE FOR LICENSING OF OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STANDING COMMITTEE TO ADVISE THE BUILDING AUTHORITY ON THIS SUBJECT.

THERE IS ALSO A CLAUSE PROPOSING MAXIMUM PENALTIES OF A $100,000 FINE AND IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS FOR CONTRAVENTIONS OF THE REGULATIONS.

ALSO GAZETTED TODAY ARE THE BUILDING (OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS) REGULATIONS 1978.

THESE PROVIDE A LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR AN APPROVED CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS.

THE CODE WAS DRAWN UP FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED IN THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE 1973 AP LEI CHAU OIL SPILL. IT WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT THE LICENSING AUTHORITY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MINIMISING THE RISK OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION RESULTING FROM DEFECTIVE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS, OR UNSATISFACTORY INSPECTION, MAINTENANCE OR OPERATION.

THESE REGULATIONS ALSO SET OUT PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS FOR ISSUING LICENCES, WHICH WILL COST $2,000 A YEAR, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVISORY STANDING COMMITTEE AS THE STATUTORY BODY TO ADVISE THE BUILDING AUTHORITY ON MATTERS RELATING TO OIL STORAGE INSTALLATIONS.

THE DANGEROUS GOODS(GENERAL) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1978, ALSO PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S GAZETTE, MAKE MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE DANGEROUS GOODS (GENERAL) REGULATIONS TO ENSURE THAT THERE IS NO OVERLAP OF RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES.

IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE BILL AND THE TWO SETS OF REGULATIONS SHOULD COME INTO OPERATION JOINTLY BY MAY 1.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE OIL INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE WAS FULLY CONSULTED ON THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

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GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS FOR NOVEMBER 1977

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THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER, 1977, SHOW A SURPLUS OF $697.6 MILLION, COMPARED WITH A SURPLUS OF $392 MILLION IN NOVEMBER, 1976.

THIS HAS RESULTED IN A SURPLUS OF $190 MILLION FOR THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF THIS FINANCIAL YEAR, COMPARED WITH A DEFICIT OF $91 MILLION FOR THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE, AT $638.1 MILLION, WAS $140.1 MILLION MORE THAN IN NOVEMBER, 1976.

TOTAL REVENUE AND RECEIPTS, AT $1,335.7 MILLION, WERE $445.7 MILLION MORE THAN FOR THE SAME MONTH IN 1976, DUE MAINLY TO INCREASED RECEIPTS FROM INTERNAL REVENUE AND LAND SALES.

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EMPLOYMENT AT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES IN DECEMBER 1977

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THE NUMBER OF MANUAL WORKERS EMPLOYED AT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES INCREASED BY FOUR PER CENT TO 63,010 IN DECEMBER COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 1977, ACCORDING TO A RECENT EMPLOYMENT SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT.

COMPARED WITH DECEMBER 1976, THE NUMBER ROSE BY 14,249 OR 29 PER CENT.

THERE WERE 1,202 BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES IN OPERATION IN DECEMBER 1977, 337 OF WHICH WERE TENDERED BY THE PUBLIC WORKS AND HOUSING DEPARTMENTS. THESE ACCOUNTED FOR 23,193 WORKERS, AN INCREASE OF 2,369 OR 11 PER CENT OVER SEPTEMBER.

THE NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED AT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION SITES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, HOWEVER, DECREASED BY TWO PER CENT TO 32,291 DURING THE SURVEY PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER. EMPLOYMENT AT THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION SITES RECORDED AN INCREASE OF EIGHT PER CENT TO 7,526 IN DECEMBER COMPARED WITH SEPTEMBER 1977.

DETAILED STATISTICS ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

TENDERING AUTHORITY	DECEMBER 1976 SITES IN OPERATION	DECEMBER 1976 MANUAL WORKERS ENGAGED	SEPTEMBER 1977 SITES IN OPERATION	SEPTEMBER 1977 MANUAL WORKERS ENGAGED	DECEMBER 1977 SITES IN OPERATION	DECEMBER 1977 MANUAL WORKERS ENGAGED
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT	238	11,945	281	16,580	294	18,162
HOUSING DEPARTMENT	19	2,378	30	4,244	43	5,031
MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY *	23	4,791	23	6,937	26	7,526
PRIVATE SECTOR	813	29,647	814	32,879	839	32,291
TOTAL	1,093	48,761	1,148	60,640	1,202	63,010

* CONSTRUCTION SITES UNDER THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY REFER TO M.T.R. CONTRACTS FOR WHICH WORK WAS IN PROGRESS DURING DECEMBER 1977.

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DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE IS
+NO. 1 FOSTER FATHER+ IN TOWN
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THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR. THOMAS LEE, WHO ACTS AS THE LEGAL GUARDIAN OF ABOUT 920 CHILDREN, TODAY (FRIDAY) DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS THE +NO. 1 FOSTER FATHER+ IN TOWN.

SPEAKING ON THE ROLE THAT THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT PLAYS IN THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE LIONS CLUB OF HONG KONG CENTRAL, MR. LEE SAID NO ONE IN HONG KONG HAS SO MANY CHILDREN UNDER HIS GUARDIANSHIP AS A DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE WHO HAD BEEN MADE THE LEGAL GUARDIAN OF ABOUT 3,500 BOYS AND GIRLS SINCE EARLY 1950'S.

HE SAID THAT THESE INCLUDED CHILDREN ADOPTED BY CHINESE CUSTOMARY PROCEDURES, ABANDONED BABIES, ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS, THOSE IN ILL-TREATMENT CASES AND EXPOSED TO MORAL OR PHYSICAL DANGER.

MR. LEE NOTED THAT OF THE 3,500 CASES, GIRLS ADOPTED BEFORE 1973 BY CHINESE CUSTOMARY PROCEDURES NUMBERED ABOUT 1,500. THIS KIND OF ADOPTION WAS USUALLY MADE WHEN PARENTS, FORCED BY ECONOMIC SITUATION OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, GAVE UP THEIR PARENTAL RIGHTS TO ANOTHER PERSON UPON THE SIGNING OF A 'RED PRESENTATION DEED'.

+THIS DOCUMENT, THOUGH MADE UNDER THE AGREEMENT OF BOTH PARTIES, DOES NOT HAVE ANY LEGAL BEARING AND THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IS NOT GUARANTEED.

+RECOGNISING THIS, THE GOVERNMENT IN 1951 MADE IT COMPULSORY THAT ALL CHINESE CUSTOMARY ADOPTION OF FEMALE INFANTS MUST BE REGISTERED.

+AFTER REGISTRATION, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE IS THEN THE LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THE GIRL AND HER WELFARE IS SUPERVISED UNTIL SHE REACHES 21 OR GETS MARRIED,+ HE SAID.

MR. LEE POINTED OUT THAT THE EXECUTION OF THIS KIND OF DUTY DEMANDED A GREAT DEAL OF TACT FROM THE SOCIAL WORKER, AS MOST ADOPTERS, NOW CALLED CUSTODIANS, HAD HIDDEN THE TRUTH FROM THE GIRLS SO THAT THEY WOULD BE LOOKED UPON AS THEIR REAL PARENTS.

+IN ORDER TO MAKE THEIR HOME VISITS SEEM MORE NATURAL, THE SOCIAL WORKERS ARE USUALLY INTRODUCED AS LONG-TIME FAMILY FRIENDS OR RELATIVES WHO PAY VISITS TO THE FAMILY AS A WHOLE AND NOT TO THE GIRLS IN PARTICULAR,+ HE SAID.

BY CONDUCTING REGULAR VISITS TO THE CUSTODIANS' HOMES, SOCIAL WORKERS WOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP TRACK OF THE GIRLS' DEVELOPMENT, AND RENDER ASSISTANCE WHEN NEEDED.

/WHEN A GIRL .....

WHEN A GIRL PLACED UNDER THE DIRECTOR'S GUARDIANSHIP PLANS TO GET MARRIED, THE SOCIAL WORKER ASSIGNED TO HER CASE WOULD HAVE TO FIND OUT DETAILS CONCERNING THE PROSPECTIVE GROOM.

+IF ALL COMES OUT TO BE SATISFACTORY, I WILL SIGN MY CONSENT AS HER LEGAL GUARDIAN TO HER MARRIAGE,+ HE ADDED.

TURNING TO BOYS WHO WERE GIVEN AWAY BY THE RED PRESENTATION DEED, HE SAID THAT THE SAME LEVEL OF SUPERVISION WAS PROVIDED, THOUGH REGISTRATION WAS ONLY VOLUNTARY.

MR. LEE SAID AT PRESENT HE IS THE LEGAL GUARDIAN OF 320 CHILDREN ADOPTED BY CHINESE CUSTOMARY PROCEDURES.

ON ABANDONED CHILDREN INCLUDING THOSE BY UNWED MOTHERS MR. LEE SAID +A JUVENILE COURT WOULD APPOINT ME AS THE LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THESE CHILDREN AND I MUST EXERCISE MY RIGHTS IN HELPING TO PLAN A GOOD FUTURE FOR THEM,+ HE SAID.

CHILDREN THAT ARE MENTALLY RETARDED OR PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED WOULD BE PLACED UNDER THE CARE OF THE REHABILITATION CENTRES WHILE NORMAL ONES WOULD STAY AT THE CHILDREN'S HOMES UNTIL NEW PARENTS WERE FOUND FOR THEM THROUGH LEGAL ADOPTION.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT SOCIAL WORKERS OF THESE CENTRES AND HOMES HAVE TO MAKE EXTRA EFFORTS TO CONVEY TO THE CHILDREN, WHO HAVE TO GROW UP WITH THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE NO PARENTS OF THEIR OWN, THAT THEY TOO ARE LIVING IN A WORLD OF LOVE.

IN THE PAST 20 YEARS, SOME 1,300 CHILDREN HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED TO THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE BY COURT ORDER AND 547 ARE STILL UNDER HIS GUARDIANSHIP.

FOR GIRLS OVER 16 YEARS OF AGE WHO ARE IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION, THE DIRECTOR CAN ASSUME GUARDIANSHIP BY MAKING A DECLARATION.

+INCIDENCES LIKE THIS MAY HAPPEN WHEN SHE IS FOUND TO BE TREATED WITH CRUELTY OR DISCOVERED LIKELY TO BE EXPOSED TO MORAL OR PHYSICAL DANGER,+ HE EXPLAINED. +UP TILL NOW, MORE THAN 400 GIRLS HAD BEEN DECLARED AS WARDS OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, AND MY GUARDIANSHIP STILL HOLDS FOR SOME 50 GIRLS.+

MR. LEE ALSO SAID THAT HIS DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS IN SUPERVISING THE WELFARE OF THESE CHILDREN WERE BUT SOME OF THE REMEDIAL ACTIONS TAKEN AFTER THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS HAD COME TO THE SURFACE.

+I HOPE THAT WITH CONCERTED EFFORTS FROM ALL SECTORS OF THE COMMUNITY, WE CAN HELP THESE UNFORTUNATE CHILDREN BY IMPROVING THE SOCIAL CLIMATE AND CONDITIONS OF HONG KONG IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE CAUSES OF THESE PROBLEMS AND PREVENT THESE SAD INCIDENCES FROM HAPPENING,+ HE ADDED.

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GOVERNMENT SCHEME FOR TRAINING CRAFT AND TECHNICAL APPRENTICES

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THE GOVERNMENT'S SCHEME FOR TRAINING CRAFT AND TECHNICAL APPRENTICES OPERATED BY THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A GREAT SUCCESS.

SPEAKING AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR GOVERNMENT APPRENTICES TODAY, THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEER, MR. J.A. WALLACE, SAID THAT SINCE THE SCHEME STARTED IN SEPTEMBER 1970, 359 CRAFT APPRENTICES HAD GRADUATED AS SKILLED TRADESMEN.

MOST OF THE GRADUATES, HE ADDED, WERE ENGAGED IN THEIR TRADE IN THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY AND FIRE SERVICES WORKSHOPS AND INSTALLATIONS.

REFERRING TO THE FUTURE OF THE GRADUATES, MR. WALLACE SAID: +A GREAT DEAL OF THE FACILITIES WE USE DEPEND THEIR MAINTENANCE ON THE SKILLED MAN.

+THIS MEANS THAT AS TIME GOES ON THERE WILL BE MORE AND MORE OPENINGS FOR THEM.+

DURING THE CEREMONY, MR. WALLACE PRESENTED GRADUATION CERTIFICATES TO 46 CRAFT APPRENTICES.

THE +LAISHLEY CUP+ WHICH IS AWARDED TO THE BEST CRAFT APPRENTICE WAS WON THIS YEAR BY MR. WONG WING-KIT OF THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

SIR ANTHONY TO GIVE PRESS CONFERENCE

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SIR ANTHONY ROYLE, M.P. (CONSERVATIVE), CURRENTLY VISITING HONG KONG, WILL GIVE A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 4.30 P.M. TOMORROW (SATURDAY) IN THE G.I.S. THEATRE, 5TH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE EVENT. TELEVISION CREWS ARE REQUESTED TO ARRIVE EARLY SO THAT THEY WILL HAVE AMPLE TIME TO SET UP THEIR EQUIPMENT.

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