HKGIS 香港政府新聞處

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Tuesday, February 13, 1973

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Issued by Government Information Services, Beaconsfield House, Hong Kong. Tel: 5-233191

Tuesday, February 13, 1973

GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO CURB CRIME

Governor Calls For Everyone's Full Co-operation

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The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, today reasserted the Government's determination to tackle the problem of prevailing crime in Hong Kong.

Speaking at a luncheon meeting of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong in the Mandarin Hotel, he also reiterated that members of the public must, at the same time, play their part by assisting the police.

Sir Murray stressed that the onus of crime prevention rested upon the Government. "It is a prime responsibility of this, and any administration, to ensure the safety of its population."

He said some crime prevention measures had already been implemented while others were now being formulated. "I know the Judiciary stands ready to play its constitutional part."

The Governor pointed out that violent crime had grown rather later in Hong Kong than in most other great cities of the world.

But in the last four years, it had grown much faster, and its effect on the dense population had been much more disturbing.

"Some people tell me that an increase in crime is something that must be accepted as a fact of life in this part of the 20th Century," Sir Murray said. "This I utterly reject."

"It may be so elsewhere, but it need not be so and will not be so in Hong Kong," he added.

The police force, he said, was somewhat under strength.

/"One of .....

"One of the long-term remedies is to put this right, and also to improve the quality of the force through the better conditions now being offered, and by pre-service training in a police cadet school to open this year."

However, it takes time to recruit and train a regular policeman and for this reason, during the interim period, Sir Murray had earlier called for a massive increase in the strength of the auxiliary police.

The Governor said that he and the Commissioner of Police had agreed that very considerable operation involved in the selection and training of young volunteers for the auxiliary police must now be treated as a matter of top priority.

More Police Presence

By the middle of this year, Sir Murray predicted that they should be available for action to help the trained and expert regular force.

"This will give us more muscle, more police presence and more enthusiasm."

He went on to say that a group of officials under the Secretary for Home Affairs had been working hard on details of crime prevention that would involve efforts by both the Government and the public.

"Fairly soon now it should be possible to go to district committees and subsequently to area committees and discuss what the Government believes members of the public can do, and do safely, to help the police, hinder the criminal, and make life safer for themselves, their families and neighbours."

In order to achieve the necessary impact of reversing the criminal trend, the Governor emphasised that everyone's full and active co-operation would be necessary.

/More .....

More and more people had already helped the police by raising a hue and cry when they saw a crime committed.

"This healthy and spontaneous response of the public must be helped and canalised along safe lines, and expanded and localised and systematised in many ways, and this is what will be done."

Sir Murray also touched on other problems in Hong Kong.

He said there was a general acceptance of the need for long term programmes for housing, education and the social services, and a further long term programme for the medical and health services would be added this year.

"In these fields that affect the whole population so directly, we must plan as long as we can, plan as high as we can, and plan up to but within the means at our disposal."

Sir Murray expressed confidence that Hong Kong would be able to achieve these targets.

"We have, of course, in Hong Kong very substantial resources of money and production, of services and expertise, and of human ingenuity and resilience."

Community spirit, he added, was another resource which could help achieve these targets.

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Note to Editors: Copies of the full text of the Governor's speech are contained in a supplement to today's Daily Information Bulletin.

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DISABILITY AND INFIRMITY ALLOWANCE SCHEME

Details Given Of How Scheme Will Work

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People who are entitled to an allowance under the new disability and infirmity allowance scheme will receive payments for six months at a time, provided there are no changes in circumstances.

"In most cases, the allowance will be renewed every six months, so that in practice it will provide a permanent source of income," Mr. T.S. Heppell, Assistant Director (General), Social Welfare Department said today.

He was commenting on details of the scheme announced on February 1. The scheme itself comes into operation on April 1.

The payments will be made by the Social Welfare Department. Recipients will receive order books which are renewable every six months.

The orders can be cashed each month one at a time at the nearest Post or Treasury office. If the recipient cannot make the journey himself, he can send an authorised representative.

Mr. Heppell explained that there would be some circumstances in which eligibilities for an allowance would cease, for example, where a recipient went into residential care, or where a disabled person was no longer regarded as severely disabled.

He defined the severely disabled as people who had lost the use of two limbs, or both hands, or all the fingers and both thumbs, or both feet, or eyesight to such an extent as to make even unsighted work impossible.

/The definition .....

The definition also covered residents who were totally paralysed, or so injured as to be bedridden or totally disabled, as well as those who were victims of a disabling physical or mental condition of comparable severity or which meant that constant attendance was required.

"It will be the responsibility of the Director of Medical and Health Services to certify to the Social Welfare Department that an applicant for the severe disability allowance is severely disabled, and administrative machinery will be provided for simple and speedy processing," Mr. Heppell said.

But eligibility for an infirmity allowance would not involve the Medical and Health Department, and the decision would be a matter for the Social Welfare Department.

Mr. Heppell said an announcement would be soon made about how applications for an allowance should be handled and when they should be sent in. Details of this would be widely publicised.

He stressed that while it would not be possible to process all applications immediately, any delayed payments would be backdated to the day of application.

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NEW YOUTH CENTRE FOR TAI PO

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Young people in Tai Po will have a new youth centre this summer.

The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups will be building the two-storey centre at a site next to the Tai Po public playground.

Lions International will meet the capital cost of the building. A grant of $41,000 from the Lotteries Fund and local contributions will help towards the cost of equipment and fitting-out works.

The new centre will provide conference rooms, assembly halls and library facilities. Plans are also in hand to offer courses in judo, tailoring, cookery, photography and folk dancing.

A spokesman for the Federation said that construction will soon begin on the centre, which is designed to accommodate some 500 members, with the target date set in July or August this year.

The Federation is at present operating a youth centre in Tai Po in temporary premises, but the lease is expiring this month.

The new site, with an area of over 3,000 square feet, has been granted on a Crown Land permit at an annual nominal fee of $1.

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SLIGHT INCREASE IN INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT

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Industrial employment showed a slight increase in the fourth quarter of 1972 compared with the previous quarter.

The Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Paul Tsui, disclosed this today when he announced the results of the latest quarterly employment survey.

In that quarter, industrial employment increased marginally by 2,960 to reach a total of 619,684.

The number of industrial undertakings on Labour Department records increased by 432 to 21,386.

"Employment expanded in electronics, (+2,395), cotton spinning and weaving (+967) and metal products industries (+840) but dropped in woollen knitting (-2,292), wigs (-1,272) and plastic flowers (-1,157).

Mr. Tsui observed that one of the four largest industries, in terms of employment, remained the manufacture of textiles and made-up textile goods (264,089).

The other three were plastic products (72,124), electrical machinery, apparatus, appliances and supplies (62,405), and fabricated metal products other than machinery (49,690).

A total of 19,822 vacancies was reported by industry. This represented an increase of 981 places over the previous quarter.

Most of the vacancies occurred in garments (5,790), electronics (4,297), plastics (1,754), metal products (1,344) and cotton spinning and weaving (1,139).

/"The performance .....

"The performance of individual industries varied during 1972," commented Mr. Tsui. "For instance, there were job increases of 9,345 in garments, 8,148 in electronics, 3,840 in metal products and 3,174 in the plastics industry."

Certain industries recorded a drop in employment such as wigs (-10,463), cotton spinning and weaving (-4,102) and woollen knitting (-3,334).

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IMMIGRATION FACILITIES FOR MALAYSIA

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The Malaysian Commission in Hong Kong will on Thursday (February 15) assume responsibility for Malaysia immigration matters previously exercised by the Immigration Department.

This was announced today by the Director of Immigration, Mr. W.E. Collard.

The Malaysian Commission is on the 25th floor, Permanent Comfort Building, No. 74-77 Connaught Road Central.

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WATERWORKS FOREMEN TO RECEIVE AWARDS

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Three foremen of the Waterworks Office have been awarded the 1972 W.K. Kirkwood Awards for outstanding services.

They are Mr. Chan Kam-hing, Mr. Ho Lin, and Mr. Wong Chi.

They will each receive a gold medal from the Director of Water Supplies, Mr. W.T. Knight, at a New Year Party for about 2,000 children of Waterworks staff on Sunday (February 18).

The three men have been with the Waterworks Office for over 10 years.

The Kirkwood Awards were founded in 1967 by a number of textile and engineering firms in memory of the late Mr. W.K. Kirkwood, a former engineer of the Waterworks Office.

The award is made annually to officers of the rank of Foreman Class III and below (Scale I staff), who have during the previous year shown themselves to be worthy of special recognition on the basis of general merit.

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Note to Editors: You are cordially invited to have the party and the presentation of awards covered. The party will begin at 1 p.m. at Wah Yan College, Waterloo Road, Kowloon. The presentation will take place at 2.30 p.m.

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Release time: 7.00 p.m.

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT

INFORMATION SERVICES

DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUPPLEMENT

Tuesday, February 13, 1973

SPEECH BY GOVERNOR AT ROTARY CLUB

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The following is the full text of a speech by the Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, at a luncheon meeting of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong at the Mandarin Hotel today (Tuesday):

"I am most grateful for this invitation to lunch with the Rotary Club of Hong Kong.

"I of course welcome this opportunity to speak to so responsible a group which comprises many of Hong Kong's most influential people, and which does so much for the community as a whole.

"I thought the best way I could spend the time would be to pick up some of the points I made in my speech to the Legislative Council last October and comment on them.

"You may remember that the principal points covered were new programmes for housing, education and social services, and the paramount importance of maintaining the prosperity of our economy, and personal safety and ease of mind for our population.

"There is general acceptance of the need for long term programmes for housing, education and the social services, and a further long term programme for the medical and health services will be added this year. In these fields that affect the whole population so directly, we must plan as long as we can, plan as high as we can, and plan up to but within the means at our disposal.

/"You are .....

"You are businessmen and taxpayers, and you may well say 'this is all very well, but can we really pay for it?'. No doubt the Financial Secretary will be speaking about this when he opens his budget, but the short answer is 'Yes, certainly on present assumptions and on present projections'. All this really means is that provided our economy and consequently our revenue continues to expand as we expect it to, the targets are realistic.

"Let me put this rather differently. Hong Kong's industrialisation and prosperity have been achieved against tremendous odds. The phenomenon has certainly surprised the world, but it may also, a little, have surprised us, the people of Hong Kong. To some extent our thinking may have been affected in the past by a prudent doubt as to whether this prosperity would last. I have no doubt that we should plan on the assumption of continued prosperity. I am sure that this is what a responsible group like yourselves and the people of Hong Kong would wish your Government to do, and I am sure that it is the right way to keep prosperous.

Community Spirit

"I am always impatient of pessimists.

"We have of course in Hong Kong very substantial resources of money and production, of services and expertise, and of human ingenuity and resilience. Recent months have shown that we also have another resource - community spirit. It has always been apparent in the extraordinarily wide participation in charitable enterprises and in times of emergency or disaster. But in the campaign to clean Hong Kong it has emerged as a force which stood ready to assist in dealing with a large and intractible community problem; and it has achieved striking results. Great credit for the result is due to the organising committee, the Cleansing Department. the Information Services and the area

/committees, ...

committees, and in these last weeks I have tried to visit some of those concerned to congratulate them. Nevertheless they would be the first to agree that it was the response of the public that turned the day.

"I attach great importance to the results achieved because they may show a way in which some other problems may be tackled. Some things can only be achieved by a partnership in which the Government works out what can be done and then enlists the co-operation and participation of the whole community in doing them.

"I spoke earlier of safety and ease of mind for our population being something of paramount importance. I believe that at this moment these are things which many people do not have. It is our clear duty and obligation to restore them. Crime, violent crime has grown rather later in Hong Kong than in most of the other great cities of the world, but in the last four years it has grown much faster, and its effect on our closely packed population has been much more disturbing.

Crime Prevention

"We are confronted by a few people, who have spread fear in our society. And they are products of that society; reminders of the fact that shortcomings need to be remedied if we produce such people.

"I addressed our Legislative Council on the social measures this government is working to achieve, including measures to benefit young people. While I advocate them on their own merits, I hope that they may help to remedy the conditions which - if some of our sociologists are to be believed - breed crime.

"But in the short term, as I said then, we must look to other methods.

/"I want .....

"I want to make it clear here that the onus of crime prevention rests upon the Government. It is a prime responsibility of this, and any administration, to ensure the safety of its population.

"As you know some measures have already been implemented, and I elaborated on those in the Legislative Chamber and the Attorney General has since annnounced others. Others are now being formulated. I know the Judiciary stands ready to play its constitutional part.

"But the brunt of the fight against crime is being borne with courage and devotion and considerable success by the regular police force, and it is on this professional force that we principally depend. It is somewhat under strength. One of the long-term remedies is to put this right, and also to improve the quality of the force through the better conditions now being offered, and by pre-service training in a police cadet school to open this year. We will push on with all this. But it takes time to recruit and train a regular; the process cannot be cut or skimped and meanwhile the problem of crime cannot wait.

Massive Increase

"It is for this reason that I called for a massive increase in the strength of the auxiliary police. The response of our young men has been magnificent. Clearly they see an opportunity to serve and wish to take it. The Commissioner and I are agreed that the very considerable operation involved in the selection and training of these young volunteers must now be treated as a matter of top priority, and that by the middle of the year they should be available for action to help our trained and expert regular force. This will give us more muscle, more police presence, and more enthusiasm.

/"I also .....

"I also hope that this citizens' constabulary will help to bridge such psychological gaps as exist between the regular police and the people they protect, and encourage more communication and confidence between police and public.

"Some people tell me that an increase in crime is something that must be accepted as a fact of life in this part of the 20th Century. This I utterly reject. It may be so elsewhere, but it need not be so and will not be so in Hong Kong. Time after time our community has been faced with apparently insuperable problems whether economic, political or created by nature. Time after time it has shown it can surmount them. When faced with a real challenge Hong Kong has a rare instinct and ability for combining to do what is necessary. I believe it will do so again in this instance, but it is up to the Government to show the way.

Active Co-operation

"A group of officials under the Secretary for Home Affairs has been working hard on the details. Fairly soon now it should be possible to go to district committees and subsequently to area committees and discuss what the Government believes members of the public can do, and do, safely, to help the police, hinder the criminal, and make life safer for themselves, their families and neighbours. The regular and auxiliary police can be relied on to play the main part. But to achieve the necessary impact to reverse this criminal trend everyone's full and active co-operation will be necessary. Already more and more people are helping the police by raising a hue and cry when they see a crime committed, and having the satisfaction of seeing the criminal caught as a result. This healthy and spontaneous

response .....

response of the public must be helped and canalised along safe lines, and expanded and localised and systematised in many ways, and this is what will be done. It was Edmund Burke, 200 years ago, who said 'If evil is to prevail, all that is necessary is that good men should do nothing'. I am confident that in Hong Kong good men can be relied on to do a great deal: I am confident that together we shall succeed."

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