



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
APPROPRIATION BILL PASSED AT LEGCO	1
MAXIMUM FINE FOR ILLEGALLY EMPLOYING CHILDREN UNDER 14 DOUBLED	4
REDUCE WATER CONSUMPTION CALL	5
INCLUSION OF BUSINESSMEN AND INDUSTRIALISTS IN EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY WELCOMED BY UNOFFICIALS	6
100,000 SQ. FT. OF INDUSTRIAL SPACE AVAILABLE THIS YEAR ..	9
MORE SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNED FOR CENTRAL	10
GOVERNMENT TO RAISE LOAN FROM A.D.B. FOR HOUSING PROJECT IN SHA TIN	11
GOVERNOR PAYS TRIBUTE TO MR. BRAY	12
NEARLY 19,000 TICKETS ISSUED UNDER FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM ..	13
KWUN TONG-CENTRAL HOVERFERRY SERVICE	14
H.K.'S POSTAGE RATES FOR PRINTED MATTER VERY LOW	15
BILLS PASSED	15
NEW TYPHOON SHELTERS FOR CHEUNG CHAU AND TUEN MUN	16
INSPECTIONS OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS	17
SURVEY OF PRACTICE OF OPTOMETRY	17
MARCH BANKING STATISTICS	18
58 BUILDING PLANS APPROVED IN MARCH	20

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977.

- 1 -

APPROPRIATION BILL PASSED AT LEGCO

* * * * *

THE APPROPRIATION BILL 1977 COMPLETED ITS PASSAGE THROUGH THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON.

DURING THE COMMITTEE STAGE, TWO UNOFFICIALS FURTHER COMMENTED ON THE BILL. THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN AND THE HON. JAMES WU TOUCHED ON HONG KONG'S EXPORTS IN THE FACE OF WORLD PROTECTIONISM, AND STIFF COMPETITION FROM SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN, SCHOOL DROP-OUTS AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE DISCRETIONARY GRANT.

MR. CHEONG-LEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE PREPARED TO MAKE AVAILABLE WHATEVER RESOURCES AND FUNDS THAT WERE NECESSARY TO STABILISE THE PRICE OF LAND FOR INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION, SURVEY THE POTENTIAL OF NEW INDUSTRIES, ASSIST SMALLER FACTORIES IN THEIR DESIGN CAPABILITY AND TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THEIR PRODUCTS, STRENGTHEN OUR TRADE PROMOTION EFFORTS WORLDWIDE, AND GENERALLY TO KEEP OUR PRODUCTIVITY AHEAD OF RISING COSTS.

AS EXPONENTS OF THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM, HE SAID, HONG KONG INDUSTRIALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN HAD NEVER BEEN OVERAWED OR AFRAID OF COMPETITION.

+YET IT WOULD BE A MATTER OF SIMPLE PRUDENCE IF WE AVOID ANY SENSE OF COMPLACENCY, AND INSTEAD STRIVE EVEN MORE THAN EVER TO ACCELERATE HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH,+ HE SAID.

MR. CHEONG-LEEN SAID, HE WAS +DISTURBED+ BY THE GOVERNMENT'S +BLITHE+ STATEMENT THAT THE CONSISTENTLY HIGHER GROWTH RATES OF SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN IN THE EXPORT OF MANUFACTURED GOODS WERE +NOT NECESSARILY A CAUSE FOR CONCERN.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE EXPORT OF HONG KONG GOODS TO THE UNITED STATES LAST YEAR INCREASED BY 56 PER CENT OVER THAT OF THE PREVIOUS YEAR. SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN HAD INCREASED THEIRS BY 83.5 PER CENT AND 69.5 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

IN 1971, HONG KONG RANKED SECOND AMONG ASIAN COUNTRIES IN TOTAL EXPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES, BUT LAST YEAR, HONG KONG'S RANK DROPPED TO FIFTH PLACE FOLLOWING JAPAN, TAIWAN, INDONESIA AND SOUTH KOREA, HE SAID.

+WITHOUT A DOUBT, HOWEVER, HONG KONG HAD PERFORMED WELL IN 1976 AND ON NO ACCOUNT SHOULD WE BELITTLE OUR OWN ACHIEVEMENT. NEVERTHELESS WE SHOULD STILL BE ASKING OURSELVES SERIOUSLY IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS WHETHER OUR COMPETITIVE EDGE WOULD BE BLUNTED BY THE GATHERING MOMENTUM OF THE KOREAN AND TAIWAN EXPORT-ORIENTED ECONOMIES,+ HE SAID.

MR. JAMES WU VOICED SIMILAR CONCERN AND HE FELT THAT NOT ENOUGH RESOURCES HAD BEEN ALLOCATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN ITS VITAL ROLE OF PROTECTING OUR ACCESS TO TRADITIONAL EXPORT MARKETS AND PROMOTING INVESTMENT DIVERSIFICATION AND SOPHISTICATION IN OUR INDUSTRY.

/HE NOTED

HE NOTED THAT LESS THAN HALF A MILLION DOLLARS HAD BEEN PROVIDED FOR INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION WHEREAS THERE WERE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF INDUSTRIAL ESTATE FOR SALE TO PROSPECTIVE INVESTORS.

IN THE MIDST OF GROWING PROTECTIONISM, MR. WU SUGGESTED EXPANDING AND STRENGTHENING THE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS DIVISIONS AND THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT PROMOTION BRANCHES BY INJECTING MORE FUNDS.

+IF, AS WE WERE TOLD, THE SCATTERED AND PIECE-MEAL EFFORTS IN INDUSTRIAL PROMOTION ARE GETTING RESULTS, WHAT VAST IMPROVEMENTS THERE COULD BE BY ORGANISED AND CO-ORDINATED EFFORTS.

+THEREFORE, WE SHOULD ALLOCATE MORE MONEY IN THIS PARTICULAR DIRECTION AND I REMAIN CONVINCED THAT THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IS NECESSARY FOR COMMON GOOD AND THAT MORE PROVISIONS UNDER HEAD 26 SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY TO PREPARE FOR ITS EARLY FORMATION,+ HE SAID.

ON EDUCATION, MR. CHEONG-LEEN SAID THERE WERE STILL SEVERAL THOUSAND CHILDREN OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE, PARTICULARLY AMONG CHILDREN FROM FISHING FAMILIES WHO WERE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL.

HE CALLED ON THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION TO INDICATE THE NUMBER OF DROP-OUTS OR PREMATURE LEAVERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS, AND WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE MEASURES ADOPTED TO REDUCE SUCH NUMBER.

+APART FROM HANDICAPPED CHILDREN,+ MR. CHEONG-LEEN ASKED, +WILL IT BE TOO MUCH TO EXPECT THAT THERE WILL BE A 99.9 PER CENT PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS.+

IN REPLY, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY, SAID THE 1976 CENSUS DATA INDICATED THAT 98 PER CENT OF CHILDREN AGED 6 - 11 WERE IN SCHOOL.

+THIS IS ALREADY A HIGH FIGURE. IMPROVEMENTS BEYOND THIS LEVEL ARE VERY HARD TO ACHIEVE AND REWARDS TO EFFORT ARE LIKELY TO BE LOW,+ MR. TOPLEY SAID.

HE ADDED THAT IT WAS HARD TO FIND THE LAST FEW, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO MAY NEVER HAVE BEEN TO SCHOOL. A HOUSE-TO-HOUSE OR BOAT-TO-BOAT SEARCH IS NOT THE ANSWER.

MR. TOPLEY REVEALED, HOWEVER, THAT A CAMPAIGN WAS TO BE LAUNCHED LATER THIS MONTH TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF ALL PARENTS, SPECIFICALLY IN THE FISHING AND WATER-BORNE COMMUNITIES, TO THE FULL AVAILABILITY OF FREE PRIMARY PLACES AND TO THE FACT THAT PARENTS MIGHT BE PROSECUTED IF THEY DID NOT SEND THEIR PRIMARY AGED CHILDREN TO SCHOOL OR IF THEY PREVENTED THEM FROM ATTENDING CLASSES AT ANY STAGE OF THE SIX-YEAR COURSE.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 3 -

HE ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THOSE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WHICH WERE IN DAY-TO-DAY CONTACT WITH INDIVIDUALS IN THOSE PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY WHOSE CHILDREN FOR SOME REASON MIGHT NOT BE AT SCHOOL WITH A VIEW TO MAKING USE OF THEIR RESOURCES TO REMIND PARENTS OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL.

+AS REGARDS PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN DISCONTINUING THEIR SCHOOLING, I HAVE PREVIOUSLY STATED IN THIS COUNCIL THAT WE HAVE A SYSTEM BY WHICH HEADMASTERS INFORM US OF CASES WHERE THEY BELIEVE THAT A CHILD HAS DISCONTINUED SCHOOLING.

+SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS FOLLOW UP THESE CASES. SOME CHILDREN ARE FOUND TO HAVE LEFT HONG KONG, OTHERS TURN OUT TO BE OVER-AGED OR PROVE UNTRACEABLE. THE PARENTS OF THE REST ARE PERSUADED TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL,+ MR. TOPLEY EXPLAINED.

ON DISCRETIONARY GRANTS FOR DENTURES AND SPECTACLES UNDER THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME, MR. CHEONG-LEEN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THESE TWO ITEMS MORE READILY AVAILABLE THROUGH WIDER PUBLICITY.

HE NOTED THAT SINCE 1973 UP TO THIS MONTH, 277 PERSONS HAD BEEN GIVEN DISCRETIONARY GRANTS FOR DENTURES AND 121 PERSONS FOR THE COST OF SPECTACLES UNDER THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

+BEARING IN MIND THAT WE HAVE ABOUT 49,000 PUBLIC ASSISTANCE CLIENTS AT PRESENT, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE DISCRETIONARY GRANT HAS BEEN EITHER HIGHLY DISCRETIONARY OR THAT NOT TOO MANY PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT ITS EXISTENCE, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO DENTAL CARE AND SPECTACLES,+ HE SAID.

PERHAPS, HE ADDED, THE TIME HAD COME TO IMPROVE UPON THESE TWO PARTICULAR ITEMS UNDER THE GRANT BY MAKING THEM MORE READILY AVAILABLE THROUGH WIDER PUBLICITY AND BY ADAPTING THEM TO THE NEEDS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN WHOSE FAMILIES WERE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE CLIENTS.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE DENTAL CARE ELEMENT, IN PARTICULAR, SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO DENTURES ONLY BUT SHOULD ALSO BE EXTENDED TO EXTRACTIONS AND FILLINGS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/4

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 4 -

MAXIMUM FINE FOR ILLEGALLY EMPLOYING CHILDREN
UNDER 14 RAISED
* * * * *

THE MAXIMUM FINE FOR ILLEGALLY EMPLOYING CHILDREN UNDER 14 IN INDUSTRY WILL BE RAISED FROM \$5,000 TO \$10,000 UNDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS REGULATIONS APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE RESOLUTION, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON. IAN PRICE, SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH ILLEGAL EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN DID NOT TAKE PLACE ON A LARGE SCALE, IT STILL EXISTED DESPITE RIGOROUS ENFORCEMENT BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

HE WENT ON: +IT AROUSES CONSIDERABLE CRITICISM ABROAD AND RENDERS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THE WORK OF OUR TRADE NEGOTIATORS, BECAUSE IT IS USED AS A BASIS FOR THE FALLACIOUS ARGUMENT THAT HONG KONG USES CHEAP CHILD LABOUR TO ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE PRICES,+

+SUCH CHARGES WILL BE PARTICULARLY DAMAGING TO HONG KONG'S REPUTATION AND TRADING INTERESTS IN THE YEAR AHEAD WHEN SEVERAL MAJOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS ARE DUE TO BE RE-NEGOTIATED.+

MR. PRICE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD MADE THESE REGULATIONS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT +GOVERNMENT REGARDS THE ILLEGAL EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN AS SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE, IS DETERMINED TO ERADICATE IT, AND REGARDS SUCH OFFENCES AS BEING PARTICULARLY SERIOUS.+

+IT IS HOPED,+ HE SAID, +THAT THE DOUBLING OF THE MAXIMUM FINE WILL LEAD TO THE COURTS TAKING A MORE SERIOUS VIEW OF OFFENCES AGAINST THE REGULATION AND IMPOSING FINES AT A HIGHER LEVEL THAN HAS BEEN THE GENERAL PRACTICE IN THE PAST.+

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION, SENIOR UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR, DR. THE HON. S.Y. CHUNG URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO +SERIOUSLY CONSIDER WITH SOME PRIORITY+ THE INCLUSION IN THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE OF A CLAUSE BANNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF ANY CHILD, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESS PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED.

HE SAID THAT THERE WERE TWO BASIC REASONS FOR PROHIBITING THE EMPLOYMENT IN ANY INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKING OF CHILDREN, WHO ARE DEFINED AS PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 14 YEARS.

+THE FIRST IS BECAUSE OF HEALTH AND SAFETY. THE SECOND AND THE MORE IMPORTANT REASON IS SOCIAL UNDESIRABILITY,+ HE ADDED.

DR. CHUNG ASKED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TO PONDER OVER THE ISSUE ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN NOT ONLY IN INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS BUT MORE WIDELY INCLUDING SERVICE INDUSTRIES AND OTHER TRADES.

/+AS THE

+AS THE LAW STANDS THERE ARE MANY ANOMALIES,+ HE SAID, POINTING OUT THAT A SHOE-MAKER OR A TAILOR WHO USES NO POWER MACHINERY AND EMPLOYS LESS THAN 20 PERSONS COULD LEGALLY EMPLOY CHILDREN DESPITE THE APPALLING WORKING CONDITIONS.

HE ADDED: +IF IT IS SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE FOR CHILDREN TO BE EMPLOYED IN FACTORIES, SHOULD IT NOT BE EQUALLY SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE FOR CHILDREN TO BE EMPLOYED IN OTHER TRADES WHOSE WORKING CONDITIONS ARE NOT BETTER OR EVEN WORSE THAN THOSE IN FACTORIES.+

DR. CHUNG SAID HE WAS AWARE THAT THERE WERE SOME CASES IN WHICH CHILDREN COULD BE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED, PARTICULARLY ON PART-TIME BASIS, WITHOUT SOCIAL OBJECTION.

+ONE POSSIBLE WAY TO REMOVE SUCH ANOMALIES,+ HE SAID, +IS TO INCORPORATE IN THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE A CLAUSE PROHIBITING THE EMPLOYMENT OF ANY CHILD WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THOSE WHO HAVE EXPRESS PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED.+

DR. CHUNG SAID IT WAS RECOGNISED THAT THE PROBLEM OF EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN MIGHT NOT BE SO EASILY RESOLVED. NEVERTHELESS, IT WAS AN IMPORTANT SOCIAL ISSUE. HE URGED THAT GOVERNMENT SERIOUSLY CONSIDER IT WITH SOME PRIORITY.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WATER SITUATION
* * * * *

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, TODAY WARNED OF POSSIBLE WATER RESTRICTIONS THIS YEAR AND URGED THE PUBLIC AND INDUSTRY TO START SAVING WATER.

HE TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT PRESENT STORAGE LEVELS WERE MARGINALLY SATISFACTORY FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR BUT +IF THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT RAINFALL DURING THIS MONTH IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO INTRODUCE RESTRICTIONS IN SUPPLY.+

MR. MCDONALD SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD LAUNCH A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN TO IMPRESS ON CONSUMERS THE IMPORTANCE OF REDUCING CONSUMPTION AS A SAFEGUARD AGAINST POSSIBLE SHORTAGES.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY DR. THE HON. CHUNG SZE-YUEN ABOUT THE PRESENT WATER STORAGE POSITION.

MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT ON MAY 1 THIS YEAR RESERVOIR STORAGE STOOD AT 34,000 MILLION GALLONS OR ABOUT HALF OF TOTAL CAPACITY, COMPARED WITH 45,200 MILLION GALLONS OR 67 PER CENT OF CAPACITY AT THE SAME TIME LAST YEAR.

ON OCTOBER 1 LAST YEAR, HE SAID, THE RESERVOIRS WERE 96 PER CENT FULL. +HAD THERE BEEN AVERAGE YIELD AND DEMAND SINCE THEN THE STORAGE WOULD NOW HAVE BEEN AROUND 43,300 MILLION GALLONS OR 64 PER CENT OF CAPACITY,+ HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 6 -

INCLUSION OF BUSINESSMEN AND INDUSTRIALISTS IN EXAMINATIONS
AUTHORITY WELCOMED BY UNOFFICIALS

* * * * *

THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY BILL, WHICH AIMS TO SET UP AN INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY, WAS PASSED INTO LAW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

EARLIER, SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON. ALEX WU SAID THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS, UNDER WHICH PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS ARE ADMINISTERED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE TWO UNIVERSITIES, WERE NO LONGER ADEQUATE BECAUSE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HONG KONG, THE EXAMINATIONS WERE USED AS MUCH FOR THE MEASUREMENT OF ACADEMIC STANDARDS AS FOR THE PURPOSES OF OBTAINING EMPLOYMENT.

MR. WU NOTED THAT THE BILL HAD BEEN FAVOURABLY RECEIVED BY THE UNOFFICIALS.

HOWEVER, HE WAS ASKED BY AN AD HOC GROUP SET UP BY THE UNOFFICIALS TO COMMENT ON SOME ASPECTS OF THE BILL.

FIRSTLY, HE SAID, IT WAS HOPED THAT THE PLANNING FOR THE NEW AUTHORITY WOULD INCLUDE SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS TO AVOID INTERRUPTION IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF VARIOUS EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS AT PRESENT RUN BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

SECONDLY, MR. WU CONTINUED, THE UNOFFICIALS TRUSTED THAT THE VALUABLE ASSISTANCE GIVEN FOR MANY YEARS BY STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITIES, OTHER INSTITUTIONS, AS WELL AS SOME INDIVIDUALS, WOULD CONTINUE AFTER THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR RUNNING THE EXAMINATIONS HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY.

THIRDLY, MR. WU SAID, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO SEEK OVERSEAS RECOGNITION OF THE EXAMINATIONS ADMINISTERED BY THE AUTHORITY AND IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO DELAY IN OBTAINING THIS.

+FOURTHLY, NO ONE WISHES TO SEE THE EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY TURN INTO A BUREAUCRATIC 'TOP-HEAVY' MACHINE EMPLOYING TOO MANY SENIOR STAFF AND DUPLICATING SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

+IN THIS RESPECT, THE MONITORING FUNCTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT BE OVER-EMPHASISED,+ HE SAID.

MR. WU SAID HE WAS SURE THE PUBLIC WOULD BE PLEASED TO SEE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS AS WELL AS NON-GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONALISTS AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

+THE PRESENCE OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES WILL, I HOPE, ENCOURAGE THE AUTHORITY TO BEAR IN MIND THE NEED FOR A FLEXIBLE APPROACH,+ HE ADDED.

/REV. THE HON.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 7 -

REV. THE HON. JOYCE BENNETT, SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, ALSO WELCOMED THE INCLUSION IN THE AUTHORITY OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNIVERSITIES, POLYTECHNIC, POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS.

+I BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL WE RECOGNISE THAT OUR EDUCATION POLICY IS A MATTER OF PUBLIC CONCERN, NOT ONLY FOR ACADEMIC ESTABLISHMENTS BUT ALSO FOR INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL UNDERTAKINGS,+ SHE SAID.

SHE THOUGHT THE BILL WAS LONG OVERDUE AND RECALLED THAT SUCH AN INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY WAS FIRST MOOTED IN THE MARSH-SAMPSON REPORT IN 1963 AND RECOMMENDED IN THE 1965 WHITE PAPER ON EDUCATION.

IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, SHE SAID, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAD DONE GOOD SERVICE IN AMALGAMATING THE SYLLABUSES AND EXAMINATIONS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

+WITH THIS INDEPENDENT EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY THERE WILL BE A FIRST-CLASS OPPORTUNITY TO RATIONALISE FURTHER OUR EXAMINATION SYSTEM,+ SHE NOTED.

SHE ASKED THAT SCHOOLS BE GIVEN ADEQUATE NOTICE OF ANY CHANGES.

+CLEARLY THERE HAS BEEN GOOD COOPERATION AND LIAISON BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FOR THE SETTING UP OF THIS AUTHORITY, AND I BELIEVE THAT EACH OF THESE BODIES WILL ASSIST IN MAKING THE CHANGE-OVER SMOOTH AND SATISFACTORY.

+SCHOOLS, I KNOW, LOOK FOR THE IRONING OUT OF CERTAIN ANOMALIES BETWEEN THE PRESENT TWO UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS CONCERNING THE SUBJECTS EXAMINED AND THE LENGTH OF THEIR SYLLABUSES, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO THE COURSES LEADING TO THE H.K. CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION.

+THE AUTHORITY WILL BE ABLE TO STUDY THESE PROBLEMS IN DEPTH,+ REV. BENNETT SAID.

IN REPLY TO THE COMMENTS MADE BY MR. WU THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY ASSURED THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBER THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DIFFICULTY IN CONTINUING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS. REGARDING OVERSEAS RECOGNITION OF THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS, HE SAID +APPROPRIATE STEPS WILL BE TAKEN DIRECTLY THE TIME COMES TO MAINTAIN THIS RECOGNITION+.

/HE POINTED

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 8 -

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSED MACHINERY OF THE AUTHORITY WAS ON STRICTLY FUNCTIONAL LINES AND THE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF STAFF WERE 'SEVERELY PRACTICAL', MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY WOULD INCLUDE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL INTERESTS, AND ITS BUDGET SUBJECT TO GOVERNMENT SCRUTINY.

+APPROPRIATE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST A BUREAUCRATIC TOP-HEAVY MACHINE HAVE THUS BEEN BUILT IN,+ HE SAID.

+THE APPROVAL OF SYLLABUSES BY THE AUTHORITY WILL BE AN ENABLING STEP TO BRING GREATER CO-ORDINATION INTO OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM IN DUE COURSE.+

IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE, AN AMENDMENT UNDER CLAUSE 3 WAS MADE TO ENABLE ANY PUBLIC OFFICER TO BE APPOINTED WITHOUT INCREASING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF OFFICIAL MEMBERS.

MR. TOPLEY EXPLAINED THAT GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY WAS DESIRABLE, +BEARING IN MIND THE DECISIONS WHICH MUST BE TAKEN REGARDING THE FINANCIAL POLICY OF THE AUTHORITY AND ALSO THE PROPOSED FEE-REMISSION ARRANGEMENTS.

+IT MAY THUS BE APPROPRIATE FOR AN OFFICER OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT TO BE APPOINTED TO THE AUTHORITY,+ HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/9

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 9 -

100,000 SQ. FT. OF INDUSTRIAL SPACE AVAILABLE THIS YEAR
* * * * *

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WILL HAVE ABOUT 100,000 SQUARE FEET OF SPACE AVAILABLE THIS YEAR IN ITS SHEK KIP MEI FACTORIES.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. DEREK JONES, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. JONES SAID THAT FOLLOWING THE RECENT APPROVAL OF FURTHER SITES FOR THE HOUSING AUTHORITY TO BUILD FLATTED FACTORIES, THE AUTHORITY HOPED TO PRODUCE AN ADDITIONAL 100,000 TO 150,000 SQUARE FEET OF FLATTED FACTORY SPACE PER ANNUM FROM 1979 ONWARDS.

REFERRING TO THE PRODUCTION BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR, HE SAID IT WAS CONSIDERABLY HARDER TO ESTIMATE.

THE BEST GUESS THAT COULD BE MADE NOW OF THE AMOUNT OF LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ACCOMMODATION LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE WOULD BE ABOUT NINE MILLION SQUARE FEET IN 1977, 12 MILLION IN 1978, 15 MILLION IN 1979, 11 MILLION IN 1980 AND 12 MILLION IN 1981, MR. JONES SAID.

BY WAY OF COMPARISON, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PREVIOUS HIGHEST RATE OF AVAILABILITY OF FACTORY SPACE WAS 10.8 MILLION SQUARE FEET IN 1972, WHICH WAS AN EXCEPTIONAL YEAR.

HE EXPLAINED THAT PROJECTED FIGURES WERE BASED ON ESTIMATES OF EXISTING VACANT LIGHT INDUSTRIAL ACCOMMODATION, TOGETHER WITH FURTHER SPACE LIKELY TO BE MADE AVAILABLE IN BUILDINGS ALREADY UNDER CONSTRUCTION AND IN BUILDINGS WHICH COULD BE BUILT ON INDUSTRIAL LAND ALREADY SOLD, OR WHICH WAS LIKELY TO BE SOLD, IN TIME FOR BUILDING TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

HE FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT THE FIGURES WERE BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THERE WOULD BE A STEADY RATE OF BUILDING OVER THE PERIOD AND THAT DEVELOPERS WOULD BUILD TO THE MAXIMUM.

WHETHER THIS WOULD ACTUALLY HAPPEN, HE SAID, WOULD LARGELY DEPEND ON THE DEMAND FOR FACTORY SPACE.

THE SECRETARY ADDED THAT STAGES I AND II OF THE TAI PO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE WOULD PROVIDE ABOUT 4.8 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF LAND (NOT ACCOMMODATION) OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS FOR SALE TO INDUSTRIES THAT COULD NOT OPERATE IN HIGH RISE BUILDINGS.

+FURTHER AREAS OF LAND MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR SPECIAL INDUSTRIES, DEPENDING ON WHETHER WORTHWHILE PROPOSALS ARE MADE FOR OPERATIONS THAT COULD SIGNIFICANTLY UPGRADE THE TECHNOLOGY OF HONG KONG INDUSTRY,+ HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/10

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 10 -

MORE SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNED FOR CENTRAL
* * * * *

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, SAID TODAY THAT MORE SITES FOR COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE PROVIDED IN CENTRAL UNDER A NEW ZONING PLAN FOR THE DISTRICT.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM MR. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN WHO ASKED FOR DETAILS ON THE UP-TO-DATE PLANS FOR THE USE OF THE EX-NAVAL DOCKYARD OFF COTTON TREE DRIVE AND ARSENAL STREET.

MR. MCDONALD SAID NO CHANGES WERE BEING PROPOSED TO THE ZONING OF THE EX-NAVAL DOCKYARD SITE WHICH HAD BEEN EARMARKED FOR COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL USE, AS WELL AS LOCAL OPEN SPACE AT THE EAST OF THE SITE.

MR. MCDONALD SAID A SITE OF ABOUT 5,700 SQUARE METRES HAD BEEN ALLOCATED TO THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION TO ALLOW DEVELOPMENT DIRECTLY OVER ADMIRALTY STATION.

+PRELIMINARY PLANNING LAYOUTS INDICATE FOUR OTHER LARGE COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL SITES WHICH ARE INTENDED TO BE SOLD FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT.

+THE COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS WILL CENTRE ONTO A PEDESTRIAN PODIUM WHICH WILL BE EXTENDED TO THE WEST ACROSS COTTON TREE DRIVE TO CENTRAL AND TO THE SOUTH ACROSS QUEENSWAY TO THE VICTORIA BARRACKS AREA,+ HE SAID.

+A LARGE PART OF THE SITE IS CURRENTLY BEING USED AS A MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY WORKS SITE AND WILL NOT BECOME AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT UNTIL 1980,+ HE ADDED.

IN REPLY TO A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION FROM MR. CHEONG-LEEN, MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT THE NEW ZONING PLAN WAS READY BUT SOME INVESTIGATIONS WERE IN HAND TO LOOK AT POSSIBLE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE FACILITIES RELATED TO THE ADMIRALTY STATION.

+THIS MAY MAKE A SLIGHT REVISION TO THE LAYOUT, BUT IT SHOULD BE READY IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.+

THE FOUR ADDITIONAL COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL SITES WOULD BE READY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN 1980 BUT THEY COULD BE SOLD EARLIER WITH DEFERRED POSSESSION, HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/11

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 11 -

GOVERNMENT TO RAISE ANOTHER LOAN FROM A.D.B.
FOR HOUSING PROJECT IN SHA TIN
* * * * *

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HAS APPROVED THE RAISING OF A US\$20.5 MILLION LOAN FROM THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK TO FINANCE A SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTION OF THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE COST OF THE SHA TIN URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HOUSING) PROJECT.

THE PROJECT INVOLVES THE CONSTRUCTION OF TWO HOUSING ESTATES FOR SOME 61,000 PEOPLE AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES, FOUR PRIMARY AND FOUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE TWO ESTATES, A GENERAL HEALTH CLINIC, A DIVISIONAL FIRE STATION AND A COMMERCIAL COMPLEX FOR ONE OF THE HOUSING ESTATES.

AUTHORITY FOR RAISING THE LOAN WAS SOUGHT UNDER A MOTION TO AMEND THE FIRST AND SECOND SCHEDULES TO THE LOANS (ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK) ORDINANCE IN THE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE TOLD COUNCIL MEMBERS THAT HE REGARDED THE TERMS OF THE LOAN AS SATISFACTORY.

THE LOAN, TO BE MADE AVAILABLE IN VARIOUS CURRENCIES EQUIVALENT IN TOTAL TO US\$20.5 MILLION, WOULD BE REPAYABLE OVER 10 YEARS FROM JULY 1, 1980 AT A RATE OF INTEREST OF 8.7 PER CENT PER ANNUM CHARGEABLE ON THE AMOUNT OF THE LOAN WITHDRAWN AND OUTSTANDING FROM TIME TO TIME.

THERE WOULD ALSO BE A COMMITMENT CHARGE OF 0.45 PER CENT, MR. HADDON-CAVE ADDED.

HE NOTED THAT THIS WOULD BE THE THIRD LOAN NEGOTIATED FROM THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK.

THE FIRST, FOR US\$21.5 MILLION, WAS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEA WATER DESALTING WORKS AT LOK ON PAI. THE SECOND, FOR US\$20 MILLION, WAS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF STAGE I OF THE SHA TIN SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/12

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977.

- 12 -

GOVERNOR PAYS TRIBUTE TO MR. BRAY

* * * * *

THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, PAID TRIBUTE TO MR. DENIS BRAY, SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BEFORE IT ADJOURNED TODAY.

THE MEETING WAS THE LAST ATTENDED BY MR. BRAY BEFORE HE TAKES UP THE POST OF HONG KONG COMMISSIONER IN LONDON.

+HIS TASK AS COMMISSIONER WILL ONLY BE FOR A FEW YEARS, SO HIS ABSENCE FROM HONG KONG AND PERHAPS EVEN FROM THIS COUNCIL IS ONLY TEMPORARY, SO THIS IS NOT A VALEDICTORY,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

HE THANKED MR. BRAY FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNCIL AS COMMISSIONER FOR NEW TERRITORIES AND SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS.

+THESE ARE FAST MOVING AREAS WHERE ENERGY, ORIGINALITY AND A CERTAIN PERSONAL TOUCH ARE NECESSARY AND THESE QUALITIES HE HAS DISPLAYED IN FULL,+ THE GOVERNOR SAID.

+HE WILL CERTAINLY HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO USE THEM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WHERE IT WILL BE HIS TASK TO SUSTAIN A GREAT FUND OF GOODWILL THAT UNDOUBTEDLY EXISTS FOR HONG KONG THERE.

+I AM SURE THAT HONG KONG CAN BENEFIT FROM A SKILFUL AND FRANK PRESENTATION OF THE FACTS IN THE RIGHT WAY TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE AT THE RIGHT TIME.

+HONG KONG HAS A STRONG CASE AND IT WILL BE MR. BRAY'S TASK TO PRESENT IT,+ HE ADDED.

THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, DR. S.Y. CHUNG, ALSO EXTENDED ON BEHALF OF HIS COLLEAGUES, THEIR BEST WISHES TO MR. BRAY.

HE ALSO ASSURED HIM THAT HE WOULD HAVE EVERY SUPPORT FROM ALL THE UNOFFICIALS IN HIS NEW ASSIGNMENT.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/13

NEARLY 19,000 TICKETS ISSUED UNDER
FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM

* * * * *

THE FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM FOR CERTAIN TRAFFIC OFFENCES WHICH CAME INTO FORCE IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR HAS BEEN GENERALLY SUCCESSFUL SO FAR, THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. GARTH THORNTON SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY THE HON. PETER C. WONG AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID: +THE NEW SYSTEM DOES APPEAR TO HAVE GOT OFF TO A GOOD START.+

DURING THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF OPERATION OF THE FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM, HE SAID, A TOTAL OF 18,924 TICKETS WERE ISSUED.

HE SAID THAT AMONG THE 74 OFFENCES LISTED IN THE SCHEDULE TO THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) ORDINANCE, THE FIGURES FOR THE TOP FOUR WERE:

* SPEEDING, THAT IS, EXCEEDING THE SPEED LIMIT BY MORE THAN 10 MILES PER HOUR -- 5,010=

* SPEEDING, THAT IS, EXCEEDING THE SPEED LIMIT BY 10 MILES PER HOUR OR LESS -- 1,010=

* DISOBEYING TRAFFIC SIGNS -- 2,997= AND

* PICKING UP AND SETTING DOWN PASSENGERS IN RESTRICTED AREAS -- 2,176.

MR. THORNTON SAID FEWER THAN 1,000 TICKETS WERE ISSUED IN RESPECT OF EACH OF THE OTHER OFFENCES IN THE SCHEDULE.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THESE FIGURES HAD BEEN UNDOUBTEDLY INFLUENCED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS TAKEN BY THE POLICE TO IMPLEMENT THE SCHEME IN PHASES.

+FOR THE FIRST THREE MONTHS ONLY TRAFFIC POLICE OFFICERS OF THE RANK OF SERGEANT OR ABOVE WERE PERMITTED TO ISSUE TICKETS= FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS ALL TRAFFIC POLICE OFFICERS WERE PERMITTED TO DO THIS, AND THE THIRD STAGE UNDER WHICH ALL UNIFORM BRANCH POLICE OFFICERS MAY BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE SCHEME HAS JUST RECENTLY BEGUN, HE SAID.

+THE POLICE ARE CONTINUING TO MONITOR THE OPERATION OF THE SCHEME WITH CARE,+ THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL ADDED.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977.

- 14 -

KWUN TONG -- CENTRAL HOVERFERRY SERVICE
* * * * *

THE HOVERFERRY SERVICE BETWEEN KWUN TONG AND CENTRAL, WHICH WAS INTRODUCED ON APRIL 18, FOR A TRIAL PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS, OFFERS A MUCH IMPROVED SERVICE.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. DEREK JONES IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY REV. THE HON. JOYCE BENNETT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE HOVERFERRY SERVICE ON THIS ROUTE, HE SAID, REDUCED THE JOURNEY TIME FROM 36 MINUTES TO 15.

MR. JONES SAID THAT PASSENGER DEMAND FOR THE KWUN TONG -- CENTRAL FERRY SERVICE WAS AT A PEAK BEFORE 9.30 A.M. AND AFTER 5 P.M.

+DURING THE OFF-PEAK PERIODS FEWER THAN 200 PASSENGERS WERE BEING CARRIED EACH HOUR AND THIS REPRESENTED A VERY UNECONOMIC USE OF LARGE FERRY VESSELS,+ HE SAID.

MR. JONES SAID THAT SHOULD THE PUBLIC REACTION TO THE CHANGE BE UNFAVOURABLE, THE HOVERFERRY SERVICE WOULD NOT BE MADE PERMANENT.

THE SECRETARY AGREED THAT THE HOVERFERRY FARE WAS HIGHER.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT +THE KWUN TONG -- NORTH POINT FERRY CONTINUES TO RUN AS BEFORE AND THAT, TOGETHER WITH CONNECTING PUBLIC TRANSPORT, IT OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE ROUTE TO CENTRAL AND TO OTHER PARTS OF HONG KONG ISLAND.+

- - - - 0 - - - -

/15

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977.

- 15 -

H.K.'S POSTAGE RATES FOR PRINTED MATTER VERY LOW

* * * * *

HONG KONG'S INTERNAL POSTAGE RATES AND OVERSEAS SURFACE RATES FOR PRINTED PAPERS IN ABSOLUTE TERMS ARE VERY LOW, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON. DAVID JEAFFRESON SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM THE HON. T.S. LO IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID: +TAKEN ON THEIR OWN THESE PRINTED PAPER SERVICES OPERATE AT A LOSS.+

MR. JEAFFRESON SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT TO MAKE A VALID COMPARISON BETWEEN HONG KONG AND OTHER COUNTRIES, +BUT, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THE MAJORITY OF OTHER MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION (UPU) DO NOT HAVE PRINTED PAPER RATES WHICH ARE RELATIVELY LESS THAN HONG KONG'S.+

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE UPU DID NOT REGULATE INTERNAL POSTAGE RATES. ALTHOUGH HONG KONG AND SOME OTHER COUNTRIES HAD A SINGLE PRINTED PAPER RATE, OTHERS HAD COMPLICATED RATE STRUCTURES WHICH PROVIDE FOR DIFFERENT CLASSES OF PRINTED PAPERS AND SOME, SUCH AS THE UNITED KINGDOM, HAD NO SEPARATE RATE FOR PRINTED PAPERS.

AS TO THE INTERNATIONAL SERVICE, MR. JEAFFRESON SAID, HONG KONG'S POSTAGE RATES FOR PRINTED MATTER WERE CALCULATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PERCENTAGES OF THE FULL LETTER RATE LAID DOWN BY THE UPU.

HE SAID THAT FROM AN EXAMINATION OF THE RATE STRUCTURE OF 153 COUNTRIES, HONG KONG'S POSTAGE CONCESSION IN PERCENTAGE TERMS FOR PRINTED PAPERS WAS IN LINE WITH THE MAJORITY OF THE UPU'S MEMBER COUNTRIES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

BILLS PASSED

* * * * *

THE APPROPRIATION BILL 1977 PASSED ITS COMMITTEE STAGE AND THIRD READING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS AFTERNOON.

ALSO PASSED WERE THE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1977, THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY BILL 1977, THE HONG KONG AND YAUMATI FERRY COMPANY (SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1977, THE +STAR+ FERRY COMPANY (SERVICES) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1977, THE FERRIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1977 AND AN UNOFFICIAL MEMBER'S BILL, THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1977.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/16

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 1977

- 16 -

NEW TYPHOON SHELTERS FOR CHEUNG CHAU AND TUEN MUN
* * * * *

NEW TYPHOON SHELTERS ARE TO BE BUILT AT CHEUNG CHAU AND TUEN MUN AND ANOTHER TWO ARE PLANNED AT YAU MA TEI, THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR. THE HON. HENRY HU WHO ASKED WHETHER IT WAS NECESSARY TO REPLACE THE ANCHORAGES FOR SMALL BOATS AND VESSELS LOST THROUGH RECLAMATION.

MR. MCDONALD SAID THE CHEUNG CHAU SHELTER WAS ALREADY IN CATEGORY A OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME AND WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN 1979.

THE TUEN MUN SHELTER WHICH FORMED PART OF THE NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT WAS PLANNED FOR COMPLETION IN 1980.

TOGETHER THEY WOULD PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 72 HECTARES OF SHELTER ANCHORAGE.

+IN ADDITION TO THESE TWO, IT IS PLANNED TO RECLAIM THE EXISTING YAU MA TEI TYPHOON SHELTER AND TO PROVIDE TWO NEW SHELTERS NEARBY AND IF THIS SCHEME IS APPROVED, THE TOTAL SHELTERED AREA TO BE PROVIDED CAN BE ADJUSTED TO MEET FUTURE REQUIREMENTS.

+TO ASSESS THESE REQUIREMENTS THE DIRECTOR OF MARINE IS CARRYING OUT ANOTHER REVIEW TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE TREND TOWARDS CONTAINERISATION WHICH IS HAVING AN EFFECT ON THE TYPE AND NUMBER OF CRAFT USING TYPHOON SHELTERS,+ SAID MR. MCDONALD.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/17

INSPECTION OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS
* * * * *

PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE INSPECTED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ABOUT FIVE TIMES A YEAR FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY, SAID TODAY.

FOR PRIVATE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS, HE ADDED, THE FIGURE WAS SOMETHING LIKE THREE VISITS A YEAR.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY REV. THE HON. JOYCE BENNETT AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING, THE DIRECTOR POINTED OUT: +THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF VISITS PAID TO ANY PARTICULAR SCHOOL DEPENDS PARTLY ON THE PROBLEMS WHICH ARISE DURING THE YEAR AND PARTLY ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SCHOOL WELCOMES ASSISTANCE IN ATTEMPTING TO IMPROVE ITS STANDARDS.

IN REPLY TO ANOTHER QUESTION, MR. TOPLEY SAID THAT THE INSPECTIONS OF PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS COULD BE DIVIDED INTO TWO CATEGORIES -- VISITS TO CHECK ON THE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOLS AND VISITS TO ASSIST THE SCHOOLS IN PROFESSIONAL MATTERS RELATING TO THE CURRICULUM.

HE SAID THAT WELL OVER HALF THE VISITS WERE MADE FOR THE LATTER PURPOSE.

THIS CATEGORY OF VISIT, HE ADDED, INCLUDED ADVISING INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS, ASSISTING WITH NEW CURRICULUM PROJECTS, AND FINDING WAYS OF ASSISTING SCHOOLS TO MAKE THE MOST EFFECTIVE USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SURVEY OF PRACTICE OF OPTOMETRY
* * * * *

A SURVEY IS BEING CONDUCTED AMONG THOSE WHO ARE ENGAGED IN THE PRACTICE OF OPTOMETRY, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR. THE HON. K.L. THONG, SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. ALEX WU AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID PRIOR TO CONSIDERING THE INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF OPTOMETRY, IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT RELIABLE AND BASIC INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT BE COLLECTED.

THIS INCLUDED THE NUMBER OF FIRMS AND PERSONS INVOLVED, THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE.

+HOPEFULLY WITH THE COOPERATION OF ALL CONCERNED SUFFICIENT DATA SHOULD BE AVAILABLE BY THE END OF THE YEAR SO THAT A MEANINGFUL ASSESSMENT MAY BE MADE,+ DR. THONG SAID.

AT PRESENT, HE ADDED, THERE WAS NO LEGISLATION REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF OPTOMETRY.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MARCH BANKING STATISTICS
* * * * *

BANKING DEPOSITS AT THE END OF MARCH STOOD AT \$45,547 MILLION, COMPRISING \$10,634 MILLION IN DEMAND DEPOSITS, \$17,961 MILLION IN TIME DEPOSITS AND \$16,952 MILLION IN SAVINGS DEPOSITS.

THERE WERE 74 LICENSED BANKS IN HONG KONG AT THE END OF MARCH.

THE FOLLOWING TABLE RELEASED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING TODAY GIVES A DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF BANK LIABILITIES AND ASSETS AND MONEY SUPPLY FOR THE MONTH:-

<u>LIABILITIES</u>	\$MILLION
1. DEPOSITS	45,547
2. AMOUNT DUE TO BANKS ABROAD	29,029
3. OTHER LIABILITIES	<u>8,364</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>\$82,940</u>

<u>ASSETS</u>		
1. CASH		892
2. AMOUNT DUE FROM BANKS ABROAD:		
(I) DEMAND AND SHORT TERM CLAIMS	23,124	
(II) TIME DEPOSITS	<u>3,523</u>	26,647
3. LOANS AND ADVANCES:		
(I) HONG KONG	31,041	
(II) ABROAD	<u>14,455</u>	45,496
4. INVESTMENTS:		
(I) HONG KONG	3,299	
(II) ABROAD	<u>74</u>	3,373

/OTHER

5. OTHER ASSETS:

(I) HONG KONG	3,856	
(II) ABROAD	<u>2,676</u>	
		<u>6,532</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>\$82,940</u>

AVERAGE LIQUIDITY DURING MONTH 43.75 PER CENT

MONEY SUPPLY

MILLION

1. LEGAL TENDER COINS AND NOTES IN CIRCULATION (A)

(I) COMMERCIAL BANK ISSUES	4,947	
(II) GOVERNMENT ISSUES	<u>537</u>	
		5,484

2. LICENSED BANKS' HOLDINGS OF LEGAL TENDER COINS AND NOTES (B) 892

3. LEGAL TENDER COINS AND NOTES IN HANDS OF NON-BANK PUBLIC (A) - (B) == (C) 4,592

4. DEMAND DEPOSITS WITH LICENSED BANKS (D) 10,634

5. MONEY SUPPLY (DEFINITION 1) (C) +(D) =(E) 15,226

6. TIME DEPOSITS WITH LICENSED BANKS (F) 17,961

7. SAVINGS DEPOSITS WITH LICENSED BANKS (G) 16,952

8. MONEY SUPPLY (DEFINITION 2) (E) + (F) + (G)=(H) 50,139

- - - - 0 - - - -

/20

58 BUILDING PLANS APPROVED IN MARCH
* * * *

A TOTAL OF 58 NEW BUILDING PLANS WERE APPROVED BY THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT'S BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE IN MARCH, COMPARED WITH 54 FOR FEBRUARY.

OF THE PLANS APPROVED, 28 WERE FOR BUILDINGS ON HONG KONG ISLAND, 13 FOR KOWLOON AND 17 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THEY INCLUDED PLANS FOR A NUMBER OF 24 STOREYS OR MORE APARTMENT/COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS AT WAN CHAI, NORTH POINT, AND KENNEDY TOWN, AND A THREE-STOREY MULTI-PURPOSE AUDITORIUM AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

IN THE SAME MONTH, 81 NEWLY COMPLETED BUILDINGS WERE CERTIFIED FOR OCCUPATION, INCLUDING A SOCIAL CENTRE AT YUEN LONG, THREE PETROL FILLING STATION AT KING'S ROAD, JAVA ROAD AND WONG CHUK HANG ROAD, AND A HOTEL BUILDING BETWEEN MARSH ROAD AND JAFFE ROAD.

THE TOTAL DECLARED COST OF THE NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN MARCH AMOUNTED TO \$276 MILLION, COMPARED WITH \$146 MILLION FOR THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

THE TOTAL USABLE FLOOR AREA OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED DURING THE MONTH AMOUNTED TO 243,874.3 SQUARE METRES, COMPRISING 117,494.7 SQUARE METRES OF NON-DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA AND 126,379.6 SQUARE METRES OF DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA.

DURING THE MONTH, THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE GAVE CONSENT FOR WORK TO START ON 60 NEW BUILDING PROJECTS, INCLUDING AN ELECTRICITY SUB-STATION AT BOUNDARY STREET, A TELEPHONE EXCHANGE BUILDING AT CLEARWATER BAY ROAD AND A HOLIDAY INN BUILDING AT SAI KUNG.

THE B.O.O. ALSO CONSENTED TO THE DEMOLITION OF 37 BUILDINGS IN MARCH.