



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL: 5-233191

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
PROPOSED DEPENDENT PARENT ALLOWANCE COMPARES FAVOURABLY WITH OTHER COUNTRIES	1
DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL PASSED INTO LAW	3
INDUSTRIAL LAND SALE CONDITIONS REVIEWED	5
SECRETARY FOR SECURITY SPEAKS ON REFUGEE PROBLEM	7
NT DEVELOPMENT AREAS BEING EXTENDED	9
14 NEW ESTATES OPENED SINCE 1973	11
STEPS TAKEN TO IMPROVE CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHING	13
BILL TO FACILITATE WORK OF LANDS TRIBUNAL	15
PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL	16
GOVERNMENT INTERESTED IN PROMOTING CO-OPERATIVE PROJECTS .	17
PROJECT CO-ORDINATION TEAM FOR N.E. KOWLOON PLANNED	18
NORTH POINT-KOWLOON CITY VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICE BECOMES PERMANENT	20
FIVE BILLS PASSED	20
PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE UNDERTAKES MEDIUM-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS	21
DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORM THREE LEAVERS	22
MTR TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN SHAM SHUI PO	23
LADY MACLEHOSE TO OPEN CAREERS EXHIBITION	24
WATER CUT IN KWUN TONG	24

.....

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 1 -

PROPOSED DEPENDENT PARENT ALLOWANCE COMPARES
FAVOURABLY WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

* * * * *

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY THAT THE LEVEL OF THE PROPOSED DEPENDENT PARENT ALLOWANCE AT \$4,000 PER PARENT COMPARES VERY FAVOURABLY WITH SIMILAR ALLOWANCES IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

SPEAKING ON THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 5) BILL TO RE-INTRODUCE THE DEPENDENT PARENT ALLOWANCE, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID, THE ALLOWANCE IS THE EQUIVALENT OF LESS THAN \$1,000 PER PARENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, AND IN SINGAPORE IT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF ABOUT \$1,500 PER PARENT.

HE SAID THE PROPOSED LEVEL OF ALLOWANCE IS BASED ON THE EXISTING ALLOWANCE FOR A FIRST CHILD, AND THE ALLOWANCE NOW PROPOSED IS NON-MEANS TESTED AND IS PAYABLE IN FULL IRRESPECTIVE OF THE COST TO THE TAXPAYER OF THE MAINTENANCE OF THE DEPENDENT PARENT.

+A PARENT WILL BE REGARDED AS BEING MAINTAINED IF HE RESIDES WITH A TAXPAYER RENT-FREE FOR NOT LESS THAN SIX MONTHS, OR IF THE TAXPAYER CONTRIBUTES NOT LESS THAN \$1,200 A YEAR IN CASH TOWARDS HIS MAINTENANCE,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE PROPOSED ALLOWANCE IS MUCH MORE GENEROUS THAN THE PREVIOUS ONE BECAUSE THE NEW SCHEME DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR ABATEMENT AND WHERE THE COST TO THE TAXPAYER OF MAINTAINING HIS PARENT IS LESS THAN \$4,000 A YEAR, THE FULL ALLOWANCE WILL STILL BE ALLOWED.

REFERRING TO CRITICISM ON THE PROPOSED AGE CRITERION OF 60 OR ABOVE, HE SAID IT HAS BEEN ARGUED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO AGE CRITERION AT ALL, OR, IF AN AGE CRITERION IS NECESSARY, IT SHOULD BE PEGGED AT A LEVEL TO RELATE TO THE RETIREMENT AGE OF CIVIL SERVANTS OF 55 OR EVEN 45.

HE EXPRESSED DOUBT OVER THE RELEVANCE OF THE RETIREMENT AGE OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND THE ALLOWANCE AS SUCH, WHICH IS NOT DIRECTED AT CIVIL SERVANTS.

HE SAID: +IN ANY CASE, IT IS POSSIBLE FOR CIVIL SERVANTS TO EXTEND THEIR SERVICE BEYOND THE RETIREMENT AGE OF 55, AND IN THE VAST MAJORITY OF CASES, THOSE WHO DO RETIRE AT 55 ARE IN RECEIPT OF A PENSION OR HAVE ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT.+

MR. HADDON-CAVE FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT THE IMPOSITION OF AN AGE CRITERION IS IN PART TO BOLSTER THE CONCEPT OF MAINTENANCE AND IN PART TO REDUCE THE COST TO THE REVENUE.

+TO REMOVE THE AGE LIMIT ALTOGETHER WOULD ENTAIL A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN FORGONE REVENUE. THIS WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE ON BUDGETARY GROUNDS,+ HE SAID.

/IN ADDITION,

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 2 -

IN ADDITION, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID HE IS SATISFIED THAT THE SELECTION OF THE QUALIFYING AGE OF 60 DOES REFLECT THE GENERAL RETIREMENT AGE IN THE COMMUNITY, AND IT IS ALSO IN LINE WITH THE LIMITS IMPOSED IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITH SIMILAR PROVISIONS FOR ALLOWANCES TO RECOGNISE DEPENDENCY.

ON THE SUGGESTIONS TO REMOVE THE CONDITION THAT THE PARENT MUST BE A PERMANENT RESIDENT IN HONG KONG, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID SUCH REMOVAL WOULD MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ADMINISTER THE SCHEME.

+IT IS ESSENTIAL TO MINIMISE THE POSSIBILITY OF ABUSE AND TO LIMIT THE COMMISSIONER'S MONITORING ROLE TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM,+ HE SAID.

MR. HADDON-CAVE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSED ALLOWANCE WILL EFFECTIVELY REDUCE THE TAX LIABILITY OF THOSE WITH DEPENDENT PARENTS, THE EXTENT OF THE RELIEF BEING DETERMINED BY THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYER.

HE NOTED THAT THE TAX THRESHOLD OF A MARRIED TAXPAYER WITH TWO CHILDREN AND TWO DEPENDENT PARENTS WILL BE PUSHED UP FROM \$31,000 A YEAR TO OVER \$38,000, AND THE TAX LIABILITY OF SUCH A TAXPAYER WILL BE REDUCED BY NEARLY 79 PER CENT, OR \$412, ON A SALARY OF \$40,000 A YEAR- BY OVER 50 PER CENT, OR \$887 ON A SALARY OF \$50,000 A YEAR- AND BY NEARLY 37 PER CENT, OR \$1,350, ON A SALARY OF \$60,000 A YEAR.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY PROPOSED THAT THE ALLOWANCE SHOULD APPLY TO 1978-79 FINAL ASSESSMENTS AND 1979-80 PROVISIONAL ASSESSMENTS.

THE LOSS OF REVENUE WILL BE ABOUT \$61 MILLION IN THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1979-80 AND \$37.5 MILLION A YEAR THEREAFTER, IN ADDITION TO THE COST OF ADMINISTRATION REQUIRED TO ADMINISTER THE SCHEME, HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/3

DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL PASSED INTO LAW
* * * * *

THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978 WHICH SEEKS TO PROVIDE FURTHER PROTECTION TO DEPOSITORS WAS PASSED INTO LAW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF HIS UNOFFICIAL COLLEAGUES IN SUPPORT OF THE BILL, THE HON. LI FOOK-WO SAID:

+THE UNOFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT ITS ENACTMENT WILL NOT ONLY PROVIDE FURTHER PROTECTION TO DEPOSITORS BUT ALSO ALLOW THE GOVERNMENT TO REGULATE MORE ADEQUATELY THE OPERATIONS OF REGISTERED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.+

MR. LI ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE UNOFFICIALS ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THE LIQUIDITY POSITION OF SUCH COMPANIES WILL NOT BE, BY ITSELF, A GENUINE SAFEGUARD IF THE COMPANIES ENGAGE IN UNSOUND BUSINESS PRACTICES.

+A SYSTEM OF PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION IS THEREFORE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, ESPECIALLY AS SHORT-TERM CLAIMS BY BANKS ON THESE COMPANIES ARE NOT TO RANK AS LIQUID ASSETS,+ HE SAID.

MR. LI PERSONALLY FELT THAT THE LIQUIDITY RATIO REQUIREMENT FOR THE COMPANIES SHOULD, OF NECESSITY, BE LOWER THAN THAT OF A BANK. EVEN IN THE CASE OF THE BANKS, HE AGREED WITH THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY THAT THE LIQUIDITY POSITION NEEDS TO BE RE-EXAMINED.

HE SUGGESTED THAT THIS COULD BE DONE AT THE SAME TIME AS THE DEFINITIONS OF LIQUID ASSETS AND THE MINIMUM PROPORTION OF DEPOSIT LIABILITIES FOR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ARE RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

MR. LI RECALLED THAT EARLY IN NOVEMBER 1973 HE HAD ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO REGULATE FINANCE COMPANIES IN THE INTEREST OF THE PUBLIC AT LARGE. HE HAD MADE VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS AND VARIOUS MEASURES HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT. THE PRESENT LEGISLATION DEALS WITH THE FILING OF MONTHLY RETURNS BY THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES AND THE REQUIREMENT OF A MINIMUM LIQUIDITY RATIO.

HE WAS SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED HOWEVER THAT IT HAS TAKEN FOUR YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS SINCE HE MADE THE SUGGESTION, BEFORE THE SUBMISSION OF MONTHLY RETURNS IS TO BE MADE A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT.

+I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A RELATIVELY SIMPLE EXERCISE WELL WITHIN THE CAPACITY OF OUR LEGAL DRAFTSMEN,+ MR. LI SAID, ALTHOUGH HE APPRECIATED THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN ATTEMPTING TO SPECIFY A MINIMUM LIQUIDITY RATIO WHICH CANNOT BE DETERMINED ARBITRARILY.

ANOTHER UNOFFICIAL COUNCILLOR, THE HON. ANDREW SO ALSO SPOKE ON THE BILL.

WHILE HE SUPPORTED IT WHOLE-HEARTEDLY, HE SUGGESTED THAT IN ORDER TO FURTHER PROTECT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND TO ENSURE THAT THE FINANCIAL SECTOR ADEQUATELY SERVICES THE NEEDS OF OUR GROWING ECONOMY, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD AT A LATER STAGE CONSIDER INTRODUCING AN INSURANCE PROGRAMME.

THIS PROGRAMME WOULD REQUIRE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES AS WELL AS BANKS TO BE INSURED WITH A GOVERNMENT INSURANCE FUND TO BE SET UP AGAINST POSSIBLE LOSS IN CASE THEY WIND UP OR DISSOLVE THEIR BUSINESS.

UNDER THIS SCHEME, THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES OR BANKS WILL PAY ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DEPOSIT INSURANCE FUND.

IN REPLY, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID THE DELAY IN PUTTING FORWARD THE PROPOSALS FOR DETAILED PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION OF DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES WAS LARGELY DUE TO A GREAT DEAL OF TIME SPENT IN VERY DETAILED AND TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS BOTH ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED AND THEIR DETAILED APPLICATION.

HE AGREED WITH MR. LI COMPLETELY THAT IT SHOULD BE A RELATIVELY SIMPLE EXERCISE TO PROVIDE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF MONTHLY RETURNS BY DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES AS A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT, BUT HE POINTED OUT THAT IN SO DOING, THE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS A DEGREE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PRUDENTIAL SUPERVISION OF THOSE COMPANIES.

+HOW FAR IS IT RIGHT FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT THAT RESPONSIBILITY IF IT DOES NOT HAVE THE POWER TO ENSURE THAT ALL IS WELL IN THE COMPANIES?+ HE ASKED.

MR. HADDON-CAVE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS PROTECTION OF DEPOSITORS HAS CHANGED SINCE THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES ORDINANCE WAS PASSED TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS AGO.

+AND WE NOW ACCEPT - AFTER LONG DISCUSSIONS WITH THE FINANCIAL COMMUNITY THAT WE HAVE A DUTY TOWARDS THE LARGER DEPOSITOR, AS WELL AS THE SMALLER.

+I DO NOT SAY THAT WE ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ULTIMATE REPAYMENT OF DEPOSITS, LARGE OR SMALL. BUT WE ACCEPT THAT WE NEED TO SUPERVISE THE ATTITUDES OF ALL INSTITUTIONS WHICH TAKE DEPOSITS, LARGE OR SMALL.

+THAT IS THE GENERAL SOCIAL INTEREST AND IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR EMERGENCE AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE,+ HE SAID.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY ALSO SAID THAT IN THE COMING MONTHS, THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE LOOKING AT THE LIQUIDITY REQUIREMENTS AND THE DEFINITION OF LIQUID ASSETS, FOR LICENSED BANKS AS WELL AS FOR REGISTERED DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES.

+THESE REQUIREMENTS AND DEFINITIONS MUST BE COMPLEMENTARY, IF NOT IDENTICAL, AND SO MUST BE EXAMINED TOGETHER,+ HE SAID.

ON MR. SO'S SUGGESTION TO SET UP AN INSURANCE FUND TO PROTECT DEPOSITORS WITH BOTH BANKS AND DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THIS SUGGESTION RAISES MANY DIFFICULT QUESTIONS ON THE EXTENT OF THE INSURANCE COVERAGE AS WELL AS BASIS OF THE INSURANCE PREMIUM TO BE CHARGED.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 5 -

INDUSTRIAL LAND SALE CONDITIONS REVIEWED
TO MEET PRESENT DAY NEEDS

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING SELLING INDUSTRIAL LAND WITH CONDITIONS TO MEET ALL THE NEEDS OF PRESENT DAY INDUSTRY, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. DEREK JONES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE, MR. JONES SAID THERE SEEMED TO BE AN INCREASING DEMAND FOR GROUND FLOOR SPACE AND FOR FLOOR LOADINGS AND CEILING HEIGHTS TO ACCOMMODATE HEAVIER MACHINERY.

+WE ARE THEREFORE CONSIDERING, AS AN EXPERIMENT, SELLING SOME INDUSTRIAL LAND WITH CONDITIONS REQUIRING THE LOWER FLOORS TO BE BUILT WITH SPECIALLY HEAVY LOADING AND HIGHER CEILINGS,+ MR. JONES SAID.

SIMILARLY, HE SAID, THE SALE OF SOME LOTS WITH A REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE SMALL FACTORY UNITS, WHICH WOULD HELP MEET THE PROBLEMS OF SMALL SCALE OPERATORS IS ALSO BEING CONSIDERED.

+IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR LAND PRODUCTION PROGRAMME,+ MR. JONES EMPHASISED, +I AM PARTICULARLY CONCERNED NOT ONLY THAT SUFFICIENT LAND SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO INDUSTRY BUT THAT IT SHOULD BE SOLD IN WAYS THAT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.+

MR. JONES ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN GIVING CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT TO THE SUBJECT OF INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF USABLE LAND FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS.

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAND PRODUCTION HAS CARRIED OUT A VERY USEFUL STOCKTAKING OF WHAT ALL OUR CURRENTLY PLANNED PROJECTS ADD UP TO IN TERMS OF THE SIZE AND TIMING OF LAND PRODUCTION FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES, HE SAID. AND, THE COMMITTEE HAS INAUGURATED STUDIES INTO POSSIBLE NEW DEVELOPMENTS STRETCHING WELL INTO THE EIGHTIES.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION IS ALSO, AS PART OF ITS WIDE RANGING ACTIVITIES, STUDYING IN DEPTH THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LAND POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION AND THE EXPANSION AND DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR ECONOMY, HE ADDED.

+PROGRESS IS BEING MADE AND I WOULD HOPE THAT SOME HELPFUL RECOMMENDATIONS, WHICH CAN BE ACTED UPON, WILL EMERGE IN THE COURSE OF 1979,+ HE SAID.

MR. JONES SAID THAT STEPS ARE BEING TAKEN TO STRENGTHEN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING CAPACITY OF THE LANDS DIVISION OF THE ENVIRONMENT BRANCH TO ASSIST IN MAKING THE EARLY DECISIONS WHICH ARE VITAL TO ENSURE A CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF LAND SUPPLIES.

/MR. JONES

MR. JONES EMPHASISED THAT THE PRESENT DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES, PARTICULARLY IN THE NEW TOWNS, WOULD BE PRODUCING LAND FOR ALL PURPOSES OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS AT A GREATER RATE THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME IN HONG KONG'S HISTORY.

+DETAILED STUDIES ARE ALSO IN HAND WHICH WILL PROVIDE THE BASIC INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR AN ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH LANTAU WHEN THIS IS NEEDED - AND THE MACHINERY WILL BE THERE TO KEEP ALL OPTIONS UNDER CONTINUING REVIEW,+ HE SAID.

MR. JONES ASSURED THAT THE STUDIES INCLUDED THE ENGINEERING FEASIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A REPLACEMENT AIRPORT AT CHEK LAP KOK AND ALL THE CONSEQUENCES OF SO DOING, INCLUDING THE FUTURE USE OF THE LAND WHICH WOULD THEN BE RELEASED AT KAI TAK, POSSIBLE FURTHER RECLAMATIONS AND SO ON.

TURNING TO LAND ADMINISTRATION, MR. JONES POINTED OUT THAT GOVERNMENT'S PROCEDURES FOR SELLING LAND IN ORDER TO REDUCE SPECULATION AND TO ENSURE THAT LAND WAS USED TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE HAD BEEN KEPT UNDER REVIEW.

HE SAID THE TERMS FOR THE PAYMENT OF PREMIUM FOR EXPENSIVE SITES WERE AMENDED A FEW MONTHS AGO TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASED DOWN PAYMENT OF PREMIUM, AND +THE WHOLE QUESTION OF INSTALMENTS OF PREMIA IS NOW BEING FURTHER EXAMINED.+

ON POLLUTION, MR. JONES SAID THE GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING THE FORM OF CONTROLS WHICH SHOULD BE IMPOSED ON BOTH OLD AND NEW POLLUTING INDUSTRIES.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY OF CERTAIN LIMITED AREAS WOULD BE STARTED SHORTLY TO SEE WHETHER THE INTRODUCTION OF POLLUTING INDUSTRIES WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE.

IF SO, HE SAID, THOSE AREAS WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE A SPECIAL VALUE FOR INDUSTRIES SUCH AS DYEING FACTORIES -- AN IMPORTANT INDUSTRY FOR HONG KONG.

ON TRANSPORT, MR. JONES SAID THE WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORT POLICY WOULD SHORTLY BE TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE WHITE PAPER WOULD CONTAIN EVIDENCE OF THE VERY CONSIDERABLE PLANNING EFFORT WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS PUTTING INTO THIS VITAL FIELD AND OF THE VERY SIGNIFICANT NEW DEVELOPMENTS WHICH ARE EXPECTED TO COME TO FRUITION IN THE EIGHTIES, HE ADDED.

+AT PRESENT,+ MR. JONES SAID, +WE ARE IN THE DARKEST HOUR BEFORE THE DAWN BUT, WITHIN TWO YEARS FROM NOW WHEN, FOR EXAMPLE, THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY AND THE ABERDEEN TUNNEL AND ITS ASSOCIATED ELEVATED ROAD CONNECTIONS ARE OPEN, WE SHOULD BEGIN TO SEE SOME REAL IMPROVEMENTS.+

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 7 -

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY SPEAKS ON REFUGEE PROBLEM

* * * * *

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON. LEWIS DAVIES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY THAT IT WOULD NOT BE REALISTIC AT PRESENT TO IMPOSE A FIXED LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES HERE AT ANY ONE TIME, ALTHOUGH HONG KONG CERTAINLY IS NOT ABLE TO COPE WITH MANY MORE REFUGEES.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED POLICY DEBATE, MR. DAVIES DESCRIBED THE REFUGEE PROBLEM AS A +FAST MOVING SCENE+, WITH SOME DISTURBING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS IN CONSTANT DIALOGUE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR).

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE AGREEMENT AT PRESENT IS THAT HONG KONG ALLOWS VIETNAMESE REFUGEES TO LAND HERE AS PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL EFFORT AND AGAINST A GUARANTEE BY THE UNHCR TO FIND THEM PERMANENT HOMES ELSEWHERE.

+WE ACCEPT SUCH PERSONS BOTH IN OVERSEAS SHIPS WHICH HAVE RESCUED THEM, AND IN WHICH HONG KONG IS THE FIRST PORT OF CALL, AS WELL AS IN CASES WHERE REFUGEES ARRIVE HERE DIRECT FROM VIETNAM IN SMALLER LESS SEAWORTHY VESSELS,+ HE SAID.

+THE UNHCR CARE FOR THESE PEOPLE WHILST THEY ARE HERE AND WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR DOING SO,+ HE ADDED.

ON THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION, MR. DAVIES SAID THE NUMBER OF CASES PRESENTLY UNDER INVESTIGATION IS HIGHER THAN ANY TIME DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS AND IS ABOUT EQUAL TO THE HIGHEST CASE-LOAD OF THE PAST TWO YEARS.

MR. DAVIES POINTED OUT THAT PRESENT INVESTIGATIONS INCREASINGLY TEND TO BE CONCERNED WITH THE 'SATISFIED CUSTOMER' TYPE OF CORRUPTION AND THESE ARE LESS DRAMATIC, AND THEREFORE LESS NEWSWORTHY, THAN THOSE DEALING WITH SYNDICATED CORRUPTION.

+THESE CASES ARE COMPLEX AND COMPLICATED AND THEY FREQUENTLY PRESENT FAR GREATER DIFFICULTIES FOR THE ICAC INVESTIGATORS THAN DO CASES IN OTHER CATEGORIES,+ HE SAID.

MR. DAVIES ADDED THAT THE COMMISSION'S PREVENTION AND EDUCATION ARMS CONTINUE TO LENGTHEN AND EXPAND. +AGAIN, THEY ARE NOT THE SORT OF ACTIVITIES WHICH ATTRACT THE ATTENTIONS OF THE MEDIA VERY OFTEN.+

HE SAID: +EVEN SO, MEMBERS CAN BE ASSURED THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO SLACKENING OF IMPETUS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION: THE ICAC REMAINS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, A MOST POTENT FORCE.+

/TURNING

TURNING TO THE WORK OF THE POLICE FORCE, MR. DAVIES SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE EFFORTS AND SUCCESS OF THE POLICE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME WERE APPRECIATED BY THE PUBLIC.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE THRUST OF POLICE OPERATIONS IS BEING CONSTANTLY REFINED AND REDIRECTED TO MEET NEW CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCUR.

AS AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THE ACTIVITIES OF TRIADS ARE THE SUBJECT OF CLOSE INVESTIGATION AND COVERAGE BY THE POLICE AND THERE ARE ALSO FURTHER PLANS TO BRING GREATER PRESSURE ON TRIADS.

THESE INITIATIVES HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED IN THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE AND A PROPOSAL FOR THE AMENDMENT OF LEGISLATION WILL BE PUT TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL SHORTLY, HE SAID.

+AT THE SAME TIME,+ HE SAID, +A SMALL OFFICIAL GROUP IS BEING ESTABLISHED TO CO-ORDINATE MORE COMPREHENSIVELY, THAN HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE, THE COUNTER MEASURES WHICH OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS ARE TAKING.+

ON PROPOSALS FOR HOUSING THE POLICE, MR. DAVIES SAID THE PROVISION OF HOUSING FOR ALL JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS IS NOW AN ACCEPTED POLICY, PARTLY IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES AND PARTLY IN DEPARTMENTAL QUARTERS, THOUGH INEVITABLY THE POLICY WILL TAKE TIME TO IMPLEMENT.

+FURTHER, A SCHEME FOR ALLOCATING HOUSING IN PUBLIC ESTATES FOR JUNIOR OFFICERS IN ALL DISCIPLINED SERVICES, WHO ARE APPROACHING RETIREMENT, HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED. THE FIRST ALLOCATION WILL TAKE PLACE NEXT YEAR AND WILL ENABLE THE OFFICERS TO RETAIN THIS ACCOMMODATION AFTER RETIREMENT,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE CORRECTIVE AND TREATMENT PROGRAMMES OF THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT, MR. DAVIES SAID THE GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING TWO PROPOSALS: FIRST TO EXTEND THE COVERAGE OF AFTERCARE SERVICES TO INCLUDE THOSE UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE SENTENCED TO PRISON= AND SECONDLY, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ACTION COMMITTEE AGAINST NARCOTICS, AT POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE LAW IN RESPECT OF ADDICTS GENERALLY, AND ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED TWO OR MORE SENTENCES.

MR. DAVIES ADDED THAT THE ENCOURAGING RESULTS FROM DETENTION CENTRES AND TREATMENT CENTRES ARE BEING MAINTAINED, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE WRONG TO PAINT TOO ROSY A PICTURE OF THE RESULTS OF THESE PROGRAMMES, OR OF THE LONG TERM WORK HABITS, OR PROSPECTS, OF THOSE WHO ARE RELEASED FROM PRISON INSTITUTIONS.

+THE CIVIL SERVICE FOR ITS PART PROVIDES A SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT FOR SOME OF THEM AND IN APRIL THERE WERE ABOUT 170 EX-PRISONERS AND 450 ADDICTS IN EMPLOYMENT IN VARIOUS CAREFULLY SELECTED DEPARTMENTS AND JOBS,+ HE SAID.

NT DEVELOPMENT AREAS BEING EXTENDED

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY STARTED WORK ON EXTENDING THE ORIGINAL PLANNING BOUNDARIES ON MANY OF THE DEVELOPMENT AREAS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY BY THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES IN REPLY TO POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

HE CITED, AS EXAMPLES OF THE EXTENSION PROGRAMME, SHA TIN, WHERE THE BULLDOZERS HAVE ALREADY STARTED CUTTING INTO THE HILLSIDES OPPOSITE THE SHA TIN RACECOURSE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TOWN NORTHWARDS TO WU KWAI SHA, AND TUEN MUN, WHERE SIMILAR WORK IS BEING CARRIED OUT ON THE ERODED HILLS BETWEEN TAI LAM AND SO KWUN WAT OR THE EXTENSION OF TUEN MUN NEW TOWN.

MR. AKERS-JONES SAID SIMILAR WORK IS BEING CARRIED OUT AT +MANY OTHER PLACES TOO LONG TO LIST+.

REFERRING TO THE SUGGESTION BY A NUMBER OF UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS TO MAKE MORE PRESENT USE OF THE PRIVATE LAND RESERVES IN THE AGRICULTURAL AREAS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES, HE SOUNDED A NOTE OF CAUTION ON THE IDEA.

WHILE HE AGREED WITH THE SUGGESTION OF MR. CHARLES YEUNG THAT +WE SHOULD LOOK AROUND PERHAPS EVEN MORE THOROUGHLY AND PLAN AND EXTEND TOWNS LIKE YUEN LONG, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE SURROUNDING LAND HAPPENS TO BE LYING LARGELY ABANDONED AND WASTE,+ HE NEVERTHELESS DOUBTED WHETHER IT WOULD BE WISE TO EXTEND OURSELVES EVEN FURTHER TO DEVELOP EVEN MORE LAND WITH THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AS STRETCHED AS IT IS.

HE ADDED: +LET US PLAN, BY ALL MEANS, AND DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT WE CAN ROLL THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FORWARD, FOR HOUSING, FOR INDUSTRY, AND THE OTHER NEEDS OF THE FUTURE AS RESOURCES, IN THE BROADEST SENSE OF THE WORD, BECOME AVAILABLE TO DO SO.+

HE ALSO CAUTIONED AGAINST SEEING AREAS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND +AS AN EASY WAY OUT TO THE REMOVAL OF TEMPORARY FACTORIES FROM THE PATH OF PERMANENT DEVELOPMENT.

+THERE MAY BE ODD CASES WHERE THIS CAN BE DONE, BUT WHOLESALE AND HAPHAZARD RESITING OF LITERALLY THOUSANDS OF SQUATTER INDUSTRIES CAN SURELY NOT COMMEND ITSELF AS AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION,+ HE SAID.

+YUEN LONG DRAINS INTO DEEP BAY, WHERE WE ALREADY HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THE OYSTER INDUSTRY.

+TAI PO DRAINS INTO TOLO HARBOUR, WHERE WE ARE SPENDING ENORMOUS SUMS OF MONEY ON SEWAGE TREATMENT TO ARREST POLLUTION.

/+IF WE SIMPLY

+IF WE SIMPLY RESITE SQUATTER FACTORIES, HOW CAN WE THEN PREVENT OTHER FACTORIES FROM JOINING THEM AND ALL THE CONGLOMERATION OF SQUATTER STRUCTURES THAT WOULD GO WITH THIS KIND OF UNCONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT? I REPEAT, SURELY WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS?+

MR. AKERS-JONES POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS DEVELOPING NOT SIMPLY THREE NEW TOWNS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, BUT 11 TOWNS ALL AT ONCE.

+OF COURSE, THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE NEW TOWNS IS MORE SPECTACULAR BUT DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS AT THE OTHER TOWNS ARE, IN THEIR WAY, NO LESS IMPORTANT,+ HE ADDED.

IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, HE SAID, THAT THE UNOFFICIALS' SUGGESTION TO MAKE MORE USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND HAD TO BE EXAMINED.

MR. AKERS-JONES ALSO WARNED HOLDERS OF OLD LAND EXCHANGE ENTITLEMENTS THAT IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO CANCEL THE PRIORITY RIGHTS THEIR ENTITLEMENTS NORMALLY RECEIVE UNLESS THEY TAKE UP THEIR OPTION WHEN LAND BECOMES AVAILABLE.

HE SAID AT THE MOMENT, TOO MANY OWNERS WERE HOLDING ON TO THEIR EXCHANGE LETTERS AND WERE NOT PRESENTING THEM WHEN LAND IS ADVERTISED FOR EXCHANGE.

IT SHOULD BE THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE TO EXTINGUISH ALL EXCHANGE ENTITLEMENTS - LETTER B - OUTSTANDING AT THE END OF MARCH THIS YEAR, BY THE END OF MARCH, 1981.

+I SAY THEORETICALLY BECAUSE, FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, TOO MANY EXCHANGE OWNERS ARE HOLDING ON TO THEIR EXCHANGE LETTERS, AND ARE NOT PRESENTING THEM FOR EXCHANGE WHEN LAND IS ADVERTISED FOR EXCHANGE,+ HE SAID.

+I HAVE TO ADVISE THESE OWNERS THAT UNLESS THEY TAKE UP THE OPTION WHEN AN EXCHANGE IS AVAILABLE, IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO CANCEL THE PRIORITY THESE OLD EXCHANGE RIGHTS NORMALLY ATTRACT UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF CALCULATION.+

HE NOTED THAT THE PRINCIPAL FINDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE SET UP TO EXAMINE THE QUESTION OF COMPENSATION FOR LAND RESUMED IN TOWN BOUNDARIES HAD BEEN ACCEPTED AND IMPLEMENTED.

HE ALSO REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL HAD NOW APPROVED PROPOSALS REGARDING COMPENSATION FOR LAND OUTSIDE THE TOWN BOUNDARIES AND HE WOULD SHORTLY BE DISCUSSING THESE WITH THE HEUNG YEE KUK.

ON THE SEVEN DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARDS, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED MUCH TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND RECREATION AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+THE BOARDS HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR ALMOST A YEAR AND HAVE GIVEN ADVICE AS TO HOW FUNDS, AMOUNTING TO \$3.7 MILLION, SHOULD BE SPENT ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT AND RECREATION AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 11 -

+THEY ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE A LIVELY HAND IN LOCAL AFFAIRS,+
MR. AKERS-JONES SAID.

HE HOPED THAT WHEN THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT AND THE NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION WERE RE-ORGANISED AND STRENGTHENED, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO RESPOND MORE READILY TO LOCAL DEMANDS AND WOULD ACHIEVE A MUCH HIGHER STANDARD OF URBAN MANAGEMENT THAN IN THE PAST.

THE GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING NEW TOWNS, AND REPLANNING THE OLD SO THAT THEY PROVIDE A SATISFYING LIVING ENVIRONMENT AND THE PEOPLE WITHIN THEM FIND WORK AND ENJOYMENT AND TAKE PRIDE IN THEM.

+HOPEFULLY THE DISTRICT ADVISORY BOARDS WILL BE THE INSTRUMENT WHEREBY PUBLIC SERVANTS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS WILL WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THIS COMMON PURPOSE,+ HE SAID.

MR. AKERS-JONES ALSO SPOKE ON THE SETTING UP OF NEW COUNTRY PARKS WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS A +REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT+. +LAST YEAR AT THIS TIME THERE WERE ONLY FIVE SUCH PARKS.+

+NOW THERE ARE 15 IN ALL HONG KONG COVERING 130 SQUARE MILES AND VISITED BY TWO MILLION PEOPLE LAST YEAR,+ HE SAID.

HE AGREED THAT MORE CAMP SITES AND HOSTELS ARE NEEDED, AND SAID CAMP SITES ARE EASIER TO PROVIDE WHILE HOSTELS ARE MORE COSTLY AND TAKE TIME TO PLAN AND BUILD.

THE PO LEUNG KUK, HE SAID, IS BUILDING ONE SUCH HOSTEL IN SAI KUNG.

+BUT IT IS NOT NEARLY ENOUGH AND I HOPE THAT OTHER ORGANISATIONS WILL FOLLOW THIS EXAMPLE.

+IF SPONSORS COME FORWARD WITH PRIVATE FUNDS THE GOVERNMENT WILL RESPOND WITH EQUAL ENTHUSIASM TO FIND A SUITABLE SITE,+ MR. AKERS-JONES SAID.

- - - - - 0 - - - - -

14 NEW ESTATES OPENED, 48,500 FLATS PROVIDED
SINCE 1973, SAYS SECRETARY FOR HOUSING

FOURTEEN NEW PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES HAVE BEEN OPENED IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, PROVIDING 48,500 MORE FLATS FOR TENANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

AND THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S BUILDING PROGRAMME IS ACCELERATING SO FAST THAT THE NEXT FIVE YEARS WILL SEE THE COMPLETION OF 186,000 FLATS, OR ALMOST FOUR TIMES THE PRODUCTION OF THE PRECEDING FIVE YEARS.

/THIS WAS

THIS WAS SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON. ALAN SCOTT, WHO WAS SPEAKING IN THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE.

COMMENTING ON ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD BY TWO UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS, THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN AND THE HON. WONG LAM, FOR CONSIDERATION FOR PEOPLE ABOVE INCOME LIMITS FOR RENTED PUBLIC HOUSING OR THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME, MR. SCOTT SAID: +UNFORTUNATELY, WE CANNOT TAKE ON ALL DESIRABLE OBJECTIVES SIMULTANEOUSLY AND PRIORITIES HAVE TO BE ESTABLISHED, BOTH WITHIN THE PROGRAMME UNDER DISCUSSION, IN THIS CASE HOUSING, AND AS BETWEEN OTHER MAJOR PROGRAMMES.

+THE FIRST PRIORITY HAS FOR MANY YEARS BEEN THE PROVISION OF SUBSIDISED RENTED HOUSING FOR THE LOWEST INCOME GROUP, AND IT MUST SO CONTINUE.

+THE SECOND, RELATIVELY NEW PRIORITY, IS THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME.

+WE CANNOT, FOR THE PRESENT, CONSIDER EXTENDING THESE PRIORITIES.+

HOWEVER, HE SAID, THE AUTHORITY WOULD BE ALERT TO THE NEED FOR EXPANSION OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME AND TO THE RELATIVE BALANCE IN PROVIDING RENTED AND HOME OWNERSHIP FLATS.

ON MR. WONG LAM'S POINT THAT SOME FAMILIES ON THE WAITING LIST ARE OVER THE INCOME LIMIT WHEN THEIR NUMBERS FINALLY COME UP, MR. SCOTT SAID: +THIS IS VERY DISAPPOINTING, BUT WE HAVE TO DETERMINE INCOME CRITERIA AND STAND BY THEM IN ORDER THAT THOSE IN GREATEST NEED RECEIVE FIRST ATTENTION, UNTIL IT IS POSSIBLE TO EXTEND OR VARY THE PRIORITIES.

+RAISING THE INCOME LIMIT INCREASES THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AND MEANS THAT PEOPLE INSIDE THE LIMIT HAVE TO WAIT LONGER WHILE PEOPLE WITH HIGHER INCOMES ARE, AS IT WERE, BROUGHT BACK INTO THE QUEUE.+

HE SAID THAT SINCE 1963, AS A RESULT OF REGULAR REVIEWS, THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED INCOME HAD INCREASED AT A MUCH FASTER RATE THAN, FOR EXAMPLE, THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, AND THE INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL WAGES.

AS A RESULT, THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS HAD GONE UP FROM 89,000 IN 1973 TO 223,000 IN 1976.

CONCERNING STAFFING ON ESTATES, MR. SCOTT SAID THE AUTHORITY HAD INCREASED STAFF ON FORMER RESETTLEMENT ESTATES TO IMPROVE THE STANDARD OF MANAGEMENT. ITS GENERAL POLICY WAS TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN SATISFACTORY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS AS AGAINST EFFICIENT DEPLOYMENT OF THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF PEOPLE NEEDED TO DO THE JOB.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 13 -

STEPS TAKEN TO IMPROVE CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHING
* * * * *

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS WELL AWARE OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE BY THE DEPARTMENT TO EMPHASISE THE USE OF THE LANGUAGE AS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN DAILY LIFE, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. TOPLEY WAS REPLYING TO THE VARIOUS POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS FOLLOWING THE PUBLICATION OF THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION.

THE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS AND AIMS, HE SAID, WERE REFLECTED IN RECENT REVISIONS OF SUGGESTED SYLLABUSES, IN STEPS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TEXTBOOKS, AND IN THE PREPARATION OF MORE EFFECTIVE TEACHING AIDS.

+IN THE FOREFRONT OF THIS MOVEMENT IS THE CHINESE LANGUAGE TEACHING CENTRE WHICH HAS BEEN RUNNING REGULAR IN-SERVICE COURSES FOR TEACHERS SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1974,+ MR. TOPLEY SAID.

ON THE QUESTION OF THE TEACHING OF SIMPLIFIED CHINESE CHARACTERS, HE SAID THAT AS LONG AS THE TRADITIONAL SCRIPT REMAINED THE NORMAL METHOD OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION IN OUR COMMUNITY, IT WOULD BE MOST UNWISE, AND INDEED BE DOING A GREAT DISSERVICE TO THE PUPILS, TO STOP TEACHING IT IN THE SCHOOLS.

SIMPLIFIED CHARACTERS, HE SAID, WOULD MORE CONVENIENTLY BE UNDERTAKEN BY INDIVIDUALS WHO FOUND A NEED FOR THIS SPECIFIC SKILL.

ON REMARKS BY THE HON. JAMES WU ON THE HONG KONG EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY'S DECISION TO CHANGE THE REGULATIONS OF THE HIGHER LEVEL EXAMINATION, MR. TOPLEY SAID THE AUTHORITY'S BASIC CONSIDERATION WAS TO KEEP ENTRY RESTRICTIONS TO A MINIMUM.

+SINCE THE HIGHER LEVEL EXAMINATION MAY BE TAKEN EITHER IN ENGLISH OR IN CHINESE CANDIDATES SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO HAVE OBTAINED IN THE CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION AT LEAST GRADE E IN EITHER LANGUAGE.

+IN MAKING THESE EXAMINATION REGULATIONS THE AUTHORITY HAD NO INTENTION OF PRESCRIBING WHAT SUBJECTS SCHOOLS SHOULD TEACH IN THEIR COURSES, SINCE THE AUTHORITY DID NOT CONSIDER THAT THE DETERMINATION OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM WAS ONE OF ITS FUNCTIONS.

+HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE MATTER, THE EXAMINATIONS AUTHORITY WILL BE REVIEWING ITS EARLIER DECISION IN THE NEAR FUTURE. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS ESSENTIAL IN THE FIELD OF CURRICULUM PLANNING AND ITS LATER IMPLEMENTATION IN THE FORM OF CLASSROOM TEACHING THAT WE MUST DIRECT OUR EFFORTS IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE COMPETENCE OF OUR PUPILS IN THE USE OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.

/+FINALLY,

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 14 -

+FINALLY, I SHOULD MENTION THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION IS TAKING A LIVELY INTEREST IN THE WHOLE QUESTION OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY, AND I SHALL CONTINUE TO SEEK ADVICE FROM THE BOARD TO ENSURE THAT WE ARE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION,+ MR. TOPLEY SAID.

ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH, HE SAID, THE MATTER WAS BEING REVIEWED BY AN ENGLISH ADVISER WHO WAS WORKING IN CLOSE LIAISON WITH THE TEAM NOW PLANNING THE NEW COURSE OF TEACHER TRAINING MENTIONED IN THE WHITE PAPER.

+IN THE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, POSTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR THE TEACHING OF LANGUAGE SKILLS, IN ADDITION TO THOSE FOR THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AND CHINESE. IT IS THE INTENTION TO GIVE MUCH ATTENTION IN BOTH PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE COURSES TO DEVELOPING PROFICIENCY IN LANGUAGE AND IMPROVING COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

+IN ORDER TO IMPROVE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH AMONG GRADUATE TEACHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION, BOTH UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEEN INVITED TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO THE UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPING AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE UNIT IN EACH OF THE SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION.+

ON THE PROPOSAL TO ABOLISH TONG FAI, MR. TOPLEY SAID THAT IT WAS PARTLY BECAUSE CHILDREN WERE STILL REQUIRED TO BUY THEIR OWN TEXTBOOKS, STATIONERY AND UNIFORMS THAT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CONSIDERED THAT THIS FEE AS WELL AS TUITION FEES IN FORMS I - III SHOULD BE ABOLISHED IN THE VAST MAJORITY OF SCHOOLS.

ABOLITION OF TONG FAI WOULD MEAN A CONSIDERABLE INCREASE IN THE CAPITATION GRANT WHICH WOULD ENABLE ALL AIDED SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE WHAT THEY CONSIDER ESSENTIAL AND DESIRABLE.

NO CHANGE, HE ADDED, WAS BEING CONTEMPLATED REGARDING THE PRESENT TONG FAI ARRANGEMENTS IN FORMS IV - VI.

----- 0 -----

/15

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 15 -

BILL TO FACILITATE WORK OF LANDS TRIBUNAL INTRODUCED
* * * * *

THE LANDS TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978 WHICH CONTAINS CHANGES IN THE LAW INTENDED TO FACILITATE THE WORK OF THE TRIBUNAL WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE LANDS TRIBUNAL WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1974 FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION ARISING UNDER VARIOUS ORDINANCES AND TO HEAR AND DETERMINE RATING APPEALS.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON. GARTH THORNTON, SAID IT WAS GENERALLY RECOGNISED THAT THE TRIBUNAL HAD WORKED WELL AND WAS ACHIEVING SATISFACTORILY THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT WAS SET UP.

+HOWEVER,+ HE SAID, +THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PAST FEW YEARS HAS BROUGHT TO LIGHT THE NEED FOR SEVERAL AMENDMENTS TO THE LANDS TRIBUNAL ORDINANCE.+

MR. THORNTON SAID ONE OF THE AMENDMENTS RELATES TO A SECTION OF THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE WHICH PROVIDES THAT DECISIONS OF THE TRIBUNAL ARE FINAL EXCEPT FOR A RIGHT OF APPEAL TO THE COURT OF APPEAL ON A POINT OF LAW.

+THIS AMENDMENT CONCERNS ONLY THE PROCEDURE OF SUCH APPEALS AND PROVIDES FOR APPEALS TO BE BY WAY OF THE SIMPLER CASE STATED PROCEDURE RATHER THAN UNDER THE RULES OF THE SUPREME COURT,+ MR. THORNTON SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE AMENDMENT IN FACT CONFIRMS THE ORIGINAL INTENTION.

MR. THORNTON SAID OTHER AMENDMENTS INCLUDE THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION EMPOWERING THE TRIBUNAL TO CORRECT ANY ERRONEOUS FINDINGS OF FACT WHICH MAY APPEAR IN THE TRIBUNAL'S DECISIONS.

+THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADOPTING A WRONG FIGURE OR MATHEMATICAL ERROR CAN, OF COURSE, BE SERIOUS AND THIS CLAUSE WILL ENABLE ANY ERRORS OF THIS KIND TO BE SIMPLY CORRECTED BY THE TRIBUNAL WITHIN ONE MONTH OF THE DECISION EITHER IN ITS OWN MOTION OR ON THE APPLICATION OF EITHER PARTY TO THE PROCEEDINGS,+ HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

----- 0 -----

116

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 16 -

PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL

A BILL SEEKING TO EXTEND THE GOVERNOR'S POWER UNDER THE PENSIONS ORDINANCE IN GRANTING, AT HIS DISCRETION, RETIREMENT BENEFITS TO CIVIL SERVANTS WHO ARE RETIRED COMPULSORILY OR REMOVED FROM OFFICE, WAS INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE HON. MARTIN ROWLANDS SAID UNDER THE EXISTING SECTION 7 OF THE PENSIONS ORDINANCE, DISCRETIONARY GRANT OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS IS PROVIDED ONLY WHEN AN OFFICER IS RETIRED IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST OTHERWISE THAN AS A PUNISHMENT.

HOWEVER, WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1 LAST YEAR, COLONIAL REGULATIONS WERE AMENDED TO PROVIDE FOR THE AWARD OF COMPULSORY RETIREMENT AS A PUNISHMENT, EITHER WITH, OR WITHOUT, OR WITH REDUCED PENSION BENEFITS.

+THIS NEW FORM OF PUNISHMENT IS NEEDED IN CASES WHEN DISMISSAL WITH COMPLETE LOSS OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS WOULD BE TOO SEVERE OR WHEN RETIREMENT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, OTHERWISE THAN AS A PUNISHMENT, WOULD BE TOO GENEROUS,+ MR. ROWLANDS SAID.

AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE AMENDMENT OF COLONIAL REGULATIONS, HE EXPLAINED, THERE IS A NEED TO INCLUDE SUCH A PROVISION IN THE PENSIONS ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE THE GOVERNMENT WITH MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH SUCH CASES.

THE DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

----- 0 -----

/17

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 17 -

GOVERNMENT INTERESTED IN PROMOTING CO-OPERATIVE PROJECTS
* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO BE INTERESTED IN THE PROMOTION OF SELF-HELP CO-OPERATIVE PROJECTS WHETHER THEY ARE TARGETTED TOWARDS ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL AIMS OR BOTH.

THIS WAS STATED TODAY BY THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, THE HON. TED NICHOLS, IN REPLY TO POINTS RAISED BY THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, THE HON. ANDREW SO, IN THE ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

+THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNISES AND ACKNOWLEDGES THE BENEFITS ACCURING FROM MEMBERSHIP OF EITHER THE CO-OPERATIVE OR THE CREDIT UNION MOVEMENT,+ MR. NICHOLS SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN HONG KONG IS NOW MORE THAN 25 YEARS OF AGE AND IS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED AS A WAY OF LIFE PARTICULARLY FOR MANY OF THE PRIMARY PRODUCERS.

HE SAID AT PRESENT THE LIVES OF NEARLY 100,000 PEOPLE IN HONG KONG ARE BENEFITED BY INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

THERE ARE 130 CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES PROVIDING ECONOMIC SERVICES RANGING FROM MARKETING TO THE PROVISION OF CREDIT FACILITIES TO ABOUT 48,000 TO 50,000 FARMERS, FISHERMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

THE MOVEMENT ALSO INCLUDES 24 CO-OPERATIVES WHICH AIM AT PROVIDING SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR SOME 2,000 FAMILIES OR MORE THAN 8,000 PERSONS IN SELF-HELP HOUSING PROJECTS FOR PRIMARY PRODUCERS.

IN A MORE GENERAL FIELD, MR. NICHOLS SAID, THERE ARE 253 CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES OF WHICH ONLY FOUR ARE CONCERNED WITH THRIFT AND LOAN ACTIVITIES AND THE REMAINING 249 SOCIETIES PROVIDE PRIMARILY SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THEIR MEMBERS AND FAMILIES TOTALLING 35,000 PEOPLE.

TURNING TO THE CREDIT UNION MOVEMENT, MR. NICHOLS SAID THIS MOVEMENT WAS YOUNGER, HAVING COME INTO LEGAL EXISTENCE ONLY 10 YEARS AGO. AT PRESENT THERE ARE 55 CREDIT UNIONS WITH SOME 10,500 MEMBERS DRAWN FROM ASSOCIATIONAL, EMPLOYMENT AND RESIDENTIAL LINKAGES.

+THE CREDIT UNION CONCEPT SEEKS TO ESTABLISH AGENCIES FOR THRIFT AND PERSONAL CREDIT, TO CHANNEL MEMBERS' SAVINGS INTO PRODUCTIVE AND USEFUL UNDERTAKINGS AND TO PROVIDE A SOURCE OF CREDIT TO MEMBER IN TIME OF NEED,+ HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/18

PROJECT CO-ORDINATION TEAM FOR N.E. KOWLOON PLANNED

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING THE SETTING UP OF A PROJECT CO-ORDINATION TEAM FOR THE NORTH EAST KOWLOON AREA ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS.

THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. DAVID MCDONALD, DURING THE RESUMED ANNUAL POLICY DEBATE AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. MCDONALD SAID THAT FROM THE INFORMATION DRAWN FROM STUDIES CARRIED OUT BY THIS TEAM AND FROM EXPERIENCE GAINED HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO ESTABLISH THE BASIS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF FURTHER CO-ORDINATING TEAMS TO COVER OTHER AREAS OF KOWLOON AND HONG KONG.

HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT CO-ORDINATION COULD BE EXPECTED TO SHOW ITS GREATEST EFFECT ON PUBLIC SECTOR WORKS.

MR. MCDONALD WAS REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBER, THE HON. LI FOOK-WO.

IN HIS SPEECH IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION OF THANKS TO THE GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. LI REFERRED TO THE HEADWAY MADE IN DEVELOPMENT. BUT HE SUGGESTED THAT MUCH MORE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE HAD THERE BEEN BETTER OVERALL CO-ORDINATION OF THE MAJOR PROJECTS AND HAD THERE BEEN MORE LAND AVAILABLE.

MR. MCDONALD RECALLED THAT IN 1971-72, THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT LET 357 CONTRACTS FOR PUBLIC CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS. IN 1977-78, 658 WERE LET, AN INCREASE OF 84.5 PER CENT.

+IN RECENT YEARS THERE HAVE BEEN MANY FACTORS WHICH HAVE HAD LIMITING EFFECTS ON DEVELOPMENT AND ALTHOUGH THE ACTIONS OF A PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR MIGHT HAVE HAD SOME BENEFICIAL EFFECTS I DOUBT THAT HE COULD HAVE MADE ANY MEANINGFUL IMPRESSION ON THE VOLUME OF WORKS EXECUTED,+ HE SAID.

MR. MCDONALD DREW THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL TO THE SIZE OF THE CO-ORDINATING TASK.

IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, HE SAID, NOT ONLY CATEGORY A ITEMS BUT CATEGORY B, D AND E ITEMS, URBAN COUNCIL BLOCK VOTE PROJECTS, PROPERTY SERVICES AGENCY PROJECTS, PROJECTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REPROVISIONING OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS, WORKS CARRIED OUT ON OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTAL VOTES, PUBLIC HOUSING, CLEARANCE PROGRAMMES RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT WITH THEIR ATTENDANT COMMITMENTS FOR RE-HOUSING AND GENERAL BUILDING AND ENGINEERING MAINTENANCE WORKS ALL HAVE TO BE BROUGHT WITHIN THE CO-ORDINATOR'S AMBIT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT ABOUT 30 PER CENT OF ALL PROJECTS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME WERE ALREADY CO-ORDINATED BY P.W.D. PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAMS ESTABLISHED TO DEVELOP THE NEW TOWNS AND OTHER AREAS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES AND FURTHER EXPANSION OF THIS FORM OF MANAGEMENT WOULD OCCUR. IN ADDITION, A FAIRLY LARGE TEAM CO-ORDINATED ALL ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY WORKS.

+HOWEVER, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED THAT OVER 200 P.W.D. OFFICERS ARE CURRENTLY ENGAGED SOLELY ON MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION ASPECTS OF THE NEW TERRITORIES AND MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY PROJECTS AND THESE PROJECTS COVER CLEARLY DEFINED AREAS OF TOTALLY RELATED ELEMENTS,+ MR. MCDONALD SAID.

+IN THE NEW TOWNS THE AREAS BEING DEALT WITH ARE COMPARATIVELY CLEAR AND DEVELOPMENT CAN BE MOULDED TO A PRE-CONCEIVED PROGRAMME BUT THIS CANNOT BE READILY ACHIEVED IN THE URBAN AREAS WHERE DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED OVER MANY YEARS AND WHERE REDEVELOPMENT IS NECESSARILY FRAGMENTED.+

THE DIRECTOR SAID THAT PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT WAS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT TO CO-ORDINATE.

CITING AN EXAMPLE, HE SAID THAT DURING 1977-78, 810 APPROVALS OF PLANS FOR PROPOSED NEW PRIVATE BUILDINGS WERE GIVEN BUT THIS GAVE NO TRUE INDICATION OF WHEN OR IF THESE APPROVED PROJECTS WOULD PROCEED.

+APPROVALS ARE VALID FOR TWO YEARS AND IT IS FAIRLY COMMON, IN CHANGING MARKET CONDITIONS, FOR DEVELOPERS TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS ON THE FORM AND TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT AND NEW REPLACEMENT APPLICATIONS ARE SUBMITTED,+ HE ADDED.

+THE NEAREST WE CAN GET TO KNOWING WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTAINTY WHEN A PRIVATE PROJECT WILL COMMENCE AND IN WHAT FORM IS WHEN THE DEVELOPER APPLIES FOR CONSENT TO COMMENCE WORKS BUT AS THE WORKS MUST THEN START WITHIN THREE MONTHS IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE TO SATISFACTORILY MESH INTO A CO-ORDINATED PROGRAMME.+

MR. MCDONALD CONTINUED THAT THE FLEXIBILITY WHICH MUST THEREFORE BE GIVEN TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS INEVITABLY AFFECTED SUCH THINGS AS UTILITIES AND OTHER SERVICES AND OF COURSE MEANT ROAD OPENINGS.

HE SAID: +AT ANY GIVEN DATE THERE IS LIKELY TO BE ABOUT 2,500 OPENINGS IN ROADS THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

+ALTHOUGH ALL APPLICATIONS FOR THESE OPENINGS ARE PROCESSED THROUGH CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEES THERE ARE UNFORTUNATELY QUITE FREQUENT EMERGENCY OR UNFORESEEN MAINTENANCE WORKS REQUIRED WHICH MAKE IT NECESSARY TO OPEN ROADWAYS EVEN IN AREAS WHERE SURFACE REINSTATEMENT WORKS HAVE ONLY RECENTLY BEEN COMPLETED.+

IN CONCLUSION, MR. MCDONALD EMPHASISED THAT THE OVERALL CO-ORDINATION OF EVERY CONSTRUCTION PROJECT IN HONG KONG +IS A GIGANTIC TASK AND IS FAR BEYOND THE CAPABILITY OF ANY ONE CO-ORDINATOR OR EVEN OF ONE CO-ORDINATING GROUP+.

BUT HE ADDED THAT THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE CONCEPT OF GENERAL CO-ORDINATION WAS NOT FAVOURED.

+IN FACT, CONSIDERATION IS CURRENTLY BEING GIVEN TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROJECT CO-ORDINATION TEAM FOR THE NORTH EAST KOWLOON AREA ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS,+ HE SAID.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 20 -

NORTH POINT VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICE BECOMES PERMANENT

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY GAVE ITS APPROVAL TO THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO MAKE PERMANENT THE VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICE BETWEEN NORTH POINT AND KOWLOON CITY OPERATED BY THE HONG KONG AND YAUMATI FERRY COMPANY.

INTRODUCING THE MOTION TO GIVE EFFECT TO THIS DECISION, THE SECRETARY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE HON. DEREK JONES, SAID THE ROUTE HAS BEEN OPERATING UNDER A TEMPORARY LICENCE SINCE 1976 AND HAS PROVED POPULAR, CARRYING SOME 50,000 VEHICLES A MONTH AND MAKING A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL CROSS-HARBOUR VEHICULAR TRAFFIC.

+GIVEN THE INCREASING CONGESTION IN THE AREA OF THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL IT IS ONLY SENSIBLE TO MAINTAIN FACILITIES OF THIS TYPE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE TUNNEL FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO USE THEM,+ MR. JONES SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE MOTION WAS INTRODUCED WITH THE CONSENT OF THE HONG KONG AND YAUMATI FERRY COMPANY.

----- 0 -----

BILLS PASSED

FIVE BILLS WERE PASSED INTO LAW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THESE WERE THE DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978, BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978, SHIPPING AND PORT CONTROL BILL 1978, HONG KONG AIRPORT (CONTROL OF OBSTRUCTIONS)(AMENDMENT) BILL 1978 AND WIDOWS AND ORPHANS PENSION (EXEMPTION) BILL 1978.

----- 0 -----

/21

PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE UNDERTAKING MEDIUM-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
* * * * *

THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE HAS BEGUN TO UNDERTAKE MEDIUM-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL CO-ORDINATION IN A NUMBER OF PRODUCTIVITY RELATED ISSUES.

IN HIS STATEMENT ON THE CENTRE'S WORK DURING THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL, THE HON. S.L. CHEN MENTIONED THREE SUCH ACTIVITIES WHICH HE SAID +MARKED THE BEGINNING OF AN ATTEMPT TO TACKLE PRODUCTIVITY ISSUES ON THE BASIS OF AN INDUSTRY SECTOR WHERE THE IMPACT IS LIKELY TO BE GREATER THAN IF CONFINED TO INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISES.+

THESE WERE:

- * ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMATION CENTRE FOR INDUSTRY SERVICE. THE PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE ACTED AS A PLANNING BODY AND FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH INTERESTED ORGANISATIONS, A PROPOSAL WAS SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR CONSIDERATION-
- * ESTABLISHMENT OF A PROGRAMME OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY TO IMPROVE ITS PRODUCTIVITY AND EXPORT PERFORMANCE. THIS WAS DONE IN RESPONSE TO THE INDUSTRY'S REQUEST AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER INTERESTED ORGANISATIONS- AND
- * UNDERTAKING A SERIES OF STUDIES, INCLUDING ONE ON THE FOUNDRY INDUSTRY, IN RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR AN IMPROVED ENGINEERING INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT DIVERSIFICATION OF INDUSTRY. A COPY OF THE FINAL REPORT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL DIVERSIFICATION FOR ITS INFORMATION.

MR. CHEN POINTED OUT THAT DESPITE THESE ACTIVITIES THE PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE'S EFFORTS IN PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO INDIVIDUAL ENTERPRISES HAD NOT BEEN REDUCED.

A TOTAL OF 180 CONSULTANCY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN 1977-78, COMPARED WITH 149 IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

THERE WAS A SLIGHT REDUCTION IN THE LEVEL OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES BUT, BECAUSE THERE WAS A GREATER DEGREE OF SELECTIVITY AND A STRONGER BIAS TOWARDS MORE TECHNOLOGICAL AND SPECIALISED SUBJECTS, THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER TRAINING COURSE INCREASED FROM 22 IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR TO 27, AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS INCREASED FROM 6,426 TO 6,633.

THE CENTRE ALSO EXPANDED ITS RANGE OF TECHNICAL SERVICES DURING THE YEAR. NEW SERVICES PROVIDED INCLUDED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELECTRONICS UNIT AND A TECHNICAL INFORMATION UNIT. TWO BI-LINGUAL QUARTERLY BULLETINS, ON PLASTICS TECHNOLOGY AND FURNITURE TECHNOLOGY, WERE PUBLISHED AND WERE VERY WELL RECEIVED.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE, MR. CHEN WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE WILL PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN PROVIDING THE MUCH NEEDED TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES AND TO RESPOND TO THE MANUFACTURING CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH OUR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

+WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM U.N. AGENCIES, THE CENTRE WILL BE SETTING UP A HEAT TREATMENT UNIT IN THE COMING YEAR, AND PLANS ARE BEING DEVELOPED FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL SERVICES UNIT TO DEAL WITH PRODUCTIVITY RELATED ISSUES,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT GIVEN THE NECESSARY SUPPORT, THE CENTRE WILL BECOME AN EVEN MORE EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT OF TECHNOLOGICAL GROWTH IN THE 1980'S.

- - - - - 0 - - - - -

DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORM THREE LEAVERS
* * * *

MR. KEN TOPLEY, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, TODAY CALLED ON FORM THREE LEAVERS TO CHOOSE CAREFULLY WHEN CONSIDERING FURTHER STUDIES IN ORDER TO MAKE FULL USE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED IN THE WHITE PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN CANTONESE AT THE JOINT SPEECH DAY OF TUNG WAH SECONDARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY ABOUT 1,400 STUDENTS FROM SEVEN SCHOOLS.

+STUDENTS SHOULD FIRST FIND OUT WHERE THEIR INTERESTS LIE AND WHAT THEY ARE CAPABLE OF DOING BEFORE CHOOSING THE NEXT STEP TO BE TAKEN,+ MR. TOPLEY SAID. +IN THIS WAY THEY CAN MAKE FULL USE OF WHAT HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR THEM IN THE EDUCATION WHITE PAPER.+

STUDENTS WHO NEED ADVICE AND GUIDANCE IN MAKING THEIR DECISIONS COULD ALWAYS APPROACH THEIR TEACHERS OR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, HE SAID.

LISTING OUT THE DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORM THREE LEAVERS, MR. TOPLEY SAID MANY OF THEM COULD GO ON TO RECEIVE SUBSIDISED SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION AND LATER ON TERTIARY EDUCATION, WHILE OTHERS COULD CHOOSE TO ENTER TECHNICAL INSTITUTES.

THOSE WHO TAKE ON JOBS AFTER FORM THREE COULD, IF THEY WISH, CONTINUE WITH THEIR STUDIES IN SUBSIDISED EVENING SCHOOLS.

MR. TOPLEY PRAISED THE TUNG WAH GROUP FOR ITS EFFORTS IN COMMUNITY SERVICE, ESPECIALLY FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION WITH THE OPERATION OF 19 SECONDARY AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS. HE ALSO NOTED THE GROUP'S INVOLVEMENT IN FURTHER EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS.

LATER MR TOPLEY PRESENTED CERTIFICATES TO THE GRADUATES AND AWARDS TO WINNERS OF ACADEMIC AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

- - - - - 0 - - - - -

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 23 -

MTR TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN SHAM SHUI PO

* * * * *

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT A NUMBER OF TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE INTRODUCED IN SEVERAL STREETS IN SHAM SHUI PO AREA FROM 10 A.M. ON FRIDAY (NOVEMBER 17) IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY.

FROM THAT DAY, URBAN CLEARWAY RESTRICTIONS FOR ALL MOTOR VEHICLES, EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES, WILL BE IMPOSED BETWEEN 7 A.M. AND 10 A.M. AND FROM 4 P.M. TO 7 P.M. DAILY IN THE SECTIONS OF YU CHAU STREET, YEE KUK STREET AND HAI TAN STREET BETWEEN KWEI LIN STREET AND YEN CHOW STREET, AS WELL AS THE SECTION OF WONG CHUK STREET BETWEEN TAI NAN STREET AND YU CHAU STREET.

URBAN CLEARWAY RESTRICTION WILL ALSO BE IN FORCE IN THE SECTION OF CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD BETWEEN TONKIN STREET AND A POINT 60 METRES WEST OF FAT TSEUNG STREET FROM 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M. DAILY.

FROM 7 A.M. TO MIDNIGHT, PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PICK UP OR SET DOWN PASSENGERS IN A SECTION OF TUNG CHAU WEST STREET FROM CHEUNG SHA WAN ROAD EXTENDING 15 METRES NORTHWARDS.

MEANWHILE, CERTAIN TRAFFIC RE-ROUTING WILL BE INTRODUCED IN THE FOLLOWING STREETS:

* TAI NAN STREET BETWEEN SHEK KIP MEI STREET AND WONG CHUK STREET WILL BE RE-ROUTED ONE-WAY SOUTHBOUND-

* KI LUNG STREET BETWEEN SHEK KIP MEI STREET AND WONG CHUK STREET WILL BE RE-ROUTED ONE-WAY NORTHBOUND-

* KI LUNG STREET BETWEEN WONG CHUK STREET AND BOUNDARY STREET WILL BE RE-ROUTED ONE-WAY SOUTHBOUND- AND

* THE SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC IN YEN CHOW STREET WILL BE PROHIBITED FROM TURNING RIGHT INTO HAI TAN STREET.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT FROM THE SAME TIME ON FRIDAY, THE LEARNER DRIVER PROHIBITION ON CAROLINE HILL ROAD BETWEEN EASTERN HOSPITAL ROAD AND LEIGHTON ROAD IN CAUSEWAY BAY WILL BE LIFTED TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE AREA.

HOWEVER, LEARNER DRIVERS WILL STILL BE RESTRICTED FROM ENTERING COTTON PATH.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP IN THESE AREAS TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

- - - - 0 - - - -

/24

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1978

- 24 -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

LADY MACLEHOSE TO OPEN CAREERS EXHIBITION

* * * * *

LADY MACLEHOSE WILL OPEN THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT'S SEVENTH CAREERS EXHIBITION AT HUNG HOM RAIL TERMINUS ON SATURDAY (NOVEMBER 18) AT 9.30 A.M. AS THE GOVERNOR, SIR MURRAY MACLEHOSE, HAS CANCELLED ALL HIS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS FOR THE WEEK BECAUSE OF FLU.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHER TO COVER THE OPENING CEREMONY.

- - - - - 0 - - - - -

WATER CUT IN KWUN TONG

* * * * *

WATER SUPPLY TO A NUMBER OF PREMISES IN KWUN TONG WILL BE STOPPED FOR SIX HOURS FROM MIDNIGHT FRIDAY (NOVEMBER 17) TO FACILITATE LEAKAGE TESTS BY THE WATER SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT.

THE AREA TO BE AFFECTED IS BOUNDED BY KA LOK STREET, SHUI WO STREET, HIP WO STREET AND YUET WAH STREET INCLUDING TSZ LOI LANE, PING SHING LANE AND BLOCK NOS. 1-11 WO LOK ESTATE.

- - - - - 0 - - - - -