



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1994

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR'S PUBLIC MEETING

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FOLLOWING IS A TRANSCRIPT OF THE GOVERNOR THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN'S PUBLIC MEETING AT THE CULTURAL CENTRE TODAY (MONDAY):

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH. THIS IS THE THIRD YEAR WHEN YOU GIVE THE FIRST CHANCE TO THE DISABLED. YOU HAVE BEEN TRYING THE PAST TWO YEARS TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO TRANSPORT AND EMPLOYMENT. EVEN THOUGH THOSE ARE VERY DIFFICULT QUESTIONS YOU HAVE MADE VERY GOOD START. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK A QUESTION THIS YEAR. I HOPE THAT YOU WILL TRY AND GIVE US MORE TAX CONCESSIONS BECAUSE WE DO HAVE EXTRA EXPENSES BECAUSE WHEN WE TALK ABOUT WHEEL CHAIR IT'S \$7,000 OR EVEN \$10,000. AND ALSO WITH PROSTHETICS, IT IS ALSO EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE. SO MR GOVERNOR, THESE ARE NECESSITIES. FOR INSTANCE, WE NEED MEDICATION AND WE NEED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT. AND SO, COULD THESE BE MADE INTO DEDUCTIBLE ITEMS, THAT IS, TAX DEDUCTIBLE ITEMS? AND, OF COURSE, NOT EVERY DISABLED PERSON CAN WORK AND, OF COURSE, IF THEY ARE ABLE TO WORK THEN OF COURSE, THEN THEY CAN GET TAX ALLOWANCES. BUT IF THEY HAVE TO STAY AT HOME AND THEY CAN'T REALLY GO OUT TO WORK, SO COULD IT BE DONE IN THE WAY OF SINGLE PARENTS. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU GIVE MORE ALLOWANCES TO THOSE FAMILIES SO THAT THEY ARE MORE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF THE DISABLED MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILY. NOW, IN FACT, IN SINGAPORE SOMETHING SIMILAR HAS BEEN DONE. HONG KONG IS AN AFFLUENT SOCIETY AND HONG KONG IS ALSO A CARING AND NOT A HEARTLESS SOCIETY AND I AM SURE YOU ARE VERY WILLING TO HELP THE ELDERLY, THE FRAIL AND SO I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THIS OF YOU, THANK YOU.

GOVERNOR: CAN I SAY A GENERAL THING ABOUT DISABLED MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY AND THEN ANSWER YOUR QUESTION ABOUT TAX ALLOWANCES SPECIFICALLY. THERE ARE, I THINK IT'S JUST OVER 280,000 PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WITH SOME FORM OF DISABILITY - 286,000 - AND IT IS, I BELIEVE, EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT WE GIVE THOSE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHO ARE DISABLED THE OPPORTUNITY OF PLAYING A FULL PART IN OUR COMMUNITY AND OF DEVELOPING THEIR OWN ABILITIES TO THE FULL. THAT'S NOT ONLY THE HUMANE AND COMPASSIONATE WAY A COMMUNITY LIKE THIS SHOULD BEHAVE BUT CANDIDLY, IT'S ALSO IN OUR ECONOMIC INTEREST. WE ARE SHORT OF SKILLS; WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE SHORTAGES IN OUR LABOUR MARKET AND THEREFORE WE CAN'T AFFORD JUST TO THROW ON ONE SIDE ALL THE SKILLS AND ABILITIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE SOME FORM OF DISABILITY. SO IN THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, WITH THE HELP OF THE MEMBERS OF THE DISABLED COMMUNITY, WE'VE ORGANISED SEMINARS ON BOTH THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF THE DISABLED AND ON THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS OF THE DISABLED. I THINK AS A RESULT OF THAT WE'VE STARTED TO MAKE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN BOTH THOSE IMPORTANT AREAS. WE'LL BE PUBLISHING A WHITE PAPER ON REHABILITATION, PARTICULARLY ON THE NEEDS OF THE DISABLED BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR WHICH WILL FOLLOW UP THE 1992 GREEN PAPER. AND DURING THE COURSE OF NEXT YEAR WE'LL BE PRODUCING A DOCUMENT AS THE RESULT OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENT ABOUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.

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SO WE ARE MAKING, I THINK, PROGRESS IN THOSE AREAS. I BELIEVE THAT BEHIND ALL THAT IT'S IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT THOSE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE EQUALITY OF RESPECT AS WELL AS EQUALITY OF CARE. AND THAT'S WHY WE ARE GOING TO LEGISLATE IN THE COMING SESSION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE DISABLED WHICH I THINK HAS NO PART IN A CIVILISED COMMUNITY LIKE HONG KONG.

WE TURN NEXT TO THE QUESTION OF TAX ALLOWANCES. THERE ARE TWO FEATURES OF HONG KONG'S TAX SYSTEM WHICH IMMEDIATELY STRIKE OUTSIDERS. THE FIRST IS THAT OUR TAX SYSTEM IS EXTREMELY SIMPLE. IT'S NOT ON THE WHOLE HUNG ABOUT WITH DIFFERENT ALLOWANCES AND CONCESSIONS. AND, SECOND, WHICH IS ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THAT FIRST POINT OF SIMPLICITY, WE ACTUALLY PAY VERY LOW RATES OF TAX. GETTING AFTER THE LAST COUPLE OF BUDGETS, GETTING ON FOR 60 PER CENT OF THOSE WHO ARE IN WORK DON'T PAY SALARIES TAX AT ALL AND ONLY 2 PER CENT OF THE WORKING POPULATION PAY THE TOP RATE OF TAX OF 15 PER CENT, SO THAT IT MAY BE THOUGHT BY SOME THAT TAX ALLOWANCES WITH SUCH A LOW LEVEL OF TAX WOULDN'T NECESSARILY BE THE BEST WAY OF HELPING THOSE WITH DISABILITY. I AM SURE THAT THERE WERE SOME WHO WOULD SAY YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING MORE AT THE CSSA RATES FOR THE DISABLED. YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING MORE AT THE GRANTS THAT ARE AVAILABLE FOR THINGS LIKE WHEEL CHAIRS AND PROSTHETIC DEVICES RATHER THAN LOOKING AT THOSE WHO WERE PAYING SALARIES TAX AND WHO MIGHT GET SOME SORT OF CONCESSION. NEVERTHELESS, I WILL ENSURE THAT THAT PARTICULAR PROPOSAL IS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY AS HE THINKS ABOUT HIS NEXT BUDGET. IT'S BEEN DISCUSSED I KNOW AT SOME OF OUR SUMMITS IN THE PAST. YOU PUT A SERIOUS ARGUMENT ABOUT IT AND WE WILL GIVE IT THE SERIOUSNESS IT DESERVES. I HAVE TO SAY THAT ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I THINK WE HAVE AS A COMMUNITY MADE PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING SERVICES FOR THE DISABLED IS BECAUSE THE INTEREST GROUPS, THE LOBBIES, WHICH ARGUE THE CASE FOR THE DISABLED HAVE DONE SO WITH CONSIDERABLE ELOQUENCE AND INTELLIGENCE AND I THINK THAT'S HELPED THEIR CAUSE NO END. THANKS VERY MUCH.

QUESTION: AS WE APPROACH 1997, THE CHINESE LANGUAGE IS GOING TO BECOME MORE AND MORE IMPORTANT IN HONG KONG. MANY FIRMS REQUIRE APPLICANTS TO BE FLUENT IN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE, NOT ONLY THE SPOKEN PART BUT ALSO THE WRITTEN AND READING PART OF IT. I KNOW THAT GOVERNMENT IS UNDERGOING PLANS TO PROPOSE, SORT OF A LEVEL OF CHINESE REQUIREMENT BEFORE YOU CAN HAVE GOVERNMENT JOBS. WHAT I WOULD LIKE THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS IS, THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE FOR THE MINORITIES. AS YOU WELL KNOW, MANY MINORITIES IN HONG KONG MAY SPEAK THE LANGUAGE BUT THEY DO NOT KNOW HOW TO WRITE CHINESE OR READ CHINESE, WHICH PUTS THEM AT A VERY SERIOUS DISADVANTAGE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE GOVERNMENT IS THE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN HONG KONG AND IF THERE ARE PROPOSALS TO HAVE A MINIMUM CHINESE REQUIREMENT, THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE MINORITIES WOULD BE BARRED FROM HAVING GOVERNMENT JOBS. THE MINORITIES IN HONG KONG ARE INCREASING. I MEAN WHEN I WAS IN SCHOOL I WAS TAUGHT THAT 99% OF THE POPULATION IS CHINESE BUT NOW, THESE DAYS, MORE THAN 1% OF THE POPULATION ARE FILIPINOS, AND THE OVERALL MINORITY POPULATION IS, I THINK, ABOUT TWO TO THREE PER CENT. WHEN I SAY 'MINORITY', YOU MAY ASK ME: WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A MINORITY? TO ME, I FEEL THAT A MINORITY IS A PERSON WHO - I MEAN NOT ONLY THE INDIANS AND PAKISTANIS, SRI LANKANS AND SO ON, BUT ALSO THE BRITISH, NEW ZEALANDERS, CANADIANS, OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

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I'VE ASKED SOME FRIENDS, "WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CHINESE REQUIREMENT? DO YOU THINK THAT YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR CHILDREN TO HAVE A CHINESE EDUCATION, SO THAT WHEN THEY GROW UP THEY WILL HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES "JOB-WISE, AND OTHERS?" AND THEY SAY THAT THEY REALLY WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE GOVERNMENT HAVE A SYSTEM SO THAT THEIR CHILDREN, RIGHT FROM KINDERGARTEN, WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN CHINESE, SO THAT WE CAN COMPETE WITH OUR FELLOW CHINESE PEOPLE. AND IN FACT NOT ONLY WILL THIS BE BENEFICIAL FOR THE MINORITIES, BUT ALSO BENEFICIAL FOR HONG KONG AS A WHOLE, AS THE WHOLE SOCIETY CAN SORT OF INTEGRATE, INSTEAD OF HAVING, THESE DAYS, SOMETIMES THERE ARE MINORITIES AND CHINESE LIVING APART IN THEIR OWN SEPARATE WORLDS. COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME SOME COMMENTS ON THIS ISSUE?

GOVERNOR: I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO HONG KONG'S FUTURE PROSPERITY AND COMMERCIAL SUCCESS, AS WELL AS IMPORTANT TO HONG KONG'S HARMONY, THAT WE PROVE THAT WE ARE NOT JUST A BILINGUAL BUT A TRILINGUAL COMMUNITY. I THINK EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THAT IS IMPORTANT IN BUSINESS AND IT IS IMPORTANT IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS WELL. IT RAISES A NUMBER OF ISSUES, NOT JUST, IF I MAY SAY SO, FOR THOSE YOU DESCRIBED AS THE MINORITIES - BECAUSE IN GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES WE ARE ALL MINORITIES - AND I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY IN AN OPEN COMMUNITY LIKE HONG KONG, NOT TO THINK OF MINORITIES BUT TO THINK OF US ALL AS PART OF THE RICH TAPESTRY OF LIFE HERE IN HONG KONG. BUT THERE ARE PARTICULAR ISSUES AFFECTING THOSE WHO YOU DESCRIBE AS THE MINORITIES, IN WHOM I'D BETTER INCLUDE MYSELF, I GUESS, AND PERHAPS I CAN COME TO THOSE IN A MOMENT.

BUT IF WE ARE GOING TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN HONG KONG, WE HAVE TO TACKLE THE SUBJECT AT A NUMBER OF LEVELS. FIRST OF ALL, OF COURSE, AT SCHOOL. AND ONE OF THE ISSUES THAT OUR EDUCATORS FACE AT THE MOMENT, IS WHETHER THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION, AS IT IS CALLED IN THE JARGON, IN OUR SCHOOLS, SHOULD BE ENGLISH OR CANTONESE. NOW, MANY EDUCATORS THINK THAT YOU'RE MORE LIKELY TO LEARN GOOD CANTONESE AND PUTONGHUA, AND GOOD ENGLISH, IF YOU'RE TAUGHT IN, AS IT WERE, YOUR MOTHER TONGUE, BUT YOU HAVE VERY GOOD SPECIFIC LANGUAGE TEACHING ON TOP OF THAT.

IT'S AN ISSUE ABOUT WHICH MANY PARENTS FEEL VERY STRONGLY, BECAUSE AT THE MOMENT A LOT OF PARENTS THINK THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THEIR CHILDREN WENT TO SCHOOLS WHERE TEACHING WAS IN ENGLISH RATHER THAN CANTONESE, AND WE HAVE TO PERSUADE THEM THAT THE WORST OF ALL, IS TO GO TO SCHOOLS WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT IN CHINGLISH - IN NEITHER ENGLISH NOR CHINESE, CANTONESE OR PUTONGHUA. SO WE'VE GOT TO TALK TO PARENTS ABOUT THE BEST MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING.

I THINK THAT WE'VE ALSO GOT TO USE THE LANGUAGE FUND, WHICH I ANNOUNCED LAST YEAR WHICH IS WORTH \$300 MILLION, AS IMAGINATIVELY AS POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN BOTH PUTONGHUA AND IN ENGLISH. AND THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PROJECTS COMING FORWARD TO THE COMMITTEE WHICH IS ALLOCATING THE FUNDS AT THE MOMENT, A NUMBER OF VERY GOOD PROJECTS COMING FORWARD TO ACTUALLY DEVELOP OUR LANGUAGE TEACHING.

WE ALSO HAVE TO SPEND A LOT MORE IN THE CIVIL SERVICE ON IMPROVING LANGUAGE SKILLS, PARTICULARLY FOR MOST OF OUR CIVIL SERVANTS LEARNING PUTONGHUA.

BUT I THINK YOU RAISE A SPECIFIC ISSUE ABOUT THOSE YOU DESCRIBE AS THE MINORITIES AND I'D LIKE TO THINK OF YOU AS A CENTRAL PART OF OUR COMMUNITY. AND I THINK THAT PERHAPS WE SHOULD BE DOING MORE IN THE FIELD OF ADULT EDUCATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION TO HELP THOSE WHO HAVEN'T PICKED UP CANTONESE OR PUTONGHUA AT SCHOOL, TO COME BACK AND PICK UP CANTONESE OR PUTONGHUA, BOTH WRITTEN AND SPOKEN, IN LATER LIFE.

I'LL MAKE SURE THAT THE COMMITTEE WHICH IS ADMINISTERING THE LANGUAGE FUND TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE POINT YOU'VE RAISED TODAY, BECAUSE IT IS AN IMPORTANT ONE. IT'S AN IMPORTANT ONE FOR BOTH THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOME MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY AND THE MAJORITY OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE, AND IT'S IMPORTANT, IN MY JUDGMENT, FOR OUR FUTURE PROSPERITY AS WELL, BECAUSE THERE IS NO DOUBT AT ALL, I THINK, THAT THE TWO LANGUAGES OF BUSINESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY, WILL BE CHINESE AND ENGLISH.

QUESTION: IN HONG KONG, WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE MEDIA, NOW WE ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR FATE. RTHK DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE A CLEAR ENOUGH ROLE, OR THEIR ROLE IS NOT CLEAR ENOUGH. FOR INSTANCE, IN RTHK, ACTUALLY ONE OF THEIR PROGRAMMES DID CLIP PART OF A PROGRAMME PRODUCED BY ATV WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT. SO MY QUESTION IS: REGARDING RTHK PROGRAMMES, DO THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO MONITOR THE PROGRAMMES OF ANOTHER TV CHANNEL, OR DO THEY HAVE THE RIGHT TO CLIP CERTAIN PARTS WITHOUT CONSENT?

GOVERNOR: WELL, A LOT OF YOU IN THE AUDIENCE WILL HAVE BEEN AS PUZZLED BY THAT QUESTION AS I MIGHT HAVE BEEN HAD I NOT ALREADY KNOWN THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN ATV AND RTHK OVER A PARTICULAR PROGRAMME. NORMALLY, A JOURNALIST WOULD ASK A QUESTION AT A PRESS CONFERENCE RATHER THAN AT AN OCCASION LIKE THIS, BUT SINCE YOU'VE ASKED THE QUESTION, WHAT I'LL SUGGEST TO YOU IS THAT YOU TAKE THE ISSUE UP:

- (A) WITH SIR ROGER LOBO, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY; AND
- (B) WITH CHEUNG MAN YEE, THE HEAD OF RTHK.

I'M SURE THAT'S THE BEST WAY OF PURSUING AN ARGUMENT BETWEEN TWO SUCH DISTINGUISHED BROADCASTING ORGANISATIONS. AND HAVING APPEARED ON BOTH RTHK AND ON ATV IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS, I AM OF COURSE OBLIGED TO SAY THAT VERY STRONGLY.

/QUESTION

QUESTION: YOU SAID THAT HONG KONG SHOULD BE A FAIR SOCIETY WITH INTEGRITY. I FULLY APPRECIATE THAT STATEMENT BUT I HAVE A QUESTION. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR GOVERNMENT SAYS BECAUSE THERE IS INSUFFICIENT LAND SO SOME LAND ORIGINALLY RESERVED FOR SCHOOL BUILDING WOULD BE USED INSTEAD FOR HOUSING. NOW, I AM NOT AGAINST THAT SPIRIT BUT IN SOME COMMUNITIES THERE ARE MORE URGENT MATTERS THAT NEED TO BE ATTENDED TO BUT THEY ARE NOT ATTENDED TO AND I HAVE STRONG RESENTMENT ABOUT THAT. IN LAM TIN THERE ARE FIVE DISTRICT BOARD CONSTITUENCIES AND IN FOUR OF THEM THERE ARE NO PRIMARY SCHOOLS. EVEN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY ADMITTED IN DISTRICT BOARD MEETING THAT THEY HAVE TO CHANGE SOME LAND ORIGINALLY FOR SCHOOL BUILDING INTO HOUSE BUILDING PURPOSE BECAUSE OF INSUFFICIENT LAND SUPPLY BUT WITHIN A PERIOD OF TWO MONTHS THEY MANAGED TO FIND ANOTHER SUITABLE SITE OUTSIDE THAT AREA SO THEY SEEM TO BE CONTRADICTING THEIR OWN STATEMENTS. IN THAT CASE HOW COULD WE RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF SCHOOL PLACES IN OUR AREA? NOW WHEN WE BUY HOUSING UNITS WE LOOK AT THE FLAT DESCRIPTIONS AND THE PRICES GIVEN BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT, WE MAKE COMPARISON BASED ON THOSE INFORMATION BUT EVEN THOUGH IT IS MONITORED BY THE CONSUMER COUNCIL THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAS MISLED RESIDENTS OF THE HONG PARK COURT. WE WERE DECEIVED TIME AND AGAIN, WE WERE MISLED TIME AND AGAIN. SO MR GOVERNOR, I HOPE YOU WOULD ADDRESS THIS ISSUE PROPERLY AND I HOPE YOU HAVE THE MORAL COURAGE TO GIVE AN UNDERTAKING TO RECTIFY THE WRONG SO THAT LAND ORIGINALLY RESERVED FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS WOULD BE USED EXACTLY FOR THAT PURPOSE. THANK YOU.

GOVERNOR: PERHAPS I CAN DEAL WITH THE GENERAL AND THEN WITH THE SPECIFIC. WHAT I CAN'T DO - WITH OR WITHOUT THE MORAL COURAGE WHICH YOU REFER TO - WHAT I CAN'T DO IS MAGICALLY INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF LAND THAT WE HAVE IN HONG KONG AND WE REGULARLY HAVE TO MAKE DIFFICULT JUDGEMENTS ABOUT PRIORITIES FOR THE USE OF LAND, NOT JUST BETWEEN EDUCATION AND HOUSING BUT BETWEEN HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL USE WHICH IS ANOTHER PRESSURE POINT. THAT WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PROBLEM AND IF I MAY SAY SO WE ARE GOING TO FACED EVEN MORE PRESSURES ON THE EDUCATION FRONT, EVEN MORE DEMANDS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES BECAUSE THERE ARE A LARGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO ENTER HONG KONG AFTER 1997 - AT LEAST 70,000 WHO HAVE A PARENT IN HONG KONG BUT ARE THEMSELVES AT PRESENT IN CHINA - AND I THINK WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO START ADDRESSING THAT PROBLEM AS WE HAVE BEEN BEFORE 1997 SO THAT IT'S NOT TOO DIFFICULT AFTER 1997. WE ARE AT PRESENT BUILDING PARTLY TO ACCOMMODATE THOSE CHILDREN WHO ARE COMING IN, WE ARE BUILDING A PRIMARY CLASS EVERY THREE DAYS AND THAT'S SOON GOING TO BE NOT NEARLY ENOUGH WHEN WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO BUILD MORE SO THE PRESSURES YOU'VE IDENTIFIED ON THE EDUCATION FRONT ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE RATHER THAN DIMINISH. THERE ARE GENERAL GUIDELINES AS YOU KNOW ABOUT THE CATCHMENT AREAS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND THE SORT OF POPULATION WHICH REQUIRES A PRIMARY SCHOOL AND WE TRY TO SATISFY THOSE WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

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THE CASE WHICH YOU MENTION HAS BEEN RAISED WITH ME RECENTLY. I THINK YOU SENT ME, OR OTHERS SENT ME A LETTER ABOUT IT DURING THE DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS AND I WILL LOOK INTO YOUR PARTICULAR CASE AND RESPOND TO YOU AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. CLEARLY WHERE PARENTS FOR EXAMPLE HAVE TO TRAVEL A LONG WAY WITH THEIR CHILDREN IN ORDER TO PUT THEM INTO A SCHOOL IT CAUSES SOCIAL STRAINS AND IT CAUSES DOMESTIC PROBLEMS. SO IT IS IMPORTANT WHEREVER POSSIBLE TO HAVE PRIMARY SCHOOLS CLOSE TO WHERE PEOPLE LIVE AND NOT AT SOME DISTANCE FROM WHERE THEY LIVE. IT'S EASIER WHEN WE ARE PLANNING A NEW HOUSING ESTATE ON THE WHOLE TO ENSURE THAT WE HAVE THE RIGHT HEALTH FACILITIES, THE RIGHT SOCIAL WELFARE FACILITIES AND THE RIGHT SCHOOLING INTEGRATED IN THE ESTATE. IT'S SOMETIMES MORE DIFFICULT WHEN ONE'S DEALING WITH AN OLDER URBAN AREA AND WE FOUND THAT IN PROVIDING THINGS LIKE HEALTH AND WELFARE FACILITIES IN SOME OF OUR OLDER URBAN AREAS. BUT I'LL LOOK AT YOUR INDIVIDUAL CASE AND LET YOU KNOW WHAT THE POSITION IS.

QUESTION: YOUR EXCELLENCY, I'VE BEEN IN HONG KONG FOR THE LAST 42 YEARS, PART AND PARCEL OF HONG KONG, IDENTIFIED WITH HONG KONG. I MET MANY GOVERNORS. EVERY GOVERNOR HAS PLAYED AN EXCELLENT ROLE. YOUR GOOD SELF HAS PLAYED AN EXCELLENT ROLE TOO. STILL THE PEOPLE ARE VERY MUCH WORRIED BECAUSE OF SINO-BRITISH RELATION. EVERYTHING'S FINE, HONG KONG WAS NOTHING BECAUSE THE BRITISH RULE HAS DONE SO GOOD. HONG KONG IS PROSPERING EVERYWHERE; ALL THE WAY AND I THINK THE PART WHICH YOU ARE PLAYING IS EXCELLENT. I PAY TRIBUTE, I HAT OFF BEFORE YOU BUT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND, IN SPITE OF YOUR SO GOOD EFFORTS, WORKING VERY VERY HARD DAY AND NIGHT - MIDNIGHT WORK - PREPARING THE SPEECHES AND ALL THOSE THINGS, WHY PEOPLE OF HONG KONG - I MEET WITH THEM, I AM A PAST PRESIDENT OF LIONS CLUB, I AM NOW A SENIOR CITIZEN, I AM A LIFE MEMBER OF LIONS CLUB - I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE ARE LIVING ALL IN THIS STRESS. HOW CAN IT BE ELIMINATED SO THAT PEOPLE CAN BE HAPPY AND GAY? THAT'S MY ONLY QUESTION.

GOVERNOR: I AM IN FAVOUR OF PEOPLE, AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE BEING HEALTHY AND GAY AND I PAY TRIBUTE TO YOU STRAIGHTAWAY FOR THE WORK WHICH THE LIONS DO IN TRYING TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY AS SUCCESSFUL AND HARMONIOUS AS POSSIBLE.

/YOUR QUESTION

YOUR QUESTION GOES I GUESS RIGHT TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM WHICH I HAVE TO ADDRESS AS GOVERNOR AND WHICH I AM SURE CHINESE OFFICIALS THINK ABOUT - DIRECTOR LU PING AND OTHER CHINESE OFFICIALS. WE MAY SEE THE CHALLENGE IN DIFFERENT WAYS, INEVITABLY WE HAVE DIFFERENT HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES. WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER'S HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES BUT THE QUESTION AT THE END OF THE DAY - AND THE QUESTION ON THE 30TH OF JUNE 1997 - WILL BE THE SAME ONE. THIS IS AN INCREDIBLY SUCCESSFUL AND I THINK PRETTY HAPPY COMMUNITY. AND IT'S ACHIEVED THAT SUCCESS AND IT'S ACHIEVED THAT HARMONY LARGELY THROUGH AN ASTONISHING CHEMICAL COMBINATION OF THE HARD WORK, THE COMMITMENT, THE ENERGY OF SHANGHAINESE, CANTONESE, MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE RULE OF LAW, ALL OPERATING A MARKET ECONOMY SO SUCCESSFULLY THAT MOST OF THE REST OF THE WORLD HAS LOOKED ON WITH AWE - THAT HASN'T JUST PRODUCED PEOPLE WHO ARE FABULOUSLY RICH, THOUGH IT'S OF COURSE PRODUCED SOME OF THOSE - IT HASN'T JUST PRODUCED THE SORT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH RATES WHICH THE REST OF THE WORLD WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO HAVE ACHIEVED, IT'S ALSO PRODUCED TREMENDOUS ADVANCES IN HEALTH. WE'VE NOW GOT AMONG THE BEST HEALTH INDICATORS IN THE WORLD, IN EDUCATION, IN PUBLIC HOUSING, IN WELFARE. OF COURSE MUCH MORE TO DO BUT WE'VE PRODUCED HERE A TERRIFIC SUCCESS STORY AND THAT SUCCESS STORY EVERYBODY WANTS TO CONTINUE AFTER THE 30TH OF JUNE 1997. I THINK THAT THERE IS EVERY REASON WHY IT CAN CONTINUE AS WELL AS WHY IT SHOULD CONTINUE BUT THAT IS GOING TO DEMAND FROM CHINESE OFFICIALS, AS WELL AS FROM ME AND AS WELL AS FROM MY COLLEAGUES IN GOVERNMENT, THAT IS GOING TO DEMAND CO-OPERATION AND A REAL EFFORT TO GET ON TOGETHER. I PUT FORWARD SOME PROPOSALS IN MY POLICY ADDRESS LAST WEEK, NOT A COMPLETE AGENDA BUT SOME IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION AND PEOPLE SAY TO ME "WELL WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF CHINA SIMPLY IGNORES THEM OR THROWS THEM OUT". I'M NOT SURE THAT'S A FAIR QUESTION TO ASK BECAUSE A BETTER QUESTION TO ASK IS "WHY SHOULD CHINA JUST WANT TO REJECT THOSE PROPOSALS"? "WHY DOESN'T CHINA PUT FORWARD SOME PROPOSALS WHICH WE WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS IN AS OPEN-MINDED A WAY AS POSSIBLE?"

I THINK IF WE ARE GOING TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT JOBS THAT ANYBODY HAS TRIED THIS CENTURY, THE TRANSFER PEACEFULLY OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY, THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ONE-COUNTRY-TWO-SYSTEMS CONCEPT - A CHINESE CONCEPT - IF WE ARE GOING TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF THAT IT IS GOING TO REQUIRE A CERTAIN GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT ON ALL SIDES AND THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG DESERVE NO LESS THAN THAT.

I'VE SAID BEFORE THIS IS PREDOMINANTLY A CHINESE CITY, IT'S 97 PER CENT CHINESE AND I THINK THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WANT THIS COMMUNITY TO BE ABLE TO PLAY A HUGELY SUPPORTIVE ROLE IN CHINA IN THE 21ST CENTURY WHICH MANY PEOPLE THINK IS GOING TO BE THE CENTURY OF CHINA AND THE CENTURY OF ASIA. THIS CAN BE ONE OF THE GREATEST CITIES IN WORLD HISTORY, GIVEN EVEN HALF A CHANCE. SO, I HOPE THAT WE CAN - AS I'VE SAID BEFORE - STOP SHOUTING AND START DOING A LITTLE MORE TALKING. I THINK THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG DESERVE NO LESS THAN THAT AND I TRUST WE CAN LIVE UP TO THEIR EXPECTATIONS IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. BUT WHATEVER HAPPENS, WE WILL TRY TO DO OUR DUTY WHICH I DEFINE AS BEING TO WORK DAY AND NIGHT TO MAKE SURE THAT THE JOINT DECLARATION HAS THE BEST POSSIBLE CHANCE OF BEING THE GUIDELINE FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE AS IT'S THE GUIDELINE FOR HONG KONG'S PRESENT.

QUESTION: GOOD EVENING, MR PATTEN. I REPRESENT A NUMBER OF ARTS ORGANISATIONS TODAY BECAUSE REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE ORGANISATIONS WERE NOT SO FORTUNATE TO GET TICKETS IN TO COME AND TALK TO YOU THIS EVENING, SO I'M POSING A QUESTION ON THEIR BEHALF.

WHEN YOU PROPOSED, TWO YEARS AGO, THAT YOU WERE ESTABLISHING A HONG KONG ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE ARTS COMMUNITY WAS OVERJOYED. BUT I MUST CONFESS THAT THIS TIME ROUND, WHEN YOU SAID THAT YOU'D ACHIEVED YOUR TARGET OF ESTABLISHING THE HKADC, WE WERE A BIT DISAPPOINTED BECAUSE YOU SEEMED TO BE HAPPY WITH THE FACT THAT THE BILL, WHICH IS NOW COMING UP BEFORE THE BILLS COMMITTEE, STILL STATED THAT YOU WOULD BE APPOINTING ALL THE MEMBERS TO THIS HKADC. THE BILL IS NOW UP BEFORE THE BILLS COMMITTEE AND AT THE LAST TWO MEETINGS THE BILLS COMMITTEE WAS IN FAVOUR OF INTRODUCING AN ELEMENT OF DIRECT ELECTIONS BUT MR JAMES SO, YOUR SECRETARY FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, WAS AGAINST THIS IDEA. WE HAVE SENT OUR VIEWS TO YOU BUT I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE TOO BUSY TO ANSWER THE VIEWS OF WHAT MR JAMES SO SO CALMLY DISMISSES AS "THE NOISY FEW".

SO I'M TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY HERE TODAY TO ASK YOU WHETHER YOU IN FACT SUPPORT THE IDEA OF INTRODUCING AT LEAST AN ELEMENT OF DIRECT ELECTIONS INTO THE HKADC, OR WHETHER YOU SUPPORT MR JAMES SO IN SAYING THAT THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE? AND IF YOU INDEED SUPPORT THE IDEA THAT IT IS NOT EVEN POSSIBLE TO INTRODUCE A SMALL ELEMENT OF DIRECT ELECTION INTO THE HKADC, THEN YOU ARE IN FACT, I THINK, PROVING MISS CHRISTINE LOH QUITE RIGHT WHEN SHE WRITES IN THE 'SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST' ABOUT YOUR REFUSAL TO TIDY UP A FEW OF THESE LOOSE ENDS WHICH WOULD INTRODUCE DIRECT ELECTIONS INTO HONG KONG. COULD WE HAVE YOUR OPINION ON THIS, PLEASE?

GOVERNOR: YES, CERTAINLY. AND I THINK THAT IT'S INTERESTING HOW THE DEBATE MOVES ON. AT, I THINK, THE VERY FIRST OF THESE MEETINGS THAT I HAD, I WAS PRESSED VERY HARD ON WHETHER I WOULD SET UP AN ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL FOR HONG KONG BECAUSE THERE WERE SOME PEOPLE WHO WERE DISSATISFIED WITH THE ARRANGEMENTS THEN. INDEED, I WAS CRITICISED AT, I THINK, MY VERY FIRST PUBLIC MEETING FOR NOT HAVING TALKED ABOUT THE ARTS IN MY FIRST POLICY ADDRESS, AND I WAS PRESSED, AS WELL, ABOUT THE INADEQUATE FUNDING OF THE ARTS IN HONG KONG. SO WE RESPONDED, AND WE PROPOSED SETTING UP AN ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL. THE FIRST STAGE, WE SET UP AN ARTS DEVELOPMENT BOARD WITH A BROAD AND COMPREHENSIVE MEMBERSHIP AND WE PROVIDED IT WITH FUNDS IN ORDER TO 'PRIME THE PUMP' OF THE ARTS HERE IN HONG KONG. I THINK DEVELOPING OUR ARTS - OUR VISUAL, OUR PERFORMING ARTS, OUR MUSIC - ALL THOSE ARE ASPECTS OF OUR INCREASING SUCCESS AS A COMMUNITY.

NOW IT IS ARGUED THAT IT'S ONLY IF WE MAKE THAT COUNCIL AN ELECTED BODY THAT WE'LL HAVE ADEQUATELY RESPONDED TO PRESSURE FROM THE ARTS COMMUNITY. AND I HAVE TO SAY THAT I DON'T AGREE WITH YOU ON THAT. I LOOK AROUND THE WORLD AND I SEE ARTS AGENCIES IN ALL SORTS OF OTHER DEVELOPED COMMUNITIES, FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO NORTH AMERICA, TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN EUROPE, AND THEY HAVE, BY AND LARGE, APPOINTED BODIES - PEOPLE APPOINTED ON MERIT BECAUSE OF THE CONTRIBUTION THEY CAN MAKE TO THE ARTS. AND PROVIDED ONE HAS OVERALL DEMOCRATIC CHECKS AND BALANCES - I THINK WE'D HAVE WITH OUR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - I DON'T SEE THE ARGUMENT FOR CREATING ANOTHER SET OF - IF YOU DON'T MIND ME MAKING THE POINT - FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES IN THE ARTS, IN ORDER TO ELECT AN ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL. SO I'M NOT PERSUADED THAT JAMES SO IS WRONG. IN FACT I THINK HE'S ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.

I WANT TO SEE THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL DISPERSING FUNDS IN AS EFFECTIVE A WAY AS POSSIBLE. I WANT TO SEE THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ESTABLISHING A REPUTATION FOR INDEPENDENCE AND WISE JUDGEMENT. I DON'T THINK THAT THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL IS THE SAME AS A DISTRICT BOARD OR THE URBAN COUNCIL OR THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SO I'M VERY MUCH IN FAVOUR OF A STRONG, WELL-RESOURCED, WELL-FUNDED, BROADLY BALANCED, WELL-SERVED ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL. BUT I DON'T SEE IT AS A SURROGATE FOR DEMOCRACY. SO WHEREAS I HOPE WE'LL AGREE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER FUNDING AND SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS, I'M AFRAID I DON'T AGREE WITH YOU ABOUT THE WAY IN WHICH THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

QUESTION: MR PATTEN, YOU'VE JUST SAID THAT IN THE 21ST CENTURY THE TWO LANGUAGES OF THE CENTURY WILL BE ENGLISH AND CHINESE. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT I THINK PEOPLE IN HONG KONG HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE ABOUT IS, DURING THE LAST 150 YEARS, THERE'S THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTRODUCED HERE AND THERE IS NO DOUBT AN EFFORT TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

I DO HOPE VERY MUCH THAT OBVIOUSLY BY 1997, THERE WILL BE WAYS AND MEANS THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT WILL DO TO IMPROVE OUR CHINESE AND PUTONGHUA. I DO HOPE THAT BEFORE 30TH JUNE 1997, YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT WILL DO AN EASY JOB - AN EASY JOB OF REVISING MOST OF THE ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS, WHICH ARE TERRIBLE IN HONG KONG. I BROUGHT THIS QUESTION UP TWO YEARS AGO. IT'S SUCH A SIMPLE SUBJECT, I THINK, TO YOUR ABILITY AND TO THE ABILITY OF YOUR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. I'M VERY SURPRISED THAT IN THE PAST TWO YEARS VERY LITTLE HAS BEEN DONE ON THIS SUBJECT.

I DO NOTICE THAT YOU HAVE PAID ATTENTION, AND YOUR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS ALSO PAY ATTENTION TO THIS QUESTION BY TAKING SOME ACTION. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE OF THE CASES WAS THAT AFTER I BROUGHT UP THIS QUESTION TWO YEARS AGO, THERE WAS A CASE WHERE THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION BROUGHT UP THE CASE AGAINST A PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, AND AS A RESULT OF THAT HE WAS CONVICTED. I THOUGHT, AT ONE TIME, THE GOVERNMENT WAS POINTING AT THE RIGHT DIRECTION - BUT THEN IT STOPPED. IS THAT THE END OF THE STORY OF THAT CASE, OR DO YOU THINK THAT'S ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG?

THEN YOU ANSWERED ME, TWO YEARS AGO, THAT YOU INTEND TO BRING UP THIS SUBJECT TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR BUSINESS COUNCIL. WELL UNFORTUNATELY, I'VE NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF HEARING ANYTHING ABOUT IT IN PUBLIC. MAYBE YOU COULD TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT THIS? AND I THINK THIS IS SUCH AN EASY THING THAT I'M SURE YOU CAN DO, IF YOU ARE DETERMINED TO DO IT - RIGHT.

GOVERNOR: AS A RESULT OF YOUR ELOQUENCE ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS, AND THAT OF OTHERS, INCLUDING SOME MEMBERS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, INCLUDING SOME OF OUR UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNICS GRANTS COMMITTEE WHO FEEL VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THIS, AND AS A RESULT OF THE VIEWS OF MANY TEACHERS, WE DID, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, SET UP THE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT FUND WITH \$300 MILLION IN IT, LAST YEAR, AND THAT HAS STARTED TO DISPERSE MONEY. AND I'M SURE THAT ONE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH IT CAN USEFULLY SPEND MONEY IS ON FURTHER DEVELOPING AND REFINING CLASSROOM AIDS, INCLUDING OF COURSE, TEXTBOOKS. BUT I WILL BE HAPPY TO LOOK, IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEND THEM TO ME, AT EXAMPLES OF INADEQUATE TEXTBOOKS, AND AT ANY IDEAS YOU HAVE FOR IMPROVING FURTHER THE QUALITY OF OUR TEXTBOOKS.

I GO BACK TO SOMETHING I SAID EARLIER - AND WHILE I'M JUST COMPLETING THE QUESTION, I'M GOING TO ASK CHRIS IF HE'D LIKE TO ASK THE NEXT QUESTION - YES, HE WOULD! - BECAUSE CHRIS WAITS OUTSIDE THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FOR ME. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO BE SHORT TODAY, CHRIS - AND NO POEMS - NO POEMS!

I'D JUST LIKE TO, JUST TO FINISH, IT IS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE SURE THAT CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT USING THE RIGHT LANGUAGE. I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY PARENTS SHOULD OFTEN FEEL THAT A CHILD IS MORE LIKELY TO LEARN GOOD ENGLISH IF SHE OR HE IS GOING TO A SCHOOL IN WHICH THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION IS ENGLISH. BUT I THINK YOU KNOW THAT THAT'S NOT ALWAYS THE CASE AND YOU CAN LEARN BETTER ENGLISH, VERY OFTEN, IF YOU'VE GOT GOOD SUPPORT AND GOOD TEACHERS IN A SCHOOL WHERE OTHER SUBJECTS ARE TAUGHT IN CANTONESE. YOU COULD SAY THE SAME ABOUT PUTONGHUA. BUT IT IS A DIFFICULT POINT, IT'S ONE WE HAVE TO EXPLAIN CAREFULLY TO PARENTS. WE HAVE TO CARRY PARENTS WITH US BECAUSE I THINK THAT IN ANY COMMUNITY LIKE THIS, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IS ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL TO EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS. BUT GIVE ME THE EXAMPLES AND WE'LL COME BACK TO YOU.

QUESTION: I'M VERY DISAPPOINTED THAT YOU REJECTED MISS ANNA WU'S DEMAND TO PRESENT HER PRIVATE BILL TO SET UP A HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO IMPLEMENT THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. BECAUSE WE'RE GOING BACK TO CHINA, THE SOVEREIGNTY, AND WE KNOW THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN CHINA IS NOT SO GOOD. DO YOU THINK IT IS A RESPONSIBLE WAY TO TREAT THIS MATTER? DO YOU HAVE TO SEEK CHINESE CONSENT?

GOVERNOR: NO, WE HAVE TO DO WHAT WE THINK IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF HONG KONG. BUT IT'S AN IMPORTANT QUESTION AND PERHAPS I CAN GIVE IT THE ATTENTION WHICH YOUR QUESTIONS ALWAYS DESERVE, CHRIS.

WE'VE REJECTED A HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, BUT WE HAVEN'T REJECTED THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES, AND IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE THAT DISTINCTION. WE ARE ATTEMPTING, IN A NUMBER OF WAYS, TO ENSURE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE PROPERLY PRESERVED AND PROTECTED IN HONG KONG. THAT IS THE PURPOSE OF OUR BILL OF RIGHTS. IT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW THAT WE'RE UNDERTAKING OF ALL THOSE LAWS WHICH HAVE SOME IMPACT ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH. IT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON GOVERNMENT INFORMATION THAT WE'RE INTRODUCING. IT'S THE PURPOSE OF OUR DECISION TO SET UP AN INDEPENDENT LEGAL AID SERVICE COUNCIL AND TO EXTEND LEGAL AID. IT'S THE PURPOSE OF OUR DETERMINATION TO ENSURE THAT OUR COURTS CAN DEAL WITH HUMAN RIGHTS CASES MORE RAPIDLY. ALL THOSE ARE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF OUR DETERMINATION TO ENSURE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE PROPERLY PROTECTED.

WE DIDN'T THINK THAT THE PROPOSAL TO SET UP A HUGE NEW INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT WAS THE BEST WAY OF PROCEEDING. WE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD CAUSE A GREAT DEAL OF CONTROVERSY IN THE COMMUNITY, WE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE EXPENSIVE, AND WE THOUGHT THAT IT WOULDN'T ACHIEVE ANYTHING THAT WE WEREN'T GOING TO BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE BY TAKING A NUMBER OF SENSIBLE STEPS, COVERING, SOME OF THEM, VERY MUCH THE SAME GROUND THAT ANNA WU IS TALKING ABOUT. WE'RE GOING TO SET UP AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION; WE'RE GOING TO LEGISLATE, I HOPE, ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE DISABLED. SO I DON'T THINK THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND ANNA WU AND SOME OTHER LEGISLATORS, IS ONE OF OBJECTIVE. I THINK IT'S ONE OF THE BEST MEANS OF ACHIEVING THAT OBJECTIVE.

/WE HAVEN'T

WE HAVEN'T, AND WOULDN'T, DENY THE RIGHT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO DISCUSS THESE MATTERS, BUT WE DON'T THINK THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION IS THE BEST WAY FORWARD IN THIS PARTICULAR AREA. WE THOUGHT ABOUT IT A GREAT DEAL THIS SUMMER, AND THAT'S THE CONCLUSION WE CAME TO.

QUESTION: MR GOVERNOR, I AM FROM A THA AND I REPRESENT PEOPLE LIVING AT THAS. ACTUALLY IN 92 - 93, IN YOUR TWO POLICY ADDRESSES YOU TOLD US THAT BY 97 WE WILL ALL BE RE-HOUSED AND WE WERE EXTREMELY HAPPY. NOW, MR GOVERNOR, YOU ALWAYS KEEP US IN MIND AND YET UNFORTUNATELY, THE DEPARTMENT UNDER YOU - THAT IS THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT - KEEP POSTPONING THE CLEARANCE DATES. FOR INSTANCE, IN SOME THAS THEY SAY THAT "OKAY, WITHIN SIX MONTHS TO NINE MONTHS THEY WILL BE CLEARED" AND YET THE DATE IS POSTPONED TIME AND AGAIN AND ORIGINALLY THE DAY WAS SET AT MARCH 94 AND YET THEY STILL STAND. FOR INSTANCE, IN PING SHEK THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THAS. FOR INSTANCE, IN PING SHEK SHUN LING. IN PING SHEK THE THA HAS BEEN THERE FOR 20 YEARS AND THE DATE WAS ORIGINALLY SET FOR CLEARANCE AND YET THEY ARE STILL THERE. IT HAPPENS IN OTHER THAS AS WELL.

IN YOUR POLICY ADDRESS THIS YEAR YOU ALSO TALK ABOUT THAS AND YOU SAY THAT BY THE END OF 97 ALL THAS - THAT ALL THOSE LIVING IN THAS IN 1993 WOULD BE RE-HOUSED. WHEN THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT ALLOCATE UNITS THEY DON'T REALLY LOOK AT WHAT WE NEED. FOR INSTANCE, WE HAVE ELDERLY PEOPLE, THEY MAY BE OVER 70 AND YET THEY ARE PUT ON THE SEVENTH FLOOR OF A BUILDING WITHOUT LIFTS AND SO OF COURSE THEY WILL REJECT IT AND THEN THEIR CHANCE IS GONE AND SO, YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE KEEPING YOUR PROMISE. SO COULD YOU CLARIFY THE CLEARANCE DATES. DON'T JUST TAKE THE NOTIFICATION DATE AS THE CLEARANCE DATE. ONCE YOU HAVE NOTIFIED US PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING IS IN PLACE AND ALLOCATION OF FLATS IS PROPERLY DONE. SOME MAY HAVE CHILDREN STUDYING IN THE VICINITY AND THE COUPLE MAY BE WORKING IN THE AREA AND YET YOU SEND THEM AS FAR AWAY AS TIN SHUI WAI. SO IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO ADJUST.

ONE FURTHER POINT. TO THE ELDERLY YOU HAVE PRIORITY HOUSING FOR THOSE WITH ELDERLY MEMBERS, BUT NOW THEY HAVE TO SHARE ACCOMMODATION. ORIGINALLY THIS WAS SAID TO BE SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE PHASED OUT AND ACTUALLY IN TAI WOR ESTATE NOT TOO LONG AGO, WE HAD A TRAGEDY WHERE ONE CHOPPED ANOTHER UP, BUT NOW SUCH ELDERLY PEOPLE ARE STILL PUT TOGETHER AND THEY WILL HAVE TO SHARE ACCOMMODATION. SOME ELDERLY PEOPLE, THEY ARE NOT SINGLE. THEY MAY HAVE CHILDREN BUT YOU REFUSE TO ALLOW THEM TO ADD THE NAMES TO THEIR APPLICATION. THEY MUST BE UNDER 18 BEFORE THEIR NAMES CAN BE ADDED AND SO YOU ARE FORCING THESE ELDERLY PEOPLE TO BE SINGLETONS OR SINGLE MEMBERS FOR ACCOMMODATION. SO, MR GOVERNOR YOU HAVE MADE PROMISES. COULD YOU HONOUR YOUR PROMISES? PLEASE FOLLOW UP. PLEASE MONITOR WHAT THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT IS DOING TO SEE WHETHER THEY ARE DOING WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO. THANK YOU.

GOVERNOR: I THINK THE HOUSING AUTHORITY DOES DESERVE SOME APPLAUSE SOMETIMES AS WELL. WHERE WE AND MOSTLY THEY ARE SPENDING I THINK 400 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS MORE ON HOUSING TODAY THAN THEY WERE TEN YEARS AGO. SO EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE PROBLEMS WHICH REMAIN AS YOU MENTIONED MADAM, AND DIFFICULT PROBLEMS, I DON'T THINK ONE SHOULD IGNORE THE PROGRESS THAT'S BEEN MADE. LET ME SAY EXACTLY WHAT WE ARE DOING AND WHAT WE ARE COMMITTED TO DOING AND THEN POINT OUT TO YOU WHAT THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN MEETING THE OBJECTIVE IS. IT USED TO BE THE CASE THAT THE HOUSING AUTHORITY RE-DEVELOPED TEMPORARY HOUSING AUTHORITY SITE, TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA SITES ACCORDING TO NEED - ACCORDING TO DEVELOPMENT NEED. AND WHAT THAT MEANT WAS THAT SOME OF THE OLDEST TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS WHICH PROVIDED THE LEAST SANITARY AND LEAST SATISFACTORY CONDITION WERE CONTINUING TO BE LIVED IN BY PEOPLE AND I SAW SOME OF THOSE TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS AND I THOUGHT THEY WERE PRETTY DEPLORABLE. SO WE HAVE NOW CONCENTRATED ON CLEARING ALL THE OLDER TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS FIRST. WE WILL CLEAR SEVEN OF THE 11 REMAINING PRE-1984 TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS DURING THE COURSE OF THIS FINANCIAL YEAR AND WE WILL CLEAR THE LAST FOUR OF THE OLDER TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS NEXT YEAR. WE ALSO REMAIN ON TARGET TO OFFER RE-HOUSING TO ALL TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA TENANTS BY 1997. BY AUGUST THIS YEAR, WE'D OFFERED RE-HOUSING TO OVER 30 PER CENT OF ALL PEOPLE LIVING IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS IN OCTOBER 1993.

BUT THAT'S WHERE WE COME TO THE PROBLEM WHICH YOU MENTIONED BECAUSE SOMETIMES, IT'S EXTREMELY DIFFICULT - EVEN WITH THE VERY BEST WILL IN THE WORLD - TO OFFER PEOPLE RE-HOUSING IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF THE TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA IN WHICH THEY'VE BEEN LIVING. IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF ANY TERRIBLE BUREAUCRATIC DISEASE ON THE PART OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY; IT'S A FACT OF DEVELOPMENT IN HONG KONG. AND I UNDERSTAND THAT VERY OFTEN SOMEBODY WHO IS PERHAPS LIVING IN A TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA, HOME, IN KOWLOON, AND IS OFFERED RE-HOUSING IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, ISN'T VERY KEEN ON GOING. BUT IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT NOT ONLY TO OFFER PEOPLE ACCOMMODATION BUT TO OFFER PEOPLE ACCOMMODATION OF PRECISELY THE SORT THAT THEY WANT IN PRECISELY THE AREA THAT THEY WANT. WE'VE OBVIOUSLY GOT TO TRY AS HARD AS WE CAN BUT THE PRIORITY MUST BE TO OFFER PEOPLE RE-HOUSING AND HOPE THAT WE CAN OFFER THEM RE-HOUSING IN PLACES THAT THEY WANT TO BE IN. WE WILL STILL BE ABLE TO OFFER ALL THA TENANTS AND AT LEAST ONE OFFER OF RE-HOUSING BY 1997 AND I HOPE MOST OF THEM WILL HAVE MOVED OUT OF THE THAS BY THEN. WE'LL CERTAINLY HAVE GOT RID OF ALL THE OLDER TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS BY THE END OF THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR AND THAT'S AS IT SHOULD BE BECAUSE THE STANDARD OF ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED IN THEM, PARTICULARLY THE OLDER ONES, IS A GREAT DEAL LESS GOOD THAN ANY OF US SHOULD WANT TO SEE PEOPLE IN HONG KONG IN THE 1990'S LIVING IN.

ON THE ELDERLY, I'D JUST LIKE TO MAKE TWO POINTS AND THEY ARE BOTH DEALT WITH IN A LOT MORE DETAIL IN THE WORKING GROUP REPORT ON THE ELDERLY WHICH CAME OUT AT THE END OF LAST WEEK. FIRST OF ALL, WE WILL HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RE-HOUSE ALL 4,000 SINGLE ELDERLY ON THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WAITING LIST BY 1997. SECONDLY, WE ARE GIVING PRIORITY WHERE WE CAN, TO THOSE FAMILIES THAT ARE LOOKING AFTER AN ELDERLY RELATIVE, AND WERE ABLE TO REDUCE SUBSTANTIALLY THE AMOUNT OF TIME THEY WILL HAVE TO SPEND ON THE WAITING LIST. SO I HOPE THAT WE CAN PROVIDE BETTER HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY AS WELL AS PROVIDE THE HOUSING WHICH TEMPORARY HOUSING AREA TENANTS NEED AND REQUIRE. BUT I HAVE TO SAY THAT THE DIFFICULTY ON THE FORMER POINT IS THE ONE I DESCRIBED. YOU CAN'T ALWAYS OFFER SOMEBODY HOUSING EXACTLY WHERE THEY WANTED IT.

QUESTION: GOOD EVENING MR PATTEN. MY SURNAME IS YEN. I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A FEW POINTS. FIRSTLY ON HOUSING. THEN, I AM AGAINST THE IMPORTATION OF LABOUR BECAUSE IMPORTED LABOUR THREATENS THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES OF LOCAL WORKERS AND ALSO I HOPE YOU WOULD INCREASE THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE RATE AND ALSO, YOU SHOULD SPEED UP THE ALLOCATION TIME FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND ALSO, I AM AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE DISABLED AND THE MENTALLY ILL. AND ALSO, WITH THE PRESENT MENTAL HEALTH ORDINANCE AND FOR INVOLUNTARY ADMISSION TO MENTAL HOSPITALS IT NEEDS THE APPROVAL GIVEN BY A JUDGE. I HOPE THAT PROCEDURE CAN BE CHANGED. I DON'T THINK PEOPLE SHOULD BE SENT TO MENTAL HOSPITALS IF THEY ARE NOT DOING SO VOLUNTARILY.

GOVERNOR: FIRST OF ALL, LABOUR IMPORTATION. I AM ALWAYS SURPRISED WHEN PEOPLE SAY THAT LABOUR IMPORTATION IS DESTROYING JOBS HERE IN HONG KONG. AFTER ALL, THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED IN HONG KONG IS ABOUT HALF THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED JOB VACANCIES. WE'VE GOT ONE OF THE LOWEST LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN ANY DEVELOPED ECONOMY AND, IF ANYTHING, THE PRESSURES ON US ARE TO FIND MORE PEOPLE FOR THE JOBS THAT NEED TO BE DONE RATHER THAN FINDING OURSELVES WITH AN EMBARRASSMENT OF PEOPLE LOOKING FOR JOBS. THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THERE AREN'T SOME PROBLEMS. THERE ARE PROBLEMS WHEN PEOPLE SOMETIMES GET RE-TRAINED AND CAN'T FIND A JOB IN THE SECTOR FOR WHICH THEY'VE BEEN RE-TRAINED AND WE ARE TRYING TO ADDRESS THAT. BUT I DON'T MYSELF BELIEVE THAT THE OBJECTIONS TO THE LABOUR IMPORTATION SCHEME OR TO THE IMPORTATION OF SKILLED LABOUR ELSEWHERE, OR TO THE IMPORTATION OF LABOUR FOR PARTICULAR PROJECTS LIKE THE AIRPORT - I DON'T THINK THOSE ARGUMENTS ARE GOOD ECONOMICALLY OR SOCIALLY. I'LL JUST SAY ONE OTHER THING. THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WORKING IN HONG KONG HAS ACTUALLY BEEN INCREASING QUITE STEADILY AND THE LATEST FIGURE SHOWED AN INCREASE I THINK OF OVER 3-1/2 PER CENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR. AND THAT'S BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH CONTINUING HIGH LEVELS OF EMPLOYMENT. SO WHAT WE ARE MANAGING TO DO BECAUSE WE ARE GROWING SO RAPIDLY IS CONTINUING TO FIND MORE JOBS AND INDEED REQUIRE MORE PEOPLE TO COME IN AND DO THEM. WE HAVE TO RESTRICT IT, WE CAN'T HAVE NO CHECKS AT ALL ON THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE COMING IN, BUT I THINK THE PRESENT SYSTEM WORKS RATHER BETTER THAN YOU WERE SUGGESTING AND I AM UNDER A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE FROM EMPLOYERS IN BUSINESS THE WHOLE TIME TO ALLOW MORE PEOPLE TO COME INTO HONG KONG.

WE HAVE PROPOSED SOME QUITE IMPORTANT INCREASES IN CSSA SCALE RATES IN THE COMING YEAR. WE'VE CONCENTRATED THE ASSISTANCE ON SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES AND ON CHILDREN AND I THINK THAT'S THE CORRECT PRIORITY. BUT WE ARE ALSO USING THE, WHAT'S CALLED THE HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE SURVEY OVER THE NEXT YEAR TO LOOK AT WHETHER THE WHOLE BASIS FOR OUR CSSA RATES IS THE RIGHT ONE. I AM ALSO INTERESTED IN SEEING WHETHER WE CAN CONSOLIDATE INTO THE BASIC RATES SOME OF THE SPECIAL GRANTS WHICH ARE GIVEN AT THE MOMENT BECAUSE I THINK SOMETIMES PEOPLE GET A RATHER DISTORTED VIEW OF WHAT'S AVAILABLE TO CLAIMANTS BECAUSE THEY IGNORE THE NUMBER OF SPECIAL GRANTS THAT ARE BEING QUITE PROPERLY TAKEN UP.

ON ALLOCATION TIME FOR PUBLIC HOUSING. AS A RESULT OF COMMITTING OURSELVES TO AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PUBLIC HOUSING OVER THE FIVE, SIX YEARS WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO REDUCE THE WAITING LIST. THE WAITING LIST ISN'T OF COURSE ENTIRELY ACCURATE BECAUSE THERE'S A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF OVERLAPPING AND DOUBLE-COUNTING ON THE WAITING LIST, AND BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE ON THE WAITING LIST ARE ABOVE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA BUT, NEVERTHELESS, AND I HOPE THAT THE INCREASE IN PUBLIC HOUSING THAT WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING WILL REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ON THE WAITING LIST. IT WOULD REDUCE, OF COURSE, EVEN MORE IF THE 10 PER CENT OF PEOPLE IN HOUSING AUTHORITY ACCOMMODATION WHO HAVE INCOMES DOUBLE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA MOVED ON TO HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEMES AND WE MUST ENCOURAGE AS MANY AS POSSIBLE TO DO THAT.

I HOPE YOU WILL APPROVE - INDEED I THINK YOU DID - OF OUR DETERMINATION TO LEGISLATE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION ON THE DISABLED AND THE POINT THAT YOU MADE ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATION HASN'T BEEN MADE TO ME BEFORE, BUT I WILL FOLLOW IT UP. AND IF YOU LEAVE YOUR NAME WITH ONE OF THE STEWARDS I WILL RESPOND TO YOU ABOUT THAT PARTICULAR ISSUE.

QUESTION: GOOD EVENING, MR GOVERNOR. I WISH TO THANK YOU - YOU MADE A PROMISE THAT YOU WILL BE GIVING A REPLY TO THE GENTLEMAN WHO MENTIONED THE PIECE OF LAND FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN LAM TIN AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO THAT.

NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU THIS: THE GRASSROOTS PEOPLE IN HONG KONG HOPE THAT YOU WILL SPEND MORE TIME ON BREAD AND BUTTER ISSUES. THIS IS MY FIRST INVITATION TO YOU. I HOPE THAT YOU CAN COME TO LAM TIN ONCE AGAIN. MY INVITATION IS VERY SINCERE. THANK YOU.

GOVERNOR: WELL, THESE PUBLIC MEETINGS WOULDN'T BE COMPLETE UNLESS I GOT AN OFFER, WHICH I CAN'T REFUSE, TO VISIT ONE PART OF HONG KONG OR ANOTHER. AT LEAST ONE AFTERNOON A WEEK I GO OUT AND VISIT DISTRICT BOARDS OR VISIT OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND I WILL CERTAINLY RESPOND TO YOUR INVITATION TO COME AND VISIT YOU - AND I HOPE YOU'LL PROVIDE A CUP OF TEA. ALRIGHT? WE'LL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU. YOU WON THE JACKPOT!

QUESTION: I HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR YOU AS OUR GOVERNOR. AFTER YOU DELIVERED YOUR POLICY ADDRESS, SOME CRITICISED THAT AS AN EMPTY ADDRESS BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR POSITION BECAUSE IT IS SIMPLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DECIDE ON ISSUES AFTER 1997 ON BEHALF OF THE CHINESE SIDE. SO IF YOU PAINT TOO ROSY A PICTURE, IT MAY BE EXAGGERATION. BUT IF YOU PAINT A GRIM PICTURE, THEN YOU MAY BE CRITICISED BY THE CHINESE SIDE. SO YOU'RE IN A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION.

WITH REGARD TO YOUR POLICY ADDRESS, I THINK IT'S RATHER PRACTICAL AND PRAGMATIC. YOU HAVE NOT EXAGGERATED WHAT TASKS NEED TO BE DONE AFTER 1997 FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY AND SO ON. YOU HAVE PUT FORWARD A NUMBER OF PRACTICAL PROPOSALS BUT IT SEEMS THAT IN YOUR POLICY ADDRESSES YOU HAVE NEVER MENTIONED MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS. IN THE EIGHTIES, WHEN THE MTR CAME INTO PLACE, WHEN HONG KONG WAS DEVELOPING A MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM, THAT WAS ABOUT THE TIME WHEN THE PROGRESS STOPPED. IT IS ONLY RECENTLY THERE IS MENTION OF THE AIRPORT RAILWAY, BUT FOR OTHER MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT, MA ON SHAN, TSEUNG KWAN O, OR IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, IT SEEMS THAT ALL SUCH DEVELOPMENTS HAVE STOPPED. SO I HOPE WHEN YOU CONSIDER MASS TRANSIT SYSTEMS, YOU WOULD PUT FORWARD MORE PROPOSALS BECAUSE HONG KONG IS RAPIDLY EXPANDING AND DEVELOPING.

GOVERNOR: I VERY MUCH AGREE WITH THE LAST POINT THAT YOU MADE - AND I WAS VERY SYMPATHETIC TO THE FIRST POINT YOU MADE AS WELL - BUT I VERY STRONGLY AGREED WITH THE LAST POINT. WE DO SUFFER, IN HONG KONG, INCREASINGLY, FROM AWFUL PROBLEMS OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION. NOW IT'S ONLY OF LIMITED COMFORT TO KNOW THAT THE PROBLEMS ARE WORSE IN A NUMBER OF OTHER PLACES - WORSE IN BANGKOK, WORSE IN A NUMBER OF NORTH AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN CITIES. THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT WE CAN BE COMPLACENT ABOUT THE PROBLEMS HERE AND UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING, THE PROBLEMS ARE GOING TO GET WORSE.

AT PRESENT, GIVEN THE AFFLUENCE OF OUR COMMUNITY, WE ACTUALLY HAVE RATHER LOW CAR OWNERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY BUT WE HAVE A VERY HIGH NUMBER OF CARS FOR THE LIMITED AMOUNT OF ROADS THAT WE'VE GOT. SO IF, AS ONE MIGHT EXPECT, CAR OWNERSHIP CONTINUES TO INCREASE AT 10% A YEAR, WHICH IT HAS BEEN, OUR TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEMS ARE GOING TO GET WORSE AND WORSE AND WORSE.

PART OF THE ANSWER HAS GOT TO BE THE PROVISION OF EVEN MORE EXTENSIVE, EVEN BETTER, PUBLIC TRANSPORT, BOTH MASS TRANSIT AND BUSES. WE'LL BE PRODUCING A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON THIS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND IF YOU THINK THAT ANYTHING THAT I HAVE DONE IN THE LAST TWO YEARS HAS BEEN CONTROVERSIAL, YOU WAIT UNTIL THE DEBATE STARTS ON DEALING WITH TRAFFIC CONGESTION AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT. BECAUSE IN MY EXPERIENCE, THOSE ARE ISSUES WHICH PUSH UP THE TEMPERATURE IN ANY COMMUNITY.

OF COURSE THE FRAMEWORK FOR OUR PROPOSALS ON RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT IS THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, WHICH IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT IF YOU'RE DISCUSSING, FOR INSTANCE, THE MOVEMENT OF FREIGHT IN AND AROUND HONG KONG, OR IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING THAT PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES, OR INDEED ELSEWHERE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, HAVE RATHER BETTER ACCESS TO THE CENTRE OF HONG KONG. THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IS PRECISELY THE SORT OF SUBJECT WHICH YOU WERE REFERRING TO. EVEN THOUGH WE NEED TO PLAN FOR IT BEFORE 1997, THE INVESTMENT AND THE COSTS WILL BE NEARLY ALL AFTER 1997. IT'S A SUBJECT THAT WE'LL WANT TO TALK TO OUR CHINESE COLLEAGUES ABOUT AND, I HOPE, HAVE THEIR UNDERSTANDING.

I SAID IN MY POLICY ADDRESS THAT ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE AS A WHOLE I THOUGHT THAT WE NEEDED TO BE MORE POSITIVE IN LOOKING, WITH GUANGDONG AND WITH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES, AT THE WAY WE DEVELOP THINGS IN HONG KONG. I'M SURE THAT'S RIGHT. I'M SURE THAT'S RIGHT FOR THE REGION, I'M SURE IT'S RIGHT FOR CHINA AS A WHOLE, AND I HOPE WE CAN GET ON WITH THAT SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

THERE ARE OTHER SUBJECTS WHERE WE, AGAIN QUITE PROPERLY, HAVE TO DISCUSS ISSUES WITH THE FUTURE SOVEREIGN. THE OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME IS ONE OF THEM. AND I HOPE THAT ON ALL THESE SUBJECTS WE CAN RESPECT ONE ANOTHER'S GOOD INTENTIONS AND NOT ENDLESSLY HUNT FOR THE SNAG OR THE PROBLEM, BUT DO WHAT HONG KONG HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO GOOD AT, WHICH IS ROLLING ITS SLEEVES UP AND GETTING ON WITH THINGS. THAT'S WHAT HAS MADE THIS COMMUNITY SO SUCCESSFUL AND I HOPE THAT'S WHAT WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP THIS COMMUNITY SUCCESSFUL FOR THE FUTURE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED. I HOPE SOME OF YOU WILL COME ALONG AND ASK QUESTIONS NEXT YEAR AND I HOPE WE'LL HAVE EVEN MORE SUCCESSES AND FEWER PROBLEMS TO TALK ABOUT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED.

EUROCLEAR LINKS UP WITH CMU IN HONG KONG

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THE HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY (HKMA) AND THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF EUROCLEAR CLEARANCE SYSTEM SOCIETE COOPERATIVE HAVE AGREED TO ESTABLISH A LINK BETWEEN THE EUROCLEAR SYSTEM AND THE CENTRAL MONEYMARKETS UNIT (CMU), THE CENTRALISED CLEARING SYSTEM FOR DEBT INSTRUMENTS OPERATED BY THE HKMA, ACCORDING TO A JOINT STATEMENT FROM HKMA AND EUROCLEAR.

THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION LIMITED HAS BEEN APPOINTED AS THE AGENT OF EUROCLEAR TO PROCESS TRANSACTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THOSE INSTRUMENTS CLEARED BY THE CMU. THE EUROCLEAR LINK WITH THE CMU IS EXPECTED TO BE OPERATIONAL BY DECEMBER 1994.

THIS LINK IS THE FIRST ESTABLISHED BY AN INTERNATIONAL CLEARING SYSTEM WITH A DOMESTIC DEBT CLEARING SYSTEM IN EAST ASIA. THE BASIS FOR THE LINK BETWEEN THE EUROCLEAR OPERATIONS CENTRE AND CMU IS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE GREATLY INCREASING INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN HONG KONG DOLLAR DEBT SECURITIES AND THE VAST POTENTIAL OF THE CHINA DEBT MARKET.

THE LINK WILL FACILITATE OVERSEAS INVESTORS TO TRADE HONG KONG DOLLAR DEBT INSTRUMENTS THROUGH THE VAST INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF THE EUROCLEAR.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE HKMA, MR JOSEPH YAM, WELCOMED THE DEVELOPMENT OF LINKAGE BETWEEN THE CMU AND EUROCLEAR.

"THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH A LINK REPRESENTS ANOTHER MILESTONE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HONG KONG DEBT MARKET BY WIDENING THE OVERSEAS INVESTOR BASE OF HONG KONG DOLLAR DEBT SECURITIES. THIS IS PART OF HKMA'S ON-GOING EFFORTS TO DEVELOP THE MARKET INFRASTRUCTURE TO PROMOTE THE GROWTH OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR DEBT MARKET," HE SAID.

CMU, THE CENTRALISED BOOK-ENTRY SAFEKEEPING, CLEARING AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEM FOR HONG KONG DOLLAR DEBT SECURITIES, STARTED MORE THAN FOUR YEARS AGO FOR THE EXCHANGE FUND PAPER PROGRAMME.

IT EXTENDED ITS SERVICE TO PRIVATE SECTOR DEBT SECURITIES AT THE BEGINNING OF 1994 AND THIS CMU SERVICE HAS DEVELOPED VERY RAPIDLY SINCE THEN.

MOST OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN HONG KONG HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE CMU. CURRENTLY THERE ARE 131 RECOGNISED DEALERS FOR THE TRADING OF EXCHANGE FUND PAPER AND 158 CMU MEMBERS FOR THE TRADING OF PRIVATE SECTOR DEBT SECURITIES.

AS AT END SEPTEMBER 1994, THE HOLDINGS OF EXCHANGE FUND PAPER (BILLS AND NOTES) AMOUNTED TO HK\$50.3 BILLION (US\$6.5 BILLION) AND OF PRIVATE SECTOR DEBT SECURITIES TO HK\$19.3 BILLION (US\$2.5 BILLION). THE TURNOVER (SETTLEMENTS) OF EXCHANGE FUND PAPER WAS HK\$23.5 BILLION (US\$3.0 BILLION) PER DAY IN AUGUST AND A RECORD HIGH OF HK\$60 BILLION (US\$7.7 BILLION) WAS ACHIEVED ON JULY 28, 1994.

THE EUROCLEAR SYSTEM IS THE LARGEST CLEARANCE AND SETTLEMENT SYSTEM FOR INTERNATIONALLY TRADED DEBT AND EQUITY SECURITIES. EUROCLEAR PARTICIPANTS CAN CONFIRM, CLEAR AND SETTLE TRADES BY BOOK-ENTRY IN ANY OF 29 CURRENCIES BY SIMULTANEOUS TRANSFER OF SECURITIES AGAINST PAYMENT.

IN ADDITION TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITIES, LINKS WITH MORE THAN 20 DOMESTIC MARKETS EXTEND EUROCLEAR SERVICES TO MANY DOMESTIC DEBT AND EQUITY SECURITIES.

THE SYSTEM SERVES OVER 2,700 FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACTIVE IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITIES MARKETS.

IN 1993, THE EUROCLEAR SYSTEM CELEBRATED 25 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP WITH RECORD GROWTH TO US\$1,470 BILLION OF SECURITIES DEPOSITED AND TURNOVER (SETTLEMENTS) IN EXCESS OF US\$17 TRILLION.

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ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

A PRESS BRIEFING WILL BE HELD AT 3 PM ON 30TH FLOOR, 3 GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG. PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE NO TV FILMING OR PHOTO-TAKING DURING THE SESSION.

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COMMITMENT TO AN EFFICIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA, SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN EFFICIENT TRANSPORT SYSTEM TO MEET THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

HE SAID: "OUR THREE PRONGED POLICY OBJECTIVE IS TO EXPAND THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE, IMPROVE THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM AND MANAGE ROAD USE EFFECTIVELY."

ON TRAFFIC CONGESTION, MR BARMA SAID OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE CARS INCREASED BY ONE-THIRD AND WAS CONTINUING TO INCREASE AT AN ANNUAL RATE OF 10 PER CENT.

MR BARMA SAID: "TRAFFIC SPEEDS IN SOME OF THE URBAN AREAS ARE ALREADY DETERIORATING.

"IF NOTHING IS DONE, THE SITUATION WILL GET WORSE. IN SOME OF THE MAJOR ROUTES, SUCH AS THE GASCOIGNE ROAD FLYOVER AND GLOUCESTER ROAD, TRAFFIC WILL EVEN GRIND TO A HALT," HE SAID.

MR BARMA SAID TRAFFIC CONGESTION WOULD HAVE SERIOUS ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS. CONGESTION ALREADY CAUSED A DAILY LOSS OF 1,500 BUS TRIPS LAST YEAR.

MR BARMA SAID TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM, A WORKING GROUP UNDER HIS CHAIRMANSHIP WAS FINALISING A PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS FOR WIDE PUBLIC CONSULTATION WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

ON THE \$30 BILLION TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURE ANNOUNCED BY THE GOVERNOR IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS, MR BARMA SAID, IN ADDITION TO THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME ROAD PROJECTS, THE GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO COMPLETE FIVE MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS - TING KAU BRIDGE BY MID-1997; ROUTE 3 COUNTRY PARK SECTION AND THE HUNG HOM BYPASS AND PRINCESS MARGARET ROAD LINK BY 1998; AND ROUTE 16 FROM CHEUNG SHA WAN TO SHA TIN; AND THE WIDENING OF TOLO HIGHWAY FROM SHA TIN TO TAI PO BY 2000.

"IN PARALLEL, THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS UPGRADING AND EXPANDING THE COMPUTERISED AREA TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW AT 550 ROAD JUNCTIONS IN KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES," HE SAID.

ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT, MR BARMA SAID: "THE KCRC AND MTRC ARE UNDERTAKING A MASSIVE PROGRAMME TO INCREASE THEIR CARRYING CAPACITY BY 25 PER CENT AND 10 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY BY 1996.

"WE ARE ALSO FINALISING THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY WHICH WILL GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO TWO NEW RAIL LINKS, A NEW RAILWAY FOR THE NORTHWEST NEW TERRITORIES AND AN MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY EXTENSION TO TSEUNG KWAN O.

"GIVEN THE CONSTRAINTS OF OUR DENSELY BUILT-UP URBAN AREAS AND THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENTS IN OTHER IMPORTANT AREAS SUCH AS HOUSING, WELFARE AND EDUCATION, NO ACHIEVABLE ROAD/RAIL BUILDING PROGRAMMES OR TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT SCHEMES COULD COPE WITH THE PRESENT RATE OF PRIVATE VEHICLE GROWTH," MR BARMA SAID.

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NEW LICENSING OFFICE WELCOMED BY THE PUBLIC

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THE NEW ACCOMMODATION OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'S LICENSING OFFICES FOR HONG KONG ISLAND HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY THE PUBLIC WHO VISIT THE OFFICE FOR LICENSING SERVICES.

THE NEW ACCOMMODATION, ON THE THIRD FLOOR OF UNITED CENTRE, QUEENSWAY, WAS OPENED FOR SERVICE ON AUGUST 30 THIS YEAR UPON THE CLOSING OF THE OLD OFFICE AT 2 MURRAY ROAD.

A CEREMONY TO MARK THE OPENING OF THE OFFICE WAS HELD TODAY (MONDAY). IT WAS JOINTLY OFFICIATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR HAIDER BARMA; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, PROFESSOR LEUNG CHI-KEUNG; A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'S CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUP, MR YUEN CHI-PO; AND A STAFF REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S LICENSING DIVISION, MR WONG KWING-TONG.

SPEAKING AT THE CEREMONY, MR BARMA SAID THE NEW OFFICE WAS ABOUT 33 PER CENT LARGER THAN THE OLD ONE AND WAS EQUIPPED WITH MORE USER-FRIENDLY FACILITIES.

AS EXAMPLES, MR BARMA SAID CUSTOMERS COULD MAKE USE OF THE ONE-STOP COUNTER FOR OBTAINING BOTH A LEARNER'S DRIVING LICENCE AND ROAD TEST BOOKINGS; THEY COULD USE THE NEW SELF-SERVICE MULTI-MEDIA ENQUIRY MACHINES, THE 24-HOUR TELEPHONE ENQUIRY SERVICE, OR MAKE PERSONAL ENQUIRIES OVER THE COUNTER FOR INFORMATION; AND A NEW 24-HOUR DROP-IN-BOX FOR LICENSING APPLICATION.

"I AM ALSO PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS ANNOUNCING TODAY THE SECOND PHASE OF THEIR PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME IN WHICH MORE SERVICES, FROM LICENSING TO VEHICLE EXAMINATION MATTERS, ARE COVERED," HE SAID.

/THE PLEDGES

THE PLEDGES NOW COVERED BY THE SCHEME INCLUDE:

- * GENERAL LICENSING SERVICES,
- * LICENSING SERVICES FOR PUBLIC VEHICLES,
- * DRIVING TEST SERVICES,
- * VEHICLE RECORDS AND AUCTION SERVICES, AND
- * VEHICLE EXAMINATION SERVICES.

THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS OF THE SERVICES UNDER THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME ARE EXPRESSED AS WAITING TIMES, THAT IS, QUEUING AND PROCESSING TIMES.

UNDER THE SCHEME, TWO CUSTOMER LIAISON GROUPS (CLG) HAVE BEEN SET UP TO ENABLE THE PUBLIC TO PARTICIPATE IN MONITORING THE DEPARTMENT'S SERVICES AND ADVISING ON HOW TO MAKE THEM MORE CUSTOMER-ORIENTED.

SO FAR, FIVE CLG MEETINGS HAVE BEEN HELD AND SIX NEWSLETTERS PUBLICISING THE SERVICES THE DEPARTMENT OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC WHICH INCLUDE SUGGESTIONS FROM THE CLG MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED.

THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD MORE REGULAR MEETINGS WITH THE CLG MEMBERS AND CONDUCT REGULAR OPINION AND WAITING-TIME SURVEYS ON THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGE SCHEME TO ENSURE THAT THE CUSTOMER-ORIENTED SERVICES ARE PROVIDED IN MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MANNER AT ALL TIMES.

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CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND NOT CONSIDERED

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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, MR W K LAM, TODAY (MONDAY) REAFFIRMED THAT A CENTRAL PROVIDENT FUND (CPF) WAS NO LONGER UNDER CONSIDERATION.

"THE GOVERNOR HAS RULED OUT THE INTRODUCTION OF A CPF IN HIS POLICY ADDRESS. NOR WOULD WE RECONSIDER THE INTRODUCTION OF A COMPULSORY PRIVATELY MANAGED PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME, WHICH RECEIVED LITTLE PUBLIC SUPPORT IN THE LAST CONSULTATION EXERCISE," MR W K LAM SAID.

IN RESPONSE TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S STATEMENT THAT THEY WOULD INTRODUCE A CPF THROUGH A PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL, MR LAM SAID HE WAS SURPRISED AT THE PARTY'S ASSERTION THAT A CPF COULD BE SET UP WITHOUT INVOLVING GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND WITHOUT INCURRING A CHARGE ON PUBLIC REVENUE.

"CLEARLY, THERE WOULD NEED TO BE A PUBLIC AUTHORITY TO ENFORCE CONTRIBUTIONS, TO VET AND APPROVE EXEMPTIONS, TO MANAGE THE INVESTMENT OF THE FUND, AND TO PAY OUT BENEFITS TO RETIREES.

"WITHOUT GOVERNMENT BACKING AND INVOLVEMENT IN ITS MANAGEMENT, THE FUND LACKS THE NECESSARY CREDIBILITY TO ACHIEVE ITS PURPOSE," MR LAM SAID.

/MR LAM

MR LAM SAID THERE WERE SERIOUS INADEQUACIES INHERENT IN ANY TYPE OF PROVIDENT FUND SCHEMES, INCLUDING A COMPULSORY PRIVATELY MANAGED PROVIDENT FUND SCHEME, WHICH HAD BEEN ADVOCATED BY THE LIBERAL PARTY.

"UNLIKE THE PROPOSED OLD AGE PENSION SCHEME, COMPULSORY PROVIDENT FUNDS, WHETHER CENTRAL OR PRIVATE, OFFER NO PROTECTION FOR THAT HALF OF THE POPULATION OUTSIDE THE WORKFORCE.

"OF THE REMAINING HALF, THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY MIDDLE-AGED AND THOSE WITH LOW INCOME WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCRUE SUFFICIENT BENEFITS TO PROVIDE THEM WITH INCOME SECURITY UPON RETIREMENT," MR LAM SAID.

"THESE PROVIDENT FUND SCHEMES WILL NOT HELP THOSE WHO ARE MOST IN NEED, AND IN VIEW OF THE LONG TIME REQUIRED TO BUILD UP SUFFICIENT FUNDS, THEY WILL NOT MEET THE COMMUNITY'S WISH OF PROVIDING INCOME SECURITY FOR THE ELDERLY AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE," MR LAM ADDED.

MR LAM EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE INADEQUACIES OF THE VARIOUS PROVIDENT FUND SCHEMES, WHICH WERE WELL DOCUMENTED, WERE ONCE AGAIN BEING OVERLOOKED.

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SMALLER INCREASE IN VTC TUITION FEES

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THE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN APPROVAL FOR THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL (VTC) TO INCREASE TUITION FEES FOR ITS SUB-DEGREE COURSES TO \$15,300 PER YEAR FOR THE 1994/95 ACADEMIC YEAR.

IN ADDITION, THE VTC HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO SET ITS OWN LEVEL OF TUITION FEES FOR SUB-DEGREE COURSES FROM 1994/95.

"AS PART OF THE TERTIARY EDUCATION EXPANSION PROGRAMME, THE VTC'S TWO TECHNICAL COLLEGES HAVE OFFERED FULL-TIME SUB-DEGREE COURSES TRANSFERRED FROM THE TWO LOCAL POLYTECHNICS SINCE OCTOBER 1993," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION AND MANPOWER BRANCH SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

"THE TUITION FEES FOR THE VTC COURSES WERE SET AT THE SAME LEVEL AS THOSE OFFERED BY THE POLYTECHNICS, THAT IS \$12,750 PER YEAR," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

ACCORDING TO A FORMULA FOR DETERMINING FEE LEVELS BASED ON COST RECOVERY RATES, THE FEE LEVEL FOR SUB-DEGREE COURSES PROVIDED BY THE POLYTECHNICS HAS BEEN REVISED TO \$18,000 PER YEAR FOR THE 1994/95 ACADEMIC YEAR.

"HOWEVER, AS THE GENERAL SERVICES AND AMENITIES PROVIDED BY THE VTC AND THE POLYTECHNICS ARE DIFFERENT, THE VTC HAS BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE A LOWER UNIT OPERATING COST FOR SUB-DEGREE COURSES," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"THE SAME COST RECOVERY RATE CAN THEREFORE BE ACHIEVED BY A SMALLER INCREASE IN THE LEVEL OF FEES," HE EXPLAINED.

"THE VTC HAS PROPOSED, AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED, THAT THE BENEFIT SHOULD BE PASSED ON TO THE STUDENTS," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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CONSULTATION ON LICENSING ESTATE AGENTS ENDS

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THE WORKING GROUP ON REGULATION OF ESTATE AGENTS HAS RECEIVED VIEWS FROM A WIDE CROSS SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY ON ITS RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF A REGULATORY SYSTEM FOR THE TRADE IN THE TERRITORY.

DURING THE TWO-MONTH CONSULTATION WHICH ENDED TODAY (MONDAY), THE WORKING GROUP HAS SO FAR RECEIVED 40 WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS FROM DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS.

IN ADDITION, A LARGE BODY OF OPINIONS WAS EXPRESSED IN THE PRESS AND DISCUSSION FORUMS.

THE OPINION MAKERS INCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, ACADEMICS, TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL, PROFESSIONAL BODIES, AND INDIVIDUAL ESTATE AGENTS, WHO IN GENERAL EXPRESSED SUPPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE ACTING DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS (HOUSING POLICY), MR WILLIAM SHIU, SAID THE WORKING GROUP COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, THE CONSUMER COUNCIL, THE LAW SOCIETY AND THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION WOULD MEET LATER THIS MONTH TO CONSIDER THE OPINIONS BEFORE SUBMITTING ITS FINAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT.

"WE AIM TO SUBMIT THE DRAFT BILL TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WITHIN THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION, AND TO SET UP THE PROPOSED REGULATORY AUTHORITY AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE," MR SHIU SAID.

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EMPLOYMENT AND VACANCIES STATISTICS IN JUNE RELEASED

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COMPARING JUNE 1994 WITH JUNE 1993, THERE WAS CONTINUED GROWTH IN EMPLOYMENT IN THE VARIOUS SERVICES SECTORS, BUT EMPLOYMENT IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR DECLINED FURTHER.

THIS MAINLY REFLECTED THE CONTINUED RE-ORIENTATION OF THE ECONOMY TOWARDS SERVICES, ALONG WITH THE RELOCATION OF INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES TO CHINA. MEANWHILE, EMPLOYMENT ON CONSTRUCTION SITES REGISTERED A SLIGHT INCREASE.

VACANCIES IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR FELL FURTHER COMPARED WITH A YEAR EARLIER. BUT VACANCIES IN VARIOUS SERVICES SECTORS AND ON CONSTRUCTION SITES REGISTERED INCREASES OF VARIOUS MAGNITUDES.

ACCORDING TO THE FIGURES RELEASED TODAY (MONDAY) BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, THERE WERE 443,500 PERSONS ENGAGED IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR IN JUNE 1994, REPRESENTING A DECREASE OF 15.0% FROM JUNE 1993.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND IMPORT/EXPORT TRADES, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR, AT 1,034,000 IN JUNE 1994, WAS 10.9% HIGHER THAN IN JUNE 1993.

EMPLOYMENT IN THE FINANCING, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR, AT 351,200, WAS UP BY 7.3% OVER A YEAR EARLIER.

/EMPLOYMENT ON

EMPLOYMENT ON CONSTRUCTION SITES (MANUAL WORKERS ONLY), AT 57,400, WAS 1.0% HIGHER THAN IN JUNE 1993.

THE EMPLOYMENT FIGURES FOR JUNE 1994 IN SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTORS, COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES FOR JUNE 1993 AND MARCH 1994, ARE AS FOLLOWS :

SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTOR	PERSONS ENGAGED (EMPLOYMENT)			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	JUN 93	MAR 94	JUN 94	JUN 94 OVER JUN 93	JUN 94 OVER MAR 94
MANUFACTURING	522,000	455,900	443,500	-15.0	-2.7
CONSTRUCTION (MANUAL WORKERS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES ONLY)	56,900	58,000	57,400	+ 1.0	-0.9
WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND IMPORT/EXPORT TRADES, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	932,700	997,800	1,034,000	+10.9	+3.6
FINANCING, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	327,200	349,400	351,200	+ 7.3	+0.5

THE ABOVE STATISTICS FOR SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTORS IN JUNE 1994 WERE DERIVED FROM THE QUARTERLY SURVEY OF EMPLOYMENT AND VACANCIES AND THE QUARTERLY EMPLOYMENT SURVEY OF CONSTRUCTION SITES CONDUCTED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

IN THE FORMER SURVEY, EMPLOYMENT IN THE RETAIL TRADE EXCLUDED HAWKERS AND PERSONS WORKING AT RETAIL PITCHES BUT INCLUDED THOSE WORKING IN MARKET STALLS.

THE TWO SURVEYS MENTIONED ABOVE ALSO PROVIDE THE VACANCY STATISTICS FOR SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTORS. THE VACANCY FIGURES, TOGETHER WITH A COMPARISON WITH THE CORRESPONDING FIGURES FOR JUNE 1993 AND MARCH 1994, ARE AS FOLLOWS :

/NUMBER OF

SELECTED MAJOR ECONOMIC SECTOR	NUMBER OF REPORTED VACANCIES			PERCENTAGE CHANGE	
	JUN 93	MAR 94	JUN 94	JUN 94 OVER JUN 93	JUN 94 OVER MAR 94
MANUFACTURING	14,760	14,890	11,240	-23.8	-24.5
CONSTRUCTION (MANUAL WORKERS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES ONLY)	490	440	530	+ 7.7	+19.6
WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND IMPORT/EXPORT TRADES, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS	27,240	42,100	35,400	+30.1	-15.8
FINANCING, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES	10,540	14,550	11,890	+12.8	-18.3

COMPARING JUNE 1994 WITH JUNE 1993, VACANCIES IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR FELL BY 23.8%.

HOWEVER, VACANCIES IN THE WHOLESALE, RETAIL AND IMPORT/EXPORT TRADES, RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS SECTOR INCREASED BY 30.1% WHILE THOSE IN THE FINANCING, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR INCREASED BY 12.8%. VACANCIES ON CONSTRUCTION SITES ALSO RECORDED AN INCREASE OF 7.7% IN JUNE 1994 OVER A YEAR EARLIER.

DETAILED BREAKDOWNS OF THE ABOVE STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE QUARTERLY REPORT OF EMPLOYMENT, VACANCIES AND PAYROLL STATISTICS, JUNE 1994 AND THE QUARTERLY REPORT OF EMPLOYMENT AND VACANCIES AT CONSTRUCTION SITES, JUNE 1994.

THEY WILL BE AVAILABLE AT \$24 PER COPY AND \$13 PER COPY RESPECTIVELY AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, HONG KONG AND AT THE PUBLICATIONS SECTION OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT ON THE 19TH FLOOR, WANCHAI TOWER, 12 HARBOUR ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1994

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STI TO VISIT HKPC

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR T H CHAU, WILL VISIT THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL TOMORROW (TUESDAY) MORNING TO SEE ITS NEWEST DEVELOPMENTS TO ENHANCE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKET COMPETITIVENESS OF HONG KONG'S INDUSTRY.

SUCH DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDE THE WORLD'S SMALLEST POCKET-SIZED PERSONAL COMPUTER, RAPID PROTOTYPING TECHNOLOGY AND APPLICATIONS, AND KARAT GOLD ELECTROFORMING.

MR CHAU WILL MEET THE PRESS TO SPEAK ON TRADE AND INDUSTRY ASPECTS OF THE GOVERNOR'S POLICY ADDRESS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TOUR.

ATTENTION NEWS EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER MR CHAU'S VISIT TO THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL AND THE PRESS BRIEFING.

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE REQUESTED TO ARRIVE AT 10 AM TOMORROW (TUESDAY) ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL, HKPC BUILDING, 78 TAT CHEE AVENUE, KOWLOON. (ABOUT TWO MINUTES WALK FROM THE KOWLOON TONG MTR STATION). THE TOUR WILL START AT 10.15 AM AND THE PRESS BRIEFING WILL TAKE PLACE AT 10.45 AM.

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PLEDGE OF HIGHER SERVICES STANDARDS
BY CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT HAS PLEDGED TO FURTHER IMPROVE ITS SERVICES IN ITS NEW PERFORMANCE PLEDGE FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING THE TARGETS SET LAST YEAR.

"FOLLOWING THE ISSUE OF THE DEPARTMENT'S FIRST PERFORMANCE PLEDGE IN SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR, WE HAVE BEEN CLOSELY MONITORING OUR PERFORMANCE AGAINST TARGETS," THE COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS, MR FREDERICK HO WING-HUEN, SAID TODAY (MONDAY).

"THE PROGRESS IS REPORTED IN OUR SECOND PLEDGE.

"IN THE SECOND PLEDGE, WE HAVE REVISED OUR TARGETS. FOR A NUMBER OF SERVICES, WE PLEDGE TO FURTHER SHORTEN THE TIME NEEDED TO PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES TO OUR CUSTOMERS," MR HO ADDED.

LAST YEAR, TO FACILITATE THE PUBLIC IN SUPPLYING REQUIRED INFORMATION TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE COMPILATION OF STATISTICS, THE DEPARTMENT WAS ABLE TO VIRTUALLY HANDLE ALL SIMPLE ENQUIRIES BY TELEPHONE OR PERSONAL VISIT WITHIN 15 MINUTES. FOR WRITTEN ENQUIRIES, A REPLY COULD BE GIVEN WITHIN SEVEN WORKING DAYS.

FOR THE COMING YEAR, IT PLEDGES THAT FOR SIMPLE ENQUIRIES BY TELEPHONE OR PERSONAL VISIT, ANSWERS CAN BE PROVIDED WITHIN 12 MINUTES AND FOR WRITTEN ENQUIRIES, WITHIN SIX WORKING DAYS.

/THE DEPARTMENT

THE DEPARTMENT HAS RECENTLY INSTALLED AN INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE SYSTEM (IRVS) TO HANDLE ENQUIRIES ON TRADE MATTERS.

A HANDY USER CARD CONTAINING THE HOTLINE ENQUIRY NUMBER AND THE TYPES OF SERVICES PROVIDED VIA THE IRVS AVAILABLE FOR REFERENCE BY THE USER.

"FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE PLEDGE OR THE WORK OF THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC CAN CONTACT CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGERS OR OFFICERS OF SPECIFIC SUBJECT SECTIONS," MR HO SAID.

A DIRECTORY OF THE TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE RELEVANT OFFICERS/SECTIONS IS GIVEN IN THE PLEDGE.

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CLOSURE OF SHAM SHUI PO ILLEGAL STRUCTURES SOUGHT

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THE BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT IS SEEKING TO CLOSE FIVE UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES IN SHAM SHUI PO SO THAT THEY CAN BE DEMOLISHED WITHOUT ENDANGERING THE OCCUPANTS AND THE PUBLIC.

A TWO-STOREY AND FOUR SINGLE-STOREY UNAUTHORISED STRUCTURES USED FOR DWELLING ARE LOCATED ON THE 10TH FLOOR ROOF AND ROOF TOP OF A BUILDING AT THE JUNCTION OF 37-41 WONG CHUK STREET AND 2A-2B FUK WING STREET.

NOTICES APPLYING FOR CLOSURE ORDERS FROM THE DISTRICT COURT UNDER THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE ON FEBRUARY 23, 1995 HAVE BEEN POSTED ON THE PREMISES.

DEMOLITION WORKS ARE EXPECTED TO START AS SOON AS THE CLOSURE ORDERS ARE ISSUED.

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WATER STORAGE FIGURE

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STORAGE IN HONG KONG'S RESERVOIRS AT 9 AM TODAY (MONDAY) STOOD AT 98 PER CENT OF CAPACITY OR 574.098 MILLION CUBIC METRES.

THIS TIME LAST YEAR THE RESERVOIRS CONTAINED 523.322 MILLION CUBIC METRES OF WATER, REPRESENTING 89.3 PER CENT OF CAPACITY.

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1994

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HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

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	\$ MILLION	TIME (HOURS)	CUMULATIVE CHANGE (\$ MILLION)
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OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,396	0930	+1,078
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,974	1000	+1,078
CHANGE ATTRIBUTABLE TO :		1100	+1,058
MONEY MARKET ACTIVITY	+1,058	1200	+1,058
LAF TODAY	-480	1500	+1,058
		1600	+1,058
LAF RATE 3.00 BID/5.00 OFFER		TWI 122.0 *+0.1*	10.10.94

HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY

EF BILLS

EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS

TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	4.58	20 MONTHS	2605	6.35	100.21	6.30
1 MONTH	4.65	23 MONTHS	2608	6.15	99.55	6.51
3 MONTHS	4.93	31 MONTHS	3704	6.15	98.22	7.04
6 MONTHS	5.16	34 MONTHS	3707	6.95	99.64	7.21
12 MONTHS	5.79	60 MONTHS	5909	7.45	98.37	8.01

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 45,045 MN

CLOSED 10 OCTOBER 1994

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