



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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BROAD STUDY OF MEDICAL SYSTEM PROPOSED

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DR THE HON HARRY FANG TODAY URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO APPOINT A PANEL OF OVERSEAS AND LOCAL EXPERTS TO TAKE A BROAD LOOK AT HONG KONG'S MEDICAL AND HEALTH SYSTEM.

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL DEBATE ON THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR SIR EDWARD YOUDE'S ANNUAL ADDRESS.

DR FANG SAID, +THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF OUR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR COMMUNITY, AS WITNESSED BY THE RECENT PUBLIC AGITATION FOR THE EARLY CONSTRUCTION OF THE EASTERN HOSPITAL AND THE INCREASING NUMBER OF CIVIL ACTIONS AGAINST ALLEGED NEGLIGENCE OF HOSPITAL STAFF.+

HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY HIM WAS NOT WELL PLACED TO UNDERTAKE THE REVIEW.

+THIS COMMITTEE IS INVALUABLE IN MANY WAYS AND HAS RECEIVED EXCELLENT SUPPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES AND HIS STAFF.

+BUT NEARLY A DECADE HAS PASSED SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF THE 1974 WHITE PAPER WHICH SET DOWN THE BLUE PRINT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

+THE PLAN HAS BEEN ROLLED FORWARD EACH YEAR BY MDAC BUT THE TIME HAS COME FOR A FRESH MANDATE AND IMPETUS.

+HENCE MY SUGGESTION FOR AN OVERALL REVIEW BY A SEPARATE BODY,+ HE SAID.

WHILE CONCEDED THAT HONG KONG'S HEALTH INDICES WERE ENCOURAGING AND STEADY PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE IN VARIOUS MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, HE SAID THAT THESE ACHIEVEMENTS WERE MODEST COMPARED WITH OTHER SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMMES.

HE NOTED THAT THE SHARE OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE IN THIS PROGRAMME AREA DID NOT COMPARE WITH THOSE FOR HOUSING AND EDUCATION.

HE ADDED, +OUR MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES SUFFERS FROM LONG STANDING OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS: TOO MANY CAMP BEDS IN REGIONAL HOSPITALS, LONG QUEUES AT GOVERNMENT CLINICS AND UNRELENTING PRESSURE ON OUR ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY UNITS.

+SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS MAY BE TRACED BACK TO THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY GOVERNING THE PROVISION AND FUNDING OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES IN HONG KONG AND THE ROLES ENVISAGED FOR GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR.+

+TOO OFTEN WE FALL BACK ON THE DEFENCE THAT THE DEMAND IS INSATIABLE WITHOUT REALLY GETTING TO THE ROOTS OF THE PROBLEM,+ DR FANG SAID.

/+WE MUST

+WE MUST ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH GENUINE DEMAND AND TO WORK TOWARDS SATISFYING THIS DEMAND,+ HE STRESSED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE +SANDWICH+ CLASS, IN PARTICULAR, FELT LEFT OUT.

+THEY ARE TOO RICH TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE STANDARD OF SERVICES AVAILABLE IN OUR GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS AND NOT RICH ENOUGH TO AFFORD PRIVATE HOSPITALISATION,+ HE SAID.

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GOVERNMENT PRAISED FOR 'POSITIVE ATTITUDE'

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THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE, TOGETHER WITH THE PLANNED EXPANSION IN SOCIAL PROGRAMMES, ENDORSES GOVERNMENT'S DETERMINATION TO PURSUE THE TALKS TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION, THE HON W.C.L. BROWN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

IT ALSO INDICATES CONSIDERABLE CONFIDENCE THAT THE FUTURE WILL INDEED, MIRROR OUT ASPIRATIONS, HE ADDED.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS, MR BROWN SAID, +THIS POSITIVE AND OPTIMISTIC ATTITUDE IS COMFORTING.

+IT ILLUSTRATES THAT INTELLIGENT ANTICIPATION REFERRED TO BY MY COLLEAGUE, MISS DUNN, YESTERDAY AND I FEEL CERTAIN GOVERNMENT WILL MATCH PROMISES WITH PERFORMANCE AS REQUESTED BY THE SENIOR MEMBER.+

HE CONGRATULATED THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECENT MEASURES TAKEN IN REGARD TO THE STABILISATION OF THE VALUE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR, THOUGH CRITICISM HAD BEEN VOICED IN SOME QUARTERS AS TO THE TIME IT TOOK TO INTRODUCE SUCH MEASURES.

+THE RADICAL CHANGE THEY REPRESENT JUSTIFIES THE CARE TAKEN IN THEIR DELIBERATION AND METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION.

+THE MEASURES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND AS MEMBERS WILL BE AWARE THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS WAS ABLE THIS MORNING TO REDUCE INTEREST RATES - A FURTHER SIGN THAT MATTERS ARE TURNING OUT AS ANTICIPATED,+ HE SAID.

PROVIDED ALL CONCERNED WORK TOGETHER WITH A COMMON PURPOSE, MR BROWN SAID, HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT NEW ARRANGEMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

HE SAID, +WITH THE STABILITY OF THE EXCHANGE RATE RESTORED OUR MAIN OBJECTIVES NOW MUST BE TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF INFLATION AND ACHIEVE AN INCREASE IN THE REAL LEVEL OF WAGES OF THE LABOUR FORCE.+

AS THE EXPORT-LED RECOVERY GATHERED MOMENTUM, MR BROWN SAID, THESE TWO OBJECTIVES HAD TO BE GIVEN PRIORITY.

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ON THE PROPOSED NUCLEAR POWER STATION IN DAYA BAY, MR BROWN URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE A PROMPT DECISION ON THE PROJECT.

+I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENTS OF CONSULTANTS' REPORTS INDICATE IT OUGHT TO BE POSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE AN OFF-TAKE AGREEMENT WHICH WILL BE OF BENEFIT TO BOTH CHINA AND HONG KONG.

+THIS IS A DECISION THAT MUST BE MADE QUICKLY, FOR WE MUST NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROJECT WHICH OFFERS HONG KONG A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR DESIRE TO CO-OPERATE WITH CHINA TOWARDS THE FULFILMENT OF THEIR FOUR MODERNISATIONS PROGRAMME,+ HE SAID.

HE SHARED LORD KADOORIE'S BELIEF THAT +THIS NUCLEAR POWER STATION, DESIGNED, MANUFACTURED AND OPERATED WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY REGULATIONS, OFFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ILLUSTRATE THAT THE OFT QUOTED MUTUALITY OF INTERESTS BETWEEN PEKING, LONDON AND HONG KONG DOES INDEED EXIST.+

AS FOR THE CONCERN OVER THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND POSSIBLE DANGERS TO HEALTH WHICH A NUCLEAR POWER STATION ON OUR DOORSTEP WOULD ENTAIL, MR BROWN NOTED THAT THE STATION WOULD BE BUILT WITHIN INTERNATIONAL SAFETY STANDARDS.

+ON THE BASIS THAT THE HONG KONG CONSUMER WILL NOT HAVE TO PAY MORE FOR HIS ELECTRICITY THAN FROM OTHER SOURCES, AND THIS IS THE BASIS ON WHICH WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THE COMMERCIAL VIABILITY OF THE PROJECT IS BASED, THEN WE SHOULD GRASP THE OPPORTUNITY OFFERED AND WE SHOULD GRASP IT NOW.+

TURNING TO THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, MR BROWN SAID THAT IT WAS CLEARLY DESIRABLE THAT WE SHOULD MAINTAIN A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF OUR SYSTEM AND PROCEDURES.

HE ALSO WELCOMED THE CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND SAID A LITTLE MORE LIVELY DEBATE WOULD DO A LOT OF GOOD.

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CONFIDENCE EXPRESSED IN H.K. DOLLAR

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THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADOPT A CONSERVATIVE BUDGET AND ASSIST SUCH FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNERS AS EXPORT AND TOURISM, THE HON CHAN KAM-CHUEN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+WE SHOULD ALSO PAY ATTENTION TO INTERNAL STABILITY, THE CONTINUANCE OF OUR HOUSING PROGRAMME, CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT, AND CONTAIN INFLATION,+ HE ADDED.

SPEAKING OF THE RECENT CURRENCY PROBLEMS AND THE +PANIC+ SHOWN BY SOME PEOPLE ABOUT THE LOCAL DOLLAR, MR CHAN SAID: +WHAT THEY HAVE OVERLOOKED IS THE VITAL FACT THAT OUR DOLLAR IS SOLIDLY BACKED BY A BASKET OF FOREIGN CURRENCIES.+

/MR CHAN

MR CHAN RECALLED +THE SWIFT AND EFFECTIVE MEASURES+ RECENTLY TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PEG THE HONG KONG DOLLAR AT \$7.80 TO THE U.S. DOLLAR.

HE FELT CONFIDENT, HE SAID, THAT THE HK DOLLAR WOULD GRADUALLY STRENGTHEN TO \$6.50 TO THE U.S. DOLLARS -- +PROVIDED THE PUBLIC DOES NOT STAMPEDE AGAIN AND OUR EXPORTS CONTINUE TO INCREASE.+

HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY IN MAINTAINING INTERNAL STABILITY ALLOWED FOR MORE CONCENTRATION OF ATTENTION ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT.

MR CHAN SAID THAT +A STABLE HONG KONG DOLLAR WOULD BENEFIT NOT ONLY HONG KONG BUT ALSO ALL HER TRADING PARTNERS, IN PARTICULAR CHINA IN HER MODERNISATION PROGRAMME.

+BEING GOOD NEIGHBOURS, WE WISH CHINA EVERY SUCCESS IN HER MODERNISATION PROGRAMME WHICH WE ARE HELPING WITH OUR FOREIGN EXCHANGE, EXPERTISE AND OTHER FACILITIES,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID HE HAD HEARD CRITICISMS ABOUT GOVERNMENT SPENDING +ON GRAND PLANS IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, +BUT HE WISHED TO POINT OUT THAT, AT A TIME WHEN THE WORLD WAS GOING THROUGH A LONG PERIOD OF RECESSION, HONG KONG WOULD HAVE BEEN IN DEEP TROUBLE WITH RISING UNEMPLOYMENT+ IF WE HAD SPENT LESS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY AND OTHER MAJOR BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION WORKS.+

SPEAKING OF +CRIMINALS WHO ARE NOT HONG KONG BELONGERS,+ MR CHAN CALLED FOR A REVIEW OF THE DEPORTATION POLICY.

+THIS COULD BE AN EFFECTIVE DETERRENT, NOW THAT WE ALL KNOW THAT CHINA IS ADOPTING STIFF PENALTIES TOWARDS CRIMINALS.

+THIS DONE, THE POLICE WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO HANDLE UNFORSEEN EMERGENCIES,+ HE SAID.

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HK LEGAL SYSTEM MUST CONTINUE: SWAINE

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THE HON JOHN SWAINE TODAY REAFFIRMED HIS VIEW THAT THE FUTURE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY THE CONTINUATION OF BRITISH ADMINISTRATION AND OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR SIR EDWARD YOUDE'S ANNUAL ADDRESS, MR SWAINE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT HONG KONG OWED MUCH OF ITS SUCCESS TO THE SYSTEM BY WHICH THE LAWS OF THE TERRITORY ARE ADMINISTERED.

FOCUSSING HIS ATTENTION ON THE RULE OF LAW, MR SWAINE DESCRIBED IT AS +THE SINGLE BEST DESCRIPTION OF THE SYSTEM+ UNDER WHICH HONG KONG OPERATES.

/HE SAID

HE SAID THAT FOR THE WELL BEING OF HONG KONG, THERE SHOULD BE ENSHRINED IN ANY FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TERRITORY PROVISIONS THAT WOULD:

- * SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS AND RIGHTS OF PROPERTY,
- * SUBJECT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TERRITORY TO THE JURISDICTION OF ORDINARY COURTS, AND
- * ENABLE THE CITIZEN TO QUESTION THE EXECUTIVE ACTS OF THE GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE ORDINARY COURTS IN SO FAR AS THEY AFFECT HIS PERSON OR HIS PROPERTY.

+IT MUST BE APPARENT THAT THE RULE OF LAW REQUIRES FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY; FOR NO MATTER HOW SOUND A PRINCIPLE, IT IS OF ACADEMIC VALUE IF THERE IS LACKING MACHINERY FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

+THE INDIVIDUAL MUST BE CONFIDENT THAT IF HE TAKES THE GOVERNMENT TO COURT, WHETHER FOR REDRESS OF A PRIVATE WRONG, OR IN ORDER TO QUESTION THE LEGALITY OF A GOVERNMENT ACT WHICH AFFECTS HIS PERSON OR HIS PROPERTY, HE WILL HAVE HIS COMPLAINT HEARD AND DETERMINED BY A TRIBUNAL THAT IS COMPLETELY IMPARTIAL,+ MR SWAINE SAID.

THE RULE OF LAW ALSO REQUIRES FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION AN INDEPENDENT LEGAL PROFESSION WHEREBY ADVOCATES ARE EXPECTED TO BE FEARLESS IN DEFENCE OF THEIR CLIENTS, HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT WITHIN THE JUDICIARY, THE FINAL APPEAL FROM HONG KONG IS TO THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL IN LONDON, WHOSE MEMBERS ARE EMINENT JUDGES DRAWN FROM THE LAW LORDS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

+IT CANNOT BUT ENHANCE OUR LEGAL SYSTEM THAT OUR FINAL JUDICIAL ARBITER IS SO ILLUSTRIOUS A BODY.

+BUT I THINK THAT OUR SYSTEM CAN WITHSTAND THE SHOCK OF LOSING THIS FINAL RECOURSE TO THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE, ALTHOUGH I THINK IT WOULD BE A GREAT PITY.

+WHAT I DO NOT THINK WE COULD WITHSTAND, HOWEVER, IS THE SHOCK OF HAVING THE DECISIONS OF THE COURTS OF HONG KONG SUBJECT TO APPEAL IN PEKING,+ MR SWAINE SAID.

HE STATED THAT QUITE APART FROM THUS ENGRAFTING ONTO HONG KONG'S SYSTEM +A HEAD THAT DOES NOT UNDERSTAND OUR LAW+, THERE WOULD BEAT WITHIN IT +A HEART THAT IS ALIEN TO OUR TRADITIONS+.

FOR THE FUTURE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF HONG KONG, THERE SHOULD BE THE CLEAREST PROVISIONS FOR SAFEGUARDING THE INDEPENDENCE OF ITS JUDICIARY AND OF ITS LEGAL PROFESSION, AND FOR ENSURING THAT THE DECISIONS OF THAT JUDICIARY ARE NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL IN PEKING, HE SAID.

THESE PROVISIONS, MR SWAINE SAID, SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO ANY FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HONG KONG.

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CONCERN FELT OVER LABOUR LEGISLATION GROWTH
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THE PROSPECT OF MORE LABOUR LEGISLATION WHICH MAY HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING PRODUCTION COSTS, CONTINUED TO BE A MAJOR CONCERN TO MANUFACTURERS, THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

ANOTHER MATTER OF CONCERN WAS THE +NEVER-ENDING UPWARD REVISION OF ENERGY BASIC TARIFFS,+ HE SAID.

SPEAKING ON THE MOTION OF THANKS FOR THE GOVERNOR'S ANNUAL ADDRESS, MR CHEONG SAID THAT NO RESPONSIBLE MANUFACTURER WOULD COMPLAIN ABOUT THE EFFECT ON PRODUCTION COSTS OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY LEGISLATION.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, +BUT THE GROWING BODY OF LABOUR LEGISLATION, INVOLVING AS IT DOES A VARIETY OF CASH PAYMENTS AND NON-CASH BENEFITS, HAS THE EFFECT OF REDUCING INFLOW AND SUPPLY OF LABOUR, AND THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF THE LEGISLATION LEADS ONLY ONE WAY TOWARDS INCREASING PRODUCTION COSTS.+

HE ALSO QUESTIONED THE +NOTION OF EXPANDING THE SCOPE AND INCREASING THE RATES OF SEVERANCE PAY IN A PERIOD OF UNCERTAIN AND AS YET UNSUSTAINED RECOVERY.+

+I SAY THIS BECAUSE ANY INCREASE IN LABOUR OVERHEADS REQUIRED BY LAW WOULD RESULT NOT ONLY IN PROFIT MARGINS BEING SQUEEZED, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY IN MANUFACTURERS HAVING TO TAKE A MUCH MORE AUSTERE VIEW ABOUT EMPLOYING MORE WORKERS AND ABOUT GRANTING INCREASES IN REAL WAGES.

+ULTIMATELY, IT IS THE WORKERS WHO MIGHT LOSE OUT,+ HE SAID.

+I HOPE THAT BEFORE THE ADMINISTRATION INTRODUCES INTO THIS COUNCIL ITS PROPOSALS FOR EXPANDING THE SCOPE AND INCREASING THE RATE OF SEVERANCE PAY, VERY CAREFUL CONSIDERATION WILL HAVE BEEN GIVEN, FIRST, TO THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT ON PRODUCTION COSTS OF LABOUR LEGISLATION ALREADY IN FORCE AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THIS PARTICULAR MEASURE ADDS TO SUCH COSTS= SECOND, TO THE TIMING OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS MEASURE IN RELATION TO THE FORESEEABLE GROWTH PATH OF THE ECONOMY; AND, THIRD, TO WHETHER THIS MEASURE WOULD NOT ULTIMATELY REDOUND TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF EMPLOYEES,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID HE HOPED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD UNDERTAKE VERY FULL CONSULTATIONS ON THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND ITS DETAILED PROVISIONS.

IN CONTRAST TO LABOUR LEGISLATION, MR CHEONG SAID GOVERNMENT'S MONITORING OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE TWO POWER COMPANIES WAS +PRIMA FACIE LIGHT-WEIGHT+.

+GIVEN THE DEEP DISSATISFACTION THAT HAS BEEN EXPRESSED OVER TARIFF INCREASES DESPITE THE POWER COMPANIES' RECORD PROFIT YEAR AFTER YEAR, AND THE EVEN DEEPER RESENTMENT WITH THE NOTION THAT CONSUMERS SHOULD PAY WELL IN ADVANCE FOR ADDITIONAL GENERATING CAPACITY, PUBLIC OPINION APPEARS TO BE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE COMPLACENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE POWER COMPANIES, WHILE DISCOUNTING THE FACT THAT THEY MAY BE EFFICIENT ENTERPRISES.

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+IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TREAT ITS CONSULTANCY ON THE MONITORING OF THE POWER COMPANIES AS SOMETHING MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN PURELY PUBLIC RELATIONS EXERCISE,+ HE SAID.

+EVEN IF FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES TO THE SCHEMES OF CONTROL MAY NOT BE FEASIBLE, IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THE GENERAL PUBLIC EXPECT TO SEE A CRITICAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE APPRAISAL OF THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE POWER COMPANIES, AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OR OTHERWISE OF THE EXISTING MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS,+ HE ADDED.

COMMENTING ON THE EXHIBITION CENTRE WHICH MISS DUNN, MR LEE AND MR WONG MENTIONED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL YESTERDAY, MR CHEONG SAID, +I ONLY PLEAD THAT OUR HOPES THIS TIME WOULD NOT AGAIN BE FRUSTRATED BY RED TAPE. +

ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, MR CHEONG SAID THAT THE PATH STOWARDS A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE TALKS COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO BE A SMOOTH ONE.

HE SAID THE TALKS WERE BASICALLY ABOUT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ATTITUDES AND WERE THEREFORE VERY DIFFICULT TO MANAGE.

+IT IS AN UNDENIABLE FACT THAT ALL OUR CITIZENS ENJOY ALL THE RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES, CONFIRMED BY THE RULE OF LAW, THAT EXIST IN ANY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY IN THE WEST, AND THAT WE HAVE - BY ANY STANDARD - AN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE, PROGRESSIVE AND, ABOVE ALL, RESPONSIVE ADMINISTRATION,+ HE SAID.

NEVERTHELESS, GIVEN THAT HONG KONG AND CHINA TODAY HAVE VERY DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEMS AND VERY DIFFERENT SENSE OF VALUES, THE FACTORS BEHIND OUR SUCCESS UNDERSTANDABLY DEFY EASY UNDERSTANDING AND READY ACCEPTANCE.

+THE PROCESS OF UNDERSTANDING US MUST BE ALLOWED TO RUN ITS NATURAL COURSE AND THE UNDERSTANDING BE GIVEN ADEQUATE TIME TO MATURE.

+IT IS ONLY AFTER BOTH SIDES HAVE WELL AND TRULY MASTERED AND ACCEPTED THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF HONG KONG'S VIABILITY THAT THE NEGOTIATORS COULD BEGIN TO DEVISE A FRAMEWORK WHICH WOULD SAFEGUARD OUR STABILITY AND PROSPERITY,+ MR CHEONG SAID.

MR CHEONG SAID THAT THE NEED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY ON THE TALKS MUST BE RESPECTED AND ACCEPTED.

+THEREFORE, HOWEVER ANXIOUS WE ALL ARE ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS WE MUST REFRAIN FROM BEING RATTLED OR GOADED INTO MAKING INCORRECT ASSESSMENTS BY PRONOUNCEMENTS WE READ IN THE MEDIA.

+WE MUST ALWAYS BE MINDFUL OF A SIMPLE TRUTH AND THAT IS WHILST THE NEGOTIATION IS GOING ON, EITHER SIDE CAN HARDLY BE EXPECTED TO PUBLICLY COMPROMISE THEIR RESPECTIVE NEGOTIATING POSITIONS,+ HE SAID.

/+THUS, IF

+THUS, IF AND WHEN OFFICIALS FROM EITHER SIDE, NO MATTER HOW HIGH RANKING THEY MAY BE, WERE QUIZZED ON ISSUES WHICH HAVE A DIRECT BEARING ON THEIR RESPECTIVE NEGOTIATING POSITIONS, THEIR ANSWERS, IN THE FORM OF PRONOUNCEMENTS IN THE MEDIA, WOULD NECESSARILY REFLECT ONLY A REITERATION OF WHATEVER STANCE THAT HAS BEEN MADE PUBLIC.+

HE WARNED THAT +IT WOULD THEREFORE BE DANGEROUS TO TRY TO READ TOO MUCH INTO ANYTHING OTHER THAN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.

+IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE FOR US TO JUMP, EITHER PESSIMISTICALLY OR OPTIMISTICALLY, INTO PREMATURE CONCLUSIONS.+

HE URGED THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, +NOT TO LOSE HEART+.

+FOR IF WE, AS A FREE AND HARD WORKING COMMUNITY LOSE CONFIDENCE, THE BASIC PROPOSITION OF PRESERVING OUR STABILITY AND FOSTERING OUR PROSPERITY WILL FALL AWAY,+ HE ADDED.

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'STRATEGY FOR YOUTH' SUGGESTED

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A CALL FOR A CO-ORDINATED STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S YOUNG PEOPLE WAS MADE BY THE HON MRS SELINA CHOW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SHOULD BE TO REBUILD IN YOUNG PEOPLE A PROPER VALUE SYSTEM, MORAL JUDGEMENT, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS AND A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THEMSELVES AND THE COMMUNITY, SHE SAID.

AND THIS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT NOT ONLY BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED, BUT ALSO BY PEOPLE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR WHO ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE PROBLEMS, SHE SAID.

MRS CHOW SAID THERE WERE THREE DIFFERENT PROBLEM AREAS OF LAW AND ORDER INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE - YOUNG CRIMINALS, NEW ADDICTS AND CORRUPT YOUTHS.

A CO-ORDINATED STRATEGY WOULD ENSURE THAT +EFFORTS ARE COMPLEMENTARY AND NOT WASTED THROUGH UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION,+ SHE ADDED.

CITING VARIETY SHOWS AS ONE POPULAR WAY OF PROMOTING PUBLICITY, SHE SAID IT MIGHT BE +REVEALING+ TO STUDY THOSE THAT HAD BEEN HELD IN THE PAST TWO YEARS TO FIND OUT HOW COST-EFFECTIVE THEY WERE.

+WE NEED MORE IDEAS WHICH WOULD CAPTURE THE IMAGINATION OF THE YOUNG. WE NEED TO OFFER THEM MORE OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION AND ORGANISATION WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY INVOLVE THEM MORE BUT WOULD HOPEFULLY PROVIDE THEM WITH THE SATISFACTION OF KNOWING THAT THEY HAVE DONE SOMETHING MEANINGFUL,+ SHE SAID.

SHE SAID THAT WHILE CAMPAIGNS THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA OR IN PUBLIC PLACES WERE NECESSARY AND EFFECTIVE IN REACHING THE MASS, SHE OFTEN FOUND THERE WAS +TOO MUCH CONCENTRATION ON THE PUBLICITY ASPECT AND NOT ENOUGH ON THE PERSONAL APPROACH WHICH COULD BE PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE WITH YOUTHS.+

MRS CHOW SAID THAT APART FROM THEIR OWN FAMILIES, THE PEOPLE WHO SHOULD HAVE THE MOST INFLUENCE ON THE YOUNG WERE TEACHERS, SOCIAL WORKERS AND YOUTH LEADERS.

MRS CHOW SAID THE LLEWELYN REPORT ADVOCATED THE NEED FOR A PROFESSIONAL BODY TO BE FORMED TO UPGRADE THE TECHNICAL AND ETHICAL PRACTICE OF TEACHERS, SHE SAID.

+THE SHORTAGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN SCHOOLS IS UNSATISFACTORY, BUT TEACHERS CAN TO A CERTAIN EXTENT MAKE UP THE SHORTFALL BY TAKING UP THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OVERSEEING THE MORAL AS WELL AS ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR STUDENTS,+ MRS CHOW SAID.

SPEAKING OF A RECENT NEWS REPORT, SHE SAID IT WAS A +SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS+ THAT OUT OF 46 RECENT GRADUATES IN SOCIAL WORK, 44 HAD CHOSEN SOME OTHER EMPLOYMENT.

IF THIS WERE TRUE, +THEIR DECISION TO ABANDON THE FIELD FOR WHICH THEY HAVE STUDIED CAN SET BACK YOUTH WORK, PARTICULARLY IN OUT-REACH PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTHS AT RISK WHICH CALL FOR THE MORE FLEXIBLE AND SENSITIVE APPROACH OF THE TRUE PROFESSIONALS.+

AS FOR YOUTH LEADERS, MRS CHOW SAID, THEY HAD PROVED TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE IN CONSTRUCTIVE YOUTH WORK SUCH AS JUNIOR POLICE CALL, SCOUTS, POLICE CADETS, ROAD SAFETY PATROL AND OTHER VOLUNTEER SERVICES.

+THIS IS NOT SURPRISING AS YOUTHS CAN IDENTIFY MORE EASILY WITH HEROES OF THEIR OWN AGE GROUP AND BACK-GROUND THAN WITH OLDER PEOPLE, AND ARE THEREFORE MORE EASILY INFLUENCED BY THEM.

+THE SCOUTING AND TRAINING OF YOUTH LEADERS IN VARIOUS FIELDS OF WORK AND RECREATION IS CERTAINLY A WORTHWHILE POLICY THAT DESERVES SUPPORT,+ SHE SAID.

SPEAKING +IN THE LIGHT OF THE PRESENT POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY+ OF HONG KONG'S FUTURE, MRS CHOW SAID, +IT IS NATURAL FOR OUR YOUNG GENERATION'S OUTLOOK IN LIFE TO BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THEIR FEAR THAT ALL VALUES WE HAVE HELD SO DEAR WILL HAVE BEEN LOST WHEN THEY EVENTUALLY COME TO HOLD THE REINS.

+IT IS THEREFORE MOST IMPORTANT FOR THEM TO SEE THAT WE ARE DOING OUR UTMOST TO PROTECT THE MUCH VALUED CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR COMMUNITY: OUR PROSPERITY, OUR STABILITY, OUR MANY FREEDOMS, AND OUR RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.+

SHE SAID THAT IF THE PEOPLE LOSE THESE FREEDOMS OR LEGAL PROTECTION THEY WILL BE +UNABLE TO PRESERVE THEIR PRESENT LIFE-STYLE, EVEN IF THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG IS MAINTAINED.+

+IN MY VIEW, AND IN THE VIEW OF MANY WHO UNDERSTAND THE COMPLEXITIES OF HONG KONG, THE ONLY WAY WE CAN BE CONFIDENT THAT THIS WILL NOT HAPPEN IS THAT A CONTINUATION OF OUR PRESENT SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION, LAW, AND JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE CAN BE GUARANTEED BEYOND THE YEAR 1997,+ MRS CHOW STRESSED.

MARIA TAM SUGGESTS FUND TO HELP LITIGANTS
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A FUND SHOULD BE SET UP TO HELP THOSE WHO HAVE A REASONABLE CHANCE TO SUCCEED BUT CANNOT AFFORD THE COSTS OF LITIGATION TO PURSUE THEIR CLAIMS IN COURT REPRESENTED BY LAWYERS.

THIS SUGGESTION WAS MADE BY THE HON MARIA TAM IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+AFTER THE CASE IS HEARD THE AIDED CLIENT WILL REPAY THIS FUND A SUM OUT OF THE DAMAGES HE RECOVERS SO THAT THE FUND WOULD BE SELF-SUFFICIENT IN FINANCING OTHER LITIGANTS,+ SHE EXPLAINED.

SHE FELT THAT SUCH A FUND WAS NEEDED BECAUSE +HAVING THE RULE OF LAW IN OUR LEGAL SYSTEM IS ONE THING, MAKING ITS PROTECTION AVAILABLE TO THE MEN IN THE STREET IS ANOTHER.+

SHE NOTED THAT AT PRESENT, THE LEGAL AID SCHEME IN CIVIL CASES COVERED AN ESTIMATED TWO-THIRDS OF HONG KONG'S POPULATION, LEAVING OVER 1.4 MILLION PEOPLE UNPROTECTED.

SHE CITED THE RESULTS OF A STUDY TO SHOW THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO WERE UNABLE TO AFFORD A LAWYER PRIVATELY, BUT WHO THEN FAILED THE MEANS TEST OF THE LEGAL AID SCHEME ALTHOUGH THEIR CASES HAD MERITS.

MISS TAM SAID THAT THE ADVANTAGES OF SUCH A FUND, WHICH COULD BE SET UP WITH A LOAN FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, WERE THAT:

- * LITIGANTS COULD RECOVER SOME DAMAGES (MINUS A PERCENTAGE OF REPAYMENT TO THE FUND) INSTEAD OF RECOVERING NOTHING AT ALL,
- * SUITORS OF THIS CATEGORY COULD ASSIST EACH OTHER IN OVERCOMING A DIFFICULT SITUATION,
- * CASES WITH MERITS WOULD BE GIVEN A JUST AND FAIR TRIAL, AND
- * THESE LITIGANTS WOULD NOT HAVE TO EXHAUST THEIR SAVINGS IN THE FIRST PLACE BY ENGAGING A LAWYER'S SERVICE ON A PRIVATE BRIEF AND THEN REVERT TO LEGAL AID.

+USUALLY FOR A PERSONAL INJURY CASE ONE CAN EASILY ESTIMATE THE DAMAGES RECOVERABLE BY THE PLAINTIFF, AND CASES ONCE STARTED CAN BE QUICKLY SETTLED.

+WHERE THERE IS A BREACH OF CONTRACT OR NEGLIGENCE CASE IT MAY TAKE UP TO TWO YEARS TO COMPLETE.

+HENCE THE REPAYMENT OF THE INITIAL LOAN CAN BE MADE WITHIN A MATTER OF, SAY, THREE YEARS AND THE FUND WOULD BECOME SELF-FINANCING,+ SHE ADDED.

/MISS TAM

MISS TAM ENVISAGED THAT THERE WOULD STILL BE SOME KIND OF MEANS TEST FOR THIS FUNDING SCHEME THE LEVEL OF WHICH COULD BE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN THE EXISTING LEGAL AID SCHEME.

+ASSISTANCE HAS TO BE GIVEN STRICTLY ON MERIT BASIS SO AS TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC FUNDS ARE NOT WASTED ON FRUITLESS LITIGATION,+ SHE STRESSED.

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REVIEW OF HEALTH PROGRAMME URGED
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DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP TODAY CALLED FOR A REVIEW OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH PROGRAMME FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS.

DR IP SAID THAT IN THE LAST 10 YEARS, WHILE TRYING TO PROVIDE EVERY TYPE OF MEDICAL SERVICE FOR TOO MANY, THE GOVERNMENT HAD ENDED UP BY NOT PROVIDING ENOUGH AND SATISFACTORILY FOR ANYONE.

SHE SUGGESTED THAT IN PLANNING THE PROGRAMME, THE GOVERNMENT COULD:

- * CONSIDER CHARGING PATIENTS WITH MEDICAL INSURANCE THE FULL COST OF THE GOVERNMENT MEDICAL SERVICE OFFERED,
- * ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO BUY MEDICAL INSURANCE BY MAKING PREMIUM TAX FREE SO AS TO REDUCE THE GOVERNMENT'S EXPENDITURE AND COMMITMENT FOR THIS SECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY,
- * OFFER PROFIT OR NON-PROFIT-MAKING PRIVATE HOSPITALS FREE LAND, AND
- * CONTRACT MEDICAL SERVICES OUT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO REDUCE THE GOVERNMENT'S NEED TO PLAN FOR THE WHOLE OF THE COMMUNITY.

ON MEDICAL PROJECTS, DR IP SAID THAT HONG KONG SHOULD BE CONGRATULATED FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE 150-BED MACLEHOSE MEDICAL REHABILITATION CENTRE.

BUT SHE STRESSED THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR A PAEDIATRIC MEDICAL CENTRE-CUM-HOSPITAL.

AMONG OTHER ADVANTAGES OF HAVING SUCH A CENTRE, SHE CITED THE FOLLOWING:

- * CHILDREN WOULD ENTER SUCH A HOSPITAL WITHOUT FEAR BUT WITH A REASSURANCE THAT THEY WOULD GET BETTER;
- * FRIGHTENED NOVICE PARENTS WOULD BECOME CONFIDENT ON REALISATION THAT, WHATEVER THE STATE OF THEIR CHILDREN'S HEALTH, THEY WOULD HAVE A PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL TO TURN TO; AND
- * WITH THE POOLING OF RESOURCES, RANGING FROM EQUIPMENT TO MEDICAL AND PARAMEDICAL PERSONNEL, THEY WOULD BE MORE EFFICIENTLY UTILISED.

ON THE FINANCIAL ASPECT, SHE POINTED OUT THAT THE REASON WHY A PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL MIGHT APPEAR TO BE MORE EXPENSIVE TO RUN THAN A GENERAL HOSPITAL WAS THAT ONE WAS NOT COMPARING LIKE WITH LIKE.

DR IP SAID THAT:

- * FIRST, A PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL PROVIDES QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ON THE EXISTING SERVICE WHICH IS BELOW STANDARD SO THAT THE INCREASED EXPENDITURE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH A PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL PER SE.
- * SECOND, THE NATURE OF PAEDIATRIC MEDICAL CARE MAKES IT MORE COSTLY BECAUSE CHILDREN NEED TO BE FED, CARED FOR, PLAYED WITH, TALKED TO AND RESTRAINED MORE SO THAN ADULTS.

SHE ADDED, +WITH THE ECONOMICAL CLIMATE AS IT IS AT THE MOMENT, I ONLY URGE THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSIDER ASSISTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PAEDIATRIC MEDICAL CENTRE IN MONEY OR IN KIND, IF AND WHEN A NON-PROFIT-MAKING CHARITABLE ORGANISATION, SUCH AS THE PO LEUNG KUK, OFFERS A VIABLE PLAN.

+THIS OUGHT NOT BE AT THE EXPENSE OF OTHER MORE NEEDY PROJECTS BUT SHOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSED PROJECTS OR SCHEMES, SUCH AS THE SCHOOL MEDICAL SCHEME, MATERNITY AND CHILD HEALTH CLINICS, GENERAL OUTPATIENT CLINICS, CHILD ASSESSMENT CENTRES, CHILD DENTAL CLINICS.

+AND TO BE EVEN MORE FAR SIGHTED, I HOPE THE GOVERNMENT COULD, WHEN OPPORTUNITY ARISES, CONVERT AND CONSOLIDATE EXISTING PAEDIATRIC MEDICAL PROJECTS SO AS TO GIVE BIRTH TO THE CONCEPT OF A PAEDIATRIC MEDICAL CENTRE.+

DR IP CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT FOR FAILING TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MANAGEMENT REVIEW TEAM SET UP IN JULY 1979 TO LOOK INTO THE ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

THE TEAM RECOMMENDED THE INCLUSION OF ONE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, THE DIVISION OF MINOR STAFF IN HOSPITALS INTO NURSES AID/WARD ASSISTANTS AND DOMESTIC ASSISTANTS TO IMPROVE CONTROL OVER THEM, THE INTRODUCTION OF A WARD CLERKS SYSTEM TO RELIEVE DOCTORS AND NURSES OF THE BULK OF THEIR CLERICAL DUTIES, EXAMINATION OF THE POSSIBILITY OF USING PART-TIME NURSES, A CAREER STRUCTURE WHICH OFFERS HIGH LEVELS OF PROMOTION IN CLINICAL NURSING AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE APPOINTMENT SYSTEM.

DR IP CONSIDERED THESE RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE SOUND AND SAID, +THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT MAY REFUSE TO LISTEN TO THE COMPLAINTS OF PATIENTS, OR THE ADVICE OF DOCTORS AND NURSES BUT OUGHT AT LEAST TO CONSIDER THE ADVICE FROM THE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT.+

TURNING TO EDUCATION, DR IP SAID, +WE MUST HAVE AN OPEN UNIVERSITY IN HONG KONG TO CO-ORDINATE ALL THE CONTINUING EDUCATION WHICH ALREADY EXISTS, TO STANDARDISE AND ACCREDIT EXISTING PART-TIME POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES, TO EXTEND AND DEVELOP HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH TELEVISION, AND TO CONFER RECOGNITION TO HIGHER STUDIES WITHIN A HIGHLY FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK,+ SHE SAID.

BIGGER ROLE SOUGHT FOR DISTRICT BOARDS
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DISTRICT BOARDS WOULD BE MERE WINDOW DRESSING UNLESS THEIR ADVICE WAS CONSIDERED, AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, ACTED UPON PROMPTLY AND WITH IMAGINATION, THE HON CHAN YING-LUN SAID AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE POINTED OUT THAT SOME DB MEMBERS FELT THAT THEIR SUGGESTIONS SOMETIMES DID NOT RECEIVE THE ATTENTION THEY DESERVED. HE ALSO SAID THAT DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES APPEARED TO BE UNDULY BOUND BY EXISTING OR OUTDATED POLICIES WHICH MIGHT NOT SUIT THE PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL DISTRICTS.

HOWEVER, HE ADDED, +DISTRICT BOARDS ARE A NEW SET-UP AND THAT TIME MUST BE ALLOWED FOR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO GEAR THEMSELVES UP TO MEET LOCAL DISTRICT NEEDS.+

REGARDING GOVERNMENT'S REPRESENTATION ON DISTRICT BOARDS, MR CHAN SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE GIVEN FULL AUTHORITY TO SPEAK FOR THEIR DEPARTMENTS AND AT THE SAME TIME, BE ENCOURAGED TO 'THINK DISTRICT' AND 'ACT DISTRICT' WITHIN THE PERIMETER OF THEIR DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES.

HE ALSO SAID THAT ADVICE OF DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE SOUGHT ON ISSUES OF TERRITORY-WIDE INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANCE.

+I BELIEVE AN UNUSUALLY GOOD START HAS BEEN MADE OF DISTRICT BOARDS AS A MECHANISM FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION IN THE RECENT DISCUSSION OF THE LLEWELLYN REPORT ON EDUCATION THROUGHOUT THE EIGHTEEN DISTRICT BOARDS.

+THIS, TO MY MIND, REPRESENTS A MAJOR STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND I DO HOPE THAT FUTURE ISSUES OF TERRITORY-WIDE IMPORTANCE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE DEBATED AT THE DISTRICT BOARDS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID ALSO THAT DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES.

HE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT A +MORE FORMAL LINK CAN BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE DISTRICT BOARDS, URBAN COUNCIL, AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.+

MR CHAN SAID HE BELIEVED THAT DISTRICT BOARDS COULD ASSUME A MORE SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN WORKING FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN SQUATTER AREAS.

+SUCH IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN AS MANY AREAS AS POSSIBLE, TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE PROVISION OF METERED WATER SUPPLY AND IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THAT DISTRICT OFFICES COULD ALSO HELP IN THE PROCESS BY ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO ORGANISE THEMSELVES INTO MUTUAL AID GROUPS TO BRING ABOUT IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH THEIR OWN EFFORTS.

FLEXIBLE EDUCATION SYSTEM URGED

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HONG KONG'S EDUCATION SYSTEM MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY WHICH CHANGE OVER TIME, THE HON RITA FAN SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE SYSTEM MUST BE ADEQUATELY PRAGMATIC TO STRIKE A REALISTIC BALANCE BETWEEN SOCIAL DEMANDS AND ECONOMIC NEEDS, MRS FAN SAID.

REFERRING TO THE LLEWELLYN REPORT, SHE SAID, +THE GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN IS TO DETERMINE WHICH AREA(S) SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY, AT WHAT TIME AND TO WHAT EXTENT THE SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED, AND HOW TO TAP THE NECESSARY RESOURCES.+

+THIS IS A TALL ORDER, AND ONE CAN EASILY BE SO INVOLVED IN ONE AREA AND LOSE SIGHT OF OTHER NEEDS.

+TO AVOID THIS, IT IS HELPFUL TO REMIND OURSELVES OF WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE THROUGH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM, SO THAT WE CAN ALWAYS REFER TO IT TO ENSURE THAT THE WAYS AND MEANS WE DEVELOPED ARE ACHIEVING THE AIM, RATHER THAN BECOMING +ENDS+ IN THEMSELVES.

+A SIMPLE VERSION OF THE AIM OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM IS TO DEVELOP USEFUL, CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY,+ SHE ADDED.

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TO BECOME SUCH A MEMBER, SHE LISTED THE FOLLOWING PREREQUISITES:

- * FIRST, THE PERSON MUST HAVE A SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE COMMUNITY. IN OTHER WORDS THERE SHOULD EXIST A MUTUAL BOND OF CARE AND CONCERN BETWEEN THAT PERSON AND THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM.
- * SECOND, TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT AND PROGRESS OF SOCIETY, HE MUST HAVE THE ABILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGE (WHICH IS SOMETIMES OUTSIDE HIS OWN CONTROL), TO MAKE THE BEST OF SITUATIONS AS THEY ARISE, AND TO USE HIS ANALYTICAL POWER AND ORGANISING SKILLS TO ARRIVE AT INNOVATIVE IDEAS WHICH CAN BE REALISTICALLY IMPLEMENTED.
- * THIRD, THE PERSON MUST ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.

IF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TO HAVE THE FIRST TWO PREREQUISITES, MRS FAN SAID, +WE HAVE TO DEPEND ON INTERACTION AMONG OUR TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS.

+WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR US TO EMBARK ON THE TASK OF INCREASING THE NUMBER AND UPGRADING THE QUALITY OF TEACHERS, I WOULD PLEAD FOR EMPHASIS TO BE PLACED ON STIMULATING TEACHERS TO RE-CONSIDER THEIR PROFESSIONAL ROLE IN INFLUENCING STUDENTS' BEHAVIOUR AND VALUES, AND TO CLARIFY THEIR OWN ATTITUDES.

/+I SINCERELY

+I SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT ALL OF US INVOLVED IN EDUCATION NEED TO, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, TAKE SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON OUR OWN BEHAVIOUR AND ASSESS HONESTLY HOW SUCH BEHAVIOUR MAY AFFECT THOSE UNDER OUR CHARGE.+

ON MORAL EDUCATION, SHE SUGGESTED THAT SOME RESEARCH BE UNDERTAKEN TO EVALUATE THE RESULT OF WHAT WAS CURRENTLY BEING DONE IN SCHOOLS.

THE DATA WOULD BE USEFUL FOR IDENTIFYING AREAS OF NEED, AND COULD LEAD TO A REVIEW OF METHODS USED AS WELL AS TO CHANGES IN THE SYSTEM, SHE SAID.

SHE FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT A +GENERAL STUDIES+ COURSE SHOULD BE INTRODUCED AT FORM VI LEVEL TO GIVE STUDENTS AN INSIGHT INTO DISCIPLINES WHICH ARE NOT THEIR MAIN COURSES OF STUDY. AS EXAMPLES, SHE MENTIONED SCIENTIFIC METHODS FOR ARTS STUDENTS AND HUMANITIES FOR SCIENCE STUDENTS.

SHE SAID, +THE AIM OF THIS COURSE WOULD BE TO WIDEN THEIR HORIZON, TO STIMULATE THEIR SOCIAL AWARENESS, AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM IN RATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CURRENT AFFAIRS.+

SHE ENVISAGED THAT AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COURSE, STUDENTS IN GROUPS WOULD HAVE TO PLAN AND EXECUTE A PROJECT IN COMMUNITY SERVICE AND THE PROGRESS MADE BY INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS COULD BE DETERMINED THROUGH CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT BY TEACHERS RATHER THAN BY EXAMINATION.

ON THE THIRD PREREQUISITE, SHE FELT THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE GIVEN MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO ACQUIRE TECHNOLOGICAL SKILL.

SHE COMMENDED THE INTRODUCTION OF THE TWO-YEAR PILOT SCHEME IN COMPUTER STUDIES IN 30 SCHOOLS AND SAID, +IF WE ARE TO KEEP PACE WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY, OUR STUDENTS MUST BE IN CONSTANT CONTACT WITH THE BASIC SKILLS AT AN EARLY AGE SO THAT THEY CAN DEVELOP CONFIDENCE AND LITERACY IN NEW TECHNOLOGIES.+

TURNING TO THOSE WHO NEED CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR BETTER QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, MRS FAN SUGGESTED THAT ENCOURAGEMENT BE GIVEN TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT-CENTRED, SELF-LEARNING PROGRAMMES.

THIS METHOD, SHE SAID, WOULD ALLOW THE STUDENTS TO STUDY AND PROGRESS AT HIS OWN PACE.

SHE ALSO PROPOSED THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO THE POSSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES FOR SUITABLY QUALIFIED STUDENTS ON +APPROVED+ TRAINING COURSES.

+THE SUBSIDY SHOULD GO TO THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT RATHER THAN ORGANISATIONS IN THE FORM OF REIMBURSEMENT OF A CERTAIN PORTION OF THE FEES AFTER A STUDENT HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AN +APPROVED+ COURSE.

+THIS METHOD OF SUBSIDY MAY PROVE TO BE LESS COSTLY THAN OTHER ALTERNATIVES IN THE SHORT TERM, AND GOVERNMENT HAS THE FLEXIBILITY OF GEARING ITS SUPPORT TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF NEED FOR ECONOMIC PURPOSES,+ SHE SAID.

COMMENTING ON THE FUNDING OF IMPROVEMENTS IN HONG KONG'S EDUCATION SYSTEM, SHE NOTED THAT THE FORMATION OF AN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT FUND THROUGH PRIVATE DONATIONS WAS A POSSIBLE SOURCE.

+HOWEVER, TO ENSURE THAT THE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT FUND HAS A GOOD START, CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO OFFER BETTER INCENTIVES, SUCH AS A MORE GENEROUS TAX EXEMPTION SCHEME AND APPROPRIATE RECOGNITION FOR DONORS,+ SHE ADDED.

+EDUCATION IS OUR INVESTMENT IN FUTURE, AND A SOUND ALL-ROUND EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE MOST MEANINGFUL AND SUBSTANTIAL INHERITANCE THAT IS WITHIN OUR CAPABILITY TO GIVE TO OUR NEXT GENERATION,+ MRS FAN CONCLUDED.

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STRONGER LINKS URGED FOR BOARDS, COMMITTEES
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THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD UNDERTAKE A REVIEW TO ENSURE THAT THE TIES BETWEEN THE DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE AREA COMMITTEES ARE STRENGTHENED TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE OPERATION OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME.

THIS SUGGESTION WAS MADE BY THE HON MRS NG CHOW MAY-LIN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SHE SAID THAT THE ROLE PLAYED BY AREA COMMITTEES HAD BEEN STEADILY GAINING IMPORTANCE SINCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT AREA COMMITTEES WITH MEMBERS DRAWN FROM A WIDE SOCIAL SPECTRUM WERE SUITED TO REFLECT THE VIEWS AND WISHES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE SUB-DISTRICTS.

MRS NG DESCRIBED AN AREA COMMITTEE AS A +DISTRICT BOARD IN MINIATURE+.

+IN RECENT YEARS THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION, IN AN ATTEMPT TO SYNCHRONISE THE FUNCTIONS OF THE AREA COMMITTEE AND THE DISTRICT BOARD, HAS VESTED THE FORMER WITH WIDER POWERS TO ADVISE ON WELFARE, PUBLIC AMENITIES, ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RECREATIONAL MATTERS OF THE SUB-DISTRICT.

+THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AREA COMMITTEE IS ALL TOO APPARENT FROM ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE.

+THE AREA COMMITTEES SHOULD THEREFORE MAINTAIN CLOSE TIES WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICT BOARDS, IN ORDER TO GET THE MAXIMUM EFFECTS OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME,+ MRS NG SAID.

/+IN THE

+IN THE FORMAL ADVISORY FRAMEWORK, THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE AREA COMMITTEE VIS-A-VIS THE DISTRICT BOARD AND OTHER DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE CLEARLY DEFINED SO THAT THE AREA COMMITTEE CAN BE ACCORDED A RECOGNISED ADVISORY STATUS,+ SHE ADDED.

EARLIER ON MRS NG SPOKE ABOUT EDUCATION AND HOUSING FOR THE +SANDWICHED CLASS+.

SHE NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTED FREE PRIMARY EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN IN 1971, EXTENDED IT TO JUNIOR SECONDARY IN 1978, AND SUCCESSFULLY ATTAINED THE PLANNED OBJECTIVE OF SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION IN 1981.

+NOW SHOULD BE THE TIME TO QUICKEN THE PACE BY PROVIDING SUBSIDISED PLACES TO ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN WHO ASPIRE TO STUDY IN FORM IV AND V,+ SHE SAID.

MRS NG CITED STATISTICS TO SHOW THAT AN INCREASING NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO HAD COMPLETED FORM III WENT ON TO COMPLETE THEIR STUDIES IN FORM V, EITHER ON GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY OR AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE.

+WITH THIS RISING TREND, IT COULD BE SEEN THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF HONG KONG PARENTS WISHED THEIR CHILDREN TO COMPLETE THE ENTIRE FIVE-YEAR SECONDARY COURSE, SO AS TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE FUTURE.

+ALSO THE PRESENT YOUNG GENERATION SHOWS A STRONG DESIRE TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE,+ SHE SAID.

IN HER VIEW, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SATISFY THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE AND PROVIDE SUBSIDISED PLACES FOR ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN WHO WISH TO RECEIVE SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION, SO THAT THEY COULD COMPLETE THE FIVE-YEAR SECONDARY COURSE 'IN PLEASANT SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT'.

ON HOUSING, MRS NG SAID IT WAS +SOMEWHAT ARBITRARY+ FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONCLUDE THAT THE MIDDLE CLASS DID NOT NEED SUBSIDISED HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME HOUSING AND THUS CANCEL FUTURE HOUSING SCHEME FOR THIS +SANDWICHED CLASS+.

THIS MOVE, SHE SAID, WAS THE RESULT OF THE COOL RESPONSE TO THE SALE OFFER ON FLATS IN MELODY GARDENS IN TUEN MUN.

SHE SAID THAT THE FAILURE OF THIS SCHEME WAS NO SURPRISE AS THE GOVERNMENT HAD CONCENTRATED ON THE DESIGN OF THE PREMISES WITHOUT CONSIDERING SUCH FACTORS AS EMPLOYMENT, SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORT.

+I EARNESTLY HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL REVIEW THE NEEDS OF THE MIDDLE INCOME CLASS, AND PROVIDE THEM AGAIN WITH HOS HOUSING SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR THEM,+ MRS NG SAID.

CONSTANT CHECKS ON FINANCIAL SECTOR URGED
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THE HON PETER W.C. POON TODAY WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR.

HE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT THE GROWTH OF THE FINANCIAL SECTOR, IN SCALE AND SOPHISTICATION, HAD BEEN PHENOMENAL.

+CONSEQUENTLY, CONSTANT ATTENTION AND SUPERVISION BY PROPER AUTHORITIES ARE REQUIRED.

+I AM PLEASED TO HEAR THAT THE LONG-AWAITED COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL IS EXPECTED TO BECOME LAW WITHIN THIS SESSION,+ HE SAID.

THIS WAS VERY MUCH NEEDED TO BRING THE COMPANY LEGISLATION UP TO DATE AND SHOULD RESULT IN A CORRESPONDING IMPROVEMENT IN FINANCIAL REPORTING, HE ADDED.

MR POON POINTED OUT THAT THE EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMPANY LAW REFORM WOULD PROVIDE A PROPER BODY TO REVIEW AND SUGGEST AMENDMENTS TO MODERNISE THE COMPANY LAW FROM TIME TO TIME.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE RECENT PROBLEMS OF SOME BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES HAD CAUSED MUCH PUBLIC CONCERN.

+THOUGH THE PRESENT PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION SYSTEM IS BASICALLY SOUND, THERE ARE AREAS WHICH NEED FREQUENT REVIEW.

+IN THE LIGHT OF PAST EXPERIENCE, THE AMENDMENTS RELATING TO RESTRICTIONS OF LOANS TO DIRECTORS AND DIRECTOR-CONTROLLED COMPANIES ARE URGENTLY REQUIRED,+ HE SAID.

MR POON AGREED THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR SOME FORM OF REQUIREMENT FOR THE DISCLOSURE OF SHAREHOLDINGS AND DEALINGS BY LISTED COMPANIES IN THE INTERESTS OF THE PUBLIC.

HE SAID THAT MANY CHINESE BUSINESSMEN BY TRADITION AND OVERSEAS INVESTORS BY CIRCUMSTANCES DESIRED TO KEEP A LOW BUSINESS PROFILE AND WERE RELUCTANT TO DISCLOSE THEIR FINANCIAL AFFAIRS.

+HOWEVER, IF OUR STOCK MARKET IS TO BE PROPERLY REGULATED AND HAVE CREDIBILITY HERE AND OVERSEAS, SUCH RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.

+THE MANNER AND EXTENT OF DISCLOSURE, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE DETERMINED BY WHAT IS SUITABLE AND NECESSARY IN HONG KONG AND NEED NOT BE UNDULY STRINGENT AS IN SOME PART OF THE WORLD.

/+IT IS

+IT IS HOPED THAT CONSENSUS OF VIEWS CAN BE REACHED SO THAT THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION CAN BE INTRODUCED AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE,+ HE SAID.

TO PROTECT HONG KONG'S REPUTATION AS A FINANCIAL CENTRE, MR POON URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO BE FIRM AND INTRODUCE MEASURES AND LEGISLATION SPEEDILY WHERE THE PUBLIC INTEREST CLEARLY OVERRODE ANY SECTIONAL INTEREST.

ON THE SUBJECT OF EDUCATION, MR POON SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THE GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN HONG KONG.

HE SAID THAT THERE WERE INSUFFICIENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO RECEIVE HIGHER EDUCATION IN HONG KONG SO THAT MANY PARENTS HAD TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN ABROAD FOR FURTHER STUDIES, SHOULDERING A GREAT FINANCIAL BURDEN.

+THE JOINT FUNDING ARRANGEMENT BY THE HONG KONG AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS TO HELP LOCAL STUDENTS STUDYING IN BRITAIN NO DOUBT HELPS MANY STUDENTS FROM HONG KONG BUT IS NOT THE ANSWER TO OUR PROBLEMS,+ HE SAID.

NOTING THAT THE AMOUNT OF MONEY USED TO PROVIDE OVERSEAS EDUCATION FOR LOCAL STUDENTS WAS VERY SUBSTANTIAL, MR POON SAID THAT THERE WAS THE LIKELIHOOD THAT MANY OF THE STUDENTS MIGHT EVENTUALLY CHOOSE NOT TO RETURN TO HONG KONG.

+IT IS THEREFORE GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT THE CITY POLYTECHNIC MAY BECOME A REALITY IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE. THE THIRD UNIVERSITY, THE INTRODUCTION OF EXTERNAL DEGREES AND THE OPEN UNIVERSITY TYPE OF FURTHER EDUCATION WILL ALSO BE WELCOME BUT MUCH WILL NECESSARILY DEPEND ON OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

+WITH THE POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY AT PRESENT AND THE RECOVERY OF THE WORLD ECONOMY, WE MAY FACE ANOTHER BRAIN DRAIN SOON. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE HAVE AND DO IMPLEMENT OUR OWN PLANS TO PROVIDE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION,+ HE SAID.

MR POON ALSO EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WOULD ONCE AGAIN OVERCOME THE MANY DIFFICULTIES THEY WERE FACING AND WOULD CONTINUE TO PROSPER IN THE YEARS TO COME BY TAKING HEED OF THE GOVERNOR'S ADVICE TO BE PATIENT, CALM AND RESOLUTE.

NOTED EXPERT HEADS LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
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AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPERT HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO HEAD THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION. HE IS DR VERNER C. BICKLEY, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE EAST-WEST CENTRE'S CULTURE LEARNING INSTITUTE IN HONOLULU.

DR BICKLEY FIRST VISITED HONG KONG IN 1965, AS A KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT AN ENGLISH CONFERENCE ORGANISED BY THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG, AND LATER VISITED THIS CITY ON A NUMBER OF OTHER OCCASIONS.

DR BICKLEY OBTAINED HIS FIRST DEGREE AND SUBSEQUENTLY HIS M.A. IN EDUCATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES, AND HIS PH. D. FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON. THROUGHOUT HIS 30-YEAR CAREER HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED EITHER IN THE TEACHING OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE OR IN RELATED AREAS OF TRAINING AND RESEARCH.

DR BICKLEY STARTED HIS CAREER AS A TEACHER OF ENGLISH IN SINGAPORE IN 1951, AND IN 1954 HEADED THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AT WHAT IS NOW THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION.

HE LATER JOINED THE BRITISH COUNCIL AND SERVED IN BURMA, INDONESIA AND JAPAN, SPECIALISING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION. HE WAS AWARDED AN M.B.E. FOR HIS SERVICES IN 1964.

IN 1971 HE WAS APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE EAST-WEST CENTRE'S CULTURE LEARNING INSTITUTE IN HONOLULU, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DESIGN AND ADMINISTRATION OF AN INTEGRATED MULTI-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOCUSING ON INTERNATIONAL, CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONS. UNDER HIS DIRECTORSHIP, PROJECTS ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING AND ENGLISH AS AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE WERE INITIATED.

IN 1981, HE TOOK LEAVE FROM THE CENTRE TO HELP SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINES IMPROVE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF THEIR EMPLOYEES AND TRAINEES. DURING THIS TIME, DR BICKLEY ADMINISTERED AN ENGLISH TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE AIRLINE'S 25 000 EMPLOYEES.

DR BICKLEY IS THE AUTHOR OF 15 BOOKS AND MANY ARTICLES AND PAPERS ON LANGUAGE, LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONS.

ROAD WORKS IMPRESS VISITOR
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MR MICHAEL HARDY, PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTION OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION, WHO IS VISITING HONG KONG, TODAY SPOKE HIGHLY OF THE ROAD PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

MR HARDY TODAY VISITED THE SHA TIN-TAI PO COASTAL ROAD AND THE TAI PO BYPASS, A SECTION OF THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD CONNECTING NORTH TAI PO WITH LAM KAM ROAD.

HE SAID THAT HE WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE SCALE AND PACE OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN HONG KONG.

MR HARDY WAS ACCOMPANIED ON THE VISIT BY MR MARTIN RUDIN, TECHNICAL SECRETARY OF THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE; MR ROBERT DICKIE OF THE TAI PO AND FANLING NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT OFFICE; MR TONY BOWLEY FROM THE CONSULTANTS, PETER FRAENKEL AND PARTNERS AND MR M.T. PANG, SENIOR ENGINEER, HIGHWAYS OFFICE (NEW TERRITORIES), OF THE ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

YESTERDAY, MR HARDY INSPECTED MAJOR ROAD PROJECTS SUCH AS THE ISLAND EASTERN CORRIDOR AND THE AIRPORT TUNNEL.

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DB TO DISCUSS BUILDING MANAGEMENT
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A REPORT ON A PILOT SCHEME ON PRIVATE BUILDING MANAGEMENT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE YAU MA TEI DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TOMORROW (FRIDAY) AFTERNOON.

MEMBERS WILL REVIEW A RECENT STUDY TOUR TO BRITAIN BY SOME BOARD MEMBERS FROM YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK.

THEY WILL ALSO COMMENT ON THE PUTTING UP OF A SIGNPOST AT THE NEW JADE MARKET AND A CONCRETE FENCE WALL AT THE SHEK LUNG STREET FRUIT MARKET.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA WILL INCLUDE THE ELECTION OF CHAIRMEN TO THE BOARD'S ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY BUILDING COMMITTEES, AND A REVIEW ON DB FUNDS.

IN THE SAME AFTERNOON, THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS WILL DISCUSS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOOTBRIDGE AT THE JUNCTION OF SHAU KEI WAN ROAD, SHING ON STREET AND TAI ON STREET, WHICH WILL FORM AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY STATION'S DEVELOPMENT.

MEMBERS WILL ALSO BE BRIEFED ON THE PROPOSED LAU SIN STREET FLYOVER PROJECT DESIGNED TO ALLEVIATE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN TIN HAU TEMPLE ROAD AND THE TUNG LO WAN AREA.

INFORMATION PAPERS ON A PILOT SCHEME ON THE REPAIRS OF PRIVATE STREETS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BUS TERMINUS AT BRAEMAR HILL ROAD WILL BE TABLED FOR DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING.

OTHER ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED WILL INCLUDE THE EASTERN DISTRICT SPORTS FESTIVAL AND PROGRESS REPORT OF THE BOARD'S COMMITTEES.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER:

- (1) THE EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD MEETING AT 2.30 PM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) IN THE DISTRICT OFFICE'S CONFERENCE ROOM AT 884-886 KING'S ROAD= AND
- (2) THE YAU MA TEI DISTRICT BOARD MEETING AT 3 PM IN THE DISTRICT OFFICE'S CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR OF HOP FAT COMMERCIAL CENTRE AT 490-492 NATHAN ROAD.

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LABORATORY SAFETY SEMINARS ARRANGED
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A SERIES OF IDENTICAL SEMINARS ON SAFETY IN SCHOOL LABORATORIES WILL BE HELD IN DECEMBER THIS YEAR AND JANUARY NEXT FOR LABORATORY TECHNICIANS WORKING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

THE SEMINARS WILL BE CONDUCTED IN CANTONESE AND WILL BE HELD IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S SCIENCE TEACHING CENTRE AT 4 PAK FUK ROAD, NORTH POINT.

THEY WILL COVER A VARIETY OF TOPICS, RANGING FROM THE GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS OF SCHOOL LABORATORIES TO THE HANDLING OF DANGEROUS CHEMICALS.

DUE TO LIMITED SPACE, 30 PERSONS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR EACH SEMINAR. APPLICATIONS WILL BE TREATED ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS, BUT PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO UNTRAINED LABORATORY TECHNICIANS.

SCHOOL HEADS WISHING TO SEND LABORATORY TECHNICIANS TO ATTEND THE SEMINARS SHOULD SUBMIT THEIR NOMINATIONS TO THE PRINCIPAL INSPECTOR (CHEMISTRY), ADVISORY INSPECTORATE, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, LEE GARDENS, 5/F, HYSAN AVENUE, CAUSEWAY BAY BEFORE NOVEMBER 9.

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VARIETY SHOW IN CENTRAL

A 90-MINUTE VARIETY SHOW, ENTITLED 'SPARKLING EVENING OF SONGS AND DANCES', WILL BE STAGED AT THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT AND STATUE SQUARE ON SUNDAY (OCTOBER 30) TO MARK THE OPENING OF THE MONTH-LONG CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT FESTIVAL.

BEGINNING AT 7.15 PM, THE VARIETY SHOW WILL FEATURE A PERFORMANCE BY THE CAPE COLLINSON MARCHING BAND, A TRADITIONAL DANCE BY STUDENTS OF A LOCAL SECONDARY SCHOOL, AND SINGING AND DANCING BY FAMOUS SINGERS AND TELEVISION ARTISTES.

THE SHOW, WHICH IS PRODUCED BY RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG, WILL BE TELEVISED ON TVB JADE AT 9.30 PM ON NOVEMBER 5.

FREE ADMISSION TICKETS TO THE VARIETY SHOW ARE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS AT THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE, AND THE CENTRAL ENQUIRY AND KENNEDY TOWN SUB-OFFICES.

THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, MR DAVID AKERS-JONES, WILL BE THE OFFICIATING GUEST.

ALSO PRESENT WILL BE THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICER, MISS LOLLY CHIU; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FESTIVAL'S ORGANISING COMMITTEE, MR LIU LIT-FOR; THE CHAIRMAN OF THE URBAN COUNCIL, MR HILTON CHEONG-LEEN; THE DIRECTOR OF BROADCASTING, MR STUART WILKINSON; AND DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT FESTIVAL AT 7.15 PM ON SUNDAY (OCTOBER 30) AT THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT AND STATUE SQUARE IN CENTRAL.

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GARDEN CONCERTS IN SHAM SHUI PO

THREE OUTDOOR GARDEN CONCERTS WILL BE HELD AT DIFFERENT VENUES IN SHAM SHUI PO DURING THE NEXT FORTNIGHT.

THE CONCERTS ARE BEING JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE MUSIC OFFICE OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT, THE PERFORMING ARTS COMMITTEE OF THE SHAM SHUI PO ARTS ASSOCIATION AND THE SHAM SHUI PO DISTRICT OFFICE TO PROMOTE INTEREST AMONG LOCAL RESIDENTS IN VARIOUS TYPES OF MUSIC.

THE FIRST CONCERT WILL BE GIVEN BY THE MUSIC OFFICE SYMPHONIC BAND AT MEI FOO SUN CHUEN STAGE 5 MALL (NEXT TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE UNIT) ON SATURDAY (OCTOBER 29), STARTING AT 4 PM.

THE PROGRAMME WILL FEATURE LIGHT AND POPULAR MUSIC, INCLUDING WASHINGTON POST MARCH, STAR AND STRIPES FOREVER, TV FILM SONGS AND POP MUSIC.

THE SECOND CONCERT WILL BE HELD AT THE LAI KOK ESTATE RECREATION GROUND ON NOVEMBER 5, BEGINNING AT 4 PM.

SEVERAL PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS OF THE MUSIC OFFICE WILL GIVE A VARIETY OF CHINESE INSTRUMENTAL SOLO AND ENSEMBLE ITEMS, WHILE A SOPRANO WILL PRESENT CHINESE FOLK MELODIES.

THE FINAL CONCERT WILL BE HELD AT THE NAM SHAN ESTATE RECREATION GROUND ON NOVEMBER 12 AT 4 PM, WITH FOLK SONG GROUPS AND WINNERS OF THE AMATEUR SINGING CONTEST PRESENTING BOTH POPULAR AND FOLK TUNES.

ADMISSION TO THE THREE CONCERTS WILL BE FREE.

PROGRAMME HANDBILLS ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL SHAM SHUI PO DISTRICT OFFICE SUB-OFFICES AND THE MONG KOK MUSIC CENTRE, 84 WATERLOO ROAD, FIRST FLOOR, CAMBRIDGE COURT, KOWLOON.

ENQUIRIES MAY BE DIRECTED TO TELEPHONE 3-7149255 OR 3-704251.

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FOLK MUSIC FROM CLASSROOMS

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FOLK MUSIC GROUPS FORMED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS STUDYING OR LIVING IN KOWLOON CITY ARE INVITED TO AUDITION FOR A CONCERT.

THE AUDITIONS WILL BE HELD FROM 9 AM TO 1 PM ON NOVEMBER 26 AND 27, AND DECEMBER 3 AT THE YAU MA TEI MUSIC CENTRE OF MUSIC OFFICE. ABOUT 12 GROUPS WILL BE SELECTED.

APART FROM THE CONCERT TO BE STAGED AT THE KO SHAN THEATRE ON DECEMBER 30, THE SELECTED GROUPS WILL ALSO PERFORM IN A SERIES OF SATURDAY MATINEES IN PUBLIC PLACES IN THE DISTRICT DURING JANUARY AND FEBRUARY.

THE +FOLK MUSIC FROM THE CLASSROOM+ PROJECT IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT ARTS AND CULTURE COUNCIL, WITH DISTRICT BOARD SPONSORSHIP AT \$10 000.

THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ROGER GARCIA, SAID THE PROJECT WAS VALUABLE IN PROMOTING FOLK MUSIC AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE AND DEVELOPING THEIR TALENT.

+IN THE DISTRICT, WE ARE INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK OF ACTIVITIES WHICH WILL ALLOW PEOPLE TO COME FORWARD AND SHOW THEIR TALENTS AND SKILLS: A KIND OF SELF-HELP APPROACH TOWARDS THE ARTS,+ HE SAID.

HE SAID THE CONCERT WOULD GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE A CHANCE TO PERFORM IN PUBLIC WHILE THE AFTERNOON RECITALS WOULD TAKE MUSIC OFF THE STAGE AND INTO EVERYDAY PLACES SUCH AS THE HOUSING ESTATES.

+THE SATURDAY MATINEES ARE MEANT TO BE SMALL-SCALE, INFORMAL RECITALS FOR THE CURIOUS AND THE INTERESTED -- IN FACT, ANY PASSERBY WHO CARES TO STOP AND LISTEN,+ HE SAID.

STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED CAN OBTAIN APPLICATION FORMS FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT 141-143 KAU PUI LUNG ROAD; THE HUNG HOM BRANCH OFFICE AT 32 WUHU STREET; THE HO MAN TIN BRANCH OFFICE AT BLOCK 8 HO MAN TIN ESTATE; THE YAU MA TEI MUSIC CENTRE, GOLDEN GATE COMMERCIAL BUILDING, 138 AUSTIN ROAD; AND THE MONG KOK MUSIC CENTRE, CAMBRIDGE COURT, 84 WATERLOO ROAD.

THE CLOSING DATE IS NOVEMBER 11.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

SWIMMERS TO RECEIVE PRIZES

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WINNERS OF THE SUMMER AQUATIC PROGRAMME WILL BE PRESENTED WITH TROPHIES AT THE VICTORIA PARK SWIMMING POOL TOMORROW (FRIDAY) NIGHT.

THE AQUATIC PROGRAMME WAS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE RECREATION AND SPORT SERVICE OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT AND THE URBAN COUNCIL.

THE WINNERS WERE AMONG SOME 2 500 WHO TOOK PART IN VARIOUS AQUATIC EVENTS SUCH AS SNORKELLING, DIVING AND SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING.

DURING THE CEREMONY AT WHICH URBAN COUNCILLOR, MR KWAN LIM-HO WILL OFFICIATE -- THERE WILL BE A DISPLAY OF SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING AND DIVING.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR RECREATION AND CULTURE, MR PATRICK WILLIAMSON, WILL BE PRESENT TO WELCOME MR KWAN.

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY WHICH WILL START AT 7.30 PM.

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PLB PROHIBITED ZONES

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FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (OCTOBER 29), ALL PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES EXCEPT THOSE AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING ROAD L10 WEST OF ITS JUNCTION WITH ROAD D4, SHEUNG SHUI.

FROM THE SAME DAY, THE NEW BUS TERMINUS IN SUN TIN WAI ESTATE, SHA TIN, WILL ALSO BE DESIGNATED A PROHIBITED ZONE. ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED PUBLIC OMNIBUSES AND THOSE AUTHORISED IN WRITING BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM ENTERING THE BUS TERMINUS.

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