



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
PROPOSAL TO REINTRODUCE DEPENDENT PARENT'S ALLOWANCE	1
NEED FOR REVISION OF WATER CHARGES EXPLAINED	3
INCREASE IN SIZE OF PUBLIC SERVICE - JUSTIFIABLE AND ESSENTIAL	5
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE COMES INTO BEING SOON	8
MASSIVE NT DEVELOPMENT CLEARS DOUBTS ABOUT GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS	10
STAFF RELATIONS AND MANAGEMENT IN CIVIL SERVICE	13
EXTENDING 'RELEASE UNDER SUPERVISION' SCHEME TO INCLUDE PRISONERS	16
CHANGING STRUCTURE OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY	18
PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	20
FINANCIAL SECRETARY WINDS UP BUDGET DEBATE	21
BILLS PASSED	23
CONFIDENCE IN TUEN MUN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT	24
MORE YOUTHS TAKE UP APPRENTICESHIP	26
TELEVISION PROGRAMME ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION	27
FIREMEN GRADUATION PARADE	28
PRISON OFFICERS PASSING-OUT PARADE	28
CERTIFICATES FOR SWIMMING TEACHERS	29
TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS	29

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 1 -

PROPOSAL TO REINTRODUCE DEPENDENT PARENT'S ALLOWANCE IN 1979-80

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, TODAY PROPOSED TO REINTRODUCE THE DEPENDENT PARENT'S ALLOWANCE IN 1979-80 BUT REJECTED SUGGESTIONS TO FURTHER INCREASE THE PERSONAL ALLOWANCES OR TO INTRODUCE A WORKING WIFE'S ALLOWANCE.

WINDING UP THE BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID SUBJECT TO THE ADVICE OF THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL, HE WOULD INTRODUCE AN AMENDING BILL IN THE COUNCIL LATER THIS YEAR WHICH WOULD CONTAIN PROPOSALS FOR A DEPENDENT PARENT'S ALLOWANCE FROM THE YEAR OF ASSESSMENT 1979-80.

+I HOPE HONOURABLE MEMBERS WILL READILY APPRECIATE THAT 1979-80 IS THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION. THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF OUR BEING ABLE TO WORK OUT A SCHEME, INTRODUCE LEGISLATION AND MOUNT ALL THE NECESSARY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN TIME TO GRANT THE ALLOWANCE FOR THE CURRENT YEAR OF ASSESSMENT,+ HE SAID.

MR. HADDON-CAVE NOTED THAT WHILE NO ONE HAS DENIED HIS POINT THAT, IN GENERAL CONTEXT OF OUR SYSTEM OF PERSONAL TAXATION, THE ALLOWANCE IS OF LIMITED SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE TAXPAYER WITH DEPENDENT PARENTS, THE PRESSURE FOR THE ALLOWANCE TO BE REINTRODUCED IN SOME FORM APPARENTLY REMAINS.

+THE QUESTION IS WHY? I CAN ONLY PRESUME THAT IT IS THE CONCEPT OF AN ALLOWANCE FOR DEPENDENT PARENTS WHICH IS OF IMPORTANCE: THAT IS TO SAY, THE VIEW IS WIDELY HELD THAT IT IS WRONG FOR THE GOVERNMENT, VIA THE SYSTEM OF PERSONAL TAXATION, NOT TO RECOGNISE FILIAL DUTY.+

ON PERSONAL ALLOWANCES IN SALARIES TAX, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THE ALLOWANCE WHICH WAS REVIEWED ONLY LAST YEAR ARE GENEROUS ENOUGH TO KEEP A VERY LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE SALARIED POPULATION COMPLETELY OUTSIDE THE DIRECT TAX NET.

HE SAID: +I MUST ALSO REJECT THE VIEW THAT, WHEN I INCREASED THE TAX THRESHOLD TO \$12,500 AND \$25,000 FOR SINGLE AND MARRIED PERSONS RESPECTIVELY, I WAS OF THE OPINION THAT THESE WERE MINIMUM SUBSISTENCE COSTS.+

+NOT TO REJECT THIS VIEW WOULD BE TO IMPLY THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG ARE LIVING BELOW SUBSISTENCE LEVEL.+

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT OUR EFFECTIVE RATES OF TAX - THE AMOUNT OF TAX EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF A PERSON'S INCOME, IN THEIR PROGRESSION TO THE STANDARD RATE OF 15 PER CENT OF GROSS INCOME - ARE EXTREMELY LOW.

/HE GAVE THE

HE GAVE THE FOLLOWING COMPARATIVE FIGURES TO ILLUSTRATE HIS REMARKS.

EFFECTIVE RATE OF TAX (IN PERCENTAGE)

HONG KONG SINGAPORE MALAYSIA UNITED KINGDOM

ANNUAL
TOTAL INCOME
OF A MARRIED
COUPLE WITH
TWO CHILDREN

HK\$25,000	0	4.2	4.44	14.16
\$35,000	0.64	6.71	8.06	19.83
\$70,000	8.21	14.93	18.21	27.24

REFERRING TO THE WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE, MR. HADDON-CAVE ARGUED THAT SUCH AN ALLOWANCE WAS NOT EQUITABLE +BECAUSE WHERE FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES - INCLUDING INCOME - WERE THE SAME, A MARRIED MAN WITH A WORKING WIFE ENJOYED AN ADVANTAGE OVER THE MAN WHOSE WIFE DID NOT WORK, AND THIS ADVANTAGE REMAINED UNTIL BOTH WERE PAYING TAX AT THE STANDARD RATE.+

+I ARGUED, FURTHER, THAT TO BASE AN ALLOWANCE ON THE CONCEPT OF THE ADDITIONAL COST OF MAINTAINING THE HOME IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF PERSONAL CHOICE OFFENDED THE PRINCIPLE, THAT, IN A SYSTEM OF TAXATION, ALLOWANCES SHOULD BE VARIED ACCORDING TO THE CONDITION OF, AND THE STANDARD OF LIVING EXPECTED OR ENJOYED BY DIFFERENT CLASSES OF TAXPAYERS.+

TO RECTIFY THIS INEQUITABLE SITUATION, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THE BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR ALL WIVES WAS INCREASED FROM \$7,000 TO \$10,000 IN 1973 AND THE SPECIAL \$3,000 EXTRA ALLOWANCE FOR A WORKING WIFE WHICH WAS INTRODUCED IN 1970, WAS CANCELLED.

+THE WITHDRAWAL OF THIS SPECIAL EXTRA ALLOWANCE FOR A WORKING WIFE, ACCOMPANIED BY THE INCREASE IN THE BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR ALL WIVES, IN EFFECT MEANT THAT ALL WIVES WERE ASSUMED TO BE WORKING WIVES AND MANY WIVES WOULD CERTAINLY CONCUR WITH THIS VIEW,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THE REPEAL OF THE WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE IN 1973 LED TO WIVES BEING DETERRED FROM WORKING DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF ANY FORM OF TAX RELIEF.

+OF A TOTAL OF OVER 200,000 DEMAND NOTES FOR SALARIES ISSUED IN 1977-78, ONLY 39,600 INVOLVED WORKING WIVES, OF WHOM ABOUT 34,500 WOULD HAVE DERIVED BENEFIT FROM A WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE.

- 3 -

+THE REMAINING 5,100 WOULD NOT HAVE BENEFITED BECAUSE THEY AND THEIR HUSBANDS WERE ALREADY ON THE STANDARD RATE OF TAX OF 15 PER CENT.

+THESE PROPORTIONS ARE NOT MATERIALLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE DISCLOSED FOR 1972-73, THAT IS THE LAST YEAR FOR WHICH A WORKING WIFE ALLOWANCE WAS GRANTED,+ HE SAID.

ON TAXATION TREATMENT OF INTEREST, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID HAVING REGARD TO THE POSSIBLE EFFECT ON THE COST OF BORROWINGS BY HONG KONG BUSINESS, THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED NOT TO ACCEPT THE THIRD INLAND REVENUE ORDINANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION RELATING TO SUCH TAXATION TREATMENT GENERALLY OR A VARIANT OF IT.

+THAT IS TO SAY, THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED NOT TO REINFORCE THE EXISTING CHARGE ON INTEREST AS SUCH BY EXTENDING THE TERRITORIAL SOURCE CRITERION SO AS TO TAX INTEREST RECEIVED ON FUNDS USED BY BORROWERS TO PRODUCE PROFITS CHARGED TO HONG KONG TAX (UNLESS, OF COURSE, THE INTEREST IS ALREADY BEING TAXED UNDER THE PROVISION OF CREDIT TEST).+

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FINANCIAL SECRETARY EXPLAINS NEED FOR REVISION OF WATER CHARGES

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, EXPLAINED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY WHY A REVISION OF WATER CHARGES IS INEVITABLE BY OUTLINING THE POSITION OF THE WATERWORKS ACCOUNTS WITH REGARD TO OPERATING COSTS, CURRENT WATER CHARGES AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM RATES AND GENERAL REVENUE.

SUMMING UP THE BUDGET DEBATE, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID ON PRESENT COSTS, OPERATING EXPENDITURES ARE ESTIMATED TO BE \$634 MILLION IN 1977-78, BASED \$705 MILLION IN 1978-79, AND TO TOTAL \$2,207 MILLION OVER THE THREE YEAR FORECAST PERIOD, 1979-80 TO 1981-82.

BUT HE SAID THAT ON THE BASIS OF CURRENT WATER CHARGES AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM RATES AND GENERAL REVENUE, INCOME IS ESTIMATED TO BE \$433 MILLION IN 1977-78, \$457 MILLION IN 1978-79, AND TO TOTAL \$1,810 MILLION OVER THE FORECAST PERIOD.

THE CONTRIBUTION FROM RATES IS AT PRESENT SET AT TWO PER CENT OF THE RATEABLE VALUE AND, FOR 1978-79, IS ESTIMATED TO BE \$201 MILLION.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY POINTED OUT: +IF THE PRESENT CHARGES ARE MAINTAINED, AND EVEN ON THE BASIS OF THE CONSERVATIVE CALCULATION OF COSTS, THE WATERWORKS ACCOUNTS WILL BE IN DEFICIT TO THE TUNE OF \$200 MILLION IN 1977-78 AND \$250 MILLION IN 1978-79, WITH DEFICITS OVER THE FORECAST PERIOD TALLING \$400 MILLION.+

/HE ADDED:

HE ADDED: +IN ORDER TO BRING THE ACCOUNTS INTO BALANCE, WITH NO CHANGE IN THE RATES CONTRIBUTION, BUT WITH A PROPORTIONAL INCREASE IN THE CONTRIBUTION FROM THE GENERAL REVENUE, THE TOTAL DIRECT CONTRIBUTION BY CONSUMERS WOULD HAVE TO BE INCREASED BY AT LEAST 50 PER CENT. THE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE A LARGE SUBSIDY.+

BUT MR. HADDON-CAVE OBJECTED TO SUBSIDISING PUBLIC UTILITIES AND EXPLAINED THAT NON-OBSERVANCE OF THE NO-SUBSIDY PRINCIPLE MEANS:

- * THAT PUBLIC UTILITIES ARE OPERATED AT A LOSS AND THIS IS LIKELY TO BE INFLATIONARY,
- * NON-OBSERVANCE RESULTS IN THE TAXPAYER MAKING AN INDISCRIMINATE CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROFITS OF ALL FIRMS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR,
- * TO CHARGE LESS THAN THE TRUE COST IS TO ENCOURAGE EXCESSIVE USE AND WASTE OF THE PRODUCT OR SERVICE SUPPLIED, AND
- * IN TURN, EXCESSIVE USE (AND WASTE) DUE TO SUBSIDISATION, ACCELERATES THE NEED TO EXPAND PUBLIC UTILITIES.

+FOR THESE FOUR REASONS, THE NO-SUBSIDY PRINCIPLE MUST APPLY UNLESS CONSCIOUS POLICY DECISIONS DICTATE OTHERWISE,+ THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID.

ON DOMESTIC WATER CONSUMPTION, MR. HADDON-CAVE AGREED ENTIRELY WITH THE HON. S.L. CHEN THAT THERE SHOULD BE A STEEPLY RISING TARIFF FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMERS POSITIVELY TO DISCOURAGE EXTRAVAGANCE AND WASTE.

IN THE CASE OF NON-DOMESTIC SUPPLIES, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID: +THE NEED FOR WATER VARIES FROM INDUSTRY TO INDUSTRY AND FROM FACTORY TO FACTORY WITHIN EACH INDUSTRY= AND SOME ENTERPRISES ARE ECONOMICAL USERS OF WATER AND SOME ARE NOT.

THE PROVISION OF LOW PRICED WATER FOR INDUSTRY WOULD THUS BE AN EXTREMELY ARBITRARY, WASTEFUL AND INDISCRIMINATE MEANS OF DISBURSING AID.+

HOWEVER, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID THERE ARE GROUNDS FOR ENCOURAGING INDUSTRY TO CONSERVE WATER THROUGH A MORE SOPHISTICATED PRICING SYSTEM.

+WE ARE LOOKING AT THIS AND DESPITE THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE EXERCISE, ARE SEEKING TO DEVISE A SYSTEM WHICH, ON THE ONE HAND, WILL ENCOURAGE CONSERVATION, INCLUDING RECYCLING BUT WHICH, ON THE OTHER HAND, WILL NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST LARGE SCALE ENTERPRISES.+

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY POINTED OUT: +TO BALANCE THE WATERWORKS ACCOUNTS THE REVENUE FROM WATER CHARGE WOULD ONLY NEED TO BE INCREASED BY APPROXIMATELY 35 PER CENT OVERALL.

+CHARGES FOR BOTH DOMESTIC AND NON-DOMESTIC SUPPLIES WILL HAVE TO BE INCREASED AS SOON AS A NEW PRICING SYSTEM HAS BEEN DEvised AND WE HAVE ACQUIRED SUFFICIENT EXPERIENCE WITH OUR NEW COMPUTERISED BILLING SYSTEM,+ THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 5 -

INCREASE IN SIZE OF PUBLIC SERVICE
—JUSTIFIABLE AND ESSENTIAL
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THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON. SIR DENYS ROBERTS, TODAY ASSURED UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THAT SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN THE SIZE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE WILL BE BOTH +JUSTIFIABLE+ AND +ESSENTIAL+ DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY THE UNOFFICIALS AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE, THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID THE INCREASES WERE NECESSARY +IF WE ARE NOT TO LOSE THE MOMENTUM OF OUR VARIOUS PROGRAMMES+.

SIR DENYS SAID: +OUR HOUSING, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL WELFARE PLANS, AND OUR PROGRAMMES OF CONSTRUCTION OF OTHER FACILITIES, WILL CONTINUE TO EXPAND DURING THE NEXT FEW YEARS. IT WOULD SURELY BE UNFORTUNATE IF THESE PLANS AND PROGRAMMES WERE DELAYED BECAUSE OF A LACK OF ADEQUATE STAFF IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SIZE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE WAS FROZEN DURING THE PERIOD OF RECESSION AND SAID +THIS MEANT THAT, WHEN THE ECONOMY RECOVERED UNEXPECTEDLY SWIFTLY, WE WERE NOT IN A POSITION TO MAKE USE OF THE ADDITIONAL REVENUE AS QUICKLY AS WE WOULD HAVE LIKED.+

+IT ALSO OBLIGED US TO COMPRESS INTO TWO OR THREE YEARS THE NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL POSTS WHICH, HAD WE BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN A STEADY PROGRESSION, WOULD HAVE BEEN SPREAD OUT OVER FOUR OR FIVE,+ HE ADDED.

ON THE SUGGESTION FOR MONITORING PUBLIC SERVICE SIR DENYS SAID THAT SO FAR AS THE CREATION OF POSTS WAS CONCERNED, THE RECORD OF THE FINANCE BRANCH, AS A GUARDIAN OF THE PUBLIC PURSE, WAS AN EXCELLENT ONE.

SIR DENYS NOTED THAT WHEN AN APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL STAFF GOES TO THE FINANCE BRANCH, IT MUST STILL SATISFY MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT SUB-COMMITTEE AND THEN FINANCE COMMITTEE ITSELF.

+CONSEQUENTLY, MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL HAVE THE FINAL SAY IN THE APPROVAL OF ANY NEW POST IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE,+ HE SAID.

+THEREFORE, I BELIEVE THAT ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS EXIST FOR ENSURING THAT UNNECESSARY POSTS ARE NOT CREATED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE,+ HE ADDED.

SIR DENYS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT EXAMINATIONS OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF STAFF IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WERE CARRIED OUT FROM TIME TO TIME BY THE CIVIL SERVICE BRANCH AND BY THE MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION (WHICH INCLUDES THE ORGANISATION AND METHODS UNIT), WHOSE JOB WAS COMPLEMENTED BY THE FINANCE BRANCH.

/+THIS INCLUDES

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 6 -

+THIS INCLUDES THE DUTY OF EXAMINING WHETHER A DEPARTMENT'S ESTABLISHMENT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE DISCHARGE OF ITS APPROVED FUNCTIONS AND OF ENSURING THAT THERE ARE THE CORRECT NUMBERS OF POSTS AT ALL LEVELS,+ HE SAID.

ON THE SUGGESTION FOR AN EXAMINATION OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S STRUCTURE, SIR DENYS POINTED OUT THAT THE SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION INITIATED LAST YEAR AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT AS A CENTRAL CO-ORDINATING BODY, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VARIOUS SECRETARIES.

HE SAID MANAGEMENT SERVICES STAFF FROM THE ADMINISTRATION BRANCH OF THE SECRETARIAT HAVE ALSO UNDERTAKEN A PROGRAMME OF REVIEWING THE ORGANISATION OF DEPARTMENTS.

SUCH STUDIES HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT IN THE AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT, THE PRINTING DEPARTMENT AND THE HOME AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, AND WILL BE EXTENDED TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS AS SUITABLE STAFF BECOME AVAILABLE.

+THE HONG KONG CIVIL SERVICE AS A WHOLE IS SUBJECTED, UNDERSTANDABLY, TO MORE CRITICISM THAN PRAISE, BECAUSE GENERALLY THE DISGRUNTLED MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC IS MORE VOCAL THAN THOSE WHO ARE SATISFIED,+ SIR DENYS SAID.

+BUT I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE HONG KONG CIVIL SERVICE HAS MUCH MORE THAN ITS FAIR SHARE OF ABLE, DEVOTED AND INDUSTRIOUS OFFICERS, WITH A GENUINE SENSE OF DEDICATION TO THE COMMUNITY THEY SERVE.

+I AM CONFIDENT THAT THEY WILL NOT LET HONG KONG DOWN IN THE EXCITING YEARS WHICH LIE AHEAD OF US.+

REFERRING TO THE SUGGESTION BY THE HON. F.W. LI ON THE REMOVAL OF SOME ENTERPRISES OF PUBLIC UTILITY NATURE FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE TO BECOME INDEPENDENT CORPORATION OPERATING ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS, SIR DENYS SAID THERE WAS NO SUCH NEED AT PRESENT.

+IF IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED CLEARLY THAT ANY OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WOULD BE RUN MORE ECONOMICALLY, MORE EFFICIENTLY AND PROVIDE A BETTER SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC, UNDER SOME OTHER REGIME, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER IT,+ HE SAID.

SPEAKING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HONG KONG AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, SIR DENYS EXPRESSED DOUBT ON THE SUGGESTION THAT SUCH LINKS HAD BEEN WEAKENED IN RECENT YEARS.

HE SAID: +OF COURSE, HONG KONG HAS ITS ENEMIES AND CRITICS, BUT SURELY THEY ARE FEW COMPARED WITH THE LARGE NUMBER OF OUR FRIENDS IN BRITAIN.+

/SIR DENYS ALSO

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 7 -

SIR DENYS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE ADDITION OF A DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR THE LONDON OFFICE HAS BEEN RECENTLY APPROVED, +WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF RELIEVING THE COMMISSIONER OF MUCH OF HIS OTHER WORK, SO THAT HE CAN CONCENTRATE HIS ENERGIES UPON THE PROMOTION OF BETTER UNDERSTANDING IN THE UK OF HONG KONG+.

ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES IN OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THESE COMMITTEES.

+THE GOVERNMENT DOES CARRY OUT PERIODICAL EXAMINATIONS OF THE STRUCTURE, PURPOSE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THESE COMMITTEES, TO SEE WHETHER THEIR EXISTENCE IS JUSTIFIED OR THEIR JURISDICTION SHOULD BE CHANGED,+ HE SAID.

SIR DENYS ALSO EXPRESSED DOUBT ON THE PRACTICABILITY OF A HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, SUBSIDISED AND GENERALLY CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT, AS PROPOSED BY THE HON. CHARLES YEUNG.

+THERE REMAINS ROOM FOR SCHEMES WHICH SUPPLEMENT THE MEDICAL CARE PROVIDED FROM PUBLIC FUNDS, FOR THOSE WHO WANT THEM AND CAN AFFORD THEM. BUT I DO NOT THINK THAT IT WOULD BE A PROPER USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS FOR SUCH SCHEMES TO BE SUBSIDISED, OR ORGANISED, BY THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

REFERRING TO THE SLIGHT DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF MAGISTRATES PROVIDED FOR IN THE DRAFT ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1978/79, SIR DENYS SAID THIS REDUCTION IS DUE TO A SHIFT IN CRIMINAL CASES FROM MAGISTRATES COURTS TO DISTRICT COURTS. IN PARTICULAR MANY MORE ROBBERY CASES ARE TRIED IN THE DISTRICT COURTS THAN PREVIOUSLY.

TO MEET THIS CHANGED PATTERN, POSTS FOR THREE MORE DISTRICT JUDGES HAVE BEEN CREATED WITH A REDUCTION OF THREE IN THE NUMBER OF MAGISTRATES.

ON THE COMPLAINTS THAT DELAYS AND INCONVENIENCE HAVE BEEN CAUSED TO WITNESSES AND DEFENDANTS AWAITING THEIR APPEARANCE IN COURTS, SIR DENYS ASSURED THAT THE JUDICIARY IS FULLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO DO WHATEVER IT REASONABLY CAN TO REDUCE TO THE MINIMUM SUCH DELAYS AND INCONVENIENCE.

SIR DENYS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT PERHAPS AT THE START OF THE NEXT SESSION, THE EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM IN BILLS WOULD CONTAIN A PARAGRAPH INDICATING THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

ON THE SUGGESTION OF RELAXING IMMIGRATION LAWS TO ALLOW MORE FOREIGN WORKERS INTO HONG KONG TO ALLEVIATE MANPOWER SHORTAGE, SIR DENYS SAID SUCH RELAXATION WOULD POSE +GRAVE SOCIAL PROBLEMS+.

+WE SHOULD ALSO BEAR CAREFULLY IN MIND THE FACT THAT, ONCE YOU HAVE IMPORTED SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF FOREIGN WORKERS, IT IS DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, TO GET RID OF THEM IF CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE AND YOU NO LONGER REQUIRE THEM,+ SIR DENYS SAID.

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/8

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 8 -

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE COMES INTO BEING SOON

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THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, TODAY ASSURED THAT THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE WILL SOON BE BROUGHT INTO BEING IN GOOD TIME FOR IT TO CONSIDER THE REPORT AND CERTIFICATE OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT ON THE ACCOUNTS FOR 1977-78.

IN WINDING UP THE BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, SECRETARIES, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF ORGANISATIONS IN RECEIPT OF PUBLIC FUNDS WILL BE CALLED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE TO ANSWER ANY POINTS PUT TO THEM.

+THE COMMITTEE WILL BE CONCERNED WITH PRINCIPLES AND SYSTEM, NOT WITH DETAILS AND PERSONALITIES, AND WILL LOOK TO THE DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY, AS THE HEAD OF THE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS, TO SEE THAT APPROPRIATE ACTION IS TAKEN ON ITS REPORT,+ HE SAID.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT A GREATER DEGREE OF DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FROM BOTH THE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND FINANCE BRANCH IS CALLED FOR TO RELIEVE THEIR WORKLOAD AND SAID THAT HE HAD ASKED THE DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO SET IN MOTION A REVIEW OF DELEGATED AUTHORITIES.

MR. HADDON-CAVE NOTED THAT A LIGHTER WORKLOAD WOULD ENABLE MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO DIRECT THEIR ATTENTION, EVEN MORE THAN AT PRESENT, TO WHAT THE HON. LYDIA DUNN DESCRIBED AS +THE POLICIES AND PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS.+

THE FINANCE BRANCH WOULD ALSO BE ABLE TO DEVOTE MUCH MORE OF THEIR TIME TOWARDS DETERMINING WHETHER DEPARTMENTS ARE ACHIEVING VALUE-FOR-MONEY IN THEIR EXPENDITURE PERFORMANCE, HE ADDED.

MR. HADDON-CAVE ALSO SAID THAT HE AND THE FINANCE BRANCH WERE EXTREMELY CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT THE HON. S.L. CHEN DESCRIBED AS 'COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC SPENDING' THOUGH, SOMETIMES, +WE ARE NOT ABLE TO BE AS EFFECTIVE AS WE WOULD LIKE TO BE.+

WITH REFERENCE TO MISS LYDIA DUNN'S REMARKS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENTED FINANCE COMMITTEE WITH +FAIT ACCOMPLI+ SITUATIONS, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THAT AS THE CHIEF SECRETARY HAD EXPLAINED, FINANCE COMMITTEE COULD DECLINE TO SANCTION THE PROVISION SOUGHT.

/HE SAID

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 9 -

HE SAID: +I WOULD STRESS THAT IT IS FINANCE COMMITTEE WHICH SANCTIONS PROVISION, CONTRARY TO WHAT FATHER MCGOVERN SEEM TO SUGGEST WHEN HE RATHER FLATTERINGLY REFERRED TO MY PERSONAL GENEROSITY IN 'LAVISHLY LASHING OUT LIBERAL LUMPS OF MONEY TO DESTITUTE DEPARTMENTS?'+

ON THE GOVERNMENT'S SYSTEM OF FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID NOTWITHSTANDING CERTAIN IMPORTANT CHANGES INTRODUCED IN RECENT YEARS, IT +REMAINS THE SAME AS IT WAS 20 YEARS AGO, PARTICULARLY INsofar AS IT RELATES TO THE AUTHORISATION OF EXPENDITURE AND THE SANCTIONING OF ADDITIONAL PROVISION.+

HE POINTED OUT THAT IT WOULD BE SHORT-SIGHTED NOT TO RECOGNISE THAT THIS SYSTEM, THOUGH +HAS STOOD US IN GOOD STEAD OVER THE YEARS+, WAS DEvised FOR AN EARLIER AGE AND MIGHT NOT BE ENTIRELY SUITABLE FOR PRESENT DAY CIRCUMSTANCES.

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID AS A LOGICAL STEP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FINANCIAL DEVOLUTION WITHIN HONG KONG, +WE NEED TO DEFINE HOW AUTHORITY SHOULD BE CONFERRED AND AT WHAT LEVELS AUTHORITY CAN BEST BE EXERCISED.+

+THE GENERAL WARRANT SIGNED AFTER THE ENACTMENT OF THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE IS NO MORE THAN AUTHOIRSATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES TO PAY OUT UP TO THE LIMIT REPRESENTED BY THE TOTAL PROVISION IN EACH HEAD OF EXPENDITURE.

+THE CONTROL OF EXPENDITURE IS SUBJECT ONLY TO ADMINISTRATIVE RULES.+

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID ACCORDINGLY, HE HAD ASKED THE DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO HEAD A SMALL WORKING PARTY CONSISTING OF THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT AND THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING SERVICES TO CONSIDER WHETHER +WE SHOULD THINK IN TERMS OF A SYSTEM IF STATUTORY BACKING FOR OUR SYSTEM OF FINANCIAL CONTROL AND POSSIBLY INTRODUCE A FORMAL CONCEPT OF ACCOUNTING OFFICER.+

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/10

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 10 -

MASSIVE NT DEVELOPMENT CLEARS DOUBTS
ABOUT GOVERNMENT INTENTIONS AND ABILITY

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DOUBTS ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY AND INTENTION TO CARRY OUT MASSIVE BUILDING PROGRAMME IN THE NEW TERRITORIES HAD NOW BEEN DISPELLED BY ACHIEVEMENT OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS, THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, THE HON. DAVID AKERS-JONES SAID TODAY.

THE CENTRAL CORE OF THE DEVELOPMENT HAD NOW BEEN COMPLETED, HE SAID, WHICH WILL LEAD TO THE PROVISION OF HOMES FOR ONE AND A HALF MILLION PEOPLE.

SPEAKING IN THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID: +THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME PEOPLE IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS WHO WILL HAVE DOUBTED WHETHER WE REALLY MEANT WHAT WE SAID WHEN THE PLANS FOR THE NEW TOWNS, AND ALL THE OTHER THINGS WE SAID WE WERE GOING TO DO, WERE SPELT OUT. THERE WERE SOME WHO DOUBTED THE WISDOM OF TRYING TO DO SO MUCH AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME.

+TODAY THERE CAN BE NO MORE DOUBTING, WE HAVE NOT COLLAPSED UNDER THE STRAIN AND THE ESSENTIAL NUCLEUS OF DEVELOPMENT HAS ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED.

+NOW, ROUND THIS CENTRAL CORE IN EVERY PLACE RECLAMATION, ENGINEERING WORKS AND PILE DRIVING IS ALREADY UNDERWAY, WHICH WILL TAKE US WELL INTO THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND TOWARDS THE TARGET OF PROVIDING NEW HOMES FOR ONE AND A HALF MILLION PEOPLE.+

ANSWERING A NUMBER OF POINTS RAISED BY THE UNOFFICIAL COUNCILLOR MR. CHARLES YEUNG, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID THE EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC WORKS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES HAD CLIMBED FROM AN ACTUAL 1976-77 FIGURES OF \$347 MILLION TO ALMOST DOUBLE THAT IN THE FORECAST FOR 1978-79 OF \$675 MILLION.

HE ADDED THE FIGURES REPRESENTED AN INCREASE FROM 30 TO 42 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC WORKS IN THE LAST THREE YEARS.

MR. AKERS-JONES POINTED OUT THAT ACTUAL ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE SHOWED PROOF OF THE INCREASINGLY HIGH STANDARDS OF DEVELOPMENT BEING APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+STANDARDS BEING APPLIED WILL BE FAR HIGHER THAN ANYTHING YET SEEN IN HONG KONG= EMPHASIS IS BEING PLACED ON BALANCED DEVELOPMENT, AND, ON RESTORING THE BALANCE WHERE FACILITIES ARE LACKING= AND ATTENTION IS BEING PAID, AS NEVER BEFORE IN HONG KONG, TO THE ENVIRONMENT, LANDSCAPING AND MANAGEMENT OF THESE COMMUNITIES +

/ON THE SUBJECT

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 11 -

ON THE SUBJECT OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO MORE ISOLATED VILLAGES, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID THE GOVERNMENT'S RECORD WAS NOT BAD AND WORK WAS CONTINUING. ONLY LAST YEAR EIGHT NEW MOTORABLE ACCESS TRACKS WERE BUILT AND 13 REPAIRED.

THOSE VILLAGES WHICH STILL DID NOT HAVE VEHICULAR ACCESS, HE SAID, WERE USUALLY VERY REMOTE OR SPARSELY INHABITED, SAVE IN A FEW CASES WHERE PRIVATE LAND PREVENTED IT. +I BELIEVE WE HAVE NOW REACHED A POINT WHERE, IN CERTAIN CASES, WE SHOULD TACKLE THE PROBLEM, AS MR. YEUNG SUGGESTS, BY RESUMPTION OF THE LAND REQUIRED,+ HE SAID.

ON WATER SUPPLY, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID THERE WERE PROJECTS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE EXISTING SUPPLY ZONES AND TO EXTEND WATER SUPPLY TO NEW AREAS.

+THESE INCLUDE PROVISION OF SUPPLY TO MA WAN AND LAMMA, AND TO CHEUNG SHA ON LANTAU.

+PROVISION OF A SUPPLY, AS I SAID IN 1976, IS ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOPMENT OF THESE PLACES. AND I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT TARGET DATES HAVE BEEN SET FOR MA WAN AND CHEUNG SHA, AND THAT CONSULTANTS HAVE NOW BEEN APPOINTED TO INVESTIGATE AND ADVISE ABOUT THE SUPPLY FOR LAMMA ISLAND WITH A VIEW TO GETTING ON WITH IT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE,+ HE SAID.

HE ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD, WHERE POSSIBLE, ENTERTAINED REQUESTS FOR THE PROVISION OF INDIVIDUAL METRED WATER SUPPLY FOR VILLAGE HOUSES, IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING WATER FROM A PUBLIC STAND-PIPE.

MR. AKERS-JONES SAID IT WAS A REGRETTABLE FACT THAT PART OF THE PRICE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WAS THE ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE DISTURBANCE AND, IN SOME CASES, COMPLETE REMOVAL OF LONG-ESTABLISHED VILLAGES.

+EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO REDUCE THIS TO THE MINIMUM AND CONSTANTLY TO REVIEW REMOVAL TERMS AND THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE. BUT THE OPTIONS ARE LIMITED BY THAT VERY PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT WHOSE AIM IS TO TURN A RURAL ENVIRONMENT INTO AN INDUSTRIALISED TOWN,+ HE SAID.

MR. AKERS-JONES SPOKE ON REMOVAL TERMS FOR VILLAGE HOUSES AS WELL AS THE RESITING OF VILLAGES WHICH ARE BUILT TO MODERN STANDARDS AND PROPER LAYOUT AND WITH MODERN SERVICES.

HE SAID THERE WERE PLANS TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT OF VILLAGES WHICH COULD BE LEFT WHERE THEY WERE, AND PROVIDE THEM WITH VARIOUS FACILITIES NOW LACKING.

MR. AKERS-JONES CONTINUED TO SPEAK ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF COUNTRY PARKS AND MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

/+THE GOVERNMENT

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 12 -

+THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT THIEVES AND ROBBERS IN COUNTRY PARKS AND ELSEWHERE ARE BEST TACKLED BY STRENGTHENING THE PRESENCE OF THE POLICE AND THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND TO CALLS FOR HELP.

+PART OF THE PROCESS OF IMPROVING POLICE EFFECTIVENESS IS THE EXTENSION OF BEAT RADIO TO THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+BEAT RADIO IS ALREADY USED IN KWAI CHUNG AND TSUEN WAN. THE SCHEME HAS PROVED VERY EFFECTIVE, BUT IT IS EXPENSIVE AND THERE ARE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS TO OVERCOME.

+NEVERTHELESS, IT IS THE INTENTION THAT THIS SYSTEM SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO SHA TIN AND TUEN MUN DURING THIS AND THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR, AND LATER TO YUEN LONG AND SHEUNG SHUI,+ HE SAID.

MR. AKERS-JONES CONTINUED TO SPEAK ON PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION IN COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON YOUNG PEOPLE.

+I AM SURE THERE IS MUCH MORE THAT CAN BE DONE IN THIS DIRECTION AND WITH THIS IN VIEW, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES, WHO IS THE COUNTRY PARKS AUTHORITY, WILL PRESENT HIS PLANS ON CONSERVATION EDUCATION TO THE COUNTRY PARKS BOARD DURING THE SUMMER, AND WILL PUT FORWARD THE AUTHORITY'S INTENTIONS TO THIS FIELD,+ SAID MR. AKERS-JONES.

AS FOR THE POINT THAT THERE SHOULD BE A REVIEW OF FACILITIES BEING PROVIDED IN THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR. AKERS-JONES SAID: +THE DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES HAS JUST COMPLETED SUCH A REVIEW AND IT WILL SHORTLY BE EXAMINED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS COMMITTEE, WHICH I CHAIR, SO THAT THE LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROGRAMME CAN BE PROPERLY ASSESSED AND, EQUALLY IMPORTANT, SO AS TO ENSURE THE ADEQUACY OF THE MACHINERY TO IMPLEMENT AND MANAGE THE PROGRAMME OF WORKS INVOLVED.+

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/13

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 13 -

SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMENTS ON
STAFF RELATIONS AND STAFF MANAGEMENT

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GOOD STAFF RELATIONS BEGIN NOT WITH CONSULTATIVE OR NEGOTIATING MACHINERY BUT WITH GOOD STAFF MANAGEMENT, THE SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE HON. MARTIN ROWLANDS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR. ROWLANDS CITED FIVE ASPECTS OF STAFF MANAGEMENT WHICH AFFECT STAFF RELATIONS:

- * DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITY AND MAKING IT STICK=
- * ENCOURAGING INITIATIVE AND DELIBERATELY PROVIDING THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICER WITH A CHALLENGE=
- * ENSURING THAT WORK IS BOTH PROPERLY ORGANISED AND SUPERVISED=
- * DEVELOPING GOOD TWO-WAY ORAL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN ALL LEVELS OF STAFF= AND
- * ESTABLISHING THE CONCEPT OF ACCOUNTABILITY DOWNWARDS WITHIN THE ORGANISATION.

ELABORATING ON THE LAST POINT, MR. ROWLANDS SAID WE WERE ALL USED TO THE IDEA OF BEING ACCOUNTABLE UPWARDS TO OUR SUPERIORS. +EQUAL EMPHASIS SHOULD, IN MY VIEW, BE GIVEN AT ALL LEVELS TO AN OFFICER'S ACCOUNTABILITY TO HIS JUNIORS IN MATTERS WHICH AFFECT THEIR WELL-BEING,+ HE SAID.

WHILE PROPER STAFF MANAGEMENT ALONG THESE LINES WAS A NECESSARY FOUNDATION FOR GOOD STAFF RELATIONS, ONE ALSO NEEDED A PROPERLY CONSTITUTED FORUM IN WHICH MANAGEMENT AND STAFF COULD TALK TO EACH OTHER ON AN EQUAL FOOTING AND IN WHICH THEY COULD RESOLVE THE DIFFERENCES WHICH WERE BOUND TO ARISE FROM TIME TO TIME IN ANY HUMAN ORGANISATION.

FORMAL STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCILS, OF WHICH THERE WERE NOW 19, SERVED THIS PURPOSE AT THE DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL. +HOWEVER, BEFORE EXPANDING THEIR NUMBER, I BELIEVE THE TIME IS RIPE TO REVIEW THEIR ROLE AND 'MODUS OPERANDI', WITH THE AIM OF MAKING THEM MORE EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENTS FOR RESOLVING MATTERS WHICH ARE WITHIN THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT'S AUTHORITY.+

MR. ROWLANDS SAID AT THE SAME TIME WE NEEDED TO REVIEW THE ROLE OF DEPARTMENTAL STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCILS IN RELATION TO PAY AND STRUCTURE MATTERS AFFECTING DEPARTMENTAL GRADES OF STAFF, FOR THESE NEARLY ALWAYS HAD IMPLICATIONS FOR SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS, AND THEREFORE NEEDED TO BE DETERMINED ON A SERVICE-WIDE BASIS.

/+MY INITIAL,

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 14 -

+MY INITIAL, AND TENTATIVE, VIEW IS THAT SUCH PAY AND STRUCTURE MATTERS SHOULD CONTINUE, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, TO BE REFERRED TO THE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENTAL STAFF CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL FOR THE RESPECTIVE VIEWS OF BOTH THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF SIDES, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT COINCIDE. THE MATTER SHOULD THEN BE CONSIDERED CENTRALLY, WITHOUT DELAY, USING NEW NEGOTIATING PROCEDURES TAILORED TO MEET OUR LOCAL REQUIREMENTS.+

IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT ANY NEW PROCEDURES SHOULD, FROM THE OUTSET, ENJOY THE CONFIDENCE OF BOTH THE STAFF AND THE GOVERNMENT, AND THAT IT BE ACCEPTED BY ALL CONCERNED THAT THE PURPOSE WAS TO REACH AGREEMENT.

MR. ROWLANDS SAID MANY STAFF MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE STEMMED DIRECTLY FROM THE RAPID EXPANSION TO WHICH WE WERE COMMITTED IN ORDER TO DEVELOP PUBLIC SERVICES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AT THE DESIRED RATE.

+IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT THE PACE OF DEVELOPMENT IS NOW SO FAST THAT MANY SENIOR OFFICERS SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE TIME TO DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH STAFF MANAGEMENT ON TOP OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES FOR POLICY, PLANNING, OPERATIONS AND GENERAL ADMINISTRATION. URGENT STUDIES ARE NEEDED TO GET THE MEASURE OF THE PROBLEM, AND TO WORK OUT QUICK AND SIMPLE REMEDIES,+ HE SAID.

+MY OWN TENTATIVE VIEW IS THAT IN MANY DEPARTMENTS WE SHALL FIND A NEED FOR SENIOR OFFICERS ABLE TO DEVOTE THEIR WHOLE TIME TO SUPERVISING RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, POSTINGS, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, WELFARE, STAFF RELATIONS AND RELATED MATTERS.+

HE SAID HE COULD TESTIFY FROM HIS OWN RECENT EXPERIENCE THAT AN INVESTMENT IN RESPONSIVE STAFF MANAGEMENT COULD LEAD QUICKLY TO VISIBLY BETTER MORALE, GREATER EFFICIENCY, AND TO ECONOMY IN THE USE OF SCARCE STAFF.

+IF IT SHOULD BE DECIDED TO APPOINT SENIOR STAFF MANAGERS IN THE LARGER DEPARTMENTS, PERHAPS AS PART OF A PLAN TO IMPROVE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GENERALLY, I AM REASONABLY CONFIDENT THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO FIND SUITABLE CANDIDATES FROM AMONG SERVING OFFICERS IN PROFESSIONAL AND GENERAL GRADES.+

ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT, MR. ROWLANDS SAID THIS LAY AT THE HEART OF GOOD STAFF MANAGEMENT IN AN ORGANISATION THE SIZE OF THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT.

+AN YET IT MUST BE ADMITTED,+ HE SAID, +THAT THE APPLICATION OF THIS CONCEPT WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE IS STILL VERY MUCH IN ITS INFANCY, PARTLY BECAUSE IT REQUIRES HIGHLY SKILLED, AND THEREFORE SCARCE, STAFF IF IT IS TO BE EFFECTIVE.+

HE SAID A GREAT DEAL MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE BY WAY OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL SERVING OFFICERS, BOTH LOCAL AND OVERSEAS.

/ON LOCALISATION,

ON LOCALISATION, MR. ROWLANDS SAID LOCAL OFFICERS NOW HELD 197 POSTS AT THE DIRECTORATE LEVEL, OR 35 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL. HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THIS PROPORTION WOULD GROW STEADILY IN THE YEARS AHEAD.

+INDEED, WE APPEAR TO BE ENTERING A PHASE WHERE IT WILL BE INCREASINGLY THE NORM FOR OVERSEAS OFFICERS TO FIND LOCAL OFFICERS SENIOR TO THEM IN RANK.+

WITH REGARD TO THE HON. LYDIA DUNN'S REFERENCE TO THE +PARTICULARLY LARGE+ NUMBER OF OVERSEAS OFFICERS WHO JOINED THE SERVICE LAST YEAR, MR. ROWLANDS SAID IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED POLICY TO RECRUIT REGULARLY FROM OVERSEAS FOR THE POLICE FORCE.

+IN ALMOST ALL OTHER CASES THE NEED TO RECRUIT FROM OVERSEAS WAS PARTLY THE CONSEQUENCE OF AN OVERALL SHORTAGE OF PEOPLE IN HONG KONG HOLDING PARTICULAR QUALIFICATIONS (FOR EXAMPLE SURVEYORS), PARTLY THE CONSEQUENCE OF EXTREMELY HIGH DEMAND IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR (FOR EXAMPLE ARCHITECTS) AND PARTLY BECAUSE IN SOME PROFESSIONS (FOR EXAMPLE MEDICAL AND LEGAL) THERE IS A MARKED PREFERENCE FOR PRIVATE PRACTICE.+

MR. ROWLANDS SAID IT WAS EVIDENT THAT, DESPITE REPEATED DECLARATIONS OF INTENT TO LOCALISE, AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT MORE AND MORE LOCAL OFFICERS WERE MOVING INTO SENIOR RANKS, THE GOVERNMENT HAD NOT SUCCEEDED IN PERSUADING MANY PEOPLE OF ITS SINCERITY ON THIS ISSUE. THIS MIGHT BE PARTLY BECAUSE NO MATTER HOW MUCH THE GOVERNMENT DID, THERE WAS ALWAYS SO MUCH MORE REMAINING TO BE DONE.

+I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY THEREFORE OF STATING, UNEQUIVOCALLY, THAT I REGARD IT AS ONE OF MY PRINCIPAL TASKS TO IMPLEMENT THE GOVERNMENT'S LOCALISATION POLICY, TO DO SO FIRMLY, AND WITH FAIRNESS TO ALL THE OFFICERS CONCERNED, LOCAL AND OVERSEAS ALIKE,+ MR. ROWLANDS SAID.

HE SAID HE ECHOED MISS DUNN'S REMARK THAT HONG KONG WAS TOO SOPHISTICATED A PLACE FOR IT TO BE WISE OR NECESSARY TO PURSUE A POLICY OF LOCALISATION FOR ITS OWN SAKE. +INDEED, IF WE WERE EVER TO FALL INTO THAT TRAP, THE CIVIL SERVICE COULD LOSE SOME OF ITS MOST DEDICATED AND TALENTED OFFICERS. HONG KONG AS A WHOLE WOULD THEN BE THE LOSER.+

ON CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR MARRIED WOMEN CIVIL SERVANTS, MR. ROWLANDS SAID HE WOULD ARRANGE A FURTHER SURVEY OF CURRENT PRACTICE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR CONSIDERING WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CHANGE ITS RULES.

REFERRING TO THE PROBLEM OF PRIVATE HOUSING FOR CIVIL SERVANTS, MR. ROWLANDS SAID IT WAS NOW BEING LOOKED AT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FULL SCALE REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICIES, FOR HOUSING CIVIL SERVANTS.

+WHILE I CANNOT ANTICIPATE ITS OUTCOME, I SHALL NOT BE SURPRISED IF IT RECOMMENDS THAT OUR MAIN AIM IN FUTURE SHOULD BE TO ASSIST CIVIL SERVANTS TO OWN THEIR HOMES WHERE THEY WISH TO DO SO.+

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 16 -

ON THE SUBJECT OF DISPUTES IN THE CIVIL SERVICE, MR. ROWLANDS SAID HE BELIEVED HE SPOKE FOR VIRTUALLY THE WHOLE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE WHEN HE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO DESIRE TO ENGAGE IN MILITANCY.

+NOR DO I BELIEVE THERE IS ANY GENERAL DISSATISFACTION THROUGHOUT THE SERVICE, THOUGH THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PROBLEM AREAS AND THESE ARE RECEIVING MY CLOSE ATTENTION.+

HE SAID IF THERE WERE MORE GROUPS OF STAFF WHO FELT AGGRIEVED OVER ONE ISSUE OR ANOTHER, +WE MUST SEEK OUT THE CAUSES AND TAKE STEPS TO REMEDY THEM, FOR, AS A GENERAL RULE, HONG KONG CIVIL SERVANTS DO NOT COMPLAIN UNLESS THEY BELIEVE THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT.+

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EXTENDING RELEASE UNDER SUPERVISION SCHEME
TO INCLUDE PRISONERS

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THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON. LEWIS DAVIES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY HE WAS IN FAVOUR OF EXTENDING EXISTING SCHEMES OF RELEASE UNDER SUPERVISION TO INCLUDE PRISONERS. HE SAID THIS HAD BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR SOME TIME.

ANSWERING POINTS RAISED BY THE HON. CHARLES YEUNG AT THE RESUMED BUDGET DEBATE, MR. DAVIES SAID RELEASE OF PRISONERS UNDER SUPERVISION WOULD BE TIMED TO TAKE EFFECT WHEN THE PRISONER'S RESPONSE TO HIS TREATMENT HAD REACHED THE HIGHEST POINT AND WHEN IN THEORY HIS RETURN TO SOCIETY UNDER SUPERVISION SHOULD THEREFORE ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULTS.

+BUT THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES,+ HE SAID. +IN ANY EXTENSION OF THE SCHEME IT MAY NOT BE EASY TO REASSURE THE PUBLIC THAT THE AUTHORITIES COULD KEEP IN SUFFICIENTLY CLOSE AND REGULAR TOUCH WITH THOSE RELEASED TO SEE THAT THE CONDITIONS OF RELEASE ARE IMPOSED EFFECTIVELY.

+SECONDLY, IT IS A MATTER OF JUDGMENT WHETHER A PRISONER HAS REACHED THE POINT OF MAXIMUM RESPONSE. THIS PLACES A GREAT BURDEN ON THE PAROLE BOARD.

/+THIRDLY,

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 17 -

+THIRDLY, AND UNHAPPILY, EVEN WHERE SUCH SCHEMES HAVE BEEN IN OPERATION, THEY HAVE NOT ALWAYS HAD AN OBVIOUS INFLUENCE ON RECIDIVISM,+ HE SAID.

IN SOME COUNTRIES WHERE SUCH A SYSTEM EXISTED NATURAL LEVELS OF LAWLESSNESS HAD REACHED RECORD HEIGHTS. NOT UNNATURALLY THE PUBLIC WAS APPREHENSIVE AND THE EXTENSION OF THE SYSTEM TO PRISONERS HERE, HUMANE AS IT MIGHT BE, COULD ONLY BE APPROACHED WITH CAUTION.

+PROBABLY, THE NEXT CATEGORY TO BE CONSIDERED SHOULD BE YOUNG OFFENDERS,+ MR. DAVIES SAID.

MR. DAVIES SAID HE AGREED THAT PRISONERS SHOULD BE EMPLOYED MORE PRODUCTIVELY. HE SAID EXPERT ADVICE ON PRISON INDUSTRIES WAS OBTAINED LAST YEAR AND ACTION WAS IN TRAIN TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS.

+THE OBJECT IS TO DEVELOP OUTPUT TO THE MAXIMUM COMPATIBLE WITH THE LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY PRISONS DISCIPLINE AND ROUTINE.+ THIS WOULD REQUIRE ADDITIONAL TRAINING STAFF, SOME POSTS HAVING ALREADY BEEN APPROVED.

MR. DAVIES SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO BE PROCEEDING WITH A PROGRAMME FOR IMPROVED AND ADDITIONAL WORKSHOP FACILITIES.

+THE IMMEDIATE AIM IS TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL OUTPUT TO ABOUT \$26 MILLION AND IN THE LONG TERM TO ABOUT \$50 MILLION ANNUALLY,+ HE SAID.

+WE INTEND TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARDS THESE TARGETS IN THIS FINANCIAL YEAR.+

MR. DAVIES TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THERE WAS PROVISION IN THE 1978/79 ESTIMATES FOR ANOTHER 12 NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UNITS AND 37 REPORTING CENTRES.

HE SAID FUNDS WERE INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET TO EXTEND THE BEAT RADIO SYSTEM TO SHA TIN AND CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN TO FURTHER EXTENSIONS IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

MR. DAVIES SAID HE ENVISAGED SOME EXPANSION OF THE CIVIL AID SERVICES STRENGTH IN THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL YEARS.

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/18

CHANGING STRUCTURE OF HK'S ECONOMY
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THE GOVERNMENT IS AWARE OF THE DEVELOPING SHIFT IN EMPHASIS IN OUR ECONOMY FROM MANUFACTURING TO TERTIARY INDUSTRIES AND IS KEEPING +A CLOSE EYE+ ON SUCH DEVELOPMENT, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE SAID TODAY.

WINDING UP THE BUDGET DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT HAS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT SUCH DEVELOPING SHIFT IS UNDESIRABLE, IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE GROWTH OF TERTIARY INDUSTRIES AND WILL DO ITS BEST TO FACILITATE THAT GROWTH OR, AT LEAST, NOT TO IMPEDE IT.

HE SAID: + THE MODIFICATIONS TO THE STAMP ORDINANCE, MOST OF WHICH ARE OF BENEFIT TO INDUSTRIES IN TERTIARY SECTOR, AND THE RECENT LIFTING OF THE MORATORIUM ON THE GRANTING OF BANK LICENCES ARE POLICY DECISIONS REFLECTING THIS SYMPATHY.+

HE NOTED THAT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES MAY BE DOMINANT IN TERMS OF EXPORTS, BUT THEY ARE ALSO RELATIVELY IMPORT-INTENSIVE, WHILE TERTIARY INDUSTRIES ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY LESS EXPORT-ORIENTED AND LESS IMPORT-INTENSIVE.

ON OUR POSITION IN THE WORLD ECONOMY, MR. HADDON-CAVE SHARED THE HON. Q.W. LEE'S REMARKS THAT CHANGES IN RECENT YEARS HAVE RESULTED IN HONG KONG BEING +MUCH MORE VULNERABLE TO INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS (THAN IN THE PAST).+

+FOR EXAMPLE,+ HE SAID, +OUR INTERNAL PRICE LEVEL IS NOW MORE INFLUENCED BY THE MARKETING STRATEGY OF OUR MAIN SUPPLIERS= OUR INTEREST RATE STRUCTURE USED TO BE LARGELY DETERMINED BY INTERNAL DEMAND AND SUPPLY FACTORS, BUT THIS IS NO LONGER THE CASE= OUR STOCK MARKET IS NOW INFLUENCED BY THE STATE OF OTHER MARKETS= AND THE HONG KONG DOLLAR, WHICH USED TO HAVE A FIXED RELATIONSHIP FIRST WITH STERLING AND LATER WITH THE U.S. DOLLAR, IS NOW FLOATING.+

+THESE CHANGES, TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE EMERGENCE OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR OF OUR ECONOMY, INVOLVING GREATLY ENLARGED CAPITAL FLOWS ACROSS THE EXCHANGES, HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG, NOT JUST ON THE PART OF HONG KONG RESIDENTS, OR EVEN OF OVERSEAS INVESTORS IN OUR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, BUT ALSO OF THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL COMMUNITY.+

BUT HE SOUNDED A NOTE OF CAUTION AND SAID: +IF ITS CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG GENERALLY, AND IN THE GOVERNMENT'S MANAGEMENT OF OUR FISCAL, BUDGETARY, ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS WERE TO BE ERODED, THE EFFECT COULD BE QUITE DISASTROUS.

+IN OTHER WORDS, WE LIVE IN A MUCH RISKIER, BECAUSE IT IS A MUCH MORE EXPOSED, ENVIRONMENT AND SO PRUDENT MANAGEMENT OF OUR AFFAIRS IS MORE VITAL THAN EVER,+ HE ADDED.

REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY THE UNOFFICIALS ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TOWARDS INDUSTRY, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID THE GOVERNMENT IS ALREADY INVOLVED, DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY, IN ACTIVITIES WHICH FACILITATE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE VARIOUS PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE UNOFFICIALS FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S FURTHER INVOLVEMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DIVERSIFICATION UNDER ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE.

REPLYING TO REMARKS BY THE HON. JAMES WU THAT SPECULATION IN PROPERTY, +FUELLED BY IDLE CASH+, IS PREVENTING THE UNDERLYING MARKET FORCES FROM OPERATING CORRECTLY, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID: +IT IS TRUE THAT SUCH SPECULATION, IF IT EXISTS, COULD TEMPORARILY --- AND, I EMPHASISE, TEMPORARILY --- PUSH UP LAND PRICES.+

+IF IT CAN BE PROVED THAT THIS IS HAVING DAMAGING EFFECT ON THE ECONOMY AND IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CERTAINLY INTERVENE,+ HE ADDED.

REFERRING TO THE HON. S.L. CHEN'S SUGGESTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD, IN THE INTERESTS OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, MAKE LAND AVAILABLE AT BELOW CURRENT MARKET PRICES TO CERTAIN LAND-INTENSIVE, HIGH TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY PROVIDES LAND ON THIS BASIS TO A LIMITED EXTENT, BUT GREATER THE PROPORTION OF LAND FOR SUCH USE, THE HIGHER WILL BE THE OPEN MARKET PRICE OF THE REMAINING INDUSTRIAL LAND.

IN REPLY TO UNOFFICIALS' REMARKS ON ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF LABOUR SUPPLY, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID HE EXPECTED THE GROWTH RATE OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TO SLOW DOWN SUBSTANTIALLY THIS YEAR COMPARED WITH LAST YEAR SO THAT THE PRESSURE EXERTED BY THIS INDUSTRY ON THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR SHOULD ALREADY BE MODERATING.

HE POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH 15,000 WORKERS JOINED THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1976 AND SEPTEMBER 1977, AND 20,000 WORKERS LEFT MANUFACTURING SECTOR, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THE ECONOMY GREW BY 41,000 IN THE SAME PERIOD.

MR. HADDON-CAVE ALSO NOTED THAT IN THE CONTEXT OF AN OVERALL GROWTH IN OUTPUT OF THE ECONOMY IN REAL TERMS EQUIVALENT TO ABOUT NINE PER CENT PER WORKER LAST YEAR, IT DOES NOT SEEM EXCESSIVE FOR REAL WAGES RATES IN MANUFACTURING TO HAVE GROWN AT JUST OVER SIX PER CENT.

BEFORE CONCLUDING HIS SPEECH, MR. HADDON-CAVE THANKED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE +OBVIOUS CARE WITH WHICH THEY HAVE STUDIED THE VARIOUS BUDGET DOCUMENTS LAID BEFORE THEM+ AND THE UNOFFICIALS FOR THEIR KIND REMARKS ON THE BUDGET SPEECH.

THE APPROPRIATION BILL 1978 WAS PASSED INTO LAW TODAY.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 20 -

PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

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THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON. KENNETH TOPLEY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY IT IS BELIEVED THAT SOME, PERHAPS THE MAJORITY, OF THE ONE PER CENT OF PRIMARY-AGE CHILDREN NOT AT SCHOOL AT A MOMENT OF TIME, ATTEND SCHOOL AT OTHER TIME.

MR. TOPLEY WAS REPLYING AT THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF THE APPROPRIATION BILL TO THE HON. HILTON CHEONG-LEEN WHO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS PERCENTAGE OF +PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN HAVE STILL TO SEE THE INSIDE OF A CLASS-ROOM, BUT THAT THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS STRENUOUSLY ATTEMPTING TO REDRESS THIS SOCIAL ANOMALY.+

MR. CHEONG-LEEN ALSO WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO 3,000 OR MORE STUDENTS WHO HE CLAIMED WERE DROPPING OUT OF THEIR PRIMARY EDUCATION, AND HOW MANY OF THEM WERE BEING LURED INTO FACTORIES.

HE ALSO ASKED WHETHER CHILDREN UNDER 14 WILL BE BANNED FROM WORKING IN NON-INDUSTRIAL PLACES SUCH AS OFFICES AND RESTAURANTS AS FROM OCTOBER NEXT YEAR AND IF SO, WHAT FURTHER STEPS WOULD THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT BE TAKING THIS YEAR TO CLOSE THE GAP ON DROP-OUTS IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM.

IN REPLY, MR. TOPLEY SAID: +SOME 5,000 STUDENTS MAY HAVE DISCONTINUED SCHOOLING DURING THEIR PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION AND THIS FIGURE INCLUDES SOME 1,300 STUDENTS WHO HAVE EMIGRATED WITH THEIR PARENTS TO OVERSEAS COUNTRIES IN 1977.

+IT ALSO APPEARS THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE 5,000 ARE ALREADY OVER THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL AGE OF 11 WHEN THEY LEAVE.

+AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY STATED IN THIS COUNCIL WE HAVE A SYSTEM BY WHICH HEADMASTERS INFORM US OF CASES WHERE THEY BELIEVE THAT A CHILD HAS DISCONTINUED SCHOOLING. THESE CASES ARE FOLLOWED UP WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS, AND WHERE NECESSARY, THE CHILDREN ARE PLACED BACK IN SCHOOL.

+THE SYSTEM WORKS WELL BUT IT IS TRUE AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY STATED, THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO TRACE ALL CHILDREN.

+WHEN TRACED, NEARLY ALL THE PARENTS ACCEPT PERSUASION TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL AND SO FAR IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY TO SERVE ONLY TWO ATTENDANCE ORDERS.

+THE ORDERS WERE SERVED AFTER THE PARENT CONCERNED HAD REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE ADVICE OF OFFICERS OF THE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENTS TO SEND HIS TWO CHILDREN TO SCHOOL,+ MR. TOPLEY SAID.

/MR. CHEONG-LEEN

MR. CHEONG-LEEN POINTED OUT THAT AS THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAD NO AUTHORITY AT PRESENT TO COMPEL PARENTS TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER THE AGE OF 11, AND ASKED WHETHER ANY AMENDMENT TO EXISTING LEGISLATION WOULD BE REQUIRED UNTIL SUCH TIME THAT GOVERNMENT COULD PROVIDE FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION UP TO FORM 3 OR ON ATTAINMENT OF THE AGE OF 15.

IN REPLY MR. TOPLEY SAID: +AS REGARDS LEGISLATION FOR THE RAISING OF THE COMPULSORY AGE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND THE CORRESPONDING PROHIBITION OF EMPLOYMENT, THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS ARE DESCRIBED IN YOUR EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH OF OCTOBER 5 LAST YEAR.

+SPECIFICALLY AS REGARDS NON-INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT, SIR, YOU STATED: 'THE INTENTION IS TO PROHIBIT EMPLOYMENT WHICH WOULD INTERFERE WITH A CHILD'S SCHOOLING, BUT FLEXIBILITY WILL BE MAINTAINED TO ALLOW FOR PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT PARTICULARLY IN FAMILY BUSINESS OR SUMMER JOBS'.

LASTLY, MR. CHEONG-LEEN ASKED, IN ORDER TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF PRIMARY EDUCATION, AND DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR MONEY SPENT, HOW SOON THE GOVERNMENT COULD REVERT BACK TO FULL-DAY SESSIONS.

IN REPLY MR. TOPLEY SAID: +THE QUESTION OF UNISESSIONAL AND BI-SESSIONAL PRIMARY EDUCATION IS BEING EXAMINED BY THE WORKING PARTY ON PRIMARY EDUCATION.+

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FINANCIAL SECRETARY WINDS UP BUDGET DEBATE * * * *

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON. PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY IT NOW LOOKS THAT THE SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR 1977-78 WILL BE \$1,080 MILLION COMPARED WITH HIS PREDICTION OF \$1,150 MILLION.

BASED ON THE STATE OF THE TREASURY'S CASH BOOK AT THE END OF MARCH, HE EXPECTED REVENUE TO BE ABOUT \$9,200 MILLION AND EXPENDITURE ABOUT \$8,120 MILLION.

COMMENTING ON THE ACCURACY OF ESTIMATES, MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID HE HAS TO RELY ON PROFESSIONAL OPINION AND GUIDELINES BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND FINANCE BRANCH IN PREPARING THE BUDGET.

IN WINDING UP THE BUDGET DEBATE BY REPLYING TO POINTS RAISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID HE +CANNOT MANAGE THE PUBLIC FINANCES SOLELY ON THE BASIS OF STATISTICAL PROJECTIONS.+

MR. HADDON-CAVE SAID: +ON THE REVENUE SIDE, I HAVE TO TAKE A VIEW OF THE LIKELY COURSE OF THE ECONOMY AND GIVE DUE WEIGHT TO THE PROFESSIONAL OPINIONS OF SUCH COLLECTORS OF REVENUE AS THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE= AND, ON THE EXPENDITURE SIDE, I HAVE TO BE GUIDED BY WHAT HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND FINANCE BRANCH SAY IS NEEDED BY WAY OF VOTE PROVISION TO IMPLEMENT APPROVED POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES.+

ON FISCAL RESERVES, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY DISAGREED WITH THE HON. T.S. LO'S SUGGESTION THAT WE SHOULD RESIGN OURSELVES TO THE INEVITABILITY OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY NOT BEING VIABLE AND USE A SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTION OF OUR FISCAL RESERVES TO REDUCE THE LOAN GEARING OF THE CORPORATION.

+TO EARMARK A PROPORTION OF OUR FISCAL RESERVES TO SECURE THE LOANS RAISED BY THE CORPORATION AGAINST A GUARANTEE BY THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT IMPLY THAT THE CORPORATION WILL BE UNABLE TO SERVICE ITS DEBT.

+THESE LOANS ARE, IN THE OPINION OF THE CORPORATION'S CREDITORS, WELL SECURED BY THE PROJECTED CASH FLOW OF THE CORPORATION WHEN THE RAILWAY IS OPERATING. BUT THE TERMS UNDER WHICH THE LOANS ARE NEGOTIATED ARE, OF COURSE, GREATLY INFLUENCED BY THE VIEW TAKEN OF THE PARENT COMPANY'S FINANCIAL STRENGTH.

+I DO NOT AGREE, THEREFORE, THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE A LARGER EQUITY POSITION IN THE CORPORATION AND DEPRIVE ITSELF, MEANWHILE, OF THE USEFUL INCOME DERIVED FROM THE VARIOUS MONETARY INSTRUMENTS AND DEPOSITS IN WHICH OUR FISCAL RESERVES ARE HELD.+

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT IN 1978-79, EVEN AT CURRENT INTEREST RATES, WE SHOULD EARN AT LEAST \$230 MILLION FROM THESE INVESTMENTS, OR TWO-AND-A-HALF PER CENT OF TOTAL RECURRENT REVENUE.

REFERRING TO THE HON. MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH'S SUGGESTION THAT AT LEAST PART OF OUR RESERVES SHOULD BE USED TO ACCELERATE THE GROWTH RATE OF EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL SERVICES, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID: +I AM AFRAID WE SIMPLY MUST MAINTAIN A CERTAIN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR RESERVES, ON THE ONE HAND, AND OUR CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND THE CURRENT EXPENDITURE, ON THE OTHER.

+WITHOUT THE SURPLUS OF NEARLY \$1,100 MILLION THROWN UP BY THE BUOYANCY OF REVENUE IN 1977-78, THE GUIDELINE RATIOS WHICH I BELIEVE SHOULD DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF OUR FISCAL RESERVES WOULD BE SERIOUSLY BREACHED. THAT SURPLUS LIFTED THE LEVEL OF OUR FISCAL RESERVES FROM \$3,713 MILLION A YEAR AGO TO ABOUT \$4,800 MILLION TODAY.

+SO WITHOUT IT, AFTER ALLOWING \$3,200 MILLION AS SECURITY FOR OUR CONTINGENT LIABILITIES, THE BALANCE OF OUR RESERVES WOULD ONLY BE SUFFICIENT TO COVER FIVE PER CENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE CURRENT YEAR INSTEAD OF THE AGREED GUIDELINE OF 15 PER CENT.

+GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADING ECONOMY IN WHICH WE LIVE, AND OUR OBLIGATION TO MAINTAIN OUR RESERVES AND CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMMES INTACT IN THE FACE OF SHORT TERM DIFFICULTIES, I WOULD REGARD THIS AS DANGEROUS LIVING INDEED.+

MR. HADDON-CAVE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT MRS. KWAN KO SIU-WAH WAS PAYING INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO THE GROWTH RATE OF EXPENDITURE ENVISAGED FOR 1978-79, COMPARED WITH 1977-78 (REVISED ESTIMATES): OVERALL IT IS 26 PER CENT.

ON SOCIAL WELFARE SUBVENTIONS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY STRESSED THAT THE ALLOCATED SUM WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO ENABLE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO PLAY THEIR PROGRAMMED ROLE IN THEIR DEVELOPING SERVICES IN 1978-79.

+IF I AM PROVED WRONG, AND CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT, SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION WILL BE SOUGHT,+ HE SAID.

BUT HE ADDED: +THE PRESENT-DAY ROLE OF PARTICULAR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES IN OUR NETWORK OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES NEEDS TO BE DEFINED AND, IN APPROPRIATE CASES, PRESENT FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD THEN BE REVISED TO ENABLE THEM TO FULFILL THEIR DEFINED AGREED ROLES.

+IN RETURN, THEY WILL HAVE TO ACCEPT A LESSER DEGREE OF INDEPENDENCE, FOR WE CANNOT INTEGRATE THE SERVICES THEY PROVIDE WITH THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND CONTINUE TO SUBVENT THEM ON THE PRESENT LUMP-SUM DISCRETIONARY GRANT BASIS.+

AS REGARDS HOUSING AUTHORITY'S FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY NOTED THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF \$296 MILLION BETWEEN THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT'S ESTIMATES OF WHAT IT WILL SPEND AND THE AMOUNT WHICH WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND.

BUT HE POINTED OUT THAT THE DIFFERENCE WOULD BE MET FROM THE AUTHORITY'S OWN FUNDS AND ON-LENDING FROM THE DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND WILL BE INCREASED ACCORDINGLY IF, IN THE EVENT, THE HOUSING AUTHORITY IS ABLE TO SPEND AS FAST AS IT ENVISAGES.

ON LOTTERIES FUND, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID HE AGREED WITH THE HON. F.W. LI THAT THE RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE FUND SHOULD BE AMENDED TO ALLOW A WIDER RANGE OF NON-CAPITAL ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE TO BE FINANCED FROM THE FUND.

+ACCORDINGLY, I HAVE ASKED THE DEPUTY FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO SUGGEST A SUITABLE AMENDMENT TO THE RESOLUTION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL SERVICES.+

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BILLS PASSED
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THREE BILLS WERE PASSED INTO LAW TODAY AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THEY ARE THE APPROPRIATION BILL 1978, THE HOUSING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978 AND THE LAW AMENDMENT AND REFORM (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1978.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 24 -

FACTORY OPENING MARKS CONFIDENCE IN
TUEN MUN NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT

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THE SECRETARY FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES, MR. DAVID AKERS-JONES, SAID TODAY THE OPENING OF A \$70-MILLION FACTORY IN TUEN MUN DEMONSTRATED THE CONFIDENCE BOTH HONG KONG AND OVERSEAS INVESTORS HAVE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TOWN.

MR. AKERS-JONES, TOGETHER WITH THE JAPANESE CONSUL-GENERAL IN HONG KONG, MR. EIJIRO NODA, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK, MR. CHAN YAT SAN AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TUEN MUN RURAL COMMITTEE, MR. LAU WONG FAT, PERFORMED A RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY TO OFFICIALLY OPEN THE SIX-STORY YKK ZIPPER FACTORY IN SAN LIK STREET.

HE TOLD THE GATHERING THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF TUEN MUN WAS PROCEEDING AT A REMARKABLE PACE. +IN THE LAST THREE YEARS 16 FACTORY BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, AND THERE ARE NO FEWER THAN 20 FACTORIES NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION PROVIDING ANOTHER 2.8 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF FLOOR SPACE.

+FOUNDATION WORKS ARE IN PROGRESS ON HOUSING ESTATES FOR 100,000 PEOPLE,+ HE SAID.

MR. AKERS-JONES ADDED THAT LAND FORMATION AND RECLAMATION WAS NOW PROCEEDING FOR THE SUCCEEDING STAGES OF THE TOWN AND NEXT MONTH THE NEW TUEN MUN HIGHWAY LINK WITH TUEN MUN AND KOWLOON WOULD BE OPENED.

+IT IS NOW ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE BUILDING OF THE NEW TOWN OF TUEN MUN IS ABSOLUTE, AND ANY DOUBTS THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN ABOUT THIS ARE FIRMLY DISPELLED BY THE INTENSE ACTIVITY THAT WE SEE ALL AROUND US,+ HE SAID.

MR. AKERS-JONES EMPHASISED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN TUEN MUN. +THE YKK INVESTMENT OF \$70 MILLION IN THE TOWN IS A GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT.

+I AM GLAD TOO, THAT THE HOUSING AUTHORITY HAS BEEN ABLE TO ASSIST YOU BY PROVIDING FLATS FOR SOME OF YOUR KEY WORKERS, TO HELP YOU IN YOUR MOVE TO THE NEW TOWN.

+MAY I WISH YOUR COMPANY EVERY SUCCESS IN FUTURE OPERATIONS HERE IN TUEN MUN, AND MAY CO-OPERATION BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT CONTINUE FOR OUR FUTURE PROSPERITY AND THE BENEFIT OF OUR HARD-WORKING PEOPLE,+ SAID MR. AKERS-JONES.

THE PRESIDENT OF YKK JAPAN, PARENT COMPANY OF YKK ZIPPER FACTORY IN HONG KONG, MR. TADAO YOSHIDA, FLEW TO HONG KONG SPECIALLY TO ATTEND THE FACTORY'S OPENING CEREMONY.

/MR. YOSHIDA

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 25 -

MR. YOSHIDA SAID IN HIS ADDRESS AT THE OPENING CEREMONY THAT YKK ZIPPER FACTORY IN HONG KONG OWED ITS SUCCESS TO THE DRAMATIC GROWTH OF HONG KONG'S GARMENT INDUSTRY.

THE JAPANESE COMPANY FIRST STARTED PRODUCTION OPERATION IN KWUN TONG IN 1966 AND NOW SUPPLIES ABOUT 75 PER CENT OF LOCAL DEMAND FOR ZIP FASTENERS.

THE NEW YKK FACTORY IN TUEN MUN HAS BROUGHT TO HONG KONG THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY AND AUTOMATION FROM JAPAN AND ITS ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF SOPHISTICATED AND HIGH QUALITY ZIP FASTENERS IS EXPECTED TO EXCEED \$46 MILLION.

IT HAS A TOTAL FLOOR AREA OF 160,000 SQUARE FEET AND EMPLOYS A WORKFORCE OF ABOUT 250.

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/26

MORE YOUTHS TAKE UP APPRENTICESHIP
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MORE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TAKING UP EMPLOYMENT AS APPRENTICES IN VARIOUS MAJOR INDUSTRIES IN HONG KONG, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY.

IN THE PAST YEAR SOME 1,900 FORM 3 AND FORM 5 SCHOOL LEAVERS HAVE ENTERED INTO MODERN CRAFT AND TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES IN HONG KONG'S 10 MAJOR INDUSTRIES THROUGH THE TRAINING COUNCIL DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT. THIS FIGURE REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF NEARLY 63 PER CENT OVER THE NUMBER RECORDED IN 1976.

THE 10 MAJOR INDUSTRIES IN HONG KONG ARE AUTOMOBILE REPAIRS AND SERVICING, BUILDING AND CIVIL ENGINEERING, CLOTHING, ELECTRICAL, ELECTRONICS, MACHINE SHOP AND METAL WORKING, PLASTIC, PRINTING, SHIP-BUILDING AND SHIP REPAIRS AND TEXTILES.

COMMENTING ON THE INCREASED NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE TAKING UP EMPLOYMENT AS APPRENTICES AND THE NUMBER OF FIRMS STARTING THEIR OWN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES, THE SPOKESMAN SAID: +THE FIGURES ARE MOST ENCOURAGING AS THEY INDICATE THAT YOUNGSTERS IN HONG KONG ARE BECOMING MORE INTERESTED IN JOBS IN INDUSTRY WHICH PROVIDE THEM WITH TRAINING AND PROSPECT, AND THAT MORE EMPLOYERS ARE RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER MANPOWER TRAINING.+

HE URGED SCHOOL LEAVERS WHO WISH TO PURSUE A CAREER IN INDUSTRY THROUGH APPRENTICESHIP, AND EMPLOYERS WHO WISH TO START APPRENTICE TRAINING, TO CONTACT THE TRAINING COUNCIL DIVISION OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT AT ASIAN HOUSE, 12TH FLOOR, NO. 1, HENNESSY ROAD, HONG KONG, OR TELEPHONE 5-278760.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID: +IN ADDITION TO RECEIVING ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROVIDED BY THEIR EMPLOYERS, THE APPRENTICES ALSO ATTEND RELATED PART-TIME TECHNICAL COURSES IN TECHNICAL INSTITUTES ON A ONE DAY AND TWO EVENINGS PER WEEK BASIS.+

HE SAID OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH CRAFT AND TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIPS EXIST IN ALL THE 10 MAJOR INDUSTRIES.

ENTRY REQUIREMENT FOR CRAFT APPRENTICESHIP IS COMPLETION OF FORM 3 SCHOOLING AND FOR TECHNICIAN APPRENTICESHIP IS COMPLETION OF FORM 5 WITH PASSES IN FOUR APPROPRIATE SUBJECTS IN THE CERTIFICATION OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION.

REFERRING TO THE WORK OF THE TRAINING COUNCIL DIVISION, THE SPOKESMAN SAID: +OTHER THAN HELPING YOUNGSTERS TO FIND JOBS AS APPRENTICES, THE DIVISION ALSO ASSISTS EMPLOYERS TO START OR IMPROVE ORGANISED SCHEMES FOR APPRENTICE TRAINING.

+INDUSTRIAL TRAINING OFFICERS OF THE DIVISION CAN ASSIST EMPLOYERS IN TRAINING MATTERS SUCH AS RECRUITMENT OF APPRENTICES AND DESIGNING TRAINING PROGRAMMES.

+LAST YEAR,+ HE SAID, +THE DIVISION HELPED 180 FIRMS TO START THEIR OWN APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES.+

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION DRAMA ON FRUSTRATIONS OF OLD AGE
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THE RELUCTANCE OF LOSING ONE'S GRASP ON A HARD-EARNED CAREER, COUPLED WITH PHYSICAL FRAILITY THAT HERALDS THE START OF OLD AGE, COULD BE A MOST UNSETTLING EXPERIENCE FOR THOSE ON THE VERGE OF RETIREMENT.

TYPICAL FEELINGS AND REACTIONS SHARED BY MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE UNPREPARED TO ACCEPT AND ADJUST TO THIS LESS EVENTFUL STAGE OF LIFE ARE DEPICTED IN A FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION TELEVISION SPECIAL 'THE OBSTINATE GRANDPA', SCREENING OF WHICH STARTS FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY) NIGHT.

FROM THE CALM OPENING SCENES RIGHT UNTIL HIS FATAL FALL FROM HEIGHT, THE ATTITUDE OF A RETIRED SCAFFOLDING WORKER WAS GIVEN ADEQUATE EXPOSURE IN THIS HALF-HOUR EPISODE, PRODUCED BY THE RTHK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.

THE INABILITY TO CONVINCE HIS SON INTO FOLLOWING HIS FOOTSTEPS, THE SHIFTING OF ROLE FROM A BREADWINNER AND HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD TO A DEPENDANT PROVED TOO MUCH FOR THIS 'OBSTINATE GRANDPA', WHO, DESPITE FAILING HEALTH, RESORTED TO TAKING UP HIS OLD JOB ONCE AGAIN.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT SAID TODAY THAT THE DECISION WHICH LED TO THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT WAS BY NO MEANS ONE MADE AT THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT.

+THE OLD MAN'S STUBBORNNESS, OVER-CONFIDENCE, SUSPICION TOWARDS AND REFUSAL TO ACCEPT CHANGES OF THE MODERN WORLD WERE PARTLY BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE INDIFFERENT ATTITUDE OF THOSE AROUND HIM,+ HE SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT AT A TIME WHEN MATERIAL SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY WAS GIVEN DUE EMPHASIS, THEIR NEED FOR UNDERSTANDING AND CONCERN DURING THIS PERIOD OF TRANSITION COULD NOT BE OVEREMPHASISED.

+ASSISTANCE FROM MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY, RENDERED BY MEANS OF DAY-TO-DAY CONVERSATION, OR CONVEYED THROUGH GESTURES OF KINDNESS AND WARMTH, WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN FACILITATING THEIR ADJUSTMENT,+ THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

HE SAID THAT SUGGESTIONS OF SOME COMMON WAYS IN ACHIEVING THIS WAS BORNE OUT IN THE EPILOGUE OF THE PLAY, THROUGH A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE SON AND THE POLICEWOMAN AFTER THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT.

HE ADDED THAT PROGRAMMES AIMING TO PREPARE INDIVIDUALS FOR LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT WERE ORGANISED AS PART OF THE CURRENT FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

'THE OBSTINATE GRANDPA', THE SEVENTH EPISODE OF THE SERIES 'UNDER THE SAME ROOF', WILL BE SCREENED ON TVB JADE TOMORROW AT 8.30 P.M., ON RTV CHANNEL 1 ON SATURDAY AT 7 P.M. AND ON CTV ON SUNDAY AT 6 P.M.

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 28 -

FIREMEN GRADUATION PARADE

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THE FIRE SERVICES DEPARTMENT WILL HOLD ITS 28TH PASSING OUT PARADE AT ITS TRAINING SCHOOL AT PAT HEUNG, NEW TERRITORIES, TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

THE DIRECTOR OF FIRE SERVICES, MR. FED WATSON, WILL INSPECT THE PARADE. THE PARADE WILL BE FORMED BY 99 FIREMEN AND 30 AMBULANCEMEN, WHO HAD COMPLETED THEIR BASIC TRAINING. FIVE SQUADS OF FIRE OFFICERS, FIREMEN AND AMBULANCEMEN WHO ARE STILL UNDER TRAINING WILL ALSO BE ON PARADE.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE EVENT, WHICH WILL COMMENCE AT 10.15 A.M. A GOVERNMENT BUS HAS BEEN ARRANGED TO TAKE PRESS REPRESENTATIVES TO THE TRAINING SCHOOL. IT WILL LEAVE THE NORTH POINT FIRE STATION AT 8.30 A.M.

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PRISON OFFICERS PASSING OUT PARADE

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A PASSING OUT PARADE FOR PRISON RECRUIT OFFICERS WHO RECENTLY COMPLETED THEIR TRAINING WILL BE HELD AT 11 A.M. ON SATURDAY (APRIL 15) AT THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT TRAINING INSTITUTE AT STANELY.

JUDGE COLLIER WILL TAKE THE SALUTE.

A TOTAL OF 127 PRISON OFFICERS, INCLUDING SIX WOMEN OFFICERS, WILL TAKE PART IN THE PARADE.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE EVENT.

A VAN WILL BE AVAILABLE TO TAKE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES TO STANLEY AND BACK. IT WILL LEAVE THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AT GUARDIAN HOUSE, OI KWAN ROAD, HAPPY VALLEY AT 10 A.M. SHARP ON SATURDAY, MR. TANG CHUNG-YUEN WILL ON HAND TO ASSIST PRESS REPRESENTATIVES.

AS THERE WILL BE ONLY NINE SEATS AVAILABLE, MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WISHING TO USE THIS FACILITY ARE REQUESTED TO CALL THE PRISONS DEPARTMENT P.R. SECTION ON 5-756521 EXT. 48 TO BOOK A SEAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

PARKING SPACES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR PRESS MEMBERS USING THEIR OWN TRANSPORT. THEY SHOULD CONTACT MR. LEUNG KWAI-HOI ON ARRIVAL.

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/29

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1978

- 29 -

NOTE TO EDITORS:

CERTIFICATES FOR SWIMMING TEACHERS

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THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR. KENNETH TOPLEY, WILL PRESENT TOMORROW (FRIDAY) EVENING CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE TO 70 TEACHERS OF SWIMMING WHO RECENTLY ATTENDED A LIFE-SAVING REFRESHER COURSE.

THE CEREMONY WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE EAST AND WEST ROOM, 23RD FLOOR, MANDARIN HOTEL, AT 6 P.M.

MRS. TOPLEY AND MR. CHOW YAU, COUNCILLOR OF THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY, WILL ALSO PRESENT CERTIFICATES.

THE COURSE WAS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FOR TEACHERS OF SWIMMING TO PROMOTE WATER SAFETY AND TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO HAVE OBTAINED LIFE-SAVING AWARDS IN THE PAST YEARS, TO BRING THEIR LIFE-SAVING TECHNIQUES UP-TO-DATE.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO COVER THE EVENT.

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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT TODAY ANNOUNCED THAT THE EXISTING PUBLIC LIGHT BUS RESTRICTED ZONE IN NGAU TAU KOK ROAD WILL BE EXTENDED TO A POINT ABOUT 110 FEET NORTH OF NGAU TAU KOK SECOND STREET FROM 10 A.M. ON SATURDAY (APRIL 15).

THE RESTRICTION WHICH APPLIES FROM 7 A.M. TO MIDNIGHT DAILY, IS INTENDED TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW ON NGAU TAU KOK ROAD.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT A SPEED LIMIT OF 30 M.P.H. WILL BE IMPOSED FROM SATURDAY AT 10 A.M. ON CASTLE PEAK ROAD BETWEEN LAMP POST U73 WHICH IS ABOUT 935 FEET WEST OF THE JUNCTION WITH MA MIU ROAD AND A POINT 787 FEET WEST OF THE JUNCTION WITH PING HA ROAD.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP IN BOTH PLACES TO GUIDE MOTORISTS.

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