



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1985

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LONDON TO GET FULL REPORT OF DEBATE - AG

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A FULL REPORT OF TODAY'S ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986 WILL BE SENT TO LONDON SO THAT ALL THE POINTS MADE BY MEMBERS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN THE DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL COMES BEFORE PARLIAMENT, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

WINDING UP TODAY'S ADJOURNMENT DEBATE, MR THOMAS SAID A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT ISSUES HAD BEEN RAISED IN THE DEBATE. THESE INCLUDED:

- \* THE NEED TO MAKE THE NEW BN(O) PASSPORT AS EFFECTIVE A TRAVEL DOCUMENT AS THE EXISTING BDC PASSPORT;
- \* THE NEED TO MAKE SURE THE BN(O) PASSPORT ENJOY THE CONFIDENCE OF IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS OF THIRD COUNTRIES;
- \* THE NEED FOR HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO DO ITS UTMOST TO TRY AND ENSURE THAT THE BN(O) PASSPORT IS WIDELY ACCEPTABLE INTERNATIONALLY, AND POSSIBLY TO THIS END, INCLUDE IN THE PASSPORT FREEDOM OF ENTRY INTO THE UK;
- \* THE NEED TO GIVE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION TO THE REQUEST FOR RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE UK FROM HONG KONG BDC'S WHO ARE NOT OF CHINESE ORIGIN, AND FROM FORMER SERVICEMEN IN HONG KONG; AND
- \* THE NEED TO ENSURE CONTINUED CONVENIENCE OF TRAVEL OF CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY (CI) HOLDERS.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL POINTED OUT THAT WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE LAST POINT, THESE ISSUES WERE ESSENTIALLY MATTERS FOR HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

+WE SHALL ENSURE THAT HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT SEE THE VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO ISSUES WHICH ARE WITHIN THE PROVINCE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, MR THOMAS SAID ONE ASPECT OF THE NEW BN(O) PASSPORT WHICH HAD GIVEN RISE TO DOUBT ABOUT ITS USEFULNESS WAS THE FACT THAT IT WOULD NOT CARRY A DIRECT +HOLDER HAS THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG+ ENDORSEMENT.

/+MEMBERS WILL .....

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+MEMBERS WILL HAVE SEEN THAT BARONESS YOUNG, THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, SAID IN REPLY TO A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS YESTERDAY, THAT THE CHINESE SIDE, IN A RECENT MEETING OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP, HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT THE WORDING OF THE ENDORSEMENT SHOULD BE AS FOLLOWS:

+THE HOLDER OF THIS PASSPORT HAS HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD NUMBER (SO AND SO) WHICH STATES THAT THE HOLDER HAS THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG.+

+BY THESE WORDS IT WILL BE QUITE CLEAR THAT THE HOLDER HAS THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG, AND THAT IT IS HIS IDENTITY CARD WHICH SPECIFIES HIS RIGHT OF ABODE, NOT HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY HAD HAD INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH A NUMBER OF CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES IN HONG KONG ON THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE NEW PASSPORT IN THE PAST MONTH.

+IN THE LIGHT OF THESE DISCUSSIONS, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE RIGHT OF ABODE ENDORSEMENT ALONG THOSE LINES SHOULD SATISFY IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS OF THIRD COUNTRIES OF THE HOLDERS' RIGHT TO RETURN TO HONG KONG WITHOUT CALLING FOR THE PRODUCTION OF THE IDENTITY CARDS THEMSELVES,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE TIME SCALE, MR THOMAS SAID HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT WOULD START APPROACHING THIRD COUNTRIES FORMALLY AFTER THE ORDER IN COUNCIL HAD BEEN MADE, +PROBABLY IN APRIL NEXT YEAR+, TO EXPLAIN THE NEW BN(O) STATUS AND TO ENSURE THAT HOLDERS OF BN(O) PASSPORTS WOULD ENJOY THE SAME ACCESS TO THIRD COUNTRIES AS HOLDERS OF BDTC PASSPORTS.

THE OBJECT WOULD BE TO ENSURE THAT THE BN(O) PASSPORT WOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE TRAVEL DOCUMENT ALONE, AND THAT EXISTING ENTRY AGREEMENTS - ESPECIALLY THE VISA ABOLITION AGREEMENTS - WOULD CONTINUE TO APPLY, HE ADDED.

AS FOR THE MECHANICS FOR PROCURING THE NEW BN(O) PASSPORTS, MR THOMAS CONFIRMED THAT A BDTC COULD TRADE IN HIS BN(O) PASSPORT FOR A BDTC PASSPORT BEFORE 1997 IF HE BECAME DISSATISFIED WITH HIS BN(O) PASSPORT.

+BUT IN LINE WITH HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT'S ESTABLISHED PRACTICE ON THE ISSUE OF PASSPORTS, HE CAN ONLY HOLD EITHER A BN(O) OR A BDTC PASSPORT AT ANY ONE TIME,+ HE SAID.

+ACCORDINGLY IF HE DOES NOT HOLD A BN(O) PASSPORT ON JULY 1, 1997, HE WILL HAVE NO BRITISH NATIONALITY OR BRITISH PASSPORT UNLESS HE WOULD OTHERWISE BE STATELESS.

+FURTHERMORE, BDTC PASSPORTS ISSUED AFTER JULY 1, 1987 WILL HAVE PROGRESSIVELY SHORTER VALIDITY PERIODS AS 1997 APPROACHES,+ HE SAID.

/THE ATTORNEY .....

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THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ADDED THAT BN(O) PASSPORTS WOULD BE VALID FOR 10 YEARS, IN LINE WITH THE NORMAL VALIDITY PERIODS OF BRITISH PASSPORTS.

+AS THE PROCESS FOR REGISTRATION AS A BN(O) WILL BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PROCESS FOR ACQUIRING A BN(O) PASSPORT, THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR A BDTC SEPARATELY TO REGISTER AS A BN(O) ONCE HE HAS ACQUIRED A BN(O) PASSPORT,+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS SAID THERE WERE TWO MAIN REASONS WHY THE BN(O) PASSPORT WAS BEING INTRODUCED IN 1987.

+THE FIRST IS TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE BDTC PASSPORT WHICH FROM THAT TIME ONWARD WILL HAVE A PROGRESSIVELY SHORTER PERIOD OF VALIDITY.

+AND THE SECOND IS TO ALLOW IMMIGRATION CONTROL POINTS IN THIRD COUNTRIES PLENTY OF TIME TO GET USED TO THE NEW PASSPORT.

+INTENTION IS, OF COURSE, THAT BY THE TIME THE BN(O) PASSPORT BECOMES AVAILABLE IN 1987, THIRD COUNTRIES WILL HAVE ACCEPTED IT AS A VALID TRAVEL DOCUMENT.+

AS FOR WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR A RESIDENT OF THE HONG KONG SAR TO HOLD CONCURRENTLY A BN(O) PASSPORT AND AN SAR PASSPORT, HE SAID THAT IN HIS VIEW PARAGRAPH 3 OF SECTION 14 OF ANNEX 1 TO THE JOINT DECLARATION CLEARLY PROVIDED FOR RESIDENTS TO THE SAR TO HOLD CONCURRENTLY AN SAR AND A BN(O) PASSPORT.

+THERE CAN BE, SIR, NO OTHER INTERPRETATION,+ HE SAID.

AS FOR THE CALL FOR SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION TO BE GIVEN TO THE REQUEST, FROM BDTC'S WHO ARE NOT OF CHINESE ORIGIN AND FORMER SERVICEMEN, TO BE GRANTED BRITISH CITIZENSHIP OR THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE UK, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS A MATTER FOR HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

+AND I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE ELOQUENT PLEAS MADE ON THEIR BEHALF BY THOSE IN THIS COUNCIL AND OTHERS OUTSIDE WILL REACH THE EARS OF THOSE IN WESTMINSTER BY THE TIME THE DRAFT ORDER COMES TO BE DEBATED,+ HE SAID.

+BUT THERE IS NO QUESTION OF ANY PERSON WHO CEASES TO BE A BDTC ON JULY 1, 1997, BY VIRTUE OF PROVISIONS IN THE DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL, OR ANY CHILD BORN ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 1997 TO SUCH A PERSON, THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THEM BECOMING STATELESS THEREAFTER,+ HE SAID.

+ARTICLE 6 OF THE DRAFT ORDER PROVIDES THAT ANY PERSON WHO CEASES TO BE A BDTC ON JULY 1, 1997 SHALL AUTOMATICALLY BECOME A BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZEN IF HE WOULD OTHERWISE BE STATELESS.

/+SO FOR .....

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+SO FOR ANY CHILD OF A FORMER BDTC BORN ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 1997, THE GRANDCHILD OF A FORMER BDTC WILL HAVE AN ENTITLEMENT TO REGISTER AS A BOC WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF HIS BIRTH.

+THUS THE DRAFT ORDER IN COUNCIL PROVIDES FOR A FORM OF BRITISH NATIONALITY TO BE GRANTED TO FORMER BDTC'S, TO THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN IF THEY WOULD OTHERWISE BE STATELESS.

+BUT THE CHINESE BDTC'S AND BDTC'S WHO ARE NOT OF CHINESE ORIGIN WILL HAVE A RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG AFTER 1997 PROVIDED THAT THEY SATISFY THE CONDITIONS FOR ACQUISITION OF RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG SAR IN THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT DECLARATION, AND IN ADDITION SIR, ARTICLE 7 OF THE CHINESE NATIONALITY LAW MAKES PROVISIONS FOR ALIENS TO ACQUIRE CHINESE NATIONALITY,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO HOLDERS OF CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY, MR THOMAS SAID GOVERNMENT WAS FULLY AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ACHIEVING SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR CONTINUED EASE OF TRAVEL.

+IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE OVER 1.7 MILLION RESIDENTS IN HONG KONG WHO QUALIFY FOR THE ISSUE OF CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY AND OVER 900 000 CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY ARE CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION,+ HE SAID.

+OVER THE YEARS THE CERTIFICATE OF IDENTITY HAS ACHIEVED A HIGH REPUTATION AND WIDE INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY.

+I UNDERSTAND, SIR, THAT THE ISSUE WILL BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP,+ HE SAID.

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UK URGED TO LEAD IN RECOGNISING BN(O) PASSPORT  
\* \* \* \*

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO DEVISE A SYSTEM OF RECOGNITION OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORT SO THAT IT IS AUTOMATICALLY GOOD FOR TRAVEL TO THE UK WITHOUT THE NEED FOR SPECIFIC PERMISSION ON EACH OCCASION OR FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY.

THE SUGGESTION WAS MADE BY THE HON JOHN SWAINE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

LEADING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986, MR SWAINE SAID THIS WAS ONE FACET OF INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY WHICH WAS ENTIRELY WITHIN THE POWER OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

/HE RECALLED .....

HE RECALLED THAT HE HAD SUGGESTED AN AUTOMATIC PERMISSION TO LAND ENDORSEMENT IN HIS SPEECH DURING LAST WEEK'S POLICY DEBATE.

+IF THAT PRESENTS A TECHNICAL DIFFICULTY (AS TO WHICH I AM NOT CONVINCED) THEN COULD NOT ANOTHER METHOD BE DEvised WHICH WOULD BE TECHNICALLY ACCEPTABLE AND WHICH WOULD OBIvIATE THE PROCEDURES UNDER THE IMMIGRATION RULES BEFORE LEAVE TO ENTER IS GIVEN?+ HE ASKED.

+THE IMPORTANT THING IS FOR BRITAIN TO SET THE LEAD IN GIVING TO THE NEW PASSPORT THE STAMP OF INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY,+ HE SAID.

+BRITAIN, I FEAR, IS RAPIDLY LOSING THE BATTLE FOR THE MINDS AND HEARTS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE: IT IS NOT TOO LATE EVEN NOW FOR SOME MEASURE OF GOODWILL TO BE REGAINED,+ HE ADDED.

MR SWAINE OBSERVED THAT THE NEW STATUS OF BN(O) CREATED BY THE DRAFT ORDER WOULD BE AN ODD STATUS IN THAT AS FROM JULY 1, 1997 THE BN(O) PASSPORT WOULD BE A TRAVEL DOCUMENT WITHOUT A HOME OF ITS OWN.

+IT DOES NOT CARRY THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE UK, AND WILL NOT CARRY ANY RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG BECAUSE THAT WILL BE GOVERNED BY ANNEX I ARTICLE XIV OF THE JOINT DECLARATION.

+RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG WILL THEN BE EVIDENCED BY A PERMANENT IDENTITY CARD TO BE ISSUED BY THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION GOVERNMENT,+ HE ANALYSED.

HE NOTED THE DILEMMA THAT THIS POSED HAD JUST BEEN RESOLVED BY THE NEWS THAT BRITAIN AND CHINA HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE FORM OF ENDORSEMENT ON THE BN(O) PASSPORT THAT THE HOLDER POSSESSES A HONG KONG PERMANENT IDENTITY CARD WHICH STATES THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG.

+IT REMAINS FOR BRITAIN NOW TO ENSURE THE INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY OF THE NEW PASSPORT WITH THIS ENDORSEMENT: EASE OF TRAVEL IS, OF COURSE, ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAIN HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY AND WAY OF LIFE,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE OTHER FEATURE OF THE DRAFT ORDER, THE STATUS OF BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZEN, MR SWAINE SAID IT WAS EVEN MORE NEBULOUS THAN THAT OF BN(O) AND FURTHER REMOVED FROM IDENTIFICATION WITH A HOME.

IT COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS ANOMALIES AND INJUSTICES WITH REGARD TO NON-CHINESE BRITISH NATIONALS, HE ADDED.

CONCLUDING, MR SWAINE MADE A SPECIAL PLEA FOR THE EX-SERVICEMEN OF HONG KONG BECAUSE HE BELIEVED NONE DESERVED IT MORE.

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HE POINTED OUT THAT THEY FOUGHT IN DEFENCE OF HONG KONG AND IN OTHER THEATRES OF WAR-FOR KING AND COUNTRY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR.

+BRITAIN AND HONG KONG OWE THEM A DEBT OF GRATITUDE WHICH MUST BE HONOURED.

HE SAID HE RECKONED THEIR NUMBER WAS ABOUT 400 AND WAS DWINDLING.

+THEY FOUGHT IN DEFENCE OF A SYSTEM WHICH WILL RUN ITS COURSE IN HONG KONG IN 12 YEARS.

+BRITAIN MUST THEREFORE OFFER THEM A HOME. NOTHING LESS WILL DO,+ HE STRESSED.

MR SWAINE SAID THE WAY TO DO SO WAS PROVIDED BY THE BRITISH NATIONALITY ACT OF 1981 ITSELF.

UNDER SECTION 4 THE HOME SECRETARY HAD DISCRETION TO REGISTER A HONG KONG BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY CITIZEN AS A BRITISH CITIZEN AND TO WAIVE THE RESIDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS IF HE HAD BEEN IN CROWN SERVICE, INCLUDING MILITARY SERVICES, HE OBSERVED.

+I APPEAL TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO MAKE IT KNOWN THAT IT WILL SYMPATHETICALLY CONSIDER ALL SUCH APPLICATIONS MADE BY OUR EX-SERVICEMEN,+ HE URGED.

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NEW PASSPORT MUST STATE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HK  
\* \* \* \*

THE NEW BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORT WOULD ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE IF THE ENDORSEMENT COULD REMOVE ALL DOUBTS OF IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES REGARDING THE RETURNABILITY TO HONG KONG OF SUCH PASSPORT HOLDERS WITHOUT THE NEED TO PRODUCE ADDITIONAL IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS, DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986.

RECALLING A SPEECH BY THE THEN BRITISH MINISTER OF STATE, MR RICHARD LUCE, DURING THE DEBATE OF THE HONG KONG BILL IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR, DR HO SAID THERE WAS A CLEAR UNDERTAKING BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD REAFFIRMED THAT A SOLUTION TO THE STATING OF THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG ON BN(O) PASSPORTS WOULD BE SOUGHT WITH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES WHICH IN THE END WOULD NOT NECESSITATE THE CARRYING OF AN ADDITIONAL DOCUMENT BY THE HOLDERS OF SUCH PASSPORT WHEN TRAVELLING ABROAD.

HOWEVER, SAID THE WORDING OF THE ENDORSEMENT ANNOUNCED THIS MORNING AND REPORTED IN THE PRESS HAD NOT FULLY ADDRESSED THIS PARTICULAR POINT.

DR HO HOPED THAT HOLDERS OF THE BN(O) PASSPORT COULD ENJOY THE SAME DEGREE OF CONVENIENCE IN TRAVELLING AS THE PRESENT BDTC PASSPORT HOLDERS.

HE BELIEVED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD FIRM COMMITMENT TO MAKE THE STRONGEST REPRESENTATION TO THIRD COUNTRIES, TO EXPLAIN TO THEM THIS RELATIVELY COMPLEX ARRANGEMENT SO AS TO ESTABLISH INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR THE NEW-STYLE PASSPORT.

+ONLY IF THE BN(O) PASSPORT WERE ACCEPTED BY THIRD COUNTRIES SOON AFTER ITS ISSUANCE BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WOULD ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS IN HONG KONG BE ENCOURAGED TO COME FORWARD TO APPLY FOR IT,+ DR HO SAID.

+COULD WE BE ENLIGHTENED THEN AS REGARDS HOW AND WHAT THE UK GOVERNMENT WILL DO TO PROMOTE THE ACCEPTANCE OF BN(O) PASSPORT IN A MORE DETAILED MANNER?+ HE ASKED.

DR HO SAID HIS UNDERSTANDING FROM THE JOINT DECLARATION WAS THAT RESIDENTS WHO AT PRESENT WERE ENTITLED TO HOLD BDTC PASSPORTS WOULD IN FUTURE BE ENTITLED TO USE BN(O) PASSPORTS AS A TRAVELLING DOCUMENT IN ADDITION TO THE ONE ISSUED BY THE FUTURE HONG KONG SAR GOVERNMENT.

+IT WOULD DEFINITELY HELP TO DISPEL UNNECESSARY SUSPICION CONCERNING THE ENTITLEMENT TO CONCURRENTLY HOLDING BOTH TYPES OF PASSPORT IF THIS COULD BE CONFIRMED IN DUE COURSE BY BOTH THE BRITISH AND THE CHINESE GOVERNMENTS.

+THIS, I BELIEVE, WILL GO A LONG WAY IN EASING THE MINDS OF THOSE ELIGIBLE TO TAKE UP THE NEW-STYLE BRITISH PASSPORTS,+ HE SAID.

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CALL TO OFFER BRITISH OR BDT CITIZENSHIP TO MINORITIES

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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD OFFER LOCAL NON-CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITIES BRITISH CITIZENSHIP OR BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY CITIZENSHIP IN ANOTHER BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON ALLEN LEE DURING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986 TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/HE SAID .....

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HE SAID SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF THE ORDER, THERE WERE CONSIDERABLE CONCERNS AMONG THE MINORITIES IN HONG KONG THAT THEY WOULD BECOME STATELESS.

EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE OFFERED BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZENSHIP (BOC) AFTER JULY 1, 1997, AND PROVISIONS WOULD BE MADE FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN BORN AFTER 1997 FOR BOC STATUS, THERE WAS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY THAT THE THIRD GENERATION OF THE MINORITY GROUP WOULD BECOME STATELESS, HE SAID.

HE NOTED THAT THE INDIAN COMMUNITY HAD MADE REPRESENTATION TO UMELCO AND EXPRESSED STRONGLY THAT EVEN IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OBTAINED THE AGREEMENT FROM THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT THAT THEIR FUTURE DESCENDANTS COULD APPLY FOR CHINESE CITIZENSHIP, THEY WERE RELUCTANT, AT THIS STAGE, TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO ACCEPTANCE.

+NO ONE SHOULD BECOME STATELESS DURING THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY NOR IN THE FUTURE,+ MR LEE SAID.

+THESE MINORITIES IN HONG KONG CHOOSE TO BECOME BRITISH NATIONALS BECAUSE THEY HAVE FAITH IN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

+IT IS UNETHICAL FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO TURN HER BACK AND WASH HER HANDS CLEAN WITH REGARD TO LESS THAN 10 000 MINORITIES IN THIS CATEGORY,+ HE ADDED.

MR LEE SAID ONE ARGUMENT HE HAD HEARD WAS THAT EVEN FOR A BRITISH CITIZEN LIVING OUTSIDE BRITAIN FOR TWO GENERATIONS, THE THIRD GENERATION WOULD LOSE BRITISH CITIZENSHIP.

THE DIFFERENCE, HE POINTED OUT, WAS THAT THE BRITISH CITIZEN HAD THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE WHILE THE MINORITIES IN HONG KONG DID NOT HAVE THIS FREEDOM OF CHOICE.

+ANOTHER ARGUMENT IS THAT IF BRITAIN OFFERS BRITISH CITIZENSHIP OR BDTC STATUS TO THE MINORITIES IN HONG KONG, WHAT ABOUT THE ETHNIC CHINESE BDTC PASSPORT HOLDERS? WHAT WOULD BE THEIR REACTION?

+I HAVE TALKED TO QUITE A FEW CHINESE BDTC PASSPORT HOLDERS, I CAN SAFELY SAY THAT THEY HAVE NO OBJECTION TO THE MINORITIES OBTAINING BRITISH CITIZENSHIP OR RETAINING THE BDTC STATUS; IN FACT, THEY WISH THE MINORITIES THE BEST OF LUCK,+ MR LEE SAID.

IT WAS A BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFER THE LOCAL MINORITIES BRITISH CITIZENSHIP OR BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY CITIZENSHIP IN ANOTHER BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY, HE SAID.

+FAILING TO TAKE UP THIS RESPONSIBILITY IS UNTHINKABLE.

+I HOPE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT WOULD CONSIDER THIS CASE CAREFULLY,+ HE NOTED.

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MP'S ASKED TO BE HONEST WITH HK PEOPLE

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BRITISH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT HAVE BEEN URGED TO BE TOTALLY HONEST, NOT ONLY WITH THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE AND HONOUR, BUT ALSO WITH THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WHEN TAKING PART IN THE FORTHCOMING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE NATIONALITY WHITE PAPER.

THE PLEA WAS MADE BY THE HON STEPHEN CHEONG DURING AN ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE ISSUE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHEONG ALSO SUGGESTED THREE AREAS WHICH MP'S MIGHT WISH TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION IN THEIR FUTURE DELIBERATIONS.

+FIRST, PLEASE TAKE HEED OF THE REQUEST OF THE SMALL NUMBER (LESS THAN 10 000) OF BRITISH SUBJECTS OF HONG KONG WHO ARE NOT ETHNIC CHINESE,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEONG POINTED OUT THAT THEIR FEARS ABOUT POSSIBLE BECOMING STATELESS PERSONS AFTER 1997 COULD BE VIEWED AND CONSIDERED WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY.

+THEY DO DESERVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IF ONLY BECAUSE THE PLIGHT THEY CLAIM TO BE IN IS, IN MY VIEW, A PRODUCT OF THE LEGACY OF THE EMPIRE THAT WAS.

+MANY OF THE FOREFATHERS OF OUR NON-CHINESE FRIENDS MIGHT VERY WELL HAVE BEEN REQUIRED TO WORK AND EVENTUALLY SETTLED IN HONG KONG AS THEY WERE BROUGHT IN BY THEIR THEN COLONIAL MASTERS IN ORDER TO PERFORM THE NECESSARY PIONEERING WORK IN HONG KONG FOR THE GLORY OF THE THEN EMPIRE.

+THE UNIQUENESS OF THEIR CASE MUST RANK EQUALLY WITH, IF NOT HIGHER THAN, THE CASE OF THE GIBRALTARIANS AND FALKLANDERS FOR IT IS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT DECIDED TO RETURN HONG KONG TO CHINA,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEONG ADDED THAT HE COULD NOT SEE ANY REASON WITH BRITAIN SHOULD NOT GIVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR THOSE PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT ETHNIC CHINESE IN HONG KONG IF THEY CHOSE TO CONCEDE TO GIBRALTARIANS AND FALKLANDERS. +AFTER ALL THE NUMBER IS MUCH LESS THAN THOSE OF GIBRALTAR.+

+IF THEIR REQUESTS WERE TO BE REJECTED, THEN THEY SHOULD AT LEAST BE ENTITLED TO AN HONEST EXPLANATION FOR, WITHOUT IT, THE DECISION OF REJECTION COULD EASILY BE LOOKED UPON AS ONE THAT CARRIES TINTS OF RACIALISM.

+IT WOULD NOT SERVE ANY USEFUL PURPOSE TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO PULL WOOLS OVER THE EYES OF THE GENTLE FLOCK,+ HE SAID.

/SECONDLY, MR .....

SECONDLY, MR CHEONG SAID HE HOPED THAT SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENT OF BRITAIN WOULD CONTINUE TO COMMIT TO THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE BN(O) ORDER AND WOULD UNDERTAKE TO MAKE ALL THE NECESSARY INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE COMPLETE COMPATIBILITY OF THE DOCUMENT WITH THE BDTG PASSPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLING NOW AND IN THE ENSUING 50 YEARS AFTER 1997 SO THAT IT WOULD NOT BE MADE A MOCKERY THUS EFFECTIVELY DEGENERATING IT INTO A USELESS AND MEANINGLESS DOCUMENT.

THIRDLY, HE SAID, THE QUESTION ON BN(O) PASSPORT WAS NOT WHETHER IT WAS ACCEPTABLE TO THE THIRD COUNTRIES BUT WHETHER IT WAS EXEMPTED BY THIRD COUNTRIES FROM VISA REQUIREMENTS.

+I THEREFORE URGE THAT THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT CONSIDERS SERIOUSLY AND OBJECTIVELY THE SUGGESTIONS MADE BY THE HONOURABLE JOHN SWAINE THAT THE BN(O) DOCUMENT BE STAMPED WITH PERMISSION TO LAND IN BRITAIN SO THAT BRITAIN COULD BE SEEN TO TAKE THE LEAD IN UPHOLDING INTERNATIONAL CONFIDENCE IN THE FACT THAT THE BN(O) DOCUMENT IS INDEED A TOTALLY EFFECTIVE AND CONVENIENT TRAVEL DOCUMENT IN FACILITATING OUR BUSINESSMEN AND TOURISTS.

+AS ACCESSIBILITY TO INTERNATIONAL MARKET PLACES BY OUR BUSINESSMEN IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO OUR FUTURE PROSPERITY, SUCH INITIATIVES MADE BY BRITAIN TO ENSURE THE EASE OF OUR ACCESS WOULD CERTAINLY DEMONSTRATE THAT BRITAIN IS BEING SERIOUS IN HER DECLARATION TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS HONG KONG'S STABILITY AND PROSPERITY,+ MR CHEONG SAID.

HE RECALLED THAT IN 1981 EFFORTS MADE BY THE THEN UMELCO MEMBERS TO SEEK CLARIFICATIONS ON THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE NEED TO SPLIT BRITISH NATIONALS INTO DIFFERENT CLASSES AND INTRODUCE THE NEW NOMENCLATURE FOR THOSE BRITISH SUBJECTS RESIDING IN HONG KONG AND TO FIGHT FOR HONG KONG HAD BEEN THWARTED BY PEOPLE USING STALLING TACTICS.

+WE WERE ADVISED BY PEOPLE WHOM WE IMPLICITLY TRUST THAT THE HOUSE OF LORDS WILL PASS THE BILL WITH A WIDE MARGIN SO THAT ANY FURTHER MOVES MADE BY HONG KONG OR INDEED BY ANY OTHER PLACES LIKE GIBRALTAR AND FALKLAND ISLANDS WOULD NOT HAVE ANY CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING.

+WELL, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ONLY MANAGED TO SECURE THE MINISCULE MARGIN OF TWO VOTES AND TO ADD INSULT TO INJURY THE GIBRALTARIANS AND THE FALKLANDERS SUCCEEDED IN MAKING THEIR SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE DREAMS CAME TRUE,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEONG SAID IT WAS POINTLESS TO DWELL ON THE PAST AND MOOT ON WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

+WE SHOULD NOT HARBOUR ANY GRUDGES FOR WE DO UNDERSTAND NOW THE REASONS WHY THE BRITISH SUBJECTS IN HONG KONG WERE SINGLED OUT FOR DIFFERENT TREATMENT.

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+ALTHOUGH WE MAY FEEL UNHAPPY ABOUT WHAT HAD HAPPENED BUT WE SHOULD BE COMPASSIONATE ENOUGH TO ACCEPT THE REALITY WITH DIGNITY.

+WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS TO TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THEIR COUNTRY FOR IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A NIGHTMARE FOR ANY GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN TO BE EXPOSED TO THE POSSIBILITY, HOWEVER SLIGHT, THAT THE ALREADY HEAVILY BURDENED SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM MIGHT WELL BE FURTHER STRETCHED,+ HE SAID.

+NEVERTHELESS WE WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH HAPPIER IF SOMEHOW THOSE BRITISH POLITICIANS COULD BE SLIGHTLY MORE HONEST AND TOLD US THE TRUTH RIGHT FROM THE START.

+IT IS WITH THIS THOUGHT IN MIND THAT I WISH TO PLEA TO WHOEVER THAT TAKES PART IN THE DEBATE IN WESTMINSTER TO RISE TO THE OCCASION THIS TIME AROUND, TO DO SOME HARD SOUL-SEARCHING AND TRY TO TAKE HEED OF OUR CONCERNS; LISTEN ATTENTIVELY TO OUR SUGGESTIONS AND THE RATIONALE BEHIND OUR SUGGESTIONS; AND FINALLY PERSUADE THE U.K. GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT OUR PROPOSALS,+ MR CHEONG SAID.

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RIGHT OF ABODE STATEMENT ESSENTIAL IN NEW PASSPORT  
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A CLEAR ENDORSEMENT ON ALL BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORTS STATING CATEGORICALLY THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG ENJOYED BY HOLDERS IS ESSENTIAL TO FACILITATE THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE DOCUMENT BY THIRD COUNTRIES, THE HON MRS SELINA CHOW SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986, MRS CHOW REITERATED HER CALL FOR THIS ENDORSEMENT WHICH SHE FIRST MENTIONED IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR.

SHE SAID IT WAS LEARNT THAT THE UK AND CHINA HAD AGREED IN THE LAST ROUND OF TALKS AT THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP THAT THE ENDORSEMENT ON THE BN(O) PASSPORTS WOULD BE +THE HOLDER OF THIS PASSPORT HAS HONG KONG PERMANENT IDENTITY CARD NO. XYZ WHICH STATES THAT THE HOLDER HAS THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG+.

HOWEVER, SHE SAID THIS DIFFERED FROM THE EXISTING ENDORSEMENT IN BDTC PASSPORTS SAYING +THE HOLDER HAS THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG+.

+IN MY VIEW, THE MENTION OF THE PERMANENT HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD, IN THE BN(O) PASSPORT MAY LEAD TO UNNECESSARY SUSPICION OF IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS IN THIRD COUNTRIES,+ SHE SAID.

/SHE EXPLAINED .....

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SHE EXPLAINED THAT THERE MIGHT BE PROBLEMS IN GETTING IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS IN OTHER COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT THE PASSPORTS BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER JULY 1, 1997.

SHE URGED THEREFORE IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE EASE OF TRAVEL, AND SO AS NOT TO PLACE BN(O)'S IN A WORSE OFF POSITION TO BDTC'S THAT BRITAIN AND CHINA AGREED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE OF PUTTING A CERTIFICATE OF RIGHT OF ABODE WITH THE BN(O) PASSPORTS BEFORE AND AFTER 1997.

MRS CHOW NOTED THAT THE BDTC PASSPORT NOW REQUIRED NO VISA TO ENTER ABOUT 70 COUNTRIES AND WONDERED WHETHER THE VISA ABOLITION AGREEMENTS APPLICABLE TO BDTC PASSPORTS WOULD BE EQUALLY VALID FOR BN(O) PASSPORTS.

+UNLESS AND UNTIL BRITAIN CAN ASSURE HONG KONG BY THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF NEGOTIATION WITH AT LEAST THE COUNTRIES WITH WHICH WE PRESENTLY HAVE VISA ABOLITION AGREEMENTS, THE BN(O) PASSPORTS WILL CERTAINLY BE LESS ATTRACTIVE TO BDTC'S,+ SHE SAID.

MRS CHOW MAINTAINED THAT ALTHOUGH BRITAIN MIGHT NOT BE IN A POSITION TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF SUCH NEGOTIATION, HONG KONG MUST BE TOLD WHEN SUCH TALKS WOULD START, AND BY WHEN THEY WERE EXPECTED TO BE CONCLUDED.

+BDTC'S WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR BN(O) PASSPORTS HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THE NEW DOCUMENT REQUIRES AND EXEMPTS,+ SHE STRESSED.

SHE WARNED THAT IF BDTC'S WERE KEPT IN A STATE OF UNCERTAINTY, OR IF THEIR PRESENT CONVENIENCE WAS ERODED, THERE WAS EVERY POSSIBILITY THEY WOULD POSTPONE THE APPLICATION FOR THE BN(O) PASSPORTS UNTIL DOUBTS WERE REMOVED.

FINALLY, MRS CHOW ECHOED HER SUPPORT FOR THE HON JOHN SWAINE'S CALL FOR AUTOMATIC PERMISSION FOR EVERY BN(O) PASSPORT HOLDER TO LAND IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

+I BELIEVE SUCH A MOVE NOT ONLY REMOVES THE UNCERTAINTY THAT SURROUNDS THE EXISTING OPTIONAL CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY, BUT WILL ALSO HELP BRITAIN TREMENDOUSLY IN REACHING VISA ABOLITION AGREEMENTS FOR HONG KONG WITH THIRD COUNTRIES,+ SHE SAID.

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CONCERN OVER ACCEPTABILITY OF BN(O) PASSPORT  
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THE NEW BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORT MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME ACCEPTANCE AS THE BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY CITIZEN (BDTC) PASSPORT.

THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN VOICED HIS CONCERN OVER THIS AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID HE PRESUMED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO LET A PERSON HOLDING A BN(O) PASSPORT AFTER JULY 1, 1987 RETAIN HIS BDTC STATUS UNTIL JUNE 30, 1997, UNLESS HE RENOUNCED IT OR WAS DEPRIVED OF THAT STATUS BEFORE THAT DATE.

+WE IN HONG KONG ARE NATURALLY VERY CONCERNED AS TO WHETHER THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO CONTINUOUSLY ENSURE THAT THE BN(O) PASSPORT WILL BE GIVEN EQUAL STATUS AND RECOGNITION BY COMMONWEALTH AND OTHER COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES AS ARE CURRENTLY GIVEN TO BDTC PASSPORTS HELD BY HONG KONG PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEONG-LEEN SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO SEEK ASSURANCE THAT SHOULD A BN(O) PASSPORT HOLDER BE DISSATISFIED WITH THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THAT PASSPORT, HE WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE HIS BN(O) PASSPORT BACK FOR A BDTC PASSPORT, WITH EXPIRY DATE AS OF JUNE 30, 1997.

HE ALSO CALLED FOR CLARIFICATION AS TO WHETHER THE VALIDITY OF A BN(O) PASSPORT WOULD BE FOR 10 YEARS AFTER THE DATE OF ISSUANCE OR WOULD IT BE ONLY UP TO JUNE 30, 1997.

+IF THE VALIDITY DATE IS BEYOND 1997, WOULD THE HOLDER STILL BE REQUIRED TO REGISTER FOR BN(O) STATUS BEFORE JUNE 30, 1997?+ HE ASKED.

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PROPER STATUS FOR NON-CHINESE AFTER 1997 URGED  
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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MUST ACCORD PROPER STATUS TO THE NON-CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATION OF HONG KONG, IN PARTICULAR THE INDIANS, WHO ARE BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY CITIZENS (BDTCs), AFTER 1997.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON THOMAS CLYDESDALE DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID THIS GROUP OF PEOPLE SHOULD, AFTER JUNE 30, 1997, BE ACCORDED FULL BRITISH NATIONAL STATUS WITH THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN BRITAIN OR, AT THE VERY LEAST, RETENTION OF THEIR BDTCS STATUS WITH RIGHT OF ABODE IN A BRITISH TERRITORY.

MR CLYDESDALE SAID OF THE 10 000 NON-CHINESE BDTCS, SOME 6 000 WERE INDIANS, THE MAJORITY OF WHOM WERE FROM FAMILIES WHICH WERE SETTLED HERE BEFORE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE IN 1947.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE INDIAN COMMUNITY HAD CONTRIBUTED A LOT TO THE HONG KONG ECONOMY OVER A VERY LONG PERIOD OF TIME, AND THAT THEY WERE AT PRESENT RESPONSIBLE FOR AT LEAST 10 PER CENT OF HONG KONG'S EXTERNAL TRADE BY VALUE AND FOR A VERY MUCH LARGER PERCENTAGE OF ITS TRADE WITH CERTAIN COUNTRIES.

IN ADDITION, A HIGH PROPORTION OF THE ORIGINAL INDIAN IMMIGRANTS WERE BROUGHT TO HONG KONG BY THEIR BRITISH EMPLOYERS.

+THEY CAME FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS AND NOT SOLELY FOR ECONOMIC REASONS. THEY CAME, AMONG OTHER THINGS, BECAUSE HONG KONG WAS BRITISH AND BECAUSE THEY CLEARLY BELIEVED IT WOULD REMAIN SO,+ HE NOTED.

THEREFORE, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, AND INDEED THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, COULD NOT EVADE DIRECT MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS GROUP OF CITIZENS AND MUST RESPECT THEIR WISH TO REMAIN BRITISH, HE STRESSED.

+THEY WERE AFTER ALL BRITISH SUBJECTS BEFORE THE BRITISH NATIONALITY ACT 1948 AND, AFTER THAT ACT, WERE IN MANY CASES REQUIRED TO RE-AFFIRM ALLEGIANCE TO BRITAIN,+ HE ADDED.

MR CLYDESDALE SAID THAT AFTER 1997, NON-CHINESE BDTCS WOULD BECOME BRITISH NATIONALS (OVERSEAS) OR BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZENS IF THEY HAD FAILED FOR ANY REASON TO APPLY FOR BN(O) STATUS, BUT THE PASSPORTS THEY WERE ENTITLED TO HAVE WOULD BE NO MORE THAN A TRAVEL DOCUMENT.

TO HAVE THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN HONG KONG, THEY HAD TO OBTAIN A HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD AND IN DOING SO, THEY HAD TO MEET CERTAIN ELIGIBILITY RULES AS WELL AS TO SHOW HONG KONG WAS THEIR PLACE OF +PERMANENT RESIDENCE+ THE PRECISE MEANING OF WHICH WAS NOT YET CLEAR, HE SAID.

+CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN OF NON-CHINESE BDTCS BORN AFTER JUNE 30, 1997 WILL ACQUIRE BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZEN STATUS.

+CHILDREN OF SUCH GRANDCHILDREN WILL, HOWEVER, BE STATELESS WHILE TO FURTHER COMPLICATE THE ISSUE, CHILDREN OF SUCH STATELESS CITIZENS IF BORN IN CHINA WILL BE CHINESE UNDER THE CHINESE NATIONALITY LAW,+ MR CLYDESDALE SAID.

+ALL OF THIS IS EXTREMELY COMPLICATED AND UNSETTLING FOR THE NON-CHINESE BDTC'S AND THEY ARE ENTITLED TO FEEL THAT HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IS IN EFFECT TELLING THEM THAT THEY EVENTUALLY WILL HAVE TO BECOME CHINESE NATIONALS OR ACCEPT THE FACT THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL BECOME STATELESS.

+IN SHORT, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS WASHING ITS HANDS OF ANY FUTURE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEM AND THE NET EFFECT IS THAT HONG KONG IS LIKELY TO LOSE MANY OF THESE VALUABLE CITIZENS TO OTHER TERRITORIES OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS,+ HE ADDED.

+EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE BY THIS COUNCIL AND BY THE HONG KONG AUTHORITIES TO PERSUADE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO ACCORD THESE FEWER THAN 10 000 PEOPLE THE PROTECTION OF BRITISH STATUS WITH THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN BRITAIN OR AT LEAST RETENTION OF BDTC STATUS,+ HE SAID.

+THE NUMBER IS SMALL GIVEN THE POPULATION AND IMMIGRANT AND EMIGRANT LEVELS IN BRITAIN AT PRESENT,+ HE ADDED.

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THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE IN AN EXTREME PREDICAMENT  
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IT SEEMS THAT HONG KONG BDTC'S HAVE NO REAL ALTERNATIVE BUT TO APPLY FOR THE NEW PASSPORTS AFTER JULY 1, 1987, AND THIS IS AN EXTREME PREDICAMENT TO BE IN, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986, MR HUI SAID THE DRAFT ORDER WAS FORMALLY PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WHEN THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT DECLARATION TOOK EFFECT, INTRODUCING A BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORT TO REPLACE THE BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORIES CITIZEN PASSPORT BY JULY 1, 1997, THE LATTER CEASING TO BE EFFECTIVE ON THAT DAY.

HE SAID THIS ACTION, FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S POINT OF VIEW, WAS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROVISIONS LAID DOWN IN THE MEMORANDUM ATTACHED TO THE JOINT DECLARATION.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT WHAT THE MAJORITY OF HOLDERS OF BDTC PASSPORTS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT MOST WERE THE CONVENIENCE, RECOGNITION, AND ACCEPTABILITY BY THIRD COUNTRIES OF THE NEW PASSPORT WHEN IT WAS USED DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD (FROM NOW TO JULY 1, 1997) AND AFTER JULY 1, 1997.

/THEREFORE, HE .....

THEREFORE, HE SAID, HE SUPPORTED THE HON JOHN SWAINE'S CALL FOR A CLEAR STATEMENT IN THE NEW PASSPORT THAT THE HOLDER WAS ENTITLED TO ENTER THE UNITED KINGDOM WITHOUT HAVING TO APPLY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY BEFOREHAND.

MOREOVER, HE SAID HE FELT, IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR THAT THE HOLDERS OF THE PASSPORT HAVE THE RIGHT OF PERMANENT ABODE IN HONG KONG.

+THIS IS THE MINIMUM MORAL OBLIGATION WHICH BRITAIN HAS TO TAKE UP AND THE RIGHTS TO BE ENJOYED BY THE HOLDERS OF THE NEW PASSPORTS,+ HE STRESSED.

MR HUI NEXT EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE PLIGHT OF SOME 960 000 CERTIFICATE-OF-IDENTITY (CI) HOLDERS IN HONG KONG.

HE ESTIMATED THAT THERE WERE A FURTHER ONE MILLION MORE PEOPLE WHO WERE ELIGIBLE TO OBTAIN CI'S BUT, FOR WHATEVER REASONS, HAD NOT YET APPLIED FOR THEM.

+THIS SILENT MAJORITY, WHO ARE NOT BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORIES CITIZENS, WOULD BE UNABLE TO OBTAIN THE NEW PASSPORTS ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 1987 UNLESS THEY ARE WILLING TO APPLY FOR NATURALISATION AS BDTC'S ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 1997 UNDER CLAUSE 18 OF THE BRITISH 1981 NATIONALITY ACT,+ HE SAID.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, IT WAS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THE CI HOLDERS WOULD DO SO.

MR HUI POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE JOINT DECLARATION, THOSE PEOPLE WHO WERE BORN OR WHO HAD ORDINARILY RESIDED IN HONG KONG FOR A CONTINUOUS PERIOD OF SEVEN YEARS OR MORE WOULD BECOME CITIZENS OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (SAR) AND WOULD BE QUALIFIED TO OBTAIN PASSPORTS OR TRAVEL DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE SAR.

+BUT FOR PEOPLE CURRENTLY HOLDING CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY OR THOSE WHO WILL HOLD THEM IN THE FUTURE, IF THEY ARE UNWILLING AFTER 1997 TO BECOME CITIZENS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, (FOR EXAMPLE HONG KONG CHINESE FOR POLITICAL REASONS) IT IS VERY POSSIBLE THAT PROBLEMS OF NATIONALITY WOULD ARISE ON OR AFTER JULY 1, 1997.

+IN THIS REGARD, I URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE ABOVE-MENTIONED SITUATION AND NEGOTIATE WITH THE RELEVANT AUTHORITY AT AN EARLY DATE THE STATUS, RIGHTS, AND ALTERATIONS TO ISSUING PROCEDURES REGARDING CERTIFICATE-OF-IDENTITY HOLDERS DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD.

+THE PURPOSE IS TO OBTAIN A SATISFACTORY REPLY SO THAT CERTIFICATE-OF-IDENTITY HOLDERS NEED NOT HAVE ANY ANXIETY,+ MR HUI SAID.

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PASSPORT PACKAGE SHOULD BE IMPROVED

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THE PRESENT PACKAGE REGARDING THE NEW BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD IMPROVE ON IT BEFORE ASKING THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG TO ACCEPT IT.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE HON MARTIN LEE DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID HE HAD SPENT A LONG TIME TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE SO-CALLED ADVANTAGES OF HAVING A BN(O) PASSPORT.

+I HOPE THAT A LOT OF BDTC'S WILL APPLY FOR THE NEW BN(O) PASSPORTS AS SOON AS THEY ARE INTRODUCED IN 1987; AND I PRAY THAT ONE DAY IN THE NOT SO DISTANT FUTURE IMMIGRATION OFFICERS ALL OVER THE WORLD WILL BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO THE BN(O) PASSPORT,+ HE SAID.

+BUT IN ALL HONESTY, I REALLY CANNOT RECOMMEND IT TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG NOW, UNLESS ITS DESIGNER WERE TO MAKE IT MUCH MORE ATTRACTIVE - NOT JUST BY CHANGING ITS COLOUR TO BURGUNDY, BUT BY ENDORSING ON IT A STATEMENT THAT THE HOLDER HAS AUTOMATIC PERMISSION TO ENTER THE UNITED KINGDOM, OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT, AS SUGGESTED BY MY HONOURABLE COLLEAGUE, MR JOHN SWAINE,+ HE ADDED.

MR LEE SAID HE AGREED WITH THE HON ALLEN LEE THAT THE MINORITY GROUPS IN HONG KONG DESERVED A BETTER DEAL THAN WHAT WAS NOW GIVEN TO THEM.

+AS THEY ARE NOT OF CHINESE ORIGIN, THEY CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO SHARE THE SAME POSITIVE FEELINGS OF SOME CHINESE IN HONG KONG ABOUT THE RETURN TO MOTHERLAND.

+MANY OF THESE NON-CHINESE BRITISH NATIONALS HAD COME TO HONG KONG NOT BECAUSE IT WAS CHINESE TERRITORY, BUT BECAUSE IT WAS BRITISH,+ HE SAID.

HE CITED FROM THE PETITION BY THE COUNCIL OF HONG KONG INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS SAYING THAT +THEY CHOSE HONG KONG 'BECAUSE THEY HAD FAITH IN THE LAWS AND THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN AND BECAUSE THEY CHOSE TO GIVE OR TO CONTINUE THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO GREAT BRITAIN'.+

MR LEE ALSO QUOTED A FEW PASSAGES FROM A VERY RECENT PUBLICATION BY +THE JOINT COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF IMMIGRANTS+ ENTITLED +A QUESTION OF BELONGING - BRITISH NATIONALITY LAW AND THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+:

/+THAT LAW .....

+THAT LAW (THAT IS, BRITISH NATIONALITY LAW) WAS MORALLY INDEFENSIBLE AND HAS INDEED LEFT MANY CHINESE BDTC'S IN HONG KONG FEELING THAT THEY HAVE BEEN SOLD OUT; BUT IT WOULD BE DOUBLY UNJUST IF THEIR SITUATION WERE TO BE USED AS AN EXCUSE FOR FAILING TO ACT TO RELIEVE THE PLIGHT OF AN EVEN MORE DISADVANTAGED GROUP.+

ANOTHER PASSAGE READ: +IT MUST BE AN ABSOLUTE PRIORITY THAT THE BRITISH INVENTION OF 'ONE COUNTRY, SIX CITIZENSHIPS' DOES NOT LEAVE ANYONE WITH 'ONE CITIZENSHIP, NO COUNTRY'.+

THEIR RECOMMENDATION WAS THAT +THE FEW THOUSAND BRITISH NATIONALS IN HONG KONG WHO DO NOT HAVE ANOTHER NATIONALITY AND ARE EFFECTIVELY STATELESS SHOULD THEREFORE BE GRANTED FULL BRITISH CITIZENSHIP.+

MR LEE SAID HE ALSO AGREED WITH MR SWAINE IN HIS PLEA FOR THE 400 OR SO EX-SERVICEMEN IN HONG KONG.

HE POINTED OUT THAT EVERY YEAR ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY, LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS WOULD LINE UP BEFORE THE CENOTAPH AND PAY RESPECT TO +THE GLORIOUS DEAD+, MANY OF WHOM WERE THE DECEASED COLLEAGUES OF THESE 400 EX-SERVICEMEN.

+IT IS OF COURSE RIGHT AND PROPER THAT WE SHOULD HONOUR OUR DEAD WARRIORS; BUT SHOULD WE NOT ALSO HONOUR THE LIVING?

+HAS GREAT BRITAIN SHRUNK TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT SHE CANNOT EVEN ALLOW SUCH A SMALL NUMBER OF EX-SERVICEMEN TO LIVE THERE, IF THEY SHOULD WISH TO DO SO?+ MR LEE ASKED.

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ACTION NEEDED TO NEGOTIATE PASSPORT ACCEPTANCE

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A CALL WAS MADE TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO PROVIDE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AN ACTION PLAN TO NEGOTIATE INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL (OVERSEAS) PASSPORT, AND MAKE PROGRESS REPORTS TO THE PUBLIC AT REGULAR INTERVALS.

IT CAME FROM THE HON DESMOND LEE YU-TAI DURING THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DRAFT HONG KONG (BRITISH NATIONALITY) ORDER 1986 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

DESPITE VERBAL ASSURANCE BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT THEY WOULD DO THEIR BEST, THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WANTED TO KNOW HOW THEY CARRIED OUT NEGOTIATIONS, THE ACTUAL PROGRESS AND TIMESCALE, MR LEE SAID.

+THIS ASSURANCE BY WORD OF MOUTH IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH. THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ARE PRAGMATIC AND WILL DEMAND ACTION,+ HE STRESSED.

/MR LEE .....

MR LEE SAID THE BN(O) PASSPORT MIGHT BE REGARDED AS A +TRAVEL DOCUMENT+, NOT A +NATIONALITY PAPER+, BUT MANY HONG KONG PEOPLE WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACQUIRE THE DOCUMENT FOR UTILITY REASONS, IF CONVENIENCE OF TRAVEL COULD BE ENSURED.

HE FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT IF THE BN(O) WAS TO SERVE ANY PURPOSE, IT MUST ENJOY THE SAME STATUS AS THE BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORIES CITIZEN PASSPORT (BDTC), WHICH ENTITLED VISA EXEMPTION FOR ENTRY TO OVER 70 COUNTRIES.

MR LEE SUGGESTED THAT COMMUNITY LEADERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO ACQUIRE THE BN(O) AT THE EARLIEST STAGE AND TO TRY IT OUT IN INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, SO AS TO ESTABLISH ACCEPTABILITY.

HE ALSO CALLED UPON BRITAIN TO TAKE THE LEAD IN RECOGNISING THE BDTC AND BN(O) PASSPORTS SHE ISSUED.

HE SAID IT WAS NORMAL PRACTICE FOR HONG KONG BDTC'S TO APPLY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENTRY FOR TRAVEL TO BRITAIN WHILE NON-BRITISH NATIONALS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ENJOYED AN ABSOLUTE RIGHT TO ENTER.

+IF BRITAIN IS WILLING TO RECTIFY THIS DISPARITY, IT IS ENTIRELY WITHIN HER AUTHORITY TO DO SO,+ HE ADDED.

MR LEE SAID THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG'S COMMUNITY DEPENDED ON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS, AND FREE MOVEMENT AND TRAVEL WERE ESSENTIAL.

HE THEREFORE ASKED THE ADMINISTRATION TO ENSURE THAT FREEDOM OF TRAVEL WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ENJOYED BY THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

MEANWHILE, MR LEE SAID, IF BRITAIN CONSIDERED SUPPORT FOR THE BN(O) WAS DESIRABLE, THE TWO MILLION HONG KONG BELONGERS WHO WERE HOLDERS OF CERTIFICATES OF IDENTITY (CI), A TRAVEL PAPER THAT DID NOT CARRY A NATIONALITY, SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR BDTC STATUS, WHICH WOULD SUBSEQUENTLY TRANSFER TO BN(O).

+MANY CI HOLDERS HAVE LIVED HERE FOR MANY YEARS AND ESTABLISHED A CAREER. THEY ARE NO LESS OF A HONG KONG BELONGER THAN A BDTC, BUT CANNOT CLAIM A NATIONALITY LIKE THE LATTER,+ HE SAID.

TO PROVIDE AN INCENTIVE, HE PROPOSED THAT THE CURRENT NATURALISATION PROCEDURES BE SIMPLIFIED AND EXPEDITED.

MR LEE ALSO SPOKE ABOUT THE PLIGHT OF THE ETHNIC MINORITIES, AMONG WHICH THE INDIAN COMMUNITY WAS THE LARGEST GROUP.

HE SAID HE WAS INFORMED THAT THE INDIANS IN HONG KONG HAD STAYED HERE FOR MANY YEARS, INTERGRATED THEMSELVES WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND REGARDED HONG KONG AS THEIR PERMANENT HOME, AND MANY OF THEM WERE HOLDING BDTC PASSPORTS.

HOWEVER, HE SAID THE CHINESE NATIONALITY LAW WOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY PROVIDE A NATIONALITY FOR THOSE MINORITIES UNLESS THEY APPLIED FOR BN(O) STATUS BEFORE 1997. THEIR BDTC STATUS WOULD BE CHANGED TO BRITISH OVERSEAS CITIZEN (BOC) BY 1997.

IN THIS WAY THE INDIANS WERE WORRIED THAT THEY WOULD BECOME STATELESS BY THE TRANSFER DATE OF 1997, HE SAID.

+AS THE MINORITIES ARE MAKING USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROSPERITY OF HONG KONG, I THINK THEIR PETITION SHOULD DESERVE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION,+ HE ADDED.

LASTLY, MR LEE SAID HE HOPED THE VIEWS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE, BOTH ETHNIC CHINESE AND MINORITIES INCLUDED, WOULD BE CARRIED FORWARD TO BRITAIN FOR THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE.

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EXTRA PROTECTION FOR INSURANCE POLICY HOLDERS  
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A BILL SEEKING TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEASURES TAKEN BY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF INSURANCE POLICY HOLDERS OR POTENTIAL POLICY HOLDERS WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1985, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID A SECTION OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE GAVE THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY POWERS TO IMPOSE REQUIREMENTS ON AN INSURER IN ORDER TO PROTECT POLICY HOLDERS AGAINST THE RISK THAT THE INSURER MIGHT BE UNABLE TO MEET ITS LIABILITIES.

+THE USUAL ACTION TAKEN BY THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY UNDER THIS SECTION IS THE ISSUE OF A NOTICE TO AN INSURER REQUIRING THE COMPANY TO MAKE A DEPOSIT WITH A BANK IN THE NAME OF THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY ACCOUNT FOR THAT PARTICULAR COMPANY,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE COMPANY WAS REQUIRED TO KEEP THE DEPOSIT FREE OF ANY CHARGES, LIENS, ENCUMBRANCES, EQUITABLE INTERESTS, AND THIRD PARTY RIGHTS.

+IF THIS REQUIREMENT IS BREACHED AND THE DEPOSIT BECOMES ENCUMBERED, IT CEASES TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH IT WAS SET ASIDE, THAT IS AS AN INVIOABLE FUND TO PROVIDE EXTRA PROTECTION FOR POLICY HOLDERS, SIR JOHN NOTED.

HE SAID THAT SINCE THE ENACTMENT OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE 1983, THERE HAD BEEN ONE CASE WHERE A CHARGE WAS CREATED ON A DEPOSIT WHICH HAD BEEN REQUIRED BY A NOTICE ISSUED UNDER THE ORDINANCE.

+AS A RESULT, THE DEPOSIT PROVIDED NO PROTECTION FOR POLICY HOLDERS WHEN THE INSURER CONCERNED SUBSEQUENTLY BECAME INSOLVENT,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

HE SAID THE BILL SOUGHT TO AMEND THE ORDINANCE BY ADDING A NEW SECTION TO PROVIDE THAT IF THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY REQUIRED AN INSURER TO MAKE A BANK DEPOSIT IN THE NAME OF THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY, TO BE HELD IN TRUST FOR THE INSURER PURSUANT TO A NOTICE ISSUED UNDER THE ORDINANCE, ANY CHARGE OF WHATEVER NATURE CREATED OVER THAT DEPOSIT SHOULD BE VOID AGAINST ALL PERSONS.

+ANY DEPOSIT MADE IS THUS PRESERVED AS A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF EXTRA PROTECTION FOR POLICY HOLDERS,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

IN ORDER TO HOLD THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY ACCOUNTABLE FOR ITS TRUSTEESHIP OF ANY DEPOSITS HELD BY WAY OF NOTICE UNDER THE ORDINANCE, SIR JOHN PROPOSED THAT THE INSURANCE AUTHORITY SHOULD PREPARE PROPER ANNUAL ACCOUNTS OF ALL DEPOSITS REFERRED TO IN THE NEW SECTION AND SUBMIT A STATEMENT OF THOSE ACCOUNTS TO THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT FOR HIS EXAMINATION.

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EX-GRATIA PAYMENT PROPOSED FOR DISMISSED WORKERS  
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A BILL REQUIRING AN EMPLOYER TO MAKE, IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT TO AN EMPLOYEE WHOSE CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT IS TERMINATED BY DISMISSAL WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE SECOND READING OF THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON, SAID EMPLOYEES DISMISSED BY REASONS OF REDUNDANCY HAD BEEN ELIGIBLE FOR A SEVERANCE PAYMENT FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS SINCE 1974.

IN THE CASE OF EMPLOYEES WHOSE CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT WAS TERMINATED UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, HE SAID, THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE MERELY REQUIRED THE SERVICE OF AN AGREED OR STATUTORY PERIOD OF NOTICE OR THE PAYMENT BY THE EMPLOYER OF WAGES IN LIEU OF SUCH NOTICE.

+THE DISPARITY IN THE TREATMENT OF A DISMISSED EMPLOYEE HAS BEEN OFTEN CRITICISED AS UNFAIR, AND ESPECIALLY UNFAIR TO AGEING EMPLOYEES DISMISSED THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN AND WHO HAVE SERVED THE SAME EMPLOYER FOR SEVERAL DECADES.

+MANY OLDER EMPLOYEES AFTER DISMISSAL FIND IT ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT TO SECURE ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT, IN PARTICULAR MANUAL WORKERS,+ HE SAID.

MR HENDERSON SAID THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD FOR SOME TIME BEEN CONSIDERING WAYS OF GIVING GREATER SECURITY TO ELDERLY LONG SERVICE EMPLOYEES.

HE SAID LEGISLATION ON UNFAIR DISMISSAL HAD BEEN CONSIDERED BUT THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER COUNTRIES, IN PARTICULAR THE UNITED KINGDOM, IN THIS FIELD OF LEGISLATION, HAD SHOWN THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO DEFINE WHAT CONSTITUTED UNFAIR OR UNREASONABLE DISMISSAL.

IN ADDITION, HE SAID, THE SCHEME WOULD REQUIRED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW TRIBUNAL OR AN EXPANSION OF THE EXISTING LABOUR TRIBUNAL TO HANDLE THE INEVITABLE DISPUTES WHICH WOULD ARISE IF LEGISLATION OF THIS KIND WERE INTRODUCED.

+INSTEAD, THE PRESENT LONG SERVICE PAYMENT PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS A PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE TO UNFAIR DISMISSAL LEGISLATION, BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT THE DISMISSAL OF AN ELDERLY LONG SERVICE EMPLOYEE WITHOUT SOME FORM OF PROVISION FOR HIS FUTURE IS ITSELF UNREASONABLE.

+A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT FOR AN EMPLOYER TO MAKE A PAYMENT TO A DISMISSED EMPLOYEE, BASED ON HIS AGE AND LENGTH OF SERVICE, WOULD ACHIEVE MUCH THE SAME RESULT AS AN EMPLOYEE'S ENTITLEMENT TO MONETARY COMPENSATION UNDER UNFAIR DISMISSAL LEGISLATION WHILE AVOIDING THE NEED FOR COMPLEX AND EXPENSIVE PROCEDURES TO ESTABLISH THAT THE DISMISSAL HAD BEEN UNREASONABLE,+ HE SAID.

MR HENDERSON SAID THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD IN THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL WERE AIMED AT THE OLDER EMPLOYEE AND TOOK INTO ACCOUNT HIS LENGTH OF SERVICE AS WELL AS HIS AGE.

HE SAID AN EMPLOYEE AGED 40 OR LESS MUST HAVE AT LEAST 10 YEARS' SERVICE TO QUALIFY FOR A LONG SERVICE PAYMENT AND ABOVE THIS AGE, THE MINIMUM QUALIFYING SERVICE WAS PROGRESSIVELY REDUCED SO THAT AN EMPLOYEE AGED 45 OR MORE REQUIRED ONLY FIVE YEARS' SERVICE TO QUALIFY.

+THE RATIONALE FOR PROGRESSIVELY REDUCING THE PERIOD OF QUALIFYING SERVICE AFTER THE AGE OF 40 IS THAT THIS AGE IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE THE PEAK OF AN EMPLOYEE'S WORKING LIFE BEYOND WHICH HE WILL FIND IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT,+ HE SAID.

+IN THE CASE OF A MANUAL WORKER IT IS ALSO THE AGE BEYOND WHICH HIS ENERGY AND PRODUCTIVITY BECOME HARDER TO MAINTAIN,+ HE SAID.

MR HENDERSON SAID IT WAS ALSO FELT THAT A YOUNGER EMPLOYEE WHO HAD SPENT 10 OF THE MOST PRODUCTIVE YEARS OF HIS LIFE WITH THE SAME EMPLOYER ALSO DESERVED RECOGNITION FOR HIS LOYALTY, THOUGH BECAUSE THE PROPOSALS WERE PRIMARILY AIMED AT MORE ELDERLY EMPLOYEES, EMPLOYEES YOUNGER THAN 40 WOULD ONLY RECEIVE A PROPORTION OF THE STATUTORY PAYMENT.

+IT IS PROPOSED, AS IN THE CASE OF SEVERANCE PAY, THAT THE AMOUNT OF THE PAYMENT SHOULD BE TWO-THIRDS OF A MONTH'S WAGE FOR EACH YEAR OF SERVICE, UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 12 MONTHS' WAGES.

+IT IS PROPOSED THAT A PAYMENT THUS CALCULATED WILL BE REDUCED BY A QUARTER IN THE CASE OF AN EMPLOYEE AGED 36 OR MORE BUT LESS THAN 40, AND BY A HALF IN THE CASE OF AN EMPLOYEE AGED LESS THAN 36.

+SUCH EMPLOYEES BEING IN THEIR PRIME OF LIFE SHOULD HAVE LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN FINDING ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT AND THEREFORE HAVE LITTLE REAL NEED OF THE PROTECTION AFFORDED BY THIS BILL,+ HE SAID.

MR HENDERSON SAID THE EMPLOYER WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MAKE THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT, TOGETHER WITH OTHER SUMS DUE SUCH AS ARREARS OF WAGES OR WAGES IN LIEU OF NOTICE, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER AN EMPLOYEE'S CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT WAS TERMINATED BY HIM, AND IN ANY CASE NOT LATER THAN SEVEN DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF TERMINATION, AND MUST GIVE HIM A WRITTEN STATEMENT INDICATING HOW THE AMOUNT HAD BEEN CALCULATED.

HE SAID THAT LIKE ANY OTHER PIECE OF SOCIAL LEGISLATION INVOLVING THE INTERESTS OF BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES, THE LONG SERVICE PAYMENT SCHEME REPRESENTED A WORKABLE COMPRISE BETWEEN WHAT WAS DESIRABLE AND WAS PRACTICABLE.

+THE SCHEME HAS TO BE BOTH ACCEPTABLE TO EMPLOYEES AND AT THE SAME TIME AFFORDABLE TO EMPLOYERS AT LARGE.

+THE PRESENT PROPOSALS ARE THE RESULT OF A PROLONGED DISCUSSION BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES IN THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD AND ARE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES,+ HE SAID.

ALSO INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL WERE THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1985 AND THE BANKRUPTCY (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1985 WHICH WERE CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO ACCORD LONG SERVICE PAYMENT THE SAME PREFERENTIAL STATUS AS SEVERANCE PAYMENT IN THE EVENT OF A WINDING-UP OR A BANKRUPTCY.

DEBATES ON THE BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

MOVE TO DEREGULATE PEAK TRAM FARES  
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A BILL TO DEREGULATE FARES ON THE PEAK TRAM AND TO REPLACE THE EXISTING PERMIT FEE SYSTEM WITH A LONG-TERM RIGHT FOR THE PEAK TRAMWAY COMPANY TO OPERATE THE TRAMWAY WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PEAK TRAMWAY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1985, SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON, POINTED OUT THAT THE PEAK TRAM WAS NO LONGER AN ESSENTIAL FORM OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT, AND FEW PEOPLE RELIED ON IT FOR COMMUTING.

+AS THE PEAK TRAMWAY IS NOW LARGELY A RECREATIONAL FACILITY, FARE CONTROL BY GOVERNMENT IS NO LONGER JUSTIFIED,+ HE SAID.

TO PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF THE SMALL NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DO USE THE PEAK TRAMWAY FOR COMMUTING, MR MACPHERSON SAID THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED THAT THE MONTHLY TICKET ISSUED BY THE COMPANY WAS NOT TO EXCEED 25 TIMES THE LOWEST FARE FOR A FULL DISTANCE SINGLE JOURNEY.

IN RESPONSE TO SUGGESTIONS BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS THAT THE BILL SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED BY IMPOSING A FIRM OBLIGATION ON THE COMPANY TO ISSUE MONTHLY TICKETS, HE SAID HE WOULD MOVE AN AMENDMENT TO THAT EFFECT AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE.

ON A NEW SYSTEM TO CHARGE THE COMPANY FOR USING GOVERNMENT LAND TO OPERATE THE SERVICE, MR MACPHERSON SAID: +THE BILL GIVES THE COMPANY A RIGHT TO OPERATE THE TRAMWAY FOR 20 YEARS WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1, 1984, SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE PEAK TRAMWAY ORDINANCE AND THE PAYMENT OF A PREMIUM OF \$2.6 MILLION.+

THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED FOR THE DELETION OF AN OBSOLETE PROVISION OF THE ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE POWER OF GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL TO PURCHASE THE COMPANY AFTER EXPIRATION OF 28 YEARS FROM THE TIME WHEN THE COMPANY WAS EMPOWERED TO CONSTRUCT THE TRAMWAY AND EVERY SEVEN YEARS THEREAFTER.

+THE ABOVE PACKAGE OF MEASURES SERVES TO REFLECT THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE PEAK TRAM AS A RECREATION FACILITY AND IT STREAMLINES THE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE PEAK TRAM TO CONTINUE ITS OPERATION AS A COMMERCIAL UNDERTAKING,+ MR MACPHERSON SAID.

TAVA SCHEME EXTENDED FOR ACCIDENT VICTIMS

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ADOPTED A MOTION APPROVING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE SCHEME TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL PROTECTION TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY INSURERS WHO ARE NOW INSOLVENT.

MOVING A RESOLUTION ON THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME PURSUANT TO THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS (ASSISTANCE FUND) ORDINANCE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE SUPPLEMENT WAS TO USE SURPLUS FUNDS ACCUMULATED IN THE EXISTING TAVA FUND TO MAKE EX-GRATIA PAYMENTS TO PERSONS WHO HAD SUFFERED BODILY INJURY AND TO THE DEPENDENTS OF THOSE WHO DIED AS A RESULT OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS INVOLVING MOTOR VEHICLES INSURED WITH FIVE INSURERS WHO HAD BECOME INSOLVENT.

SIR JOHN SAID THE ACCUMULATED SURPLUS IN THE EXISTING TAVA FUND WAS ABOUT \$190 MILLION.

+THIS IS FAR IN EXCESS OF THE AMOUNT REQUIRED TO MEET PAYMENTS UNDER THE EXISTING TAVA SCHEME, WHICH PROVIDES ONLY FOR IMMEDIATE PAYMENTS TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS WHO SUFFER HARDSHIP IN THE AFTERMATCH OF A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT.

+THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME WILL NOT AFFECT THE OPERATION OF THE EXISTING SCHEME,+ HE SAID.

SIR JOHN SAID THE FULL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME COULD NOT BE DETERMINED NOW BECAUSE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CLAIMS WOULD NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL THE SCHEME HAD BEEN APPROVED AND PUBLICISED.

+IT IS, HOWEVER, ESTIMATED THAT THE TOTAL VALUE OF ALL CLAIMS WILL BE BETWEEN \$50 AND \$70 MILLION.

+THE TAVA FUND CAN THEREFORE ABSORB THE COST OF IMPLEMENTING THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME WITHOUT REQUIRING AN INCREASE IN THE LEVIES ON VEHICLE AND DRIVING LICENCES OR THE ANNUAL GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION WHICH FINANCE IT, FOR SEVERAL YEARS,+ HE SAID.

SIR JOHN SAID THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME WAS DESIGNED TO COMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE MOTOR INSURERS' BUREAU ON NOVEMBER 1.

UNDER THIS AGREEMENT THE MOTOR INSURERS' BUREAU HAS UNDERTAKEN TO ESTABLISH AND OPERATE AN INSOLVENCY FUND SCHEME TO PROVIDE PROTECTION AGAINST THE INSOLVENCY OF ANY MOTOR INSURER WHICH MAY OCCUR IN THE FUTURE.

+BOTH THE INSOLVENCY FUND AND THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME ALSO PROVIDE FOR THE REIMBURSEMENT OF INSURED PERSONS WHO HAVE ALREADY PAID DAMAGES TO A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS AS A RESULT OF THE ENFORCEMENT OF A COURT JUDGEMENT OR AN OUT-OF-COURT SETTLEMENT+, SIR JOHN SAID.

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+TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE TWO SCHEMES PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF FINANCIAL PROTECTION AND COMPENSATION FOR THE UNFORTUNATE VICTIMS OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS WHO, THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN, ARE UNABLE TO RECOVER ANY OF THE DAMAGES DUE TO THEM BECAUSE THE INSURER CONCERNED HAS BECOME INSOLVENT,+ HE ADDED.

TWO UNOFFICIALS, THE HON K.C. CHAN AND THE HON MARIA TAM, SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION.

MR CHAN, CONVENER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP ON THE ISSUE, SAID THE PAYMENTS SHOULD BE EX-GRATIA OUT OF THE TAVA FUND AND SHOULD NOT CREATE A PRECEDENT.

HE NOTED THAT THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCHEME MENTIONED BY THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY WOULD MEAN THAT WE WERE STEPPING INTO THE UNKNOWN GROUND OF INSURING BANKRUPTCY OF BUSINESS AND HE WONDERED WHERE THE LIST OF BUSINESS WOULD END.

THE TREND IN THE BUSINESS CIRCLES NOWADAYS, HE SAID, WAS FOR THE TRADE TO ASK ITS MEMBERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO A FUND WHICH INSURED INSOLVENT MEMBERS AND PROVIDE LIMITED ASSURANCE TO THEIR CLIENTS.

HE CITED AS EXAMPLES THE SHARE MARKET, GOLD MARKET AND TOURISM, ADDING THAT BUSINESS AS A WHOLE WAS NOW COLLECTIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROTECTION OF WAGES IN INSOLVENCY FUND.

WHY THE INSURANCE TRADE SHOULD BE AN EXCEPTION, HE ASKED.

+AS LONG AS WE LEGISLATE TO GOVERN THE COMPULSORY CONTRIBUTION, LEVY AND PROPER OPERATION OF A FUND, THEN WHETHER THE INSURANCE COMPANY CHARGES IT AS EXPENDITURE AND SHARES IT WITH THEIR CLIENTS IS ANOTHER MATTER.

+IT WOULD ADD TO THE IMAGE THAT THE FOUNDATION OF THE INSURANCE TRADE IS ON SOLID ROCKS,+ HE SAID.

MR CHAN FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT THERE WERE GROUNDS FOR STREAMLINING OR AMALGANATING INTO ONE THE VARIOUS FUNDS MOTOR VEHICLE OWNERS OR DRIVERS WERE NOW PAYING FOR.

+THIS MAY RESULT IN SAVINGS BENEFICIAL TO THE INSURER OR INSURED,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO FELT THAT A CEILING SHOULD BE IMPOSED ON INDIVIDUAL CLAIMS ON DEATH OR TOTAL DISABILITY AND THERE SHOULD BE A SCHEDULE SCALING DOWN THE PERCENTAGE OF CLAIM FOR INJURIES.

THERE WAS ALSO ANOTHER SCHOOL OF THOUGHT THAT COMPLETE PROTECTION OF THE GUILTY MOTORISTS BY INSURANCE MIGHT HAMPER EFFORTS TO PROMOTE GREATER ROAD SAFETY WHICH SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID ALL THESE PROBLEMS MIGHT REQUIRE LENGTHY AND CAREFUL STUDY AND CONSIDERATION BEFORE SOLUTIONS COULD BE FOUND BUT FOR THE PRESENT HE DID NOT WISH TO HINDER THE PROGRESS OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS AND ABOVE ALL, HE DID NOT WISH TO PROLONG THE ANXIETIES AND SUFFERINGS OF THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

MISS TAM SAID THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP HAD DECIDED TO SUPPORT THE SCHEME ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PROPOSED PAYMENT OUT OF THE TAVA FUND WOULD ONLY BE AN +ONE-OFF+ EXERCISE.

SHE EXPLAINED THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THE AD HOC GROUP HAD MADE ITS DELIBERATIONS.

+FIRSTLY WE QUESTIONED WHY AN EXCEPTION HAS TO BE MADE FOR THESE FIVE COMPANIES AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO SIMILAR CASES IN THE FUTURE; SECONDLY WE QUESTIONED WHY GOVERNMENT SHOULD COME TO THE AID OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND ALLOW MOTOR INSURANCE TO HAVE INSOLVENCY FUND AND WHETHER WE CAN DIFFERENTIATE MOTOR INSURANCE FOR OTHER TYPES OF INSURANCE WHERE THERE IS A MANDATORY REQUIREMENT BY LAW FOR A PARTICULAR CLASS OF PERSONS TO TAKE OUT INSURANCE, FOR EXAMPLE, EMPLOYERS FOR EMPLOYEES; AND THIRDLY, WHETHER THE PAY-OUT METHOD PROPOSED IS SATISFACTORY,+ SHE SAID.

MISS TAM SAID THE AD HOC GROUP HAD BEEN ASSURED BY THE ADMINISTRATION THAT AFTER TWO AND A HALF YEARS OF ENFORCEMENT OF MORE STRINGENT PRUDENTIAL CONTROL OVER INSURANCE COMPANIES UNDER THE INSURANCE COMPANIES ORDINANCE 1983, AND WITH FURTHER MEASURES TO FOLLOW, IT WAS NOT ENVISAGED THAT HISTORY WOULD KEEP REPEATING ITSELF.

+WE HAVE ALSO CONSIDERED THAT THE DOCTRINE OF CAVEAT EMPTOR (BUYERS BEWARE) MUST ALSO BE RELEVANT HERE IN THAT CUSTOMERS SHOULD CHOOSE A SOUND AND NOT A CHEAP INSURANCE COMPANY TO PURCHASE THEIR POLICIES AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN ACTS IF THEY FAIL TO PICK THE RIGHT ONE.

HOWEVER, SHE SAID, IT WAS THE HARDSHIP ALL ROUND THAT WE WISHED TO GIVE RELIEF TO AND THE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT WAS A FINITE ONE, I.E. UP TO \$100M.

AS THERE WAS A SURPLUS OF ABOUT 190M IN THE TAVA'S FUND, WE THEREFORE, ON BALANCE, DECIDED TO SUPPORT THE SCHEME, SHE SAID.

ON THE SECOND ISSUE, MISS TAM EXPLAINED THAT THE MOTOR INSURANCE INDUSTRY HAD A LONG TRADITION IN THE OPERATIONS OF MOTOR INSURERS' BUREAU IN OVERSEAS COUNTRIES TO SET UP FUNDS TO REINSURE ITSELF= AND HENCE BY TRADITIONAL PRACTICE DEPARTED FROM THE REST OF THE INSURANCE POLICIES WHICH WERE MANDATORY UNDER THE LAW.

+WE THEREFORE DO NOT CONSIDER IT IMPERATIVE THAT THE TAVA'S PAYMENT SHOULD FALL IN LINE WITH OTHER MANDATORY INSURNACE SCHEMES,+SHE SAID.

/LASTLY, MISS .....

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LASTLY, MISS TAM POINTED OUT THAT THE COOPERATION OF THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS VICTIMS WAS PARAMOUNT IN ENABLING THE PROPOSAL TO ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES BECAUSE UNDER THE LEGISLATION, TAVA'S FUND COULD ONLY BE PAID TO THE VICTIMS, BUT NOT THE INSURED.

+HENCE OF THE 135 CASES WHERE THE INSURED PERSON HAD PAID, IN PART OR IN FULL, DAMAGES TO THE VICTIMS, THESE INSURED PERSONS MUST NOW RELY ON THE VICTIMS TO CLAIM PAYMENTS FROM THE FUND AND SIGN AN UNDETAING TO REIMBURSE THEM,+ SHE SAID.

+WE DO NOT SEE FIT TO AMEND THE TAVA'S ORDINANCE AND MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR PAYMENTS TO BE MADE TO THE INSURED BECAUSE THIS IS AN +ONE-OFF+ EXERCISE,+ MISS TAM SAID.

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PNEUMOCONIOSIS FUND LEVY REVISED  
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A MOTION SEEKING TO LOWER THE LEVY TO FINANCE THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND BY 25 PER CENT WAS ADOPTED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON, SAID THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND BOARD WAS ESTABLISHED TO ADMINISTER THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION FUND, WHICH WAS FINANCED BY A LEVY OF 0.2 PER CENT OF THE VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS WITH A VALUE OF AT LEAST \$1 MILLION AND OF QUARRY PRODUCTS.

HE SAID THE BOARD AT PRESENT HAD A SURPLUS BALANCE OF SOME \$30 MILLION AND IN ORDER TO CORRECT THE IMBALANCE BETWEEN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE THE BOARD HAD RECOMMENDED TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE RATE OF LEVY BE REDUCED BY 25 PER CENT, TO 0.15 PER CENT.

THE REVISED RATE OF LEVY WOULD COME INTO EFFECT ON JANUARY 6 NEXT YEAR IF THE NECESSARY RESOLUTION WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE NOTED.

MR HENDERSON EXPLAINED THAT WHEN THE BOARD BEGAN OPERATION, IT HAD TO DEAL WITH AN INITIALLY LARGE NUMBER OF CLAIMANTS, MANY OF WHOM WERE SERIOUSLY INCAPACITATED BY PNEUMOCONIOSIS.

THESE CLAIMS HAD NOW BEEN PROCESSED AND, WHERE APPROPRIATE, COMPENSATION HAD BEEN PAID, HE SAID.

+CLAIMANTS ARE NOW COMING FORWARD IN SMALLER NUMBERS AND AT AN EARLIER STAGE OF THE DISEASE. AS A RESULT, THE BOARD'S EXPENDITURE ON COMPENSATION HAS FALLEN OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS WHILE ITS INCOME HAS REMAINED STEADY.

+THIS TREND SEEMS LIKELY TO CONTINUE,+ MR HENDERSON NOTED.

SUPPORTING THE MOTION, THE HON HO SAI-CHU URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER EVENTUALLY ABOLISHING THE LEVY ON THE VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS AND QUARRY PRODUCTS FOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE FUND AND TO REVIEW THE FUND'S AMBIT.

NOTING THAT THERE HAD BEEN A STEADY AND SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE INCOME OF THE COMPENSATION FUND SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1981, HE SAID ITS EXPENDITURE HAD BEEN FALLING FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS AS A RESULT OF A DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CLAIMANTS AND A REDUCTION IN THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION PAYABLE.

+NATURALLY, THIS RESULTED IN HUGE SURPLUSES.

+IN 1984 ALONE, THE SURPLUS ITSELF IS IN THE ORDER OF \$23 MILLION AND THERE ARE REASONS TO BELIEVE THAT THIS TREND WOULD CONTINUE,+ HE SAID.

MR HO SAID HE BELIEVED THE INTERESTS ON THE SURPLUS FUNDS ALONE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE OUTGOINGS OF THE FUND IN A MATTER OF THREE TO FOUR YEARS.

+IF THIS IS THE CASE, I SUBMIT THAT IT WOULD NO LONGER BE MEANINGFUL TO IMPOSE A LEVY ON THE VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKS AND QUARRY PRODUCTS PRODUCED AND I AM PLEASED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO INTRODUCE THE RESOLUTION TO REDUCE THE RATE OF LEVY BY 25 PER CENT NEXT YEAR,+ HE SAID.

MR HO SUGGESTED THAT THE SAME RATE OF REDUCTION COULD BE MADE IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS AND THE LEVY COULD BE ABOLISHED ALTOGETHER WHEN THE FUND ITSELF COULD GENERATE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO FINANCE ITS PRESCRIBED FUNCTIONS.

+ALTERNATIVELY, IF THERE ARE SOME COMPELLING REASONS TO MAINTAIN THE LEVY, I SUGGEST THAT THE AMBIT OF THE FUND SHOULD BE REVIEWED SO AS TO ALLOW THE SURPLUS FUNDS TO BE USED FOR EVEN MORE GAINFUL PURPOSES SUCH AS EDUCATION, PUBLICITY AND RESEARCH IN CONNECTION WITH THE PREVENTION OF PNEUMOCONIOSIS AND IF APPROVED, WILL BE A LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE FUND WAS SET UP.

+IT IS MY SINCERE BELIEF THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT TASK IS TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF THE DISEASE AND THAT NO MOMENTARY COMPENSATION IS SUFFICIENT TO ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERINGS OF THE PNEUMOCONIOTICS,+ MR HO SAID.

HE ADMITTED THAT HIS PROPOSALS MIGHT CARRY WITH IT CERTAIN IMPLICATIONS THAT MIGHT HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY EXAMINED.

+I WOULD, HOWEVER, LIKE TO THINK THAT THE SPIRIT OF MY PROPOSALS IS NO DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE MOTION BEFORE THIS COUNCIL AND THAT IS, TO IMPROVE THE COMPENSATION SCHEME SO AS TO BETTER THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE WORKING IN THE CONSTRUCTION AND QUARRY INDUSTRIES.

+IT IS WITH THIS COMMON OBJECTIVE THAT I URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THE PROPOSALS ITS SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION,+ HE SAID.

WELCOMING MR HO'S SUPPORT, MR HENDERSON SAID THE FUND BOARD, AMONG ITS OTHER FUNCTIONS, KEPT A CLOSE WATCH ON TRENDS IN ITS INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

+I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT IT WILL RECOMMEND TO THE GOVERNMENT A FURTHER REDUCTION IN THE RATE OF LEVY IF THIS SEEMS DESIRABLE,+ HE SAID.

WHILE SYMPATHISING WITH MR HO'S MOTIVES, MR HENDERSON SAID HE WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO CONSIDER AN EXPANSION OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE FUND BOARD.

+EDUCATION, PUBLICITY AND RESEARCH IN CONNECTION WITH OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES ARE DESIRABLE ACTIVITIES, BUT THEY SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN IN A CO-ORDINATED MANNER WITH OTHER INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MATTERS IN SUCH MANNERS AS RESOURCES AND PRIORITIES ALLOW.

+TO USE PART OF THE LEVY ON THE CONSTRUCTION AND QUARRY INDUSTRIES FOR THESE PURPOSES WOULD ENTAIL TREATING THIS PARTICULAR ASPECT OF EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ON A DIFFERENT BASIS FROM THOSE AREAS COVERED BY THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE AND WOULD REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH EMPLOYERS IN THE QUARRY AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES WERE CONSULTED BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS COMPENSATION SCHEME IN ITS PRESENT FORM IN 1980,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

HE SAID THE REASONS WHY COMPENSATION FOR PNEUMOCONIOSIS WAS NOT DEALT WITH UNDER THE EMPLOYEES' COMPENSATION ORDINANCE WERE FIRSTLY, THAT THE DISEASE WAS SPECIFIC TO THE QUARRY AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES AND SECONDLY, THAT IT COULD TAKE MANY YEARS TO BECOME APPARENT AND IT WAS THEREFORE DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, FOR LIABILITY FOR THE PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION TO BE ATTACHED TO ANY PARTICULAR EMPLOYER.

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TAXI LIMIT DATE EXTENSION SOUGHT

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A MOTION SEEKING TO EXTEND THE DATE LIMITING THE NUMBER OF TAXIS FROM DECEMBER 6 THIS YEAR TO JULY 17 NEXT YEAR WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON, SAID THE TAXIS (LIMITATION ON NUMBER) NOTICE 1984 PUBLISHED AS LEGAL NOTICE NO. 395 OF 1984 PROVIDED THAT THE NUMBER OF MOTION VEHICLES WHICH MIGHT BE REGISTERED AS TAXIS WAS AS FOLLOWS: 14 000 FOR URBAN TAXIS, 2 638 FOR NEW TERRITORIES TAXIS AND 40 IN THE CASE OF LANTAU TAXIS.

HE SAID A REVIEW OF THE LIMITS ON THE NUMBER OF TAXIS WOULD BE CONDUCTED DURING THE FIRST HALF OF NEXT YEAR AND RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD THAN BE MADE ON THE LIMITS TO BE APPLIED AFTER JULY 17 NEXT YEAR.

+AS LEGAL NOTICE NO. 395 OF 1984 REMAINS IN FORCE ONLY UNTIL DECEMBER 6 THIS YEAR, A RESOLUTION UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE WAS REQUIRED TO EXTEND THE CURRENT LIMITS TO JULY 17 NEXT YEAR,+ MR MACPHERSON SAID.

HE NOTED THAT THE LIMITS ON THE NUMBER OF TAXIS IN THE URBAN AREAS AND THE NEW TERRITORIES WERE SET BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL ON JULY 17, 1984 FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

AS REGARDS LANTAU TAXIS, THEIR UTILISATION RATE AT PRESENT DID NOT CALL FOR ANY REVISION IN THE CURRENT LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF VEHICLES, HE ADDED.

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MAJOR CAMPAIGN AGAINST FALLING OBJECTS SET TO START

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A SPECIAL TERRITORY-WIDE CAMPAIGN WILL BE LAUNCHED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR TO STRENGTHEN PEOPLE'S AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS OF FALLING OBJECTS, SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE EXISTING ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC INTEREST (API) ON TELEVISION WOULD BE REPLACED AND A NEW POSTER WOULD BE PRODUCED AND WIDELY DISTRIBUTED, HE SAID.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PAULINE NG ON WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD REVIEW EXISTING MEASURES TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM, MR LIAO SAID THIS WAS BEING DONE FROM TIME TO TIME.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID WHERE FALLING OBJECTS OCCURRED AT BUILDINGS UNDER CONSTRUCTION, REPAIR OR DECORATION, THE RESPONSIBILITY RESTED WITH THE CONSTRUCTORS CONCERNED, BUT POLICE INVESTIGATION OF SIMILAR INCIDENTS INVOLVING HIGH-RISE RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS WAS ALWAYS FRAUGHT WITH DIFFICULTIES.

MR LIAO POINTED OUT THAT SUCH INVESTIGATIONS WERE TIME-CONSUMING AND DID NOT ALWAYS PRODUCE THE DESIRED RESULTS, AND THE POLICE'S SUCCESS DEPENDED ESSENTIALLY ON THE CO-OPERATION OF WITNESSES.

+IT IS DIFFICULT TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSION ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICE ACTION, BUT EVEN THOUGH THE POLICE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE CULPRITS IN EVERY REPORTED INCIDENT, DOOR TO DOOR ENQUIRIES BY THE OFFICERS DO PRODUCE A DETERRENT EFFECT ON SUCH CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR,+ HE SAID.

MR LIAO SAID PREVENTIVE PUBLIC EDUCATION INVOLVING DISTRICT BOARDS AND DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEES WAS THE BEST APPROACH TO THIS PARTICULAR PROBLEM.

+AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL, DISTRICT OFFICERS AND THEIR STAFF THROUGH REGULAR LIAISON WITH MUTUAL AID COMMITTEES, RESIDENTS ASSOCIATIONS, OWNERS CORPORATIONS, SCHOOLS AND OTHER DISTRICT ORGANISATIONS, WILL CONTINUE THE TASK OF EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT SUCH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR,+ HE ADDED.

MR LIAO NOTED THAT A SUCCESSFUL PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN WAS LAUNCHED IN WONG TAI SIN IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR BY THE DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE WHERE POSTERS, STICKERS AND PAMPHLETS WERE DISTRIBUTED TO RESIDENTS.

+A SIMILAR CAMPAIGN WAS ALSO ORGANISED BY THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD IN AUGUST THIS YEAR,+ HE ADDED.

MR LIAO SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS MINDFUL OF THE NEED TO REVIEW THE ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ON THIS PROBLEM.

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COMMENTS SOUGHT ON DRAFT MAGISTRATES AMENDMENT BILL  
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A NEW DRAFT BILL ALLOWING A MAGISTRATE THE DISCRETION TO AMEND A DEFECTIVE COMPLAINT, INFORMATION OR SUMMONS HAS ALREADY BEEN SENT TO THE HON MARTIN LEE FOR COMMENTS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY MR LEE HIMSELF, HE RECALLED THAT DRAFTING LEGISLATION ON THE MATTER HAD BEEN CIRCULATED FOR DISCUSSION SOME TIME AGO.

/MR THOMAS .....

MR THOMAS SAID THAT MR LEE, THEN CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG BAR ASSOCIATION, ADVANCED SOME HELPFUL AND PENETRATING CRITICISMS OF THE DRAFT AND THE POINTS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY CONSIDERED WITHIN THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CHAMBERS.

+VARIOUS VIEWS WERE EXPRESSED BUT NO CONSENSUS WAS REACHED,+ HE ADDED.

SINCE THEN, THERE HAD BEEN DELAYS IN DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM.

HAVING LOOKED INTO THE MATTER AS A RESULT OF MR LEE'S QUESTION, HE SAID THAT HE WOULD SEE WHETHER AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND IN CONSULTATION WITH ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

+A PROPOSAL TO AMEND SECTION 27 OF THE MAGISTRATES ORDINANCE (CAP. 227) TO ALLOW THE MAGISTRATE A DISCRETION IN RELATION TO THE AMENDMENT OF A DEFECTIVE COMPLAINT, INFORMATION OR SUMMONS CANNOT BE CONSIDERED IN ISOLATION BECAUSE THE PROVISION CONCERNED (SUBSECTION (2) OF SECTION 27) IS LINKED WITH OTHER SUBSECTIONS,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

+WHEN CONSIDERING AN AMENDMENT, IT IS NECESSARY TO LOOK AT THE WHOLE OF SECTION 27 TO CREATE AN ACCEPTABLE OVERALL PROCEDURE,+ HE ADDED.

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#### TRAFFIC OFFENCE PROSECUTION EXPLAINED

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ALTHOUGH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAS THE OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROSECUTION, THE DECISION WHETHER TO USE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE (CAP 374) OR ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS) ORDINANCE (CAP 375) IN DEALING WITH A TRAFFIC OFFENCE IS EXERCISED BY A POLICE OFFICER, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MARTIN LEE, HE SAID THE DECISION WAS BASED ON THE PERCEIVED SERIOUSNESS OF THE ALLEGED OFFENCE, WITH THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE BEING USED FOR MORE SERIOUS OFFENCES.

ON THE QUESTION OF DISQUALIFICATION, MR MACPHERSON SAID THAT UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS) ORDINANCE (CAP 375), A MAGISTRATE MAY ORDER A DISQUALIFICATION WHERE AN OFFENDER HAS ACCUMULATED 15 OR MORE DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS.

FOR OFFENCES WHICH WERE NOT COVERED BY THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) ORDINANCE, MR MACPHERSON SAID THE COURT HAD A GENERAL POWER UNDER SECTION 69 OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE TO DISQUALIFY A PERSON CONVICTED OF ANY OFFENCE FOR SUCH A PERIOD AS IT THOUGHT FIT.

FOR OFFENCES (OTHER THAN SPEEDING) WHICH ALSO GAVE RISE TO PENALTY POINTS UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) ORDINANCE, BOTH METHODS COULD BE USED.

+IF THE COURT DOES DISQUALIFY A PERSON, SUCH A PERSON IS NOT LIABLE TO RECEIVE THE PENALTY POINTS ATTRIBUTABLE TO THAT OFFENCE. IN ADDITION ANY PREVIOUSLY ACCRUED POINTS ARE EXTINGUISHED.

+IF THE COURT DOES NOT DISQUALIFY THEN PENALTY POINTS WILL BE ACCRUED IN THE USUAL WAY, AS THEY WOULD IF THE FIXED PENALTY PROCEDURE WAS ADOPTED.

+IN THESE CASES THE TWO SYSTEMS CAN CO-EXIST WITHOUT DIFFICULTY,+ MR MACPHERSON EXPLAINED.

ON THE PARTICULAR OFFENCE OF SPEEDING, MR MACPHERSON SAID SECTION 41(2) OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE GAVE A SPECIFIC DIRECTION TO THE COURT TO IMPOSE A DISQUALIFICATION OF 12 MONTHS WHEN A CASE WHICH CAME BEFORE THE COURT ON INFORMATION INVOLVED A THIRD OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENCE.

+THE POSSIBILITY OF DISQUALIFICATION UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING OFFENCE POINTS) ORDINANCE ARISES ON THE ACCUMULATION OF 15 POINTS.

+A CONVICTION UNDER SECTION 41 OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE ATTRACTS THREE POINTS. FIVE SPEEDING CONVICTIONS ARE THEREFORE NECESSARY BEFORE A PERSON BECOMES LIABLE TO DISQUALIFICATION,+ HE SAID.

IT IS THIS CATEGORY OF OFFENCES WHICH MIGHT CAUSE CONFUSION, MR MACPHERSON SAID.

MR MACPHERSON SAID THAT AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL WORKING GROUP HAD EXAMINED THE ANOMALY AND HE INTENDED TO RECOMMEND TO THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL THE REMOVAL OF THE MANDATORY DISQUALIFICATION PROVISION UNDER 41(2) OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE.

+THE DISCRETIONARY POWER OF THE COURT TO ORDER DISQUALIFICATION UNDER SECTION 69 OF THE ORDINANCE WOULD REMAIN,+ MR MACPHERSON SAID.

ANTI-NOISE MEASURES PLANNED FOR NEW TRAM DEPOT  
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EVERY POSSIBLE MEASURE WILL BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT A SITE PROPOSED FOR A NEW TRAM DEPOT IN SAI YING PUN IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT TRAFFIC OR THE PROVISION OF AMENITIES IN THE AREA, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LIU LIT-FOR, HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SITE WAS CURRENTLY USED A LORRY PARK AND THAT +A TRAM DEPOT IS UNLIKELY TO GENERATE MORE NOISE THAN IS PRODUCED BY THE HEAVY VEHICLES CURRENTLY USING THE LORRY PARK+.

MR MACPHERSON SAID THAT THE HONG KONG TRAMWAYS COMPANY LIMITED HAD UNDERTAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THREE MEASURES TO MINIMISE ANY NOISE NUISANCE.

FIRSTLY, IMPROVEMENT WORK WOULD BE CARRIED OUT TO THE TRAM TRACKS SO AS TO REDUCE NOISE FROM GEAR WHINE AND ROLLING STOCK. SECONDLY, THE TRACKS LEADING TO THE NEW DEPOT WOULD BE CAREFULLY ALIGNED TO AVOID SHARP TURNS AND THUS REDUCE WHEEL SQUEAL, AND LASTLY, THE DESIGN OF THE NEW DEPOT WOULD ENSURE THAT THE SIDINGS AND WORKSHOP WOULD BE SCREENED OFF FROM NEARBY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BY THE COMPANY'S OWN BUILDING.

MR MACPHERSON SAID HE HOPED THESE NOISE REDUCTION MEASURES WOULD LEAD TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN NOISE LEVELS IN THE AREA.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT A TRAM DEPOT AT THIS SITE WOULD NOT CAUSE ANY MAJOR TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEMS.

+TRAMS WOULD ONLY USE THE DEPOT OUTSIDE PEAK HOURS, WHEN TRAFFIC ALONG BOTH WHITTY STREET AND CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST WAS LIGHT,+ HE SAID.

+NEVERTHELESS, NECESSARY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES WOULD BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT THE TRAM DEPOT WAS FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH THE TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE AREA.

+IN THE LONGER TERM, CONSULTANTS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED TO EXAMINE THE UPGRADING OF CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST WOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF A TRAM DEPOT AT THIS LOCATION IN DEVISING FUTURE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEMES IN THE AREA.+

MR MACPHERSON ALSO TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT ALTHOUGH THE SITE IN QUESTION WAS ORIGINALLY ZONED FOR LOCAL OPEN SPACE, IT WAS NOT AN ATTRACTIVE LOCATION FOR SUCH USE SINCE IT FELL PARTLY UNDER A FLYOVER.

IN THE LATEST DRAFT LAYOUT PLAN FOR THE WESTERN RECLAMATION, IT HAD BEEN RE-DESIGNATED AS A TRAM DEPOT.

+AN ALTERNATIVE SITE, SOME 300 METRES TO THE EAST, HAS NOW BEEN DESIGNATED AS PARKLAND.

+THIS WOULD MORE THAN COMPENSATE FOR THE LOSS OF THE ORIGINAL SITE SINCE IT IS NEARLY SEVEN TIMES LARGER,+ HE SAID.

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COMMUNITY CENTRE STAFF TO BE STRENGTHENED  
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THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO HIRE MORE PEOPLE TO ENSURE THE SMOOTH RUNNING OF COMMUNITY CENTRES, THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LEE YU-TAI ON THE STAFF SITUATION AT THESE CENTRES, MR LIAO SAID THERE HAS BEEN NO REDUCTION OF GOVERNMENT STAFF ASSIGNED TO WORK IN COMMUNITY CENTRES, ESTATE COMMUNITY CENTRES AND COMMUNITY HALLS, SINCE THEIR MANAGEMENT WAS TRANSFERRED FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT TO THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION LAST JUNE.

+A SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF \$1.5 MILLION HAS BEEN SOUGHT TO EMPLOY TEMPORARY COMMUNITY ORGANISERS IN 1985-86 TO ASSIST IN THE MANNING OF THESE FACILITIES,+ HE SAID.

+IT IS ALSO INTENDED THAT THE MANNING SCALE BE INCREASED IN ORDER TO MAXIMISE UTILISATION OF COMMUNITY CENTRES,+ HE ADDED.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL ORGANISATIONS TO MAKE FULL USE OF COMMUNITY CENTRE FACILITIES.

MR LIAO POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE NOW 415 STAFF (230 FROM SWD AND 185 FROM CNTA) WORKING IN THESE CENTRES, COMPARED WITH 394 SWD STAFF BEFORE THE TRANSFER.

+THE TRANSFER OF THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY CENTRES WAS TO RATIONALISE THE RESOURCE ALLOCATION OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND CNTA SO THAT THE FORMER CAN CONCENTRATE ITS MANPOWER RESOURCES IN SOCIAL WORK SERVICES WHILE THE LATTER ASSUMES THE GENERAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY BUILDING,+ HE SAID.

THIS ENTAILED THE REDEPLOYMENT OF STAFF RESOURCES INCLUDING THE WITHDRAWAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT IN SOME CASES, MR LIAO SAID.

+AS THERE WAS NO OVERALL REDUCTION OF STAFF, IT WAS A MATTER OF HOW THE CHANGING-OVER OF MANAGEMENT HAD AFFECTED THE USE OF THESE CENTRES.

+WITH THE TRANSFER, WE WERE ABLE TO PROVIDE BETTER SERVICES TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AS A WHOLE,+ HE SAID.

MR LIAO NOTED THAT SOME GROUP ACTIVITIES PREVIOUSLY LED BY PROFESSIONAL STAFF MAY HAVE TO BE REPLACED BY OTHER ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY LOCAL BODIES.

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PUNISHMENT ON STUDENTS SHOULD BE APPROPRIATE  
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SCHOOL AUTHORITIES SHOULD EXERCISE THEIR DISCRETION CAREFULLY IN DETERMINING THE KIND OF PUNISHMENT CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE FOR AN OFFENCE BY A STUDENT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE AGE OF THE PUPIL CONCERNED, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON, SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHAN YING-LUNG, MR HENDERSON SAID THE MOST COMMON FORMS OF DISCIPLINE INCLUDED DETENTION, COPYING FROM TEXTBOOKS AND ACCUMULATION OF DEMERITS WHILE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION MIGHT BE RESORTED TO IN SERIOUS CASES.

REGARDING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, HE SAID, EDUCATION REGULATIONS 58 AND 59 SPECIFIED HOW AND TO WHOM IT MIGHT BE ADMINISTERED AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ISSUED CIRCULARS FROM TIME TO TIME ADVISING HEAD TEACHERS TO CONSIDER CAREFULLY THE APPROPRIATENESS OF SUCH PUNISHMENT IN EACH INDIVIDUAL CASE.

+AS REGARDS SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION, DETAILED RULES ARE SET OUT IN THE CODES OF AID FOR AIDED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND IN THE RELEVANT REGULATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

IN PARTICULAR, HE ADDED, THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT MUST BE CONSULTED BEFORE ANY CHILD WAS EXPELLED.

HE SAID THAT WHERE PARENTS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH THE NATURE OR EXTENT OF THE DISCIPLINE ADMINISTERED TO THEIR CHILDREN, THE NORMAL COURSE WAS TO COMPLAIN TO THE HEAD TEACHER IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

+IF THE COMPLAINT IS REJECTED OR IF THE REPLY GIVEN IS UNSATISFACTORY, PARENTS CAN - AND DO - TAKE THEIR COMPLAINTS TO THE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER WHO WILL INVESTIGATE AND TAKE ACTION AS NECESSARY WITH THE SCHOOL,+ MR HENDERSON ADDED.

HE SAID COMPLAINTS BY PARENTS OF USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT WERE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN AND TEACHERS WHO WERE FOUND TO HAVE ADMINISTERED SUCH PUNISHMENT IMPROPERLY OR EXCESSIVELY WERE WARNED.

+IN SERIOUS CASES, CONSIDERATION WOULD HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO CANCELLING THE TEACHER'S REGISTRATION OR TEACHING PERMIT,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

## EXCESSIVE NOISE AFFECTING SCHOOLS UNDER STUDY

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A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY HAS BEEN CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM OF EXCESSIVE NOISE AFFECTING SCHOOLS NEAR TO THE AIRPORT AND MAJOR ROADS AND TO ASSESS VARIOUS MEANS OF IMPROVEMENT, SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY PROF THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR HENDERSON SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS WELL AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS FACED BY CERTAIN SCHOOLS AS A RESULT OF INCREASED NOISE LEVELS IN THEIR VICINITY.

+THE STUDY HAS ESTABLISHED THAT THE MEASURES REQUIRED WOULD DEPEND UPON THE INTENSITY OF THE NOISE AFFECTING A PARTICULAR SCHOOL.

+IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO INSTALL DOUBLE GLAZING, TO SEAL THE EXISTING WINDOWS OR SIMPLY TO KEEP EXISTING WINDOWS CLOSED.

+IN ALL THREE CASES, HOWEVER, AIR-CONDITIONING WOULD BE REQUIRED,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

HE THEN POINTED OUT THAT A SAMPLE SURVEY OF SCHOOLS INDICATED THAT A TOTAL OF SOME 10 000 CLASSROOMS AND SPECIAL ROOMS MIGHT REQUIRE TREATMENT OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER.

THE FULL COST OF THIS TREATMENT WOULD BE ABOUT \$240 MILLION WITH A RECURRENT COST (IN RESPECT OF AIR-CONDITIONING) OF AROUND \$50 MILLION PER ANNUM, HE SAID.

MR HENDERSON STRESSED THAT A VERY SUBSTANTIAL PROGRAMME WOULD BE REQUIRED IF NOISE WAS TO BE REDUCED TO DESIRABLE LEVELS IN ALL SCHOOLS CURRENTLY AFFECTED.

+IT IS, HOWEVER, POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH ORDERS OF PRIORITY AND TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO SOME OF THE MOST SERIOUSLY-AFFECTED SCHOOLS FIRST.

+THIS IS INDEED THE APPROACH ENDORSED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE EDUCATION COMMISSION,+ MR HENDERSON SAID.

HE ADDED THAT AN AGENDA ITEM PAPER WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE IN THE NEAR FUTURE ADVISING MEMBERS OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY AND SEEKING APPROVAL TO BRING FORWARD MORE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS DEALING INITIALLY WITH THE WORST-AFFECTED SCHOOLS.

+IN ORDER TO AVOID PROBLEMS OF THIS KIND,+ MR HENDERSON SAID, +PLANNING GUIDELINES HAVE BEEN AMENDED TO ENSURE THAT NOISE LEVELS ARE TAKEN SPECIFICALLY INTO ACCOUNT IN THE ALLOCATION OF SITES.+

+WHERE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID A NOISY SITE, REMEDIAL MEASURES WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT DESIGN AND THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL APPROVAL SOUGHT,+ HE SAID.

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RIGHT-HAND DRIVE TO STAY  
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NO CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE CONVERSION OF HONG KONG'S TRAFFIC SYSTEM FROM RIGHT-HAND DRIVE TO LEFT-HAND DRIVE, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON IAN MACPHERSON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR MACPHERSON SAID HE DID NOT SEE THE NEED TO PLAN FOR SUCH A CHANGE.

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LOITERING LAW STRIKES +FAIR, EQUITABLE+ BALANCE  
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THE LOITERING PROVISIONS IN THE EXISTING LAW STRIKE A +FAIR AND EQUITABLE+ BALANCE BETWEEN THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN PREVENTING CRIME, AND THE RIGHT OF INNOCENT INDIVIDUALS NOT TO BE UNDULY HARASSED IN THE PROCESS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PETER C. WONG, MR THOMAS SAID THE POLICE BELIEVED THE PROVISIONS, WHICH HAD BEEN IN OPERATION SINCE 1979, WERE VALUABLE IN PREVENTING CRIME.

+IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SHOW HOW MANY SERIOUS CRIMES HAVE BEEN PREVENTED BY TIMELY ARRESTS ON LOITERING CHARGES BUT IT IS A FACT THAT ABOUT 18 PER CENT OF PEOPLE ARRESTED FOR LOITERING ARE SUBSEQUENTLY CHARGED FOR MORE SERIOUS OFFENCES,+ HE SAID.

+THE POLICE CITE 18 RECENT CASES, IN WHICH 25 PERSONS WERE INITIALLY ARRESTED ON LOITERING CHARGES AND IN WHICH SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATIONS LED TO FURTHER CHARGES IN RESPECT OF 47 ROBBERIES, 23 BURGLARIES, NINE RAPES AND FOUR INDECENT ASSAULTS,+ HE ADDED.

MR THOMAS SAID THE USE OF THE PROVISIONS HAD PRODUCED NOTABLE REDUCTIONS IN ROBBERY AND BURGLARY FIGURES IN CERTAIN AREAS.

+THESE EXAMPLES INDICATE THAT THE PROVISIONS ARE, IN MR PETER C. WONG'S WORDS, 'PERFORMING A USEFUL FUNCTION',+ HE SAID.

MR THOMAS SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALSO CONSIDERED THAT THE POLICE HAD BEEN ENFORCING THE LAW IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER.

THE RELEVANT POLICE HEADQUARTER'S ORDER SET OUT CLEARLY THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH AN OFFICER SHOULD ACT, AND STATED THAT HE MUST WATCH THE SUSPECT FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE TO OBSERVE A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOUR WHICH WAS GENUINELY SUSPICIOUS.

/IT ALSO .....

IT ALSO STATED THAT THE EXPLANATIONS OFFERED BY THE SUSPECT SHOULD BE CHECKED AT OR NEAR THE TIME HE GAVE THEM TO ENSURE THAT IF THE EXPLANATION WAS TRUE AND REASONABLE HE WOULD BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY.

MR THOMAS SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW WAS REINFORCED BY THE FACT THAT IN THE FIVE AND A HALF YEARS SINCE THE ENACTMENT OF THE LOITERING PROVISIONS, THE CONVICTION RATE HAD NEVER BEEN LESS THAN 60 PER CENT IN ANY ONE YEAR AND HAD AVERAGED 72 PER CENT.

+FURTHERMORE, IN 1984, THE FIRST COMPLETE YEAR FOR WHICH STATISTICS WERE COMPILED, THERE WERE 2 644 PROSECUTIONS FOR LOITERING BUT IN ONLY 183 CASES WERE THERE COMPLAINTS LODGED WITH CAPO. ONLY FOUR OF THOSE WERE SUBSTANTIATED.+

HOWEVER, HE SAID, FOUR WEEKS AGO, THE COURT OF APPEAL, BY A MAJORITY DECISION, HAD INTERPRETED ONE OF THE LOITERING PROVISIONS IN A MANNER THAT APPEARED TO REDUCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE PROVISIONS IN PREVENTING CRIME AND WOULD LEAD TO CHANGES IN POLICE PROCEDURES.

+THE STRONG DISSENTING OPINION DESCRIBED THE COURT'S DECISION AS HAVING THE EFFECT OF MAKING THE PROVISION 'AN EMPTY SHELL',+ MR THOMAS SAID.

IN VIEW OF THE CONFLICT OF JUDICIAL OPINION, THE CROWN HAD DECIDED TO APPLY FOR LEAVE TO APPEAL TO THE PRIVY COUNCIL AND THE APPLICATION WOULD BE HEARD ON DECEMBER 19, HE ADDED.

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ASSISTANCE FOR TEACHERS TO HANDLE UNRULY PUPILS  
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THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO GIVE TEACHERS EVERY POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE IN DEALING WITH UNRULY AND DELINQUENT PUPILS, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON, SAID TODAY.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON RITA FAN, HE SAID A STANDING COMMITTEE ON UNRULY AND DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOLS WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1982 UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION TO KEEP THE MATTER UNDER REVIEW AND TO CONSIDER CONSTRUCTIVE MEASURES TO ASSIST TEACHERS.

/HE SAID .....

HE SAID MEASURES SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO TRAINING INCULDED PROVISION OF REGULAR SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS FOR SERVING HEADS AND TEACHERS JOINTLY ORGANISED WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SUCH AS THE POLICE AND THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, INTRODUCTION OF COUNSELLING AS A UNIT OF STUDY IN THE PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING COURSES FOR TEACHERS IN THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF TEACHERS TO ATTEND THE ONE-YEAR EXTRA MURAL COURSE IN SCHOOL COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE RUN BY THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

OTHER MEASURES, HE SAID, HAD INCLUDED SURVEYS ON UNRULY AND DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR, PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL TEACHERS FOR SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE REMEDIAL AND GUIDANCE SERVICES, ISSUE OF SCHOOL CIRCULARS TO INFORM TEACHERS ABOUT HOW TO HANDLE SUSPECTED GANG ACTIVITIES, AND ISSUE OF PAMPHLETS TO SCHOOLS AND PARENTS TO INFORM THEM OF THE SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR HELPING CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS.

+IN ADDITION, THE EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGISTS, EDUCATIONAL COUNSELLORS AND SCHOOL INSPECTORS OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SECTION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ALSO PROVIDE BOTH REMEDIAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS AS WELL AS ADVISORY SERVICES FOR THE TEACHERS AND PARENTS CONCERNED.

+THERE IS ALSO A PLAN TO SET UP A SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM TO VISIT SCHOOLS AND TO RENDER ON-SITE ASSISTANCE TO TEACHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR GUIDANCE IN SCHOOLS,+ HE SAID.

MR HENDERSON SAID HE HOPED THAT THE SCHEME WOULD BE LAUNCHED ON A PILOT BASIS IN SEPTEMBER NEXT YEAR.

HE SAID DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR SUCH AS ACTS OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE, GAMBLING, STEALING AND SUSPECTED INVOLVEMENT IN TRIAD ACTIVITIES ACCOUNTED FOR APPROXIMATELY 10 PER CENT OF TOTAL INCIDENTS RECORDED DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF INSTANCES RELATED TO COMPARATIVELY MINOR BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS HABITUAL LATENESS, FAILURE TO HAND IN HOMEWORK AND NOT BRINGING TEXTBOOKS TO SCHOOL.

+ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A SLIGHT INCREASE IN BOTH CATEGORIES BETWEEN 82-83 AND 83-84, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT 84-85 WILL SHOW SOME IMPROVEMENT.

+CLEARLY, IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO SPEAK OF A TREND ON THE BASIS OF THE DATA AVAILABLE SO FAR,+ HE SAID.

SERVICES TO HANDLE FAMILY PROBLEMS SATISFACTORY  
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THERE ARE 22 FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES RUN BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND 23 BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WHICH OFFER COUNSELLING AND OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES WITH PROBLEMS SUCH AS MARITAL BREAKDOWNS, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

ANSWERING A QUESTION BY THE HON TAI CHIN-WAH, MR THOMAS SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS, ON THE WHOLE, SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT PROVISION OF COUNSELLING SERVICES AND HAD NO PLAN TO SET UP AN ADVISORY BODY SPECIALLY TO DEAL WITH SUCH PROBLEMS.

HE SAID THAT THE MATRIMONIAL CAUSES RULES REQUIRED THE PETITIONER'S SOLICITOR IN DIVORCE CASES TO CERTIFY TO THE COURT WHETHER OR NOT HE HAD DISCUSSED WITH HIS CLIENT THE POSSIBILITY OF A RECONCILIATION AND GIVEN HIS CLIENT THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF PERSONS QUALIFIED TO ASSIST IN RECONCILIATION.

+THIS UNDERLINES WHAT I TAKE TO BE GOOD PRACTICE ON THE PART OF SOLICITORS IN HONG KONG,+ MR THOMAS SAID, +AND I AM ASSURED THAT IN THE LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT AT LEAST THE PROSPECTS OF RECONCILIATION ARE ALWAYS DISCUSSED WITH PETITIONERS.+

DURING THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1984 THE NUMBER OF LEGAL AID CERTIFICATES ISSUED FOR MATRIMONIAL CASES, INCLUDING DIVORCE AND OTHER FAMILY RELATED PROCEEDINGS, WAS 8 453.

THE CORRESPONDING FIGURE FOR OTHER CIVIL CASES WAS 17 246, MR THOMAS SAID.

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MOVE TO STUDY FUTURE WAR MEMORIAL FUND NEEDS  
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A MOTION TO APPOINT A SELECT COMMITTEE TO MAKE AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS OF THE HONG KONG WAR MEMORIAL FUND WAS MOVED BY THE HON JOHN SWAINE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

INTRODUCING THE MOTION, HE RECALLED THAT THE FUND WAS ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE IN 1947 TO ENSURE THAT ALL WHO SERVED IN DEFENCE OF HONG KONG DURING THE LAST WAR, INCLUDING THOSE WHO BECAME PRISONERS OF WAR AND WHO WERE INCAPACITATED AND IN NEED WOULD BE ADEQUATELY PROVIDED FOR. ASSISTANCE WAS ALSO PROVIDED TO THEIR DEPENDANTS.

+THE FUND IS ADMINISTERED BY A STATUTORY COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR AND COMPRISES RESPECTED SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WHO HAD WAR EXPERIENCE IN HONG KONG OR ELSEWHERE PLUS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE,+ HE SAID.

DUE TO AN INCREASED ANNUAL EXPENDITURE SINCE 1979 CAUSED BY MORE BENEFICIARIES, MR SWAINE SAID THE FUND'S ASSETS HAD NEARED DEPLETION AND THIS YEAR FINANCE COMMITTEE HAD BEEN ASKED TO APPROVE SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION TO MEET EXPENDITURE FROM THE FUND.

+THE GOVERNMENT HAS GUARANTEED THAT THE FUND WOULD ALWAYS HAVE THE MEANS TO PAY BUT I BELIEVE THAT A SELECT COMMITTEE OF THIS COUNCIL CAN BEST MAKE AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS OF THE FUND WHICH WOULD BE FAIR BOTH TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE PRISONERS OF WAR AND OTHER BENEFICIARIES BEFORE FINANCE COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO VOTE FURTHER FUNDS FOR ITS CONTINUANCE,+ MR SWAINE SUGGESTED.

SUPPORTING THE MOTION, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID HE AGREED WITH MR SWAINE THAT IT WAS AN APPROPRIATE TIME FOR AN INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION TO DETERMINE FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FUND WHICH WOULD BE FAIR BOTH TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE BENEFICIARIES.

HE ADDED THAT GOVERNMENT AGREED THAT THE MOST APPROPRIATE WAY OF DOING THIS WAS BY MEANS OF A SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

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#### HK PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL SEEKS OWN BUILDING \* \* \*

THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL WILL SEEK GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT TO ALLOCATE A SITE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SPECIAL PURPOSE BUILDING TO ACCOMMODATE MOST OF ITS PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND FACILITIES UNDER ONE ROOF.

THIS WAS SAID BY THE HON ALLEN LEE WHEN TABLING THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 1984-85 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR LEE NOTED THAT IN RECENT YEARS, THE CONTINUED VIGOROUS GROWTH OF THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES AND WORKFORCE HAD POSED A RECURRENT PROBLEM OF ACCOMMODATION.

THE COUNCIL, HE SAID, BELIEVED THAT WITH ITS INCREASING SIZE AND DIVERSITY, ONLY THE AVAILABILITY OF SUCH A BUILDING TO MAXIMISE UTILISATION OF ITS RESOURCES, WOULD ENABLE IT TO SERVE MOST EFFECTIVELY, ESPECIALLY IN MULTI-DISCIPLINARY TASKS AND ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULTS.

+OUR GROSS RENTAL ACCOMMODATIONS HAVE BEEN AND ARE GROWING TO THE POINT WHERE WE BELIEVE THAT INVESTMENT IN OUR OWN BUILDING IS VIABLE,+ HE ADDED.

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FOR THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW, THE DEMAND FOR THE COUNCIL'S SERVICES CONTINUED TO GROW.

+THE FEE INCOME DERIVED FROM SERVICES INCREASED BY 32 PER CENT, WHICH FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR, REPRESENTS SUBSTANTIAL REAL GROWTH,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS A SUSTAINED DEMAND FOR THE COUNCIL'S WELL-ESTABLISHED CORE SERVICES.

IN TRAINING, THE COUNCIL ORGANISED 374 COURSES COVERING A WIDE RANGE OF SPECIALISED MANAGEMENT AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS, WITH MORE THAN 8 000 PARTICIPANTS.

IN CONSULTANCY, THE COUNCIL UNDERTOOK 241 ASSIGNMENTS ASSISTING BOTH LOCAL AND OVERSEAS COMPANIES IN EITHER ESTABLISHING NEW PLANTS, OR EXPANDING AND STREAMLINING THEIR MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS.

MR LEE SAID THE COUNCIL ALSO EXPANDED THE SCOPE OF ITS ACTIVITIES BY TAKING A MORE ACTIVE APPROACH IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

+PROJECTS AIMED AT SERVING MULTIPLE USERS REQUIREMENTS INCLUDED THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE COMPUTER AIDED DESIGN SYSTEMS AND THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST STAGE OF A COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR THE GARMENT INDUSTRY,+ HE SAID.

DURING THE YEAR, THE COUNCIL EXPANDED ITS SUPPORT FACILITIES IN VARIOUS SURFACE TREATMENT TECHNOLOGIES, AND THERE WERE OVER 1 000 LOCAL COMPANIES USING THE COUNCIL'S SUPPORT FACILITIES, HE NOTED.

THE COUNCIL ALSO ENDORSED A +UNIFIED APPROACH CONCEPT+ TO TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES.

+THE INTENTION OF THE UNIFIED APPROACH IS TO RATIONALISE THE VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL SEPARATE TECHNO-ECONOMIC STUDIES AND TO GIVE EARLY IMPLEMENTATION TO PRIORITY PROJECTS UNDER ONE MANAGEMENT SO AS TO OPTIMISE THE USE OF RESOURCE.

+THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIFIED APPROACH AND THE ADOPTION OF AN ACTIVE APPROACH TO TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER REQUIRE A NEW LEGAL FRAMEWORK WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL,+ MR LEE SAID.

CONSEQUENTLY, AN AMENDMENT BILL TO THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL ORDINANCE WAS PREPARED AND RECEIVED THE ASSENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON AUGUST 7, 1985, HE ADDED.

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1985

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PAC CONCLUDES HEARINGS  
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THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE WILL CONCLUDE ITS OPEN HEARINGS FOR THIS YEAR IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER TOMORROW (THURSDAY) STARTING FROM 9.15 AM.

APPEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE TO ANSWER POINTS RAISED IN THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT'S ANNUAL REPORT WILL BE THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES, THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, THE DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY AND THE DIRECTOR OF LANDS.

THE TIMETABLE FOR TOMORROW'S HEARINGS IS AS FOLLOWS:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| 9.15 AM  | SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, PARAGRAPHS 58-62.                                     |
| 9.45 AM  | SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE AND DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES, PARAGRAPHS 63-68. |
| 10.15 AM | SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, PARAGRAPHS 154-162.                                   |
| 10.45 AM | SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, PARAGRAPHS 46-54.               |
| 11.15 AM | DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY, PARAGRAPHS 134-137.  |
| 11.30 AM | DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY, PARAGRAPHS 138-140.  |
| 2 PM     | DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, PARAGRAPHS 76-96.  |
| 2.45 PM  | SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, PARAGRAPHS 163-182.                                  |
| 3.45 PM  | DIRECTOR OF LANDS AND DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES, PARAGRAPHS 25-38.               |

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES COVERING THE OPEN HEARINGS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNT'S COMMITTEE ARE ADVISED TO BRING ALONG A COPY OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR REFERENCE.

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1981

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WANING SUPPORT FOR TEXTILE BILL INDICATED

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS PASSED THE TEXTILE BILL BUT THE VOTING SIGNALS A FURTHER DECLINE IN SUPPORT FOR THE PROTECTIONIST LEGISLATION, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR PAUL WONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE BILL, PASSED BY 255 VOTES TO 161, WAS THE SAME AS THE VERSION PASSED 60 - 39 VOTES BY THE SENATE IN NOVEMBER. IT IS SIGNIFICANT HOWEVER THAT YESTERDAY'S VOTE IN THE HOUSE ONCE AGAIN FELL SHORT OF THE TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IT WOULD NEED TO OVERRIDE A PRESIDENTIAL VETO.

YESTERDAY'S VOTING ALSO INDICATED A FALLING OFF IN HOUSE SUPPORT FROM AN EARLIER VERSION OF THE BILL WHICH WAS PASSED BY A MARGIN OF 262 TO 159 IN OCTOBER.

+ALTHOUGH THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL MARKS THE FINAL LEGISLATIVE HURDLE IN THE CONGRESS, IT STILL HAS TO GO BEFORE PRESIDENT REAGAN FOR SIGNING BEFORE IT BECOMES LAW AND ALL THE INDICATIONS CONTINUE TO POINT TO A PRESIDENTIAL VETO.

+WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT THE BILL HAS YET AGAIN FAILED TO WIN THE TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY THAT WOULD BE NEEDED TO OVERTURN A PRESIDENTIAL VETO,+ MR WONG SAID.

HE SAID THAT SUPPORT FOR THE BILL HAD DECLINED ALTHOUGH THE BILL WAS AMENDED IN THE SENATE TO INCLUDE PROTECTION FOR THE FOOTWEAR AND COPPER INDUSTRIES.

AT THE PEAK OF ITS SUPPORT, THE BILL HAD ABOUT 290 CO-SPONSORS IN THE HOUSE.

+THE FIGURES SHOW A FALLING AWAY OF SUPPORT. CLEARLY OUR LOBBYING EFFORTS TO SHOW THAT THE BILL IS MISGUIDED AND MISCONCEIVED HAVE HELPED TO TURN THE TIDE,+ MR WONG SAID.

LOOKING AHEAD, HE SAID THE BILL WOULD PROBABLY BE SENT TO PRESIDENT REAGAN TODAY (U.S. TIME). THE PRESIDENT WILL THEN HAVE 10 DAYS (EXCLUDING SUNDAYS) TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO VETO IT. IF HE OPTS TO VETO THE BILL, IT WOULD BE REFERED BACK TO THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE WHERE A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY WOULD BE NECESSARY TO OVERRIDE THE VETO.

+ON YESTERDAY'S VOTING, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT SUCH A PROPORTION COULD BE ACHIEVED, PARTICULARLY WHEN MANY CONGRESSMEN WHO MIGHT VOTE FOR THE BILL NOW WOULD THINK TWICE ABOUT THE MORE SERIOUS STEP OF OVERRIDING A PRESIDENTIAL VETO,+ MR WONG SAID.

/THE FINAL .....

THE FINAL VERSION OF THE BILL WOULD CUT BACK MFA TEXTILE EXPORTS FROM HONG KONG BY ABOUT 12 PER CENT FROM ITS 1984 LEVEL. NON-MFA EXPORTS (SILK, RAMIE AND LINEN) WOULD BE CUT BACK BY ABOUT 70 PER CENT. THE OTHER TWO MAJOR EXPORTERS, SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN WHO LIKE HONG KONG HAVE BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR THE HARSH EST TREATMENT, WOULD FIND THEIR EXPORTS CUT BY ABOUT 30 PER CENT FROM THEIR 1984 LEVEL.

IT WOULD ALSO FREEZE IMPORTS INTO THE UNITED STATES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES EXCEPT THE EEC AND CANADA AT THE 1984 LEVEL, WITH MINIMAL GROWTH.

MR WONG SAID THE IMPACT OF THE FINAL VERSION OF THE BILL ON HONG KONG WAS THE SAME AS THAT OF THE ORIGINAL VERSION INTRODUCED INTO THE CONGRESS IN MARCH. AN EARLIER AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE REDUCED THE IMPACT ON HONG KONG HAS BEEN MODIFIED IN THE FINAL VERSION, SO THAT THERE IS NO CHANGE FROM THE ORIGINAL.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

BRIEFING ON JENKINS BILL  
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THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF TRADE, MR PAUL WONG, WILL GIVE A PRESS BRIEFING TODAY (WEDNESDAY) ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS OF THE JENKINS BILL.

THE BRIEFING WILL BE HELD AT 3 PM IN THE TRADE DEPARTMENT'S CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE 15TH FLOOR, OCEAN CENTRE, CANTON ROAD.

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1985

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PRIVATE MEDICAL SECTOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY WELCOMED  
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THE PUBLIC MEDICAL SERVICE WILL WELCOME AND FOLLOW WITH THE GREATEST INTEREST THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MORE EXPENSIVE AND SOPHISTICATED MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR FOR GUIDANCE IN ITS FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS, THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR K.L. THONG, SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE HONG KONG LITHOTRIPTER CENTRE AT ST PAUL'S HOSPITAL, DR THONG SAID THAT AS A MEDICAL ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, HE HAD TO ENSURE AN EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES WHICH WERE PAID FOR FROM PUBLIC FUNDS AND TO UTILISE THESE RESOURCES IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.

+THERE MUST BE COMPETING PRIORITIES WHICH HAVE TO BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN RESOURCES WHICH ARE NOT UNLIMITED,+ HE SAID.

DR THONG PRAISED THE ST PAUL'S HOSPITAL FOR AGAIN TAKING THE LEAD IN HONG KONG IN INTRODUCING ADVANCED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT - THIS TIME A NEW TREATMENT METHOD FOR RENAL STONES.

HE RECALLED THAT THE HOSPITAL WAS ALSO THE FIRST ONE IN HONG KONG TO INSTALL THE CAT SCANNER IN 1977.

LITHOTRIPTER IS A NEW TREATMENT METHOD FOR KIDNEY STONES, USING SHOCK WAVES IN EXERTING PRESSURE ON THE STONES TO MAKE THEM CRUMBLE INTO SAND-GRAIN SIZE PARTICLES.

IT IS A NON-INVASIVE METHOD APPLIED EXTERNALLY TO THE BODY AND HAS A DISTINCT ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER CONVENTIONAL TREATMENT METHODS OF KIDNEY STONES FOR SUITABLE CASES.

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THAI OFFICIALS TRAINED ON TRAFFIC CONTROL  
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FOUR SENIOR THAI OFFICIALS HAVE COMPLETED A SIX-WEEK TRAINING COURSE ON THE AREA TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM (ATC) ORGANISED BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

THEY WERE THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ROAD TRAFFIC, MRS SUMONTHA THUNYAPON= ENGINEER OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, MR PREECHA LAOCHAREON= TRANSPORT OFFICER OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, MR TONG NATICHIEM, AND CIVIL ENGINEER OF BANGKOK METROPOLITAN ADMINISTRATION, MR SOMKID WONGTANGSWAD.

/THEIR TRAINING, .....

THEIR TRAINING, WHICH COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF AREAS RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ATC SYSTEM, WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE THAI OFFICIALS WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE AN INDEPTH AND UP-TO-DATE TECHNIQUE OF THE SYSTEM.

DURING THEIR COURSE, THE THAI OFFICIALS WERE GIVEN ON-THE-JOB TRAINING AT VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE TRAFFIC CONTROL SURVEILLANCE DIVISION OF THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT. THEY ALSO VISITED THE MONITOR ROOM, AIRPORT TUNNEL CONTROL ROOM, KOWLOON URBAN ATC AREA AND ABERDEEN TUNNEL AREA TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES THE ACTUAL OPERATION OF THE SYSTEM.

MRS THUNYAPON SAID TODAY THAT THE TRAINING ENABLED HER AND HER COLLEAGUES TO LEARN AND APPRECIATE THE GENERAL METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING THE ATC SYSTEM IN VARIOUS AREAS OF HONG KONG AND CONSIDER HOW THEY MIGHT BE APPLIED IN BANGKOK.

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#### AIR-CONDITIONED AIRPORT COACHES LAUNCHED \* \* \* \*

THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR PETER LEEDS, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) INAUGURATED THE NEW AIR-CONDITIONED AIRPORT COACH SERVICE OPERATED BY THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY.

SPEAKING AT A CEREMONY AT THE AIRPORT TRANSPORT TERMINUS, MR LEEDS SAID GOOD TRANSPORT FACILITIES ON LAND WERE ESSENTIAL FOR THE EFFICIENT WORKING OF THE AIRPORT WHICH LAST YEAR SERVED 9.5 MILLION PASSENGERS.

HE SAID THERE WAS A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES INCLUDING CAR-PARKING FOR PRIVATE CARS, TAXIS, LIGHT BUSES, HOTEL BUSES, AND THE PUBLIC BUS SERVICE FROM TSIM SHA TSUI AND TO CENTRAL DISTRICT ON HONG KONG ISLAND.

MR LEEDS SAID THE PUBLIC LIGHT BUS SERVICES USING COACHES WITH SPACE FOR BAGGAGE WERE INTRODUCED BY THE KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY IN 1975.

CURRENTLY THESE SERVICES HAVE BEEN CARRYING ABOUT 110 000 PASSENGERS A MONTH AND OFFER A VALUABLE LINK BOTH FOR AIRLINE PASSENGERS AND FOR PEOPLE WORKING AT THE AIRPORT.

+TODAY WE SEE A MAJOR IMPROVEMENT OF THESE SERVICES WITH THE COMMISSIONING OF THE FIRST OF THE NEW AIR-CONDITIONED COACHES.

/+THE COACHES .....

+THE COACHES ARE AIR-CONDITIONED WITH THE LATEST EQUIPMENT WHICH HAS BEEN WIDELY USED IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD, AND TO ENSURE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE AIR-CONDITIONING THE BODIES HAVE BEEN INSULATED AND THE WINDOWS TINTED TO REDUCE HEAT TRANSMISSION.

+THE CHASSIS DESIGN OF THE COACHES AND A FULLY AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION AND AIR SUSPENSION WILL PROVIDE A COMFORTABLE RIDE FOR THE PASSENGERS,+ MR LEEDS SAID.

THE INTERIOR WAS FINISHED TO A HIGH STANDARD WITH A CARPETED FLOOR AND HIGH BACK SEATS WITH ADEQUATE LEG-ROOM TO ENSURE COMFORT, HE ADDED.

ALSO PRESENT AT TODAY'S CEREMONY WAS THE AIRPORT GENERAL MANAGER, MR R.A. SIEGEL.

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PRESS CONFERENCE ON DB'S FORUMS  
\* \* \* \*

A PRESS CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF A SERIES OF PUBLIC FORUMS FOR TSUEN WAN RESIDENTS TO LEARN ABOUT THE POLICIES AND WORK OF THE DISTRICT BOARD.

THE CONFERENCE WILL BE CHAIRED BY DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMAN, MR CHAU HOW-CHEN, BOARD MEMBERS AND DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ANGUS MIU.

IT WILL BE HELD AT 11.30 AM IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT OFFICE, FIRST FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN.

THE FIRST IN THE SERIES OF CONSULTATIVE PUBLIC FORUMS WILL BE A MEETING FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPALS TO BE HELD ON DECEMBER 11 (WEDNESDAY).

THE BOARD'S INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE ALSO PLANS TO HOLD A FORUM FOR INDUSTRIALISTS AND BUSINESSMEN IN THE DISTRICT.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE PRESS CONFERENCE TOMORROW.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEET-THE-MEDIA SESSION

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THE CHIEF STAFF OFFICER OF THE CIVIL AID SERVICES, MR JOHN FORTUNE, WILL MEET THE MEDIA IN THE GIS PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM ON THE FIFTH FLOOR, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, AT 4 PM TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

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GREEN MINIBUS ROUTE APPLICATION TO CLOSE

\* \* \* \*

MORE THAN 1 000 APPLICATION FORMS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED FOR OPERATING THE 24 NEW GREEN MINIBUS ROUTES ON HONG KONG ISLAND, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT EXERCISE WAS VERY ENCOURAGING AND HE REMINDED GREEN MINIBUS OWNERS THAT THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATION WAS FRIDAY (DECEMBER 13).

COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS MUST BE RETURNED BY REGISTERED POST TO REACH THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AT SIXTH FLOOR, GUARDIAN HOUSE, 32 01 KWAN ROAD, WAN CHAI, ON OR BEFORE THE DEADLINE. LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

+IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE NEW ROUTES WILL BE INTRODUCED IN JULY NEXT YEAR,+ THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

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CONTAINER PARKING SITE FOR RENT

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THE LANDS DEPARTMENT IS INVITING TENDERS FOR THE TENANCY OF A SITE AT TSING YI ROAD, ON TSING YI ISLAND.

THE 2.11-HECTARE SITE IS TO BE USED AS A FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CAR PARK FOR CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS ONLY.

TENANCY IS FOR ONE YEAR, RENEWABLE MONTHLY THEREAFTER.

/CLOSING DATE .....

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1985

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CLOSING DATE FOR ACCEPTANCE OF TENDERS IS NOON ON DECEMBER 20.

FORM OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM, AND TENDER PLAN INSPECTED AT, THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, TSUEN WAN, 10TH FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN, NEW TERRITORIES, THE LANDS DEPARTMENT, SURVEY DIVISION, MURRAY BUILDING, FIFTH FLOOR, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG, AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, KOWLOON, YAU MA TEI CAR PARK BUILDING, 10TH FLOOR, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

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TEMPORARY TRAFFIC CHANGES IN WESTERN  
\* \* \* \*

THE FLYOVER LINKING POK FU LAM ROAD AND BONHAM ROAD WILL BE CLOSED FROM 11.30 PM SATURDAY (DECEMBER 7) TO 6.30 AM THE NEXT DAY AND FROM 8.30 PM ON SUNDAY (DECEMBER 8) TO 6 AM THE NEXT DAY TO FACILITATE ROAD WORK.

DURING THE CLOSURE, VEHICLES ON EASTBOUND POK FU LAM ROAD HEADING FOR BONHAM ROAD WILL BE DIVERTED VIA HIGH STREET AND WESTERN STREET.

CHINA MOTOR BUS ROUTES NO. 3 AND 23 WILL BE CONVERTED TO CIRCULAR ROUTES AND OPERATED TO PARK ROAD ONLY. CMB ROUTES NO. 40 AND 40M ON THEIR CENTRAL-BOUND JOURNEYS WILL BE RE-ROUTED VIA POK FU LAM ROAD, WESTERN STREET, DES VOEUX ROAD WEST, CONNAUGHT ROAD WEST, CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL, GILMAN STREET, DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL AND QUEENSWAY.

GREEN MINIBUS ROUTES NO. 8 AND 22 ON THEIR JOURNEYS TO CENTRAL AND ROUTES NO. 28 AND 31 ON THEIR JOURNEYS TO CAUSEWAY BAY WILL BE DIVERTED VIA HIGH STREET AND WESTERN STREET TO REJOIN BONHAM ROAD.

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