



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1989

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HK MUST BUILD ON FOUNDATION OF JOINT DECLARATION: GOVERNOR
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) STRESSED THAT HONG KONG MUST CONTINUE TO BUILD ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE JOINT DECLARATION WHICH REMAINED THE BEST AND THE ONLY REALISTIC FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE TERRITORY'S FUTURE.

IN A STATEMENT TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNOR SAID A FACT WE HAD TO RECOGNISE WAS THAT RECENT EVENTS IN CHINA HAD SHAKEN CONFIDENCE IN THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE.

"WE HAVE TO RECOGNISE OTHER FACTS AS WELL. HISTORY HAS GIVEN US THE DATE 1997 AS A POINT OF CHANGE IN HONG KONG'S DESTINY. OUR FUTURE IS INEXTRICABLY BOUND UP WITH CHINA.

"THE JOINT DECLARATION REMAINS THE BEST -- INDEED THE ONLY -- REALISTIC FOUNDATION STONE FOR HONG KONG'S FUTURE, A FUTURE AS PART OF CHINA, BUT A DISTINCTIVE PART WITH ITS OWN FREEDOMS, WAY OF LIFE AND FREE MARKET ECONOMY PRESERVED," SIR DAVID SAID.

NOTING THAT WORK ON THE BASIC LAW WAS AT PRESENT IN SUSPENSE, SIR DAVID SAID THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR FUTURE WORK WOULD SURELY RECOGNISE THAT THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION AND PROMULGATION SHOULD BE PROLONGED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE RECENT ENFORCED DISRUPTION OF THE ORIGINAL TIMETABLE.

"WHEN WORK ON THE BASIC LAW RESUMES IT WILL REMAIN AS IMPORTANT AS EVER: MORE SO IF ANYTHING.

"THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WILL WANT TO SCRUTINISE THE DRAFT WITH THE GREATEST POSSIBLE CARE. TO ENSURE THAT IT PROVIDES TO THE FULL FOR ALL THE GUARANTEES OF THE HONG KONG SAR'S HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY AND THE PRESERVATION OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS PROVIDED FOR IN THE JOINT DECLARATION," HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THE TIME HAD NOW COME WHEN HONG KONG MUST MOVE ON FROM THE SENSE OF SHOCK PRODUCED BY RECENT EVENTS IN CHINA.

"TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG'S FUTURE WE LOOK FOR ACTIONS FROM CHINA AND FROM BRITAIN.

"BUT WE MUST ALSO, AND ESSENTIALLY, LOOK TO OURSELVES," HE STRESSED.

THE GOVERNOR POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG HAD SUFFERED SHOCKS MANY TIMES BEFORE. AND PULLED THROUGH.

"WE MUST AGAIN TURN OUR MINDS AND DEVOTE OUR ENERGIES TO BUILDING UP HONG KONG; MAINTAINING OUR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND DOING NOTHING TO DAMAGE THE STABILITY OF THE TERRITORY," SIR DAVID SAID.

/"WHILST WE

"WHILST WE SHOULD NOT FORGET WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN CHINA. WE MUST LOOK TO OUR OWN FUTURE," HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THERE WERE MASSIVE AND FAR-REACHING PLANS FOR THE FUTURE: FOR DEVELOPING SOCIAL PROGRAMMES; FOR IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT; AND FOR BUILDING AN ECONOMY WHICH WOULD ENABLE HONG KONG TO SURVIVE AND PROSPER WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

"THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE PRESSING AHEAD WITH THESE PLANS," HE SAID.

NOTING THAT HONG KONG HAD BEEN THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES, AND WAS STILL IN DIFFICULT TIMES, THE GOVERNOR SAID: "WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO SHOW THE WORLD, ONCE AGAIN, THAT HONG KONG CAN TRIUMPH THROUGH ADVERSITY AND THAT THIS REMARKABLE PLACE, WHICH WILL ALWAYS BE HOME TO THE VAST MAJORITY OF ITS PEOPLE, WILL SURVIVE AND PROSPER THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF US ALL."

"FOR MY OWN PART I WILL WORK UNTIRINGLY TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL WILL HAVE THE SAME COMMON AND UNITED AIM," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE EVENTS IN PEKING AND OTHER PARTS OF CHINA HAD SHAKEN CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG, THEY HAD ALSO PRODUCED A STRONG SENSE OF UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY HERE.

"ONE SIGN OF THIS HAS BEEN THE CONSENSUS REACHED BY MEMBERS OF BOTH COUNCILS ON THE SHAPE AND SPEED OF FUTURE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE TERRITORY.

"IF THE POSITION AGREED BY OMELCO IS ACCEPTED BY THE VARIOUS POLITICAL GROUPINGS IN THE TERRITORY, WE SHALL HAVE WHAT WE HAVE LONG BEEN SEEKING --- A WIDE CONSENSUS ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TO REPLACE THE DIVERGENT VIEWS OF RECENT YEARS," SIR DAVID SAID.

THIS, HE SAID, WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CERTAINLY WISH TO REFLECT THIS DESIRE FOR A MORE RAPID PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT IN PLANNING THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

"FURTHERMORE WE WOULD HAVE ACHIEVED THE COMMON HONG KONG VIEW WHICH THE DRAFTERS OF THE BASIC LAW HAVE WANTED TO SEE TO HELP THEM CARRY OUT THEIR IMPORTANT WORK," HE ADDED.

SIR DAVID SAID THAT ANOTHER ELEMENT IN THIS EMERGING CONSENSUS WAS THE COMMON WISH FOR A BILL OF RIGHTS OR EQUIVALENT LEGISLATION TO SAFEGUARD EXISTING FREEDOMS.

HE SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WAS ALREADY WORKING HARD ON THE BEST OPTION TO PURSUE, AND THAT HE WOULD SAY MORE ABOUT THIS IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE COUNCIL IN OCTOBER.

THE GOVERNOR SAID THAT THE RECENT EVENTS HAD ALSO PRODUCED IN MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY A STRONG DESIRE FOR GREATER ASSURANCES ABOUT THEIR OWN PERSONAL FUTURE.

"IN PARTICULAR THERE HAS BEEN A WIDESPREAD DEMAND THAT THOSE HOLDING THE VARIOUS FORMS OF BRITISH HONG KONG PASSPORTS SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT OF ENTRY OR THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE UK," HE SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID HE HAD PUT THESE VIEWS STRONGLY TO THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, AND EXPLAINED THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD DO AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF GOOD IN HONG KONG AT A TIME WHEN A BOOST IN MORALE WAS BADLY NEEDED.

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OZONE BILL SHOULD FOLLOW MONTREAL PROTOCOL
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THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION BILL 1989 SHOULD BE LEGISLATED AS FAR AS POSSIBLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL.

THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON KENNETH KWOK, SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN WINDING UP THE SECOND READING DEBATE ON THE BILL.

MR KWOK SAID HE WAS READY TO SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS MADE FOR AMENDING THE BILL.

ON ONE OF THESE SUGGESTIONS, THAT MEASURES SHOULD GO FURTHER, MR KWOK SAID: "WE MAY BE ABLE TO DO SO IN FUTURE, BUT FOR THE PRESENT I FEEL THAT WE SHOULD LEGISLATE, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL, AND AMEND OUR STRATEGIES AS AND WHEN THE PROTOCOL IS UPDATED.

"I CAN ASSURE MEMBERS THAT WE WILL RE-EXAMINE THE PROVISIONS OF THIS BILL IN ABOUT A YEAR'S TIME, OR EARLIER IF AND WHEN THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL IS UPDATED. AT THAT TIME WE WILL ALSO RE-ASSESS THE POINTS THAT MEMBERS HAVE MADE TODAY."

MR KWOK ALSO SAID THAT THE LEVEL OF FINES AS STIPULATED IN THE BILL WOULD BE REVIEWED IN THE COURSE OF MAKING OTHER AMENDMENTS TO THE ORDINANCE IN FUTURE.

LATER, IN THE COMMITTEE STAGE, MR KWOK SAID HE SUPPORTED THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED BY MEMBERS, AND SAID THEY ALL HELPED TO IMPROVE THE BILL.

THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE COUNCIL.

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SUPPORT FOR OZONE PROTECTION BILL

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HONG KONG MUST SUPPORT THE AIMS OF THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION BILL 1989 BECAUSE TO OPPOSE IT WOULD ALLOW THE DEPLETION OF THE OZONE LAYER AND PERMIT MORE AND MORE ULTRA-VIOLET RADIATION TO PENETRATE THE ATMOSPHERE AND AFFECT ALL LIVING ORGANISMS ON EARTH.

THE HON PETER WONG SAID THIS IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) DURING THE SECOND READING DEBATE ON THE BILL.

HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WERE TWO CRITICISMS THAT COULD WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION BE LEVELLED AT THE BILL.

FIRSTLY, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD TAKEN TOO LONG IN GETTING THE BILL TO LEGCO MEMBERS AND, IN VIEW OF THE NEED FOR HONG KONG TO FULFIL ITS OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL, THE JUNE 30 DEADLINE IMPOSED WAS TOO TIGHT.

SECONDLY, MR WONG SAID, HE HAD DOUBTS WHETHER THE CONTROLS WERE TIGHT ENOUGH AND WHETHER THE LIST OF SUBSTANCES TO BE CONTROLLED WERE COMPREHENSIVE ENOUGH.

"WE ARE GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT ONLY THE CHLOROFLUOROCARBONS (CFC'S) WILL BE RESTRICTED STRAIGHT AWAY WHILST THE HALONS WILL ONLY BE RESTRICTED FROM 1992 ONWARDS.

"THE CONTROLS ON CFC ARE ON THE LEVEL OF IMPORTS AND NOT THE ACTUAL RATE OF CONSUMPTION; IN OTHER WORDS NOT AT THE RATE AT WHICH THEY ARE DISCHARGED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE," HE SAID.

MR WONG SAID THE RECENT HELSINKI DECLARATION HAD WARNED THAT THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL WAS ALREADY OUTDATED AND OTHER SUBSTANCES, LIKE METHYL CHLOROFORM AND CARBON TETRACHLORIDE, SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE SCHEDULED SUBSTANCES.

HE ADDED THAT WHAT HAD BEEN GRATIFYING WAS THE LACK OF ANY OPPOSITION FROM INDUSTRY TO THE PROPOSALS, DESPITE THE INCONVENIENCE AND HIGHER COSTS ENTAILED.

MORE WORK HAD TO BE DONE TO EDUCATE ALL THE USERS SO THAT THEY USED THESE CHEMICALS SPARINGLY AND ENSURED THAT THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM WAS DISCHARGED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE.

"I AM PREPARED TO SUPPORT THIS BILL ON THE CONDITION THAT THERE WILL BE A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ALL ASPECTS OF THE CONTROLS IN ONE YEAR'S TIME WITH THE VIEW THAT WE STEP UP TO THE BEST PRACTICE IN THE WORLD," HE SAID.

IN THE MEANTIME, MR WONG SAID, HE WOULD BE WATCHING WITH INTEREST THE REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE QUOTA SYSTEM AND HOW THEY WORKED OUT IN PRACTICE. HE WOULD ALSO LOOK TO THE ADMINISTRATION TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR ALL TO EMULATE IN THE REDUCTION IN USE OF HALONS FOR FIRE-DRILL EXERCISES.

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LATE INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO LEGCO REGRETTEED

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PROFESSOR THE HON POON CHUNG-KWONG CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT TODAY (WEDNESDAY) FOR THE LATE INTRODUCTION OF THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION BILL 1989 INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"THIS BILL IS AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF LEGISLATION TO SAVE OUR ENVIRONMENT FROM FURTHER DETERIORATION. IN ORDER THAT OUR FUTURE GENERATION WILL NOT SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCE OF OUR OWN DESTRUCTION, TIMELY ACTIONS MUST BE TAKEN," SAID PROFESSOR POON, WHO WAS THE CONVENER OF THE LEGCO AD HOC GROUP FORMED TO STUDY THE BILL.

SPEAKING IN THE COUNCIL'S RESUMED DEBATE ON THE BILL, PROF POON SAID HE REGRETTEED THAT THE AUTHORITIES, HAVING FULL KNOWLEDGE THAT THE LEGISLATION HAD TO BE IN PLACE BY JULY 1 FOR HONG KONG TO FULFIL ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL, HAD NOT INTRODUCED THE BILL INTO LEGCO UNTIL MAY 31.

THIS IMPOSED UPON THE AD HOC GROUP A VERY SHORT TIME FRAME FOR THE EXAMINATION OF THE ENGLISH AND CHINESE TEXTS OF THE LEGISLATION.

NEVERTHELESS, THE AD HOC GROUP HAD ENDEAVOURED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS DIFFICULT MISSION BY COMMENCING ITS WORK EVEN IN ADVANCE OF THE FIRST READING OF THE BILL.

ALTOGETHER, SIX MEETINGS WERE HELD WITHIN THE SHORT TIME AVAILABLE AND SOME 11 AMENDMENTS TO THE ENGLISH AND 22 AMENDMENTS TO THE CHINESE TEXT WERE AGREED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION.

ON THE BACKGROUND TO THE BILL, PROF POON SAID THERE WAS WIDE AGREEMENT AMONG SCIENTISTS AROUND THE WORLD THAT THE DEPLETION OF THE OZONE LAYER, CAUSED PRINCIPALLY BY CHLOROFUOROCARBONS (CFC'S) AND HALONS, WOULD THREATEN PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS IN TERMS OF DAMAGES TO HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT IF PROPER CONTROLS WERE NOT ADOPTED IN GOOD TIME.

"THE MAIN USAGES OF CFC'S ARE IN REFRIGERATION, AIR CONDITIONING, PACKAGING AND AS SOLVENT AND AEROSOL PROPELLANTS. HALONS ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE FIRE-FIGHTING MATERIALS BEARING A MUCH HIGHER OZONE DEPLETING POTENTIAL THAN CFC'S," HE EXPLAINED.

HE SAID THE 1985 VIENNA CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE OZONE LAYER AND THE 1987 MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT DEplete THE OZONE LAYER SIGNIFIED EFFORTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN SETTING UP AN INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ADDRESSING THE OZONE DEPLETION PROBLEM.

UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION, THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL WAS CONCLUDED IN SEPTEMBER 1987, STIPULATING SPECIFIC CONTROLS. HONG KONG WAS PARTY TO BOTH AGREEMENTS.

THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL CALLED FOR A FREEZE, AND SUBSEQUENT REDUCTIONS, IN THE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF CFC'S AND HALONS.

/SIGNATORIES TO

SIGNATORIES TO THE PROTOCOL, NUMBERING SOME 40 COUNTRIES AT PRESENT, WERE REQUIRED TO FREEZE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF CFC'S AT THEIR 1986 LEVELS WITH EFFECT FROM JULY 1 THIS YEAR, TO FREEZE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF HALONS AT THEIR 1986 LEVELS WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1, 1992; AND, TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF CFC'S TO 80 PER CENT OF 1986 LEVELS IN FIVE YEARS AND TO 50 PER CENT IN 10 YEARS.

THE PRESENT BILL, WHICH WAS BROADLY IN LINE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL, SOUGHT TO PROHIBIT THE MANUFACTURE OF CFC'S AND HALONS, AND TO PROVIDE A REGISTRATION AND LICENSING SCHEME TO CONTROL THE IMPORT AND EXPORT OF CFC'S AND HALONS.

"IT ALSO PROVIDES REGULATION-MAKING POWERS FOR THE CONTROL OR PROHIBITION OF THE MANUFACTURE, IMPORT OR EXPORT OF PRODUCTS CONTAINING, OR MADE WITH, THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES WHICH MAY BECOME NECESSARY AT A LATER STAGE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS IN THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL.

"IT IS WORTHY TO NOTE THAT AS HONG KONG HAS NOT ENGAGED IN THE MANUFACTURE OF CFC'S AND HALONS IN THE PAST, THIS BILL HAS MADE A POSITIVE MOVE BEYOND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROTOCOL BY BANNING THE PRODUCTION OF SUCH SUBSTANCES," PROF POON SAID.

IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK IN TIME FOR HONG KONG TO FULFIL ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS, MEMBERS GENERALLY ACCEPTED THAT THE BILL SHOULD BE SUPPORTED, HE SAID.

SUCH A DECISION WAS MADE ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD REVIEW THE BILL IN ABOUT ONE YEAR'S TIME, AFTER THE NEXT MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL, WHICH WAS EXPECTED TO COME UP WITH MORE STRINGENT CONTROLS OVER OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES.

IN THE COURSE OF DELIBERATION, MEMBERS WERE CONCERNED THAT THE PROHIBITION OF MANUFACTURE OF CFC'S AND HALONS IN HONG KONG WOULD ENTIRELY OUTLAW THE PRODUCTION OF ANY SUCH SUBSTANCES, HOWEVER SMALL THE QUANTITY, EVEN FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION.

IN THIS RESPECT, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD AGREED WITH THE GROUP'S VIEW THAT AN AMENDMENT SHOULD BE MADE TO EXCLUDE CFC'S AND HALONS SO PRODUCED FROM THE DEFINITION OF "MANUFACTURE", PROF POON SAID.

ANOTHER POINT WHICH AROUSED MEMBERS' CONCERN WAS CLAUSE 12(C) OF THE BILL, WHICH EMPOWERED AN AUTHORISED OFFICER TO DETAIN A PERSON FOUND IN ANY PLACE OR PREMISES WHICH HE WAS ALLOWED TO SEARCH UNTIL THE PREMISES OR PLACE HAD BEEN SEARCHED.

MEMBERS WERE WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE ABUSE OF SUCH POWER. THEY WERE, HOWEVER, REASSURED BY THE ADMINISTRATION THAT THE EQUIVALENT POWER IN THE IMPORT AND EXPORT ORDINANCE HAD NOT GIVEN RISE TO DIFFICULTIES IN THE PAST.

/MEMBERS ALSO

MEMBERS ALSO EXPRESSED RESERVATION OVER THE PROVISION UNDER CLAUSE 14(4) WHICH STIPULATED THAT ANYTHING SEIZED BASED ON REASONABLE SUSPICION THAT AN OFFENCE HAD BEEN COMMITTED UNDER THE ORDINANCE WAS LIABLE TO FORFEITURE.

"IT WAS CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE TO FORFEIT THINGS SO SEIZED IF THERE WAS NO BREACH OF THE ORDINANCE. THE ADMINISTRATION AGREED AND AN AMENDMENT WOULD BE MADE TO CONFINE THE POWER OF FORFEITURE TO THINGS WHICH WERE THE SUBJECT OF AN OFFENCE," PROF POON SAID.

MEMBERS NOTED THAT THE REGULATIONS TO BE MADE UNDER THE ORDINANCE COULD, AMONG OTHER THINGS, IMPOSE A MAXIMUM FINE OF UP \$1,000,000 AND A MAXIMUM PRISON SENTENCE OF TWO YEARS FOR CERTAIN OFFENCES.

IN VIEW OF THE HEAVY PENALTIES INVOLVED, MEMBERS CONSIDERED THAT THE REGULATIONS SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO AN AFFIRMATIVE APPROVAL PROCEDURE RATHER THAN THE NEGATIVE PROCEDURE PROPOSED IN THE BILL.

THE ADMINISTRATION AGREED THAT REGULATIONS MADE UNDER THIS ORDINANCE, OTHER THAN THOSE WHICH ONLY PRESCRIBED FEES AND HAD TO BE MADE BEFORE JULY 1 THIS YEAR, WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

MEMBERS WERE, HOWEVER, PLEASED TO LEARN OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO MINIMISE THE USE OF THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, PROF POON ADDED.

TURNING TO THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING SCHEME UNDER THE BILL, HE SAID MEMBERS HAD SOUGHT CONFIRMATION FROM THE ADMINISTRATION THAT FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE ADOPTED IN DEALING WITH COMPANIES WHICH HAD PROBLEMS AT THE TIME WHEN THE ADMINISTRATIVE QUOTA SYSTEM BECAME EFFECTIVE ON JULY 1, E.G. FAILURE TO OBTAIN A LICENCE TO COVER THE DELAYED ARRIVAL OF A SHIPMENT OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE BEFORE THAT DATE.

SECONDLY, TO ENSURE FAIRNESS TO ALL APPLICANTS, THE ADMINISTRATION AGREED THAT UNLESS UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, A UNIFORM PERIOD OF VALIDITY WOULD BE GIVEN TO ALL REGISTRATIONS.

THIRDLY, THERE WAS A DRAFTING AMBIGUITY IN CLAUSE 7(1) AS TO WHETHER AN ERROR OF THE DIRECTOR COULD ALSO RESULT IN A CANCELLATION OF A REGISTRATION OR LICENCE. MEMBERS STRONGLY FELT THAT THIS COULD CAUSE FINANCIAL LOSSES TO THE COMPANY THROUGH NO FAULT OF ITS OWN, AND WHOSE DECISION TO IMPORT WAS BASED ON THE REGISTRATION AND LICENCE BEING ISSUED.

ON THIS, THE ADMINISTRATION HAD AGREED THAT AN ERROR OF THE DIRECTOR WOULD NOT BE USED AS A MEANS TO PLACE ANY FURTHER RESTRICTIONS ON THE APPLICANT'S ABILITY TO IMPORT OR EXPORT THE SCHEDULED SUBSTANCES BEYOND THOSE RESTRICTIONS WHICH SHOULD HAVE APPLIED.

/LASTLY, MEMBERS

LASTLY, MEMBERS HAD SOUGHT CLARIFICATION THAT THE PRESCRIBED REGISTRATION FEE UNDER CLAUSE 5(1) WAS ONLY PAYABLE AFTER THE REHISTRATION HAS BEEN APPROVED.

ON CALLS FOR A TIGHTER TIME-TABLE FOR PHASING OUT CFC'S AND HALONS, AND FOR CONTROLS OVER OTHER OZONE DEPLETING COMPOUNDS, E.G. CARBON TETRACHLORIDE AND METHYL CHLOROFORM, PROF POON SAID THAT IN VIEW OF THE URGENCY IN THE PASSAGE OF THE BILL, MEMBERS FELT THAT THIS NEW AREA OF LEGISLATIVE AND QUOTA CONTROL SHOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO WORK AND BE REVIEWED IN A YEAR'S TIME.

"THE SCOPE OF THE PRESENT BILL ACTUALLY COVERS ANY FUTURE NEED TO TIGHTEN UP CONTROLS WHICH MIGHT BE DEEMED APPROPRIATE AS A RESULT OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT OR ARISING FROM FUTURE CHANGES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL," HE NOTED.

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EASING BURDEN ON CONSUMER COUNCIL MEMBERS
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PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN MADE TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS APPOINTED TO THE CONSUMER COUNCIL IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE BURDEN ON MEMBERS AND TO ALLOW FOR A WIDER SELECTION OF PROFESSIONS AND BACKGROUNDS. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE CONSUMER COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989, SIR PIERS SAID IT WAS PROPOSED THAT UP TO 20 MEMBERS MIGHT BE APPOINTED TO THE COUNCIL.

"THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF UP TO FIVE EXTRA MEMBERS. CONSEQUENTIAL TO THIS INCREASE, THE BILL ALSO PROVIDES THAT A MAJORITY OF MEMBERS WILL FORM A QUORUM FOR MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL," HE ADDED.

SIR PIERS SAID THAT OVER THE YEARS THE COUNCIL'S WORKLOAD HAD INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.

"FURTHERMORE, MANY CONSUMER PROTECTION ISSUES ARE BECOMING MORE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE. THIS HAS PLACED AN INCREASED BURDEN ON MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL," HE ADDED.

THE CONSUMER COUNCIL WAS INCORPORATED IN 1977, AND SECTION 6 OF THE CONSUMER COUNCIL ORDINANCE PROVIDED FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIRMAN, AND NOT LESS THAN 13 NOR MORE THAN 15 MEMBERS, HE SAID.

IN 1985 THE ORDINANCE WAS AMENDED TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A VICE-CHAIRMAN.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL SIMPLIFIES CONTROLS ON DUTIABLE COMMODITIES

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THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1989 SEEKS TO SIMPLIFY AND IMPROVE THE LICENSING AND PERMIT CONTROLS ON DUTIABLE COMMODITIES. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, SIR PIERS SAID THE CONTROLS, INTRODUCED IN THE 1930'S FOR THE PROTECTION OF PUBLIC REVENUE, HAD OUTLIVED THEIR USEFULNESS IN THEIR PRESENT FORM.

"THIS BILL, IF ENACTED, WILL EXCLUDE FROM LICENSING AND PERMIT CONTROLS CERTAIN GOODS CONTAINING LIQUOR, HYDROCARBON OIL OR METHYL ALCOHOL.

"IT ALSO PROPOSES CERTAIN MINOR CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING THE ABOLITION AND CONSOLIDATION OF A NUMBER OF LICENCES," HE SAID.

THE PROPOSALS WOULD REDUCE COST AND ELIMINATE INCONVENIENCE TO THE TRADE, AND WOULD RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF LICENCES AND PERMITS ISSUED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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ELECTRICITY BILL PROVIDES FOR CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION

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THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE ELECTRICITY BILL 1989 IS THE PROVISION FOR A REGISTRATION SYSTEM FOR ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS UNDER THE REGISTRATION REGULATIONS. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, SIR PIERS SAID ALL ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS AND WORKERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED AFTER MEETING CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT ELECTRICAL WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN ONLY BY QUALIFIED PEOPLE.

"AS A GENERAL RULE, ONLY REGISTERED ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS MAY BE EMPLOYED TO UNDERTAKE ELECTRICAL WORK.

"IN TURN, THEY WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENGAGE REGISTERED ELECTRICAL WORKERS WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE WORK IN QUESTION," HE SAID.

/ANOTHER FEATURE

ANOTHER FEATURE OF THE BILL, SIR PIERS SAID, PROVIDED FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF SUPPLY VOLTAGE REGULATIONS TO REGULATE THE SUPPLY VOLTAGE.

THE GOVERNMENT WAS EXAMINING THE IMPLICATIONS OF UPGRADING THE SUPPLY VOLTAGE IN HONG KONG.

THE BILL ALSO SOUGHT TO REPLACE THE EXISTING ELECTRICITY SUPPLY ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE A NEW REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR ELECTRICITY-RELATED MATTERS.

"IT DELINEATES THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE SUPPLY COMPANIES, THE ELECTRICAL TRADE, AND LASTLY CONSUMERS.

"IT ALSO ACTS AS THE ENABLING LEGISLATION FOR SIX SETS OF REGULATIONS WHICH EMBODY THE TECHNICAL AND DETAILED MEASURES." HE SAID.

SIR PIERS SAID THE EXISTING ORDINANCE HAD BEEN ENACTED IN 1911 AND HAD LONG REQUIRED A MAJOR OVERHAUL TO INCORPORATE NEW PROVISIONS UPDATING ITS REGULATORY AND SAFETY ASPECTS.

THREE ROUNDS OF CONSULTATION HAD BEEN CONDUCTED WITH CONCERNED PARTIES BEFORE THE ADMINISTRATION COMPLETED THE DRAFT BILL.

THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED FOR THE MAKING OF WIRING REGULATIONS AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS (SAFETY) REGULATIONS. THE FORMER SET OUT THE MINIMUM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE WIRING OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS, WHILE THE LATTER PRESCRIBED THE MINIMUM SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS FOR LOCAL USE.

SIR PIERS SAID ELECTRICITY SUPPLY REGULATIONS WOULD COVER THE TECHNICAL STANDARDS TO WHICH THE SUPPLY COMPANIES SHOULD MAINTAIN THEIR INSTALLATIONS AND WOULD REPLACE THE EXISTING ELECTRICITY SUPPLY REGULATIONS.

THE EXISTING PROVISIONS OF THE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY (SPECIAL AREAS) REGULATIONS CONTROLLED THE SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY IN SQUATTER AREAS, TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS AND THOSE AREAS DESIGNATED BY THE DIRECTOR OF HOUSING, AND THESE REGULATIONS WOULD BE RETAINED WITH MINOR AMENDMENTS.

"TO ENSURE THAT THE BILL AND ITS SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION ARE PROPERLY ENFORCED, THERE IS PROVISION FOR THE SETTING UP OF A DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL TO HEAR CASES CONCERNING REGISTERED ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS OR WORKERS, AND AN INDEPENDENT APPEAL BOARD TO HEAR ANY APPEAL CASES UNDER THIS LEGISLATION," SIR PIERS SAID.

AFTER ENACTMENT IT WAS THE INTENTION THAT THE LEGISLATION WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN PHASES IN ORDER TO MINIMISE DISRUPTION TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE ELECTRICAL TRADE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS AJOURNED.

LOCALISATION OF MERCHANT SHIPPING LEGISLATION

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THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF POLLUTION) BILL 1989 PROVIDES LOCAL LEGISLATION TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF TWO INTERNATIONAL MARITIME CONVENTIONS AIMED AT THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF MARITIME POLLUTION INCIDENTS. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, SIR PIERS SAID BOTH OF THE CONVENTIONS ALREADY APPLIED TO HONG KONG BUT THEY HAD BEEN GIVEN LEGISLATIVE BACKING BY VIRTUE OF UNITED KINGDOM ENACTMENTS.

"THESE UK ENACTMENTS NEED TO BE REPLACED BY EQUIVALENT LOCAL LEGISLATION BEFORE 1997 SO THAT THERE IS A CONTINUITY OF LEGAL BACKING.

"THIS BILL, IF ENACTED, WILL PROVIDE THAT CONTINUITY," HE SAID.

THE TWO CONVENTIONS ARE THE 1969 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION RELATING TO INTERVENTION ON THE HIGH SEAS AND ITS PROTOCOL OF 1973 (KNOWN AS THE INTERVENTION CONVENTION); AND THE 1973 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS AND ITS PROTOCOL OF 1978 (KNOWN AS MARPOL 73/78).

SIR PIERS SAID THAT ESSENTIALLY THE BILL DID NOT INTRODUCE ANY CHANGES OF SUBSTANCE TO THE EXISTING PROVISIONS.

"THE UNITED KINGDOM LEGISLATION IS MERELY BEING REPLACED BY HONG KONG LEGISLATION HAVING THE SAME EFFECT.

"THIS PROCESS OF 'LOCALISATION' OF THE UK LEGISLATION INVOLVES LARGELY THE SUBSTITUTION OF REFERENCES TO UK AUTHORITIES BY REFERENCES TO HONG KONG AUTHORITIES," THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY SAID.

THE BILL IMPLEMENTED THE PROVISIONS OF THE INTERVENTION CONVENTION AND MARPOL 73/78 BY EMPOWERING THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE SUCH MEASURES ON THE HIGH SEAS AS MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO PREVENT, MITIGATE OR ELIMINATE DANGER TO OUR COASTLINE BY MARINE POLLUTION BY OIL AND OTHER SUBSTANCES. FOLLOWING A MARITIME CASUALTY, SIR PIERS EXPLAINED.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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PROVISIONS FOR DEALING WITH OIL SPILL DAMAGE
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THE INTRODUCTION OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIABILITY AND COMPENSATION FOR OIL POLLUTION) BILL 1989 WILL ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO ENACT PROVISIONS OF TWO INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS DEALING WITH LIABILITY AND COMPENSATION RESULTING FROM DAMAGE CAUSED BY MARITIME OIL SPILLAGE, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, SIR PIERS SAID ITS PURPOSE WAS TO REPLACE EXISTING UNITED KINGDOM ENACTMENTS WHICH APPLY TO HONG KONG WITH OUR OWN LEGISLATION HAVING SIMILAR PROVISIONS.

"THIS WILL ENSURE THAT CONTINUITY OF LEGAL BACKING BEYOND 1997 IS GIVEN TO INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS ON MARITIME POLLUTION," HE SAID.

"THE BILL IMPLEMENTS THE PROVISIONS OF THESE CONVENTIONS BY IMPOSING CIVIL LIABILITY ON SHIPOWNERS FOR POLLUTION DAMAGE IN HONG KONG CAUSED BY THE ESCAPE OF OIL FROM BULK CARRIERS, WHETHER THE CASUALTY TAKES PLACE INSIDE OR OUTSIDE HONG KONG WATERS," SIR PIERS EXPLAINED.

"THAT LIABILITY IS EXTENDED TO POLLUTION DAMAGE ARISING FROM THE SAME INCIDENT TO ANY ADJACENT COUNTRY ADHERING TO THE CONVENTION," HE ADDED.

THE TWO CONVENTIONS ARE THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON CIVIL LIABILITY FOR OIL POLLUTION DAMAGE, 1969 (KNOWN AS THE LIABILITY CONVENTION); AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR COMPENSATION FOR OIL POLLUTION DAMAGE, 1971 (KNOWN AS THE FUND CONVENTION).

SIR PIERS SAID THE BILL ALSO REQUIRED ALL HONG KONG REGISTERED SHIPS, WHEREVER THEY MIGHT BE, AND OTHER SHIPS IN HONG KONG WATERS, IF IN EITHER CASE THEY WERE BULK OIL CARRIERS, TO CARRY VALID CERTIFICATES OF INSURANCE COVERING THE OWNER'S LIABILITY.

"THE BILL IMPLEMENTS THE FUND CONVENTION BY DETAILING THE FUND'S LIABILITY TO COMPENSATE FOR OIL POLLUTION DAMAGE ARISING FROM A MARITIME CASUALTY, AND PROVIDES FOR PAYMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FUND IN RESPECT OF OIL IMPORTED INTO HONG KONG BY SEA," HE SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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BILL LOWERS AGE OF MAJORITY

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THE LAW REFORM (LEGAL EFFECTS OF AGE) BILL 1989 WILL LOWER THE AGE OF MAJORITY AND WILL EFFECT CHANGES IN THE LAW RELATING TO MINORS' CONTRACTS, WILLS AND COMPANIES, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON JEREMY MATHEWS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR MATHEWS SAID IT GAVE EFFECT TO THE MAIN RECOMMENDATION IN A REPORT BY THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION ON THE EFFECTS OF AGE IN CIVIL LAW.

THE REPORT, WHICH WAS PUBLISHED IN APRIL 1986, RECOMMENDED, IN ESSENCE, THAT THE AGE AT WHICH A PERSON ATTAINED FULL LEGAL CAPACITY SHOULD, FOR MOST PURPOSES, BE REDUCED FROM 21 TO 18.

MR MATHEWS EXPLAINED THAT THE LAW AT PRESENT DEFINED "A MINOR" AS A PERSON WHO HAD NOT ATTAINED THE AGE OF 21.

HE SAID THE PROTECTION OFFERED BY THE LAW TO MINORS IN LIMITING THEIR CAPACITY TO MAKE CONTRACTS AND TO DEAL WITH PROPERTY MIGHT ACT TO THE MINOR'S DETRIMENT IN BOTH HIS PERSONAL AND BUSINESS LIFE.

"IT IS FELT THERE IS NO GOOD REASON WHY YOUNG PERSONS WHO ARE WORKING AND ENJOYING A DEGREE OF FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE SHOULD SUFFER THESE CONSTRAINTS.

"FROM VARIOUS SURVEYS AND STUDIES, THE COMMISSION CONCLUDED THAT AT 18 YEARS OF AGE MOST YOUNG PERSONS HAVE ATTAINED THE NECESSARY INDEPENDENCE.

"CLAUSES 2 AND 6 OF THE BILL THEREFORE PROVIDE FOR THE AGE OF MAJORITY TO BE REDUCED TO 18," HE SAID.

MR MATHEWS SAID THERE WERE THREE AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW RELATING TO MINORS' CONTRACTS.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT RELATED TO GUARANTEES.

"UNDER THE COMMON LAW, A PERSON ENTERING INTO A GUARANTEE OF AN OBLIGATION INCURRED BY A MINOR MAY AVOID LIABILITY UNDER THE GUARANTEE IF THE MINOR FAILS TO FULFILL HIS OR HER CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION ON THE GROUND OF AGE.

"THIS COULD LEAD TO INJUSTICE, AND A GUARANTEE IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD NO LONGER BE UNENFORCEABLE AGAINST THE GUARANTOR FOR THAT REASON ALONE. CLAUSE 3 OF THE BILL SO PROVIDES," HE EXPLAINED.

THE SECOND AMENDMENT, IN RELATION TO CONTRACTS WITH MINORS, REFERRED TO SECTION 46 OF THE DISTRICT COURT ORDINANCE WHICH REMOVED THE DEFENCE OF MINORITY IN RESPECT OF CLAIMS OF UP TO \$60,000 BROUGHT IN THE DISTRICT COURT.

/"THIS PROVISION

"THIS PROVISION FINDS NO COUNTERPART IN RELATION TO CLAIMS BROUGHT IN THE SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL OR THE SUPREME COURT AND IS THUS ANOMALOUS.

"THE COMMISSION TOOK THE VIEW THAT THE HISTORICAL BASIS FOR THE PROVISION NO LONGER HELD, AND THAT THE EROSION OF THE PROTECTION GIVEN BY THE COMMON LAW SHOULD BE REVERSED.

"CLAUSE 17 OF THE BILL SEEKS TO REVERSE THAT EROSION AND TO RESTORE THE DEFENCE OF MINORITY IN ALL ACTIONS BROUGHT IN THE DISTRICT COURT IN RESPECT OF AGREEMENTS MADE AFTER THE COMMENCEMENT DATE OF THIS BILL," MR MATHEWS SAID.

THE THIRD AMENDMENT WAS IN RELATION TO THE SALE OF PROPERTY OR GOODS TO MINORS.

MR MATHEWS SAID THAT EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF THE ANOMALY TO WHICH HE HAD REFERRED, THE PRESENT LAW AFFORDED NO REMEDY AGAINST A MINOR WHO, UNDER A CONTRACT, OBTAINED GOODS OR PROPERTY NOT REGARDED AS NECESSARY FOR HIM AND WHO THEN FAILED TO PAY FOR THEM.

"A DISHONEST MINOR COULD TAKE UNFAIR ADVANTAGE OF HIS PROTECTED POSITION. IT IS FELT THEREFORE THAT SOME REMEDY SHOULD BE AVAILABLE AGAINST HIM IN SUCH CASES.

"CLAUSE 4 EMPOWERS A COURT, WHERE IT CONSIDERS IT JUST AND EQUITABLE, TO REQUIRE A MINOR RESTORE PROPERTY TO THE OTHER PARTY," HE SAID.

AS REGARDS WILLS, MR MATHEWS SAID CLAUSES 11 AND 12 AMENDED THE WILLS ORDINANCE TO ENABLE A PERSON WHO HAD ATTAINED 18 YEARS OF AGE TO MAKE A VALID WILL.

CLAUSE 13 PROVIDED FOR THE AGE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A DIRECTOR OF A COMPANY TO BE REDUCED TO 18, AND FOR SIMILAR CHANGES TO BE MADE IN RESPECT OF CERTAIN OTHER AGE RESTRICTIONS IN THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE.

IN RESPECT OF TRUSTEES AND PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES, THE BILL MAINTAINED THE PRESENT POSITION AND PROVIDED THAT THE AGE AT WHICH A PERSON MIGHT ACT AS A SOLE TRUSTEE OR MIGHT BE GRANTED ADMINISTRATION OR PROBATE IN THEIR OWN RIGHT BE RETAINED AT 21.

"THIS IS BECAUSE THERE SHOULD BE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE APPROPRIATE AGE FOR DEALING FREELY WITH ONE'S OWN PROPERTY OR ESTATE AND FOR CARRYING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROPERTY OR ESTATE OF OTHER PERSONS.

"THE AGE OF 21 SHOULD BE, AS IN EFFECT IT IS NOW, THE MINIMUM AGE FOR BEING GRANTED PROBATE AS SOLE EXECUTOR OF A WILL, OR APPOINTMENT AS A SOLE TRUSTEE," MR MATHEWS EXPLAINED.

HE SAID THE BILL WOULD REMOVE THE ANACHRONISM WHEREBY AT COMMON LAW A PERSON WAS HELD TO REACH A PARTICULAR AGE ON THE DAY PRECEDING HIS BIRTHDAY.

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CLAUSE 5 PROVIDED THAT IN FUTURE A PARTICULAR AGE SHOULD BE ATTAINED, AS ONE WOULD EXPECT, ON THE DAY OF THE BIRTHDAY.

MR MATHEWS SAID THE BILL IMPLEMENTED THE MAIN RECOMMENDATION OF THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION REPORT.

AS THE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF DISPARATE SUBJECTS. IT WAS INTENDED THAT THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN SEPARATE LEGISLATION.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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EXTENSION OF FUND TO INCLUDE SEVERANCE PAYMENTS PROPOSED

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AMENDMENT OF THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY ORDINANCE TO EXTEND COVERAGE OF THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND TO SEVERANCE PAYMENTS UP TO \$4,000 PER EMPLOYEE WAS PROPOSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID THE OPERATION OF THE FUND HAD RECENTLY BEEN REVIEWED, AND A CONCLUSION REACHED THAT ITS SCOPE SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO GIVE SOME HELP WITH SEVERANCE PAYMENTS.

HE EXPLAINED THAT THE OBJECT OF THE FUND WAS TO PROVIDE HELP QUICKLY FOR EMPLOYEES WHEN THEIR EMPLOYERS BECAME INSOLVENT. AT THE MOMENT THE FUND COVERED WAGES IN ARREARS AND UNPAID WAGES IN LIEU OF NOTICE.

"THESE PAYMENTS ARE INTENDED TO TIDE AN EMPLOYEE OVER THE DIFFICULT PERIOD AFTER THE SUDDEN LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT.

"OUR AIM IS GRADUALLY TO IMPROVE THE PROTECTION GIVEN TO EMPLOYEES BY THIS FUND." HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID IT WAS CONSIDERED PRUDENT TO LIMIT THE HELP WITH SEVERANCE PAYMENTS NOW PROPOSED TO \$4,000 PER EMPLOYEE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE BECAUSE THE FUND HAD ONLY BEEN IN OPERATION FOR A FEW YEARS, AND ITS FUTURE FINANCIAL POSITION WAS DIFFICULT TO FORESEE.

HE SAID THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY FUND BOARD AND THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD BOTH AGREED THAT THE FUND SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO INCLUDE SEVERANCE PAYMENTS.

"AS REGARDS THE AMOUNT OF PAYMENT, A MAJORITY OF THE FUND BOARD FAVOUR THE CAUTIOUS APPROACH OF A LIMIT OF \$4,000 PER EMPLOYEE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE.

/"THERE IS

"THERE IS A RANGE OF VIEWS IN THE LABOUR ADVISORY BOARD : SOME FAVOUR A LIMIT OF \$2,000. SOME OF \$4,000 AND SOME OF \$8,000.

"HAVING CONSIDERED THE VIEWS OF THE TWO BOARDS, OUR VIEW IS THAT IT WOULD BE REASONABLE TO MAKE A START WITH A \$4,000 LIMIT AND REVIEW THE SITUATION ONE YEAR AFTER THE EXTENSION COMES INTO EFFECT," HE SAID.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE BILL ALSO PROVIDED FOR A NEW FOUR-MONTH TIME BAR ON APPLICATIONS FOR WAGES IN LIEU OF NOTICE AND SEVERANCE PAYMENTS IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS LONG AFTER EMPLOYMENT HAD ENDED. IT ALSO MADE A CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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RELAXATION OF LAW ON CHILDREN CYCLISTS PROPOSED

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THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1989 WOULD RELAX THE PRESENT REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING CHILDREN CYCLISTS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR LEUNG SAID THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE STIPULATED THAT NO PERSON SHOULD HIRE A BICYCLE OR TRICYCLE TO A CHILD UNDER 11 YEARS OLD OR PERMIT SUCH A CHILD TO RIDE A BICYCLE OR TRICYCLE ON A ROAD WITHOUT ADULT SUPERVISION.

HOWEVER, IN RECENT YEARS, THE GOVERNMENT HAD PROVIDED CYCLEWAYS AND CYCLE PARKS WHICH WERE SEGREGATED FROM VEHICULAR TRAFFIC AND WHERE YOUNG CHILDREN COULD SAFELY CYCLE, HE SAID.

TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO USE SUCH OFF-STREET CYCLING FACILITIES, THE BILL SOUGHT TO AMEND SECTION 54 OF THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE BILL WOULD ALLOW UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 11 TO RIDE BICYCLES OR TRICYCLES IN AREAS WHICH THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT CONSIDERED SUITABLE AND SET ASIDE FOR SUCH PURPOSES.

"ONCE IDENTIFIED, THESE AREAS WILL BE SUITABLY SIGNPOSTED.

"THE HIRING OF BICYCLES OR TRICYCLES TO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 11 WILL ALSO BE ALLOWED WITHIN SUCH AREAS AND THE IMMEDIATE ADJOINING LAND WHERE THE DRIVING OF MOTOR VEHICLES IS PROHIBITED," MR LEUNG SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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TOUGHER PROVISIONS AGAINST ILLEGAL GAMBLING PROPOSED

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THE GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989 WILL NOT ONLY PROVIDE A MEANS TO CRACK DOWN ON ILLEGAL GAMBLING, IT WILL ALSO GO A LONG WAY TO HELP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST TRIAD AND OTHER ORGANISED CRIME SYNDICATES, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, MR BARNES SAID IT AIMED TO INCREASE THE PENALTIES FOR THOSE CONVICTED OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING OFFENCES, AND TO TIGHTEN UP THE PROVISIONS OF THE GAMBLING ORDINANCE TO ALLOW MORE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW.

"ILLEGAL GAMBLING GENERATES LARGE PROFITS FOR THE SYNDICATES WHICH RUN SUCH OPERATIONS," HE SAID.

"PROFITS FROM ILLEGAL GAMBLING ARE THOUGHT TO BE THE SECOND MAJOR SOURCE OF INCOME, AFTER DRUG TRAFFICKING, FOR TRIAD AND OTHER ORGANISED CRIME SYNDICATES IN HONG KONG.

"BUT IN GENERAL THE LEVELS OF SENTENCES AWARDED FOR OFFENCES ASSOCIATED WITH ILLEGAL GAMBLING AND BOOKMAKING HAVE BEEN LOW.

PROPOSALS TO INCREASE THE PENALTIES FOR ILLEGAL GAMBLING OFFENCES WERE PUT FORWARD IN THE FIGHT CRIME COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSION DOCUMENT "OPTIONS FOR CHANGES IN THE LAW AND IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW TO COUNTER THE TRIAD PROBLEM".

MR BARNES SAID THE PROPOSALS INCLUDED MANDATORY PRISON SENTENCES AND MINIMUM FINES FOR PEOPLE CONVICTED OF RUNNING ILLEGAL GAMBLING SYNDICATES.

"HOWEVER, MANDATORY SENTENCES DEPRIVE THE COURTS OF DISCRETION AND FLEXIBILITY TO MEET THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL CASES," HE SAID.

THEREFORE, HE SAID, THE BILL PROPOSED INSTEAD IN CLAUSES 3, 5 AND 7 A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE MAXIMUM FINES FOR OPERATORS OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING ENTERPRISES FROM \$500,000 TO \$5 MILLION.

"THIS INCREASE WILL ENABLE THE SYNDICATES WHICH RUN ILLEGAL GAMBLING OPERATIONS TO BE HIT WHERE IT HURTS THEM MOST --- IN THE POCKET," MR BARNES EXPLAINED.

"THE BILL ALSO PROPOSES INCREASES IN THE MAXIMUM SENTENCES FOR OTHER ILLEGAL GAMBLING OFFENCES SO AS TO DETER PEOPLE FROM PATRONISING ILLEGAL GAMBLING ESTABLISHMENTS," HE SAID.

CLAUSES 4, 6, 8 AND 9 WOULD PROVIDE A SCALE OF MAXIMUM SENTENCES FOR THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT CONVICTIONS FOR ILLEGAL GAMBLING.

/SENTENCES RANGED

SENTENCES RANGED FROM \$10,000 AND THREE MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT (THE CURRENT MAXIMUM PENALTY) ON FIRST CONVICTION, TO \$30,000 AND NINE MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT ON THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT CONVICTIONS.

TURNING TO OTHER AMENDMENTS WHICH AIMED TO FACILITATE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAW, MR BARNES SAID CLAUSE 2 BROADENED THE DEFINITIONS OF "BOOKMAKING" AND "BETTING SLIP" TO INCLUDE THE SETTLING OF A BET.

"THIS IS TO REMOVE THE PRESENT ANOMALY WHEREBY THE PAYMENT OF ILLEGAL WINNINGS DOES NOT OF ITSELF CONSTITUTE EVIDENCE OF A BOOKMAKING OFFENCE," HE SAID.

CLAUSE 5 REMOVED THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S CONSENT TO LAY A CHARGE OF "ASSISTING" IN BOOKMAKING, TO ALLOW PROSECUTORS MORE FLEXIBILITY IN LAYING CHARGES AGAINST PERSONS INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF BOOKMAKING SYNDICATES.

CLAUSE 11 AIMED TO SAVE THE TIME OF THE COURTS, THE POLICE AND THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, BY ALLOWING THE COURTS OF THEIR OWN MOTION TO ORDER DISCONNECTION OF TELEPHONE SERVICES TO PREMISES USED FOR ILLEGAL GAMBLING OR BOOKMAKING PURPOSES.

MR BARNES SAID THAT AT PRESENT APPLICATIONS HAD TO BE MADE BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.

"UNDER CLAUSE 12 OF THE BILL A REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION IS CREATED, THAT WHERE AUTHORISED ENTRY OF A POLICE OFFICER IS DELAYED, THE DELAY IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBSTRUCTION, AND CONSTITUTES AN OFFENCE.

"THIS PROVISION IS INTENDED TO COMBAT OPERATORS OF ILLEGAL GAMBLING ENTERPRISES WHO DELAY THE ENTRY OF THE POLICE IN ORDER TO DESTROY EVIDENCE AND CONCEAL GAMBLING MONEY WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE BE LIABLE TO FORFEITURE," MR BARNES EXPLAINED.

CLAUSE 13 EXTENDED THE POWER TO ORDER FORFEITURE OF MONEY, ILLEGAL GAMBLING EQUIPMENT AND PROPERTY FROM MAGISTRATE TO ALL COURTS.

"THIS MEASURE WILL HELP SAVE THE TIME OF THE COURTS," MR BARNES SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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FIRST REPORT OF BROADCASTING AUTHORITY PUBLISHED
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THE FIRST YEAR OF THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY (BA) WAS A BUSY AND CHALLENGING ONE IN VIEW OF THE EXPIRY OF THE LICENCES OF TVB LTD. AND ATV LTD. ON NOVEMBER 30, 1988.

SET UP IN SEPTEMBER 1987 UNDER THE BROADCASTING AUTHORITY ORDINANCE, THE BA UNDERTOOK A COMPLETE REVIEW OF THE LICENSING CONDITIONS OF THE TWO STATIONS AND SUBMITTED RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE GRANT OF THE NEW LICENCES.

THIS IS AMONG THE SUBJECTS COVERED IN THE FIRST REPORT OF THE BA ON THE PROGRESS OF TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN HONG KONG.

TABLED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE REPORT REVIEWS THE WORK OF BA BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1987 AND AUGUST 1988.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, THE WORK OF AMENDING THE TELEVISION ORDINANCE AND REVIEWING THE LICENSING CONDITIONS, EXAMINING THE REORGANISATION AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROPOSALS OF THE PROSPECTIVE LICENSEES, AS WELL AS REVIEWING THE CODES OF PRACTICE, WERE COMPLEX TASKS REQUIRING THOROUGH AND DETAILED STUDY.

THESE TASKS WERE PERFORMED WITH THE AIM OF ENSURING A HIGH QUALITY OF BROADCASTING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

ON CABLE TELEVISION, THE BA WAS INVITED BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED CONDITIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CABLE TV.

THE BA MADE A NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS ON THE CORPORATE STRUCTURE OF THE LICENSEE, RESTRICTIONS ON FOREIGN OWNERSHIP AND THE PERIOD OF LICENCE, AFTER MAKING REFERENCE TO THE NEW LICENSING CONDITIONS FOR WIRELESS TV LICENSEES.

THE BA WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ASKED TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY INTO A SUITABLE SYSTEM OF CABLE TV FOR HONG KONG AND THE LEGISLATIVE, TECHNICAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, INCLUDING A DETAILED EXAMINATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ALL CABLE TV PROPOSALS SUBMITTED.

REGARDING OTHER ASPECTS OF BROADCASTING, THE BA ALSO GAVE ADVICE ON REMOVING THE NEED FOR A LICENCE FOR "TELEVISION RECEIVE ONLY" SATELLITE DISHES AND THE INTRODUCTION OF LIMITED SUBSCRIPTION TELEVISION SERVICES FOR HOTELS.

DURING THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW, THE COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE OF THE BA DEALT WITH 433 COMPLAINTS. OF THESE, 275 COMPLAINTS WERE ABOUT PROGRAMME STANDARDS, WITH 251 ON TVB PROGRAMMES AND 24 ON ATV PROGRAMMES.

/SUBSEQUENTLY 10

SUBSEQUENTLY 10 WARNING LETTERS AND 36 ADVISORY LETTERS WERE ISSUED TO THE TWO LICENSEES.

IN ONE CASE, THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THAT THE VIOLENCE IN A DRAMA EPISODE DEPICTING THE BRUTAL KILLING OF A FAMILY WAS EXCESSIVE AND IN THIS CASE THE CONTRAVENTION OF THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON PROGRAMME STANDARDS MERITED A FINANCIAL PENALTY. A FINE OF \$20,000 WAS THEREFORE IMPOSED.

OTHER COMPLAINTS DEALT WITH BY THE COMMITTEE INCLUDED 45 COMPLAINTS ABOUT TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS. ACTION TAKEN INCLUDED, IN SOME CASES, REQUIRING CHANGES TO BE MADE TO THE ADVERTISEMENTS CONCERNED AND, IN OTHER CASES, WITHDRAWAL OF THE ENTIRE ADVERTISEMENT.

ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION, THE REPORT SAYS THAT CONSULTATION WAS AN IMPORTANT MEANS OF KEEPING ABREAST OF THE CHANGING TASTES AND OPINIONS OF THE PUBLIC.

IT GOES ON TO SAY THAT CLOSE LIAISON WAS MAINTAINED WITH THE DISTRICT-BASED TELEVISION HOME VIEWING GROUPS WHICH PROVIDED USEFUL COMMENT AND ADVICE TO THE BA.

THE GROUP MEMBERS WERE GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THE QUALITY OF STATION-PRODUCED PROGRAMMES AND ADVERTISING MATERIAL. THERE WERE FAVOURABLE COMMENTS ON DOCUMENTARIES, PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMES.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WAS CRITICISM OF UNWARRANTED AND EXCESSIVE VIOLENCE IN A NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES.

THE BA FOUND THAT DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW, THE LICENSEES GENERALLY COMPLIED WITH THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE TELEVISION ORDINANCE, THE CODES OF PRACTICE AND THE LICENCE CONDITIONS.

THE REPORT ANTICIPATES THAT THE COMING YEAR WOULD BE EQUALLY CHALLENGING AS THE BA WOULD BE ENGAGED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW PROVISIONS IN THE TELEVISION ORDINANCE AND IN THE CODES OF PRACTICE AND THE LICENCES.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1989

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WHITE PAPER ON POLLUTION TABLED
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THE PROPOSALS IN THE WHITE PAPER ON POLLUTION WILL LEAD TO GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE OF SOME \$20 BILLION OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS. THE HON KENNETH KWOK, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN TABLING THE DOCUMENT, MR KWOK SAID THE EXPENDITURE, AT 1988 PRICES, WOULD BE EARMARKED MOSTLY FOR MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURAL PROJECTS, IN PARTICULAR THE NEW SEWERAGE SYSTEMS IN THE TERRITORY.

HE SAID THAT EXPENDITURE WOULD ALSO BE NEEDED BY THOSE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNS CONTRIBUTING TO THE POLLUTION AND THE COSTS SHOULD BE BUILT INTO THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

MR KWOK NOTED THAT THE WHITE PAPER WAS THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTIVES FOR TACKLING ALL FORMS OF POLLUTION RELATING TO WASTE, WATER, AIR AND NOISE, REGARDLESS OF SOURCE.

AS A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE, IT ALSO POINTED THE WAY FORWARD IN ENFORCEMENT, EDUCATION AND PLANNING IN SOLVING POLLUTION PROBLEMS.

MR KWOK EXPLAINED THAT IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO PUBLISH A WHITE PAPER INSTEAD OF A GREEN PAPER BECAUSE TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE.

NEVERTHELESS, THE GOVERNMENT WELCOMED PUBLIC COMMENTS, AND WOULD BE FOLLOWING NORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESSES WITH INDUSTRY AND WITH THE MUNICIPAL COUNCILS ON THE DOCUMENT.

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PERIOD FOR LIMITING TAXI NUMBERS EXTENDED
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) PASSED A MOTION TO EXTEND THE PERIOD OF LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF LICENSED TAXIS BY ONE YEAR TO JULY 7, 1990.

MOVING A MOTION UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, SAID THE EFFECT OF THE EXTENSION WAS THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VEHICLES WHICH MIGHT BE REGISTERED AND LICENSED AS TAXIS WOULD REMAIN AT 14,800 FOR URBAN TAXIS, 2,838 FOR NEW TERRITORIES TAXIS AND 40 FOR LANTAU TAXIS.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1989

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AMENDMENT TO PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS
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THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED AN AMENDMENT TO THE PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT A PHARMACIST IS IN A BETTER POSITION TO CONTROL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND PREVENT UNAUTHORISED SALE OF POISONS.

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON T.H. CHAU, EXPLAINED THAT THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD HAD RESOLVED TO AMEND REGULATION 19 TO REQUIRE THAT IN A RETAIL SHOP OR PREMISES ANY SPECIFIED POISON SHOULD BE STORED IN A RECEPTACLE WHICH WAS SECURELY LOCKED AND SITUATED IN A PART OF THE PREMISES INACCESSIBLE TO CUSTOMERS.

"THE PRESENT PROVISION ONLY REQUIRES THAT IT SHOULD BE SECURELY LOCKED OR SITUATED IN A PART OF THE PREMISES INACCESSIBLE TO CUSTOMERS," MR CHAU SAID.

THE OPPORTUNITY WAS ALSO TAKEN TO REPLACE THE WORDS CUPBOARD OR DRAWER BY THE BROADER TERM RECEPTACLE, HE ADDED.

THE COUNCIL PASSED MR CHAU'S MOTION, MOVED UNDER THE PHARMACY AND POISONS ORDINANCE, THAT IT APPROVE THE PHARMACY AND POISONS (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1989, AND THE POISONS LIST (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1989.

MR CHAU POINTED OUT THAT SECTION 29 OF THE PHARMACY AND POISONS ORDINANCE EMPOWERED THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, TO MAKE REGULATIONS PROVIDING FOR THE CONTROL OF PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS AND POISONS.

"THE SCHEDULES TO THE PHARMACY AND POISONS REGULATIONS AND THE POISONS LIST SET OUT IN THE SCHEDULE TO THE POISONS LIST REGULATIONS ARE UPDATED BY THE PHARMACY AND POISONS BOARD FROM TIME TO TIME WHEN NEW PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS REQUIRING CONTROL APPEAR ON THE MARKET.

"THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TWO SETS OF REGULATIONS REFLECT THE LATEST UPDATING OF THE SCHEDULES AND THE LIST BY THE BOARD." HE SAID.

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ABOLITION OF DB CONSTITUENCIES OF ELECTORAL COLLEGE EXPLAINED
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THE ABOLITION OF THE DISTRICT BOARD CONSTITUENCIES OF THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE IN 1991 IS TO AVOID HAVING TWO PARALLEL SYSTEMS OF GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, THE HON DONALD LIAO, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

"THIS CHANGE WILL NOT, IN ANY WAY, AFFECT THE ADVISORY ROLE OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS," MR LIAO SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON LAM WAI-KEUNG.

MR LIAO SAID THAT OVER THE YEARS, THE 19 DISTRICT BOARDS HAD DEVELOPED INTO A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF OUR SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

"THEY GIVE VALUABLE ADVICE TO THE GOVERNMENT, PRIMARILY ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE DISTRICTS, AND SOMETIMES ON ISSUES OF TERRITORY-WIDE CONCERN," HE SAID.

MR LIAO EXPLAINED THAT GOVERNMENT POLICY WAS THAT THE ADVICE GIVEN BY THE BOARDS SHOULD BE RESPECTED AND FOLLOWED WHEREVER PRACTICABLE AND THAT SUFFICIENT RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE BOARDS TO ENABLE THEM TO PERFORM THEIR FUNCTIONS EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY.

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EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY BEING REVIEWED
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THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD EXERCISE ITS AUTHORITY OVER PUBLIC BODIES SUCH AS THE KOWLOON-CANTON RAILWAY CORPORATION IS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW. THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY),

HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO INTENTION TO ALTER THE BASIC POLICY OF ALLOWING PUBLIC BODIES TO OPERATE ACCORDING TO PRUDENT COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES AND WITH MINIMUM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RITA FAN, SIR PIERS EXPLAINED THAT WHEN PUBLIC BODIES SUCH AS THE KCRC WERE ESTABLISHED, THE INTENTION WAS TO ALLOW THEM TO OPERATE WITH THE MINIMUM OF DIRECT GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT.

"THE RELEVANT ORDINANCES WHICH APPLY TO SUCH BODIES PROVIDE GENERAL DIRECTIONS AND ENABLE THE GOVERNMENT TO GIVE SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS.

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"ANY DIRECTIONS THAT MAY BE GIVEN MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE DELIBERATE INTENTION TO ALLOW THE BODIES SUFFICIENT OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE TO DISCHARGE THEIR OBLIGATIONS," HE SAID.

SIR PIERS SAID THE ACCOUNTS OF BOTH KCRC AND MTRC WERE SUBJECT TO INDEPENDENT AUDIT BY CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS, AND THERE WAS THEREFORE NO NEED TO REQUIRE THE DIRECTOR OF AUDIT TO CARRY OUT THIS FUNCTION.

"SO FAR AS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE ORDINANCE AND ACCEPTABLE OPERATING PERFORMANCE ARE CONCERNED, THIS MATTER IS BEING CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE REVIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BODIES CONCERNED," HE ADDED.

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EEC ANTI-DUMPING ACTIONS UNFAIR
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THE GOVERNMENT HAS DEVOTED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO DEVOTE, A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT AND RESOURCES IN HELPING COMPANIES WHICH HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE RECENT SPATE OF ANTI-DUMPING ACTIONS BY THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON SO CHAU YIM-PING, SIR PIERS SAID THE GOVERNMENT REMAINED FIRMLY OF THE VIEW THAT THE ANTI-DUMPING ACTIONS INSTITUTED BY THE EEC AGAINST HONG KONG WERE BOTH UNFAIR AND ILL-FOUNDED.

HE EXPLAINED THAT IN FACT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAD DONE FAR MORE TO ASSIST INDUSTRY IN THIS RESPECT THAN OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN SIMILAR POSITIONS ELSEWHERE.

"AS SOON AS ANTI-DUMPING PROCEEDINGS INVOLVING HONG KONG COMPANIES ARE ANNOUNCED, THE TRADE DEPARTMENT WILL BRIEF THE AFFECTED COMPANIES ON THE ANTI-DUMPING REGULATIONS AND THE INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES, AND ON HOW BEST TO DEAL WITH THESE PROCEEDINGS.

"AT THE SAME TIME, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN BRUSSELS WILL MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION," HE SAID.

ALSO, THE TRADE DEPARTMENT HAD RETAINED TWO CONSULTANTS TO ADVISE ON THE COMPATIBILITY OF EEC ANTI-DUMPING REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE GATT ANTI-DUMPING CODE, AND ON PROBLEMS RELATING TO SPECIFIC PROCEEDINGS.

"THE CONSULTANTS ARE HELPING TO IMPROVE OUR EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA SO THAT WE ARE READY TO CHALLENGE THE EEC WHERE WE BELIEVE IT HAS OVERSTEPPED THE LINE," HE SAID.

WHILE THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALWAYS READY TO PROVIDE ADVICE ON GENERAL ISSUES RELATING TO THE EEC ANTI-DUMPING REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES, SIR PIERS POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO ANSWER DETAILED COMPANY-SPECIFIC QUESTION POSED BY THE EEC.

"THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES OWN ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THESE PROCEEDINGS.

"THE COMPANIES CONCERNED MUST ALSO PLAY THEIR PART IN ORDER TO SECURE THE BEST PROTECTION," HE SAID.

TURNING TO THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT ON DEFINITIVE ANTI-DUMPING DUTIES ON VIDEO CASSETTE TAPES ORIGINATING IN HONG KONG, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY NOTED THAT THE VERY HIGH PROVISIONAL DUTIES RANGING FROM 8.1 PER CENT TO 59.3 PER CENT ANNOUNCED LAST DECEMBER HAD BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED TO 0 PER CENT TO 21.9 PER CENT.

"JUDGING FROM THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL'S DECISION ON DEFINITIVE DUTIES, THE REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY THE COMPANIES CONCERNED AND BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT HAVE CLEARLY PROMPTED THE EUROPEAN AUTHORITIES TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT THE CASE AGAINST HONG KONG AND TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS TOWARDS HONG KONG," HE SAID.

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GOVT NOT UNRESPONSIVE TO CIVIL SERVANTS' CONCERNS

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THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT INSENSITIVE OR UNRESPONSIVE TO CIVIL SERVANTS' CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON MICHAEL CHENG, SIR DAVID SAID THAT ESSENTIALLY THERE WERE TWO WAYS IN WHICH SUCH CONCERNS COULD BE AND WERE ADDRESSED.

"FIRST, PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE SHOULD BE REVIEWED PERIODICALLY TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES AND SECONDLY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THERE TO BE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS STAFF," HE SAID.

MR CHENG HAD ASKED WHAT HAD CAUSED A RECENT INCREASE IN INDUSTRIAL ACTION TAKEN BY CIVIL SERVANTS OF VARIOUS GRADES, AND WHAT PLANS WERE IN HAND TO AVOID AND REDUCE SUCH ACTION.

SIR DAVID SAID HE WOULD SET THE PROBLEM IN CONTEXT.

"ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN AN APPARENT INCREASE RECENTLY IN INDUSTRIAL ACTION TAKEN BY CIVIL SERVANTS, ONLY FOUR OUT OF A TOTAL OF SOME 400 GRADES WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVICE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ANY SORT OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION THIS YEAR.

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"IN THE MAIN, THE CAUSES HAVE BEEN RELATED TO PAY, CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OR WORK, OR PROMOTION PROSPECTS," HE SAID.

SIR DAVID SAID THE PRESENT FRAMEWORK FOR CIVIL SERVICE PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED 10 YEARS AGO BY THE STANDING COMMISSION ON THE BASIS OF A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW WHICH IT CARRIED OUT AT THE TIME.

IT HAD NOW EMBARKED UPON A SIMILAR OVERALL REVIEW OF PAY PRINCIPLES AND SALARY STRUCTURES. IT WOULD ALSO ADDRESS SUCH ISSUES AS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROBLEMS.

"THE COMMISSION HAS ALSO RECENTLY COMPLETED A REVIEW OF CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF CONSULTATION WITH STAFF ASSOCIATIONS.

"THE OBJECTIVE THERE IS TO ACHIEVE A FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF THE EXISTING CONSULTATIVE MACHINERY IN THE CIVIL SERVICE," SIR DAVID SAID.

"FINALLY, I WOULD MAKE THE POINT AGAIN WHICH I HAVE MADE IN THIS COUNCIL BEFORE THAT WE HAVE A LONG TRADITION IN THE SERVICE OF RESOLVING OUR PROBLEMS BY CAREFUL AND PATIENT DISCUSSION.

"THAT PRINCIPLE HAS SERVED BOTH MANAGEMENT AND STAFF WELL AND HAS HELPED TO ENSURE IN MOST CASES THAT SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAS NOT BEEN AFFECTED," HE SAID.

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HANDICAPPED PERSONS HAWKING ILLEGALLY LIABLE TO PROSECUTION
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HANDICAPPED PERSONS HAWKING ILLEGALLY IN PUBLIC PLACES AND PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES ARE LIABLE TO PROSECUTION IN THE SAME WAY AS ANY ILLEGAL HAWKER, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON T.H. CHAU, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON MIRIAM LAU, MR CHAU SAID THERE HAD BEEN REPORTS OF PERSONS, APPARENTLY DEAF AND MUTE, HAWKING ILLEGALLY AT MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY STATIONS AND PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES BY OFFERING HANDICRAFT ITEMS FOR SALE.

"SUCH PEOPLE ARE SUBJECT TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION BY THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT IN THE SAME WAY AS ANY ILLEGAL HAWKER," HE SAID.

UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES ORDINANCE, ANY PERSON, HANDICAPPED OR OTHERWISE, WHO TRADED IN PUBLIC PLACES WITHOUT A HAWKER LICENCE ISSUED BY THE URBAN COUNCIL OR REGIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTED AN OFFENCE AND WAS LIABLE TO PROSECUTION, HE SAID.

UNDER HOUSING AUTHORITY POLICY, HAWKING ACTIVITIES WERE PROHIBITED IN PUBLIC HOUSING ESTATES.

ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NO READILY AVAILABLE STATISTICS, MR CHAU NOTED THAT THE NUMBER OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS ENGAGED IN ILLEGAL HAWKING ACTIVITIES WAS BELIEVED TO BE VERY SMALL.

"WHILST I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY REPORTS THAT THESE PEOPLE ARE BEING EXPLOITED FOR COMMERCIAL GAIN, IT IS OBVIOUSLY DESIRABLE THAT SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DISABLED SHOULD BE WIDENED." HE SAID.

"IN THIS REGARD, OUR EFFORTS INCLUDE THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN, VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR ADULTS SUITABLE FOR OPEN EMPLOYMENT AND ASSISTANCE IN SEEKING JOBS FOR THOSE WHO POSSESS THE APPROPRIATE SKILLS.

"FOR THOSE WHO ARE UNSUITABLE FOR OPEN EMPLOYMENT, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE PLACEMENTS IN DAY ACTIVITY CENTRES AND SHELTERED WORKSHOPS." HE ADDED.

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DECISION TO CLOSE POLICE CADET SCHOOL EXPLAINED

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IN THE CHANGING ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT IN HONG KONG, THE POLICE CADET SCHOOL COULD NO LONGER OFFER THE NUMBERS OF GOOD QUALITY RECRUITS WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED IN THE POLICE FORCE. THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON GEOFFREY BARNES, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR BARNES SAID THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVED THAT THE RIGHT WAY TO MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS OF POLICE RECRUITS AND SOLVE THE RECRUITING PROBLEM WAS BY MAKING A CAREER IN THE POLICE FORCE ATTRACTIVE TO FORM 5 GRADUATES.

MR BARNES SAID THE POLICE CADET SCHOOL HAD BEEN A VALUABLE SOURCE FOR POLICE RECRUITS SINCE ITS FORMATION IN 1973, AND WOULD REMAIN SO UNTIL ITS CLOSURE IN MARCH 1990.

HE SAID THE DECISION TO CLOSE THE SCHOOL WAS TAKEN BECAUSE IT FACED A RECRUITMENT PROBLEM OF ITS OWN IN GETTING SUFFICIENT PUPILS TO ENROL AND SERVE AS A CONTINUING SOURCE OF RECRUITS FOR THE POLICE.

"THE REASON FOR THE POLICE CADET SCHOOL FACING A RECRUITMENT PROBLEM IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN HONG KONG.

"THE REQUIRED EDUCATIONAL STANDARD FOR DIRECT ENTRY INTO THE POLICE FORCE AS A POLICE CONSTABLE IS COMPLETION OF FORM 5. HOWEVER, OVER 70 PER CENT OF THE RECRUITS INTO THE CADET SCHOOL ARE FORM 3 STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOCATED A FORM 4 PLACE WITHIN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SYSTEM.

/"THEY RECEIVE

"THEY RECEIVE TRAINING AND FURTHER EDUCATION DURING THE TWO YEARS IN THE CADET SCHOOL TO ENABLE THEM TO MEET THE STANDARDS FOR RECRUITMENT INTO THE POLICE," HE SAID.

MR BARNES POINTED OUT THAT THE POOL OF FORM 3 STUDENTS WHO WERE NOT OFFERED ANY TYPE OF POST-FORM 3 EDUCATION EXCEEDED 20,000 ANNUALLY UNTIL 1987, PROVIDING A SUFFICIENTLY LARGE POOL FOR GOOD QUALITY RECRUITS.

BUT THE NUMBER WOULD DECLINE TO 7,000 BY 1990 AND 4,000 BY 1991 AS A RESULT OF GOVERNMENT POLICY TO INCREASE POST-FORM 3 PLACES IN GOVERNMENT SUBSIDISED AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS, HE SAID.

"THESE STUDENTS WILL BE AT THE LOWER END OF THE ACADEMIC SCALE AND ARE UNLIKELY TO BE SUITABLE FOR ENROLMENT AS POLICE CADETS.

"THE IMPLICATION IS THEREFORE THAT, IF THE CADET SCHOOL WERE TO REMAIN OPEN IT WOULD HAVE INSUFFICIENT ENTRANTS TO JUSTIFY ITS CONTINUED EXISTENCE," MR BARNES SAID.

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SCHOOL CANTEEN SERVICE NOT VIABLE

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IT WOULD NOT BE ECONOMICAL TO PROVIDE A CANTEEN SERVICE FOR EACH SCHOOL, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON T.H. CHAU, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

MR CHAU WAS REPLYING A QUESTION FROM THE HON PEGGY LAM, WHO HAD ASKED HOW THE HYGIENE STANDARDS OF FOOD SOLD FROM FAST-FOOD VANS WERE CONTROLLED, AND WHETHER THERE WERE PLANS TO PROVIDE CANTEEN SERVICES IN SCHOOLS.

PROVIDING A CANTEEN SERVICE WOULD TAKE UP VALUABLE SPACE WHICH COULD BE BETTER USED FOR PURELY EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES, AND ALSO THERE MIGHT NOT BE SUFFICIENT DEMAND WITHIN A SCHOOL TO MAKE A CANTEEN ECONOMICALLY VIABLE, MR CHAU SAID.

HE SAID THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER HAD ADVISED HIM THAT THERE WERE AT PRESENT NO PLANS TO PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES.

MR CHAU SAID THAT PLENTY OF LICENSED FOOD CATERERS WERE AVAILABLE TO MEET THE LUNCH NEEDS OF STUDENTS.

"THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HAS ISSUED A LIST OF LICENSED FOOD FACTORIES TO THE SCHOOLS FOR REFERENCE," HE SAID.

MR CHAU ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THERE WERE AT PRESENT NO LEGALLY OPERATED FAST-FOOD VANS.

"ANYONE WHO IS FOUND OPERATING SUCH A VAN IS LIABLE TO FACE PROSECUTION AND, UPON CONVICTION, TO CONFISCATION OF HIS EQUIPMENT OR COMMODITY, IN ADDITION TO OTHER PENALTIES," HE SAID.

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WARNING LETTERS ON MANAGEMENT ISSUED TO 17 SCHOOLS

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WARNING LETTERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED ON 24 OCCASIONS TO A TOTAL OF 17 SCHOOLS DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS ON GROUNDS THEY WERE NOT BEING MANAGED SATISFACTORILY OR THAT THE CHILDREN WERE NOT BEING PROPERLY EDUCATED, THE SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER, THE HON RON BRIDGE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

BUT NO MANAGER HAD BEEN DE-REGISTERED NOR ANY NEW MANAGER APPOINTED BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION DURING THIS PERIOD, HE ADDED.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON DAVID CHEUNG, MR BRIDGE POINTED OUT THAT THE MANAGEMENT OF A SCHOOL WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ITS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

ON BEING ALLOCATED A SCHOOL, THE SPONSORING BODY WOULD NOMINATE MANAGERS FOR REGISTRATION BY THE DIRECTOR, HE SAID.

UNDER THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, THE DIRECTOR HAS TO BE SATISFIED THAT THE PROPOSED MANAGERS WERE SUITABLE BEFORE HE REGISTERED THEM.

MR BRIDGE SAID THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT MONITORED THE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS DURING REGULAR INSPECTIONS, AND HELPED SCHOOLS TO OVERCOME ANY MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS WHICH MIGHT ARISE.

HE SAID A WARNING LETTER WOULD BE ISSUED IF IT APPEARED TO THE DIRECTOR THAT A SCHOOL WAS NOT BEING MANAGED SATISFACTORILY OR THAT CHILDREN WERE NOT BEING EDUCATED PROPERLY. IF IMPROVEMENTS WERE NOT MADE, THE DIRECTOR MIGHT DE-REGISTER ANY MANAGER AND APPOINT ONE OR MORE NEW ONES.

MR BRIDGE ALSO SAID THAT IN ALLOCATING A SCHOOL FOR OPERATION BY A SPONSORING BODY, THE DIRECTOR WOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FOLLOWING:

THE BODY'S EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION; ITS FINANCIAL CAPABILITY; THE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF SCHOOLS ALREADY OPERATED BY IT; AND ANY LOCAL TIES WITH THE DISTRICT CONCERNED.

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NEW ROAD SIGNAGE SYSTEM WELL PUBLICISED

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THE NEW SIGNAGE SYSTEM WHICH DROPPED THE "NO WAITING" SIGN IN 1984 WAS WELL PUBLICISED AT THE TIME AND SUBSEQUENTLY INCORPORATED IN THE ROAD USER'S CODE.

THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, GAVE THIS ANSWER IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON PEGGY LAM.

UNDER THE SIMPLIFIED SIGNAGE ARRANGEMENT, WAITING AND PARKING WERE NOT ALLOWED ON ANY ROAD WITH STREET LIGHTING EXCEPT AT DESIGNATED PARKING SPACES. MR LEUNG SAID.

THE ARRANGEMENT NOT ONLY SIMPLIFIED THE SIGNAGE SYSTEM, BUT IT ALSO BROUGHT SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE IN NOT HAVING TO ERECT AND MAINTAIN "NO WAITING" SIGNS.

HE EXPLAINED THAT RE-INTRODUCING SUCH SIGNS AND MARKINGS ALONG THE STREETS WITH A SYSTEM OF STREET LIGHTING WOULD LEAD TO A PROLIFERATION OF TRAFFIC SIGNS.

THE PROBLEM WOULD BE PARTICULARLY SERIOUS IN THE OLDER DISTRICTS, SUCH AS WAN CHAI, WHERE MANY OF THE PAVEMENTS WERE NARROW AND THE ERECTION OF SIGNS ALONG THEM WOULD CAUSE INCONVENIENCE AND OBSTRUCTION TO PEDESTRIANS.

MR LEUNG ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MOUNT SUITABLE PUBLICITY TO REMIND THE MOTORING PUBLIC OF THE PRESENT SIGNAGE ARRANGEMENT.

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GOVT MAINTAINS SYSTEM OF SOCIAL STATISTICS

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THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY MAINTAINS A SYSTEM OF SOCIAL STATISTICS WHICH CAN BE USED AS BROAD INDICATORS OF SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN HONG KONG.

THIS IS DONE BY UTILISING DATA COLLECTED IN SURVEYS OR DERIVED FROM ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR PIERS JACOBS, GAVE THIS ANSWER IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON TAM YIU-CHUNG.

SIR PIERS SAID THE SYSTEM WAS CONSTRUCTED WITH THE FOLLOWING AIMS IN MIND:

/(A) TO PROVIDE

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- (A) TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO MANY SOCIALLY RELEVANT QUESTIONS: HOW HEALTHY ARE WE? HOW EDUCATED? HOW ADEQUATE IS OUR HOUSING? WHAT IS THE CRIME SITUATION? ETC.;
- (B) TO MONITOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL POLICIES; AND
- (C) TO GIVE WARNING OF CERTAIN SOCIAL PROBLEMS, E.G. DRUG ADDICTION.

HE SAID THE SOCIAL STATISTICS AVAILABLE IN HONG KONG WERE BROADLY IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE AND WERE PUBLISHED REGULARLY BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT. REFERENCE MIGHT BE MADE IN PARTICULAR TO THE "HONG KONG SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS" AND THE "HONG KONG ANNUAL DIGEST OF STATISTICS".

SIR PIERS SAID THE SOCIAL STATISTICS COVERED THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

POPULATION COMPOSITION AND CHANGE; HOUSEHOLDS AND FAMILIES, MARITAL STATUS AND FERTILITY; HOUSING; HEALTH CONDITIONS AND HEALTH SERVICES; EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES; THE LABOUR FORCE; INCOME AND CONSUMPTION; SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE SERVICES; AND PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY.

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MID-LEVELS ESCALATOR PROJECT COULD START IN 1990

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THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) HE PLANNED TO SEEK FUNDING FOR CONSTRUCTING THE HILLSIDE ESCALATOR LINKING THE MID-LEVELS WITH CENTRAL EARLY NEXT YEAR IN ORDER TO START CONSTRUCTION IN MID-1990.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON SO CHAU YIM-PING, MR LEUNG SAID THE PROJECT WOULD BE DUE FOR COMPLETION BY MID-1992, ABOUT SIX MONTHS AHEAD OF THE ORIGINAL TIMETABLE.

HE ADDED THAT THIS TIMING WOULD DEPEND ON THE NUMBER AND NATURE OF OBJECTIONS TO THE SCHEME, INCLUDING LAND RESUMPTION, AFTER IT WAS GAZETTED SHORTLY AND HOW SOON SUCH OBJECTIONS COULD BE RESOLVED.

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EXPENDITURE ON MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

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THE GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT ABOUT \$1 MILLION ON PUBLICISING THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN 1986 AND \$0.86 MILLION IN 1989.

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON RONALD CHOW IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, EXPLAINED THAT THE LOWER EXPENDITURE RESULTED MAINLY FROM THE ELIMINATION OF ACTIVITIES THAT HAD PROVED LESS EFFECTIVE, SUCH AS VARIETY SHOWS, AND THE INTRODUCTION OF COST SAVING MEASURES, FOR EXAMPLE IN STANDARDISING PUBLICITY MATERIAL.

"IN ADDITION, THE NUMBERS OF CANDIDATES REDUCED FROM 79 IN 1986 TO 53 IN 1989, WHILE THE NUMBERS OF UNCONTESTED SEATS INCREASED FROM TWO TO SEVEN. THIS ALSO HAD THE EFFECT OF LOWERING PUBLICITY COSTS TO SOME EXTENT," SIR DAVID SAID.

HE POINTED OUT THAT IN PRACTICE, THE QUALITY AND INTENSITY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S PUBLICITY EFFORTS WERE VERY SIMILAR TO WHAT WAS PROVIDED IN 1986.

EXPENDITURE ON PUBLICITY FOR THE DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS IN MARCH 1988 WAS \$1.43 MILLION. HOWEVER, THE CHIEF SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS INAPPROPRIATE TO MAKE COMPARISONS WITH THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS GIVEN THE FAR GREATER NUMBER OF CONSTITUENCIES INVOLVED.

ON PUBLICITY TO ENCOURAGE ELECTORS' PARTICIPATION IN THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN 1989, SIR DAVID SAID IT WAS ARRANGED ON BOTH A TERRITORY-WIDE AND A DISTRICT BASIS.

IT INCLUDED ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE MASS MEDIA, DISPLAY OF POSTERS AND PUBLICITY BANNERS IN PUBLIC PLACES, SPECIAL ISSUES OF DISTRICT NEWSPAPERS, AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR CANDIDATES' TO MEET RESIDENTS.

LEAFLETS PROVIDING INFORMATION ON POLLING PROCEDURES AND THE CANDIDATES WERE MAILED TO REGISTERED ELECTORS, IN ADDITION TO THEIR POLL CARDS.

"GOVERNMENT'S PUBLICITY EFFORTS WERE COMPLEMENTED BY MASS MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE ELECTIONS AND THE CANDIDATES' OWN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS," THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID.

IN THIS YEAR'S MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 1,211,109 POLL CARDS WERE SENT TO ELECTORS LIVING IN THE CONTESTED CONSTITUENCIES AND 30,710 WERE RETURNED UNDELIVERED.

"CHANGE OF ADDRESS WAS NOT THEREFORE A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE LOW VOTER TURNOUT. NEVERTHELESS, GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO ENCOURAGE REGISTERED ELECTORS TO REPORT CHANGES IN ADDRESS, SO THAT THE ELECTORAL ROLL CAN BE KEPT UP TO DATE," HE REMARKED.

/SIR DAVID

SIR DAVID POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS THE PRACTICE TO CONDUCT AN INTERNAL REVIEW OF THE PUBLICITY AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS AFTER EACH ELECTION TO DISTRICT BOARDS, MUNICIPAL COUNCILS AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE PURPOSE WAS TO IDENTIFY POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS WHICH MIGHT BE APPLIED IN FUTURE ELECTIONS.

THE REVIEW OF THE LATEST MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS WAS DUE TO BE COMPLETED IN AUGUST.

"AS IN THE PAST, ANY MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE ANNOUNCED BEFORE THEY ARE INTRODUCED FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF ELECTIONS," SIR DAVID SAID.

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SIX HOSPITALS NOT PROVIDING SCHOOL SERVICES

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THERE ARE CURRENTLY SIX PUBLIC HOSPITALS WHICH DO NOT PROVIDE SCHOOL SERVICES IN THEIR PAEDIATRIC WARDS EITHER BECAUSE THEIR PATIENTS ARE ALL BELOW SCHOOL AGE OR BECAUSE OF THE SMALL NUMBER OF PATIENTS CONSIDERED TO BE IN NEED OF THE SERVICE.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON T.H. CHAU, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY) IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP.

MR CHAU NOTED THAT THE SIX HOSPITALS WERE TSAN YUK HOSPITAL, OUR LADY OF MARYKNOLL HOSPITAL, NETHERSOLE HOSPITAL, POK OI HOSPITAL, YAN CHAI HOSPITAL AND GRANTHAM HOSPITAL.

HE SAID HOSPITAL SCHOOL SERVICES WERE OPERATED IN PAEDIATRIC WARDS BY THE RED CROSS HOSPITAL SCHOOL, AND WERE SUBVENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

"TSAN YUK HOSPITAL DOES NOT PROVIDE A SCHOOL SERVICE AS ITS PAEDIATRIC PATIENTS ARE ALL BELOW SCHOOL AGE.

"REGARDING THE OTHER FIVE HOSPITALS, A SCHOOL SERVICE HAS NOT BEEN SET UP MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE SMALL NUMBER OF PAEDIATRIC PATIENTS IN THESE HOSPITALS CONSIDERED TO BE IN NEED OF THIS SERVICE," MR CHAU SAID.

HE SAID CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN TO PROVIDING HOSPITAL SCHOOL SERVICES TO YAN CHAI HOSPITAL AFTER THE COMPLETION OF ITS EXTENSION PROJECT AND TO THE RELOCATED NETHERSOLE HOSPITAL IN TAI PO.

"BOTH HOSPITALS WILL, BY THEN, HAVE INCREASED THEIR NUMBER OF PAEDIATRIC BEDS," HE SAID.

"AS REGARDS THE OTHER FOUR HOSPITALS, THERE ARE NO PLANS AT PRESENT TO PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES TO THEM," MR CHAU ADDED.

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LICENSING PROCEDURES STREAMLINED

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CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THE PAST TWO YEARS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF LICENCES AND APPROVALS REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH RETAIL OUTLETS. THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON T.H. CHAU, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON MARTIN BARROW, MR CHAU SAID WHAT REMAINED REPRESENTED THE MINIMUM NECESSARY FOR GOOD ADMINISTRATION IN THE WIDER INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY.

A RETAIL OUTLET, LIKE ALL BUSINESSES, WAS REQUIRED TO REGISTER WITH THE BUSINESS REGISTRATION OFFICE BECAUSE IT WAS PART OF THE SYSTEM OF TAXATION. REGISTRATION AND RENEWAL WERE VERY SIMPLE MATTERS INVOLVING LITTLE PAPERWORK.

MR CHAU EXPLAINED THAT SIGNIFICANT STREAMLINING OF PROCEDURES IN ISSUING LICENCES AND PERMITS HAD BEEN ACHIEVED BY THE TWO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS SINCE APRIL LAST YEAR. BECAUSE A RETAIL OUTLET WAS NOW ONLY REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A FRESH PROVISION SHOP LICENCE TO SELL FOOD AND FRESH PROVISIONS.

"PERMISSION TO SELL VARIOUS CONTROLLED FOOD ITEMS SUCH AS RESTRICTED FOOD, ICE-CREAMS, MILK AND NON-BOTTLED DRINKS, CAN BE GRANTED BY WAY OF ENDORSEMENTS ON THE SAME LICENCE.

"IT MUST BE BORNE IN MIND THAT THE PURPOSE OF THESE LICENCES IS TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY AND THIS MUST SURELY BE CONSIDERED A WORTHWHILE USE OF MANPOWER," MR CHAU SAID.

HE NOTED THAT SOME RETAIL OUTLETS MIGHT ALSO REQUIRE A LICENCE AS A "SELLER OF PART II POISONS" AND AGAIN IT WAS FELT THAT THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE MAINTAINED AS A NECESSARY SAFEGUARD FOR THE PUBLIC.

"THE SALE OF DUTIABLE COMMODITIES NAMELY, TOBACCO, INTOXICATING LIQUOR, HYDROCARBON OIL, ETHYL ALCOHOL AND METHYL ALCOHOL, AT PRESENT REQUIRES A LICENCE FOR EACH," MR CHAU SAID.

"THIS REQUIREMENT IS CUMBERSOME AND, IN RECENT YEARS, HAS CONTRIBUTED NOTHING TO THE PROTECTION OF REVENUE," HE ADDED.

HE SAID THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY HAD DECIDED TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT, AND THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 1989 WAS GAZETTED ON JUNE 9, 1989, TO GIVE EFFECT TO THIS.

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MOVE TO ENHANCE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF LEGCO ACTIVITIES
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FUNDS WILL BE SOUGHT IN THE 1990-91 ESTIMATES FOR THE PURPOSE OF FURTHER PUBLICISING THE FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE COUNCIL WAS INFORMED OF THIS TODAY (WEDNESDAY) BY THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD.

"IT IS HOPED THAT PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES WILL BE ENHANCED THROUGH SUCH EFFORTS AND LEAD TO INCREASED ATTENDANCE THROUGHOUT SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL," SIR DAVID SAID IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON MARTIN BARROW.

SIR DAVID SAID A BOOKING SYSTEM WAS IN OPERATION FOR SEATS IN THE CHAMBER'S PUBLIC GALLERIES.

"THE SEATS ARE FULLY BOOKED FOR MOST SITTINGS OF THE COUNCIL.

"AS PEOPLE MAY LEAVE AT ANY TIME DURING A SITTING, THERE IS NO WAY OF TELLING WHEN SEATS WILL BE AVAILABLE DURING THE AFTERNOON," HE SAID.

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ASSURANCE ON POST-1997 FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT
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EXPATRIATES EMPLOYED IN HONG KONG AFTER 1997 WILL CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE EXISTING FREEDOM OF TRAVEL INTO AND OUT OF THE TERRITORY, THE CHIEF SECRETARY, THE HON SIR DAVID FORD, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON MIRIAM LAU, SIR DAVID SAID THE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL INTO AND OUT OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION (HKSAR) WAS A MATTER ADDRESSED BY VARIOUS PROVISIONS IN THE JOINT DECLARATION.

UNDER PARAGRAPH 3(5) OF THE JOINT DECLARATION, RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS INCLUDING THOSE OF TRAVEL, MOVEMENT AND CHOICE OF OCCUPATION, WOULD BE ENSURED BY LAW IN THE HKSAR.

OTHER PROVISIONS WOULD ENABLE HOLDERS OF VALID TRAVEL DOCUMENTS TO LEAVE THE HKSAR WITHOUT SPECIAL AUTHORISATION, BUT THE SAR GOVERNMENT MIGHT APPLY IMMIGRATION CONTROLS ON ENTRY, STAY AND DEPARTURE OF FOREIGN NATIONALS.

SIR DAVID SAID THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROVISIONS WAS TO ENABLE THE EXISTING FREEDOMS OF TRAVEL INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG TO REMAIN UNCHANGED AFTER 1997.

/"EXPATRIATES MAKE

"EXPATRIATES MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO HONG KONG'S ECONOMY, AND THEY WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TO DO SO AFTER 1997 WHILE ENJOYING ALL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE SAME HIGH DEGREE OF FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG THEY CURRENTLY ENJOY," HE SAID.

"IN THIS REGARD, I WOULD EMPHASISE THAT AFTER 1997 DISCRETION TO GRANT PERMISSION FOR SUCH PERSONS TO ENTER AND STAY IN THE HKSAR FOR EMPLOYMENT, WILL LIE WITH THE HKSAR GOVERNMENT ALONE.

"THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE NO SAY OVER THE EXERCISE OF THIS DISCRETION," HE ADDED.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY SAID THE FREEDOM OF TRAVEL OF EXPATRIATES WOULD BE ENHANCED FURTHER IF THEY BECAME PERMANENT RESIDENTS WITH THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE HKSAR.

"UNDER THE JOINT DECLARATION, EXPATRIATES MAY ACQUIRE THE RIGHT OF ABODE IF THEY HAVE LIVED FOR A CONTINUOUS PERIOD OF SEVEN YEARS OR MORE IN HONG KONG, AND IF THEY HAVE TAKEN HONG KONG TO BE THEIR PLACE OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE," SIR DAVID SAID.

HE SAID THAT FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS IN THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP, THE BRITISH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS HAD REACHED A COMMON UNDERSTANDING THAT A PERSON MIGHT ESTABLISH THAT HE HAD TAKEN HONG KONG AS HIS PLACE OF PERMANENT RESIDENCE BY SIGNING A SIMPLE DECLARATION.

"IT WILL THUS BE RELATIVELY EASY FOR EXPATRIATES TO BECOME PERMANENT RESIDENTS OF THE HKSAR.

"WITH SUCH A STATUS, THEY WILL ENJOY THE AUTOMATIC RIGHT OF ENTRY INTO THE HKSAR, AND THE RIGHT TO LIVE AND WORK HERE, WITHOUT BEING SUBJECT TO THOSE IMMIGRATION CONTROLS APPLICABLE TO NON-PERMANENT RESIDENTS," SIR DAVID SAID.

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EXACT TOLLS WILL NOT RELIEVE TUNNEL CONGESTION

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A PROPOSAL TO REQUIRE ALL MOTORISTS TO PAY EXACT TUNNEL TOLLS HAD BEEN FULLY EXAMINED, BUT IT HAD BEEN FOUND THAT THIS WOULD NOT RELIEVE CONGESTION AT OR OUTSIDE THE TUNNELS, THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON MICHAEL LEUNG, INFORMED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

IN A WRITTEN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON DAVID CHEUNG, MR LEUNG SAID THAT CONGESTION DID NOT RESULT FROM THE LIMITED CAPACITY OF THE TOLL BOOTHS.

"CONGESTION EXISTS BECAUSE THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC GOING THROUGH THE TUNNEL EXCEEDS THE DESIGNED CAPACITY," HE SAID.

/MR LEUNG

MR LEUNG SAID THAT TO DESIGNATE MORE EXACT PAYMENT BOOTHS OR TO REQUIRE ALL MOTORISTS TO PAY EXACT TOLLS WOULD NOT INCREASE THE FLOW THROUGH A TUNNEL.

ON THE CONTRARY, THIS WOULD AGGRAVATE CONGESTION AT THE PLAZA AREA AND THE TUNNEL PORTAL AND MIGHT ALSO ADVERSELY AFFECT EMERGENCY RESCUE OPERATIONS IN CASE OF ACCIDENTS INSIDE THE TUNNEL.

"FROM A PUBLIC RELATIONS POINT OF VIEW, IT IS ALSO DESIRABLE TO PROVIDE SOME ORDINARY TOLL BOOTHS TO CATER FOR THOSE MOTORISTS WHO HAVE NO SMALL CHANGE." HE SAID.

THERE WERE AT PRESENT FOUR EXACT PAYMENT BOOTHS AT EACH OF THE TWO GOVERNMENT TOLL TUNNELS AND SIX AT THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL. THESE NUMBERS WERE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE UNDER THE CURRENT TRAFFIC CONDITIONS. MR LEUNG ADDED.

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ONE BILL PASSED
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THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION BILL 1989 WAS PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

NINE BILLS WERE INTRODUCED FOR FIRST AND SECOND READINGS. THESE WERE THE CONSUMER COUNCIL (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989, THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1989, THE ELECTRICITY BILL 1989, THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF POLLUTION) BILL 1989, THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIABILITY AND COMPENSATION FOR OIL POLLUTION) BILL 1989, THE LAW REFORM (LEGAL EFFECTS OF AGE) BILL 1989, THE PROTECTION OF WAGES ON INSOLVENCY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989, THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1989, AND THE GAMBLING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1989.

DEBATES ON THESE BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

THE FIRST REPORT FROM THE HONG KONG BROADCASTING AUTHORITY AND THE WHITE PAPER ON "POLLUTION IN HONG KONG -- A TIME TO ACT" WERE TABLED.

TWO MOTIONS, MOVED UNDER THE ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE AND THE PHARMACY AND POISONS ORDINANCE RESPECTIVELY, WERE PASSED.

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FC APPROVES CIVIL SERVICE PAY ADJUSTMENTS

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THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TODAY (WEDNESDAY) APPROVED THE 1989 CIVIL SERVICE PAY ADJUSTMENTS FOR BOTH DIRECTORATE AND NON-DIRECTORATE LEVELS WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1989.

FOR NON-DIRECTORATE STAFF, ABOUT 13.43 PER CENT WAS APPROVED FOR THE UPPER PAY BAND. FOR MAGISTRATES BELOW THE TOP POINT OF THEIR SALARY SCALE AND FOR LAY MAGISTRATES, FOR THE MIDDLE AND LOWER BANDS, IT WOULD BE 14.81 PER CENT.

FOR DIRECTORATE AND EQUIVALENT RANKS IN THE DISCIPLINED SERVICES, AND JUDICIAL OFFICERS ON DIRECTORATE EQUIVALENT SALARIES, AN ADJUSTMENT OF ABOUT 14.5 PER CENT WAS APPROVED.

FOR THE THREE NON-DIRECTORATE PAY BANDS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE TOLD THE PAY TREND SURVEY INDICATORS HAD FOR THE FIRST TIME INCLUDED INCREASES ATTRIBUTABLE TO MERIT AND IN-SCALE INCREMENTS AS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

THE INDICATORS CALCULATED BY THIS NEW METHOD HAD BEEN DISCOUNTED BY THE PAYROLL COST OF CIVIL SERVICE INCREMENTS.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ALSO APPROVED SIMILAR ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PAY SCALES AND RATES OF PAY OF ORGANISATIONS, INCLUDING DEFICIENCY SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS, WHICH ARE NORMALLY ADJUSTED IN LINE WITH CIVIL SERVICE PAY.

MEMBERS NOTED THAT SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF ABOUT \$3,837 MILLION WOULD BE REQUIRED IN 1989-90.

THEY ALSO NOTED THAT SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION OF ABOUT \$110 MILLION SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE, ON APPLICATION, TO DISCRETIONARY SUBVENTED ORGANISATIONS IN 1989-90.

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SEPARATE ICAC SALARY SCALE TO BE CREATED

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THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS DECIDED THAT SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE PAY OF THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION (ICAC) SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO LINE WITH THE NEW POLICE PAY SCALE WHICH WAS ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLINED SERVICES PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN ANNOUNCED TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

THIS IS TO BE ACHIEVED BY THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE ICAC SALARY SCALE.

/ICAC GRADES

ICAC GRADES HAVE BEEN PAID FROM THE MASTER PAY SCALE AT LEVELS WHICH BROADLY CORRESPONDED TO THOSE FOR EQUIVALENT RANKS IN THE POLICE BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRESENT POLICE PAY SCALE, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THIS RELATIONSHIP WITH POLICE PAY, WHICH HAD EXISTED SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ICAC IN 1974, WAS CHANGED AS A RESULT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICE PAY SCALE WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1988.

THE SALARIES OF ICAC GRADES ARE NOW SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER THAN THOSE OF THEIR POLICE COUNTERPARTS.

"THE ICAC SALARY SCALE WILL RESTORE THE RELATIONSHIP THAT EXISTED BETWEEN ICAC AND POLICE PAY SCALES BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE POLICE PAY SCALE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

IT WILL HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING THE SALARY OF ICAC GRADES BY AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 8.4 PER CENT.

"THE FINANCE COMMITTEE WILL BE ASKED TO APPROVE THE ICAC SALARY SCALE WITH EFFECT FROM APRIL 1, 1988, THE SAME DATE AS FOR THE POLICE PAY SCALE.

"IF APPROVED, THE NEW SCALE WILL COST AN ADDITIONAL \$14.3 MILLION A YEAR."

"THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE SALARY SCALE FOR THE ICAC WILL UNDERLINE ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM THE CIVIL SERVICE," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

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OMELCO NATIONALITY WORKING GROUP REPORTS ON WORK
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FOLLOWING IS THE CONTENT OF TODAY'S PRESS BRIEFING BY ROSTER MEMBERS OF THE OMELCO SPECIAL WORKING GROUP ON NATIONALITY, DR DANIEL TSE, MR EDWARD HO, MR RONALD ARCULLI AND MRS PEGGY LAM:

"THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, THE HON DAME LYDIA DUNN AND THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, THE HON ALLEN LEE IMMEDIATELY STARTED THEIR WORK IN PRESSING FOR THE RIGHT OF ABODE FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ON THEIR ARRIVAL IN LONDON YESTERDAY (TUESDAY).

"THEY MET WITH SIX MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS INCLUDING LORD MACLEHOSE, FORMER GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG. THEY ALSO HAD A MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE ANGLO HONG KONG PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY SOME 30 MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. MEMBERS OF THE OMELCO SPECIAL WORKING GROUP ARE GLAD THAT ACCORDING TO THE TWO SENIOR MEMBERS, ALL OF THEM SHOWED A GREAT DEAL OF INTEREST IN, AND CONCERN FOR, THE HONG KONG CASE.

"THE TWO SENIOR MEMBERS ALSO SPENT AN HOUR WITH THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE. THEY WERE INFORMED THAT THE COMMITTEE INTENDED TO PUBLISH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM THEIR REPORT ON HONG KONG AT THE END OF THE MONTH.

"TODAY (WEDNESDAY), THEY WILL ATTEND A DEBATE ON HONG KONG AT THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN THE AFTERNOON, PRECEDED BY A LUNCH WITH LORD BRAMALL, THE FORMER COMMANDER OF BRITISH FORCES IN HONG KONG. A SERIES OF TELEVISION, RADIO AND PRESS INTERVIEWS HAVE ALSO BEEN SCHEDULED.

"THE TWO SENIOR MEMBERS HAVE RECEIVED A LOT OF SUPPORT AND OFFERS TO HELP FROM PEOPLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, INCLUDING ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION, THE HONG KONG LINK, THE HONG KONG FOUNDATION, THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND MANY BIG FIRMS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AS WELL AS INDIVIDUALS. BOTH DAME LYDIA AND MR ALLEN LEE WERE VERY APPRECIATIVE OF THEIR SUPPORT.

"THEY HAVE ALSO RECEIVED TREMENDOUS MEDIA INTEREST AND SUPPORT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. TO QUOTE ONE EXAMPLE, THE TIMES HAS COME OUT WITH A VERY ENCOURAGING EDITORIAL SAYING: 'THEY (DAME LYDIA AND MR LEE), SEEK, MOREOVER, EXACTLY WHAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS PROCLAIMED TO BE ITS OWN GOAL: CONFIDENCE IN HONG KONG IN THE YEARS LEADING TO ITS TRANSFER TO CHINESE SOVERIGNTY, AND THE LONG-TERM WELFARE AND PROSPERITY OF ITS PEOPLE. TALK OF 3.25 MILLION PEOPLE POURING INTO THIS COUNTRY IF THEIR RIGHT OF ABODE HERE WERE RESTORED TO THEM IS IRRESPONSIBLE SCARE-MONGERING. THIS IS ENTIRELY WITHIN ITS (HMG'S) POWER. IT IS A MORAL OBLIGATION. IT MAKES POLITICAL SENSE. WITHOUT AN ESCAPE ROUTE, HOWEVER, DEMOCRACY IS AN ILLUSION.'

"MANY PEOPLE IN HONG KONG HAVE WRITTEN DIRECTLY TO THE PRIME MINISTER. AS FAR AS OMELCO IS CONCERNED, WE HAVE RECEIVED A TREMENDOUS VOLUME OF ORAL AND WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS IN SUPPORT OF ITS POSITION. UP TO 11 AM TODAY, WE HAVE RECEIVED LETTERS FROM ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH MORE THAN 4,000 SIGNATURES. THESE ORGANISATIONS INCLUDED ALL THE 19 DISTRICT BOARD CHAIRMEN, FEDERATION OF HONG KONG INDUSTRIES, HONG KONG SUBSIDIZED SECONDARY SCHOOLS COUNCIL AND CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG STUDENTS' UNION. THESE LETTERS WILL BE FORWARDED TONIGHT BY SPECIAL DELIVERY SERVICE TO THE TWO SENIOR MEMBERS FOR PRESENTATION TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON FRIDAY.

"MEANWHILE, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE REMINDED THAT THEY MAY CONTACT THE OMELCO SECRETARIAT ON 5-264027 DURING OFFICE HOURS SHOULD THEY WISH TO SEEK INFORMATION OR ADVICE ON THE NATIONALITY ISSUE.

"REGARDING PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENT AT THE QUESTION TIME IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS YESTERDAY THAT BRITAIN WOULD SEEK THE HELP OF THE WHOLE WORLD IF THE HONG KONG REFUGEE PROBLEM EMERGED, MEMBERS OF THE OMELCO SPECIAL WORKING GROUP THOUGHT THAT THIS WAS NOT WORKABLE FOR TWO REASONS.

"FIRSTLY, WE CANNOT SEE HOW WE CAN BE TREATED AS REFUGEES BEFORE 1997 WHEN HONG KONG IS STILL UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION.

"SECONDLY, WHAT WE ARE REALLY ASKING HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO DO IS TO STABILISE HONG KONG NOW AS WE WANT TO STAY HERE. THEREFORE, PROVIDING AN EXIT WHEN PROBLEMS ARISE WOULD BE TOO LATE. THIS WILL NOT STABILISE HONG KONG. IT IS A QUESTION OF CONFIDENCE."

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PUBLIC TRANSPORT FARES TO GO UP IN JULY

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THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS APPROVED FARE INCREASE APPLICATIONS BY STAR FERRY, LANTAU TAXI OPERATORS AND THE CHINA MOTOR BUS COMPANY (CMB) RANGING FROM AN AVERAGE OF ABOUT 11 PER CENT TO 20 PER CENT IN LINE WITH INFLATION AND INCREASED OPERATING COSTS.

THE FARE INCREASES FOR CMB AND STAR FERRY WILL TAKE EFFECT FROM JULY 2 THIS YEAR AND THAT FOR LANTAU TAXIS ON JULY 10.

AFTER REVISION OF CMB FARES, 74 PER CENT OF CMB PASSENGERS WILL PAY AN ADDITIONAL 10 TO 30 CENTS, AND 25 PER CENT AN ADDITIONAL 40 TO 50 CENTS.

THE REMAINING ONE PER CENT, MOSTLY ON EXPRESS COACH ROUTES, WILL PAY AN ADDITIONAL 80 CENTS TO \$1.60.

FOR CROSS HARBOUR BUS SERVICES WHICH ARE JOINTLY OPERATED WITH KOWLOON MOTOR BUS COMPANY, THE FARES WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED.

IN APPROVING THE FARE RISE, THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT CMB'S FINANCIAL POSITION AFFECTED BY RISING INFLATION IN THE THREE YEARS SINCE THE LAST INCREASE IN APRIL 1986.

THE MAIN FACTORS WERE INCREASES IN OPERATING COSTS DUE TO INFLATION, AND THE NEED TO MEET COSTS OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS. THE APPROVED OVERALL INCREASE OF 20 PER CENT IS BELOW THE AGGREGATE INFLATION OF 24 PER CENT SINCE CMB'S LAST FARE INCREASE.

THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD AND RESIDENTS OF SOUTHERN DISTRICT REGARDING THE RELATIVELY HIGH FARE LEVELS ON SOUTHERN ROUTES COMPARED WITH NON-SOUTHERN ROUTES WAS ALSO NOTED.

TO NARROW THE FARE DIFFERENTIALS, THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL APPROVED SEVERAL MEASURES. THESE INCLUDE:

- * AN AVERAGE INCREASE OF 15 PER CENT FOR ALL SOUTHERN ROUTES AS COMPARED WITH AN AVERAGE INCREASE OF 24 PER CENT FOR NON-SOUTHERN ROUTES;
- * A SECTION FARE OF \$1.20 ON ROUTE 97 FOR TRIPS FROM AP LEI CHAU TO WONG CHUK HANG; AND
- * INTRODUCTION OF TWO NEW FARE BANDS INTO THE SOUTHERN EXPRESS ROUTE GROUP, SO REDUCING THE INCREASES ON FOUR ROUTES (ROUTES 72, 92, 38, 42).

HOWEVER, A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT THAT REDUCTION OF FARE DIFFERENTIALS BETWEEN SOUTHERN AND NON-SOUTHERN ROUTES COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED PROGRESSIVELY. A SUDDEN AND SHARP REDUCTION OF THE DIFFERENTIALS COULD LEAD TO DRASTIC FARE INCREASES OR SIGNIFICANT SERVICE REDUCTIONS ON NON-SOUTHERN ROUTES.

/HE ADDED

HE ADDED THAT THE APPROVED MEASURES ARE A FIRST STEP TO REDUCE THE FARE DIFFERENTIALS AND THEY WILL BE CONTINUED IN FUTURE FARE ADJUSTMENT EXERCISES.

"WE MUST ALLOW TIME TO MONITOR THE IMPACT OF INCREMENTAL FARE CHARGES ON PASSENGERS' TRAVEL PATTERNS, AND ON CMB'S FINANCIAL SITUATION," HE SAID.

"FURTHERMORE A STUDY OF CMB'S FARE STRUCTURE BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT IS BEING CONDUCTED. THIS STUDY IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED IN AUTUMN AND WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD," HE SAID.

FOR STAR FERRY'S EDINBURGH PLACE TO KOWLOON POINT SERVICE, THE UPPER DECK FARE FOR ADULTS WILL BE INCREASED BY 20 CENTS FROM 80 CENTS TO \$1 AND THAT FOR CHILDREN BY 10 CENTS FROM 50 CENTS TO 60 CENTS. THE COST OF A MONTHLY TICKET WILL GO UP FROM \$39 TO \$50.

HOWEVER, LOWER DECK FARES FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED AT 60 CENTS.

FARES FOR THE EDINBURGH PLACE TO HUNG HOM SERVICE WILL BE INCREASED BY 10 CENTS FROM 90 CENTS TO \$1 FOR BOTH ADULT UPPER DECK FARES AND LOWER DECK FARES, WHILE UPPER DECK FARES FOR CHILDREN RISE FROM 50 CENTS TO 60 CENTS.

THERE WILL BE NO FARE INCREASE FOR THE WAN CHAI TO KOWLOON POINT SERVICE.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAD CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE STAR FERRY COMPANY AND APPROVED THE INCREASES TO MEET RISING OPERATING COSTS DUE TO INFLATION AND THE COST OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.

FOR LANTAU'S TAXI FARES, THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL APPROVED THE FLAGFALL FOR THE FIRST TWO KILOMETRES TO INCREASE FROM \$5 TO \$5.50 AND SUBSEQUENT DISTANCE CHARGES FROM \$0.50 EVERY 0.20 KILOMETRE TO \$0.70 EVERY 0.25 KILOMETRE.

WAITING TIME CHARGE WILL BE \$0.70 FOR ONE MINUTE INSTEAD OF \$0.50. RADIO-CALL SURCHARGE WILL BE INCREASED FROM \$1 TO \$2.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT IN MAKING THE DECISION, THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL HAD TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE TAXI TRADE ON LANTAU, INCLUDING INFLATION, RISING MAINTENANCE AND OPERATING COSTS, AS WELL AS THE LEVEL OF TAXI SERVICE AND THE FARE DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN TAXI AND FRANCHISED BUSES ON THE ISLAND. THIS NEW FARE SCALE IS ALSO IN LINE WITH THAT FOR NEW TERRITORIES TAXIS.

THE EXISTING AND NEW FARE SCALES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

	EXISTING FARES (\$)	NEW FARES (\$)
	-----	-----
FLAGFALL FOR THE THE FIRST 2 KM	5.00	5.50
AFTER THE FIRST 2 KM	0.50	0.70
	(EVERY 0.2 KM)	(EVERY 0.25 KM)
FOR EVERY 1 MINUTE OF WAITING TIME	0.50	0.70
SURCHARGE FOR EACH ARTICLE OF BAGGAGE, ANIMAL OR BIRD	2.00	2.00
SURCHARGE FOR RADIO-CALL SERVICE	1.00	2.00

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GOVERNOR TO VISIT ISLANDS DISTRICT

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THE GOVERNOR, SIR DAVID WILSON, WILL VISIT THE ISLANDS DISTRICT TOMORROW (THURSDAY) TO SEE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS.

SIR DAVID WILL FIRST FLY TO LAMMA ISLAND TO VISIT THE HONGKONG ELECTRIC COMPANY AT YUNG SHUE WAN WHERE HE WILL BE BRIEFED ON THE COMPANY'S ASH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY.

HE WILL THEN FLY TO NGONG PING ON LANTAU ISLAND WHERE HE WILL TOUR THE PO LIN MONASTERY AND THE CONSTRUCTION SITE OF THE BIG BUDDHA STATUE.

SIR DAVID WILL BE UPDATED ON THE VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS ON LANTAU WHICH WERE DESIGNED TO COPE WITH THE EXPECTED INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF TOURISTS.

THE GOVERNOR'S LAST STOP WILL BE NGAN WAN ESTATE AT MUI WO WHERE HE WILL VISIT A FAMILY.

HE WILL ALSO ATTEND A TEA RECEPTION AND MEET MEMBERS OF THE ISLANDS DISTRICT BOARD AT THE ESTATE PLAZA.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE LANTAU PART OF THE GOVERNOR'S VISIT TO THE ISLANDS DISTRICT TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

A PRESS LAUNCH WILL LEAVE THE KOWLOON PUBLIC PIER, TSIM SHA TSUI, AT 1.15 PM FOR LANTAU ISLAND. INFORMATION OFFICERS WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1989

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DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IMPORTANT

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IT IS DIFFICULT AT PRESENT TO PREDICT WHAT EFFECT RECENT EVENTS IN CHINA WILL HAVE ON THE TREND TO MOVE LABOUR-INTENSIVE PROCESSES ACROSS THE BORDER, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, SIR PIERS JACOBS, SAID THIS (WEDNESDAY) EVENING.

SIR PIERS SAID IT WAS CLEAR HOWEVER THAT MANUFACTURERS COULD NOT AFFORD TO DO NOTHING, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE BOUND TO BE MORE CAUTIOUS.

SPEAKING AT THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF THE YOUNG INDUSTRIALIST AWARDS OF HONG KONG 1989, HE WARNED THAT COMPETITIONS FROM THE REGION WERE PURSUING HARD TO INCREASE THEIR MARKET SHARE AT THE EXPENSE OF HONG KONG.

"WE MUST PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THIS CHALLENGE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IS ONE AREA THAT REQUIRES MUCH ATTENTION," HE POINTED OUT.

AS HONG KONG ENTERED THE 1990'S, MORE TALENTED YOUNG INDUSTRIALISTS WITH FORESIGHT, ENERGY AND INNOVATION WERE NEEDED, SIR PIERS SAID.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF YOUNG MANUFACTURERS WITH THESE QUALITIES, JUDGING FROM THE OUTCOME OF THIS SELECTION EXERCISE.

"THIS YEAR'S AWARD WINNERS WILL PROVE A SHINING EXAMPLE TO OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE AND WILL LEAD OTHERS TO CONSIDER THE EXISTING AND CHALLENGING FUTURE IN MANUFACTURING," HE ADDED.

A TOTAL OF SEVEN INDUSTRIALISTS INVOLVED IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, FROM AIRCRAFT ENGINEERING AND KNITTING TO PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS AND ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS, WERE HONOURED THIS YEAR.

THE AWARD SCHEME WAS INTRODUCED LAST YEAR BY THE FEDERATION OF HONG KONG INDUSTRIES WITH THE PURPOSE OF RECOGNISING YOUNG LEADERS WHO HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE WELL-BEING OF HONG KONG'S MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

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ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD CONCEPT
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THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT WILL LAUNCH A SERIES OF TERRITORY-WIDE ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE THE CONCEPT OF RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD LATER THIS YEAR. THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE, MR STEPHEN LAW, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT A LUNCHEON MEETING OF THE ROTARY CLUB OF KOWLOON WEST, MR LAW NOTED THAT APART FROM MEETING THE PHYSICAL NEEDS OF THEIR CHILDREN, PARENTS SHOULD ALSO SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS, AND SHOULD AVOID UNNECESSARY PUNISHMENT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A MORE HARMONIOUS FAMILY LIFE.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES HAD BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY PROVIDING FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION SINCE 1979 TO AROUSE THE COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY LIFE.

"ONE OF THE OBJECTIVES OF FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION IS TO HELP INCREASE THE INDIVIDUAL'S UNDERSTANDING AND CARE OF OTHER MEMBERS IN THE FAMILY SO THAT THE QUALITY OF FAMILY LIFE WILL BE IMPROVED," MR LAW SAID.

"ANOTHER OBJECTIVE IS TO HELP PREVENT FAMILY BREAK-UPS WHICH IN TURN MAY LEAD TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, GIRLS RUNNING AWAY FROM HOME AND CHILD ABUSE.

"FURTHERMORE, FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION CAN HELP FOSTER HARMONIOUS INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND AROUSE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY A MORE CARING ONE," HE ADDED.

TO COMMEMORATE THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR THE CHILD, MR LAW SAID HIS DEPARTMENT'S COMMITTEE ON FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN WOULD LAUNCH A SERIES OF TERRITORY-WIDE ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE THE CONCEPT OF RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD LATER THIS YEAR IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT (ISD) AND RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG (RTHK).

THE ACTIVITIES, AIMED AT ENHANCING PARENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING PROPER CARE AND GUIDANCE TO THEIR CHILDREN AND PREVENTING THE OCCURRENCE OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT, WOULD BE CONDUCTED AT TWO LEVELS, MR LAW SAID.

"AT ONE LEVEL, PUBLICITY WORK THROUGH THE MASS MEDIA AS WELL AS TERRITORY-WIDE ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS EXHIBITIONS AND SEMINARS, WILL BE ORGANISED TO ENHANCE THE PUBLIC'S UNDERSTANDING OF PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF FAMILY LIFE.

"AT ANOTHER LEVEL, EDUCATION ON THE PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES AND PROPER ATTITUDE IN CHILD REARING WILL BE STRENGTHENED THROUGH DISTRICT PROGRAMMES SUCH AS TALKS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS TO ENABLE PARENTS TO BETTER HANDLE VARIOUS FAMILY PROBLEMS," HE SAID.

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ON THE MAJOR ACTIVITIES, MR LAW SAID A SEMINAR WOULD BE HELD ON JULY 22 TO AROUSE THE COMMUNITY'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

AN EXHIBITION ON RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD, HIGHLIGHTING THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD NEGLECT AND ABUSE, WOULD BE HELD JOINTLY WITH THE ISD AT SHUN TAK CENTRE, SHEUNG WAN ON OCTOBER 28 AND 29.

THE DEPARTMENT WOULD ALSO WORK WITH RADIO STATIONS IN ORGANISING DRAMA AND QUIZZES TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF CARE FOR THE YOUNG.

JOINTLY WITH RTHK, THE DEPARTMENT WOULD HOLD A FAMILY CARNIVAL AT VICTORIA PARK ON DECEMBER 9 TO HELP PARENTS UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF THEIR CHILDREN.

MR LAW CALLED ON THE COMMUNITY TO ACTIVELY TAKE PART IN AND SUPPORT THESE ACTIVITIES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY SO THAT THE YOUNG WOULD GROW UP HAPPILY AND HEALTHILY.

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GOVT TO CONSIDER GREEN ISLAND RECLAMATION STUDY

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THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONSIDER AT THE END OF THIS YEAR WHICH OF THE FOUR MODULES PROPOSED BY THE GREEN ISLAND RECLAMATION FEASIBILITY STUDY WOULD BE UPDATED TO TIE IN WITH THE TERRITORY'S DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES.

THIS WAS STATED BY THE REGIONAL SECRETARY FOR HONG KONG AND KOWLOON, MR DAVID LAN, TODAY (WEDNESDAY) WHEN HE ADDRESSED A JOINT "A STEP CLOSER" SEMINAR FOR AREA COMMITTEES IN THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT.

MR LAN NOTED THAT THE VIABILITY OF THE GREEN ISLAND RECLAMATION PROJECT WOULD VERY MUCH HINGE ON THE PLANNED LOCATION OF THE NEW AIRPORT, WHICH IN TURN HAD TO BE DECIDED BY THE PORT AND AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT STUDY.

HE REMARKED THAT MANY OF THE OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS IN THE CENTRAL AND WESTERN DISTRICT WOULD BE SOLVED IF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS OF THE RECLAMATION STUDY WERE IMPLEMENTED.

THE STUDY ATTEMPTED TO TACKLE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION IN KENNEDY TOWN AND TO CONSIDER REMOVING THE ABATTOIR AND THE CEMENT PLANT. IT WOULD ALSO AFFECT THE DECISION ON THE WESTERN EXTENSION OF THE MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY, MR LAN ADDED.

THE REGIONAL SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT APART FROM THE GREEN ISLAND RECLAMATION STUDY, TWO MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE DISTRICT WOULD EITHER BE COMPLETED OR GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT WITHIN THIS YEAR.

/"THE UPGRADING

"THE UPGRADING OF CONNAUGHT ROAD WILL BE COMPLETED IN SEVERAL MONTHS, WHILE LAND RESUMPTION NOTICES FOR BUILDING THE PILOT MID-LEVELS ESCALATOR WILL BE GAZETTED SHORTLY," HE SAID.

AT THE SEMINAR, MR LAN STRESSED THAT OVER THE YEARS, AREA COMMITTEES HAD EVOLVED INTO AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COMMUNITY BUILDING MACHINERY AND FOCAL POINTS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION AT THE AREA LEVEL.

HE PAID TRIBUTE TO MEMBERS OF THE SIX LOCAL AREA COMMITTEES FOR THEIR ROLE IN THE CONSULTATION PROCESS, ADDING THAT THEY HAD GIVEN USEFUL SUGGESTIONS IN HELPING TO SOLVE THE DISTRICT'S ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRAFFIC PROBLEMS.

CITING THE RECENT CADOGAN STREET CARGO HANDLING AREA AS AN EXAMPLE, HE NOTED THAT THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HAD, FOLLOWING A JOINT SITE VISIT, ACCEPTED THE VIEWS OF AN AREA COMMITTEE IN MODIFYING THE SCHEME.

TODAY'S SEMINAR WAS ATTENDED BY THE CHAIRMEN AND MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT'S AREA COMMITTEES.

A NUMBER OF THEM EXPRESSED VIEWS ON PROBLEMS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS.

ON THE EFFECTS OF RECENT EVENTS IN CHINA ON HONG KONG, THE REGIONAL SECRETARY TOLD THE GATHERING THAT THE TERRITORY HAD A REMARKABLE TRACK RECORD OF BEING ABLE TO PULL THROUGH WHATEVER ADVERSITIES. HE SAID THAT CONFIDENCE WOULD RETURN AND THAT HONG KONG WOULD BE ABLE TO BOUNCE BACK.

HE CALLED ON ALL AREA COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO DISCARD THEIR DIFFERENCES AND WORK TOGETHER FOR A BETTER HONG KONG.

TODAY'S SEMINAR WAS THE SEVENTH IN A SERIES TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS BETWEEN AREA COMMITTEES AND THE CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION.

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FLOOD CONTROL MEASURES ON NORTH DB AGENDA

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MEMBERS OF THE NORTH DISTRICT BOARD WILL BE BRIEFED ON THE GOVERNMENT'S FLOOD CONTROL MEASURES AND EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT AT THEIR MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

BRIEFING THEM WILL BE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CIVIL ENGINEERING SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE NEW TERRITORIES NORTH EAST DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, THE NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE AND DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE.

THE MEETING WILL ALSO DISCUSS A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT ON RURAL PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY WHICH AIMS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES.

/THE DIRECTOR

THE DIRECTOR OF TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT, DR NIP KAM-FAN. AND THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT TOWN PLANNER OF THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, DR PUN KWOK-SHING, WILL PRESENT THE STRATEGY.

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA INCLUDE A PROPOSAL FOR INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THE USE OF DISTRICT BOARD LOGOS, AND A REPORT FROM THE NORTH DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

YOU ARE INVITED TO COVER THE NORTH DISTRICT BOARD MEETING TOMORROW (THURSDAY) IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE NORTH DISTRICT OFFICE, JOCKEY CLUB ROAD, FANLING. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 9.30 AM.

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GOVT LAND TO LET BY TENDER
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THE BUILDINGS AND LANDS DEPARTMENT IS OFFERING TO LET BY TENDER THREE PIECES OF GOVERNMENT LAND FOR STORAGE PURPOSES.

THE FIRST TWO PISCES ARE A 4,580 SQUARE METRE SITE AT CHOI HA ROAD, JORDAN VALLEY, KOWLOON FOR OPEN STORAGE, AND A 6,450 SQUARE METRE SITE AT LAI CHO ROAD, KWAI CHUNG, NEW TERRITORIES FOR OPEN STORAGE EXCLUDING CONTAINERS.

THEY WILL BE OFFERED FOR AN INITIAL TENANCY PERIOD OF ONE YEAR AFTER WHICH THE LEASE CAN BE EXTENDED ON A QUARTERLY BASIS.

THE THIRD PIECE OF GOVERNMENT LAND, TO BE USED FOR OPEN STORAGE OF EMPTY CONTAINERS ONLY, IS IN AREA 17, TSING YI, NEW TERRITORIES AND HAS AN AREA OF ABOUT 17,000 SQUARE METRES.

THE LEASE IS FOR ONE YEAR COMMENCING FROM AUGUST 1 THIS YEAR AND RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

MEANWHILE, TWO PIECES OF LAND IN TSING YI, NEW TERRITORIES ARE BEING OFFERED TO LET BY TENDER FOR THE PURPOSE OF FEE-PAYING PUBLIC CARPARKS.

ONE IS A 24,000 SQUARE METRE SITE IN AREA 3 FOR THE PARKING OF VEHICLES, EXCLUDING CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS. THE OTHER, A 5,800 SQUARE METRE SITE IN AREA 1 IS FOR THE PARKING OF GOODS VEHICLES, EXCLUDING CONTAINER TRACTORS AND TRAILERS.

THE LEASE FOR BOTH SITES IS FOR ONE YEAR AND RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

/TENDERS FOR

TENDERS FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE FIVE PIECES OF GOVERNMENT LAND SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BEFORE NOON ON JULY 7 THIS YEAR.

FORM OF TENDER, TENDER NOTICE AND CONDITIONS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM AND TENDER PLAN INSPECTED AT THE FOLLOWING OFFICES:

- * THE BUILDING AND LANDS DEPARTMENT, 14TH FLOOR, MURRAY BUILDING, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG;
- * THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICES KOWLOON, 10TH FLOOR, YAU MA TEI CARPARK BUILDING, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON; AND
- * THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE, KWAI TSING FOR THE FOUR PIECES OF LAND IN KWAI CHUNG AND TSING YI.

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QUARTERLY REPORT ON LABOUR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS
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THE REPORT ON THE GENERAL HOUSEHOLD SURVEY FOR JANUARY-MARCH 1989, CONDUCTED BY THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS DEPARTMENT, IS NOW AVAILABLE.

IT CONTAINS STATISTICS ON EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT FOR THE QUARTER.

IT ALSO CONTAINS DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MEMBERS OF THE LABOUR FORCE, INCLUDING THEIR AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, ACTIVITY STATUS, OCCUPATION, INDUSTRY, HOURS WORKED PER WEEK, MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT EARNINGS AS WELL AS REASON FOR UNEMPLOYMENT AND DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

COPIES OF THE REPORT, AT \$10 EACH, CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS CENTRE, GPO BUILDING, CONNAUGHT PLACE, CENTRAL.

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INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES REVISED
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A GOVERNMENT GAZETTE PUBLISHED YESTERDAY (TUESDAY) CONTAINS A LEGAL NOTICE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY HAS AUTHORISED A DECREASE IN THE RATE OF INTEREST PAYABLE ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES.

FROM TOMORROW (THURSDAY), THE NEW ANNUAL RATE OF INTEREST WILL BE 7.80 PER CENT (TAX FREE) AS AGAINST THE CURRENT RATE OF 8.28 PER CENT (TAX FREE).

/INTEREST ON

INTEREST ON TAX RESERVE CERTIFICATES IS CALCULATED IN MONTHLY STEPS AND THE NEW RATE WILL BE \$0.65 PER MONTH PER \$100. INTEREST WILL BE CREDITED AS BEFORE IN RESPECT OF COMPLETE MONTHS BETWEEN PURCHASE AND SURRENDER IN PAYMENT OF TAX.

INTEREST IS ONLY CREDITED WHEN CERTIFICATES ARE USED TO PAY TAX AND NO INTEREST IS DUE WHERE THE PRINCIPAL VALUE OF A CERTIFICATE IS REPAID BY A CHEQUE.

THE NEW RATE WILL APPLY TO ALL CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER TOMORROW.

CERTIFICATES WHICH WERE ISSUED BEFORE TOMORROW WILL CONTINUE TO EARN INTEREST AS FOLLOWS:

3.00 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER DECEMBER 2, 1987 AND BEFORE DECEMBER 9, 1987;
2.04 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER DECEMBER 9, 1987 AND BEFORE FEBRUARY 20, 1988;
2.76 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER FEBRUARY 20, 1988 AND BEFORE APRIL 13, 1988;
3.36 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER APRIL 13, 1988 AND BEFORE MAY 11, 1988;
4.32 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER MAY 11, 1988 AND BEFORE JUNE 16, 1988;
4.8 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JUNE 16, 1988 AND BEFORE JUNE 29, 1988;
5.28 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JUNE 29, 1988 AND BEFORE JULY 27, 1988;
5.76 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER JULY 27, 1988 AND BEFORE AUGUST 17, 1988;
6.36 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER AUGUST 17, 1988 AND BEFORE DECEMBER 7, 1988;
6.84 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER DECEMBER 7, 1988 AND BEFORE FEBRUARY 15, 1989;
7.32 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER FEBRUARY 15, 1989 AND BEFORE MARCH 8, 1989;
7.80 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER MARCH 8, 1989 AND BEFORE MARCH 22, 1989; AND
8.28 PER CENT	PER ANNUM FOR CERTIFICATES ISSUED ON OR AFTER MARCH 22, 1989 AND BEFORE JUNE 22, 1989.

/BUT ALWAYS

BUT ALWAYS SUBJECT TO THE GENERAL RULE THAT INTEREST CEASES TO ACCRUE AFTER 36 COMPLETE MONTHS WITHOUT SURRENDER FOR PAYMENT OF TAX.

EXAMPLE: \$1,000 CERTIFICATES PURCHASED ON JUNE 22, 1989, JULY 22, 1989 AND AUGUST 22, 1989 RESPECTIVELY. SURRENDER IN PAYMENT OF TAX DUE ON SEPTEMBER 21, 1989 WILL HAVE INTEREST CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

ON \$1,000, JUNE 22, 1989 TO SEPTEMBER 21, 1989	
3 COMPLETE MONTHS AT \$6.5 PER MONTH	= \$19.50
ON \$1,000, JULY 22, 1989 TO SEPTEMBER 21, 1989	
2 COMPLETE MONTHS AT \$6.5 PER MONTH	= \$13.00
ON \$1,000, AUGUST 22, 1989 TO SEPTEMBER 21, 1989	
1 COMPLETE MONTH AT \$6.5 PER MONTH	= \$ 6.50

	\$39.00
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TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN SHAU KEI WAN AND KWUN TONG

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JUNE 23), TAI ON STREET IN SHAU KEI WAN BETWEEN TAI HONG STREET AND THE ACCESS ROAD LEADING TO THE SAI WAN HO FERRY CONCOURSE WILL BE RE-ROUTED FROM ONE-WAY WESTBOUND TO TWO-WAY.

TRAFFIC ON TAI ON STREET EASTBOUND WILL BE PERMITTED TO TURN RIGHT ONLY AT THE JUNCTION OF TAI ON STREET WITH THE ACCESS ROAD LEADING TO SAI WAN HO FERRY CONCOURSE.

AT THE SAME TIME, A SECTION OF SHUI WO STREET BETWEEN WAN HON STREET AND KA LOK STREET IN KWUN TONG WILL BE ROUTED TWO-WAY.

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LANE CLOSURES IN SHA TIN

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED THAT TO FACILITATE ROAD RESURFACING WORK, TWO SECTIONS OF TAI PO ROAD (SOUTHBOUND) IN SHA TIN WILL BE CLOSED FROM FRIDAY (JUNE 23).

ABOUT 300 METRES OF THE SLOW LANE SOUTH OF TOLO HIGHWAY WILL BE CLOSED FROM 8 PM ON FRIDAY TO 8 PM ON JULY 3.

IN ADDITION, ABOUT 300 METRES OF THE CENTRE LANE SOUTH OF TOLO HIGHWAY WILL BE CLOSED BETWEEN 8 PM AND 8 AM THE NEXT DAY FROM FRIDAY TO JULY 2.

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RIGHT-TURN BAN ON CHATER ROAD

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THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED THAT FROM 10 AM ON FRIDAY (JUNE 23), WESTBOUND TRAFFIC ON CHATER ROAD IN CENTRAL WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TURN RIGHT TO THE FURAMA INTER-CONTINENTAL HOTEL AND THE UNNAMED ACCESS ROAD BETWEEN NO. 3 CHATER ROAD AND THE HOTEL.

THE RIGHT-TURN BAN WILL BE IN FORCE FROM 7 AM TO 7 PM DAILY, EXCEPT ON SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS, TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW.

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