



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER ~~30~~²⁹, 1974

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NEW GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR TEXTILE EXPORTS

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NEW GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR HONG KONG'S MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR TEXTILE EXPORTS HAS BEEN ACHIEVED UNDER SEPARATE TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

BOTH AGREEMENTS COME INTO EFFECT ON OCTOBER 1 TO REPLACE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN RENEGOTIATED UNDER THE NEW ARRANGEMENT COVERING INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN TEXTILES.

THE NEW THREE-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES - HONG KONG'S MAJOR MARKET FOR TEXTILES - PROVIDES A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTER-LINKING ARRANGEMENT GOVERNING THE EXPORT OF HONG KONG-MADE COTTON, MAN-MADE FIBRE AND WOOL TEXTILES TO THE U.S.

THE AGGREGATE LIMIT HAS BEEN RAISED FROM 792 MILLION TO 835 MILLION EQUIVALENT SQUARE YARDS, AND THIS WILL INCREASE BY JUST OVER SIX PER CENT ANNUALLY TO REACH 943 MILLION EQUIVALENT SQUARE YARDS BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER, 1977, WHEN THE AGREEMENT EXPIRES.

THE AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. RELATES TO FOUR GROUPS OF TEXTILE PRODUCTS - YARN AND FABRICS, GARMENTS, MADE-UPS AND MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS, AND WOOL PRODUCTS.

WITHIN THE YARNS AND FABRICS AND APPAREL GROUPS CERTAIN PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ITEMS HAVE BEEN GIVEN SPECIFIC LIMITS.

BUT FOR THE OTHER ITEMS THERE IS FULL INTER-FIBRE FLEXIBILITY SO THAT COMPANIES CAN USE THEIR QUOTA FOR PRODUCTS EITHER OF COTTON OR MAN-MADE FIBRE, DEPENDING ON THE PATTERN OF DEMAND.

THIS FULL INTER-FIBRE FLEXIBILITY IS NOT POSSIBLE UNDER EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS BECAUSE COTTON AND MAN-MADE FIBRE TEXTILES ARE SUBJECT TO DIFFERENT SETS OF ARRANGEMENTS.

OTHER FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS IN THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW AGREEMENT AND IMPROVED UPON.

THE NEW AGREEMENT WITH CANADA WILL REMOVE VIRTUALLY ALL RESTRICTIONS ON HONG KONG'S TEXTILE EXPORTS. FROM OCTOBER 1 EXISTING QUANTITATIVE RESTRAINTS WILL BE LIFTED ON COTTON YARN, COTTON TERRY TOWELS AND CERTAIN TYPES OF WOVEN BLOUSES AND TROUSERS.

THE SOLE REMAINING ITEM UNDER LIMITATION WILL BE MEN'S TAILORED SHIRTS. THIS RESTRAINT IS DUE TO EXPIRE ON NOVEMBER 29, HOWEVER, AND IT IS HOPED THAT NO FURTHER QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS WILL BE IMPOSED BEYOND THIS DATE.

IN PLACE OF EXISTING RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENTS, THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT WILL EXTEND ITS SURVEILLANCE MEASURES SO AS TO PROVIDE AN ACCURATE FORWARD PICTURE OF EXPORT TRENDS FOR BOTH THE CANADIAN AND HONG KONG GOVERNMENTS.

THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A HEAVY SCHEDULE OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS SINCE THE NEW ARRANGEMENT ON WORLD TRADE IN TEXTILES CAME INTO FORCE ON JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR.

NEW ARRANGEMENTS COVERING HONG KONG'S TEXTILE EXPORTS ARE ALREADY IN FORCE WITH SWEDEN, NORWAY, AUSTRALIA AND AUSTRIA. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY HAVE YET TO TAKE PLACE.

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RICE CONTROL SCHEME

DIRECTOR ANSWERS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY STAFF

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MR. DAVID JORDAN, DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S RICE CONTROL SCHEME, HAS ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT.

+REPORTS HAVE APPEARED IN SOME NEWSPAPERS SUGGESTING THAT OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT HAVE ACCUSED RICE MERCHANTS OF PROVIDING FALSE RETURNS WITH THE INTENTION OF 'BLACKMAILING' THEM. THE REPORT ALSO STATED THAT THE ICAC WAS INVESTIGATING THESE ALLEGATIONS AND TAPPING THE HOME AND OFFICE TELEPHONES OF THE OFFICERS CONCERNED.

+I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THE ICAC IS TAKING ANY SUCH ACTION BUT I DO KNOW THAT IF THESE OFFICERS DID NOT CHECK IMPORTERS' RETURNS AND ASK THEM TO EXPLAIN ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE FIGURES THEY WOULD BE FAILING IN THEIR DUTY.

+IF ANY RICE IMPORTER HAS ANY COMPLAINT TO MAKE ABOUT THE ACTIONS OF ANY OFFICER OF THIS DEPARTMENT HE CAN MAKE HIS COMPLAINT DIRECT TO ME, AT ANY TIME.

+NO ONE HAS MADE ANY SUCH COMPLAINT TO ME OR TO ANY SENIOR OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT.

+AT THE SAME TIME, I SHOULD SAY THAT I BELIEVE THAT THE OFFICERS CONCERNED ARE DOING THEIR DUTY IN A CONSCIENTIOUS MANNER AND THAT I HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE ACTING IMPROPERLY IN ANY WAY.

+IN ANY CASE, I PERSONALLY TAKE ALL THE MAJOR DECISIONS INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION OF THE RICE CONTROL SCHEME. NO ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST ANYONE IN THE TRADE, WHATEVER THE ALLEGATION THAT MAY BE MADE, WITHOUT MY PERSONAL APPROVAL.

+FINALLY, I SHOULD SAY THAT IT IS THE VERY OFFICERS AGAINST WHOM THESE ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS ARE NOW MADE, WHO HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE MEASURES THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS TAKEN, SINCE THE EARLY MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, TO ASSURE THE PUBLIC OF THEIR SUPPLIES OF RICE, TO PREVENT SPECULATION AND PROFITEERING AND TO CONTROL PRICES AND PROFITS.+

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LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S ROLE IN AIR POLLUTION CONTROL

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ON A CLEAR DAY, A TOURIST ONCE REMARKED, YOU CAN STAND ON THE PEAK AND ALMOST SEE KOWLOON - THANKS TO THE INDUSTRIAL SMOG.

NOWADAYS, ON A CLEAR DAY, YOU CAN ALMOST SEE FOREVER. AND THAT'S DUE IN LARGE MEASURE TO A SMALL BUT HIGHLY-TRAINED BAND OF POLLUTION FIGHTERS TUCKED AWAY ON THE FOURTH FLOOR OF THE CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, (SET UP ONLY THREE-AND-A-HALF YEARS AGO,) IS A RELATIVE NEW COMER IN GOVERNMENT RANKS, BUT ITS IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT HAS BEEN PLAIN TO SEE.

FOR THE SCEPTICS WHO RAISE A DISBELIEVING EYEBROW, THE UNIT PRODUCES STATISTICS TO SHOW THAT THE PUBLIC IS BEING SHIELDED FROM THE WORST EFFECTS OF AIRBORNE POLLUTION CREATED BY INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL FUEL BURNING PLANTS AND DIRTY INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES.

THE UNIT IS HEADED BY DAVID NEWBURY, A HIGHLY-QUALIFIED ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER APPOINTED IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR.

HE TOOK OVER AT A TIME WHEN THE UNIT WAS IN A FLURRY OF ACTIVITY WITH THE DECLARATION OF THE CHEUNG SHA WAN-SHUM SHUI PO DISTRICT AS A SMOKE CONTROL AREA.

SINCE THEN, THE COMBINED AREA OF YUEN LONG AND TUEN MUN AND THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG ISLAND HAVE ALSO BEEN DECLARED SMOKE CONTROL AREAS, PROMPTING CONSERVATIONISTS TO PREDICT THAT IT WILL +ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME+ BEFORE ALL HONG KONG COMES UNDER THE OFFICIAL CONTROL OF THE CLEAN AIR ORDINANCE.

THIS WOULD MAKE THE UNIT'S JOB CONSIDERABLY EASIER. IN OFFICIALLY-DECLARED SMOKE CONTROL AREAS, THE UNIT'S 11 SMOKE INSPECTORS HAVE THE POWER TO ACT ALONE IN PROSECUTING PERSISTENT OFFENDERS.

OUTSIDE THESE AREAS, THE INSPECTORS MUST NOT ONLY HAVE THE NECESSARY SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE OF EXCESSIVE SMOKE EMISSION, BUT ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC MAKE A FORMAL COMPLAINT IN COURT.

THIS IS NOT ALWAYS AS EASY AS IT MAY SOUND.

+IN ANY CASE,+ SAYS MR. NEWBURY, +OUR POLICY SO FAR HAS BEEN ONE OF PERSUASION RATHER THAN PROSECUTION.

+THIS MIGHT NOT WORK IN OTHER SOCIETIES - PEOPLE IN SOME OTHER PLACES WOULD WALK ALL OVER YOU - BUT WE HAVE FOUND IT VERY EFFECTIVE IN HONG KONG.

+WE FIND THAT IF WE EXPLAIN WHAT IS REQUIRED AND PUT THE WHOLE PROBLEM IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE, THEN PEOPLE ARE PREPARED TO CO-OPERATE.

/+IN THE LAST

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+IN THE LAST THREE YEARS OR SO WE HAVE HAD 89 PROSECUTIONS. WE COULD HAVE HAD 1,000 IF WE HAD GONE AT IT LIKE A BULL AT A GATE. BUT WE WOULD HAVE FINISHED UP WITH A TOTAL LACK OF CO-OPERATION FROM INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE.

+SO WHEN WE PROSECUTE, IT'S USUALLY BECAUSE THE OFFENDER HAS SINNED BY COMMISSION RATHER THAN OMISSION.+

HE POINTS OUT THAT AMONG THE 89 PROSECUTIONS IS A 10 TO 15 PER CENT HARD CORE OF PERSISTENT OFFENDERS - +POLLUTION RECIDIVISTS+, MR. NEUBURY CALLS THEM.

ONE RESTAURATEUR, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN TAKEN TO COURT SEVEN TIMES. +I WOULD SAY THAT WE HAVE MORE PROBLEMS WITH RESTAURANTS THAN ANYTHING ELSE,+ SAYS MR. NEUBURY.

THE CLEAN AIR ORDINANCE, WHICH THE UNIT ADMINISTERS, WAS FIRST INTRODUCED IN 1959, BUT IT HAS BEEN REVISED AND AMENDED SEVERAL TIMES SINCE TO GIVE IT SHARPER +TEETH+. BROADLY SPEAKING, THE ORDINANCE STRICTLY LIMITS THE VOLUME OF DARK SMOKE COMING FROM ANY ESTABLISHMENT AND CARRIES A FINE OF UP TO \$2,000.

THE ORDINANCE DOES NOT COVER OTHER FORMS OF AIR POLLUTION, SUCH AS VEHICLE EXHAUST FUMES.

THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT SEES ITS ROLE AS AN EDUCATIONAL ONE AS MUCH AS ANYTHING ELSE, AND MR. NEUBURY ESTIMATES THAT MORE THAN HALF ITS OPERATIONS ARE DEVOTED TO THIS END.

THE SMOKE INSPECTORS - ALL HIGHLY QUALIFIED IN SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS AND ENGLISH AS WELL AS BEING PUT THROUGH A DEMANDING 12-MONTH IN-SERVICE TRAINING COURSE - WORK ALONE OR IN PAIRS, MAKING DAILY VISITS TO INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL UNDERTAKINGS, ADVISING, CAJOLING, EXPLAINING, AS WELL AS FOLLOWING UP COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC.

AND TWO OR THREE TIMES A MONTH, THE INSPECTORS ARE FORMED INTO +FLYING SQUADS+ TO TAKE SPECIAL SMOKE READINGS, USUALLY IN AREAS WHERE IT IS SUSPECTED THAT POLLUTERS ARE DISREGARDING THE LAW.

+THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HONG KONG COULD HAVE FACED A VERY SERIOUS POLLUTION PROBLEM IF THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT DECIDED TO SET UP THE UNIT,+ SAYS MR. NEUBURY.

+KWUN TONG HAD REALLY GOT GOING AND WAS SWEEPING POLLUTION ALL OVER KOWLOON AND VICTORIA.+

HOWEVER, THE UNIT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN STOPPING THIS VERY SERIOUS TREND - AS THE FIGURES SHOW.

IN THE LAST THREE AND A HALF YEARS, THE AMOUNT OF POLLUTION-PRODUCING FUEL BURNT IN HONG KONG - THAT IS SULPHUR-BEARING OIL FUEL - HAS INCREASED IN TONNAGE BY 30 PER CENT.

BUT IN THE SAME PERIOD, THE RECORDED GROUND LEVEL CONCENTRATIONS OF SULPHUR DIOXIDE HAS FALLEN BY 11 PER CENT.

/THE UNIT'S

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THE UNIT'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME IS CLEARLY PAYING DIVIDENDS AS MORE AND MORE BUSINESSMEN SEEK HELP AND GUIDANCE.

MR. NEWBURY ESTIMATES +CONSERVATIVELY+ THAT THE UNIT'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME HAS CUT BY FIVE TO 10 PER CENT THE AMOUNT OF FUEL USED BY HONG KONG INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE.

+IF YOU LOOK AT IT IN TERMS OF MONEY ALONE, THIS IS QUITE AN ACHIEVEMENT,+ HE SAYS.

+HONG KONG'S ANNUAL FUEL BILL IS \$500 MILLION. A FIVE PER CENT REDUCTION MEANS A SAVING OF \$25 MILLION.

+IF IT WASN'T FOR THE UNIT, WE WOULD ALL HAVE TO PAY THAT \$25 MILLION.+

MR. NEWBURY ADMITS THAT GENERALLY SPEAKING, HONG KONG'S INDUSTRIALISTS ARE NOT PARTICULARLY ENVIRONMENT-CONSCIOUS. BUT BY TALKING TO THEM IN THE LANGUAGE THEY KNOW BEST - PROFITABILITY - THAT UNIT HAS WON A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF CO-OPERATION AND GOODWILL IN A VERY SHORT TIME.

THERE IS A DEGREE OF IRONY IN THIS. A FEW YEARS AGO THE STRONGEST OPPOSITION TO TOUGH POLLUTION CONTROL CAME FROM INDUSTRIALISTS WHO FEARED IT WOULD COST THEM DEARLY.

THINGS HAVE CHANGED A GREAT DEAL SINCE THEN, AS MR. NEWBURY TESTIFIES WITH THE STORY OF ONE BIG FACTORY OWNER WHO CAME TO THE UNIT RECENTLY SEEKING ADVICE ON HOW HE COULD REDUCE THE SMOKE POLLUTION BEING CAUSED BY HIS FACTORY.

AN AIR POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT TEAM MADE A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION AND CAME UP WITH RECOMMENDATIONS THAT NOT ONLY SOLVED HIS POLLUTION PROBLEM, BUT SLICED HIS FUEL BILL BY 28 PER CENT - SIMPLY BY IMPLEMENTING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL METHODS WHICH IS CERTAINLY A PAINLESS WAY OF HELPING MAKE HONG KONG A CLEANER PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

MR. JOHN MARDEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION (CEPCOM), MR. DAVID NEWBURY AND OFFICERS OF THE AIR POLLUTION CONTROL UNIT WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE GIS CINEMA, 5TH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY (OCTOBER 2), TO COINCIDE WITH THE COMING INTO FORCE OF THE DECLARATION OF ALL HONG KONG ISLAND (INCLUDING AP LI CHAU) AS A SMOKE CONTROL ZONE. THE SUBJECT WILL BE : INDUSTRIAL AIR POLLUTION CONTROL IN HONG KONG - THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

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INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS TO HOLD ENGLISH EXAMS IN DECEMBER

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THE INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS IS TO HOLD ITS ENGLISH EXAMINATIONS FOR CHINESE STUDENTS BETWEEN DECEMBER 2 AND 6.

THE EXAMINATIONS ARE FOR STUDENTS BETWEEN PRELIMINARY AND INTERMEDIATE LEVELS. THERE WILL BE NO EXAMINATION AT THE FINAL LEVEL IN DECEMBER.

ENTRY FEES HAVE BEEN ADJUSTED DUE TO THE INCREASES INTRODUCED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS.

THE ENTRY FEES FOR THE WHOLE EXAMINATION RANGE FROM \$65 FOR PRIMARY LEVEL TO \$125 FOR INTERMEDIATE LEVEL, WHILE THE FEES FOR ONE OR TWO PARTS RANGE FROM \$40 TO \$75.

ONE CONDITION OF ENTRY IS THAT THE CANDIDATE MUST BE AVAILABLE FOR THE ORAL TESTS AT A TIME TO BE SPECIFIED ON ANY DAY BETWEEN NOVEMBER 25 AND DECEMBER 14.

ENTRY FORMS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THE EXAMINATIONS DIVISION, CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 393 CANTON ROAD, 10TH FLOOR, KOWLOON FROM MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1974.

COMPLETED ENTRY FORMS, TOGETHER WITH PROOF OF IDENTITY (HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD/PASSPORT) AND TWO RECENT PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE APPLICANT (SIZE 2-1/2" X 2") MUST BE SUBMITTED IN PERSON AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS, BETWEEN 9 A.M. AND 4 P.M. FROM SEPTEMBER 30 TO OCTOBER 4, 1974.

CANDIDATES ARE ADVISED THAT NO LATE ENTRIES CAN BE ACCEPTED AND THAT ALL FEES MUST BE PAID (IN CASH OR BY CHEQUE) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 8, 1974 TO THE ACCOUNTS OFFICE, EXTERNAL EXAMINATIONS DIVISION, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, CANTON ROAD GOVERNMENT OFFICES, 11TH FLOOR, 393 CANTON ROAD, KOWLOON.

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NEW TRAFFIC REGULATIONS EFFECTIVE FROM TOMORROW

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT FOLLOWING ENACTMENT OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING LICENCES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1974, CHANGES IN RESPECT OF THE RENEWAL DATE OF DRIVING LICENCES AND THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF RENEWAL WILL COME INTO EFFECT FROM TOMORROW (MONDAY).

A DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT HITHERTO, IF A PERSON RENEWED HIS DRIVING LICENCE BEFORE IT EXPIRED, RENEWAL RAN FROM THE DATE OF RENEWAL AND NOT FROM THE DATE OF EXPIRY.

+THIS WAS IN CONTRAST TO A SIMILAR PROVISION FOR VEHICLE LICENCES WHERE RENEWAL RUNS FROM THE DATE OF EXPIRY, AND THIS MEANT THAT THE PRUDENT DRIVER WHO RENEWED HIS LICENCE IN ADVANCE WAS PENALISED BY HAVING THE RENEWAL DATE PUT BACK. IT WAS UNFAIR AND, FOR THAT REASON, AMENDMENTS WERE MADE TO THE REGULATIONS.+

NOW, A DRIVING LICENCE MAY BE RENEWED UP TO FOUR MONTHS BEFORE THE DATE OF EXPIRY AND UP TO 15 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF EXPIRY, WITH RENEWAL IN BOTH CASES RUNNING FROM THE DATE OF EXPIRY.

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