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Governor's public meeting

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The following is the transcript of the Governor, the Rt Hon Christopher Patten's public meeting held at the City Hall today (Friday):

Governor: This is the fourth time that I've given my Governor's address to the Legislative Council here in Hong Kong and after each of those speeches I've had a public meeting or a number of public meetings, at which you, the people of Hong Kong, have had the opportunity of coming along and asking me questions, either about the Legislative Council speech that I've given or about any other matters that may concern you. For me it's an important part of the openness and accountability of your Government in Hong Kong.

I don't want to make a long speech this evening because this is very much an occasion for you. I want to give as many as possible of you, the chance of asking questions and all I want to do at the outset is to remind you all of the established ground rules. What I'll do in a moment is to ask for a show of hands and then I'll choose three or four people from the audience near the microphones which are round about. I'll give you the order in which I'd like you to ask your question and then I very much hope that when you ask your question you can do so as briefly as possible. Now I say that every year, but sometimes people are a bit long-winded but if you take a long time to ask a question or if you make a speech rather than ask a question, it's just being unfair to everybody else because fewer people can actually get their question asked. I'll try to be brief in giving my answers, if you're brief in asking your questions.

So, can we have agreement at the outset that everybody will be as brief as possible in asking their questions. Thank you very much indeed. All right, that's a promise.

Now the most questions we've ever got in was I think in Sha Tin a couple of years ago, when we got through about 12 or 13 questions in just over an hour, about an hour and ten minutes and I'd like to see if we can get at least that many today. The one other thing I'd ask is, if somebody has already asked a question about your subject, there isn't very much point in asking a question on the same subject. I mean, I don't mind giving you the same answer but we should try to cover as many subjects as possible, O K.

Right. Now it's over to you. Let's start with a show of hands. We'll first of all start down here and then there is a gentleman over here, in a blazer and a red tie. Do you want to come down to No. 2. Yes, yes. And the gentleman in the striped shirt there, near No.4. Yes, you, you, you, yes. If you come down to No. 4. And then there's a gentleman in a white short-sleeved shirt, near 3. If you go up to No. 3. Yes, you, you, you, yes. OK. But first of all here.

Question (in Chinese): Mr Patten, I'd like to thank you for showing your concern for the disabled over the past few years. You have helped us to solve our transportation problems, employment and tax problems. I think now is the time for you to help us to help ourselves. For the physically disabled for example, if we had to help ourselves, education is of paramount importance. I don't know if you're aware of this, a lot of the primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong are not adapted to wheelchair disabled or other disabled. There's only, probably, one such district school that accommodates to us. The rest of us have to go to special schools. This is not ideal in any way. A lot of the times they don't have any choice, they have to go to a particular school which might be in a band four or a band five. I hope you can help them in this respect.

Secondly, for adult physically disabled people, I wonder if you are aware of this as well. There are hundreds of us who are actually mobile but because of accidents at work or otherwise, they are wheelchair bound. Is there any way, Mr Patten, for you to create a resource centre for all these people to come together to encourage each other to solve each other's problems? Governor Patten, I know last year the Government has allocated funds for five ex-mentally ill patients or their parents to establish a resource centre. This year you have committed eight resource centres for the chronically ill. I wonder if you could allocate a certain amount of funds for organisations dealing with the physically disabled to set up similar resource centres, so that they are able to help themselves. I think you've already given a lot of fish to the disabled, so to speak. Can't you give us some cod liver oil so that they can go and fish those fish themselves?

Thank you.

Governor: I think as we try in Hong Kong to establish welfare programmes which are commensurate with our prosperity as a community, one of our most important priorities is to ensure that those with disabilities are properly integrated into the whole community. That's the civilised and decent way of behaving, to ensure that everybody can make the absolute maximum of their considerable abilities. The key to integration, in my view, is employment and the key to employment is education and training. Now we have made some progress, as you know, in improving training. But I hear what you say about the importance of adequate school facilities for those with a disability. You will know better than me, that with older buildings there are quite often very considerable expenses involved in modifying a building to make it available easily for those in a wheelchair or with some other mechanical device that they need to move around. But I can assure you that I will speak to the Education Department and see what programme we have and what progress we've made in providing for students with a disability.

I also agree with you about the importance of resource centres. Let's be clear about one of their considerable benefits. One of their benefits is reminding people, or showing people, that they're not on their own. That they're not islands, that there are other people with the same problems and challenges as them who can share the way they rise to those challenges and who can provide one another with more initiative and frankly, even more courage to face the problems of daily living. We're having some success in providing centres for the chronically ill and I will certainly look at whether we should, and could, provide the sort of centre that you are talking about, for people with disabilities, people who are wheelchair bound and people who cope spectacularly well with problems of transport, with problems getting to work. There's a very good coffee shop which some of you may have been to, near Pacific Place, which is entirely run by mostly young people with disabilities. One of the most interesting things is to hear them individually tell you how they get to work, what a challenge it is, the difficulties that they have to go through. So, I hope that we can perhaps follow up your advice and maybe if I can have another meeting like this next year I'll be able to report progress on that.

Gentleman No. 2.

Question: His Excellency, Sir, Chris Patten, under your able guidance and administration, everything has gone so well. I will say a few words on the British Empire. Hong Kong's so tiny. A fisherman's island to have progressed so well British administration, but what chance do we have now, after 1997. I will be leaving us but the one thing I should appeal to LegCo Members to give full co-operation, 100%. Nobody's perfect on this earth. We are all, all fallible (inaudible). So in order to get the good relationship with China, my humble opinion is that something should be done, one should sacrifice. Nobody is perfect. The Chinese may demand something but I think if we think that something can be done should be done now and I personally feel very strongly that we can change our mind, you can be a little flexible, we should not be rigid and I personally appeal to LegCo Members (inaudible) here I am, devoted my whole life in Hong Kong, more than 45 years. I link with the Lions Association, I have done service programme and blind, this and that, Hong Kong Eye Bank. I feel that I'm more comfortable with Hong Kong people. Some people say "are you leaving Hong Kong?" I say, "No, no, I am identified with Hong Kong, I am (inaudible) with Hong Kong, I am linked with Hong Kong, so why should I leave Hong Kong?".

Governor: The first thing I want to say is that Hong Kong is a 97%/98% Chinese community, so the main credit for the success of Hong Kong goes to the men and women and young people who have worked so hard, who have shown so much entrepreneurial skill, who have shown so much energy over the years, in creating a community which others regard as a marvellous example, not just of how to run an economy but of how to run a free society. I think the main contribution which governments have made over the years is to provide a framework within which people can excel and prosper and live their own lives in decency. And that framework, we usually call the rule of law. I believe that if the people of Hong Kong wish that framework to continue, if they are sufficiently committed to the rule of law continuing, it will, and that Hong Kong will continue to show the world how to live a decent, free and prosperous life.

I agree with you that we do need to co-operate, all of us. The Hong Kong Government needs to co-operate with the future Government of Hong Kong and we have put forward proposals for doing that. The Government and the Legislative Council need to co-operate, as I'm sure we will be able to do. What none of us should forget is that what is happening in 1997 is one of the most important events in the world, not just for this decade but for this generation. That's why people will be watching here so closely, because of the implications for everyone of success in Hong Kong. And I believe that we will be successful if we're sufficiently determined to stand up for the values that we've cherished over the years.

Question: (in Chinese) Thank you Mr Patten. I've read your Policy Report and I think there are two questions which I must raise. In the two years to come, there are two things you should do, Mr Patten. First of all, you must solve problems dealing with the economic and livelihood of Hong Kong. Do something practical; don't talk so much. That will be beneficial to prosperity and stability. Don't try and steal the limelight.

The second issue - a transitional issue. You must co-operate and discuss matters with the Chinese Government. You must also implement the consensual opinions and agreements reached by the British and Chinese Governments, and don't put further obstacles in our way. So, I have two recommendations for you. That's all, Mr Patten. Thank you.

Governor: Thank you very much indeed. Well, I think we know where your sympathies lie. I won't try to steal the limelight, so I'll be extremely brief. First of all, I very much agree with you about the importance of getting the economic and livelihood issues right. That's why I'm very pleased that our economy has grown by 18% in the last three years, which is a very considerable record. That's why I'm so pleased that we've been able in each of those years to cut taxes and increase the amount of money in Hong Kong's own Reserves. And that's why I'm pleased, as well, that we've been able to increase social welfare spending by 47% in real terms over that three year period. I think that's a real success for the people of Hong Kong and I'm delighted that I've been able to be Governor while that's been happening.

Secondly, I'm very much in favour of co-operation - and co-operation is a two-way street. I'm delighted that the Chinese Government, when they met Mr Rifkin, the new British Foreign Secretary, ten days ago, accepted our proposals for co-operation on matters like a through-train for the Civil Service, on matters like co-operation with the Preparatory Committee. But if you look back over the last three years - or thirteen years - I don't think you could reasonably argue that when it came to co-operation it was the Hong Kong Government that had been at fault.

Question: (in Chinese) Thank you Mr Patten, a few questions. I would also like to give you a few recommendations; and I hope you can answer my questions, of course. First of all, on housing, there are over 300,000 on the general waiting list. Originally, you were going to build 60,000 public housing units but from '90-'92 only a few thousand were finished; and in '93 you said there were to be 38 hectares which would be ready by 1996; from there, you can only get 25,000 units. How are you going to deal with all those people on the general waiting list. They currently are also trying to promote the HOS scheme, first of all to increase property prices.

Well, the second issue: unemployment is really very high. When a lot of people are out of work, how are they supposed to pay for the houses they're buying? I think banks would be involved in this. I hope you can build more public housing in order to help the poorer strata of our society.

Next issue: education and law and order, both are related. We have nine years education at the moment and every year when students finish Form 3, a lot of them are left behind. These are generally the 14 to 15 year olds, they are therefore unable to find work - and nobody would employ them either. All these students can do is to loiter on our streets and would thus pose a threat to law and order in our society. I hope the Hong Kong Government can allocate one-tenth of the Reserves, as Dr Law Cheung-kwok said. Could you set aside the fund, not for adults but for vocational training type schools in order to train all these young people who have left Form 3?

In addition, could you also allocate funds -- Right, I'll make it short then. Could you allocate funds to build factories to create careers for those who are unemployed now?

Right, the third issue: medical - student health. Now you've cancelled the previous Student Health Service Scheme, I think this has put a lot of pressure on parents. I hope, Mr Patten, you could actually amalgamate the two schemes, i.e. the existing one and the new one. The new one, there will be a general medical check-up for schools. Could you not include this into the existing scheme? Thank you Mr Patten.

Governor: Can I just say that it is a problem if you ask a lot of questions because, I mean there are about four or five questions in that, but I'll try to answer them all. First of all on housing, and I just correct you: I only arrived in Hong Kong in 1992. It may seem like longer but from 1990-92 I was involved elsewhere.

When I came to Hong Kong, in my first Policy Address I committed us to completing 100 flats a day, where we've actually been completing about 117, so there are 18,000 more families with their public rental units than would have been the case had we not exceeded our original target. We're committed to building 140,000 units by 2001, which should enable us to make a further reduction in the waiting list. The waiting list stands at present at about 150,000. We reduced the waiting list in the last two or three years from nine years to seven years. We now want to get it down from seven years to five years in urban areas. It's about, I think, four years in the New Territories. But I agree with you completely that we need to continue with a vigorous public housing building programme. We've got to make sure the infrastructure is available to that and we've committed about \$8 billion to the infrastructure. But we mustn't forget other housing needs as well, including all those who do want to own their own home, which is why we've put more resources into sandwich-class housing schemes, into the cheaper loans for people who want to buy their own housing and so on. But you're quite right in the emphasis you place on housing, which is, I think, the most important issue still on our social agenda.

Secondly, unemployment. There may be some people in the audience who aren't from Hong Kong who may be surprised that unemployment is such a lively issue in Hong Kong, because the rate in Hong Kong at 3.5% is a lot lower than people from other prosperous communities are used to. But I think there's so much concern about unemployment in Hong Kong because we do believe very strongly that the basis of any decent social policy is that everybody should have the opportunity of earning their own living, of bringing up their family with the living they've made at work, and we've had a strong commitment over the years to absolutely full employment, and we've still got that commitment. We've announced a number of proposals which I hope will enhance the competitiveness of our industries and which I hope will help those who are unemployed and those who are looking for work.

You mentioned education and the relationship between education and law and order. At present, over 40% of those who get Form 5, stay on in education, and well over 80% of those who get to Form 7, go on to either university or technical training. So the figures are pretty good, though I'd like to see them further improved. You're absolutely right to talk about the importance of vocational training. There are at present in Hong Kong about 155,000 a year involved in some sort of adult education, very often vocational training at colleges like the one at Tsing Yi, or elsewhere, and I hope that we can further increase vocational training over the next few years.

I quite take your point about the importance of making sure there are enough factories in Hong Kong. We've got factory estates and we're committed to developing another one. But what's important is to have employers moving into the factories with the ideas to produce goods and the markets to sell them to. We shouldn't think that we just have to depend on manufacturing; we used to in Hong Kong. But now, about 85%/86% of our employment is in service industries which are just as important in creating jobs and creating resources in the community. And we've set up a committee under the new Financial Secretary, a task force under the new Financial Secretary, Donald Tsang, to try to give the maximum support to service industries - as well as, of course, the manufacturing industry - the maximum support to service industries so they'll produce new jobs as well.

One final point on employment. In the last three years we've created 270,000 new jobs. That's a net figure. There's been a 10% increase in the number of jobs in Hong Kong but there's been an 11% increase in the number of people in the work-force. That's not because of people all coming in through job programmes. That's because of returning emigrants, it's because of immigrants from China, it's because of demographic changes with more young people coming into the work-force and not as many retiring from it, though there has been a small addition, as well, of people who've been part of the Labour Importation Scheme, but that's a very small part of the figure. So the main problem we've had is that even though we've been increasing the number of jobs, the number of people in the work-force has increased by slightly more.

Question (in Chinese): You're constantly saying that you want to improve issues of livelihood but the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Michael Suen, has not paid attention to us. A lot of people have been trying to help social workers related to the Neighbourhood Level Community Development Project. Could you just answer me whether you support or you don't support that particular community project?

Governor: Well for those who don't know about it, let me tell you one or two things about the Neighbourhood Level Community Development Project. There are 54 teams in the NLCDP and they started work about 20 years ago, working in some of our most deprived areas, working very often extremely effectively to deal with community problems in run down housing areas, in temporary housing areas, and elsewhere where there was social deprivation and need. The argument at the moment is whether or not, even when housing is cleared, even when for example temporary housing areas are removed, whether we should continue with the teams doing that work or whether they should be re-deployed to other sorts of social work. To social work with young people, to social work with elderly people, to social work with families. The argument isn't about cutting the number of social workers, let's be absolutely clear about that. The argument is about how we can best use the number of social workers that there are in the community. We're discussing that later this month in the Executive Council and I'll tell you what my views are after we've discussed it in the Executive Council. But I want to underline once again that it would be dishonest to suggest that anybody is trying to cut the amount of social work or social provision in Hong Kong. The question is whether we're best focusing social workers, continuing to focus as many social workers on Neighbourhood Development or whether there are other priorities and I think it is a perfectly reasonable argument for the community to be having. A number of views have been expressed. The Council for Social Services, LegCo and LegCo Panels and other community groups and we have to listen to what everybody says before making up our minds.

Question (in Chinese): Thank you Mr Patten. Imported Labour is the issue. You stated in your policy address that a supplementary scheme will be replacing the present scheme. I do believe that we have to import a certain quota of imported labour because we do have a labour shortage problem. The Thai workers have had to protest because a lot of the money has not been given to them. I'm sure a lot of companies would prefer to employ local people but they brought in imported labour so that the money can be kept behind, but I do believe that local employers are very willing to hire local employees. We must be able to monitor and control the situation. I don't know which government department, perhaps the Police, must enforce monitoring of this situation.

I really think it's very good of you to come down to our level to visit us and to have a cup of tea every now and then at our level.

A lot of people got terribly excited with your visit to the temporary housing area last week. There were so excited because they really want public housing. Can the Government really not do something for them? For people who have property who are living in public housing, I don't know, maybe you can try asking them for double rent or even triple rent, but something must be done Mr Patten.

Question (in Chinese): Mr Patten, able leader, we do not agree with what Mr Suen Ming-yueng says about voting down the NLCDP and cutting social workers. I hope Mr Patten you will really try and fight for our rights and welfare. We are absolutely against the cutting of the NLCDP.

Governor: I was waiting for that. Well you've got a few supporters here today. Let me answer that last question and I think, if I may say so, you're more likely to get and retain support if you let other people have the meeting that they came for rather than trying to dominate it.

So the issue is, the issue which the Executive Council has to decide is whether or not social workers should continue to work in neighbourhood projects, even when the neighbourhoods have changed, or whether they should be concentrated on other forms of social care, working with the elderly, working with children and so on.

The gentleman who asked a question, imported labour. I don't think anybody argues seriously that there should be no workers from elsewhere at all, allowed to come into Hong Kong. I think everybody knows that there are particular skills that we need in our very sophisticated economy and that those skills can't always be found here. At the same time, people do argue that when there are fewer vacancies, and when unemployment is going up, you shouldn't allow so many people to come in to do jobs in Hong Kong, particularly for example when those jobs are unskilled or where there are clearly people in Hong Kong who could do them if they had the chance. And the survey which we carried out and which was shared with the Legislative Council yesterday, made it absolutely clear that there are a number of areas, there are a number of areas of commercial activity where we're bringing in people, even when there are local people available to do the work. And I don't think anybody seriously supposes that that makes very great sense.

So we've proposed scrapping the present labour importation Scheme and introducing a new scheme which would allow in far fewer people and would be better targeted so that employers would have to demonstrate that there really wasn't a local to do the job.

Under the existing schemes, there may, from time to time, be abuses. I don't want to comment on any particular cases which may be being investigated at the moment, but you're entirely correct in saying that we should police those schemes very thoroughly to make sure that people aren't abusing them. It's the job of the Labour Department. It's a job which the Labour Department is taking particularly seriously, not least because of recent accusations and I think all of us have got to recognise that the credibility of any, of any importation scheme, will be damaged if it looks as though employers are abusing it.

You mentioned temporary housing areas. You may have visited quite a few. I've been to ten now and I must confess that once or twice those have been more boisterous occasions than normal and I should also say that on the whole I've learnt most when I've gone on my own. When I've gone unofficially, without a great official entourage and, saving their presence, without about 40 members of the press. It's easier for me to go into people's homes, very inadequate homes, which they're making the best of. It's easier for me to see the very bad conditions in which they sometimes live and it's easier for me to have a sensible discussion with them.

We're committed to a programme under which we reduce the number of temporary housing areas from 55, when I arrived in Hong Kong, to 13 by 1997. We're committed to, and are achieving, three specific pledges:

- 1) That at least three-quarters of those who are in temporary housing areas in 1992, should have been re-housed by 1997.
- 2) We're committed to giving everybody who was in a temporary housing area in 1993, at least one offer of re-housing by 1997.
- 3) We're committed to getting rid of all the 14 oldest temporary housing areas, which are the worst, by 1996.

We've got rid of eight of those so far and there are six still to go.

I would like to be able to get rid of all of them. The reason why we can't do so is we still need some emergency accommodation to deal, for example, with new immigrants coming in from China and we're now in a situation where there are about 50,000 coming in every year. We need to be able to deal with those who are being cleared from squatter developments, we need them for those sort of emergencies. What we're determined to do is to try to ensure that the standard of provision in those temporary housing areas which we'll still need, and we'll still need because the alternative is people sleeping on the streets or people jumping some of the 150,000 in the existing waiting list. What we're determined to do is to improve the actual standards in those temporary housing areas. First of all by introducing a new sort of housing unit, a new sort of prefabricated unit and secondly by moving some of those who will have to be in temporary housing areas, into older housing blocks which we'll do a bit of refurbishment to, which should be better than the conditions in the temporary housing areas.

I do find that going to them, as I said to you, unofficially and informally, enables me to see things as they are day to day, rather than as they are when Governors go and look at them. I can remember a couple that I went to a few months ago where the lavatories were blocked and were in a very bad condition. It's conceivable that if people had known I'd been going they would have sorted the problem out before I actually got there. As it was, I saw what the conditions were like and got somebody to do something about them. It's not the only place in the world where when Governor or Prime Minister or others visit a place, people try to clean it up a bit beforehand, but that's an argument for me going unofficially as well as officially.

Question (in Chinese): Mr Patten I would like to raise three questions very quickly. First of all, corruption. The community at large, I don't know if the community at large is clear about the ICAC and how it handles Civil Service corruption. I found that if there are very major cases then it's all over the streets. But what about small cases, minor cases of corruption? Would the ICAC let the civil service individual departments handle these small corruption's? I think I've heard of one case which was done that way. That department would actually issue a warning in letter that they should not go on being corrupt but after three years that person in question was actually promoted. If he commits a corruption offence again, do we have to tolerate this? I do hope ICAC could give us some data on how many cases are given back to the civil service to deal with, those cases which are not dealt with by the courts. That's the first question.

Second question, on the British Government's dealing with right of abode, I don't think the British Government has done as well as the Portuguese Government. For Civil Servants who have served many years, they don't have the right to live in Britain either. When you visit Britain next week, could you give them this message? Could you ask them to give the right of abode to Hong Kong civil servants who have worked for you for more than ten years?

Third issue. Traffic problem in Tuen Mun. Well the traffic situation there is really like traffic in the outlying islands. In fact, it's even worse. I understand that the railway will be extended to the Tuen Mun centre. I do think that improvement should be made on Castle Peak Road as well, in addition.

Thank you Mr Patten.

Governor: First of all, corruption. And you're quite right to say that low level corruption can be just as damaging as some of the bigger corruption scandals. Because, of course, low level corruption can very easily build up, and low level corruption, or what looks like low level corruption, can destroy the morale, the integrity, the effectiveness, of a part of our Public Service all too easily.

I think it's extremely important that people should go on reporting corruption at whatever level, and that's why I hope people will continue to drop into the Community Offices of the ICAC and report anything which they are suspicious about or worried about. And if you leave your name we'll get in touch with you. I'll certainly enquire about the points that you raised about some low level corruption being reported to the civil service and dealt with through departments rather than the ICAC. I haven't, to be honest, heard of any examples of that, but if it is happening I will find out and let you know. I think that the most important defence against corruption, the most important defence we have about corruption coming in from the margins of commercial and public life into the centre of our life - where, alas, it was in the sixties and seventies - is the community's own determination not to let that happen. If we don't want to lose our reputation for integrity in Hong Kong for doing things in a decent and clean way, then we've got to stand up for those standards, both now and in the future. I'm sure that under the new Commissioner Against Corruption as under the present one, we'll be able to give a clear message to the whole community that corrupt practices in business or the public sector, will impoverish Hong Kong and mean that we live in a much less civilised or decent place.

Secondly, I will continue to argue the case, which has been the position of the Hong Kong Government for the last six years, that more people from Hong Kong should have the right of abode in the United Kingdom. I repeated, recently, on a radio programme what had been the Hong Kong Government's position for six years. It's something I'd certainly said before. I don't think anybody in Hong Kong is under any illusions about what has been the position of the British Government and the British Official Opposition, but it appeared that there wasn't as great a knowledge as I think there should be about Hong Kong's position, back in the United Kingdom. As you know, under the British Nationality Scheme quite a lot of civil servants and those working in sensitive categories and entrepreneurial jobs have gained passports to the United Kingdom. There have been 50,000 allocated to heads of household which will of course mean many more people than that having the right of abode in the United Kingdom. But there are some particular groups that I feel particularly strongly about, one of which is the ethnic minority here in Hong Kong, whose position, once again, I'll continue to urge on the British Government when I return.

On traffic and the problems of Tuen Mun. I think it goes more broadly than Tuen Mun. I think we've developed the northwest New Territories rather ahead, to put it mildly, of the development of an infrastructure to enable the people who live in those communities to travel as freely and easily as they would like. Now, we've been trying to deal with the problems of Tuen Mun as vigorously as possible. We've increased the ferry services by about 15 per cent and we've got further increases in mind; we're widening the Tuen Mun Road and Castle Peak Road; we've got the Country Park Section of Route Three which should be completed by 1998. But above all, above all, there is the Railway Development Strategy with, we hope, not only another line going north-south up to the border, but with a loop running round through the northwest New Territories down to Tuen Mun.

The Kowloon-Canton Railway are undertaking a feasibility study of that at the moment; they should have completed that by the early New Year. And as a result of an unofficial visit I made to Tuen Mun, in April I think it was, they are also looking at the possibility of extending that railway-line from Tuen Mun North to Tuen Mun Central, about which there is a lot of strong feeling in Tuen Mun. It would involve bridging-over the nullah, but that could well be possible if you were able to, I think, gain some commercial facilities as part of that development.

So, I totally accept that the most important way of dealing with the transport needs of the northwest New Territories is by improving railway facilities, though that will take a bit of time. It will be, I imagine, one of the biggest infrastructure projects for the SAR Government after 1997.

Question: Mr Governor, the time is 1998 and the new Mayor of Hong Kong is about to serve his 10 year term and he is drawing up his long range 10 year plan, and this time he comes to (you for) your advice. What would you advise him in terms of the most critical issues that he should deal with? And what do you think is a realistic target that he should set for himself in 10 years' time that he can claim a successful term?

Governor: Wow! Now look, if I answer your question as honestly as possible, I hope that I won't have any statement from a distinguished member of the NCNA tomorrow saying that I've overstepped the mark and that I've infringed on Chinese sovereignty and that I've behaved like a serpent again.

I'll obviously have opportunities of talking to my successor, the Chief Executive designate of the SAR, and sharing my own perceptions, for what they are worth, about Hong Kong's problems, with the Chief Executive designate. I think we've touched on some of the main problems for my successor during the course of this discussion.

First of all, I think in the next few years Hong Kong is going to have to take some fairly radical decisions about housing. We have over the years, quite properly, committed very substantial resources to housing. I think the Government, the Housing Authority, the community, is going to have to think quite hard about whether those resources are being allocated in the way most likely to help those in the greatest need. And I think we're also going to have to consider whether we're being imaginative enough in the way that we help those who want to become home owners themselves. We've got a very good Chairman of the Housing Authority who I'm sure is even more aware than I am of the substantial nature of the housing tasks ahead. But I think housing is inevitably going to be one of the priorities of my successor.

Secondly, given the importance of Hong Kong in relation to the opening up of the whole of southern China, I'm sure that a second economic priority is going to be the continuing development of infrastructure links with the rest of China, as it will be then. And I think the importance of the railway, not least in getting freight off the road on to railways from our port, is going to be vital as well. We've got a port which is still increasing in capacity at about the same rate as the total of Seattle or Oakland or Felixstowe, every year. It's an astonishing figure. And as China continues to grow and expand, that isn't going to become any less of an issue. So the real problems of improving North-South infrastructure and infrastructure both to the North-West and North-East is going to be a heavy priority as well.

Thirdly - and I could go on but I'll just mention one other. Increasingly, in the next few years, the competitiveness of communities is going to be determined by their investment in knowledge and skills. In Hong Kong, over the last few years, we've, understandably, concentrated in our education spending on increasing quantity, providing more elementary and secondary schooling for everyone, increasing tertiary education at a spectacular rate. Ten years ago only 3 per cent of 18-21 year-olds going into tertiary education. Today, 24 per cent. The task for us in the next few years, if we're to stay competitive, will be to concentrate more on quality and make sure that we're getting the quality education we want as well as the quantity that we required.

If all those things can be tackled, I very much hope that my successor will be able to add 10 years of continuing economic growth to the 38 of uninterrupted growth which Hong Kong will, by then, have enjoyed. It's been an astonishing record, and given half a chance, I'm sure the people of Hong Kong can add to it and do even better in the 10 years beyond the transition.

Question: Thank you, Governor. I'm a visitor from the United States with a delegation of private citizens and policy makers who've come here to look at the prospects for the continuation of civil liberties in Hong Kong as the transition goes on. We're in touch with many people in the Congress of the United States who have the same concerns we do, and we have met while we're here with several members of Legco and with several leading journalists on the Island. Our concerns about the future of civil liberties in Hong Kong have deepened, and as private citizens and as policy makers in the United States we want to watch and we want to help in any way we can. With that in mind, I wonder what you would say to people in the United States they might be able to do to give what help they can: what should they watch for and what should they do?

Governor: Chinese officials are always very sensitive about something they call internationalisation. - I'll invite the gentleman at number 5 who has been very patient to -- In a moment, just let me finish answering this one, okay? In a moment, yes, but just wait a couple of minutes. Just wait until I've answered this one, okay?

I said there is sensitivity about what Chinese officials often call internationalisation. But the fact of the matter is that this is a city which becomes part of China in 1997 but it is also an international city, full of people from other parts of the world, one of the great cities of the globe. A great trading city, like New York or Venice or Amsterdam or London at their peaks of prosperity, and it could be, analysts say, - I was reading one of those futurologists the other day who said that by the year 2010, 2020, something in that decade - Hong Kong, on present trends, would become the richest city in the world. Now it's not surprising, under those circumstances, that the world takes an interest in what happens here.

I think Chinese officials, in their hearts, know that. I think that's why one very distinguished Chinese leader recently made his famous teapot speech, saying that the world would be looking at how China handled this precious teapot, how China managed to go on pouring very good tea out of this precious teapot.

I think that Chinese officials know, in their hearts, that the rest of the world is going to regard the way one country two systems works after 1997, the way China, Peking, relates to Hong Kong, as a sort of litmus test for how China is going to behave in the region and in the world as its greatness as a nation is manifested in the role that it plays on the international stage.

So, speaking for myself without in any way wishing to construct conspiracies or surround China in any unfair way, I very much hope that our friends around the world will continue to take an interest, will continue to visit, will continue to write, will continue to make programmes, will continue to report, will continue to make their views felt. Just as I'm sure Chinese people going to other places make their thoughts about them manifest as well.

One last thought. There are many guarantees for Hong Kong's civil liberties. There's the Basic Law, there's the International Covenants, there's the Joint Declaration. But the most important guarantee is people's commitment to those civil liberties. Example: reporting what's going on. Self-censorship, which journalists very often worry about, can only be dealt with by not allowing oneself to be censored. It's easier for me to say it, I concede straightaway, because I won't be here after 1997. But who knows, there may even be a little self-censorship today.

I say this, finally. Nobody thinks that between now and 1997 the Governor of Hong Kong is going to roar around the territory trampling on people's civil liberties. The reassurances that people look for have to be given by China and Chinese officials in words as well as deeds. And I very much hope that they will give those reassurances in the next couple of years. It's in all our interests that we should do so. This is a unique place. It's a very, very precious place. And all of us should want it to stay that way.

Question (in Chinese): Thank you Mr Patten. Questions and recommendations. First of all, on the transfer of sovereignty -- Oh sorry! The police power is too much, too great, they can stop-and-search us at any time at the moment, and I don't think they serve our rights in that way. We have no privacy. I don't think that's terribly reasonable.

Secondly, the IPCC should really be independent of the Police Force. Those who are investigating should not be police officials. Only in this way can the IPCC maintain its integrity and credibility. Vice establishments in West Kowloon.

I hope you will pay more attention to issues of livelihood as well. Could you not just focus on democracy issues? What do I mean by livelihood issues? Controlling inflation, for example; controlling public companies, utilities, control the way they increase their prices. I also am against the charging for sewage discharges.

In addition, could you also halt the importation of labour scheme immediately? I think those who are unskilled should not be allowed to come in any more because the unemployment rate is very high at the moment, 3.5 per cent. And the semi-unemployment rate is 2.5 per cent. If I had to choose, I would rather you halted the importation scheme immediately. And I wouldn't go and get CSSA assistance. I also object for you charging for sewage discharges. Lastly, Mr Patten, I will give you my address so you can contact me.

Governor: I'd be delighted to have your address and I can then send you a Christmas card! But I'll try briefly to answer your questions straightaway.

First of all, your suggestion that I shouldn't always talk about democracy and should talk about livelihood issues. I'm just looking at what I've been doing this evening which is pretty well typical of my working day, and that is dealing with all the sort of issues which, somebody talked about the Mayor of Hong Kong, which the Mayor of Hong Kong would be dealing with in other circumstances. I don't think that the position of the Legislative Council is irrelevant to all that, but I do spend most of my time talking about other things.

One of my regular experiences in life is to go to a hospital or a clinic or a housing estate, looking forward to talking to all my friends from the press afterwards on the health service, or housing, or transport, and after I've made a few remarks on that subject, while their pencils have stayed about 18 inches away from the notebook, they then say to me, what about the airport Mr Patten, or what about the Legislative Council elections Mr Patten. So, I think sometimes it's the media which can be one issue rather, with respect, than the Governor.

Let me deal with your questions in reverse order. You mentioned controlling inflation. Yes, we do need to control inflation. Inflation has come down from 13.9% at its peak the year before I arrived in Hong Kong, to about 8.5% on the latest count. Still too high but we've been moving it in the right direction. I don't agree with you that simply putting a freeze, putting a ceiling on utility charges is at all the same thing as dealing with inflation. All that happens in those circumstances is somebody has to pick up the bill for that and the costs bubble up somewhere else in the system. They don't actually bring inflation down in the long-term. Sewage charges are a good case in point. The average monthly cost of our sewage disposal scheme for people in the community, the average monthly cost is HK\$8.00. That's not, with great respect as barristers say, that's not a huge household contribution to having a decent drainage and sewage system, particularly when you compare that sort of cost with what people in other communities pay. But that's helping to give us a HK\$9 billion modern sewage treatment system which will clean up about 70% of the pollution in our surrounding waters.

I think I dealt with importation of labour earlier and don't want to add to what I said. I notice that you referred to not importing unskilled workers, so maybe there isn't as much difference between us as your question initially suggested because I don't think that you would argue that we should never allow any worker, even one with skills that we needed, into the community.

On the IPCC, we'll be legislating in the coming session, I hope, to put the IPCC on a statutory basis under its very distinguished chairman who's a member of my Executive Council. They have actually been developing new techniques like the videoing and recording of interviews which I think have been a help in building up the confidence which people have in the whole process.

And finally, we did in the last Legislative Council look in a comprehensive way at police powers, to make sure that our police powers are in line with the Bill of Rights and I think that the general view was that we got the balance about right. Of course we want to protect peoples' civil liberties but we also want to make sure that our police can do their job as well as possible.

Question: Thank you. I would like to know about beliefs and religions.

Governor: Mine, or . . . ?

Question: After 1997.

Governor: It's an extremely important question and one which, I know, causes worry to some people in Hong Kong. The guarantees of continuing freedom of worship are absolutely explicit in the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law and I say to you as myself a practising Christian that I'm sure that religious belief is safe and secure in Hong Kong. I don't say that lightly. I've thought about the issue very carefully and I believe very strongly that religious belief and the ability to practise your own faith, whatever it may be, will be secure after 1997.

One of the interesting things is how many people in public life, in the civil service, in politics and so on, are themselves strong and committed religious believers and that I am sure is an additional guarantee for religious belief in the future.

Thank you very much indeed and I hope you'll come again next year.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Transcript of CS's question-and-answer session

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The following is the transcript of the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan's question-and-answer session with members of the Harvard Business School Association of Hong Kong after delivering a speech at a luncheon meeting of the association today (Friday):

Question: Mrs Chan, I have a hard question and a soft question.

Chief Secretary: Let's have the hard one first.

Question: The hard question is regarding the new labour importation scheme. I think a lot of people believe that the current scheme has a pitfall in that it is not really need-based and that the new one will be very much need-based. If that is the case, is there really a need to set an upper limit. If businesses can prove that it cannot find labour to the tune of maybe 20, 30 thousand for specific positions, should we not let that happen naturally?

Chief Secretary: Yes, I think it is quite right that there is a question whether there is a need for a quota at all. But I notice from a survey conducted immediately after the Governor's Wednesday address that about 50 per cent of the community believed that we have got the number about right. But of course it remains to be seen. I think the important point to make here is as you have pointed out that the new scheme is a completely new scheme. It will be based on needs because we will be looking at each and every application and if the need is established then of course the employer will be allowed to bring in the workers. Whether the 5,000 will in the event prove to be too many or too few remains to be seen. And certainly if there is a demonstrable need for more workers to be imported, based strictly on needs, then of course we are prepared to review the quota. But I think at this stage, it is premature and I repeat, according to the community, they seem to think that is about right and to the extent that we have complaints both on the employers' side and on the employees' side. I have concluded that maybe we have got it about right. Your soft question?

Question: There is a consensus among all Hong Kong that you are one of the most brilliant administrators in the civil service today. If the situation allows you to serve in the future, do you feel you prefer to continue serving Hong Kong by being its chief executive or ... the Chief Secretary, consider that the former would have to deal with a lot in the external relations.

Chief Secretary: First of all, thank you for your compliment. I was just speaking with one of the guests at the head table and I said that the favourite guessing game in town is who is going to be the chief executive officer. I for one am not going to take part in this favourite guessing game. I think there are plenty of people who want to take part in this. So one less will certainly not make any difference. I have made it quite plain on many occasions in the past that I would hope to be able to serve out the remaining years of my term which means staying after 1997 and I am quite happy to continue to serve the people of Hong Kong in whatever capacity is deemed to be most appropriate after 1997. I think that is all that I would say by way of comment.

Question: Mrs Chan, every thing that you have said is highly commendable and what the government is doing and what it is achieving. But I think there was one omission from what you said and that is the area of co-operation with China. Could you comment on that and say in what ways is the government and the secretariat going to co-operate in a greater extent with China over the next 18 months in particular?

Chief Secretary: I think we are all very happy to note particularly following the meeting between the two foreign ministers in London that co-operation with China does seem to have improved a great deal since we had the row over constitutional reforms. All that of course is behind us. We were particularly happy to note that at the meeting between the two foreign ministers, we reached agreement with the Chinese in four very important areas not the least of which is the question concerning better communication and better contact between senior officials here in Hong Kong and their counterparts in China. That's crucially important because I am sure you will all agree that the civil service plays a key role in Hong Kong's prosperity and stability and we all want to see improved communication between the two. I myself was very happy to be able to meet with Mr Qian Qichen and Mr Lu Ping in July of this year and we had very good discussions addressing a number of concerns and I am hopeful myself that in the remaining days of transition there will be greater co-operation between the two on resolving the remaining transitional issues. I think both China and Britain and of course Hong Kong realise that if we are going to have a smooth transition all three parties need to co-operate. That is not to say of course that we will always reach absolute agreement on all issues. But I am personally convinced that there is a strong commitment on the part of all three parties to implement the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law, that it is a fervent wish of all three parties to see a smooth transition and I am sure that with those objectives in mind, I do not see that any issue is incapable of resolution given good-will and co-operation on the part of all parties concerned.

Question: What is your opinion in these statements of China about the dissolution of LegCo in 1997. Would you request them to retain certain people in the LegCo not from the government but...

Chief Secretary: The government's position and for that matter, the UK government's position on the legislature had been made abundantly clear. But in case it is not let me repeat it here. We have always felt that the constitutional reforms which were passed by way of legislation by our legislature are fully in accordance with the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. They were what the people of Hong Kong wanted and this has been reflected very strongly in the actual conduct of the election in the record number of people who actually voted and the number of people who actually stood for election. We now have a credible legislature elected in an open and fair manner reflecting the views of the community of Hong Kong. We have a broad cross section of community opinion reflected in the legislature and in my view if we want to see a smooth transition and we all want to see that, clearly an experienced legislature with continuity in the legislature will do a great deal to ensure a smooth transition. We see no reason why this current legislature and the people elected into the legislature cannot be expected to serve their full four-year term which will of course take them to 1999. I refer just now to the Chinese' wish to see a smooth transition and bearing that in mind I'm sure they will have regard to the opinions expressed by the people of Hong Kong. Of course to a large extent it also depends on how the new Legislative Council will function. We have held preliminary discussions with the all the political parties. I think all political parties are very conscious of the responsibilities that they have on their shoulders. They are all determined to work in co-operation with the Hong Kong government. On my part, speaking on behalf of all my colleagues in the civil service, we certainly wish to start a constructive dialogue with the legislature. There is a great deal of work to be gone through and I am sure that with the co-operation of civil servant and the legislature we will get through this programme. So I repeat again we see no reason why the legislature should be dismantled and we very much hope that all the members elected will be able to serve out their full four-year term.

Question: Mrs Chan, there is a recent report on "60 Minutes" that described the voter turnout rate in Taiwan being 75 per cent and that compared of course to about 35 per cent here in Hong Kong despite the fact the government has spent a lot of money publicising the LegCo election last September. I was wondering if you care to comment on the difference in voter turnout rate in ...

Chief Secretary: I am not sure that it is particularly meaningful to compare one voter turnout rate with that of another. The circumstances are totally different. I think that by world standards, the percentage of turnout rate that we had for our last election was pretty good and if you consider it with the voter turnout rate and particularly more importantly I think the actual numbers who voted, we had a record 920,000 people turning up to vote which was about 170,000 more than in the 1991 election. So I would say that that fully reflects that there is enthusiasm on the part of the community to participate in the elections.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Transcript of CS's media session

The following is the transcript of the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson Chan's media session after giving a luncheon speech to the Harvard Business School Association of Hong Kong today (Friday):

Question: Will the visit of the Deputy Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office ... sparks off the first round of between the officials on both sides.

Chief Secretary: The details of the get-together, the informal get-togethers between Hong Kong officials and Chinese officials still have to be discussed with the Chinese side. We are following up on this. We do not, I think as yet, have confirmation that Mr Chen Ziyang is coming but of course if he is coming I will be delighted to meet with him and to have the opportunity to reciprocate his hospitality which he extended to me when I saw him in July.

Question: (inaudible)

Chief Secretary: We haven't yet decided. Clearly we want to get the get-together going as soon as possible. As soon as we've sorted out the details, we would then draw up a programme of which policy secretaries. It might for example be quite a good idea to start off with a policy secretary not having too many heads of departments under him because we want to keep the group reasonably small so that everybody can speak reasonably freely and in a relaxed atmosphere.

Question: Have you ... officials that's been invited to attend the ceremony?

Chief Secretary: Yes, senior officials at the appropriate level will be invited to attend. You are referring to the MAFF foundation stone laying ceremony?

Question: (on remarks by the US Ambassador to China designate on China's right to dissolve LegCo)

Chief Secretary: I have not seen a full record of his statement but I did notice listening to the radio this morning that he said that he hoped very much China would reconsider its position and that he would do his very best to influence Chinese thinking to accept the legislature and to maintain its credibility.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Paradoxes make Hong Kong tick: Chief Secretary

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There are three uniquely Hong Kong paradoxes which need to be grasped if people are to understand what makes the territory tick so successfully, the Chief secretary, Mrs Anson Chan, said today (Friday).

Addressing a luncheon of the Harvard Business School Association, Mrs Chan said: "The first is that Hong Kong promotes a free enterprise culture, but also places a very high priority on the quality of its public services.

"Second, Hong Kong is totally committed to a free-market economy, but also provides a sophisticated regulatory regime for it to go on prospering.

"Third, Hong Kong is administrated by an executive-led government which does not have its own party, or even a single vote, in the Legislature."

Mrs Chan said that the Governor in his Policy Address delivered on Wednesday (October 11) had reminded Legislative Councillors that despite concerns about unemployment and inflation, Hong Kong's economy was in fact in very good shape.

"Over the past three years, our GDP has increased by 18 per cent in real terms and is on track for a steady and substantial five per cent growth this year," she said.

"Hong Kong has gone on prospering and the Government has gone on working to improve the public services which the community values so highly."

Citing statistics, Mrs Chan said during the past three years, the housing programme had delivered 80,000 new homes, the education sector had employed 2,000 more teachers and cut class sizes in secondary schools to 20 and to 24 in primary schools and an additional 2,700 beds had been provided in public hospitals.

"In Hong Kong, we believe that there should be no contradiction between a commitment to enterprise and to markets on the one hand and a commitment to improving public services on the other," she said.

"The key to understanding this essential fact of Hong Kong political and economic life is what the Governor has called the 'living within our means' rule of public expenditure control."

The Government would also continue to make sure that as it amended or modernised business legislation, it did not erect new barriers to business.

She said to maintain Hong Kong's competitive edge, it had to retain the policy option of importing labour to meet Hong Kong's economic needs.

Explaining the Government's intention to terminate the General Scheme for Importation of Labour introduced since 1989 which now had a quota ceiling of 25,000 and to replace it with a Supplementary Labour Scheme with a quota ceiling of 5,000 from next January, she said: "Employers will have to satisfy us that their jobs cannot be filled locally."

They would have to register with the Labour Department and join the Job Matching Programme and the Employees Retraining Board would be involved to provide tailor made training or on the job training for local workers where appropriate.

She said the scheme struck a reasonable balance between the interests of employers and those of the workforce and was in the overall interest of the economy.

"A total ban on imported labour is not the panacea to unemployment which is caused largely by the continuous transformation of our economy," she added.

"The solution lies in maintaining a favourable business environment including the flexibility for employers to recruit suitable staff; in providing quality education to meet our needs into the 21st century; and in providing retraining and job matching to help the unemployed to return to the workforce."

On the political system, Mrs Chan said she was confident that the Government's legislative and financial programmes would be handled fairly and expeditiously in the same way as in the past in the new LegCo.

She said the Governor had reminded us that he had the duty to withhold assent to any Bill passed by LegCo which, in his view, would be contrary to the best interests of the people of Hong Kong.

"But the Government is committed to cooperating with Legislative Council, and I want to discuss with Legislative Council members a number of issues relating to the handling of Government business in the Council," she said.

"But the essential point remains that we have to work closely together to discharge our responsibilities in the interests of the whole community."

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Basket of new initiatives to improve quality of life

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The proposed enhancements to the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme announced by the Governor in his Policy Address on Wednesday (October 11) are only one part of the CSSA Review currently underway.

Any further recommendations arising from the Review will be implemented in 1996-97 following consultation with the Social Welfare Advisory Committee and Members of the Legislative Council.

This was stated by the Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mrs Katherine Fok, during a briefing session for the newly-elected Legislative Councillors this (Friday) morning on the new policy initiatives the Government will be taking next year in health and welfare.

The Review started in November last year and is scheduled for completion in early 1996. A central element of the Review is to assess the adequacy of the CSSA standard rates based on, among other things, an analysis of data from the year-long Household Expenditure Survey which has just been completed.

According to the survey, the first six months' data on the spending pattern of CSSA clients and of the lowest five per cent income group (that is those whose income and assets are just above the level which would make them otherwise eligible for CSSA) show that the standard rates for the majority of clients are higher than both their own expenditure and the spending levels of the lowest five per cent income group.

But the standard rates for adults and elderly clients living in a family, are lower than the level of spending of their equivalents in the lowest five per cent income group.

"Based on this analysis, we believe we must act promptly to give help where it is needed and justified," said Mrs Fok.

She said subject to LegCo's approval, it was proposed to increase the following monthly standard rates from April next year:

- * by 54% to \$1,605 for single parents and adults caring for dependants at home;

- * by 46-54% to \$1,770 for single adults whose ill-health prevents them from working and to \$1,605 if they are living in a family;
- * by 23-27% to \$1,490 for single adults and \$1,325 if they are living in a family; and
- * by 12% to \$1,685 for elderly people if they are living in a family.

Mrs Fok said the increases would enable a three-member single parent family to receive an average monthly payment of \$7,090 and that for a family of four will be \$9,180. These compare with \$6,570 and \$8,610 the two groups are now receiving respectively.

The proposed enhancements will benefit up to 52,000 people at an annual cost of about \$300 million.

Other aspects of the CSSA scheme to be covered in the Review include the level and scope of special grants for which CSSA clients are eligible; simplifying reimbursement procedures for special grants; the level of the asset eligibility test; the level of permitted disregarded earnings to enable CSSA clients to attain a measure of financial independence through work; the level and administration of long term supplements paid to clients receiving CSSA for over 12 months; the arrangements for clients to receive CSSA outside Hong Kong; and making it easier to apply for and obtain CSSA support.

On services for the elderly, Mrs Fok said the Government would implement the 71 recommendations of the Working Group on Care for the Elderly in full by 1998-99 at a total capital cost of \$331 million. In recurrent terms, this will cost \$80 million in 1996-97 rising to \$112 million in 1998-99.

So far, the Government has set up a \$200 million Elderly Services Development Fund to give grants to non-governmental organisations to help them run non-profit making, self-financing welfare projects for the elderly; improved services provided by day care centres and social centres; expanded home help services; implemented pilot volunteer and elderly volunteer programme; and established four additional geriatric health teams.

Looking ahead to 1996-97, it will conduct a study of the residential care and community support needs of elderly people with a view to formulating new planning ratios for these services; subject to the result of a feasibility study, establish a computerised integrated waiting list for applicants for residential care services; upgrade the services provided by private residential homes through implementation of the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance and the training of an additional 600 health workers to help private home operators meet new statutory requirements; and establish four additional geriatric teams to provide outreach medical services to elderly people.

"Implementing the recommendations of the Working Group on Care for the Elderly is not all that we will do in expanding our services for the elderly," Mrs Fok said.

"We are, of course, continuing our programme of meeting the various targets which have been set for increasing the number of places in care and attention homes and homes for the aged, places under the Bought Place Scheme in private residential homes, and facilities such as social centres, multi-service centres and day care centres for the elderly."

Turning to rehabilitation services, Mrs Fok said the most important long term challenge was to find jobs for people with a disability.

As recommended by the Working Party on Training and Employment for People with Disabilities in its report in July, the Government will in 1996-7:

- * expand vocational assessment and training services for about 900 sheltered workers, traffic accident victims and injured workers per year;
- * increase the number of supported employment places in sheltered workshops from the existing 360 to 950, an increase of 164 per cent;
- * strengthen the Rehabus service by adding eight extra scheduled routes and two additional vehicles for the "dial-a-ride" service, thus increasing the number of passenger trips by 67,000, or 21 per cent, a year; and
- * continue to encourage, through public education programmes, the integration of those with disabilities fully into the society.

Mrs Fok also announced that the Government would extend its student health service to cover over 400,000 secondary school children, in addition to its service for 450,000 primary school children which was started last month.

In addition, the number of school social workers will be increased to enable around 100 schools to have one school social worker to 1,000 students.

Turning to medical and health services, Mrs Fok expected that public hospitals would treat some 846,000 in-patients while the general clinics and specialist clinics would provide consultation for some 4.5 million and 6.3 million out-patients respectively in 1995-96.

To alleviate the overcrowded conditions at Castle Peak Hospital, the Government will embark on the final phase of its redevelopment project at a capital cost of about \$850 million upon completion of the first phase in 1996-97.

The Government also proposes to inject \$20 million into the Samaritan Fund which provides a source of financial assistance to patients who cannot afford to pay for their medical treatment. This helps to ensure that no one in Hong Kong is denied adequate medical treatment through lack of means.

Earlier in her opening remarks, Mrs Fok stressed that new policy initiatives and targets involving major construction would take some time to achieve.

She said she fully understood the natural eagerness of all to see announcements of these initiatives and targets being translated into tangible improvements in service as quickly as possible.

"But the need for consultation with local residents, planning, design and construction inevitably means a long lead time, a time-lag, before targets can be met," she explained.

"There cannot be a smooth annual increase in places to meet targets which may have been set two or three years ago. Many of our targets are for achievement by 1997. Because of lead times, the bulk of these new places will indeed only be able to come on stream in 1997.

"We would all wish them to be earlier but the fact that they may have not yet come on stream should not be interpreted as a cause for concern or as a failure," she stressed.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Call for response to challenge of meeting needs of elderly

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There is an urgent need for the welfare sector to respond to the challenge of meeting the special needs of the elderly and help them to continue to live in the community and lead decent and dignified lives.

This was stated by Administrator, Hospital Services Department, Mrs Rose Goodstadt today (Friday) when she opened the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals' Anita Mui Day Care Centre.

Mrs Goodstadt said the Governor in his Policy Address on Wednesday said the Government would spend \$9 billion this year on services for the elderly, an increase of 20 per cent in real terms over the previous year.

She said there was, however, another important message in the Policy Address that was the need to ensure that social services adjust to meet the changing needs of the most vulnerable groups in the community.

"Among the very vulnerable are the growing numbers of the 'old-old', the over-80-year-olds, who suffer from increasingly frail physical health and serious threats to their mental well-being," she said.

"In Hong Kong 20 years ago, there were only about 30,000 persons aged over 80. Today there are about 100,000. At the same time, the proportion of the 'old-old' has increased to over 17 per cent of the elderly population as a whole."

Mrs Goodstadt said this meant that the problems of the elderly had changed and that the services for them must respond to this changing demand.

"Our mental facilities are expanding to meet this growing need. Our mental hospitals are already heavily utilised by elderly patients: occupying about 600 out of the total of 3,800 beds," she said.

She added that there were also about two hundred psychogeriatric beds in our major general hospitals and six psychogeriatric teams had also been set up in the last two years providing psychiatric support for elderly patients in general hospitals, care-and-attention homes, as well as day treatment and community care.

"However, this positive response by our hospitals and health services is not enough," Mrs Goodstadt said.

"The community's attitudes must also change.

"In fact, the majority of the elderly with mental health problems, including the 'old-old', can be cared for by families in their own homes when they have access to adequate support service. "In particular, social centres, multi-service centres and day care centres can help to ease distress of the elderly and relieve the strain on their families."

"To organise new services to meet the special needs of the 'old-old' has required a redeployment of our resources, both financial and manpower, a situation to which the Government has responded in the past two Policy Addresses," she said.

"More important still, it requires a new initiative , an innovative and imaginative approach by the team work of different professionals."

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Shenzhen/HK to hold joint fire exercise

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Shenzhen and Hong Kong Fire Services will hold a joint fire exercise at 10.30 am next Wednesday (October 18) in the Fook Tin District, Shenzhen.

This is the first time the two neighbouring fire brigades to take part in such kind of exercise to exchange skills, to enhance cross-border emergency co-ordination link and to test the co-operation in fire-fighting operation between the two sides.

The exercise will take place in a 26-storey Fook Kin building, a composite building comprising two blocks with an area of about 32,000 square metres and is used as offices, hotels, staff quarters, restaurants and apartments. It is located at the junction of Choi Tin Road and Fook Wah Road.

The Shenzhen Fire Brigade will respond to the fire call initially and later will request the assistance of the Hong Kong Fire Services.

More than 150 firemen and ambulancemen in 24 fire engines and ambulances from both brigades will take part in the exercise which is expected to last about an hour. They will be supported by Police, Traffic Police and medical staff of Fook Tin District.

Leading the 41-strong Hong Kong fire contingent, comprising seven fire engines and an ambulance, will be the Chief Fire Officer (New Territories), Mr Clement Wong Man-chiu.

The Director of Fire Services, Mr Peter Cheung, will attend as an observer.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Hong Kong - A City in Transition: FS

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The Financial Secretary, Mr Donald Tsang, said on Thursday (October 12) in New York that Hong Kong would continue to be successful and an excellent place in which to do business both before and after 1997.

In his address entitled "Hong Kong: A City in Transition" to the National Committee on US-China Relations, Mr Tsang said Hong Kong was well-placed to contribute to phenomenal economic growth envisaged for the Asia-Pacific region in the next century, particularly to China's quest for modernisation.

He said the development of a partnership between Hong Kong and China was one of the key factors in ensuring a prosperous future for Hong Kong.

"As China navigates the tide of economic change, Hong Kong serves as the pilot boat in front. Our businessmen understand the China market far better than most," he said.

Mr Tsang said in 1994, realised direct investment by Hong Kong companies in China amounted to some US\$20 billion, more than 20 times the level of a decade ago. On a cumulative basis, Hong Kong's realised direct investment in China was now estimated at US\$60 billion, accounting for 60 per cent of China's total.

Apart from direct investment, Hong Kong companies also helped to do deals, raise finance, and direct interested investors to the right projects.

"In addition, I see tremendous opportunities for further development in Hong Kong as a funding centre for both the Chinese equity and debt markets," he said. Mr Tsang said China also had a very substantial financial stake in Hong Kong, predominantly in the service sectors and in major infrastructural projects. Direct investment in Hong Kong by China had doubled from an estimated US\$10 billion at the end of 1990 to over US\$20 billion at the end of 1994.

"There is simply no reason for China to upset the apple-cart after 1997. Indeed, there is very good reason for China to ensure that Hong Kong continues to thrive," he said.

Mr Tsang said the international business community should have every reason to feel confident about Hong Kong's future and that confidence was well-founded for the following reasons:

- * There is a strong and continuing demand for Hong Kong dollar assets.
- * Hong Kong's linked exchange rate has been exceedingly stable since its establishment in 1983.
- * Total assets of Hong Kong's Exchange Fund stood at US\$58 billion at the end of June 1995. Hong Kong's foreign exchange reserves amount to US\$54 billion. It is ranked seventh in the world in terms of overall foreign exchange reserves and second in reserves per capita. And Hong Kong has zero public debt.
- * Economic and business activities exhibit steady growth. Hong Kong's gross domestic product will continue to grow at about five per cent per annum in real terms over the next four years.
- * There has been a strong pick-up in private sector expenditure on plant and machinery.
- * Exports and re-exports continue to surge ahead.

Mr Tsang told the Committee that the continued ebullience of Hong Kong and the promotion of free trade in the region, and indeed the world, were of vital importance to US interests.

"Future growth in the Chinese economy taken together with future stability and continued success in Hong Kong will inevitably be to the advantage of your (US) economy," he said.

Mr Tsang said he was confident that Hong Kong had the armoury to face the future: security in the institutional safeguards, a population full of energy and spirit of enterprise and, most of all, the goodwill and support from its friends in China and abroad.

He emphasised that Hong Kong would not stand still in social development. He outlined the whole series of initiatives across the whole spectrum of public services for Hong Kong which Governor Patten announced on October 11. These initiatives included improvement to public transport, equal opportunities, social security assistance, as well as health and welfare for the elderly.

"Hong Kong is eager to show the world that it is facing the challenges of 1997 with customary strength, determination and foresight," said Mr Tsang. Note to Editors:

Mr Tsang's speech will be faxed.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Land survey regulation gazetted

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A regulation which seeks to impose fees for services under the Land Survey Ordinance is gazetted today (Friday).

The Land Survey (Fees) Regulation provides that fees be charged for the inspection of land boundary records, supply of copies of plans, deposit of land boundary plans and survey record plans with the Land Survey Authority, and registration and renewal of registration as an authorised land surveyor.

A government spokesman said the proposed fees, which were set at levels sufficient to recover the full costs incurred for the services, were in line with the "user pays" principle.

The Regulation is expected to come into operation on November 18.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Monitors' Report submitted to CS

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The monitors appointed to observe the transfer yesterday (Thursday) of 163 Vietnamese migrants selected for the Orderly Repatriation Programme from the High Island Detention Centre to Victoria Prison have submitted their report to the Chief Secretary, a Government spokesman said today (Friday).

The four monitors comprised two non-official Justices of the Peace, Mr Tommy Cheung Yu-yan and Mr Robert Kwan Chiu-yin. The other two are representatives from two non-government organisations - Miss Emily Liu from Christian Action and Mr Ian Anderson from Oxfam.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Quarterly business receipts indices for service industries

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According to statistics released today (Friday) by the Census and Statistics Department, business receipts in many service industries showed notable increases in value terms in the second quarter of 1995 over a year earlier.

The transport industry registered the fastest growth, by 28% in value terms. This was mainly attributable to increase in business of companies providing cargo forwarding services.

Business receipts in the banking and the import/export industries also rose considerably over the same period, both by 20% in value terms. The growth in business receipts in the former was mainly attributable to increase in net interest income, while the growth in the latter was related to increase in trading business on miscellaneous durable goods.

Meanwhile, notable increases in business receipts were also registered in the following service industries: storage (+16%); hotels (+16%); communication (+15%) and insurance (+14%).

On the other hand, business receipts in the financing (except banking) industry continued to decrease, by 6% in value terms. There was however an improvement over the first quarter this year, when a decline of 30% was recorded. Compared with the first quarter of 1995, business receipts in the storage and the transport industries registered significant increases in value terms, by 17% and 10% respectively.

The business receipts in the banking, the import/export and the communication industries registered a moderate growth, by 7%, 6% and 5% respectively in value terms.

However, business receipts in some other industries recorded decreases of various magnitudes. These included the business services, financing (except banking), retail, wholesale, insurance and restaurants industries.

Table 1 presents the provisional business receipts indices for service industries for the second quarter of 1995. Revised indices for the first quarter of 1995 are also included. The quarterly average of business receipts in 1992 was taken as 100.

Table 2 shows the time series of quarterly business receipts indices. Annual indices are also included.

Statistics on banking are obtained from the Hong Kong Monetary Authority; and those on retail and restaurants businesses are obtained from two existing surveys regularly conducted by the Census and Statistics Department.

The report "Quarterly Business Receipts Indices for Service Industries, Second Quarter 1995" is now on sale at \$7 per copy at the Government Publications Centre of the Information Services Department, Queensway Government Offices, Low Block, ground floor, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

It can also be purchased from the Publications Unit of the Census and Statistics Department, 19th floor, Wanchai Tower, 12 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

Enquiries about the survey results may be directed to the Business Services Statistics Section of the Census and Statistics Department on 2802 1244.

Table 1 : Business Receipts Indices for Service Industries for 1st Quarter and 2nd Quarter 1995

表一：一九九五年第一季及第二季服務業業務收益指數
(Quarterly average of 1992 = 100)
(一九九二年按季平均指數 = 100)

Type of Service Industry 服務行業	1st Quarter 1995 一九九五年第一季	2nd Quarter 1995 一九九五年第二季	2nd Quarter 1995 compared with 1st Quarter 1995 一九九五年第二季與一九九五年第一季比較		2nd Quarter 1995 compared with 2nd Quarter 1994 一九九五年第二季與上年同期比較	
	(Revised figures) (修訂數字)	(Provisional figures) (臨時數字)	Points (點)	% (百分率)	Points (點)	% (百分率)
Wholesale 批發	123.9	117.0	- 6.8	- 5.5	+ 5.4	+ 4.9
Import / Export 進出口貿易	128.7	135.9	+ 7.3	+ 5.6	+ 22.4	+ 19.7
Retail 零售 ⁽¹⁾	131.8	124.0 #	- 7.8	- 5.9	+ 5.0	+ 4.2
Hotels 酒店	142.8	143.3	+ 0.5	+ 0.3	+ 19.2	+ 15.5
Restaurants 飲食店 ⁽²⁾	116.1	111.1	- 5.0	- 4.3	+ 6.0	+ 5.7
Transport 運輸	128.6	141.9	+ 13.3	+ 10.3	+ 30.8	+ 27.8
Storage 倉庫	105.8	123.2	+ 17.5	+ 16.5	+ 17.2	+ 16.2
Communication 通訊	141.9	149.4	+ 7.5	+ 5.3	+ 20.0	+ 15.5
Banking 銀行 ⁽³⁾	129.3	138.8	+ 9.6	+ 7.4	+ 23.5	+ 20.4
Financing (except banking) 金融(銀行除外) ⁽⁴⁾	154.7	136.7	- 18.0	- 11.6	- 9.0	- 6.2
Insurance 保險	169.4	161.6	- 7.8	- 4.6	+ 19.7	+ 13.9
Business services 商用服務	146.5	126.6	- 19.9	- 13.6	+ 3.6	+ 2.9

Notes 註釋：

- (1) Based on the survey results of the Monthly Survey of Retail Sales
根據零售業銷售額按月統計調查的結果
- (2) Based on the survey results of the Quarterly Survey of Restaurant Receipts and Purchases
根據飲食店收益及購貨按季統計調查的結果
- (3) Business receipts data are obtained from the Hong Kong Monetary Authority
業務收益數據由香港金融管理局提供
- (4) Excluding investment and holding companies
不包括投資及控股公司

Revised figure
修訂數字

Table 2 : Time Series of Quarterly Business Receipts Indices for Service Industries

表二：服務業按季業務收益指數的時間數列
(Quarterly Average of 1992 = 100)
(一九九二年按季平均指數 = 100)

Year Quarter 年 季	Wholesale 批發		Import/Export 進出口貿易		Retail 零售		Hotels 酒店		Restaurants 飲食店		Transport 運輸	
	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較
%												
1993	106.3	+ 6.3	108.8	+ 8.8	112.7	+ 12.7	112.5	+ 12.5	106.1	+ 6.1	111.8	+ 11.8
1994	121.0	+ 13.8	123.7	+ 13.6	126.1	+ 11.9	131.1	+ 16.5	110.1	+ 3.7	123.1	+ 10.1
1993 2	102.8	N.A.	105.4	N.A.	107.5	N.A.	105.1	N.A.	98.3	N.A.	109.6	N.A.
3	109.5	N.A.	118.3	N.A.	118.1	N.A.	106.8	N.A.	111.5	N.A.	121.2	N.A.
4	114.5	N.A.	115.1	N.A.	120.5	N.A.	137.0	N.A.	115.5	N.A.	114.7	N.A.
1994 1	108.4	+ 10.2	108.0	+ 12.0	123.4	+ 17.9	121.3	+ 19.9	114.3	+ 15.2	112.2	+ 10.4
2	111.6	+ 8.5	113.5	+ 7.8	119.1	+ 10.7	124.1	+ 18.0	105.1	+ 7.0	111.0	+ 1.3
3	129.2	+ 17.9	130.4	+ 10.2	128.8	+ 9.0	120.2	+ 12.5	109.6	- 1.7	134.2	+ 10.7
4	134.8	+ 17.7	142.7	+ 24.0	133.2	+ 10.6	158.8	+ 15.9	111.2	- 3.7	134.9	+ 17.6
1995 1	123.9	+ 14.2	128.7	+ 19.1	131.8	+ 6.8	142.8	+ 17.7	116.1	+ 1.6	128.6	+ 14.6
2*	117.0	+ 4.9	135.9	+ 19.7	124.0 #	+ 4.2	143.3	+ 15.5	111.1	+ 5.7	141.9	+ 27.8

Year Quarter 年 季	Storage 倉庫		Communication 通訊		Banking 銀行		Financing (except banking) 金融(銀行除外)		Insurance 保險		Business services 商用服務	
	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較	Indices 指數	Compared with preceding year/same quarter a year ago 與上年/上年同季比較
%												
1993	98.5	- 1.5	118.8	+ 18.8	116.6	+ 16.6	148.7	+ 48.7	119.3	+ 19.3	117.3	+ 17.3
1994	106.6	+ 8.2	136.1	+ 14.5	122.5	+ 5.1	169.4	+ 13.9	146.9	+ 23.1	127.4	+ 8.7
1993 2	92.4	N.A.	115.6	N.A.	111.5	N.A.	117.0	N.A.	118.0	N.A.	111.9	N.A.
3	101.0	N.A.	121.4	N.A.	121.9	N.A.	146.8	N.A.	121.7	N.A.	121.2	N.A.
4	95.6	N.A.	130.9	N.A.	123.5	N.A.	221.5	N.A.	122.5	N.A.	142.1	N.A.
1994 1	95.1	- 9.5	129.5	+ 20.6	116.9	+ 6.9	219.6	+ 101.0	150.2	+ 30.7	125.6	+ 33.8
2	106.1	+ 14.8	129.4	+ 11.9	115.4	+ 3.5	145.7	+ 24.5	141.9	+ 20.3	123.0	+ 9.9
3	114.8	+ 13.6	135.7	+ 11.8	120.6	- 1.1	157.9	+ 7.6	146.4	+ 20.3	130.8	+ 7.9
4	110.3	+ 15.3	149.7	+ 14.4	137.0	+ 10.9	154.3	- 30.3	149.1	+ 21.7	130.3	- 8.3
1995 1	105.8	+ 11.2	141.9	+ 9.6	129.3	+ 10.6	154.7	- 29.6	169.4	+ 12.8	146.5	+ 16.6
2*	123.2	+ 16.2	149.4	+ 15.5	138.8	+ 20.4	136.7	- 6.2	161.6	+ 13.9	126.6	+ 2.9

N.A. : Not available 沒有數字

* : Provisional figure 臨時數字

: Revised figure 修訂數字

Employers and outstanding disabled employees commended

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The Labour Department's Selective Placement Division (SPD) had successfully placed more than 14,000 disabled job-seekers in the past 15 years, the Commissioner for Labour, Mr Stephen Ip, said today (Friday).

Speaking at the 1995 Presentation of Souvenirs Ceremony organised by SPD to commend open-minded employers and outstanding disabled employees, Mr Ip said the ceremony had special significance as it marked SPD's 15th anniversary. Twelve disabled employees from different careers were awarded for their outstanding working ability.

"Despite the limitations brought about by their disability, they manage to overcome hindrances successfully. We see in them the true meaning of perseverance and positive attitudes towards life," Mr Ip said.

The award-winning employers were selected from over 600 employers. They have all adopted an open and enlightened attitude towards employing the disabled and offered disabled employees ample opportunities to realise their potentials. Mr Ip said SPD would continue to strengthen its publicity and promotion work and together with the employers, identify more suitable jobs for the disabled.

"We believe by doing so we can follow through the objective of 'Fifteen years we care, brighter life for all to share'," he said.

The presentation of the Employment Aid Open Competition' 95 Award of the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation was also held on the same occasion. Awards were presented by the Chairman of Employment Sub-Committee of Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, Mr Vincent Cheng.

There was also a video show and an exhibition on employment opportunities of the disabled and winning designs of the Employment Aid Open Competition' 95. Mr Ip also said the Seminar on Open Employment for People with a Disability' 95 would be held on November 23 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Seminars for employers

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More than 110 employers who have been granted quotas under the Importation of Labour Scheme for the New Airport and Related Projects took part in two seminars held in Tsuen Wan Town Hall this (Friday) afternoon.

Jointly organised by the Labour Department and the Hong Kong Construction Association (HKCA), the first seminar was conducted in Cantonese and the second in English.

Officers from the Labour Department's Importation of Workers Division and representatives from HKCA briefed participants on the conditions of the importation of labour scheme, employment terms, employers' legal liabilities under the standard employment contract and relevant labour laws.

In addition, speakers also advised employers on salient points to maintain harmonious labour relations.

Publications containing information on the importation of labour scheme and employment benefits for workers were distributed to the employers at the two seminars.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Senior staff movement

* * * * *

The Government announced today (Friday) that the Deputy Director of Education, Miss Elaine Chung, will be made Secretary General of the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service with effect from October 16.

Her vacancy will be filled by a Senior Assistant Director of Education, Mr T F Kwan.

Following are biographic notes of the two officers:

Miss Elaine Chung Lai-kwok, JP

Aged 50. Miss Chung joined the administrative service in 1969. She was appointed Deputy Secretary for Health and Welfare in 1986 and was Deputy Secretary for Administrative Services and Information from 1987 to 1989, after which she became Deputy Secretary for Works.

She was made Deputy Director of Education in September 1994.

Mr T F Kwan

Aged 54. Mr Kwan joined the Government in September 1963 and became an Assistant Education Officer in September 1965.

He was promoted to Principal Education Officer in April 1988 and to Assistant Director of Education in August 1989. His promotion to Senior Assistant Director of Education was in May 1995.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Proposed reclamation at Sulphur Channel

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The Government intends to construct seawalls and to reclaim about 370,000 square metres of land by public dumping at the Sulphur Channel between Kennedy Town and Green Island. This will provide a site mainly for the disposal of surplus construction material that is suitable for reclamation.

Work is scheduled to commence in the middle of next year for completion in eight years.

The extent of the area of foreshore and sea-bed affected is described in a notice published in the Government Gazette today (Friday).

Any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and sea-bed involved may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands within two months from today, that is, on or before December 13. The objection should describe the interest, right or easement of the objector and the manner in which he alleges he will be affected.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with its related plans can be seen on the notice boards posted near the site.

The plan can also be seen at the Lands Department, Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road and at the Central and Western District Office, ground floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong. Copies of the plan are also on sale at the Lands Department's office.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Proposed submarine cable from Sha Chau to Lung Kwu Chau

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A submarine cable is being proposed to be laid between Sha Chau and Lung Kwu Chau to provide permanent electricity supply to the Civil Aviation Department's radar station on Lung Kwu Chau for the new airport.

Work will commence in March next year and will be completed in three months' time.

"Dredging will only take place on both sides of the landing points and the estimated total dredging volume of the marine deposits will not be more than 1,000 cubic metres," said a government spokesman today (Friday).

The extent of the area of foreshore and sea-bed to be affected is described in a Lands Department notice published in the Government Gazette today.

Any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and sea-bed involved may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands within two months from today.

The objection should state the interest, right or easement of the objector and the manner in which he alleges he will be affected.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) and its related plans can be seen on notice boards posted near the site.

Plans can be seen and copies can be purchased on order from the Lands Department Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong.

The plans can also be seen at the Tuen Mun District Office, 2nd floor, Tuen Mun Government Offices, 1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories, and at the New Airport Section (New Territories Office) of the Lands Department, 22nd floor, Tsuen Wan Government Offices, 38 Sai Lau Kok Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995.

Dredging work proposed at Tai O Creek

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The Government intends to carry out dredging work within an area of about two hectares of foreshore and sea-bed at Tai O Creek.

The work will improve the creek for navigation purpose and enhance its drainage and flushing capability, thus improving the sanitary and living condition of Tai O. The dredged creek will also serve as a sampan anchorage area. Work is scheduled to commence in June 1997 for completion in June 1999.

The extent of the area affected is described in a notice published in the Government Gazette today (October 13).

Any person who considers that he has an interest, right or easement in or over the foreshore and sea-bed involved may submit a written objection to the Director of Lands within two months from today.

The objection should describe the interest, right or easement of the objector and the manner in which he alleges he will be affected.

The notice (in both English and Chinese) together with its related plans can be seen on the notice boards posted near the site.

The plan can also be seen and copies can be purchased on order at the Lands Department Survey and Mapping Office, 14th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong.

The plan is also available for public inspection at the Islands District Office, 20th floor, Harbour Building, 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong, and at its Mui Wo Sub-office, ground floor, Mui Wo Government Offices, 2 Ngan Kwong Wan Road, Mui Wo, Lantau Island.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Roadworks for Tai O

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The Territory Development Department has proposed to construct three roads in Tai O, Lantau Island.

The new roads will be built at the northeast of Lung Tin Estate Phase I.

The project also include the construction of footpaths, drainage systems, public car parking spaces and amenity areas.

Meanwhile, a riverwall will be built along the bank of Tai O Creek while the existing low-lying area behind the proposed riverwall will be filled up. A notice of the proposed roadworks was gazetted today (Friday).

The plan and scheme of the proposed works can be seen at the Public Enquiry Service Centre of the Central and Western District Office; the Islands District Lands Office; the Islands District Office and its Mui Wo Sub-office.

Any person objecting to the works should send his objection in writing to the Secretary for Transport, Central Government Offices, East Wing, second floor, Lower Albert Road, Central, not later than December 12, describing his interest and the manner in which he will be affected.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Beach buildings at Hung Shing Ye Beach

The Architectural Services Department is inviting tenders for the construction of beach buildings at Hung Shing Ye Beach on Lamma Island.

Details of the tender are contained in the Government Gazette published today (Friday).

The works will include the construction of a two-storey beach building complex with changing rooms, toilets and a command post together with drainage, sewage treatment plant and external works. Only contractors on the Approved Contractors for Public Works List I in Groups B and C for Building Works will be permitted to tender.

Tender forms and further particulars can be obtained from the Architectural Services Department, 34th floor, Queensway Government Offices, 66 Queensway, Hong Kong.

Tenders must be clearly marked and addressed to the Chairman of the Central Tender Board and placed in the Government Secretariat tender box at the lower ground floor lift lobby of Central Government Offices (East Wing), Lower Albert Road, Hong Kong, before noon on November 3. Late tenders will not be accepted.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Tenders invited for sewerage improvement works

The Drainage Services Department is inviting tenders for sewerage improvement works in Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon City and Wong Tai Sin.

The works include the construction of about 8.5 kilometers of sewers with diameters ranging from 300 mm to 1,800 mm, two sewage pumping stations and seven dry weather flow interceptors. Works are scheduled to begin in December this year for completion in 17 months.

A notice of the tender invitation was gazetted today (Friday).

Tender forms and further particulars may be obtained from the office of Consulting Engineers Rust-Atkins Haswell, 11th floor, West Wing, Hennessy Centre, 500 Hennessy Road, Causeway Bay. The tender closing date is noon on November 3.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Air Quality Report for September

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The Environmental Protection Department today (Friday) released air quality information for September.

The purpose of the announcement is to keep the public informed of the air quality levels in the territory and to explain the measurements.

The announcement contains monitoring results from Mong Kok, Central/Western and Kwai Chung, which represent three important land use types in the territory :

- * locations close to road traffic in built-up urban areas;
- * combined commercial and residential districts; and;
- * districts close to industrial areas.

The reported air pollutants include sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), total suspended particulates (TSP) which comprise all sizes of dust particles, and the respirable fraction of the dust (RSP). All these pollutants can affect respiratory health in sufficient concentration.

In September, there were no exceedances of the 24-hour Air Quality Objective (AQO) values at any of the three sites. Mong Kok station recorded the highest concentration of air pollutants, with the 24-hour average NO₂ approaching 90% of the corresponding AQO on September 22.

The gases and particles described originated from various sources. SO₂ is mostly produced when fuels that contain sulphur are burned. NO₂ is formed during combustion by the combination of nitrogen and oxygen, and by the atmospheric oxidation of nitric oxide (NO), also a product of combustion.

Vehicle exhaust is an important source of NO and NO₂ in terms of impact on local air quality. It is also a major source of airborne particulate matter, especially the smaller respirable particles.

Diesel-engined vehicles such as taxis, public light buses, passenger coaches, franchised buses and light and heavy goods vehicles are the greatest contributor of particulate matter. Other sources include industry, furnaces and boilers, construction activities, the sea and the soil.

It is worth noting that while the weather and climate always affect the concentrations of pollutants in the air, the only sure way of reducing the levels is to reduce emissions from the man-made sources.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Action against cooling towers by Buildings Department

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A total of 450 removal orders will be served by the Buildings Department in the coming few months on factory owners in San Po Kong and Chai Wan districts, asking them to remove cooling towers and supporting frames which have been abandoned or are poorly maintained.

The first batch of 12 orders were served today (Friday) to owners of factories in an industrial building in Choi Hung Road.

Chief Building Surveyor (Control and Enforcement), Mr Leung Siu-hong, said that the operation was an on-going effort by the Buildings Department to safeguard public safety and property from poorly maintained and dangerous cooling towers. In January this year, the Buildings Department published the results of a survey on coolers in industrial areas San Po Kong and Chai Wan. The survey covered 77 and 68 buildings in the two districts respectively.

A total of 1,043 advisory letters were subsequently issued to the owners of cooling towers found to be in a poor state of repair. The letters called on the owners to demolish them voluntarily.

"We are pleased to see that over half of the owners have removed their towers and frames. But the others will be served with statutory removal orders.

"We urge owners to take heed and comply with this removal order. If they fail to comply, we will consider taking legal action according to the Buildings Ordinance.

"Government contractors will also be employed to carry out the removal work, and all the costs incurred will be recovered from the owners," he warned.

Mr Leung also advised factory owners to obtain prior approval from the Building Authority before putting up new cooling towers on the external wall of buildings.

"It is the owners' duty not only to design and construct such towers and supporting frames properly. They must also maintain them in a safe and sound condition," he said.

End/Friday, October 13, 1995

Hong Kong Monetary Authority money market operations

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	\$ million	Time (hours)	Cumulative change (\$million)
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Opening balance in the account	2,298	0930	+870
Closing balance in the account	3,466	1000	+870
Change attributable to :		1100	+870
Money market activity	+868	1200	+870
LAF today	+300	1500	+870
		1600	+868

LAF rate 4.25% bid/6.25% offer TWI 121.9 *-0.1* 13.10.95

Hong Kong Monetary Authority

EF bills		EF notes				
Terms	Yield	Term	Issue	Coupon	Price	Yield
1 week	5.43	2 years	2708	6.06	100.44	5.88
1 month	5.49	3 years	3807	6.16	100.14	6.19
3 months	5.57	5 years	5009	6.95	100.66	6.90
6 months	5.61	5 years	M501	7.90	102.73	7.32
12 months	5.66					

Total turnover of EF bills and notes - \$7,316 million

Closed October 13, 1995

End/Friday, October 13, 1995