



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1976

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GOVERNMENT TO PRESS AHEAD WITH SOCIAL PROGRAMMES

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IN ADDRESSING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID THAT ANGLO-CHINESE RELATIONS WERE EXCELLENT AND CONTACTS OVER HONG KONG FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.

+RECENT SAD EVENT IN CHINA+ HE SAID, +HAVE NO BEARING ON THE SATISFACTORY SITUATION WHICH I AM CONFIDENT WILL CONTINUE+.

SIR MURRAY SHOWED MARKED CONFIDENCE IN THE ECONOMY WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS +BACK ON THE COURSE FROM WHICH IT WAS KNOCKED BY THE RECESSION+. THOUGH THE RATE OF GROWTH COULD NOT CONTINUE AT THE PRESENT PACE, HE SAID, +1976 WILL CONTINUE TO BE A VERY GOOD YEAR FOR HONG KONG+, WITH THE QUANTITY OF EXPORTS INCREASING BY 25% AND THE GDP BY +SOME 16% OR MORE+.

ANTI-INFLATIONARY MEASURES BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS MIGHT MAKE THE GROWTH OF WORLD TRADE SLOWER IF SURER, BUT THE GOVERNOR WAS CONFIDENT THAT HONG KONG COULD WIN A SHARE SUFFICIENT TO KEEP CAPACITY FULLY OCCUPIED. +I CAN SAY WITH CONFIDENCE+, HE CONCLUDED, +THAT UNPREDICTABLE EXTERNAL CONVULSIONS APART, OUR PROSPECTS ARE NOW GOOD, AND THAT WE MAY FACE THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF HONG KONG WITHOUT FEAR THAT OUR REASONABLE PLANS TO SOLVE THEM WILL SUFFER FROM FINANCIAL RESTRAINT+.

THE GOVERNOR THEN REVIEWED THE PRINCIPAL SOCIAL PROGRAMMES. HE LAID PARTICULAR STRESS ON HOUSING- COMPLETIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR WOULD RISE TO 170,000 IN '78/79 AND 224,000 IN '79/80 AND THEREAFTER FIGURES OF WELL OVER 200,000 WOULD BE MAINTAINED UNTIL +THE BACK OF THE PROBLEM WAS BROKEN+ ABOUT 1984.

SIR MURRAY SAID THAT WITH +THE RETURN TO GREAT ACTIVITY+ IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, +BETWEEN NOW AND 1980 THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS COMBINED SHOULD HAVE PRODUCED NEW HOMES FOR ABOUT ONE MILLION PEOPLE+.

IN SPEAKING OF RENTS, HE SAID THAT HE HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE THAT INITIAL RENTS IN NEW ESTATES WOULD BE STABILISED AT PRESENT LEVELS OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THEY WERE HALF OR LESS THOSE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND HE SAID +TO ENSURE THIS HOUSING FULFILLS ITS SOCIAL PURPOSE THIS DEGREE OF SUBSIDISATION WILL BE MAINTAINED+.

AFTER SURVEYING EDUCATION, WHERE THE PRINCIPAL EMPHASIS CONTINUES TO BE ON PROVISION, BY 1978, OF NINE YEARS EDUCATION FOR ALL INCLUDING THREE YEARS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION, AND MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, SIR MURRAY ANNOUNCED PROPOSALS TO INCLUDE IN THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME ABLE-BODIED PERSONS UNDER 55 +SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS BEING MADE TO PREVENT ABUSE+.

HE SAID IT WAS QUITE WRONG THAT DURING THE RECESSION THOSE INELIGIBLE +SHOULD LIVE OFF THEIR WITS OR THEIR FRIENDS OR THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE GRANTED TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES+. +THIS IS SOMETHING WE SHOULD PUT RIGHT+, HE CONCLUDED.

THE GOVERNOR EMPHASISED THAT THE PASSAGE OF LABOUR LEGISLATION SHOULD CONTINUE AND ANNOUNCED THAT IN THIS SESSION IT WOULD INCLUDE PROVISION FOR ONE REST DAY A WEEK (INSTEAD OF FOUR A MONTH), AND ONE WEEK'S PAID HOLIDAY A YEAR, ALSO IMPROVEMENTS IN SEVERANCE PAY AND SICKNESS BENEFIT.

IN THIS FIELD, HE SAID, THE GOVERNMENT'S TARGET WAS THAT LEGISLATION SHOULD BE +AT LEAST BROADLY EQUIVALENT TO THE BEST IN OUR NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES+ EXCLUDING JAPAN.

SIR MURRAY THOUGHT THIS COULD BE DONE FAST AND WELL WITHIN FIVE YEARS. THIS YEAR'S LEGISLATION +WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS CLOSING THE GAP+, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT IN THE NEW TERRITORIES THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN OPEN TO CRITICISM FOR NOT DOING ENOUGH OUTSIDE THE NEW TOWNS. +THIS WILL NOW END+ HE PROMISED, AND ANNOUNCED NEW DEVELOPMENTS AT TAI PO, FANLING, YUEN LONG, SILVERMINE BAY AND CHEUNG CHAU.

HE CLAIMED THAT +THE RISE IN CRIME HAS AT LAST STOPPED AND THE PROSPECTS FOR REDUCING IT ARE BECOMING BRIGHTER+.

SIR MURRAY PAID A TRIBUTE TO THE MANY THINGS THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE HAD DONE +TO REFURBISH ITS ORGANISATION TO FIGHT CRIME AND ENLIST THE HELP OF THE PUBLIC+.

HE SAID THAT IN SPITE OF +HEADLINE-CATCHING CRIMES+ HE WAS CONVINCED +THAT THE GENERAL SITUATION IN THE POLICE FORCE HAS VASTLY IMPROVED+. HE SUMMED UP THE OVERALL PICTURE AS BEING +HARD-WON AND ENCOURAGING PROGRESS, BUT NOT YET VICTORY+.

ON THE ICAC, THE GOVERNOR SAID: +I AM PLEASED WITH THE PROGRESS NOW BEING MADE. IT HAS ALREADY MADE A VERY CONSIDERABLE IMPACT BOTH IN CHECKING CORRUPTION HERE IN HONG KONG AND RE-ESTABLISHING THE GOOD NAME OF HONG KONG OVERSEAS+. WITH AN EFFECTIVE DETERRENT FORCE DEPLOYED THE EMPHASIS COULD NOW BE MORE ON PREVENTIVE MEASURES THROUGH COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION.

THE GOVERNOR SPOKE OF HONG KONG'S PARTICULAR PROBLEM OF HELPING PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN DENSELY POPULATED, HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS +GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER, LIVE IN HARMONY, AND FEEL SECURE+.

HE SAID +A GRAND DESIGN+ WAS EMERGING TO COPE WITH THIS PROBLEM COMPOSED OF +MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES, THE KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS, AREA COMMITTEES, SUPPORTED AND ASSISTED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICERS, COMMUNITY YOUTH OFFICERS AND RECREATION OFFICERS+ WITH THEIR WORK CO-ORDINATED OR DIRECTED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND HIS STAFF.

IN SUMMING UP THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT +RECOVERY HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO GET BACK ON TO THE TARGETS FOR OUR SOCIAL PROGRAMMES WITH ALL THE HOPE THAT THIS IMPLIES FOR ELIMINATING THE MAIN DEFICIENCIES IN OUR CITY BY THE EARLY '80S+.

/HE ADDED:

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HE ADDED: +YOU WILL HAVE NOTED THAT TO THESE PROGRAMMES I HAVE ADDED A NEW AND SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON LABOUR LEGISLATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE+.

THIS, HE SAID, WAS +TIMELY, RIGHT FOR OUR SOCIETY, AND ONLY COMMON JUSTICE+ AFTER THE HARDSHIP SUFFERED DURING THE RECESSION.

SIR MURRAY CONCLUDED BY SAYING +IT IS YOUR GOVERNMENT'S AIM TO BUILD INTO OUR SOCIETY A BALANCE+. ON ONE SIDE OF THIS WAS ECONOMIC FREEDOM WHICH HE SAID WAS +PERFECTLY COMPATIBLE WITH SOCIAL AND COMMERCIAL RESPONSIBILITY+. THE OTHER SIDE - +SOCIAL PROVISION+ - WAS EQUALLY COMPATIBLE WITH +THE TRADITIONAL VIRTUES OF REALISM, WILL TO WORK AND SELF-RELIANCE+.

+THESE+, HE SAID, +ARE PRECIOUS TO OUR SOCIETY AND MUST BE PRESERVED+.

HE ENDED: +I AM CONVINCED THAT IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND PRESERVATION OF THIS BALANCE LIE HONG KONG'S BEST PROSPECTS OF PROSPERITY, SOCIAL HARMONY AND INTERNATIONAL RESPECT+.

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ANGLO-CHINESE RELATIONS CONTINUE TO BE EXCELLENT

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID TODAY THAT ANGLO-CHINESE RELATIONS HAD CONTINUED TO BE EXCELLENT DURING THE PAST YEAR, AND WITHIN THIS FRAMEWORK PRACTICAL CONTACTS OVER HONG KONG HAD LIKEWISE BEEN FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY SAID: +RECENT SAD EVENTS IN CHINA HAVE NO BEARING ON THIS SATISFACTORY SITUATION WHICH I AM CONFIDENT WILL CONTINUE.+

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GOVERNOR WELCOMES NEW LEGCO MEMBERS

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, TODAY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVELY DEBATES IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON MATTERS OF POLICY WHERE THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEMBERS OR BETWEEN THEM AND THE GOVERNMENT.

WELCOMING THE EIGHT NEW UNOFFICIAL AND FIVE OFFICIAL MEMBERS TO THE COUNCIL, HE SAID IT WAS THE COUNCIL'S TRADITION THAT EACH MEMBER SPOKE FOR NO PARTICULAR GROUP OR SECTION BUT IN THE INTEREST OF ALL HONG KONG AS IT APPEARED IN HIS OR HER PERSONAL JUDGEMENT.

+THIS IS A GOOD TRADITION, BUT ONLY IF IT IS BALANCED, AS IS NOW MORE THE CASE, BY MEMBERSHIP DRAWN FROM A WIDE RANGE OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE, PUBLIC SERVICE, AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

HE TOLD THE NEWLY-APPOINTED UNOFFICIALS THAT THEY HAD BECOME PART OF THE BODY OF UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND COULD GREATLY ASSIST IN MAKING GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AS ACCESSIBLE AND RESPONSIVE TO THE PUBLIC AS POSSIBLE.

+IN THIS UNELECTED GOVERNMENT THE FUNCTIONS OF UMELCO OUTSIDE THE FORMAL WORK OF THE TWO COUNCILS ARE VITAL,+ HE SAID.

+MUCH GOOD WORK IN THIS RESPECT IS DONE BY THE WARD OFFICES OF THE URBAN COUNCILLORS, AND BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC,+ HE SAID. +BUT THE IMPORTANCE OF UMELCO IN ITS FUNCTION OF REDRESSOR OF GRIEVANCES AND STIMULANT AND CHECK ON THE ADMINISTRATION CANNOT BE OVERSTATED.+

LOOKING BACK AT THE GOVERNMENT'S REVIEW IN 1972 AND 73 OF WHAT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ELIMINATE THE PRINCIPAL DEFECTS IN OUR SOCIETY WITHIN A TIME-SCALE OF ABOUT 10 YEARS, SIR MURRAY SAID THAT +TO TACKLE AND MASTER ALL THE MANY DIFFERENT PROBLEMS WE REALISED REQUIRED MORE REVENUE, THE OVERHAUL OF THE ADMINISTRATION, BOLD PLANNING, AND A RADICAL NEW DEGREE OF CONTACT AND PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNED+.

+WITH THE SUPPORT OF HON. MEMBERS AND OF THE PUBLIC YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS PERSISTED WITH THESE OBJECTIVES IN SPITE OF THE TRAUMATIC AND WHOLLY UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCE OF THE RECESSION.

+FROM THIS EXPERIENCE HONG KONG HAS NOW EMERGED AND, AS IT WERE, CHANGED GEAR. I THEREFORE PROPOSE TO REVIEW WHAT OUR ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES ARE IN THE PERIOD OF RENEWED GROWTH INTO WHICH WE HAVE MOVED, AND HOW THIS CAN BEST BE USED TO STRENGTHEN OUR ECONOMY, IMPROVE LIVING STANDARDS AND ATTAIN OUR SOCIAL TARGETS,+ THE GOVERNOR SAID.

HONG KONG'S ECONOMY TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND

THE GOVERNOR TODAY PREDICTED THAT HONG KONG'S ECONOMY WOULD CONTINUE TO EXPAND FOR THE REST OF THIS DECADE AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF AT LEAST SIX PER CENT PER ANNUM IN REAL TERMS.

SIR MURRAY TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT 1976 WOULD BE A VERY GOOD YEAR FOR HONG KONG WHICH IS EXPECTING TO SEE AN INCREASE OF 25 PER CENT IN THE QUANTITY OF ITS EXPORTS AND OF SOME 16 PER CENT OR MORE IN THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN REAL TERMS COMPARED WITH 1975.

HE SAID: +IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1976, THE VOLUME WAS 36 PER CENT HIGHER THAN IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD OF LAST YEAR AND HAD FULLY RECOVERED THE GROUND LOST DURING THE RECESSION.+

WITH THE MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT IN JUNE THIS YEAR AT A RECORD BREAKING 750,000 AND REAL WAGES RATES IN MANUFACTURING IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR INCREASING AT AN ANNUAL RATE OF OVER 12 PER CENT, THE GOVERNOR SAID: +I CAN NOW SAY WITH CONFIDENCE THAT IN TERMS OF INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY, EMPLOYMENT AND LEVEL OF REAL INCOMES, OUR ECONOMY IS BACK ON COURSE FROM WHICH IT WAS KNOCKED BY THE RECESSION.+

HOWEVER, HE SAID, HONG KONG COULD NOT EXPECT ITS ECONOMY TO GO ON EXPANDING AT THE PACE OF THE LAST 12 MONTHS BECAUSE THE RECOVERY OF DEMAND IN ITS MAJOR MARKETS HAD BEEN INFLUENCED BY REPLENISHMENT OF STOCKS RUN DOWN DURING THE RECESSION.

+EVEN THOUGH THERE IS ROOM IN OUR OVERSEAS MARKETS FOR FURTHER RECOVERY IN CONSUMER DEMAND AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT, THE RATE OF EXPANSION WILL PROBABLY SLOW DOWN A LITTLE FROM NOW ON,+ SAID THE GOVERNOR.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 1977 AND BEYOND, SIR MURRAY SAID HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN THE LONGER TERM MUST DEPEND VERY LARGELY ON ITS OWN EFFORTS AS WELL AS ITS MAJOR MARKETS AND SOURCES FOR RAW MATERIALS.

HE SAID: +BETTER USE OF THE LABOUR FORCE THROUGH MORE TRAINING, MORE SKILLS AND THE PROVISION OF MORE PRODUCTIVE MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT IS VERY MUCH IN OUR OWN HANDS. SO IS THE ADAPTABILITY OF OUR ECONOMY TO CHANGES IN DEMAND IN OVERSEAS MARKETS.+

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OVERSEAS MARKETS, SIR MURRAY SAID THERE WERE SIGNS THAT THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF MOST MAJOR COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD WOULD CONTINUE TO BE STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY FEAR OF INFLATION.

+IF SO, THE GROWTH IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE MAY BE SLOWER IF SURER,+ HE ADDED, +NEVERTHELESS, SO LONG AS IT DOES CONTINUE TO GROW, AS WE CONFIDENTLY EXPECT IT WILL, HONG KONG'S INDUSTRY IS SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE TO WIN THE SHARE THAT WILL KEEP OUR CAPACITY FULLY OCCUPIED.+

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PLANS TO EXPAND INDUSTRY

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID TODAY HE WAS CONVINCED THAT FOR HONG KONG'S INDUSTRY TO EXPAND SO AS TO DIVERSIFY AND ACHIEVE HIGHER LEVELS OF TECHNOLOGY, THE PRINCIPAL STIMULANT THE GOVERNMENT COULD INJECT WAS LAND.

SPEAKING AT THE NEW SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY SAID THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE LAYOUTS OF THE NEW TOWNS WERE BEING REVIEWED SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR WIDER DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY.

+SECONDLY, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE ITS POLICY OF GRANTING LAND ON SPECIAL TERMS FOR INDUSTRIES INTRODUCING NEW TECHNOLOGY OF VALUE TO THE ECONOMY. THE PROCESS OF THIS POLICY IS ALREADY APPARENT, FOR INSTANCE, ON TSING YI ISLAND,+ HE SAID.

+THIRDLY, I BELIEVE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION CAN BE MADE THROUGH THE CONCEPT OF INDUSTRIAL ESTATES.+

SIR MURRAY SAID THAT A PROVISIONAL INDUSTRIAL ESTATES AUTHORITY HAD ALREADY BEEN ESTABLISHED AND SUBJECT TO THE ADVICE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, LEGISLATION TO CONVERT THE AUTHORITY INTO AN INDEPENDENT CORPORATION WOULD BE INTRODUCED THIS SESSION.

WORK ON THE FIRST INDUSTRIAL ESTATE AT TAIPO OF ABOUT 185 ACRES IS PROCEEDING FAST, AND WORK SHOULD START ON ANOTHER OF ABOUT THE SAME SIZE NEAR YUEN LONG NEXT YEAR. TWO OR THREE OTHER LARGE ESTATES ARE BEING PLANNED.

THE GOVERNOR NOTED THAT IN THESE MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS OF NEW TOWNS AND NEW AREAS FOR INDUSTRY, PROVISION OF ADEQUATE COMMUNICATIONS WOULD BE CRUCIAL.

+TO THE WEST, IN ADDITION TO SEA COMMUNICATIONS, WHICH ARE CAPABLE OF CONSIDERABLE EXPANSION, THERE IS THE TUEN MUN HIGHWAY, AND I HOPE THAT A PROPOSAL WILL BE MADE SHORTLY FOR COMMENCING THE SECOND AND FINAL PHASE OF THAT PROJECT,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

TO THE EAST AND NORTH, HE ADDED, THE DOUBLING OF THE LION ROCK TUNNEL AND OF THE ROAD AND RAIL LINKS TO SHATIN WOULD BE GREAT IMPROVEMENTS.

+WE ARE NOW CONSIDERING THE CONTINUATION OF THESE LINKS BY MEANS OF COAST ROAD TO TAIPO AND A THOROUGH-GOING EXPANSION OF THE RAILWAY,+ THE GOVERNOR SAID.

+WITHIN THE URBAN AREA ITSELF, THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY IS MAKING GOOD PROGRESS. I ALSO HOPE THAT THE TUNNEL TO ABERDEEN AND ITS CONNECTION WITH THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL WILL EASE CONGESTION ON EXISTING ROADS AND PAVE THE WAY FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT IN ABERDEEN AND POKFULAM.+

/REGARDING

REGARDING HONG KONG'S FINANCIAL SYSTEM, SIR MURRAY SAID:
+WE MUST NOT EVER ON ANY ACCOUNT DISCOURAGE ENTERPRISE AND
THE WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS FOR THE SAKE OF PROFITS.

+BUT THE GROWTH OF HONG KONG AS A MAJOR FINANCIAL CENTRE
HAS REQUIRED THE GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT THE SYSTEM IS
CONDUCTED WITH A DEGREE OF RESPONSIBILITY WHICH MATCHES OUR
INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND PROTECTS OUR PUBLIC.

+WE HAVE THEREFORE ENACTED ORDINANCES PROGRESSIVELY TO
REGULATE BANKING, SECURITIES, DEPOSIT TAKING COMPANIES AND
COMMODITY TRADING. MUCH HAS ALSO BEEN DONE TO STRENGTHEN OUR
COMPANIES LEGISLATION PARTICULARLY THAT DEALING WITH PROSPECTUSES
AND COMPANY ACCOUNTS.+

DURING THE COMING SESSION, THE GOVERNOR SAID, FURTHER BILLS
WERE EXPECTED TO BE INTRODUCED TO GIVE EFFECT TO MORE
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMPANIES LAW REVISION COMMITTEE.

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT A BILL INVOLVING A MAJOR REVISION
AND CONSOLIDATION OF HONG KONG'S INSURANCE LAW SHOULD BE
PRESENTED BEFORE LONG.

CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN, HE ADDED, TO THE DIFFICULT
PROBLEM OF CURBING INSIDER TRADING ON WHICH BOTH THE GOVERNMENT
AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NOW REALISED THAT ACTION WAS OVERDUE.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALSO THE VERY
IMPORTANT DUTY OF PROTECTING INDUSTRY'S ACCESS TO OVERSEAS
MARKETS.

+THIS THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE
TO DO TO THE BEST OF ITS VERY CONSIDERABLE ABILITY. I SHOULD
ALSO LIKE TO RECORD THIS GOVERNMENT'S THANKS FOR THE UNFAILING
SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND ITS MISSIONS IN HELPING
TO PROTECT OUR TRADING RIGHTS,+ HE SAID.

+IN CONCERT WITH THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND THE
GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY WILL CONTINUE TO PROMOTE BOTH EXPORTS AND OVERSEAS
INVESTMENT TO EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY OUR INDUSTRY.+

THE GOVERNOR WAS CONFIDENT THAT UNPREDICTABLE EXTERNAL
ECONOMIC CONVULSIONS APART, OUR PROSPECTS WERE ONCE MORE GOOD,
AND THAT WE MAY FACE THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF HONG KONG WITHOUT
FEAR THAT OUR REASONABLE PLANS TO SOLVE THEM WILL SUFFER
FROM FINANCIAL RESTRAINT.

+NOW THE TIME IS GOOD AND THERE IS EVERY PROSPECT OF IT
CONTINUING SO, THEREFORE IT BEHOVES US, IN THIS NEW AND MORE
FORTUNATE SITUATION, TO CONSIDER WHETHER OUR PLANS ARE
COMMENSURATE WITH OUR POSSIBILITIES,+ HE SAID.

HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME NEEDS BROADENING

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THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME, UNDER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT BUILDS FLATS FOR SALE TO THE PUBLIC, NEEDS BROADENING, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID THE ORIGINAL INTENTION WAS TO SELL FLATS ONLY TO PERSONS ALREADY IN HOUSING ESTATES SO AS TO MAKE ROOM IN RENTED ACCOMMODATION FOR OTHERS IN MORE NEED.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, AFTER CAREFUL THOUGHT HE HAD REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT PROMOTION OF HOME OWNERSHIP WAS SUCH A DESIRABLE SOCIAL OBJECTIVE IN ITS OWN RIGHT THAT THE SCHEME NEEDED BROADENING.

ACCORDINGLY, A WORKING PARTY ON HOME OWNERSHIP UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WAS SET UP AT THE END OF JULY. ITS TASK WAS FIRSTLY TO WORK OUT A PRACTICABLE SCHEME FOR PERSONS WITHIN AND ALSO IMMEDIATELY ABOVE THE INCOME LIMITS OF ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AND SECONDLY TO RECOMMEND HOW AND BY WHOM THE SCHEME SHOULD BE MANAGED.

+IT WILL NOT BE EASY TO DEVISE MORTGAGE FACILITIES TAILORED TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF PEOPLE OF THE INCOME RANGES WE HAVE IN MIND, BUT I AM CONFIDENT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

THE GOVERNOR EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH THE WORKING PARTY WILL DEVISE WOULD BE THE BEGINNING OF A LARGE-SCALE NON-PROFIT-MAKING SCHEME OF HOME OWNERSHIP WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

HE DISCLOSED THAT THE FIRST INSTALMENT OF 5,000 FLATS WOULD BE READY FOR SALE IN 1979/80 AND FURTHER INSTALMENTS WOULD THEN FOLLOW EACH YEAR.

SIR MURRAY SAID THAT OUR TARGET WAS SELF-CONTAINED HOUSING IN A DECENT ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL, AND WITHIN THE MEANS OF ALL, BY THE EARLY '80S.

+HOUSING 'FOR ALL' IS A QUESTION OF QUANTITY,+ HE SAID. +ONLY WHEN WE ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE NEW HOMES FOR ABOUT 200,000 PEOPLE A YEAR IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR WILL WE BE MAKING THE KIND OF IMPACT WE SET OUT TO DO.+

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT IN THIS AND THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR HONG KONG WOULD STILL BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF RESTRAINTS IMPOSED DURING THE RECESSION.

HE ADDED THAT TAKING ALL GOVERNMENT-FINANCED HOUSING TOGETHER, INCLUDING THAT OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY AND THE HOUSING SOCIETY, COMPLETIONS IN THESE TWO YEARS WOULD HOUSE ABOUT 97,000 AND 109,000 PERSONS RESPECTIVELY.

+BUT IN 1978/79, THE FIGURES WILL RISE DRAMATICALLY TO 170,000 AND 224,000 IN 1979/80. THEREAFTER FIGURES WELL OVER THE 200,000 MARK WILL BE MAINTAINED,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

+THE BACK OF THE PROBLEM SHOULD BE BROKEN BY '84, PROVIDED ALL CONCERNED MAINTAIN THE PRESSURE NECESSARY TO KEEP ON OUR TARGETS,+ HE STRESSED.

+NONE OF US LIKE THE PRESENT HOUSING SITUATION IN HONG KONG, THE LENGTH OF THE WAITING LIST, THE NUMBERS IN THE OLDEST TYPE ESTATES, IN RESITE AREAS OR SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS OR BED-SPACES. OUR ONLY DEFENCE CAN BE THAT WE ARE MAKING THE MAXIMUM EFFORT TO END IT THAT IS PHYSICALLY AND ADMINISTRATIVELY POSSIBLE. WITH THE RECESSION BEHIND US, THIS I BELIEVE AT LAST TO BE THE CASE.+

REFERRING TO HOUSING +WITHIN THE MEANS OF ALL+, THE GOVERNOR SAID IT WAS A QUESTION OF STANDARDS, COSTS AND RENTS ON THE ONE HAND AND INCOMES ON THE OTHER.

HE SAID THE RENTS CHARGED IN THE NEWEST ESTATES WERE NOT MORE THAN HALF OF PRIVATE SECTOR RENTS AND USUALLY LESS, AND TO ENSURE THAT HOUSING FULFILLS ITS SOCIAL PURPOSE THIS DEGREE OF SUBSIDISATION WOULD BE MAINTAINED.

SIR MURRAY SAID : +WE SHOULD NOT DROP STANDARDS IN THE NEW ESTATES AND IN FACT SHOULD RATHER SEEK TO RAISE THEM WITHOUT OF COURSE REDUCING THE NUMBERS TO BE REHOUSED.+

+I AM EQUALLY CONVINCED THAT HOUSING MUST CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE WITHIN THE MEANS OF ALL, OR A SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT IN THE SOCIAL COHESION OF HONG KONG WILL BE LOST.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE COURSE BEING FOLLOWED BY THE AUTHORITY WAS TO FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT FROM OLD TO NEW ESTATES OF THOSE ABLE TO PAY THE HIGHER RENTS AND THUS MAKE ROOM FOR THOSE WHO WERE NOT.

+THE SLOW RAISING OF THE EXCEPTIONALLY LOW RENTS IN THE OLD ESTATES WHICH WERE STATIC FOR SO LONG, AND STILL ARE ONLY BETWEEN QUARTER AND A SEVENTH OF COMPARABLE PRIVATE RENTS IS IN LINE WITH THE GENERAL AIM OF PROVIDING HOUSING WITHIN THE MEANS OF ALL,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

+I SAY THIS BECAUSE I BELIEVE THE JUSTICE OF SLOWLY RAISING THEM IS GENERALLY ACCEPTED, THOUGH IT IS CERTAINLY OUR INTENTION THAT THEY SHOULD REMAIN VERY LOW IN COMPARISON WITH PRIVATE RENTS.+

AS FOR NEW ESTATES, THE GOVERNOR SAID, IT SEEMED SENSIBLE TO FIX RENTS AT A LEVEL WHICH +AVOIDS EXCESSIVE SUBSIDY FOR THE MAJORITY OF ELIGIBLE FAMILIES, SINCE THEY CAN AFFORD THESE LEVELS.+

+THIS MEANS THAT SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE MADE FOR THE MINORITY WHO CANNOT AFFORD THEM BUT WHOSE HOUSING PROBLEM MUST BE SOLVED,+ HE ADDED.

+THE AUTHORITY'S POLICY IS FRAMED TO MEET THIS PROBLEM, AND THE AUTHORITY WILL KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON IT AND DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO HOUSE EVERYBODY WITHIN THEIR MEANS.+

GOVT. TO PROVIDE NINE YEARS OF EDUCATION

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THE GOVERNMENT'S IMMEDIATE PRIORITY IN EDUCATION IS TO PROVIDE NINE YEARS OF EDUCATION, INCLUDING THREE YEARS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION, FOR ALL AND WITHIN THE MEANS OF ALL, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE ADDED: +THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF OUR INABILITY HITHERTO TO DO THIS HAVE BEEN A MATTER OF DEEP CONCERN= HOWEVER THE THREE YEARS FROM 1978-80 WILL SEE AN END OF THIS.+

+BY '78 THE EXTRA PLACES WILL BE FOUND FOR ALL PRIMARY SCHOOL LEAVERS BY BUILDING OR CONVERSION TO CREATE 48 NEW SCHOOLS, BY FLOTATION AND EXTENDED DAY CLASSES, AND BY THE PURCHASE OF PLACES IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS,+ HE SAID.

THESE ARRANGEMENTS, HOWEVER, SHOULD NOT BE MADE PERMANENT AND SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, +THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FURTHER 35 NEW SCHOOLS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE COMING TWO YEARS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF JUNIOR SECONDARY PLACES,+ HE SAID.

TO ASSIST QUALITY DURING THIS PERIOD OF EXPANSION, HE ADDED +HERCULEAN EFFORTS HAVE ALSO BEEN MADE TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION SERVICES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS.+

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THESE ARRANGEMENTS INCLUDED PROVISION FOR ONLY 29 PER CENT OF THE 15-16 AGE GROUP, WHILE THE WHITE PAPER HAD RECOMMENDED THE PROVISION OF ASSISTED SENIOR SECONDARY PLACES FOR 40 PER CENT OF THIS AGE GROUP.

+SO IN THE COMING YEAR PLANS MUST BE MADE TO MEET THIS SHORTFALL,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO REVEALED THAT, WITH THE PROSPECT OF PROVISION FOR UP TO FORM 3 BEING COMPLETED AND WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF PLACES AT OTHER LEVELS WHICH COULD BE EXPECTED IN THE EARLY 1980'S, A WORKING PARTY WAS ENGAGED IN DRAWING UP A REPORT ON WHAT OUR FUTURE COURSE SHOULD BE FOR SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION AND THE BALANCE THAT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

+WHEN THE REPORT IS READY, WHICH SHOULD BE EARLY IN THE NEW YEAR, I WILL BE SEEKING ADVICE ON BOTH THE SUBSTANCE OF THE REPORT AND ON PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING IT,+ HE SAID.

+BUT SINCE IT WILL BE OF SUCH CONCERN TO THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, AT THE MOMENT IT SEEMS TO ME A SUITABLE SUBJECT FOR A GREEN PAPER BEFORE ANY FINAL DECISION IS TAKEN,+ HE ADDED.

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TURNING TO TERTIARY EDUCATION, SIR MURRAY SAID THE EXPANSION OF THE POLYTECHNIC AND THE UNIVERSITIES WOULD CONTINUE.

+AT THE POLYTECHNIC IN 1975/76 THERE WERE ABOUT 7,500 FULL-TIME AND EQUIVALENT PART-TIME STUDENTS AND THIS SHOULD GROW TO JUST UNDER 10,000 BY '77/78 AND TO 11,400 BY '80/81.

+BY THEN THE POLYTECHNIC WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR MORE THAN 30,000 DAY AND EVENING STUDENTS,+ HE SAID.

THE COMBINED STUDENT POPULATION OF THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY AND THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY WAS ABOUT 6,000 IN 1973. +BY THE END OF 1978 IT WILL BE 8,800 AND BY '81 ABOUT 10,300,+ HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR NOTED THAT PLANNING WAS BEGINNING IN EARNEST FOR THE OPENING OF A MEDICAL SCHOOL IN THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY. +NOT ONLY WILL HONG KONG NEED THIS EXTRA SUPPLY OF DOCTORS IN THE '80S, BUT THIS MAJOR PROJECT DEMONSTRATES THE GOVERNMENT'S CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY AND THE GREAT PART IT HAS TO PLAY IN MEETING THE NEEDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN HONG KONG,+ HE SAID.

+I THINK THIS RATE OF BUILD-UP IN BOTH THE POLYTECHNIC AND THE UNIVERSITIES IS THE MOST THAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT SACRIFICING QUALITY, AND WITHOUT CREATING IMBALANCE IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE,+ HE ADDED.

TURNING TO TECHNICAL INSTITUTES, SIR MURRAY SAID DEVELOPMENT WAS PROCEEDING WELL.

+WHEN THE FIFTH INSTITUTE, PLANNED FOR KOWLOON TONG, IS OPENED IN '79 THERE WILL BE PLACES FOR SOME 6,650 FULL-TIME OR EQUIVALENT PART-TIME STUDENTS AND FOR ABOUT 20,000 EVENING STUDENTS IN ADDITION,+ HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT WE MUST WATCH HOW DEMAND FOR THIS TYPE OF TRAINING DEVELOPED AS INDUSTRY BECAME MORE SOPHISTICATED AND THE FULL EFFECT OF THE APPRENTICESHIP ORDINANCE WAS FELT, AND BE READY TO EXPAND IT IF NECESSARY.

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MASSIVE PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
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THE GOVERNOR TODAY OUTLINED A MASSIVE PROGRAMME FURTHER TO IMPROVE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES WHICH CONTINUE TO BE IN HEAVY DEMAND.

IN HIS ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW SESSION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY SAID, +BY THE END OF 1976, WHEN PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL WILL BE IN FULL USE, THERE WILL BE A TOTAL OF 19,000 HOSPITAL BEDS AGAINST AN ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT OF 22,600. 2,700 OF THIS SHORTFALL IS IN PSYCHIATRIC BEDS.+

OUTLINING THE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME, HE SAID THAT IN 1980 THE NEW 1,300-BED PSYCHIATRIC WING AT PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL WOULD MEET PART OF THE SHORTFALL OF PSYCHIATRIC BEDS AND A FURTHER 630 BEDS WOULD BE ADDED IN OTHER PROJECTS WITHIN THE NEXT EIGHT YEARS.

HE DISCLOSED THAT A HOSPITAL COMPLEX AT SHATIN WITH 1,200 BEDS, A SUPPORTING POLYCLINIC AND A GENERAL CLINIC WOULD OPEN IN 1982/83.

IN ADDITION, THE TUEN MUN HOSPITAL WITH 1,200 BEDS AND A SUPPORTING POLYCLINIC WOULD OPEN IN 1983/84 AND A FURTHER FOUR CLINICS, ONE HEALTH CENTRE AND A POLYCLINIC PLANNED FOR OTHER AREAS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES AND EAST KOWLOON WOULD BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE NEXT EIGHT YEARS.

SIR MURRAY SAID, +THOUGH THESE DEVELOPMENTS WILL REDUCE PRESSURE ON BOTH QUEEN MARY AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITALS, FURTHER THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN TO SUPPLEMENTING THIS PROGRAMME WITH ADDITIONAL BEDS IN A NEW HOSPITAL IN EAST KOWLOON.+

THE GOVERNOR ALSO OUTLINED OTHER WAYS IN WHICH THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES CAN BE IMPROVED.

THEY ARE THE REGIONALISATION OF USE OF HOSPITAL BEDS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES, THE APPLICATION OF THE COMMUNITY NURSING, THE DRUG TREATMENT FACILITIES, THE SUPPLY OF DOCTORS, THE DENTAL SERVICES, THE REHABILITATION SERVICES AND POPULATION CONTROL.

SIR MURRAY SAID A MAJOR RE-ORGANISATION WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN 1977 TO MAKE MORE EFFICIENT USE OF HOSPITAL BEDS AND MEDICAL FACILITIES AVAILABLE.

ON COMMUNITY NURSING, THE GOVERNOR SAID A WORKING PARTY TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY NURSING AT PRESENT PROVIDED BY SOME VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE EXPANDED OR MIGHT HELP TO EASE THE PRESSURE ON HOSPITAL BEDS HAD SUBMITTED A REPORT TO THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE WHOSE VIEWS THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER.

REFERRING TO FACILITIES FOR DRUG TREATMENT, HE SAID FOUR METHADONE MAINTENANCE CLINICS WERE OPENED IN DECEMBER 1974 AND MORE RECENTLY 14 DETOXIFICATION CLINICS.

/HE SAID:

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HE SAID: +BUT NOW THAT THE INTERCEPTION OF SUPPLIES IS MORE SUCCESSFUL, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE THAT CLINICS ARE AVAILABLE TO ADDICTS WHEREVER THE DEMAND EXISTS.+

THE GOVERNMENT, HE ADDED, INTENDED TO KEEP A CLOSE WATCH ON HOW THIS DEVELOP.

TURNING TO THE SUPPLY OF DOCTORS, THE GOVERNOR SAID THE NEW MEDICAL SCHOOL AT THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY WOULD ADMIT ITS FIRST INTAKE IN 1981, AND WOULD EVENTUALLY PRODUCE 100 DOCTORS A YEAR SUPPLEMENTING THE 150 DOCTORS PRODUCED BY THE EXISTING MEDICAL SCHOOL AT THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY.

+MEANWHILE,+ HE SAID, +IT IS HOPED THAT A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF SO-CALLED 'UNREGISTRABLE DOCTORS' WILL BE LICENSED.

+ABOUT 1,700 HAVE APPLIED TO TAKE THE EXAMINATION, AND THE FIRST TO QUALIFY AFTER A PERIOD OF ASSESSMENT SHOULD START PRACTISE IN 1979,+ HE SAID.

ON DENTISTRY, THE GOVERNOR SAID, +WE PROPOSE TO START WITH A SERVICE TO CARE FOR THE TEETH OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

+A DENTAL CENTRE IS BEING BUILT AT MORRISON HILL FOR A DENTAL NURSE AND HYGIENIST TRAINING SCHOOL, AND A CHILDREN'S DENTAL CLINIC WITH 30 CHAIRS.+

THE FIRST INTAKE OF DENTAL NURSES FOR TRAINING WILL START IN SEPTEMBER 1978 AND THE SCHOOL DENTAL CONSERVATION SERVICE IN 1981.

THE GOVERNOR ALSO REVEALED THAT THE PLANNING OF A DENTAL SCHOOL IN THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG HAD STARTED AND IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THE FIRST PRE-CLINICAL INTAKE WOULD BE IN 1980 AND THE FIRST GROUP OF 60 DENTISTS SHOULD GRADUATE IN 1984.

ON REHABILITATION SERVICES, HE SAID THE THOROUGH REVIEW OF THESE SERVICES HAD JUST BEEN COMPLETED AND A GREEN PAPER ON THE SUBJECT WOULD BE PUBLISHED NEXT WEEK.

SPEAKING ABOUT POPULATION CONTROL, SIR MURRAY SAID, +WE MUST CONTINUE TO EXERT TIGHT CONTROL OVER BOTH LEGAL AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION, AND ALSO ENSURE THAT FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES ARE ADEQUATE TO THE COMMUNITY'S REQUIREMENTS.

HE SAID ALL NEW FAMILY HEALTH CENTRES WOULD INCORPORATE FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES WHICH ARE NOW BEING PROVIDED AT 66 CENTRES -- 40 OPERATED BY THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND 26 BY THE FAMILY PLANNING ASSOCIATION.

+THE CALCULATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS SUGGEST THAT THESE MEASURES ARE HAVING FAIRLY SATISFACTORY RESULTS,+ SAID SIR MURRAY.

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SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES UNDERGOING MAJOR REVIEW

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THE GOVERNMENT IS CONDUCTING A MAJOR REVIEW OF ITS SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMMES, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE SAID THE PROGRAMMES FALL INTO THREE MAIN CATEGORIES: PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, DISABILITY AND INFIRMITY ALLOWANCES AND SERVICES.

REGARDING THE PROVISION OF SERVICES, HE SAID: +ON THESE YOUR GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING COSTED PROGRAMME PLANS COVERING THE MAJOR FIELDS OF SERVICES TO THE HANDICAPPED, THE ELDERLY AND YOUTH.+

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT PLANS ON REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED WILL BE PUBLISHED NEXT WEEK, PLANS ON SERVICES TO THE ELDERLY SHOULD BE READY EARLY NEXT YEAR AND PLANS ON PREVENTIVE SERVICES FOR YOUTH SHOULD BE READY BY THE LATE SPRING OR EARLY SUMMER.

+ONCE WE HAVE THESE PLANS WE WILL UNDERTAKE AS A MATTER OF PRIORITY A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF WHAT NEEDS DOING TO COMPLETE THE SAFETY NET FOR OUR SOCIETY AND MAKE SURE IT HAS NO HOLES,+ HE SAID.

+CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR PAYMENTS ARE AN ENORMOUS ADVANCE ON THE DRY RATIONS OF SIX YEARS AGO.

+BUT NOW THAT THE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY HAS BEEN RUN IN, WE SHOULD LOOK CLOSELY AT HOW WELL IT REALLY WORKS= AT WHETHER METHODS OF PROVING NEED FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE ARE REASONABLE, AT WHETHER THE LEVELS OF PAYMENTS ARE APPROPRIATE AND CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY INCLUDING FOR INSTANCE THE AGE FOR INFIRMITY ALLOWANCE ARE RIGHT.

+IN SHORT, AT WHETHER OUR ARRANGEMENTS COVER PROPERLY THE VULNERABLE GROUPS THE COMMUNITY WISHES TO HELP, AND IF NOT WHAT ADJUSTMENTS WOULD BE NECESSARY.

+WE INTEND TO COMBINE THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE REVIEWS OF PAYMENTS AND OF SERVICES IN AN AMENDED AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND SPECIFIC SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMME, WHICH WE INTEND SHOULD BE READY BY ABOUT THE END OF 1977, AND SUBJECT TO VIEWS OF HONOURABLE MEMBERS, BEGIN IMPLEMENTED IN 1978,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS A DEFECT IN THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME WHICH MADE ITS PRESENCE FELT DURING THE RECESSION WHEN MANY ABLE-BODIED PERSONS BETWEEN 15 AND 55 WERE EXCLUDED.

DURING THE RECESSION, HE SAID, IT WAS QUITE WRONG THAT UNEMPLOYED SINGLE MEN OR COUPLES WITHOUT CHILDREN HAD TO LIVE OFF THEIR FRIENDS OR THEIR WITS, OR THAT SOME MARRIED MEN HAD TO LIVE OFF THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE GRANTED TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILY.

/+WE PROPOSE

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+WE PROPOSE TO INCLUDE THEM NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR, SUBJECT TO SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS BEING MADE TO PREVENT ABUSE,+ HE SAID.

+WE THINK THESE SHOULD INCLUDE A RESIDENCE QUALIFICATION, A DEFINED PERIOD OF UNEMPLOYMENT, AS WELL AS SERVICES TO ASSIST APPLICANTS TO FIND WORK AND TO CHECK ON THEIR SITUATION -- BUT OF COURSE ADMINISTERED WITH HUMAMINITY.

+IT DO NOT THINK ATTEMPTS AT ABUSE ON A SIGNIFICANT SCALE LIKELY IN THIS HARD WORKING AND SELF-RELIANT COMMUNITY, AND SO FAR THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME HAS BEEN ABUSED REMARKABLY LITTLE.+

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DETENTION CENTRE PROGRAMME TO BE EXTENDED

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THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES TO EXTEND AN AMENDED VERSION OF THE DETENTION CENTRE PROGRAMME TO OFFENDERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 21 AND 25, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, SAID TODAY.

IN HIS OPENING ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY NOTED THAT THE DETENTION CENTRE CONTINUED TO BE MOST EFFECTIVE IN DEALING WITH OFFENDERS AGED FROM 14 TO 20.

+BUT THE NUMBER OF PERSONS UNDER 21 CONVICTED OF CRIMES OF VIOLENCE HAS DROPPED AND THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN THE 21 TO 30 AGE GROUP,+ HE SAID.

A DETENTION CENTRE FOR OFFENDERS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 21 AND 25 WILL BE OPENED NEXT APRIL, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT INSPITE OF RAPID EXPANSION OF PRISON ACCOMMODATION IN THE LAST 2-1/2 YEARS, MORE WAS STILL NEEDED TO REDUCE OVERCROWDING.

+THE NEW RECEPTION CENTRE FOR ABOUT 1,000 AT LAI CHI KOK AND THE NEW TRAINING CENTRE IN TSUEN WAN DISTRICT, BOTH OF WHICH OPEN NEXT YEAR SHOULD HELP CONSIDERABLY.

+BUT FURTHER HIGH SECURITY ACCOMMODATION IS NEEDED AND PROPOSALS WILL BE PUT TO YOU FOR A NEW PRISON FOR 400 AT SHEK PIK FOR COMPLETION IN 1980,+ HE SAID.

SIR MURRAY ALSO REVEALED THAT AN EXPERT ON PRISON INDUSTRIES WOULD BE COMING TO HONG KONG EARLY NEXT YEAR TO HELP SPEED UP THE EXPANSION OF PRISON INDUSTRIES AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

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NEW MEASURES TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT
AND WORKING CONDITIONS

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL INTRODUCE IN THE CURRENT SESSION FURTHER MEASURES TO IMPROVE LEGISLATION GOVERNING EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN HONG KONG, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE SAID IN HIS OPENING ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

AFTER OUTLINING A NUMBER OF NEW LEGISLATIONS AND AMENDMENTS THAT WERE ENACTED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN THE LAST SESSION, THE GOVERNOR SAID: +IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THIS LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME SHOULD CONTINUE.+

HE REVEALED THAT AMENDMENTS TO THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE WILL BE INTRODUCED TO PROVIDE FOR ONE WEEK'S HOLIDAY WITH PAY FROM 1978 AND FOR ONE REST DAY A WEEK (INSTEAD OF FOUR A MONTH) NEXT YEAR, AND FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN SEVERANCE PAY AND SICKNESS BENEFITS.

OTHER PLANS IN THE PROGRAMME INCLUDE:

- * IMPROVEMENTS IN SEVERANCE PAY AND SICKNESS BENEFITS,
- * COMPENSATION SCHEME FOR WORKERS SUFFERING FROM SILICOSIS AND ASBESTOSIS,
- * A DETAILED REVIEW OF THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ORDINANCE AND,
- * FURTHER LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE GREATER PROTECTION OF WAGES IN THE CASE OF BANKRUPTCY OR LIQUIDATION.

+IT IS IMPORTANT,+ SIR MURRAY SAID +THAT IN THIS FIELD OF LABOUR LEGISLATION TOO WE SHOULD HAVE A CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT OUR OBJECTIVES ARE.+

+YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS CONCLUDED THAT WE SHOULD SET OURSELVES THE TARGET ACHIEVING A LEVEL OF LEGISLATION GOVERNING SAFETY, HEALTH AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AT LEAST BROADLY EQUIVALENT TO THE BEST IN OUR NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES WHOSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND ARE SIMILAR TO OUR OWN, WHICH IN EFFECT MEANS OUR PRINCIPAL ASIAN, COMPETITORS EXCLUDING JAPAN,+ HE POINTED OUT.

ADMITTING THAT HONG KONG WORKERS' INCOMES WERE HIGHER THAN THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES, THE GOVERNOR SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL WOULD BELIEVE IT RIGHT THAT ON THIS ACCOUNT HONG KONG SHOULD AIM AT PROVIDING ITS PEOPLE WITH LESS PROTECTION.

+NOR COULD WE DEFEND A LOWER TARGET INTERNATIONALLY OR AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE SORT OF SOCIETY WE ARE TRYING TO BUILD,+ HE EMPHASISED.

/+THIS IS

+THIS IS A FIELD IN WHICH WE HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE LAST SIX OR SEVEN YEARS, BUT WE HAVE TO GO FURTHER TO REACH THE STANDARD WE HAVE SET AND I AM SURE WE CAN DO SO FAIRLY WELL WITHIN FIVE YEARS.

+INDEED THE LEGISLATION NOW PROPOSED WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS CLOSING THE GAP.

+I AM SATISFIED THAT WE CAN DO SO BY STEPS GRADUATED SO AS NOT TO AFFECT MATERIALLY OUR COMPETITIVE POSITION,+ HE ADDED.

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URBAN COUNCIL LAUDED
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THE GOVERNOR TODAY PAID TRIBUTE TO THE URBAN COUNCIL AND SAID THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS UNDER WHICH IT WORKED HAD PROVED A SUCCESS AND A STIMULANT THROUGHOUT ITS FIELD OF ACTIVITY.

IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY SAID, +WE ARE ALL PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH THE DIMENSION IT HAS BROUGHT TO ITS WORK IN THE CULTURAL FIELD.

+THE GREAT VOLUME AND VARIETY OF ENTERTAINMENT WHICH IT NOW OFFERS HAS BROUGHT NEW INTEREST AND NEW EXCITEMENT TO A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF THE POPULATION.+

HE SAID THAT THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO HAWKING DURING THE RECESSION WAS HUMANE AND REALISTIC.

+I AM SURE NOW THAT HAWKING IS SLIGHTLY IN DECLINE THE COUNCIL WILL BE EQUALLY IMAGINATIVE IN PLANNING PERMANENT PROVISION FOR THE RIGHT LEVEL OF THIS FORM OF RETAIL TRADE.+

ON THE CLEAN HONG KONG CAMPAIGN, SIR MURRAY SAID, +HONG KONG IS MUCH CLEANER THAN IT WAS.+

+THE COUNCIL HAD GREAT INITIAL SUCCESS IN CLEANING THE STREETS AND LITTER SPOTS AND HAS FOLLOWED UP WITH THE BEACHES.

+CLEANLINESS AND CARE FOR THE APPEARANCE OF WHAT WE SEE EACH DAY IS OF INESTIMABLE VALUE TO THE WHOLE COMMUNITY JUST AS THE REVERSE IS AN IRRITANT AND A THREAT TO HEALTH,+ HE ADDED.

SIR MURRAY NOTED THAT A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT BRED CARE TO PRESERVE IT, JUST AS TOLERATED LITTER BEGOT INDIFFERENCE.

+WE ALL THEREFORE ATTACH THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO THE COUNCIL'S FURTHER WORK IN THIS FIELD, AND WISH THEM SUCCESS IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS TO PERSUADE THE PUBLIC TO MAKE EXTRA EFFORT IN THEIR RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS AND IN THE STREETS SO THAT OUR CITY WILL NOT JUST BE CLEANER THAN MOST OTHERS, BUT WILL BE SECOND TO NONE,+ THE GOVERNOR SAID.

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DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR N.T. AND OUTLYING ISLANDS
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, TODAY OUTLINED NEW DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR EIGHT DIFFERENT PLACES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND OUTLYING ISLANDS.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE SAID THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS WOULD TAKE PLACE IN THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR AND THE NEXT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT TAI PO, FANLING AND YUEN LONG THERE WOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL EXPANSION OF URBAN CENTRES TO PROVIDE HOUSING, LAND FOR INDUSTRY, AND COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

AT OTHER PLACES SUCH AS SILVERMINE BAY AND CHEUNG CHAU SMALLER HOUSING ESTATES WOULD BE BUILT, HE PROMISED.

THE GOVERNOR NOTED THAT THE PACE OF PHYSICAL CHANGE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WAS MORE DRAMATIC THAN ELSEWHERE, PARTICULARLY IN THE NEW TOWNS.

BUT THE GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, HAD BEEN OPEN TO THE CHARGE THAT OUTSIDE THE NEW TOWNS IT HAD DONE TOO LITTLE.

+I ASSURE RESIDENTS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES THIS WILL NOW CHANGE,+ HE ASSERTED.

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT DUE TO THE RAPID PACE OF DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF POPULATION IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, THERE WAS A SERIOUS DANGER OF UNDER-ADMINISTRATION THERE.

+THE MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG AND ADEQUATELY STAFFED TO RESPOND QUICKLY AND ADEQUATELY TO LOCAL PROBLEMS AND ASPIRATIONS,+ HE SAID.

+A PILOT ADMINISTRATION IS BEING SET UP IN TSUEN WAN, WHERE THE POPULATION IS ALREADY MORE THAN HALF A MILLION. A TOWN MANAGER HAS BEEN APPOINTED AND A NUMBER OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS CREATED.

+THE TOWN MANAGER COMBINES THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FORMER NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION DISTRICT OFFICER WITH THOSE OF A CITY DISTRICT COMMISSIONER.

+HE WILL HAVE UNDER HIM STAFF BOTH TO ENABLE HIM TO FULFIL HIS ESSENTIAL PART IN THE PHYSICAL PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT, AND ALSO TO RUN A DISTRICT ORGANISATION SIMILAR TO THAT IN HONG KONG AND KOWLOON SO AS TO FOSTER THE GROWTH OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS.

+THESE HAVE A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN THE NEW TOWNS, WHERE SO MUCH OF THE POPULATION IS NEW AND CONTAINS SO MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE STRANGERS TO EACH OTHER,+ HE SAID.

/HOWEVER,

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HOWEVER, SIR MURRAY POINTED OUT THAT BECAUSE OF THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE GOVERNMENT HAD TO ENSURE THAT LARGE AREAS OF UNSPOILT COUNTRYSIDE ARE PRESERVED INTACT TO PLAY THEIR PART IN RECREATION AND TOURISM.

+WE MUST PRESERVE AREAS WHERE THERE IS QUIET, FRESH AIR, AND NATURAL BEAUTY, AND HONG KONG IS STILL RICH IN SUCH AREAS,+ HE SAID.

+THE COUNTRY PARKS AUTHORITY AND BOARD HAVE THEREFORE BEEN ESTABLISHED.

+THE BOARD IS STRONG, WITH PLENTY OF PUNCH, AND THE AUTHORITY IS NOT STINTED OF FUNDS.

+THEY ARE ENGAGED IN A RACE AGAINST TIME TO DESIGNATE THE PARK AREAS AND ESTABLISH MANAGEMENT TO PRESERVE THEM AND TO ENCOURAGE THEIR PROPER USE, BEFORE IMPROPER AND HAPHAZARD USE DESTROYS THEM.+

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BRIGHT PROSPECTS OF REDUCING CRIME

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THE RISE IN CRIME HAS AT LAST STOPPED AND THE PROSPECTS OF REDUCING IT ARE BECOMING BRIGHTER, ALTHOUGH WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO, THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN HIS ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE AFFAIRS OF HONG KONG, THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT IN THE AREA OF CRIME, +OVERALL THE PICTURE IS OF SOME HARD-WON AND ENCOURAGING PROGRESS, BUT NOT YET OF VICTORY+.

HE SAID THAT MOBILISATION OF EFFORT BY THE POLICE ON THE ONE HAND AND THE PUBLIC ON THE OTHER WAS BEGINNING TO HAVE AN EFFECT.

+I AM NOT THINKING ONLY OF THE CRIME FIGURES, THOUGH THE RISE IN FIGURES FOR OVERALL CRIME HAS LEVELLED OFF, THOSE FOR VIOLENT AND KEY CRIME HAVE BEGUN TO SHRINK= AND IN PARTICULAR THOSE FOR ROBBERY HAVE DROPPED SIGNIFICANTLY. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME NOTABLE SUCCESSES AGAINST MAJOR CRIME AND SYNDICATED CRIME,+ HE SAID.

HE STRESSED HE WOULD NOT BE IMPRESSED BY THE BARE FIGURES, +WERE IT NOT THAT FROM THE MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE HOUSING ESTATES I CONTINUALLY HEAR OF A GREATER SENSE OF SECURITY, BETTER LIAISON WITH THE POLICE AND THE BELIEF THAT FEWER CRIMES ARE BEING COMMITTED WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S AREA.+

BUT HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE DOMINANT FACT WAS STILL THAT THE LEVEL OF CRIME WAS FAR TOO HIGH, AND OUTLINED FURTHER PLANS TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT AGAINST IT.

FIRSTLY, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POLICE IS BEING REVIEWED IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT EXPERIENCES AND NEW COMMITMENTS, AND WILL BE FURTHER EXPANDED IF NECESSARY.

+SECONDLY, WE MUST PRESS ON WITH IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE FORCE, AND IT IS HEARTENING THAT 90 PER CENT OF THE APPLICANTS NOW HAVE SOME SECONDARY EDUCATION,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

HE SAID THE SIZE OF THE POLICE CADET SCHOOL WOULD BE DOUBLED TO 600 EARLY NEXT YEAR AND HOPED THAT CONSTRUCTION OF A PERMANENT SCHOOL FOR ABOUT 1,000 WOULD BE COMPLETED BY 1980 AT THE LATEST, +AS I AM CONVINCED THAT IN THIS CADRE OF PRE-TRAINED AND EDUCATED ENTRANTS LIES AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN THE CALIBRE OF THE FORCE+.

+THIRDLY+, HE SAID, +WE MUST CONTINUE TO ENLIST AND ENCOURAGE THE SUPPORT OF THE PUBLIC.+

/+I AM

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+I AM SURE THAT ONE EFFECTIVE WAY OF DOING THIS IS TO EXPAND THE MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES,= BUT THEIR QUALITY MUST BE MAINTAINED AND THE NUMBERS MUST NOT OUT-RUN EXPANSION OF THE HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO SUPPORT THEM.

+BY THE END OF THIS FINANCIAL YEAR THERE WILL BE ABOUT 2,200 COMMITTEES, AND THE RATE OF INCREASE WE HAVE IN MIND IS ABOUT 600 A YEAR IN THE URBAN AREAS PLUS 120 A YEAR IN THE NEW TERRITORIES,+HE SADID.

SIR MURRAY ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE WORK OF THE POLICE AND SAID HE HAD NO DOUBT THAT THE GENERAL SITUATION IN THE FORCE HAD VASTLY IMPROVED.

+THREE YEARS AGO IT WAS 3,200 UNDER STRENGTH,+ HE SAID. +BUT BY THE END OF THIS FINANCIAL YEAR IT WILL BE VIRTUALLY UP TO ITS FULL ESTABLISHMENT OF 17,000.+

HE SAID THE POLICE HAD TOTALLY OVERHAULED ITS ORGANISATION TECHNIQUES, PROCEDURES AND DEPLOYMENT, CITING AS EXAMPLES THE STRENGTHENING OF THE CID, THE INTRODUCTION OF A PERSONAL RADIO SCHEME, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NETWORK OF 85 REPORTING CENTRES, THE BUILDING OF A SYSTEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE UNITS, THE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE AUXILIARY POLICE, IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC THROUGH POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICERS AND CONTACT WITH MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES, AND THE REMARKABLE IMPACT OF THE 168,000-MEMBER JUNIOR POLICE CALL.

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I.C.A.C. HAS MARKED SUCCESS, SAYS GOVERNOR

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THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION HAS MADE A VERY CONSIDERABLE IMPACT BOTH IN CHECKING CORRUPTION AND IN RE-ESTABLISHING THE GOOD NAME OF HONG KONG OVERSEAS, THE GOVERNOR SAID TODAY.

IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE ATTACK ON CORRUPTION WOULD CONTINUE INEXORABLY.

+THERE WILL BE NO RELAXATION, NO LET UP, UNTIL THIS PROBLEM IS BEHIND US, AND I KNOW THAT NO ONE HERE WOULD HAVE IT OTHERWISE,+ SAID THE GOVERNOR.

HE SAID THE OPERATIONS BRANCH HAD REACHED FULL ESTABLISHMENT AND BECOME A POTENT DETERRENT.

+MOREOVER, IT IS NOW ABLE NOT ONLY TO REACT TO COMPLAINTS, BUT INCREASINGLY TO TAKE THE OFFENSIVE AGAINST THOSE INVOLVED IN THE DEEP-SEATED ORGANISED CORRUPTION WHICH HAS HITHERTO ESCAPED THE LAW,+ HE ADDED.

SIR MURRAY POINTED OUT THAT THE PROCESS OF DETECTION AND PUNISHMENT MUST BE ACCOMPANIED INCREASINGLY BY PREVENTION AND EDUCATION AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO STAMP OUT CORRUPTION WAS SO AMPLY PROVED THERE WAS A MUCH BETTER PROSPECT OF ACHIEVING RESULTS IN THESE PREVENTIVE FIELDS.

+THUS MR. CATER WILL NOW PLACE INCREASING EMPHASIS ON THE WORK OF HIS OTHER TWO DEPARTMENTS FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION.+

ON CRITICISM THAT THE ICAC SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE RATHER THAN THE PAST EXCEPT IN MAJOR CASES- THAT IT SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH MAJOR OFFENCES RATHER THAN MINOR ONES AND WITH THE PUBLIC RATHER THAN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, THE GOVERNOR SAID THESE WERE PRECISELY WHAT ICAC'S PRIORITIES WERE.

+BUT THE LAW LEAVES THE COMMISSIONER LITTLE DISCRETION.

+HE MUST INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS BROUGHT, AND WHEN SATISFIED THAT A CASE EXISTS, SUBMIT IT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.+

THE GOVERNOR SAID IT WAS UP TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND HIS OFFICE TO DECIDE WHAT FURTHER ACTION IS APPROPRIATE.

SIR MURRAY ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO MR. PRENDERGAST WHO HE SAID, +HAS FULFILLED HIS UNDERTAKING GIVEN TO ME NEARLY THREE AND A HALF YEARS AGO, TO CREATE AN OPERATIONS UNIT CAPABLE OF DETECTING CORRUPTION IN HONG KONG AND OF BRINGING IT TO JUSTICE.+

+WHEN HE RETIRES NEXT JANUARY HE WILL HAVE ROUNDED OFF A CAREER OF GREAT DISTINCTION WITH AN EXCEPTIONALLY DIFFICULT ASSIGNMENT EXCEPTIONALLY WELL DONE,+ SIR MURRAY SAID.

SUMMING UP HIS REMARKS ON ICAC, THE GOVERNOR SAID, +THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION IS HAVING MARKED SUCCESS, IT COMMANDS THE SUPPORT OF THE POPULATION, AND ALL OF US, I AM SURE, DEVOUTLY WISH IT QUICK SUCCESS SO THAT WE CAN PUT THE PAST BEHIND US.+

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AIM TO BUILD A SOCIETY
WITH MUTUAL CARE AND RESPONSIBILITY
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THE GOVERNOR TODAY REITERATED THAT OUR AIM MUST BE TO BUILD A SOCIETY IN WHICH THERE IS MUTUAL CARE AND RESPONSIBILITY.

IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, SIR MURRAY POINTED OUT THAT OUR SOCIAL PROGRAMMES ARE OF COURSE RELEVANT BECAUSE PEOPLE WILL NOT CARE FOR A SOCIETY WHICH DOES NOT CARE FOR THEM.

THE GOVERNOR SAID HE GREATLY ADMIRERD THE EXCELLENT WORK DONE BY MANY OFFICIAL, VOLUNTARY AND PRIVATE ORGANISATIONS.

+BUT THE FIELD IS SO IMPORTANT AND THERE IS SO MUCH OVERLAPPING OF THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES, AND BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF SOCIAL WORK, THAT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT ESCAPE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CO-ORDINATION AND OVERALL PROVISION.

+THUS,+ HE SAID, +A DESIGN TO DO THIS IS EMERGING BASED ON THE WORK OF THE MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES IN RESIDENTIAL AND FACTORY BLOCKS, THE KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS AND AREA COMMITTEES IN LARGER AREAS, SUPPORTED AND ASSISTED BY THE EXPANDING SERVICES OF THE DISTRICT OFFICERS, THE COMMUNITY YOUTH OFFICERS AND THE RECREATION OFFICERS.+

+ALL THIS IS BEING ASSISTED, CO-ORDINATED OR DIRECTED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS AND HIS STAFF,+ HE ADDED.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THE SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNITY YOUTH OFFICERS OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN IN OPERATION FOR TWO AND A HALF YEARS IN ALL TEN CITY DISTRICTS AND ALSO IN TSUEN WAN AND YUEN LONG AND HAD PROVED A GREAT SUCCESS IN PROVIDING CO-ORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY AND YOUTH GROUPS AND IN PROMOTING CIVIC SENSE.

HE SAID THE RECREATION AND SPORTS SERVICE HAD MADE A GOOD START IN ORGANISING THE BETTER USE OF RECREATIONAL AND SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES AND IN ENCOURAGING NEW ONES FOR ALL WALKS AND AGES OF LIFE.

THE SERVICE IS NOW BEING EXPANDED TO ALL DISTRICTS ON HONG KONG ISLAND AND IN KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES AND HAS JUST OPENED THE FIRST CAMP OF ITS OWN AT THE SAI KUNG RECREATION CENTRE.

THE GOVERNOR SAID, +THE ENTHUSIASTS RUNNING THESE POPULAR AND EFFECTIVE SERVICES ARE DOING ALL WE COULD EXPECT OF THEM AND THEY WILL BE GIVEN THE RESOURCES THEY NEED.+

SIR MURRAY SAID THE PROGRAMMES FOR THE PROVISION OF SECURITY, HOUSING, EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES, A SOCIAL WELFARE NET, AND THE PROVISION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, WERE NOT ENOUGH IN THIS COMMUNITY WHICH WAS SO DENSELY PACKED AND SUBJECT TO SUCH RAPID DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES.

+WE MUST ACTIVELY PLAN, ORGANISE AND ENCOURAGE THE BUILDING OF OUR COMMUNITY AND ITS CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH ITS GOVERNMENT,+ SAID THE GOVERNOR.

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GOVERNOR CONFIDENT OF CONTINUING PROSPERITY FOR H.K.

THE GOVERNOR, REVIEWING THE AFFAIRS OF HONG KONG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, EXPRESSED HIS RENEWED CONFIDENCE IN CONTINUING PROSPERITY, AND DETERMINATION BOTH TO MAINTAIN IT AND TO USE IT FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS.

IN THIS CONNECTION, SIR MURRAY SAID, IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM TO BUILD INTO OUR SOCIETY A BALANCE BETWEEN COMPARATIVE ECONOMIC FREEDOM AND SOCIAL PROVISION, ON WHICH LIES OUR BEST PROSPECT FOR PROSPERITY, SOCIAL HARMONY AND INTERNATIONAL RESPECT.

+ON THE ONE HAND,+ HE ADDED, +THERE MUST BE REASONABLE FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE WEALTH AND INCREASE INCOMES AT ALL LEVELS, AND BECAUSE OF OUR NEED TO RETAIN AND INCREASE INVESTMENT TO EMPLOY OUR POPULATION TO DO SO TO A COMPARATIVELY GREATER EXTENT THAN IN OTHER COMMUNITIES.+

+ON THE OTHER HAND THERE MUST BE EASE OF MIND FOR ALL PEOPLE THROUGH CERTAINTY THAT ALL MAY COUNT ON THE ESSENTIALS OF LIFE -- EDUCATION;# MEDICAL SERVICES= HOUSING= WHERE NECESSARY RELIEF THROUGH SOCIAL WELFARE= PROTECTION THROUGH ADEQUATE LABOUR LEGISLATION= AND OF COURSE PERSONAL SAFETY,+ HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT DURING THE RECESSION, +THE MUTUAL COMPREHENSION BETWEEN THE SHOP FLOOR AND THE BOARD ROOM WAS A GREAT CREDIT TO HONG KONG+.

+BUT NEVERTHELESS THE RECESSION HIT THE SHOP FLOOR MUCH HARDER THAN THE BOARD ROOM,+ HE ADDED.

ALTHOUGH THE RECESSION WAS NOW BEHIND US, HE SAID, WE MUST NOT FORGET ITS LESSONS.

+A NEW EFFORT NOW TO PROVIDE SAFEGUARDS FOR THE WORK FORCE AND LOW INCOME GROUP IS THEREFORE TIMELY, RIGHT FOR OUR SOCIETY, AND BUT COMMON JUSTICE,+ THE GOVERNOR SAID.

IN THE LIGHT OF THIS, HE SAID, A NEW AND SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON LABOUR LEGISLATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE HAD BEEN ADDED TO THE GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL PROGRAMMES.

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TRIBUTE TO MRS. JOYCE SYMONS

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, TODAY PAID TRIBUTE TO MRS. JOYCE SYMONS WHO RETIRED AFTER SERVING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FOR FOUR YEARS.

SIR MURRAY WAS SPEAKING AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL DURING WHICH 10 NEWLY-APPOINTED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL TOOK THE OATH OR MADE AFFIRMATION OF ALLEGIANCE.

HE SAID MRS. SYMONS HAD A VERY LONG RECORD OF DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE INCLUDING THE URBAN COUNCIL, THE SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE BOARD, MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES INCLUDING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS, ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION, COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, AND THE ICAC TARGET COMMITTEE.

+SHE WILL BE PARTICULARLY REMEMBERED IN THIS COUNCIL FOR THE CONTRIBUTION SHE MADE IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION,+ HE SAID. +I AM GLAD TO SAY THAT MRS. SYMONS WILL NOT BE RETIRING FROM PUBLIC SERVICE ALTOGETHER, AND I WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE THE BENEFIT OF HER ADVICE IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,+ THE GOVERNOR ADDED.

SPEAKING AFTER THE GOVERNOR, THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, DR. THE HON. S.Y. CHUNG DESCRIBED MRS. SYMONS AS A PERSON +WHO HAS NOT ONLY BEEN A VERY PERCEPTIVE AND DISTINGUISHED LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLOR OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS BUT ALSO AN ENERGETIC AND CLEAR-THINKING COLLEAGUE ON UMELCO MATTERS.+

+WE ARE HAPPY THAT, AS A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, SHE WILL CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPORTANT TASKS WHICH ARE BORNE BY UMELCO IN THIS COMMUNITY AND WE WISH HER EVERY SUCCESS IN HER NEW ROLE,+ HE ADDED.

ON BEHALF OF HIS UNOFFICIAL COLLEAGUES, DR. CHUNG ALSO EXTENDED A WARM WELCOME TO THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, BOTH OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL.

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ROAD CLOSURE
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CHATER ROAD BETWEEN PEDDER STREET AND MURRAY ROAD, AND
ICE HOUSE STREET BETWEEN CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL AND DES VOEUX
ROAD CENTRAL WILL BE CLOSED TO MOTORISTS BETWEEN 1.30 A.M.
AND 6.30 A.M. EVERY NIGHT STARTING FROM FRIDAY (OCTOBER 8).

THE CLOSURE OF THESE ROADS IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO
FACILITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CHATER
STATION.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE POSTED TO GUIDE
MOTORISTS.

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