



# DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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FOREIGN BANKS MAY NOW APPLY FOR  
HONG KONG BANKING LICENCE  
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED ITS DECISION TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FROM FOREIGN BANKS FOR BANKING LICENCES IN HONG KONG AND AT THE SAME TIME TIGHTEN THE CONTROL OVER THE OPERATION OF DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.

IN A STATEMENT OF POLICY IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID +FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION+ FOR A HONG KONG BANKING LICENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO FOREIGN BANKS WHICH MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA :

- \* THAT THE APPLICANT BANKS ARE INCORPORATED IN COUNTRIES WHOSE MONETARY AUTHORITY EXERCISE EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION AND HAVE, WHERE NECESSARY, APPROVED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A BANK IN HONG KONG=
- \* THAT THE APPLICANT BANKS ARE OF A SUBSTANTIAL SIZE WITH TOTAL ASSETS, NET OF CONTRA ITEMS, EXCEEDING THE EQUIVALENT OF US\$3,000 MILLION= AND
- \* THAT SOME FORM OF RECIPROCITY IS AVAILABLE IN THE APPLICANT'S COUNTRY OF INCORPORATION TO HONG KONG BANKS.

+THESE CRITERIA ARE ARBITRARY AND SIMPLISTIC AND THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AS LICENSING AUTHORITY RESERVES THE RIGHT NOT TO GRANT A LICENCE WHEN TO DO SO WOULD BE AGAINST HONG KONG'S INTEREST, NOTWITHSTANDING THAT AN APPLICANT MEETS THE THREE CRITERIA,+ MR. HADDON-CAVE EMPHASISED.

COMMENTING ON THE DECISION TO EASE THE EXISTING MORATORIUM ON FULL BANKING LICENCES, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THIS WAS TO ENSURE THAT THE FINANCIAL SECTOR WAS IN A SUITABLY COMPETITIVE STATE IN THE GENERAL INTEREST OF OUR ECONOMY.

+I AM AWARE OF THE ARGUMENT THAT HONG KONG IS OVER-BANKED, BUT AS LONG AS THERE ARE INSTITUTIONS THAT WISH TO DO THE FULL RANGE OF BANKING BUSINESS AS DEFINED IN THE BANKING ORDINANCE THERE IS A PRIMA FACIE CASE THAT THE 12-YEAR MORATORIUM ON THE GRANTING OF BANKING LICENCES DOES, IN FACT, RESTRAIN COMPETITION.+

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ALSO ANNOUNCED A NUMBER OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE REGULATION OF DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.

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/THESE ARE THAT .....

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THESE ARE THAT DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES WILL BE :-

- \* REQUIRED TO FURNISH MONTHLY REPORTS TO THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING=
- \* SUBJECTED TO PERIODIC INSPECTION= AND
- \* SUBJECTED TO LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENTS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE BANKING ORDINANCE.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THAT A BILL SUITABLY AMENDING THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ORDINANCE WOULD SHORTLY BE INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

COMMENTING ON THE MOVE TO CONTROL THE OPERATION OF THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ALONG THE LINES OF A FULLY-FLEDGED BANK, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROTECTION OF DEPOSITORS.

+AS THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ARE DEPENDENT TO A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE ON LICENSED BANKS AS A SOURCE OF FUNDS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED THAT THE SYSTEM OF PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES,+ HE SAID.

+THIS BRINGS ME TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER COMPETITION WITHIN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR ITSELF, PARTICULARLY BETWEEN LICENSED BANKS AND THOSE FOREIGN BANKS REGISTERED AS DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES, IS EQUITABLE.

+SOME HAVE ARGUED THAT DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES EFFECTIVELY HAVE AN UNFAIR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN THAT THEY ARE NOT REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENTS.

+THE LICENSED BANKS ACCEPT THAT THERE ARE AREAS IN WHICH THE COMPANIES CANNOT COMPETE, BECAUSE OF THE DEFINITION OF BANKING BUSINESS IN THE BANKING ORDINANCE AND BECAUSE OF THE \$50,000 MINIMUM DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS, BUT CONTEND THAT RETAIL BANKING IS NO LONGER OF ITSELF VERY PROFITABLE.

+THE SOLUTION PROPOSED IS THAT THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ORDINANCE SHOULD BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE FOR LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENTS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE BANKING ORDINANCE,+ HE SAID.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THE APPROPRIATE PERCENTAGE RATIO TO BE IMPOSED ON DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES WOULD BE SPECIFIED LATER UPON THE ADVICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF BANKING.

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HK-NORWAY MAY RE-OPEN TEXTILE TALKS LATER THIS YEAR  
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TEXTILE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND NORWAY WILL POSSIBLY BE RE-OPENED LATER THIS YEAR, THE DIRECTOR OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND CUSTOMS, THE HON. DAVID JORDAN, SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY THE HON. FRANCIS TIEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. JORDAN SAID HE RECEIVED CONFIRMATION THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING FROM THE NORWEGIAN CONSUL-GENERAL THAT +THE NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES WILL NOT OPPOSE RESUMPTION OF THE TEXTILE CONSULTATIONS WHICH WERE OPENED IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR.+

BECAUSE OF OTHER BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS AND ALSO INTERNAL PREPARATION FOR THE APRIL MEETING OF THE TEXTILE COMMITTEE WITHIN THE GATT, THE NORWEGIAN CONSUL-GENERAL SAID +IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO ENTER INTO NEW CONSULTATIONS UNTIL AFTER THE SAID TEXTILES COMMITTEE MEETING+, MR. JORDAN TOLD THE COUNCIL.

IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THE RESUMED CONSULTATIONS TAKE PLACE IN OSLO AFTER THAT MEETING.

THE NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES HAD INTRODUCED WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1 UNILATERAL IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS OF CERTAIN TEXTILE PRODUCTS FROM HONG KONG AT UNSPECIFIED LEVELS.

MR. JORDAN SAID +THIS DISCRIMINATORY ACTION AGAINST HONG KONG HAS DISRUPTED THE NORMAL TRADE IN THESE PRODUCTS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND NORWAY.+

HE ALSO SAID THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN OSLO HAS, AT THE REQUEST OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND ON INSTRUCTION FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, DELIVERED A FORMAL NOTE TO THE NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES ASKING THAT THE RESTRICTIONS, +WHICH WE BELIEVE TO BE NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GATT OR THE MULTI-FIBRE ARRANGEMENT, SHOULD BE REMOVED, OR FAILING THIS, THAT THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD ENTER INTO CONSULTATIONS WITH HONG KONG, UNDER THE GATT, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.+

MR. JORDAN ADDED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ALSO EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN ON BEHALF OF HONG KONG TO THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT AND HAS PRESSED THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT TO RE-OPEN NEGOTIATIONS AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

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BILL TO PROHIBIT DISCLOSING NAME OF COMPLAINANTS  
IN RAPE CASES  
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THE DRAFTING OF A BILL TO AMEND THE LAW SO AS TO PROHIBIT DISCLOSURE OF THE NAME OF COMPLAINANTS IN RAPE CASES HAS NOW BEEN COMPLETED AND WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL LATER THIS MONTH, THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. GARTH THORNTON TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE REV. THE HON. JOYCE M. BENNETT, MR. THORNTON SAID IF THE BILL IS ENACTED THEN THE PUBLICATION OF MATTER LIKELY TO LEAD MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO IDENTIFY A WOMAN AS THE COMPLAINANT IN A RAPE CASE WOULD CONSTITUTE AN OFFENCE, UNLESS A JUDGE HAS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORISED PUBLICATION. THE BILL IS MODELLED ON THE ENGLISH SEXUAL OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) ACT OF 1976.

MR. THORNTON SAID THE POLICE WERE ALWAYS CAREFUL IN RELEASING INFORMATION TO THE MEDIA NEVER TO REVEAL THE IDENTIFY OF COMPLAINANTS IN RAPE OR INDECENT ASSAULT CASES.

HE ADDED: +I AM INFORMED THAT RESPONSIBLE SECTIONS OF THE MEDIA DO NOT AS A MATTER OF PRACTICE PUBLISH THE NAMES OR PHOTOGRAPHS OF COMPLAINANTS IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.+

REFERRING TO THE QUESTION OF REVEALING THE IDENTITY OF VICTIMS OF INDECENT ASSAULT, MR. THORNTON SAID A FREE PRESS AND COURTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ARE CORNERSTONES OF OUR HONG KONG WAY OF LIFE AND IT TAKES AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE TO JUSTIFY INTERFERENCE WITH THESE.

+IT IS FELT THAT RAPE CASES DO PROVIDE SUCH A JUSTIFICATION BUT THE CASE FOR INDECENT ASSAULT IS MUCH LESS STRONG.+

MR. THORNTON ALSO SAID THE REPORT OF THE ADVISORY GROUP ON THE LAW OF RAPE, WHICH PRECEDED THE ENGLISH LEGISLATION, INDICATES THAT THE GROUP DID CONSIDER ANONYMITY IN RELATION TO OTHER OFFENCES THAN RAPE BUT IT MADE NO RECOMMENDATION.

HE SAID: +THE GROUP FELT THAT THERE WERE PROBLEMS PECULIARLY AND SPECIFICALLY APPLICABLE TO THE CRIME OF RAPE WHICH JUSTIFIED TREATING RAPE DIFFERENTLY FROM OTHER OFFENCES.

+IT ACCEPTED THAT THE VERY FACT OF HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN A RAPE CASE IS LIABLE TO HAVE EMBARRASSING OR EVEN DAMAGING CONSEQUENCES FOR A WOMAN.

+INDECENT ASSAULT IS, OF COURSE, A LESS SERIOUS OFFENCE THAN RAPE AND IT IS ONE WHICH CAN VARY A GREAT DEAL IN ITS SERIOUSNESS. MEN, WOMEN OR CHILDREN MAY BE VICTIMS,+ MR. THORNTON SAID.

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PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES (AMENDMENT) BILL WELCOMED

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UNOFFICIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, THE HON. MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH AND THE REV. THE HON. JOYCE M. BENNETT WELCOMED THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND JUVENILES (AMENDMENT) BILL AT ITS SECOND READING TODAY BUT URGED THAT FURTHER PROVISION BE MADE TO ENABLE YOUNG GIRLS WHO ARE IN NEED OF HELP TO BE MORE ADEQUATELY PROTECTED.

THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY THE BILL WOULD INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY WITH WHICH YOUNG PERSONS WOULD BE PLACED UNDER SUPERVISION BY COURT ORDER AND MAKE THIS SUPERVISION MORE EFFECTIVE, MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH SAID.

SHE RECOMMENDED, HOWEVER, THAT IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN THE SCOPE OF PROTECTION, A SECTION IN THE BILL SHOULD BE WIDENED TO EXTEND THE POWER OF THE POLICE TO TAKE GIRLS BETWEEN THE AGE OF 16-18 WHO ARE IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION TO A PLACE OF REFUGE.

SHE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT A SECTION OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE BE WIDENED TO EMPOWER THE AUTHORITY TO DEAL WITH GIRLS IN THIS AGE GROUP WHO ARE LIKELY TO BE EXPOSED TO ANY MORAL OR PHYSICAL DANGER.

THE REV. BENNETT ALSO URGED THAT THIS SECTION BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL POWERS TO PROTECT GIRLS OF 16 OR 17 WHO ARE NO LONGER CHILDREN OR YOUNG PERSONS AS DEFINED IN LAW.

SHE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT THE BILL AS PROPOSED DID NOT PLUG THIS LOOPHOLE ALTHOUGH IN 1973 WHEN SHE CONSULTED THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE ABOUT THE REASON WHY THE POLICE HAD NO POWER TO PUT THESE GIRLS IN A PLACE OF REFUGE SO THAT THE PARENTS WERE HELPED TO CONTROL THEM, THE REPLY WAS THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS AWARE OF THE LOOPHOLE.

+OUR WOMEN POLICE ARE DOING A FINE JOB TO HELP PROTECT YOUNG FEMALES AND CHILDREN. DO NOT LET US TIE THEIR HANDS BY ALLOWING THE LAW TO BE UNCLEAR AND PROVIDING LOOPHOLES FOR THEM NOT TO TAKE ANY ACTION,+ SHE SAID.

THE TWO UNOFFICIALS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE ADEQUACY OF HOMES FOR GIRLS WHICH PROVIDE REFUGE FOR YOUNG GIRLS.

MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH POINTED OUT THAT EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF THE ORDINANCE RELIES ON THE CO-OPERATION AND HARD WORK OF THESE INSTITUTIONS, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, AND THE POLICE, AND EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION DEPENDS TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT ON THEIR QUALITY AND QUANTITY.

THE REV. BENNETT CALLED ON THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT TO COMPLETE ITS STAFFING PLANS SOON FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE NEW MA TAU WEI GIRLS' HOME WHICH WILL BE READY THIS SUMMER AND BE ABLE TO HOUSE 144 GIRLS.

/SHE ALSO POINTED .....

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SHE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW WOULD BE MEANINGLESS WITHOUT THE EFFICIENT AND SYMPATHETIC EXECUTION OF IT BY THE POLICE, THE JUVENILE COURTS AND THE PLACES OF REFUGE.

MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH IN ADDITION HOPED THAT WHERE A PERSON IS STILL UNDER 16 WHEN THE SUPERVISORY PERIOD ORDERED BY THE COURT IS OVER, CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN TO REFERRING HIM TO ONE OF THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHICH PROVIDE VOLUNTEER AFTER-CARE SERVICES.

+THE YOUNG PERSON WILL THEN FEEL THAT HE STILL HAS SOMEONE WHO CARES AND UNDERSTANDS HIS PROBLEM AND TO WHOM HE CAN TALK AND TURN TO, AFTER THE EXPIRY OF THE FORMAL SUPERVISION PERIOD.

+IN THIS WAY HE CAN CONTINUE TO DEVELOP HIS POTENTIAL AND SET OUT IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TO MAKE HIS WAY IN THE COMMUNITY,+ SHE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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LEGAL AID TO CRIMINAL CASES IN DISTRICT COURTS  
EFFECTIVE FROM APRIL  
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THE EXTENSION OF LEGAL AID TO COVER ALL CRIMINAL CASES IN THE DISTRICT COURT WILL COME INTO EFFECT FROM NEXT MONTH.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, THE HON. GARTH THORNTON, IN MOVING THE RESOLUTION UNDER THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ORDINANCE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, SAID THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE AS A RESULT OF GOVERNMENT'S IMPROVED FINANCIAL POSITION.

MR. THORNTON TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THE APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE OF THE EXTENSION OF LEGAL AID TO COVER ALL CRIMINAL CASES IN THE DISTRICT COURT WAS GIVEN BY THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL IN AUGUST 1974, BUT THE LIMITED FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR THE NEW SERVICES, AND OTHER CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S RESOURCES IN 1975 AND 1976, PRECLUDED THE IMMEDIATE INTRODUCTION OF THE EXTENSION.

MR. THORNTON SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CASES WHICH WILL ATTRACT LEGAL AID AS A RESULT OF THE EXTENSION CANNOT BE ESTIMATED ACCURATELY, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR AID FOR DISTRICT COURT CASES GRANTED IN 1978/79 MIGHT BE ABOUT 1,080, COMPARED WITH OVER 900 IN 1977/78 AND 666 IN 1976/77.

+EXPENDITURE AT \$2.9 MILLION IS LIKELY TO BE ABOUT \$0.8 MILLION HIGHER THAN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDER THE PRESENT SCHEME.

+IT IS CONSIDERED THAT THE RESOURCES OF BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION ARE SUFFICIENT FOR THE INCREASED WORKLOAD TO BE HANDLED SATISFACTORILY,+ MR. THORNTON ADDED.

UNDER THE EXISTING RULES LEGAL AID IS AVAILABLE SUBJECT TO MEANS TESTED LIMITS OF A MONTHLY DISPOSABLE INCOME OF \$1,500 AND A DISPOSABLE CAPITAL OF \$10,000 TO DEFENDANTS IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES OF CRIMINAL CASES:

- \* ALL CRIMINAL TRIALS IN THE SUPREME COURT=
- \* ALL CRIMINAL APPEALS TO THE COURT OF APPEAL FROM THE SUPREME AND DISTRICT COURTS=
- \* ALL CRIMINAL APPEALS TO THE SUPREME COURT FROM MAGISTRATE COURTS= AND
- \* CASES IN THE DISTRICT COURT INVOLVING AN OFFENCE CARRYING A MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF 14 YEARS OR MORE.

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LEGCO APPROVES RATE PERCENTAGES FOR NT  
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A MOTION TO GIVE LEGISLATIVE EFFECT TO THE RATE PERCENTAGES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES FOR 1978-79 WAS APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID UNDER THE RATING ORDINANCE, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MAY, BY RESOLUTION, DETERMINE FROM TIME TO TIME THE PERCENTAGE OF THE RATEABLE VALUE OF TENEMENTS TO BE CHARGED AS GENERAL AND URBAN COUNCIL RATES.

HE STRESSED THAT THE SOLE OBJECT OF THE RESOLUTION IS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE EXISTING POLICY ON THE PHASING IN OF THE RATE CHARGES FOR NEWLY RATED AREAS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND SAID NO CHANGE IN EITHER THE GENERAL RATE OR THE URBAN COUNCIL RATE WAS PROPOSED FOR 1978-79.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY FOR THE EXTENSION OF RATING TO THE DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING AREAS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE GENERAL RATE FOR NEWLY ASSESSED AREAS, FROM AREA F ONWARDS, IS BEING PHASED IN ON A GRADUAL BASIS -- THAT IS TO SAY, IN THE FIRST YEAR 50 PER CENT OF WHATEVER THE GENERAL RATE FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES MIGHT BE, IN THE SECOND YEAR 60 PER CENT, IN THE THIRD YEAR 70 PER CENT AND SO ON UP TO 100 PER CENT IN THE SIXTH YEAR.

HE SAID THE GENERAL RATE FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES IS 11 PER CENT. FOR 1978-79, THE PERCENTAGE TO BE APPLIED TO AREAS F TO M (FOR THEIR THIRD YEAR OF ASSESSMENT) IS, THEREFORE, 70 PER CENT OF 11 PER CENT, OR EIGHT PER CENT. FOR AREA N (FOR ITS SECOND YEAR OF ASSESSMENT), IT IS 60 PER CENT OF 11 PER CENT, OR SEVEN PER CENT.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THE SCHEDULE IN THE MOTION ALSO INCLUDES 12 NEW AREAS TO BE BROUGHT INTO ASSESSMENT WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1978 UNDER THE FIFTH PHASE OF THE EXTENSION OF RATING IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

BUT AS THESE 12 AREAS ARE EXTENSIONS TO AREAS F TO N, THE CORRESPONDING PERCENTAGES WILL APPLY, HE SAID.

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SALT WATER FLUSHING SYSTEM BEING EXTENDED

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REDUCTION IN THE CONSUMPTION OF FRESH WATER FOR FLUSHING PURPOSES IS BEING ACHIEVED BY EXTENDING EXISTING AND CONSTRUCTING NEW SALT WATER SYSTEMS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH, HE SAID THE CURRENT QUANTITY OF FRESH WATER SUPPLIED FROM MAINS FOR FLUSHING PURPOSES WAS ABOUT 23,000 CUBIC METRES OR FIVE MILLION GALLONS A DAY.

HOWEVER, MR. MCDONALD ADDED THAT THERE WERE, AT PRESENT, 18 ITEMS RELATING TO SALT WATER SUPPLIES IN CATEGORY A OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME AT VARIOUS STAGES OF COMPLETION, WITH A FURTHER 11 ITEMS IN CATEGORY B AND FOUR IN CATEGORY C.

+A PRIME CONSIDERATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SALT WATER SYSTEMS IS THE LOCATION OF THE SEA WATER INTAKE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN AN ACCEPTABLE QUALITY OF WATER FOR DISTRIBUTION,+ HE EXPLAINED.

+IN A NUMBER OF CASES SUITABLE SITES ARE NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL RECLAMATIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE AND SO THE ADVANCEMENT OF ITEMS IN THE PROGRAMME IS GEARED TO THE TIMING OF THE RECLAMATION WORKS.+

MR. MCDONALD ADDED, HOWEVER, FOR AREAS WHERE SUBSTANTIAL LOCALISED DEMANDS WERE ARISING OR WERE LIKELY TO ARISE BEFORE THE PERMANENT INTAKE AND ASSOCIATED WORKS COULD BE COMPLETED, A STUDY WAS IN HAND TO DETERMINE WHETHER INTERIM MEASURES COULD BE INTRODUCED TO MINIMISE THE CONSUMPTION OF FRESH WATER.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN CERTAIN HIGH LEVEL SITUATIONS OR AREAS OF SMALL LOCALISED DEMAND, IT WOULD BE UNECONOMIC TO PROVIDE SEPARATE SALT WATER FLUSHING SYSTEMS AND THERE MIGHT, THEREFORE, ALWAYS BE A SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY USING FRESH WATER FOR FLUSHING.

THE QUANTITY OF WATER USED IN THESE SITUATIONS AT PRESENT WAS ESTIMATED TO BE ABOUT 4,500 CUBIC METRES OR ONE MILLION GALLONS A DAY, MR. MCDONALD ADDED.

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VOTE ON ACCOUNT MOTION APPROVED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY ADOPTED A MOTION WHICH ENABLES THE GOVERNMENT TO USE FUNDS TO CARRY ON EXISTING SERVICES BETWEEN THE START OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR ON APRIL 1 THIS YEAR AND THE ISSUE OF THE GENERAL WARRANT FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID IT WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE THE DEBATE ON THE SECOND READING OF THE APPROPRIATION BILL IS TO BE EXTENDED INTO NEXT MONTH TO ALLOW COUNCILLORS MORE TIME TO EXAMINE THE DRAFT ESTIMATES FOR 1978-79.

HE SAID THE FUNDS SOUGHT UNDER EACH HEAD HAVE BEEN DETERMINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULES WHICH HAVE BEEN AGREED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THIS COUNCIL.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID EXPENDITURE WILL BE REGULATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HEADS AND SUBHEADS SHOWN IN THE DRAFT ESTIMATES 1978-79.

+A VOTE ON ACCOUNT WARRANT WILL BE ISSUED TO THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES AUTHORISING HIM TO MAKE PAYMENTS UP TO THE AMOUNT SPECIFIED IN THIS MOTION, AND WILL LIMIT THE EXPENDITURE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREED RULES.

+THE PROVISION UNDER THE VOTE ON ACCOUNT WILL BE SUBSUMED UPON THE ENACTMENT OF THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, AND THE GENERAL WARRANT ISSUED AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE WILL REPLACE THE VOTE ON ACCOUNT WARRANT AND BE EFFECTIVE FROM APRIL 1,+ THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID.

MR. HADDON-CAVE ADDED THAT UNDER THE APPROPRIATION-IN-AID SYSTEM CERTAIN RECEIPTS, CONSISTING OF FEES AND CHARGES, WILL BE APPROPRIATED-IN-AID AND USED TO OFFSET EXPENDITURE INSTEAD OF BEING CREDITED TO GENERAL REVENUE.

+THE MOTION ALSO SEEKS THE AUTHORITY OF THIS COUNCIL TO ENABLE ME TO DIRECT THAT SUCH RECEIPTS SHOULD BE APPLIED IN THIS WAY DURING THE PERIOD COVERED BY THE VOTE ON ACCOUNT,+ HE SAID.

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SURVEY ON USE OF PRIVATE CLUB FACILITIES  
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THE GOVERNMENT IS CONDUCTING A SURVEY TO DETERMINE, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE FACILITIES OF PRIVATE RECREATIONAL CLUBS HAVE BEEN USED BY OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS AND THE FREQUENCY OF REFUSAL BY THE LESSEES BECAUSE OF MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS OR BECAUSE THE APPLICATIONS INTERFERE WITH THE CLUBS' OWN USE.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED TODAY BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON. F.K. LI, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY HE HON. T.S. LO IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR. LO HAD ASKED: +HAS PROPER USE BEEN MADE BY GOVERNMENT OF THE RIGHT RESERVED TO IT IN THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF RECREATIONAL LEASES TO REQUIRE THE LESSEES TO ALLOW ITS SPORTING FACILITIES TO BE USED BY SCHOOLS, YOUTH CLUBS OR WELFARE ORGANISATIONS?+

MR. LI SAID: +WHEN THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY HAVE BEEN ANALYSED, GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO SEEK THE ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORT TO DETERMINE HOW THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF GRANT CAN BE MODIFIED ON RENEWAL SO AS TO ALLOW FOR MORE CONTROLLED USE OF THE SPORTING FACILITIES.+

MR. LI REVEALED THE MAJORITY OF THE PRIVATE LEASES FALL DUE FOR RENEWAL IN 1981 AND 1982.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE SPECIAL CONDITION MENTIONED IN MR. LO'S QUESTION IS NOT ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY FOR TWO REASONS.

+FIRSTLY, A CLUB IS ONLY REQUIRED TO MAKE AVAILABLE ITS GROUNDS FOR OUTSIDE USE, BUT NOT ANY BUILDING OR STRUCTURE ERECTED ON THE LOT= CONSEQUENTLY, A CLUB IS NOT OBLIGED TO MAKE ITS CHANGING AND TOILET FACILITIES AVAILABLE.

+SECONDLY, THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY FOR THE SPECIAL CONDITION MUST BE SATISFIED THAT USAGE BY SCHOOLS AND OTHERS WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH THE PROPER CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF THE LOT OR THE CLUB'S OWN USE,+ HE SAID.

BUT MR. LI SAID THAT IN MANY CASES THE FACILITIES WERE QUITE WIDELY USED BY OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING PROFESSIONAL BODIES AND SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS AND NOT RESTRICTED TO SCHOOLS, YOUTH CLUBS OR WELFARE ORGANISATIONS.

LAST YEAR THE RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE HAD ORGANISED A TOTAL OF 300 COACHING SESSIONS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION LESSONS AND INTER-SCHOOLS COMPETITIONS USING THE FACILITIES OF PRIVATE RECREATIONAL LEASES, MR. LI POINTED OUT.

NO STATISTICS WERE KEPT BEFORE 1977, HOWEVER, NOR HAVE ANY STATISTICS BEEN KEPT IN RESPECT OF DIRECT APPROACHES TO THE LESSEES BY SCHOOLS, YOUTH CLUBS OR WELFARE ORGANISATIONS.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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FACILITIES FOR LEISURE IN COMMUNITY CENTRES ADEQUATE

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THE GOVERNMENT IS SATISFIED THAT THE EXISTING FACILITIES FOR LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY CENTRES ARE ADEQUATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PUBLIC.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON. THOMAS LEE, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

REFERRING TO FACILITIES PROVIDED ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS, MR. LEE RECALLED HIS REPLY TO THE HON. WONG LAM'S QUESTION ON FEBRUARY 15 IN WHICH HE OUTLINED GOVERNMENT'S PLAN TO MAKE COMMUNITY CENTRE FACILITIES AVAILABLE DURING WEEKENDS.

HE ADDED THAT IF AND WHEN, IN ADDITION TO FACILITIES PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT CENTRES, THE NEED FOR A VOLUNTARY AGENCY CENTRE IN A PARTICULAR LOCATION TO BE OPEN ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS COULD BE DEMONSTRATED AND ESTABLISHED, CONSIDERATION WOULD BE GIVEN TO ENABLE THIS TO BE DONE.

+WE SHOULD, HOWEVER, BEAR IN MIND THAT STAFF OF VOLUNTARY AGENCY CENTRES, LIKE THOSE IN GOVERNMENT CENTRES, ALREADY ORGANISE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR THEIR MEMBERS DURING WEEKENDS AND THESE ACTIVITIES SHOULD NOT BE CURTAILED AND THAT STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY AS A SOCIAL UNIT SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED, + MR. LEE POINTED OUT.

+IT IS ALREADY KNOWN THAT MANY FAMILIES PREFER TO SPEND THEIR WEEKENDS TOGETHER. THIS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE ENCOURAGED, + HE SAID.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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FIRST EXPERIMENTAL VILLAGE LIGHTING SCHEME  
TO BE COMPLETED THIS MONTH  
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CONTRACTS FOR SEVEN LIGHTING SCHEMES COVERING 16 VILLAGES HAVE BEEN LET AT A COST OF \$450,000 AND THE FIRST SCHEME WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE END OF THIS MONTH.

AND ON PRESENT EXPENDITURE FORECASTS FOR THE COMING FINANCIAL YEAR, CONTRACTS FOR A FURTHER 20 TO 25 SCHEMES WILL BE LET AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$1 MILLION, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS FROM THE HON. CHARLES YEUNG, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID: +PROGRESS IN THIS ESSENTIALLY EXPERIMENTAL STAGE HAS BEEN SATISFACTORY.+

DURING THE COURSE OF THIS PRESENT FINANCIAL YEAR, HE SAID, THE LOCAL PUBLIC WORKS SCHEME IN THE NEW TERRITORIES HAD BEEN EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF LIGHTING TO VILLAGES WHICH FOR REASONS OF LOCATION WOULD NOT OTHERWISE BE INCLUDED IN THE STREET LIGHTING PROGRAMME.

ANSWERING ANOTHER QUESTION, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID IT WAS NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION TO PROVIDE ALL NEW TERRITORIES VILLAGES WITH STREET LIGHTING.

+CLEARLY SMALL AND REMOTE VILLAGES AND AREAS OF SCATTERED HABITATION MUST RATE A VERY LOW PRIORITY,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID HE INTENDED TO EXAMINE THE STAFF AND FUNDS REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH A FORMAL VILLAGE LIGHTING PROGRAMME.

+I AM NOT YET, THEN, IN A POSITION TO SAY WHEN STREET LIGHTING WILL BE INSTALLED IN THOSE VILLAGES WHERE EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC FUNDS ON PROVIDING LIGHTING COULD BE JUSTIFIED, BUT IT IS MY INTENTION TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS ON THE OVERALL REQUIREMENT WITHIN THE NEXT FOUR TO FIVE YEARS, PROVIDED STAFF AND FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE,+ SAID MR. AKERS-JONES.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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STAFF CONSULTATION ON DEPARTMENTAL ISSUES

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THE EXISTING CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH SERVICE-WIDE ISSUES WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE +SEEMS TO BE WELL SUITED TO OUR PRESENT NEED+, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE HON. RONALD BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. BRIDGE ADDED THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW LOOKING INTO MORE FORMALISED ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTING STAFF ON DEPARTMENTAL ISSUES, AS RECENT EXPERIENCE APPEARS TO SHOW SUCH A NEED.

+WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO OPEN DISCUSSIONS ON THIS WITH THE STAFF ASSOCIATIONS BY THE EARLY SUMMER,+ HE SAID.

MR. BRIDGE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. WONG LAM WHO ASKED THE GOVERNMENT IF ITS CONSULTATIVE PROCEDURES WITH CIVIL SERVANTS ARE ADEQUATE AND WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE BEING PLANNED +IN VIEW OF THE DISSATISFACTION RECENTLY EXPRESSED BY SOME CIVIL SERVANTS WITH THEIR CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND PROMOTION PROSPECTS+.

EXPLAINING THE PROCEDURES, MR. BRIDGE SAID: +CONSULTATION IN THE CIVIL SERVICE TAKES PLACE AT TWO LEVELS, DEPENDING ON WHETHER OR NOT THE ISSUE IS OF SERVICE-WIDE OR DEPARTMENTAL INTEREST.

+SERVICE-WIDE ISSUES, SUCH AS THE OVERALL LEVEL OF SALARIES AND LEAVE EARNING RATES, ARE DISCUSSED WITH THE THREE MAIN STAFF ASSOCIATIONS IN THE SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE COUNCIL.

+THE 1968 AGREEMENT WITH THESE ASSOCIATIONS PROVIDES FOR CONSULTATION WITH THEM BEFORE MAJOR CHANGES ARE MADE AND, IN SOME INSTANCES, FOR DISPUTES TO BE REFERRED TO AN INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.+

FOR DEPARTMENTAL ISSUES, MR. BRIDGE SAID, THEY WERE FIRST DISCUSSED BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS WITH STAFF REPRESENTATIVES EITHER DIRECTLY OR IN DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCILS.

+IF THEY CONCERN PAY OR ANY OTHER QUESTION THAT HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTS, THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH ALSO HAS TO BE INVOLVED,+ HE ADDED.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO TRADE UNIONS  
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THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IS ABLE TO PROVIDE TRADE UNIONS IN HONG KONG WITH ASSISTANCE IN THEIR ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON. PETER WILLIAMS, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. LEUNG TAT-SHING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+WE RESPOND TO REQUESTS FROM UNIONS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO SEND SPEAKERS TO COURSES RUN BY THEM AND THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF GUIDES AND PAMPHLETS ON LABOUR MATTERS WHICH ARE FREELY AVAILABLE ON REQUEST,+ MR. WILLIAMS SAID.

+THESE INCLUDE BOOKLETS ON SIMPLE TRADE UNION ACCOUNTING AND ADMINISTRATION,+ HE ADDED.

MR. WILLIAMS ALSO SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IS ABLE TO ASSIST ANY UNION IN FINDING THE APPROPRIATE TRAINING FOR ITS OFFICIALS AND WITH SPECIFIC ADVICE ON MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEMS.

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BACKLOG OF COMPASSIONATE HOUSING CASES NOT LARGE  
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THERE IS NOT A LARGE BACKLOG OF NEEDY FAMILIES WAITING FOR COMPASSIONATE HOUSING, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE HON. THOMAS LEE, SAID TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO A QUESTION FROM DR. THE HON. HARRY FANG, WHO HAD ASKED: +IN VIEW OF THE CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF NEEDY FAMILIES WAITING FOR HOUSING UNDER THE COMPASSIONATE HOUSING SCHEME, WILL GOVERNMENT EXPLAIN WHY THE ANNUAL QUOTAS FOR THIS SCHEME FOR 1976/77 AND 1977/78 WERE NOT FULLY ALLOCATED?+

MR. LEE SAID: +DR. FANG IN HIS QUESTION REFERRED TO THE CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF NEEDY FAMILIES WAITING FOR HOUSING UNDER THE COMPASSIONATE HOUSING SCHEME. FIRST, LET ME ASSURE DR. FANG THAT THIS IS, FORTUNATELY, NOT THE CASE.+

MR. LEE GAVE AN ASSURANCE THAT ANYBODY WHOSE FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL OR MEDICAL POSITION WAS PROFESSIONALLY ASSESSED AS REQUIRING IMPROVED ACCOMMODATION WOULD BE RECOMMENDED FOR COMPASSIONATE HOUSING.

EXPLAINING WHY ONLY HALF OF THE COMPASSIONATE QUOTA OF 750 FLATS WAS TAKEN UP IN 1976/77, MR. LEE SAID THERE WERE SEVERAL REASONS FOR THIS.

/THESE INCLUDED .....

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THESE INCLUDED THE FACT THAT WHILE NUMERICALLY ONLY 367 FLATS WERE ALLOCATED, 500 CASES WERE ASSISTED BECAUSE SOME OF THE FLATS WERE OCCUPIED BY TWO OR EVEN THREE UNRELATED PEOPLE= ADDITIONALLY, 91 OTHER CASES RECOMMENDED WERE UNSUCCESSFUL BECAUSE THE APPLICANTS WERE STILL IN HOSPITAL OR SOME OTHER INSTITUTION.

ADDITIONALLY, SOME APPLICANTS DECLINED FIRST OFFERS OF HOUSING AND PREFERRED TO WAIT FOR SUBSEQUENT OFFERS IN ESTATES OF THEIR PREFERENCE= OTHERS CHOSE TO LIVE IN TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS.

\*FINALLY, WE INCREASED RENTAL ALLOWANCES IN THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME SUBSTANTIALLY IN 1976, AND MANY FAMILIES WHO COULD BE CONSIDERED FOR COMPASSIONATE REHOUSING PREFERRED TO CONTINUE LIVING IN PRIVATE HOUSING BECAUSE OF LOCATION AND FAMILY REASONS,+ SAID MR. LEE.

CONCERNING COMPASSIONATE HOUSING IN 1977/78, MR. LEE POINTED OUT THAT THE 429 FLATS ALLOCATED SO FAR WERE PROVIDING ACCOMMODATION FOR A TOTAL OF 1,691 PEOPLE.

THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON. ALAN SCOTT, ANSWERING ANOTHER QUESTION FROM DR. FANG ABOUT COMPASSIONATE HOUSING, EXPLAINED THAT UP TO 1975/76 ALLOCATIONS WERE MADE TO NUMBERS OF PEOPLE, BUT FROM THEN ONWARDS COMPASSIONATE HOUSING WAS ALLOCATED IN TERMS OF FLATS, NOT PEOPLE.

HE GAVE THE FOLLOWING FIGURES:

1973/74 QUOTA .....	3,500 PEOPLE
ACTUAL ALLOCATION ....	2,941 PEOPLE
1974/75 QUOTA .....	3,000 PEOPLE
ACTUAL ALLOCATION ....	1,919 PEOPLE
1975/76 QUOTA .....	1,000 FLATS
ACTUAL ALLOCATION ....	981 FLATS
1976/77 QUOTA .....	750 FLATS
ACTUAL ALLOCATION ....	367 FLATS
1977/78 QUOTA .....	500 FLATS
ALLOCATIONS SO FAR ...	429 FLATS

MR. SCOTT SAID THAT ALL COMPASSIONATE HOUSING CASES WERE SUBJECT TO THE PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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MEDIUM-WAVE FREQUENCIES TO BE CHANGED  
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HONG KONG'S MEDIUM-WAVE BROADCASTING FREQUENCIES WILL BE CHANGED FROM THE END OF NOVEMBER THIS YEAR TO IMPROVE RADIO RECEPTION.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON. F.K. LI, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH ON WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE MEASURES TO IMPROVE RADIO RECEPTION IN RESPECT OF CHINESE CHANNELS IN TAI PO DISTRICT.

THERE ARE FOUR CHINESE LANGUAGE RADIO CHANNELS IN HONG KONG, THREE IN THE MEDIUM FREQUENCY BAND (AM) AND ONE IN THE VERY HIGH FREQUENCY BAND (FM).

RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG OPERATES THE FM SERVICE AND ONE OF THE AM SERVICES AND THE OTHER TWO AM SERVICES ARE OPERATED BY COMMERCIAL RADIO.

+AM RECEPTION IN THE NORTHERN NEW TERRITORIES IS NOT ALWAYS SATISFACTORY AS IT SUFFERS FROM INTERFERENCE FROM DISTANT TRANSMITTERS USING FREQUENCIES SIMILAR TO THOSE ALLOCATED TO HONG KONG,+ MR. LI SAID.

+RECEPTION DETERIORATES AT NIGHT WHEN INTERFERENCE CAN BE EXPERIENCED FROM TRANSMITTERS AT A DISTANCE OF UP TO 5,000 MILES,+ HE ADDED.

IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE RECEPTION OF THIS TYPE, MR. LI SAID, THE 1975 GENEVA CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION DECIDED ON WORLD-WIDE CHANGES IN LONG-WAVE AND MEDIUM-WAVE BROADCASTING FREQUENCY ALLOCATIONS WITH EFFECT FROM THE END OF NOVEMBER THIS YEAR.

AS REGARDS RTHK'S FM CHINESE LANGUAGE SERVICE, MR. LI ADDED, MOST LISTENERS IN THE TAI PO DISTRICT SHOULD BE ABLE TO OBTAIN A SATISFACTORY RECEPTION AT ALL TIMES WITH THE AID OF AN EXTERNAL AERIAL, ALTHOUGH HILLY TERRAIN IN CERTAIN AREAS DOES PRECLUDE RECEPTION OF AN ADEQUATE FM SIGNAL.

+HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THIS PROBLEM, AND IS CONSIDERING HOW IMPROVEMENTS IN RECEPTION QUALITY CAN BE OBTAINED,+ MR. LI SAID.

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HOLIDAY CAMPS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES

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THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO REPORT REAL PROGRESS IN LOCATING SITES FOR HOLIDAY CAMPS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND ISLANDS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

HE WAS REPLYING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN WHO ASKED ABOUT PROGRESS OF THE WORKING PARTY FORMED TO LOOK AT WHERE HOLIDAY CAMPS MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED.

MR. AKERS-JONES SAID HE REGRETTED THAT NO EFFECTIVE PROGRESS ON LOCATING SITES HAD BEEN MADE BY THE WORKING PARTY, BECAUSE THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION HAD NECESSARILY, DURING THE LAST FEW MONTHS, BEEN CONCENTRATED ON GIVING THE COUNTRY PARKS AUTHORITY SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IN ESTABLISHING AND IN GIVING LEGAL STATUS TO COUNTRY PARKS.

+THE BOUNDARIES OF ALMOST ALL THE COUNTRY PARKS HAVE NOW BEEN ESTABLISHED AND I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO REPORT REAL PROGRESS IN LOCATING SITES FOR HOLIDAY CAMPS WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS,+ SAID MR. AKERS-JONES.

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FIRE PREVENTION IN MULTI-STOREY FACTORY BUILDINGS

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THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE PRIORITY TO PREVENT OCCUPIERS OF MULTI-STOREY FACTORY BUILDINGS FROM IGNORING FIRE SERVICES REGULATIONS AND ALLOWING MATERIALS TO BE STORED IN CORRIDORS AND STAIRCASES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON. LEWIS DAVIES, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. S.L. CHEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY.

MR. DAVIES SAID: +THE STEPS WHICH ARE TAKEN ARE MAINLY BY INSPECTIONS BY THE STAFFS OF TWO DEPARTMENTS.+

HE ADDED THAT A NEW DEVELOPMENT IS THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED AGREEMENT WITH THE PLASTICS INDUSTRY ON THE INTRODUCTION OF A CODE OF PRACTICE WHICH SHOULD HELP TO IMPROVE FIRE SAFETY IN THIS INDUSTRY.

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STATIONING OF TRAFFIC WARDENS AT ROAD CROSSING

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THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. DEREK JONES, SAID TODAY TRAFFIC POLICE OR TRAFFIC WARDENS WERE STATIONED AT ANY ROAD JUNCTION OR CROSSING IF THE SITUATION WARRANTED IT.

THIS, HE SAID, ALSO APPLIED TO JUNCTIONS AND CROSSINGS WHERE IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO INSTALL TRAFFIC LIGHTS.

MR. JONES WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE REV. THE HON. JOYCE M. BENNETT WHO ASKED WHETHER TRAFFIC POLICEMEN OR TRAFFIC WARDENS WOULD BE PUT ON POINT DUTY AT SUCH LOCATIONS UNTIL TRAFFIC LIGHTS WERE INSTALLED.

MR. JONES ADDED THAT EVERY SITUATION HAD TO BE CONSIDERED ON ITS MERITS AND IN THE LIGHT OF OTHER DEMANDS THERE MAY BE FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL PERSONNEL.

MOST MAJOR ROAD INTERSECTIONS IN HONG KONG WERE ALREADY CONTROLLED BY TRAFFIC LIGHTS, HE SAID, AND DECISIONS TO INSTALL OTHERS AT NEW LOCATIONS WERE USUALLY TAKEN BEFORE BUILD UP TO LEVELS WHERE LIGHTS WERE REALLY NEEDED.

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PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE LIGHTING IN ESTATE CORRIDORS

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THE CORRIDOR LIGHTING OF SOME OF THE OLDER GROUP A PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES IS TO BE IMPROVED AS PART OF THE NORMAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME, AT A COST OF \$4.5 MILLION.

THESE DETAILS WERE GIVEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE HON. ALAN SCOTT, SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN.

CONCERNING GROUP B ESTATES, MR. SCOTT SAID THAT THE PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE LIGHTING IN INTERNAL CORRIDORS OF 265 BLOCKS WAS COMPLETED ONE YEAR AGO, AT A COST OF \$4.9 MILLION.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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NO CHANGE IN URBCO FRANCHISE AND MEMBERSHIP  
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THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DENYS ROBERTS, SAID TODAY THE GOVERNMENT HAD NO PLANS TO ENLARGE EITHER THE FRANCHISE OF THE URBAN COUNCIL OR THE NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS ON THE COUNCIL.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY DR. THE HON. HENRY HU.

DR. HU HAD ASKED FOR A GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON WHETHER THE FRANCHISE OF THE URBAN COUNCIL WILL BE ENLARGED AND THE NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS IN THE COUNCIL INCREASED.

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AMBULANCE SIRENS NECESSARY EVEN AT NIGHT  
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THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON. E.P. HO, SAID TODAY THAT IT WOULD BE INADVISABLE FOR AMBULANCE TO GO ABOUT THEIR ERRANDS WITHOUT USING SIRENS IN ORDER TO REDUCE NOISE AND DISTURBANCES AFTER 11 P.M.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON. LEUNG TAT-SHING IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. HO SAID THE REASON WAS THAT TRAFFIC HAZARDS WERE POSSIBLY GREATER DURING THE HOURS OF DARKNESS WHEN, FOR EXAMPLE, MOTORISTS MIGHT BE INCLINED TO TAKE LIBERTIES BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF TRAFFIC.

HE ADDED THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES HAS ASSURED THAT AMBULANCE SIRENS WERE ONLY USED WHEN RESPONDING TO EMERGENCY CALLS AND WHEN IT WAS APPARENT THAT TIME WAS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN GETTING A PATIENT TO HOSPITAL FOR TREATMENT.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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TRAFFIC LIGHTS OPERATIONAL DELAY EXPLAINED

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THERE HAS BEEN A DELAY IN THE ELECTRICAL CABLING WORKS FOR THE TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT SCHEME IN KWUN TONG, DUE MAINLY TO THE INABILITY OF THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE DIVISION OF THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL OFFICE TO KEEP UP WITH ITS VERY HEAVY PROGRAMME OF WORKS.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE REV. THE HON. JOYCE M. BENNETT, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY.

THE REV. BENNETT HAD ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD STATE THE REASON FOR THE DELAY IN BRINGING INTO OPERATION THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS AT THE JUNCTION OF MUT WAH STREET AND HONG NING ROAD IN KWUN TONG WHICH WERE INSTALLED IN THE SUMMER OF 1977 BUT ONLY BROUGHT INTO USE LAST WEEK.

MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT THE LIGHT SIGNALS IN QUESTION FORMED ONLY A PART OF A GENERAL TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENT SCHEME IN THE KWUN TONG AREA.

ALTHOUGH THE COMPARATIVELY SIMPLE TASK OF ERECTING SIGNAL POSTS AT THE HONG NING ROAD/MUT WAH STREET JUNCTION WAS EXECUTED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO AS PART OF THE CIVIL WORKS, HE SAID, THE ELECTRICAL CABLING WORKS FOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM AND THE INSTALLATION AND TESTING OF THE LIGHT CONTROLLER HAD STILL TO BE CARRIED OUT.

+IT WAS IN THIS PHASE THAT A DELAY OCCURRED, DUE MAINLY TO THE INABILITY OF THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE DIVISION OF THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL OFFICE TO KEEP UP WITH ITS VERY HEAVY PROGRAMME OF WORKS,+ HE ADDED.

HOWEVER, MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT A SUBMISSION TO ALLOW FOR STAFF INCREASES AND RE-ORGANISATION OF THIS PART OF THE ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL OFFICE HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE WHICH HOPEFULLY WOULD BE APPROVED BY FINANCE COMMITTEE IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

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BILLS PASSED

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TWO BILLS WERE PASSED INTO LAW AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THEY ARE THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978 AND THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS) BILL 1978.

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 1978

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HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE SIGN SPEEDPOST AGREEMENT

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THE POST OFFICE TODAY TOOK A FURTHER STEP IN EXTENDING ITS SPEEDPOST SERVICE WITH THE SIGNING OF AN AGREEMENT WITH SINGAPORE.

THE AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON BETWEEN MR. LIM KAY-YEEK, REPRESENTING THE POSTMASTER GENERAL OF SINGAPORE, AND MR. KYLE BAMFORD, POSTMASTER GENERAL OF HONG KONG.

THE EXTENSION OF THE SERVICE TO SINGAPORE WILL COME INTO EFFECT ON APRIL 1, 1978. SPEEDPOST SERVICE IS ALREADY AVAILABLE TO AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, BRAZIL, FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, JAPAN, THE NETHERLANDS, SINGAPORE, TAIWAN, AND THE U.S.A.

UNDER THIS FACILITY, PACKAGES OF BUSINESS PAPERS, DOCUMENTS, COMPUTER DATA AND MICROFILMS ARE GIVEN FAST AND RELIABLE DOOR TO DOOR COLLECTION AND DELIVERY SERVICE. PRE-DETERMINED FLIGHTS OUT OF HONG KONG ARE USED FOR THESE DESPATCHES AND THE PACKAGES ARE SPECIALLY DELIVERED TO THE OVERSEAS ADDRESSEES.

THE SERVICE TO SINGAPORE IS AVAILABLE ON A CONTRACT BASIS AND +ON-DEMAND+. PACKAGES HANDED IN OR COLLECTED BEFORE NOON IN HONG KONG WILL BE DESPATCHED ON A FLIGHT LEAVING KAI TAK IN THE AFTERNOON AND ARRIVE SINGAPORE THE SAME EVENING. SUBSEQUENT SPECIAL DELIVERY WILL BE MADE THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

FOR CONTRACT SERVICES, SENDERS SIGN A CONTRACT FOR A MINIMUM PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS, WITH A MINIMUM OF ONE REGULAR PRE-DETERMINED POSTING PER MONTH. TIMES OF COLLECTION AND DELIVERY OF PACKAGES ARE SPECIFIED AND AGREED WITH THE CUSTOMER.

THE COST OF THE SERVICE WILL BE A BASIC CHARGE OF \$70 FOR THE FIRST POUND PLUS \$5 PER EACH ADDITIONAL POUND OR PART OF A POUND. THIS WILL INCLUDE PICK UP AT THE CUSTOMERS PREMISES AT A TIME AGREED BY THE CUSTOMER, AND DELIVERY DIRECT TO THE ADDRESSEE.

THE +ON DEMAND+ SERVICE IS PROVIDED TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF CASUAL USERS OF SPEEDPOST OR TO SUPPLEMENT A CUSTOMER'S CONTRACT SERVICE. +ON DEMAND+ ITEMS MAY BE HANDED IN AT SPECIALLY DESIGNATED COUNTERS AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, TSIM SHA TSUI AND KOWLOON CENTRAL POST OFFICE WITHOUT THE NEED TO MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE POST OFFICE. FOR +ON DEMAND+ ITEMS A FEE OF \$20 IS PAYABLE IN ADDITION TO THE BASIC CHARGES.

CUSTOMERS WISHING MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SERVICE ARE ASKED TO CONTACT THE POST OFFICE REPRESENTATIVE ON 5-2671105.

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CAREERS SEMINARS END  
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THE SERIES OF 12 CAREERS SEMINARS ORGANISED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY SERVICE ENDED TODAY WITH THE LAST ONE BEING HELD IN YUEN LONG.

THE SEMINARS WHICH BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 20 ATTRACTED MORE THAN 8,000 STUDENTS FROM SOME 60 SCHOOLS.

A LABOUR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN DESCRIBED THE RESPONSE FROM PARTICIPANTS AS +MOST ENCOURAGING+.

+THERE WAS A GOOD FLOW OF QUESTIONS RANGING FROM SIMPLE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS TO COMPLICATED SATELLITE TRANSMISSIONS, AND FROM SALARY SCALE TO MENTAL PRESSURE AS WELL AS JOB SATISFACTION,+ HE SAID.

+IT IS INDEED HEARTENING TO FIND THAT THE YOUNG ARE SHOWING MORE INTEREST IN TRAINING FACILITIES THAN IMMEDIATE MONETARY GAINS,+ HE ADDED.

TO HELP PARTICIPANTS TO RETAIN THE VALUABLE INFORMATION THEY ACQUIRED FROM THE SEMINARS, AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHO MISSED THE OCCASION, THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY SERVICE IS PUTTING OUT A 'CAREERS SPECIAL' PAMPHLET AT THE END OF THIS MONTH.

IT WILL FEATURE TOPICS COVERED IN THE SEMINARS AND HIGHLIGHT POINTS OF INTEREST BROUGHT UP BY SPECIALISTS OF VARIOUS FIELDS.

THE 'CAREERS SPECIAL' ISSUED IN THE FORM OF A NEWSLETTER WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND YOUTH CENTRES. STUDENTS WHO WISH TO OBTAIN A COPY WHICH WILL BE DISTRIBUTED FREE OF CHARGE ON A 'FIRST COME FIRST SERVED' BASIS ARE INVITED TO CALL THE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY SERVICE ON 5-282523 EXT. 58 OR 3-222702.

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS AT KWUN TONG  
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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT A NUMBER OF TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS AT TING ON STREET AND TING FU STREET, KWUN TONG WILL BE IMPLEMENTED FROM 10 A.M. ON SATURDAY (MARCH 18) TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE AREA.

THESE ARRANGEMENTS ARE:-

- \* THE SOUTHERNMOST SECTION OF TING ON STREET, SOUTH OF TING FU STREET, WILL BE RESTRICTED TO ONE-WAY TRAFFIC, IN THE SOUTHBOUND DIRECTION= AND
- \* ON THE SOUTHERN SECTION OF TING FU STREET THE DIRECTION OF TRAFFIC FLOW WILL BE REVERSED FROM ONE-WAY NORTHWEST-BOUND TO ONE-WAY SOUTHEAST-BOUND.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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