



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Sunday, October 8, 1972

SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION FOR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Final preparations for introducing simultaneous interpretation to Hong Kong are being made and the system will soon be used in the Legislative Council.

It will be the first time simultaneous interpretation between English and Cantonese will be used anywhere in the world and marks an important stage in the use of Chinese in official business in Hong Kong.

The person mainly responsible for introducing the system, the Chief Interpreter, Mr. Y.P. Cheng, is enthusiastic about the challenge he is facing.

He says simultaneous interpretation will be introduced in the Urban Council as well in the near future so that members of the public who are less conversant in English may take more interest in the proceedings of the two councils.

The use of Chinese in the Legislative and Urban Councils and in other governmental committees was one of the important recommendations submitted by the Chinese Language Committee and was accepted by the Government in May last year.

Mr. Cheng later came to Hong Kong from England to assume the job of Chief Interpreter, and started to make preparations for introducing simultaneous interpretation to Legislative Council meetings.

/Mr. Cheng

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Mr. Cheng pointed out that the standard of interpretation may not be ideal in the early stages. However, he hoped that improvement would come with more experience.

"To do a good job, not only is it necessary to have suitable interpretation equipment, it is also necessary to have qualified interpreters,"

Mr. Cheng said.

"The Government has already employed a number of part-time interpreters who have been going through some intensive training in the past few months."

According to Mr. Cheng, simultaneous interpretation may be basically similar to other translation work, but its demand on the work of the interpreter is different.

In ordinary translation, there is always time enough for thinking or for consulting reference books, and a chance to touch up the translated work.

A simultaneous interpreter, however, has to be able to interpret a speech rapidly and accurately the moment it is being delivered. This requires volubility and an unperturbed but fast mind.

They must, of course, also be expert in the two languages to be interpreted and be familiar with the idioms and technical terms of the languages.

On the other hand, their efficiency may be lowered if a speech is spoken with a heavy accent or too quickly.

Good interpreters are difficult to find and the fees paid by the Government are set according to the standards laid down by the International Association of Conference Interpreters (Association Internationale des Interpretes de Conference) in Geneva.

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Part-time simultaneous interpreters will be paid \$350 for each sitting when working in a team of three and \$560 when working in a team of two.

To accommodate them at Legislative Council, an interpretation booth and an electronic interpretation sound system have already been installed in the chambers.

Communication between the floor and the booth is possible, so that, for example, the interpreter can signal to a councillor to speak slower, and any councillor may follow the interpretation of a speech by listening through pre-installed earphones.

Members of the public attending the meetings will be provided with a miniature receiver. When they plug on the earphones they will be able to listen to the interpretation without interfering with the proceedings around them.

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NOTICE OF MOVE

With effect from October 10, 1972, the offices of The Television Authority, The Secretary to The Panel of Film Censors, The Secretary, Television Authority and Chief Film Censor will be located at the Secretariat for Home Affairs, 24th floor, International Building, 141 Des Voeux Road, Central.

Telephone Numbers are:-

Commissioner for Television and Films	H-457617
Secretary, Television Authority	H-458309
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