



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 1988

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BILL GIVES HOUSING AUTHORITY MORE FLEXIBILITY

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A BILL ENABLING THE HONG KONG HOUSING AUTHORITY TO UNDERGO A REORGANISATION OF ITS STRUCTURE AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1 WAS READ A SECOND TIME IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE REORGANISATION WOULD FACILITATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LONG TERM HOUSING STRATEGY.

"UNDER THE STRATEGY, THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC HOUSING WILL BECOME MORE DEMAND-LED, "THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON ROBIN SAUNDERS, SAID IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE HOUSING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

"INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR FAMILIES ASPIRING TO BUY THEIR OWN HOMES, WHILE RENTAL HOUSING WILL CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE TO THOSE WHO NEED IT."

MR SAUNDERS SAID THE AUTHORITY WOULD REGULARLY MONITOR DEMAND AND SUPPLY IN ALL HOUSING SECTORS.

IT WOULD THEN ADJUST ITS OWN CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME TO CO-ORDINATE WITH WHAT WAS BEING PRODUCED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR SO AS TO ENSURE THAT DEMAND WAS MET MOST EFFECTIVELY.

THE LONG TERM HOUSING STRATEGY WOULD REQUIRE THE AUTHORITY TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND WITH GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS TO MEET FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS, HE SAID.

"A PACKAGE OF PROPOSALS HAS THEREFORE BEEN DEvised TO GIVE THE AUTHORITY THE FREEDOM IT NEEDS TO DEAL WITH ITS DUTIES IN A MORE FLEXIBLE MANNER AND THE FINANCIAL FLEXIBILITY TO BE ABLE TO PUT ITS RESOURCES WHERE ITS PRIORITIES ARE," MR SAUNDERS SAID.

"THESE MEASURES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES TO THE ORGANISATION AND FINANCES OF THE AUTHORITY AND THROUGH THE BILL WHICH MAKES SEVERAL NECESSARY AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSING ORDINANCE."

MR SAUNDERS STRESSED THAT THE PROPOSALS WERE NOT INTENDED TO REDUCE THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC HOUSING.

"ALTHOUGH THE AUTHORITY WILL HAVE GREATER FREEDOM TO MAKE DECISIONS ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE WORK OF THE AUTHORITY AND WILL REMAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR SETTING THE MAJOR POLICY GUIDELINES WITHIN WHICH THE AUTHORITY WILL OPERATE," HE SAID.

/REFERRING TO .....

REFERRING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING FINANCIAL COMMITMENT TO THE AUTHORITY, MR SAUNDERS SAID IT WOULD BE HANDING OVER THE CLOSING BALANCE OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP FUND AND NOT REQUIRING REPAYMENT OF THE OUTSTANDING LOANS MADE TO THE AUTHORITY BY THE DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND.

IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD IF NECESSARY INJECT CASH TO GUARANTEE THE AUTHORITY'S FINANCIAL SOLVENCY AND FACILITATE ITS CASH FLOW.

THESE SUMS WOULD BECOME THE GOVERNMENT'S PERMANENT CAPITAL IN THE AUTHORITY.

THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE LAND TO THE AUTHORITY ON CONCESSIONARY TERMS TO ENABLE IT TO DEVELOP HOUSING AT AFFORDABLE RENTS AND PRICES.

REFERRING TO CONCERNS AS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE REORGANISATION WOULD HAVE ON RENT LEVELS, MR SAUNDERS SAID THAT "THE AUTHORITY WILL OPERATE WITHIN EXISTING RENT AND PRICING POLICIES AND WILL BE REQUIRED TO SEEK THE APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL BEFORE MAKING ANY CHANGES."

HE ALSO SAID THAT THE AUTHORITY'S GREATER OPERATIONAL FREEDOM WOULD NOT REDUCE ITS PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY.

THE AUTHORITY'S ANNUAL PROGRAMME AND ESTIMATES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNOR AND ITS AUDITED ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL REPORT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"QUARTERLY REPORTS WILL KEEP GOVERNMENT INFORMED OF THE AUTHORITY'S ACTIONS AND DECISIONS, WHILE THE APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS TO THE AUTHORITY AND ITS COMMITTEES WILL ENSURE THAT GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ARE KNOWN TO THE AUTHORITY," MR SAUNDERS ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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STRONG EVIDENCE COMMUNITY SUPPORTS VIEWING CONSTRAINTS

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THERE IS STRONG EVIDENCE THAT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY SUPPORTS AND INDEED DEMANDS CONSTRAINTS ON WHAT MAY BE PUBLICLY VIEWED, THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION, THE HON PETER TSAO, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE FILM CENSORSHIP BILL 1988, MR TSAO SAID THAT FOR OVER 35 YEARS FILM CENSORSHIP HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE PUBLIC AS A GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY.

/AND HE .....

AND HE STRESSED THAT THE BILL WAS NOT AIMED AT CORRECTING ANY DEFICIENCIES IN THE PRESENT LEGISLATION BECAUSE THE LATTER WAS IN GOOD ORDER.

"RATHER IT SEEKS TO CONSTRAIN CENSORSHIP AND ALLOW THE SCREENING OF FILMS WHICH CANNOT BE APPROVED FOR VIEWING AT PRESENT," HE SAID.

"IT EXPANDS THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE CENSORIAL PROCESS, THUS ENSURING THAT CENSORSHIP STANDARDS BETTER REFLECT THE COMMUNITY'S VIEWS ON WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE OR OTHERWISE."

MR TSAO SAID THAT THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT CENSORSHIP ON GROUNDS OF SEX AND VIOLENCE REFLECTED THE COMMUNITY'S EXPECTATIONS AT LARGE.

POLITICAL CENSORSHIP WAS ALSO NECESSARY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE WELL-BEING OF THE COMMUNITY, HE SAID, WHICH WAS WHY IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN PART OF THE FILM CENSORSHIP PROCESS.

"HONG KONG MUST NOT ALLOW ITSELF TO BE USED AS A BASE FOR PROPAGATING PROPAGANDA. I BELIEVE THIS POINT IS WELL UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED IN HONG KONG," HE SAID.

AT THE INSTIGATION OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP ON FILM CLASSIFICATION AND CENSORSHIP, IT WAS NOW PROPOSED TO PROVIDE FOR CENSORSHIP WHERE "THERE IS A LIKELIHOOD THAT THE EXHIBITION OF THE FILM WOULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE GOOD RELATIONS WITH OTHER TERRITORIES".

UNDER THE BILL, THE FUTURE SYSTEM FOR FILM CLASSIFICATION WOULD BE:

CATEGORY I - FOR GENERAL EXHIBITION;

CATEGORY II - APPROVED FOR EXHIBITION WITH THE CAUTION THAT IT IS NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN;

CATEGORY III - APPROVED FOR EXHIBITION ONLY TO PERSONS WHO HAVE ATTAINED THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

MR TSAO SAID THIS NEW CLASSIFICATION WOULD ALLOW THE EXHIBITION OF FILMS WHICH MIGHT BE ENJOYED BY MATURE OR RESTRICTED AUDIENCES AND WHICH HAD HITHERTO HAD TO BE BANNED OR SEVERELY CUT TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE STORY FLOW.

"THE PROPOSED THREE-TIER SYSTEM WILL MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR MORE THAN ONE VERSION OF A FILM TO BE APPROVED FOR EXHIBITION TO DIFFERENT AUDIENCES," HE SAID.

WHILE IT WOULD BE AN OFFENCE TO EXHIBIT A CATEGORY III FILM TO A PERSON UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS UNLESS ALL REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS HAD BEEN TAKEN TO PREVENT ITS HAPPENING, MR TSAO SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT PROPOSING TO MAKE THE VIEWING OF A CATEGORY III FILM BY AN UNDERAGE PERSON A CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

/HOWEVER, HE .....

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HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT THE AUTHORITY WOULD ADVISE PARENTS IN WRITING WHEN THEIR CHILDREN WERE FOUND AT SUCH SCREENINGS.

THE AUTHORITY WOULD HAVE POWER TO APPOINT INSPECTORS TO UNDERTAKE CHECKS OF ALL CINEMAS TO ENFORCE THE FILM CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND TO INITIATE PROSECUTIONS AGAINST OFFENDING OPERATORS, HE ADDED.

MR TSAO ALSO SAID THAT FILM ADVERTISING MATERIAL WHICH WAS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CENSORSHIP AUTHORITY FOR EXAMINATION UNDER THE PRESENT LEGISLATION WOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE CENSORSHIP REQUIREMENTS OF THE BILL.

BUT IT WOULD FALL WITHIN THE AMBIT OF THE CONTROL OF OBSCENE AND INDECENT ARTICLES ORDINANCE, HE SAID.

ON PRACTICAL PROBLEMS FOR THE FILM INDUSTRY THAT MIGHT ARISE AS A RESULT OF THIS, MR TSAO SAID THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE WITH THE INDUSTRY WITH A VIEW TO RESOLVING THESE PROBLEMS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

TURNING TO GREATER PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE CENSORIAL PROCESS, MR TSAO SAID A PANEL OF ADVISERS REPRESENTING A CROSS-SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY WOULD BE APPOINTED BY THE FILM CENSORSHIP AUTHORITY TO ADVISE THE CENSORS.

THE APPEAL MECHANISM WOULD ALSO BE REVAMPED BY REPLACING THE OFFICIAL-DOMINATED REVIEW BOARD WITH A BOARD COMPRISING A MAJORITY OF NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS AND A CHAIRMAN APPOINTED FROM AMONG THEM.

MR TSAO ALSO THANKED THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP AND ALL THOSE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD CONTRIBUTED ADVICE AND COMMENTS DURING THE CONSULTATIVE PERIOD, ADDING THAT MANY OF THEIR VIEWS WERE REFLECTED IN THE BILL PUT BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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#### FRESH LOOK AT TRAINING FUND COMMITTEE

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THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO LOOK AFRESH AT THE COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND COMMITTEE TO DETERMINE WHETHER CHANGES ARE APPROPRIATE TO REFLECT CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1961.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID THIS WHEN WINDING UP DEBATE ON THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

/HE AGREED .....

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HE AGREED THAT THERE WAS A CONTINUING NEED FOR THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCE IN PROMOTING THE TRAINING PROSPECTS OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS TEACHING MATERIALS, THOUGH HE NOTED THERE WAS A FORUM FOR THIS IN THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WORK TRAINING.

"SO FAR AS THE CRITERIA ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE FOR SPONSORING INDIVIDUALS FOR SOCIAL WORK TRAINING ARE CONCERNED, DETAILS ARE IN FACT GIVEN IN THE FUND'S ANNUAL REPORT WHICH IS TABLED EACH YEAR IN THIS COUNCIL, AND WHICH IS AVAILABLE TO ANYONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED," HE SAID.

"SO THE COMMITTEE, WHICH ALREADY INCLUDES MEMBERS ACTIVE IN THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FIELD, IS NOT QUITE SO INSCRUTABLE."

MR CHAMBERS ALSO PAID TRIBUTE TO THE ROYAL HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB FOR MAKING A \$6 MILLION DONATION TO THE FUND LAST YEAR.

"THIS GENEROUS GESTURE WILL ENABLE US TO DO MORE TO PROVIDE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES BOTH LOCALLY AND ABROAD," HE ADDED.

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#### CONCERN OVER SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND COMMITTEE

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THE SOCIAL SERVICE FUNCTIONAL CONSTITUENCY IS CONCERNED OVER THE COMPOSITION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND COMMITTEE, THE HON HUI YIN-FAT SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND COMMITTEE SHOULD BE CHAIRED BY A PERSON WHO WAS NOT A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, MR HUI SAID WHEN SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988.

THIS WAS IN LINE WITH A RECOMMENDATION BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL WORK TRAINING, HE NOTED IN THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL.

FURTHERMORE, MR HUI SUGGESTED THAT THE EXISTING PRACTICE OF APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE ON A PERSONAL BASIS SHOULD BE CHANGED.

INSTEAD, DELEGATES SHOULD BE ACCEPTED FROM VARIOUS REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE HONG KONG SOCIAL WORKERS' ASSOCIATION, AND THE HONG KONG COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE WHOSE MEMBER AGENCIES EMPLOYED A LARGE NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORKERS, AND WERE CONCERNED WITH TRAINING PROSPECTS.

/ "GIVING VOLUNTARY .....

"GIVING VOLUNTARY AGENCIES REPRESENTATION ON THE COMMITTEE WOULD DEFINITELY STRENGTHEN THE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AS WELL AS THE COMMITTEE'S ACCOUNTABILITY," HE SAID.

"IN THE LIGHT OF RAPID DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL WORK TRAINING, WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT MORE INDIGENOUS TEACHING MATERIALS OUGHT TO BE DEVELOPED FOR THE TRAINING OF LOCAL SOCIAL WORKERS," MR HUI SAID.

"IN THIS RESPECT, THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE IN IMPROVING TRAINING FACILITIES OUGHT TO BE EXPANDED AND MORE TRAINING RESOURCES SHOULD BE DEVELOPED LOCALLY AND ABROAD."

HE ALSO SAID THAT VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE CONCERNED THAT THEY WERE NOT FULLY APPRISED OF THE PRIORITY SET BY THE COMMITTEE FOR SUBSIDISING SOCIAL WORK TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND OF THE CRITERIA FOR SPONSORING INDIVIDUALS FOR FORMAL SOCIAL WORK TRAINING OVERSEAS. THE COMMITTEE WAS INSCRUTABLE ON THESE POINTS.

"IT IS IMPORTANT FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO BE PRIVY TO SUCH STANDARDS IN PLANNING THEIR STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES FOR IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY," HE STRESSED.

FINALLY, MR HUI SAID IT WAS TIME THAT THE COMMITTEE PROVIDED AN OPEN CHANNEL FOR THE SHARING OF EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, AND INFORMATION IN IMPROVING THE TRAINING AND SKILLS OF SOCIAL WORKERS AND IN MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF VALUABLE MANPOWER RESOURCES.

THE OBJECTS OF THE FUND ARE TO MAKE GRANTS TO INDIVIDUALS FOR THE PURPOSE OF STUDY AND TRAINING AS SOCIAL WORKERS; AND GENERALLY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN HONG KONG.

THE AMENDMENT BILL PROPOSED CHANGES TO SOME OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED AS A STATUTORY FUND IN 1961.

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#### CHANGE IN CHAIRMANSHIP PROPOSED

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THE GOVERNMENT'S DECLARED POLICY IS THAT, WHEREVER FEASIBLE, PEOPLE OTHER THAN OFFICIALS SHOULD CHAIR ITS ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, MR BRIDGE SAID THAT THE BILL ACCORDINGLY PROVIDED FOR PEOPLE OTHER THAN THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE TO CHAIR THE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND COMMITTEE.

/ "THE BILL .....

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"THE BILL ALSO PROVIDES FOR ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS OF THE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND TO BE KEPT AS THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES MAY REQUIRE," HE ADDED.

THE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND ORDINANCE WAS ENACTED IN 1955, PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF A TRUST FUND KNOWN AS THE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE ORDINANCE PROVIDED FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE FUND COMMITTEE.

"APART FROM SOME VERY OLD SCHOLARSHIPS, THE DONORS OF WHICH CANNOT BE TRACED, ALL DONORS AND HEADS OF SCHOOLS HAVE AGREED TO THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF CHAIRMANSHIP.

"THE CHANGES PROPOSED IN THE BILL ARE DESIRABLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD AND IT IS INTENDED TO BRING THEM INTO EFFECT AS SOON AS THE BILL IS ENACTED," HE ADDED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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#### PRIVATE BILL ON FOREIGN BANK MERGER

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A PRIVATE BILL RELATING TO A GERMAN BANK MERGER WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE HON DAVID LI WHO DESCRIBED IT AS A WELCOME BILL THAT WOULD SHOW HONG KONG WAS MOST RESPONSIBLE IN AFFORDING CERTAINTY OF OPERATION TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CUSTOMERS ALIKE.

THE BILL WAS THE DEUTSCHE BANK (MERGER) BILL 1988, WHICH MR LI ALSO DESCRIBED AS TECHNICAL IN NATURE AND UNCONTROVERSIAL. IT WAS GIVEN A SECOND READING.

MR LI SAID THE BILL WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE, UNDER THE LAW OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, DEUTSCHE BANK WOULD ABSORB DEUTSCHE BANK ASIA (D.B. ASIA) WHICH WAS ITS WHOLLY-OWNED SUBSIDIARY, ON APRIL 5 THIS YEAR.

"D.B. ASIA WILL CEASE TO EXIST AND, UNDER GERMAN LAW, ALL ITS BUSINESS, ASSETS AND LIABILITIES WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO DEUTSCHE BANK," HE SAID.

NOTING THAT THE EFFECT OF THIS MERGER UNDER GERMAN LAW WAS NOT CLEAR UNDER HONG KONG LAW, MR LI SAID THAT THE BILL SOUGHT TO CLARIFY ALL MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MERGER IN A MANNER WHICH AFFORDED CERTAINTY TO D.B. ASIA AND ITS CUSTOMERS IN HONG KONG.

/"D.B. ASIA .....

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"D.B. ASIA HAS A SUBSTANTIAL BANKING PRACTICE IN HONG KONG AND HONG KONG HAS AN INTEREST IN AFFORDING CERTAINTY AND SECURITY OF BUSINESS TO INTERNATIONAL BANKS OPERATING HERE," HE ADDED.

MR LI SAID THE BILL WAS NOT WITHOUT PRECEDENT. IT WAS MODELLED ON THE LLOYDS BANK (MERGER) ORDINANCE 1985 BY WHICH EFFECT WAS GIVEN IN HONG KONG TO THE MERGER UNDER ENGLISH LAW OF LLOYDS BANK AND LLOYDS BANK INTERNATIONAL.

HE ALSO SAID THAT NO STAMP DUTY WOULD BE SAVED BY THE BILL AND THERE WAS NO INTENTION BY D.B. ASIA AND DEUTSCHE BANK TO AVOID STAMP DUTY BY MEANS OF IT.

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AMENDMENTS TO ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS PROPOSED

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THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSES THAT THREE PROVISIONS IN THE ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS SHOULD BE AMENDED.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THE FIRST AMENDMENT CONCERNED THE DATE OF DISSOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL.

HE SAID ROYAL INSTRUCTION XXVIII A AT PRESENT PROVIDED THAT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL "SHALL STAND DISSOLVED ON THE NINETIETH DAY BEFORE THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST SITTING OF THE COUNCIL FOLLOWING THE LATEST ELECTION FOR ALL THE ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL".

THIS MEANT, IN EFFECT, THAT, IN THIS PARTICULAR YEAR, THE COUNCIL WOULD HAVE TO DISSOLVE ON AUGUST 1 AND THAT HONG KONG WOULD THEN BE WITHOUT A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FOR NEARLY THREE MONTHS.

"THE PROVISION HAS A NUMBER OF DRAWBACKS," MR THOMAS SAID.

"FIRST, IT ALLOWS NO FLEXIBILITY IN FIXING A DATE FOR THE COUNCIL TO DISSOLVE.

"SECONDLY, WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE PROVISION IN THE ROYAL INSTRUCTION XXIA THAT THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE LAST SITTING OF THE SESSION AND THE FIRST SITTING OF THE NEXT SESSION SHALL NOT EXCEED THREE MONTHS, IT GIVES RISE TO THE SITUATION WHEREBY, OVER TIME, THE OPENING DATE FOR EACH NEW SESSION TENDS TO CREEP FURTHER FORWARD.

"THIS RESULTS IN FURTHER DIFFICULTIES IN KEEPING TO OUR NORMAL ELECTORAL CYCLE WHICH ENVISAGES ELECTIONS IN SEPTEMBER AND A RESUMPTION OF THE COUNCIL IN EARLY TO MID-OCTOBER.

/THIRDLY, AND .....

THIRDLY, AND THIS WAS PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT, THIS LACK OF FLEXIBILITY ON DATES MEANT THAT, WHEN TAKEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH NECESSARY PRE- AND POST-ELECTION MEASURES, THERE WOULD BE NO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL FOR AN UNDESIRABLY LONG TIME.

MR THOMAS SAID IT WAS PROPOSED THE ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS BE AMENDED TO PROVIDE THAT THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPOINT A DATE FOR THE DISSOLUTION WHICH SHALL BE NOT EARLIER THAN 60 DAYS OR LATER THAN 30 DAYS BEFORE THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE PRECEDING ELECTION AND AT A LATER STAGE TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO ABRIDGE THE TIME FOR ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE BY ELECTED MEMBERS.

HE SAID THAT THESE MEASURES, TAKEN TOGETHER, WOULD REMOVE ALL THE DRAWBACKS MENTIONED.

IF THESE CHANGES WERE ACCEPTABLE, IT WAS LIKELY THE GOVERNOR WOULD APPOINT THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 1988 AS THE DATE OF DISSOLUTION OF THE PRESENT COUNCIL AND THE SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22.

THE NEW COUNCIL WOULD THEN MEET FOR THE FIRST TIME ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12.

MR THOMAS SAID THE SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS WOULD PROVIDE THAT ANY BILL WHICH HAD NOT COMPLETED ALL ITS STAGES THROUGH THE COUNCIL WOULD LAPSE UPON A DISSOLUTION.

AT PRESENT, THE ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED THAT THE CONSIDERATION OF A BILL OR OTHER BUSINESS WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED BY THE TERMINATION OF A SESSION.

"ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE THE CASE THAT THIS PROVISION DOES NOT APPLY TO THE TERMINATION OF THE FINAL SESSION IN THE TERM OF A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BEFORE DISSOLUTION, THE POSITION IS NOT AS CLEAR AS IT COULD BE," HE SAID.

"THIS MATTER SHOULD BE PUT BEYOND DOUBT BY AMENDING THE RELEVANT PROVISION IN THE ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS.

"IT IS UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT MEMBERS OF A NEW LEGISLATURE TO PICK UP AND COMPLETE THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF THE OLD."

MR THOMAS SAID THAT THIRDLY, IT WAS PROPOSED TO DELETE FROM ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS XXV(2) AND XXVII THE REQUIREMENT TO INCLUDE MARGINAL NOTES ALONGSIDE EACH CLAUSE OF AN ORDINANCE.

HE SAID THE NEED FOR NOTES IN THE MARGINS CAUSED SECRETARIAL AND PRINTING DIFFICULTIES, PARTICULARLY IN PRINTING CHINESE TEXTS.

IT WAS PROPOSED THAT THE PRESENT PRACTICE OF USING MARGINAL NOTES BE REPLACED BY THE USE IMMEDIATELY ABOVE EACH CLAUSE OF LEFT MARGIN BOLD HEADINGS. THIS WAS A COMMONLY USED FORM IN LEGISLATION ELSEWHERE.

MR THOMAS SAID THAT FOLLOWING THE DEBATE ON THE WHITE PAPER ON MARCH 16 AND 17, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE LETTERS PATENT WHICH WOULD NEED TO BE MADE IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE POLICY SET OUT IN THE WHITE PAPER FOR THE 1988 ELECTIONS TO THE NEXT LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO ESTIMATES

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A SUMMARY OF ALL CHANGES MADE TO THE APPROVED ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF THE 1987-88 FINANCIAL YEAR WAS TABLED FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION BY THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF \$149.1 MILLION WAS APPROVED AND IT WAS FULLY OFFSET EITHER BY SAVINGS UNDER THE SAME HEAD OF EXPENDITURE OR BY THE DELETION OF FUNDS UNDER THE ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS SUBHEADS, HE SAID.

APPROVED NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS WERE INCREASED BY \$199.6 MILLION DURING THE PERIOD, AND NEW NON-RECURRENT COMMITMENTS OF \$121.2 MILLION WERE ALSO APPROVED.

IN THE SAME PERIOD, A NET INCREASE OF 1,412 POSTS WERE APPROVED.

MR NENDICK NOTED THAT ITEMS IN THE SUMMARY HAD BEEN APPROVED EITHER BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OR UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY.

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CHANGES PROPOSED IN PAYPHONE RENTAL

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THE HONGKONG TELEPHONE COMPANY LIMITED PROPOSED TO ALTER ITS CHARGING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RENTAL OF ITS PRIVATE PAYPHONE IN TWO RESPECTS, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING A MOTION TO AMEND PART III OF THE SCHEDULE TO THE TELEPHONE ORDINANCE, MR NENDICK SAID THAT FIRST THE COMPANY WISHED TO REDUCE THE ANNUAL TARIFF FROM \$6,600 TO \$2,400.

SECONDLY, IT SOUGHT TO SHARE CALL CHARGE REVENUE WITH THE PRIVATE PAYPHONE RENTER ON AN EQUAL BASIS.

CURRENTLY, ALL CHARGE REVENUE WAS RETAINED BY THE PRIVATE PAYPHONE RENTER.

MR NENDICK SAID THAT TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE TWO PROPOSALS REPRESENTED A FAIRER SYSTEM FOR CHARGING THE PRIVATE PAYPHONE RENTER THAN THE CURRENT SINGLE HIGH RENTAL CHARGE, WHICH TOOK NO ACCOUNT OF THE USE OF THE TELEPHONE NETWORK.

/"THE PROPOSED .....

"THE PROPOSED NEW RENTAL TARIFF, WHICH REPRESENTS A MONTHLY CHARGE OF \$200, WOULD GIVE THE COMPANY A REASONABLE RETURN ON ITS COSTS OTHER THAN WITH RESPECT TO THE USE OF THE NETWORK, WHICH WOULD BE ACCOUNTED FOR BY THE PROPOSED REVENUE-SHARING ARRANGEMENT," HE SAID.

THESE PROPOSALS WERE EXPECTED TO YIELD ADDITIONAL REVENUE OF APPROXIMATELY \$10 MILLION OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

HOWEVER, THE COMPANY HAD UNDERTAKEN TO USE THIS EXTRA REVENUE TO HELP FUND LESS PROFITABLE BUT SOCIALLY DESIRABLE PUBLIC SERVICES SUCH AS PUBLIC PAYPHONES IN LOW USAGE AREAS AND EMERGENCY HELPLINES.

MR NENDICK NOTED THAT REVENUE FROM PRIVATE PAYPHONE RENTAL WAS COVERED BY THE SCHEME OF CONTROL.

"WHILST SOME CURRENT PRIVATE PAYPHONE RENTERS WOULD HAVE THEIR REVENUE FROM PRIVATE PAYPHONES REDUCED AS A RESULT OF THESE PROPOSALS, MOST PRIVATE PAYPHONE RENTERS WOULD NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO MAKE AN ATTRACTIVE NET RETURN AND THOSE WITH PRIVATE PAYPHONES IN LOW USAGE SITES WOULD HAVE AN IMPROVED RETURN," HE SAID.

"THERE ARE CURRENTLY ABOUT 900 PRIVATE PAYPHONES IN SERVICE. THE CALL CHARGE FOR THESE PAYPHONES WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED, THAT IS, \$1 PER CALL AS AT PRESENT."

MR NENDICK EXPLAINED THAT ALL AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEDULE OF CHARGES OF THE TELEPHONE ORDINANCE REQUIRED A RESOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND HE ADDED THAT THE PROPOSED NEW CHARGING ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN EXAMINED BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND WERE CONSIDERED EQUITABLE.

THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

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MOTION ON TENEMENT RATEABLE VALUE APPROVED

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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED A MOTION UNDER THE RATING ORDINANCE TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM RATEABLE VALUE OF TENEMENTS FROM \$1,000 TO \$1,200, FROM APRIL 1 THIS YEAR.

MOVING THE MOTION, THE ACTING FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON DAVID NENDICK, SAID THAT UNDER THE RELEVANT SECTION OF THE ORDINANCE ANY TENEMENT THE RATEABLE VALUE OF WHICH DID NOT EXCEED AN AMOUNT PRESCRIBED BY A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL RESOLUTION WAS EXEMPT FROM ASSESSMENT TO RATES.

/THE PURPOSE .....

THE PURPOSE OF THE SECTION WAS PRIMARILY TO REDUCE ADMINISTRATIVE COST. IT WAS NOT INTENDED AS A MEASURE OF EXEMPTION FOR SMALL TENEMENTS ON SOCIAL OR OTHER GROUNDS.

THE EXISTING PRESCRIBED AMOUNT OF \$1,000 WAS INTRODUCED IN 1984, HE SAID.

"IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE COST OF COLLECTING RATES AND MAINTAINING AN ASSESSMENT IN THE VALUATION LIST WILL REACH \$80 IN 1988-89, WHILE THE RATES COLLECTED FROM A TENEMENT WITH A RATEABLE VALUE OF \$1,000 WILL ONLY BE \$60 AT THE PREVAILING RATE.

"IN VIEW OF THE NEED TO OPTIMISE RECOVERY AND HAVING REGARD TO THE OVERALL INCREASE OF 17 PER CENT IN RATEABLE VALUES, THE MINIMUM RATEABLE VALUE SHOULD BE INCREASED FROM \$1,000 TO \$1,200."

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ONE BILL PASSED  
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THE SOCIAL WORK TRAINING FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS FUND (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988, THE FILM CENSORSHIP BILL 1988 AND THE HOUSING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988 WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. DEBATE ON THESE WAS ADJOURNED.

TWO MOTIONS WERE ALSO PASSED. ONE WAS UNDER THE RATING ORDINANCE, AND THE OTHER WAS UNDER THE TELEPHONE ORDINANCE.

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FIRE-FIGHTING VESSELS CARRY RESCUE EQUIPMENT  
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THE GOVERNMENT MUST RELY CHIEFLY FOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND SKILLS ON THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND ASSISTANCE FROM THE ROYAL NAVY IN SERIOUS MARINE ACCIDENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG, WHO REFERRED TO THE ACCIDENT INVOLVING A CHINESE CARGO VESSEL WHICH CAPSIZED AT KUP SHUI MUN ON FEBRUARY 7, LEAVING THREE CREWMEN DEAD AND ONE MISSING.

/MR BARNES .....

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MR BARNES SAID THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAD SEVEN FIRE-FIGHTING VESSELS WHICH CARRIED RESCUE EQUIPMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT ALSO HAD FIVE TEAMS OF FIVE DIVERS AVAILABLE AT ANY TIME.

"THE TEAMS ARE DEPLOYED ON LAND THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY AND HAVE A LIMITED UNDERWATER RESCUE CAPABILITY IN WATER UP TO 15 METRES DEEP," HE SAID.

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THE ROYAL NAVY HAD A DIVING UNIT WHICH WAS TRAINED TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS IN A WIDE RANGE OF UNDERWATER WORK INCLUDING RESCUE. IT ALSO HAD SPECIALIST UNDERWATER CUTTING EQUIPMENT.

"THE DIVING UNIT CAN BE AVAILABLE IN ABOUT ONE HOUR PROVIDED THEY ARE NOT DEPLOYED ON OTHER TASKS," HE ADDED.

MR BARNES SAID THE MARINE DEPARTMENT HAD NO EQUIPMENT WHICH COULD BE USED IN SUCH ACCIDENTS.

"A NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS OPERATE SPECIALISED SALVAGE EQUIPMENT WHICH COULD BE CALLED ON TO ASSIST BUT THIS IS EQUIPMENT DESIGNED FOR SALVAGE RATHER THAN RESCUE WORK," HE ADDED.

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#### TRAFFIC SIGNS PROVIDED TO HELP DRIVERS

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TRAFFIC SIGNS ARE PROVIDED TO HELP DRIVERS TO USE THE ROADS SAFELY, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE SIGNS ALSO SERVED TO CONTROL THE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE ROADS.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR LEUNG ASSURED HER THAT NO TRAFFIC SIGNS WERE EVER SO PLACED AS TO "TRAP" DRIVERS.

"NO STUDIES HAVE BEEN MADE OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE POOR LOCATION OF SIGNS IS A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR TO THEIR CONTRAVENTION.

"THIS WAS BECAUSE THERE IS ALREADY A WELL ESTABLISHED SYSTEM TO ENSURE THAT TRAFFIC SIGNS ARE DISPLAYED AND LOCATED PROPERLY," HE SAID.

MR LEUNG SAID THAT ROAD SIGNS AND MARKINGS IN HONG KONG FOLLOWED INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND USAGE.

/STANDARDS AND .....

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STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE WERE PROVIDED TO TRAFFIC ENGINEERS AND TECHNICIANS IN THE GOVERNMENT INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING AND INSTALLATION OF TRAFFIC SIGNS TO ENSURE THAT THEY WERE USED AND LOCATED PROPERLY.

TWO IMPORTANT FACTORS WERE CONSIDERED:

- \* A SIGN'S LOCATION RELATIVE TO A JUNCTION, RESTRICTION, HAZARD OR OTHER FEATURES TO WHICH IT APPLIED; AND
- \* THAT THE SIZE OF THE SIGN WAS APPROPRIATE TO THE PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AT THE SITE AND THE SPEED OF THE VEHICLES USING THE ROAD.

SITE INSPECTIONS WERE CONDUCTED BOTH BEFORE SIGNS WERE ERECTED TO ENSURE DESIGN WAS COMPATIBLE WITH SITE CONDITIONS AND AFTERWARDS TO ENSURE THEY WERE ERECTED PROPERLY.

TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT STAFF ALSO INSPECTED REGULARLY EXISTING SIGNS TO ENSURE THAT THEY WERE MAINTAINED IN GOOD CONDITION AND WERE COMPATIBLE TO ANY CHANGES TO ROAD AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS, MR LEUNG SAID.

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#### RESTRICTIONS ON MAIDS LIKELY TO BE LIFTED

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THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) THAT THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE THAT THE PHILIPPINES GOVERNMENT'S RESTRICTIONS ON ITS NATIONALS FROM TAKING UP EMPLOYMENT IN HONG KONG WOULD BE LIFTED.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ROSANNA TAM IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR BRIDGE SAID LABOUR LEGISLATION IN HONG KONG ALREADY AFFORDED A HIGH LEVEL OF PROTECTION TO EMPLOYEES, WHETHER LOCAL OR FROM OVERSEAS, WHATEVER THEIR OCCUPATION.

"THIS HAS BEEN CAREFULLY EXPLAINED TO PHILIPPINES GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES BOTH THROUGH THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN MANILA AND IN DIRECT CONTACTS WITH PHILIPPINES GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN HONG KONG.

"THE MOST RECENT OF THESE DISCUSSIONS WAS BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR OF IMMIGRATION AND THE ACTING COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR AND MR ACHACOSO, DIRECTOR OF THE PHILIPPINES OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT AGENCY," HE SAID.

/NOTING THAT .....

NOTING THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD LAST SATURDAY MORNING, MR BRIDGE SAID THEY APPEARED TO GO WELL AND HE BELIEVED THERE WAS NOW A VERY GOOD CHANCE THAT THE RESTRICTIONS ON EMPLOYMENT IN HONG KONG WOULD BE LIFTED.

MR BRIDGE SAID THAT THE TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE PHILIPPINES GOVERNMENT ON THE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT OF ITS NATIONALS WERE INTENDED TO PROTECT THEM FROM EXPLOITATION.

THEY APPLIED WITH EFFECT FROM MARCH 1, 1988 TO CONTRACTS ENTERED INTO AFTER FEBRUARY 15, 1988 AND DID NOT AFFECT ANY EXISTING CONTRACT OR RENEWAL OF AN EXISTING CONTRACT BETWEEN THE SAME EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE, HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE ADDED THAT THE RESTRICTIONS HAD NOT SO FAR HAD ANY NOTICEABLE EFFECT ON THE LOCAL JOB MARKET OR ON MAIDS EMPLOYED IN HONG KONG, THOUGH PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS HAD TO RUSH TO PROCESS THEIR APPLICATIONS BEFORE THE CUT OFF DATE ON FEBRUARY 15.

"I THINK WE HAVE GOOD REASON TO HOPE THAT THEIR FUTURE EFFECTS MAY ALSO BE MINIMAL, SINCE, AS I HAVE SAID, THE RECENT DISCUSSIONS WENT WELL AND IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE RESTRICTIONS WILL BE LIFTED," HE SAID.

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GREAT MAJORITY OF REFUGEES ARE LAW ABIDING  
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THE CRIME RATE AMONG VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN THE OPEN CENTRE HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY HIGHER THAN THAT FOR THE POPULATION AS A WHOLE OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THIS COMPARISON WAS EXPRESSED IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF OFFENDERS PER 1,000 OF THE POPULATION AGED SEVEN OR OVER, HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON SELINA CHOW, MR BARNES CAUTIONED THAT A DIRECT COMPARISON WAS DIFFICULT SINCE THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE POPULATION HAD A HIGHER PROPORTION OF MALES IN THE 16 - 30 AGE RANGE THAN THERE WAS IN THE COMMUNITY GENERALLY.

HE STRESSED THAT ALTHOUGH THE FIGURES REFLECTED A HIGHER THAN USUAL INVOLVEMENT IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AMONG REFUGEES IN THE OPEN CENTRE THE OVERALL NUMBERS WERE RELATIVELY SMALL AND THE GREAT MAJORITY OF REFUGEES WERE LAW-ABIDING.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT FIGURES FOR THE OFFENDER RATES BY AGE GROUPS IN HONG KONG SHOWED A RELATIVELY LARGE NUMBER OF OFFENDERS IN THE 16 - 30 AGE BRACKET.

/''A FURTHER .....

"A FURTHER FACTOR, WHICH CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED, IS THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF A LONG STAY IN A REFUGEE CAMP," HE ADDED.

MOST OF THE CRIMES COMMITTED BY THE REFUGEES WERE PETTY THEFTS AND MINOR ASSAULTS, HE NOTED.

MR BARNES EXPLAINED THAT THE STATISTICS DID NOT SUGGEST THE NEED FOR ANY CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERALL POLICY OF SEEKING EARLY RESETTLEMENT AND OTHER DURABLE SOLUTIONS, PENDING WHICH THE CLOSED CENTRE POLICY HAD THEREFORE TO CONTINUE.

MR BARNES ALSO PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING TABLE ON THE CRIME RATE AMONG VIETNAMESE REFUGEES AS COMPARED WITH THAT FOR THE POPULATION AS A WHOLE, ON THE BASIS OF THE NUMBER OF OFFENDERS PER 1,000 OF THE POPULATION AGED SEVEN OR OVER:

|      | VR OFFENDERS<br>----- | ALL OFFENDERS<br>----- |
|------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1983 | 55.3                  | 7.6                    |
| 1984 | 60.2                  | 7.8                    |
| 1985 | 77.6                  | 8.7                    |
| 1986 | 83.6                  | 8.3                    |
| 1987 | 86.2                  | 8.4                    |

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PRIVATISATION OF HOS MANAGEMENT SERVICES A SUCCESS  
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THE TRIAL SCHEME BY WHICH THE HOUSING AUTHORITY CONTRACTS OUT MANAGEMENT SERVICES OF HOME OWNERSHIP SCHEME COURTS TO PRIVATE FIRMS HAS BEEN A SUCCESS AND THE PILOT SCHEME WILL BE EXTENDED TO A FURTHER FOUR COURTS OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON ROBIN SAUNDERS, SAID THIS IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHUNG PUI-LAM IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"THE PILOT SCHEME, WHICH WAS STARTED IN JANUARY 1987, HAS WORKED VERY WELL, AND THE STANDARD OF MANAGEMENT ACHIEVED HAS BEEN COMPARABLE TO THAT PROVIDED BY THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT'S IN-HOUSE STAFF," MR SAUNDERS SAID.

/HE ADDED .....

HE ADDED THAT IT WAS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S LONG-TERM OBJECTIVE THAT HOS OWNERS SHOULD EVENTUALLY TAKE OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN MANAGEMENT. THE PILOT SCHEME WAS INTENDED TO BE A STEP IN THAT DIRECTION.

MR SAUNDERS SAID A CRITERION FOR SELECTING PRIVATE MANAGEMENT COMPANIES FOR HOS COURTS WAS THAT A COMPANY MUST HAVE HAD A MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN PROPERTY MANAGEMENT.

IT MUST ALSO HAVE UNDER ITS MANAGEMENT 2,000 OR MORE PROPERTIES, INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE RESIDENTIAL ESTATE OF NO FEWER THAN 500 UNITS.

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#### STUDIES MADE ON URBAN WATER POLLUTION

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SEVERAL LARGE SCALE STUDIES OF THE SOURCES OF WATER POLLUTION IN URBAN AREAS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN APRIL 1986, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE SAID A SURVEY OF POLLUTION SOURCES IN THE CATCHMENT AREA OF THE WONG CHUK HANG NULLAH WAS UNDERTAKEN DURING JULY AND AUGUST LAST YEAR AND THE FINDINGS WERE REPORTED TO THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD IN JANUARY.

MR CHAMBERS, WHO WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LIU LIT-FOR, SAID THAT DURING THE SURVEY, 1,373 FACTORIES WERE INSPECTED AND 34 WERE FOUND TO PRODUCE POLLUTING EFFLUENTS.

"TWELVE OF THESE FACTORIES WERE DISCHARGING DIRECTLY INTO STORMWATER DRAINS WHICH FLOW INTO THE NULLAH THUS CAUSING SERIOUS POLLUTION OF THE NULLAH," HE SAID.

"WARNING LETTERS HAVE BEEN SENT TO THESE OFFENDERS REQUIRING THEM TO DISCHARGE THE EFFLUENTS TO FOUL SEWERS.

"THEY HAVE ALSO BEEN ADVISED TO APPOINT AUTHORISED PERSONS TO DESIGN AND SUPERVISE THE NECESSARY DRAINAGE CONSTRUCTION WORKS."

MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION, THE NULLAH ALSO RECEIVED FROM THE SQUATTER VILLAGES OF YAU SHEUNG CHUEN, WONG CHUK HANG PATH VILLAGE AND SUN WAI CHUEN, THE DOMESTIC SEWAGE OF ABOUT 4,000 PEOPLE AND LIVESTOCK WASTE FROM SEVERAL PIG FARMS.

LIVESTOCK KEEPING WOULD BE BANNED ON HONG KONG ISLAND AFTER JUNE 24 THIS YEAR WHEN THE AREA BECAME A PROHIBITION AREA UNDER THE WASTE DISPOSAL (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1987.

"THE RAW SEWAGE FROM THE SQUATTER POPULATION WILL BE CONTROLLED EITHER BY THE PROVISION OF SEWERAGE FACILITIES OR BY SQUATTER CLEARANCE WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN YAU SHEUNG CHUEN IN JUNE," HE ADDED.

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USEFULNESS OF COUNSELLING DEPENDS ON INDIVIDUAL OFFENDER

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IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SPECIFY PRECISELY WHAT TYPE OR TYPES OF OFFENDERS ARE LIKELY TO BENEFIT FROM COUNSELLING, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHAN YING-LUN, MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT MANY OF THOSE CONVICTED OF MINOR OFFENCES DID NOT NEED SUCH A SERVICE WHILE FOR OTHERS, SUCH AS RECIDIVISTS, COUNSELLING WAS UNLIKELY TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE.

"IN GENERAL, EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT COUNSELLING WORKS BEST WITH THOSE WHO HAVE COMMITTED A CRIME AS A RESULT OF SOCIAL PRESSURES SUCH AS FAMILY AND FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OR ASSOCIATING WITH ANTI-SOCIAL ELEMENTS," HE SAID.

"AT PRESENT WE DO NOT PROPOSE TO SEEK ADDITIONAL RESOURCES SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS PURPOSE, ALTHOUGH FUNDS HAVE BEEN EARMARKED FOR THE CREATION OF ADDITIONAL POSTS TO REDUCE THE CASE-LOADS OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS WHO WORK IN THE FAMILY SERVICE CENTRES."

MR CHAMBERS POINTED OUT THERE WERE A NUMBER OF CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH AN OFFENDER GIVEN A NON-CUSTODIAL SENTENCE MIGHT RECEIVE REHABILITATIVE COUNSELLING.

FIRSTLY, PERSONS SUBJECT TO PROBATION ORDERS OR COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS WERE REQUIRED TO UNDERGO REHABILITATIVE COUNSELLING PROVIDED BY STAFF OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT.

SECONDLY, A COURT MIGHT REFER OFFENDERS TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR COUNSELLING OR OTHER WELFARE SERVICES.

"AN OFFENDER MAY ALSO RECEIVE COUNSELLING AT HIS OWN REQUEST, IN WHICH CASE THE SERVICE MAY BE PROVIDED BY EITHER THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT OR BY A VOLUNTARY AGENCY," HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, THE SOCIETY FOR THE REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS HAD SINCE APRIL LAST YEAR BEEN OPERATING A PILOT PROJECT TO PROVIDE COUNSELLING FOR OFFENDERS WHO WERE GIVEN NON-CUSTODIAL SENTENCES.

MR CHAMBERS ALSO SAID THE TYPE OF REHABILITATIVE COUNSELLING PROVIDED DEPENDED ON THE NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED.

"THE USUAL APPROACH IS FOR THE SOCIAL WORKER TO DISCUSS ANY PROBLEMS THAT THE OFFENDER MAY HAVE WHILST TRYING TO DELVE INTO THE SITUATION WHICH LED TO THE CRIME BEING COMMITTED.

"ONCE A RAPPORT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, THE SOCIAL WORKER CAN PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND ADVICE ON MATTERS SUCH AS THE IMPROVEMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS OR SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, AND WAYS IN WHICH THE OFFENDER CAN AVOID BECOMING INVOLVED IN ANY FURTHER CRIMINAL ACTIVITY.

"ARRANGEMENTS CAN ALSO BE MADE FOR OFFENDERS TO BE PROVIDED WITH OTHER FORMS OF ASSISTANCE AS APPROPRIATE, SUCH AS SOCIAL SECURITY PAYMENTS OR HELP WITH EMPLOYMENT OR EDUCATION," HE SAID.

GOVT ASSISTS IN FUNDING REFUGEE VOCATIONAL TRAINING

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING, LIKE OTHER EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN HONG KONG, IS PROVIDED BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES USING THEIR OWN RESOURCES ASSISTED BY FUNDS FROM THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES AND THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT.

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON JACKIE CHAN.

"VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN OTHER PLACES OF FIRST ASYLUM IN THE REGION ARE PROVIDED, IF AT ALL, BY VOLUNTARY AGENCIES SUPPORTED IN PART BY UNHCR FUNDING," MR BARNES ADDED.

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NUISANCE TELEPHONE CALLS INVESTIGATED

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THE POLICE INVESTIGATE ALL COMPLAINTS OF NUISANCE TELEPHONE CALLS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON POON CHI-FAI, MR BARNES EXPLAINED THAT THE POLICE DID NOT TRACE OR MONITOR SUCH CALLS.

"BUT, WITH THE COMPLAINANT'S WRITTEN CONSENT, THEY MAY SEEK THE ASSISTANCE OF THE HONGKONG TELEPHONE COMPANY," HE ADDED.

NEITHER THE POLICE NOR THE TELEPHONE COMPANY CHARGED FOR ANY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED OR ACTION TAKEN, HE ADDED.

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EMPLOYMENT LAW STIPULATES BASIC OBLIGATIONS

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THE EMPLOYMENT ORDINANCE REGULATES GENERAL CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND STIPULATES EMPLOYERS' BASIC OBLIGATIONS AND EMPLOYEES' BASIC BENEFIT ENTITLEMENTS, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO THE HON PANG CHUN-HOI, MR BRIDGE SAID FURTHER OBLIGATION MIGHT BE PROVIDED FOR IN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS AND IT WAS ALWAYS OPEN TO EMPLOYERS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS ABOVE THOSE REQUIRED BY STATUTE OR CONTRACT.

/ "IN THE .....

"IN THE NATURE OF THINGS THESE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS ARE AT THE EMPLOYER'S DISCRETION.

"ANY EMPLOYEE WHO FEARS THAT HIS EMPLOYER MAY NOT ABIDE BY HIS PROMISES SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF HIS EMPLOYMENT ARE CLEARLY STATED IN THE EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT. THIS AFFORDS SUFFICIENT LEGAL PROTECTION," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE EMPLOYMENT ODRINANCE WAS KEPT UNDER CONSTANT REVIEW BY THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IN CONSULTATION WITH THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD.

"IT IS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME SO AS TO PROVIDE IMPROVED BENEFITS AND ELIMINATE LOOPHOLES.

"IF MEMBERS HAVE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT WILL ALWAYS BE HAPPY TO CONSIDER THEM," HE ADDED.

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#### WAX NOW USED IN SCHOOL SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS

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THE SCIENCE SYLLABUS FOR SECONDARY 1-3 HAS RECENTLY BEEN UPDATED AND EXPERIMENTS TO DETERMINE THE MELTING POINT OF A SUBSTANCE NOW USE WAX INSTEAD OF NAPHTHALENE, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON JOHN CHAMBERS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON CHIU HIN-KWONG, MR CHAMBERS SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WAS AWARE THAT EXPOSURE TO NAPHTHALENE MIGHT CAUSE HAEMOLYSIS (DESTRUCTION OF BLOOD CELLS) IN CHILDREN WHO SUFFERED FROM A. G6PD (GLUCOSE-6-PHOSPHATE DEHYDROGENASE) DEFICIENCY.

THE PHYSICS SYLLABUS FOR SECONDARY 4-5 HAD ALSO BEEN REVIEWED AND EXPERIMENTS INVESTIGATING THE COOLING CURVE OF NAPHTHALENE (A SUBSTANCE USED IN, FOR EXAMPLE, MOTHBALLS) HAD BEEN REPLACED WITH AN EXPERIMENT BASED ON THE USE OF N-OCTADECYL ALCOHOL.

"THESE CHANGES WILL BE REFLECTED IN THE REVISED SYLLABUS WHICH WILL BE READY FOR DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS THIS SUMMER," HE SAID.

MR CHAMBERS SAID THAT, IN ADDITION, PUBLISHERS OF SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS WERE REGULARLY ADVISED TO AVOID MAKING REFERENCES TO EXPERIMENTS USING NAPHTHALENE.

/SCHOOL INSPECTORS .....

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SCHOOL INSPECTORS CONSTANTLY REMINDED SCIENCE TEACHERS OF THE HAZARDOUS NATURE OF NAPHTHALENE AND ADVISED THEM TO USE SAFER ALTERNATIVES.

"SCHOOLS WILL ALSO BE ADVISED TO REQUEST PARENTS TO NOTIFY THEM IF THEIR CHILDREN ARE SUFFERING FROM G6PD DEFICIENCY AS WELL AS OTHER ACUTE ALLERGIES SO THAT PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN," HE SAID.

"IN THIS CONTEXT, ALL BABIES BORN IN PUBLIC SECTOR HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS ARE SCREENED TO DETECT DEFECTS IN G6PD ACTIVITIES, AND THOSE BORN IN PRIVATE HOSPITALS ARE SCREENED ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS.

"THE PARENTS OF THE CHILDREN FOUND TO HAVE G6PD DEFICIENCY ARE NOTIFIED AND GIVEN COUNSELLING ON THE PRECAUTIONS TO BE TAKEN CONCERNING EXPOSURE TO FOOD AND OTHER SUBSTANCES.

"G6PD DEFICIENT PERSONS CARRY A SPECIAL CARD ADVISING THEM OF SUBSTANCES TO BE AVOIDED."

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TASK FORCE TO STUDY GUEST HOUSE FIRE HAZARDS  
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AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL TASK FORCE WILL BE SET UP TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF FIRE HAZARDS TO THE RESIDENTS OF GUEST HOUSES SITUATED IN BUILDINGS LIKE CHUNGKING MANSIONS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR BARNES WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, WHO ASKED WHAT REMEDIAL MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN FOLLOWING THE FATAL FIRE IN CHUNGKING MANSIONS, TSIM SHA TSUI, ON FEBRUARY 21.

IN HIS WRITTEN REPLY MR BARNES SAID REMEDIAL MEASURES ALSO INCLUDED THE ONGOING MEASURES TAKEN BY THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO PROTECT THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF BOTH RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS FROM FIRE.

/"THESE INCLUDE .....

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"THESE INCLUDE EDUCATING THE PUBLIC THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA AND FIRE PREVENTION CAMPAIGNS, AND THE INCREASED VIGILANCE OF THE OPERATIONAL CREWS RESPONSIBLE FOR INSPECTING THE COMMON AREAS AND MEANS OF ESCAPE IN BUILDINGS," HE SAID.

BETWEEN JANUARY 1985 AND FEBRUARY THIS YEAR, THERE WERE 29 FIRE INCIDENTS IN CHUNGKING MANSIONS, HE SAID.

THE CAUSES OF THESE FIRES WERE: ELECTRICAL SHORT CIRCUITS, 10; SMOKING MATERIALS, 2; NAKED FLAMES FROM COOKING STOVES, 2; UNKNOWN CAUSES, 15.

MR BARNES SAID THAT AMONG THE 15 FIRES OF UNKNOWN CAUSE, THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THREE FIRES, INCLUDING THE ONE ON FEBRUARY 21, APPEARED SUSPICIOUS AND WERE REFERRED TO THE POLICE FOR INVESTIGATION.

TWO DAYS AFTER THE FIRE ON FEBRUARY 21, THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT CONDUCTED AN INSPECTION OF THE FIRE SERVICES INSTALLATIONS, THE COMMON AREAS AND THE MEANS OF ESCAPE IN THE BUILDINGS OF CHUNGKING MANSIONS.

"ACTION IS BEING TAKEN TO PROSECUTE EIGHT OFFENDERS FOR CAUSING OBSTRUCTION TO THE MEANS OF ESCAPE," HE SAID.

"FIRE HAZARD ABATEMENT NOTICES HAVE ALSO BEEN SERVED UPON 72 OFFENDERS IN CHUNGKING MANSIONS FOR MINOR OFFENCES SUCH AS THE WEDGING OPEN, OR THE REMOVAL, OF SMOKE LOBBY DOORS."

A SECOND INSPECTION WAS CONDUCTED ON MARCH 3 TO FOLLOW UP ON THE IRREGULARITIES FOUND IN THE FIRST INSPECTION AND TO IDENTIFY ANY CHANGE OF USE IN THE RESIDENTIAL SECTION OF THE BUILDINGS.

"THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT IS GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS WHICH THE OFFENDERS HAVE MADE IN CORRECTING THE IRREGULARITIES," MR BARNES SAID.

"AS REGARDS RESIDENTIAL UNITS USED FOR OTHER PURPOSES, THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT IDENTIFIED 16 UNREGISTERED FACTORIES AND 17 UNLICENSED FOOD PREMISES.

"DETAILS OF THESE HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AND TO THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT RESPECTIVELY FOR NECESSARY ACTION.

"FURTHER INSPECTIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED ON THE EXPIRY OF INDIVIDUAL ABATEMENT NOTICES. THEREAFTER, THE BUILDINGS WILL BE INSPECTED ABOUT EVERY SIX MONTHS."

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PRIOR APPROVAL TO JOIN PRIVATE SECTOR NOT REQUIRED  
\* \* \* \* \*

OFFICERS OTHER THAN PENSIONERS EMPLOYED BY THE GOVERNMENT ON AGREEMENT (CONTRACT) TERMS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO OBTAIN PRIOR APPROVAL TO JOIN THE PRIVATE SECTOR UPON EXPIRY OF THEIR AGREEMENTS, SIR DAVID FORD TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE IMPOSITION OF RULES SIMILAR TO THOSE GOVERNING PENSIONABLE OFFICERS ON AGREEMENT OFFICERS WOULD GIVE RISE TO LEGAL QUESTIONS APART FROM ACTING AS A POSSIBLE DISINCENTIVE TO RECRUITMENT, SIR DAVID SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY, IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHIEF SECRETARY, TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON JACKIE CHAN.

"LEGAL ADVICE IS THAT, IN THE EVENT OF LEGAL ACTION, ANY RESTRICTIONS OF THE KIND WOULD BE EXAMINED STRICTLY BY THE COURTS FOR THEIR REASONABLENESS IN RELATION TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL," HE SAID.

"CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF SUCH RESTRICTIONS COULD THEREFORE BE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE."

SIR DAVID SAID THAT AS AT JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR, 299 OUT OF 1,024 DIRECTORATE OFFICERS WERE EMPLOYED ON AGREEMENT TERMS.

"OF THOSE EMPLOYED ON AGREEMENT TERMS, 77 WERE RETIRED OFFICERS RE-EMPLOYED ON AGREEMENT TERMS.

"AS THESE 77 OFFICERS WERE PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED ON PENSIONABLE TERMS, THEY ARE GOVERNED BY THE RULES ON POST-RETIREMENT APPLICABLE TO PENSIONABLE OFFICERS," HE SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID THE RULES REQUIRED THEM TO SEEK PERMISSION TO TAKE UP OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT WITHIN THE TWO-YEAR PERIOD AFTER EXPIRY OF THEIR FINAL AGREEMENT.

HE ALSO ASSURED MEMBERS THAT THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY TOOK MEASURES TO ENSURE THE SUFFICIENT SUPPLY OF SUITABLE OFFICERS THROUGH ANNUAL DIRECTORATE SUCCESSION PLANNING.

"IN THIS PROCESS, WHICH THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH CO-ORDINATES, OFFICERS WITH POTENTIAL, AVENUES FOR THEIR ADVANCEMENT, AND THEIR TRAINING NEEDS ARE IDENTIFIED AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT PATH IS PLANNED," HE SAID.

"AT THE SAME TIME, THE PROMOTION AND TRANSFER OF STAFF TO FILL SENIOR POSTS IS FORECAST AND PLANNED.

"FURTHERMORE, THE GOVERNMENT'S EXISTING PRACTICE IS THAT THE RENEWAL OF THE CONTRACTS OF AGREEMENT OFFICERS IS NORMALLY ARRANGED, WHERE APPROPRIATE, EIGHT TO 10 MONTHS BEFORE EXPIRY.

"THIS NORMALLY PROVIDES SUFFICIENT LEAD TIME TO ENABLE REPLACEMENTS TO BE IDENTIFIED IN GOOD TIME IN CASES WHERE CONTRACTS ARE NOT BEING RENEWED."

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\$900 MILLION SPENT ON REFUGEES SINCE 1979

\* \* \* \*

TOTAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM JANUARY 1979 TO DATE WAS APPROXIMATELY \$900 MILLION, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RITA FAN, MR BARNES GAVE THE FOLLOWING BREAKDOWN OF THE GOVERNMENT'S EXPENDITURE ON VIETNAMESE REFUGEES UP TO MARCH THIS YEAR:

| YEAR   | EXPENDITURE         |
|--|---------------------|
| ----   | -----               |
| JANUARY 1979<br>TO JUNE 1982<br>(PRIOR TO<br>IMPLEMENTATION<br>OF CLOSED CENTRE<br>POLICY) | \$271.9M            |
| JUNE 1982 TO<br>MARCH 1983   | \$80.6M             |
| 1983/84  | \$98.1M             |
| 1984/85  | \$102.8M            |
| 1985/86  | \$117.8M            |
| 1986/87  | \$122.7M            |
| 1987/88  | \$126.0M (ESTIMATE) |
|  | -----               |
|  | \$919.9M            |

MR BARNES SAID THE ANNUAL BREAKDOWN OF COSTS PRIOR TO JUNE 1982 WAS NOT AVAILABLE.

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LIAO URGES ELECTORS TO VOTE  
\* \* \* \* \*

THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, MR DONALD LIAO, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) CALLED ON ALL ELECTORS TO CAST THEIR VOTES IN TOMORROW'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS.

MR LIAO SAID THAT HONG KONG'S SYSTEM OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION HAD EVOLVED FROM A FINE TRADITION AND DEVELOPED OVER THE YEARS TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

"WE NEED BOTH THE COLLECTIVE STRENGTH OF OUR COMMUNITY AND THE WISDOM OF OUR RESIDENTS TO HELP ITS FURTHER DEVELOPMENT," HE SAID.

ELECTIONS WERE PART OF THIS PROCESS TO SELECT THOSE WHO WOULD REPRESENT AND SPEAK FOR THE COMMUNITY ON THE DISTRICT BOARDS, HE SAID.

"WE SHOULD TAKE PART IN THIS PROCESS," MR LIAO ADDED.

HE NOTED THAT THE SUCCESS OF DISTRICT BOARDS DEPENDED TO A GREAT EXTENT ON THE CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY.

"THERE IS NO BETTER WAY TO PLEDGE OUR SUPPORT THAN TURNING OUT TO VOTE TOMORROW," HE SAID.

MR LIAO WILL BE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS OF THE ELECTIONS CLOSELY TOMORROW ALTHOUGH HE WILL HAVE TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE SINO-BRITISH JOINT LIAISON GROUP, WHICH IS BEING HELD IN HONG KONG.

HE WILL VISIT A POLLING STATION IN HAPPY VALLEY EARLY IN THE MORNING BEFORE ATTENDING THE JLG MEETING, HE WILL RETURN TO THE ELECTION CONTROL CENTRE AFTER THE MEETING IS COMPLETED.

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KOWLOON CITY VOTERS URGED TO SUPPORT DB ELECTIONS  
\* \* \* \* \*

KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT OFFICER, MR ALEX FONG, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPEALED TO THE DISTRICT'S 100,000 REGISTERED VOTERS TO CAST THEIR VOTES IN TOMORROW'S 1988 DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS.

"BY CASTING YOUR VOTE YOU ARE NOT ONLY ELECTING YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO THE DISTRICT BOARD BUT ARE ALSO EXERCISING YOUR CIVIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES," HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT BOARD HAD BECOME AN IMPORTANT DISTRICT CONSULTATION ORGANISATION IN PROVIDING A LINK BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

/ "IN THE .....

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"IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE DISTRICT BOARD HAD ACTIVELY IMPLEMENTED AND GIVEN ADVICES ON PROJECTS CONCERNING LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE, RECREATION AND SPORT, TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT, AS WELL AS COMMUNITY AFFAIRS. VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS OFTEN TAKE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION ON VIEWS EXPRESSED BY DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS," MR FONG SAID.

HE SAID THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE DISTRICT BOARD DEPENDED VERY MUCH ON ENTHUSIASTIC DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS, AND THEREFORE ELECTORS SHOULD EXERCISE THEIR CIVIC RIGHT TO ELECT THEIR REPRESENTATIVES TO THE BOARD.

THE KOWLOON CITY DISTRICT HAS EIGHT CONSTITUENCIES WITH 16 SEATS. EXCEPT THOSE IN HO MAN TIN NORTH, SOME 100,000 REGISTERED VOTERS IN THE OTHER SEVEN CONSTITUENCIES ARE URGED TO CAST THEIR VOTES TOMORROW AT DESIGNATED POLLING STATIONS WHICH WILL BE OPEN BETWEEN 7.30 AM AND 10.30 PM.

IN ORDER TO REMIND RESIDENTS TO VOTE TOMORROW, THE DISTRICT OFFICE HAS ORGANISED A PUBLICITY BUS AND FOUR BROADCASTING VANS TO TOUR AROUND BUSY LOCATIONS FROM 10 AM TO 9 PM AT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOUSING ESTATES, SHOPPING COMPLEXES, AN MTR STATION, FERRY CONCOURSES AND THEATRES IN THE DISTRICT.

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AIRY MESSAGE FOR VOTERS  
\* \* \* \* \*

A HELIUM BALLOON CARRYING A VOTING MESSAGE WAS FLOATED AT THE SHA TSUI ROAD PLAYGROUND IN TSUEN WAN TODAY (WEDNESDAY) TO REMIND REGISTERED ELECTORS TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS IN THE 1988 DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS TOMORROW.

A BRIEF CEREMONY, OFFICIATED BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR MICHAEL SUEN, WAS HELD PRIOR TO THE BALLOON -LAUNCHING AS PART OF A PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN FOR TOMORROW'S ELECTIONS.

TO HELP SPREAD THE ELECTIONS MESSAGE, VARIOUS ACTIVITIES WERE HELD IN THE PAST MONTH INCLUDING THE DISPLAY OF POSTERS AT PROMINENT LOCATIONS, THE SETTING UP OF VIDEO WALLS AND THE BROADCAST OF ANNOUNCEMENTS IN PUBLIC INTEREST (API'S) ON TELEVISION AND RADIO.

STARTING TODAY, PASSENGERS AT KCR TRAIN STATIONS WILL ALSO BE REMINDED OF THE ELECTION DAY THROUGH THE PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM.

/FOR TOMORROW'S .....

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FOR TOMORROW'S ELECTIONS, ANOTHER HELIUM BALLOON WITH A 'VOTE TODAY' MESSAGE WILL BE FLOATED AT STATUE SQUARE WHILE ADVERTISEMENTS WILL APPEAR IN MAJOR NEWSPAPERS TO REMIND REGISTERED ELECTORS TO BRING ALONG THEIR ID CARD AND POLL CARD AND TO CAST THEIR BALLOT IN PERSON AT THEIR DESIGNATED POLLING STATION.

ALL POLLING STATIONS WILL BE OPEN FROM 7.30 AM TO 10.30 PM TOMORROW.

ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE ON 5-8653911.

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GOVERNOR STRESSES IMPORTANCE OF TRADE WITH JAPAN  
\* \* \* \* \*

MUCH IMPORTANCE HAD BEEN ATTACHED TO PROMOTING HONG KONG TRADE WITH JAPAN WITH THE DEPARTURE TODAY OF A HIGH-POWERED DELEGATION TO JAPAN, THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) MORNING.

SPEAKING TO REPORTERS BEFORE LEAVING FOR TOKYO, THE GOVERNOR SAID JAPAN WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO HONG KONG IN TERMS OF TRADE.

"WE ARE BEGINNING TO MAKE INROADS INTO THE JAPANESE MARKET," HE SAID.

"OUR EXPORTS WENT UP BY SOME 53 PER CENT LAST YEAR, BUT WE HAVE A LOT MORE WORK TO DO. WE HAVE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY NOW TO DO IT, BECAUSE THE RATES OF EXCHANGE OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR ARE FAVOURABLE TO US EXPORTING TO JAPAN," HE ADDED.

"I FEEL SURE THAT THE WORK THAT WILL BE DONE BY THE HONG KONG/JAPAN BUSINESS CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE WILL BE VERY USEFUL TO PROMOTING TRADE," SIR DAVID SAID.

SIR DAVID WAS ACCOMPANIED BY LADY WILSON AND MEMBERS OF THE HONG KONG/JAPAN BUSINESS CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE, INCLUDING SIR S.Y. CHUNG, MISS LYDIA DUNN, MR WILLIAM PURVES, MR THOMAS CLYDESDALE, MR HAMISH MACLEOD, MR JACK TANG, MR JAMES WU, MR MARTIN BARROW, MR DENNIS TING, MR SETO FAI AND MR JACK SO.

SEEING THE GOVERNOR OFF WERE THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR DAVID FORD, AND THE ACTING CONSUL-GENERAL OF JAPAN, MR MASAKI SAITO.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT TOMORROW'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS, SIR DAVID SAID HE WOULD BE WATCHING WITH GREAT INTEREST FROM JAPAN.

"I WILL BE GETTING A REPORT ON THE ELECTIONS WHEN I AM IN JAPAN," HE SAID.

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AS CAN BE SEEN FROM TABLE 1, THE DOMESTIC EXPORT VOLUME OF MOST COMMODITY GROUPS INCREASED IN 1987 WHEN COMPARED WITH 1986.

THE MORE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES WERE IN METAL ORES AND SCRAP (+54 PER CENT); TEXTILE FABRICS (+43 PER CENT); TEXTILE YARN AND THREAD (+28 PER CENT); METAL MANUFACTURES (+27 PER CENT); ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS (+20 PER CENT); WATCHES AND CLOCKS (+18 PER CENT) AS WELL AS CLOTHING (+17 PER CENT).

NEVERTHELESS, A DECREASE IN DOMESTIC EXPORT VOLUME WAS RECORDED IN TRAVEL GOODS, HANDBAGS AND SIMILAR ARTICLES (-1 PER CENT).

PRICES OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS OF MOST COMMODITY GROUPS INCREASED OVER THE SAME PERIOD.

THESE INCLUDED CLOTHING (+7 PER CENT); TEXTILE FABRICS (+6 PER CENT); TEXTILE YARN AND THREAD (+5 PER CENT); TRAVEL GOODS, HANDBAGS AND SIMILAR ARTICLES (+4 PER CENT); METAL ORES AND SCRAP (+4 PER CENT); FOOTWEAR (+4 PER CENT); RADIOS OF ALL KINDS (+4 PER CENT); TEXTILE MADE-UPS AND RELATED ARTICLES (+4 PER CENT); DOMESTIC ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES (+3 PER CENT); METAL MANUFACTURES (+2 PER CENT) AS WELL AS WATCHES AND CLOCKS (+1 PER CENT).

HOWEVER, A DECREASE IN DOMESTIC EXPORT PRICES WAS REGISTERED FOR ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS (-2 PER CENT).

THE CHANGES IN THE VALUE, UNIT VALUE AND VOLUME OF IMPORTS BY END-USE CATEGORY FOR DECEMBER AND THE WHOLE OF 1987 AS COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING PERIODS IN 1986 ARE SHOWN IN TABLE 2.

AS PRESENTED IN TABLE 2, IMPORTED FOODSTUFFS INCREASED BY 12 PER CENT IN VOLUME IN 1987 COMPARED WITH 1986. SIGNIFICANT GROWTH WAS RECORDED IN SUGAR; FISH AND FISH PREPARATIONS; FRUIT AS WELL AS MEAT AND MEAT PREPARATIONS.

HOWEVER, DECREASES IN IMPORT VOLUME WERE REGISTERED FOR TEA AND COFFEE AS WELL AS SOYA BEAN OIL, PEANUT OIL AND LARD.

OVER THE SAME PERIOD, THE IMPORT VOLUME OF CONSUMER GOODS INCREASED BY 36 PER CENT, THE ITEMS WITH MORE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES BEING HOUSEHOLD ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES; FOOTWEAR; RADIOS, TELEVISION SETS, GRAMOPHONES, RECORDS, TAPE RECORDERS AND AMPLIFIERS AS WELL AS CAMERAS, FLASHLIGHT APPARATUS AND SUPPLIES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY.

/THE IMPORT .....

THE IMPORT VOLUME OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES ROSE BY 33 PER CENT IN 1987 COMPARED WITH 1986. THE MAJOR INCREASES WERE RECORDED IN RAW COTTON; MAN-MADE FIBRES; WOOD, LUMBER AND CORK; PLASTIC MOULDING MATERIALS AS WELL AS CRUDE ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE MATERIALS.

IMPORTS OF FUELS INCREASED BY 3 PER CENT IN VOLUME IN 1987 AS COMPARED WITH 1986.

IN THE CAPITAL GOODS CATEGORY, THE IMPORT VOLUME INCREASED BY 35 PER CENT IN 1987 OVER 1986. THERE WERE SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT; TEXTILE MACHINERY AS WELL AS OFFICE MACHINES.

IMPORT PRICES OF ALL END-USE CATEGORIES ROSE IN 1987 AS COMPARED WITH 1986, RANGING FROM 2 PER CENT FOR FOODSTUFFS TO 7 PER CENT FOR CAPITAL GOODS.

THE CHANGES IN THE VALUE, UNIT VALUE AND VOLUME OF RE-EXPORTS BY END-USE CATEGORY FOR DECEMBER AND THE WHOLE OF 1987 AS COMPARED WITH THE CORRESPONDING PERIODS IN 1986 ARE SHOWN IN TABLE 3.

AS PRESENTED IN TABLE 3, THE RE-EXPORT VOLUME OF MOST END-USE CATEGORIES INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY IN 1987 WHEN COMPARED WITH 1986, RANGING FROM 16 PER CENT FOR FOODSTUFFS TO 53 PER CENT FOR CONSUMER GOODS. HOWEVER, THE VOLUME OF RE-EXPORTS OF FUELS DECREASED BY 13 PER CENT.

PRICES OF RE-EXPORTS OF FUELS INCREASED BY 11 PER CENT IN 1987 OVER 1986. THOSE OF CONSUMER GOODS AND RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES ROSE BY 2 PER CENT AND 3 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY, WHILE THE PRICES OF FOODSTUFFS DROPPED BY 1 PER CENT.

FURTHER DETAILS ARE CONTAINED IN THE DECEMBER 1987 ISSUE OF THE "HONG KONG TRADE INDEX NUMBERS" AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE AROUND MARCH 14 AT \$2.50 PER COPY.

ENQUIRIES REGARDING REGULAR SUBSCRIPTION TO THIS REPORT MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT AT FRENCH MISSION BUILDING, HONG KONG (TEL. 5-8428802) AND ENQUIRIES IN TRADE INDEXES TO THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT (TEL. 5-8234918).

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TABLE 1: INCREASES IN DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY COMMODITY GROUP.

| COMMODITY GROUP                                   | COMPARING JAN-DEC 1987<br>WITH JAN-DEC 1986 |                    |             | COMPARING DEC. 1987<br>WITH DEC. 1986 |                    |             |
|---|---|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
|   | VALUE<br>%                                  | UNIT<br>VALUE<br>% | VOLUME<br>% | VALUE<br>%                            | UNIT<br>VALUE<br>% | VOLUME<br>% |
| CLOTHING  | 25  | 7                  | 17          | 13                                    | 7                  | 6           |
| TEXTILE FABRICS                                   | 51  | 6                  | 43          | 37                                    | 6                  | 29          |
| TEXTILE YARN AND<br>THREAD                        | 35  | 5                  | 28          | 23                                    | 8                  | 14          |
| TEXTILE MADE-UPS<br>AND RELATED ARTICLES          | 10  | 4                  | 6           | 7                                     | 2                  | 5           |
| RADIOS OF ALL KINDS                               | 13  | 4                  | 8           | -15                                   | 9                  | -22         |
| ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS                             | 18  | -2                 | 20          | 50                                    | -2                 | 53          |
| FOOTWEAR  | 19  | 4                  | 14          | 26                                    | 6                  | 19          |
| METAL MANUFACTURES                                | 30  | 2                  | 27          | 39                                    | 3                  | 35          |
| METAL ORES AND SCRAP                              | 61  | 4                  | 54          | 88                                    | 5                  | 79          |
| WATCHES AND CLOCKS                                | 18  | 1                  | 18          | 34                                    | 3                  | 30          |
| TRAVEL GOODS,<br>HANDBAGS AND<br>SIMILAR ARTICLES | 4   | 4                  | -1          | 7                                     | 6                  | 1           |
| DOMESTIC ELECTRICAL<br>APPLIANCES                 | 16  | 3                  | 13          | 6                                     | 3                  | 3           |
| ALL COMMODITIES                                   | 27  | 3                  | 23          | 23                                    | 3                  | 19          |

## NOTES FOR TABLES 1 TO 3:

\* INSIGNIFICANT, I.E. LESS THAN 0.5 PER CENT

PERCENTAGE CHANGES ARE CALCULATED FROM TRADE INDEXES TAKEN TO MORE DECIMAL PLACES THAN THOSE TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE "HONG KONG TRADE INDEX NUMBERS". THEY MAY THEREFORE DIFFER FROM THE PERCENTAGE CHANGES TO BE COMPUTED DIRECTLY FROM THE FIGURES TO BE PUBLISHED.

/TABLE 2: .....

TABLE 2: INCREASES IN IMPORTS BY END-USE CATEGORY

| END-USE CATEGORY                       | COMPARING JAN-DEC 1987<br>WITH JAN-DEC 1986 |                    |             | COMPARING DEC. 1987<br>WITH DEC. 1986 |                    |             |
|--|---|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
|  | VALUE<br>%                                  | UNIT<br>VALUE<br>% | VOLUME<br>% | VALUE<br>%                            | UNIT<br>VALUE<br>% | VOLUME<br>% |
| FOODSTUFFS                             | 14  | 2                  | 12          | 32                                    | 3                  | 28          |
| CONSUMER GOODS                         | 41  | 4                  | 36          | 42                                    | 5                  | 36          |
| RAW MATERIALS AND<br>SEMI-MANUFACTURES | 38  | 4                  | 33          | 37                                    | 6                  | 30          |
| FUELS                                  | 7   | 3                  | 3           | 22                                    | 16                 | 5           |
| CAPITAL GOODS                          | 44  | 7                  | 35          | 60                                    | 10                 | 45          |
| ALL COMMODITIES                        | 37  | 4                  | 32          | 41                                    | 6                  | 33          |

TABLE 3: INCREASES IN RE-EXPORTS BY END-USE CATEGORY

| END-USE CATEGORY                       | COMPARING JAN-DEC 1987<br>WITH JAN-DEC 1986 |                    |             | COMPARING DEC. 1987<br>WITH DEC. 1986 |                    |             |
|--|---|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
|  | VALUE<br>%                                  | UNIT<br>VALUE<br>% | VOLUME<br>% | VALUE<br>%                            | UNIT<br>VALUE<br>% | VOLUME<br>% |
| FOODSTUFFS                             | 15  | -1                 | 16          | 37                                    | *                  | 37          |
| CONSUMER GOODS                         | 56  | 2                  | 53          | 50                                    | 2                  | 47          |
| RAW MATERIALS AND<br>SEMI-MANUFACTURES | 48  | 3                  | 43          | 50                                    | 6                  | 41          |
| FUELS                                  | -4  | 11                 | -13         | 44                                    | 17                 | 22          |
| CAPITAL GOODS                          | 49  | *                  | 49          | 61                                    | 1                  | 59          |
| ALL COMMODITIES                        | 49  | 2                  | 46          | 51                                    | 4                  | 46          |

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RESIGNATIONS FROM CIVIL SERVICE STEADY

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RESIGNATIONS FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE WERE STEADY, AVERAGING 1.89 PER CENT OF THE STRENGTH OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR TONY EASON, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

AND THERE WAS NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT FINAL FIGURES OF RESIGNATIONS FOR THE 1987/88 FISCAL YEAR WOULD VARY FROM THAT TREND, HE SAID.

MR EASON WAS COMMENTING ON A NEWSPAPER REPORT THAT CIVIL SERVANT RESIGNATIONS IN THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 1987/88 HAD INCREASED BY 34 PER CENT COMPARED TO THE FULL 12 MONTHS OF 1986/87.

WHILE NOT DISPUTING THE CONCLUSION OF THE ARITHMETIC INVOLVED, MR EASON SAID THE RESIGNATIONS HAD TO BE TAKEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SIZE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE AS A WHOLE.

IN 1982/83, FOR EXAMPLE, THE STRENGTH OF THE CIVIL SERVICE WAS 154,034 AND RESIGNATIONS TOTALLED 3,943, REPRESENTING 2.56 PER CENT. RESIGNATIONS IN THE SUCCEEDING FOUR YEARS WERE 1.93 PER CENT, 1.98 PER CENT, 1.56 PER CENT AND 1.43 PER CENT RESPECTIVELY.

MR EASON CONFIRMED THAT FROM APRIL 1987 TO THE END OF JANUARY THIS YEAR THERE HAD BEEN 3,334 RESIGNATIONS (INCLUDING FIVE DIRECTORATE LEVEL STAFF) BUT LIKENED THAT TO 3,336 RESIGNATIONS IN 1984/85 WHICH ALSO INCLUDED FIVE DIRECTORATE STAFF. HE NOTED THAT 13 DIRECTORATE LEVEL STAFF RESIGNED IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

"THE NUMBER OF RESIGNATIONS THIS YEAR IS BY NO MEANS UNUSUAL," HE SAID.

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NEW MEDICAL CLINIC OPENS IN SAI KUNG

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MEDICAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES IN SAI KUNG WILL BE FURTHER UPGRADED WITH THE OPENING OF A NEW CLINIC IN THE DISTRICT TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE NEW CLINIC, LOCATED IN MAN NIN STREET IN SAI KUNG TOWN, IS NAMED AFTER MADAM MONA FONG, DIRECTOR OF SHAW BROTHERS (HK) LIMITED, IN APPRECIATION OF THE \$3 MILLION DONATION MADE BY THE SHAW FOUNDATION TOWARDS THE CAPITAL COST OF THE PROJECT.

/MADAM FONG .....

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MADAM FONG THIS AFTERNOON OFFICIATED AT THE OPENING CEREMONY WITH THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR K.L. THONG, AND SIR RUN RUN SHAW OF THE SHAW FOUNDATION.

IN HIS ADDRESS, DR THONG SAID IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO BRING THE MEDICAL FACILITIES CLOSE TO THOSE USING SUCH SERVICES.

"TODAY, THIS CLINIC, BUILT AS IT IS IN THE CENTRE OF SAI KUNG, WILL MAKE THE SERVICES IT PROVIDES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA," HE SAID.

AT THE SAME TIME, IT WOULD ALSO BOOST THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH FACILITIES IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, AS IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO EXPAND SUCH SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE NEW TOWNS.

IN THANKING THE SHAW FOUNDATION FOR ITS TIMELY GESTURE, DR THONG SAID THE DONATION WAS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF CONSTANT CO-OPERATION BETWEEN PHILANTHROPISTS SUCH AS SIR RUN RUN AND THE GOVERNMENT IN IMPROVING MEDICAL SERVICES.

MADAM FONG SAID SHE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO BE INVOLVED IN THE WORTHY PROJECT, BECAUSE IT WAS A PUBLIC SERVICE FOR THE SAI KUNG DISTRICT WHERE SHE HAD LIVED FOR MANY YEARS.

AFTERWARDS, MADAM FONG UNVEILED A COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE.

THE MONA FONG CLINIC IS A FOUR-STOREY BUILDING OCCUPYING AN AREA OF 4,183 SQUARE METRES.

IT PROVIDES GENERAL OUT-PATIENT SERVICES, ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICE (FROM 9 AM TO 5 PM DAILY), OPHTHALMIC, CHEST AND DENTAL SERVICES. IT ALSO HAS A 12-BED MATERNITY WARD.

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AFD HEAD TO HOST SPRING RECEPTION  
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THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, DR LAWRENCE LEE, WILL HOST A SPRING RECEPTION ON FRIDAY (MARCH 11) FOR RURAL AND FARMERS' LEADERS AND PROMINENT FIGURES IN THE PRIMARY PRODUCTION INDUSTRIES AND WHOLESALE MARKETING BUSINESS.

THE RECEPTION WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE OCEAN PALACE RESTAURANT IN OCEAN CENTRE, TSIM SHA TSUI, KOWLOON, FROM 4.30 PM TO 6.30 PM.

GUESTS INVITED TO THE RECEPTION ALSO INCLUDE SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGCO AD-HOC GROUP FORMED TO STUDY THE WASTE DISPOSAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1987.

/THE GUESTS .....

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THE GUESTS WILL BE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN TASTING PORK FROM PIGS RAISED UNDER THE INNOVATIVE EFFLUENT-FREE PIG RAISING TECHNIQUE AND UNDER THE CONVENTIONAL METHOD.

TWO SPECIAL DISHES - ROASTED PIG AND FRIED PORK FILLET - WILL BE PREPARED FOR THE OCCASION.

VERDICTS ON THE TASTING SESSION WILL BE GIVEN BEFORE THE END OF THE RECEPTION.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE SPRING RECEPTION ON FRIDAY (MARCH 11). THE PORK TASTING SESSION WILL BEGIN AT 5.15 PM.

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#### PRISONERS PASS PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

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TWENTY-THREE PRISONERS WERE PRESENTED CERTIFICATES TODAY (WEDNESDAY) FOR PASSING PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS AND COMPLETING COURSES OFFERED BY THE EXTRAMURAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY.

THE REV. SIK CHI-WAI OF PO LIN MONASTERY OFFICIATED AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY HELD AT SHEK PIK PRISON.

OF THE 23 PRISONERS, ONE ACHIEVED PASSES IN SIX SUBJECTS AND ANOTHER RECEIVED A DISTINCTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN LAST YEAR'S HONG KONG SCHOOL OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION.

SEVEN OTHER INMATES PASSED THE PITMAN (LONDON) EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. FOUR OF THEM OBTAINED A FIRST CLASS MERIT PASS.

THE REST WERE PRESENTED CERTIFICATES FOR COMPLETING COURSES ON PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMICS AND ON MONOCHROME DRAWING OFFERED BY THE EXTRAMURAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT. THE TWO COURSES LASTED FOR SIX MONTHS.

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TSUEN WAN DB COMMITTEE TO MEET

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MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE TSUEN WAN DISTRICT BOARD WILL BE BRIEFED ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE DISTRICT AT A MEETING ON FRIDAY.

A REPORT ON THE LATEST PROGRESS OF WORKS FOR WATER SUPPLY TO MA WAN WILL BE TABLED.

QUESTIONS ON THE PROVISION OF A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON YEUNG UK ROAD WILL ALSO BE RAISED.

THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 2.30 PM IN THE MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL, SECOND FLOOR, TSUEN WAN STATION MULTI-STOREY CARPARK BUILDING, 174-208 CASTLE PEAK ROAD, TSUEN WAN.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE MEETING.

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VEHICLE BAN IN CENTRAL TO BE RELAXED

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THE EXISTING RESTRICTION UNDER WHICH VEHICLES EXCEPT TAXIS AND PRIVATE CARS ARE BANNED FROM ENTERING THE LAYBY IN CONNAUGHT PLACE IN CENTRAL, ADJACENT TO THE EXCHANGE SQUARE, WILL BE RELAXED FROM 10 AM ON SATURDAY (MARCH 12).

MOTORCYCLES WILL ALSO BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE LAYBY FROM THAT TIME.

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