



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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HONG KONG ACTS ON TEXTILE FRAUDS

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WAS TOLD TODAY THAT A PROBABLE INCREASE IN THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR TEXTILE FRAUDS FROM \$50 000 TO \$500 000- AND THE INTRODUCTION OF IMPORT LICENCES WERE TWO MOVES PLANNED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS.

ANSWERING QUESTIONS BY THE HON FRANCIS TIEN, THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, THE HON BILL DORWARD SAID THE PRESENT MAXIMUM PENALTY WAS A FINE OF \$50 000 AND ONE YEAR'S IMPRISONMENT.

+I RECENTLY TOOK THE ADVICE OF THE TEXTILES ADVISORY BOARD ON THE ADEQUACY OF THIS PENALTY AND THE VIEW OF THE BOARD, WHICH I FULLY ACCEPT, IS THAT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IT PROBABLY IS INADEQUATE. I PROPOSE TO SEEK PERMISSION TO INTRODUCE LATER INTO THIS COUNCIL AN AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING THE PENALTIES TO PROBABLY \$500 000, WITH PERHAPS AN INCREASE IN THE IMPRISONMENT PENALTY AS WELL.+

MR DORWARD SAID HE HOPED TO INTRODUCE, IN A MATTER OF WEEKS, A SYSTEM OF IMPORT LICENCING FOR ALL TEXTILES INTO HONG KONG.

FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR DORWARD STRESSED: +THE IMPORT LICENCES WILL BE ISSUED AUTOMATICALLY AND FREE OF CHARGE. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THEM BEING USED TO RESTRICT IMPORTS.+

CONTINUING HIS REPLY TO MR TIEN, HE SAID: +THIS WILL ENABLE US TO INSTITUTE A SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM, AND TO MONITOR THE MOVEMENT OF SUCH TEXTILES AND TO SPOT CHECK THEM WHEN THEY ARE TO BE RE-EXPORTED FROM HONG KONG.+

HE SAID A FURTHER MOVE WAS AN INCREASE IN THE INVESTIGATION STAFF BY SEPTEMBER FROM 200 TO 285 OFFICERS.

+EIGHT COMPANIES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTED FOR TEXTILE FRAUDS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION INVOLVING THE SURRENDER OF QUOTA HAS BEEN TAKEN AGAINST 34 COMPANIES. FURTHER CASES ARE PENDING.

+WE ARE KEENLY AWARE THAT DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES DEVELOP WHICH CALL FOR NEW OR INTENSIFIED MEASURES. LAST YEAR THERE WERE SOME WELL PUBLICISED FRAUD CASES WHERE HONG KONG TEXTILES FOUND THEIR WAY INTO THE EEC MARKET UNDER FALSE CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN ISSUED IN THIRD COUNTRIES. THESE WERE DETECTED BY AN INVESTIGATION CARRIED OUT IN CLOSE CO-OPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN AGENCIES CONCERNED, NOTABLY THE UNITED KINGDOM CUSTOMS,+ HE SAID.

MR DORWARD SAID THERE HAD BEEN A RECENT SPATE OF ALLEGATIONS, MOSTLY UNSUBSTANTIATED, CONCERNING EXPORTS OF THIRD COUNTRY PRODUCTS DESCRIBED AS OF HONG KONG ORIGIN.

+OUR OWN INVESTIGATIONS HAVE SHOWN THERE TO BE SOME SUBSTANCE IN THIS PROBLEM, AND A NUMBER OF INVESTIGATIONS ARE IN TRAIN. FOUR PROSECUTIONS HAVE BEEN TAKEN SO FAR THIS YEAR,+ HE SAID.

LAST YEAR HONG KONG ISSUED OVER 800 000 CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN, AND LESS THAN 150 OFFENCES WERE DETECTED AND SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTED.

+NO MATTER HOW RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT THESE MALPRACTICES, THEY COULD BE USED TO DISTORT AND DAMAGE OUR TRADING RELATIONS. IT IS FOR THIS REASON HONG KONG HAS ALWAYS PLACED GREAT EMPHASIS ON POLICING ITS CERTIFICATION AND QUOTA SYSTEMS, AND WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO DO SO,+ HE SAID.

MR DORWARD ADDED THAT FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS HONG KONG HAD BEEN BUILDING UP AND OPERATING WHAT IS, HE BELIEVED, OBJECTIVELY RECOGNISED AS ONE OF THE MOST EFFICIENT ORIGIN AND QUOTA CONTROL SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD.

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NEW TERRITORIES COVERED BY RENT LAWS

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A BILL CLARIFYING THAT ALL POSTWAR PREMISES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES ARE UNDER RENT CONTROLS AS PROVIDED IN THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND PASSED INTO LAW TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION)(AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1980, THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON DONALD LIAO SAID THERE WERE DOUBTS RECENTLY ABOUT THE APPLICATION TO THE NEW TERRITORIES OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE RELATING TO POSTWAR PREMISES.

IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT, BY VIRTUE OF THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION) ORDINANCE (APPLICATION TO NEW TERRITORIES) ORDER MADE IN 1954, PARTS II, IV AND V OF THAT ORDINANCE HAVE NEVER, SINCE THAT TIME, APPLIED TO THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR LIAO SAID.

HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAD APPROVED, AFTER AN INTENSIVE DEBATE, THE EXTENSION OF THE PART II RENT CONTROLS TO ALL POSTWAR DOMESTIC PREMISES IN HONG KONG OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFICALLY EXEMPTED.

+ALL AVAILABLE EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT THE PUBLIC, THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND THE COURTS HAVE, OVER THE YEARS, ACCEPTED THE APPLICATION OF PART II TO THE NEW TERRITORIES.+

THE OBJECT OF THIS BILL IS TO REMOVE ANY DOUBTS AS TO THE APPLICATION OF PARTS II, IV AND V TO THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR LIAO SAID.

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INSURANCE COMPANY TOLD TO CEASE BUSINESS

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THE REGISTRAR GENERAL HAS INFORMED KYOTO INSURANCE LIMITED THAT ITS AUTHORISATION FOR CARRYING ON MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE BUSINESS IN HONG KONG IS TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM JUNE 21.

A NOTICE TO THIS EFFECT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE ON FRIDAY, JUNE 13.

THE ACTION IS TAKEN UNDER SECTION 3 OF THE MOTOR VEHICLES INSURANCE (THIRD PARTY RISKS) ORDINANCE, WHICH EMPOWERS THE REGISTRAR GENERAL TO REVOKE SUCH AUTHORISATION WHERE HE CEASES TO BE SATISFIED AS TO THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OF A COMPANY CARRYING ON MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE BUSINESS IN HONG KONG.

THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF THE REVOCATION WILL BE THAT ALL MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE POLICIES ISSUED BY KYOTO INSURANCE LIMITED WILL CEASE TO BE VALID AS AT MIDNIGHT ON JUNE 20.

+ALL MOTORISTS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO BE COVERED AGAINST THIRD PARTY BODILY RISK AND PASSENGER LIABILITY. IT WILL THEREFORE BE A MATTER OF THE GREATEST URGENCY FOR THOSE INSURED WITH THE COMPANY TO TAKE OUT NEW POLICIES WITH ANOTHER AUTHORISED COMPANY,+ A SPOKESMAN FOR THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY.

THE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT IF ANY MOTORIST, WHO IS AT PRESENT COVERED BY A KYOTO INSURANCE LIMITED POLICY, FAILS TO TAKE OUT A NEW POLICY BY MIDNIGHT ON JUNE 20 AND USES HIS VEHICLE ON A PUBLIC ROAD AFTER THAT, HE WILL BE COMMITTING A STATUTORY OFFENCE FOR WHICH HE COULD BE FINED \$10 000, BE IMPRISONED FOR UP TO A YEAR AND LOSE HIS LICENCE FOR UP TO THREE YEARS.

+SECONDLY, AND POTENTIALLY EVEN MORE SERIOUS, IF A MOTORIST WITHOUT VALID INSURANCE COVER IS INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT, HE WILL BE PERSONALLY LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGES AWARDED AGAINST HIM.

+SUCH DAMAGES NOWADAYS CAN BE VERY HEAVY INDEED AND IT COULD TAKE THE MOTORIST THE REST OF HIS LIFE TO DISCHARGE HIS LIABILITY,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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RAPE VICTIMS PROTECTED FROM PUBLICITY

THE CRIMES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1980, WHICH PROTECTS VICTIMS OF RAPE AND INDECENT ASSAULT FROM PUBLICITY FROM THE TIME THEY MAKE A POLICE REPORT, WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JOHN GRIFFITHS EXPLAINED THAT AS THE LAW STOOD AT PRESENT, THE PROHIBITION ON PUBLICITY DID NOT OPERATE UNLESS AND UNTIL A PROSECUTION FOR THE OFFENCE STARTED.

THERE IS A PERIOD OF TIME BEFORE A CASE IS FIRST BROUGHT BEFORE ANY COURT AND ON OCCASIONS THIS LENGTH OF TIME MAY BE CONSIDERABLE, HE SAID.

+EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT ON MANY OCCASIONS IRRESPONSIBLE ACTION IS TAKEN BY A FEW NEWSPAPERS WHICH NOT ONLY ATTEND AT THE SCENE OF THE RAPE, BUT ALSO TAKE DETAILED PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE VICTIM.

+I HAVE HAD DRAWN TO MY ATTENTION HARROWING PHOTOGRAPHS OF ANGUISHED WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHED WHILST STILL SHOCKED BY THE EXPERIENCE THEY HAVE BEEN THROUGH,+ HE SAID.

ON A FEW OCCASIONS IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO HAVE THE PROHIBITION LIFTED TO ASSIST IN CATCHING THE OFFENDER OR ALTERNATIVELY ON VERY INFREQUENT OCCASIONS TO PROTECT OTHER WOMEN IN A PARTICULAR AREA FROM A SIMILAR CRIME.

ACCORDINGLY, THE BILL WILL EMPOWER A POLICE OFFICER OF THE RANK OF SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT OR ABOVE, WITH THE CONSENT OF THE COMPLAINANT, TO ALLOW CERTAIN PUBLICITY TO BE GIVEN.

IF THE VICTIM IS NOT IN A CONDITION TO GIVE CONSENT OR REFUSES CONSENT, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IS EMPOWERED TO GIVE A SIMILAR DIRECTION.

+I ANTICIPATE IT WOULD BE ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT THE ATTORNEY GENERAL WOULD AGREE TO DO SO,+ MR GRIFFITHS SAID.

+NOTICE OF ANY SUCH DIRECTION WOULD HAVE TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE GAZETTE SO THAT IT MAY BE KNOWN TO THE MEDIA.+

+IT FOLLOWS FROM WHAT I HAVE SAID THAT THE PRESS, RADIO AND TELEVISION WOULD BE WELL ADVISED UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES TO PUBLISH ANY MATTER LIKELY TO LEAD TO THE IDENTIFICATION OF ANY VICTIM, ONCE THIS BILL BECOMES LAW,+ HE ADDED.

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POWER TRANSMISSION BILL A JUST BALANCE

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THE ELECTRICITY NETWORKS (STATUTORY EASEMENTS) BILL 1980 STRIKES A JUST BALANCE BETWEEN THE NEEDS OF THE POWER COMPANIES AND THE CONSUMERS OF ELECTRICITY ON THE ONE HAND AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE RIGHTS OF THE PRIVATE LANDOWNERS WHOSE LAND MAY BE AFFECTED.

SPEAKING AT THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL TODAY, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON DEREK JONES SAID NEW LEGISLATION HAD BECOME MORE NECESSARY GIVEN THE SCOPE OF THE TRANSMISSION NETWORKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LARGE NEW POWER STATIONS NOW BEING BUILT AT TAP SHEK KOK AND ON LAMMA ISLAND.

+THE MODE OF TRANSMISSION, BECAUSE OF THE COSTS INVOLVED AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CONSUMING PUBLIC, AND THE ROUTE OF THE TRANSMISSION LINES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT, ARE MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS TO THE POWER COMPANIES.

+ALTHOUGH, GENERALLY SPEAKING, IN PLANNING THE ROUTING OF TRANSMISSION LINES PRIVATE LAND IS AVOIDED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, THIS CANNOT BE ALTOGETHER ACHIEVED AS PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AND PLANNING REQUIREMENTS CAN, IN PLACES, SEVERELY LIMIT THE CHOICE OF ROUTE,+ HE SAID.

THE PRACTICE FOR POWER COMPANIES TO SEEK INFORMAL AGREEMENTS WITH CONCERNED LANDOWNERS IS A TIME-CONSUMING AND SOMETIMES FRUSTRATING PROCEDURE WHICH DOES NOT GIVE ADEQUATE PROTECTION TO THE INTERESTS OF EITHER PARTY, HE ADDED.

THE BILL WILL ENABLE THE POWER COMPANIES TO APPLY FOR THE RIGHT TO PLACE TRANSMISSION LINES OVER OR UNDER PRIVATE LAND, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THE INTERESTS OF THE PRIVATE LANDOWNERS WILL BE SAFEGUARDED.

+IT MAKES A POWER COMPANY LIABLE TO PAY COMPENSATION FOR ANY DIMINUTION IN THE VALUE OF PRIVATE LAND AS A RESULT OF THE CREATION OF AN EASEMENT,+ MR JONES SAID.

CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION WOULD NEED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE POWER COMPANY AND THE SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS WOULD THEN BE A MATTER BETWEEN THE COMPANY AND THE INDIVIDUAL CLAIMANT.

+HOWEVER,+ HE NOTED, +IF AGREEMENT CANNOT BE REACHED, THE CLAIMANT WOULD BE ABLE TO REFER THE CLAIM TO THE LANDS TRIBUNAL FOR DETERMINATION.+

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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NEW LAW TO PROTECT CREDITORS
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A BILL SEEKING TO IMPROVE THE EXISTING LAW WHICH PROTECTS CREDITORS OF A BUSINESS IN A SALE OR TRANSFER OF ANY PART OF THE BUSINESS WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE TRANSFER OF BUSINESSES (PROTECTION OF CREDITORS) BILL 1980, THE LAW DRAFTSMAN, THE HON G.P. NAZARETH SAID IT WOULD RETAIN THE PROTECTION PROVIDED BY THE FRAUDULENT TRANSFER OF BUSINESSES ORDINANCE BUT WOULD QUALIFY IT SO FAR AS POSSIBLE TO MEET CRITICISM OF THE ORDINANCE.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS ORDINANCE, WHICH WOULD BE REPLACED BY THE BILL, WAS ENACTED IN 1923 TO COMBAT THE FRAUDULENT TRANSFER OF BUSINESSES WHICH LEFT CREDITORS WITHOUT ASSETS AGAINST WHICH TO PROCEED.

IT MAKES THE PERSON TO WHOM A BUSINESS IS TRANSFERRED LIABLE FOR ITS DEBTS UNTIL PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE TRANSFER IS GIVEN.

IN INTRODUCING THE LEGISLATION, THE THEN ATTORNEY GENERAL SAID IT WAS IN THE NATURE OF AN EXPERIMENT. +NOT SURPRISINGLY THEREFORE, THE ORDINANCE HAS BEEN SUBJECT TO INTERMITTENT CRITICISM,+ MR NAZARETH SAID.

HE ADDED THAT IN RECENT YEARS CRITICISM HAD TENDED TO COME FROM RECEIVERS DISPOSING OF BUSINESSES WHO ARGUED THAT SECURED CREDITORS COULD BE PREJUDICED BY THE PROVISIONS OF THE ORDINANCE.

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PYRAMID SELLING CONTAINS ELEMENTS OF DISASTER
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A BILL SEEKING TO MAKE IT AN OFFENCE FOR ANY PERSON TO PROMOTE PYRAMID SELLING WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PYRAMID SELLING PROHIBITION BILL 1980, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, SAID SUCH SCHEMES OFTEN SERVED NO ECONOMIC PURPOSE AND CONTAINED ELEMENTS OF DISASTER FOR THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE.

+A PERSON WHO PAYS TO JOIN A SCHEME MAY FIND THAT HE IS UNABLE TO RECOUP HIS MONEY BY SELLING THE GOODS. AS THE REWARDS FOR RECRUITING USUALLY FAR EXCEED THOSE THE PARTICIPANTS CAN EARN FROM SELLING, HE CONCENTRATES ON RECRUITING OTHER PARTICIPANTS,+ HE EXPLAINED.

THE SAME CONSIDERATION, MR JEAFFRESON SAID, COULD AFFECT THE ATTITUDES OF THOSE WHOM HE RECRUITED AND SO ON DOWN EACH STAGE OF THE PYRAMID.

/+THE GOODS

+THE GOODS ARE FORGOTTEN AS THE SALESMEN MULTIPLY, YET EACH NEW RECRUIT IS PROBABLY HAVING TO BUY FROM THE ORGANISERS A FIXED QUANTITY OF GOODS TO SELL,+ HE SAID.

THE SITUATION MIGHT END WITH THOSE AT THE TOP OF THE PYRAMID BEING RICH AS THE RESULTS OF SELLING THE RIGHT TO SELL AND THE GOODS THAT WERE TO BE SOLD, HE SAID.

+AS WE LOOK DOWN THE PYRAMID THE PARTICIPANTS APPEAR TO BE LESS WELL OFF UNTIL WE FIND AT THE BASE A LARGE NUMBER OF SALESMEN WHO HAVE PAID FOR THEIR POSITION ON THE ONE HAND AND HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO SETTLE DOWN AND SELL THOSE LONG FORGOTTEN GOODS ON THE OTHER,+ MR JEAFFRESON ADDED.

MR JEAFFRESON POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS EVIDENCE THAT THE HIGH PRESSURE RECRUITING TECHNIQUES ADOPTED BY SOME COMPANIES TENDED TO ATTRACT GULLIBLE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVING JUST LEFT SCHOOL, WERE DRAWN BY PROMISE OF RICHES WITHOUT HAVING THE MATURITY TO DISTINGUISH THE SNARES.

+OUR CONCLUSION IS THAT WE ARE IN A SITUATION IN WHICH THESE YOUNG PEOPLE LACKING THE MATURITY TO RESIST THE LURES OF THE RECRUITERS PERHAPS CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES,+ HE SAID.

+SO WE JUST ABOUT HAVE A SITUATION WHICH MEETS OUR CRITERION FOR INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THEM,+ HE ADDED.

BUT MR JEAFFRESON SAID THERE HAD BEEN GREAT DIFFICULTY IN DEVISING A DEFINITION THAT DID NOT INADVERTENTLY OPERATE AGAINST REPUTABLE DIRECT SELLING ORGANISATIONS NOT USING PYRAMID SELLING TECHNIQUES.

+TO THIS END, WE HAVE CONSULTED A NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING THE CONSUMER COUNCIL, THE DIRECT SELLING ASSOCIATION, THE LAW SOCIETY, THE BAR ASSOCIATION AND THE HONG KONG SOCIETY OF ACCOUNTANTS, AND HAVE ALSO DRAWN HEAVILY ON THE EXPERIENCE OF COUNTRIES THAT HAVE LEGISLATED AGAINST PYRAMID SELLING,+ HE SAID.

POINTING OUT THAT IT WAS A TRICKY AREA IN WHICH TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION, MR JEAFFRESON SAID: +IF IN PRACTICE WE FIND WE HAVE NOT GOT IT QUITE RIGHT, WE MAY HAVE TO COME BACK TO THIS COUNCIL TO AMEND THE DEFINITION.+

TAX AVOIDANCE DEVICE COUNTERED

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THE USE OF CONTRIVED CESSATIONS OF BUSINESSES TO AVOID TAX WILL BE COUNTERED BY THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO 2) BILL 1980, THE ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON.

SPEAKING AT THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, SIR PHILIP POINTED OUT THAT PROVISIONS IN THE MAIN ORDINANCE TO HELP BUSINESSES WHOSE ACCOUNTING PERIODS END OTHER THAN ON MARCH 31, HAVE BEEN EXPLOITED BY SOME LARGE PROPERTY DEVELOPERS AT A CONSIDERABLE COST TO THE REVENUE.

+IN 1979-80 THE LOSS MIGHT HAVE BEEN AS MUCH AS \$50 MILLION,+ HE SAID.

+AS THERE IS NO TIME LIMIT ON THESE CONTRIVED CESSATIONS OF BUSINESS, WITHOUT CORRECTIVE LEGISLATION NOW, CONSIDERABLE SUMS OF FUTURE REVENUE WILL REMAIN AT RISK,+ HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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GAS SMELLS NOT HAZARDOUS

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ONE THING DEFINITELY ESTABLISHED BY THE SEARCHES AND INVESTIGATIONS INTO REPORTS OF GAS SMELLS IN SCHOOLS IS THAT WE ARE NOT DEALING WITH A GAS THAT IS PRESENT IN ANYTHING APPROACHING HAZARDOUS CONCENTRATIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON DEREK JONES SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION RAISED BY THE HON T.S. LO, MR JONES SAID: +THE PRESS REPORTS REFERRING TO 'TOXIC' GASES, 'GASSING' INCIDENTS AND CHILDREN BEING 'OVERCOME' ARE THEREFORE, IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, EXAGGERATED AND MISLEADING AND ARE LIABLE TO LEAD TO UNNECESSARY ALARM.+

MR JONES SAID THE INVESTIGATIONS WERE CONTROLLED AND CO-ORDINATED BY A COMMITTEE OF SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL THE DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP.

THE COMMITTEE HEARD AND ASSESSED REPORTS ON THE DAY'S INVESTIGATIONS AND PROVIDED GUIDANCE ON THE DIRECTIONS WHICH FURTHER WORK ON THE PROBLEM SHOULD TAKE.

DESPITE THE THOROUGHNESS OF ALL THESE EFFORTS TO TRACE THE SOURCE OF THE EMISSION, IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO DO SO WITH ANY CERTAINTY, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS MAY HAVE BEEN IMPLICATED IN SOME WAY, MR JONES SAID.

HE WAS INFORMED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS THAT THIS WAS NOT ALTOGETHER SURPRISING, +AS, IN THEIR EXPERIENCE, IT USUALLY PROVES IMPOSSIBLE IN CASES OF THIS SORT TO LOCATE THE SOURCE OF THE TROUBLE.

/+THIS IS

+THIS IS BECAUSE, ON THE ONE HAND, IT IS OFTEN SOME FORM OF SPILLAGE THAT IS INVOLVED, WHICH CAN EVAPORATE OR SOAK AWAY QUICKLY, AND SO IS NOT PICKED UP IN THE FIELD SEARCHES THAT ARE CARRIED OUT.

+AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PRESENCE OF THE ODOUR IN THE PLACE AFFECTED IS TRANSITORY, SO THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN A SAMPLE FOR ANALYSIS.

+EVEN IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A SAMPLE, THE CONCENTRATIONS INVOLVED COULD WELL BE BELOW THE DETECTION LIMITS OF THE BEST SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT.

+THE HUMAN NOSE IS GENERALLY FAR MORE SENSITIVE TO ODOURS THAN EVEN THE MOST ELABORATE SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT,+ HE ADDED.

MR JONES SAID IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO GIVE AN ASSURANCE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FUTURE ACCIDENTAL SPILLAGES OR SHORT PERIODS OF EMISSION OF SOME GASEOUS SUBSTANCE OR OTHER THAT WOULD GIVE RISE TO OBJECTIONABLE SMELLS.

+BUT WE HAVE LEARNT SOMETHING FROM THESE INCIDENTS AND WE HAVE IMPROVED OUR ARRANGEMENTS FOR RESPONDING TO THEM IN A MORE STRUCTURED WAY,+ HE SAID.

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IDENTITY CARDS ISSUED TO CHINESE IMMIGRANTS * * * * *

IN THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, 24 908 IDENTITY CARDS WERE ISSUED TO LEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA, AND 34 518 TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM ALL SOURCES.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON LEWIS DAVIES IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON F.K. HU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR DAVIES POINTED OUT THAT THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT'S RECORDS OF IDENTITY CARDS ISSUED TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS DID NOT PROVIDE A DETAILED BREAKDOWN BY ORIGIN, BUT THE DEPARTMENT ESTIMATED THAT THOSE FROM CHINA ACCOUNTED FOR ABOUT 92 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL.

ON THIS BASIS IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE NUMBER OF IDENTITY CARDS ISSUED TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA DURING THE FIVE MONTHS WAS 31 760, HE SAID.

MR DAVIES ADDED THAT LESS THAN 100 IDENTITY CARDS WERE ISSUED DURING THE PERIOD TO CHINESE IN TRANSIT FROM CHINA WHO HAD STAYED IN HONG KONG FOR LONGER THAN 180 DAYS.

IDENTITY CARDS ARE NOT ISSUED TO CHINESE WHO STOP IN HONG KONG IN TRANSIT TO CHINA.

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GAS SUPPLY ARRANGEMENTS TO BE REVIEWED

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ACTION IS NOW IN HAND TO OBTAIN THE SERVICES OF AN APPROPRIATE CONSULTANCY TO ADVISE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR GAS SUPPLY, INCLUDING ITS DISTRIBUTION IN STREETS AND BUILDINGS AND SAFETY STANDARDS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON LEWIS DAVIES SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN IN THE LEGISLATION COUNCIL, MR DAVIES SAID THESE MATTERS REQUIRED REVIEW AND HE HOPED THAT CONSULTANTS WOULD BE WORKING ON THESE ISSUES BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR.

IN HIS REPLY, MR DAVIES SAID THERE WERE AT PRESENT NO STATUTORY REGULATIONS COVERING THE SUPPLY, INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF GAS WATER HEATERS IN DOMESTIC PREMISES.

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CONTROLLED REFUSE TIPPING PRACTISED WORLDWIDE

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CONTROLLED TIPPING OF REFUSE IS A METHOD OF WASTE DISPOSAL WHICH HAS BEEN PROVEN TO BE ACCEPTABLE AND WHICH IS PRACTISED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON JACK STEAN, TODAY TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON WONG LAM, HE SAID CONTROLLED TIPPING IN HONG KONG WAS CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES ADOPTED ELSEWHERE, +THE METHOD BEING, THE SPREADING OF REFUSE IN THIN LAYERS, WHICH ARE THEN COMPACTED TO THE SMALLEST POSSIBLE VOLUME AND COVERED WITH SOIL AT THE END OF EACH WORKING DAY.

+THIS METHOD IS CURRENTLY THE MEANS OF DISPOSING OF ABOUT TWO THIRDS OF HONG KONG'S REFUSE, AND IT IS THE MOST ECONOMICAL OF THE METHODS USED AND ULTIMATELY PRODUCES LAND WHICH CAN BE USED FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES,+ HE SAID.

MR STEAN POINTED OUT THAT CONTROLLED TIPS WERE MONITORED BY THE GOVERNMENT CHEMIST ON A REGULAR BASIS AND WERE CAREFULLY SUPERVISED TO ENSURE THAT ENVIRONMENTALLY THEY REMAINED ACCEPTABLE.

+THE GOVERNMENT IS ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE TECHNIQUE OF CONTROLLED TIPPING SUCH AS THE PRETREATMENT OF REFUSE BY BALING BEFORE CONTROLLED TIPPING,+ HE ADDED.

+TO THIS END, A PILOT BALING PLANT IS NOW UNDER TRIAL AT SAI TSO WAN.+

MR STEAN SAID THAT PULVERISATION OF REFUSE WAS ALSO BEING CONSIDERED AND A PULVERISER HAD BEEN INSTALLED AT THE CHAI WAN COMPOSTING PLANT, PRIMARILY AS PART OF THE PLANT.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY WHAT THE RESULT OF THESE EXPERIMENTAL PROCESSES WOULD BE.

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BEGGING FOR A LIVING NOT NECESSARY
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THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON MRS ANSON CHAN SAID TODAY THAT THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND SPECIAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE SCHEMES HAD MADE IT UNNECESSARY FOR ANYONE TO BEG FOR A LIVING.

IN REPLY TO THE HON ANDREW SO WHO ASKED WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS DOING TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO GIVE UP BEGGING, MRS CHAN SAID ALL KNOWN CASES WERE INVESTIGATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE GIVEN, INCLUDING CASH ASSISTANCE, COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING, JOB PLACEMENT, INSTITUTIONAL CARE AND OTHER REHABILITATION SERVICES.

+THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN SOCIAL SERVICES COUPLED WITH EASY ACCESSIBILITY BY THOSE WHO REQUIRE HELP, WOULD ACT MORE EFFECTIVELY AGAINST BEGGING THAN PROSECUTIONS IN COURT,+ SHE SAID.

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PILOT RESERVOIR SPORTS SCHEME
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PLOVER COVE, SHING MUN AND HIGH ISLAND RESERVOIRS HAVE POTENTIAL FOR SAILING, CANOEING AND ROWING, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON F.K. LI TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHARLES YEUNG, MR LI SAID THE WORKING PARTY SET UP TO LOOK INTO THE USE OF RESERVOIRS FOR WATER SPORTS HAD REACHED THIS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDED THAT A DETAILED ENGINEERING FEASIBILITY STUDY SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITH A VIEW TO IDENTIFYING ONE OF THESE RESERVOIRS FOR A PILOT SCHEME.

+THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORT ENDORSED THE WORKING PARTY'S RECOMMENDATION AND THE PUBLIC WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE APPROVED IN DECEMBER 1979 A CATEGORY D ITEM IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME FOR THE ENGAGEMENT OF A CONSULTANT TO UNDERTAKE THE INVESTIGATION.

+THE DIRECTOR OF WATER SUPPLIES IS NOW LOOKING FOR A SUITABLE CONSULTANT,+ MR LI SAID.

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MORE LAB TECHNICIANS FOR SCHOOLS

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PROPOSALS REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF LABORATORY TECHNICIANS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS WILL BE TABLED AT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL ON JUNE 18, THE HON KENNETH TOPLEY, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION SAID TODAY.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED IN HIS REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

+THE PROPOSED ALTERATION TO THE MANNING SCALE WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF LABORATORY TECHNICIAN POSTS IN BOTH GOVERNMENT AND AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND THERE WILL BE A MINOR AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONS OF SERVICE,+ MR TOPLEY SAID.

THE PROPOSALS ARE BASED ON A REPORT SUBMITTED IN MAY LAST YEAR BY A WORKING GROUP IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SET UP TO LOOK INTO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LABORATORY TECHNICIANS IN SCHOOLS WHERE THE NEW CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT SYLLABUSES FOR INTEGRATED SCIENCE ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED.

THE NEXT STEP WOULD BE TO SUBMIT THE PROPOSALS TO THE FINANCE AND CIVIL SERVICE BRANCHES FOR CONSIDERATION, MR TOPLEY SAID, AND ULTIMATELY THE DECISION TO APPROVE THE NEW MANNING SCALE AND THE PROVISION OF THE NECESSARY FUNDS WOULD REST WITH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

+I CANNOT SAY THEREFORE WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTAINTY WHETHER ADDITIONAL LABORATORY TECHNICIANS WILL BE IN POST IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS THIS SEPTEMBER,+ HE SAID.

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COMMISSIONER OF TRADE RETURNS FROM CHINA

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THE COMMISSIONER OF TRADE, MR PETER TSAO HAS RETURNED FROM A VISIT TO CHINA.

MR TSAO VISITED PEKING LAST WEEK AT THE INVITATION OF THE CHINA TEXTILE IMPORT AND EXPORT CORPORATION FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS.

+THE DISCUSSIONS WERE CONFINED TO TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE QUOTA CONTROL SYSTEM, IN PARTICULAR FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS AND OTHER WAYS AND MEANS TO MAXIMISE THE UTILISATION OF THE RESTRAINT LIMIT SET OUT IN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS,+ SAID MR TSAO.

+WE ALSO EXCHANGED VIEWS ON THE MULTILATERAL ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN TEXTILE,+ HE ADDED.

MR TSAO HELD SIMILAR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CORPORATION'S OFFICIALS IN SHANGHAI WHEN HE VISITED THE CITY ON MONDAY.

MR TSAO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER IN CHARGE OF TRADE CONTROLS, MR DANIEL SUM.

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GRANTHAM SCHOLARSHIPS FOR APPLICATION

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APPLICATIONS ARE BEING INVITED FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF GRANTHAM SCHOLARSHIPS IN THE COMING SCHOOL YEAR.

APPLICANTS HAVE TO BE STUDENTS WHO ARE PURSUING

- * AN ANGLO-CHINESE SECONDARY COURSE=
- * CHINESE MIDDLE SECONDARY COURSE=
- * ONE-YEAR OR TWO-YEAR MATRICULATION COURSE=
- * TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL COURSE AT THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC, TECHNICAL INSTITUTE, OR INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL WORK TRAINING=
- * DIPLOMA COURSE AT THE HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE, HONG KONG SHUE YAN COLLEGE, OR HONG KONG LING NAN COLLEGE= OR
- * FIRST DEGREE COURSE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG OR THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

ACCORDING TO A SPOKESMAN FOR THE GRANTHAM SCHOLARSHIPS FUND COMMITTEE, THE OVER-RIDING CRITERION FOR AWARD WILL BE THE FINANCIAL NEED OF THE STUDENTS.

THE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE TO BE HELD FOR ONE YEAR. SUBJECT TO CONTINUING FINANCIAL NEED AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS AND CONDUCT, HOLDERS MAY RE-APPLY AND BE GIVEN PRIORITY FOR RENEWAL.

HOLDERS MAY ALSO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ELSEWHERE, PROVIDED THAT THE TOTAL AMOUNT THEY RECEIVE IS NOT EXCESSIVE.

APPLICATION FORMS WILL BE OBTAINABLE FROM JULY 2 ON PRESENTATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY CARDS AT THE TRUST FUNDS OFFICE, HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, ON THE 10TH FLOOR OF INTERNATIONAL BUILDING, 141 DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL.

THE COMPLETED FORM, TOGETHER WITH A SWORN STATUTORY DECLARATION OF FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN, SHOULD BE RETURNED THROUGH THE APPLICANT'S SCHOOL PRINCIPAL BY AUGUST 30. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

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NO PASSAGE THROUGH IVY STREET

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IVY STREET AT ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI KOK TSUI ROAD IN KOWLOON WILL BE CLOSED FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY) FOR ABOUT THREE WEEKS.

DURING THIS PERIOD, THE SECTION OF THE STREET FROM THERE TO ELM STREET WILL BE RE-ROUTED TWO-WAY.

THE ARRANGEMENT IS TO FACILITATE THE RE-CONSTRUCTION OF TAI KOK TSUI ROAD UNDER THE WEST KOWLOON CORRIDOR PROJECT.

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BILLS PASSED

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THREE BILLS RECEIVED THEIR THIRD READING AND WERE PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY WERE THE STAMP (AMENDMENT) BILL 1980- THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION REGULATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1980, AND THE LANDLORD AND TENANT (CONSOLIDATION)(AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1980.

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