



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES
BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, HONG KONG. TEL.: 842 8777

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
GOVERNOR IN LEGCO	1
LEGCO AND ACC BRIEFED ON AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME	15
WORK ON HARBOUR SEWERAGE PROJECTS SOON BEGIN	17
AN HONOURABLE SOLUTION FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES URGED	18
TIGHTER CONTROL OF CATEGORY III VIDEOTAPES AND LASERDISCS ...	19
WHOLE-DAY AUCTION OF CAR MARKS	21
EPCOM RENAMED ACE TO REFLECT WIDER RESPONSIBILITIES	22
THREE MORE HIV-INFECTED CASES CONFIRMED	23
APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS	24
\$10 GOLD COIN OVER-SUBSCRIBED	25
AIR QUALITY REPORT FOR DECEMBER	25
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MUSICIANS AND DANCERS	27
COOL AND CLOUDY IN DECEMBER	28
MORE THAN 1,100 YEARS DEDICATED TO EDUCATION	31
SCHOOL QUIZ AND TELEMATCH CONTEST ON AIDS	31
HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS ..	32

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

- 1 -

GOVERNOR IN LEGCO

* * * * *

FOLLOWING IS THE STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNOR, THE RT HON CHRISTOPHER PATTEN, AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (THURSDAY):

MR PRESIDENT,

IN MY POLICY ADDRESS, I SAID THAT ONE OF OUR MAIN PRIORITIES MUST BE TO KEEP HONG KONG'S TRAFFIC MOVING. THIS IS, OF COURSE, VITAL TO OUR ECONOMY AND TO PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOOD. PARADOXICALLY, IT IS ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INCREASING PERSONAL WEALTH THAT ARE PLACING OUR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER SO MUCH PRESSURE. WE ARE THE VICTIMS OF OUR OWN SUCCESS.

WE ARE FORTUNATE IN THAT 90% OF THE TEN MILLION PASSENGER TRIPS MADE IN THE TERRITORY EACH DAY ARE BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT. LEVELS OF PRIVATE CAR OWNERSHIP ARE LOW COMPARED WITH OTHER PLACES. WE ARE ALSO FORTUNATE THAT, TAKEN OVERALL, OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM FUNCTIONS EFFICIENTLY, OFFERS A WIDE CHOICE TO TRAVELLERS AT REASONABLE FARES, AND REQUIRES NO DIRECT PUBLIC SUBSIDY. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WE CAN AFFORD TO BE COMPLACENT. BUT WE CAN JUSTIFIABLY BE PROUD OF TRANSPORT FACILITIES WHICH ARE THE ENVY OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN ASIA AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

AGAINST A BACKGROUND OF INCREASING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, WE WILL BE KEEPING THE TRAFFIC MOVING IN THREE WAYS:

- (A) FIRST, WE WILL CONTINUE TO INVEST IN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE - \$9 BILLION IS TO BE SPENT NEXT YEAR COMPARED WITH \$7 BILLION THIS YEAR AND \$4 BILLION LAST;
- (B) SECOND, WE WILL PROMOTE THE EXPANSION AND UPGRADING OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES TO MEET RISING PUBLIC ASPIRATIONS - AND HERE I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR THE FUTURE EXTENSION OF THE RAIL SYSTEM WHICH HAS SUCH OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES IN HONG KONG'S CROWDED ENVIRONMENT AS AN EFFICIENT, NON-POLLUTING MOVER OF PEOPLE; AND
- (C) THIRD, WE WILL IMPROVE ROAD MANAGEMENT SO AS TO DERIVE THE MAXIMUM RETURN FROM OUR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - FOR EXAMPLE THROUGH CONTINUING TO IMPLEMENT AND UPGRADE COMPUTERISED AREA TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEMS. THESE HAVE IMPROVED THE TRAFFIC FLOW IN SOME AREAS BY UP TO 30%.

/IN HONG

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

- 2 -

IN HONG KONG, AS IN THE PAST, WE MUST FACE UP TO OUR TRAFFIC PROBLEMS AND FIND SOLUTIONS. WORK HAS ALREADY BEGUN ON THE DUAL THREE LANE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING WHICH WILL BRING LASTING BENEFITS TO CROSS HARBOUR TRAVELLERS. WE HAVE RECENTLY COMMITTED OURSELVES TO BUILDING THE \$3 BILLION TING KAU BRIDGE AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN SO AS TO EASE TRAVEL BETWEEN THE NORTHWEST NEW TERRITORIES AND THE URBAN AREA. AND WE HAVE INVITED BIDS FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO BUILD THE REMAINDER OF THE ROUTE THREE COUNTRY PARK SECTION UNDER A FRANCHISE ARRANGEMENT. THIS WILL RELIEVE THE TUEN MUN ROAD AND GREATLY IMPROVE TRANSPORT LINKS BETWEEN THE BORDER AND THE CONTAINER PORT.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION IS NOT UNIQUE TO HONG KONG. IT IS A DISEASE THAT PLAGUES MOST MAJOR CITIES. SO FAR WE HAVE COPEDED BETTER THAN MOST. BUT KEEPING HONG KONG TRAFFIC MOVING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY WILL BE A MAJOR CHALLENGE. IT MUST BE ADDRESSED BOLDLY AND IMAGINATIVELY IF WE ARE TO MAINTAIN OUR ECONOMIC SUCCESS AND OUR EASE OF MOVEMENT. WE WILL CONTINUE TO INVEST SUBSTANTIALLY IN ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE WHILE RECOGNISING THAT THERE ARE NATURAL LIMITS ON WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED, PARTICULARLY IN THE OLDER URBAN AREAS. WE MUST ENSURE THAT THE VEHICLE FLEET IS NOT ALLOWED TO GROW AT SUCH A PACE THAT IT LEADS TO AN UNACCEPTABLE DETERIORATION IN AIR QUALITY. IN PARTICULAR, THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE CARS, WHILE STARTING FROM A RELATIVELY LOW BASE, HAS INCREASED VERY SIGNIFICANTLY IN RECENT YEARS. GROWTH OF THIS MAGNITUDE CANNOT BE SUSTAINED INDEFINITELY.

IN DEALING WITH THESE AND OTHER TRANSPORT PROBLEMS WE WILL BE FACED WITH DIFFICULT CHOICES, BALANCING THE INTERESTS OF VEHICLE OWNERS AND THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE. IN THE PERIOD AHEAD, THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE LOOKING TO MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING IN REACHING DECISIONS WHICH WILL BEST SERVE THE FUTURE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF HONG KONG.

THANK YOU, MR PRESIDENT.

MR VINCENT CHENG: THANK YOU MR PRESIDENT. GOVERNOR, I HAVE A QUESTION WHICH YOU HAVE NOT COVERED. IT'S ABOUT TRANSPORTATION FOR THE UNDER PRIVILEGED, I MEAN THE SEVERELY DISABLED AND THE SEVERELY MENTALLY RETARDED. I'M NOT SURE WHETHER I WILL BE RULED OUT OF ORDER BUT I'D BETTER MAKE SOME QUESTION ON THAT. AT THE MOMENT WE ADOPT A WEALTHY APPROACH, WHICH IS TO HAVE A VOLUNTARY AGENCY RUNNING A REHAB BUS AND THE REHAB BUSES ARE REALLY DONATED BY CORPORATIONS. THIS SORT OF, IF I MAY CALL IT, BACK AND BOW APPROACH HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES WE NEED AND WE HAVE TO CONSTANTLY TURN AWAY REQUESTS. I AM JUST WONDERING WHETHER THE GOVERNOR WOULD RECONSIDER THIS APPROACH TO THOSE WHO CANNOT GET ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND PROVIDE MORE RESOURCES TO THIS TYPE OF PEOPLE? THANK YOU.

/GOVERNOR:

GOVERNOR: I THINK THE HONOURABLE GENTLEMAN WILL KNOW THAT THIS IS A SUBJECT IN WHICH I'VE TAKEN A CLOSE PERSONAL INTEREST, NOT LEAST BECAUSE IT'S BEEN RAISED WITH ME AT PUBLIC MEETINGS THAT I'VE HELD BOTH IN 1992 AND IN 1993, FOLLOWING MY POLICY ADDRESS TO THIS COUNCIL. AFTER THE EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN AT MEETINGS IN 1992, I HELD A MEETING IN DECEMBER 1992, WITH BOTH REPRESENTATIVES OF DISABLED GROUPS AND WITH THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPERATORS AND WITH OTHERS WHO ARE CONCERNED IN THIS AREA. I THINK IT WAS GENERALLY REGARDED AS BEING A HELPFUL MEETING ON BOTH SIDES. I THOUGHT THE INTELLIGENCE AND MODERATION OF THE REQUESTS MADE BY THOSE REPRESENTING THE DISABLED WERE VERY IMPRESSIVE. I ALSO THOUGHT THAT THE TRANSPORT OPERATORS THEMSELVES WERE OBVIOUSLY KEEN TO RESPOND AS CONSTRUCTIVELY AS POSSIBLE.

WE'RE HAVING A FURTHER MEETING IN, I THINK IT'S FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR, CERTAINLY IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS, AT WHICH WE'RE GOING TO REVIEW THE PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING IN DECEMBER. AND THERE IS SOME PROGRESS TO REPORT. PROGRESS IN THE COMMITMENTS MADE BY THE KOWLOON CANTON RAILWAY COMPANY, PROGRESS IN THE COMMITMENTS MADE BY THE MTRC, NOT LEAST IN LOOKING AT THE DESIGN FOR THE NEW AIRPORT RAILWAY, PROGRESS IN THE EFFORTS MADE BY SOME OF OUR BUS COMPANIES TO PROVIDE BETTER FOR THE DISABLED, THOUGH WE KNOW THE PARTICULAR PROBLEMS WHICH BUS COMPANIES HAVE IN THIS RESPECT.

AS FOR REHAB BUS SERVICES, TWO TYPES OF SERVICES SCHEDULE AND 'DIAL A RIDE', ARE NOW AVAILABLE. I'M TOLD THAT THE SCHEDULE SERVICE WILL BE EXPANDED WITH THE ADDITION OF FOUR ROUTES A YEAR BETWEEN 1993/94 AND 1997/98 AND THE 'DIAL A RIDE' SERVICE WILL ALSO BE IMPROVED WITH THE PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL VEHICLES. I CAN ASSURE THE HONOURABLE MEMBER THAT THIS IS A SUBJECT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY AND I HOPE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE FURTHER PROGRESS AFTER THE NEXT MEETING BETWEEN THE GROUPS THAT I MENTIONED. ONE VERY POSITIVE, PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT THAT'S BEEN MADE IS THAT WE WERE ABLE TO SECURE THE PUBLICATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS' GUIDE TO HELP THE DISABLED PLAN THEIR TRIPS AND THAT CAME OUT AT THE END OF LAST YEAR, ON 30 DECEMBER. I THINK COPIES HAVE SINCE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO ALL DISABLED GROUPS AND I THINK THEY FOUND THEM VERY HELPFUL.

MR DAVID LI: SIR, WILL YOU PLEASE ADVISE THIS COUNCIL HOW THE RECENT INCREASE IN TAXI RATE CAN BE JUSTIFIED WHEN NO MEASURES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN WHICH ENSURE BETTER QUALITY OF SERVICE FOR TAXI USERS?

GOVERNOR: AS I'M SURE THE HONOURABLE MEMBER WILL KNOW, THE QUESTION OF TAXI FARES WAS REFERRED TO THE TAC, TO THE TRANSPORT ADVISORY COUNCIL AND IT WAS ONLY AFTER THEIR ADVICE HAD BEEN TAKEN THAT THE INCREASE IN FARES WAS AGREED. BUT WHILE THE DISCUSSION ABOUT TAXI FARES WAS TAKING PLACE I THINK EVERYBODY WAS AWARE OF INCREASED CONCERN BEING EXPRESSED, BOTH ABOUT THE QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ABOUT THE WAY THAT PROVISION IS CURRENTLY ORGANISED, THE WAY THAT TAXIS ARE LICENCED. NOW THIS COUNCIL HAS BEGUN TO ADDRESS THAT ISSUE WITH ITS AGREEMENT TO REGULATIONS WHICH ENSURE THAT FROM NOW ON, OR FROM A MONTH OR SO'S TIME, TAXIS WILL CARRY A PLATE AND A LICENCE WHICH WILL ENABLE UNSATISFIED CUSTOMERS TO IDENTIFY MORE CLEARLY WHO'S BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR A BAD SERVICE. WE'VE ALSO SEEN INCREASED ACTIVITY BY THE POLICE IN ENFORCING EXISTING REGULATIONS AND I HOPE THAT THAT TOO WILL IMPROVE LEVELS OF SERVICE. BUT THE HONOURABLE MEMBER IS ENTIRELY RIGHT IN SAYING THAT THE PUBLIC WILL LOOK TO IMPROVED SERVICES AS THE PRINCIPAL JUSTIFICATION FOR ANY FUTURE INCREASE IN FARES, PARTICULARLY WHEN SO MANY OF OUR CITIZENS DEPEND ON TAXIS, NOT JUST FOR AN OCCASIONAL RETURN HOME BUT FOR A REGULAR MOVEMENT AROUND THE TERRITORY.

/MR LAU

MR LAU WONG-FAT (THROUGH INTERPRETER): MR PRESIDENT, IN RECENT YEARS WE HAVE MORE AND MORE FREIGHT MOVEMENT ACROSS THE BORDER. NOW, WE HAVE LAND TRANSPORT LINKS BUT WE KNOW THAT OUR CROSS-BORDER CONTROL POINTS ARE VERY BUSY. I WONDER WHETHER THE ADMINISTRATION HAS CONSIDERED HAVING A MEETING WITH THE SHENZHEN AUTHORITIES TO SEE WHETHER THE FOURTH LINK, OR FOURTH CONTROL POINT, CAN BE OPENED TO COPE WITH FUTURE DEMAND IN THIS REGARD?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THERE ARE TWO ISSUES THAT ARISE FROM THAT QUESTION. THE FIRST IS THE HOURS AT WHICH EXISTING CROSSING POINTS ARE OPEN AND THE SECOND IS WHETHER WE SHOULD IMPROVE LINKS - AND TRANSPORT LINKS - BETWEEN THE MAINLAND AND HONG KONG, AND PERHAPS I CAN DEAL WITH THOSE IN THAT ORDER.

FIRST OF ALL, AS I AM SURE THE HONOURABLE MEMBER WILL KNOW, WE HAVE PROPOSED TO THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES A TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR OPENING AT ONE OF THE CROSSINGS, A TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR OPENING WITH AT LEAST A COUPLE OF KIOSKS OPEN RIGHT THROUGH THE NIGHT. WE THINK THAT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL AND WOULD HELP TO SMOOTH OUT SOME OF THE PEAKS IN DEMAND AT THE MOMENT AND DEAL WITH SOME OF THE REAL TRANSPORT BLOCKAGES THAT EXIST. THE CHINESE HAVE NOT ACCEPTED THE PROPOSAL FOR TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR OPENING AT LOK MA CHAU. THEY HAVE SAID THAT THERE ARE RESOURCE PROBLEMS ON THEIR SIDE BUT THEY HAVE OFFERED TO RECONSIDER THE ISSUE AT THE END OF THIS YEAR. I THINK THE COUNCIL SHOULD RECOGNISE THAT THE RESOURCE PROBLEMS ARE MORE CONSIDERABLE FOR THEM BECAUSE OF THE PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE OF SHENZHEN AND BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER OF CUSTOMS POINTS THEY HAVE AROUND THEIR BORDER. BUT I DO HOPE THAT WE CAN MAKE PROGRESS ON THAT ISSUE, AN ISSUE WHICH HAS BEEN RAISED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS WITH THE PRC AUTHORITIES BY GROUPS REPRESENTING HONG KONG BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, LIKE, I THINK, THE HONG KONG FEDERATION OF INDUSTRIES. SO, FIRST OF ALL, WE ARE PREPARED AND WISH TO SEE LONGER OPENING HOURS AT OUR BORDER-CROSSINGS AND I HOPE THAT WE CAN MAKE PROGRESS ON THAT SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

SECONDLY, PERHAPS I CAN DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF ADDITIONAL ROUTES, NORTH-SOUTH, ACROSS THE BORDER. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE BOTH FOR OUR OWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHERN CHINA, TO SECURE BETTER RAIL LINKS, NORTH-SOUTH, BETWEEN HONG KONG, BETWEEN OUR CONTAINER PORT AND BETWEEN THE PRC. I THINK THAT THE ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD IN THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, ON WHICH AT PRESENT WE ARE OF COURSE CONSULTING, ARE PARTICULARLY PERSUASIVE IN THIS REGARD. I THINK IN PARTICULAR, THAT TO SEE MORE FREIGHT TRAVELLING NORTH-SOUTH ON RAILWAYS RATHER THAN ON BUSY ROADS IS VERY IMPORTANT. WE KNOW THAT THE PRC THEMSELVES HAVE MADE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE RAIL SYSTEM ON THE MAINLAND AND I HOPE VERY MUCH THEREFORE THAT THEY WILL WELCOME OUR ATTEMPTS TO DO THE SAME IN HONG KONG.

ONCE THE CONSULTATION PERIOD ON THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY HAS BEEN COMPLETED, WE WILL WANT TO COME TO THIS COUNCIL AND TO GO TO OUR CHINESE COLLEAGUES, WITH THOUGHTS ON THE WAY FORWARD, AND I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT WE CAN GET A MOVE ON WITH THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF ITS IMPORTANCE TO OUR ECONOMIC CONVERGENCY WITH CHINA BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF ITS IMPORTANCE TO, FOR EXAMPLE, THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES WHO HAVE VERY STRONG VIEWS ABOUT THE PROVISION OF BETTER RAILWAY FACILITIES IN THAT PART OF THE TERRITORY.

/MR MARVIN

MR MARVIN CHEUNG: SIR, IN THE LIGHT OF THE SEVERE CONGESTION IN THE EXISTING MTR SYSTEM, PARTICULARLY ALONG THE NATHAN ROAD SECTION, WHEN, IN THE OPINION OF THE GOVERNMENT, IS THE FINAL DATE BEYOND WHICH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW MTR ROUTE ALONG THE WESTERN SECTION OF KOWLOON PENINSULAR CANNOT BE DEFERRED WITHOUT JEOPARDISING THE SAFETY OF THE PASSENGERS USING THE NATHAN ROAD SECTION OF THE MTR LINE?

GOVERNOR: I WANT TO SEE US ABLE TO MOVE AHEAD WITH THE RAILWAY SYSTEM ASSOCIATED WITH THE BUILDING OF THE NEW AIRPORT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. THE HONOURABLE MEMBER IS QUITE RIGHT IN SAYING THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAILWAY WILL NOT ONLY SECURE THE SORT OF ACCESS WHICH ANY MODERN CITY SHOULD WANT TO A NEW AIRPORT, BUT WILL ALSO RELIEVE CONGESTION AND TRAFFIC PROBLEMS ELSEWHERE. AND I THINK THAT THE IMPACT ON THE NATHAN ROAD CORRIDOR OF THE LOOSELY DESCRIBED 'AIRPORT RAILWAY' IS ONE OF THE IMPORTANT SIDE EFFECTS, BENEFICIAL SIDE EFFECTS, OF THAT INVESTMENT.

OBVIOUSLY, WE HAVE LOOKED, AS AN ADMINISTRATION, AT WHETHER THERE IS A CASE FOR HAVING A NUMBER OF BITES AT THE RAILWAY AND FOR INVESTING IN SMALLER PARTS OF THE OVERALL SCHEME BECAUSE OF THEIR LOCAL BENEFICIAL EFFECTS RATHER THAN WAITING UNTIL WE CAN GET ON WITH THE WHOLE SCHEME. I HAVE TO SAY THAT I THINK OUR JUDGMENT IS THAT TO TAKE ONE PART OF THE SCHEME AT A TIME WOULD NOT MAKE VERY GOOD SENSE. I DON'T THINK, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT WE COULD JUSTIFY NATHAN ROAD RELIEF IN ECONOMIC OR IN OTHER TERMS AND USE THAT AS A REASON FOR JUST GOING AHEAD WITH THAT PART OF THE RAILWAY REGARDLESS OF OUR ABILITY TO LINK UP WITH THE AIRPORT, BUT WE WILL OBVIOUSLY KEEP THIS UNDER REVIEW.

I JUST REPEAT WHAT I SAID AT THE OUTSET. THE SOONER WE CAN HAVE AN OVERALL AGREEMENT ON THE AIRPORT RAILWAY, AS ON THE AIRPORT ITSELF, THE BETTER. THE BETTER FOR HONG KONG TODAY AND THE BETTER FOR HONG KONG TOMORROW. THE BETTER, IF I MAY SAY SO WITHOUT BEING GUILTY OF LAIZE MAJESTE, THE BETTER FOR THE SAR GOVERNMENT IN DUE COURSE.

MR MOSES CHENG (THROUGH INTERPRETER): THANK YOU MR PRESIDENT. RECENTLY THE NUMBER OF CARS IN HONG KONG HAS BEEN SOARING AND IN THE PAST THE GOVERNMENT ADOPTED FISCAL MEASURES TO SUPPRESS THE GROWTH OF VEHICLES BUT IT SHOWED THAT ONLY SHORT-TERM EFFECTS WERE ACHIEVED. NOW THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO CONSIDER FISCAL MEASURES AGAIN, LIKE TAXATION IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH THE RISE IN THE NUMBER OF CARS. MR GOVERNOR, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD KNOW THAT THIS IS ONLY A SHORT-TERM SOLUTION. WHY DOES THE GOVERNMENT STILL CONSIDER THIS KIND OF FISCAL MEASURES?

GOVERNOR: THE HONOURABLE MEMBER HAS RAISED A QUESTION WHICH I GUESS WILL PROVOKE INCREASINGLY LIVELY, I WOULD USE THE ADJECTIVE ACRIMONIOUS DID I NOT HAVE AS MUCH RESPECT AS I DO FOR MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL, INCREASINGLY LIVELY DEBATE IN THE YEARS AHEAD BECAUSE HONG KONG FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS IS GOING TO FACE BIGGER AND BIGGER PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO CAR OWNERSHIP.

THE LAST MAJOR STUDY WE DID WHICH SHOWED SOME OF THE HAZARDS INVOLVED IN PREDICTING THE CONSEQUENCES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN HONG KONG, THE LAST MAJOR STUDY WE DID SUGGESTED THAT CAR OWNERSHIP WOULD BE GROWING IN THE TERRITORY BY ABOUT 5% A YEAR. WELL, THE TRUTH IS THAT IT'S BEEN GROWING AT ABOUT 10% A YEAR. THE LAST FIGURES WE HAD SUGGESTED GROWTH OF NEARLY 12% IN 1992. WE'VE ALREADY EXCEEDED THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE VEHICLES THAT WE'D ORIGINALLY FORECAST FOR 1996 AND WE'VE EXCEEDED THEM BY A MARGIN OF OVER 40,000. WE PASSED THAT FIGURE IN NOVEMBER, 1993. ALL THOSE FACTS ARE A CONSEQUENCE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, THE SAME ECONOMIC GROWTH WHICH IS MAKING US CHANGE OUR TELEPHONE NUMBERING ONCE AGAIN, ONLY A FEW YEARS AFTER CHANGING IT FOR THE LAST TIME.

HONG KONG NEVERTHELESS STILL HAS LOW CAR OWNERSHIP IN RELATION TO THE SIZE OF OUR POPULATION BUT THE FIGURES ARE PRETTY DEVASTATING IN RELATION TO THE NUMBER OF ROADS WE HAVE. PER KILOMETRE OF ROADS, THE NUMBER OF CARS AND OF ALL VEHICLES RANKS AMONGST THE HIGHEST IN THE WORLD. 160 FOR CARS, 270 PER KILOMETRE FOR ALL VEHICLES. THOSE ARE VERY LARGE FIGURES AND FIGURES WHICH ARE GROWING EXPONENTIALLY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES. WE CAN'T SHRUG OFF THAT PROBLEM AND I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYBODY WHO SERIOUSLY THINKS THAT WE'LL BE ABLE TO ADDRESS IT SIMPLY BY BUILDING MORE ROADS. IF ONE TURNS THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG INTO A ROUNDABOUT I SUPPOSE THAT ONE MIGHT BE ABLE TO REDUCE THE FIGURES IN A ACCEPTABLE WAY BUT I DON'T THINK HONG KONG WOULD IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES BE AN ACCEPTABLE PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE IN. SO, WHAT DO WE DO IF WE WANT TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM? THOSE WHO HAVE CARS ARE ALWAYS OF COURSE PRETTY VIGOROUS IN THEIR BELIEF IN THE USE OF ECONOMIC OR OTHER MECHANISMS TO DETER OTHER PEOPLE FROM GETTING CARS AS WELL, BUT WE DO HAVE TO FACE UP TO THE ISSUE.

THE OPTIONS ARE CLEAR, WE CAN INTRODUCE PRICING MECHANISMS WHICH WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO PURCHASE CARS OR MORE DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO USE THEM WITHOUT PAYING FOR IT. SO WE CAN INTRODUCE HIGHER TAXES ON CAR OWNERSHIP OR, DARE I MENTION THE WORDS IN THIS CHAMBER, WE CAN GO BACK TO THE QUESTION OF ROAD PRICING WHICH I KNOW CAUSED SO MUCH INTEREST AND EXCITEMENT A FEW YEARS AGO. THERE'S AT LEAST ONE RETIRED SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE HONG KONG ADMINISTRATION WHO I THINK WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE US VERY CRISP ADVICE ON THAT ISSUE. IF WE DON'T USE THE PRICE MECHANISM WHICH WOULD BE HONG KONG'S CUSTOMARY WAY OF TACKLING THESE PROBLEMS, WHAT ELSE IS AVAILABLE? WELL, WE COULD INTRODUCE THE SORT OF PHYSICAL CONTROLS THAT EXIST IN OTHER PLACES. WE COULD BAN CARS FROM PARTS OF OUR URBAN AREA, OR WE COULD INTRODUCE A DIFFERENT SORT OF CONTROL SYSTEM, SUCH AS OTHER PEOPLE HAVE FLIRTED WITH, AND BAN CERTAIN SORTS OF VEHICLE FROM PARTS OF OUR URBAN AREA AT GIVEN TIMES. THAT'S PRETTY WELL THE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES SHORT OF DISINVENTING THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE WHICH ISN'T ACTUALLY AN AVAILABLE OPTION. UNLESS WE FACE UP TO ONE OF THOSE OPTIONS WE REALLY WILL FIND THAT HONG KONG MOVES, PERHAPS MOVES IS THE WRONG WORD, BUT HONG KONG GOES INEVITABLY TOWARDS COMPLETE GRIDLOCK IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

THERE'S A CERTAIN AMOUNT MORE WE CAN DO TO BUILD NEW ROADS AND TUNNELS. WE'RE COMMITTED TO BUILDING GETTING ON FOR 100 KILOMETRES MORE ROAD BETWEEN NOW AND 1997 BUT THERE COMES A POINT WHERE EVEN THE MOST ACTIVE AND IMAGINATIVE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, WHERE EVEN BUILDING MORE ROADS, WHERE EVEN BUILDING MORE INFRASTRUCTURE IN GENERAL WON'T DEAL WITH A SERIOUS SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM AND AT THAT POINT POLITICIANS WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE THE SORT OF LEADERSHIP WHICH I'M AFRAID DOESN'T ALWAYS GUARANTEE POPULARITY.

/MR STEVEN

MR STEVEN POON (THROUGH INTERPRETER): MR GOVERNOR, THE TRANSPORT OPERATORS ALWAYS HAVE FARE INCREASES. PUBLIC OPERATIONS LIKE THE RAILWAY CORPORATIONS CITE INFLATION AS THE REASON FOR FARE INCREASE, THEN PRIVATE COMPANIES SAY THAT THEIR PROFITS HAVE NOT REACHED A SATISFACTORY LEVEL, SO THEY HAVE INCREASES. SO THE CONSEQUENCE IS THIS, OUR TRAVELLING EXPENSES ARE RISING, SO THERE IS INFLATION PUSHED UP AS WELL. MR GOVERNOR, HAS THE GOVERNMENT REVIEWED THE PRESENT SYSTEM, CONSIDERING A NEW METHOD TO MONITOR THESE TRANSPORT OPERATORS, TO MONITOR THEIR FARE INCREASES TO SEE IF THEY ARE REASONABLE AND THEN TO JUDGE WHETHER THE CITIZENS CAN SHOULDER THESE INCREASES EVERY YEAR? THANK YOU.

GOVERNOR: WE ARE AWARE, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF YESTERDAY'S DEBATE, BUT AS A RESULT OF OTHER DEBATES AS WELL, WE ARE AWARE OF THE INTEREST OF THIS COUNCIL AND OF THE INTEREST OF DISTRICT BOARDS AND MUNICIPAL COUNCILS IN THE QUESTION OF THE FARES CHARGED BY THE MTRC AND THE KCRC, OF COURSE WE'RE AWARE OF THAT BUT WE'RE ALSO AWARE OF THE PHILOSOPHY ON WHICH OUR RAILWAY COMPANIES WERE ESTABLISHED. A PHILOSOPHY WHICH HAS ENABLED THEM, I THINK IT'S GENERALLY RECOGNISED TO BE A FACT, TO OPERATE JUST ABOUT THE BEST PUBLIC RAILWAY SYSTEM ANYWHERE IN THE REGION AND ONE OF THE BEST IN THE WORLD. THEY ARE DIFFERENT FROM PRIVATE TRANSPORT OPERATORS, THEY'RE NOT UNDER PRESSURE TO MAXIMISE PROFITS, THEY ARE UNDER PRESSURE TO GIVE A QUALITY SERVICE AND TO INVEST HEAVILY IN ITS IMPROVEMENT AND THE ABILITY TO SET FARES WHICH ARE REQUIRED TO ENABLE THEM TO BORROW MONEY, TO INVEST IN THE SERVICE, THEIR ABILITY TO SET FARES WITHOUT THE SORT OF POLITICAL CONTROLS THAT YOU MENTION IS I THINK AT THE HEART OF THEIR OPERATING STRATEGY.

WE COULD EASILY POLITICISE THE BUSINESS OF FARE SETTING AND THEN WE COULD HAVE A RAILWAY SYSTEM AS GOOD OR AS BAD AS SOME OF THOSE THAT EXIST IN WESTERN EUROPE OR NORTH AMERICA. I DON'T THINK THAT IS A DIRECTION IN WHICH THIS COUNCIL WOULD WANT US TO GO. WHAT'S INTERESTING IS TO LOOK AT HOW "INFLATIONARY" THE FARE INCREASES CHARGED BY THE KCRC AND THE MTRC HAVE BEEN OVER THE YEARS. THE KOWLOON CANTON RAILWAY HAS FOR THE LAST SIX YEARS ASKED FOR FARE INCREASES WHICH WERE LOWER THAN THE INCREASE IN THE OVERALL LEVEL OF INFLATION. THEY'VE DONE THAT YEAR AFTER YEAR. THE MTRC HAS AN EVEN LONGER RECORD OF DOING THAT, FOR THIRTEEN YEARS THEY'VE ASKED FOR FARE INCREASES WHICH WERE LOWER THAN THE INCREASE IN THE OVERALL RATE OF INFLATION. I'M BOUND TO SAY THAT IF EVERY PROVIDER OF SERVICES IN HONG KONG, IF EVERY PRODUCER OF GOODS IN HONG KONG HAD BEEN ABLE TO OFFER THAT, WE'D HAVE A MUCH BETTER INFLATION RECORD AND WOULD BE EVEN MORE COMPETITIVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. NONE OF THAT MEANS THAT THE RAILWAY CORPORATIONS SHOULDN'T BE IN A POSITION IN WHICH THEY HAVE TO JUSTIFY TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE ADMINISTRATION AND TO THIS COUNCIL WHAT THEY'RE DOING. WE'RE ENCOURAGING THEM TO DEVELOP THEIR LIAISON WITH THEIR PASSENGERS, WE'RE ENCOURAGING THEM TO BE MORE OPEN ABOUT THEIR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AND THE HONOURABLE MEMBER WILL KNOW ABOUT THE OBLIGATION THAT WE'RE PLACING ON THEM IN THAT REGARD. WE'RE, AS YOU KNOW, WE'VE DECIDED THAT THE OMBUDSMAN SHOULD BE ABLE TO LOOK AT THEIR SERVICES AS WELL AS THOSE PROVIDED ELSEWHERE IN THE COMMUNITY AND I'M PREPARED TO GO FURTHER THAN THAT, FOR EXAMPLE IT'S BEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE CONSUMER COUNCIL SHOULD HAVE A LOOK AT OUR RAILWAY CORPORATIONS AS WELL. I'M PREPARED TO LOOK AT THAT SORT OF PROPOSAL BUT I DON'T THINK I WOULD BE DOING, I DON'T THINK THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE DOING THE COMMUNITY A SERVICE IF WE WERE TO AGREE TO ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD TURN THE DECISION ON FARE INCREASES EVERY YEAR INTO A POLITICAL FOOTBALL. I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD MAKE SENSE, I THINK IT WOULD THREATEN A SERVICE WHICH, WHILE NOT PERFECT, WHO IS PERFECT?, WHILE NOT PERFECT IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE BEST PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD.

MR W S LAU (THROUGH INTERPRETER): MR GOVERNOR, AT PRESENT THERE IS A GREAT SHORTAGE OF PARKING SPACES AND THIS IS NOT IN PROPORTION TO THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE CARS THAT WE HAVE, EITHER IN PRIVATE HOUSING ESTATES OR IN PRIVATE CAR PARKS. WE SEE A BIG JUMP IN THE PARKING FEES THEY ARE CHARGING AND THIS HAS BECOME A BIG FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR OUR PRIVATE CAR OWNERS. I WONDER WHETHER THE ADMINISTRATION HAS ADDRESSED THIS ISSUE SQUARELY AND WHAT MEASURES WILL BE ADOPTED TO SUPPRESS THESE CHARGES INCREASING?

GOVERNOR: OUR EXISTING PLANNING GUIDELINES, LIKE THOSE IN OTHER COMMUNITIES, DO OF COURSE TAKE ACCOUNT OF PARKING DEMAND WHEN WE ARE LOOKING AT APPROVAL FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS, WHETHER COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS OR HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS. IN ADDITION TO THAT, PERHAPS TO GIVE THOSE GUIDELINES MORE SENSIBLE AND UP TO DATE PARAMETERS WITHIN WHICH TO OPERATE, WE ARE UNDERTAKING A REVIEW OF PARKING DEMAND AND AS SOON AS THAT IS AVAILABLE, THOUGH I THINK IT WILL BE ABOUT A YEAR BEFORE IT IS, WE WILL SHARE THE RESULTS OF THAT SURVEY ON PARKING DEMAND WITH THIS COUNCIL, WITH DISTRICT BOARDS AND WITH THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. I THINK THAT THAT SURVEY OF PARKING DEMAND MAY WELL AFFECT OUR VIEW ON PARKING GUIDELINES AND AFFECT OUR VIEW ON THE REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE MORE AND BETTER FOR CAR OWNERSHIP, THOUGH I THINK THAT IF PEOPLE HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN USING UP OUR SCARCE LAND FOR CAR-PARKING SPACES OR FOR PROVIDING MORE FLATS FOR THOSE WITHOUT THEM, THEY MAY WELL COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE LATTER IS THE PRIORITY.

I WOULD BE VERY RELUCTANT TO GO FURTHER THAN THAT, AND VERY RELUCTANT TO INTERVENE IN MARKET OPERATIONS. I DON'T THINK THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD GIVE ITSELF THE JOB OF SETTING OR DETERMINING THE PRICES FOR CAR-PARKING SPACES THAT ARE PROVIDED BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR. I THINK AS SLIPPERY-SLOPES GO, THAT ONE IS QUITE SLIPPERY AND PRETTY STEEP. BUT NEVERTHELESS, I KNOW, NOT LEAST FROM LETTERS PRESENTED TO ME AS I ENTERED THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, THE AMOUNT OF CONCERN THERE IS ABOUT THIS ISSUE ON A NUMBER OF ESTATES AND I AM SURE THAT WHERE THERE IS CONCERN THAT MARKET FORCES ARE BEING STRETCHED BEYOND NORMAL BOUNDS OF ELASTICITY, HONOURABLE MEMBERS WILL MAKE IT CLEAR TO PRIVATE DEVELOPERS THAT THAT IS THE VIEW OF LOCAL RESIDENTS.

MR ROGER LUK (THROUGH INTERPRETER): GOVERNOR, AT THE EARLIER MOMENTS WHEN WE DEVELOPED THE NEW TOWNS THERE WERE VERY FEW OUTSIDE TRANSPORT LINKS FOR THE RESIDENTS. WHAT MEASURES WILL THE ADMINISTRATION ADOPT TO MAKE SURE THAT IN FUTURE WHEN WE HAVE NEW TOWNS BUILT ON LANTAU THERE WILL NOT BE THE SAME PROBLEM REPEATED?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THAT THE PROBLEM ON LANTAU SHOULD BE LESS THAN THAT WHICH IS FACED BY THOSE LIVING IN NEW TOWNS, IN THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES IN PARTICULAR, BECAUSE THE RAILWAY WHICH SERVES THE NEW AIRPORT WILL BE GOING IN AT THE SAME TIME OR EVEN BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW LIVING ACCOMMODATION AND I WOULD HOPE THAT THAT WOULD - WITH ASSOCIATED BUS FEEDER SERVICES - I WOULD HOPE THAT THAT WOULD DEAL WITH THE MAJOR TRANSPORT PROBLEMS WHICH ARE ASSOCIATED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

/BUT THE

BUT THE HONOURABLE MEMBER IS QUITE RIGHT TO SAY THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TOWNS HAS, TO A DEGREE, GONE AHEAD OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE NEW TOWNS AS EASY AS IT SHOULD BE. I THINK THERE ARE PARTICULAR PROBLEMS FACED BY THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES BUT WORK IN KOWLOON OR ON THIS ISLAND AND HAVE DIFFICULT JOURNEYS TO WORK EVERYDAY. IT IS CERTAINLY A POINT WHICH IS EXPRESSED TO ME FAIRLY REGULARLY BY THOSE WHO REPRESENT THE GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTITUENCIES IN THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES AND IT IS A POINT THAT IS MADE TO ME WHEN I VISIT THE NEW TERRITORIES AS WELL.

THERE ARE - AND IT MAY BE, I GUESS, THE SUBJECT OF A LATER QUESTION - THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS THAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO IN ORDER TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT FACILITIES FOR THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE NEW TERRITORIES. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ROUTE THREE - OF THE COUNTRY PARKS SECTION OF ROUTE THREE - IS IMPORTANT. THE DEVELOPMENT OR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TUEN MUN HIGHWAY IS RELEVANT. THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RAILWAY SYSTEM, NOT LEAST, AS ADVOCATED BY MANY, WITH LINKS ROUND TO TUEN MUN, THAT IS IMPORTANT AS WELL. THE DEVELOPMENT OF FASTER DIRECT FERRY SERVICES BETWEEN CENTRAL AND TUEN MUN IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT FACTOR. AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUS SERVICES AND THOSE FERRY SERVICES TOO, HAS TO BE TAKEN ACCOUNT OF. SO THOSE ARE ALL PRACTICAL THINGS WE CAN DO TO ALLEVIATE A PROBLEM IN THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES WHICH I KNOW HAS BOTH SOCIAL EFFECTS AND, I WOULD JUDGE, ECONOMIC EFFECTS AS WELL.

MR HENRY TANG: GOVERNOR, MY QUESTION CONCERNS CROSS HARBOUR TUNNELS. SINCE THE OPENING OF THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING IN 1989, WE ARE AT OR NEAR ITS CAPACITY TODAY, FOUR YEARS LATER. YESTERDAY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT IN ANSWERING ONE OF THE QUESTIONS SAID THAT LONG TERM TRAFFIC, CROSS HARBOUR TRAFFIC SOLUTION LIES IN THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING DUE TO OPEN IN 1997. NOW, IF WE DEVELOP ECONOMICALLY LIKE THE TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT STUDY THAT'S BEEN COMING OUT, I ENVISAGE THAT WE PROBABLY MIGHT REACH ITS CAPACITY BY THE YEAR, LET'S SAY 2002, WHICH IS FIVE YEARS AFTER ITS SCHEDULED OPENING. NOW IN ORDER NOT TO BECOME ANOTHER TIME A VICTIM OF OUR OWN SUCCESS, AND TO KEEP OUR TRAFFIC MOVING LIKE YOU SAID SIR, IS THERE A FOURTH HARBOUR CROSSING IN YOUR VISION AND IF NOT, WHY NOT? AND NOW THAT I'VE ASKED YOU ABOUT IT, WOULD YOU THINK ABOUT IT?

GOVERNOR: AFTER OUR EXPERIENCE OF LEGISLATING FOR THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING I'M CERTAINLY HAPPY TO THINK ABOUT IT BUT I HOPE I DON'T HAVE TO LEGISLATE FOR IT.

/THE HONOURABLE

THE HONOURABLE MEMBER IS QUITE RIGHT, THOUGH I THINK HE PERHAPS RAISES INADVERTENTLY THE PROBLEMS SOMETIMES ASSOCIATED WITH LINEAR PROJECTION, OR WITH ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT EXPONENTIAL GROWTH. BUT HE'S RIGHT FIRST OF ALL IN POINTING OUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH OUR EXISTING CROSS HARBOUR LINKS ARE INADEQUATE. THE CROSS HARBOUR TUNNEL IS USED BY ABOUT 180,000 VEHICLES EACH DAY. IT'S OPERATING, I THINK I'M RIGHT IN SAYING, ABOUT 20% BEYOND ITS CAPACITY. THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING IS ALSO BEING EXTENSIVELY USED. IT'S USED BY ABOUT 87,000 VEHICLES A DAY AND THOSE FIGURES WILL INCREASE SLIGHTLY, THOUGH ANY INCREASE WHEN YOU'RE ALREADY CONGESTED IS SIGNIFICANT. THOSE FIGURES WILL INCREASE SLIGHTLY BECAUSE OF THE NECESSARY PHASING OUT (I MUST LEARN HOW TO PUT THIS IN MY EAR) THE NECESSARY PHASING OUT OF THE CENTRAL-JORDAN VEHICULAR FERRY SERVICE. THE IMMEDIATE ANSWER IS TO COMPLETE THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND I'M SURE THAT THAT WILL HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL EFFECT ON THE PRESSURE ON THE OTHER TWO CROSSINGS, THE OTHER TWO TUNNELS. IF I MAY JUST SAY IN PARENTHESIS, I RECALL THAT THERE WERE THOSE WHO VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING, ONE OR TWO OF THEM ARE STILL AMONG THE RANKS OF THOSE WHO CRITICISE THE BUILDING OF THE AIRPORT AND THE AIRPORT RAILWAY WHICH PERHAPS PUTS THEIR CRITICISM IN CURRENT CONTEXT. WE'VE ALSO IN ADDITION TO COMPLETING THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, GOT AS WE ARE, GOT TO TAKE, AS WE'RE DOING, GOT TO TAKE MEASURES TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT IN RELATION TO BOTH THE EXISTING TUNNELS. WE'VE TAKEN A NUMBER OF MEASURES SUCH AS THE PROVISION OF MORE LIGHTS, TRAFFIC LIGHTS WHICH HAVE MADE A BIT OF AN IMPACT THOUGH THERE'S A LIMIT TO WHAT ONE CAN DO. WE'VE, I THINK, ON THE EASTERN HARBOUR CROSSING, NOW IN THE EVENINGS GOT THREE FILES OF TRAFFIC MOVING FROM THE ISLAND BACK TO KOWLOON WHICH MEANS THAT PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO MOVE MORE RAPIDLY IN THAT DIRECTION. THOSE ARE ALL LIMITED MEASURES THAT ONE CAN MAKE THOUGH THEY'RE USEFUL.

WHETHER, WHEN WE'VE GOT A THIRD CROSSING, WE'LL REQUIRE A FOURTH, I THINK IS DIFFICULT AT THIS MOMENT TO PREDICT, THOUGH PERHAPS IT'S NOT TOO SOON TO TRY TO CONSIDER FUTURE TRAFFIC DEMAND ACROSS THE HARBOUR. I HAVE AN INSTINCT MYSELF THAT THERE DOES COME A POINT WHERE YOU DON'T NEED TO GO ON EASING THE SHOE, THAT THERE DOES COME A POINT WHERE WE SHOULD HAVE SATISFIED DEMAND. IF WE NEED A FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH CROSS HARBOUR CROSSING, THEN I SUGGEST THAT WE'LL HAVE FAILED TO ANSWER THE QUESTION WHICH I RAISED EARLIER ABOUT CAR OWNERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON OUR OVERALL ENVIRONMENT. I DON'T THINK, EVEN HONG KONG, I DON'T THINK CAN GO ON WITH MORE AND MORE TRAFFIC RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE WITHOUT PEOPLE ASKING SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER HONG KONG WAS MEANT FOR PEOPLE OR FOR CARS.

MR ALFRED TSO (THROUGH INTERPRETER): MR GOVERNOR, NOW WHEN A PASSENGER GOES FROM TSUEN WAN TO THE TUEN MUN HIGHWAY TO THE YUEN LONG CIRCULAR ROAD TO THE NORTH AND TO THE BORDER, IT TAKES HIM 50 MINUTES. IF ROUTE THREE IS COMMISSIONED IT WILL ONLY TAKE 15 MINUTES, SO WE CAN SEE THAT ROUTE THREE IS VERY COST-EFFECTIVE. BUT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS FROM THE PLANNING STAGE UP TO THE TENDERING STAGE, TEN YEARS HAVE BEEN SPENT AND THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THIS IN RECENT YEARS IN WESTERN NT THERE HAVE BEEN TRAFFIC CONGESTIONS AND THE OFFICIALS STILL TAKE THINGS EASY AND DO NOT TAKE THINGS SERIOUSLY. SO, THERE ARE DELAYS IN THE WHOLE PROCESS. MR GOVERNOR, JUST NOW YOU MENTIONED THE IMPORTANCE OF ROUTE THREE BUT HOW ABOUT WRONG DECISION MAKING, ABOUT POOR PERFORMANCE BY OFFICIALS? WILL YOU PUNISH THEM TO ENSURE THAT NT RAIL SYSTEM AND ROUTE THREE CAN GO ON AS SCHEDULED? IN THIS WAY THE CITIZENS THERE WILL NOT SUFFER FROM CONGESTION AND THE WIDER PUBLIC WILL ALSO BE CONVINCED.

GOVERNOR: IT WAS THE HABIT OF TUDOR MONARCHS TO PUNISH OFFICIALS IN THE WAY THAT THE HONOURABLE MEMBER IS SUGGESTING. BUT I THINK GIVEN THE REMARKABLE SUCCESS OF HONG KONG OVER THE YEARS THAT OUR CIVIL SERVANTS AND OFFICIALS DESERVE PRAISE RATHER THAN DECAPITATION. I THINK THAT WE'VE NOT GOT A SENSIBLE STRATEGY FOR ROUTE THREE AND FOR THE PRINCIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS WHICH REMAIN UNCOMPLETED AND WE'RE GRATEFUL TO THIS COUNCIL FOR HAVING VOTED FUNDS FOR THE TING KAU BRIDGE WHICH IS PERHAPS, WELL WHICH IS ONE OF THE INTEGRAL PARTS OF THAT DEVELOPMENT. THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, AS THE COUNCIL WILL RECALL, HAS VOTED \$3.3 BILLION FOR THE BRIDGE AND WE HOPE TO HAVE COMPLETED IT BY MID-1997.

THE COUNCIL WILL KNOW THAT WE'RE HOPING TO DEVELOP THE OTHER PROJECTS, THE TUNNEL AND THE YUEN LONG APPROACH ROAD ON THE BASIS OF A BUILD-OPERATE-TRANSFER AGREEMENT WITH PRIVATE FRANCHISEES. THE COST OF THAT PART OF THE PROJECT IS, I THINK, ABOUT \$6.4 BILLION. I THINK IT'S ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF AN AREA WHERE WE CAN USE PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT FOR A PUBLIC GAIN. IT WILL TAKE SLIGHTLY LONGER TO COMPLETE THE TUNNEL AND THE APPROACH ROAD. OUR BEST ESTIMATE AT THE MOMENT IS THAT WE'LL TAKE UNTIL 1998, THOUGH MAYBE AS WITH OTHER PROJECTS IN HONG KONG, WE'LL BE ABLE TO FINISH IT AHEAD OF TIME. I THINK THAT THAT PROJECT IS, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, A KEY TO BETTER TRANSPORT IN THE NEW TERRITORIES AND I'M SURE THE HONOURABLE MEMBER WILL BE WATCHING US CAREFULLY TO MAKE SURE THAT WE GET ON WITH IT AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. I'M SURE THAT WHEN IT COMES TO CONSIDERING MATTERS LIKE THE TERMS OF THE FRANCHISE, HE WILL BE ONE OF THE HONOURABLE MEMBERS WHO WILL BE URGING HIS COLLEAGUES TO GET ON WITH THINGS AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE RATHER THAN TO HOLD THINGS UP UNNECESSARILY FOR PERHAPS LOCAL POLITICAL REASONS. SO, I HOPE THAT WE CAN GET ON WITH THAT PROJECT WITH THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE HONOURABLE MEMBER AND OTHER HONOURABLE MEMBERS, AND WITH THE PUNISHMENT OR DECAPITATION OF NO OFFICIALS.

MR TAM YIU CHUNG (THROUGH INTERPRETER): MR GOVERNOR, YOU MENTION TRAFFIC PROBLEMS. IT SEEMS THAT THERE ARE NO FRESH IDEAS PROPOSED BUT I, MYSELF, DO HAVE A NEW SUGGESTION. I WONDER IF MR GOVERNOR CAN CONSIDER THIS. NOW, CHINA-HONG KONG TRANSPORT IS DEVELOPING AND THERE ARE A LOT OF PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED AND THEREFORE DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS OF CHINA AND HONG KONG THEY DON'T HAVE A STANDING OR REGULAR CHANNEL FOR DISCUSSION, FOR CO-ORDINATION. IN EARLY DECEMBER I WAS IN BEIJING; I RAISED THIS ISSUE. THAT IS, SETTING UP A MECHANISM SO THAT THE OFFICIALS IN CHINA AND HONG KONG CAN HAVE MORE CHANCE TO COMMUNICATE. DO YOU THINK THERE IS A NEED FOR THIS? DO YOU SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL? WOULD YOU SAY THAT THERE WILL BE DIFFICULTY IF YOU TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO RAISE IT?

GOVERNOR: I THINK THAT IT IS AN EXTREMELY INTERESTING IDEA. WE HAVE TAKEN A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE BETTER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN HONG KONG AND CHINA WHICH HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED UP SUCCESSFULLY. FOR EXAMPLE, THE INITIATIVE WHICH I PROPOSED TO DIRECTOR LU PENG IN OCTOBER 1992 TO START TRAINING COURSES FOR SOME OF OUR SENIOR OFFICIALS IN PEKING, THAT HAS BEEN FOLLOWED UP. WE HAVE HAD TWO VERY SUCCESSFUL COURSES AND I VERY MUCH HOPE THAT ALL OUR SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS WILL HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF ATTENDING OR SEEING THOSE COURSES BEFORE 1997.

THIS PARTICULAR PROPOSAL, I THINK IS AN EXTREMELY SENSIBLE ONE. THE HONOURABLE MEMBER IS ENTIRELY RIGHT TO SAY THAT ECONOMIC CONVERGENCE REQUIRES US TO LOOK MUCH MORE CREATIVELY AT INFRASTRUCTURE CONVERGENCE AS WELL. I MENTIONED EARLIER, THE DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA OF THE RAILWAY NETWORK AND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING SURE THAT OUR RAILWAY SYSTEM IN HONG KONG IS IMPROVED AND LINKS UP WITH THE NORTH-SOUTH RAILWAY ROUTES IN CHINA, SO I HOPE THAT THE HONOURABLE MEMBER'S BABY CAN BE BROUGHT TO GLORIOUS ADULTHOOD AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. AND IF THE HONOURABLE MEMBER HAS ANY PARTICULAR SUGGESTIONS ABOUT HOW WE COULD CARRY THAT IDEA FORWARD, I WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO HEAR FROM HIM ABOUT IT.

MR EDWARD HO: GOVERNOR, YOU HAVE MENTIONED QUITE A NUMBER OF HUGE ROADWORKS PROJECTS AND I THINK WE WELCOME THEM - LIKE ROUTE THREE - BUT THE PROBLEM SOMETIMES IS IN THE BUILT-UP AREAS, FOR INSTANCE IN KOWLOON. AS YOU KNOW, THE TOWN PLANNING BOARD HAS JUST ISSUED 16 OZPS FOR KOWLOON, WHICH LIMITS DEVELOPMENT TO THE POTENTIAL PERMITTED BY THE BUILDING PLANNING REGULATIONS AND THE WHOLE CONSTRAINT HAS BEEN ON THE TRANSPORT NETWORK. I THINK WHAT'S HAPPENED IS THAT TOWN PLANNING AND BUILDING DEVELOPMENT ARE CONSTRAINED BY GOVERNMENT'S WILLINGNESS TO IMPROVE ROAD NETWORKS WITHIN THE BUILT-UP AREAS AND CONSEQUENTLY OUR PEOPLE HAVE TO MOVE AWAY TO NEW TOWNS AND THEN WE HAVE TO CATCH UP WITH BUILDING ROADS, LINKING THEM WITH THE WORKPLACE AND SO FORTH. SO MY QUESTION IS: IS THERE ANY PLAN FOR GOVERNMENT TO TRY TO IMPROVE, SAY, ROADWORKS WITHIN THE BUILT-UP AREAS, ESPECIALLY IN KOWLOON?

GOVERNOR: YES. WE ARE SPENDING A LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY ON IMPROVED TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, COMPUTERISED SCHEMES WHICH INCREASE TRAFFIC FLOW WITHOUT THE PROVISION OF NEW ROADS BUT THERE ARE OBVIOUSLY LIMITS TO THE IMPACT THAT YOU CAN MAKE THROUGH TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ON THE PROBLEM OF TRANSPORTATION.

THERE IS ONE ISSUE WHICH IS RELEVANT TO THIS WHICH I THINK CAUSES CONSIDERABLE CONCERN TO MANY ORDINARY RESIDENTS AS WELL AS TO MEMBERS OF THIS COUNCIL, AND THAT IS THE IMPACT ON AN ALREADY DIFFICULT TRANSPORT SCENE OF ENDLESS ROAD OPENINGS BY PUBLIC UTILITIES. IT IS AN ISSUE WHICH IS RAISED FAIRLY REGULARLY IN THE NEWSPAPERS BY ONE OR TWO CORRESPONDENTS, IN RELATION NOT ONLY TO KOWLOON BUT FOR THE SOUTH OF THIS ISLAND AS WELL. I KNOW THERE IS ONE CORRESPONDENT WHO WRITES REGULARLY ABOUT THE PROBLEMS IN DEEP WATER BAY AND THE ROADS IN THAT AREA. I THINK WE HAVE TO LOOK AT THE QUESTION OF ROAD OPENINGS, EXCAVATIONS THAT IS, MORE IMAGINATIVELY. WE ARE ASKING THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS TO DO THAT AT THE MOMENT. WE HAVE GOT TO TALK TO THE PUBLIC UTILITIES TO TRY TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY BEHAVE A BIT MORE SENSIBLY AND I AM NOT AGAINST LOOKING AT ISSUES LIKE THE USE OF CHARGING, IN ORDER TO TRY TO MAKE SURE THAT ROAD EXCAVATIONS, ROAD OPENINGS, ARE AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE AND DEALT WITH AS SENSIBLY AS POSSIBLE BY, FOR EXAMPLE, COVERING CUTS IN THE ROAD. THAT IS THE SORT OF SIMPLE ISSUE WHICH CAN MAKE AN IMPACT ON TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC MOVEMENT WITHOUT GREAT EXPENSE.

BUT OVERALL, I THINK THE HONOURABLE MEMBER HAS RAISED A MATTER WHICH GOES BACK TO THE EARLY QUESTION OF THE EXTENT OF CAR OWNERSHIP IN A SMALL COMMUNITY LIKE THIS. OUR CITIES WEREN'T BUILT FOR THE INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE, THEY WERE BUILT FOR HUMAN BEINGS.

MRS MIRIAM LAU (THROUGH INTERPRETER): MR GOVERNOR, IN ORDER TO SOLVE THE TRAFFIC CONGESTION PROBLEM IN HONG KONG, WELL WE REALLY NEED TO DEVELOP A MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR EXAMPLE RAIL SYSTEM AND THAT POINT WAS ALSO MENTIONED BY YOU IN YOUR OPENING STATEMENT. WE HAVE THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ISSUED LAST YEAR AND MANY OPTIONS WERE MENTIONED BUT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE WILL BE 2001 BEFORE WE CAN SEE THE FIRST LINK IS IMPLEMENTED. WILL THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDER ADVANCING THE IMPLEMENTATION DATE AND IN ORDER TO EXPEDITE THESE PROJECTS, WILL THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDER PRIVATE PARTICIPATION?

GOVERNOR: THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD LIKE LITTLE MORE THAN TO BE ABLE TO ADVANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND I THINK IT WOULD BE NATURAL FOR THIS COMMUNITY TO USE PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT TO SECURE SOME OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN THE RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY. I THINK THE HONOURABLE LADY WILL KNOW THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS WHICH MUST KNOW TAKE PLACE. WE'VE VIRTUALLY COMPLETED CONSULTATIONS ON THE STRATEGY, WE MUST THEN CONSIDER THE VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THOSE VIEWS HAVE BEEN PRESENTED VERY VIGOROUSLY. WE MUST THEN PRESENT OUR ASSESSMENT TO THIS COUNCIL AND TO THE COMMUNITY AND BEGIN A DIALOGUE WITH OUR CHINESE COLLEAGUES, SINCE MOST OF THESE MATTERS WILL INVOLVE IMPLEMENTATION AFTER 1997, AND IT WOULD BE CRAZY TO TRY TO IMPLEMENT A RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR HONG KONG IN ANY EVENT WITHOUT TAKING ACCOUNT OF WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER. IF WE CAN MAKE RAPID PROGRESS IN THOSE DISCUSSIONS, CONCEIVABLY A LITTLE MORE RAPID PROGRESS THAN WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE IN, FOR EXAMPLE THE CASE OF THE AIRPORT, THEN I WOULD WELCOME IT. THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD WELCOME IT AND WE COULD GET ON AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SORT OF RAILWAY SYSTEM WHICH THE WHOLE OF HONG KONG NEEDS, NOT LEAST THE INHABITANTS OF THE NORTH-WEST NEW TERRITORIES, TSEUNG KWAN O AND OTHER PARTS OF THE TERRITORY.

MR LEE WING-TAT (THROUGH INTERPRETER): THANK YOU MR PRESIDENT. MR GOVERNOR, I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU HAVE TRIED THIS, THAT IS GET ON A BUS IN THE MORNING AND THEN TAKE THE MTR. PERHAPS YOU DON'T NEED THIS AND SO YOU ARE VERY RELAXED WHEN YOU ANSWER ALL THESE QUESTIONS, BUT PLEASE DON'T FORGET OVER ONE MILLION PEOPLE HAVE TO TAKE BUSES AND THEN TRANSFER TO THE MTR EVERY DAY.

I'M VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE AIRPORT RAILWAY. AT PRESENT THERE IS NO FINANCING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES. TWO DAYS AGO THE MTRC MANAGING DIRECTOR SAID THAT IF THE ADMINISTRATION IS WILLING TO INJECT SOME MORE MONEY INTO THE MTRC, THE MTRC WILL HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO BUILD ONE SECTION OF THE AIRPORT RAILWAY, THAT IS TSING YI TO CENTRAL, ACCORDING TO MY OWN PROJECTION. THAT WAS ALSO MENTIONED IN CTS2 IN 1989, BUT WE USED A DIFFERENT NAME THEN. UNFORTUNATELY WE CHANGED THE NAME TO AIRPORT RAILWAY AND THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES DON'T LIKE THIS NAME. SO MR GOVERNOR, CAN YOU TELL US WHETHER YOU WILL CONSIDER THIS SUGGESTION FROM THE MTRC SO THAT OUR CITIZENS WON'T HAVE TO SUFFER SO MUCH EVERY MORNING? THANK YOU.

/GOVERNOR:

GOVERNOR: ON THE FIRST POINT THAT THE HONOURABLE MEMBER MENTIONED, IT IS TRUE THAT THOSE OF US, INCLUDING CONCEIVABLY SOME MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, DON'T HAVE TO TRAVEL EVERY DAY IN THE SAME WAY AS MOST OF THE CITIZENS OF HONG KONG. I'M PERHAPS GUILTIER THAN MOST SINCE I WALK DOWNSTAIRS IN THE MORNING, RATHER THAN CATCH A BUS. I'M ALSO IN A SITUATION IN WHICH WHEN I DO CATCH A BUS OR CATCH A TRAM OR CATCH A TRAIN, I'M DOING SO IN THE COMPANY OF ABOUT 18 TELEVISION CAMERAS AND LARGE NUMBERS OF JOURNALISTS WHICH KEEPS ME COMPANY BUT ISN'T ENTIRELY THE SAME CRUSH THAT MOST OTHER PEOPLE HAVE TO ENDURE EVERY DAY. BUT IF IT'S ANY COMFORT TO THE HONOURABLE MEMBER, I USED TO COMMUTE REGULARLY TO THE OFFICE ON THE TRAIN AND IT WAS A LOT LESS GOOD A SERVICE THAN PEOPLE HAVE IN HONG KONG. BUT PRECISELY BECAUSE MANY OF US DON'T HAVE TO FACE THE SAME PROBLEMS THAT ORDINARY PEOPLE HAVE TO FACE, OTHER ORDINARY PEOPLE LET ME SAY, EVERY DAY IN GETTING TO WORK, WE SHOULD BE EVEN MORE CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING GOOD PUBLIC SERVICES AT A REASONABLE COST. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN A HOUSING AUTHORITY FLAT TO KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING GOOD HOUSING AUTHORITY FLATS FOR AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO USE A BUS OR A TRAIN EVERY DAY TO KNOW THE IMPORTANCE TO THE COMMUNITY OF PROVIDING GOOD BUS AND TRAIN SERVICES FOR EVERYONE FOR EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR AND NOT JUST OCCASIONALLY OFF PEAK. SO I JUST PUT THAT POINT STRAIGHTAWAY BECAUSE I REALISE THAT NOT EVERYBODY IN THE COMMUNITY HAS A FLAG ON THE FRONT OF THE CAR.

THE HONOURABLE MEMBER RAISED, IN THE SHADOW OF THAT ADMONITION OF THAT SERMON, THE HONOURABLE MEMBER RAISED A QUESTION ABOUT PART OF THE AIRPORT RAILWAY, AND IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION WHICH I THINK WAS RAISED EARLIER AS WELL AND I TRIED TO RESPOND TO EARLIER, WHETHER WE CAN DEAL WITH WHAT IS PERHAPS WRONGLY CALLED THE AIRPORT RAILWAY IN DIFFERENT BITES. EVEN IF WE CAN'T JUSTIFY THE WHOLE SYSTEM UNTIL THERE IS AN OVERALL AGREEMENT, DOING PARTS OF THE SYSTEM IN ORDER TO RELIEVE TRAFFIC PROBLEMS IN PARTICULAR AREAS AND I SAID IN REPLY TO THE QUESTION EARLIER, WHICH I SAY AGAIN TO THE HONOURABLE MEMBER, THAT WE DON'T BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A TRANSPORT JUSTIFICATION FOR DOING SMALL BITS OF THE RAILWAY. AND WE DON'T BELIEVE THAT WE COULD JUSTIFY JUST INVESTING IN THE TSING YI CENTRAL PART OF THE AIRPORT RAILWAY ON THE GROUNDS THAT THAT WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE NATHAN ROAD CORRIDOR. I DON'T THINK THE HONOURABLE MEMBER HAS CONVEYED ENTIRELY ACCURATELY THE POSITION OF THE MTRC, THOUGH I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY HE'S PERHAPS ADDED A BIT OF BOUNCE TO THEIR STEP ON THIS ISSUE. BUT I'M PREPARED TO LOOK AT ANY EVIDENCE THAT HE HAS, OR ANY NEW EVIDENCE THE MTRC HAVE AND IF THERE IS AN ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION FOR GOING AHEAD WITH THE PROJECT THEN WE'D HAVE TO LOOK AT IT MORE SERIOUSLY. BUT AT PRESENT I MUST SAY THAT HASN'T BEEN OUR CALCULATION.

/WHAT WE

WHAT WE SHOULD ALL TRY TO DO, OF COURSE, IS GET AHEAD WITH THE WHOLE PROJECT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. IT IS RIDICULOUS THAT WE'RE IN THIS POSITION AND HAVE BEEN IN THIS POSITION FOR SO LONG, SINCE BEFORE I BECAME GOVERNOR. THE SOONER WE CAN RESOLVE THESE MATTERS THE BETTER. AS I SAID YESTERDAY, WHAT WOULD HELP US A GREAT DEAL WOULD BE TO BE IN A SITUATION IN WHICH WE DIDN'T FEEL AS THOUGH WE WERE PLAYING DARTS BLINDFOLD IN THE DARK, CASTING DARTS IN THE DIRECTION OF WHERE WE THINK THE BOARD MAY BE, HOPING THAT WE HIT THE BULL'S EYE. WHAT WOULD BE A HELP WOULD BE IF THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD SAY, FOR THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE COMMUNITY, PRECISELY WHAT THEY WANT, PRECISELY WHAT FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS THEY WOULD REGARD AS ACCEPTABLE TO THE FUTURE SAR GOVERNMENT AND TO THE COMMUNITY HERE IN HONG KONG FOR THE RAILWAY AND FOR THE AIRPORT ITSELF. WE THEN CONCEIVABLY HAVE A RATHER BETTER IDEA OF THE GAP BETWEEN WHAT WE'VE BEEN PROPOSING WITH THREE DIFFERENT SETS OF PROPOSALS SO FAR AND WHAT THE CHINESE SIDE PRESUMABLY WANT. WE COULD RESOLVE ALL THAT I WOULD HAVE HOPED IN THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE VERY RAPIDLY IF THE WILL WAS THERE. PEOPLE TALK ABOUT CONSULTATION, WE'VE MADE AN AWFUL LOT OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE, BUT IF NOTHING COMES BACK THEN CONSULTATION IS A RATHER DIFFICULT PROCESS. SO, I HOPE THAT CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIONS CAN FOLLOW SOME OF THE WORDS THAT WE'VE HEARD RECENTLY AND THAT INSTEAD OF OFFERING ONE ANOTHER ADVICE ACROSS THE 'AIRWAVES' AS HAS BEEN HAPPENING FOR MONTH AFTER MONTH AFTER MONTH, WE'LL ACTUALLY DO WHAT PEOPLE IN HONG KONG WOULD LIKE US TO DO, WHICH IS TO RESOLVE THESE QUESTIONS AROUND THE TABLE WITH THE INTERESTS OF HONG KONG AND HONG KONG'S POSITION AS A REGIONAL TRANSPORT HUB AT HEART RATHER THAN SOME PERHAPS MORE OBSCURE POLITICAL REASON DICTATING THE PACE OF EVENTS.

THE PRESIDENT: IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDERS I NOW ADJOURN THE SITTING UNTIL WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 1994.

- - - - 0 - - - -

LEGCO AND ACC BRIEFED ON AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) BRIEFED MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THE AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ABOUT PROGRESS ON THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME (ACP) AND ABOUT OPTIONS FOR FURTHER FUNDING OF THE PROVISIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY (PAA).

OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THAT THE MONEY OF THE DAY (MOD) ESTIMATE FOR THE ENTIRE ACP HAS BEEN REDUCED BY \$5.5 BILLION, FROM \$163.7 BILLION TO \$158.2 BILLION.

THEY BRIEFED THE MEMBERS ON ESTIMATES OF FUTURE COST INCREASES, IN THE ABSENCE OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CHINESE SIDE ON FINANCING FOR THE AIRPORT AND AIRPORT RAILWAY.

THE OFFICIALS ALSO EXPLAINED THE TWO OPTIONS THAT THEY HAVE PUT FORWARD FOR THE NEXT STEP ON THE AIRPORT.

THE SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY, MR DONALD TSANG, SAID: "WE HAVE MADE EXCELLENT PROGRESS WITH OUR CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS ON THE AIRPORT CORE PROGRAMME AND WORK IS WELL ADVANCED ON MANY OF THE PROJECTS.

/"WE HAVE

"WE HAVE HAD HIGHLY COMPETITIVE TENDERING, WHICH HAS ENABLED MANY OF THE GOVERNMENT ACP CONTRACTS TO BE AWARDED BELOW BUDGET. THIS HAS HELPED CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS A \$7.6 BILLION REDUCTION, FROM \$60.1 BILLION TO \$52.5 BILLION, IN THE ESTIMATES FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S SEVEN ACP PROJECTS.

"THE \$7.6 BILLION REDUCTION ALSO STEMS FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF LOWER LEVELS OF CONTINGENCIES AND REVISIONS IN OUR CONSTRUCTION INFLATION FORECASTS."

THE SECRETARY FOR WORKS, MR JAMES BLAKE, SAID AFTER THE BRIEFINGS: "IN TERMS OF PHYSICAL PROGRESS, SITE FORMATION WORK ON THE AIRPORT PLATFORM IS MORE THAN 36 PER CENT COMPLETE, WHILE WORK ON THE WEST KOWLOON RECLAMATION IS MORE THAN 65 PER CENT COMPLETE.

"THE CONTRACT FOR BUILDING THE TSING MA SUSPENSION BRIDGE IS 37 PER CENT COMPLETE. GOOD PROGRESS IS ALSO BEING MADE ON OTHER PROJECTS SUCH AS THE WESTERN HARBOUR CROSSING, THE NORTH LANTAU EXPRESSWAY, AND THE KAP SHUI MUN BRIDGE."

MR TSANG EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS NOW NECESSARY TO DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED ON FURTHER PAA FUNDING, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR IMPORTANT AIRPORT CONTRACTS.

"AGREEMENT WITH THE CHINESE SIDE ON THE OVERALL FINANCING FOR THE AIRPORT AND AIRPORT RAILWAY REMAINS OUR PRIMARY AIM. IT WOULD ENABLE US TO PROCEED IN THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE WAY WITH THESE LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS. REGRETTABLY, IT HAS NOT YET BEEN POSSIBLE TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH THE CHINESE SIDE," MR TSANG SAID.

"IN THAT SITUATION, WE HAVE PUT TWO OPTIONS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. THESE OPTIONS ARE ENTIRELY IN LINE WITH THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BECAUSE THEY SEEK TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM ON THE AIRPORT SO THAT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE CAN BE COMPLETED BY MID-1997.

"THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT AN AIRPORT WILL BE BUILT AT CHEK LAP KOK. THE OPTIONS WE HAVE PUT FORWARD THEREFORE CONSTITUTE A SOUND INVESTMENT BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT BE WASTED."

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID ONE OPTION WOULD BE TO SEEK FUNDING FOR \$377 MILLION, WHICH WAS THE MINIMUM AMOUNT NEEDED TO EXTEND THE PAA'S HEAD OFFICE FUNDING INTO 1994/95. THIS WOULD ENABLE THE PAA TO CONTINUE TO SUPERVISE DESIGN AND SITE PREPARATION WORK.

THE OTHER OPTION WOULD BE TO TAKE ANOTHER STEP AND SEEK A FURTHER \$1.29 BILLION FUNDING TO ENABLE THE PAA TO PROCEED WITH THE DESIGN PHASE OF BAGGAGE HANDLING AND AUTOMATED PEOPLE-MOVER SYSTEMS, FOUNDATION WORKS FOR THE PASSENGER TERMINAL BUILDING, AND VARIOUS CONSTRUCTION SUPPORT FACILITIES.

REAL COST ESTIMATES (EXPRESSED IN MARCH 1991 PRICES) FOR THE NEW AIRPORT AT CHEK LAP KOK AND THE AIRPORT RAILWAY HAD REMAINED UNCHANGED. SLIGHT INCREASES HAD HOWEVER BEEN NECESSARY IN THE MOD ESTIMATES: \$1.6 BILLION IN THE \$48.2 BILLION ESTIMATED COSTS OF THE AIRPORT TO BE BORNE BY PAA; AND \$0.5 BILLION IN THE \$33.5 BILLION ESTIMATE FOR THE AIRPORT RAILWAY.

THESE INCREASED ESTIMATES HAD BEEN MAINLY CAUSED BY DELAYS TO THE START OF CONTRACTS TO BE LET IN THE FUTURE WHEN INFLATION WOULD LEAD TO HIGHER COST ESTIMATES IN MOD TERMS.

"FURTHER DELAYS IN REACHING AGREEMENT WITH THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE AIRPORT COMMITTEE WILL LEAD TO FURTHER INCREASES IN COSTS AMOUNTING, IT IS ESTIMATED, TO AT LEAST \$2 BILLION FOR A SIX-MONTH DELAY ON THE AIRPORT, PLUS A SIMILAR AMOUNT ON THE AIRPORT RAILWAY," SAID MR TSANG.

- - - - 0 - - - -

WORK ON HARBOUR SEWERAGE PROJECTS SOON BEGIN

* * * * *

WORK ON SEWERAGE PROJECTS OF THE HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAMME TO CLEAN UP THE HARBOUR WILL BEGIN IN MARCH.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID: "THESE PROJECTS WILL BE FUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN FULL AND WE WILL BE SEEKING LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S ADVICE ON A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A TRADING FUND IN THE DRAINAGE SERVICES DEPARTMENT."

THE FUND IS TO HOLD AND MANAGE THE GOVERNMENT INJECTION FROM THE CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUND WHICH WILL FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF PROJECTS IN THE HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAMME.

WHEN SEWAGE CHARGES ARE INTRODUCED, THE TRADING FUND WILL ALSO COLLECT CHARGES PAYABLE BY USERS IN ORDER TO FUND THE COST OF OPERATING SEWAGE SERVICES, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE SAID LEGISLATION ENABLING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEWAGE CHARGING SCHEME WOULD BE INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL LATER IN THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION.

SUBJECT TO LEGCO'S APPROVAL OF THE LEGISLATION, THE PRESENT PLAN IS TO INTRODUCE THE CHARGES IN AUGUST.

THIS FOLLOWS A TWO-AND-A-HALF MONTH CONSULTATION DURING WHICH A WIDE RANGE OF REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS WERE BRIEFED, A LARGE BODY OF OPINION WAS EXPRESSED IN THE MEDIA AND 80 WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS WERE RECEIVED.

MOST OF THE GROUPS SUPPORTED THE POLLUTER PAYS PRINCIPLE AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE SEWAGE CHARGING SCHEME.

THESE GROUPS INCLUDED THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE, THE INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, MAJOR INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ORGANISATIONS AND THE GREEN GROUPS.

THE POLLUTER PAYS PRINCIPLE WAS ALSO SUPPORTED BY MAJOR POLITICAL GROUPS ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SUGGESTIONS FROM SOME QUARTERS THAT HOUSEHOLDS SHOULD BE GIVEN FURTHER OR TOTAL EXEMPTION FROM THE CHARGING SCHEME.

OF THE 80 SUBMISSIONS, 57 WERE FROM ORGANISATIONS AND 23 FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

ABOUT 60 PER CENT OF THE SUBMISSIONS WHICH EXPRESSED A VIEW ON THE CHARGING PROPOSAL WERE IN SUPPORT OF THE POLLUTER PAYS PRINCIPLE. A FEW EVEN ARGUED AGAINST ALLOWING ANY EXEMPTION FOR HOUSEHOLDS AS PROPOSED IN THE SCHEME.

THE CONSULTATION CONCLUDED WITH A MOTION DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON DECEMBER 1 DURING WHICH A MOTION IN SUPPORT OF THE POLLUTER PAYS PRINCIPLE WAS CARRIED WITHOUT AMENDMENT.

- - - - 0 - - - -

AN HONOURABLE SOLUTION FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES URGED

* * * * *

THE INFLUENTIAL LONDON NEWSPAPER, THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, YESTERDAY TOOK UP THE CASE OF HONG KONG'S NON-ETHNIC CHINESE MINORITIES BY PUBLISHING AN ARTICLE WRITTEN BY THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, BARONESS DUNN WHO URGED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE AN HONOURABLE AND JUST SOLUTION TO THE NON-CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITIES IN HONG KONG WHO WILL BE RENDERED STATELESS IN 1997 WHEN SOVEREIGNTY CHANGES.

WRITING IN THE DAILY TELEGRAPH IN LONDON, BARONESS DUNN SAID BRITAIN HAS A MORAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THIS GROUP OF 5,000 TO 7,000 PEOPLE.

"BY GRANTING FULL BRITISH CITIZENSHIP TO THIS SMALL GROUP OF BRITISH NATIONALS, THERE CAN BE NO CLEARER SIGNAL TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG THAT BRITAIN UNDERSTANDS THE UNIQUE COMPLEXITIES OF HONG KONG'S SITUATION. THERE CAN BE NO BETTER EXAMPLE THAT BRITAIN TAKES THE MORAL STANCE NOT ONLY ON LARGE MATTERS, BUT ON SMALL ONES TOO.

"THERE CAN BE NO FIRMER COMMITMENT THAT BRITAIN HAS THE WILL AND THE DETERMINATION TO DO RIGHT BY ITS SUBJECTS IN HONG KONG," SHE SAID.

BARONESS DUNN SAID UNDER THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE BASIC LAW AFTER 1997, THIS GROUP OF ETHNIC MINORITIES MAY HAVE THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN THE CHINESE SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF HONG KONG BUT HAS NO RIGHT TO CHINESE NATIONALITY.

THE ISSUE WAS DEBATED IN BOTH THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS FOLLOWING A CAMPAIGN LED BY BARONESS DUNN TO SEEK FULL BRITISH CITIZENSHIP FOR THIS GROUP IN 1986 AS WELL AS LOBBYING EFFORTS BY A GROUP OF HONG KONG LEGISLATORS.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS, BY A MAJORITY OF 60 TO 48 IN JULY LAST YEAR, HAD CALLED UPON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THIS GROUP FULL BRITISH CITIZENSHIP.

"BUT NONE OF THIS HAS MOVED THE HOME SECRETARY," SHE SAID.

/BARONESS DUNN

BARONESS DUNN SAID IMPROVISED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ETHNIC MINORITIES AFTER 1997 WERE NOT AN HONOURABLE SOLUTION.

"THE CASE OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IS NOT ONLY SPECIAL BUT ALSO UNIQUE. NO OTHER CITIZENS OF BRITAIN FACE STATELESSNESS."

ON THE HOME SECRETARY'S ARGUMENT THAT GIVING FULL CITIZENSHIP TO THIS GROUP WILL REQUIRE DIFFICULT PRIMARY LEGISLATION, BARONESS DUNN SAID THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAD ALWAYS HAD TO PLACE THEIR TRUST IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

"THEIR FATE ON SO MANY IMPORTANT ISSUES AFFECTING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS HAS BEEN DECIDED WITHOUT THEIR SAY."

COMMENTING ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT LAST JULY THAT SHOULD THIS GROUP EVER CAME UNDER PRESSURE TO LEAVE HONG KONG AND HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DAY "WOULD BE EXPECTED TO CONSIDER SYMPATHETICALLY THEIR CASE FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNITED KINGDOM", BARONESS DUNN SAID THIS WAS SIMPLY NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO DISCHARGE THE CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATIONS.

"I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT AND THE BRITISH PEOPLE, RENOWNED FOR THEIR HUMANITY AND DECENCY, WOULD CONSIDER THIS FAIR TREATMENT FOR THEIR NATIONALS," SHE SAID.

BARONESS DUNN WILL FLY TO LONDON TO ATTEND THE COMMITTEE STAGE OF LORD BONHAM-CARTER'S PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL, HONG KONG NATIONALITY BILL, WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR DEBATE ON JANUARY 27.

"MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HAVE BEEN PURSUING THIS MATTER FOR A VERY LONG TIME WITH THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. WE ARE COMMITTED TO FINDING A JUST SOLUTION FOR THESE PEOPLE," SHE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

TIGHTER CONTROL OF CATEGORY III VIDEOTAPES AND LASERDISCS

* * * * *

THERE WILL BE TIGHTER CONTROL OF THE SALE OR HIRE OF CATEGORY III VIDEOTAPES AND LASERDISCS TO YOUNGSTERS WHEN THE FILM CENSORSHIP (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1993 TAKES EFFECT FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY), A SPOKESMAN FOR THE TELEVISION AND ENTERTAINMENT LICENSING AUTHORITY (TELA) SAID TODAY.

EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR THE ORDINANCE, THE SPOKESMAN SAID:

"THERE WAS A LOOPHOLE IN THAT EVEN THOUGH IT IS AN OFFENCE TO SHOW A CATEGORY III FILM TO A PERSON BELOW THE AGE OF 18 IN A CINEMA, YET WHEN THE FILM WAS TURNED INTO A VIDEOTAPE OR LASERDISC, THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE LAW TO PREVENT THE TAPE OR DISC FROM BEING SOLD OR HIRED TO AN UNDERAGED PERSON.

"THE NEW ORDINANCE PLUGS THIS LOOPHOLE. FROM JANUARY 14 ONWARDS, IT WOULD BE AN OFFENCE TO SELL OR HIRE A CATEGORY III VIDEOTAPE OR LASERDISC TO ANY PERSON BELOW THE AGE OF 18."

/THE MAXIMUM

THE MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR THIS OFFENCE IS A FINE OF \$200,000 AND IMPRISONMENT FOR 12 MONTHS.

THE OTHER MAIN FEATURES OF THE ORDINANCE INCLUDED: ALL ADVERTISING MATERIALS FOR A VIDEOTAPE AND LASERDISC MUST STATE CLEARLY THE CLASSIFICATION GIVEN BY TELA, I.E. CAT. I, II AND III.

ALSO, THE PACKAGING OF A CAT. III TAPE OR DISC MUST BE SUBMITTED TO TELA.

"IF THE PACKAGING CONTAINS ANY INDECENT MATTERS, TELA WILL REQUIRE IT TO BE ENCLOSED IN AN OPAQUE WRAPPER."

TELA HAD ISSUED GUIDELINES IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR TO HELP VIDEO SHOPS TO COMPLY WITH THE NEW LAW.

THESE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THE ADVICE THAT WHEN THE SHOP STAFF SUSPECT THAT A PERSON BUYING OR RENTING A CAT. III VIDEOTAPE OR LASERDISC IS BELOW THE AGE OF 18, THEY WOULD ASK THE PERSON TO PRODUCE PROOF OF HIS OR HER AGE.

THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE NEW LAW WAS ENACTED SIX MONTHS AGO AND THE ADMINISTRATION DEFERRED IMPLEMENTING IT UNTIL NOW IN ORDER TO GIVE THE TRADE SUFFICIENT TIME TO MAKE PREPARATION.

"OUR INSPECTORS WILL MAKE REGULAR VISITS, TO ENSURE THAT THE NEW LAW IS COMPLIED WITH," HE SAID.

CONCURRENT WITH THE NEW ORDINANCE CERTAIN NEW FEES APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL AND GAZETTED WILL BE INTRODUCED WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 14.

FEES WILL BE PAYABLE WHEN THE FILM IS DEALT WITH BY TELA WITH A VIEW TO GRANTING AN EXEMPTION.

THE SPOKESMAN SAID FEES WERE CHARGED ONLY WHEN A FILM WAS SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

"HOWEVER, THE TIME AND EFFORT REQUIRED IN EXAMINING A FILM IS THE SAME WHETHER OR NOT IT RESULTS IN A CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION OR CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.

"IT IS RIGHT, THEREFORE, THAT FEES SHOULD BE CHARGED IN BOTH CASES," HE SAID.

HOWEVER, THE FILM CENSORSHIP AUTHORITY WILL REMIT THE FEES IF SHE IS SATISFIED THAT THE FILM WILL BE EXHIBITED BY A FILM CLUB OR SIMILAR ORGANISATIONS WHICH ARE NON-PROFIT-MAKING OR THAT THE FILM WILL BE EXHIBITED FOR CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL OR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES ONLY, THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

WHOLE-DAY AUCTION OF CAR MARKS

* * * * *

THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT NOW HOLDS TWO WHOLE-DAY AUCTIONS OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARKS EVERY MONTH INSTEAD OF TWO HALF-DAY AUCTIONS TO MEET THE GROWING DEMAND FOR FAVOURITE VEHICLE MARKS.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THE MAIN PURPOSE WAS TO SHORTEN THE WAITING TIME FOR A MARK REQUESTED TO BE PUT UP FOR AUCTION.

"IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT BY THIS AUGUST, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WILL HAVE THEIR REQUESTED MARKS PUT UP FOR AUCTION IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF APPLICATION," HE ADDED.

THE FIRST WHOLE-DAY AUCTION WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY (JANUARY 15) AT THE RECITAL HALL OF THE CITY HALL, HONG KONG. THE MORNING SESSION WILL START AT 9.30 AM AND THE AFTERNOON SESSION AT 2.30 PM.

"IN THE AUCTION THIS SATURDAY, ABOUT 50 VEHICLE MARKS WITH THE DIGIT '8' WILL BE ON OFFER," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE 50 MARKS AVAILABLE FOR BIDDING AT 9.30 AM ARE:

FN1268	FN882	EN318	FM329	FM578
FM728	EM1938	FM903	FN8293	FN8958
*FC4	*FT333	*576	*DL3	*CK95
AL2808	AK8613	FM633	FM809	FN4809
FM889	FM3383	AU417	CF6811	AX6521
FN877	FN902	FM6882	FM9008	FN5331
CA283	BM3999	DD3408	FN9336	FM3208
*8146	*FT11	*FK20	*DK12	*FT34
FN8111	FF638	FN3381	FM4898	FN8295
FM330	FM8300	FM814	FM852	FM2627

IN THE AFTERNOON SESSION, ANOTHER 50 MARKS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR BIDDING. THEY ARE:

FN1668	EC128	FM328	FN9189	FM9331
FM7388	FN4483	EN233	FM9005	FN3915
*1964	*591	*1965	*FU2	*4750
FN562	FN3336	AA1230	FM6900	FN7307
HK1042	HK1096	FM921	FN1963	AW8613
FF8368	FN3280	FN9311	DA216	FM8155
FM8819	BT382	EN3338	FN122	FN7455
*DK23	*XX95	*FK22	*FT202	*FT4000
FN118	FM8038	HK491	FN6631	FN5996
FN639	FN1230	FM4899	FM9890	FN8275

* SPECIAL VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARK (NOT TRANSFERABLE)

/SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS

SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS MUST PAY BY CHEQUE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BIDDING.

THE SPOKESMAN REMINDED BIDDERS THAT THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARK WOULD BE ASSIGNED ONLY TO A VEHICLE REGISTERED IN THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF THE AUCTION.

THE CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION MUST BE PRODUCED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE AUCTION IF THE VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARK IS TO BE REGISTERED UNDER THE NAME OF BODY CORPORATE.

PROCEEDS OF THE AUCTION, AFTER DEDUCTION OF EXPENSES, WILL GO TO THE GOVERNMENT LOTTERIES FUND.

THE COMING AUCTIONS WILL BE THE 209TH AND 210TH ORGANISED BY THE DEPARTMENT SINCE MAY 1973.

- - - - 0 - - - -

EPCOM RENAMED ACE TO REFLECT WIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

* * * * *

THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPCOM) HAS BEEN RENAMED THE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE ENVIRONMENT (ACE) WITH EFFECT FROM JANUARY 1 THIS YEAR TO REFLECT ITS WIDER RESPONSIBILITIES ARISING FROM A REVISION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE.

THE CHANGES, WHICH ARE RECOMMENDED IN THE SECOND REVIEW OF THE 1989 WHITE PAPER ON THE ENVIRONMENT, REFLECT THE GROWING COMMITMENT AND THE SIGNIFICANCE THE GOVERNMENT ATTACHES TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT UNDER THE NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE, ACE IS TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF KEEPING UNDER REVIEW THE STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN HONG KONG.

IT WILL ALSO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, ON APPROPRIATE MEASURES WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN TO COMBAT POLLUTION OF ALL KINDS, AND TO PROTECT AND SUSTAIN THE ENVIRONMENT.

THE SCOPE OF ACE IS SIGNIFICANTLY WIDER THAN EPCOM WHOSE PRINCIPAL ROLES WERE TO ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON POLLUTION CONTROL MATTERS IN THE OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT.

AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGE, THE PRESENT RESTRICTION ON DELIBERATION OF MATTERS CONCERNING INDOOR AIR POLLUTION HAS BEEN REMOVED.

REPRESENTATION OF GREEN GROUPS ON THE COUNCIL IS FORMALISED TO INCLUDE FRIENDS OF THE EARTH, CONSERVANCY ASSOCIATION, GREEN POWER AND THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE.

/TRADE AND

TRADE AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATION IS ALSO EXTENDED TO FOUR GROUPS: THE CHINESE MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION, HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE FEDERATION OF HONG KONG INDUSTRY AND THE MOTOR TRADERS ASSOCIATION.

THE CHAIRMAN OF EPCOM, PROFESSOR WANG GUNGWU, WILL CONTINUE HIS CHAIRMANSHIP ON THE RECONSTITUTED COUNCIL.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ARE:

MR GUY CLAYTON
DR A R JACK
MR JOSEPH LAU MAN-WAI
MR M J D RUSHWORTH
MS LIZA HOPKINSON
DR NG CHO-NAM
MR DAVID MELVILLE
DR HO KIN-CHUNG
MRS PEGGY LAM PEI YU-DJA
DR THE HON SAMUEL WONG PING-WAI
MR ALBERT CHAN WAI-YIP
MS CHRISTINE LOH KUNG-WAI
MR HENRY S S CHIU
MR CHAN KWOK-WAI
DR LAM KIN-CHE
MR CLINT MARSHALL
MR PAUL C H FAN

THE SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS, THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE IN PERMANENT ATTENDANCE.

THE MEMBERSHIP LIST TOGETHER WITH THE NEW COUNCIL'S NAME WILL BE GAZETTED TOMORROW.

THE ACE WILL HOLD ITS FIRST MEETING ON JANUARY 31.

- - - - 0 - - - -

THREE MORE HIV-INFECTED CASES CONFIRMED

* * * * *

THREE MEN WERE FOUND TO BE POSITIVE FOR THE HIV ANTIBODY TEST LAST MONTH (DECEMBER), THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ANNOUNCED TODAY (THURSDAY).

THIS BRINGS THE NUMBER OF HIV-INFECTED PERSONS IN HONG KONG TO 416.

NO NEW AIDS CASES WERE REPORTED DURING THE MONTH.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CONFIRMED AIDS CASES IS 92 WITH 63 DEATHS. THE 29 OTHERS ARE EITHER UNDER COUNSELLING AND TREATMENT OR HAVE LEFT THE TERRITORY.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

- 24 -

OF THE 416 HIV-INFECTED, 304 ACQUIRED THE INFECTION SEXUALLY, NINE WERE INJECTING DRUG USERS, AND 65 ACQUIRED THE INFECTION THROUGH CONTAMINATED BLOOD OR BLOOD PRODUCTS BEFORE 1985 WHEN HIV ANTIBODY TEST AND SAFE HEAT TREATED CLOTTING CONCENTRATES WERE NOT AVAILABLE.

FOR THE REMAINING 38, THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE WAS INADEQUATE FOR CLASSIFICATION.

UNDER THE HIV SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMME STARTED IN 1985, A TOTAL OF 309,868 BLOOD SPECIMENS HAVE BEEN TESTED FOR THE HIV ANTIBODY.

THE HONG KONG RED CROSS BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE HAS ALSO SCREENED ALL BLOOD DONORS FOR AIDS.

UP TO LAST MONTH, 1,350,233 UNITS OF BLOOD HAD BEEN TESTED AND 29 DONORS WERE FOUND POSITIVE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS

* * * * *

THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED TODAY (THURSDAY) THAT MRS HELEN YU LAI CHING-PING WILL BE APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS WITH EFFECT FROM TOMORROW (FRIDAY).

THE DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS POST WAS CREATED ON AUGUST 1 LAST YEAR UPON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT.

MR TONY EASON HAS BEEN UNDERTAKING THE DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR IN ADDITION TO HIS OWN DUTIES AS SECRETARY FOR PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT AND LANDS WHILE THE PROCESS OF SELECTING THE NEW DIRECTOR HAS BEEN GOING ON.

MRS YU, AGED 52, FIRST JOINED THE CIVIL SERVICE IN 1965 AND WAS APPOINTED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE IN AUGUST 1968.

SHE WAS PROMOTED TO HER PRESENT RANK OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER STAFF GRADE B1 IN JANUARY 1992.

BEFORE BEING APPOINTED AS DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS, SHE WAS SECRETARY GENERAL, OFFICE OF MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. BEFORE THAT, SHE HAS HAD WIDE ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

- - - - 0 - - - -

\$10 GOLD COIN OVER-SUBSCRIBED

* * * * *

A TOTAL OF 40,089 APPLICATIONS FOR THE LIMITED EDITION HONG KONG COMMEMORATIVE \$10 GOLD COIN WERE RECEIVED WHEN THE APPLICATION PERIOD CLOSED LAST SATURDAY (JANUARY 8) AFTERNOON.

"AS EXPECTED, DEMAND FOR THE GOLD COIN WAS HIGH. IN VIEW OF OVER-SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE 18,000 PIECES BEING RESERVED FOR HONG KONG RESIDENTS, A BALLOT WILL BE HELD," A SPOKESMAN FOR THE HONG KONG MONETARY AUTHORITY SAID TODAY (THURSDAY).

"A PRODUCTION LIMIT OF 20,000 HAS BEEN SET ON THE COIN, WHICH IS THE FIRST-EVER, TWO-GOLD ALLOY COIN IN THE HISTORY OF HONG KONG'S COINAGE," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

IT ALSO COMMEMORATES THE INTRODUCTION OF HONG KONG'S NEW COIN DESIGNS BEARING THE BAUHINIA FLOWER.

ALL SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY REGISTERED MAIL BY THE HONGKONGBANK AROUND JANUARY 26 (WEDNESDAY), WHILE UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS WITH SUPPORTING CHEQUES WILL BE RETURNED BY ORDINARY MAIL TWO DAYS EARLIER.

"FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN HONG KONG COINS, A LIMITED QUANTITY OF THE 1988 AND 1993 BRILLIANT UNCIRCULATED COIN COLLECTIONS ARE STILL AVAILABLE AT TWO OVERSEAS TRUST BANK BRANCHES AT 160 GLOUCESTER ROAD, HONG KONG AND 524 NATHAN ROAD, KOWLOON," THE SPOKESMAN ADDED.

- - - - 0 - - - -

AIR QUALITY REPORT FOR DECEMBER

* * * * *

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT TODAY (THURSDAY) RELEASED AIR QUALITY INFORMATION FOR LAST DECEMBER.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEPARTMENT SAID THE PURPOSE WAS TO KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED OF THE AIR QUALITY LEVELS IN THE TERRITORY AND TO EXPLAIN THE MEASUREMENTS.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT NORMALLY CONTAINS MONITORING RESULTS OBTAINED AT ITS MONG KOK, CENTRAL/WESTERN AND KWAI CHUNG MONITORING STATIONS.

THESE LOCATIONS ARE TYPICAL OF THREE OF THE IMPORTANT LAND USE TYPES FOUND IN THE TERRITORY:

- * LOCATIONS CLOSE TO ROAD TRAFFIC IN BUILT-UP URBAN DISTRICTS,
- * COMBINED COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS, AND
- * DISTRICTS CLOSE TO INDUSTRIAL AREAS.

THE REPORTED AIR POLLUTANTS INCLUDE SULPHUR DIOXIDE (SO₂), NITROGEN DIOXIDE (NO₂), RESPIRABLE SUSPENDED PARTICULATES (RSP) AND TOTAL SUSPENDED PARTICULATES (TSP).

THE GASEOUS POLLUTANTS ARE MONITORED CONTINUOUSLY WHILE PARTICLE SAMPLES ARE COLLECTED FOR 24 HOURS, ONCE EVERY SIX DAYS.

AIR POLLUTION LEVELS REMAINED RELATIVELY CONSTANT THROUGHOUT THE MONTH AS A RESULT OF LITTLE CHANGE IN WEATHER CONDITIONS.

HOWEVER, THERE WERE SOME MINOR VARIATIONS IN AIR QUALITY OVER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS. ON BOXING DAY, ELEVATED GASEOUS POLLUTANT LEVELS WERE RECORDED.

AS THE DISPERSION OF AIR POLLUTANTS WAS INHIBITED UNDER A LOW LEVEL INVERSION AND LIGHT WIND SITUATION, AND NO₂ LEVELS AT MONG KOK INCREASED SUFFICIENTLY TO BREACH THE 150 UG/CUBIC METER 24-HOUR AIR QUALITY OBJECTIVE.

AGAIN THIS MONTH, LEVELS OF POLLUTANTS WERE GENERALLY HIGHER AT THE STREET-LEVEL SITE OF MONG KOK THAN AT THE OTHER TWO SITES WHICH ARE LOCATED ON ROOF TOPS.

THE FOUR POLLUTANTS DISCUSSED HAVE DIFFERENT ORIGINS. SO₂ MOSTLY ORIGINATES FROM THE COMBUSTION OF SULPHUR CONTAINING FOSSIL FUELS.

NO₂ IS FORMED EITHER DIRECTLY DURING COMBUSTION OR, BY THE ATMOSPHERIC OXIDATION OF NITRIC OXIDE (NO) WHICH IS ALSO PRODUCED DURING COMBUSTION.

VEHICLE EXHAUST IS A MAJOR SOURCE OF NO AND NO₂. IT IS ALSO A MAJOR SOURCE OF AIRBORNE PARTICLES; OTHER SOURCES INCLUDE INDUSTRY, FURNACES AND BOILERS, CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES, THE SEA AND SOIL DUST.

THE EPD CURRENTLY MONITORS AIR QUALITY CONTINUOUSLY AT EIGHT STATIONS, INCLUDING THE THREE MENTIONED ABOVE. SHORT-TERM MEASUREMENT CAMPAIGNS ARE ALSO UNDERTAKEN AS AND WHERE THE NEED ARISES.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

FURTHER ENQUIRIES CAN BE DIRECTED TO PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER, MR RAYMOND LEUNG ON TELEPHONE 594 6401.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

- 27 -

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MUSICIANS AND DANCERS

* * * * *

LOCAL YOUNG MUSICIANS AND DANCERS CAN NOW APPLY FOR OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED BY THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND FOR THE YEAR 1994/95.

THE SCHOLARSHIPS HELP TALENTED YOUNG PEOPLE RECEIVE MUSIC OR DANCE TRAINING IN POST-DIPLOMA STUDIES AT OVERSEAS INSTITUTIONS.

RECIPIENTS OF THE AWARDS SHOULD RETURN TO HONG KONG AND MAKE CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY.

THE SCOPE OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS IS NOT CONFINED TO INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC STUDIES OR BALLET.

RELATED STUDIES IN MUSIC OR DANCE, PRACTICAL OR ACADEMIC SUCH AS COMPOSITION, MUSICOLOGY, CHOREOGRAPHY AND DANCE NOTATION, ARE ALSO COVERED.

SELECTION OF SUITABLE CANDIDATES WILL BE MADE THROUGH AUDITIONS OR INTERVIEWS TO BE HELD IN MARCH OR APRIL.

ALL QUALIFIED APPLICANTS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE AUDITION IN PERSON.

THE SCHOLARSHIP WILL COVER TUITION FEE, A TECHNICAL ALLOWANCE, A SUBSISTANCE ALLOWANCE AND A RETURN PASSAGE TO THE INTENDED COUNTRY OF STUDY.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL NOT BE AWARDED A SCHOLARSHIP FOR TWO SUCCESSIVE YEARS UNLESS UNDER VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

APPLICANTS PLANNING TO PURSUE A COURSE LONGER THAN ONE YEAR SHOULD BE PREPARED TO LOOK FOR OTHER SOURCES OF FINANCE AFTER THE FIRST YEAR.

CANDIDATES APPLYING FOR MUSIC, MUSIC-RELATED, DANCE OR DANCE-RELATED STUDIES SHOULD PREFERABLY BE UNDER THE AGE OF 23 ON SEPTEMBER 1 THIS YEAR.

HOWEVER, EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE IN THE CASES OF SINGERS, COMPOSERS OR CHOREOGRAPHERS WISHING TO ENTER ADVANCED COURSES.

THE APPLICANTS SHOULD NORMALLY BE GRADUATES OF A RECOGNISED HONG KONG TERTIARY INSTITUTION AND SHOULD BE AT A PERFORMANCE STANDARD EQUIVALENT TO THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA GRANTED BY THE HONG KONG ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS.

COMPOSERS, MUSICOLOGISTS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SHOULD BE AT A COMPARABLE ADVANCED STANDARD.

HOWEVER, EXCEPTIONS MAY BE MADE IN THE CASE OF PRACTISING ARTISTS WITH PROVEN ABILITY AND EXPERIENCE.

/IN ADDITION,

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

- 28 -

IN ADDITION, ALL APPLICANTS SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST THREE YEARS' RESIDENCE IN HONG KONG.

APPLICATION FORMS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FROM THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND SECRETARIAT, CULTURE DIVISION, RECREATION AND CULTURE BRANCH, 40TH FLOOR, REVENUE TOWER, 5 GLOUCESTER ROAD, WAN CHAI, HONG KONG.

COMPLETED FORMS SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THE HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB MUSIC FUND SECRETARIAT BY FEBRUARY 15.

FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE OBTAINED ON TEL 594 5620 OR 594 5628.

- - - - 0 - - - -

COOL AND CLOUDY IN DECEMBER

* * * * *

LAST DECEMBER WAS SLIGHTLY COOLER AND CLOUDIER THAN NORMAL, A MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT OF THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY SAYS.

APART FROM A HUMID SPELL EARLY IN THE MONTH, IT WAS RATHER DRY. THE MONTHLY RAINFALL OF 15.7 MILLIMETRES WAS 42 PER CENT BELOW THE DECEMBER NORMAL OF 27.3 MILLIMETRES.

THE WINTER MONSOON WAS GENERALLY ACTIVE BUT BECAME MORE SUBDUED TOWARDS THE END OF THE MONTH. COLD MORNINGS AND DAYS OF LOW HUMIDITY BEFORE CHRISTMAS WERE FOLLOWED BY NOTICEABLY MILDER WEATHER DURING THE WEEK LEADING UP TO THE NEW YEAR.

THE MONTH BEGAN WITH RELATIVELY MILD AND UNSEASONABLY HUMID CONDITIONS. THE WEATHER WAS MOSTLY CLOUDY WITH OCCASIONAL LIGHT RAIN ON DECEMBER 1 AND 2. MIST PATCHES WERE REPORTED OFFSHORE IN THE MORNINGS AND EVENINGS.

AS THE CLOUDS AND MIST CLEARED ON DECEMBER 3, TEMPERATURES CLIMBED TO THE MONTH'S MAXIMUM OF 25.3 DEGREES DURING THE DAY BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF A SURGE OF THE WINTER MONSOON TOWARDS MIDNIGHT.

AS NORTHERLY WINDS FRESHENED AND PERSISTED, TEMPERATURES DROPPED PROGRESSIVELY FROM DECEMBER 3 TO 7, A FALL OF MORE THAN 11 DEGREES IN FIVE DAYS.

THE WEATHER REMAINED FINE AND SUNNY AS DRIER CONTINENTAL AIR PREVAILED. WINDS TURNED EASTERLY ON THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 7 AND BECAME OCCASIONALLY STRONG OFFSHORE.

AS A REPLENISHMENT OF THE WINTER MONSOON ARRIVED EARLY ON DECEMBER 10, WINDS TURNED NORTHERLY THAT DAY BEFORE REVERTING BACK TO EASTERLY AGAIN THE FOLLOWING MORNING. DESPITE THE CLOUDIER WEATHER, THERE WERE STILL SUNNY PERIODS DURING THE DAY ON DECEMBER 10 AND 11.

/A SPELL

A SPELL OF CLOUDY AND RAINY WEATHER PERSISTED FROM DECEMBER 12 TO 15. DURING THIS TIME, A TROPICAL CYCLONE NAMED MANNY WAS TRAVERSING THE SOUTH CHINA SEA AND MOISTURE ADVECTION TOWARDS THE SOUTH CHINA COASTAL AREAS WAS ENHANCED.

MEANWHILE, NORTHERLY WINDS FRESHENED OVERNIGHT ON DECEMBER 13, CAUSING A SIGNIFICANT TEMPERATURE FALL OF ABOUT SEVEN DEGREES OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS.

THOUGH THE WEATHER IMPROVED ON DECEMBER 16, ANOTHER REPLENISHMENT OF THE WINTER MONSOON AND A STRENGTHENING OF NORTHERLY WINDS THAT NIGHT RESULTED IN A FURTHER DROP IN TEMPERATURES THE NEXT DAY.

AT THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY, THE MONTH'S LOWEST TEMPERATURE OF 9.2 DEGREES WAS RECORDED ON THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 17. AT TAI MO SHAN, TEMPERATURES WERE NEAR FREEZING.

AFTER A CLOUDY AND RAINY DAY ON DECEMBER 18, FINE WEATHER RETURNED ON DECEMBER 19 AND TEMPERATURES ROSE AGAIN.

CONDITIONS ONCE AGAIN BECAME COLD AS A SURGE OF THE WINTER MONSOON REACHED HONG KONG ON THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 21. THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF A SPELL OF SUSTAINED NORTHERLY WINDS WHICH LASTED TILL DECEMBER 27.

NORTHERLY WINDS WERE STRONG AND GUSTY DURING THE ONSET STAGE AND SOME SCAFFOLDINGS COLLAPSED IN YAU MA TEI ON DECEMBER 21.

WITH CLEAR SKIES, NIGHTTIME COOLING WAS ENHANCED IN THE NEW TERRITORIES WHERE TEMPERATURES WERE GENERALLY BELOW 10 DEGREES ON THE MORNINGS OF DECEMBER 22 AND 23.

THE PREVAILING CONTINENTAL AIR MASS LED TO INCREASINGLY DRY CONDITIONS AND RELATIVE HUMIDITY WAS AS LOW AS 22 PER CENT ON DECEMBER 24. HILL FIRES WERE REPORTED IN TAI PO KAU AND TAI LAM COUNTRY PARK.

AFTER WINDS TURNED EASTERLY DURING THE DAY ON DECEMBER 27, SURGES OF COLD AIR FROM THE NORTH BECAME LESS FREQUENT. FINE WEATHER PERSISTED AND CONDITIONS BECAME MILDER TOWARDS THE END OF THE MONTH.

NORTHERLY WINDS ASSOCIATED WITH A WEAK REPLENISHMENT OF THE WINTER MONSOON ON DECEMBER 31 WERE RATHER SHORT-LIVED. THE ONLY EFFECT WAS A SLIGHT DROP IN TEMPERATURE ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

THREE TROPICAL CYCLONES AFFECTED THE WESTERN NORTH PACIFIC AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA IN DECEMBER.

DURING THE MONTH, NO AIRCRAFT WAS DIVERTED BECAUSE OF ADVERSE WEATHER.

DETAILS OF THE ISSUANCE/HOISTING AND CANCELLATION/LOWERING OF VARIOUS WARNINGS/SIGNALS IN THE MONTH ARE SUMMARISED IN TABLE 1.1.

MONTHLY METEOROLOGICAL FIGURES AND DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL FOR DECEMBER ARE TABULATED IN TABLE 1.2.

TABLE 1.1 WARNINGS AND SIGNALS IN DECEMBER 1993

WARNINGS / SIGNALS	EFFECTIVE DATE AND TIME
STRONG MONSOON SIGNALS	DEC 3 2300 - DEC 4 0900
	DEC 8 0435 - DEC 8 0730
	DEC 9 0130 - DEC 9 0645
	DEC 16 1815 - DEC 17 1510
	DEC 21 0630 - DEC 21 0930
	DEC 21 1930 - DEC 22 0730
FIRE DANGER WARNINGS	
YELLOW	DEC 4 0630 - DEC 5 0725
	DEC 11 0620 - DEC 12 0600
	DEC 19 0615 - DEC 20 0600
	DEC 26 0610 - DEC 28 0600
RED	DEC 5 0725 - DEC 6 0615
	DEC 7 0645 - DEC 7 2300
	DEC 18 0000 - DEC 18 1800
	DEC 21 0700 - DEC 26 0610
	DEC 31 0620 - JAN 1 0615
GAS HEATER ALERTS	DEC 14 1630 - DEC 19 1630
	DEC 21 1630 - DEC 24 1600

TABLE 1.2 FIGURES AND DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL - DECEMBER 1993

TOTAL BRIGHT SUNSHINE	165.8 HOURS; 15.7 HOURS BELOW NORMAL
MEAN DAILY GLOBAL SOLAR RADIATION	11.01 MJ/SQM; 1.02 MJ/SQM BELOW NORMAL
TOTAL RAINFALL	15.7 MM; 11.6 MM BELOW NORMAL
MEAN CLOUD AMOUNT	53 % ; 4 % ABOVE NORMAL
MEAN RELATIVE HUMIDITY	67 % ; 1 % BELOW NORMAL
MEAN DAILY MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE	19.4 DEGREES; 1.1 DEGREES BELOW NORMAL
MEAN AIR TEMPERATURE	17.1 DEGREES; 0.5 DEGREE BELOW NORMAL
MEAN DAILY MINIMUM TEMPERATURE	15.0 DEGREES; 0.4 DEGREE BELOW NORMAL

/MEAN DEW

MEAN DEW POINT	10.5 DEGREES; 0.7 DEGREE BELOW NORMAL
TOTAL EVAPORATION	70.7 MM; 40.8 MM BELOW NORMAL

NOTE: ALL MEASUREMENTS WERE MADE AT THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY EXCEPT SUNSHINE, SOLAR RADIATION AND EVAPORATION WHICH WERE RECORDED AT KING'S PARK.

- - - - 0 - - - -

MORE THAN 1,100 YEARS DEDICATED TO EDUCATION
* * * * *

FORTY-FIVE MEMBERS OF THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT, CONTRIBUTING A TOTAL OF MORE THAN 1,100 YEARS OF SERVICE AND RANGING IN RANK FROM WORKMAN II TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TODAY (THURSDAY) RECEIVED RECOGNITION OF THEIR SERVICE.

OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF THOSE RECEIVING LONG SERVICE AWARDS, ONE HAD BEEN IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE FOR 40 YEARS, EIGHT FOR 30 YEARS AND 36 FOR 20 YEARS.

AMONG THE RECIPIENTS WERE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MR HORACE R KNIGHT AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MR LEUNG KAM-FONG OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL.

PRESENTING THE AWARDS WAS THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR DOMINIC S W WONG.

"THIS YEAR, 12 OF OUR COLLEAGUES WERE AWARDED 20 YEARS' MERITORIOUS SERVICE CERTIFICATES AND 33 THE RETIREMENT SOUVENIRS. THEIR CONTRIBUTION HAS BEEN ADMIRABLE AND THEIR SERVICE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN," HE SAID.

- - - - 0 - - - -

SCHOOL QUIZ AND TELEMATCH CONTEST ON AIDS
* * * * *

SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE INVITED TO ENTER AN INTER-SCHOOL QUIZ AND TELEMATCH COMPETITION ON AIDS.

THE COMPETITION AIMS AT ENHANCING STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC FACTS ABOUT AIDS AS WELL AS FOSTERING CONCERN FOR HIV-INFECTED PEOPLE.

IT IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE HONG KONG ASSOCIATION OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCES EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRY IS THE END OF THIS MONTH. ENQUIRIES CAN BE MADE OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES SECTION, ADVISORY INSPECTORATE, ON TEL 892 6546.

- - - - 0 - - - -

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, 1994

- 32 -

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND
MONEY MARKET OPERATIONS

* * * * *

	\$ MILLION -----
OPENING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,825
REVERSAL OF LAF	+2,175
BALANCE AFTER REVERSAL OF LAF	4,000
NET INJECTION/WITHDRAWAL TODAY	NIL
EFFECT OF LAF TODAY	-2,133
CLOSING BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT	1,867
LAF RATE 2.00 BID/4.00 OFFER	TWI 127.5 *+0.0* 13.1.94

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE FUND

EF BILLS			EF NOTES/HONG KONG GOVERNMENT BONDS			
TERMS	YIELD	TERM	ISSUE	COUPON	PRICE	YIELD
1 WEEK	2.81 PCT	13 MONTHS	2502	4.75	101.36	3.50
1 MONTH	2.86 PCT	16 MONTHS	2505	3.75	100.12	3.69
3 MONTHS	2.98 PCT	19 MONTHS	2508	4.625	101.22	3.86
6 MONTHS	3.12 PCT	22 MONTHS	2511	4.15	100.25	4.05
12 MONTHS	3.42 PCT	33 MONTHS	3610	4.20	99.30	4.52

TOTAL TURNOVER OF BILLS AND BONDS - 20,977 MN

CLOSED 13 JANUARY 1994

- - - - 0 - - - -