



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1984

- 1 -

PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION  
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PROPOSALS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S SYSTEM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION WERE ANNOUNCED BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, SIR PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IF IMPLEMENTED THEY WILL REPRESENT A FURTHER STEP IN THE PROCESS WHICH BEGAN IN JUNE 1980 WHEN THE GREEN PAPER ON +A PATTERN OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN HONG KONG+ WAS PUBLISHED.

THE GREEN PAPER WAS FOLLOWED BY A WHITE PAPER ON DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN HONG KONG IN JANUARY 1981, WHICH DESCRIBED THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS AS REGARDS THE NEW PATTERN OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION TO BE INTRODUCED. THESE WERE, BRIEFLY:

- (A) TO ESTABLISH DISTRICT BOARDS, WITH AN ELECTED ELEMENT, IN EACH OF THE EIGHTEEN DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT HONG KONG ISLAND, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES;
- (B) TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL TO 15, EACH REPRESENTING A SEPARATE CONSTITUENCY; AND
- (C) TO CREATE A NEW ELECTORAL FRANCHISE FOR ALL PERSONS AGED 21 YEARS AND ABOVE WITH 7 YEARS' ORDINARY RESIDENCE IN HONG KONG, WHICH WOULD APPLY TO BOTH THE DISTRICT BOARD AND URBAN COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

ELECTIONS FOR THE NEW DISTRICT BOARDS WERE HELD DURING 1982 AND ELECTIONS FOR THE NEW URBAN COUNCIL CONSTITUENCIES WERE HELD IN MARCH 1983.

IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 5, 1983, THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YUDE, SAID, +OUR PRESENT SYSTEM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IS RELATIVELY NEW. IN PARTICULAR, THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME, AN INNOVATIVE EXTENSION OF THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT BY CONSULTATION AND CONSENT WHICH HAS EVOLVED IN HONG KONG, NOW ENABLES PEOPLE TO EXERT A DIRECT INFLUENCE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF DISTRICT AFFAIRS+.

AFTER STRESSING THAT THE SCHEME REMAINS SUITED TO HONG KONG'S CHANGING NEEDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES, THE GOVERNOR THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATION, AND THE ORGANISATION OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE DECISIONS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE ADVICE OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS, WERE TO BE EXAMINED TO CONSIDER WHETHER THEY MIGHT BE IMPROVED.

THE PROPOSALS TO INCREASE THE ELECTED ELEMENT IN THE DISTRICT BOARDS AND TO CREATE A NEW REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE NEW TERRITORIES WHICH WERE ANNOUNCED TODAY STEM FROM THIS REVIEW OF THE SYSTEM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION CALLED FOR BY THE GOVERNOR.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN EXPLAINED THAT THE AIM OF THE PROPOSALS WAS TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF ENCOURAGING GREATER PARTICIPATION BY THE PUBLIC IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HONG KONG.

/FOLLOWING IS .....

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY:

+SIR, THE GREEN PAPER ON A PATTERN OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN HONG KONG WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN JUNE 1980, DESCRIBED THE REASONS WHY IT WAS CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO INTRODUCE CERTAIN CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SYSTEM OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN EXISTENCE AT THAT TIME. IN PARTICULAR, THE GREEN PAPER DREW ATTENTION TO THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS OF ADMINISTRATION THAT HAD DEVELOPED IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF HONG KONG, TO THE INCREASED PROSPERITY AND TO THE GREATLY IMPROVED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY THEN ENJOYED AND, BY WAY OF A RESPONSE TO HIGHER ASPIRATIONS, TO THE NEED TO BUILD COHESIVE COMMUNITIES. SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO PRODUCE A MORE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION WERE THEN PUBLISHED IN THE WHITE PAPER ON DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN HONG KONG IN JANUARY 1981. THESE LED TO THE FORMATION IN 1982 OF DISTRICT BOARDS, WITH AN ELECTED ELEMENT, IN EACH DISTRICT OF HONG KONG, KOWLOON AND THE NEW TERRITORIES.

+DURING THEIR SHORT EXISTENCE THE DISTRICT BOARDS HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR VALUE FOR, AND I QUOTE FROM THE WHITE PAPER, 'CONTACT, DISCUSSION, STIMULUS AND ADVICE BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES IN EACH DISTRICT AND THE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT'.

+IN YOUR ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE PRESENT SESSION OF THIS COUNCIL YOU SAID, SIR, THAT WE MUST ENSURE THAT THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME 'REMAINS SUITED TO HONG KONG'S CHANGING NEEDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES' AND ADDED THAT YOU HAD CALLED FOR AN EXAMINATION OF 'THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE ORGANISATION OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE DECISIONS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE ADVICE OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS'.

+DURING THE COURSE OF THIS REVIEW THE DISTRICT BOARDS THEMSELVES, AT A SERIES OF MEETINGS, HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR OWN VIEWS AND IDEAS FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION.

+AS A RESULT OF THE REVIEW, THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOW COME TO CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS. THE NEXT DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS ARE DUE TO BE HELD IN MARCH 1985 AND THE GOVERNMENT'S FIRST CONCLUSION IS THAT THE REPRESENTATIVE STATUS OF THE BOARDS SHOULD THEN BE STRENGTHENED BY INCREASING THE SIZE OF THE ELECTED ELEMENT. IN DISTRICTS WHERE THE POPULATION LEVEL IS ALREADY RELATIVELY STABLE, IT IS PROPOSED THAT, AS FROM 1985, THE NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS SHOULD BE DOUBLE THAT OF APPOINTED MEMBERS. BUT IN DISTRICTS WHERE THE SIZE OF THE POPULATION IS STILL ON THE INCREASE (FOR EXAMPLE, THE NEW TOWN OF SHATIN) THIS RATIO OF ELECTED MEMBERS TO APPOINTED MEMBERS MIGHT BE BEST ACHIEVED PROGRESSIVELY OVER THE YEARS AS THE POPULATION INCREASES. ALSO, IN SOME DISTRICTS, TO HAVE THE NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF APPOINTED MEMBERS MIGHT RESULT IN A BOARD WHICH WAS TOO LARGE AND UNWIELDY, IN WHICH CASE THE SIZE OF THE BOARD COULD BE SCALED DOWN, WHILST RETAINING THE SAME 2 : 1 RATIO OF ELECTED TO APPOINTED MEMBERS.

+THE SECOND CONCLUSION OF THE REVIEW IS THAT, INASMUCH AS SOME DISTRICTS (FOR EXAMPLE, TSUEN WAN) ARE LARGE AND COMPLEX CONURBATIONS, IT MAY BE DESIRABLE IN THESE DISTRICTS TO CREATE BOARDS TO SERVE SMALLER GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS. BUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS CONCLUSION WILL OBVIOUSLY NEED TO BE EXAMINED IN GREAT DETAIL.

+THE THIRD CONCLUSION OF THE REVIEW IS THAT, AS DISTRICT BOARDS HAVE ALREADY MADE AN IMPACT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR DENSELY POPULATED URBAN AREAS, IT IS FOR CONSIDERATION WHETHER THIS URBAN MANAGEMENT ROLE SHOULD BE DEVELOPED. IN ADDITION, DISTRICT BOARDS MIGHT BE ABLE TO ASSIST IN THE MANAGEMENT, AND IN THE PROMOTION OF THE USE OF, CERTAIN FACILITIES LOCATED IN THEIR DISTRICTS, OTHER THAN SPECIALIST FACILITIES, WHICH HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR THE BENEFIT OF RESIDENTS IN THEIR DISTRICTS. DETAILED EXAMINATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THESE AND OTHER IDEAS WHICH THE BOARDS THEMSELVES HAVE SUGGESTED, INCLUDING THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE LINKS BETWEEN DISTRICT BOARDS AND DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES.

+THE FOURTH CONCLUSION OF THE REVIEW, IS THAT ANOTHER, WHAT ONE MIGHT CALL 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED, TO COVER THE AREAS NOT UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL. IN LINE WITH THE URBAN COUNCIL, THIS NEW 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL WOULD COMPRISE AN EQUAL NUMBER OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED MEMBERS. BY 1991 THERE WILL BE MORE PEOPLE LIVING NORTH OF THE KOWLOON FOOTHILLS THAN THERE ARE IN KOWLOON. THIS SHIFT OF POPULATION TO THE NEW TOWNS DEMONSTRATES THE NEED FOR SUCH AN ADDITIONAL 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL, WITH POPULAR PARTICIPATION, TO CONTROL THE PROVISION OF THOSE CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED SERVICES NOW PROVIDED BY THE NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT. THIS NEW 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL IS ALSO CONSIDERED TO BE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE PRESENT ANOMALOUS SITUATION WHEREBY A WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES IS PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC IN THE URBAN AREAS BY THE URBAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE URBAN COUNCIL, BUT SIMILAR SERVICES ARE PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC IN THE NEW TERRITORIES BY THE NEW TERRITORIES SERVICES DEPARTMENT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THE URBAN COUNCIL SYSTEM HAS BEEN WORKING WELL IN THE URBAN AREAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS CONCLUDED THAT A SIMILAR SYSTEM SHOULD NOW BE INTRODUCED TO COVER THE REST OF HONG KONG, WHERE A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE COMMUNITY NOW RESIDES: AND AN EVEN LARGER PROPORTION WILL RESIDE AS THE YEARS GO BY.

+IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE FUNCTIONS OF THE NEW 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL WILL BE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE URBAN COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION AND HYGIENE SERVICES. SO FAR AS RECREATION AND CULTURAL AND AMENITIES SERVICES ARE CONCERNED, THE FUNCTIONS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL AND THE NEW 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL WILL INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF MOST OF THOSE SERVICES NOW PROVIDED BY THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT. OUR AIM IS TO ENSURE THAT THESE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED IN THE MOST EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE MANNER.

+I SHOULD NOTE HERE THAT THE HEUNG YEE KUK IS A SPECIALLY APPOINTED STATUTORY BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR GIVING ADVICE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE NEW TERRITORIES AS SUCH, AND NO CHANGE IN THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE KUK IS PROPOSED. MOREOVER, IN RECOGNITION OF THE KUK'S TRADITIONAL POSITION, IT IS PROPOSED THAT A NUMBER OF THE NEW OFFICERS OF THE KUK SHOULD BE EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE NEW 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL.

+I SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR, AS REGARDS THE URBAN COUNCIL IT IS NOT THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE, NOR IS IT PROPOSED, TO EXTEND ITS POWERS TO COVER THE REST OF HONG KONG, BECAUSE OF EXISTING INSTITUTIONS AND BECAUSE THE URBAN COUNCIL WOULD THUS BECOME TOO LARGE AND UNWIELDY. I WOULD ADD THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS VERY CONSCIOUS OF THE ENTHUSIASTIC AND COMPETENT PERFORMANCE OF THE URBAN COUNCIL WITHIN ITS PRESENT JURISDICTION AND WOULD NOT WISH TO PUT ITS CONTINUING ROLE IN THE URBAN AREAS IN THE FUTURE AT RISK.

+AS REGARDS THE ACTUAL GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TWO COUNCILS THAT WOULD BE CREATED IF THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS ARE IMPLEMENTED, IT IS FOR CONSIDERATION WHETHER, FOR EXAMPLE, THE NEW TOWN BEING BUILT AT JUNK BAY, WHICH IS VIRTUALLY AN EXTENSION OF NEW KOWLOON, SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE JURISDICTION OF THE PRESENT URBAN COUNCIL. SIMILARLY, ADMINISTRATION OF THE ISLANDS TO THE SOUTH AND WEST OF HONG KONG ISLAND MIGHT BE MORE CONVENIENTLY COMBINED WITH THAT OF HONG KONG ISLAND RATHER THAN THE NORTHERN NEW TERRITORIES. HOWEVER, SINCE THIS HAS A BEARING ON THE TRADITIONAL SPHERE OF RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK IT WILL CLEARLY NEED CAREFUL EXAMINATION.

+SIR, THIS STATEMENT HAS BEEN MADE TODAY IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN THE STATE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S THINKING AS REGARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR SYSTEM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROPOSALS WILL BE, I HOPE, SELF-EVIDENT: IT IS TO CREATE MORE EVEN AND SYMMETRICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG AND TO BRING ABOUT A GREATER DEGREE OF DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN THE RUNNING OF OUR INCREASINGLY COMPLEX SOCIETY. I AM SURE THERE WILL BE A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT THIS WILL PRESENT FOR THOSE ANXIOUS TO TAKE PART IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AT DISTRICT AND REGIONAL LEVEL.

+IN CONCLUSION, I SHOULD EMPHASISE, SIR, THAT PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PROPOSALS WILL BE WELCOMED AND THE FURTHER ADVICE OF DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE ADVICE OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK, WILL BE SOUGHT, AS WILL THE VIEWS OF THE URBAN COUNCIL. IF THE PROPOSALS COMMAND SUPPORT, IT IS INTENDED THAT THE CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE INTRODUCED IN TIME FOR THE ELECTIONS IN 1985 AND THAT ELECTIONS FOR THE SECOND 'REGIONAL' COUNCIL SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN 1986, BUT WITH A PROVISIONAL, WHOLLY APPOINTED COUNCIL TAKING OFFICE IN 1985.

+MEANWHILE, PRELIMINARY WORK IS IN HAND ON THE ORGANISATIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THESE PROPOSALS SO THAT, IF THEY DO COMMAND SUPPORT, THE TIMETABLE ENVISAGED FOR THEIR IMPLEMENTATION MAY BE MET.

PUBLIC VIEWS ARE PICKED UP THROUGH 16 CHANNELS

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THE GOVERNMENT PICKED UP VIEWS COMMONLY EXPRESSED BY PEOPLE THROUGH SOME 16 CHANNELS, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DENIS BRAY, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SOME OF THE CHANNELS WERE THE UMELCO OFFICE, THE 15 URBAN COUNCIL WARDS, THE 18 DISTRICT BOARDS, OVER 300 GOVERNMENT ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, HE SAID.

OTHER CHANNELS INCLUDED PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION AND RADIO, OPINION POLLS, ATTITUDE SURVEYS AS WELL AS SPECIAL COMPLAINT OFFICES AND 'HOT LINES' SET UP BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ANDREW SO, ON HOW GOVERNMENT MONITORED AND ASSESSED PUBLIC OPINION, MR BRAY SAID THAT SEVERAL OF THESE CHANNELS INVOLVED MANY COMPONENTS.

ANYONE WHO WISHED TO AIR HIS VIEWS HAD A CHOICE OF, OR A COMBINATION OF THESE CHANNELS, MR BRAY SAID.

+THOSE WHO DO NOT ACTIVELY SEEK TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS, AND THEY FORM THE BULK OF THE PEOPLE, MAY BE REQUESTED TO STATE THEIR OPINION ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS THROUGH SURVEYS OR THROUGH THEIR DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED,+ HE SAID.

THESE CHANNELS WERE CAREFULLY MONITORED BY THE GOVERNMENT WITH FOUR DEPARTMENTS ENTRUSTED SPECIFICALLY WITH THE ROLE OF CO-ORDINATING EFFORT IN THIS AREA -- THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES, RADIO TV HONG KONG, CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION AND THE HOME AFFAIRS BRANCH, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES, HE EXPLAINED, ASSESSED OPINION EXPRESSED IN THE MEDIA AND DISTRIBUTES A SUMMARY OF NEWS AND COMMENTS DAILY TO ALL GOVERNMENT BRANCHES AND DEPARTMENTS. THE DEPARTMENT ALSO PRODUCES A WEEKLY REVIEW OF CHINESE EDITORIAL COMMENTS, AS WELL AS A WEEKLY SUMMARY OF MEDIA REPORTING AND COMMENTARY ON SPECIAL ISSUES. THERE IS ALSO A WEEKLY SUMMARY OF ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

RTHK, APART FROM PROVIDING DIRECT CHANNELS FOR THE PUBLIC TO AIR THEIR OPINION TO GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL OR TO SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, IS ALSO ENGAGED IN PRODUCING PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES WHICH SEEK TO HIGHLIGHT PUBLIC CONCERN AT ANY PARTICULAR MOMENT, MR BRAY SAID.

THE CNTA, HE SAID, REGULARLY REPORTS ON VIEWS AND COMMENTS GATHERED FROM CONTACTS WITH THE PUBLIC AND CIRCULATES A WEEKLY ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC OPINION WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT.

THE HAB COLLATES PUBLIC OPINION OBTAINED BY OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND THROUGH OPINION POLLS AND ATTITUDE SURVEYS.

+THE FINDINGS ARE ANALYSED AND ASSESSED AND PRESENTED TO BRANCHES AND DEPARTMENTS,+ HE SAID.

APART FROM THESE FORMAL ASSESSMENTS IT WAS A PART OF THE DAILY ROUTINE OF ALL SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO GAUGE OPINION BY READING NEWSPAPERS, WATCHING TELEVISION PROGRAMMES, LISTENING TO AND PARTICIPATING IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES AND GENERALLY MAINTAINING THEIR OWN PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE IN PUBLIC LIFE, MR BRAY SAID.

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#### IMITATION FIREARMS TO BE BANNED

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THE GOVERNMENT IS DRAFTING LEGISLATION TO BAN THE POSSESSION, EXPORT, IMPORT, MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF HIGH QUALITY IMITATION FIREARMS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON CHARLES YEUNG, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT PRESENT LEGISLATION CONTROLLING GENUINE FIREARMS WAS ADEQUATE.

HOWEVER, THE COMMITTEE WAS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT REDUCING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMUGGLING FIREARMS INTO HONG KONG.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR CUSTOMS AND EXCISE HAD NOW INSTALLED MORE DETECTION EQUIPMENT AND WOULD BE DEPLOYING MORE MANPOWER AT CHECK POINTS TO STEP UP EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION, HE SAID.

MR JEAFFRESON POINTED OUT THAT FIREARMS ALREADY IN HONG KONG WERE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POLICE.

+FOLLOWING THE RECENT ARMED ROBBERIES, THE POLICE HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY SUCCESSFUL IN TRACING AND SEIZING ILLEGAL FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION,+ HE SAID.

IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PETER C. WONG ON MEASURES TO PREVENT OR REDUCE ARMED ROBBERIES, MR JEAFFRESON SAID THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE HAD GROUPS LOOKING AT THE USE OF FIREARMS IN CRIME, AT THE SECURITY OF GOLDSMITH AND JEWELLERY SHOPS, BANKS AND GOLD WORKSHOPS AND AT HOW TO REDUCE CRIME GENERALLY, AND ROBBERIES IN PARTICULAR, IN MULTI-STORY BUILDINGS.

+AS REGARDS GOLDSMITHS AND JEWELLERY SHOPS THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE IS FULLY AGREED THAT THE ANSWER LIES IN BETTER SECURITY MEASURES AND IS IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE RELEVANT ASSOCIATIONS TO THIS EFFECT,+ HE SAID.

+THE SECURITY OF CERTAIN BANKS COULD BE IMPROVED IF THEY WOULD ABANDON THEIR OPEN-PLAN DESIGNS AND THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF BANKS HAS BEEN ADVISED TO THIS EFFECT.

+FOR REDUCING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROBBERIES IN MULTI-STOREY BUILDINGS, THE COMMITTEE HAS DRAWN UP GUIDELINES ON THE DESIGN OF BUILDINGS, IS LOOKING AT HOW THE QUALITY OF WATCHMEN MIGHT BE IMPROVED AND IS EXAMINING WAYS OF ENCOURAGING BETTER MANAGEMENT.+

ON THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC IN REDUCING ARMED ROBBERIES, MR JEAFFRESON SAID MEASURES THAT COULD BE TAKEN FELL INTO TWO CATEGORIES.

+ONE IS TAKING SENSIBLE CRIME PREVENTION MEASURES AND THE OTHER IS GIVING FULL CO-OPERATION TO THE POLICE IN THE INVESTIGATION OF SUCH CRIMES,+ HE SAID.

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#### NEW APPROACH TO GDP ESTIMATES USED

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THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT HAD MADE MAJOR REVISIONS TO ITS ESTIMATES OF THE EXPENDITURE-BASED GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AND STARTED A NEW PRODUCTION-BASED GDP SERIES, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON WONG PO-YAN, MR JACOBS EXPLAINED THAT ANNUAL SURVEYS COVERING VARIOUS SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY HAD PROVIDED THE DEPARTMENT WITH THE INFORMATION WHICH MADE THE REVISIONS AND THE USE OF THE PRODUCTION APPROACH POSSIBLE.

+THE REVISIONS MADE TO THE EXPENDITURE-BASED GDP SERIES HAVE THE EFFECT OF RAISING THE LEVEL OF THE PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED CURRENT PRICE ESTIMATES BY ROUGHTLY 15-20 PER CENT IN EACH YEAR,+ HE SAID.

THIS HIGHER LEVEL WAS LARGELY DUE TO THE INCLUSION OF SURVEY-BASED ESTIMATES IN PLACE OF CRUDE ASSUMPTIONS FOR SEVERAL ITEMS ON WHICH INFORMATION WAS NOT AVAILABLE PREVIOUSLY, HE ADDED.

+THE REVISED SERIES REPRESENTS AN IMPROVEMENT ON THE PREVIOUS SERIES AND IS MORE SENSITIVE TO ECONOMIC CHANGES.

+AS RESULT, THE GROWTH RATES FOR SOME YEARS DIFFER QUITE MARKEDLY FROM EARLIER FIGURES.

+THE OVERALL PICTURE AS REGARDS LONGER-TERM GROWTH IS NOT, HOWEVER, SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT,+ HE POINTED OUT.

THE DEPARTMENT HAS A CONTINUING PROGRAMME TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND THE RANGE OF STATISTICS AVAILABLE FOR HONG KONG.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROGRAMME, MR JACOBS SAID, WAS TO PROVIDE RELIABLE STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE BASIS OF WHICH ANALYSES OF VARIOUS FACETS OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMY AND SOCIETY MIGHT BE MADE.

+AN INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE OF OUR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND THE COVERAGE OF OUR STATISTICAL SERVICES IS THAT VARIOUS SERIES WILL, EVERY NOW AND THEN, HAVE TO BE REVISED AND EVEN RE-DEFINED,+ HE SAID.

THE PREVIOUS MAJOR REVISION TO THE GDP SERIES WAS MADE IN FEBRUARY 1980.

MR JACOBS PRAISED THE DEPARTMENT FOR +PROVIDING TIMELY AND RELIABLE STATISTICS ON GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER.+

+CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE BUT EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE WITH A VIEW TO ACHIEVING FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS,+ HE SAID.

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### BUSES MUST PASS STRINGENT TESTS

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A BUS MUST PASS A CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS (COF) INSPECTION BEFORE IT IS ALLOWED ON THE ROAD, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

COF INSPECTIONS ARE CARRIED OUT AT INTERVALS RANGING FROM THREE TO FIVE YEARS, MR SCOTT SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON PAULINE NG.

THE INTERVAL BECOMES SHORTER AS THE BUS BECOMES OLDER, HE POINTED OUT.

+A PARTICULAR FEATURE OF THE COF INSPECTION IS THE MANDATORY OVERHAUL OF THE MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE VEHICLE, INCLUDING THE BRAKING, STEERING AND SUSPENSION SYSTEMS,+ HE SAID.

IN ADDITION, EACH YEAR BEFORE A BUS IS RELICENSED, IT MUST PASS A CERTIFICATE OF ROAD WORTHINESS TEST.

THIS TEST COVERS 26 SEPARATE CHECKS, INCLUDING THE CHECKING OF THE DRIVING AND ENGINE CONTROLS, THE STEERING SYSTEM, THE BRAKING SYSTEM, THE SUSPENSION AND SHOCK ABSORBER SYSTEM, THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM AND TYRES, MR SCOTT POINTED OUT.

ALSO, UNDER THE PUBLIC OMNIBUS SERVICES ORDINANCE, THE FRANCHISED BUS COMPANIES ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE PROPER VEHICLE MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AND TO KEEP FULL RECORDS OF VEHICLE MAINTENANCE.

THESE FACILITIES AND RECORDS ARE SUBJECT TO INSPECTION BY THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT, MR SCOTT SAID.

+IF A COMPANY FAILS TO MAINTAIN AN ADEQUATE BUS MAINTENANCE SERVICE AND FAILS TO COMPLY WITH A DIRECTION FROM THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT TO IMPROVE THE SERVICE, THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL MAY UNDER SECTION 22 OF THE ORDINANCE IMPOSE A PENALTY OF UP TO \$10 000 IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, GOING UP TO \$50 000 ON SUBSEQUENT OCCASIONS,+ HE SAID.

AND ULTIMATELY, POWER RESTS WITH THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL TO REVOKE A FRANCHISE, HE ADDED.

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19 .....

ACCIDENT VICTIM FAMILIES GET FINANCIAL AID

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THE 13 FAMILIES OF THOSE KILLED OR INJURED IN THE TRAGIC ACCIDENT IN HAPPY VALLEY ON JANUARY 28 ARE ALL AWARE OF THE HELP THEY CAN GET FROM THE TRAFFIC ACCIDENT VICTIMS ASSISTANCE SCHEME, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON HENRY CHING, SAID TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON PAULINE NG IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ABOUT ASSISTANCE OFFERED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO THE FAMILIES.

MR CHING SAID SO FAR A TOTAL OF \$102 700 HAD BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO 11 OF THE FAMILIES, AND TWO FAMILIES HAD NOT SOUGHT HELP UNDER THE SCHEME.

+ADDITIONALLY, THE FAMILIES HAVE ALL BE ASKED IF THEY NEED ANY OTHER HELP, AND AS A RESULT ONE FAMILY HAS BEEN OFFERED CHILD CARE SERVICES WHILE ANOTHER IS BEING CONSIDERED FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE,+ HE SAID.

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FRUSTRATION WILL GROW IN VR CAMPS

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FRUSTRATION WILL GROW AS VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ARE DETAINED FOR LONG PERIODS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LYDIA DUNN WHO ASKED FOR A STATEMENT ON TWO RECENT INCIDENTS IN CAMPS AT HEI LING CHAU AND CHI MA WAN AND WHO WANTED TO KNOW WHAT ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN IN RESPECT OF TROUBLE MAKERS.

+THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM IS TO PRESERVE LAW AND ORDER IN ALL REFUGEE CENTRES AND TO DEAL FIRMLY WITH ANY DISTURBANCES,+ SAID MR JEAFFRESON, +BUT WE MUST APPRECIATE THAT WHEN REFUGEES ARE DETAINED HERE FOR LONG PERIODS FRUSTRATION WILL GROW.+

DESCRIBING THE INCIDENT AT HEI LING CHAU CENTRE FOR SINGLE MALE REFUGEES, HE SAID THAT TROUBLE BEGAN AT MIDDAY ON FEBRUARY 2 WHEN A FIGHT INVOLVING THREE REFUGEES DEVELOPED INTO A GANG FIGHT INVOLVING OVER 100 NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN REFUGEES.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES STAFF QUICKLY BROUGHT THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL.

HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THIS DISTURBANCE AND A NUMBER OF OTHER INCIDENTS INVOLVING NORTH-SOUTH CONFLICT, IT WAS DECIDED TO SEPARATE THE TWO GROUPS IN TWO CENTRES, HE SAID.

WHEN, AS A RESULT, THE TRANSFER OF REFUGEES FROM CHI MA WAN TO HEI LING CHAU BEGAN ON FEBRUARY 7, ABOUT 200 OCCUPANTS IN ONE HUT RESISTED CSD STAFF ATTEMPTS TO MOVE THEM AND AT LEAST TWO OFFICERS WERE ATTACKED.

THE HUT WAS ISOLATED, THE MOVES CONTINUED, AND THE RINGLEADERS WERE IDENTIFIED AND TRANSFERRED TO THE VICTORIA CLOSED CENTRE LATER THAT DAY.

A SEARCH MADE FOLLOWING THE TRANSFERS UNCOVERED A WIDE VARIETY OF HOME-MADE WEAPONS IN EACH OF THE CLOSED CENTRES INVOLVED.

+I SHOULD LIKE AT THIS STAGE TO ADD THAT THE STAFF OF THE CORRECTIONAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT ACTED WITH THOROUGHLY COMMENDABLE FIRMNESS AND RESTRAINT THROUGHOUT THESE REGRETTABLE INCIDENTS,+ SAID MR JEAFFRESON.

HE SAID THAT THE SEPARATION OF THE TWO GROUPS WILL CONTINUE - NORTHERNERS IN THE HEI LING CHAU CLOSED CENTRE AND SOUTHERNERS IN THE CHI MA WAN CLOSED CENTRE.

IN ADDITION THE CENTRE FOR SINGLE MALE REFUGEES ON HEI LING CHAU HAS BEEN EMPTIED AND, EXCEPT FOR IDENTIFIED TROUBLEMAKERS, THE REFUGEES PREVIOUSLY HOUSED THERE HAVE GONE TO ONE OR OTHER OF THE CLOSED CENTRES.

IN ADDITION, HE SAID, 100 REFUGEES FROM THE HEI LING CHAU TREATMENT CENTRE AND 20 FROM CHI MA WAN, IDENTIFIED AS THE INSTIGATORS OF THE DISTURBANCES OR ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THEM, HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE VICTORIA CLOSED CENTRE WHERE THEY WILL BE UNABLE TO EXERT INFLUENCE OVER THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE VAST MAJORITY OF LAW ABIDING REFUGEES.

UPON COMPLETION OF INVESTIGATIONS, THE POLICE MAY LAY CHARGES AGAINST SOME OF THOSE INVOLVED IN THE DISTURBANCES, MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

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NO BLOOD SHORTAGE FOR ACUTE SURGERY - THONG  
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THERE HAD NEVER BEEN ANY OCCASION WHEN ACUTE AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS HAD TO BE RESCHEDULED OR DELAYED BECAUSE OF BLOOD SHORTAGE. THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, DR THE HON K.L. THONG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON LYDIA DUNN WHO ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF BLOOD FOR TRANSFUSIONS, RESULTING IN SOME SURGICAL OPERATIONS BEING DELAYED.

DR THONG SAID THAT FOR SCHEDULED OR NON-EMERGENCY CASES, IT HAD ALSO BEEN POSSIBLE TO CARRY OUT OPERATIONS ACCORDING TO THE TIMES AND THE SCHEDULES.

/+HOWEVER, THERE .....

+HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME OCCASIONS WHEN IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO RESCHEDULE SUCH OPERATIONS TO THE NEXT SESSION BECAUSE OF THE LOWER LEVEL OF BLOOD COLLECTION DURING CERTAIN PERIODS OF THE YEAR,+ HE SAID.

DR THONG EXPLAINED THAT SUCH OCCASIONS WERE INFREQUENT AND OCCURRED MAINLY BEFORE MAJOR PUBLIC HOLIDAYS OR FESTIVALS.

SURGICAL CASES THAT REQUIRED BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS WERE OF TWO TYPES, - ACUTE AND EMERGENCY OPERATIONS AND SCHEDULED OR NON-EMERGENCY OPERATIONS COMMONLY KNOWN AS 'COLD CASES', HE SAID.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE RESCHEDULING OF OPERATIONS OF COLD CASES HAD NO ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE MEDICAL CONDITION OF THE PATIENTS AS THEY DID NOT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE OPERATIONS.

+THUS, THE RESCHEDULING DOES NOT REALLY CONSTITUTE A DELAY INsofar AS THE PATIENTS' CONDITIONS ARE CONCERNED,+ DR THONG SAID.

THIS MANNER OF BLOOD UTILISATION FOR EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY CASES WAS COMMON TO MOST HOSPITALS IN THE WORLD, DR THONG SAID.

DR THONG SAID THAT BLOOD WAS NORMALLY COLLECTED BY THE HONG KONG RED CROSS FROM VOLUNTARY DONORS AND THEN SUPPLIED TO THE BLOOD BANKS OF THE MAJOR GOVERNMENT, SUBVENTED AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

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#### SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SCHEME WIDELY USED

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THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SCHEME VIRTUALLY COVERS THE ENTIRE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON COLVYN HAYE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR HAYE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN ABOUT THE PRESENT SITUATION AND FUTURE GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

HE SAID THAT OF THE 482 SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND ASSOCIATED BRANCHES SERVED BY SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS FROM THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES, 408 SCHOOLS WERE VISITED REGULARLY BY WORKERS TO FACILITATE LIAISON WITH TEACHING STAFF AND THE COUNSELLING OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS.

THE DIRECTOR CONTINUED: +ANOTHER 74 SCHOOLS, WHICH ARE UNABLE TO OFFER FACILITIES FOR REGULAR VISITS BY A SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER, ARE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGED TO REFER CASES, WHENEVER NECESSARY, TO A WORKER NOMINATED BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT OR A VOLUNTARY AGENCY.

/+IN ADDITION, .....

+IN ADDITION, A SMALL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, WHICH AMOUNT TO 19 AND ARE MAINLY UNDER RELIGIOUS SPONSORSHIP, HAVE OPTED TO EMPLOY THEIR OWN SOCIAL WORKERS FROM PRIVATE RESOURCES.+

MR HAYE SAID THE DAY-TO-DAY OVERALL COORDINATION OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK SCHEME RESTED WITH THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT IN CONSULTATION WITH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

+THERE IS ANOTHER FACET OF THE SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMME WHICH I SHOULD MENTION: IT IS THE REFERRAL OF DIFFICULT COUNSELLING CASES BY MY STUDENT GUIDANCE OFFICERS TO THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, AND THIS CAN OCCUR IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS,+ HE ADDED.

MR HAYE SAID THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS WHEN THE GENERAL MANPOWER SITUATION IN THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION IMPROVED.

HOWEVER, BEFORE THE INFUSION OF FURTHER STAFF RESOURCES, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT THE RESOURCES ALREADY DIRECTED TO THIS SERVICE WERE BEING USED AS EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE IN DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS FACED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS.

+AN EVALUATION OF THE SERVICE IS NOW BEING CONDUCTED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR,+ HE ADDED.

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#### TRAFFIC PENALTY LAW TIDIED UP

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TWO BILLS AIMED AT CLEARING UP ANOMALIES IN THE FIXED PENALTY LEGISLATION, WHICH WILL COME INTO EFFECT IN APRIL, WERE READ A SECOND TIME IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MOVING THE BILLS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, MR ALAN SCOTT SAID THAT THE TRAFFIC FIXED PENALTY SYSTEM HAD TO +BE SEEN BY THE PUBLIC AS OPERATING FAIRLY+.

IN PARTICULAR OUTSTANDING PENALTIES SHOULD BE COLLECTED SO THAT OFFENDERS CANNOT IGNORE AND ESCAPE THE LAW,+ HE ADDED.

THE TWO BILLS ARE THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AND THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984.

MR SCOTT SAID THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF BOTH BILLS WAS TO RECTIFY SHORTCOMINGS IN THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1981 AND THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1981 - BOTH OF WHICH ARE INTENDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION IN APRIL.

+THE PRINCIPAL FEATURE OF THOSE ORDINANCES WAS THE IMPOSITION OF AN ADDITIONAL PENALTY ON PERSONS WHO, WHILE NOT WISHING TO CONTEST AN OFFENCE FOR WHICH A FIXED PENALTY TICKET HAD BEEN ISSUED, HAD DELAYED PAYING THE DUE FINE,+ HE SAID.

+BOTH THE 1981 AMENDING ORDINANCES PROVIDED THAT WHEN A PERSON SATISFIES THE COURT THAT HE DID NOT RECEIVE THE NOTICE SERVED, HE MAY PAY THE FIXED PENALTY WITHOUT THE ADDITIONAL PENALTY. HOWEVER, IF THAT PERSON SUBSEQUENTLY FAILS TO PAY THE FINE WITHIN THE SPECIFIED PERIOD, THE IMPOSITION OF AN ADDITIONAL PENALTY FOR DELAY IN PAYMENT IS NOT PROVIDED FOR. CLEARLY, FOR CONSISTENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS, IT SHOULD BE.+

MR SCOTT SAID THAT THE TWO BILLS TO BE GIVEN A SECOND READING PROVIDE THAT A PERSON WHO SATISFIES THE COURT THAT HE DID NOT RECEIVE NOTICE OF A FIXED PENALTY OFFENCE, BUT WHO FAILS TO COMPLY WITH THE COURT'S ORDER TO PAY THE PENALTY WITHIN THE PERIOD SPECIFIED, SHALL BE LIABLE TO THE SAME ADDITIONAL PENALTY AS A PERSON WHO RECEIVED NOTICE AND DID NOT PAY, OR DID NOT GIVE NOTICE OF HIS INTENTION TO DISPUTE IT.

THE BILLS ALSO ALLOW THE POLICE AT ANY TIME TO APPLY TO THE COURT TO RESCIND ORDERS FOR FIXED PENALTY PAYMENTS MADE IN ERROR. THE BILLS ALSO CLARIFY THE TIME LIMIT FOR THE REVIEW OF A CASE AND REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT FOR COMPLAINT FORMS TO BE SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

+THE RATE OF COLLECTION OF PENALTIES IN HONG KONG IS ACTUALLY HIGH BY COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNTRIES,+ SAID MR SCOTT.

+BUT FURTHER IMPROVEMENT SHOULD RESULT FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1981 ORDINANCES, WITH THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED IN THE PRESENT BILLS.+

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO MARCH 14.

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#### PAWNBROKERS' LIABILITY FOR THEFT EASED \* \* \* \* \*

THE PAWNBROKERS BILL 1983 HAD BEEN SCRUTINISED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS EVEN THOUGH IT AFFECTED ONLY A SMALL SECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY, THE HON CHARLES YEUNG SAID TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, MR YEUNG SAID REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TRADE HAD CALLED ON UMEICO OFFICE TWICE TO PRESENT THEIR VIEWS TO THE LEGCO GENERAL SERVICES WORKING GROUP.

MR YEUNG SAID THAT THE GROUP HAD CONSIDERED THE VIEWS OF THE REPRESENTATIVES AND ACCEPTED THEIR SUBMISSION THAT LIABILITY FOR COMPENSATION IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD PLACE AN UNFAIR BURDEN ON THEM.

/+ACCORDINGLY WE .....

+ACCORDINGLY WE PROPOSED THAT PAWNBROKERS' LIABILITY TO PAY COMPENSATION WHERE LOSS OR DAMAGE HAD OCCURRED AS A RESULT OF FIRE OR THEFT, SHOULD BE LIMITED,+ HE SAID.

+WE PROPOSED THAT ONLY WHERE SUCH LOSS OR DAMAGE COULD BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE PAWNBROKER, SHOULD THE PAWNBROKER BE LIABLE.

+I AM PLEASED TO SAY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AGREED WITH US AND AGREED TO AMEND THE BILL ACCORDINGLY,+ HE ADDED.

HE SAID THAT THE GROUP'S ATTENTION WAS ALSO DRAWN TO THE DIFFICULTIES OF ACCURATELY ASSESSING THE VALUE OF PAWNED ITEMS FOR INSURANCE PURPOSES AND OF THE OPEN-ENDED FINANCIAL LIABILITY OF BROKERS WHEN COMPENSATION WAS REQUIRED.

+WE ARE ACCORDINGLY HAPPY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAS AGREED TO LIMIT THE MAXIMUM LIABILITY OF THE BROKER TO THE MAXIMUM LOAN LIMIT SET UNDER THE BILL,+ HE SAID.

+WE CONSIDER THIS TO BE A FAIR ARRANGEMENT AND SUPPORT THE AMENDMENT,+ HE ADDED.

IN HIS SPEECH, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, POINTED OUT THERE HAD BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT, LEGCO UNOFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PAWNBROKERS SINCE THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL LAST AUGUST.

+I SHOULD LIKE TO RECORD OUR APPRECIATION OF THE TIME AND EFFORT SPENT BY THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ON THE PROBLEMS THAT THESE CONSULTATIONS HAVE UNEARTHED AND OF THEIR HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR SOLVING THEM,+ MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

HE SAID THESE SUGGESTIONS WOULD LEAD TO HIS PROPOSING +SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENTS+ TO THE BILL.

+AS FAR AS THE CLIENTS ARE CONCERNED, THOSE WHO PAWN GOODS WITH A VALUE OF LESS THAN THE MAXIMUM LEVEL OF LOAN PERMITTED WILL BE FULLY COVERED IN THE EVENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE TO THEIR GOODS RESULTING FROM NEGLIGENCE ON THE PART OF A PAWNBROKER.

+OUR INTENTION IS TO INTRODUCE REGULATIONS TO ENSURE THAT CLIENTS ARE ADEQUATELY WARNED OF THE RISKS TAKEN IN Pawning GOODS OF A VALUE GREATER THAN THE MAXIMUM LOAN LIMIT,+ MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

HE SAID THAT THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO TAKE SUCH RISKS SHOULD EXTEND THEIR OWN INSURANCE COVER FOR THE DURATION OF THE PAWN PERIOD.

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### SEVEN FOOTBRIDGES GET HIGHER PRIORITY

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SEVEN OF NINE FOOTBRIDGES IN THE EASTERN DISTRICT HAVE BEEN UPGRADED TO CATEGORY A OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

MR SCOTT WAS REPLYING TO THE HON MARIA TAM WHO ASKED ABOUT PROGRESS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOOTBRIDGES FOLLOWING THE DELAY LAST APRIL.

THE SEVEN FOOTBRIDGES ARE ALONG KING'S ROAD, AT ITS JUNCTION WITH TAI KOO SHING ROAD, FINNIE STREET, TIN CHIU STREET, MOUNT PARKER ROAD, NORTH POINT ROAD, JAVA ROAD AND PAN HOI STREET.

TWO OF THEM ARE NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION, WITH ONE TO BE COMPLETED IN JUNE THIS YEAR AND THE OTHER IN JANUARY NEXT YEAR, MR SCOTT SAID.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE REMAINING FIVE BRIDGES WILL BEGIN IN APRIL AND MAY THIS YEAR, WITH COMPLETION SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1985.

AS THESE FOOTBRIDGES WERE ORIGINALLY PLANNED FOR COMPLETION IN MID-1984, THE ACTUAL DELAY WAS A MATTER OF SIX TO EIGHT MONTHS ONLY, MR SCOTT SAID.

THE BRIDGES AT THE JAVA ROAD JUNCTION WITH NORTH POINT ROAD AND AT KING'S ROAD JUNCTION WITH YAU MAN STREET REMAIN IN CATEGORY AB BECAUSE OF THEIR LOWER PRIORITY IN ROAD SAFETY AND TRANSPORT TERMS, HE SAID.

WORK ON THEM WILL START IN 1985-86 AND WILL TAKE ABOUT ONE YEAR TO COMPLETE, HE ADDED.

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### NO PRESENT PLAN FOR TRUNK ROAD

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THERE WAS NO INTENTION AT PRESENT TO CONSTRUCT A TRUNK ROAD ALL THE WAY FROM SHA TIN TO SAI KUNG, THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL WAS TOLD TODAY.

THIS WAS SAID BY THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, WHO ASKED FOR INFORMATION ON THE PRESENT POSITION REGARDING CONSTRUCTION OF SUCH A ROAD.

MR CHAN EXPLAINED THAT BY +TRUNK ROAD+, HE MEANT A ROAD OF THREE-LANE, DUAL-CARRIAGEWAY STANDARD TO MAJOR TRAFFIC ROUTE SPECIFICATIONS IN RESPECT OF CURVES, GRADIENTS AND OTHER PARTICULARS.

/+HOWEVER. THE .....

+HOWEVER, THE DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR SHA TIN AND MA ON SHAN AREA INCLUDE A THREE-LANE, DUAL-CARRIAGEWAY ROAD FROM SHA TIN TO MA ON SHAN AND THERE IS A COMMITTED PROGRAMME OF DISTRIBUTOR ROADS TO BE CONSTRUCTED UNDER STAGE I OF THE MA ON SHAN DEVELOPMENT,+ HE SAID.

FROM THE OTHER END THERE IS AN EXISTING TWO-LANE ROAD FROM SAI KUNG VIA THREE FATHOMS COVE TO NAI CHUNG, WHICH IS ABOUT TWO KILOMETRES FROM MA ON SHAN STAGE I.

IT WAS THEREFORE PROPOSED AS PART OF A PROJECT CURRENTLY IN CATEGORY B OF THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME TO CONSTRUCT A TWO-LANE ROAD TO LINK THE MA ON SHAN DISTRIBUTOR ROADS TO THE EXISTING ROAD AT NAI CHUNG, THUS PROVIDING A THROUGH ROUTE - ALBEIT NOT OF TRUNK ROAD STANDARD - TO SAI KUNG.

THE DISTRIBUTOR ROADS THROUGH MA ON SHAN STAGE I WERE EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN THE YEAR 1986-87. THE INTENTION WAS TO COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION OF THE LINK BETWEEN MA ON SHAN AND NAI CHUNG AT THAT TIME.

ON THIS PROGRAMME THE THROUGH ROUTE FROM SHA TIN TO SAI KUNG WOULD BE AVAILABLE IN THE YEAR 1988-89, MR CHAN TOLD THE COUNCIL.

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#### GOVERNMENT SATISFIED WITH STANDARD OF TRANSLATION

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ON THE WHOLE, THE GOVERNMENT IS SATISFIED WITH THE STANDARD OF TRANSLATION IN THE CIVIL SERVICE, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DENIS BRAY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

BUT AS AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF TRANSLATION WORK IS DONE THERE IS ALWAYS SCOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT, MR BRAY SAID, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON WONG LAM.

THE TIME ALLOWED FOR TRANSLATION OFTEN AFFECTS THE QUALITY OF TRANSLATION.

+IT IS UNFORTUNATELY OFTEN THE CASE THAT TRANSLATION IS REQUIRED SPEEDILY TO MEET A DEADLINE AND IN SUCH CASES THE WORK PRODUCED CANNOT DO JUSTICE TO THE ABILITY OF THE TRANSLATORS.

+WHEN THESE CASES OCCUR THE PROBLEMS ARE POINTED OUT WITH THE HOPE THAT ON FUTURE OCCASIONS, MORE TIME WILL BE ALLOWED,+ MR BRAY SAID.

MEASURES BEING TAKEN TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE STANDARDS OF TRANSLATION INCLUDE MAINTENANCE OF THE STANDARD OF ACHIEVEMENT OF RECRUITS, STEPPED-UP IN-SERVICE TRAINING, MONITORING TRANSLATION BY REGULAR INSPECTION AND STRENGTHENING OF ESTABLISHMENT WHERE THE VOLUME OF WORK HAS INCREASED.

THE ENTRY REQUIREMENT FOR APPOINTMENT OF CHINESE LANGUAGE OFFICERS WAS RAISED IN 1979 FROM MATRICULATION TO GRADUATE LEVEL, MR BRAY ADDED.

BUT MATRICULANTS AND GRADUATES OF POST-SECONDARY COLLEGES MAY BE APPOINTED IF THEY CAN ACHIEVE GOOD RESULTS IN THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS SET AT GRADUATE LEVEL.

IN REPLY TO A SEPARATE QUESTION FROM THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN, MR BRAY TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS A TOTAL ESTABLISHMENT OF 365 POSTS FOR TRANSLATORS AND 351 POSTS ON STRENGTH.

+WE DO, HOWEVER, HAVE DIFFICULTY IN MEETING ALL THE DEMAND. THE BACKLOG OF WORK OR DELAY IN TRANSLATION IN CERTAIN DEPARTMENTS IS A MATTER OF CONCERN BECAUSE OF THE DRASTIC INCREASE IN THE VOLUME OF WORK AND OF COMPETING DEMANDS IN THOSE DEPARTMENTS FOR OTHER STAFF,+ MR BRAY POINTED OUT.

VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO THOSE DEPARTMENTS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL STAFF.

THE GOVERNMENT IS ALSO CARRYING OUT AN INTERNAL REORGANISATION REVIEW ALONG WITH A VALUE-FOR-MONEY STUDY WITHIN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE DIVISION IN THE HOPE OF ACHIEVING IMPROVEMENTS, HE SAID.

MR YEUNG ALSO ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETERS.

IN REPLY, MR BRA POINTED OUT THAT EVEN THOUGH A SMALL NUMBER OF SUCH OFFICERS WAS REQUIRED, THE GOVERNMENT HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY IN SUPPLYING INTERPRETERS ON ALL DESIRABLE OCCASIONS.

ON STRENGTH, THE GOVERNMENT HAD ONE CHIEF INTERPRETER, ONE ACTING CHIEF INTERPRETOR AND FOUR FULL-TIME INTERPRETERS, HE SAID.

MR BRAY SAID THAT TO FILL THE ESTABLISHMENT, THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE MORE INTENSIVE RECRUITMENT EFFORTS AND HAD INTRODUCED A SYSTEMATIC PROGRAMME FOR THE TRAINING OF PART-TIME SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETERS.

IN ADDITION, THERE WERE EIGHT PART-TIME INTERPRETERS AND MORE WERE BEING RECRUITED.

+IF WE WERE TO PROVIDE THE BEST STANDARDS OF INTERPRETATION AT ALL DESIRABLE MEETINGS WE KNOW OF NOW, THE ESTABLISHMENT WOULD NEED TO BE DOUBLED.

+IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO RECRUIT SO MANY OFFICERS QUICKLY EVEN IF FUNDS WERE AVAILABLE,+ HE SAID.

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BILL SEEKS STRIKE OUT POWER FOR TRIBUNAL

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THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 SEEKS TO REMEDY A DEFICIENCY IN THE MAIN ORDINANCE BY EMPOWERING THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL, UPON APPLICATION BY THE DEFENDANT, TO SET ASIDE AN AWARD OR ORDER ON TERMS THAT IT THINKS FIT, THE LAW DRAFTSMAN, THE HON GERALD NAZARETH, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL ORDINANCE PROVIDES THAT WHERE A DEFENDANT WHO HAS BEEN SERVED WITH NOTICE DOES NOT APPEAR AT THE HEARING, THE TRIBUNAL MAY MAKE AN AWARD OR ORDER IN HIS ABSENCE.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR NAZARETH SAID THAT THE DEFICIENCY IS THAT THE ORDINANCE DOES NOT EMPOWER THE TRIBUNAL TO SET ASIDE SUCH AN AWARD OR ORDER.

THE ORDINANCE ALSO OMITTS TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE NON-APPEARANCE OF THE CLAIMANT.

MR NAZARETH EXPLAINED THAT THE BILL MAKES SIMILAR PROVISION BY EMPOWERING THE TRIBUNAL TO STRIKE OUT THE CLAIM, AND UPON THE APPLICATION OF THE CLAIMANT, TO RESTORE IT UPON TERMS IT THINKS FIT.

IN BOTH CASES, APPLICATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE MADE WITHIN SEVEN DAYS OF THE HEARING OR SUCH FURTHER PERIOD AS THE TRIBUNAL MAY ALLOW, HE ADDED.

+THESE ARE NORMAL POWERS AND PROCEDURES IN OUR COURTS, INCLUDING THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL. THEY WORK WELL AND ENABLE JUSTICE TO BE DONE WHILE AVOIDING MUCH OF THE DELAY AND DISRUPTION THAT NON-APPEARANCE WOULD OTHERWISE CAUSE.

+THERE IS NO REASON WHY THEY SHOULD NOT WORK EQUALLY WELL IN THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL,+ HE SAID.

MR NAZARETH DESCRIBED THE BILL AS A +MODEST BUT CLEARLY DESIRABLE MEASURE OF REFORM.+

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO MARCH 14.

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REVIEW OF LAND SITES FOR TEMPORARY USE

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AT THE REQUEST OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAND SUPPLY, THE DIRECTOR OF LANDS IS CONDUCTING A REVIEW OF THE TEMPORARY USE OF VARIOUS LAND SITES, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THESE SITES INCLUDE ALL THOSE IN THE MAIN URBAN AREAS WHICH HAVE BEEN EARMARKED FOR GOVERNMENT, INSTITUTION OR COMMUNITY USE BUT FOR WHICH THERE ARE AS YET NO DEFINITE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND PROGRAMMES.

MR CHAN WAS REPLYING TO DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP WHO ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONSIDER DOING A REVIEW TO ENSURE MAXIMUM UTILISATION OF SUCH CROWN LAND WHICH WOULD BE LEFT UNDEVELOPED FOR FIVE YEARS OR MORE.

MR CHAN SAID THE REVIEW WOULD IDENTIFY WHICH OF THESE SITES WERE CONSIDERED SUITABLE FOR TEMPORARY USE.

+THE PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW IS TO ENSURE THAT AVAILABLE LAND IS FULLY USED,+ HE ADDED.

+IN THE PROCESS, THE POSSIBILITY OF RELEASING SITES WHICH ARE UNLIKELY TO BE REQUIRED FOR GOVERNMENT, INSTITUTION OR COMMUNITY USE FOR PERMANENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL ALSO BE EXAMINED.+

MR CHAN SAID THE REVIEW WAS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED SHORTLY AND THE FINDINGS WOULD BE PUT TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON LAND SUPPLY FOR INITIAL CONSIDERATION.

+THEREAFTER, DISTRICT BOARDS WILL BE CONSULTED, AS INDEED THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST, ABOUT THE USE OF SITES TEMPORARILY AVAILABLE WITHIN THEIR OWN PARTICULAR DISTRICTS,+ HE SAID.

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FIRE DANGER GREATER IN HILLSIDE SQUATTER AREAS

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FIRE RISKS IN HILLSIDE SQUATTER AREAS ARE GREATER THAN THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH SQUATTER HUTS ON THE ROOFTOPS OF BUILDINGS IN URBAN DISTRICTS, SAID THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI, WHO ASKED WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WAS AWARE OF THE FIRE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ROOFTOP STRUCTURES AND WHO WANTED TO KNOW WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN TO REDUCE THESE.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THAT DURING THE TWO YEARS ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1983, THERE WERE 46 FIRES, OF WHICH ONLY THREE WERE THIRD ALARM OR ABOVE, INVOLVING ROOFTOP SQUATTER HUTS.

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IN THE SAME PERIOD, HOWEVER, THERE WERE 208 FIRES IN HILLSIDE SQUATTER AREAS, 52 OF THEM BEING THIRD ALARM OR ABOVE.

HE SAID THAT FIRE SERVICES OFFICERS REGULARLY INSPECT BUILDINGS AND ROOFTOP STRUCTURES.

ADVICE TO RESIDENTS IS AVAILABLE FROM THE FIRE PROTECTION BUREAU, AND THE GOVERNMENT FIRE PREVENTION CAMPAIGN AND EFFORTS TO IMPROVE BUILDING MANAGEMENT ARE CONTINUING.

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#### MORE LAWS TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE

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FORTY-FIVE PIECES OF LEGISLATION HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE SO FAR, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DENIS BRAY, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THEY INCLUDE SIX OF THE 18 PIECES IDENTIFIED BY UMELCO AND THE URBAN COUNCIL LAST YEAR FOR PRIORITY TRANSLATION AS THEY AFFECT THE GENERAL PUBLIC, MR BRAY SAID.

HE WAS REPLYING TO THE HON WONG LAM WHO ASKED ABOUT THE PRESENT POSITION ON THE TRANSLATION OF HONG KONG LAWS INTO CHINESE AND WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT WAS SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS.

MR BRAY SAID THAT AN ORGANISATIONAL REVIEW OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE DIVISION WAS BEING CONDUCTED TO ASSESS WHETHER BETTER PROGRESS COULD BE MADE BY REDEPLOYING STAFF AND RESTRUCTURING THE DIVISION.

HE SAID THAT HE WAS +REASONABLY SATISFIED+ WITH PROGRESS IN VIEW OF COMPETING DEMANDS FOR TRANSLATION SERVICES AND THE USE OF BILINGUAL EXPLANATORY NOTES WHICH MOST PEOPLE FIND TO BE OF GREATER HELP IN UNDERSTANDING THE LAW.

OVER 1 000 SUCH PAMPHLETS HAD BEEN PUBLISHED AND KEPT UP-TO-DATE, MR BRAY SAID.

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LABOUR EDUCATION PROMOTED

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IT HAS LONG BEEN THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY TO DO ITS BEST TO PROMOTE LABOUR EDUCATION AMONG LOCAL WORKERS, THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR, THE HON RON BRIDGE, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON THE SUBJECT BY THE HON ANDREW SO.

THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAD A SPECIAL UNIT DEDICATED TO PROMOTING LABOUR EDUCATION AMONG LOCAL WORKERS, AND IN 1983 IT ORGANISED COURSES AND SEMINARS FOR MORE THAN 1 200 EMPLOYEES AND TRADE UNION OFFICIALS, MR BRIDGE SAID.

IN ADDITION, INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT GAVE MORE THAN 100 TALKS AND LECTURES TO TRADE UNIONS AND SIMILAR GROUPS AND AT SEMINARS ORGANISED BY SUCH BODIES AS THE HONG KONG MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION. THESE TALKS COVERED SUCH SUBJECTS AS LABOUR RELATIONS, LABOUR LEGISLATION, INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFECTING THE RIGHTS OF UNIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS.

THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD'S COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND ACCIDENT PREVENTION ALSO REGULARLY ORGANISED INDUSTRIAL SAFETY SEMINARS. MORE THAN 700 EMPLOYEES AND MIDDLE MANAGERS TOOK PART IN FOUR SUCH SEMINARS IN 1983.

MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT THAT WHENEVER NEW LABOUR LEGISLATION WAS ENACTED OR EXISTING LABOUR LEGISLATION WAS AMENDED, EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY WAS MOUNTED MAINLY BY MEANS OF POSTERS, PRESS RELEASES AND TELEVISION INTERVIEWS.

IN ADDITION, THE DEPARTMENT ALSO PREPARED SIMPLE BOOKLETS IN BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH, WHICH WERE DISTRIBUTED FREE OF CHARGE AND WERE BACKED UP BY TALKS TO MANAGERS AND TRADE UNION OFFICIALS.

THE REGISTRAR OF TRADE UNIONS AND HIS STAFF REGULARLY VISITED TRADE UNIONS TO ADVISE ON UNION LEGISLATION AND ON THEIR INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION. SOME 330 SUCH VISITS WERE MADE IN 1983.

SINCE AUGUST 1983, THE REGISTRY OF TRADE UNIONS HAD BEEN ORGANISING SHORT COURSES FOR TRADE UNION LEADERS ON TRADE UNION ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL TRADE UNION ADMINISTRATION. IN ADDITION, IT WOULD SHORTLY BE PUBLISHING A SERIES OF FREE LEAFLETS ON TRADE UNION ADMINISTRATION, MR BRIDGE ADDED.

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TAC TO CONSIDER SCHEME ON CAR CHECKS

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THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE WILL BE CONSIDERING LATER THIS MONTH A DETAILED SCHEME ON THE LICENSING OF PRIVATE GARAGES TO UNDERTAKE THE ANNUAL INSPECTION OF PRIVATE CARS OVER SIX YEARS OLD, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON S.L. CHEN, MR SCOTT SAID THAT THE SCHEME HAD BEEN WORKED OUT BY A WORKING GROUP WHICH INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION AND THE MOTOR TRADERS ASSOCIATION.

AFTER THE TAC'S CONSIDERATION, THE SCHEME WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR-IN-COUNCIL, MR SCOTT REPORTED.

ON MAY 31, LAST YEAR, THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE THE MOTOR TRADERS ASSOCIATION'S PROPOSAL ON THE SUBJECT, HE SAID.

THE SCHEME HAD BEEN PREPARED IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE WHICH ALSO ASKED FOR ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST MALPRACTICE AND ENSURING PROPER STANDARDS OF COMPETENCE AND OF EQUIPMENT, HE SAID.

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MORE POLICE POSTS INCLUDED IN DRAFT ESTIMATES

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ADDITIONAL POSTS FOR THE POLICE HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN THE DRAFT ESTIMATES, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO THE HON CHARLES YEUNG, WHO ASKED WHETHER THE POLICE STRENGTH WOULD BE INCREASED THIS YEAR.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO START A PREMATURE DEBATE ON THE SUBJECT.

HE WOULD NOT KNOW WHETHER THE STRENGTH OF THE POLICE WOULD BE INCREASED THIS YEAR UNTIL THE COUNCIL HAD VOTED ON THE APPROPRIATION BILL, HE SAID.

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NEW RULES FOR ACCOUNTANTS

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MEASURES TO TIGHTEN CONTROL OF THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION WERE DETAILED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, MOVED THE SECOND READING OF THE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984.

SIR JOHN TOLD COUNCIL MEMBERS THAT THE BILL SOUGHT TO MAKE A NUMBER OF AMENDMENTS TO THE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS ORDINANCE (CAP 50) WHICH WERE CONSIDERED NECESSARY BY THE HONG KONG SOCIETY OF ACCOUNTANTS, THE PROFESSION'S STATUTORY REGULATORY BODY, IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS.

ONE AMENDMENT PROPOSED SEEKS TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT A PRACTISING CERTIFICATE WILL NOT BE ISSUED TO A PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANT UNLESS HE IS ORDINARILY RESIDENT IN HONG KONG AND POSSESSES THE NECESSARY LOCAL EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL LAW AND PRACTICE.

OTHER PROVISIONS INCREASE THE NUMBER OF COUNCIL MEMBERS FROM 12 TO 14, INCREASE THE MEMBERSHIP OF ITS DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE FROM THREE TO FIVE, RELATE TO THAT COMMITTEE'S RULES OF PROCEDURE AND DEAL WITH RECEIPT OF COMPLAINTS.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO MARCH 14.

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GUARDIANSHIP OF HANDICAPPED

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IT IS INTENDED THAT LEGISLATIVE PROVISION FOR GUARDIANSHIP FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS OVER THE AGE OF 21, WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION LATER THIS YEAR, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON NEIL HENDERSON SAID TODAY.

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION ON SUCH GUARDIANSHIP BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

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PEAK TRAM PERMIT FEE SET  
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DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDER WAY TO ESTABLISH A NEW FORMULA TO BE USED IN THE SETTING OF THE ANNUAL PERMIT FEE PAID TO THE GOVERNMENT BY THE PEAK TRAM.

THIS WAS SAID BY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON ALAN SCOTT, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY AS HE MOVED THE SECOND READING OF THE PEAK TRAMWAY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984.

MR SCOTT SAID THAT A PERMIT FEE IS PAYABLE EACH YEAR BY THE OPERATING COMPANY. THE PRESENT BILL PROPOSES TO SET THE FEE FOR 1983 AT \$1 000 - THE SAME AS IN 1981 AND 1982. THIS WILL ENABLE THE COMPANY TO AVOID MAKING A LOSS ON ITS OPERATIONS IN 1983.

+DISCUSSIONS ARE IN PROGRESS WITH THE COMPANY, TO ESTABLISH A NEW FORMULA, WHICH WILL BE RELATED TO THE COMPANY'S PROPOSALS TO MODERNISE THE TRAMWAY,+ SAID MR SCOTT.

+SUCH A FORMULA WOULD AVOID FUTURE AD HOC REDUCTION OF PERMIT FEE AND THE NEED FOR REGULAR BILLS SUCH AS THIS ONE.+

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED TO MARCH 14.

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AMENDMENT TO HOSPITAL ORDINANCE SOUGHT  
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THE MATILDA AND WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AMENDS THE ORDINANCE BY REMOVING THE PROVISIONS RELATING TO A CUSTODIAN TRUSTEE, WHOSE ONLY FUNCTION IS TO HOLD PROPERTY WHICH CAN EQUALLY WELL, AND MORE ECONOMICALLY, BE HELD BY THE HOSPITAL ITSELF, THE HON ROGER LOBO SAID TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, HE ADDED: +THE OPPORTUNITY HAS ALSO BEEN TAKEN TO MAKE A NUMBER OF CHANGES IN THE ARTICLES OF CONSTITUTION OF THE HOSPITAL CONTAINED IN A SCHEDULE TO THE ORDINANCE IN ORDER TO MODERNISE AND STREAMLINE THE BUSINESS PROCEDURES OF THE HOSPITAL.+

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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THREE BILLS PASSED

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THREE BILLS, THE PUBLIC FINANCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE RATING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AND THE PAWNBROKERS BILL 1983 WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SIX BILLS - INCLUDING ONE UNOFFICIAL MEMBER'S BILL - WERE INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME, AND DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED TO MARCH 14.

THEY ARE: THE PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE FIXED PENALTY (CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE PEAK TRAMWAY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE LABOUR TRIBUNAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AND THE MATILDA AND WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984.

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### ADMIRALTY II SITE SOLD FOR \$380 MILLION

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THE ADMIRALTY II SITE WAS BOUGHT FOR \$380 MILLION AT AUCTION TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY FIRST PROFIT INVESTMENT LIMITED.

BIDDING OPENED AT \$300 MILLION AND BIDS WERE RAISED \$10 MILLION EACH TIME.

THE AUCTION ROOM WAS PACKED TO OVERFLOWING WITH AN ESTIMATED 700 - 800 PEOPLE PRESENT.

THE AUCTIONEER WAS GOVERNMENT LAND AGENT, MR TONY HARLAND.

THE PRICE PAID IS MORE THAN \$60 200 PER SQUARE METRE.

THE GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO OFFER THE SITE FOR SALE AT A MINIMUM PRICE OF \$300 MILLION.

OBVIOUSLY THERE WAS INTEREST IN THE SITE AS EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT IT WAS SOLD FOR \$380 MILLION, HE SAID.

THE INTEREST SHOWN WAS NOT AS GREAT AS EARLIER SPECULATION HAD SUGGESTED.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT GOVERNMENT MUST ALLOW THE MARKET TO FIND ITS OWN LEVEL AND BE PREPARED TO SELL AT REASONABLE PRICES.

HE EMPHASISED THAT THE PURCHASER WOULD NOW HAVE TO INVEST A FURTHER SUBSTANTIAL SUM (ESTIMATED AT ABOUT \$1 BILLION) TO DEVELOP THE SITE AND THIS WAS A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

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### COURT TO LOOK INTO 'OSPREY' LOSS

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THE GOVERNOR HAS APPOINTED A MARINE COURT TO INVESTIGATE THE LOSS OF THE 'BARQUENTINE OSPREY', A MARINE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THE MARINE COURT WILL BE PRESIDED OVER BY JUDGE WANE. DR PETER CHENG JUI-SHAN AND CAPTAIN ASHLEY J. WAGG HAVE BEEN APPOINTED AS ASSESSORS TO ASSIST THE COURT.

THE COURT WILL SIT AT 10 AM ON APRIL 26, 1984, IN THE OLD SUPREME COURT BUILDING, JACKSON ROAD, HONG KONG.

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ARE YOU FORCING OTHERS TO SMOKE?

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SMOKERS CAUSE BOTH DISCOMFORT AND HEALTH HAZARDS TO NON-SMOKERS.

THAT IS THE MESSAGE OF A NEW PHASE OF THE ANTI-SMOKING PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN WHICH STARTS TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

SMOKERS HAVE BEEN MADE FULLY AWARE OF THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF SMOKING ON THEMSELVES, BUT NOT MANY ARE AWARE OF THE HARM THEIR SMOKING DOES TO OTHERS.

THE DANGERS OF +PASSIVE SMOKING+ - THAT IS THE INHALING OF TOBACCO SMOKE BY NON-SMOKERS - ARE CONSIDERABLE, ACCORDING TO THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THE EFFECTS ON NON-SMOKERS COULD RANGE FROM NOSE, THROAT AND EYE IRRITATIONS AND PHYSICAL DISCOMFORT, TO LUNG DAMAGE OR EVEN FATAL LUNG CANCER, DEPENDING ON THE AMOUNT OF TOBACCO SMOKE INHALED, SAID A SPOKESMAN FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S HEALTH AND WELFARE BRANCH.

MEDICAL RESEARCH HAS PROVED THAT NICOTINE AND A RAISED LEVEL OF CARBON MONOXIDE CAN BE DETECTED IN THE BODIES OF NON-SMOKERS WHO HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO TOBACCO SMOKE IN A POORLY VENTILATED AREA, AND THE LONGER THE PERIOD OF EXPOSURE THE GREATER THE AMOUNT.

YOUNG CHILDREN, ARE PARTICULARLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO HARM FROM PASSIVE SMOKING. FOR INSTANCE, CHILDREN OF SMOKING PARENTS ARE FOUND TO HAVE MORE CHEST AND RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS THAN THOSE OF NON-SMOKING PARENTS.

TO ILLUSTRATE THIS UNHEALTHY AND UNPLEASANT ASPECT OF +PASSIVE SMOKING+, A SPECIAL POSTER HAS BEEN PRODUCED, AND IT WILL APPEAR ON GOVERNMENT POSTER SITES FROM TOMORROW.

ALSO STARTING TOMORROW, A NEW 30-SECOND FILM WILL BE SCREENED ON THE CHINESE AND ENGLISH CHANNELS OF BOTH TELEVISION STATIONS. THE FILM ILLUSTRATES THE SOCIAL UNACCEPTABILITY OF SMOKING AND AIMS TO PERSUADE PEOPLE NOT TO SMOKE IN THE PRESENCE OF NON-SMOKERS, OR BETTER STILL, TO STOP SMOKING ALTOGETHER.

ANYONE WHO WISHES TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PASSIVE SMOKING CAN OBTAIN A FACT-SHEET ON THE SUBJECT FREE OF CHARGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES MARKETING SECTION AT 2/F, BASKERVILLE HOUSE, CENTRAL; THE MEDICAL AND HEALTH DEPARTMENT CENTRAL HEALTH EDUCATION UNIT AT 181, GLOUCESTER ROAD, 2/F, CENTRE POINT, WAN CHAI, OR THE SHA TIN HEALTH EDUCATION CENTRE, AT 2/F, SHA TIN LEK YUEN HEALTH CENTRE.

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1984

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+CONCERN FOR NEW GENERATION+ COMMITTEE FORMED  
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A +CONCERN FOR THE NEW GENERATION+ COMMITTEE HAS RECENTLY BEEN SET UP BY THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICE TO AROUSE YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTEREST IN COMMUNITY WORK.

THE COMMITTEE COMPRISES REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE, THE DISTRICT FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE, THE POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE, THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION, THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE CHINESE YOUNG MEN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION (YMCA).

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE COMMITTEE SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY) A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES HAD BEEN ORGANISED, INCLUDING AN ON-STREET SURVEY BY 50 VOLUNTARY WORKERS FROM THE YMCA LAST MONTH.

FOR THE SURVEY, HE SAID, 500 YOUTHS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 24 WERE ASKED OF THEIR VIEWS OF THE EXISTING FACILITIES IN THE DISTRICT.

+RESULTS OF THE SURVEY WILL BE ANALYSED AND A REPORT WILL BE COMPILED FOR DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION,+ HE SAID.

+COPIES OF THE REPORT WILL ALSO BE DISTRIBUTED TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES.+

OTHER ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE A THREE-HOUR VARIETY SHOW AT THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 19), STARTING AT 2 PM.

THE SHOW WILL INCLUDE LION DANCES, BRASS BAND AND HARMONICA PERFORMANCES, FOLK DANCE, MARTIAL ARTS AND GYMNASTIC DEMONSTRATIONS, AND A BAMBOO DANCE SPONSORED BY THE PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL.

A VOLUNTARY SERVICES COUNTER, A MINIATURE ROAD SAFETY TOWN, AND A PHOTO EXHIBITION ON FIGHT CRIME ACTIVITIES WILL ALSO BE STAGED.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ARE INVITED TO COVER THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT'S 'CONCERN FOR THE NEW GENERATION' VARIETY SHOW AT 2 PM ON SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 19) AT THE CHATER ROAD PEDESTRIAN PRECINCT, CENTRAL.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

LUNCHEON TALK

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TRADE COMMISSIONERS IN HONG KONG REPRESENTING SOME 20 COUNTRIES WILL HOLD A LUNCHEON MEETING ON FRIDAY (FEBRUARY 17) AT HILTON HOTEL, ABERDEEN ROOM.

THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR E.P. HO WILL ADDRESS THE MEETING AT ABOUT 1.40 PM ON THE SUBJECT OF +INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT IN HONG KONG+.

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INLAND REVENUE OPENING SHA TIN OFFICE

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THE SHA TIN SUB-OFFICE OF INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT LOCATED AT K.C.R. HOUSE, LEVEL 1, SHATIN STATION, WILL BE OPEN FOR BUSINESS FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

OFFICE HOURS FOR GENERAL ENQUIRIES WILL BE FROM 8.30 AM TO 12.30 PM AND 1.30 PM TO 4.30 PM FROM MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS, AND FROM 9 AM TO 12 NOON ON SATURDAYS.

COLLECTION TIMES WILL BE FROM 9 AM TO 12.30 PM AND 1.30 PM TO 4 PM FROM MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS AND FROM 9 AM TO 11.30 AM ON SATURDAYS.

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