



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1990

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LORD CAITHNESS VISITS WELFARE ESTABLISHMENTS

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THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, LORD CAITHNESS, THIS (THURSDAY) MORNING OBTAINED FIRST-HAND INFORMATION ON SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, MRS ELIZABETH WONG, AND THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR M.D. CARTLAND, LORD CAITHNESS AND THE COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS VISITED THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT'S WAN CHAI SOCIAL SECURITY FIELD UNIT IN SOUTHRN CENTRE.

DURING THE VISIT, MR CARTLAND BRIEFED THE VISITORS ON THE SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM IN HONG KONG AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS.

LORD CAITHNESS SHOWED KEEN INTEREST IN HONG KONG'S SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM. HE WAS INFORMED THAT THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE SCHEME WAS MEANS-TESTED AND NON-CONTRIBUTORY AND THE PAYMENTS WERE GRANTED ACCORDING TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S OR A FAMILY'S MEANS AND NEEDS.

MR CARTLAND TOLD THE VISITORS THAT A DRAFT WHITE PAPER RELEASED ON TUESDAY (SEPTEMBER 18) PROPOSED THAT THE FUTURE EMPHASIS OF HONG KONG'S SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY SHOULD BE ON PRESERVING THE FAMILY AS A UNIT, AND PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT RISK AND THE ELDERLY.

LATER IN THE MORNING, LORD CAITHNESS VISITED THE ST JAMES' SETTLEMENT, A SUBVENTED WELFARE ORGANISATION, IN WAN CHAI.

ACCOMPANIED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF ST JAMES' SETTLEMENT, MR DAVID LI KWOK-PO, LORD CAITHNESS TOURED THE WELFARE COMPLEX WHICH COMPRISES A DAY CARE CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY, A DAY ACTIVITIES CENTRE FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND A SHELTERED WORKSHOP.

LATER LORD CAITHNESS MET REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SERVICE STAFF ASSOCIATIONS AT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFICES BEFORE ATTENDING A LUNCH IN CENTRAL HOSTED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, MR PETER TSAO.

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ASSN PRAISED FOR CONTRIBUTION IN COMMUNITY
PSYCHIATRIC REHAB SERVICES

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LADY WILSON TODAY (THURSDAY) PAID TRIBUTE TO THE NEW LIFE PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION AND ITS LONG SERVING COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN COMMUNITY PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION SERVICES DURING THE PAST 25 YEARS.

SPEAKING AT THE ASSOCIATION'S SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION, LADY WILSON NOTED THAT THE ASSOCIATION HAD NOW ESTABLISHED 15 SERVICE UNITS, COMPRISING HOSTELS, HALFWAY HOUSES, SHELTERED WORKSHOPS, AN ACTIVITY CENTRE AND A LONG STAY CARE HOME.

"I AM SURE NEW LIFE WILL CONTINUE ITS SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION, AND WILL BE A LEADING ORGANISATION IN DEVELOPING THESE VALUABLE SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

"IN RECENT YEARS, NEW LIFE HAS MADE GREAT EFFORTS TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH ITS PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES," SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT THE ASSOCIATION IS PLANNING TO SET UP AN INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION IN ITS PROPOSED NAM CHEONG CENTRE WHICH AIMED TO BE SET UP BY 1993/94 TO OFFER COMPREHENSIVE REHABILITATION SERVICES.

"I SINCERELY HOPE THAT THIS NEW PROJECT WILL BE GIVEN PUBLIC SUPPORT AND FUNDING, AS IT IS CLEARLY A MOST WORTHWHILE AND MUCH NEEDED PROJECT," LADY WILSON SAID.

DURING THE CELEBRATION CEREMONY, LADY WILSON PRESENTED SOUVENIRS TO LONG SERVICE COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO HAD CONTRIBUTED 10 TO 25 YEARS OF VOLUNTARY SERVICE AND TO LONG SERVING STAFF MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

SHE ALSO THANKED THE PRESIDENT, MR HO SAI-CHU, AND THE CHAIRMAN, MR RAYMOND WU, THE STAFF AND OTHERS CONCERNED WITH THE ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY OF HONG KONG.

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STI CALLS FOR TIGHTENING OF ANTI-DUMPING CODE

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR JOHN CHAN, TODAY (THURSDAY) CALLED FOR TIGHTENING OF THE ANTI-DUMPING CODE UNDER THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE (GATT).

SPEAKING AT A LUNCH MEETING OF THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN HONG KONG, MR CHAN SAID EXPERIENCE HAD SHOWN THAT INADEQUATE PROVISIONS IN THE CODE FACILITATED THE USE OF ANTI-DUMPING ACTIONS AGAINST EXPORTERS FOR PROTECTIONIST PURPOSES.

HE SAID HONG KONG WAS A PRIME MOVER IN SEEKING A BALANCE IN PROVISIONS OF THE CODE BETWEEN THE INTERESTS OF THE SO-CALLED DUMPERS AND ANTI-DUMPERS.

HE SAID THIS HAD BECOME AN UPHILL BATTLE IN THE CURRENT URUGUAY ROUND OF GATT NEGOTIATIONS, BUT ONE WELL WORTH FIGHTING BECAUSE OF THE DANGERS OF PROLIFERATION OF ANTI-DUMPING.

"UNLESS THE CODE IS TIGHTENED, THE SITUATION COULD GET OUT OF HAND," HE SAID.

MR CHAN STRESSED THAT HONG KONG DID NOT CONDONE DUMPING.

"AS REGARDS OUR EXPORTS, THE RATIONALE FOR DUMPING DOES NOT EXIST HERE. GIVEN OUR VERY OPEN ECONOMY AND THE LACK OF A PROTECTED HOME MARKET, IT WOULD SIMPLY NOT BE COMMERCIALY VIABLE FOR OUR NUMEROUS SMALL EXPORTERS AND MANUFACTURERS TO SELL THEIR PRODUCTS AT A LOSS CONTINUOUSLY," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID HONG KONG ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE URUGUAY ROUND AS A GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO STRENGTHEN AND REVITALISE THE MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM.

IT WAS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD TO REVERSE PROTECTIONISM AND FURTHER LIBERALISE WORLD TRADE.

"WE BELIEVE THE OUTCOME OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD SHAPE THE GLOBAL TRADING ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH OUR BUSINESSMEN WILL OPERATE IN THIS DECADE AND BEYOND," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID HONG KONG ALSO PLAYED THE ROLE OF BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING CONTRACTING PARTIES WHOSE INTERESTS MIGHT BE DIVERGENT.

"WITH DUE MODESTY, I BELIEVE OUR INFLUENCE IN THE URUGUAY ROUND AND THE GATT ARE QUITE OUT OF PROPORTION TO THE SIZE OF OUR TERRITORY," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID THE TEXTILES AND CLOTHING SECTOR WAS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AREAS IN THE URUGUAY ROUND, "NOT ONLY FOR US BUT FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS BECAUSE TEXTILE EXPORTING COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES SEE AN AGREEMENT ON TEXTILE TRADE LIBERALISATION AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF A BALANCED PACKAGE COMING OUT OF THE ROUND".

/THE MULTIFIBRE

THE MULTIFIBRE ARRANGEMENT (MFA), WHICH PROVIDED THE FRAMEWORK FOR MOST OF THE BILATERAL QUOTAS WHICH EXISTED TODAY, WAS A DISCRIMINATORY INSTRUMENT AND A DEPARTURE FROM THE NON-DISCRIMINATORY PRINCIPLE OF THE GATT.

"THE NEGOTIATING MANDATE IN TEXTILES AND CLOTHING IS TO SEEK AGREEMENT ON A MODALITY FOR RETURNING THIS SECTOR TO THE GATT AND GOVERNING IT BY GATT RULES AND DISCIPLINES," HE SAID.

MR CHAN SAID NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF THE URUGUAY ROUND IN DECEMBER THIS YEAR WOULD BE CRITICAL IN DECIDING WHETHER THE GLOBAL TRADING SYSTEM WOULD REMAIN OPEN AND MULTILATERAL, OR BREAK UP INTO REGIONAL TRADING BLOCS AND PROVIDE EXCUSES FOR UNBRIDLED UNILATERAL TRADE MEASURES.

THESE FEW MONTHS, HE SAID, WOULD BE A REAL TEST OF POLITICAL WILL OF THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES, IN PARTICULAR THAT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE EEC AND JAPAN.

THESE THREE COUNTRIES, TOGETHER WITH CANADA, CONSTITUTED WHAT WAS KNOWN IN GATT CIRCLES AS THE "QUADRILATERAL (OR QUAD) GROUP".

"WE LOOK UPON CANADA, AS A MEMBER OF THAT GROUP, TO BRING ITS INFLUENCE TO BEAR UPON ITS FELLOW MEMBERS TO EXERCISE GREATER POLITICAL INITIATIVE AND SHOW GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN AREAS WHERE THEY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO BREAKING THE LOGJAM SUCH AS AGRICULTURE, TEXTILES AND CLOTHING, TRADE-RELATED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND ANTI-DUMPING, TO NAME BUT A FEW," HE SAID.

"FOR OUR PART," HE SAID, "HONG KONG WILL DO ALL IT CAN TO WORK WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE ROUND. THIS REMAINS THE TOP PRIORITY OF OUR TRADE POLICY OBJECTIVE."

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CAREFUL THINKING ON ENERGY SAVING POLICY

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THE POLICY ON ENERGY CONSERVATION NEEDS CAREFUL THINKING AND AN INTERNAL GOVERNMENT WORKING PARTY IS LOOKING INTO THE MATTER, THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, MR GRAHAM BARNES, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT A PO LEUNG KUK QUARTERLY LUNCHEON, MR BARNES SAID NO POLICY DECISION HAD YET BEEN MADE ON ENERGY CONSERVATION AND THE GOVERNMENT WAS MOVING AS QUICKLY AS IT COULD INTO A POSITION TO DO SO.

THE WORKING PARTY WAS LOOKING INTO THE MATTER WITH A VIEW TO DRAWING OUT THE BROAD OUTLINE OF A DRAFT ENERGY CONSERVATION POLICY, HE ADDED.

/THE BROAD

THE BROAD OUTLINE WOULD COVER AT LEAST:

- * HOW NEW BUILDINGS SHOULD BE BUILT TO SAVE ENERGY;
- * WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD BE DONE ABOUT OLD BUILDINGS TO SAVE ENERGY;
- * HOW THE PUBLIC, THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY COULD BE ENCOURAGED TO SAVE ENERGY; AND
- * INDUCEMENTS, IF ANY, TO SAVE ENERGY.

MR BARNES SAID: "AT A LATER STAGE, I HOPE WE WILL ESTABLISH A MORE PERMANENT COMMITTEE INVOLVING INTERESTED MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY TO WORK THROUGH ENERGY SAVING PROPOSALS IN MORE DETAIL AND EXPLORE NEW SUGGESTIONS.

"OUR BUILDINGS ARE UNDOUBTEDLY VERY WASTEFUL OF ENERGY AND WILL DOUBTLESS CONTINUE TO BE BUILT IN THIS WAY UNLESS THE LAW IS CHANGED.

"AGAIN WE ARE CERTAINLY CARELESS IN OUR OFFICES AND BUSINESS PREMISES ABOUT SAVING ELECTRICITY AND IT WOULD DO LITTLE HARM FOR US TO TRY TO SAVE FUEL BY USING LESS POWER.

"BUT ABOVE ALL, THERE IS STRONG EVIDENCE FOR THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT AND IF ALL COUNTRIES IGNORE IT BECAUSE IT MIGHT NOT BE FULLY PROVED, A LOT OF TIME WILL BE LOST AND A GREAT DEAL OF UNNECESSARY CARBON DIOXIDE WILL HAVE BEEN EMITTED," HE SAID.

"AND FINALLY SAVING ELECTRICITY IS SAVING MONEY AND QUITE A LOT CAN BE SAVED BY RELATIVELY PAINLESS CHANGES IN BUILDING DESIGN AND BY SIMPLY WASTING LESS," HE ADDED.

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SAFEGUARDS FOR MEMBERS OF OCCUPATIONAL PENSION SCHEMES

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THE WHITE BILL ON THE REGULATION OF OCCUPATIONAL PENSION SCHEMES BILL HAS INCORPORATED PROVISIONS TO ENABLE SCHEME MEMBERS TO BE MORE CONVERSANT WITH THE OPERATION AND FUNDING CONDITIONS OF THEIR RETIREMENT SCHEME, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR MONETARY AFFAIRS, MR STEPHEN IP, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE PROVISIONS ALSO ENABLE MEMBERS TO RAISE THEIR CONCERNS THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE CHANNELS AS NECESSARY, HE SAID.

SPEAKING AT A WORKSHOP ON THE OCCUPATIONAL PENSION SCHEMES BILL, MR IP POINTED OUT THAT WHERE A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF A SCHEME SO WISHED, A CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE COULD BE SET UP.

"THE COMMITTEE IS ADVISORY AND THE BILL REQUIRES THE EMPLOYERS TO CONVEY THE COMMITTEE'S VIEWS TO THE DESIGNATED PERSON OF THE SCHEME," HE SAID.

UNDER THE BILL EVERY RETIREMENT SCHEME APPLYING FOR REGISTRATION SHOULD APPOINT A DESIGNATED PERSON WHO WAS REQUIRED TO FURNISH INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME TO THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OR TO THE SCHEME MEMBERS UPON REQUEST.

THE DESIGNATED PERSONS WOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE RETIREMENT SCHEME AND ACT AS THE CONTACT POINT FROM WHICH THE REGISTRAR OF THE OCCUPATIONAL PENSION SCHEMES AND MEMBERS OF THE SCHEME WOULD OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION OF THE SCHEME, MR IP SAID.

"THE BILL ALSO REQUIRES THAT THE TRUSTEES OR, WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE DESIGNATED PERSON OF A SCHEME TO PROVIDE TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE SCHEME AN ANNUAL STATEMENT REGARDING THEIR ACCRUED RIGHTS," HE SAID.

THE BILL ALSO IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON THE EMPLOYER OR HIS ASSOCIATE FROM ACTING AS THE SOLE TRUSTEE OF A SCHEME AND NO MORE THAN 10 PER CENT OF THE ASSETS OF THE RETIREMENT SCHEME SHOULD BE INVESTED IN THE EMPLOYER'S BUSINESS. LOANS TO THE EMPLOYER OR HIS ASSOCIATES WERE ALSO PROHIBITED.

"THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE BILL IS TO ENSURE THAT RETIREMENT BENEFITS WILL BE PAID WHEN THEY FALL DUE," HE STRESSED.

"IT IS NOT TO COMPEL EMPLOYERS TO SET UP RETIREMENT SCHEME OR TO SPECIFY A MINIMUM LEVEL OF BENEFITS," MR IP SAID.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WERE MAINLY EVOLVED FROM FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES, NAMELY: SEPARATION OF ASSETS; PROVISION OF ADEQUATE FUNDING; INDEPENDENT AUDIT AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION, HE ADDED.

TURNING TO THE POWERS OF INTERVENTION, MR IP SAID THAT THE REGISTRAR MIGHT REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON THE OPERATION OF A RETIREMENT SCHEME, INCLUDING A SPECIAL AUDITOR'S REPORT OR AN ACTUARIAL CERTIFICATE AT ANY TIME.

HE MIGHT ALSO APPOINT A PERSON TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY INTO A SCHEME, HE SAID.

"ALL THESE WILL ENABLE THE REGISTRAR TO OBTAIN AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE OPERATION OF A RETIREMENT SCHEME," MR IP SAID.

THE ULTIMATE SANCTION AGAINST NON-COMPLIANCE OF THE LEGISLATION IS DE-REGISTRATION, HE POINTED OUT.

"SCHEMES MAY BE DE-REGISTERED WHERE THERE IS A FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE REPORTING, DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION OR FUNDING REQUIREMENTS OF THE BILL.

"UPON DE-REGISTRATION, THE REGISTRAR OR MEMBERS OF THE SCHEME AFFECTED MAY APPLY TO THE HIGH COURT FOR CERTAIN DIRECTIONS.

"FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE THE SCHEME IS GOVERNED BY HONG KONG LAW, THE COURT MAY MAKE AN ORDER THAT THE SCHEME BE WOUND UP AND WHERE THE ASSETS OF THE SCHEME ARE INADEQUATE TO MEET ITS LIABILITIES, THE COURT MAY, UPON APPLICATION BY MEMBERS OF THE SCHEME, DETERMINE A SUM EQUAL TO THE SHORTFALL AND GIVE JUDGEMENT AGAINST THE EMPLOYER FOR THAT AMOUNT," MR IP SAID.

WHERE THE SCHEME IS NOT GOVERNED BY HONG KONG LAW, THE COURT CANNOT MAKE A WINDING UP ORDER.

HOWEVER, THE COURT MAY, UPON APPLICATION, DIRECT AN INQUIRY INTO THE ENTITLEMENTS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SCHEME IN HONG KONG, MR IP SAID.

"WHERE THERE IS A SHORTFALL, THE COURT MAY GIVE JUDGEMENT FOR THIS AGAINST THE EMPLOYER," HE ADDED.

"IN DRAFTING THE LEGISLATION, WE HAVE DELIBERATELY LEFT A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF DISCRETION TO THE COURT ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WINDING UP OF A RETIREMENT SCHEME," MR IP SAID.

"SINCE THE COURT IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO DECIDE, ACCORDING TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH CASE, WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF SCHEME MEMBERS," HE EXPLAINED.

THE REGULATORY PROPOSALS NOW SET OUT IN THE WHITE BILL HAD WIDE IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEES, ACCOUNTANTS, SOLICITORS, ACTUARIES AS WELL AS INSURANCE COMPANIES AND BANKS, WHICH ARE INVOLVED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF RETIREMENT SCHEMES.

"NEW DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE PLACED UPON THESE PERSONS," MR IP SAID.

HE REMINDED THOSE WHO WISHED TO COMMENT ON THE WHITE BILL TO SEND THEIR SUBMISSIONS TO THE MONETARY AFFAIRS BRANCH BY THE END OF THIS MONTH.

"ALL COMMENTS RECEIVED WILL BE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED AND A BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL IN THE COMING SESSION," HE ADDED.

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1991 CENSUS WILL ADOPT SELF-ENUMERATION METHOD

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT WILL USE A NEW PROCEDURE, THE "SELF-ENUMERATION" METHOD, FOR THE SHORT FORM ENUMERATION IN THE 1991 CENSUS IN ORDER TO SAVE MANPOWER.

THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR CENSUS AND STATISTICS, MR FREDERICK HO, SAID THIS WHEN ADDRESSING A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB TODAY (THURSDAY).

THE QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE USED IN THE COMING CENSUS WILL BE OF TWO TYPES, A SHORT FORM AND A LONG FORM.

AMONG ALL THE HOUSEHOLDS TO BE ENUMERATED, SIX OUT OF SEVEN WILL BE RANDOMLY SELECTED FOR ENUMERATION BY A SHORT FORM COVERING BASIC INFORMATION OF EACH FAMILY MEMBER. THE OTHER ONE-SEVENTH OF HOUSEHOLDS WILL BE ENUMERATED ON A LONG FORM.

THOSE SELECTED TO ANSWER THE SHORT FORM WILL RECEIVE A SIMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE MAILED TO THEM BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CENSUS.

THE HOUSEHOLD SHOULD COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS THEREIN (THAT IS SELF-ENUMERATION). THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IS TO BE COLLECTED BY THE ENUMERATOR PERSONALLY DURING THE CENSUS.

"THE SELF-ENUMERATION METHOD HAS BEEN ADOPTED IN MANY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, AND THE FEASIBILITY OF ITS ADOPTION FOR HONG KONG HAS BEEN CONFIRMED IN A SERIES OF TESTS, WHICH INDICATED THAT THE SELF-ENUMERATION METHOD IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE PUBLIC," MR HO SAID.

HOUSEHOLDS SELECTED TO BE ENUMERATED ON LONG FORMS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY LETTERS FROM THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO THE VISIT OF ENUMERATORS.

THEY WILL BE ENUMERATED BY THE TRADITIONAL "INTERVIEWER" METHOD, THAT IS ENUMERATORS WILL CONDUCT PERSONAL INTERVIEWS TO COLLECT THE REQUIRED DATA. HOUSEHOLDS SHOULD, IN ADDITION TO BASIC INFORMATION, SUPPLY MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.

MR HO EXPLAINED THAT THE "INTERVIEWER" METHOD WAS PREFERRED FOR LONG FORM ENUMERATION BECAUSE THE QUESTIONS WERE MORE COMPLICATED. ENUMERATORS WHO WERE FORMALLY TRAINED AND HAD A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE QUESTIONS COULD PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE HOUSEHOLDS IN ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS DURING THE INTERVIEWS.

"THE DESIGN OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE HAS ALSO GONE THROUGH CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AND CONSULTATION," HE SAID.

IN ORDER TO COPE WITH SUCH A COLOSSAL PROJECT, THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT WILL EMPLOY ADVANCED COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND THE LATEST "OPTICAL CHARACTER RECOGNITION" TECHNOLOGY FOR DATA INPUT.

THESE INCLUDE THE SETTING UP OF A COMPREHENSIVE COMPUTERISED FILE OF LIVING QUARTERS, WITH WHICH OMISSION OF ANY QUARTER FOR ENUMERATION COULD BE AVOIDED.

ANOTHER COMPUTER SYSTEM IS DESIGNED FOR PROCESSING APPLICATIONS OF TEMPORARY CENSUS STAFF AND FOR ASSISTING THE SELECTION AND TRAINING PROCEDURES. IN ADDITION, THE COMPUTER NETWORK SYSTEM ALSO HELPS TO LINK UP ALL DISTRICT FIELD CENTRES AND MONITOR THE PROGRESS AND QUALITY OF THE FIELDWORK.

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WITH THE TREMENDOUS SPEED OF COMPUTER PROCESSES, ENQUIRIES ON THE IDENTITY OF AN ENUMERATOR RECEIVED THROUGH THE TELEPHONE HOTLINE CAN BE VERIFIED PROMPTLY.

THE FULL CENSUS WILL BE CONDUCTED FROM MARCH 15 TO 24 NEXT YEAR. DURING THESE 10 DAYS, CENSUS OFFICERS WILL VISIT ALL HOUSEHOLDS IN HONG KONG TO OBTAIN POPULATION DATA.

THE DEPARTMENT IS NOW INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR TEMPORARY ENUMERATION STAFF. THE RECRUITMENT EXERCISE IS MAINLY TARGETTED AT SENIOR STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, AND TEACHERS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

AS POPULATION DATA COLLECTED IN THE CENSUS IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE PLANNING OF GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR, MR HO CALLED ON MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND IN PARTICULAR, THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, TO PARTICIPATE AS ENUMERATORS.

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MORE SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY PLANNED

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MORE SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY WILL BE SET UP IF THE PLANNING RATIO IS IMPROVED AS SUGGESTED IN THE DRAFT WHITE PAPER ON SOCIAL WELFARE RELEASED TWO DAYS AGO, THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR M.D. CARTLAND, SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE LOK SIN TONG WAN LAP KEUNG SOCIAL CENTRE FOR THE ELDERLY IN TSUEN WAN, MR CARTLAND POINTED OUT THAT A FURTHER 67 SOCIAL CENTRES WERE PLANNED OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE ALREADY 150 SUCH CENTRES IN EXISTENCE THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.

"EVEN MORE WILL BE REQUIRED IF THE PLANNING RATIO IS IMPROVED TO PROVIDE ONE SOCIAL CENTRE FOR EVERY 3,000 ELDERLY PEOPLE AS SUGGESTED IN THE DRAFT WHITE PAPER ON SOCIAL WELFARE," HE SAID.

MR CARTLAND NOTED THAT LOK SIN TONG, BY OPERATING THE CENTRE, HAD BEEN CONTRIBUTING TO THE NECESSARY EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES TO CATER FOR THE NEEDS OF THE GROWING ELDERLY POPULATION.

ANOTHER FEATURE OF THE CENTRE, HE POINTED OUT, WAS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ELDERLY VOLUNTEER GROUP TO SERVE BOTH MEMBERS OF THE CENTRE AND THOSE IN NEED IN THE COMMUNITY.

"I HOPE MORE SUCH ELDERLY VOLUNTEER GROUPS WILL BE SET UP AS SOME ELDERLY PEOPLE ARE, IN FACT, VERY ACTIVE AND CAN GIVE EXTREMELY USEFUL SERVICE TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY," HE ADDED.

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CALL FOR YOUNG THESPIANS

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THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR HAS BROUGHT ANOTHER CHANCE FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TO ENJOY THE EXCITEMENT OF PERFORMING IN, AND PRODUCING A DRAMA.

INVITATIONS HAVE BEEN SENT TO SCHOOLS TO TAKE PART IN THE 1990 ENGLISH DRAMA PROJECT, THE OBJECTIVE OF WHICH IS TO GIVE STUDENTS AN EXCITING AND INTERESTING FOCUS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACTIVITY OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

"DRAMA SHARPENS UNDERSTANDING OF THE POWERFUL ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN EXPRESSING IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS AND, ABOVE ALL, IT SATISFIES A DEEPER HUMAN NEED FOR CREATIVITY," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE SCHOOLS ENGLISH DRAMA PROJECT MADE ITS DEBUT LAST YEAR WITH 12 SCHOOLS TAKING PART.

FORTY SCHOOLS OUT OF THE TOTAL APPLICATIONS - EIGHT FROM EACH OF THE FIVE REGIONS, HONG KONG ISLAND, KOWLOON EAST, KOWLOON WEST, NEW TERRITORIES EAST AND NEW TERRITORIES WEST - WILL BE SELECTED TO TAKE PART THIS YEAR.

THE YOUNG THESPIANS WILL BE HELPED BACKSTAGE BY THEIR TEACHERS, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE ACADEMY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS.

"THE ACADEMY WILL CONDUCT EIGHT COURSES FROM OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER FOR TEACHERS ON SUCH FUNDAMENTALS AS STAGE PRODUCTION, SET DESIGN, AND AUDIO-VISUAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE CURTAIN WILL RISE IN LATE FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH NEXT YEAR FOR PRELIMINARY JUDGING OF THE DRAMAS AND THOSE SELECTED WILL TAKE PART IN THE FINALS TO BE HELD IN THE HONG KONG ARTS CENTRE NEXT APRIL.

HIGHLY COMMENDED DRAMAS WILL BE INVITED TO PERFORM AT THE PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY IN MAY, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE SAID THAT SCHOOLS TAKING PART WILL BE GIVEN A \$1,000 GRANT.

"SCHOOLS WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THE DRAMA PROJECT SHOULD SEND THEIR APPLICATIONS TO THE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES SECTION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BEFORE SEPTEMBER 28 (FRIDAY)," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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DEADLINE FOR APPLYING FOR NEW GMB ROUTES

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MINIBUS OPERATORS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BIDDING FOR ANY OF THE 27 NEW GREEN MINIBUS ROUTES IN THE TERRITORY ARE REMINDED TO SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATIONS ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 28.

"MORE THAN 300 APPLICATION FORMS FOR THESE ROUTES HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED SINCE INVITATION OF APPLICATIONS STARTED ON AUGUST 31," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

APPLICATION FORMS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FROM THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT'S LICENSING OFFICES AND ALL MAIN OFFICES OF THE DISTRICT OFFICES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

A SELECTION BOARD COMPRISING A TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER AND OFFICIALS FROM THE TRANSPORT AND OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WILL MEET AND SELECT THE APPLICANTS ON THE BASIS OF THE ESTABLISHED CRITERIA LAID DOWN BY THE BOARD.

"THESE CRITERIA INCLUDE THE APPLICANT'S EXPERIENCE IN TRANSPORT SERVICE, FINANCIAL RESOURCES, MANAGEMENT RIGHT OVER THE VEHICLES, THE MAINTENANCE RECORD OF THE VEHICLES AND THE QUALITY OF THE VEHICLES TO BE DEPLOYED SUCH AS THE AVAILABILITY OF AIR-CONDITIONING," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

"IF THE APPLICANT IS IN PARTNERSHIP OR INTENDS TO ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH ONE OR MORE PERSONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPERATING THE GREEN MINIBUS SERVICES, IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT A COMPANY BE FORMED UNDER THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE AND THE APPLICATION BE MADE IN THE NAME OF THE COMPANY," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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GRADING OF BEACH WATER QUALITY

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT (EPD) TODAY (THURSDAY) ANNOUNCED GRADES ON THE BACTERIAL WATER QUALITY OF ALL BATHING BEACHES IN HONG KONG.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GRADING SYSTEM IS TO INFORM SWIMMERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ABOUT THE STATE OF BACTERIAL POLLUTION AT VARIOUS BEACHES.

THE GRADING WILL BE ANNOUNCED BIWEEKLY DURING THE BATHING SEASON TO COINCIDE WITH THE FREQUENCY AT WHICH BEACH WATERS ARE USUALLY SAMPLED.

/THE GRADING

THE GRADING IS BASED ON THE MOST RECENT E. COLI DATA OBTAINED BY THE EPD IN ITS ROUTINE MONITORING PROGRAMME. AS WITH LAST YEAR, THE GRADING ALSO INCLUDES AN ESTIMATE OF THE RISK OF SUFFERING SOME MINOR SKIN OR GASTROINTESTINAL COMPLAINTS AS A RESULT OF SWIMMING AT A BEACH WHICH HAS SOME DEGREE OF POLLUTION.

THE ESTIMATE IS BASED ON A VERY LARGE BODY OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION GATHERED IN HONG KONG IN RECENT BATHING SEASONS.

THE GRADING OF SOME BEACHES MAY VARY DURING THE SUMMER. THIS REPRESENTS A NATURAL FLUCTUATION IN THE BACTERIAL QUALITY OF BATHING WATERS IN MOST CASES, AS RAIN AND TIDES BRING MORE OR LESS POLLUTION TO THE BEACHES.

HOWEVER, THE GRADES GIVE A GOOD GENERAL PICTURE OF THE WATER QUALITY AT BATHING BEACHES AT THE TIME OF REPORTING AND FORM THE BEST AVAILABLE FORECAST FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

THE SYSTEM FOR GRADING BEACH WATER QUALITY IS AS FOLLOWS:

GRADE "1" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS GOOD. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 24 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED RISK OF MINOR ILLNESS TO SWIMMERS IS UNDETECTABLE.

GRADE "2" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS FAIR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 180 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 10 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

GRADE "3" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS ACCEPTABLE. THE E. COLI COUNT IS NO MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS NO MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

GRADE "4" INDICATES THAT THE WATER QUALITY IS POOR. THE E. COLI COUNT IS MORE THAN 610 PER 100 MILLILITRES AT EACH BEACH SO GRADED, AND THE EXPECTED HEALTH RISK IS MORE THAN 15 CASES OF MINOR ILLNESS PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

THE DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO CLOSE A BEACH TO SWIMMERS IS BASED ON A JUDGEMENT OF WHAT DEGREE OF POLLUTION IS ACCEPTABLE.

NORMALLY, THE CLOSURE OF A BEACH WOULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED BY THE URBAN OR REGIONAL COUNCIL IF A "4" GRADING OCCURRED REPEATEDLY, SO THAT THE AVERAGE HEALTH RISK OVER THE BATHING SEASON EXCEEDED 15 CASES PER 1,000 SWIMMERS.

SIMILARLY, THE REOPENING OF A CLOSED BEACH WOULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED IF A "3" GRADE OR BETTER WERE CONSISTENTLY OBTAINED.

AT PRESENT, TWO BATHING BEACHES, NAMELY CASTLE PEAK AND OLD CAFETERIA, HAVE BEEN DECLARED UNSUITABLE FOR SWIMMING PURPOSES, BASED ON THE WATER QUALITY DURING PAST SEASONS. THEY ARE POLLUTED BY FAECAL WASTES AND FAIL TO ACHIEVE CONSISTENTLY THE HONG KONG STANDARDS.

THE PUBLIC ARE ADVISED NOT TO SWIM IN THE WATER AT THESE TWO BEACHES. IN ADDITION, ROCKY BAY BEACH HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SWIMMING PURPOSES BY THE URBAN COUNCIL. THESE THREE BEACHES ARE IDENTIFIED BY AN "X" IN THE FOLLOWING LIST.

THE GRADES ON THE BACTERIAL WATER QUALITY OF VARIOUS BEACHES IN HONG KONG AS AT TODAY ARE LISTED BELOW:

BEACH -----	LAST GRADING ----- (AS AT 6.9.90)	PRESENT GRADING ----- (AS AT 20.9.90)
HONG KONG SOUTH -----		
BIG WAVE BAY	2	2
CHUNG HOM KOK	2	2
DEEP WATER BAY	1	2
HAIRPIN	1	2
MIDDLE BAY	1	1
REPULSE BAY	1	1
SHEK O	2	2
SOUTH BAY	1	1
ST STEPHEN'S	1	1
TURTLE COVE	2	1
STANLEY MAIN	1	1
ROCKY BAY	X	X
TO TEI WAN*	1	1
SAI KUNG DISTRICT -----		
CAMPERS	1	1
CLEAR WATER BAY 1ST BEACH	2	2
CLEAR WATER BAY 2ND BEACH	2	2
HAP MUN BAY	1	1
KIU TSUI	1	1

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PAK SHA CHAU	1	1
SILVERSTRAND	1	1
TRIO (HEBE HAVEN)	1	1
ISLANDS DISTRICT		

CHEUNG SHA UPPER	1	1
CHEUNG SHA LOWER	2	2
DISCOVERY BAY*	1	1
HUNG SHING YEH	1	1
KWUN YAM WAN	2	2
TONG FUK	1	2
LO SO SHING	1	1
PUI O	1	1
SILVERMINE BAY	2	2
TUNG WAN, CHEUNG CHAU	2	1
TUNG O*	1	1
TSUEN WAN DISTRICT		

ANGLERS'	3	4
APPROACH	3	3
CASAM	2	2
GEMINI	2	2
HOI MEI WAN	2	2
LIDO	3	3
TING KAU	4	4
TUNG WAN, MA WAN	1	1

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TUEN MUN DISTRICT

OLD CAFETERIA	X	X
NEW CAFETERIA	3	3
CASTLE PEAK	X	X
KADOORIE	3	3
BUTTERFLY	2	2

NOTE: "X" THE BEACH HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR SWIMMING PURPOSES.
* NON-GAZETTED BEACHES.

THE FOLLOWING BEACHES HAVE CHANGED GRADING ON THIS OCCASION:

TURTLE COVE AND TUNG WAN ON CHEUNG CHAU, FROM "2" TO "1"; DEEP WATER BAY, HAIRPIN AND TONG FUK, FROM "1" TO "2".

THE CHANGES ARE WITHIN THE NORMAL RANGE OF FLUCTUATION OF THE BACTERIAL WATER QUALITY OF THESE BEACHES.

ANGLERS', FROM "3" TO "4".

ANGLERS' BEACH IS DOWNGRADED AGAIN ON THIS OCCASION. THE DOWNGRADING IS DUE TO THE RECENT HEAVY RAINFALL WHICH HAS CAUSED THE POLLUTANTS FROM THE BEACH HINTERLAND TO BE FLUSHED INTO THE BEACH WATER.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT THE PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER (WATER POLICY) OF EPD, MR PAUL R. HOLMES, ON TEL. 835 1234.

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APRIL-JUNE REPORT ON GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY PUBLISHED

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THE REPORT ON THE GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY FOR APRIL-JUNE 1990, WHICH CONTAINS STATISTICS ON EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT FOR THE QUARTER, IS NOW ON SALE.

THE REPORT ALSO CONTAINS DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MEMBERS OF THE LABOUR FORCE, INCLUDING THEIR AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, ACTIVITY STATUS, OCCUPATION, INDUSTRY, HOURS WORKED PER WEEK, MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT EARNINGS AS WELL AS REASON FOR UNEMPLOYMENT AND DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

COPIES OF THE REPORT AT \$11.5 EACH CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GROUND FLOOR, GPO BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL.

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FOUR II'S ARRESTED

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IMMIGRATION INVESTIGATORS, ACTING ON INFORMATION, ARRESTED FOUR MALE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CHINA IN TSUEN WAN AREA YESTERDAY (WEDNESDAY).

ONE OF THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, AGED 22, WAS APPREHENDED AT A KNITTING FACTORY. HE IS SUSPECTED TO HAVE USED A HONG KONG IDENTITY CARD RELATING TO ANOTHER PERSON.

SUBSEQUENT ENQUIRIES LED TO THE ARRESTS OF THE OTHER THREE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AGED 27, 35 AND 40 IN A RESIDENTIAL FLAT.

THE FOUR ARE NATIVES OF CHIU CHOW AND CLAIMED TO HAVE SNEAKED INTO HONG KONG IN JANUARY, AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER THIS YEAR.

THE EMPLOYER OF THE FACTORY IS ASSISTING WITH INVESTIGATIONS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT REITERATED THAT THERE WILL BE NO AMNESTY FOR ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.

HE ALSO REMINDED ALL EMPLOYERS THAT THEY SHOULD CHECK THE IDENTITY OF THEIR RECRUITS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR NATIONALITY.

EMPLOYERS WILL BE LIABLE TO PROSECUTION IF THEY DO NOT OBSERVE THIS LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENT, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE COME ACROSS DOUBTFUL PROOF OF IDENTITY MAY CALL THE INVESTIGATION HOTLINE, 824 1551, DURING OFFICE HOURS.

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DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN – SUPPLEMENT

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 5-8428777

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1990

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY
THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN
AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS,
LORD CAITHNESS, ON
SEPTEMBER 20, 1990

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1990

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MINISTER OF STATE GIVES PRESS CONFERENCE

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THE FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN THIS AFTERNOON BY THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, LORD CAITHNESS:

GOOD AFTERNOON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. FIRST OF ALL, I WOULD LIKE TO PAY A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYBODY IN HONG KONG THAT HAS ME, MY WIFE AND MY PARTY SO WELCOME. IT HAS BEEN A VERY IMPRESSIVE FIRST VISIT TO HONG KONG AND WE HAVE DONE A LOT OF HARD WORK AND A LOT OF DISCUSSION.

I THINK IF I COULD START BY, IN FACT, GOING BACK TO THE BEGINNING. I SAID WHEN I ARRIVED THAT I WOULD FIGHT FOR HONG KONG AND THIS VISIT HAS HELPED ME TO FOCUS ON WHAT THE KEY ISSUES ARE AND IF I COULD SAY THAT THERE ARE THREE THINGS THAT HAVE STRUCK ME IN THE SIX DAYS THAT I HAVE BEEN HERE. THE FIRST IS THE WIDE SPECTRUM OF PEOPLE I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO WHO HAVE PUT FORWARD THEIR CONCERNS, VERY REAL CONCERNS ABOUT THE FUTURE, ABOUT THEIR POSITIONS, HOW THEY SEE THINGS, WHAT THEIR CONCERNS ARE TODAY, TOMORROW AND IN THE LONG TERM.

THE SECOND THING IS HOW IMPRESSED I HAVE BEEN BY WHAT IS HAPPENING IN HONG KONG. I HAVE SEEN SOME OF THE RECENT WORKS, THE CONTAINER TERMINAL, THE NEW UNIVERSITY THAT IS GOING UP IN VERY SHORT ORDER. I THINK THAT THAT IS AN ENORMOUSLY ENCOURAGING SIGN AND A SIGN OF A PLACE THAT IS STILL LOOKING FORWARD, STILL LOOKING TO EDUCATE AND TRAIN THE NEXT GENERATION AND THAT WAS VERY ENCOURAGING.

I THINK THE THIRD THING THAT STRUCK ME IS HOW MUCH THE HONG KONG PEOPLE ARE DOING FOR THEMSELVES. DOUGLAS HURD HAS SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE HONG KONG TO GO FORWARD STABLY, POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY SOUND WITH HONG KONG LOOKING AFTER HONG KONG FOR THEMSELVES AND I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED BY WHAT I HAVE SEEN ON THOSE THREE FRONTS. SOME OF WHAT I HAVE HEARD HAS BEEN AT TOTAL VARIANCE WITH OTHER COMMENTS FROM OTHER PEOPLE. SO I HAVE HAD A WIDE RANGE OF VIEWS AND THAT HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL WHEN I GET BACK AND AM ABLE TO THINK ABOUT IT, TALK TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND TALK TO OTHERS ABOUT HONG KONG'S POSITION. THANK YOU.

BETTY LIU, TVB NEWS: MINISTER, WHAT EXACTLY WILL YOU FIGHT FOR HONG KONG?

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: WHAT EXACTLY, IS TO PUT OVER THE MESSAGE THAT HONG KONG IS A GOOD PLACE FOR THE FUTURE, THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL OBVIOUSLY DO THINGS AS THEY HAVE DONE BEFORE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL, THEY WILL GET SUPPORT FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, WE WILL FIGHT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE FOR HONG KONG AND FOR HONG KONG'S POSITION IN THE SAME WAY AS WE HAVE BEEN DOING BEFORE, BUT I WILL HAVE THE ADDED ADVANTAGE THAT WHEN I DO IT AT LEAST I WILL HAVE BEEN HERE FOR SIX DAYS AND I HOPE TO COME AGAIN IN THE NOT TOO DISTANCE FUTURE TO REINFORCE MY VIEWS.

BETTY LIU, TVB NEWS: CAN YOU BE A BIB MORE SPECIFIC?

LORD CAITHNESS: WELL, LET US TAKE ONE INSTANCE THEN. PERHAPS THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA, WHICH IS OF CONCERN TO A LOT OF PEOPLE HERE. FRANCIS MAUDE WENT THERE IN JULY TO RE-START THE NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE THEN, THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF MEETINGS. I HAVE TALKED TO THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON. THERE WILL BE A VISIT BY MPS TO AND FROM CHINA. THE SECRETARY OF STATE HOPES TO GO BUT A DATE IS NOT FIXED AS YET. BUT THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT AREA FOR THE STABILITY AND FUTURE OF HONG KONG AND IT IS AN AREA THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO TACKLE WITH, I HOPE, MORE AUTHORITY AS A RESULT OF WHAT I HAVE HEARD FROM PEOPLE WHO HAVE TALKED TO ME HERE.

HARVEY PONG, WAH KIU YAT PAO: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO THE GOVERNMENT DISCIPLINED STAFF WHO ARE GREATLY DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR PAY REVIEW?

LORD CAITHNESS: I HAD A VERY GOOD SESSION WITH THE CIVIL SERVICE UNIONS AND THE DISCIPLINED STAFF THIS MORNING. IT LASTED ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF. THEY PUT THEIR CASE FORCIBLY TO ME. I WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER WHAT THEY HAVE SAID. BUT IT HAS BEEN THE TRADITION THAT MATTERS OF PAY AND CONDITIONS ARE SETTLED BETWEEN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE SERVICES. THAT IS RIGHT, THAT IS HOW IT SHOULD CONTINUE. THERE HAS BEEN EXCO'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE STANDING COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON THE POLICE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A FURTHER STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CIVIL SIDE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE THAT WILL BE REPORTING BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. IT IS BEST DEALT WITH AS IT HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN BETWEEN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE SERVICES. THAT IS NOT TO SAY WE ARE DISINTERESTED, BECAUSE IN MY DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNOR IT IS HELPFUL FOR ME TO HAVE HEARD THE VIEWS AT FIRST HAND AND I SAID TO THE SERVICES THAT I WOULD RELAY THOSE VIEWS TO THE GOVERNOR AND THAT I WILL DO.

CLAUDIA MO, AFP: CHINA HAS SAID IT WOULD NOT RECOGNISE PASSPORTS ISSUED UNDER LONDON'S PASSPORT PACKAGE. WILL THAT MAKE THE ENTIRE EXERCISE LOSE ITS MEANING?

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, THE ENTIRE EXERCISE IS TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO STAY HERE TO ADD STABILITY FOR HONG KONG.

/CLAUDIA MO, AFP:

CLAUDIA MO, AFP: BUT THEY WOULDN'T WANT TO STAY HERE --

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, CAN I JUST FINISH, PLEASE? BECAUSE YOU DID ASK ME A QUESTION AND I AM TRYING TO ANSWER IT.

IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA WE WILL FOLLOW-UP THE POSITION THAT FRANCIS MAUDE CREATED IN THAT WE CAN EXPLAIN TO CHINA EXACTLY WHAT THE NATIONALITY PACKAGE IS DESIGNED TO DO AND I HOPE THAT THE CHINESE CONCERNS ABOUT IT WILL DISAPPEAR. IN FACT, I AM CONFIDENT THAT THEY WILL ONCE ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT THEY HAVE WILL, THROUGH DIALOGUE, NOT BE AS APPARENT TO THEM AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY. IT IS THROUGH THAT DIALOGUE THAT WE ARE SEEKING TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND, THAT A LOT OF MISCONCEPTIONS, A LOT OF STATEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE CAN, IN FACT, SOLVE WHAT PORTENDS TO BE A POSSIBLY TRICKY SITUATION.

CLAUDIA MO, AFP: WHEN DO YOU HOPE CHINA WILL FINALLY OFFICIALLY ENDORSE YOUR PASSPORT PACKAGE?

LORD CAITHNESS: I CAN'T GIVE YOU THE DATE, BECAUSE THERE ARE SOME DISCUSSIONS TO CONTINUE. I THINK THAT WE WANT TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS THAT FRANCIS MAUDE STARTED AND I THINK I HAVE COVERED THE REST OF THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION ALREADY.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY, BBC: THE STATEMENT BY MR HURD THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE SHOULD LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES MORE, DO YOU THINK THAT THE TIME MIGHT BE RIGHT NOW, OR SOON, FOR A HONG KONG CHINESE TO BE APPOINTED AT THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG RATHER THAN A DIPLOMAT SECONDED FROM THE FOREIGN OFFICE?

LORD CAITHNESS: WELL I DON'T KNOW WHAT REMARK YOU ARE ATTRIBUTING TO MR HURD --

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: I'M TALKING ABOUT THE POINT JUST AT THE BEGINNING THERE. YOU SAID THAT HONG KONG SHOULD LOOK AFTER HONG KONG THEMSELVES; THE HONG KONG PEOPLE SHOULD LOOK MORE AFTER THEMSELVES, NOT LOOK SO MUCH TO BRITAIN.

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, I DIDN'T SAY THAT. THAT --

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: CAN YOU RE-QUOTE BACK PERHAPS WHAT MR HURD SAID, AND THEN WE CAN GET IT ABSOLUTELY RIGHT, AND THEN GO ON TO MY QUESTION?

LORD CAITHNESS: WELL, LET ME BE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR. WHAT WE SEEK TO DO IS TO ENCOURAGE HONG KONG PEOPLE TO TAKE OVER AND HELP ON THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT. THAT THEY HAVE DONE. IT'S NOTICEABLE - THE CHIEF JUSTICE, FOR INSTANCE - THERE'S PEOPLE LIKE THAT, WHO ARE COMING UP FAR MORE THAN THEY USED TO. AND THAT IS THE POINT OF WHAT I WAS SAYING.

/NOW THAT

NOW THAT IS NOT THE QUOTATION THAT YOU REFERRED BACK TO ME. WHETHER IT IS RIGHT TO APPOINT A HONG KONG CHINESE PERSON AS GOVERNOR, IS, I THINK, SOMETHING THAT I AM NOT GOING TO ANSWER AND YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT ME TO. I AM NOT GOING TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG. WE HAVE A VERY GOOD GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG, IN WHOM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE. HE HAS BEEN HERE FOR THREE YEARS; THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR A CHANGE AND THAT IS PURE SPECULATION FOR THE FUTURE.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: COULD YOU DISCUSS THE PRINCIPLE OF HAVING A HONG KONG CHINESE PERSON AS THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG, AS OPPOSED TO A DIPLOMAT SECONDED FROM THE FOREIGN OFFICE?

LORD CAITHNESS: WE WANT THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: AND WHO MIGHT --

MR OSBORNE: WE'VE EXHAUSTED THE SUBJECT, I THINK, COULD WE --

FANNY WONG, SCMP: WELL IF IT'S DEFINITE THAT WE WILL GO AHEAD WITH THE AIRPORT PROJECT, BUT IF AT THE END OF THE DAY WE FAIL TO WIN THE CHINESE SUPPORT, IS IT LIKELY OR POSSIBLE THAT WE MAY NEED TO RE-SCALE THE PROJECT OR DEFER IT BY A FEW YEARS?

LORD CAITHNESS: AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF RESEARCH HAS BEEN DONE ON THE AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT. I WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE A VERY DETAILED BRIEFING AND TO HAVE EXPLAINED SOME OF THE THINGS THAT WOULD BE AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO ME, COMING IN NEW AS I WAS, ABOUT THE LOCATION OF THE AIRPORT, THE TRANSIT SYSTEM. AND THOSE WHO WERE ABLE, SATISFACTORILY EXPLAINED AS TO EXACTLY WHY IT HAPPENED. NOW IT IS QUITE NATURAL FOR CHINA WITH ITS ONGOING SITUATION AFTER 1997, THAT HAS AN INTEREST IN THIS PROJECT, TO HAVE THOSE SORT OF CONCERNS WHICH ANY LEGITIMATE PERSON WOULD HAVE, ANSWERED. NOW THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAVE SENT A MESSAGE TO PEKING TO ASK THE CHINESE REPRESENTATIVES TO COME HERE TO SEE ON THE GROUND, TO HAVE ANY OF THEIR QUERIES ANSWERED; SO THAT THEY CAN DISCUSS IT WITH THE CONSULTANTS AND ALL THOSE INVOLVED. AND AT THAT STAGE, I AM SURE THAT THE PROJECT WILL PROCEED, BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A SOUND PROJECT, BUT THOSE ARE DISCUSSIONS THAT ARE HAPPENING IN THE FUTURE. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT THE CHINESE RECOGNISE THAT HONG KONG NEEDS A NEW AIRPORT, BUT THOSE DISCUSSIONS, AS I MENTIONED IN ANSWER TO AN EARLIER QUESTION, ARE SOME OF THE THINGS THAT CAN BE DEALT WITH BY THE ON-GOING RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA.

FANNY WONG: WHAT ROLE CAN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT PLAY IN THIS CURRENT DEADLOCK? APPARENTLY THERE'S NO MOVEMENT AT ALL SINCE THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS SUBMITTED THE INFORMATION TO THE CHINESE SIDE. SO DO YOU THINK, IN ANY WAY, YOU CAN HELP IN THIS PROCESS?

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: WELL, IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINA, BOTH FORMALLY AND INFORMALLY, IT WILL BE ONE OF THE MATTERS THAT UNDOUBTEDLY WILL COME UP, AND I HOPE THAT THAT WILL HELP IN ITS WAY.

FANNY WONG: WHAT CONCRETE STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO HELP TO, SAY, RESOLVE THE CURRENT DEADLOCK?

LORD CAITHNESS: SORRY -- WHAT --?

FANNY WONG: WHAT CONCRETE STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO HELP TO RESOLVE THE CURRENT SITUATION?

LORD CAITHNESS: BECAUSE I THINK WHAT ONE HAS GOT TO EXPLAIN TO THE CHINESE - EXACTLY WHAT THE DESIGN OF THE -- WHY THE AIRPORT IS DESIGNED, LAID OUT AS IT IS. THAT IS BEST DONE BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE CONSULTANTS. BUT WHAT WE WILL BE URGING AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL - AND IF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SEEKS SUPPORT WE WILL GIVE IT TO THEM - TO RAISE IT WITH THE CHINESE, EXPLAIN TO THEM THE URGENCY, BECAUSE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR HONG KONG TO GET ON WITH THIS.

FOO CHOY PENG, THE STRAITS TIMES: LORD CAITHNESS, I BELIEVE YOU SAID THAT IF THE RESULTS OF NEXT YEAR'S LEGCO ELECTIONS ARE SUCCESSFUL OR RESPONSIBLE, YOU COULD BARGAIN FOR MORE DIRECT SEATS TO LEGCO IN 1995? COULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY A RESPONSIBLE OR SUCCESSFUL RESULT IN THESE ELECTIONS?

LORD CAITHNESS: ONE CANNOT JUDGE THE RESULTS OF THE 1991 ELECTIONS AS SUCCESSFUL OR NOT SUCCESSFUL ON, FOR INSTANCE, A BRITISH BASIS.

JOHN ANDREWS, THE ECONOMIST: SORRY, COULD WE HAVE THE QUESTION AGAIN BECAUSE WE DIDN'T HEAR IT BACK HERE?

LORD CAITHNESS: AS I UNDERSTOOD THE QUESTION, IS WAS HOW I WOULD JUDGE WHETHER THE 1991 ELECTIONS WERE SUCCESSFUL. AND THEN GOING ON TO SAY - GOING TO CHINA TO SAY, "CAN ONE INCREASE THE SEATS FOR THE 1995 ELECTIONS?" AND AS I SAID, I DON'T THINK YOU CAN ASSESS THE SUCCESS OF THE 1991 ELECTIONS ON THE PURE BASIS AS WE ASSESS THEM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. I THINK THAT ONE -- I HOPE THAT AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS; I HOPE THAT AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE WILL PUT THEIR NAMES ON THE ELECTORAL VOTE - ROLL - AND TURN OUT TO VOTE ON THE OCCASIONS. I KNOW YOU'VE GOT THREE LOTS OF ELECTIONS NEXT YEAR, ALL OF WHICH ARE IMPORTANT. AND THEN ONE WANTS TO ASSESS HOW IT DEVELOPS FROM THERE. AND I HAVE SAID THAT WHEN ONE CAN ASSESS THAT - AND AT A PROPITIOUS TIME ONE WILL GO BACK TO THE CHINESE AND SEEK TO NEGOTIATE AN INCREASE IN THE TWENTY - IF THAT CAN BE SHOWN TO WORK.

/FANNY FUNG, ATV:

FANNY FUNG, ATV: CAN I FOLLOW UP ON THAT QUESTION, YOU SAY IF IT IS SUCCESSFUL YOU WILL GO BACK TO CHINA AND ASK FOR MORE SEATS. BUT HOW LIKELY OR HOW OPTIMISTIC DO YOU THINK CHINA WILL AGREE TO SUCH NEGOTIATIONS WHEN CHINA IS ALREADY SAYING THE PACE OF DEMOCRACY IN HONG KONG IS ALREADY TOO FAST?

LORD CAITHNESS: WELL AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF HARD WORK WAS DONE ON THE BASIC LAW - FIVE YEARS OF VERY CONSIDERABLE DETAILED WORK - AND THERE WERE SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENTS THAT WERE NEGOTIATED DURING THAT TIME. I BELIEVE THAT WITH SUCCESSFUL 1991 ELECTIONS, WHICH ARE VERY CRUCIAL TO THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG, WHICH THE WORLD WILL BE LOOKING AT, WHEN THAT PROCESS HAS HAPPENED AND AT A PROPITIOUS TIME AFTER THAT, ONE WILL GO BACK TO CHINA AND SAY: THIS DOES WORK, YOU CAN SEE IT, HERE ARE THE TANGIBLE BENEFITS, HERE ARE THE TANGIBLE RESULTS. NOW I CAN'T PREDICT WHETHER THAT IS GOING TO BE SUCCESSFUL OR NOT, BUT IT IS SOMETHING THAT - AS I WILL REPEAT - THAT IT IS SOMETHING THAT WE AS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE UP.

FOO CHOY PENG, THE STRAITS TIMES: BUT THAT WOULD PRESUME THAT YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS IS THE SAME AS CHINA'S DEFINITION OF SUCCESS.

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, WHAT IT MEANS IS THAT AFTER THE 1991 ELECTIONS WE WILL LOOK AT THE SITUATION AGAIN, AND IF IT IS SUCCESSFUL AND EVERYBODY CONSIDERS IT TO BE SUCCESSFUL, WE WILL TALK TO THE CHINESE, IMPRESS UPON THEM WHY WE THINK IT IS SUCCESSFUL - THEY MIGHT HAVE A DIFFERENT VIEW BUT WE CAN DISCUSS THAT IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS.

JOHN ANDREWS, THE ECONOMIST: I REALISE THAT YOU SAY THAT THERE IS NOT A PARALLEL WITH SUCCESS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, BUT YOU KEEP USING THE WORD "SUCCESS" OR "SUCCESSFUL" FOR THE 1991 ELECTION, SO PRESUMABLY YOU DO HAVE A DEFINITION IN YOUR OWN MIND OF WHAT THIS WORD MEANS. COULD YOU SHARE IT WITH US?

LORD CAITHNESS: I DON'T HAVE A PRECISE DEFINITION AT THE MOMENT AND IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR ME TO DO SO. I'VE TALKED TO THE NEW POLITICAL PARTIES, OR SOME OF THEM; I'VE TALKED TO SOME PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY ARE GOING TO STAND AND SOME WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED. I THINK AT THIS STAGE IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO GIVE YOU A DEFINITION OF SUCCESS - OF WHAT I MEAN BY SUCCESS - BUT OBVIOUSLY IT IS GOING TO BE A VERY IMPORTANT TIME AND THE MORE PEOPLE THAT TAKE PART, THE MORE PEOPLE THAT GO ON THE REGISTER, THE MORE PEOPLE THAT VOTE, THE BETTER THOSE CHANCES ARE.

JOHN ANDREWS: SO IT WOULD BE THE TURNOUT THEN, THAT WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT, DO YOU THINK, OR THE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES WHO MIGHT STAND?

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, NO, IT'S A COMBINATION OF THAT AND THEN THE ON-GOING SITUATION AS WELL.

/SIMON MACKLIN, SCMP:

SIMON MACKLIN, SCMP: CAN I FOLLOW UP ON THAT, MINISTER? ISN'T IT A BIT FOOLISH TO START TALKING ABOUT SUCCESS WHEN YOU'RE NOT REALLY SURE WHAT THE SUCCESS WOULD BE?

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, I AM BEING HOPEFUL FOR THE FUTURE. I THINK IT IS A VERY IMPORTANT TIME FOR HONG KONG. I HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE A STRONG AND ACTIVE CAMPAIGN IN WHICH A LOT OF PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE.

SIMON MACKLIN: I'M SURE MOST PEOPLE ARE HOPEFUL FOR THE FUTURE BUT YOU DON'T SEEM TO HAVE A VERY CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT MIGHT BE GOOD IN THE FUTURE AND WHAT MIGHT NOT BE.

LORD CAITHNESS: I HAVE GOT STRONG VIEWS OF THAT. WHAT I HAVEN'T SAID IS THAT I HAVE GOT A CLEAR DEFINITION YET OF WHAT SUCCESS MEANS.

SIMON MACKLIN: COULD YOU PERHAPS SHARE WITH US THEN WHAT WOULDN'T BE SUCCESSFUL?

CHRIS OSBORNE: I THINK WE'VE SQUEEZED THAT ONE DRY.

ANGUS FOSTER, FINANCIAL TIMES: I'M SORRY, I DON'T THINK WE HAVE SQUEEZED IT DRY. BUILT IN TO YOUR UNDEFINED MENTION OF SUCCESS, IS THAT GOING TO BE BASED ON WHO IS ELECTED?

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, THAT IS FOR THE ELECTORATE OF HONG KONG. THAT IS NOT A DEFINITION --

ANGUS FOSTER: WHEN YOU GO UP TO CHINA BEGGING FOR MORE SEATS, WILL THAT SUCCESS DEPEND ON WHO IS ELECTED?

LORD CAITHNESS: WHAT I WANT, AS I'VE SAID, IS AS MANY PEOPLE ON THE REGISTER AS POSSIBLE, AS MANY PEOPLE TO VOTE, A GOOD STRONG ACTIVE CAMPAIGN, AND THEN SEE WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THAT.

ANGUS FOSTER: BUT THE SUCCESS OF AN ELECTION IS ON ITS RESULT, MINISTER.

LORD CAITHNESS: WHAT I SAID IS, YOU CANNOT COMPARE THE SUCCESS OF 1991 ON THE UK MODEL, BECAUSE THERE, YOU KNOW THE NEXT DAY; AND OUR ELECTIONS HAVE EVOLVED OVER MANY CENTURIES. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THERE IS GOING TO BE DIRECT ELECTIONS IN HONG KONG AND IT IS AN IMPORTANT TIME.

YUE SIN-YUI, HONG KONG STANDARD: I WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS DONE TO ASK OTHER COUNTRIES, I MEAN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, TO FOLLOW SUIT, TO GIVE A SIMILAR SCHEME AS THE NATIONALITY PACKAGE TO HONG KONG PEOPLE?

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: YES, WE HAVE BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD, DISCUSSING IT AND PUTTING FORWARD THE REPRESENTATION FOR HONG KONG. I KNOW THAT CERTAIN SCHEMES HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED. I BELIEVE I AM RIGHT IN SAYING THAT FRANCE AND GERMANY HAVE GOT SCHEMES GOING; THAT AMERICA ARE CONSIDERING A SCHEME. AND HAVING BEEN HERE NOW AND LEARNT MORE AT FIRSTHAND, I TOO, WILL BE ABLE TO REINFORCE THAT MESSAGE AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. WHAT EACH COUNTRY DECIDES TO DO, OF COURSE, IS UP TO THEM.

YUE SIN-YUI: BUT ARE SIMILAR SCHEMES COMING, I MEAN?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK THE SCHEME WILL DEPEND ON EACH GOVERNMENT AND HOW THEY WISH TO DO IT FOR THEIR PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES. I CAN'T INFLUENCE THAT, BUT WHAT I CAN DO IS ASK THEM TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HONG KONG AND TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE.

YUE SIN-YUI: MEANING, NO SIMILAR SCHEME IS COMING?

LORD CAITHNESS: I DON'T KNOW, THAT IS UP TO EACH GOVERNMENT. MY JOB IS ACTUALLY TO COMMUNICATE THE POSITION OF HONG KONG TO THOSE GOVERNMENTS.

YUE SIN-YUI: THEN YOU DO JUDGE THAT IT'S NOT SUCCESSFUL? I MEAN THAT NEGOTIATIONS --

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, I THINK THERE ARE ALREADY SCHEMES. THERE HAVE BEEN SCHEMES BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY; THERE'S A SCHEME BEING DISCUSSED IN AMERICA AT THE MOMENT. QUITE HOW THAT FINALISES AND SHAPES-UP IS YET TO BE SEEN.

KEVIN LAU, HONG KONG ECONOMIC JOURNAL: HONG KONG IS HAVING ITS FIRST EVER DEMOCRATIC ELECTION NEXT YEAR, WILL YOU ASSURE US THAT ANYTHING THAT IS ILLEGAL, UNDER THE LONG-ESTABLISHED BRITISH LAW AND CASE LAW ON ELECTIONS, WOULD NOT BE TOLERATED IN HONG KONG'S ELECTION LAWS?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK THE RULES FOR THE ELECTION HAVE BEEN CLEARLY LAID DOWN BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION IN THOSE SORT OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

KEVIN LAU: THOSE LAWS WERE NOT FOR DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS; WE ARE GOING TO HAVE IT FOR THE FIRST TIME.

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK THAT THE RULES ARE CLEAR ON THIS, AS FAR AS I UNDERSTAND, AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE THE APPROPRIATE ACTION WHERE NECESSARY.

/PAUL HARRINGTON, HONG KONG STANDARD:

PAUL HARRINGTON, HONG KONG STANDARD: CAN I TAKE YOU BACK TO 1991 -- BACK TO THE FUTURE? IF THE ELECTIONS ARE A SUCCESS, IF WE AGREE THAT THEY ARE ALL A SUCCESS, THEN WHAT EXACTLY WILL YOU BE ASKING BEIJING FOR? IS THERE A FIGURE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE NUMBER OF ELECTED SEATS INCREASE BY, FOR EXAMPLE?

LORD CAITHNESS: I DON'T HAVE A SPECIFIC FIGURE IN MIND AT THE MOMENT. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE AGREEMENT IS THAT BY 1997 THERE WILL BE TWENTY DIRECT-ELECTED SEATS. WE WOULD SEEK TO NEGOTIATE AN INCREASE ON THAT.

PAUL HARRINGTON: BUT YOU WOULDN'T SAY THAT THERE WAS AN OPTIMUM NUMBER FOR 1995?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK IT WOULD BE WRONG TO SPECULATE AT THIS STAGE.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: THE CHINESE OFFICIAL MEDIA REPORTED YESTERDAY THAT ON TUESDAY, THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES IN GUANGDONG EXECUTED SIXTY-FOUR PEOPLE. THAT'S JUST ACROSS THE BORDER AND IT'S A MASS-EXECUTION OF EXTREME PROPORTIONS. GIVEN THE CONCERN ABOUT THE DEATH PENALTY HERE, COULD YOU COMMENT ON THOSE EXECUTIONS?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR ME TO INTERFERE WITH WHAT ANOTHER COUNTRY IS DOING.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: COULD YOU THEN, PERHAPS, EXPAND THAT TO TALK ABOUT THE CONCERN ABOUT THE DEATH PENALTY NOT BEING DROPPED FROM THE BILL OF RIGHTS OR THE BASIC LAW HERE? THE DEATH PENALTY WILL STILL BE IN LAW WHEN HONG KONG IS HANDED-OVER TO CHINA IN 1997.

LORD CAITHNESS: AT THE MOMENT IT WILL BE.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: ANY PLANS TO CHANGE IT?

LORD CAITHNESS: NOT THAT I KNOW OF.

HUMPHREY HAWKSLEY: AND NO CONCERN AT ALL ABOUT THE MASS-EXECUTIONS IN CHINA?

LORD CAITHNESS: THERE WILL BE CONCERN, OBVIOUSLY, AND I WILL NEED TO TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION IN THE FUTURE.

STEVE GLAIN, INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE: YOU MENTIONED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO SIT DOWN WITH CHINA AND EXPLAIN TO THEM THE NATIONALITY PACKAGE AND THE AIRPORT, TO CLEAR UP ANY MISUNDERSTANDING. IF IT'S SO IMPORTANT, WHY WEREN'T THE CHINESE CONSULTED ON BOTH OF THESE ISSUES BEFORE THEY WERE ANNOUNCED?

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: THE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA WENT THROUGH A DIFFICULT PATCH, THAT WE ARE EMERGING FROM - THANK GOODNESS. IT'S GETTING MUCH MORE CONSTRUCTIVE. BUT A DECISION ON THAT SORT OF MATTER IS FOR THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, SUPPORTED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT; THAT IS LAID DOWN IN THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED DECLARATION, THAT WE WILL MAKE THESE SORT OF DECISIONS - THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL MAKE WHATEVER DECISIONS IT FEELS NECESSARY IN THE RUNNING OF THE TERRITORY UP UNTIL THE 1ST JULY 1997.

PAUL HARRINGTON: THAT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE THE CASE IF WE HAVE TO GO CAP-IN-HAND TO BEIJING IN 1995 WITH REGARD TO OUR OWN DEMOCRATIC MAKE-UP.

LORD CAITHNESS: I'M NOT GOING CAP-IN-HAND, I'M GOING TO TRY TO SEEK -- I MIGHT BE TRYING TO SEEK TO IMPROVE, DEPENDING ON THE ELECTIONS, AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER THAT IS ALREADY ALLOWED FOR.

PAUL HARRINGTON: ARE THERE ANY OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH WOULD NEED CHINESE APPROVAL PRIOR TO 1997?

LORD CAITHNESS: IT DOESN'T NEED CHINESE APPROVAL -- THAT WERE - TO ALTER SOMETHING THAT IS IN THE BASIC LAW WOULD NEED CHINESE APPROVAL. BUT HONG KONG GOVERNMENT STILL HAS THE RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS APPERTAINING TO HONG KONG UNTIL THE 1ST JULY 1997, THAT'S IN THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED AGREEMENT.

HARVEY PONG: IT IS SAID THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS PLANNING TO SET UP A BRITISH CONSULATE IN HONG KONG. HOW DOES THE WORK PROCEED?

LORD CAITHNESS: WE ARE DISCUSSING THAT AT THE MOMENT. I HOPE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE A DECISION SOON. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT BRITAIN DOES HAVE A GOOD CONSUL-GENERAL HERE IN THE FUTURE. IT IS AN IMPORTANT TRADING PART OF THE WORLD FOR BRITAIN; I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT CONTINUE TO BE THAT; AND UNTIL MATTERS PROCEED AND THE FINAL DECISIONS ARE TAKEN, I'M AFRAID I CAN'T SAY ANY MORE.

YUE SIN-YUI, HK STANDARD: I WANT TO KNOW YOUR IMPRESSION ABOUT THE RECENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINA AND BRITAIN? AND DO YOU HAVE PLANS TO GO TO CHINA YOURSELF?

LORD CAITHNESS: I WOULD LIKE TO GO TO CHINA, YES, AND I KNOW THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AS I SAID, WOULD ALSO LIKE TO GO TO CHINA; THE EXACT DATES HAVEN'T BEEN FIXED. AND I KNOW THAT MY OPPOSITE NUMBER IN CHINA WISHES TO COME TO THE UNITED KINGDOM AGAIN; THE DATE HAS TO BE FINALISED FOR THAT.

YUE SIN-YUI: BUT WHAT'S YOUR IMPRESSION ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN -- I MEAN THE RECENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA? HAS IT GONE BACK TO THE NORMAL SITUATION?

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: IT IS CERTAINLY IMPROVING ON WHAT IT WAS THIS TIME LAST YEAR AND WE WANT TO BUILD ON THAT.

CHEUNG MAN-YI, MING PAO: YES, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT BUILDING AN AIRPORT IS A HONG KONG GOVERNMENT DECISION, AND NOW THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT INVITE BEIJING PEOPLE TO COME TO HONG KONG AND DISCUSS THE PROJECT. IS IT THE WAY, TO INVITE THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO INTERVENE IN HONG KONG'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS?

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, IT ISN'T INTERFERING IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS. IT IS QUITE RIGHT THAT WHERE THEY ARE GOING TO TAKE ON A LIABILITY, THROUGH THE AIRPORT, A PROJECT THAT CONTINUES INTO THE NEXT CENTURY, IT IS RIGHT THAT ONE SHOULD ADVISE THEM EXACTLY WHAT THE PROJECT INVOLVES.

SIMON MACKLIN: IT WOULD BE A LIABILITY THEN?

LORD CAITHNESS: BY THE LIABILITY I MEAN THAT -- FROM THE BRIEFING THAT I GOT, IT IS ONLY THE FIRST RUNWAY THAT WILL HAVE BEEN COMPLETED BY 1997, SO THERE IS AN ON-GOING AMOUNT OF WORK TO BE DONE.

FANNY WONG: SO IN THAT CASE, CHINA'S APPROVAL -- WELL, IT'S LEGITIMATE FOR CHINA TO HAVE A SAY ON THE PROJECT.

LORD CAITHNESS: NO, IT IS RIGHT THAT CHINA SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF THE PROJECT, THE DETAILS OF THE PROJECT, AND WHY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAVE DECIDED TO POSITION IT AND TO MAKE IT IN SUCH A FASHION.

FANNY WONG: BUT AS YOU DESCRIBE, IT COULD BECOME A LIABILITY FOR THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND IT'S ONLY LEGITIMATE THAT THEY CAN HAVE A SAY ON IT.

LORD CAITHNESS: THERE IS GOING TO BE SOME HONG KONG GOVERNMENT FINANCE IN IT - THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO CHINA.

FANNY WONG: AS I SAID, I WOULD LIKE TO GO BACK TO THE ORIGINAL QUESTION. IF, AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE CAN'T WIN THE SUPPORT OF CHINA, IS IT LIKELY OR POSSIBLE THAT WE CAN, SAY, RE-SCHEDULE THE PROJECT OR DEFER IT BY A YEAR OR SO.

LORD CAITHNESS: THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAVE MADE A DECISION ABOUT THE AIRPORT. THAT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED, THE GOVERNOR ANNOUNCED THAT, I THINK LAST YEAR, AND NOW WE'RE GIVING FURTHER DETAILS TO CHINA WHICH THEY'VE REQUESTED.

FANNY WONG: SO THAT'S FINAL? THE DECISION IS FINAL?

LORD CAITHNESS: THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAVE MADE THAT DECISION.

/WONG SAU-YING, AP:

WONG SAU-YING, AP: YOU HAVE TALKED WITH THE DISCIPLINARY FORCES THIS MORNING, AND YOU ALSO SAID THEY HAD PUT ACROSS THEIR CASE PRETTY FORCIBLY. ARE YOU WORRIED OR ARE YOU CONCERNED THAT, YOU KNOW, IF THEY DON'T GET WHAT THEY WANT TO GET, HONG KONG WOULD BECOME A LAWLESS PLACE? OR WOULD IT BECOME MORE DIFFICULT - UNGOVERNABLE - IN THE RUN-UP TO 1997?

LORD CAITHNESS: I UNDERSTAND THE CONCERN THAT THERE IS AMONGST A LOT OF PEOPLE WHEN THERE IS A RISE IN CRIME. IF ONE LOOKS AT THE STATISTICS, I AM TOLD THAT ONE SEES THAT THE LEVEL OF CRIME NOW, IS IN FACT LESS THAN IT WAS TEN YEARS AGO IN HONG KONG, AND THAT HONG KONG'S INTERNATIONAL RECORD IS EXTREMELY GOOD. A GREAT MANY PEOPLE HAVE SAID TO ME, IT IS SAFER FOR A GIRL OF SEVENTEEN TO BE ON THE STREETS OF HONG KONG THAN IT IS ON THE STREETS OF LONDON - AND HAVING A DAUGHTER MYSELF THAT IS QUITE IMPORTANT - BUT THERE IS A LOT THAT IS STILL VERY GOOD HERE. BUT OF COURSE, WHEN YOU GET A RISE IN TREND THERE IS A CONCERN. I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE SERVICES WILL WORK TOGETHER TO GET ON TOP OF THE PROBLEM.

WONG SAU-YING: APART FROM WHAT YOU'VE SAID - YOU WOULD RELAY THEIR VIEW TO GOVERNMENT - WHAT HAVE YOU ASSURED THEM?

LORD CAITHNESS: I HAVE TOLD THEM THAT I WOULD RELAY THEIR VIEWS DIRECTLY TO THE GOVERNOR BUT THIS IS A MATTER WHICH THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THEY MUST SORT OUT, AS HAS BEEN DONE IN THE PAST.

WONG SAU-YING: WELL BUT THIS IS OBVIOUSLY OF CONCERN HERE IN HONG KONG, THAT PEOPLE ARE WORRIED ABOUT, YOU KNOW, OUR PUBLIC ORDER, AND IF THE DISCIPLINARY FORCES THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE A UNITED ACTION TO GET WHAT THEY WANT THIS TIME, WHAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WANT TO DO OR CAN DO TO MAKE THE PLACE MORE GOVERNABLE, BEFORE IT'S HANDED BACK TO CHINA IN 1997?

LORD CAITHNESS: I'M SURE THAT THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT WILL WORK OUT A METHOD BY WHICH THIS TERRITORY CAN CONTINUE TO BE CONTROLLED, IN THE FORM OF LAW AND ORDER, AS IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST AND TO THE SATISFACTION OF EVERYBODY.

BERNARD FONG, SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST: LORD CAITHNESS, YOUR CONFIDENCE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN, WELL, ASSURING - REASSURING, BUT ARE YOU AWARE WHY THE POLICE WOULD APPROACH YOU, BECAUSE THEY COULD NOT SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES WITH HONG KONG GOVERNMENT, AND DO YOU KNOW WHY SO MANY HONG KONG GROUPS APPEAL TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE NCNA? I THINK THAT IS OBVIOUSLY LACK OF HONG KONG CONFIDENCE IN OUR GOVERNMENT, THERE IS A VACUUM OF LEADERSHIP IN OUR GOVERNMENT. THAT IS WHY THEY LOOK TO LONDON AND LOOK TO BEIJING.

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: THESE MATTERS HAVE BEEN SETTLED TRADITIONALLY BETWEEN HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AND THE SERVICES. IT IS VERY HELPFUL FOR ME WITH MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR HONG KONG TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF EVERYBODY AT FIRST HAND, FOR ME TO CONSIDER THOSE VIEWS WHICH I WILL DO. THEY HANDED ME A NUMBER OF LETTERS WHICH I WILL REPLY TO, HAVING CONSIDERED THEM, BUT IT IS FOR THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE THESE SERVICES.

BERNARD FONG: BUT THIS IS NOT TRADITIONAL TIMES, LORD CAITHNESS. THESE ARE THE TIMES OF ANXIETIES AND THAT IS WHY PEOPLE ARE MAKING APPEALS AND MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEIR FUTURE. WHAT I AM BASICALLY ASKING YOU IS THAT WILL THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DECIDE TO INTERVENE SHOULD PROBLEMS IN HONG KONG REALLY FESTER, AND THAT HONG KONG GOVERNMENT PROCESS IS UNABLE TO COPE WITH MOUNTING PROBLEMS?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK THAT IS AT THE MOMENT A VERY HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION.

BERNARD FONG: SIR, BUT MANY THINGS FOR HONG KONG ARE HYPOTHETICAL INCLUDING ---

LORD CAITHNESS: BUT AT THE MOMENT, THAT IS STILL A VERY HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION.

CHRIS GILLETTE, VISNEWS: SPEAKING OF HYPOTHETICAL IN LIGHT OF EVENTS OF JUNE 4 LAST YEAR, WHAT GIVES YOU THE IMPRESSION THAT THE BEIJING AUTHORITIES WILL TOLERATE AN ELECTORAL SYSTEM RIGHT ON THEIR DOORSTEP AFTER 1997?

LORD CAITHNESS: IT IS WRITTEN DOWN AND AGREED.

JOHN ANDREWS: GIVEN YOUR EAGERNESS AND THAT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO GO TO BEIJING, SHOULD WE TAKE IT THEN THAT YOU FEEL THE TIME HAS COME TO END ALL INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS AGAINST CHINA? AND IF SO, WHY?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK IT IS RIGHT TO DEVELOP OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA. YOU ARE RIGHT TO MENTION THE INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS, AND PARTICULARLY WE ARE CONSTRAINT TO SOME EXTENT BY WHAT WE CAN DO WITHIN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY BECAUSE THE COMMUNITY HAVE AGREED. THERE HAVE BEEN TWO SPECIAL EXEMPTIONS: ONE FOR PORTUGAL IN ITS FRIENDSHIP WITH MACAU, ONE FOR BRITAIN IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH HONG KONG, BUT WE WILL SEEK TO IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA AND I THINK THAT TWO POSITIVE FACTORS THAT HAVE EMERGED IN THE MONTH OF AUGUST: FIRSTLY, IS CHINA'S VERY CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE IN TRYING TO HELP REACH A SETTLEMENT OF CAMBODIA IN THE PERMANENT FIVE BRINGING PEOPLE TO JAKARTA AND TRYING TO GET A RESPONSIBLE SETTLEMENT THERE THAT CAN LEAD TO A SUPREME NATIONAL COUNCIL AND IN DUE COURSE ELECTIONS AND WITH REGARD TO THE GULF, TOO, I THINK IT HAS BEEN VERY POSITIVE - THE ROLE THAT CHINA HAS PLAYED.

/JOHN ANDREWS:

JOHN ANDREWS: BUT THE REASON, IF I REMEMBER, FOR THE SANCTIONS WAS CHINA'S INTERNAL BEHAVIOUR. ARE YOU THEN SAYING THAT CHINA'S EXTERNAL BEHAVIOUR COUNTS RATHER MORE?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK THAT CHINA'S, BOTH CHINA'S INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL BEHAVIOUR COUNT. I GAVE YOU TWO EXAMPLES OF ITS EXTERNAL BEHAVIOUR AND THERE HAVE BEEN CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS ON ITS INTERNAL BEHAVIOUR.

JOHN ANDREWS: I THINK ONE OF THE IMPROVEMENTS IS MENTIONED AT THE FRONT WITH SIXTY-FOUR PEOPLE EXECUTED IN GUANGZHOU.

LORD CAITHNESS: I KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO RAISE THAT! I HAVE ALREADY ANSWERED THAT ONE.

STEVE STINE, ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL: CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT ARE SOME OF THOSE INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF ISSUES ON WHICH CHINA HAS SHOWN A WILLINGNESS TO REFORM THAT WE WISH TO SEEK TO ENCOURAGE.

STEVE STINE: FOR INSTANCE?

LORD CAITHNESS: FOR INSTANCE, THE WAY IN WHICH SOME PEOPLE ARE BEING DEALT WITH, WHICH IS DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH BEFORE.

STEVE STINE: WHO ARE YOU REFERRING TO?

LORD CAITHNESS: I THINK YOU DON'T WANT TO DRAW ME ON THAT. I DON'T WANT TO BE ABSOLUTELY SPECIFIC AT THIS STAGE ON THAT.

PAUL HARRINGTON: LORD CAITHNESS, THERE IS A TEAM FROM BRITAIN AND FROM HONG KONG IN HANOI AT THE MOMENT TALKING WITH THE VIETNAMESE ABOUT THE BOAT PEOPLE PROBLEM. THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SEEMS TO BE STUDIOUSLY AVOIDING THE TERM MANDATORY REPATRIATION AND THE UNHCR OFFICIAL SAID THAT THAT WASN'T ON THE AGENDA, BUT SURELY FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S POINT OF VIEW AND FROM THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S POINT OF VIEW THERE WOULDN'T BE TOO MUCH POINT IN THAT MEETING UNLESS THE REASON WAS TO TRY TO GET AN AGREEMENT ON THE MANDATORY REPATRIATION OF THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE FROM HONG KONG. WOULD YOU LIKE COMMENT UPON THAT?

/LORD CAITHNESS:

LORD CAITHNESS: YES, THAT IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF WHERE BRITAIN HAS BEEN VERY MUCH TO THE FOREFRONT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE TO TRY AND PROGRESS ISSUES ON BEHALF OF HONG KONG. THIS IS ONE EXAMPLE WHERE THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT WE CAN MAKE PROGRESS IN TRYING TO EXPEDITE THE RETURN TO VIETNAM OF NON-REFUGEES. NOW, EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENS IN HANOI IN THE NEXT THREE OR SO DAYS I AM NOT GOING TO PREDICT. WHAT I HOPE IS THAT WE WILL GET A BETTER MODUS OPERENDI, A BETTER WAY OF OPERATING TO RETURN THE NON-REFUGEES TO VIETNAM THAN WE HAVE AT THE MOMENT.

PAUL HARRINGTON: DOES THIS MEAN RETURNING THEM AGAINST THEIR WILL?

LORD CAITHNESS: I AM NOT GOING TO SAY ANYTHING MORE BECAUSE THEY ARE IN DISCUSSIONS IN HONG KONG, SORRY - IN HANOI - AND OBVIOUSLY WE WANT THAT TO SUCCEED.

BERNARD FONG: LACK OF ABHORRENCE WITH CHINA'S RANDOM USE WITH THE DEATH PENALTY MAY BE REFLECTED IN MARGARET THATCHER'S STATEMENT MADE THIS MORNING, I BELIEVE, IN BUDAPEST. SHE ADVOCATED THE RETURN OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT TO BRITISH LAW, THIS VERY MORNING.

LORD CAITHNESS: THAT HAS BEEN VOTED ON IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES. I THINK THE VIEWS ARE WELL SET OUT BY MEMBERS IN THE COMMONS.

KEVIN LAU: ON THE VIETNAMESE BOAT PEOPLE'S SCREENING TEST HOW DO YOU COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE TEST IS FAIR, AFTER HAVING PAID A BRIEF VISIT TO A DETENTION CENTRE AND HAVING SEEN JUST A FEW TESTING EXAMPLES?

LORD CAITHNESS: BECAUSE THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT A LOT OF, IN FACT ALL OF THE WORK WITH THE REFUGEES AND NON-REFUGEES AND PARTICULARLY THE SCREENING PROCESS IS DONE IN CONJUNCTION, IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, AND WITH THE HELP OF THE UNHCR. NOW ANYBODY FROM THE UNHCR CAN GO INTO ANY OF THE SCREENING PROCESSES TO SIT IN, TO LISTEN TO WHAT IS GOING ON WITHOUT NOTICE. SO THAT THEY CAN GO IN AT ANY TIME AND ON TOP OF THAT ONE THEN HAS AN APPEAL SYSTEM. I THINK THAT THAT IS A FAIR SYSTEM.

KEVIN LAU: ARE YOU AWARE OF THE CRITICISMS OF THE TESTS, OR ARE YOU TOTALLY SATISFIED WITH THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT?

LORD CAITHNESS: I AM AWARE OF THE CRITICISMS, I AM AWARE OF THE PLUS POINTS THAT HAVE BEEN PUT TO ME TOO. I DO THINK IT IS A FAIR SYSTEM AND I DO THINK IT IS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT THAT THE UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVE FOR REFUGEES, HIGH COMMISSIONER'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR REFUGEES, IS INVOLVED AND IS ABLE TO GO IN AT ANY TIME TO ANY INTERVIEW IN THE SCREENING PROCESS.

/KEVIN LAU:

KEVIN LAU: WILL YOU SUGGEST ANY IMPROVEMENT?

LORD CAITHNESS: I AM NOT THE EXPERT ON THAT, BUT OBVIOUSLY I TALKED TO THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE UNHCR AND I HAVE TALKED TO VARIOUS PEOPLE BOTH IN THE CAMP AND OUTSIDE.

FANNY FUNG: AFTER THIS VISIT DO YOU THINK BRITAIN IS ALREADY DOING ENOUGH, OR WHAT MORE IS NEEDED TO BE DONE FOR HONG KONG AND IF SO IN WHAT AREAS THAT BRITAIN SHOULD DO MORE FOR HONG KONG?

LORD CAITHNESS: I WILL CONTINUE TO TELL EVERYBODY WHAT AN EXCELLENT PLACE HONG KONG IS, THAT THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES HERE, THAT PEOPLE DO HAVE GENUINE CONCERNS WHICH I NOW UNDERSTAND MORE FULLY, BUT IT IS STILL, IN MY VIEW, GOT A GOOD FUTURE, BUT IT IS SOMETHING THAT WE MUST WORK TOGETHER AND ON THE INTERNATIONAL SIDE I WILL SEEK TO MAKE SURE THAT HONG KONG'S VIEWS ARE WELL REPRESENTED IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS.

ANDREA MCLAUGHLIN, RTHK: I WANT TO PICK UP ON THAT SORT OF THEME. MRS EDWINA CURRIE, A BRITISH MP, WAS IN TOWN THIS WEEK AT THE SAME TIME AS YOU WERE AND SHE SAID IN A NUTSHELL THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE SHOULD BASICALLY STOP RELYING ON BRITAIN AND GET ON WITH THE JOB THEMSELVES AND SHE ALSO IMPLIED THAT BRITAIN HAD BASICALLY FORGOTTEN ABOUT HONG KONG WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT IT HAS NOW. WHAT CAN YOU SAY? WHAT CAN YOU OFFER THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG TO REASSURE THEM THAT THAT ISN'T TRUE?

LORD CAITHNESS: IF WE HAD FORGOTTEN ABOUT HONG KONG, FOR THE FIRST THING I WOULDN'T BE HERE ON A SIX DAY VISIT. AND HONG KONG IS GOING TO TAKE UP 50 PER CENT, PROBABLY 50 PER CENT OF MY TIME. WHEN I SPOKE TO FRANCIS MAUDE HE SAID HONG KONG TOOK UP ABOUT 50 PER CENT OF HIS TIME. IT IS GOING TO TAKE UP PROBABLY 50 PER CENT OF MY TIME TOO. THAT ISN'T ANY INDICATION AT ALL THAT BRITAIN IS FORGETTING HONG KONG, IN FACT, IT IS QUITE THE OPPOSITE. IT SHOWS HOW DETERMINED WE ARE TO FULFIL OUR OBLIGATIONS RIGHT THROUGH TO THE VERY END.

ANDREA MCLAUGHLIN: PRACTICALLY, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NEXT?

LORD CAITHNESS: I HAVE GOT A LOT TO THINK ABOUT, I'VE GOT A LOT TO DISCUSS WITH PEOPLE AND OBVIOUSLY TAKE FORWARD MANY OF THE POINTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE TO ME.

ANGUS FOSTER: HOW LONG TILL WE GET OUR NEXT MINISTER?

LORD CAITHNESS: THAT IS NOT IN MY HANDS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. NICE TO MEET YOU ALL.