



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 1986

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SAFETY ASPECTS OF DAYA BAY PLANT FULLY CONSIDERED
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QUESTIONS OF SAFETY AND DESIGN WERE GIVEN FULL AND APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION BY THE GOVERNMENT BEFORE IT DECIDED THERE WAS NO OBJECTION TO LOCAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN WINDING UP THE DAYA BAY ADJOURNMENT DEBATE, MR JACOBS SAID THE EVENTS AT CHERNOBYL IN APRIL HAD HAD A PROFOUND EFFECT ON THE ATTITUDE OF PEOPLE TOWARDS THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER FOR CIVIL PURPOSES.

+THE DILEMMA IN HONG KONG IS PARTICULARLY COMPLEX FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS,+ HE SAID.

FIRST, THE PROPOSED POWER STATION AT DAYA BAY WAS NOT BEING BUILT IN HONG KONG.

SECOND, CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY HAD CONTRACTED TO BUY ELECTRICITY GENERATED AT DAYA BAY, WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND AGREEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT.

THIRD, AT THE TIME THE JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT WAS ANNOUNCED THERE WAS A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF ITS IMPORTANCE, AND IN MOST QUARTERS SUPPORT FOR THIS TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED.

MR JACOBS POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD AND COULD NOT DO BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY THE DECISION TO BUILD THIS POWER STATION WAS NOT ONE FOR HONG KONG.

HE SAID THE DAYA BAY PROJECT ORIGINATED IN A JOINT FEASIBILITY STUDY CARRIED OUT BY THE GUANGDONG POWER COMPANY AND CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY.

WHEN THE FEASIBILITY STUDY WAS PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNMENT IT WAS CLEAR THAT A VERY THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF THE PROJECT INCLUDING THE SUITABILITY OF VARIOUS SITES HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT.

DAYA BAY WAS CHOSEN ONLY AFTER A CLOSE AND DETAILED EXAMINATION OF THE GEOLOGICAL, SEISMIC AND METEOROLOGICAL ASPECTS HAD BEEN CARRIED OUT.

MR JACOBS NOTED THAT MUCH HAD BEEN SAID REGARDING THE CLOSENESS OF DAYA BAY TO HONG KONG.

+IN ACCEPTING THE FEASIBILITY STUDY AND ULTIMATELY IN AGREEING TO THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT CO. ENTERING INTO THE JOINT VENTURE, WE TOOK ACCOUNT OF INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS IN RELATION TO THE DISTANCE BETWEEN A POWER STATION AND LARGE CENTRES OF POPULATION.

/+COMPARED

+COMPARED WITH MANY POWER STATIONS, DAYA BAY IS NOT CLOSE TO HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

MR JACOBS MOVED ON TO SAY THAT THE INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNMENT FLOWED FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE SCHEME OF CONTROL.

THE SCHEME REQUIRED CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY AND ITS ASSOCIATES TO SUBMIT A FINANCING PLAN FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WHENEVER MAJOR PROPOSALS FOR MAJOR ADDITIONS TO THE COMPANY'S SYSTEMS HAD BEEN FINALISED.

+THUS, STRICTLY SPEAKING, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ONLY NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE BEEN FORMALLY CONSULTED WHEN THE DAYA BAY PROJECT WAS WELL ADVANCED,+ HE SAID.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE COMPANY NEEDED AN ASSURANCE THAT A FINANCING PLAN SUBMITTED IN THE FUTURE SHOWING PURCHASES OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE PLANT WOULD NOT BE DENIED APPROVAL. THEREFORE THE CONCLUSION WAS REACHED IN THE FEASIBILITY STUDY THAT BOTH THE GUANGDONG POWER COMPANY AND CHINA LIGHT SHOULD RECOMMEND TO THEIR RESPECTIVE BOARDS OF DIRECTORS AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES THAT THE JOINT VENTURE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

+THE GOVERNMENT'S PRIME CONCERN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SCHEME OF CONTROL IS, OF COURSE, TO ENSURE THAT CONSUMERS GET A FAIR DEAL,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

BUT IN THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, ANOTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WAS THE SAFETY OF THE PLANT BOTH IN CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION, HE SAID.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY HAD EXPLAINED THAT THE DESIGN BASIS FOR FRENCH POWER STATIONS, TO WHICH THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE VERY SIMILAR, WAS THAT NO EVACUATION MUST BE NECESSARY 10 KILOMETRES OUTSIDE THE PLANT EVEN IN THE EVENT OF A SERIOUS ACCIDENT.

THE ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY AND THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY ALSO REQUIRED THAT THE HIGHEST INTERNATIONAL SAFETY STANDARDS WOULD GOVERN THE DESIGN, MANUFACTURE, ERECTION, AND COMMISSIONING AND OPERATION OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT.

AND IN THE LIGHT OF THE ADVICE RECEIVED FROM CONSULTANTS IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY FROM THE PROJECT WOULD PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS AND FURTHERMORE THAT ON TECHNICAL GROUNDS THE STABILITY AND RELIABILITY OF HONG KONG'S OWN POWER SYSTEM WOULD NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED.

+SO WITH THE BENEFIT OF ENTIRELY INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND AFTER CONSULTING THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, WE INFORMED CHINA LIGHT AND POWER OF THE GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS, IN PRINCIPLE, TO ENDORSE AN OFFTAKE AGREEMENT,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

/HE SAID THE

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HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNISED AT ALL TIMES THE IMPORTANCE AND COMPLEXITY OF THIS PROJECT. +AND SO BETWEEN THE FEASIBILITY STUDY IN 1980 AND THE FORMATION OF THE JOINT VENTURE IN 1985, WE SUBJECTED THE PROJECT TO A LONG DETAILED EXAMINATION TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE SAFETY, FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS.+

COMMENTING ON THE SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD WITHDRAW ITS AGREEMENT TO THE PROJECT, HE SAID THIS WAS A BINDING COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO IN GOOD FAITH AND SIMPLY COULD NOT BE WITHDRAWN.

+THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT AND INDEED OF HONG KONG ITSELF WOULD BE SEVERELY DAMAGED WITH THE MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES IN SO FAR AS OUR COMMERCIAL AND EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE CONCERNED,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONCERN, THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING ACTION.

+WE HAVE BEEN TAKING ACTIVE STEPS TO ENCOURAGE ALL THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT TO GIVE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE REGARDING THE BUILDING AND OPERATION OF THE STATION.

+THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS IN CLOSE AND REGULAR COMMUNICATION WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THROUGH THEM WITH THE FRENCH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS, ABOUT THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION LEADING TO REASSURANCE,+ HE SAID.

FURTHERMORE, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES WAS CURRENTLY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM HOLDING DISCUSSIONS WITH VARIOUS AUTHORITIES.

ON THE PROVISION OF A CONTINGENCY PLAN, MR JACOBS SAID THAT IN MID-1985, LONG BEFORE CHERNOBYL, THE GOVERNMENT ENGAGED THE SERVICES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY AT HARWELL TO UNDERTAKE FIVE STUDIES COVERING THE BACKGROUND RADIATION MONITORING PROGRAMME, RISK ASSESSMENT, PUBLIC REACTION AND EDUCATION AND APPROPRIATE CONTINGENCY PLANNING.

+IT IS ENVISAGED THAT ALL THE CONSULTANTS' STUDIES WILL BE COMPLETED BY MID-1987 AND THE INTENTION IS TO PUBLISH REPORTS FROM THE CONSULTANTS IN DUE COURSE,+ HE SAID.

AS ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS IN RELATION TO THIS PROJECT WERE UNLIKELY TO BE IN PLACE BEFORE OCTOBER THIS YEAR, MR JACOBS SAID THAT UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS COULD COMPLETE THEIR VISITS AND CONSIDERATION OF THEIR FINDINGS WELL BEFORE THE RELEVANT DATE.

+IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE SEEMS NO NEED TO SUGGEST THAT THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS BE DELAYED.+

REFERRING TO REMARKS BY SOME MEMBERS CONCERNING THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY, MR JACOBS SAID IT WAS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT THE PARTIES TO THE JOINT VENTURE ENVISAGED THAT GENERAL ELECTRIC SHOULD BECOME INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT.

/ALTHOUGH

ALTHOUGH IT WAS ALWAYS ACCEPTED THAT THERE WOULD BE NEGOTIATIONS WITH GENERAL ELECTRIC, IT WAS RECOGNISED THAT ANY AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO WITH THAT COMPANY WOULD HAVE TO BE ON COMPETITIVE TERMS. HAD GENERAL ELECTRIC NOT BEEN ABLE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS, BOTH IN PRICE AND SPECIFICATIONS, THEN THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY WOULD NO DOUBT HAVE LOOKED ELSEWHERE.

ON COMMENTS THAT SUFFICIENT INFORMATION WAS NOT BEING PROVIDED TO COUNCIL MEMBERS, MR JACOBS SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WAS ENCOURAGING AND URGING THOSE WHO WERE DIRECTLY INVOLVED TO SPEAK TO COUNCILLORS.

+WE DO FEEL THAT DIRECT INFORMATION WILL BE THE MOST HELPFUL TO MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL, BUT CERTAINLY THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT SHIRKING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES,+ HE SAID.

A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION HAD BEEN GIVEN AT MEETINGS AND BRIEFINGS, HE SAID.

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MEMBERS CALL FOR DEFERMENT OF N-PLANT CONTRACT SIGNING
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UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) STRONGLY CALLED FOR A DEFERMENT OF THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS FOR THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PROJECT UNTIL THEY HAD EXAMINED ALL THE FACTS AND FORMULATED THEIR ADVICE TO THE GOVERNMENT.

TWO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DELEGATIONS ARE TO LEAVE EARLY NEXT MONTH ON FACT-FINDING MISSIONS TO THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE TO ASSESS OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS IN SIMILAR PLANTS AND THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THEM, AS WELL AS CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR DENSELY POPULATED AREAS WITHIN 50 KILOMETRES OF SUCH PLANTS.

IN TODAY'S ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON +HONG KONG AND THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PROJECT+, 27 UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS SPOKE ON VARIOUS ASPECTS.

LEADING THE DEBATE, THE HON MARIA TAM URGED THAT NO CONTRACT BE SIGNED BEFORE THE DELEGATIONS HAD RETURNED, REPORTED TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND FORMULATED THEIR VIEWS +OR ELSE THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT MAY NOT BE PROPERLY ADVISED ON THIS ISSUE+.

COUNCILLORS MUST BE GIVEN TIME TO FIND THE BEST OPTION, SHE SAID, NOTING THAT THE MAIN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS BETWEEN THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY, GEC AND FRAMATONE WOULD BE SIGNED IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER.

/MANY QUESTIONS

MANY QUESTIONS NEEDED TO BE ANSWERED, SHE SAID, AND CONFLICTING INFORMATION PRESENTED BY THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY AND ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUPS VERIFIED BEFORE A MAJORITY DECISION COULD BE TAKEN.

MISS TAM DISMISSED CRITICISM AGAINST THE FACT-FINDING MISSIONS, SAYING THAT TO LOOK AT THIS AS A PURELY POLITICAL ISSUE WAS A NARROW POINT OF VIEW.

+WE MUST FIRST VERIFY THE FACTS PUT BEFORE US AND THEN MAKE JUDGEMENTS ON IT, AND IF WE SHOULD FIND THE SAFETY AND CONTINGENCY MEASURES UNSATISFACTORY, WE SHALL SAY SO,+ SHE SAID.

THE TASK OF COUNCILLORS, SHE STRESSED, WAS TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT WHAT WAS THE BEST OPTION AVAILABLE TO US THAT WILL BEST SAFEGUARD THE INTEREST OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE, +OR ELSE WE ARE NO MORE CONTRIBUTORY THAN PRESSURE GROUPS+.

MISS TAM SAID AT PRESENT THERE WAS NO CONSENSUS ON WHAT WAS THE BEST OPTION.

SOME THOUGHT THAT NUCLEAR PLANTS OF THE DAYA BAY TYPE ARE INTRINSICALLY SAFE BUT HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY OF A CHINESE TEAM OF EXPERTS AND ENGINEERS= SOME ADVOCATED TURNING DAYA BAY INTO A COAL-FIXED PLANT= SOME BELIEVED EDUCATION PROGRAMMES MAY HELP LEAD TO ACCEPTANCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY= SOME BELIEVE NUCLEAR ENERGY PROVIDED NO SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS BUT THE RISK, NO MATTER HOW SMALL, WAS NOT WORTH TAKING= WHILE SOME BELIEVED, FOR GOOD REASONS, THE PLANS SHOULD BE SCRAPPED ALTOGETHER.

+WE MUST EXAMINE THESE OPTIONS BEFORE COMING TO A MAJORITY DECISION ON WHICH IS REALLY THE BEST ONE,+ MISS TAM SAID.

CITING SOME PLUS FACTORS OF THE PROJECT, MISS TAM SAID: +I TRUST THAT IN THE YEARS LEADING UP TO AND DURING THE SINO-BRITISH NEGOTIATION ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, THE FACT THAT THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY IS INVESTING U.S. \$400 MILLION ON THIS PROJECT HELPED TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENCE OF FOREIGN INVESTORS IN HONG KONG+.

THE FRENCH PLANTS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE A GOOD TRACK RECORD OF BEING SAFE, AND THERE WAS ALSO A NEED TO DIVERSIFY THE SOURCE OF FULL SUPPLY TO HONG KONG WHICH IS VULNERABLE TO THE COST OF TOTALLY IMPORTED COAL AND OIL.

SHE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT PARTICIPATION BY CHINA LIGHT AND POWER ENSURED THAT A HONG KONG COMPANY MAY HAVE A SAY IN THE CONTROL OF THE PLANT AND ON MATTERS OF SAFETY.

+SO LET US NOT FORGET THAT IN THOSE DIFFICULT AND UNCERTAIN YEARS THE DAYA BAY SITE ON THE MAP WAS MARKED WITH A PLUS SIGN RATHER THAN A MINUS SIGN, AND FOR GOOD REASONS,+ SHE SAID.

/SHE NOTED

SHE NOTED THAT IN YEARS PAST THE DAYA BAY PROJECT HAD A LOW PROFILE, BUT THE PICTURE HAD CHANGED AND WE NEEDED TO REASSESS THE SITUATION.

MISS TAM NOTED THAT MANY QUESTIONS HAD BEEN RAISED DURING THE PAST TWO MONTHS ON THE SAFETY OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT, THE EVACUATION OF HONG KONG IN THE EVENT OF A MISHAP, THE MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY OF CHINESE EXPERTS AND ENGINEERS, THE RISK OF HUMAN ERROR, THE ADVANTAGES OF NUCLEAR GENERATED ELECTRICITY AS AGAINST COAL-FIRED PLANTS, AS WELL AS THE ECONOMICS OF NUCLEAR PLANT POWER.

+THESE QUESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT AND MUST BE ANSWERED+.

TO HELP FIND ANSWERS, THE UMELCO PUBLIC UTILITIES PANEL, OF WHICH SHE IS CONVENOR, MET JVC ENGINEERS AND CHINA LIGHT AND POWER REPRESENTATIVES. THE PANEL ALSO MET WITH MR WALTER PATTERSON AND HELD AN OPEN MEETING WITH JVC ENGINEERS.

THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS PASSED BETWEEN THE PANEL AND THE JVC, THE ECONOMIC SERVICES BRANCH, THE LIST OF CONTRACTS TO BE SIGNED BETWEEN JVC AND THE FRENCH AND OTHER MANUFACTURERS AND CONTRACTORS, ARE PUBLISHED TODAY FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION.

MISS TAM SAID THE NUCLEAR OPTION FOR BOTH HONG KONG AND CHINA COULD NOT BE RULED OUT FOREVER.

+MANY OF US WHO TRAVEL INTO CHINA KNOW THAT WITHOUT A SUBSTANTIAL AND CONSTANT SUPPLY OF ENERGY, HER MODERNISATION WILL NOT GET OFF THE GROUND.

+ON THE OTHER HAND, HONG KONG HAS TO IMPORT ALL HER FUEL SUPPLIES AND REMAINS EXPOSED TO THE EVENTUALLY RISING COSTS OF FOSSIL FUEL,+ SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT NUCLEAR POWER TODAY ACCOUNTED FOR 30 PER CENT OF ENERGY GENERATED IN JAPAN WHICH SUFFERED THE TRAUMA OF NAGASAKE AND HIROSHIMA IN 1945, AND WAS PLANNING TO RAISE THIS TO 45 PER CENT.

LIKE HONG KONG, JAPAN IS ALSO VULNERABLE TO THE FLUCTUATION OF IMPORTED FUEL PRICES, SHE ADDED.

MISS TAM OBSERVED THAT MANY LOCAL UNIVERSITY AND VISITING NUCLEAR SCIENTISTS BELIEVE THAT NUCLEAR ENERGY IS INTRINSICALLY SAFE, BUT THEY WERE ALSO AWARE HONG KONG PEOPLE WERE GENERALLY NOT READY TO ACCEPT THIS SO SOON AFTER CHERNOBYL.

SHE SAID SHE HOPED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO WELL INFORMED DEBATE ON THE ISSUE.

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STRONG OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT VITAL
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THE HONG KONG PARTNERS IN THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PROJECT, HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (HKNIC), SHOULD RETAIN A FRONT ROLE IN THE DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT OF THE PLANT THROUGHOUT ITS LIFE SPAN, THE HON S.L. CHEN TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE ARRANGEMENTS WHEREBY HKNIC WOULD RETAIN SOME MEASURE OF INFLUENCE OVER THE POST-COMMISSIONING ACTIVITIES DURING THE FIRST TEN YEARS, WAS NOT ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY, HE SAID IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE.

MR CHEN SAID HE HAD NO WORRIES ABOUT THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ASPECTS OF THE POWER PLANT, WHICH HE CONSIDERED +REASONABLE AND TECHNICALLY ACCEPTABLE+.

+MY REAL CONCERN IS IN THE POST-COMMISSIONING MANAGEMENT OF THE PLANT, THAT IS OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE,+ HE SAID, NOTING THAT THE THREE MILE ISLAND INVESTIGATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES HAD REVEALED SIGNIFICANT DEFICIENCIES IN OPERATIONAL SAFETY.

+I WOULD FEEL HAPPIER IF HKNIC, BEING A PARTNER OF THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY, WERE TO PLAY A FRONT ROLE IN THE ON-GOING DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT OF THE POWER PLANT.

+THE PRESENT TEN-YEAR ARRANGEMENT SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO COVER THE ENTIRE LIFE PERIOD OF THE PLANT,+ HE SAID.

THIS, HE ADDED, WOULD ENSURE CONTINUED INJECTION OF EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE FROM OUTSIDE, WHICH WAS IMPORTANT AS DAYA BAY WOULD BE THE FIRST COMMERCIAL REACTOR TO BE OPERATING IN CHINA.

UNDER THE JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENTS, STAFF WHO WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD RECEIVE INTENSIVE TRAINING IN FRANCE, HE NOTED.

THESE TRAINED PERSONNEL WOULD OPERATE THE PLANT FOR THE FIRST FIVE YEARS UNDER A STATION MANAGER CHOSEN BY HKNIC. HE WOULD BE ASSISTED BY A DEPUTY FROM THE CHINESE AUTHORITY WHO, AT THE END OF THE FIRST FIVE YEARS, WOULD BECOME THE MANAGER OF THE PLANT.

MR CHEN SAID HE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE AN INDEPENDENT BODY SET UP TO MONITOR THE PLANT'S PERFORMANCE, ESPECIALLY OPERATIONAL SAFETY, AS WAS THE CASE IN OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES EMPLOYING NUCLEAR ENERGY.

HE SUGGESTED AN AUTHORITATIVE BODY, LIKE THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY, SHOULD BE ENGAGED TO ACT AS AN INDEPENDENT MONITOR FOR TEN YEARS SO AS TO ENABLE AN UNBIASED RECORD ON OPERATIONAL SAFETY TO BE ESTABLISHED.

/SUCH RECORDS,

SUCH RECORDS, HE SAID, COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO INSTILL PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.

MR CHEN SAID THAT FURTHER DOWN THE STATION MANAGEMENT LINE THE IMPORTANT EXECUTIVE POSITION OF +REACTOR PHYSICIST+ OUGHT TO BE EMPHASISED.

+BEING THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFE OPERATION OF THE REACTOR, HE MUST HAVE UNCOMPROMISED AUTHORITY TO SHUT DOWN THE PLANT WHEN HE SEES AN IMMINENT DANGER IN THE REACTOR OPERATION, AND HIS DECISION SHOULD NOT BE OVERRIDDEN BY OTHER SYSTEM CONSIDERATIONS.+

THIS, HE SAID, WOULD HELP ELIMINATE ERRONEOUS OR UNTIMELY DECISIONS IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

MR CHEN CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT WHILE THE DANGER OF A DAYA BAY NUCLEAR FALL-OUT ON HONG KONG WAS FULLY APPRECIATED, +WE MUST NOT LOSE SIGHT OF A POLITICAL FALL-OUT FROM DAYA BAY WHICH COULD BE JUST AS DAMAGING.+

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PUBLIC SHOULD BE GIVEN MORE INFORMATION
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HONG KONG PEOPLE'S FEAR AND UNEASINESS OVER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PLANT AROSE MAINLY FROM A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROJECT, THE HON WONG PO-YAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

+IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS IMPERATIVE TO CONVEY FACTUAL INFORMATION ON THIS MATTER TO THEM,+ HE SAID DURING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT.

MR WONG SAID THAT SINCE AN ATOMIC BOMB COULD FLATTEN A CITY, PEOPLE ASSUMED THAT A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WOULD HAVE AN EQUALLY DREADFUL DESTRUCTIVE POWER IF IT SHOULD +EXPLODE+.

+HOWEVER, IF THEY KNOW THAT THE URANIUM 235 ABLE TO INCUR NUCLEAR FISSION FOR THE ATOMIC BOMB IS OF A VERY HIGH CONCENTRATION, AND THE CONCENTRATION OF THE U-235 USED IN A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AS FUEL IS ONLY 3 PER CENT UP TO 7 PER CENT AND WILL NOT 'EXPLODE', THEIR FEAR SHOULD VANISH,+ HE SAID.

+OF COURSE, LEAKING OF RADIOACTIVITY IS A POSSIBILITY, BUT THERE ARE MEANS OF PREVENTION,+ HE ADDED.

THEREFORE, MR WONG SAID, HONG KONG PEOPLE NEEDED A GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACTS OF NUCLEAR POWER, AND IT SHOULD BE DEMANDED THAT THE DAYA BAY POWER PLANT MUST HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE SAFETY SYSTEM.

/+THIS IS

+THIS IS A RESPONSIBILITY WHICH THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT AVOID,+ HE SAID.

HE DESCRIBED THE ACTION TAKEN TO SEND DELEGATIONS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TO EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES AS +REALISTIC AND RESPONSIBLE+, AND HOPED THE PUBLIC WOULD VIEW THEIR REPORT WITH AN OBJECTIVE AND UNBIASED ATTITUDE.

+HONG KONG IS A CITY WITH A REASONABLY HIGH LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT AND MATURITY IN CULTURE AND EDUCATION.

+WITH THEIR INTELLIGENCE AND EAGERNESS TO LEARN, THE PUBLIC HAVE A STRONG POWER OF OBSERVATION SCIENTIFICALLY, AND THE ABILITY TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, AS A STUDENT OF NATURAL SCIENCE AND AN INDUSTRIALIST, MR WONG PERSONALLY CONSIDERED THAT NUCLEAR SCIENCE WAS ONE OF MANKIND'S GREATEST SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 20TH CENTURY AND THAT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS REPRESENTED AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS IN APPLYING NUCLEAR POWER TO PEACEFUL USES.

HE SAID THAT UP TO THE END OF 1985 THERE WERE 536 NUCLEAR POWER UNITS IN THE WORLD WITH A TOTAL CAPACITY OF 413 281 MEGAWATTS. ANOTHER 116 WERE PLANNED.

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NEED TO PROMOTE EDUCATION ON NUCLEAR ENERGY STRESSED
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROMOTE EDUCATION ON NUCLEAR POWER AND IMPLEMENT PROPOSALS BY THE UNITED KINGDOM ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY TO ALLEVIATE THE WORRIES OF HONG KONG PEOPLE OVER THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE DAYA BAY POWER PLANT, THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE, MR YEUNG ALSO SUGGESTED CHINA TO PROMPTLY ANNOUNCE IN DETAIL THE SAFETY REGULATIONS FORMULATED, IN ADDITION TO HER ASSURANCE OF IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY OF 'SAFETY FIRST, QUALITY FIRST'.

CHINA MIGHT SEND NUCLEAR EXPERTS TO HONG KONG TO HOLD EXHIBITIONS ON THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE POWER PLANT, HE SAID.

MR YEUNG CALLED ON THE PUBLIC TO KEEP CALM AND TO PLACE THEIR HOPES ON THE LEGCO FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS TO THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE, WHICH WOULD COLLECT INFORMATION ON SAFETY MEASURES AND CONTINGENCY PLANS OF NUCLEAR PLANTS THERE.

+IT IS HOPED THAT AFTER GOING THROUGH AN OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT, THE INFORMATION COLLECTED WILL BE USEFUL TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED IN MAKING A WISE DECISION,+ HE SAID.

/MR YEUNG

MR YEUNG ALSO STRESSED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SAFETY PLANNING AND MAINTENANCE, ADDING THAT THE TRAINING OF CHINESE TECHNICIANS TO MANAGE THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND THE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF THE PLANT WERE EQUALLY IMPORTANT.

+ALTHOUGH IT IS UP TO CHINA TO DECIDE WHETHER THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT SHOULD BE BUILT, SHE SHOULD TAKE AN OBJECTIVE APPROACH IN UNDERSTANDING THE REASONS OF OBJECTION PUT UP BY THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

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'RELAY WORRIES TO CHINA THROUGH JLG'
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RELAY LOCAL PEOPLE'S WORRIES AND DOUBTS ON THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT TO THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES THROUGH THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT LIAISON GROUP, THE HON RITA FAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, SHE SAID SHE HOPED THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES WOULD UNDERSTAND THE FEELINGS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE AND CONSIDER THE INTRODUCTION OF MEASURES WHICH WOULD ALLAY THEIR CONCERN.

TO THIS END, MRS FAN SUGGESTED THAT APPROPRIATE SPECIALISTS LIVING IN HONG KONG SHOULD BE ALLOWED, IN AN INDEPENDENT CAPACITY, TO TAKE PART IN MONITORING THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE NUCLEAR PLANT.

SHE SAID THAT MANY PEOPLE IN HONG KONG STILL HAD RESERVATIONS AS TO THE CURRENT MANAGEMENT ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE WITHIN CHINA.

+ALTHOUGH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY (HKNIC) HAVE ASSURED US THAT THE COMPANY WILL, DURING THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF OPERATION, EMPLOY BELGIAN SPECIALISTS WHO ARE EXPERIENCED IN MANAGING NUCLEAR PLANTS TO TAKE CHARGE OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PLANT, THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ARE STILL DOUBTFUL.+

THIS IS BECAUSE EXPERIENCE HAD SHOWN THAT SOME FOREIGN MANAGEMENT STAFF WORKING IN CHINA HAD ENCOUNTERED LIMITATIONS IN DISCHARGING THEIR DUTY.

THEREFORE, MRS FAN SAID, THE CONCERN FELT BY HONG KONG PEOPLE IN THIS RESPECT WAS NOT UNFOUNDED.

MRS FAN CRITICISED THOSE WHO WERE CHARACTERISING THE PLANT AS AN OGRE THAT WAS THREATENING TO OVERWHELM HONG KONG.

/SHE SAID

SHE SAID SHE DID NOT THINK IT WAS OBJECTIVE AND REASONABLE TO AGGRAVATE THE CONCERN OF LOCAL PEOPLE IN SUCH A WAY BEFORE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION HAD BEEN PROVIDED.

FURTHERMORE, SHE QUESTIONED IF IT WAS PROPER FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS TO ENCOURAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS TO SUPPORT SIGNATURE CAMPAIGNS OPPOSING THE PLANT.

PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS WERE AT ONLY AN EARLY STAGE OF LEARNING, AND HOW COULD THEY HAVE ANY PROPER KNOWLEDGE ABOUT A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, SHE ASKED.

SHE DOUBTED IF THERE WAS ANY MEANING IN SECURING THEIR SIGNATURES IN SUCH A WAY.

HOWEVER, SHE PRAISED SOME LOCAL NEWSPAPERS FOR PRODUCING FEATURE ARTICLES IN ADDITION TO THEIR NEWS COVERAGE ON DAYA BAY. SHE DESCRIBED IT AS AN UNBIASED AND OBJECTIVE MANNER OF PRESENTING INFORMATION ON THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

+THIS IS THE GENUINE WAY TO HELP THE PUBLIC TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM, I HOPE THE PRESS WILL CONTINUE THEIR WORK IN THIS RESPECT, SO AS TO PREVENT THE PUBLIC FROM BEING INFLUENCED BY BIASED INFORMATION AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO ANALYSE AND JUDGE THIS MATTER WITH A RATIONAL AND COOL ATTITUDE,+ SHE SAID.

MRS FAN SUPPORTED THE LEGCO FACT-FINDING VISITS TO THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE, AND SAID THE REPORT OF THE DELEGATIONS SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC.

IN THE INTEREST OF HONG KONG PEOPLE, SHE HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD FORWARD THE REPORT TO THE CHINESE AND BRITISH AUTHORITIES.

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INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR INSPECTORATE PROPOSED
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AN INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS INSPECTORATE HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO CLOSELY MONITOR THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT THROUGHOUT ITS LIFE SPAN.

MAKING THE SUGGESTION, THE HON CHENG HON-KWAN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT PERMANENT ON-GOING SUPERVISION AND MONITORING WAS VITAL DESPITE THE INTENSIVE TRAINING TO BE GIVEN TO OPERATING STAFF AND THE CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT OF THE FRENCH FRAMATONE COMPANY IN THE OPERATION OF THE PLANT DURING THE FIRST 10 YEARS.

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR CHENG ALSO STRESSED THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY HAD A DUTY TO ALLAY THE UNDERSTANDABLE FEARS OF HONG KONG RESIDENTS, AND CALLED FOR THE PUBLIC RELEASE OF:

- * THE FEASIBILITY REPORT AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT REPORT COMPILED BY CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY AND THE GUANGDONG POWER COMPANY;
- * THE REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT PREPARED BY BURNS AND ROE;
- * THE HARWELL REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT STUDY OF THE PROBABILITY OF ACCIDENTS AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR HONG KONG;
- * THE HARWELL REPORT ON THE DESIGN OF AN OUTLINE CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR HONG KONG; AND
- * THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND INITIAL SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORT PREPARED BY THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY.

MR CHENG SAID THE AUTHORITIES SHOULD APPRECIATE THAT THE FEAR AND ANXIETY OF THE PUBLIC OVER THE DAYA BAY PROJECT HAD FAR REACHING IMPLICATIONS FOR HONG KONG'S STABILITY AND PROSPERITY +AND THEIR VIEWS SHOULD NOT BE LIGHTLY DISMISSED+.

HE NOTED THAT, UNLIKE THE DAYA BAY CASE, IT WAS NORMAL PRACTICE IN OTHER COUNTRIES FOR A SAFETY ASSESSMENT REPORT TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC FOLLOWED BY A PUBLIC HEARING THROUGH THE LICENSING PROCEDURE.

+I THEREFORE CONSIDER IT LOGICAL FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG TO BE PROVIDED WITH DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE SAFETY ASPECT TO WHICH THEY HAVE THE RIGHT IN VIEW OF THE CLOSENESS OF THE INSTALLATION,+ HE SAID.

AS A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER, MR CHENG FULLY APPRECIATED THAT A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WAS AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX INSTALLATION INVOLVING MULTI-DISCIPLINES OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGNED TO THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL SAFETY STANDARD.

NONETHELESS, HE BELIEVED THAT EVENTS NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE ORIGINAL DESIGN COULD WELL HAPPEN IN A PLANT SUCH AS WHAT OCCURRED IN THE ACCIDENT AT THREE MILE ISLAND TMI-2 WHICH WAS A TYPE OF REACTOR SIMILAR TO THAT INTENDED FOR DAYA BAY.

+IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY TO INCORPORATE SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS IN THE DESIGN AND SPECIAL PROCEDURES IN THE OPERATION,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT SCIENTIFIC OR TECHNICAL JUSTIFICATION HAD YET TO BE GIVEN THAT THE DAYA BAY PLANT DESIGN WOULD NOT REQUIRE EVACUATION BEYOND A 10-KILOMETRE RADIUS OF THE PLANT IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT.

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CHINA SHOULD CONSIDER HK RESIDENTS' CONCERN

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HONG KONG RESIDENTS' DEEP CONCERN AND FEARS OVER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PROJECT HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY WEIGHED AND ASSESSED BY THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT, THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

+THE MAGNITUDE OF THE POLITICAL RISKS WILL NEED CAREFUL EXAMINATION,+ HE SAID DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT.

THE QUESTIONS FACING CHINA, HE SAID, WAS WHETHER OR NOT TO PROCEED WITH THE SIGNING OF THE CONTRACTS FOR THE PROJECT AND TO WHAT EXTENT SUCH A DECISION WOULD BE LINKED WITH THE POST-1997 STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG, AS WELL AS THE GENERAL CONFIDENCE OF LOCAL RESIDENTS.

HE ARGUED THAT THE IMPENDING SIGNING OF THE VARIOUS CONTRACTS WOULD HAVE GENERATED OVERWHELMINGLY MUCH MORE SUPPORT THAN OPPOSITION IN HONG KONG, HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT.

BECAUSE OF CHERNOBYL, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE CONCERN AND STRONG DISSIDENCE AT THE PROSPECTS OF HAVING A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AT DAYA BAY, HE SAID.

MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID A GREAT MANY RESIDENTS WERE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THE ECONOMICS OF THE PROJECT -- EVEN THOUGH IN TERMS OF PUBLIC FINANCE THIS WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR.

WHAT MANY RESIDENTS WERE SAYING, HE SAID, WAS THAT NO NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WAS AS YET FAIL-SAFE, WHETHER IT WAS OF THE CHERNOBYL RBMIC TYPE OR THE FRENCH PWR TYPE WHICH HAD BEEN SELECTED FOR DAYA BAY.

+THE WIDESPREAD FEAR OF NUCLEAR RADIATION FALL-OUT IN CASE OF ANY NUCLEAR POWER ACCIDENT WITH ATTENDANT GENETIC CONSEQUENCES TO HUMAN LIFE IS TODAY VERY MUCH A FACT OF LIFE IN HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

+THE POLITICAL FACTOR OF POST-1997 HONG KONG MAY WELL BE COMPOUNDED BY THE POSSIBILITY OF THE NUCLEAR RADIATION FACTOR,+ HE ADDED.

MR CHEONG-LEEN NOTED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAD IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS BEEN SEEKING TO LEARN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, AND HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE COUNCIL'S DECISION TO SEND TWO FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS OVERSEAS WAS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY.

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'POSTPONE N-PLANT CONTRACT SIGNING'

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, DR THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) URGED THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT TO POSTPONE THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS SO AS TO GIVE HONG KONG PEOPLE MORE TIME TO CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS.

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT, HE SAID LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS WOULD MAKE PUBLIC ALL INFORMATION GATHERED DURING THEIR IMPENDING FACT-FINDING MISSION OVERSEAS TO ASSESS OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS IN SIMILAR PLANTS, AS WELL AS ASSOCIATED RISKS AND SAFETY AND CONTINGENCY MEASURES.

DR CHIU DID NOT RULE OUT A VISIT TO BEIJING AT A LATER STAGE, AND URGED THE CHINA LIGHT AND POWER CO. AND THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT CO. TO INFLUENCE THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE CO. TO POSTPONE THE SIGNING OF CONTRACTS FOR THE TIME BEING.

IF THE FACTS OBTAINED REVEAL THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT 50 KILOMETRES AWAY FROM DENSELY POPULATED HONG KONG MAY ENDANGER OUR LIVES, HE SAID, +WE WILL WORK TOGETHER TO REACH SOME PROPER DECISIONS AND FORMULATE STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH THE DAYA BAY ISSUE FOR THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR COMMUNITY+.

+IF NECESSARY, A TRIP TO BEIJING WILL BE CONSIDERED TO ENABLE US TO REFLECT OUR WORRIES AND STRONG FEELINGS TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND TO APPEAL TO THEM TO RECONSIDER THEIR PLANS IN THE LIGHT OF THE ADVERSE EFFECTS ON THE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

DR CHIU SAID THAT EVEN IF THE COLLECTED FACTS INDICATED THAT THE PLANT WAS NOT AS UNDESIRABLE AS CONSIDERED TO BE, +WE STILL URGE CHINA TO ENSURE THAT THE DAYA BAY PLANT IS UP TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARD AND THAT THE MAINTENANCE AND CONTINGENCY BE OVERSEEN AND CLOSELY MONITORED BY A JOINT COMMITTEE WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF HONG KONG AND OVERSEAS EXPERTS.+

EARLIER, DR CHIU NOTED THAT LACK OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT HAD CREATED FEAR AND WORRY IN HONG KONG.

+THIS ISSUE HAS DEVELOPED FROM AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUE TO A POLITICAL ISSUE WHICH MAY LEAD TO A CONFIDENCE CRISIS,+ HE SAID.

+WE HAVE BEEN TRYING VERY HARD TO SECURE THE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF THIS TERRITORY, BUT WORRIES ABOUT THE DAYA BAY PLANT WILL OFFSET ALL OUR EFFORTS.

+THIS IS TOO HIGH A PRICE TO PAY,+ HE SAID.

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CALL TO DEFER DAYA BAY PROJECT
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THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PLANT PROJECT SHOULD BE DEFERRED FOR A YEAR OR TWO TO GIVE HONG KONG PEOPLE A CHANCE TO COOL OFF, THE HON CHUNG PUI-LAM SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE ISSUE, MR CHUNG SAID DURING THE SUGGESTED INTERIM PERIOD, CAREFUL DELIBERATION COULD BE MADE.

+ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN TO ACCEDE TO PUBLIC REQUESTS AND PROVIDE THEM WITH INFORMATION ON THE NUCLEAR PLANT ISSUE.

+RELIABLE AND PRACTICAL CONTINGENCY AND EVACUATION PLANS SHOULD ALSO BE DRAWN UP.

+WHEN THE PUBLIC HAS LEARNED MORE ABOUT THE SUBJECT, THEIR FEARS TOWARDS NUCLEAR ENERGY WOULD BE REDUCED,+ HE SAID.

MR CHUNG SAID IT WAS EVIDENT THAT UNLESS CHINA GAVE UP ITS MULTI-MILLION-DOLLAR INVESTMENT IN THE PROJECT VOLUNTARILY OR MOVED THE PLANT TO A FURTHER SITE, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR HONG KONG PEOPLE TO PERSUADE CHINA TO CHANGE ITS MIND.

HE WAS OF THE OPINION THAT THE FERVENT ANTI-NUCLEAR SENTIMENTS IN HONG KONG SHOULD BE HANDLED CAREFULLY BY BOTH CHINA AND HONG KONG.

MR CHUNG LISTED SIX POINTS FOR GOVERNMENT'S SERIOUS CONSIDERATION:

- * GIVE SPECIFIC EXPLANATION ON EFFECTIVE PREVENTIVE MEASURES AGAINST POSSIBLE HAZARDS WHICH A NUCLEAR PLANT MIGHT HAVE ON HONG KONG;
- * PREPARE AN ADEQUATE CONTINGENCY PLAN IF THERE WAS A NUCLEAR CATASTROPHE;
- * CALCULATE THE COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF A NUCLEAR PLANT IN RELATION TO ITS SETBACKS;
- * URGE BRITAIN AND CHINA TO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE TOGETHER AND FORMULATE REMEDIAL POLICIES;
- * CONSIDER INVITING THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY TO MONITOR THE MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AS WELL AS THE PERFORMANCE OF STAFF OF THE PLANT SO THAT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS OF THE PUBLIC REGARDING SAFETY WOULD BE REDUCED;

/* ENABLE BETTER

* ENABLE BETTER PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND SENSIBLE JUDGEMENT ON THE PROS AND CONS OF THE EFFECTS OF NUCLEAR PLANTS.

WITHOUT SUBSTANTIAL DATA TO BACK SUCH ARGUMENTS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAD FAILED TO SEE THE ISSUE IN PERSPECTIVE.

FOR THIS PURPOSE, MR CHUNG SAID HE STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF SETTING UP FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS BY MEMBERS TO VISIT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

HE SAID HE BELIEVED THESE DELEGATIONS WOULD OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ON SAFETY STANDARDS AND THE OPERATION OF NUCLEAR PLANTS.

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PUBLIC SHOULD LOOK AT ISSUE OBJECTIVELY

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THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG SHOULD LOOK AT THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ISSUE +OBJECTIVELY AND WITHOUT PANIC,+ THE HON HO SAI-CHU SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MUCH OF THE STRONG FEELING GENERATED HAD BEEN EMOTIVE AND WITHOUT PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS INVOLVED, HE SAID IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT.

+BLIND OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR THE SAKE OF OPPOSITION IS WRONG AS SCIENCE HAS TO MOVE FORWARD IF IT IS TO BE OF ANY BENEFIT TO MANKIND, ESPECIALLY A PROJECT THAT WILL ON COMPLETION BRING IMMENSE ADVANTAGE TO THE SURROUNDING REGION AND ASSIST CHINA'S MODERNISATION WHICH WILL INEVITABLY BENEFIT HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

MR HO AGREED THAT MORE INFORMATION AND FACTS WERE NEEDED FROM THE BEST EXPERTS IN NUCLEAR ENERGY BEFORE IT COULD BE DECIDED WHETHER IT WAS IN FACT SAFE TO PROCEED WITH THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, THOUGH THIS WAS A DECISION WITHIN THE SOLE DISCRETION AND JURISDICTION OF CHINA.

+NEVERTHELESS, I STRONGLY URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO SEEK AND PROVIDE THE NECESSARY INFORMATION SO THAT ALL MAY UNDERSTAND WHAT ACTUALLY IS INVOLVED AND BE ABLE TO ASSESS THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE OPERATION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WITHIN A SHORT DISTANCE FROM A HIGHLY POPULATED AREA SUCH AS HONG KONG,+ SAID MR HO.

HE ADDED: +AS FAR AS I AM AWARE, CHINA IS SYMPATHETIC TO OUR ANXIETY INSOFAR AS DAYA BAY IS CONCERNED, BUT THE REASONS FOR OPPOSING THE PROJECT MUST BE REASONABLE AND RATIONAL.+

/MR HO SAID

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MR HO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE WERE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CHERNOBYL PLANT AND THE PROPOSED DAYA BAY PLANT AND THAT THE WEAKNESSES AT CHERNOBYL HAD PROBABLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE DISASTER THERE.

THIS CONCLUSION, HE ADDED, WAS SUPPORTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AUTHORITY WHICH STATED THAT 'FROM THE INFORMATION RECEIVED ON THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT NEW PHYSICAL PHENOMENA IMPORTANT TO SAFETY HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED THAT WOULD REQUIRE ACTION ON OTHER TYPES OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT'.

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'VERBAL ASSURANCES NOT GOOD ENOUGH'
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VERBAL ASSURANCES ON THE SAFETY OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PLANT WILL NOT DISPEL THE PUBLIC'S WORRIES, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SO FAR, ASSURANCES GIVEN ON SAFETY MEASURES OF THE POWER PLANT WERE BASED ON SAFETY PLANS WHICH HAVE NOT EVEN BEEN FORMULATED YET, HE SAID IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE HARWELL CONSULTANCY REPORT THAT WAS STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS AND MAKING TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS WOULD NOT BE COMPLETED UNTIL JULY NEXT YEAR.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT BY THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER COMPANY COULD NOT BE RELEASED BECAUSE IT WAS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, HE SAID.

+UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, HOW CAN THE AUTHORITIES STILL GUARANTEE SAFETY WITH FULL CONFIDENCE?+ HE ASKED.

WHAT WORRIED PEOPLE MOST WERE HUMAN ERRORS, HE SAID.

NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS WERE SO FRIGHTENING NOT JUST BECAUSE OF DEATH AND INJURY BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE LONG LASTING DAMAGE DONE BY RADIATION.

REFERRING TO ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS IN BUILDING THE PLANT, MR HUI SAID IN VIEW OF CURRENT DECREASING WORLD OIL PRICES, THE VALUE OF NUCLEAR PLANTS IN PROVIDING CHEAP ELECTRICITY WAS RELATIVELY REDUCED.

/+MOREOVER,

+MOREOVER, WE MUST NOTE THAT THE PUBLIC DO NOT SEEM TO APPRECIATE THE OFFER OF CHEAP ELECTRICITY CHARGES. WHAT THEY EMPHASISE TIME AND AGAIN IS 'SAFETY',+ HE SAID.

MR HUI HOPED THAT BOTH THE BRITISH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS CONCERNED ORGANISATIONS WOULD STUDY THE REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS AND MAKE PRUDENT DECISIONS -- EVEN IF IT MEANT SHELVEING THE DAYA BAY PROJECT.

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SIGNING SHOULD BE DEFERRED
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DR THE HON CONRAD LAM TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SAID THE SIGNING OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE DAYA BAY PROJECT SHOULD BE DEFERRED UNTIL THE RESULTS OF THE LEGCO FACT-FINDING TRIPS ON NUCLEAR SAFETY ARE MADE PUBLIC.

+IF SUBSEQUENTLY THE GENERAL OPINION IS STILL AGAINST THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NUCLEAR PLANT AT DAYA BAY, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD WITHDRAW THE APPROVAL FOR CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY TO BUY ELECTRICITY FROM CHINA,+ HE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY PROJECT.

IT SHOULD ALSO REFUSE TO ACT AS A GENERATOR FOR LOANS SECURED BY THE POWER COMPANY AND CANCEL THE LICENCE GRANTED TO THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY, HE ADDED.

WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG COULD NOT BE MAINTAINED, HE SAID.

DR LAM ALSO ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO EXPLAIN CLEARLY TO THE PUBLIC ALL PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT BE CAUSED BY THE PROJECT. HE MENTIONED MATTERS SUCH AS SAFETY, HEALTH, MONITORING OF THE PLANT, ELECTRICITY CHARGES, ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, INSURANCE AND LEGAL PROCEEDINGS IN RELATION TO ANY ACCIDENTS AT THE PLANT AND WHETHER NUCLEAR POWER WAS THE BEST SOURCE OF ENERGY FOR HONG KONG.

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EXERCISE POWERS TO OBTAIN N-PLANT INFORMATION
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAS BEEN CALLED ON TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ITS NEWLY ACQUIRED POWERS UNDER SECTION 9 OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POWERS AND PRIVILEGES) ORDINANCE TO COMPEL THE PRODUCTION OF ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS ON THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT.

THE APPEAL WAS MADE BY THE HON MARTIN LEE DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE ISSUE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/MR LEE POINTED

MR LEE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION BEFORE ANYONE COULD BEGIN TO LOOK AT ANY PROBLEM IN DEPTH. BUT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT SUCH INFORMATION WAS STILL DENIED TO THE COUNCIL AND THE PUBLIC.

HE CLAIMED THAT ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION WERE KEPT UNDER A SOLID CONTAINMENT AND SAID IF THIS CONTAINMENT OF SECRECY WAS NOT LIFTED, HE FELT MEMBERS SHOULD EXERCISE THEIR POWERS UNDER THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (POWERS AND PRIVILEGES) ORDINANCE TO OBTAIN THE INFORMATION.

MR LEE SAID THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE COULD ONLY LOOK AT THE PROBLEM WITH THEIR COMMON SENSE IN THE ABSENCE OF RELEVANT INFORMATION.

HE SAID THE PUBLIC KNEW THERE WAS NO 100 PER CENT SAFE NUCLEAR PLANT IN THE WORLD AND THAT ACCIDENTS COULD NOT BE RULED OUT IN ANY NUCLEAR PLANT, EITHER DUE TO DESIGN, OR LACK OF MANAGEMENT, OR BOTH.

THE PUBLIC KNEW THERE WAS NO EVACUATION PLAN PROVIDED FOR HONG KONG BY CHINA AND THAT IN CASE OF ANY MAJOR MISHAP, BECAUSE OF THE PROXIMITY OF THE PLANT TO HONG KONG, THERE WAS SIMPLY NO POSSIBLE ESCAPE FOR THEM, HE ADDED.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, MR LEE QUESTIONED WHETHER ANYONE COULD REALLY BLAME THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG FOR FEARING AS THEY DID, AND WHETHER THEY WERE BEING IRRATIONAL OR HYSTERICAL.

HE AGREED TO THE COMMENT THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION HAD TURNED INTO A POLITICAL ONE AND THAT IT WOULD HAVE AN UNDOUBTED BEARING ON THE CONFIDENCE OF HONG KONG PEOPLE IN THE LEADERS OF CHINA.

HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT IT WAS NO LONGER RELEVANT TO CONSIDER WHETHER SOME PEOPLE WERE TRYING TO TURN THIS ISSUE TO THEIR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE BECAUSE IT SHOULD BE OBVIOUS TO ALL BY NOW THAT THE MAJORITY OF HONG KONG PEOPLE DID HAVE A GENUINE FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES, AND THAT THEY HAD NO POLITICAL AMBITION WHATSOEVER.

+THEIR FEARS DEMAND RECOGNITION BY BOTH THE CHINESE AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS,+ HE STRESSED.

MR LEE ALSO PUT FORWARD HIS OWN SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE DAYA BAY PROJECT.

WE MUST NOT RUSH AHEAD WHEN THE WHOLE NUCLEAR WORLD HAS HALTED, HE SAID.

HE THEN ASKED THE RELEVANT PARTIES CONCERNED NOT TO PRETEND THAT THEY HAD NO RESPONSIBILITIES TO HONG KONG PEOPLE OVER THE PROJECT WHEN THEY HAD TAKEN A DIRECT OR INDIRECT PART IN IT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD BE IN CHINA'S INTEREST TO RE-ASSESS THE ECONOMICAL VIABILITY OF THE SCHEME IN THE LIGHT OF THE TREMENDOUS FALL IN THE COST OF COAL AND NATURAL GAS.

CONCERNING THE LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM CHERNOBYL, HE QUOTED THE WORDS OF AN US EXPERT: +THE QUESTION IS WHETHER WE UNDERSTAND OUR REACTORS WELL ENOUGH.+

HE REITERATED THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO WAIT, SAYING THAT AS MANY DESIGN CHANGES HAD BEEN MADE TO NUCLEAR REACTORS AS A RESULT OF THE THREE MILE ISLAND ACCIDENT, NO DOUBT EVEN MORE DESIGN CHANGES WOULD IN THE NEAR FUTURE BE MADE AS A RESULT OF CHERNOBYL.

+THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE FACTOR IN THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 'ONE COUNTRY TWO SYSTEMS' POLICY IS THE CONFIDENCE OF HONG KONG PEOPLE THAT THERE IS A FUTURE FOR THEM AFTER 1997- AND THAT CONFIDENCE IS BEING SHAKEN TO ITS VERY FOUNDATION BY THE THOUGHT THAT A NUCLEAR PLANT MAY SOON BE OPERATING SO CLOSE TO THEM, WITHOUT AN ESCAPE ROUTE IN CASE OF A MAJOR MISHAP,+ MR LEE WARNED.

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PARTIES CONCERNED SHOULD BE OPEN-MINDED
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FOR THE SAKE OF THE TERRITORY'S STABILITY AND PROSPERITY, THE HON LIU LIT-FOR ASKED ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WITH THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT TO BE OPEN-MINDED IN HANDLING THE ISSUE RATHER THAN MAKING ARBITRARY DECISIONS AND TAKING PREEMPTORY ACTIONS.

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE ISSUE TODAY (WEDNESDAY), MR LIU SAID NUCLEAR POWER WAS A SENSITIVE ISSUE IN MANY PLACES AND OVERREACTION BY THE PUBLIC WAS THEREFORE UNAVOIDABLE.

HE SAID HE HOPED THAT CHINA, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THE NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY LIMITED WOULD TAKE AN ENLIGHTENED AND OPEN APPROACH TOWARDS SUCH OVERREACTION, MAKING FULL USE OF VARIOUS CHANNELS TO COLLECT VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC AND RESPOND REALISTICALLY AND SPECIFICALLY.

BESIDES, HE CALLED ON THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED TO ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS WITH ALL PEOPLE SO AS TO ALLOW BOTH PARTIES TO EXCHANGE VIEWS, AND THAT MISUNDERSTANDING WOULD NOT BE DEEPENED.

/MR LIU SUGGESTED

MR LIU SUGGESTED THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO CONDUCT A STUDY THROUGH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WITH VARIOUS ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED ON THE SETTING UP OF A COMMITTEE OR AN AD HOC GROUP TO PROVIDE A BRIDGE FOR EFFECTIVE EXCHANGE OF PUBLIC OPINION AND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT.

HE SAID HE BELIEVED BY DOING SO A UNANIMOUS VIEW WHICH WAS COMPREHENSIVE AND PRACTICAL COULD BE ARRIVED AT AFTER COMPLETE INFORMATION ON THE WHOLE ISSUE WAS MADE CLEAR TO ALL.

IN HANDLING THE WHOLE ISSUE, MR LIU ADVISED THAT HONG KONG SHOULD ADOPT AN OBJECTIVE APPROACH IN ORDER TO RESPOND AND MAKE A DECISION REASONABLY FROM A SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW.

HE SAID: +WE SHOULD NOT HAVE OVERDUE FEARS SIMPLY BECAUSE OF THE RECENT CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT AND OBJECT STRONGLY TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.+

TURNING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION, HE SAID THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY SHOULD SPARE NO EFFORT IN PUBLICISING AND EXPLAINING HONESTLY AND CLEARLY TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC THEIR MANAGEMENT SKILLS WHICH WERE THE FOCUS OF WORRIES.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SHOULD ALSO TAKE CORRESPONDING MEASURES WITH REGARD TO EDUCATION ON NUCLEAR POWER SO THAT THE PUBLIC MIGHT UNDERSTAND THE FACILITIES, MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY INVOLVED IN NUCLEAR-GENERATED ELECTRICITY.

MR LIU SAID HE STRONGLY BELIEVED THAT THIS WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY ASSIST IN RESOLVING THE WHOLE ISSUE.

FINALLY, HE SAID HE HOPED THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE REMEDIAL ACTIONS TO RELIEVE THE PUBLIC OF THEIR WORRIES AND FEAR.

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N-PROJECT'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
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IN WEIGHING THE PROS AND CONS OF THE PROPOSED DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PROJECT, HONG KONG SHOULD UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES NEGLECT OR DENY ITS POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO ITS PROSPERITY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON NGAI SHIU-KIT DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HOWEVER, MR NGAI SAID HE STILL HAD CERTAIN RESERVATIONS REGARDING A SERIES OF PROBLEMS ON THE PROJECT.

+THE REASON IS THAT THE GUARANTEE HONG KONG PEOPLE CAN OBTAIN IN REGARD TO THE SAFETY ASPECT OF THE PROJECT REMAINS TOO INCOMPREHENSIVE, OBSCURE AND UNCONVINCING TO PUT OUR MIND AT EASE,+ HE SAID.

THEREFORE, HE FULLY SUPPORTED THE COUNCIL'S DECISION TO SEND FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS TO OVERSEAS TO SEARCH FOR MORE INFORMATION AND DATA ON THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR POWER.

+THE CORRECT APPROACH TO THE NUCLEAR POWER ISSUE SHOULD BE RATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC, AND PROBLEMS SHOULD BE ANALYSED OBJECTIVELY AND CALMLY. OTHERWISE, IT MIGHT BECOME EITHER TOO ONE-SIDED OR MEOTIONAL.

+WE SHOULD ALSO AVOID BEING BLIND FOLLOWERS OF WHAT MOST PEOPLE SAY OR THINK, OR POLITICAL TOOLS FOR CONJURING UP A SITUATION WHERE 'THOSE WHO DON'T CONFORM ARE NOT CARING FOR THE PEOPLE',+ HE SAID.

MR NGAI NOTED THAT THE WORRY OF HONG KONG PEOPLE ON THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT WAS NOT WITHOUT BASIS.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, OWING TO THE LACK OF SUFFICIENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO HAVE A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF THE SAFETY PROBLEM.

THEREFORE, HE MADE THREE SUGGESTIONS:

- * THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RELEASE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT AND RELEVANT INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT;
- * A CAMPAIGN ON +UNDERSTANDING NUCLEAR POWER+ SHOULD BE LAUNCHED URGENTLY, USING A MORE EASILY COMPREHENSIBLE LANGUAGE, TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC SO AS TO ALLEVIATE THEIR FEAR; AND
- * A ROUND-TABLE COMMITTEE COMPRISING CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND HONG KONG REPRESENTATIVES, AND NUCLEAR EXPERTS, SHOULD BE FORMED TO DRAW UP CONTINGENCY MEASURES.

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'DEFER DAYA BAY CONTRACT SIGNING'
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THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI SUPPORTED CALLS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY FOR A POSTPONEMENT OF THE SIGNING OF FORMAL CONTRACTS IN THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PROJECT.

HE URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO ADVISE THE HONG KONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY AND THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY TO POSTPONE THE SIGNING OF FORMAL CONTRACTS FOR THE TIME BEING.

HE SAID IT WOULD TAKE A RATHER LONG PERIOD OF TIME FOR THE LEGCO FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS TO COLLATE, ANALYSE AND EXAMINE THE MATERIALS COLLECTED, BEFORE THEY COULD PRODUCE A FAIR AND BALANCED REPORT.

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+THIS COUNCIL MAY HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT SESSION BEFORE IT CAN EVALUATE THE WHOLE ISSUE AND DRAW A CONCLUSION ON IT,+ HE SAID.

MR PANG SAID GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE GREAT CARE TO UNDERSTAND THE FEELING AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER AMONG THE MAJORITY OF HONG KONG PEOPLE.

THE ISSUE WOULD INEVITABLY AFFECT THE MAINTENANCE OF CONFIDENCE AMONG RESIDENTS, AS WELL AS THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG'S SOCIETY, HE ADDED.

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+SHELVE N-PROJECT FOR THE TIME BEING+
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THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT SHOULD BE SHELVED FOR THE TIME BEING, THE HON POON CHI-FAI SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT, MR POON SAID THAT IF THE WORKS COULD COMMENCE UNTIL AFTER THE FACTS ABOUT THE ISSUE WERE CLEAR AND THE PUBLIC'S FAITH RESTORED, HONG KONG PEOPLE COULD BE RELIEVED OF THEIR WORRIES.

IN ADDITION, ANY POSSIBLE ALTERATION OF THE SAFETY FACILITIES WHICH HAD TO BE MADE AFTER THE WORKS HAD COMMENCED COULD BE AVOIDED, HE SAID.

COMMENTING ON THE VIEWS GIVEN BY SOME PEOPLE OF AUTHORITY IN THE PAST MONTHS, MR POON SAID THESE VIEWS WERE FAR FROM UNANIMOUS AND SOME OF THE ASSURANCES THEY MADE WERE LACKING SUFFICIENT DATA SUPPORT.

HENCE, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO DECIDE WHO WAS IN THE RIGHT AT THIS STAGE, HE SAID.

+I AM OF THE OPINION THAT THE COMPANY CONCERNED SHOULD PROMPTLY PROVIDE RELEVANT DATA TO SUPPORT ITS SAFETY GUARANTEE TO AVOID THE PUBLIC WORRIES FROM BURSTING BEYOND BOUNDS.

+IT IS ONLY BY PROVIDING SCIENTIFIC PROOF SHOULD DOUBTS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE BE REMOVED,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT HE SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF INVITING PROFESSIONALS FROM LOCAL UNIVERSITIES AND POLYTECHNICS TO ATTEND EXPLANATORY SESSIONS ON THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE NUCLEAR PLANT AND TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMPANIES CONCERNED.

/MR POON CALLED

MR POON CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED TO COLLECT MORE UNBIASED VIEWS AND TO HIRE NUCLEAR EXPERTS TO OBJECTIVELY ANALYSE THE SITUATION AND SUBMIT A PERTINENT REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

HE BELIEVED SUCH A REPORT WOULD BE MORE ASSURING AND CONVINCING THAN EXPLANATIONS PROVIDED EITHER BY THE NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY OR ANTI-NUCLEAR ORGANISATIONS.

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MORE DATA REQUIRED BEFORE MAKING DECISION
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PROFESSOR THE HON C.K. POON SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT HE WOULD REQUIRE MORE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL DATA BEFORE HE COULD DECIDE ON WHETHER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WAS SAFE FOR HONG KONG OR NOT.

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, PROF POON REFERRED TO THE REPORT ON THE ACCIDENT AT THE THREE MILE ISLAND PLANT IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH HIGHLIGHTED THE HUMAN FACTOR.

HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD FROM MEETINGS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR PLANT JOINT VENTURE COMPANY THAT THE DAYA BAY PLANT DESIGN HAD TAKEN ACCOUNT OF HUMAN ERROR, IN ADDITION TO EQUIPMENT MALFUNCTION.

IMPROVEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE IN THE 'INTERFACE' BETWEEN OPERATOR AND MACHINE, AS WELL AS IN THE PROCEDURES FOR OPERATING THE PLANT AND IN TRAINING OPERATORS.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, DETAILS OF HOW THE INTERFACE FUNCTIONED SO THAT IT INCORPORATED HUMAN ERROR WERE STILL UNAVAILABLE FROM THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY.

PROF POON SAID THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES HAD GIVEN AN ASSURANCE THAT THE PLANT WAS DESIGNED WITH EXTENSIVE PROTECTION AGAINST SERIOUS ACCIDENTS, INCLUDING A CORE MELTDOWN.

BUT HE WAS NOT SATISFIED AS UP TO NOW THERE WERE NO FACTS OR FIGURES TO SUPPORT THIS ASSURANCE, AND THUS THERE WERE QUESTIONS THAT REMAINED TO BE ANSWERED.

+ONLY WITH MORE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL DATA CAN I COMMIT MYSELF TO PRONOUNCING WHETHER HONG KONG IS SAFE, OR OTHERWISE,+ HE SAID.

PROF POON BELIEVED THAT THE GENERAL CONCERN OF HONG KONG PEOPLE AROSE FROM A VAGUE CONCEPT THAT THE TERRITORY WOULD BECOME A +DEAD CITY+ IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT AT DAYA BAY.

DATA FROM TECHNICAL ANALYSIS WAS REQUIRED BEFORE THIS MISAPPREHENSION COULD BE RECTIFIED.

HE SUGGESTED THAT A COMPARISON OF SUCH DATA WITH DATA FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION WOULD SHOW WHETHER HONG KONG WAS SAFE OR UNSAFE, AND WHETHER HONG KONG WOULD BECOME A +DEAD CITY+ OVERNIGHT.

PROF POON REMINDED THE COUNCIL OF THE NEED TO DEVELOP NEW ENERGY SOURCES BECAUSE OF THE DEPLETION OF SOURCES OF FOSSIL FUEL IN FUTURE.

+IF OBJECTIVE, ANALYTICAL RESULTS PROVE NUCLEAR ENERGY TO BE SUFFICIENTLY SAFE, SHOULD IT BE OBJECTED TO ON EMOTIONAL GROUNDS?+ HE ASKED.

HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER IT WOULD BE MORE ADVISABLE TO DEPEND ON A WELL-TESTED DESIGN OR TO DEPEND ON A TOTALLY NEW, UNTESTED APPROACH IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT NEW NUCLEAR POWER DESIGNS WERE BEING DRAWN UP.

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HK PEOPLE HAVE RIGHT TO EXPRESS FEARS

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HONG KONG PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPRESS THEIR FEARS AND ANXIETIES OVER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, THE HON SZETO WAH SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE OBLIGED TO REFLECT THESE REAL FEARS AND ANXIETIES, HE SAID DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON HONG KONG AND THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PROJECT.

MR SZETO EMPHASISED THAT NO ONE COULD OFFER A 100 PER CENT GUARANTEE THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY DANGER OF AN ACCIDENT BECAUSE AN ACCIDENT WAS SOMETHING UNEXPECTED AND HUMAN FACTORS COULD BE A CAUSE OF ACCIDENT AT ANY TIME.

+WE COULD ACCEPT OR TOLERATE AN ACCIDENT INVOLVING ONE, SEVERAL, A FEW DOZEN, A FEW HUNDRED, OR EVEN A FEW THOUSAND PEOPLE.

+BUT FOR AN IRREPARABLE AND DESTRUCTIVE DISASTER INVOLVING A FEW MILLION PEOPLE FOR GENERATIONS, NOBODY IS QUALIFIED TO SAY THAT WE SHOULD TAKE THE RISK OF SUCH AN ACCIDENT, OR TO SAY THAT THIS IS SOMETHING ACCEPTABLE AND TOLERABLE,+ HE SAID.

MR SZETO SAID HONG KONG HAD ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A PROSPEROUS AND STABLE INTERNATIONAL CITY AND CONFIDENCE WAS RECOVERING AND THE TERRITORY LOOKED FORWARD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR GENERATIONS.

BUT ALL THESE WOULD BE SHAKEN BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, OR EVEN DISAPPEAR IN A FLASH IF HONG KONG WERE POLLUTED BY RADIATION, HE WARNED.

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DOUBTS CAST ON ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF PROJECT
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR THE HON RICHARD LAI TODAY (WEDNESDAY) EXPRESSED HIS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE POSITIVE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT TO HONG KONG.

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE ISSUE, MR LAI SAID IF IT COULD NOT BE ASCERTAINED THAT NUCLEAR POWER WAS A MORE COST-EFFECTIVE OPTION TO HANDLE HONG KONG'S ELECTRICITY DEMAND IN THE 1990S, THERE WAS NO REASON WHY HONG KONG SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE DAYA BAY PROJECT AT ALL.

ACCORDING TO DR LAI'S CALCULATIONS, THE OVERALL SAVINGS IN THE ELECTRICITY BILL EXPECTED FROM PURCHASING POWER FROM THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD ONLY BE ABOUT 12 PER CENT.

HE ADDED THAT THE FIGURE WOULD BE EVEN SMALLER IF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COST OF NUCLEAR AND COAL-FIRE GENERATED POWER WAS SMALLER THAN 50 PER CENT, OR IF THE PLANT WAS WORKING UNDER CAPACITY, OR IF THE TOTAL ELECTRICITY DEMAND WAS GREATER THAN EXPECTED.

+DOES THAT AMOUNT OF SAVING ALONE JUSTIFY OUR CONSENT?+ HE ASKED.

DR LAI WAS ALSO NOT SATISFIED THAT THERE WAS ONLY A SIX-YEAR GUARANTEE THAT THE COST OF ELECTRICITY TO BE PURCHASED FROM THE DAYA BAY PLANT WOULD BE NO HIGHER THAN THAT OF COAL-FIRED ELECTRICITY.

+AFTER THE SIX YEARS PERIOD, ANY PRICE INCREASE DUE TO ESCALATION OF COSTS FORESEEN AND UNEXPECTED WILL BE TRANSLATED INTO HIGHER ELECTRICITY COSTS, PERHAPS HIGHER THAN THAT OF CONVENTIONALLY GENERATED POWER,+ HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT HONG KONG CONSUMERS WOULD HAVE NO PROTECTION AGAINST SUCH INCREASES BECAUSE BY THEN HONG KONG WOULD NOT HAVE ANY READILY AVAILABLE ENERGY OPTION BUT TO PURCHASE DEARER ELECTRICITY FROM THE DAYA BAY PLANT SINCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVE CONVENTIONAL PLANTS WOULD HAVE BEEN SHELVED IN FAVOUR OF THE NUCLEAR STATION.

+AND IF NUCLEAR GENERATED ELECTRICITY IS SO CERTAIN A CHEAPER OPTION, WHY WILL THE GUARANTEE ONLY LAST SIX YEARS AND NOT THE ENTIRE 20 YEARS OF THE JOINT VENTURE CONTRACT?+ HE ARGUED.

/BESIDES,

BESIDES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PLANT WOULD NOT BRING ANY ECONOMIC WINDFALL TO HONG KONG BECAUSE HONG KONG WOULD NOT DEVELOP A NUCLEAR INDUSTRY REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE DAYA BAY PLANT WAS BUILT OR NOT, HE SAID.

ON THE OTHER HAND, DR LAI POINTED OUT THAT THERE MIGHT WELL BE ADVERSE RAMIFICATIONS IF THE PLANT WAS BUILT.

HE WARNED THAT THE PLANT WOULD BE A FERTILE GROUND FOR BREEDING MALICIOUS RUMOURS.

+BECAUSE HONG KONG IS VULNERABLE TO RUMOURS, THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG WILL BE UNDERMINED IF THERE IS ANY NEWS, GENUINE OR NOT, OF A MALFUNCTION OF THE PLANT CIRCULATING IN HONG KONG.

+THE EROSION OF CONFIDENCE OF INVESTORS IN HONG KONG BECAUSE OF FEAR OF A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT IS SOMETHING WE CANNOT OBJECTIVELY ASSESS BUT WHICH WE SHOULD NOT DISCOUNT,+ HE SAID.

DR LAI SAID HIS OFFICE CARRIED OUT A SURVEY WITH DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS IN HIS CONSTITUENCY AND FOUND THAT 80 PER CENT OF THE RESPONDENTS EITHER WANTED TO HAVE FURTHER CONSULTATION BEFORE THE PLANT WAS BUILT (40 PER CENT) OR TO HAVE THE PLANT SCRAPPED ALTOGETHER (40 PER CENT).

ONLY 20 PER CENT AGREED THAT THE PROJECT SHOULD PROCEED AS PLANNED, HE ADDED.

DR LAI BELIEVED THE SURVEY DID PROVIDE A GLIMPSE OF HOW PEOPLE FELT ABOUT THE PROPOSAL AND HE REMINDED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT MORE THAN 850 000 PEOPLE HAD SIGNED A PETITION CALLING FOR A HALT TO THE PROJECT.

THEREFORE, HE CALLED FOR A POSTPONEMENT OF THE SIGNING OF THE MAJOR CONTRACT SO THAT MORE CONSULTATION, DELIBERATION AND INVESTIGATION COULD BE DONE IN ORDER TO COME TO A PRUDENT AND JUDICIOUS DECISION ACCEPTABLE TO ALL.

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CALL TO FREEZE HK'S PARTICIPATION IN DAYA BAY
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR THE HON ROSANNA TAM TODAY (WEDNESDAY) CALLED ON THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER FREEZING HONG KONG'S PARTICIPATION IN THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT AND CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE ISSUE.

SPEAKING IN THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT, SHE SAID ALL RELEVANT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROJECT SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC FOR DISCUSSION.

EMPHASISING THE NEED TO CONDUCT A REVIEW ON THE ISSUE, SHE SAID TWO FACTORS MERITED DETAILED CONSIDERATION:

/* WHETHER

- * WHETHER BUYING NUCLEAR POWER WAS IN LINE WITH THE LONG-TERM DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY AND THE LONG-TERM ENERGY POLICY; AND
- * THE SOCIAL COST FOR HONG KONG TO TAKE PART IN THE PROJECT.

NEITHER BLIND OPPOSITION TO NEW TECHNOLOGY NOR MERE ACCEPTANCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY SUPERSTITIOUSLY WERE THE PROPER ATTITUDES TO TACKLE THE CONTROVERSIES, SHE SAID, ADDING THAT WHAT HONG KONG SHOULD DO AT PRESENT WAS TO ESTIMATE OUR DEMAND FOR ELECTRICITY FROM NOW TO THE 1990S AND THEN RIGHT INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.

+AFTER CAREFULLY SETTING A COMPREHENSIVE LONG-TERM ENERGY POLICY, WE SHOULD THEN ASSESS THE FEASIBILITY OF THE DAYA BAY PROJECT AND THE ROLE PLAYED BY NUCLEAR POWER IN OUR ENERGY POLICY,+ SHE SAID.

THESE INFORMATION SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC AS FAR AS POSSIBLE SO THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE COULD PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSIONS, MRS TAM ADDED.

ON THE SOCIAL COST TO BE BORNE THE HONG KONG IN TAKING PART IN THE PROJECT, MRS TAM SAID APART FROM THE VISIBLE COST OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS, A STRONG PHOBIA HAD GRADUALLY BEEN FORMED WHICH COULD NOT BE DISPELLED IN A SHORT PERIOD BY MEANS OF EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY.

IN ADDITION, BECAUSE OF THE CLOSE PROXIMITY OF THE DAYA BAY PLANT TO HONG KONG, THE LACK OF AN ABSOLUTE SAFETY PLAN WOULD POSE SERIOUS THREATS TO THE LIVES AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG PEOPLE IN THE EVENT OF ACCIDENTS, SHE SAID.

+POLITICALLY, HONG KONG IS GOING THROUGH A SENSITIVE TRANSITION PERIOD, SO WE MUST MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY,+ SHE STRESSED.

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MAKE PUBLIC N-PLANT STUDY REPORTS
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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE PUBLIC ALL COMPLETED STUDY REPORTS ON THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR PLANT SO THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG CAN HAVE A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACTS ABOUT THE PROJECT.

THE CALL WAS MADE BY THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE ISSUE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR TAM SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD COMMISSIONED UK CONSULTANTS TO CONDUCT SEVERAL STUDIES ON THE NUCLEAR PROJECT WHICH INCLUDED A RADIATION MONITORING PROGRAMME, AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROBABILITY OF ACCIDENTS AT THE POWER STATION AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR HONG KONG, THE DESIGN OF A CONTINGENCY PLAN, TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS, AND A PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

/THE STUDIES

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THE STUDIES ON A RADIATION MONITORING PROGRAMME AND A PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME HAD BEEN COMPLETED BUT THE TWO OTHER MORE CRUCIAL STUDIES WERE YET TO BE CONCLUDED, HE SAID.

+GOVERNMENT SHOULD ASK THE CONSULTANTS TO EXPEDITE THE STUDIES AND SHOULD MAKE PUBLIC THE COMPLETED REPORTS,+ HE URGED.

IN ADDITION, MR TAM NOTED THAT THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY WERE CONDUCTING SEVERAL STUDIES AND ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO APPROACH THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO RELEASE THE STUDY REPORTS.

THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY'S REPORTS INCLUDED A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON THE DAYA BAY PROJECT, A PRELIMINARY SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORT, AND AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, HE SAID.

MR TAM FELT THAT THE PREREQUISITE FOR COMING TO A CONCLUSIVE OPINION WAS TO CONDUCT RATIONAL DISCUSSION BASED ON ADEQUATE INFORMATION.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPREHENSION AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC WERE THE LACK OF PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT.

+WHEN GOVERNMENT GAVE ITS APPROVAL IN 1983 FOR CHINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PROJECT, NO ATTEMPTS WERE MADE TO EXPLAIN THE MATTER TO THE PUBLIC, SUCH AS GOVERNMENT DELIBERATIONS ON THE ECONOMIC AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT.

+FURTHERMORE, THERE WAS NO ACTIVE CONSULTATION TO COLLECT PUBLIC OPINIONS,+ MR TAM SAID.

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DAYA BAY PROJECT SHOULD BE RECONSIDERED
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THE HON ANDREW WONG TODAY (WEDNESDAY) LIKENED THE DECISION HONG KONG HAD TO MAKE ON THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT TO AN IGNORANT MAN HAVING TO DECIDE ON WHAT KIND OF DOCTOR HE HAD TO CONSULT WHEN HE FELL SICK.

MR WONG WAS SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY ISSUE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

AS THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR POWER JOINT VENTURE COMPANY WOULD FORMALLY SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH THE FRENCH NUCLEAR POWER MANUFACTURER FRAMATOME IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER, HE SAID HE BELIEVED IT WAS HIGH TIME FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO MAKE A DECISION, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY HAD SUFFICIENT DATA.

/BASED ON

BASED ON THE SAME ANALOGY, MR WONG SAID WHETHER A PERSON WAS SICK WAS SIMILAR TO WHETHER THE POWER SUPPLY IN HONG KONG WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET DEMAND IN THE EARLY 1990S.

HE SAID HE BASICALLY ACCEPTED THE CONCLUSION BY CHINA LIGHT AND THE GOVERNMENT THAT POWER SUPPLY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO MEET SUCH A DEMAND.

+BUT HOW DO WE SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF INSUFFICIENT POWER SUPPLY? BUY OR GENERATE ELECTRICITY? IF BUYING ELECTRICITY, WHETHER TO BUY NUCLEAR GENERATED ELECTRICITY OR COAL-FIRED OR OIL-FIRED ELECTRICITY?+ MR WONG ASKED.

THIS WAS JUST LIKE DECIDING ON WHETHER TO UNDERGO AN OPERATION OR TO TAKE MEDICINE, HE SAID.

BASED ON COMMON SENSE ECONOMICS, MR WONG EXPRESSED DOUBTS THAT THE COST OF NUCLEAR POWER WOULD BE CHEAPER THAN THAT OF COAL-FIRED ELECTRICITY.

AS TO ARRANGEMENTS FOR BUYING ELECTRICITY, HE SAID HE WAS RATHER PUZZLED BY THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE GOVERNMENT, AND RAISED THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- * WHAT WOULD THE PROFIT BE?
- * WAS THE FORMULAE FOR CALCULATING THE NOMINAL PRICE OF COAL-FIRED ELECTRICITY LOGICAL? AND
- * WOULD THE PRICE OF NUCLEAR GENERATED ELECTRICITY BE ARBITRARILY FIXED BY THE JOINT VENTURE COMPANY WHOSE MAJOR SHAREHOLDER WAS GUANGDONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY?

AS TO THE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE AMOUNT OF ELECTRICITY TO BE PURCHASED, MR WONG QUESTIONED WHETHER HONG KONG WAS REQUIRED TO BUY 70 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL OUTPUT UNDER THE CONTRACT OR ONLY 25 PER CENT WHICH IT HAD ORIGINALLY UNDERTAKEN TO BUY PLUS AN ADDITIONAL 45 PER CENT TO BE PURCHASED FROM GUANGDONG.

THERE WAS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO, HE SAID.

FINALLY, MR WONG CALLED ON CHINA TO DEVELOP ITS POTENTIAL ON COAL-FIRED ELECTRICITY AS THIS WOULD MEET THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SHOULD SET UP A STANDING COMMITTEE TO MONITOR, WITHIN ITS JURISDICTION AND AUTHORITY, THE PROBLEMS AND POLICIES RELATING TO POWER SUPPLY THROUGH PUBLIC MEETINGS AND OPEN HEARINGS.

SINCE THE PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STANDING COMMITTEE WOULD BE A FORMAL MONITORING BODY, MEMBERS SHOULD NOT INCLUDE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS, HE ADDED.

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CALM APPROACH TO DAYA BAY ISSUE ADVOCATED
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MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SHOULD KEEP CALM OVER THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ISSUE.

THE APPEAL WAS MADE BY DR THE HON DANIEL TSE DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

JUDGING FROM THE PRESENT TREND, DR TSE BELIEVED THE ISSUE HAD ALREADY CHANGED FROM CONSIDERATIONS OF TECHNOLOGICAL SAFETY AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS TO A POLITICAL MOVEMENT AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER.

HE FELT THAT IT WAS THE DUTY OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TO KEEP ABREAST OF THE SITUATION AND RELEVANT INFORMATION AND THEN REPORT AND ANALYSE WITH A CALM AND CANDID APPROACH SO THAT THE PUBLIC COULD CALM DOWN AND RESPOND TO THE MATTER IN A REASONABLE WAY.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THERE SHOULD BE SERIOUS STUDIES INTO THE TESTS AND DATA WITH WHICH THE MANUFACTURER PROVED THAT HIS PRODUCT WOULD MEET THE STANDARDS SET BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

WE MUST ALSO ENSURE THAT THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED WOULD GUARANTEE THAT ALL CONSTRUCTION WORK OF THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT AND ITS SUBSEQUENT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING SYSTEM WOULD FULFIL THE REQUIREMENTS LAID DOWN IN THE PLANT'S PERMIT AT ANY ONE TIME.

DR TSE SAID IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT MANY PEOPLE HAD GREATER WORRIES OVER THE RISK FACTOR OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS AFTER THE CHERNOBYL ACCIDENT.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT IT WOULD BE UNFAIR TO COMPARE THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT WITH THE ONE IN CHERNOBYL BECAUSE THE FORMER WOULD ADOPT A DESIGN WHICH HAD BEEN INTERNATIONALLY USED ON AN EXTENSIVE BASIS, WHILE THE LATTER HAD USED THE MOST OUT-DATED EQUIPMENT IN USSR AND ITS SAFETY STANDARDS AND OPERATION WERE SELDOM REVEALED TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

DR TSE ALSO EXPRESSED HIS WELCOME TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S DECISION TO SEND TWO FACT-FINDING DELEGATIONS TO EUROPE AND USA IN AUGUST.

IN ORDER TO SET THE PUBLIC'S MINDS AT EASE AND TO BOOST THEIR CONFIDENCE, HE CALLED ON THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED TO DELAY THE SIGNING OF ANY CONTRACT THAT WOULD LEAVE HONG KONG PEOPLE WITHOUT ANY CHOICE BEFORE THE DELEGATIONS COMPLETED THEIR INVESTIGATION REPORT.

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BALANCING BENEFITS AGAINST PROBABILITIES
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IN SPITE OF THE APPEARANCE OF A TENABLE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT FOR THE PROPOSED NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT, PEOPLE MUST BEAR IN MIND THAT THE LOGIC OF DECISION THEORY DEMANDS WEIGHTING THE BENEFITS OF A PROJECT AGAINST ITS PROBABILITIES OF OCCURRENCE IN ORDER TO DETERMINE ITS EXPECTED VALUE.

THE HON KIM CHAM MADE THIS OBSERVATION DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE DAYA BAY PLANT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID THE BASIC PROBLEM IN APPLYING SUCH ANALYSIS FOR DECISION MAKING WAS THAT THE COST OF A NUCLEAR DISASTER WOULD HAVE EFFECTIVELY NULLIFIED ALL OF ITS ECONOMIC BENEFITS.

+WHILE WE ARE READY TO PLEDGE OUR FAITH IN THE COMPETENCE OF THE SCIENTISTS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SAFETY MEASURES AND THE LOW PROBABILITY OF A DISASTER, WE MUST RECOGNISE THAT THE DETERMINING CRITERION OF THE PROJECT ENDEAVOUR IS ITS SAFETY OUTLOOK.

+THIS LATTER ATTRIBUTE, IF ERODED OR THREATENED, COULD HAVE WIPED OUT WHATEVER ECONOMIC WORTH THAT MAY BE ATTACHED TO THE PROJECT,+ DR CHAM SAID.

TO THIS END, HE SAID THAT SENDING A DELEGATION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS TO EXAMINE THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR PLANTS IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA WAS CLEARLY A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.

MR CHAM SAID SEVERAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS WOULD ACCRUE FROM THE PROJECT.

+ACCORDING TO THE LATEST FINANCIAL CALCULATIONS, IT IS PROBABLE BY 1996 ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY NUCLEAR POWER WILL COST 24 PER CENT LESS TO PRODUCE THAN BY WAY OF COAL FIRE, GIVEN SOME ASSUMPTION OF INFLATION IN COAL PRICES.

+ANOTHER ATTRACTION OF THE PROJECT IS THE ABILITY OF CHINA TO OBTAIN LOWER COST OF EXPORT FINANCING,+ HE SAID.

CURRENTLY, EXPORT CREDIT TO FACILITATE PLANT PROCUREMENT BY CHINA COULD BE MADE AT THE CREDIT COST OF 7.4 PER CENT INTEREST RATE PER ANNUM, WHILE THE COMPARABLE COSTS FOR HONG KONG WOULD BE HIGHER AT 8.75 PER CENT PER ANNUM.

MR CHAM NOTED THAT UNDER THE CONTRACT, ELECTRICITY TO BE BOUGHT FROM THE GUANGDONG NUCLEAR INVESTMENT COMPANY COULD NOT EXCEED THE COST OF COAL-BURNT ELECTRICITY FOR THE FIRST SIX YEARS THAT THE NUCLEAR PLANT OPERATED.

NEW HARBOUR CROSSING AT NO COST TO PUBLIC PURSE
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THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A USEFUL NEW TRANSPORT FACILITY AT VIRTUALLY NO COST TO THE PUBLIC PURSE WHEN THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING IS CONSTRUCTED.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON S.L. CHEN DURING THE RESUMED DEBATE OF THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING BILL 1986 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHEN SAID THE FINANCING OF THE TUNNEL CONSTITUTED THE LARGEST FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN ANY ONGOING CIVIL ENGINEERING PROJECT IN HONG KONG AT PRESENT.

+THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE TUNNEL ARE POSITIVE AND PROMISING; THEY SHOW CONFIDENCE BOTH IN THE ENTERPRISE ITSELF AND IN HONG KONG.

+THE EQUITY/COST RATIO IS REASONABLY HIGH AND THE PROJECT DOES NOT RELY ON LAND OR PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT FOR FINANCING,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEN ADDED THAT THE NEW TUNNEL WOULD RELIEVE HEAVY TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE EXISTING ROAD AND RAIL LINKS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, PROVIDING A MORE BALANCED TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENT.

IT WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE NEW AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT IN CHA KWO LING AND, WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE TATE'S CAIRN TUNNEL TO SHA TIN IN 1992, WOULD DRAW EVEN MORE VEHICLES AWAY FROM THE CROWDED ROADS OF CENTRAL KOWLOON.

+THE TOLL FOR PRIVATE CARS AND TAXIS WHEN IT OPENS IN 1989 WILL BE ONLY \$10 AND THERE WILL BE NO PASSAGE TAX FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS,+ HE SAID.

ANOTHER MEMBER, THE HON KIM CHAM, SAID THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BILL LAY IN THE ILLUSTRATED EFFICACY OF MOBILISING FREE ENTERPRISE RESOURCES TO HELP FINANCE AND CONSTRUCT PUBLIC PROJECTS.

+IF DELAYS IN THE PROJECT IN SIGHT RESULT IN ESCALATING COSTS AND FALL-BEHIND OF COMMISSIONING DATES, BOTH EVENTS WILL CERTAINLY BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE COMPANY'S INTEREST AND IN TURN TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST,+ HE WARNED.

MR CHAM THEREFORE ADVISED THAT IT WAS IN THE INTEREST OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THIS PROJECT TO STRIVE TO ACHIEVE EFFICIENCY, OVERCOME DELAYS AND MINIMISE BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE.

/ALSO SPEAKING

ALSO SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN POINTED OUT THAT THE TOLLS SCHEDULE OF THE TUNNEL COULD ONLY BE VARIED BY AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL, SUBJECT TO ARBITRATION PROCEDURES IF FOUND NECESSARY.

THIS WOULD ENSURE THAT THE PUBLIC INTERESTS WERE ADEQUATELY PROTECTED, HE SAID.

+I EXPECT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL CAREFULLY ENFORCE AND MONITOR ALL THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS LAID DOWN IN THE BILL,+ HE ADDED.

MR CHEONG-LEEN THEN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT URBAN EXPANSION AT BOTH ENDS OF THE TUNNEL WOULD +IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF URBAN LIVING ENVIRONMENT, RATHER THAN CAUSING NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DUE TO SHORT-SIGHTED PLANNING STANDARDS AND SHORT-TERM BENEFITS ARISING FROM CUTTING THE WRONG CORNERS.+

MEANWHILE, THE HON POON CHI-FAI URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF A COMPOSITE INTERCHANGE ROAD NETWORK IN EAST KOWLOON AND TO CONSTRUCT AN ELEVATED ROAD ON THE WATERFRONT OF KWUN TONG TO MEET TRAFFIC DEMAND AFTER THE OPENING OF THE NEW TUNNEL.

+THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD ALSO MAKE ARRANGEMENT FOR PUBLIC VEHICLES TO USE THE TUNNEL SO AS TO PROVIDE BETTER SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC AND TO MAKE FULL USE OF IT,+ HE ADDED.

THANKING THE FOUR MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON HARNAM GREWAL, SAID A JOINT TRAFFIC STUDY HELD IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NEW HONG KONG TUNNEL COMPANY WAS PRESENTLY UNDERWAY TO DETERMINE THE TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING FOR EAST KOWLOON.

WINDING UP THE DEBATE ON THE BILL, MR GREWAL SAID FROM THE TIME SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BEGAN TO BE GIVEN TO THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING IT WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE PROJECT COULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ADD TO CONGESTION IN EAST KOWLOON, OTHERWISE IT WOULD DEFEAT THE OBJECT OF THE EXERCISE.

+IT IS THE INTENTION THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE STUDY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE PLANNED AND CONSTRUCTED.+

IF NECESSARY, A KWUN TONG BYPASS WOULD BE INCLUDED SO THAT NOT ONLY CONGESTION IN THE AREA WAS NOT INCREASED BUT AN OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN TRAFFIC FLOWS WOULD BE ACHIEVED, HE SAID.

+THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING WILL BE ACCESSIBLE TO BUSES AND THE FRANCHISED BUS COMPANIES ARE NOW CONSIDERING EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING ROUTES IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR FIVE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLANS,+ HE ADDED.

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THEFT LAW TO BE TIGHTENED

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THE THEFT ORDINANCE WILL BE TIGHTENED AGAINST THEFT IN THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR, THE HON PETER C. WONG TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE OF THE THEFT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, MR WONG POINTED OUT THAT THE BILL WOULD REMOVE LOOPHOLES IN THE EXISTING ORDINANCE.

+THE MAIN THRUST OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS IS TO TIGHTEN THE LAW AGAINST FRAUDULENTLY OBTAINING CREDIT FACILITIES FROM FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS,+ HE EXPLAINED.

HE SAID A LEGCO AD HOC GROUP HAD EXAMINED THE BILL IN GREAT DETAIL AND FOUND THAT THE KEY CLAUSE IN THE BILL HAD CAST THE NET TOO WIDE.

ACCORDINGLY, AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAUSE WOULD BE MOVED AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE BILL BY ANOTHER LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR THE HON MARIA TAM SO THAT THE AMENDED CLAUSE +WILL ONLY APPLY TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AS WAS THE INTENTION+, MR WONG ADDED.

WINDING UP THE DEBATE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, THANKED MR WONG FOR HIS SUPPORT FOR THE BILL AND SAID THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY MISS TAM DID NOT ALTER THE PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE ORIGINAL BILL.

HE SAID THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS DEFINE +BANK+ AND +DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANY+ BY CROSS-REFERENCE TO THE NEW BANKING ORDINANCE 1986 WHICH HAD NOT YET COMMENCED.

HE HOWEVER NOTED THAT THE DELAYED COMMENCEMENT OF THE BILL WOULD BE QUITE SHORT AS THE BANKING ORDINANCE 1986 WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMMENCED IN EARLY SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR.

+WITH THESE AMENDMENTS, I REMAIN SURE THAT THIS BILL WILL PROVIDE VALUABLE ADDITIONAL SANCTIONS AGAINST FORMS OF FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY THAT ARE A RECURRING THREAT TO THE INTEGRITY OF ORDINARY BUSINESS LIFE IN HONG KONG,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

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BILL TO STOP UNSCRUPULOUS DEBTORS SUPPORTED

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THE HON WONG PO-YAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) SUPPORTED AN AMENDMENT BILL THAT WOULD PREVENT UNSCRUPULOUS DEBTORS FROM TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE 15 PER CENT DIVIDEND PROVISION IN THE EXISTING BANKRUPTCY ORDINANCE SO THAT THEY COULD EVADE BANKRUPTCY ACTION.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BANKRUPTCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR WONG SAID THE AMENDMENT WAS A LITTLE TARDY AS THE INCIDENTS OF DEBTORS OPPOSING BANKRUPTCY PETITIONS OR APPLYING FOR ANNULMENT HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO BUILD UP OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.

/+IT IS

+IT IS OBVIOUSLY INEQUITABLE THAT A DEBTOR WHOSE ASSETS STOOD AT \$1.49 MILLION SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO OPPOSE A BANKRUPTCY PETITION ON THE GROUND THAT HIS ASSETS WERE INADEQUATE, AS REQUIRED BY LAW, TO MEET THE MINIMUM 15 PER CENT DIVIDEND OF HIS TOTAL DEBT OF \$10 MILLION,+ HE SAID.

IT WAS ALL THE MORE UNJUST THAT HIS CREDITORS SHOULD BE GIVEN THE ONEROUS TASK BY LAW OF TRYING TO PROVE THE DEBTOR'S TRUE FINANCIAL SITUATION, MR WONG ADDED.

HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO CONSIDER NOT SIMPLY THE AMOUNT OF THE DEBTOR'S ASSETS, BUT ALSO THE BROADER QUESTION OF OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE SUCH AS COMMERCIAL MORALITY, ILLEGAL DEALINGS OR FAULTS OR EVEN CRIMINAL OPERATIONS.

MR WONG BELIEVED THAT MANY A CREDITOR WOULD BE PREPARED TO PUT UP WITH A SMALLER DIVIDEND IF THE DEBTORS' MALPRACTICES WERE PUBLICISED IN COURT, ADDING THAT THIS WOULD HELP TO STOP THE UNSCRUPULOUS FROM INDULGING IN SUCH PRACTICES.

+IN THE LONG RUN, IT HELPS TO BUILD A MORE HEALTHY TRADING SECTOR IN HONG KONG AND ENHANCES ITS REPUTATION AS A WORLD COMMERCIAL CENTRE,+ HE SAID.

ON THE DISCRETIONARY POWER OF THE COURT TO RESCIND A RECEIVING ORDER ON APPLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL RECEIVER, MR WONG SAID IT WAS THE VIEW OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP STUDYING THE BILL THAT THE DRAFTED CLAUSE SHOULD EXPRESSLY STATE THAT THE COURT MUST ALSO BE SATISFIED THAT IT WAS DESIRABLE IN ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE FOR THE RECEIVING ORDER TO BE RESCINDED.

MR WONG LATER MOVED AN AMENDMENT TO THIS EFFECT AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE BILL SO AS TO ENSURE THAT REGARD WOULD BE PAID NOT SIMPLY TO THE AMOUNT OF THE DEBTOR'S ASSETS BUT TO THE BROADER QUESTION OF ALL OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.

WINDING UP THE DEBATE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID MR WONG'S AMENDMENT SERVED TO PUT THE MATTER BEYOND DOUBT.

THUS THE COURT, IN DECIDING TO RESCIND A RECEIVING ORDER OR TO ANNUL AN ADJUDICATION OF BANKRUPTCY UNDER THE PROPOSED NEW SECTION 33(1A), SHOULD CONSIDER ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE CASE.

+THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE NEED TO MEET THE BROADER OBJECTIVES OF BANKRUPTCY LAW, WHICH I MENTIONED WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL EARLIER THIS MONTH,+ HE ADDED.

MR JACOBS THANKED MR WONG FOR HIS COGENT REMARKS IN SUPPORT OF THE MEASURE AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP WHO STUDIED THE BILL.

FINAL ACCOUNTS SHOW ADDITIONAL \$265.7M SURPLUS
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THE FINAL BUDGET SURPLUS FOR FISCAL 1985-86, AT \$1 442.7 MILLION, WAS \$265.7 MILLION ABOVE THE ESTIMATED \$1 177 MILLION MENTIONED IN SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE'S CONCLUDING SPEECH IN THE BUDGET DEBATE LAST APRIL, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ACCOUNTS FINALISED BY THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1985-86 SHOWED THAT THE ACTUAL REVENUE AMOUNTED TO \$41 240.9 MILLION AND TOTAL EXPENDITURE TO \$39 798.2 MILLION.

+AS MEMBERS WILL RECOLLECT, THE DEFICIT ORIGINIALLY ENVISAGED IN THE 1985 BUDGET WAS \$960.3 MILLION,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

HOWEVER, THE EXPENDITURE CHARGED TO 54 HEADS WAS IN EXCESS OF THE SUM APPROPRIATED FOR THOSE HEADS BY THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 1985, HE SAID.

THIS WAS BECAUSE SUFFICIENT OFFSETTING SAVINGS COULD NOT BE FOUND WITHIN THE HEADS CONCERNED.

+IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 9 OF THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE, THIS EXCESS HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1985-86) BILL 1986 NOW BEFORE MEMBERS.+

+THE BILL SEEKS TO GIVE FINAL LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR THE AMOUNT OF SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION APPROVED IN RESPECT OF PARTICULAR HEADS OF EXPENDITURE BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER POWERS DELEGATED BY IT, HE SAID.

THE TOTAL NET SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION REQUIRED IN RESPECT OF THE 54 HEADS OF EXPENDITURE WAS \$3 098.6 MILLION.

THIS EXCESS WAS LARGELY ACCOUNTED FOR BY THE 1985 SALARIES REVISION FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE (\$939.7 MILLION) AND GOVERNMENT SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS (\$450.4 MILLION) AND FOR THE PAYMENT OF PERSONNEL RELATED ALLOWANCES (\$160.1 MILLION).

ANOTHER MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR WAS THE PAYMENT TO THE MASS TRANSIT FUND TO ENABLE THE FIRST EQUITY INJECTION TO BE MADE DURING THE 1985-86 FINANCIAL YEAR (\$1 500 MILLION), HE SAID.

+SAVINGS MADE IN OTHER SUBHEADS ARE DUE TO CONTINUED TIGHT CONTROL OVER PUBLIC EXPENDITURE, AND I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE CONTROLLING OFFICERS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO RESTRAINT,+ MR JACOBS SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

BID TO TIGHTEN CONTROL ON SALE OF POISONS
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A PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE OF THE PHARMACY AND POISONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 IS TO TIGHTEN CONTROL ON THE SALE OF POISONS AND PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS AT RETAIL OUTLETS, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON NIGEL SHIPMAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR SHIPMAN SAID THE BILL MADE VARIOUS AMENDMENTS TO THE PHARMACY AND POISONS ORDINANCE, SOME OF WHICH WERE RECOMMENDED BY THE WORKING PARTY ON THE PRACTICE OF PHARMACY AND ANCILLARY MATTERS, WHOSE REPORT WAS PUBLISHED IN 1984.

+ALL OF THESE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD,+ HE SAID.

MR SHIPMAN SAID: +THE ORDINANCE ALREADY PROHIBITS LISTED SELLERS OF POISONS, WHICH IS THE CATEGORY OF MEDICINE DEALERS WHO DO NOT ENGAGE REGISTERED PHARMACISTS, FROM SELLING ANY OF THE POTENT POISONS IN PART I OF THE POISONS LIST.

+THEY ARE NOT HOWEVER SPECIFICALLY DEBARRED FROM DISPENSING PRESCRIPTIONS.

+THIS SITUATION IS CONFUSING TO THE PUBLIC WHO CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO KNOW WHETHER A PRESCRIPTION CONTAINS A PART I POISON AND CANNOT THEREFORE LEGALLY BE DISPENSED BY A LISTED SELLER.+

MR SHIPMAN SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD ACCEPTED THE WORKING PARTY'S ADVICE THAT PRESCRIPTIONS SHOULD BE DISPENSED ONLY BY QUALIFIED PHARMACISTS ENGAGED BY AUTHORISED SELLERS OF POISONS OR IN OTHER APPROVED OUTLETS.

+CLAUSE 2 (B) OF THE BILL THEREFORE CLARIFIES THE DEFINITION OF DISPENSING TO INCLUDE THE SUPPLY OF MEDICINE OR POISON ON A PRESCRIPTION ISSUED BY A DOCTOR, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHETHER THAT MEDICINE IS IN PART I OF THE POISONS LIST OR NOT.+

DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS PROHIBITING DISPENSING BY LISTED SELLERS OF POISONS WOULD BE PROVIDED BY WAY OF SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION, HE SAID.

+THE DEFINITION OF 'SELL' IN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE DOES NOT INCLUDE SUPPLY WITHOUT PAYMENT AND TECHNICALLY IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR UNAUTHORISED PERSONS TO CIRCUMVENT CONTROL BY OFFERING POISONS AND PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS UNDER THE GUISE OF FREE SUPPLY,+ HE SAID.

+CLAUSE 2(C) IS INTENDED TO REMOVE THIS LOOPHOLE,+ HE ADDED.

CLAUSE 5 PROVIDED FOR TIGHTER CONTROL ON THE REGISTRATION OF PREMISES OF AUTHORISED SELLERS, WHO WERE THE CATEGORY OF RETAIL OUTLET THAT MIGHT SELL PART I POISONS, PROVIDED THAT THEY ENGAGED A REGISTERED PHARMACIST FOR THIS PURPOSE.

/+UNDER THE

+UNDER THE PRESENT TERMS OF THE ORDINANCE THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD HAS NO POWER TO REJECT A CORRECTLY SUBMITTED APPLICATION FOR THE REGISTRATION OF PREMISES, AND THE APPLICANT AUTOMATICALLY BECOMES AN AUTHORISED SELLER OF POISONS ONCE HIS PREMISES HAVE BEEN REGISTERED.

+ALTHOUGH THE BOARD MAY DE-REGISTER THE PREMISES CONCERNED WHEN AN AUTHORISED SELLER IS FOUND GUILTY OF AN OFFENCE, IT CANNOT REFUSE TO REGISTER THE SAME PREMISES AGAIN IF THE OPERATOR APPLIES UNDER A NEW NAME.+

MR SHIPMAN TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT CLAUSE 5 WOULD EMPOWER THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD TO GRANT OR REJECT AN APPLICATION, OR TO IMPOSE CONDITIONS ON REGISTRATION, HAVING REGARD TO THE PERSONAL SUITABILITY OF THE AUTHORISED SELLER AND THE SUITABILITY OF THE PREMISES FOR THE RETAIL SALE OF POISONS.

CLAUSE 9 ENABLED REGULATIONS TO BE MADE PROVIDING FOR MORE DETAILED PROCEDURES TO BE PRESCRIBED AND CLAUSE 10 PROVIDED FOR APPLICANTS AGGRIEVED BY A DECISION OF THE BOARD ON THESE MATTERS TO APPEAL TO THE PHARMACY AND POISONS APPEAL TRIBUNAL, HE SAID.

TO FACILITATE EASY IDENTIFICATION BY THE PUBLIC, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE SAID CLAUSES 6 AND 9 PROVIDED THAT AUTHORISED SELLERS OF POISONS SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO DISPLAY AT REGISTERED PREMISES A PRESCRIBED LOGO, WHICH NON-AUTHORISED PERSONS WOULD BE PROHIBITED FROM DISPLAYING.

+IN ADDITION TO THESE PROPOSALS TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING PARTY, THE BILL ALSO CONTAINS A NUMBER OF OTHER AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH THE MEDICAL AND PHARMACEUTICAL PROFESSIONS,+ HE SAID.

+CLAUSES 3 AND 4 REVISE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD AND THE COMMITTEE OF EXAMINERS TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY IN THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

+CLAUSE 7 REMOVES AN UNNECESSARY PROVISION DESIGNED TO RESTRICT COMPETITION AMONG LISTED SELLERS OF POISONS.

+CLAUSE 8 EXEMPTS DOCTORS, DENTISTS AND VETERINARY SURGEONS FROM THE REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN SEPARATE RECORDS ON THE SUPPLY OF MEDICINES PROVIDED THAT THE DETAILS OF SUCH SUPPLIES ARE ENTERED INTO CLINICAL RECORD CARDS KEPT FOR THEIR PATIENTS.

+CLAUSE 11 WIDENS THE POWER OF FORFEITURE BY THE MAGISTRATE TO INCLUDE ANY PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH AN OFFENCE HAS BEEN COMMITTED.+

AT PRESENT THE POWER WAS APPLICABLE ONLY TO PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS CONTAINING POISONS, HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

REASONS FOR LRT MEASURES EXPLAINED

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THERE ARE TWO MAIN REASONS WHY IT IS UNDESIRABLE TO ALLOW DIRECTLY COMPETING BUS SERVICES TO OPERATE IN THE +TRANSIT SERVICE AREA+ OF THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT) SYSTEM IN THE NORTHWESTERN NEW TERRITORIES, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON HARNAM GREWAL, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, WHICH PROVIDES A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE KCR CORPORATION TO BUILD AND OPERATE THE LRT, HE SAID THERE HAD BEEN CRITICISM THAT THE PROPOSED MEASURES FOR AN INTEGRATED PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM WOULD AMOUNT TO GRANTING A MONOPOLY TO THE CORPORATION IN THE TRANSIT SERVICE AREA.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE LRT WOULD NOT BE PLACED IN A MONOPOLY SITUATION: EXTERNAL KOWLOON MOTOR BUS SERVICES, RESIDENTIAL COACHES, RED AND GREEN MINIBUSES AND TAXIS WOULD ALL CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE REGION.

EXPLAINING THE TWO MAIN REASONS WHY COMPETING BUS SERVICES SHOULD NOT OPERATE IN THE TRANSIT SERVICE AREA, MR GREWAL SAID: +FIRSTLY, UNLIKE THE MTR WHICH IS AN ADDITIONAL MODE SERVING EXISTING URBAN CORRIDORS OF HIGH PASSENGER DEMAND, THE LRT IS TO BE BUILT AS THE PRIME PEOPLE-MOVER IN THE DEVELOPING NEW TOWN OF TUEN MUN, WHICH IS THE SAME SIZE OF KOWLOON, AND THE NORTHWEST WHERE THERE IS INSUFFICIENT INTERNAL DEMAND TO SUPPORT MORE THAN ONE MAJOR MODE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

+SECONDLY, THE LRT IS INTENDED TO BE A NEW FORM OF TRANSPORT IN PLACE OF A SYSTEM THAT RELIES HEAVILY ON BUSES. IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT IS PROPOSED IS THE REPLACEMENT OF THE INTERNAL FRANCHISED BUS SERVICE BY THE LRT.+

THE LRT SYSTEM WITH ITS FEEDER ROUTES WOULD PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE AND CONVENIENT SERVICE WITH SUFFICIENT CAPACITY TO COPE WITH TRAFFIC DEMAND WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

HENCE THERE WOULD BE A CONTINUING ROLE FOR BUSES ON FEEDER ROUTES AS WELL AS EXTERNAL SERVICES, AND IN THIS REGARD THE GOVERNMENT WOULD WELCOME CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE KCRC AND KMB ON THE PROVISION OF FEEDER SERVICES WITHIN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK SET OUT IN THE BILL. THE ACTUAL DETAILS AS TO HOW THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED WOULD BE A MATTER FOR DISCUSSION AND NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE TWO.

+THE LRT WILL BE THE FIRST PUBLIC TRANSPORT MODE OF ITS KIND IN HONG KONG, ONE THAT WILL PROVIDE A MODERN, AIR-CONDITIONED, COMFORTABLE, CONVENIENT AND EFFICIENT FORM OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AT REASONABLE COST FOR RESIDENTS OF THE NORTHWESTERN NEW TERRITORIES,+ HE POINTED OUT.

/MR GREWAL

MR GREWAL OUTLINED THE BACKGROUND CONCERNING THE LRT SYSTEM +IN VIEW OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND CONCERN THAT HAS BEEN ENGENDERED.+

IN PLANNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF TUEN MUN NEW TOWN AND THE NORTHWESTERN NEW TERRITORIES, CAREFUL THOUGHT WAS GIVEN AS TO THE BEST FORM OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR THE REGION. THE NEW TOWN WAS PLANNED FROM THE OUTSET WITH AN +EXCLUSIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT RIGHT OF WAY+ SEGREGATED FROM THE ORDINARY ROAD NETWORK.

A DETAILED EVALUATION OF THE RESPECTIVE MERITS AND DEMERITS OF BUSES, LRT AND OTHER MODES WAS CARRIED OUT TO DETERMINE WHICH WOULD BEST MEET THE NEEDS OF THE AREA.

+THE LRT WAS FINALLY CHOSEN BECAUSE IT BLENDS THE MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND COMFORT OF THE ELECTRIC RAILWAY WITH THE CONVENIENCE AND EASY ACCESSIBILITY OF THE TRAM AND BECAUSE IT IS FAST AND RELIABLE WITHOUT THE SMOKE, NOISE AND CONGESTION WHICH ARE ALL TOO FAMILIAR IN MANY PARTS OF HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

MR GREWAL NOTED THAT THE LIGHT RAIL SYSTEM WITH ITS SUPPORTING FEEDER BUS SERVICES IN A DEDICATED TRANSIT SERVICE AREA WAS EXPLAINED TO AND DISCUSSED WITH THE TUEN MUN AND YUEN LONG DISTRICT BOARDS TWO YEARS AGO AND RECEIVED THEIR SUPPORT.

IT WAS ON THIS BASIS AND WITH THIS COMMUNITY SUPPORT THAT THE KCRC UNDERTOOK TO CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE THE LRT SYSTEM, THE FIRST PHASE OF WHICH WAS DUE TO BE COMPLETED BY MID-1988.

THUS, THE LRT HAD BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE OF TUEN MUN NEW TOWN AND THE NORTHWESTERN NEW TERRITORIES. WITH A CARRYING CAPACITY CAPABLE OF MEETING DEMAND WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY, IT WAS AN INVESTMENT NOT ONLY FOR THE PRESENT BUT THE LONG-TERM FUTURE AS WELL. IT WAS IN ESSENCE A VISIBLE FORM OF GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHWEST.

MR GREWAL ALSO EXPLAINED THE CONCEPT OF THE TRANSIT SERVICE AREA, WHICH WAS INTENDED TO COVER THE WHOLE OF THE TUEN MUN DISTRICT AND THAT PART OF THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT WEST OF THE EASTERN END OF YUEN LONG TOWN.

WITHIN THE TRANSIT SERVICE AREA, PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES WILL BE FULLY INTEGRATED, WITH THE LRT FUNCTIONING AS THE BACKBONE AND OTHER MODES PLAYING A COMPLEMENTARY ROLE.

+I AM AWARE THAT CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED IN SOME QUARTERS THAT AS THE LRT WILL BE THE ONLY MASS CARRIER IN THE TRANSIT SERVICE AREA, PEOPLE WILL BE LEFT WITH NO CHOICE IF KCRC WERE TO CHARGE VERY HIGH FARES ON ITS SYSTEM. THIS CONCERN THOUGH UNDERSTANDABLE IS UNFOUNDED,+ HE SAID.

/THE KCRC HAD

THE KCRC HAD STATED PUBLICLY THAT IT WOULD ADOPT A REALISTIC FARE POLICY AND THAT FARE LEVELS WOULD BE KEPT REASONABLE.

THE CORPORATION WAS NOT A PUBLICLY LISTED COMPANY WHICH HAD TO MAXIMISE PROFIT FOR ITS SHAREHOLDERS. IT WAS WHOLLY FINANCED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNED BY A BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR.

THE BOARD COMPRISED MEMBERS FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, THE URBAN COUNCIL AND DISTRICT BOARDS WHO WERE THERE TO REPRESENT THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

+THERE WILL IN EFFECT BE A THREE-TIER SYSTEM OF MONITORING LRT FARES AND SERVICE : THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEES OF THE TWO DISTRICT BOARDS, THE KCRC BOARD ITSELF WITH ITS PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES AND FINALLY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL WHO IS EMPOWERED UNDER SECTION 6 OF THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION ORDINANCE TO GIVE DIRECTIONS TO THE CORPORATION IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST,+ HE SAID.

THIS THREE-TIER SYSTEM OF MONITORING WOULD ENSURE THAT THE PUBLIC INTEREST WAS WELL DEFENDED AND SAFEGUARDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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TOUGHER LAWS PROPOSED ON FIRE SAFETY
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PROPOSALS IN THE FIRE SERVICES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 3) BILL 1986 AIM AT ENABLING THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES TO DEAL MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH HAZARDS THAT HAVE RECURRED- DETERRING PEOPLE FROM CREATING ESPECIALLY DANGEROUS FIRE HAZARDS AND INCREASING THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION.

THIS WAS SAID BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

+THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS ARE THOSE WHICH WOULD MAKE IT A CRIMINAL OFFENCE TO ALLOW A FIRE HAZARD WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A 'FIRE HAZARD ABATEMENT NOTICE' TO RECUR WITHIN 12 MONTHS OR TO LEAVE OBSTRUCTIONS IN THE CORRIDORS, STAIRCASES AND OTHER COMMON AREAS OF A BUILDING WHICH FORM PART OF THE MEANS OF ESCAPE FROM IT OR TO LOCK ANY MEANS OF ESCAPE SUCH THAT IT CANNOT BE OPENED FROM INSIDE WITHOUT THE USE OF A KEY,+ HE SAID.

+MEMBERS MAY THINK THAT IT WOULD BE HIGHLY IRRESPONSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO COMMIT SUCH OFFENCES. SO IT IS RIGHT TO PROPOSE FAIRLY STIFF PENALTIES FOR THEM,+ HE ADDED.

/IT WAS HOPED

IT WAS HOPED THAT THE PENALTIES NOW PROPOSED WOULD PROVIDE A SUITABLE DETERRENT, AND THAT STANDARDS OF FIRE SAFETY, PARTICULARLY IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS, WOULD RISE.

MR THOMAS NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD FOR SOME TIME BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE DANGERS OF FIRE HAZARDS IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS, PARTICULARLY OBSTRUCTIONS TO ESCAPE ROUTES. SUCH HAZARDS ENDANGERED THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING IN THE BUILDINGS. THEY ALSO IMPEDED FIREMEN IN THEIR ACCESS TO FIRES.

+AT PRESENT, THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES LACKS THE POWER REQUIRED TO TACKLE THIS PROBLEM EFFECTIVELY. ALL HE CAN DO IS TO ISSUE ABATEMENT NOTICES REQUIRING FIRE HAZARDS TO BE REMOVED WITHIN A GIVEN PERIOD OF TIME. ONLY WHEN AN ABATEMENT NOTICE HAS BEEN IGNORED IS AN OFFENCE COMMITTED,+ HE SAID.

+THIS STATE OF THE LAW PROVIDES NO REAL INCENTIVE TO KEEP COMMON AREAS FREE FROM HAZARDS. BECAUSE THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE OFFENCE MANY WILL TAKE A RISK AND DELIBERATELY BLOCK ESCAPE ROUTES IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEY CANNOT BE PUNISHED UNTIL AFTER A NOTICE HAS BEEN SERVED AND THES HAVE HAD THE CHANCE TO REMOVE THE OBSTRUCTION - AT LEAST FOR A TIME, BECAUSE IF LATER THE ESCAPE ROUTE IS FOUND AGAIN TO BE BLOCKED, THE DIRECTOR MUST FIRST SERVE ANOTHER ABATEMENT NOTICE AND SO IT MAY GO ON.+

MR THOMAS NOTED THAT THE FIRE AT THE BLUE BOX FACTORY BUILDING IN ABERDEEN IN 1984 RENEWED PUBLIC CONCERN ABOUT STORAGE OF GOODS IN ESCAPE ROUTES WITHIN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS.

THAT FIRE BURNED FOR THREE DAYS, CAUSING EXTENSIVE DAMAGE, PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTIES FACED BY FIREMEN IN WORKING THEIR WAY INTO THE BUILDING.

IN RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC CONCERN, THE ADMINISTRATION EXAMINED THE EXISTING LEGISLATION TO DETERMINE WHAT CHANGES WERE REQUIRED TO CREATE APPROPRIATE DETERRENTS FOR MALPRACTICES.

+THE RESULT IS THE BILL BEFORE THE COUNCIL TODAY,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

HE ADDED THAT IN CONSIDERING THESE AMENDMENTS, THE ADMINISTRATION TOOK ACCOUNT OF THE AVAILABILITY OF STORAGE SPACE IN INDUSTRIAL AREAS TO SEE WHETHER THIS WAS A CONTINUING CONSTRAINT ON THE ABILITY TO STORE GOODS SAFELY. THE CONCLUSION WAS THAT LACK OF STORAGE SPACE WAS NO LONGER THE PROBLEM IT ONCE HAD BEEN.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, BOTH IN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THE AMENDMENTS. ALL HAD SUPPORTED THE SPIRIT OF THE PROPOSALS AND HAD SO FAR RAISED NO OBJECTIONS TO THEM.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

FINAL QUARTER SUMMARY PROVISION EXPLAINED
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THE NET SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION FOR THE FINAL QUARTER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1985-86 WAS \$250.7 MILLION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

TABLING THE SUMMARY OF THE PROVISION FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION, MR JACOBS SAID OF THE \$1 903.7 MILLION APPROVED SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION, \$1 383.4 MILLION AROSE FROM THE 1985 CIVIL SERVICE AND SUBVENTED SECTOR PAY ADJUSTMENTS.

OF THE AMOUNT OF \$1 903.7 MILLION, \$1 653 MILLION WAS OFFSET BY SAVINGS UNDER THE SAME HEADS OR OTHER HEADS OF EXPENDITURE OR BY THE DELETION OF FUNDS UNDER THE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS VOTES, HE SAID.

MR JACOBS NOTED THAT ITEMS IN THE SUMMARY HAD BEEN APPROVED EITHER BY FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY.

THE LATTER HAD BEEN REPORTED TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 8(8) (A) OF THE PUBLIC FINANCE ORDINANCE, HE SAID.

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WAR MEMORIAL FUND ASSISTANCE BASED ON NEED
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THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE WAR MEMORIAL FUND HAS RECOMMENDED THAT ASSISTANCE FROM THE FUND SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE BASED ON NEED, THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHAN WAS SPEAKING AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE WHEN HE TABLED THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HE SAID THE MEASURE OF NEED MUST NECESSARILY BE SUBJECTIVE AND THAT GUIDANCE WAS ALREADY PROVIDED BY THE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE TO THE BENEFICIARY IN THE HONG KONG WAR MEMORIAL FUND ORDINANCE.

+SUCH ASSISTANCE SHOULD, WE BELIEVE, BE PROVIDED TO ENSURE A REASONABLE STANDARD OF LIVING FOR THE BENEFICIARY WHO SHOULD BE RELIEVED FROM THE BURDEN OF FEAR FOR HIS MAINTENANCE AND LIVELIHOOD,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT THERE MIGHT NOW BE ONLY SOME 20 LOCAL AND SOME 100 OVERSEAS APPLICANTS YET TO APPLY.

MR CHAN POINTED OUT THAT THE WAR MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE MADE A RECOMMENDATION IN JULY LAST YEAR, AFTER CONDUCTING A REVIEW OF PROCEDURES, FOR THE FUND TO BECOME A COMPENSATION FUND FOR WAR RELATED DEATH OR DISABILITY, WHICH WOULD FURTHER HAVE INCREASED THE AMOUNT OF FUNDS NEEDED TO BE VOTED AND WAS AT VARIANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON BENEFITS FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR.

/HE SAID THE

HE SAID THE SELECT COMMITTEE ACCEPTED THAT THE FUND COMMITTEE HAD ACTED PROPERLY IN TAKING THE MEASURES TO RELAX THE CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF GRANTS AS THIS WAS ON THE INITIATIVE AND FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

MR CHAN EXPLAINED THAT THE SELECT COMMITTEE WAS APPOINTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN DECEMBER. ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE WERE FIRSTLY TO CONSIDER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HONG KONG WAR MEMORIAL FUND AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FUTURE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FUND, AND SECONDLY TO REPORT ON THE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO BE TAKEN WITH A VIEW TO IMPLEMENTING THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS.

LASTLY, ON BEHALF OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE, MR CHAN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF THE CO-OPERATION GIVEN BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY OF THE HONG KONG WAR MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRISONERS OF WAR AND VETERANS ASSOCIATIONS.

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UNIFORM DESCRIPTIONS OF SPEEDING OFFENCES
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A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) ORDINANCE REGARDING SPEEDING OFFENCES WAS APPROVED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE RESOLUTION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON HARNAM GREWAL, SAID THE SCHEDULE TO THE ORDINANCE WAS AMENDED SO THAT ITS DESCRIPTIONS OF SPEEDING OFFENCES WERE THE SAME AS THOSE IN THE SCHEDULE TO THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) ORDINANCE, WHICH WAS AMENDED ON JULY 9.

THE AMENDMENTS IN THIS RESOLUTION WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON JULY 28, THE SAME EFFECTIVE DATE AS THAT OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1986,+ HE SAID.

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VIEWS ON BANKING CREDIT INFORMATION BUREAU SOUGHT
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SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE SETTING UP OF A CENTRAL CREDIT INFORMATION BUREAU IF A CONSENSUS EMERGED IN FAVOUR OF THE IDEA, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HELMUT SOHMEN, MR JACOBS SAID THIS, AS USUAL, WOULD HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE WIDER ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS.

/HE SAID HE

HE SAID HE HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED A SIMILAR PROPOSAL FROM THE HONG KONG FOREIGN BANK REPRESENTATIVES ASSOCIATION.

+A CREDIT INFORMATION BUREAU IS AN INTERESTING IDEA, BUT ESSENTIALLY ONE FOR THE BANKING COMMUNITY, AT LEAST IN THE FIRST INSTANCE,+ HE NOTED.

+I HAVE ACCORDINGLY ASKED THE ASSOCIATION TO TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS. THEY HAVE NOW DONE SO,+ HE ADDED.

MR JACOBS SAID HE COULD CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND WHY BANKS WOULD WANT MORE INFORMATION ON BORROWERS IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE LATTER'S CREDIT-WORTHINESS WITH MORE PRECISION.

+THERE ARE, HOWEVER, OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: HOW WOULD BORROWERS LIKE THE IDEA OF THEIR BANKERS SHARING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ON THEM? WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS ON A BANKER'S DUTY TO MAINTAIN SECRECY ABOUT HIS CUSTOMER'S AFFAIRS?+

+NOT ALL BORROWERS ARE UNSCRUPULOUS,+ HE ADDED.

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POLICE OFFICERS HAVE TO RELY ON OWN JUDGEMENT

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IT IS RARELY POSSIBLE FOR A POLICE OFFICER TO KNOW IN ADVANCE THAT A MOTORIST IS ABOUT TO COMMIT A TRAFFIC OFFENCE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LAU WONG-FAT, MR THOMAS SAID THAT IN THIS RESPECT MOTORISTS WERE LESS THAN HELPFUL.

+EVENTS USUALLY TAKE PLACE SO RAPIDLY THAT A POLICE OFFICER IS UNABLE TO PREVENT AN OFFENCE OCCURRING WITHOUT ENDANGERING HIS OWN LIFE OR THOSE OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC,+ HE SAID.

+HE THUS IS USUALLY LEFT WITH THE DISCRETION AND THE DECISION AS TO WHETHER AND, IF SO, HOW TO ENFORCE THE LAW.+

MR LAU HAD ASKED WHETHER POLICE OFFICERS PERFORMING THEIR DUTIES HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY TO STOP OR CORRECT MOTORISTS BEFORE THEY ACTUALLY COMMITTED A TRAFFIC OFFENCE, OR SHOULD THE OFFICER SIMPLY WAIT FOR A DRIVER TO COMMIT AN OFFENCE AND THEN TAKE ACTION.

MR THOMAS EXPLAINED THAT UNDER SECTION 10 OF THE POLICE FORCE ORDINANCE CAP. 232, THE DUTIES OF THE POLICE FORCE WERE TO TAKE LAWFUL MEASURES FOR PRESERVING THE PUBLIC PEACE; PREVENTING AND DETECTING CRIMES AND OFFENCES; PREVENTING INJURY TO LIFE AND PROPERTY; APPREHENDING ALL PERSONS WHOM IT WAS LAWFUL TO APPREHEND AND FOR WHOSE APPREHENSION SUFFICIENT GROUNDS EXISTED; AND CONTROLLING TRAFFIC AND PUBLIC THOROUGHFARES AND REMOVING OBSTRUCTIONS.

WHAT CAN

+WHAT CAN AND SHOULD BE DONE BY A POLICE OFFICER CARRYING OUT THOSE DUTIES MUST DEPEND ON THE FACTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH PARTICULAR CASE WHETHER IT IS A TRAFFIC MATTER OR SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS,+ HE SAID.

WHEN A POLICE OFFICER SAW A PERSON WHO ACTED AS IF HE WAS ABOUT TO COMMIT AN OFFENCE, HE COULD TRY TO PREVENT IT.

+BUT HE CAN ONLY DO SO IF HE HAS THE TIME AND RESOURCES WITH WHICH TO ACT, IF HE IS CLOSE ENOUGH TO DO SO EFFECTIVELY, IF THE PERSON'S ACTION IS SUFFICIENTLY UNEQUIVOCAL TO PERMIT OF NO INNOCENT EXPLANATION, AND IF PUBLIC SAFETY IS NOT ENDANGERED.+

MR THOMAS SAID THAT IN MANY CASES A POLICE OFFICER WOULD BE UNABLE TO PREVENT THE OFFENCE OCCURRING, AND WOULD BE LEFT TO TAKE ACTION ONLY AFTER THE EVENT.

+WHETHER OR NOT HE THEN DECIDES TO TAKE ENFORCEMENT ACTION IS A MATTER FOR THE INDIVIDUAL JUDGEMENT OF EACH POLICE OFFICER,+ HE ADDED.

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LITTLE DEMAND FOR HELICOPTER SITES IN NT
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ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DOMESTIC HELIPAD NETWORK, A NUMBER OF SUITABLE SITES IN MAJOR TOWNS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY THE HON DAVID LI, MR JACOBS SAID:
+SO FAR THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE COMMERCIAL DEMAND, AND TO DATE NO ONE HAS EXPRESSED ANY DESIRE TO ACQUIRE AND DEVELOP ANY OF THE SITES.+

WITH REGARD TO COMMERCIAL HELICOPTER OPERATIONS AT KAI TAK, HE SAID THERE WAS A NEED TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE MOVEMENTS OF AN INCREASING NUMBER OF FIXED-WING COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT USING THE SINGLE RUNWAY AT THE AIRPORT.

+AND THE VALUABLE GROUND SPACE AND EXISTING FACILITIES ARE BEST RESERVED FOR AIRCRAFT PROVIDING INTERNATIONAL, FIXED-WING SERVICES,+ HE SAID.

+THESE SERVICES ARE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO HONG KONG'S ECONOMY.+

MR JACOBS SAID A POSSIBLE SITE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL HELIPORT ADJACENT TO THE SHA TIN-MEISHA FERRY TERMINAL WAS CURRENTLY UNDER INVESTIGATION.

HE SAID: +SHOULD IT PROVE SUITABLE, AND SHOULD THE NECESSARY FACILITIES BE PROVIDED BY A DEVELOPER, INTERNATIONAL SERVICES COULD BE OPERATED TO AND FROM IT, SUBJECT, OF COURSE, TO ALL THE USUAL ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATIONS REQUIRED FOR SUCH SERVICES.+

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PRIVATE TUTORIAL CLASSES NOT A BIG PROBLEM
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THE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM THE OPERATION OF PRIVATE TUTORIAL CLASSES HAVE NOT REACHED AN EXTENT WHICH JUSTIFIES ANY CHANGE IN THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PAULINE NG, MR LEUNG SAID THE PROBLEMS COULD BE MORE APPROPRIATELY DEALT WITH BY MAKING THE PUBLIC MORE AWARE OF WHAT COULD BE PROPERLY EXPECTED FROM PRIVATE TUTORIAL CLASSES AND OF THE ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC BOTH FROM THE CONSUMER COUNCIL AND THE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICES OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

HE NOTED THAT ALL REGISTERED SCHOOLS, INCLUDING PRIVATE TUTORIAL CLASSES WHICH FELL WITHIN THE AMBIT OF THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE WERE SUPERVISED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT THROUGH REGULAR INSPECTIONS.

THIS INCLUDED THE INVESTIGATION OF ANY COMPLAINTS RECEIVED AND REMEDIAL ACTION REQUIRED, HE SAID.

DEFINING A SCHOOL IN THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, MR LEUNG SAID THAT IT WAS +AN INSTITUTION, ORGANISATION OR ESTABLISHMENT WHICH PROVIDES EDUCATION FOR 20 OR MORE PERSONS DURING ANY ONE DAY, WHETHER OR NOT AT THE SAME TIME.+

HE POINTED OUT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO INCREASE THE SCOPE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S SUPERVISION BY AMENDING THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE SO THAT REGISTRATION UNDER THE ORDINANCE WAS REQUIRED FOR INSTITUTIONS PROVIDING EDUCATION FOR A SMALLER NUMBER OF PERSONS.

+TO DO SO, HOWEVER, WOULD RESULT IN A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN THE SUPERVISORY COMMITMENTS OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, WITH THE CONSEQUENTIAL NEED FOR INCREASED STAFFING RESOURCES.

+BEFORE SUCH A STEP IS TAKEN THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE CONVINCED THAT THE EXISTING PROBLEMS JUSTIFIED SUCH INCREASED EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC FUNDS, OR THAT THE PROBLEMS COULD NOT BE RESOLVED BY OTHER MEANS,+ MR LEUNG SAID.

RENT OF ERP COMMERCIAL TENANTS FROZEN
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THE RENTS OF ALL SHOPS IN THE 26 BLOCKS AFFECTED BY THE EXTENDED REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ARE NOW FROZEN AND ARE BEING REASSESSED ONCE EVERY SIX MONTHS, THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON JOHN TODD, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW WONG ON RENT DETERMINATION AND REVIEW FOR PUBLIC HOUSING COMMERCIAL TENANTS AFFECTED BY THE ERP, MR TODD SAID: +THE RENTS OF ALL SHOPS IN THE 26 BLOCKS CONCERNED WERE FROZEN ON ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE PROGRAMME ON NOVEMBER 21, 1985.

+SUBSEQUENT TO THAT, THE RENTS OF THESE SHOPS ARE BEING REASSESSED ONCE EVERY SIX MONTHS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CHANGES IN MARKET VALUE ARISING FROM FACTORS SUCH AS THE REDUCTION OF THE RESIDENT POPULATION.+

THE FIRST RENT REVIEW IN APRIL 1986 RESULTED IN THE RENTS OF 16 TENANCIES IN KWAI FONG ESTATE BEING REDUCED BY EIGHT TO 45 PER CENT.

MR TODD ADDED THAT FOR SHOPS IN THE VICINITY OF THE ERP BLOCKS, THEIR RENTS ARE REASSESSED ONCE EVERY SIX MONTHS IN ADDITION TO THE NORMAL REASSESSMENT OF RENTS ON RENEWAL OF TENANCY.

+THEY WILL BE REDUCED IF THE REASSESSMENT INDICATES THAT THE RENTS BEING PAID ARE ABOVE THE REASSESSED MARKET RENT.+

ON MEASURES THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAD TAKEN OR WOULD TAKE TO DETERMINE AND REVIEW THE RENTALS OF SHOP TENANTS FACING STRONG COMPETITION FROM THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN ADJACENT COMMERCIAL COMPLEXES, MR TODD SAID IT WAS THE AUTHORITY'S POLICY TO LET ITS COMMERCIAL PREMISES ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS.

+TENANCIES ARE NORMALLY RENEWED ONCE EVERY THREE YEARS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE TENANCY AGREEMENT AND RENTS ARE REASSESSED AT THE SAME TIME.

+THESE REASSESSMENTS WILL TAKE ACCOUNT OF ALL FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT THE BUSINESS POTENTIAL OF THE PREMISES, INCLUDING COMPETITION FROM SHOPS IN THE VICINITY,+ MR TODD EXPLAINED.

EFFORTS TO TACKLE RED TIDES CONTINUING
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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE WITH ITS CONTROL PROGRAMME FOR MINIMISING THE HARM DONE BY RED TIDES, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON NIGEL SHIPMAN, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, MR SHIPMAN SAID A WATER SAMPLING PROGRAMME WAS CONDUCTED IN TOLO HARBOUR AND SOME OTHER INNER BAYS EVERY TWO WEEKS AND THIS COULD GIVE EARLY DETECTION OF RED TIDE CAUSATIVE ORGANISMS.

HE SAID THAT ROUTINE TOXICITY TESTING OF SHELLFISH FROM THE MARKET AND IN MARINE HABITATS WAS ALSO CARRIED OUT.

HE ADDED: +THERE ARE ALSO STANDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR FISHERMEN AND THE STAFF OF DEPARTMENTS WHICH ARE ACTIVE IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT TO REPORT SIGHTINGS OF RED TIDES TO THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT.

+MARICULTURISTS MAY THEN BE ASSISTED IN THE TEMPORARY RELOCATION OF THEIR FISH RAFTS TO UNAFFECTED WATERS AND ADVISED ON OTHER REMEDIAL MEASURES.+

MR SHIPMAN SAID THAT WHENEVER A RED TIDE WHICH WAS SUSPECTED TO BE TOXIC AFFECTED ANY AREA OF FISH OR SHELLFISH FARMING, FARMERS WERE WARNED NOT TO SELL THEIR PRODUCE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION PENDING TESTS.

+IF THE TESTS SHOW THAT THE FISH OR SHELLFISH ARE NOT FIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION, THEY ARE DESTROYED,+ HE SAID.

MR SHIPMAN NOTED THAT THESE STANDING ARRANGEMENTS WERE DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT SEAFOOD WHICH WAS RENDERED UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION AS A RESULT OF RED TIDES DID NOT REACH THE MARKETS.

IN THE EVENT OF RED TIDE OUTBREAKS IN BEACH WATERS, WARNING SIGNS WERE ERECTED TO ALERT THE PUBLIC, HE SAID.

IN THE LONGER TERM SOLUTION, MR SHIPMAN SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT POLLUTION BY NUTRIENTS SHOULD BE REDUCED SINCE THIS WAS THE ONLY ONE OF THE KNOWN CAUSATIVE FACTORS OF RED TIDES WHICH WAS AMENABLE TO CONTROL.

PRESENT MEASURES FOR THE REMOVAL OF NUTRIENTS IN SEWAGE EFFLUENTS TOGETHER WITH PROPOSED CONTROLS ON THE DISPOSAL OF ANIMAL WASTES WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO ACHIEVE THIS REDUCTION, HE SAID.

MR SHIPMAN NOTED THAT RED TIDES WERE A RARE OCCURRENCE IN TOLO HARBOUR IN THE 1970S, BUT THE FREQUENCY HAD INCREASED MARKEDLY SINCE THEN.

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A TOTAL OF 11 OCCURRENCES WERE REPORTED IN THAT AREA BETWEEN 1980 AND 1982, 11 IN 1983, 15 IN 1984 AND 16 IN 1985, WHILE 14 OCCURRENCES IN THE HARBOUR HAD BEEN RECORDED SO FAR THIS YEAR, HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN RECENT YEARS, RED TIDE AFFECTED AREAS HAD BECOME MORE WIDESPREAD AND A GREATER VARIETY OF THE CAUSATIVE ORGANISMS, CALLED DINOFLAGELLATES, HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED.

MR SHIPMAN SAID THAT RED TIDE WAS WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON, USUALLY OBSERVED IN COASTAL WATERS, AND STUDIES INTERNATIONALLY HAD NOT YET CONCLUSIVELY ESTABLISHED THE CAUSES OF RED TIDE.

HOWEVER, IT WAS CLEAR THAT POLLUTION WAS A FACTOR WHICH MADE THE OCCURRENCE OF RED TIDE MORE LIKELY, HE NOTED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT MOST OF THE RED TIDES WERE ASSOCIATED WITH FISHKILLS AND AFFECTED THE VIABILITY OF MARICULTURE ZONES.

+THEY MAY ALSO CONSTITUTE A PUBLIC HEALTH RISK, PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE INGESTION OF SEAFOOD CONTAMINATED BY TOXIC DINOFLAGELLATES,+ HE SAID.

MR SHIPMAN HOWEVER NOTED THAT THE PRESENCE IN SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF TOXIC SPECIES OF DINOFLAGELLATES HAD BEEN CONFIRMED IN ONLY ONE OF THE RECORDED INCIDENTS OF RED TIDE IN HONG KONG IN OCTOBER 1983.

SOME SHELLFISH CONTAMINATED BY TOXIC DINOFLAGELLATES WERE ALSO FOUND IN TOLO HARBOUR IN MARCH 1984, HE SAID.

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THREE BILLS PASSED

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THREE BILLS -- THE BANKRUPTCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986, THE THEFT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING BILL 1986 -- WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

FOUR OTHER BILLS -- THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1985-86) BILL 1986, THE FIRE SERVICES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 3) BILL 1986, THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 AND THE PHARMACY AND POISONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1986 -- WERE READ A SECOND TIME AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED TO JULY 23.

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HK GOOD MARKET FOR U.S. GOODS - SIR EDWARD

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HONG KONG PROVIDES A GOOD MARKET FOR AMERICAN PRODUCTS, THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, TOLD AN AUDIENCE IN SEATTLE ON WEDNESDAY (THURSDAY, HK TIME), AND STRESSED THAT +WE PRACTICE FREE TRADE AND OPEN OUR MARKETS TO ALL+.

+ON A PER CAPITA BASIS, WE IMPORT FROM THE U.S. FAR MORE THAN THE U.S. IMPORTS FROM US. ON THE SAME PER CAPITA BASIS, WE IMPORT OVER THREE TIMES MORE FROM YOU THAN, FOR EXAMPLE, THE E.E.C. AND JAPAN.+

SIR EDWARD WAS ADDRESSING A LUNCH CO-HOSTED BY THE WASHINGTON COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND THE WASHINGTON STATE CHINA RELATIONS COUNCIL, ON 'UNITED STATES/HONG KONG TRADE RELATIONS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT+.

HE NOTED THAT HONG KONG WAS A LEADING MARKET FOR U.S. EXPORTS OF SUCH ITEMS AS WASHINGTON APPLES AND CHERRIES AND CALIFORNIAN ORANGES. OTHER MAJOR IMPORTS OF AMERICAN GOODS INCLUDED INTEGRATED CIRCUITS AND ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS, TEXTILE YARNS AND COTTON.

SIR EDWARD ALSO POINTED TO THE AIRCRAFT THAT CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS BOUGHT FROM THE SEATTLE-BASED BOEING COMPANY.

HE SAID: +DURING THE SIX YEAR PERIOD FROM 1979 TO 1985, CATHAY PACIFIC HAS INVESTED MORE THAN U.S. \$635 MILLION IN BOEING AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT.

+LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT SIX YEARS, IT HAS ALREADY PLACED FIRM ORDERS FOR FOUR BOEING 747'S AND IS CONSIDERING PURCHASING MORE.

+IT MAY WELL ILLUSTRATE THE POINT I AM TRYING TO MAKE IF I SAY THAT IT TAKES A LOT OF KNITTED SWEATERS TO PAY FOR A SINGLE 747.+

SIR EDWARD ADDED: +WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER EXPANSION OF THIS TRADE WHICH WOULD BENEFIT BOTH THE HONG KONG AND UNITED STATES CONSUMERS.+

HE EXPLAINED HOW HONG KONG DEPENDED ON TRADE. IN 1985, TOTAL TRADE AMOUNTED TO US\$60 BILLION: ABOUT 90 PER CENT OF MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS WERE SOLD OVERSEAS, WITH 44 PER CENT OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS BEING SOLD IN THE U.S. MARKET.

THE GOVERNOR SAID TARIFF OR NON-TARIFF BARRIERS WERE NOT FOUND IN HONG KONG BECAUSE OF THE ADOPTION OF FREE TRADE AND OPEN MARKET POLICIES.

IN THIS RESPECT, IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT HONG KONG SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH THE GROWTH OF PROTECTIONISM IN ITS MAJOR MARKETS.

/ON THE OTHER

ON THE OTHER HAND, HONG KONG FULLY UNDERSTOOD WHY THE UNITED STATES WAS CONCERNED WITH ITS TRADE DEFICIT, AND WITH THE FACT THAT NOT ALL ITS TRADE PARTNERS OPENED UP THEIR MARKETS TO AMERICAN GOODS AND SERVICES, AND THAT SOME MIGHT ADOPT UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES.

+BUT THESE DO NOT JUSTIFY TAKING PROTECTIONIST MEASURES AGAINST IMPORTS FROM HONG KONG. INDEED WE BELIEVE THESE MEASURES AND PROPOSALS WORK AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES IN SEEKING FREE ACCESS FOR U.S. GOODS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD,+ HE SAID.

+WE ARE HEARTENED TO KNOW THAT THESE VIEWS ARE SHARED HERE IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON. WE WELCOMED THE EFFORTS OF YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN CAMPAIGNING AGAINST PROTECTIONIST POLICIES LAST YEAR,+ HE ADDED.

SIR EDWARD SAID HONG KONG HAD ACQUIESCED IN THE RECENT UNITED STATES-HONG KONG TEXTILE CONSULTATIONS BECAUSE 'WE UNDERSTAND YOUR DIFFICULTIES WITH THE STRONG PROTECTIONIST FEELING IN THE UNITED STATES'.

HOWEVER, IT WAS PARTICULARLY UNFAIR TO APPLY FURTHER RESTRICTIONS TO A TERRITORY WHICH WAS A FIRM BELIEVER AND A REAL PRACTITIONER OF FREE TRADE.

SIR EDWARD SAID HONG KONG WAS A READY PARTNER FOR THE UNITED STATES IN PROMOTING ITS EXPORTS OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO OVERSEAS MARKETS. HE WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE ACTIVE ROLE PLAYED BY AMERICAN INVESTORS IN VARIOUS SECTORS IN HONG KONG AND SAID THERE WAS POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER GROWTH.

+IN THE MAUFACTURING SECTOR, HONG KONG OFFERS AN IDEAL OFF-SHORE MANUFACTURING BASE FOR AMERICAN COMPANIES TO HELP KEEP THEIR PRODUCTS COMPETITIVE IN WORLD MARKETS,+ HE SAID.

+WE CAN PROVIDE EFFICIENT COMMUNICATIONS AND A GOOD ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE, AN INDUSTRIOUS AND ADAPTABLE WORKFORCE, A LOW TAX REGIME AND A WELL ESTABLISHED LEGAL SYSTEM. HONG KONG THUS OFFERS AN EXCELLENT ENVIRONMENT FOR THE OVERSEAS INVESTOR.+

THIS WAS ESPECIALLY SO NOW THAT THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT DECLARATION ON HONG KONG'S FUTURE WAS IN PLACE, ENSURING A CONTINUATION OF THOSE ELEMENTS WHICH WERE ESSENTIAL TO HONG KONG'S SUCCESS.

THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP SET UP UNDER THE JOINT DECLARATION HAD PROVED A USEFUL FORUM IN WHICH THE BRITISH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS COULD WORK ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT.

A NOTABLE EXAMPLE WAS THE DECISION MADE IN APRIL THIS YEAR THAT HONG KONG SHOULD BECOME THE 91ST CONTRACTING PARTY TO THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE.

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IT WAS A HAPPY COINCIDENCE THAT THE NEW STATUS IN THE GATT BECAME EFFECTIVE AT A TIME WHEN DETAILED DISCUSSIONS WERE BEING HELD ON THE LAUNCHING OF A NEW ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS.

NOTING THAT HONG KONG HAD A SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST IN THE ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED, SIR EDWARD SAID: +WE WOULD SUPPORT ANY INITIATIVES WHICH WOULD FURTHER LIBERALISE WORLD TRADE AND STRENGTHEN THE WORLD TRADING REGIME BASED ON THE FUNDAMENTAL NON-DISCRIMINATORY PRINCIPLES OF THE GATT.+

SIR EDWARD ALSO REFERRED TO THE OPENING UP OF CHINA'S ECONOMY, AND SAID A NEW DIMENSION HAD BEEN ADDED TO HONG KONG'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES IT COULD OFFER TO THE UNITED STATES. CHINA WAS NOW THE TERRITORY'S SECOND LARGEST TRADE PARTNER, HE POINTED OUT.

THE TERRITORY'S WELL-DEVELOPED INFRASTRUCTURE, AND ITS FINANCIAL AND OTHER SERVICES HAD MUCH TO OFFER IN RELATION TO CHINA'S MODERNISATION EFFORTS.

+THE EXTENSIVE BUSINESS CONTACTS WHICH HONG KONG HAS WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD AND THE BILINGUAL NATURE OF LIFE IN HONG KONG, WITH BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH USED EXTENSIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY, CAN BE OF DIRECT BENEFIT BOTH TO CHINA IN HER DRIVE TO EXPAND TRADE AND INVESTMENT AND TO FOREIGN COMPANIES SEEKING A ROLE IN THAT EXPANSION,+ HE SAID.

SUMMING UP, THE GOVERNOR SAID: +LET ME ASSURE YOU THAT ALTHOUGH WE HAVE OUR PROBLEMS OVER PRODUCTS SUCH AS TEXTILES, OUR TRADE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES ARE GOOD. WE VALUE THE MARKET YOU PROVIDE, THE GOODS YOU SEND US, THE CONFIDENCE WHICH YOUR BUSINESSMEN HAVE SHOWN IN US BY INVESTING IN OUR MANUFACTURING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTORS, AND THE STRONG SUPPORT WHICH YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN TO THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT DECLARATION WHICH MAPS OUT OUR FUTURE.

+WE SHARE YOUR BELIEF IN OPEN MARKETS AND FREE COMPETITION. WE HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL UPHOLD THESE PRINCIPLES, PARTICULARLY IN RESPECT OF ITS TRADE PARTNERS WHO PRACTISE THEM. WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE EXPANSION OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT BETWEEN HONG KONG AND THE UNITED STATES.+

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GOVERNOR OPENS NEW U.S. OFFICE
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, ON TUESDAY (WEDNESDAY, HK TIME) OFFICIALLY OPENED HONG KONG'S LATEST OFFICE IN THE UNITED STATES, LOCATED IN THE HEART OF SAN FRANCISCO'S FINANCIAL DISTRICT.

MORE THAN A HUNDRED GUESTS ATTENDED THE FUNCTION, MANY OF THEM HAVING CLOSE TIES WITH THE TERRITORY. LOCAL DIGNITARIES INCLUDED SAN FRANCISCO'S PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, MR JOHN MOLINARI, AND THE CITY'S DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL, MR CYRIL MAGNIN.

IN INTRODUCING THE GOVERNOR, THE HEAD OF HONG KONG'S REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES IN THE UNITED STATES -- INCLUDING NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON -- MR BILL DORWARD, SAID PLANS TO EXPAND THE TERRITORY'S OFFICIAL PRESENCE TO THE WEST COAST HAD BEEN IN HAND FOR SOME TIME.

THIS, HE SAID, WAS IN +RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS PART OF THE WORLD TO HONG KONG IN SO MANY WAYS -- COMMERCIALY, INDUSTRIALLY, FINANCIALLY AND SOCIALLY.+

HEADING THE OFFICE AS DIRECTOR OF HONG KONG ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IS MR BILLY LAM, WHO RECENTLY COMPLETED THE PRESTIGIOUS SLOAN PROGRAMME AT CALIFORNIA'S STANFORD UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS.

THE NEW OFFICE ALSO ACCOMMODATES HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIAL PROMOTION OFFICE, WHICH IS HEADED BY MR ROBERT ASHWORTH AS PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT.

MR LAM SEES HIS ROLE AS A LINCHPIN IN FURTHERING HONG KONG'S INTERESTS IN THE RAPIDLY DEVELOPING PACIFIC RIM.

+BUT WE'RE NOT JUST OUT TO SELL HONG KONG'S GOODS,+ HE SAID. +WE ALSO WANT AMERICANS TO APPRECIATE THAT HONG KONG IS A MAJOR MARKET FOR U.S. GOODS AND, WITH OUR FUTURE ASSURED IN THE SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT, THAT IT IS ALSO AN EXCELLENT PLACE IN WHICH TO INVEST.+

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ACTING GOVERNOR TO VISIT CENTRAL AND WESTERN
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THE ACTING GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID AKERS-JONES, WILL VISIT CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON TO SEE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE DISTRICT.

SIR DAVID WILL BE GIVEN A PANORAMIC VIEW OF WESTERN FROM A VANTAGE POINT AND WILL BE BRIEFED ON THE WESTERN RECLAMATION PROJECT.

/HE WILL ALSO

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HE WILL ALSO LOOK AT WORKS ON THE UPGRADED CONNAUGHT ROAD SCHEME IN CENTRAL.

SIR DAVID WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR T.H. CHAU, AND THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICER, MR LAM KAM-KWONG.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

TRANSPORT HAS BEEN ARRANGED FOR MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES COVERING THE ACTING GOVERNOR'S VISIT TO CENTRAL AND WESTERN. THEY SHOULD ASSEMBLE AT 2.15 PM TOMORROW AT THE CAR PARK OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES (WEST WING), FROM WHERE THREE GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WILL TAKE THEM TO THE TSUNG SAU LANE WEST SITTING-OUT AREA IN SHEUNG WAN. GIS OFFICERS WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST.

SINO-BRITISH LAND COMMISSION MEETING

THE TWO SIDES OF THE SINO-BRITISH LAND COMMISSION HAVE AGREED THAT THE COMMISSION'S TENTH MEETING WILL BE HELD ON JULY 21, 1986. THE MEETING WILL DISCUSS THE AVERAGE COST OF LAND PRODUCTION FOR THE 1986-87 FINANCIAL YEAR.

SUB-COMMITTEE TO STUDY PLASTICS REPORT SET UP

A NEW SUB-COMMITTEE HAS BEEN SET UP TO CONSIDER A CONSULTANT'S REPORT ON HONG KONG'S PLASTICS CONVERSION INDUSTRY, THE INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THE PLASTICS SUB-COMMITTEE, CHAIRED BY THE DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, MR K.Y. YEUNG, IS MADE UP MAINLY OF UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS WITH EXPERIENCE IN THE RELEVANT FIELDS.

THEY ARE MISS LILY CHIANG, MR DAVID C. DASILVA, MR M.K. LEE, MR MARTIN TANG, MR DENNIS TIING, MR DAKHISON C.L. YIU AND MR EDMUND K.S. YOUNG.

ALSO SERVING ON THE SUB-COMMITTEE ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL AND THE EDUCATION AND MANPOWER AS WELL AS TRADE AND INDUSTRY BRANCHES.

//THE GROUP

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THE GROUP WAS SET UP TO STUDY IN GREATER DETAIL PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT ON HONG KONG'S PLASTICS CONVERSION INDUSTRY PUBLISHED LAST MONTH.

THE \$1.8 MILLION STUDY WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE DEPARTMENT AS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF MARKET RESEARCH AND TECHNO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF MAJOR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

IT WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE AMERICAN CONSULTANCY FIRM SRI INTERNATIONAL, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL.

THE SUB-COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE ARE:

- * TO CONSIDER WHETHER AND TO WHAT EXTENT ANY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PLASTICS REPORT CAN BE SUPPORTED ;
- * IN RESPECT OF THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT CAN BE SUPPORTED TO CONSIDER IN WHAT MANNER AND OVER WHAT PERIOD OF TIME THEY SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED ;
- * TO ESTABLISH ORDERS OF COST INVOLVED; AND
- * TO REPORT BACK TO THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD.

THE GROUP IS DUE TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD TOWARDS THE END OF THE YEAR.

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CALIBRATION LABORATORY GETS A BOOST
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THE GOVERNMENT STANDARDS AND CALIBRATION LABORATORY NOW PROVIDES AN ACCREDITED CALIBRATION SERVICE WHICH CAN ISSUE WIDELY AND ALMOST INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED CERTIFICATES FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANUFACTURERS, THE DIRECTOR OF INDUSTRY, MR K.Y. YEUNG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT A CEREMONY AT WHICH A BRITISH CALIBRATION SERVICE ACCREDITATION CERTIFICATE WAS PRESENTED TO THE LABORATORY, MR YEUNG SAID THE LABORATORY WAS THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN THE FAR EAST.

+THE EFFECT OF BCS ACCREDITATION OF OUR LABORATORY FOR A WIDE RANGE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC CALIBRATION SERVICES WILL SERVE AS A POWERFUL ATTRACTION FOR OVERSEAS MANUFACTURERS OF HIGH ECHELON MEASUREMENT EQUIPMENT TO USE HONG KONG AS AN OFFSHORE MANUFACTURING AND EXPORT BASE,+ HE SAID.

/+IF THESE

+IF THESE INVESTMENT PROJECTS MATERIALISE, OUR LABORATORY WILL HAVE SERVED THE DUAL PURPOSE OF ATTRACTING TO HONG KONG POWERFUL SUPPORT FOR ITS ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY.+

MR YEUNG ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE PROCESS OF BCS ACCREDITATION WOULD GO BEYOND ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC CALIBRATION SERVICES AS THE LABORATORY WAS STILL EXPANDING ITS CAPABILITIES.

+EQUIPMENT IS CURRENTLY BEING PROCURED TO ENABLE THE LABORATORY TO PROVIDE MEASUREMENT STANDARDS IN MASS, LENGTH AND FORCE,+ HE NOTED.

AT TODAY'S CEREMONY, THE SENIOR BRITISH TRADE COMMISSIONER IN HONG KONG, MR R.E. HOLLOWAY, PRESENTED THE CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION TO THE LABORATORY ON BEHALF OF THE UK LABORATORY ACCREDITATION ORGANISATION (NAMAS), WHILE MR YEUNG RECEIVED IT ON BEHALF OF THE LABORATORY.

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TUEN MUN LANDSCAPING PROJECT AWARDED
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A \$25.5 MILLION CONTRACT TO BEAUTIFY TUEN MUN NEW TOWN HAS BEEN AWARDED TO ASIA LANDSCAPING LIMITED FOR HARD AND SOFT LANDSCAPING OF CENTRAL ROAD RESERVES, VERGES AND ROADSIDE OPEN SPACES ON TUEN MUN, WONG CHU, PUI TO, TSING WUN, CASTLE PEAK AND LUNG MUN ROADS.

TREES AND SHRUBS WILL BE PLANTED ON EMBANKMENTS AND ALONG ROADS TO SCREEN THEM FROM ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

SHADED SITTING-OUT AREAS AND LANDSCAPED FOOTWAYS ARE INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT.

THE OPEN SPACE AND AMENITY AREAS ADJACENT TO YAN OI TONG CIRCUIT AND THE NEW REFUSE COLLECTION POINT AND CAR PARK AT KAI FAT PATH BENEATH PUI TO ROAD FLYOVER ACROSS TUEN MUN ROAD ARE TO BE LANDSCAPED.

NEW RAISED PLANTERS WILL BE ADDED AND THE EXISTING DEACON CHIU PARK ON PUI TO ROAD WILL BE REFURBISHED.

THE CONTRACTOR ALSO HAS TO PAVE AN AREA FOR INFORMAL GAMES UNDER THE ELEVATED PORTION OF WONG CHU ROAD FRONTING ON TING ESTATE.

ALSO SERVING ON THE SUB-COMMITTEE ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS AS WELL AS TRADE AND INDUSTRY BRANCHES.
/THE PROJECT

THE PROJECT WILL BE COMPLETED IN THREE STAGES WITH THE AREA AT KAI FAT PATH BEING GIVEN PRIORITY FOR COMPLETION IN NOVEMBER AS A RESULT OF REQUESTS FROM THE DISTRICT BOARD TO COMPLETE THE CAR PARK AND SCREEN THE REFUSE COLLECTION POINT WITHOUT DELAY.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF PLANTERS AND PAVING ALONG CASTLE PEAK ROAD BETWEEN SAM SHING HUI AND THE OLD DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING AND AT PUI TO ROAD AND YAN OI TONG CIRCUIT IS ALSO SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION BY MARCH NEXT YEAR.

THE WHOLE PROJECT WILL BE COMPLETED IN 17 MONTHS.

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MUSSEL CULTURE RESEARCH PROVES SUCCESSFUL
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THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT HAS COMPLETED A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON FAN MUSSEL CULTURE AND SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPED NEW CULTURE METHODS WHICH HAVE BEEN PROVEN TO BE ABLE TO REDUCE MORTALITY AND INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE TAKEN TO SEE THE EXPERIMENTAL WORK AT THE DEPARTMENT'S KAT O FISHERIES RESEARCH SUB-STATION ON FRIDAY (JULY 18) MORNING. THEY WILL BE BRIEFED BY SENIOR FISHERIES RESEARCH OFFICER, DR RUDOLF WU, AND FISH CULTURE RESEARCH OFFICER, MR T.K. MOK.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

TRANSPORT FOR MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WILL LEAVE AFD HEADQUARTERS, CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 393 CANTON ROAD, KOWLOON AT 9 AM FOR WONG SHEK PIER FROM WHERE A LAUNCH WILL TAKE THEM TO KAT O.

THE MEDIA PARTY WILL BE LIMITED TO 30, AND REPRESENTATIVES ARE REQUESTED TO CALL THE AFD INFORMATION UNIT AT 3-7332176 FOR ALLOTMENT OF SPACE, WHICH WILL BE DONE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN-UP PLANNED IN KOWLOON CITY
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MEMBERS OF THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE WILL MEET TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO DISCUSS A PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR 1986-87.

THESE PROJECTS INCLUDE PROVISION OF AMENITY FACILITIES IN MODEL VILLAGE, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT CLEARANCES, CLEANING UP REAR LANES, INSTALLATION OF A NEW DISTRICT BOARD NOTICEBOARD AT FAT KWONG STREET, REPAIR OF DISTRICT BOARD INSTALLATIONS, AND PROVISION OF GUARD RAILS AT NAVIGATION BEACON HILL FOR MORNING WALKERS.

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THE BUDGET FOR THESE PROJECTS AMOUNTS TO ABOUT \$350 000.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING AT 2.15 PM TOMORROW IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 141 KAU PUI LUNG ROAD, TO KWA WAN.

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE MEETING
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THE INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD WILL MEET TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO CONSIDER WAYS TO LIAISE WITH THE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS IN THE DISTRICT.

APART FROM LIAISON MATTERS, MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET PRESENTED BY THE WORKING GROUP ON INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROBLEMS.

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES WOULD BE HELD TO PROVIDE VENUES FOR LOCAL INDUSTRIALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF COMMON INTEREST.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO GIVE THEIR VIEWS ON ORGANISING ACTIVITIES FOR THE WORKING POPULATION WITH THE AIM OF PROMOTING THE INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT OF THESE PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS.

THE MEETING OF THE INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

IT WILL BE HELD AT 2.30 PM IN THE MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, SECOND FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING.

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COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS BUS SHELTERS

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MEMBERS OF THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT BOARD WILL DISCUSS THE CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME FOR BUS SHELTERS IN THE DISTRICT AT ITS MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON.

THEY WILL ALSO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF OPERATION OF PARKING METERS TO SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND THE PROGRESS REPORT ON THE MAINTENANCE WORK OF DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE ORDINARY FERRY SAILINGS BY HOVERFERRY ON THE CENTRAL TO TSUEN WAN FERRY ROUTE AND TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS INVOLVING ELDERLY PEDESTRIANS IN THE DISTRICT.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT BOARD AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE ON THE 14TH FLOOR OF HARBOUR BUILDING, 38 PIER ROAD, CENTRAL.

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EASTERN DB TO DISCUSS NUCLEAR PLANT PROJECT

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THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD WILL DISCUSS THE DAYA BAY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PROJECT AT ITS REGULAR MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY) AFTERNOON.

SOME BOARD MEMBERS HAVE BEEN TOLD BY RESIDENTS THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SAFETY ASPECTS OF SUCH A PLANT.

THE RESIDENTS ASKED THAT THEIR VIEWS BE REFLECTED TO THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES.

/MEMBERS

MEMBERS WILL ALSO DISCUSS THE OPTIONS CONCERNING A HAULAGE ROUTE FOR THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EXCAVATED MATERIAL ARISING FROM SITE FORMATION WORK AT SHAU KEI WAN FOOTHILLS (EAST).

NOTE TO EDITORS:

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

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RESTRICTED ZONES IN CAUSEWAY BAY, CENTRAL
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FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JULY 18), THE EXISTING 7 AM TO 12 MIDNIGHT DAILY RESTRICTED ZONE ON NORTHBOUND GLOUCESTER ROAD BETWEEN A POINT ABOUT 30 METRES NORTH OF ITS JUNCTION WITH GREAT GEORGE STREET AND A POINT ABOUT 75 METRES NORTH OF THE SAME JUNCTION WILL BE LIFTED.

FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (JULY 19), TWO ROAD SECTIONS IN CENTRAL WILL BE MADE 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY RESTRICTED ZONES. THESE SECTIONS ARE:

- * THE SOUTHERN KERBSIDE LANE OF CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL WESTBOUND BETWEEN POTTINGER STREET AND QUEEN VICTORIA STREET. THE MEASURE WILL BE IN FORCE FOR ABOUT SIX WEEKS TO FACILITATE UTILITY DIVERSION WORKS IN CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL.
- * THE NORTHERN KERBSIDE LANE OF QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL FROM A POINT ABOUT 30 METRES WEST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH JUBILEE STREET TO A POINT ABOUT 15 METRES WEST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH WING KUT STREET. THE MEASURE WILL BE IN FORCE FOR ABOUT FIVE WEEKS TO FACILITATE ROAD WORKS.

WITHIN THE RESTRICTED ZONES, NO VEHICLE OTHER THAN FRANCHISED BUSES WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS OR GOODS.

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TEMPORARY PROHIBITED ZONE IN CENTRAL

TO FACILITATE DRAINAGE WORK, NO VEHICLE EXCEEDING 5.5 TONNES GROSS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE SECTION OF GAGE STREET, CENTRAL, BETWEEN LYNDHURST TERRACE AND ABERDEEN STREET FROM 7 AM ON JULY 19 (SATURDAY) TO 11 PM THE FOLLOWING DAY.

THE MEASURE WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AGAIN BETWEEN 7 AM ON JULY 26 (SATURDAY) AND 11 PM THE NEXT EVENING.

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PLB RESTRICTED ZONE IN YUEN LONG

FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JULY 18), THE PUBLIC LIGHT BUS RESTRICTED ZONE IN FORCE FROM 7 AM TO 9 PM DAILY OUTSIDE HOUSE NO. 202 WESTBOUND ON CASTLE PEAK ROAD (YUEN LONG), WILL BE EXTENDED WESTWARD FOR ABOUT 40 METRES.

NO PLB'S WILL BE ALLOWED TO STOP FOR PASSENGERS WITHIN THE RESTRICTED AREA.

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MAN KAM TO ROAD TRAFFIC CHANGE

FROM 10.30 AM ON FRIDAY (JULY 18), THE NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED SECTION OF MAN KAM TO ROAD BETWEEN LIN MA HANG ROAD AND THE MAN KAM TO BORDER CHECKPOINT WILL BE OPENED TO TRAFFIC, ONE-WAY SOUTHBOUND.

THE EXISTING SECTION OF THE ROAD WILL BE REROUTED FROM TWO-WAY TRAFFIC TO ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND.

THESE ARRANGEMENTS WILL IMPROVE THE MOVEMENT OF CROSS-BORDER TRAFFIC.

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NO FLUSHING WATER

SALT WATER SUPPLY TO CERTAIN PREMISES IN YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK WILL BE TURNED OFF FROM 8 AM TO 7 PM EACH DAY FROM FRIDAY (JULY 18) TO TUESDAY (JULY 22) FOR MAINS WORK.

THE AFFECTED PREMISES ARE BOUNDED BY JORDAN ROAD, GASCOIGNE ROAD, NATHAN ROAD, WATERLOO ROAD, ARGYLE STREET, YIM PO FONG STREET, SAI YEE STREET, BOUNDARY STREET AND THE SEAFRONT.

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