



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1980

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1980

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DOMESTICALLY GENERATED INFLATION WILL EASE OFF

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT DOMESTICALLY GENERATED INFLATION WILL EASE OFF.

AT THE BUDGET DEBATE TODAY, SIR PHILIP SAID THOUGH CONSUMER PRICES HAD IN THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF THIS YEAR CONTINUED TO INCREASE RAPIDLY, THE SITUATION WAS LESS WORRYING THAN THE ONE HONG KONG FACED A YEAR AGO, EVEN THOUGH THE RATE OF INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICES WAS LESS THAN THAT BEING EXPERIENCED NOW.

+THE REASON IS THAT A BETTER BALANCE IS BEING ACHIEVED BETWEEN THE DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF DOMESTIC RESOURCES, PARTICULARLY SO IN THE LABOUR MARKET.+

FURTHERMORE, HE SAID, THE VERY RAPID GROWTH RATE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS EXPERIENCED IN 1979 WAS UNLIKELY TO BE SUSTAINED THROUGH 1980 AND ACTIVITY IN THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO DOMESTIC INFLATION THIS YEAR AS IT DID IN 1979.

SIR PHILIP SAID WHILST THE EASING OF THE PRESSURE OF DEMAND ON DOMESTIC RESOURCES WAS TAKING TIME TO WORK THROUGH THE SYSTEM TO DAMPEN DOWN DOMESTICALLY GENERATED INFLATION, WORLD PRICES HAD BEEN ACCELERATING AND WERE EXERCISING AN ADDITIONAL UNFAVOURABLE INFLUENCE ON PRICES IN HONG KONG.

HE AGREED THAT THERE IS NOT MUCH HONG KONG COULD DO IN THE FACE OF IMPORTED INFLATION.

HOWEVER, HE POINTED OUT THAT MOVEMENTS IN THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR IN THE PAST NINE MONTHS HAVE BEEN USEFUL IN DAMPENING THE RATE OF INCREASE IN IMPORT PRICES WITHOUT SERIOUSLY HAMPERING EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS.

TURNING TO OTHER POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS, SIR PHILIP SAID HE DID NOT THINK THERE WAS A NEED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER FINDING WAYS TO DISCOURAGE THE COMMUNITY'S DESIRE TO CONSUME AND, AT THE SAME TIME ENCOURAGE SAVING, BECAUSE HE DID NOT EXPECT THE GROWTH RATE OF TOTAL FINAL DEMAND THIS YEAR TO BE OUT OF LINE WITH THE GROWTH RATE OF GDP NOR DID HE EXPECT THE GROWTH RATE OF PRIVATE CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE TO BE OUT OF LINE WITH THE GROWTH RATE OF REAL INCOME THIS YEAR AND LAST YEAR.

IN FACT, HE SAID, THE GROWTH RATE OF PRIVATE CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE IN 1979, AT 7.7 PER CENT WAS ACTUALLY LESS THAN WHAT ONE WOULD EXPECT IT TO BE, GIVEN THE GROWTH RATE OF REAL INCOME IN 1978 AND 1979 OF 9.2 PER CENT AND 11.1 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

HOWEVER, HE COULD NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A SUDDEN ACCELERATION IN THE GROWTH RATE OF PRIVATE CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE THIS YEAR AND FOR THIS AND OTHER REASONS, HE ASSURED COUNCIL THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE COURSE OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY CLOSELY.

/TURNING TO

TURNING TO EXTERNAL TRADE, SIR PHILIP SAID IN THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF THIS YEAR TOTAL EXPORTS CONTINUED TO GROW FASTER THAN IMPORTS BY A SIGNIFICANT MARGIN, SO THAT THE VISIBLE TRADE GAP CONTINUED TO NARROW. THE GROWTH RATE IN REAL TERMS OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS DURING THESE TWO MONTHS WAS 25 PER CENT COMPARED WITH A 19 PER CENT GROWTH RATE IN IMPORTS.

BUT HE EXPECTED THAT THERE WOULD BE A REVERSAL OF RECENT TRENDS IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE. +I COULD, OF COURSE HAPPILY BE PROVED WRONG. IN FACT, IF THE GROWTH RATE OF IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES IS TAKEN AS A LEADING INDICATOR OF EXPORT PERFORMANCE, THE PROSPECTS FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS SHOULD BE VERY REASONABLE- FOR, ALTHOUGH THE GROWTH RATE OF IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURERS HAS SLOWED DOWN IN RECENT MONTHS, THE INCREASES ARE STILL HIGH IN ABSOLUTE TERMS. +

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NO NEED TO REVISE PERSONAL TAXATION ALLOWANCE PROPOSALS

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE SAID TODAY HE SAW NO NEED TO +FINE TUNE+ HIS PERSONAL TAXATION ALLOWANCE PROPOSALS AT PRESENT, BUT HE PROMISED TO REVIEW THE ALLOWANCES PERIODICALLY AND REVISE THEM TO THE EXTENT THAT OUR BUDGETARY SITUATION PERMITS TO AVOID FISCAL DRAG AND TO KEEP THOSE ON INCOMES AT THE LOWER END OF THE SCALE OUT OF THE TAX NET.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE, SIR PHILIP SAID THE NEW ALLOWANCES WOULD BENEFIT 315 000 PERSONAL TAXPAYERS TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTENT AND KEEP ANOTHER 60 000 WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE CAUGHT, OUT OF THE TAX NET.

HE SAID THE NEW ALLOWANCES WERE PITCHED AT A LEVEL WHICH HAD REGARD TO THEIR IMPACT ON THE EFFECTIVE RATES OF TAX AT VARIOUS INCOME LEVELS AND THE CONSEQUENTIAL COST TO THE REVENUE.

HE GAVE THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES TO ILLUSTRATE THE LOW EFFECTIVE TAX RATE:

- * A SINGLE MAN ON AN INCOME OF \$20 000 WILL NOW PAY \$250, AN EFFECTIVE TAX RATE OF 1.25 PER CENT
- * A SINGLE MAN ON \$25 000 WITH ONE DEPENDENT PARENT WILL PAY \$250, AN EFFECTIVE RATE OF ONE PER CENT
- * A MARRIED MAN WITH TWO CHILDREN ON \$44 000 WILL PAY \$250, AN EFFECTIVE RATE OF 0.57 PER CENT AND
- * A MARRIED MAN WITH TWO CHILDREN AND TWO DEPENDENT PARENTS ON \$54 000 WILL ALSO PAY \$250, AN EFFECTIVE RATE OF 0.46 PER CENT.

/SIR PHILIP

SIR PHILIP ALSO COMMENTED ON SUGGESTIONS THAT PERSONAL ALLOWANCES SHOULD HAVE BEEN INCREASED TO \$25 000 FOR A SINGLE PERSON- TO \$50 000 FOR A MARRIED MAN AND THAT THE CHILD ALLOWANCES SHOULD HAVE BEEN RAISED TO \$8 000 FOR THE FIRST CHILD, \$7 000 FOR THE SECOND CHILD AND \$5 000 FOR THE THIRD CHILD.

THOSE WHO HAD ARGUED ALONG THESE LINES, HE SAID, SIMPLY DO NOT REALISE HOW EXPENSIVE THEIR IDEAS WOULD BE: IT WOULD COST NO LESS THAN \$1 380 MILLION IN 1980-81 (OR 76 PER CENT OF THE ESTIMATED YIELD FROM PERSONAL TAXATION BEFORE ALLOWING FOR ANY CONCESSIONS), COMPARED WITH THE COST OF HIS PACKAGE AT \$426 MILLION (OR 24 PER CENT OF THE ESTIMATED YIELD FROM PERSONAL TAXATION BEFORE ALLOWING FOR THE CONCESSIONS).

REPLYING TO OTHER POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS IN THE DEBATE, SIR PHILIP SAID HE KNEW OF NO EVIDENCE THAT THE ABSENCE OF SEPARATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM OR THE ABOLITION OF THE WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE IN 1973, HAD LED TO WOMEN, SKILLED OR UNSKILLED, LEAVING THE LABOUR FORCE.

OF A TOTAL OF OVER 289 000 DEMAND NOTES FOR SALARIES TAX ISSUED IN 1979-80 ONLY ABOUT 56 000 INVOLVED WORKING WIVES AND, OF THESE, ABOUT 48 500 WOULD HAVE DERIVED SOME BENEFIT FROM A WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE. THE REMAINING 7 500 WOULD NOT HAVE BENEFITED BECAUSE THEY WERE ALREADY ON THE STANDARD RATE OF TAX. IN PROPORTIONATE TERMS, THESE FIGURES ARE NOT MATERIALLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE FOR 1972-73, THE LAST YEAR FOR WHICH A WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE WAS GRANTED.

ON HIS NEW CHILD ALLOWANCES, SIR PHILIP SAID THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE FISCAL SYSTEM ENCOURAGED PARENTS TO HAVE LARGE FAMILIES. HE NOTED THAT IN 1979-80, ALLOWANCES WERE GRANTED UNDER SALARIES TAX FOR A TOTAL OF 134 000 CHILDREN OF WHOM 67 900 WERE FIRST CHILDREN AND 41 600 SECOND CHILDREN WHILST ONLY 17 100 WERE GRANTED FOR A THIRD CHILD. THEREAFTER, THE FIGURES DROP DRAMATICALLY AND, FOR SIX TO NINE CHILDREN, A TOTAL OF ONLY 456 ALLOWANCES WERE GRANTED AT A COST TO THE REVENUE OF SOME \$120 000 ONLY.

REFERRING TO REMARKS ON THE AGE CRITERION FOR DEPENDENT PARENT ALLOWANCE, SIR PHILIP SAID IT MIGHT WELL BE THAT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR, AND IN SOME COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS, 55 IS THE OFFICIAL RETIREMENT AGE, BUT INCREASINGLY, STAFF, BOTH IN THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE SECTORS CONTINUE WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS FOR MUCH LONGER.

+AND THOSE WHO DO RETIRE OFTEN DO SO IN ORDER TO TAKE UP OTHER EMPLOYMENT. I BELIEVE THAT THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE CONTINUE IN EMPLOYMENT WELL BEYOND THE AGE OF 55 AND IT IS AS WELL THAT THEY DO BECAUSE HONG KONG NEEDS THEIR EXPERIENCE.+

THUS HE BELIEVED THAT THE AGE CRITERION SET AT 60 OR BELOW 60 WHERE THE PARENT IS ELIGIBLE FOR A DISABILITY ALLOWANCE REFLECTS MORE ACCURATELY THE AGE AT WHICH PEOPLE RETIRE IN HONG KONG.

FIRM POLICY TO ACHIEVE GREATER DECENTRALISATION IN
CIVIL SERVICE

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THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JACK CATER SAYS IT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRM POLICY TO ENCOURAGE AND TO ASSIST GREATER DEVOLUTION IN THE CIVIL SERVICE, NOT ONLY FROM THE CENTRE TO DEPARTMENTS, BUT ALSO WITHIN DEPARTMENTS FROM THEIR HEADQUARTERS TO THE REGIONAL LEVEL.

SPEAKING AT THE BUDGET DEBATE TODAY, SIR JACK SAID WHILE IT WAS NECESSARY TO INVOLVE MORE DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY BY INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS IN DEVOLUTION, IT MUST IN ANY WAY LEAD TO A LESSENING OF OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PART OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

FOR DEVOLUTION COULD ONLY MAKE SENSE IF THE CENTRE EFFECTIVELY MONITORED THE PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENTS TO ENSURE THAT WORK WAS CARRIED OUT EFFECTIVELY AND THAT PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES WERE ACHIEVED ON TIME.

HE SAID SOME MATTERS MUST CLEARLY CONTINUE TO BE DECIDED AT THE CENTRE- FOR EXAMPLE NEW LEGISLATION- IMPORTANT QUESTIONS OF POLICY OR MAJOR PUBLIC WORKS. OTHER MATTERS NEED TO BE SUBJECT TO SOME DEGREE OF CONTROL FROM THE CENTRE IN ORDER TO ENSURE UNIFORMITY- FOR EXAMPLE CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS, PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND SO ON.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE CONCEPTS OF DEVOLUTION, FLEXIBILITY, DISCRETION AND MONITORING ARE NOWADAYS ESSENTIAL WORKING TOOLS FOR THE PROGRESSIVE ADMINISTRATOR, AND HIS COMMITTEE WOULD BE GIVING INCREASING ATTENTION TO THEIR IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH THE CIVIL SERVICE.

TURNING TO RECREATION AND SPORTS, HE ASSURED THAT ADEQUATE SITES HAD BEEN RESERVED BOTH IN THE URBAN AREAS AND IN THE NT NEW TOWNS FOR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUCH AS SPORTS GROUNDS, INDOOR GAMES HALL AND FACILITIES FOR OTHER ACTIVE RECREATIONAL PURPOSES.

+HOWEVER, IT MUST BE POINTED OUT THAT, WHILST WE ALL CAN READILY AGREE THAT NEW FACILITIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED, IT IS NECESSARY TOO TO ENSURE THAT OUR EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ARE BEING USED TO THE MAXIMUM,+ HE SAID NOTING THAT A WORKING PARTY ON THE COUNCIL FOR RECREATION AND SPORT ON +MAXIMISATION OF THE USE OF FACILITIES FOR RECREATION+ UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF MR F.K. HU IS CURRENTLY LOOKING INTO THIS QUESTION.

SIR JACK ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE TASK OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED RECREATION AND CULTURE DIVISION IS TO ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT'S OWN ACTIVITIES IN THESE TWO AREAS ARE EFFECTIVELY CO-ORDINATED, AND TO EXAMINE, THROUGH THE DRAWING UP OF THE PROGRAMME PLAN ON MUSIC AND THE PERFORMING ARTS, QUESTIONS OF DIRECTION, CO-ORDINATION, MANPOWER AND FINANCE, IN SOME DETAIL.

HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALREADY COMMITTED TO PROMOTING THE ARTS, NOT ONLY THROUGH THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS DIVISION OF THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE MUSIC OFFICE, BUT ALSO THROUGH ANNUAL SUBVENTIONS TO THE HONG KONG PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY AND THE HONG KONG ARTS FESTIVAL. CONSIDERATION IS ALSO CURRENTLY BEING GIVEN TO CONTINUING TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC.

REFERRING TO THE CALL FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE LEGAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE SCHEMES, SIR JACK SAID THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER IN THE NEAR FUTURE A REPORT CONTAINING EXPANSION PROPOSALS BY THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE WHICH SUPERVISES THE TWO SCHEMES ON BEHALF OF THE LAW SOCIETY.

HE NOTED THAT THE PROVISION FOR THESE TWO SCHEMES HAS GROWN IN 18 MONTHS FROM \$1.5 MILLION FOR SERVICES AT THREE MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND TWO ADVICE CENTRES TO \$3.6 MILLION FOR SERVICES AT FOUR MAGISTRATES' COURTS AND FIVE ADVICE CENTRES.

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EVASION RATIO OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION KEPT AT A GREATLY REDUCED LEVEL

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HONG KONG IS A MUCH MORE DIFFICULT PLACE TO ENTER ILLEGALLY THAN IT WAS AND THE EVASION RATIO - THE PROPORTION OF THOSE ARRESTED COMPARED WITH THOSE WHO SUCCEED IN EVADING ARREST HAS BEEN KEPT AT A GREATLY REDUCED LEVEL OF ONE TO ZERO POINT NINE (1:0.9) IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON LEWIS DAVIES SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR DAVIES SAID HE WAS RELIEVED TO NOTE THAT SINCE THE HIGH RATE OF INFLOW STARTED MARCH WAS THE FIRST MONTH TO SEE A REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF ARRESTS COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING MONTH IN THE PRECEDING YEAR. A TOTAL OF 4 700 ARRESTS WERE MADE IN MARCH COMPARED WITH 6 600 IN MARCH LAST YEAR. +NEVERTHELESS THE FIGURES REMAIN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE SECURITY FORCES CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A HIGH DEGREE OF WATCHFULNESS AND A CONSTANT HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SYSTEM OF PATROLS ON LAND, SEA AND AIR.

+THEY INVOLVE MANY ELEMENTS AND UNITS OF THE ROYAL HONG KONG POLICE, HM FORCES AND THE AUXILIARY SERVICES WHOSE DEPLOYMENT, OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES AND COMMAND AND CONTROL ARE ALL KEPT UNDER CLOSE SCRUTINY AT ALL LEVELS TO ENSURE MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS,+ HE SAID.

MR DAVIES ALSO POINTED OUT THAT REPRESENTATIONS CONTINUE TO BE MADE ON THE LEVEL OF ILLEGAL AND LEGAL IMMIGRATION AND THE COUNTER MEASURES WHICH THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES THEMSELVES ARE TAKING ARE OF THE GREATEST POSSIBLE IMPORTANCE.

+WE KNOW OF AND SEE PATROLLING OPERATIONS ON THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE BORDER AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE NUMBERS APPREHENDED ON THE CHINESE SIDE ARE GREATER THAN THOSE WHO CROSS THE BORDER ILLEGALLY.

+THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW CRIMINAL CODE IN CHINA UNDER WHICH LEAVING CHINA ILLEGALLY IS MADE AN OFFENCE IS A FURTHER DETERRENT- SO ARE RECENT CONVICTIONS AND THE IMPOSITION OF LONG SENTENCES OF IMPRISONMENT OF PERSONS ENGAGED IN ORGANISING ILLEGAL EMIGRATION FROM CHINA,+ HE SAID.

/MR DAVIES

MR DAVIES REVEALED THAT PROVISIONS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN THE ESTIMATES OF THE NEW FINANCIAL YEAR TO:

- * ENABLE THE POLICE TO RECRUIT 900 MORE OFFICERS TO ASSIST THE FORCE TO MEET ITS COMMITMENTS IN THE EXPANDING URBAN AREAS, MAINTAIN ITS CONTRIBUTION ON THE BORDER AND ON THE FLANKS AS WELL AS AT SEA-
- * MEET HONG KONG'S SHARE OF THE COST OF THE EXISTING GARRISON OF FOUR INFANTRY BATTALIONS, THE RAF WESSEX SQUADRON AND THE FIVE RN PATROL CRAFT AS WELL AS AN INSTALMENT OF HONG KONG'S SHARE OF THE COST OF THEIR REPLACEMENT-
- * PROVIDE FOR REINFORCEMENTS BY ADDITIONAL RIFLE COMPANIES - AND THIS MONTH THERE ARE FIVE SUCH COMPANIES HERE - A SMALL RM RAIDING SQUADRON, TWO HOVERCRAFT, A FAST PATROL BOAT AND ADDITIONAL HELICOPTERS-
- * FINANCE THE COST OF NINE NEW SECTOR PATROL CRAFT AND CREWS FOR THE MARINE POLICE- THE FIRST THREE LAUNCHES WILL BE AVAILABLE BY EARLY NEXT MONTH-
- * RE-EQUIP THE AUXILIARY AIR FORCE WITH THREE DAUPHIN TWIN-ENGINED HELICOPTERS TO REPLACE THE ALLOUETTES, AND
- * CONSTRUCT AN ILLUMINATED CHAIN LINK BORDER FENCE 22 KMS LONG AND FIVE METRES HIGH FROM SHA TAU KOK TO LOK MA CHAU. THIS WILL BE COMPLETED BY JUNE AND WILL BE REINFORCED BY WATCH TOWERS WHERE NECESSARY. PLANS TO EXTEND THE FENCE THE FURTHER 13 KMS TO TSIM BEI TSUI ARE ALSO WELL ADVANCED.

MR DAVIES SAID THE TWO MAIN PRIORITIES FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OPERATIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION OPERATIONS AT THIS STAGE WILL BE THE MARINE POLICE AND THE RE-EQUIPMENT OF THE AUXILIARY AIR FORCE WITH BIGGER HELICOPTERS.

+ACCORDINGLY, PROPOSALS ARE BEING CONSIDERED FOR A SUBSTANTIAL REPLACEMENT AND EXPANSION PROGRAMME FOR THE MARINE POLICE FLEET. IN ADDITION URGENT STUDIES ARE BEING PURSUED TO PROVIDE IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND RADAR. DAUPHIN HELICOPTERS WILL BE IN SERVICE IN AUGUST.+

AT THE SAME TIME, HE SAID, A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE GARRISON'S SIZE AND COMPOSITION WAS IN PROGRESS AND DISCUSSIONS ON ITS EXPANSION AND ITS COST ARE PROCEEDING WITH THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE.

ON THE CALL FOR RECONSIDERING THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY UNDER WHICH ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO EVADE ARREST ARE AT PRESENT PERMITTED TO REMAIN IN HONG KONG, MR DAVIES SAID THE ADVANTAGES OF ANY CHANGE IN POLICY MUST BE WEIGHED AGAINST THE POSSIBLE DISADVANTAGES. +THESE WOULD INCLUDE THE EFFECT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION ON THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THE POSSIBLE NEED TO TRANSFER MAN POWER AND RESOURCES FROM OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT FUNCTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW POLICY AND THE EFFECTS OF A CHANGE OF POLICY ON LAW AND ORDER GENERALLY.

+A NEW POLICY INVOLVING THE RETURN OF EVADERS RAISES MAJOR ISSUES WHICH ARE ALREADY BEING DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC. OBVIOUSLY THIS POLICY, LIKE ALL OTHER IMMIGRATION POLICIES AND OPERATION DEPLOYMENTS AND PLANS, IS KEPT UNDER REVIEW BY THE ADMINISTRATION,+ HE SAID.

CS ORDERS LAND DEVELOPMENT, AND PLANNING REVIEW

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THE CHIEF SECRETARY HAS ORDERED A REVIEW OF THE WHOLE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S LAND DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING MACHINERY, INCLUDING ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE MAKING PROPOSALS TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL LATER THIS YEAR.

ANNOUNCING THIS AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE SECRETARY FOR ENVIRONMENT, THE HON DEREK JONES SAID A SENIOR OFFICER WITH CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN LAND ADMINISTRATION WILL BE ASSISTING IN THE REVIEW THIS SUMMER. THE VIEWS OF UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS WILL BE SOUGHT ON THE ISSUES INVOLVED.

MR JONES SAID WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOW BEGINNING TO FOCUS ON WAS NOT JUST LAND AS SUCH, BUT THE TOTAL PATTERN OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND THE VARIOUS OPTIONS AND SEQUENCES AVAILABLE.

+NATURALLY, AS LAND IS HONG KONG'S SCARCEST RESOURCE, LAND DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION MUST PLAY A CRUCIAL PART IN THIS PROCESS AND A UNIFIED LANDS DEPARTMENT IS ONE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE OPTIONS OPEN AS A MEANS OF IMPROVING THE MACHINERY FOR GETTING THINGS DONE,+ HE SAID.

+BUT WHAT WE HAVE TO LOOK AT IS OUR TOTAL MACHINERY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN TERMS OF SETTING OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSING THE MEANS AVAILABLE FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT OVER VARIOUS PERIODS OF TIME. IT IS THIS OVERALL MACHINERY WHICH IS NOW IN NEED OF A CAREFUL STUDY.+

ON LAND STATISTICS, MR JONES SAID THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAND PRODUCTION WILL PRODUCE A GLOSSARY AND A STANDARD PRESENTATION FOR FUTURE LAND STATISTICS.

REFERRING TO A SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SELL LAND TO SMALL INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATIVES BY PRIVATE TREATY AT FAIR MARKET PRICES, MR JONES SAID THERE WAS AT PRESENT A GOOD SUPPLY OF INDUSTRIAL ACCOMMODATION ON THE MARKET, INCLUDING PREMISES FOR THE SMALL INDUSTRIALISTS.

HE DID NOT THINK THAT THE SUGGESTION, WOULD ASSIST VERY GREATLY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR INDUSTRY ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS.

MR JONES ASSURED MEMBERS, IN SPEAKING ON ROADS, THAT ALL PROJECTS IN THE ROAD PROGRAMME WILL PROCEED IN THE ORDER OF PRIORITY LAID DOWN FOR THEM AND THAT THIS WILL EVENTUALLY INCLUDE, AMONG OTHERS, THE WHOLE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES CIRCULAR ROAD LINKING ALL THE NEW TOWNS.

+IN CONSIDERING THE SIZE OF OUR INVESTMENT IN ROADS, HOWEVER, WE MUST NOT FORGET ALSO THE TREMENDOUS COMMITMENT THAT IS BEING MADE TO A MODERN, HIGH CAPACITY AND INTERLOCKING RAIL NETWORK -- AND I EMPHASISE THE WORD 'INTERLOCKING',+ HE SAID.

MR JONES SAID THE OPENING OF THE MODIFIED INITIAL SYSTEM OF THE MTR HAD ALREADY SHOWN WHAT THIS COULD DO TO IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT. THE TSUEN WAN EXTENSION WAS NOW BEING BUILT JUST AS RAPIDLY AND, EQUALLY IMPORTANT, WAS THE MODERNISATION AND ELECTRIFICATION OF THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY.

/+THIS WILL

+THIS WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO SERVE THE MILLION OR SO PEOPLE WHO WILL BE LIVING IN THE EASTERN NEW TERRITORIES IN THE LATE 80'S AND THE INTERCHANGE STATION AT KOWLOON TONG WILL PLAY A KEY ROLE IN INTEGRATING THE TWO RAILWAYS INTO ONE EFFECTIVE NETWORK,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO BELIEVED THAT A RAIL SYSTEM ALONG THE NORTH SHORE OF HONG KONG ISLAND AND THE LINKING INTO THE MTR AT CENTRAL WAS EQUALLY IMPERATIVE AND URGENT.

WHETHER THIS SHOULD TAKE THE FORM OF A SHORT ISLAND LINE OF THE MTR, RUNNING SOME EIGHT KILOMETRES FROM WESTERN MARKET TO TAIKOO SHING, OR A SO-CALLED LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT SYSTEM, RUNNING 14 KILOMETRES FROM WHITTY STREET TO CHAI WAN, HAD STILL TO BE DECIDED, MR JONES SAID.

BUT HE WAS CONVINCED IN HIS OWN MIND THAT ONE OR THE OTHER RAIL SYSTEM WILL HAVE TO BE BUILT AND THE QUICKER THE BETTER.

ON BUSES, MR JONES SAID ONE CONDITION MUST BE MET BEFORE REALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN SERVICES CAN TAKE PLACE, AND THIS CONCERNED ROAD CONGESTION.

THERE WAS NO DOUBT, HE SAID, THAT ROAD CONGESTION HAD CONSIDERABLY WORSENERED IN MANY LOCATIONS SINCE 1977 AND THAT IT WAS CONTINUING TO GET WORSE AND SLOWING DOWN THE MOVEMENT OF BUSES AND MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO MEET SCHEDULES.

+THE RESULT IS THAT MORE BUSES ARE MAKING FEWER JOURNEYS. THIS MEANS THAT, TO SPEED UP THE FLOW OF BUSES AND THUS INCREASE THEIR CARRYING CAPACITY, CONSIDERATION WILL HAVE TO BE GIVEN TO THE ADOPTION OF MORE BUS PRIORITY MEASURES, INCLUDING BUS ONLY LANES, EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF WORSENING CONDITIONS FOR PRIVATE CARS AND TAXIS,+ HE SAID.

OTHERWISE, MR JONES POINTED OUT, WE WOULD BE IN DANGER OF A VICIOUS CIRCLE OF MORE BUSES, SLOWER JOURNEY TIMES, YET MORE BUSES, HIGHER FARES AND SO ON.

MR JONES SAID HE ACCEPTED THE PREDICTION THAT PRIVATE CARS WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN 1979 THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE CARS REGISTERED INCREASED BY 20 000 AND IN RECENT MONTHS THEY HAVE BEEN GROWING BY AS MUCH AS 2 000 A MONTH.

+WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO TOLERATE THIS RATE OF INCREASE WHICH IS WAY AHEAD OF ANY REALISTIC ASSESSMENT OF OUR ABILITY TO EXPAND THE ROAD NETWORK,+ HE SAID.

+CERTAINLY, NO AMOUNT OF ROAD BUILDING AND NO AMOUNT OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES COULD ACCOMMODATE THIS RATE OF GROWTH FOR LONG WITHOUT CATASTROPHIC AND DEBILITATING TRAFFIC JAMS ALL DAY LONG.+

HE SAID THE AVERAGE GROWTH IN THE LENGTH OF OUR ROAD NETWORK WAS ABOUT TWO PER CENT A YEAR AND, EVEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ROAD WIDENING AND OTHER QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS, IT COULD NOT BE MORE THAN THREE PER CENT.

SO EVEN A DOUBLING OF REAL EXPENDITURE ON ROADS, WHICH COULD NOT BE ACCOMMODATED, EITHER IN TERMS OF PHYSICAL CONSTRUCTION OR IN THE USE OF RESOURCES, WOULD FALL FAR SHORT OF MEETING THE PROBLEM, HE SAID.

+IN MY VIEW, THEREFORE, WE CANNOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY WITH UNRESTRAINED GROWTH IN VEHICLE NUMBERS AND IN VEHICLE USAGE IF WE ARE TO CONTINUE TO KEEP PEOPLE AND GOODS MOVING ON THE ROADS AND WE WILL NEED TO ADDRESS OURSELVES SERIOUSLY TO THIS PROBLEM BEFORE VERY LONG,+ MR JONES ADDED.

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SIZE OF CIVIL SERVICE NOT EXCESSIVE * * * * *

THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE HON MARTIN ROWLANDS, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE PRESENT SIZE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE WAS NOT EXCESSIVE AND THE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT WOULD BE IMPROVED BY STRENGTHENING THE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT LEVELS.

+THAT IN TURN WOULD REDUCE THE RATE AT WHICH THE CIVIL SERVICE WOULD OTHERWISE NEED TO GROW IN FUTURE,+ MR ROWLANDS SAID AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MR ROWLANDS SAID THAT HAVING LISTENED TO MEMBERS' SPEECHES IN THE DEBATE, IT OCCURRED TO HIM THAT IN MUCH OF WHAT WAS SET OUT TO DO, IT WAS NOT ECONOMIC OR FISCAL CONSTRAINTS WHICH WERE LIMITING THE CIVIL SERVICE'S ACHIEVEMENT, BUT RATHER THE SHORTAGE OF KEY STAFF IN THE UPPER LEVELS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

+THIS PROBLEM WAS RECOGNISED A FEW YEARS AGO IN RELATION TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE CLASS AND IT WAS DECIDED TO ADOPT A DELIBERATE POLICY OF RECRUITMENT TO MEET LIKELY FUTURE DEMANDS,+ HE SAID.

+THAT POLICY IS NOW BEGINNING TO BEAR FRUIT: THE ADMINISTRATIVE CLASS WILL HAVE GROWN FROM 200 OFFICERS IN 1977 TO OVER 300 BY THE END OF 1980, SO ENABLING US TO MEET A VARIETY OF FRESH STAFF COMMITMENTS WHICH COULD NOT HAVE BEEN FORESEEN TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO,+ HE ADDED.

MR ROWLANDS SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOW CONSIDERING WHETHER TO ADOPT A SIMILAR RECRUITMENT POLICY FOR THE EXECUTIVE CLASS, WHOSE 1 000 MEMBERS FULFILLED A VITAL ROLE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE CIVIL SERVICE, AS WELL AS IN SEVERAL KEY POLICY AND OPERATIONAL AREAS.

+AS AN IMMEDIATE STEP I AM PROPOSING THIS YEAR TO OFFER APPOINTMENT TO AN ADDITIONAL 60 OR SO UNIVERSITY GRADUATES SO THAT WE MAY BE BETTER ABLE TO MEET FUTURE COMMITMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN CITY DISTRICT WORK AND STAFF MANAGEMENT,+ MR ROWLANDS SAID.

MR ROWLANDS SAID HE SUSPECTED THAT THERE WERE OTHER AREAS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE WHERE THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF RECRUITING TO FILL EXISTING VACANCIES IN THE LOWER RANKS WAS A PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF +UNDER-MANAGEMENT+ AND +OVER-STRETCH+.

THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW TRYING TO IDENTIFY THESE AREAS, WORKING THROUGH THE NEW DEPARTMENTAL ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEES AND IT WOULD THEN HAVE TO WORK OUT SOLUTIONS APPROPRIATE TO EACH CASE, MR ROWLANDS SAID.

MR ROWLANDS ALSO NOTED THAT THE CIVIL SERVICE HAD MADE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO EMPLOY THE DISABLED AND FOR SOME TIME THE CIVIL SERVICE HAD BEEN GIVING DISABLED PERSONS A DEGREE OF PREFERENCE FOR JOBS OVER OTHER APPLICANTS.

+RECENTLY, WE HAVE GONE ONE STEP FURTHER AND AUTHORISED THE APPOINTMENT OF DISABLED PERSONS EVEN WHEN THEY ARE UNABLE TO PERFORM ALL THE DUTIES OF A PARTICULAR RANK,+ MR ROWLANDS SAID.

ALTOGETHER THE CIVIL SERVICE NOW EMPLOYS 660 REGISTERED DISABLED PERSONS IN ADDITION TO MANY OTHERS WITH MINOR DISABILITIES.

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PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME RECEIVES TOP PRIORITY * * * * *

GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO HOUSING IS EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME RECEIVES MORE THAN ANY OTHER PROGRAMME IN TERMS OF LAND AND MONEY, THE SECRETARY FOR HOUSING, THE HON ALAN SCOTT SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY HIS UNOFFICIAL COLLEAGUES AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE, MR SCOTT SAID THE 10-YEAR PROGRAMME WHICH BEGAN IN 1973 HAD NO TERMINAL DATE: RATHER, THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMMITTED TO A GIVEN RATE OF PRODUCTION FOR A FOUR-YEAR PERIOD, WHICH WAS ROLLED FORWARD ANNUALLY.

HE SAID, +WE MUST LOOK EVEN FURTHER FORWARD, AND DURING RECENT MONTHS I HAVE BEEN LEADING A GROUP STUDYING THE DEMAND FOR HOUSING IN THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE SECTORS, THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMME AND ESTIMATED PRIVATE SECTOR PRODUCTION.+

+THE FINDINGS OF THIS GROUP WILL BE CORRELATED WITH LAND AND OTHER RELEVANT POLICY AREAS TO PRODUCE A REVIEW OF HOUSING WITH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE END OF THIS DECADE AND, MORE TENTATIVELY, BEYOND IT.+

ON ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING, MR SCOTT SAID 24 500 NEW APPLICATIONS WERE RECEIVED IN 1979-80. DURING THE YEAR 10 000 FLATS WERE ALLOCATED TO APPLICANTS COMING UP TO THE TOP OF THE WAITING LIST BUT 6 000 OTHER FAMILIES FROM THE LIST WERE ALSO REHOUSED THROUGH BEING IN OTHER CATEGORIES, AND 9 000 APPLICATIONS WERE FOUND INELIGIBLE ON INVESTIGATION.

+FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS, THEREFORE, THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES ON THE WAITING LIST WAS ACTUALLY, EVEN IF marginally, REDUCED. THIS IS A STEP FORWARD, AND A MOVEMENT WHICH WE SHALL ACCELERATE,+ MR SCOTT SAID.

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+THE AVERAGE WAITING TIME HAS IMPROVED SLIGHTLY TO SEVEN YEARS, OR TO FIVE YEARS FOR FAMILIES WHO ACCEPT HOUSING IN TUEN MUN,+ HE ADDED.

ON HOME OWNERSHIP, MR SCOTT SAID HE WOULD AGREE THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE SHOULD BE DONE TO ASSIST FAMILIES TO BUY THEIR OWN HOMES. +IN THIS CONNECTION,+ HE SAID, +GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY COMMITTED TO A PROGRAMME OF OVER 40 000 FLATS BY 1985/86 UNDER THE HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME FOR FAMILIES WITH MONTHLY INCOMES UP TO \$5 000.+

TURNING TO HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY, MR SCOTT SAID THAT WHILE THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WAS TO PROVIDE HOMES FOR FAMILIES, THE AUTHORITY WAS VERY MUCH AWARE OF THE HOUSING PROBLEMS WHICH MANY ELDERLY SINGLE PEOPLE AND COUPLES FACED, AND WAS COMMITTED TO AN EXPANDING HOSTEL PROGRAMME WHICH BY 1986 WOULD PROVIDE 5 000 PLACES.

+SINGLE ELDERLY PERSONS MAY ALSO ENTER PUBLIC HOUSING THROUGH THE COMPASSIONATE QUOTA, ON RECOMMENDATION BY THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE OR THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES= AND THROUGH A SCHEME INTRODUCED LAST SEPTEMBER, GROUPS OF THREE OR MORE UNRELATED ELDERLY PERSONS MAY APPLY FOR HOUSING THROUGH THE WAITING LIST,+ MR SCOTT ADDED.

AS REGARDS TEMPORARY HOUSING, MR SCOTT SAID HE SHARED THE CONCERN ABOUT SITES FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING AND THE WORRY WHETHER THE \$36.5 MILLION INCLUDED IN THE ESTIMATES FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING PURPOSES WOULD BE ENOUGH.

+THE SHORTAGE OF PUBLIC HOUSING, BOTH PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY, IN THE URBAN AREA MEANS INEVITABLY THAT INCREASING NUMBERS OF PEOPLE ELIGIBLE ONLY FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING ARE HAVING TO MOVE TO THE NEW TOWN AREAS,+ MR SCOTT SAID.

THERE ARE 97 000 PERSON SPACES IN EXISTING TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS AND IT IS ESTIMATED THAT BY 1985 DEMAND WILL HAVE INCREASED TO 134 000.

MR SCOTT SAID THE \$36.5 MILLION PROVIDED FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING FOR 1980-81 WOULD BE USED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS AND TO REPLACE EXISTING UNITS WHICH HAD TO BE GIVEN UP AS A RESULT OF DEVELOPMENT.

+DURING THE YEAR, FIVE NEW AREAS ARE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED WITH A CAPACITY OF 7 800 PERSONS,+ MR SCOTT SAID, ADDING THAT SEPARATE PROVISION OF \$14.76 MILLION WAS MADE FOR MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF TEMPORARY HOUSING AND TEMPORARY INDUSTRIAL AREAS.

+MY STAFF IS CONTINUALLY SEARCHING FOR ADDITIONAL SITES FOR FUTURE THA'S, AND AN INTER-DEPARTMENTAL GROUP WAS RECENTLY SET UP TO HELP THEM,+ MR SCOTT SAID.

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GOVERNMENT POLICY IN MONITORING AND IMPROVING SOCIAL SERVICES
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THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THE HON E.P. HO, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) OUTLINED THE GOVERNMENT POLICY IN MONITORING AND IMPROVING SOCIAL SERVICES.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR HO SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENTS OF ITS POLICY IN MAJOR AREAS OF SOCIAL SERVICES; ALL PUBLISHED AFTER PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND DEBATE.

+IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION THE 1974 WHITE PAPER SET OUT A BLUEPRINT FOR THE PROVISION OF THREE YEARS OF JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL, WHICH HAS NOW BEEN ACHIEVED, WHILE THE 1978 WHITE PAPER COVERED THE DEVELOPMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION.

+THE GREEN PAPER ON PRIMARY EDUCATION AND PRE-PRIMARY SERVICES WHICH HAS BEEN FINALISED AND IS IN THE COURSE OF BEING PRINTED WILL COMPLETE THE PICTURE WHEN, AFTER ANY NECESSARY AMENDMENT IN THE LIGHT OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION, IT BECOMES A WHITE PAPER.+

TO MAKE DOUBLY SURE THAT THE PLANS ARE ON THE RIGHT LINES AND BEFORE THEY HAVE PROGRESSED TOO FAR, MR HO SAID THE GOVERNMENT ENVISAGED AN OVERALL REVIEW AS ADVISED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, TO LOOK AT THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AS A WHOLE. +DISCUSSIONS ARE IN PROGRESS ON THE MODALITIES FOR THE ASSEMBLY OF A SUITABLE TEAM FOR THIS TASK,+ MR HO SAID.

ON MEDICAL SERVICES AND REHABILITATION, MR HO SAID, THE GOVERNMENT HAD PUBLISHED THE 1974 AND 1977 WHITE PAPERS RESPECTIVELY, WHILE SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY WAS SET OUT IN THE WHITE PAPER PUBLISHED IN APRIL LAST YEAR.

MR HO ADDED THAT FOR DETAILED PLANNING PURPOSES, THE GOVERNMENT HAD A SERIES OF PROGRAMME PLANS AND OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS, WHICH TURNED THE BASIC POLICIES INTO PRACTICAL PROGRAMMES SETTING OUT ESTIMATES OF DEMAND FOR SERVICES, PLANNING RATIOS, BUILDING PROGRAMMES, STAFF TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS AND ALL THE MULTIPLICITY OF ELEMENTS WHICH WERE NECESSARY TO ENSURE THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S STATED POLICIES WERE IMPLEMENTED.

MR HO POINTED OUT THAT THESE PLANS AND PROGRAMMES WERE SUBJECT TO A VIRTUALLY CONTINUOUS PROCESS OF MONITORING AND REVIEW. +IN ALL THESE PROCESSES THE LATEST RELEVANT DATA ARE REVIEWED, PROGRESS CHECKED, AND RELATIVE PRIORITIES ADJUSTED,+ HE SAID.

ON THE PROGRESS OF THE 1978 WHITE PAPER ON SENIOR SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION, MR HO SAID THE PAPER LINKED THE DEVELOPMENT OF RETRIEVAL ADULT EDUCATION COURSES WITH ASSISTING VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS TO COMPLEMENT AND SUPPLEMENT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S OWN COURSES THROUGH A SCHEME OF SUBVENTION= AND IN THIS CONNECTION THE POSSIBLE USE OF BORROWED SCHOOL PREMISES BY THESE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AFTER NORMAL SCHOOL HOURS SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED.

/BEFORE FINALISING

BEFORE FINALISING ITS OWN PROPOSALS FOR A LIST OF RETRIEVAL COURSES WHICH COULD QUALIFY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, MR HO SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT INVITED VOLUNTARY AGENCIES KNOWN TO BE INTERESTED IN ADULT EDUCATION TO SUBMIT THEIR PROPOSALS FOR CONSIDERATION AND PRESENT INDICATIONS WERE THAT 16 VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WOULD BE RESPONDING.

+WHEN THESE RETURNS HAVE BEEN ANALYSED THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL PREPARE PROPOSALS FOR SUBMISSION TO FINANCE COMMITTEE WHICH WILL, NATURALLY, ALSO HAVE REGARD TO THE CRITERIA SET OUT IN THE 1978 WHITE PAPER,+ HE SAID.

MR HO ALSO THANKED REV THE HON JOYCE BENNETT FOR HER TRIBUTE TO THE UNIFIED CODE OF AID WHICH ENSURED ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS IN ALL OF THE AIDED SCHOOLS.

HOWEVER, MR HO POINTED OUT THAT AS THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS WERE MORE OR LESS HOMOGENEOUS ENTITIES, A CODE OF AID WAS FEASIBLE, AND THIS NEED NOT, AND INDEED COULD NOT, BE THE ANSWER IN OTHER AREAS WHERE THE SERVICES PROVIDED, OR THE INSTITUTIONS PROVIDING THEM, WERE MORE HETEROGENEOUS.

MR HO SAID THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THAT MORE SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FINANCING SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES BEING PROVIDED BY THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE REQUIRED, IN ORDER TO GIVE AN ASSURANCE OF ADEQUATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE ORGANISATIONS PROVIDING THEM, AND FOR GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY.

+A GOVERNMENT WORKING PARTY HAS BEEN EXAMINING WAYS AND MEANS OF ACHIEVING THIS, AND I EXPECT TO RECEIVE ITS REPORT SHORTLY. THERE WILL THEN BE FULL CONSULTATION WITH THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR BEFORE ANY FINAL DECISIONS ARE TAKEN.+

REPLYING TO A SUGGESTION BY DR THE HON HARRY FANG THAT CARE AND ATTENTION HOMES FOR THE ELDERLY SHOULD BE MADE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT RATHER THAN THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, MR HO SAID THAT FOLLOWING A RECENT INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF ADMISSION CRITERIA AND OF EXISTING CASES, IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT WHERE THE DISTINCTION NEEDED TO BE DRAWN WAS BETWEEN THOSE CASES WHO REQUIRED ONLY PERSONAL CARE AND MINIMUM NURSING CARE, AND THOSE WHO REQUIRED A GREATER NURSING CARE BUT NOT REGULAR MEDICAL ATTENTION.

THOSE IN THE FORMER CATEGORY WOULD IN FUTURE BE ACCOMMODATED IN HOMES FOR THE AGED WHICH ARE AND WILL REMAIN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT WHILE THE LATTER CATEGORY WILL BE PLACED IN INFIRMARIES OR NURSING HOMES TO BE RUN BY OR SUBVENTED THROUGH THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, MR HO SAID.

ON THE QUESTION OF DELAY IN THE CREATION OF CERTAIN POSTS NEEDED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT TO TAKE OVER FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND TO EXPAND THE SELECTIVE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE, MR HO SAID A PAPER SEEKING THE CREATION OF NEW POSTS FOR THE SELECTIVE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE HAD BEEN CIRCULATED TO MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE AND SUBJECT TO THEIR ENDORSEMENT THIS WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON APRIL 30 THIS YEAR.

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PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME PROCEDURES TO BE REVISED

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY IS CONSIDERING A REVISION OF PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME PROCEDURES WITH A VIEW TO LINKING THE TIMING OF UPGRADINGS TO CATEGORY A TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS, WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME INHIBITING THE PLANNING PROCESS.

THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE SAID THE NEW PROCEDURES WILL BE AIMED AT REDUCING THE CATEGORY A COMMITMENTS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME TO A MANAGEABLE LEVEL MORE IN LINE WITH THE PERMISSIBLE GROWTH RATE OF PUBLIC WORKS NON-RECURRENT EXPENDITURE.

AT THE SAME TIME, THIS WOULD ENSURE THAT, ONCE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AUTHORISED THE INCLUSION OF A PROJECT IN CATEGORY A, IT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME.

+BUT UNTIL THE VERY LARGE BACKLOG OF COMMITMENTS IS CLEARED, CONSIDERABLE RESTRAINT WILL BE NECESSARY,+ SIR PHILIP SAID. +THE NUMBER OF NEW PROJECTS THAT CAN BE PROPOSED FOR INCLUSION IN CATEGORY A MUST BE LIMITED STRICTLY TO THOSE WHICH, FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, CANNOT BE DEFERRED.+

SINCE 1976-77, HE POINTED OUT, THE FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR STARTING NEW PROJECTS HAVE AVERAGED JUST OVER EIGHT PER CENT OF TOTAL EXPENDITURE UNDER THE PUBLIC WORKS NON-RECURRENT HEADS.

HE EXPECTED THAT IT WOULD TAKE AT LEAST FOUR YEARS TO REDUCE THE OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT OF \$15 200 MILLION TO A MANAGEABLE SIZE. THIS MEANS THAT EACH CATEGORY A PROJECT NOT YET STARTED WILL HAVE TO BE EXAMINED VERY CAREFULLY TO ENSURE THAT ITS PRIORITY IN RELATION TO OTHER ITEMS IN THE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN CORRECTLY ASSESSED.

SIR PHILIP NOTED THAT IN RECENT YEARS, THE TOTAL VALUE OF ALL PROJECTS IN CATEGORY A OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME HAD GROWN FAR FASTER THAN THE ACCEPTABLE, AND PERMITTED, GROWTH RATE OF PUBLIC WORKS NON-RECURRENT EXPENDITURE.

UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, HE EXPLAINED, THE AUTHORITY GIVEN TO INCLUDE A PROJECT IN CATEGORY A WOULD IMPLY AN INTENTION TO IMPLEMENT THAT PROJECT WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME FRAME AND, UNTIL ABOUT 1977, THIS INTENTION WAS USUALLY FULFILLED.

+SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF PROJECTS HAVE BEEN UPGRADED TO CATEGORY A, REFLECTING NOT ONLY THE INCREASING SIZE OF THE PROGRAMME, BUT ALSO THE IMPROVED PLANNING CAPABILITY OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,+ SIR PHILIP SAID.

THE SHEER NUMBER, AND PARTICULARLY THE PRESENCE OF VERY EXPENSIVE PROJECTS, MEANS THAT ALL PROJECTS CAN NO LONGER BE UNDERTAKEN WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME FRAME AFTER BEING INCLUDED IN CATEGORY A, HE SAID.

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LAND SALE AND PRODUCTION FORECASTS ARE ACCURATE

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE VARIOUS ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND FORECASTS OF LAND SALES AND LAND PRODUCTIONS IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH HAD BEEN CALCULATED ON A CONSISTENT BASIS AND WOULD PROVE TO BE ACCURATE.

REPLYING TO REMARKS FROM THE HON DAVID NEWBIGGING ABOUT THE SHORTFALL BETWEEN THE BUDGET SPEECH FORECASTS OF LANDSALES IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS AND THE ACTUAL SALES, SIR PHILIP SAID IT WAS WRONG TO COMPARE THE ESTIMATES OF LAND PRODUCTION IN HIS BUDGET SPEECH WHICH ARE EXPLICITLY AND DELIBERATELY EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF GROSS AREAS WITH THOSE IN THE REPORTS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAND PRODUCTION, WHICH ARE EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF NET AREAS, EXCEPT FOR HOUSING ESTATES AND INCLUDE LAND RELEASED FROM TEMPORARY USES.

HE ALSO SAID MR NEWBIGGING WAS IN ERROR IN SUPPOSING THAT THE SHORTFALL IN 1977-78 WAS 62 PER CENT BY COMPARING LAND SALES WITH THE FORECAST OF LAND SALES PLUS PRIVATE TREATY GRANTS. +HOWEVER, HIS ERROR IS MY FAULT FOR I DID NOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN SALES AND PRIVATE TREATY GRANTS IN THE 1977 BUDGET SPEECH.+

SIR PHILIP ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE REASONS FOR THE SHORTFALLS IN THESE FOUR YEARS WERE NUMEROUS. HOWEVER HE SAID A LAND SALES TARGET COMMITTEE WAS ESTABLISHED LAST YEAR TO MONITOR SALES IN RELATION TO THE SIX-MONTHLY PROGRAMME AND HE HOPED THAT IN FUTURE, +WE SHALL AT LEAST BE WARNED IN GOOD TIME IF SHORTFALLS ARE LIKELY.+

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\$3 MILLION PUBLICITY PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY

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A \$3 MILLION FIVE-YEAR PUBLICITY PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE INDUSTRIAL SAFETY WAS BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT, THE ACTING COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON J.C.A. HAMMOND TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR HAMMOND WAS REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED AT PREVIOUS SESSIONS BY THE HON HO KAM-FAI AND THE HON WONG PO-YAN.

THE FIVE-YEAR PUBLICITY PROGRAMME COVERED THE PERIOD FROM 1978/79 TO 1982/83, THE COMMISSIONER SAID.

PLANS FOR THIS YEAR'S PUBLICITY PROGRAMME INCLUDED STAGING AN EXHIBITION ON CONSTRUCTION SAFETY, PRODUCING FILMS AND TELEVISION MESSAGES FOR BOTH PUBLICITY AND TRAINING PURPOSES, PRODUCING SAFETY POSTERS, AND CONDUCTING SPECIAL SAFETY CAMPAIGNS.

THE PROGRAMME WAS IN ADDITION TO THE REGULAR EFFORTS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S PUBLICITY UNIT, WHICH CONDUCTED A CONTINUAL PROGRAMME OF PRESS INTERVIEWS, RADIO AND TV DISCUSSIONS, AND PRESS RELEASES.

/IN REPLY

IN REPLY TO MR WONG, THE COMMISSIONER POINTED OUT THAT SOME LOCAL EXHIBITIONS AND OTHER FORMS OF PROMOTION HAD ALREADY BEEN ORGANISED. FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1979, A MOBILE UNIT STAGING PUPPET SHOWS ON INDUSTRIAL SAFETY MADE 44 APPEARANCES IN 15 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT HONG KONG.

ALSO, BOOKLETS ON INDUSTRIAL SAFETY WERE AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE AT THE DEPARTMENT'S DISTRICT OFFICES AND SAFETY POSTERS WERE SENT TO FACTORIES AND DISPLAYED IN INDUSTRIAL AREAS, AT MTR STATIONS AND IN CITY DISTRICT OFFICES.

THE COMMISSIONER AGREED WITH DR HO THAT AT THE WORKPLACE LEVEL SAFETY COMMITTEES FULLY SUPPORTED BY BOTH EMPLOYERS AND WORKERS WERE AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF REDUCING INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT ENCOURAGED THE SETTING UP OF SUCH COMMITTEES, AND THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE WAS VERY WILLING TO OFFER ADVICE AND HELP IN THIS RESPECT.

IN FACT, MR HAMMOND POINTED OUT, MANY LARGE INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS ALREADY HAD SUCH COMMITTEES AND THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE KEPT IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH THEM.

MR HAMMOND SUPPORTED MR WONG'S CALL TO EMPLOYERS TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE TRAINING OF THEIR WORKERS IN INDUSTRIAL SAFETY.

HE URGED EMPLOYERS AND TRADE ORGANISATIONS TO MAKE MORE USE OF THE VARIOUS SAFETY TRAINING COURSES OFFERED FREE OF CHARGE TO INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES BY THE DEPARTMENT'S INDUSTRIAL SAFETY TRAINING CENTRE.

LAST YEAR THE CENTRE CONDUCTED 180 COURSES FOR 6 200 PEOPLE, GAVE 62 SAFETY TALKS TO STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRES AND SCHOOLS AND ORGANISED 25 SAFETY COURSES FOR APPRENTICES.

NOTING THAT IN THE LONGER TERM INDUSTRIAL SAFETY DEPENDS VERY MUCH ON EDUCATION, MR HAMMOND SAID THE GENERAL CONCEPT OF SAFETY WAS INCLUDED IN THE SYLLABUSES OF SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS.

IN THE TEACHING OF ALL SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFE WORKING PRACTICES IN LABORATORIES AND WORKSHOPS WAS STRESSED.

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES WERE ALSO EMPHASISED IN ALL THE COURSES OF PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS, THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND THE POLYTECHNIC, AND INDUSTRIAL SAFETY WAS INCLUDED IN THE SYLLABUSES OF APPROPRIATE FULL-TIME COURSES.

MR HAMMOND SAID HE WAS GLAD TO SEE THE SURGE OF INTEREST IN THE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY WHICH HAD BEEN SHOWN BY SEVERAL WORKERS' AND EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS RECENTLY.

+I HOPE VERY MUCH THAT THIS INTEREST WILL BE MAINTAINED AND THAT IT WILL LEAD TO AN EARLY IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION. WE IN THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL CERTAINLY DO OUR BEST TO ENSURE THAT THIS DOES HAPPEN,+ HE ADDED.

MR HAMMOND ALSO SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS CONDUCTING A GENERAL REVIEW OF THE PENALTIES FOR BREACHES OF INDUSTRIAL SAFETY LEGISLATION.

AFTER THE REVIEW, THE DEPARTMENT WAS LIKELY TO PROPOSE INCREASES IN SOME OF THE PENALTIES AFTER THIS YEAR.

WITH REGARD TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, THE COMMISSIONER ASSURED DR HO THAT HIS DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN PURSUING A VIGOROUS POLICY TO ENSURE THAT BOTH MANAGEMENT AND LABOUR WERE PROPERLY OBSERVING INDUSTRIAL SAFETY REGULATIONS.

LAST YEAR THE FACTORY INSPECTORATE CONDUCTED 38 851 VISITS AND INSPECTIONS TO INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS AND CARRIED OUT 3 784 INVESTIGATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP VISITS IN CONNECTION WITH INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS. THESE RESULTED IN 3 397 PROSECUTIONS.

PLANS WERE BEING IMPLEMENTED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF FACTORY INSPECTORS FROM 140 AT PRESENT TO 250 BY 1984, HE SAID.

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STEPS TO MINIMISE EFFECTS OF POPULATION PRESSURE ON MEDICAL SERVICE

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THE SUDDEN AND DRAMATIC INCREASE IN POPULATION DURING 1979 HAS HAD A CRUCIAL IMPACT ON THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES, PARTICULARLY MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, WHICH MAY NECESSITATE THE RESETTING OF DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND TARGETS.

THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR K.L. THONG, SAID THIS AT THE RESUMED DEBATE OF THE APPROPRIATIONS BILL 1980 AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON.

HOWEVER, HE SAID, GOOD PROGRESS HAS BEEN MAINTAINED IN THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN SPITE OF THIS UNFAVOURABLE FACTOR.

DR THONG POINTED OUT THAT THE INCREASE IN POPULATION HAS BEEN MAINTAINED AT AROUND 80 000 PER ANNUM FOR ALMOST A WHOLE DECADE FROM 1970 TO 1978, BUT IN 1979 IT JUMPED TO 300 000 -- FOUR TIMES THE NORMAL POPULATION GROWTH.

THIS WAS REFLECTED DIRECTLY IN THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE OF 13 PER CENT IN HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS AS COMPARED TO 5.6 PER CENT IN 1978, HE SAID.

+SUCH POPULATION INCREASE,+ SAID DR THONG, +MUST BE UNSETTLING TO ANY PLANNERS FOR SERVICES AND FACILITIES.+

+THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, BY NATURE OF ITS WORK, IS AMONG THOSE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN THE FOREFRONT IN BEARING THE BRUNT OF THIS SUDDEN AND MASSIVE POPULATION ONSLAUGHT,+ HE ADDED.

DR THONG ASSURED THAT STEPS HAVE BEEN AND ARE BEING TAKEN TO MINIMISE THE EFFECTS OF SUCH ACUTE POPULATION PRESSURE ON THE SERVICE.

/+IN OUR

+IN OUR PLANS FOR MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEVELOPMENT, CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENTS BOTH IN THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF THE SERVICE HAVE BEEN RECOMMENDED AND ACCEPTED BY THE MEDICAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE, AND WHEN THESE PLANS COME TO FRUITION HONG KONG WILL HAVE A MEDICAL SERVICE THAT WE CAN BE PROUD OF,+ HE SAID.

THE DIRECTOR SAID 1980 WILL BE ANOTHER EXCITING YEAR WHICH WILL SEE THE COMPLETION OF SEVERAL MAJOR PROJECTS -- THE SOUTH KWAI CHUNG HOSPITAL (PSYCHIATRIC WING OF THE PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL), AND THE DENTAL TEACHING HOSPITAL, TO BE FOLLOWED LATER BY THE SHATIN HOSPITAL WHICH WILL BECOME THE REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOR EAST NEW TERRITORIES.

ON THE SUBJECT OF SUBVENTED HOSPITALS, DR THONG SAID THERE WAS DEFINITELY NO DELIBERATE POLICY ON THE PART OF GOVERNMENT TO DOWNGRADE THEIR STATUS.

+SUBVENTED HOSPITALS HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES IN HONG KONG AS THE DEPARTMENT AND SUBVENTED HOSPITALS ARE JOINED TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP TO PROVIDE THESE SERVICES,+ HE SAID.

DR THONG SAID HE HAD PROPOSED THAT THE SERVICES OF SOME SUBVENTED HOSPITALS SHOULD BE UPGRADED, WHENEVER POSSIBLE, SO AS TO ENABLE THEM TO ASSUME THE ROLE OF ACUTE GENERAL HOSPITALS.

+THIS POLICY HAS THE ENDORSEMENT OF THE MDAC AND THE NECESSARY STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO TRANSLATE POLICY INTO CONCRETE ACTION,+ HE SAID.

ON THE COMMUNITY NURSING SERVICE, THE DIRECTOR SAID THAT IN VIEW OF ITS SUCCESS AND POPULARITY, PLANS WERE IN HAND TO EXTEND THIS SERVICE FROM THE URBAN AREAS TO THE NEW TERRITORIES.

THERE ARE AT PRESENT 100 COMMUNITY NURSES IN THE SERVICE, AND IT IS ENVISAGED THAT AN ADDITIONAL 75 NURSES WILL BE TRAINED EACH YEAR WITHIN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS TO COPE WITH THE EXPANSION.

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NOT GOVT'S POLICY TO RUN BUSINESSES

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IT HAS NEVER BEEN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO +RUN BUSINESSES+ UNLESS CIRCUMSTANCES SO DICTATE.

NEITHER DID HE ACCEPT THAT THE GOVERNMENT RAN ITS BUSINESSES BADLY. +THE FACT IS THAT THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE BUREAUCRACY CANNOT EASILY BE RECONCILED WITH THE RELATIVELY SIMPLISTIC, ALMOST MECHANISTIC, DISCIPLINE IMPOSED ON THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES BY PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTING CONCEPTS,+ HE SAID IN THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE.

/+BY CONTRAST,.....

+BY CONTRAST, IF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS CONSCIOUSLY, ALBEIT PRAGMATICALLY, DEFINED THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND SOUGHT TO CONTAIN OUR ACTIVITIES WITHIN THEM, WE HAVE NOT HESITATED TO ASSOCIATE PRIVATE INITIATIVE AND EFFORT WITH THE PROVISION AND OPERATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND, IN 1980-81, \$2 214 MILLION WILL BE DISBURSED TO SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS IN THE EDUCATION, MEDICAL AND SOCIAL WELFARE FIELDS, REPRESENTING NEARLY 50 PER CENT OF ESTIMATED TOTAL EXPENDITURE FROM PUBLIC FUNDS IN THESE FIELDS.+

SIR PHILIP SAID IT MUST BE ACCEPTED THAT THE ROLE OF SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS IN OUR NETWORK OF EDUCATIONAL, MEDICAL AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES WAS, FOR HISTORICAL REASONS, AN EVOLVING ONE.

+I AM SURE THESE ORGANISATIONS VALUE, AND WOULD NOT LIGHTLY ACCEPT AN EROSION OF, THEIR INDEPENDENCE, + HE SAID.

IT FOLLOWED, HE SAID, AS A COROLLARY, THAT THERE WAS NO NECESSARY OBLIGATION ON THE GENERAL TAXPAYER TO FINANCE THEIR INSTITUTIONS IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY, AND TO THE SAME EXTENT, AS GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS AND THIS APPLIED EVEN TO THOSE INSTITUTIONS SUBVENTED ON A DEFICIENCY GRANT BASIS.

+THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WE TAKE AN INFLEXIBLE VIEW AS TO THE RELEVANCE OF OUR PRESENT RULES OF SUBVENTION FOR, CLEARLY, AS THE ACTIVITIES OF SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS ARE PROGRESSIVELY RELATED TO THE TARGETS SET BY OUR PROGRAMME PLANS THERE MUST BE CERTAIN IMPLICATIONS FOR THOSE RULES IF THE ORGANISATIONS ARE PROPERLY TO PLAY THEIR ASSIGNED ROLE, + SIR PHILIP ADDED.

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TIEN'S EXHIBITION CENTRE PROPOSAL TO BE STUDIED

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A PROPOSAL BY THE HON FRANCIS TIEN FOR A VIABLE EXHIBITION CENTRE WILL BE STUDIED BY DEPARTMENTS EXAMINING THE REPORT OF THE CONSULTANTS APPOINTED TO CONSIDER THE VIABILITY OF AN EXHIBITION CENTRE.

THEIR TASK, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PHILIP HADDONCAVE TOLD THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE, WAS TO PUT FORWARD A VIEW ON WHAT TO DO, WHY, HOW AND WHEN AND THEN THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD SEEK THE ADVICE OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

+IF ALL THIS TAKES A LITTLE LONGER THAN MR TIEN WOULD LIKE, I CAN ONLY SAY THAT WE ARE TALKING IN TERMS OF THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN A SITUATION WHERE THE LIKELIHOOD OF VIABILITY IS NOT SELF-EVIDENT AND, IF IT WAS, I AM SURE THAT PRIVATE ENTERPRISE — IN ASSOCIATION PERHAPS WITH THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, WHICH FREQUENTLY ASSERTS 'CASE PROVEN' — WOULD HAVE PRODUCED AN EXHIBITION CENTRE LONG AGO, + SIR PHILIP SAID.

MR TIEN'S PROPOSAL FOR A VIABLE EXHIBITION CENTRE ENVISAGES A PUBLIC CORPORATION, MTRC-STYLE, TO CONSTRUCT AND MANAGE THE CENTRE.

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MORE NEW POST OFFICES IN PIPELINE

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TWENTY-SIX NEW POST OFFICES WILL BE OPENED IN HONG KONG OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS TO KEEP PACE WITH HONG KONG'S DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, MR A.C. HEATHCOTE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE OI MAN POST OFFICE, MR HEATHCOTE SAID MORE THAN HALF OF THESE POST OFFICES WILL BE LOCATED IN HOUSING AUTHORITY ESTATES, AND OTHERS IN AREAS WHERE THE EXISTING FACILITIES NO LONGER MEET REQUIREMENTS.

+ALMOST EVERYBODY USES THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE POST OFFICE AND I BELIEVE THAT ADEQUATE POSTAL FACILITIES SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE IN ALL IMPORTANT COMMUNITY CENTRES SUCH AS MAJOR HOUSING ESTATES,+ MR HEATHCOTE SAID.

HE ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WAS A PARTICULAR NEED TO EXPAND POSTAL RESOURCES IN CERTAIN URBAN AREAS, SUCH AS KWUN TONG AND SHAU KEI WAN WHERE THE POST OFFICE IS HARD PRESSED TO PROVIDE EFFICIENT SERVICES.

MR HEATHCOTE ASSURED THAT THE POST OFFICE WOULD DO ALL IT COULD TO ENSURE THAT ITS PLANS PROCEED ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE SO THAT SATISFACTORY POSTAL SERVICES CAN BE MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT HONG KONG.

THE OPENING OF THE OI MAN POST OFFICE BROUGHT TO 76 THE NUMBER OF POST OFFICES IN OPERATION.

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RURAL COMMITTEE: KEY ORGANISATION IN NT

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RURAL COMMITTEES ARE KEY ORGANISATIONS FOR ALL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT WORK IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. THIS IS PARTICULARLY THE CASE WHEN THE LOCAL PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CUT OFF FROM MODERNISING INFLUENCES THROUGH THE RELATIVE ISOLATION CAUSED BY LIVING ON AN ISLAND.

TSUEN WAN TOWN MANAGER AND DISTRICT OFFICER, MR. JAMES HAYES, SAID THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN OFFICIATING AT A CEREMONY INAUGURATING THE 17TH TERM OF TSING YI RURAL COMMITTEE.

+RURAL COMMITTEES CAN DO MUCH TO EASE THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCAL PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

+IN SO DOING, THEY CAN ALSO ASSIST GOVERNMENT THROUGH HELPING TO ENSURE THAT WORKS PROGRAMMES ARE REALISTIC AND CAN PROCEED ON SCHEDULE. IN FACT, CLOSE LIAISON BETWEEN THE TWO ARE ESSENTIAL.

+ON THE OTHER HAND, THE RURAL COMMITTEES CAN TAKE AN INTEREST IN THE NEW COMMUNITY, ACQUAINTING NEW COMERS AND INCOMING AGENCIES WITH THE LOCAL SITUATION AND GETTING THEM TO WORK TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

+THIS THE TSING YI RURAL COMMITTEE HAS ALWAYS SOUGHT TO DO,+ HE SAID.

TURNING TO HOUSING, MR. HAYES SAID THE DISTRICT OFFICE AND THE NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT OFFICE HAD SET ASIDE AN AREA FOR VILLAGE EXPANSION.

+THIS TOGETHER WITH THE RESITE VILLAGE CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME SHOULD PROVIDE SUFFICIENT HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT RECREATION FACILITIES WERE DETERMINED IN ACCORDANCE WITH OVERALL PLANNING STANDARDS AND WOULD BE PROVIDED STEP BY STEP IN THE COURSE OF DEVELOPMENT.

ON THE LIVING ENVIRONMENT, HE SAID THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS CONCERNED WITH CLEANSING AND ALL ASPECTS OF PUBLIC HEALTH WOULD EXTEND THEIR SERVICES TO THE NEWLY DEVELOPED AREAS AS A MATTER OF COURSE.

+THEY WILL NEED THE HELP AND CO-OPERATION OF LOCAL PEOPLE, AND IT WILL BE THE TASK OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS, TOGETHER WITH THE PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE AND LIAISON STAFF OF THE DISTRICT OFFICE, TO BRING FORWARD ALL MATTERS REQUIRING ATTENTION,+ HE SAID.

HE ASSURED LOCAL RESIDENTS THAT THE NECESSARY GOVERNMENT SERVICES WOULD BE AVAILABLE ON THE ISLAND AND THAT THE DISTRICT OFFICE WISHED TO KEEP UNNECESSARY PROBLEMS TO A MINIMUM.

HE NOTED THAT WITH THE NEW LARGE POPULATION OF THE FUTURE TSING YI THERE WAS INEVITABLY A NEED FOR MORE RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND NECESSARILY A DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS AND SECTIONS OF DEPARTMENTS FOR DEALING WITH MATTERS.

+BUT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING SMOOTH AND PROMPT ACTION WHEN REQUIRED IS A JOINT BURDEN AND WILL REST ON CO-OPERATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENTS AND THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN ASSOCIATION WITH LOCAL BODIES.+

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IRD REMINDS EMPLOYERS TO SUPPLY PARTICULARS OF EMPLOYEES * * * * *

EMPLOYERS ARE REMINDED OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPLY THE INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT PARTICULARS OF THEIR EMPLOYEES, ESPECIALLY THEIR IDENTITY CARD NUMBERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF TAX ASSESSMENT.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID, +MANY EMPLOYERS FORGOT TO FILL IN THE IDENTITY CARD NUMBERS OF THEIR EMPLOYEES WHEN THEY RETURNED THE SPECIFIED FORMS TO THIS DEPARTMENT.+

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THIS WOULD NOT ONLY DELAY THE PROCESSING OF THESE RETURNS BUT ALSO CAUSE INCONVENIENCE TO BOTH SIDES BECAUSE WE WOULD HAVE TO RETURN FORMS WITH INCOMPLETE INFORMATION TO THE EMPLOYERS.

/+IDENTITY CARD

+IDENTITY CARD NUMBERS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR IDENTIFYING TAXPAYERS. THEY ARE ALSO REQUIRED FOR THE COMING COMPUTERISED PROGRAMME,+ HE SAID.

THE SPOKESMAN ALSO REMINDED EMPLOYERS THAT FORMS SENT TO THEM ON APRIL 1 SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE DEPARTMENT BEFORE THE END OF THIS MONTH.

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CHINA PROHIBITS IMPORT BY POST OF PIG PRODUCTS

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THE POST OFFICE ANNOUNCES TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THE CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES OF CHINA HAVE ISSUED AN ORDER PROHIBITING THE IMPORT BY POST OF CERTAIN PIG PRODUCTS.

THESE PRODUCTS INCLUDE PIG MEAT (RAW, SMOKED, DRIED OR SALTED), RAW PIG SKIN, PIG BRISTLES AND SAUSAGES, INCLUDING CHINESE SAUSAGES.

THE ORDER TAKES EFFECT IMMEDIATELY.

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DSNT OPENS SALVATION ARMY PHOTO EXHIBITION

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DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR AUGUSTINE CHUI KAM, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) OPENED A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION ORGANISED BY THE SALVATION ARMY TO COMMEMORATE ITS 50 YEARS OF SERVICE IN HONG KONG.

THE EXHIBITION IS HELD IN YUEN LONG TOWN HALL.

MR CHUI SAID THE SALVATION ARMY HAS ACHIEVED +MAGNIFICENT RESULTS+ SINCE IT STARTED WORK IN HONG KONG +LITERALLY FROM SCRATCH+ HALF A CENTURY AGO.

+THE PAST 50 YEARS SAW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LARGE NUMBERS OF SALVATION ARMY RUN CORPS FOR RELIGIOUS WORSHIP, EDUCATION SERVICES, YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WELFARE WORK, HOMES AND SOCIAL CENTRES FOR THE ELDERLY, NURSERIES AND CRECHES AND MEDICAL CLINICS PROVIDING COMFORT, CARE AND ENLIGHTENMENT TO TENS OF THOUSANDS OF HONG KONG RESIDENTS OFTEN IN AREAS OF THE GREATEST NEED,+ HE SAID.

MR CHUI ALSO NOTED THAT THE SALVATION ARMY HAS PLANS TO EXPAND ITS SERVICES IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN TUEN MUN, SHA TIN AND TAI PO. THERE WILL ALSO BE INCREASED SERVICES IN TSUEN WAN.

/+THIS IS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1980

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+THIS IS PRECISELY WHAT THE NEW TOWNS NEED NOT ONLY IN THE FORM OF HELP FOR THOSE IN NEED, BUT THE SPIRIT OF CIVIC-MINDEDNESS, SOCIAL COHESION AND MUTUAL AID WHICH WILL GIVE BIRTH TO A NEW HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN ITS NEW ENVIRONMENT,+ HE SAID.

+IT IS FOR THIS KIND OF GENEROUS PARTICIPATION AND ZEALOUS INITIATIVE THAT I FEEL THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW TERRITORIES OWE A SPECIAL DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO THE SALVATION ARMY.+

ON DISPLAY AT THE EXHIBITION ARE A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS ILLUSTRATING DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY'S WORK IN HONG KONG, HIGHLIGHTING INCREASED SERVICES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. A VIDEO-TAPED DOCUMENTARY IS ALSO SHOWN AT REGULAR INTERVALS.

MR CHUI SAID THE EXHIBITION TOLD, VISUALLY, A TOUCHING STORY OF THE EFFORTS OF THE SOLDIERS IN SERVING THE NEEDY.

+THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE HISTORICALLY VALUABLE AND REFLECT, IN INTERESTINGLY PICTURESQUE FORMS, LIFE IN THOSE EARLY DAYS AS WELL AS THE SCENES OF TODAY.

+BUT, POSSIBLY, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT IS FOUND IN THE GOODNESS OF THE MANY HEARTS AND SOULS CONVERTED THROUGH PATIENCE, UNDERSTANDING AND FAITH.

+IT IS A POWERFUL DEMONSTRATION OF HUMAN KINDNESS AND SERVICE TO FELLOWMEN,+ HE SAID.

THE EXHIBITION IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC DAILY FROM 10 AM TO 6 PM UNTIL IT CLOSSES ON FRIDAY (APRIL 18).

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