



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
FORGET THE MYTHS - AND FACE THE FACTS, SAYS MISS DUNN	1
HEUNG YEE KUK ELECTION HELD	7
BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN APRIL COST \$231 MILLION	8
INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES	9
LABOUR DEPARTMENT OFFICERS BACK FROM CONFERENCE	10
LAND SALE RESULTS	11
PRISON STAFF COMMENDED FOR GOOD WORK	11
TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PHOTO EXHIBITION	12
TALENT QUEST FOR YOUNG SINGERS	13
EDINBURGH PLACE TO BE CLOSED FOR CEREMONY	14

FORGET THE MYTHS - AND FACE THE FACTS

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IN A HARD-HITTING SPEECH A HONG KONG INDUSTRIALIST, MISS LYDIA DUNN, TODAY (THURSDAY) TOLD A BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEXTILES: +WE DEPLORE THE WAY THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN ABUSED. THE RULES WORKED OUT IN 1973 ARE NOW HONOURED MORE IN THE BREACH THAN IN THE OBSERVANCE. WHAT STARTED OFF AS A TEMPORARY BUT BALANCED INSTRUMENT IS NOW ASSUMING THE SHAPE AND SUBSTANCE OF A PERMANENT AND LOP-SIDED FIXTURE IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN TEXTILES.+

MISS DUNN WAS SPEAKING AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING UNDER THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT, BEING HELD FROM MAY 27 TO 29 IN BRUSSELS.

ALTHOUGH A MEMBER OF HONG KONG'S LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MISS DUNN, STRESSING THAT SHE SPOKE FOR THE TRADERS AND MANUFACTURERS AND NOT FOR THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, CONTINUED: +THE MFA IS BEING TRANSFORMED INTO AN INSTRUMENT OF DISCRIMINATION PRACTISED BY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AGAINST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THERE HAS BEEN A SYSTEMATIC EROSION OF THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER OF THE ARRAGEMENT.

+THE FACT THAT TEXTILE EXPORTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN PLACED UNDER RESTRICTIONS FOR THE PAST TWENTY YEARS IS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAVE FAILED TO RECOGNISE THEIR OBLIGATION TO MAKE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENTS,+ SHE SAID.

+AWARE THAT THEY ARE VULNERABLE, THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAVE FORMULATED A NUMBER OF IDEAS WHICH, IF THEY GAIN CURRENCY, WILL NOT ASSIST IN AN OBJECTIVE APPRAISAL OF THE PROBLEMS TO BE FACED IN THE FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS.+

MISS DUNN DEMOLISHED THE TWO OLDEST MYTHS USED AS REASONS FOR RESTRICTING IMPORTS FROM LOW COST SUPPLIERS - TO PRESERVE OR PROTECT THE DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT SITUATION- AND AS PROTECTION FROM UNFAIR, LOW-COST COMPETITION.

ON CHANGES IN EMPLOYMENT ARISING AS A RESULT OF IMPORT PENETRATION, SHE CHARGED: +IT IS ALL TOO EASY TO BLAME IMPORTS - PARTICULARLY IMPORTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. BUT ARE THEY REALLY TO BLAME? A NUMBER OF RECENT STUDIES HAVE POINTED TO IMPORTS BEING A RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN CAUSING A FALL IN EMPLOYMENT, AND THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR HAS BEEN INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY.

+MOREOVER, WHERE JOBS WERE LOST AS A RESULT OF EXTERNAL TRADE, IT HAS BEEN IMPORTS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, RATHER THAN IMPORTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, WHICH ACCOUNTED FOR THE BULK OF THE LOSS,+ SHE SAID.

ON SO-CALLED +LOW-COST+ IMPORTS, MISS DUNN COMMENTED: +I WOULD CERTAINLY RESENT ANY SUGGESTION THAT THE COMPETITION WE OFFER FROM HONG KONG IS UNFAIR. OUR EXPORTS ARE NOT SUBSIDISED BY THE GOVERNMENT. WE DO NOT DUMP. HONG KONG HAS NO PROTECTED HOME MARKET. WHY THEN SHOULD OUR EXPORTS BE CONSIDERED AS CONSTITUTING UNFAIR COMPETITION? IT IS A FACT THAT CASH WAGES ARE LOWER IN HONG KONG AND IN OTHER MAJOR EXPORT CENTRES THAN IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD. BUT IS THAT NOT IN THE NATURE OF THINGS? WOULD YOU JUSTIFY RESTRAINTS ON BRITISH TEXTILES IN GERMANY OR BELGIUM BECAUSE OF THE VERY SUBSTANTIAL WAGE DIFFERENTIAL?+

MISS DUNN COUNTERED ONE OF THE PROPOSALS, MADE RECENTLY BY THE BRITISH TEXTILES CONFEDERATION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE MFA THAT, IN TIMES OF RECESSION, THE ACCESS RIGHTS OF EXPORTING COUNTRIES COULD BE CURTAILED.

+THIS IS A DOUBTFUL PROPOSITION, BECAUSE THE BRUNT OF ANY RECESSION IS NOT BORNE WHOLLY BY PRODUCERS IN IMPORTING COUNTRIES. THE FACT THAT QUOTA LEVELS ARE INCREASED BY A FIXED PERCENTAGE EACH YEAR DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT ACTUAL IMPORTS WILL GROW IN A MARKET BY THAT PERCENTAGE. IN A RECESSION, IMPORTS USUALLY FALL IN LINE WITH CONSUMPTION, WHATEVER THE AGREED RATE OF GROWTH FOR IMPORTS.

+DIFFICULTIES WOULD ARISE IN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT A RECESSION WAS PRESENT, AND THE QUID PRO QUO OF INCREASED GROWTH IN GOOD TIMES WHICH MIGHT ACCOMPANY A RECESSION CLAUSE MIGHT NEVER BE GRANTED IN PRACTICE BECAUSE OF LACK OF AGREEMENT ON WHETHER OR NOT +GOOD TIMES+ HAD ARRIVED,+ SHE SAID.

TRACING THE HISTORY OF THE MFA, MISS DUNN SAID THAT IT WAS A DEROGATION FROM THE MOST-FAVOURLED-NATION (MFN) PRINCIPLE OF THE GATT. IT ENABLED IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO SEEK RESTRICTIONS ON EXPORTS OF PARTICULAR PRODUCTS FROM PARTICULAR SOURCES UNDER PRESCRIBED CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE EXPORTING COUNTRIES HAD, FOR TWO REASONS, RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED THAT WHILE THE MFA WAS DESIGNED AS A RESTRICTIVE INSTRUMENT, ONE OF ITS OBJECTIVES WOULD BE TO ACHIEVE THE EXPANSION OF TRADE, THE REDUCTION OF BARRIERS TO SUCH TRADE AND THE PROGRESSIVE LIBERALISATION OF WORLD TRADE IN TEXTILE PRODUCTS. IT ALSO SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED CERTAIN CHECKS AND BALANCES TO ENSURE THAT, HAVING ACCEPTED A DEROGATION FROM THEIR GATT RIGHTS, THE EXPORTING COUNTRIES WOULD, NEVERTHELESS, BE ACCORDED CERTAIN FORMS OF PROTECTION.

+THESE INCLUDE MINIMUM LEVELS OF GROWTH AND FLEXIBILITY- A MORE OR LESS WORKABLE DEFINITION OF MARKET DISRUPTION ON THE BASIS OF WHICH RESTRICTIONS MIGHT BE SOUGHT- AN UNDERTAKING THAT BILATERAL AGREEMENTS SHOULD, IN OVERALL TERMS, BE MORE LIBERAL THAN MINIMUM STANDARDS SET OUT IN THE ARRANGEMENT- LIMITS ON THE DURATION OF UNILATERAL RESTRICTIONS- AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TEXTILES SURVEILLANCE BODY,+ SAID MISS DUNN.

THE MFA, FOLLOWING ITS PREDECESSOR THE LONG TERM ARRANGEMENT (LTA), OFFERED A CHANCE FOR STABILITY AND MODEST GROWTH.

+I REPEAT 'MODEST' GROWTH, FOR ALTHOUGH TODAY THE FIGURE OF SIX PER CENT IS BEING CONSIDERED AN EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH GROWTH RATE, YET IT WAS ONLY A MODEST ONE PER CENT UP ON THE LTA GROWTH RATE OF FIVE PER CENT, AND MUCH LESS THAN THE SORT OF GROWTH MOST TRADERS EXPECTED TO SEE IN MANUFACTURES OTHER THAN TEXTILES.+

MISS DUNN ASKED TO WHAT EXTENT HAD THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE TWO OPPOSING INTEREST GROUPS BEEN EXERCISED ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OF THE MFA.

+AS FAR AS HONG KONG IS CONCERNED, IT WAS OUR GENERAL EXPERIENCE THAT THE MAIN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS CONCLUDED DURING THE YEARS 1974 TO 1977 UNDER THE ORIGINAL MFA HONOURED ITS PROVISIONS. I THINK AN IMPARTIAL OBSERVER WOULD AGREE THAT THESE ARRANGEMENTS WORKED WELL ENOUGH IN THE RECESSION YEARS.

+AND THEN CAME 1977. EVEN BEFORE THE ORIGINAL MFA HAD EXPIRED IT WAS CLEAR THAT ALL THE FINE PROMISES ABOUT PROGRESSIVE LIBERALISATION WERE GOING TO BE CONVENIENTLY FORGOTTEN. WE WERE INSTEAD TREATED TO THE UNEDIFYING SPECTACLE OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD'S RICHEST AND MOST POWERFUL TRADING NATIONS GIVING IN TO PROTECTIONIST CLAMOUR, AND EXACTING FROM THEIR WEAKER TRADING PARTNERS REGRESSIVE AGREEMENTS ON THE FLIMSIEST OF ECONOMIC AND MORAL JUSTIFICATIONS,+ SAID MISS DUNN.

WHILST IMPORTING COUNTRIES COULD ONLY SEEK TO RESTRAIN TEXTILE IMPORTS WHEN THE EXISTENCE OF MARKET DISRUPTION, OR REAL RISKS OF MARKET DISRUPTION, HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED, THE BURDEN WAS ON THE IMPORTING COUNTRY TO ESTABLISH ITS CASE.

SHE ACCUSED IMPORTING COUNTRIES OF GENERALLY SHOWING LITTLE RESPECT FOR THIS PROVISION WHEN SEEKING RESTRAINT.

+OFTEN INADEQUATE STATISTICS ARE PROVIDED WHICH DO NOT SUPPORT A CASE FOR RESTRAINT EITHER ON THE GROUNDS OF MARKET DISRUPTION, OR REAL RISKS THEREOF.

+INDEED, IN SOME CASES, IT HAS BEEN OBVIOUS THAT REQUESTS FOR RESTRAINT HAD A POLITICAL RATHER THAN AN ECONOMIC BASIS. FAR FROM MAKING A GENUINE ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY MARKET DISRUPTION, IMPORTING COUNTRIES HAVE OFTEN CIRCUMVENTED THIS BASIC CRITERION FOR RESTRAINT BY A VARIETY OF DEVICES, INCLUDING THE TRIGGER POINT MECHANISM, WHICH EXISTS IN BOTH THE EEC AND THE US AGREEMENTS WITH HONG KONG,+ SHE SAID.

NOT ONLY HAVE DIFFICULTIES ARISEN WITH THE FAILURE OF IMPORTING COUNTRIES TO PROVE MARKET DISRUPTION, MISS DUNN SAID, BUT A NEW CONCEPT HAS ALSO EMERGED WHICH SEEKS TO JUSTIFY RESTRAINT BY AN IMPORTING COUNTRY ON THE BASIS OF WHAT IS KNOWN AS 'CUMULATIVE MARKET DISRUPTION'.

+THIS CONCEPT SUGGESTS THAT, WHEN AN IMPORTING COUNTRY HAS ESTABLISHED THAT ITS MARKET IS BEING DISRUPTED BY LOW-PRICED IMPORTS OF A PARTICULAR PRODUCT OR PRODUCTS FROM PARTICULAR SOURCES, ANY INCREASE IN THESE IMPORTS - HOWEVER SMALL AND FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES - WOULD CONSTITUTE A PART OF THAT DISRUPTION AND SHOULD BE RESTRAINED,+ SAID MISS DUNN.

THE CONSEQUENCE WAS THAT IT BECAME POSSIBLE FOR AN IMPORTING COUNTRY, HAVING ONCE ESTABLISHED A CASE OF MARKET DISRUPTION, OR A REAL RISK, AGAINST ONE SUPPLIER, TO INTRODUCE RESTRAINTS AGAINST ALL OTHER SUPPLIERS WITHOUT HAVING TO MAKE A CASE FOR RESTRAINT WITH EACH OF THE SUPPLIERS, AS IS REQUIRED UNDER THE MFA.

+THIS CONCEPT CANNOT BE SUPPORTED BY REFERENCE TO THE MFA. IT IS AN INVENTION OF THE IMPORTING COUNTRIES IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESTRICT FURTHER THE ACCESS RIGHTS OF EXPORTING COUNTRIES, AND IT HAS GIVEN RISE TO YET ANOTHER BLATANT DISREGARD FOR THE RAISON D'ETRE OF THE MFA, NAMELY, THAT IT WAS CREATED SPECIFICALLY TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION WHERE DAMAGE IS BEING CAUSED BY IMPORTS OF PARTICULAR PRODUCTS FROM PARTICULAR SOURCES,+ SHE DECLARED.

MISS DUNN WENT ON TO SAY THAT A RELATED CONCEPT, KNOWN AS 'GLOBALIZATION', HAS ALSO EMERGED. +DEVELOPED IMPORTING COUNTRIES DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT EACH CONSIDERS TO BE ITS MAXIMUM TOLERABLE INTAKE OF TEXTILE IMPORTS FROM WHAT THEY DESCRIBE AS LOW-COST COUNTRIES - WHICH, IN PRACTICE, MEANS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SO, WITHOUT LIMITING IMPORTS FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, AN IMPORTING COUNTRY DETERMINES, ARBITRARILY, WHAT QUANTITIES DEVELOPING COUNTRY SUPPLIERS COLLECTIVELY MAY EXPORT TO IT, BY MEANS OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS OR UNILATERAL RESTRAINTS UNDER, OR MORE APPROPRIATELY IN DEFIANCE OF, THE MFA.

+SO THIS CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION DOES NOT COVER THE WHOLE GLOBE. IMPORTING COUNTRIES ONLY WANT TO CATCH THAT PART OF THE GLOBE WHICH THEY DECIDE SHOULD FALL WITHIN THE SCOPE OF RESTRAINT, + SHE SAID.

+THE CONSEQUENCE OF APPLYING A GLOBAL QUOTA APPROACH TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ONLY ALLOWED GROWTH OF IMPORTS FROM UNRESTRAINED DEVELOPED COUNTRY SOURCES, + SAID MISS DUNN.

+THE BULK OF THE INCREASE, AND THEREFORE THE CAUSE OF MARKET DISRUPTION, DID NOT COME FROM US. IT CAME FROM THE DEVELOPED, BUT UNRESTRICTED SUPPLIERS. SO THE APPROACH DOES NOT MAKE SENSE. IT IS MANIFESTLY UNFAIR.

+THE REPORT FROM WHICH I EXTRACTED THESE FIGURES WAS PREPARED BY THE BRITISH TEXTILE CONFEDERATION, AND THE WRITER WENT ON TO ADMIT THAT, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE BULK - 58 PER CENT - OF THE INCREASE CAME FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, GOVERNMENTS ARE NEVERTHELESS RESTRICTED IN THE ACTION THEY CAN TAKE TO RESTRAIN IMPORTS FROM THESE COUNTRIES, + SHE SAID.

+BUT THE CONCEPT OF GLOBALISATION IS ALSO POLITICALLY DEFICIENT. NO ROOM IS LEFT FOR NEW ENTRANTS TO THE MARKET FROM THE DEVELOPING WORLD. IN AN ATTEMPT TO OVERCOME THIS POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING SITUATION, THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HAVE BLANDLY COME TO THE VIEW THAT, SINCE THE SHARE OF ITS IMPORT MARKET HELD BY THE DEVELOPING WORLD IS FIXED AT THE WHIM OF THE IMPORTING COUNTRY CONCERNED, THE MAJOR DEVELOPING COUNTRY SUPPLIERS MUST HAVE THEIR ACCESS RIGHTS REDUCED TO MAKE ROOM FOR NEW AND SMALL SUPPLIERS. +

MISS DUNN QUOTED FROM THE BTC REPORT : 'THE (GLOBAL) CEILING MUST MAKE A GENEROUS ALLOWANCE FOR ACCESS TO THE EEC MARKET BY THE POORER COUNTRIES. IT FOLLOWS THAT THESE ADVANCED (DEVELOPING) COUNTRIES MUST ACCEPT REDUCTIONS IN THEIR SHARE OF THE CEILINGS.'

SHE CONDEMNED THIS PROPOSAL, SAYING : +BUT THIS SOLUTION, WHICH IS CHARITY TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, IS AT BEST ILL-CONCEIVED- AND, AT WORST, IT IS A DEVICE WHEREBY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HOPE TO SALVE THEIR COLLECTIVE CONSCIENCE BY GIVING CHARITY AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. +

MISS DUNN ASKED WHY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHICH ARE RELATIVELY SMALL EXPORTERS OF TEXTILE PRODUCTS SHOULD BE RESTRAINED IN THE FIRST PLACE.

/+SURELY THEIR

+SURELY THEIR EXPORTS COULD NOT HAVE INCREASED SHARPLY AND SUBSTANTIALLY TO A LEVEL CAPABLE OF CAUSING OR THREATENING SERIOUS DAMAGE. THE POINT IS NOT WHETHER OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SHOULD SHARE THEIR MARKETS, BUT RATHER WHY SHOULD NEW AND SMALL SUPPLIERS BE RESTRICTED AT ALL?+

THE CONCEPT WHICH HAS MOST UPSET THE BALANCE OF THE ORIGINAL MFA WAS UNDOUBTEDLY THE INTRODUCTION OF THE REASONABLE DEPARTURES PROVISION WHEN THE ARRANGEMENT WAS RENEWED IN 1978, SHE SAID.

+THE EEC INSISTED ON THIS PROVISION AS A CONDITION FOR RENEWING THE MFA IN ORDER TO STABILISE THE RATE OF PENETRATION OF IMPORTS INTO THE EEC AT 1976 TRADE LEVELS- AND TO PROVIDE MORE FAVOURABLE TREATMENT FOR SMALL SUPPLIER COUNTRIES AND OTHER NEWCOMERS TO THE MARKET.

+TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK OVER THE PRE-OCCUPATION BY THE EEC WITH STABILISATION, A COMPROMISE WAS FORCED ON THE EXPORTING COUNTRIES IN THE FORM OF THE PROTOCOL EXTENDING THE MFA, WHICH STATED THAT TWO PARTIES MAY 'REACH A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION WHICH DOES INCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF JOINTLY AGREED REASONABLE DEPARTURES FROM PARTICULAR ELEMENTS IN PARTICULAR CASES'.

+THIS PROVISION HAS BEEN USED BY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AS A LICENCE TO DISREGARD THE TERMS OF THE MFA AND TO EXTRACT HIGHLY RESTRICTIVE BILATERAL AGREEMENTS FROM DEVELOPING EXPORTING COUNTRIES,+ DECLARED MISS DUNN.

+FOR TWO YEARS SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION WE HAVE WITNESSED A PROLIFERATION OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS ALL HAVING FEATURES WHICH ARE AT VARIANCE WITH THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE MFA. THESE INCLUDE, AMONGST OTHERS, AGREEMENTS WITH FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS FAR LESS THAN THE MFA MINIMA.+

WHILE THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN HONG KONG AND USA PROVIDED FOR AN ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF SIX PER CENT IN THE AGGREGATE, THE GROWTH FOR WOOL PRODUCTS WAS ONLY ONE PER CENT. IN COTTON TROUSERS AND COATS, THE GROWTH WAS ONLY 4.4 PER CENT, QUOTED MISS DUNN. IN SO-CALLED +HOT ITEMS+, WHERE THE CONSUMER DEMAND WAS STRONG, THE AGREEMENT PROVIDED FOR A GROWTH RATE OF ONLY THREE PER CENT.

IN THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EEC AND HONG KONG, FIVE CATEGORIES HAD LESS THAN ONE PER CENT GROWTH, AND 32 CATEGORIES LESS THAN SIX PER CENT. REFERRING TO CUTBACKS IN QUOTAS, IN THE EEC'S AGREEMENT WITH HK, NOT ONLY WERE THE 1978 RESTRAINT LIMITS BASED ON 1976 TRADE LEVELS INSTEAD OF 1977 QUOTAS, BUT THEY ALSO INVOLVED CUTBACKS FOR CERTAIN CATEGORIES, SHE SAID.

THE REASONABLE DEPARTURES PROVISION WAS ACCEPTED BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT DEPARTURES WOULD BE TEMPORARY AND THAT THE PARTICIPANTS SHOULD RETURN IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME TO THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ARRANGEMENT.

+THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF THIS WAIVER WAS TO ENABLE THOSE PARTIES TO THE MFA WHICH WERE FACING SEVERE PROBLEMS TO ADOPT NECESSARY STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENTS,+ SAID MISS DUNN. +HOWEVER, WE IN THE TRADE HAVE SEEN LITTLE SIGN OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENTS, NOR ANY INDICATION THAT IMPORTING COUNTRIES ARE RETURNING TO THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MFA.+

THERE WAS EVIDENCE THAT SOME DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WERE INSTEAD MOVING FURTHER AWAY FROM IT. MISS DUNN REFERRED TO THE US ADMINISTRATION TEXTILE PROGRAMME OF FEBRUARY 15, 1979, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE +WHITE PAPER+, AS AN ILLUSTRATION, WHICH COMMITTED THE US GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND FURTHER PROTECTION TO ITS TEXTILE AND APPAREL INDUSTRY.

+THE WHITE PAPER STARTS WITH THE PREMISE THAT ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED FOR A 'BELEAGUERED TEXTILE AND APPAREL INDUSTRY'. THIS DESCRIPTION OBVIOUSLY CANNOT STAND UP TO CLOSE EXAMINATION. A VARIETY OF SOURCES, INCLUDING THE GATT, INDICATE THAT THE PRODUCTION OF TEXTILES IN THE US HAS BEEN ON THE INCREASE DURING THE PERIOD 1976 TO 1978.

+THE WHITE PAPER MAKES MUCH OF THE SO-CALLED SURGE PROBLEM. IT PROVIDES THAT, WHERE QUOTAS ARE UNDER-UTILIZED IN ONE YEAR, STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR TO ENSURE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO SURGE OF IMPORTS RESULTING FROM THE COMBINATION OF GREATER UTILIZATION OF QUOTA AND THE FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS,+ SAID MISS DUNN.

+THIS PROPOSITION IS COMPLETELY OPPOSED TO THE BASIC MFA PRINCIPLE THAT THE QUOTA CEILINGS AGREED BETWEEN THE PARTIES ARE THEMSELVES MEASURES DESIGNED TO REMOVE MARKET DISRUPTION OR ELIMINATE A REAL RISK OF MARKET DISRUPTION.

+GIVEN THIS, HOW AN EXPORTING COUNTRY PERFORMS WITHIN THE AGREED QUOTA CEILINGS CANNOT BE REGARDED AS GIVING RISE TO MARKET DISRUPTION OR TO RISKS OF MARKET DISRUPTION. AT THE SAME TIME, QUOTA CEILINGS GUARANTEE THE ACCESS RIGHTS FOR THE EXPORTING COUNTRY, THE CERTAINTY OF WHICH IS THE QUID PRO QUO FOR AGREEMENT TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT.+

THE WHITE PAPER ALSO CALLED FOR THE ANNUAL EVALUATION OF IMPORT GROWTH 'IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ESTIMATED RATE OF GROWTH IN THE DOMESTIC MARKET'.

+IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THIS CONCEPT CAN BE APPLIED IN PRACTICE,+ SAID MISS DUNN. +EVEN IF THE EVALUATION OF DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION COULD BE ASSESSED QUICKLY AND OBJECTIVELY, THIS CONCEPT OVERLOOKS THE FACT THAT INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN TEXTILE PRODUCTS IS HIGHLY CYCLICAL. AN EVALUATION BASED ON ONE PARTICULAR YEAR CANNOT BE USED AS A BASIS FOR ADJUSTING THE QUOTAS FOR THE FOLLOWING YEAR BECAUSE THE SIZE OF THE MARKET MAY - INDEED, IS BOUND TO - VARY.+

THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, IN COMMON WITH THOSE OF OTHER DEVELOPING EXPORTING ECONOMIES, FELT STRONGLY THAT, BEFORE CONSIDERING WHAT THE NEXT MFA MIGHT LOOK LIKE, THERE SHOULD BE A CLEAR ASSURANCE THAT THE DEVELOPED IMPORTING COUNTRIES WILL STAND BY THEIR OBLIGATIONS AND ACT IN GOOD FAITH.

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1980

- 7 -

+AS A STARTING POINT, THERE SHOULD BE A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE BASIC OBJECTS OF THE MFA= THE EXTENT TO WHICH THESE OBJECTS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED= AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH, IN PRACTICE, THE RIGHTS OF DEVELOPING EXPORTING COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN ERODED AND THE WAYS AND MEANS BY WHICH IMPORTING COUNTRIES HAVE AVOIDED THEIR OBLIGATIONS,+ MISS DUNN CONCLUDED.

MISS DUNN'S AUDIENCE AT THE CONFERENCE COMPRISES ABOUT 170 REPRESENTATIVES FROM OVER 30 COUNTRIES.

AMONG OTHER SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS TAKING PART WERE LALITH ATULATHMUDALI, MINISTER OF TRADE AND SHIPPING, SRI LANKA= WILLIAM KLOPMAN, CHAIRMAN, BURLINGTON INDUSTRIES, USA AND VICE-PRESIDENT, AMERICAN TEXTILE MANUFACTURERS INSTITUTE= HORSE-GUNTER KRENZLER, EEC CHIEF TEXTILES NEGOTIATOR= AMBASSADOR REITER WEBB, US CHIEF TEXTILES NEGOTIATOR= PETER TSAO, COMMISSIONER OF TRADE, HK= WILLIAM EBERLE, FORMER SPECIAL TRADE REPRESENTATIVE OF USA.

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HEUNG YEE KUK ELECTION HELD

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MR LAU WONG-FAT, CHAIRMAN OF TUEN MUN RURAL COMMITTEE, WAS TODAY (THURSDAY) ELECTED CHAIRMAN FOR THE 24TH TERM OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK.

MR LAU RECEIVED 93 VOTES. HE TAKES OVER FROM MR STEPHEN WONG, WHO DID NOT STAND.

THE ONLY OTHER CANDIDATE, MR YOUNG WING-YAU, OF SOUTHERN DISTRICT, RECEIVED 12 VOTES.

ELECTED FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN WAS MR LIU YUN-SUN. MR TSANG LIN WAS ELECTED SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN.

EARLIER IN THE MORNING, 15 ORDINARY MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE KUK WERE ELECTED. THEY WERE MR YAP TIN-YEUNG (83 VOTES), MR LAM WAI-KEUNG (80 VOTES), MR HO SUN-KUEN (80 VOTES), MR LAM CHAK-MAN (77 VOTES), MR LAM PAK-PING (74 VOTES), MR LAU HON-KIT (73 VOTES), MR HO WING-KWONG (63 VOTES), MR CHEUNG WAI-LAM (63 VOTES), MR TANG LAI-NAM (63 VOTES), MR LAM YIN (58 VOTES), MR HO YUN-LAM (55 VOTES), MR TANG PAK-YUI (54 VOTES), MR MAN PING-NAM (50 VOTES), MR LI WAI-KWONG (47 VOTES) AND MR YUEN SHU-KWAN (39 VOTES).

/THERE WERE

THERE WERE 22 CANDIDATES, SEVEN FROM SOUTHERN DISTRICT (INCLUDING TSUEN WAN, ISLANDS AND SAI KUNG), 10 FROM YUEN LONG (INCLUDING TUEN MUN) AND FIVE FROM TAI PO (INCLUDING SHA TIN AND NORTH).

SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES, WAS THE RETURNING OFFICER FOR THE ELECTIONS WHICH WERE HELD BY SECRET BALLOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HEUNG YEE KUK ORDINANCE.

THE ELECTORATE CONSISTED OF 112 COUNCILLORS WHO CONSTITUTE THE FULL COUNCIL OF THE KUK. THE COUNCILLORS COMPRISE SPECIAL COUNCILLORS, RURAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN AND NEW TERRITORIES UNOFFICIAL JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

THE 24TH TERM OF THE KUK BEGINS ON JUNE 1.

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BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN APRIL COST \$231 MILLION
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THE TOTAL DECLARED COST OF NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN APRIL AMOUNTED TO \$231 MILLION, ACCORDING TO FIGURES ISSUED TODAY BY THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

THIS COMPARES WITH \$76.9 MILLION IN THE SAME MONTH LAST YEAR.

THE TOTAL USABLE FLOOR AREA OF THE NEW BUILDINGS COMPLETED AMOUNTED TO 153 490.6 SQUARE METRES, COMPRISING 98 360.7 SQUARE METRES OF NON-DOMESTIC AND 55 129.9 SQUARE METRES OF DOMESTIC FLOOR AREA.

BUILDING PLANS FOR A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN TUEN MUN NEW TOWN, A SEWAGE PUMPING STATION IN DISCOVERY BAY, LANTAU, A LECTURE THEATRE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG AND 52 OTHER PROJECTS WERE APPROVED IN APRIL BY THE BUILDINGS ORDINANCE OFFICE.

OF THESE PLANS APPROVED, 27 WERE FOR PROJECTS ON HONG KONG ISLAND, EIGHT FOR KOWLOON AND 20 FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES.

DURING THE MONTH, THE OFFICE GAVE CONSENT FOR WORK TO START ON 51 NEW BUILDING PROJECTS INCLUDING A HOTEL IN CHEUNG CHAU, A PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT CHAI WAN KOK, TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN, A TEACHING BLOCK OF THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, AN EXTENSION TO HONG KONG SANATORIUM AND HOSPITAL AND A SCHOOL IN WAH FU ROAD, POKFULAM.

THIRTY-FIVE COMPLETED BUILDINGS WERE CERTIFIED FOR OCCUPATION. ASSENT WAS GIVEN TO THE DEMOLITION OF 73 BUILDINGS.

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INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES
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THE NEW ANNUAL RATE OF INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES WILL BE 9 PER CENT AS FROM TOMORROW (MAY 30), AGAINST THE CURRENT RATE OF 10.5 PER CENT.

TOMORROW'S ISSUE OF THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE WILL CONTAIN A LEGAL NOTICE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS AUTHORISED THIS DECREASE IN THE RATE OF INTEREST PAYABLE ON THE CERTIFICATES.

INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES IS TAX-FREE AND IS CALCULATED IN MONTHLY STEPS -- THE NEW RATE WILL BE 75 CENTS PER MONTH PER \$100. IT WILL BE CREDITED AS BEFORE IN RESPECT OF COMPLETED MONTHS BETWEEN PURCHASE AND SURRENDER WHEN CERTIFICATES ARE USED TO PAY TAX. NO INTEREST IS DUE WHERE THE PRINCIPAL VALUE OF A CERTIFICATE IS REPAID IN CASH.

THE NEW RATE WILL APPLY TO ALL CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER MAY 30.

CERTIFICATES ISSUED BEFORE THIS DATE WILL CONTINUE TO EARN INTEREST AS FOLLOWS:-

<u>RATE PER ANNUM</u>	<u>ISSUE DATE</u>
4.2%	SEPTEMBER 19, 1975 TO FEBRUARY 16, 1977
3%	FEBRUARY 17, 1977 TO SEPTEMBER 21, 1978
3.24%	SEPTEMBER 22, 1978 TO NOVEMBER 23, 1978
5.04%	NOVEMBER 24, 1978 TO FEBRUARY 15, 1979
5.76%	FEBRUARY 16, 1979 TO MAY 3, 1979
8.04%	MAY 4, 1979 TO OCTOBER 25, 1979
8.4%	OCTOBER 26, 1979 TO APRIL 10, 1980
10.5%	APRIL 11, 1980 TO MAY 29, 1980

HOWEVER THERE IS A GENERAL RULE THAT INTEREST CEASES TO ACCRUE AFTER 36 COMPLETED MONTHS WITHOUT SURRENDER FOR PAYMENT OF TAX.

/THE FOLLOWING

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1980

- 10 -

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXAMPLE OF INTEREST CALCULATION:

\$1 000 CERTIFICATES PURCHASED JUNE 2, 1980, JULY 2, 1980 AND AUGUST 2, 1980 RESPECTIVELY, SURRENDERED IN PAYMENT OF TAX DUE ON SEPTEMBER 2, 1980.

ON \$1 000, JUNE 2, 1980 TO SEPT 2, 1980, 3 COMPLETE MONTHS AT \$7.50 PER MONTH	= \$22.50
ON \$1 000, JULY 2, 1980 TO SEPT 2, 1980, 2 COMPLETE MONTHS AT \$7.50 PER MONTH	= \$15.00
ON \$1 000, AUGUST 2, 1980 TO SEPT 2, 1980, 1 COMPLETE MONTH AT \$7.50 PER MONTH	= \$ 7.50
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INTEREST ACCRUED	\$45.00
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LABOUR DEPARTMENT OFFICERS BACK FROM CONFERENCES
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TWO SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, MR CHAN SIU-LAP, CHIEF FACTORY INSPECTOR, AND MR CHUNG MOON-KUN, AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER, HAVE RETURNED TO HONG KONG AFTER ATTENDING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES OVERSEAS.

MR CHAN ATTENDED THE NATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE IN LONDON AND THE 9TH WORLD CONGRESS ON PREVENTION OF OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS AND DISEASES IN AMSTERDAM.

HE ALSO OBSERVED THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND HOLLAND AND HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BRITISH FACTORY INSPECTORATE.

MR CHUNG ATTENDED THE 14TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION IN PARIS, AFTER WHICH HE SPENT A WEEK IN LONDON VISITING THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE.

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LAND SALE RESULTS

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THREE LOTS OF CROWN LAND WERE SOLD AT AN AUCTION CONDUCTED BY THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT'S CROWN LANDS AND SURVEY OFFICE IN THE CITY HALL THEATRE TODAY.

A 3 000 SQUARE METRE LOT ON THE CHAI WAN RECLAMATION WAS SOLD TO CHUEN SHING INVESTMENT CO. LTD. FOR \$85 MILLION OR \$28 333.33 PER SQUARE METRE. IT IS FOR INDUSTRIAL AND/OR GODOWN PURPOSES.

ANOTHER SITE OF ABOUT 2 300 SQUARE METRES IN CHA KWO LING ROAD, FOR SIMILAR USES, WAS SOLD TO AGINCOURT LTD. FOR \$47 MILLION OR \$20 434.78 PER SQUARE METRE.

THE THIRD LOT IS LOCATED IN RECLAMATION STREET, KOWLOON AND COVERS ABOUT 48.4 SQUARE METRES. IT WAS BOUGHT BY PRENTON CO. LTD. FOR \$1.7 MILLION, OR \$35 123.96 PER SQUARE METRE. IT IS FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES.

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PRISON STAFF COMMENDED FOR GOOD WORK

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ELEVEN PRISON STAFF, COMPRISING EIGHT ASSISTANT OFFICERS, TWO TEACHERS AND A TECHNICAL INSTRUCTOR, HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS' COMMENDATION FOR EXCELLENT DUTY PERFORMANCE.

THE AWARDS WERE PRESENTED TO THEM BY THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS (OPERATIONS), MR G.D. HYDES, AT A CEREMONY HELD IN THE PIK UK PRISON TODAY.

SENIOR MASTER CHEUNG KAI-KONG WAS COMMENDED FOR THE EXPERTISE HE DISPLAYED IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING A RADIO AND TELECOMMUNICATION COURSE FOR YOUNG PRISONERS AT PIK UK CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION. THEY OBTAINED OUTSTANDING RESULTS IN THE CITY AND GUILDS EXAMINATIONS LAST YEAR.

MR LO MUK-TIM, MASTER, AND MR KWAN CHUNG-TAT, TECHNICAL INSTRUCTOR, WHO ASSISTED IN IMPLEMENTING THE COURSE, ALSO WON COMMENDATIONS.

ASSISTANT OFFICER, MR KWOK WAI-HUNG, WAS PRAISED FOR HIS ALERTNESS AND PUBLIC SPIRITED ACTION IN APPREHENDING A BURGLAR SUSPECT NEAR THE ARGYLE STREET REFUGEE CAMP IN JANUARY THIS YEAR.

ANOTHER ASSISTANT OFFICER, MR CHAN KAI-KUEN, WON HIS COMMENDATION FOR APPREHENDING WHILE OFF DUTY A TREATMENT CENTRE INMATE WHO FAILED TO RETURN FROM HOME LEAVE.

/TWO OTHER

TWO OTHER ASSISTANT OFFICERS, MR LUI KWAI-KEUNG AND MR KWAN WING-YAT, WERE BOTH COMMENDED FOR THEIR DILIGENCE AND ALERTNESS WHICH LED TO THE DISCOVERY OF DANGEROUS DRUGS CLEVERLY HIDDEN BY REMAND PRISONERS ON BEING ADMITTED TO THE LAI CHI KOK RECEPTION CENTRE.

THE FOUR OTHER RECIPIENTS, ASSISTANT OFFICERS MESSRS AMERICO SCOBRAL DE SILVA, LAU KWOK-FU, TAM CHI-LEUNG AND SZETO KWAI-YUEN, WERE ALL PRAISED FOR THEIR ALERTNESS AND INITIATIVE IN PREVENTING UNAUTHORISED ARTICLES FROM BEING INTRODUCED INTO PRISONS BY VISITORS.

AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY, MR HYDES HIMSELF WAS AWARDED THE PRISON COMMISSIONER'S COMMENDATION BY THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF PRISONS, MR TOM ECOB.

MR HYDES WAS COMMENDED FOR HIS OUTSTANDING DEVOTION TO DUTY AND EXCEPTIONAL ABILITY AND LEADERSHIP WHICH HE DISPLAYED AS SENIOR SUPERINTENDENT BETWEEN JANUARY AND MAY LAST YEAR, WHEN HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN FORMULATING THE ORGANISATION AND CO-ORDINATING THE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF SEVERAL REFUGEE CAMPS DURING THE INITIAL INFLUX OF REFUGEES.

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TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PHOTO EXHIBITION
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AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS DEPICTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF TSUEN WAN OVER THE PAST TWO DECADES WILL BE ON DISPLAY IN THE MAIN FOYER OF TSUEN WAN TOWN HALL FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

TOWN MANAGER AND DISTRICT OFFICER TSUEN WAN, MR JAMES HAYES, AND THE ACTING PROJECT MANAGER, MR NORMAN TUCKER, WILL OFFICIATE AT A RECEPTION HELD TO MARK THE EXHIBITION OPENING AT 4 PM. TSUEN WAN DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS WILL ALSO BE PRESENT.

ON DISPLAY WILL BE PHOTOGRAPHS OF LOCAL HOUSING PROJECTS, SCHOOLS AND SPORTS FACILITIES. THERE WILL ALSO BE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE CONTAINER TERMINAL AND TSING YI BRIDGE TAKEN SINCE 1960.

PLANS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR THE NEW TOWN WILL ALSO BE FEATURED. THEY INCLUDE TSUEN WAN BYPASS, NEW ROADS IN NORTH TSUEN WAN, SHA TIN-TSUEN WAN HIGHWAY AND THE BRIDGE LINKING TSING YI TO NORTHEAST LANTAU.

CAPTIONS WILL BE ATTACHED TO EACH PHOTOGRAPH TO PROVIDE VIEWERS WITH BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND DETAILS OF THE VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS.

ORGANISED BY TSUEN WAN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT OFFICE AND THE DISTRICT OFFICE, THE EXHIBITION WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC UNTIL MID-JULY, WHEN THE PHOTOGRAPHS WILL BE MOVED TO KWAI CHUNG COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR FURTHER DISPLAY.

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TALENT QUEST FOR YOUNG SINGERS

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KWUN TONG CHILDREN WITH A GOOD VOICE WILL SOON BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR SINGING TALENT.

THE MUSIC OFFICE, THE KWUN TONG CHILDREN'S CHORUS AND THE KWUN TONG DISTRICT YOUTH RECREATION CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ARE JOINTLY ORGANISING A KWUN TONG CHILDREN'S SINGING CONTEST TO BE HELD FROM JULY 5 TO 13 IN THE SCHOOL HALL OF KEI CHI MIDDLE SCHOOL.

APPLICATION TO JOIN THE CONTEST IS NOW OPEN TO ALL CHILDREN AGED 7 TO 12 LIVING OR STUDYING IN KWUN TONG DISTRICT.

THERE WILL BE SEMI-FINALS FOR THE VOCAL SOLO SECTION ON JULY 6 AND FOR THE ENSEMBLE SECTION ON JULY 5.

THE FINAL WILL BE HELD ON JULY 12 AND WINNERS WILL PERFORM AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE KWUN TONG SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMME ON JULY 13 AT TSUI PING ROAD PLAYGROUND.

APPLICATION FORMS ARE OBTAINABLE AT:

KEI CHI MIDDLE SCHOOL,
20 SHUI NING STREET,

MUSIC OFFICE, KOWLOON EAST SUB-OFFICE,
TING FU STREET, NGAU TAU KOK,

KEI FAT SCHOOL,
34 YUET WAH STREET,

PO CHARK PRIMARY SCHOOL,
SCHOOL NO. 3, KO CHUI ROAD ESTATE,

LOK SIN TONG PRIMARY SCHOOL, KWUN TONG
BLOCK 24, KWUN TONG (TSUI PING ROAD) ESTATE,

S.K.H. ST BARNABAS' PRIMARY SCHOOL,
BLOCK 11, KWUN TONG (TSUI PING ROAD) ESTATE,

COMMUNITY AND YOUTH OFFICE (KWUN TONG),
KWUN TONG GOVERNMENT OFFICES BUILDING,
3RD FLOOR, TUNG YAU STREET,

KWUN TONG COMMUNITY CENTRE,
17 TSUI PING ROAD.

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION IS JUNE 20. ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON TELEPHONE 3-411328.

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1980

- 14 -

**EDINBURGH PLACE TO BE CLOSED FOR CEREMONY

THE SECTION OF EDINBURGH PLACE EAST ON HONG KONG ISLAND BETWEEN STAR FERRY AND HMS TAMAR WILL BE CLOSED TO TRAFFIC FROM 8 AM TO 8 PM ON SUNDAY (JUNE 1) FOR THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 1980 ROAD SAFETY PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN.

QUEEN'S PIER WILL ALSO BE CLOSED FROM 11 AM TO 6.30 PM THAT DAY FOR THE EVENT. OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF SMALL CRAFT ARE ADVISED TO USE BLAKE PIER INSTEAD.

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