



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 1978

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DUKE OF KENT PRAISES HONG KONG'S SUCCESS

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HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF KENT TODAY PRAISED HONG KONG'S CONSPICUOUS SUCCESS IN GENERATING AN INCREASINGLY HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING BY PRODUCING MORE AND MORE SOPHISTICATED HIGH-TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS.

SPEAKING AT THE LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT THE HILTON HOTEL, THE DUKE SAID: +TO HAVE DONE THIS IN THE TEETH OF SUCH FIERCE WORLD-WIDE COMPETITION AND TO HAVE SUSTAINED SUCH A HIGH RATE OF GROWTH, ONLY BRIEFLY INTERRUPTED BY THE RECESSION OF 1974/75, SURELY DISPLAYS MANAGERIAL SKILL AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF AN UNUSUALLY HIGH ORDER.+

HE SAID THESE ARE THE QUALITIES WHICH ARE STILL VERY MUCH ADMIRED IN BRITAIN EVEN IF THEY MAY HAVE SEEMED TO BE SOMEWHAT DORMANT IN RECENT YEARS.

+THEY ARE I ASSURE YOU BY NO MEANS DEFUNCT, AS A LOOK AT ALMOST ANY OF OUR MAJOR EXPORTING COMPANIES WOULD QUICKLY REMIND YOU,+ HE SAID.

THE DUKE WAS GLAD THAT THERE ARE REAL SIGNS OF A STRENGTHENING OF TRADE LINKS BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND HONG KONG AND SAID HE HAD REMARKED ON THE EARLY INDICATIONS OF THIS TREND IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE ANNUAL DRAGON BOAT DINNER OF THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION IN LONDON LAST SUMMER.

HE SAID: +IT IS THEREFORE ENCOURAGING TO SEE THAT IT HAS BEEN MAINTAINED AND THAT IN 1977 WE RECORDED A SUBSTANTIAL RISE IN OUR EXPORTS TO HONG KONG AND INCREASED OUR SHARE OF THE MARKET EVEN THOUGH THE VISIBLE TRADE IMBALANCE REMAINS HEAVILY IN HONG KONG'S FAVOUR.+

THE DUKE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE UNITED KINGDOM TOOK PRIDE IN HER RECORD OVER THE YEARS, BOTH IN PROVIDING A SUBSTANTIAL OUTLET FOR HONG KONG'S PRODUCTS AS WELL AS IN ASSISTING HONG KONG TO OPEN UP NEW MARKETS.

+IN FACT SINCE 1971 THE TERRITORY'S EXPORTS TO BRITAIN, WHICH LAST YEAR REACHED OVER 450 MILLION POUNDS STERLING, HAVE MULTIPLIED ALMOST THREEFOLD.

+FOR HONG KONG, BRITAIN MUST BE RATED A HIGHLY IMPORTANT MARKET, TAKING AS SHE DOES ROUGHLY 10 PER CENT OF YOUR EXPORTS AND I HAVE NO DOUBT IT WILL REMAIN SO FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

HE ALSO ASSURED THAT BRITAIN, WITH ITS ESTABLISHED OVERSEAS REPRESENTATION, WILL CONTINUE WHEREVER POSSIBLE TO ASSIST HONG KONG BUSINESSMEN TO OPEN UP THIRD MARKETS.

/THE DUKE

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THE DUKE POINTED OUT THAT THERE ARE TWO SIMILARITIES BETWEEN BRITAIN AND HONG KONG WHICH ARE OFTEN OVERLOOKED. +BOTH HAVE DENSE POPULATIONS LIVING CLOSE TO THE SEA AND BOTH HAVE HAD TO TRADE IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

+IT IS NOT THEREFORE SUPRISING THAT OVER MANY YEARS WE HAVE BECOME PARTNERS IN TRADE,+ HE SAID.

THE DUKE SAID THE BRITISH OVERSEAS TRADE BOARD OF WHICH HE IS THE VICE-CHAIRMAN HAS A KEEN INTEREST IN SEEING A GENERAL INCREASE IN BUSINESS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND HONG KONG AND IT MAKES USE OF VARIOUS MEANS TO TRY AND PROMOTE THIS.

+BY FAR THE LARGEST PROMOTIONAL EFFORT THIS YEAR AND OF COURSE THE CHIEF REASON FOR MY COMING TO HONG KONG IS THE BRITISH INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION WHICH I OPENED ON MONDAY MORNING,+ HE SAID.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS WAS DELIGHTED TO HEAR THAT THE INTEREST AND SUPPORT FROM HONG KONG BUSINESSMEN TO THE EXHIBITION HAS BEEN TREMENDOUS.

THE DUKE DESCRIBED THE EXHIBITION AS +A WORKING DEMONSTRATION OF THE CAPABILITIES OF BRITISH INDUSTRY+ WHICH PRODUCES SO MANY OF THE PRODUCTS THAT HONG KONG NEEDS IN ITS PROGRAMME OF EXPANSION.

+MORE THAN THAT, IT IS I THINK AN EXPRESSION OF THE STRENGTH OF LINKS BETWEEN HONG KONG AND BRITAIN,+ HE ADDED.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS SAID DURING THE PAST THREE DAYS IN HONG KONG HE WAS ASTONISHED BY ITS AMBITIOUS AND IMPRESSIVE PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AND THE RATE OF DEVELOPMENT THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE SINCE HIS LAST VISIT HERE 15 YEARS AGO.

HE WAS MORE FIRMLY CONVINCED THAN BEFORE THAT HONG KONG IS +A MARKET, A TERRITORY, WHICH WITH ITS HISTORICALLY VERY CLOSE TIES WITH BRITAIN, OFFERS TO OUR BUSINESSMEN OPPORTUNITIES WHICH MUST BE ALMOST UNIQUE AND WHICH THEY WOULD BE FOOLISH TO IGNORE.+

+THAT IS THE MESSAGE WHICH I SHALL CERTAINLY TAKE BACK WITH ME TO LONDON,+ THE DUKE SAID.

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DUKE OF KENT TO LEAVE HONG KONG

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FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF HRH THE DUKE OF KENT'S PROGRAMME FOR TOMORROW (THURSDAY):

8:40 A.M. DEPART FROM HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (ACCREDITED PRESS REPRESENTATIVES MUST ASSEMBLE AT THE PRESS ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE AIRPORT TERMINAL BUILDING NOT LATER THAN 8.20 A.M. G.I.S. OFFICERS WILL ESCORT THEM TO THE FIXED PRESS POSITION, SAME AS THAT FOR ARRIVAL.)

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CORONER'S INQUIRY INTO DEATH OF LIU PING-HON TO RE-OPEN

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THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAS ORDERED THE CORONER'S INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF THE DEATH OF LIU PING-HON TO BE RE-OPENED FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS BY THE POLICE.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ORDERED THE RE-OPENING OF THE INQUIRY IN EXERCISE OF HIS POWERS UNDER SECTION 20 OF THE CORONERS ORDINANCE (CHAPTER 14) SO THAT EVIDENCE BY CERTAIN PERSONS NOT PREVIOUSLY HEARD BEFORE THE CORONER'S JURY MAY NOW BE CONSIDERED BY THEM.

ANY PERSON WHO HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN INTERVIEWED BY THE POLICE AND WHO MAY HAVE INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE CAUSE OF THE DEATH OF LIU PING-HON IS INVITED TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE CORONER, MR. D.J. LEONARD, SOUTH KOWLOON MAGISTRACY, TO BE HEARD AT THE RE-OPENED INQUIRY.

THE DATE OF THE CONTINUED INQUIRY WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN DUE COURSE.

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SURVEY OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR 1978

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT TODAY RELEASED THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR 1978 BASED ON THE VIEWS OF ABOUT 500 MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS, INCLUDING SOME OF THE LARGEST CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES.

THE MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS, WHICH EMPLOYED MORE THAN 100 WORKERS, WERE SELECTED TO REPRESENT VIEWS OF THE TEN MAJOR MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

THE SURVEY WAS CARRIED OUT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE QUARTERLY BUSINESS SURVEY OF THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1977, RESULTS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT SAID THAT THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS SURVEY PROVIDED INDICATIONS OF MANUFACTURERS' VIEWS OF PROSPECTS FOR THEIR INDUSTRIES AND WAS ONE OF THE MANY SOURCES OF INFORMATION THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TOOK INTO ACCOUNT IN DRAWING UP HIS FORECASTS FOR THE HONG KONG ECONOMY IN 1978 GIVEN IN THE BUDGET SPEECH.

ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY, MANUFACTURERS WERE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN 1978. THEY EXPECTED AN OVERALL INCREASE OF ABOUT 3 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS, WITH THE UNITED STATES MARKET BEING SEEN AS THE MAJOR CAUSE OF THEIR OPTIMISM.

MANUFACTURERS EXPECTED LITTLE OR NO CHANGE IN THE EXPORT DEMAND FOR PRODUCTS OF THE TEXTILES AND CLOTHING INDUSTRIES IN REAL TERMS. AMONG OTHER MANUFACTURED GOODS, EXPORTS OF METAL PRODUCTS, AND ELECTRICAL MACHINERY AND APPLIANCES WERE EXPECTED TO SHOW FASTEST GROWTH.

CAPACITY UTILISATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN MANUFACTURING WERE EXPECTED, BY THOSE MANUFACTURERS COVERED IN THE SURVEY, TO INCREASE DURING 1978. IN ADDITION, CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BY MANUFACTURERS WAS EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY ABOUT 13 PER CENT TO 14 PER CENT.

PRICES OF RAW MATERIALS AND SEMI-MANUFACTURES FOR USE IN MANUFACTURING WERE EXPECTED TO REMAIN FAIRLY STABLE, AS WERE EXPORT PRICES. ON THE OTHER HAND, WAGE RATES IN MANUFACTURING WERE EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY ABOUT 6 PER CENT.

IN ORDER TO COPE WITH THE INDUSTRY'S EXPECTED EXPANSION IN ITS OPERATIONS IN 1978, CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES COVERED IN THE SURVEY EXPECTED AN INCREASE OF 20 PER CENT IN CAPITAL EXPENDITURE ON CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT AND EXPECTED TO ENGAGE 9 PER CENT MORE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS. WAGE RATES IN THIS INDUSTRY WERE EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY ABOUT 10 PER CENT.

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MORE NURSERIES FOR MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES

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THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR. THOMAS LEE, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) CALLED FOR THE SETTING UP OF MORE NON-PROFIT-MAKING AND SELF-SUPPORTING CHILD CARE CENTRES BY THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR TO HELP MEET THE NEEDS OF MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES.

SPEAKING AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE CHIU YANG NURSERY, THE SECOND OF ITS KIND IN HONG KONG, MR. LEE UNDERLINED THE DEMAND OF THIS PARTICULAR INCOME GROUP FOR GOOD AND REASONABLY-PRICED CHILD CARE SERVICE.

+FAMILIES WITHIN THE MIDDLE-INCOME BRACKET CANNOT AFFORD THE HIGH FEES CHARGED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR, NOR ARE THEY ELIGIBLE FOR SUBVENTED CHILD CARE PLACES,+ HE POINTED OUT.

HE SAID THAT THE INTRODUCTION OF NON-PROFIT-MAKING AND SELF-SUPPORTING NURSERIES BY VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS, WITH GRANTS FROM THE LOTTERIES FUND TO COVER THE INITIAL CAPITAL OUTLAY, WILL BE OF GREAT BENEFIT TO WORKING MOTHERS.

+IN RECENT YEARS, EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN HAVE INCREASED CONSIDERABLY AND AS A RESULT, MANY CHILDREN HAVE BEEN LEFT UNCARED FOR AT THEIR HOMES WHILE THEIR PARENTS GO OUT TO WORK,+ HE SAID.

WITH THE OPENING OF THE CHIU YANG NURSERY, 60 MORE CHILDREN UNDER SIX YEARS OF AGE WILL NOW BE ABLE TO ENJOY NURSERY CARE SERVICE OF A HIGH STANDARD WHILE THEIR PARENTS ARE AT WORK.

MR. LEE THANKED THE CHIU YANG ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG WHICH RUNS THE NURSERY, FOR THEIR CONTINUING EFFORTS IN PROMOTING WELFARE SERVICES IN HONG KONG.

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AUCTION OF +SPECIAL+ CAR REGISTRATION NUMBERS
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MOTORISTS WILL HAVE THE CHANCE OF BUYING +SPECIAL+ NUMBERS FOR THEIR CARS AT THE WEEKEND WHILE AT THE SAME TIME HELPING LOCAL CHARITIES.

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT WILL HOLD ANOTHER OF ITS REGULAR AUCTION OF SPECIAL CAR REGISTRATION NUMBERS ON SATURDAY (MARCH 11). THE AUCTION WILL START AT 10 A.M. IN THE 8TH FLOOR LECTURE HALL OF THE CITY HALL.

TWENTY NUMBERS WILL BE OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC. THEY ARE:

HK 393	AA 8000	AE 21	3209
XX 12	AA 9999	BH 2	298
AA 63	HK 3300	BJ 600	239
AB 28	AD 123	AB 789	9955
BM 300	BB 9	BB 88	AK 4

SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS MUST PAY IN CASH OR BY CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CLOSE OF BIDDING.

A TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN REMINDED BIDDERS THAT THE CAR REGISTRATION NUMBER WILL BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO A VEHICLE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE AUCTION.

PROCEEDS OF THE AUCTION WILL AS USUAL GO INTO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND.

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P.W.D.'S HIGHWAYS SUPERINTENDENT RETIRING

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MR. W. J. MAGDONALD, P.W.D.'S HIGHWAYS SUPERINTENDENT, WILL GO ON PRE-RETIREMENT LEAVE THIS FRIDAY (MARCH 10) AFTER MORE THAN 26 YEARS SERVICE WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

MR. MACDONALD FIRST JOINED THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT IN 1951 AS AN INSPECTOR OF WORKS, CLASS II IN THE THEN PORT WORKS OFFICE.

HE WAS LATER TRANSFERRED TO THE ROADS OFFICE WHICH IS NOW THE HIGHWAYS (H.K.) DIVISION.

MR. MACDONALD WAS PROMOTED TO INSPECTOR OF WORKS, CLASS I IN FEBRUARY 1962 AND TO HIS PRESENT POST IN JANUARY 1972.

IN RECOGNITION OF HIS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN DEALING WITH THE AFTERMATH OF THE RAINSTORMS IN 1966 AND 1972 AND HIS UNFAILING ENTHUSIASM FOR WORK, MR. MACDONALD WAS AWARDED THE M.B.E. IN JUNE 1974.

WITH MR. MACDONALD'S DEPARTURE THE TITLE OF HIGHWAYS SUPERINTENDENT BECOMES OBSOLETE AND WILL BE REPLACED BY THAT OF CHIEF TECHNICAL OFFICER.

MR. MACDONALD IS A PAST PRESIDENT OF THE HONG KONG AMATEUR BOXING ASSOCIATION AND HAS SERVED AS HON. PIPER TO HONG KONG ST. ANDREWS SOCIETY ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS.

HE IS STILL A KEEN SQUASH PLAYER AND IS AN HONORARY MEMBER OF THE HONG KONG SQUASH RACKETS ASSOCIATION.

HE EXPECTS TO SPEND HIS RETIREMENT IN HIS HOME TOWN IN DUMFRIES, SCOTLAND.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

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SENIOR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR RETIRING
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THE SENIOR ASSISTANT REGISTRAR, MR. TAN SZE-SUI, WILL GO ON PRE-RETIREMENT LEAVE NEXT WEEK AFTER SERVING IN THE GOVERNMENT FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS.

MR. TAN JOINED THE GOVERNMENT ON JANUARY 24, 1949 AS A TEMPORARY TRANSLATOR AND WAS PROMOTED TO HIS PRESENT POSITION ON APRIL 1, 1964.

TO MARK HIS RETIREMENT, THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, MR. PIERS JACOBS, WILL PRESENT A GIFT TO MR. TAN ON BEHALF OF HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE RECEPTION ROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF THE GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT AT 5 P.M. ON FRIDAY (MARCH 10).

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

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WALDEN TO VISIT TUNG WAH EASTERN HOSPITAL
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THE DIRECTOR OF HOME AFFAIRS, MR. JOHN WALDEN, WILL VISIT THE TUNG WAH EASTERN HOSPITAL AT SO KUN PO TOMORROW (THURSDAY) MORNING.

DURING THE VISIT MR. WALDEN WILL TOUR THE HOSPITAL AND INSPECT SOME OF ITS FACILITIES.

HE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED ON THE VISIT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS, MR. WILSON CHEUNG= DIRECTORS OF THE GROUP= AND THE CITY DISTRICT OFFICER (WAN CHAI), MR. BOWEN LEUNG.

THE TUNG WAH EASTERN HOSPITAL IS ONE OF THE THREE CHARITABLE HOSPITALS OPERATED BY THE TUNG WAH GROUP WITH SUBVENTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

MAJOR FACILITIES OF THE 330-BED HOSPITAL INCLUDE THREE OPERATION THEATRES, TWO X-RAY ROOMS AND A LABORATORY.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SEND A REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER TO COVER MR. WALDEN'S VISIT TO THE TUNG WAH EASTERN HOSPITAL IN EASTERN HOSPITAL ROAD, SO KUN PO, HONG KONG, AT 11 A.M. TOMORROW.

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CLOSURE OF TIN LOK LANE AND MORRISON HILL ROAD

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT FROM 11 P.M. ON SATURDAY (MARCH 11) TO 6 A.M. ON SUNDAY THE SOUTHBOUND CARRIAGEWAYS OF TIN LOK LANE AND MORRISON HILL ROAD WILL BE CLOSED TO ALL TRAFFIC EXCEPT FRANCHISED BUSES TO FACILITATE THE DIVERSION OF TRAM TRACKS.

IN THIS CONNECTION, THE LAST TRAM TO AND FROM HAPPY VALLEY WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

- * KENNEDY TOWN TO HAPPY VALLEY -- 10.13 P.M.
- * SHAU KEI WAN TO HAPPY VALLEY -- 10.26 P.M.
- * HAPPY VALLEY TO KENNEDY TOWN -- 10.54 P.M.
- * HAPPY VALLEY TO SHAU KEI WAN -- 10.24 P.M.

APPROPRIATE TRAFFIC SIGNS WILL BE SET UP TO ASSIST MOTORISTS.

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DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

SUPPLEMENT

Wednesday, March 8, 1978

SPEECH BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE DUKE OF KENT,
TO THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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The following is the full text of speech by HRH, the Duke of Kent, delivered today (March 8) to the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce at a luncheon gathering at the Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel.

Let me first of all tell you how very pleased and honoured I am to have this opportunity of addressing such a distinguished gathering of members and friends of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce.

Visiting Hong Kong is always an exciting and stimulating experience. No one who comes here can fail to be struck by its spectacular beauty or to be impressed by its extraordinary vitality. In my own case I have good reasons for being particularly happy to be back here since, as some of you will know, I lived for a year with my family in the New Territories as a soldier. That is now fifteen years ago but my wife and I both have nothing but the happiest recollections of that time and this is therefore very much more than just a routine visit as far as I am concerned. It is in every sense a happy return, enabling me to renew many old contacts and friendships as well as to see something of the progress that has been made here in the intervening fifteen years. My interest in Hong Kong therefore is, as well as being professional, a very close and personal one.

/This time

This time I am in Hong Kong not as a soldier, although I spent a most interesting day with the armed forces in the New Territories yesterday, but as Vice-Chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board. My visit comes at a time when, I am glad to say, there are real signs of a strengthening of the trade links between the United Kingdom and Hong Kong. Last summer I had the pleasure of addressing the Hong Kong Association in London at the Dragon Boat dinner and I was able to remark then on the early indications of that trend. It is therefore encouraging to see that it has been maintained and that in 1977 we recorded a substantial rise in our exports to Hong Kong and increased our share of the market even though the visible trade imbalance remains heavily in Hong Kong's favour.

My Board has naturally a keen interest in seeing a general increase in business between Britain and Hong Kong and it makes use of various means to try and promote this. By far the largest promotional effort this year and of course and chief reason for my coming to Hong Kong is the British Industrial Exhibition which I opened on Monday morning. And I must say, at the risk of seeming immodest, that it is a pretty impressive display. There is a very wide range of the most up to date industrial machinery and technology available from Britain and I am delighted to hear that the interest and support we have had from Hong Kong businessmen has been tremendous.

Because this is really much more than just an exhibition. It is a working demonstration of the capabilities of British industry, which produces so many of the products that Hong Kong needs in its programme of expansion. More than that, it is I think an expression of the strength of the links between Hong Kong and Britain. Indeed, such was the enthusiasm and interest shown by companies in the United Kingdom that if space had been available we should have had no difficulty in filling an exhibition half as large again. There were many would-be exhibitors who were disappointed, but I am sure they are sufficiently interested in Hong Kong to make their own approach here.

/I have quite

I have quite often heard it suggested that British businessmen in general have tended to neglect Hong Kong, either because they imagine it is virtually a captive market anyway and so they needn't make any effort to sell here, or because they greatly under-rate its sophistication and spending power and probably reckon it not worth their attention.

Such views may have been held in the past, and how wrong they were, but I am reasonably sure they are a good deal less common now. The lesson is gradually being learned that Hong Kong is not just another far distant market with a population of only $4\frac{1}{2}$ million people but an exceptionally important and crucial one, not only in its own right, which being among the world's top 20 traders it undoubtedly is, but because of its very special position in regard to other markets of South East Asia who see it as a trading centre and shop window for goods from all over the world. That lesson is being learnt at home but I certainly hope to see more being done to ensure that it gets across.

What I do find encouraging and what has undoubtedly had considerable effect in stimulating awareness of the potential of this market has been extensive British involvement in major projects in Hong Kong. A British company completed the cross harbour tunnel in 1972, in 1976 we were awarded important contracts for the first stage of the Mass Transit Railway and only recently the General Electric Company received a letter of Intent to supply equipment for the first stage of a proposed new power station for the Kowloon Peninsula. These are projects carrying tremendous prestige both for Hong Kong and for the companies involved in them and I have no doubt that they have opened the eyes of British companies to the expanding prospects for trade with Hong Kong. From the interest shown in our industrial exhibition too I would judge that there are many other areas where British industry and technology can make a solid contribution to Hong Kong's future as a major trading partner.

/I think

I think that there are two similarities between Britain and Hong Kong which are often overlooked. Both have dense populations living close to the sea and both have had to trade in order to survive. It is not therefore surprising that over many years we have become partners in trade.

Any trading nation has to produce goods and services that people want to buy, in order to earn its living. Britain has of course managed to do this over a long period, but I think we ought to pay tribute to Hong Kong's conspicuous success in generating an increasingly high standard of living, not by producing cheap basic goods, but by taking exactly the opposite road and going progressively for more and more sophisticated high-technology products. To have done this in the teeth of such fierce world-wide competition and to have sustained such a high rate of growth, only briefly interrupted by the recession of 1974/75, surely displays managerial skill and entrepreneurial spirit of an unusually high order. These are qualities which I may say are still very much admired in Britain even if they may have seemed to be somewhat dormant in recent years. They are I assure you by no means defunct, as a look at almost any of our major exporting companies would quickly remind you.

On the United Kingdom's side I think that we can certainly take pride in our record over the years, both in providing a substantial outlet for Hong Kong's products as well as in assisting Hong Kong to open up new markets. In fact since 1971 the territory's exports to Britain, which last year reached over 450 million pounds sterling, have multiplied almost three-fold. For Hong Kong, Britain must be rated a highly important market, taking as she does roughly 10% of your exports, and I have no doubt it will remain so for many years to come. Hong Kong must of course trade to survive and Britain, with its established overseas representation, will continue wherever possible to assist Hong Kong businessmen to open up third markets.

/Ladies

Ladies and gentlemen, you will probably have noticed by now that I have the warmest regard and affection for Hong Kong and its people and I know that this feeling is widely shared among my own countrymen. I am sure we are right to recognise that relations even between old friends should never be taken for granted, but do need working at and occasionally burnishing, but at the same time we must acknowledge that many people contribute in a practical way to sustaining the links between us and to fostering the sense of understanding of each others' problems which is so important.

The Hong Kong Association is one body which is certainly active in doing this. You, Mr. Chairman, have kindly mentioned your Chamber's close links with the British Trade Commission in Hong Kong and I, for my part should like to praise particularly this Chamber and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council who together are doing so much to promote business between the two markets. Only last month in London I had pleasure of meeting the leader of your Chamber's buying mission, Mr. Daniel Koo, who in spite of difficulties with the weather was evidently well pleased with what he had found in Britain. Mr. Koo told me that he and the influential group of store-owners who were with him had been much impressed by the wide range and the quality of goods that British companies had been able to show them. I believe that missions of this kind, in both directions, are an excellent way of finding customers and suppliers and we should have more of them.

These three days in Hong Kong have left me not only astonished by the rate of development that has taken place in only 15 years - and your plans for the future are no less ambitious and impressive - but also even more firmly convinced than before that here is a market, a territory, which with its historically very close ties with Britain, offers to our businessmen opportunities which must be almost unique and which they would be foolish to ignore. That is the message which I shall certainly take back with me to London.

/I am more than

I am more than grateful to you for your kind hospitality today and for giving me this chance of speaking to you. I wish continued success and prosperity to all members of this Chamber.

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