



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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UK DEBATES AIDED BY UMELCO VISIT - AG
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THE BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES ON HONG KONG'S FUTURE WOULD HAVE BEEN LESS WELL-INFORMED AND LESS WELL-ATTENDED IF THE UNOFFICIALS HAD STAYED AT HOME, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

SPEAKING AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE, ON +THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG+, MR THOMAS SAID THE UMELCO DELEGATION'S ACTIVITIES IN LONDON BEFORE THE DEBATES BROUGHT ABOUT A +REMARKABLE AMOUNT+ OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION, APART FROM THE NUMEROUS MEETINGS THEY HAD WITH MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

IN HIS VIEW, EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAD BOOSTED UMELCO'S STANDING AS LEADERS OF THE COMMUNITY.

+AND THIS IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT COMES AT THE VERY TIME WHEN HONG KONG IS FACING A MOST DIFFICULT AND TESTING PERIOD OF IMPENDING CHANGE.

+AS THE COMPLEX ISSUES COME INTO FOCUS WITH THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WILL BE LOOKING FOR REALISM, CLEAR THINKING AND ABOVE ALL A POSITIVE LEAD FROM UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS AND ALL PERSONS OF STANDING IN THE COMMUNITY,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT UMELCO WOULD PLAY THEIR PART IN PROVIDING SUCH LEADERSHIP, FORTIFIED BY THEIR RECENT EXPERIENCES.

MR THOMAS SAID THAT SIR S.Y. CHUNG, IN HIS REMARKS QUOTED BY THE HON T.S. LO, DREW ATTENTION +TO THE GREAT DEAL OF WORK THAT LIES AHEAD.+

HE REFERRED TO MISS LYDIA DUNN'S REMARKS THAT THE INHABITANTS OF HONG KONG, THE PEOPLE MOST AFFECTED BY THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION CURRENTLY UNDER WAY, WERE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE TALKS.

IT WAS THEREFORE UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THERE SHOULD BE CONCERN AND ANXIETY HERE ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS, AND THAT UMELCO MEMBERS SHOULD WISH TO REFLECT THEM TO MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.

HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD PAID TRIBUTE TO THE IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF BOTH COUNCILS AS ADVISERS TO THE GOVERNOR AND AS A CHANNEL FOR THE EXPRESSION OF THE WISHES AND CONCERNS OF HONG KONG PEOPLE.

+IT WAS IN THIS LATTER CAPACITY THAT UMELCO MEMBERS TOOK THE DECISION TO GO TO LONDON, USING FUNDS ALLOCATED TO THEM TO AID THEM IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTIES.

/+THE MATTERS

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+THE MATTERS THEY RAISED IN THE COURSE OF THAT VISIT WERE THOSE WHICH UMELCO MEMBERS PUT FORWARD. THEY WERE DOING NO MORE THAN EXERCISING THE FREEDOM ENJOYED BY ALL PEOPLE IN THIS TERRITORY TO SPEAK THEIR MINDS,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

HE NOTED THERE WERE THOSE IN LONDON WHO QUESTIONED THE UNOFFICIALS' RIGHT TO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

BUT AS MR T.S. LO AND MRS PAULINE NG HAD POINTED OUT, THE UNOFFICIALS HAD +NEVER CLAIMED THAT STATUS OR AUTHORITY.+

+ALL THEY HAVE EVER DONE IS TO CLAIM THE RIGHT TO PRESENT OR REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

+THAT RIGHT CAN BE CLAIMED REGARDLESS OF WHETHER SPOKESMEN ARE ELECTED TO OFFICE, APPOINTED TO OFFICE OR HAVE OCCUPIED NO OFFICE AT ALL. THE SPOKESMEN NEED ONLY BE HONEST AND WELL INFORMED AND NO-ONE CAN DENY THAT UNOFFICIALS ARE BOTH,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

ON THE GOVERNMENT'S FORTHCOMING GREEN PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE ALONG REPRESENTATIVE LINES, MR THOMAS SAID THE PAPER +IS BUT ONE EXAMPLE OF THE MANY OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WILL EXIST AND WHICH WILL NEED TO BE GRASPED TO BUILD ON HONG KONG'S PAST SUCCESSES AND PRESENT STRENGTHS TO ENSURE THAT HONG KONG ITSELF IS AS WELL PREPARED AS POSSIBLE TO FACE THE FUTURE.+

AT THE DEBATE, MISS DUNN HAD UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF AN AGREEMENT IN PROVIDING THE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH HONG KONG MIGHT DEVELOP AND FLOURISH AND WITHIN WHICH THE CONTINUITY OF ITS ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS COULD BE ASSURED, HE SAID.

+THE BEST ASSURANCE OF THIS LIES IN THE CONCLUSION OF A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT IN WHICH ARRANGEMENTS FOR HONG KONG'S CONTINUING PROSPERITY AND STABILITY, BASED ON A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE OF AUTONOMY, ARE FORMALLY RECORDED WITH CLARITY AND PRECISION.

+AS MEMBERS WILL KNOW, THIS IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE BRITISH SIDE.

+IN THAT RESPECT, UNOFFICIALS MAY FEEL WELL SATISFIED THAT ONE OF THEIR MAIN CONCERNS IS FULLY SHARED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

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UMELCO ACHIEVED OVERALL AIM IN LONDON - LO

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AS A WHOLE, THE AIM OF THE UMELCO DELEGATION'S RECENT VISIT TO LONDON HAD BEEN ACHIEVED, THE HON T.S. LO SAID AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THIS AIM WAS TO REFLECT THE VIEWS AND WISHES OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE TO THE BRITISH MINISTERS AND MPS BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

THE DELEGATION HAD ALSO AROUSED THE CONCERN OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC TOWARDS THE PROBLEMS RELATING TO HONG KONG'S FUTURE, MR LO SAID.

MR LO POINTED OUT THAT UMELCO DECIDED AT ITS MEETING LAST FRIDAY THAT IT WISHED TO PLACE ON FORMAL RECORD ITS POSITION PAPER AND TO REPORT ON THE TRIP OF ITS DELEGATION TO LONDON UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SENIOR UNOFFICIAL MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, SIR S.Y. CHUNG.

HE THEN GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE PREPARATION OF THE POSITION PAPER AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DELEGATION IN LONDON FROM MAY 9 TO MAY 22.

HE SAID, +DURING OUR STAY, WE MET MANY MPS FAMILIAR WITH OR CONCERNED ABOUT HONG KONG AND WE EXPLAINED TO THEM THE VIEWS, WISHES, FEARS AND FEELINGS OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE.

+WE ALSO HAD MANY PRESS, RADIO AND TELEVISION INTERVIEWS AT WHICH WE CONVEYED TO THE UK PUBLIC THE PROBLEM OF HONG KONG'S FUTURE.

+TO KEEP THE PEOPLE IN HONG KONG ABREAST OF THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT, WE GAVE DAILY PRESS BRIEFINGS FOR THE HONG KONG REPORTERS IN LONDON, SOMETIMES AT 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

+WE WERE ENCOURAGED AND GRATEFUL FOR THE RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE VERY MANY SUPPORTIVE TELEX MESSAGES THEY SENT,+ HE SAID.

HE APPLAUDED MEMBERS OF THE PRESS WHO WENT TO LONDON TO COVER THE VISIT FOR +THEIR SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG+.

ON THE TIMING OF THE VISIT, HE SAID, +ON APRIL 20, THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, MADE A STATEMENT IN HONG KONG AND FOR THE FIRST TIME BRITAIN REVEALED PART OF THE CONTENTS OF THE TALKS ON HONG KONG'S FUTURE.

+BEFORE THAT, THE TALKS WERE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THEM. THE PEOPLE'S VIEWS AND WISHES CANNOT BE REFLECTED IN A VACUUM.+

TO THE ARGUMENT THAT UMELCO SHOULD WAIT A LITTLE LONGER FOR A MORE DETAILED ANNOUNCEMENT BEFORE GOING TO LONDON, HE SAID, +IT WAS ONLY WHEN WE LEARNED THAT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS WOULD HOLD A DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG WITHIN THE WEEK COMMENCING MAY 14 THAT WE DECIDED TO SEND A DELEGATION TO LONDON,+

/HE EXPLAINED

HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS BECAUSE IF THE DEBATE WAS TO BE MEANINGFUL AND EFFECTIVE, MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS SHOULD BE PRESENTED WITH PERTINENT ISSUES IN THE VIEW OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE.

MR LO ALSO REPLIED TO THE CRITICISM IN BRITAIN THAT AS THE UNOFFICIALS WERE NOT ELECTED, THEY DID NOT REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

+OUR CRITICS SEEMED TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT ALL ALONG WE HAVE BEEN EMPHASISING THAT OUR PURPOSE WAS MERELY TO REFLECT PUBLIC OPINION.

+OUR POSITION PAPER IS A SYNOPSIS OF THE VIEWS WE HAVE GATHERED IN OUR CONTACTS WITH THE PEOPLE THROUGH ADVISORY AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS, THE URBAN COUNCIL, DISTRICT BOARDS, KAIFONG ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER CIVIC BODIES, AND THROUGH REPRESENTATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS RECEIVED BY THE UMELCO OFFICE,+ HE SAID.

+ANY DISCERNING PERSON WOULD SEE THAT OUR CRITICS WERE NOT MOTIVATED BY THEIR WISHING TO HEAR MORE REPRESENTATIVE VIEWS BUT MERELY TO AVOID GIVING DIRECT ANSWERS TO THE POINTS WE RAISED,+ HE ADDED.

MR LO ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE DELEGATION HAD HELD MEETINGS WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF MPS, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE AND THE PRIME MINISTER MRS MARGARET THATCHER. IT ALSO ATTENDED THE DEBATES ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON MAY 16 AND THE HOUSE OF LORDS ON MAY 21.

+TWENTY-THREE MPS SPOKE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE, AND THEY ALL AGREED THAT THE AGREEMENT SHOULD INCLUDE DETAILS OF ALL ARRANGEMENTS AFTER 1997. THIS IS TANTAMOUNT TO AGREEING WITH THE FIRST OF THE FOUR SUGGESTIONS MENTIONED IN THE POSITION PAPER.

+HOWEVER, FOR THE REMAINING THREE SUGGESTIONS, THERE WAS NO CONSENSUS VIEW,+ HE SAID.

ON THE HOUSE OF LORDS DEBATE, HE SAID THAT 10 PEERS SPOKE AND ALMOST ALL APPRECIATED THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE RIGHTS OF BRITISH NATIONALS IN HONG KONG AFTER 1997.

THEY PROPOSED THAT THE AGREEMENT MIGHT BE SIGNED IN TWO STAGES, SO THAT BOTH THE CHINESE AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS COULD HAVE MORE TIME TO CONSIDER THE VIEWS AND WISHES OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE.

MR LO CONCLUDED HIS SPEECH BY QUOTING WHAT SIR S.Y. CHUNG HAD SAID ON MAY 23:

+THERE IS NO TOPIC IN HONG KONG WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT AND MORE URGENT THAN THE ISSUE OF OUR FUTURE. OUR VISIT WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING. UMELCO AND ALL OF US IN HONG KONG HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF WORK AHEAD IF WE ARE GOING TO SECURE A GOOD FUTURE NOT ONLY FOR THE PRESENT GENERATION BUT ALSO FOR OUR CHILDREN.+

PEOPLE CLAIMING OWN HUMAN RIGHTS - DUNN

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THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG DO NOT DENY THE VALIDITY OF THE CHINESE CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER THIS PART OF CHINA, THE HON LYDIA DUNN SAID AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE TODAY.

+BUT A FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THEY ARE TO PURSUE THEIR LIVES IN THE FUTURE IS NOW BEING NEGOTIATED AND SO THEY FEEL THEY ARE JUSTIFIED IN LAYING CLAIM TO THEIR OWN HUMAN RIGHTS.+

+LIKEWISE, THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG DO NOT CLAIM THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES,+ SHE SAID.

BUT, UNLESS THEIR APPREHENSIONS ARE FRANKLY RECOGNISED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND TAKEN ACCOUNT OF IN THE PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT, THESE APPREHENSIONS WILL REMAIN, SHE SAID.

MISS DUNN POINTED OUT THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE UNDERSTOOD AND ACCEPTED THE REALITY THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND CHINA.

+BUT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, FOR THEIR PART, HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO BEAR IN MIND ANOTHER REALITY, NAMELY THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL DETERMINE THE FATE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG,+ SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT THE DECLARED INTENTION OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS IS TO DEVISE ARRANGEMENTS, TO BE ENSHRINED IN A BILATERAL AGREEMENT, WHICH WOULD ENSURE THE CONTINUITY OF EXISTING SYSTEMS AND THE LIFESTYLE OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

+THIS IS IN RECOGNITION OF THE HISTORICAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF HONG KONG: WHEREAS THIS TERRITORY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE MAINLAND OF CHINA, THIS COMMUNITY HAS DEVELOPED A LIFESTYLE OF ITS OWN,+ SHE SAID.

+THIS IS NOT TO DENY THE ESSENTIALLY CHINESE QUALITY OF THIS COMMUNITY AND WE SHARE THAT SENSE OF PATRIOTISM WHICH BINDS ALL CHINESE TOGETHER, BUT IN UNITY NOT UNIFORMITY,+ SHE ADDED.

SHE SAID THAT AS SHE UNDERSTOOD IT, BOTH GOVERNMENTS ACCEPT THAT IT IS ONLY FAIR AND REASONABLE FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, AS WELL AS BEING IN THE INTEREST OF SINO-BRITISH RELATIONS, THAT CONTINUITY OF OUR FAMILIAR LIFESTYLE SHOULD BE SECURED.

THE TWO SYSTEMS - ONE COUNTRY CONCEPT, SHE SAID WAS AN +IMAGINATIVE CONCEPT+.

+BUT THERE IS A DIFFICULTY: THE CONCEPT IS WITHOUT PRECEDENT AND INVOLVES SUCH A SHARP BREAK, FROM A CONSTITUTIONAL POINT OF VIEW, WITH THE PAST.+

+IT IS NOT SURPRISING, THEREFORE, THAT THE PEOPLE ARE WORRIED AND ANXIOUS ABOUT THE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WILL COME INTO PLAY AFTER THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY IN 1997,+ SHE SAID.

/CONCEDING THAT

CONCEDING THAT HONG KONG HAS SURVIVED MANY CHANGES OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE PAST, SHE NOTED, +BUT THOSE AFFECTED, THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, CANNOT BE CRITICISED FOR TAKING THE VIEW THAT THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY COULD HAVE SUCH PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS FOR THEIR FUTURE THAT IT IS SIMPLY NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO INVOKE PAST EXPERIENCE BY WAY OF REASSURANCE.+

SHE BELIEVED THAT IT WAS ENTIRELY UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE, SHOULD HAVE RECENTLY BECOME INTENSELY INTERESTED IN THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

+THEY ARE BEING ASKED, AFTER ALL, TO BELIEVE THAT THE EXPECTED COURSE OF THEIR LIVES WILL NOT BE SUBJECT TO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE, DESPITE THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY AND THE ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY WHICH PREVAILS IN CHINA,+ SHE SAID.

SHE POINTED OUT THAT THE FEARS AND ANXIETIES OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WOULD NOT BE DISPELLED BY DECREE, LET ALONE BY EXHORTATIONS, EVEN FROM ON HIGH, THAT PEOPLE SHOULD SIMPLY HAVE FAITH AND BE CONFIDENT.

+INDEED, IT IS NOT EASY TO BE TOLERANT OF SUCH EXHORTATIONS WHEN THEY COME FROM THOSE, WHO, ON THE ONE HAND, ARE IN THE PRIVILEGED POSITION OF HAVING THE ULTIMATE SAY IN DETERMINING OUR FATE, AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, SHARE NONE OF THE RISKS,+ SHE SAID.

NO ONE, SHE SAID, COULD ARGUE THAT THESE APPREHENSIONS WERE GROUNDLESS.

+ALTHOUGH THE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT MAY REMOVE UNCERTAINTY, AN AGREEMENT WILL NOT IN ITSELF ELIMINATE APPREHENSIONS AND, CERTAINLY, THE ARBITRARY IMPLEMENTATION OF AN AGREEMENT WILL NOT ELIMINATE THEM, UNLESS THAT AGREEMENT IS PERCEIVED TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE DECLARED OBJECTIVE OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.+

COMMENTING ON THE IDEA THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MORE REPRESENTATIVE FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG WILL IN ITSELF SECURE OUR FUTURE, SHE SAID, +CLEARLY, IF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE FUTURE SAR IS TO ENJOY A HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY, AS PROMISED, THEN THAT GOVERNMENT MUST BE BUILT UPON REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS.+

+WE ALL LOOK FORWARD - AND LOOK FORWARD POSITIVELY - TO THE GOVERNMENT'S GREEN PAPER ON THIS SUBJECT. AND HOW TREMENDOUSLY IMPORTANT IT IS THAT THE DIVERSITY OF TALENT IN OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD BE TAPPED AND INVESTED IN THE HONG KONG OF TOMORROW,+ SHE ADDED.

+BUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MORE REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WILL NOT IN ITSELF DISPEL CURRENT FEARS AND ANXIETIES,+ SHE SAID.

+WHAT THE BILATERAL AGREEMENT NOW BEING NEGOTIATED MUST PROVIDE IS CREDIBILITY THAT SUCH A REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, WHEN DEvised, WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE WITHOUT INTERFERENCE,+ SHE SAID.

/SHE SAID

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SHE SAID THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THEY WERE CONCERNED WITH +THE PROBLEM OF PEOPLE+.

+HOW TO COPE WITH +THE PROBLEM OF PEOPLE+ HAS BEEN A CONSTANTLY RECURRING THEME IN HONG KONG'S HISTORY, BUT NO PERIOD IN OUR HISTORY IS COMPARABLE WITH THE EVENTS UNFOLDING TODAY,+ SHE SAID.

SHE SAID THAT IF THE AGREEMENT +PROVIDES SATISFACTORY ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS POSED IN THE UMELCO STATEMENT, THEN THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WILL FACE UP TO THE FUTURE WITH A SENSE OF PURPOSE AND WITH CONFIDENCE.+

+BUT IF THE AGREEMENT DOES NOT, THEN THE PRESENT DAY VERSION OF +THE PROBLEM OF PEOPLE+ WILL NOT BE RESOLVED AS IN THE PAST,+ SHE ADDED.

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PUBLIC STRONGLY SUPPORT UMELCO
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THE GENERAL PUBLIC AGREED WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE UMELCO DELEGATION AND FULLY SUPPORTED ITS POSITION PAPER, THE HON MRS PAULINE NG SAID AT THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE TODAY.

SHE EXPLAINED THAT THE PAPER WAS BASED ON INFORMATION GATHERED THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS - PUBLIC VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE PRESS AND ON PUBLIC OCCASIONS; REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED BY THE UMELCO OFFICE; MEMBERS' CONTACT WITH THE PEOPLE THROUGH THE VARIOUS ADVISORY BOARDS AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES, THE URBAN COUNCIL, THE HEUNG YEE KUK, INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER CIVIC BODIES.

+UMELCO MEMBERS HAVE ALSO ATTENDED SPECIAL DISTRICT BOARD MEETINGS HELD TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG IN ORDER TO OBTAIN AT FIRST HAND THE OPINION OF RESIDENTS IN THE DISTRICTS,+ SHE RECALLED.

+THE POSITION PAPER WAS BASED ON INFORMATION GATHERED THROUGH THESE CHANNELS, AND UMELCO THEREFORE AGREE UNANIMOUSLY THAT IT IS AN ACCURATE REFLECTION OF THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG ON THE FUTURE OF THE TERRITORY,+ SHE SAID.

SHE NOTED THAT IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM FROM SOME MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT THAT UMELCO COULD NOT REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG, THE PUBLIC SHOWED THEIR SUPPORT TO THE DELEGATION BY SENDING TO LONDON TELEX MESSAGES AND TELEGRAMS.

+ALTOGETHER MORE THAN EIGHT THOUSAND INDIVIDUALS, 1 500 ORGANISATIONS, FIFTEEN DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE HEUNG YEE KUK EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE UMELCO DELEGATION'S ACTION AND THE POSITION PAPER,+ SHE SAID.

+THE DELEGATION AS WELL AS UMELCO MEMBERS IN HONG KONG WERE GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY THESE TELEGRAMS AND LETTERS,+ SHE ADDED.

/SOME DISTRICT

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SOME DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS EVEN WENT TO THE AIRPORT ON MAY 23 TO WELCOME THE DELEGATION UPON ITS RETURN TO HONG KONG, SHE OBSERVED.

+I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO THESE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, CIVIC ORGANISATIONS, DISTRICT BOARDS AND THE HEUNG YEÉ KUK FOR EVERYTHING THEY HAVE DONE TO SUPPORT UMEICO,+ SHE SAID.

SHE BELIEVED THAT THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG HAD BEGUN TO REALISE THE IMPORTANCE OF GRASPING EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR WISHES, JUDGING FROM THE FACT THAT THEY HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO PLEDGE SUPPORT TO UMEICO.

HAILING THIS AS A GOOD SIGN, SHE SAID, +I HOPE THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WILL KEEP UP THEIR EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION.+

SHE HOPED THAT WHEN THE GREEN PAPER ON MORE REPRESENTATIVE LINES OF GOVERNMENT WAS PUBLISHED, THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WOULD ADOPT THE SAME ATTITUDE AND FREELY EXPRESS THEIR OPINION.

MRS NG ALSO MENTIONED THAT SINCE UMEICO PUBLISHED ITS POSITION PAPER, THE MAJORITY OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS HAD COMMENTED IN EDITORIALS THAT THE OBJECTIVES AND VIEWS OF THE UMEICO DELEGATION WERE CORRECT.

+FURTHERMORE, THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY AN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR A LOCAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER REVEALED THAT 80 PER CENT OF THOSE INTERVIEWED BY PHONE AGREED, SOME FULLY AND OTHERS PARTIALLY, TO THE VIEWS OF UMEICO AS EXPRESSED IN THEIR POSITION PAPER,+ SHE ADDED.

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OIL, COAL SUPPLIES 'ADEQUATE'
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HONG KONG'S RESERVE STOCKS AND SUPPLIES OF OIL AND COAL ARE ADEQUATE AT PRESENT, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID TODAY.

MR JACOBS SAID THAT, AS FOR OIL, THE MAJOR OIL COMPANIES IN HONG KONG WERE MAINTAINING SUFFICIENT STOCKS AND SUPPLIES TO COVER BETWEEN TWO AND THREE MONTHS CONSUMPTION.

+THIS WELL EXCEEDS THE LEVELS ESTABLISHED IN THE CODE OF PRACTICE WHICH CAME INTO FORCE IN MAY 1982 FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR OF OIL SUPPLIES AND THE OIL COMPANIES,+ HE SAID.

AS FOR COAL, HE SAID, BOTH POWER COMPANIES OBTAIN THEIR SUPPLIES FROM DIVERSE SOURCES.

+THE CRISIS IN THE GULF DOES NOT THEREFORE CONSTITUTE A THREAT TO THESE SUPPLIES, WHICH COME FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD,+ HE SAID IN REPLY TO A QUESTION RAISED BY THE HON K.C. CHAN.

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BILL TO MEET MODERN AGE
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HONG KONG IS AGAIN IN THE FOREFRONT OF LAW REFORM WITH PROPOSALS TO UPDATE THE LAWS OF EVIDENCE TO BRING THEM INTO LINE WITH THE MODERN WORLD AND ITS MODERN COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS LINKS.

THIS WAS SAID TODAY BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, THE HON MICHAEL THOMAS, WHEN HE INTRODUCED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THE EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984.

MR THOMAS SAID THAT THE BILL CONTAINED A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO TRANSACTIONS WITH AN INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION, INVOLVING THE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS AND FUNDS INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG, AND THOSE CREATED BY THE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS.

+THE LAWS OF EVIDENCE HAVE NOT KEPT PACE WITH THE WAY BUSINESS IS DONE IN TODAY'S WORLD AND THE RESULT, NOT SURPRISINGLY, HAS BEEN TO THE BENEFIT OF NO-ONE OTHER THAN THE DISHONEST AND THE UNSCRUPULOUS,+ HE SAID.

GREAT CARE HAD TO BE EXERCISED IN CHANGING THESE LAWS. THE BILL WAS IN THE MAIN CONCERNED WITH CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS - AND IN PARTICULAR WITH THE WAY IN WHICH RECORDED TRANSACTIONS MAY BE PROVED.

+THE MANNER IN WHICH BUSINESS RECORDS ARE KEPT NOWADAYS HAS VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH LEDGERS OR BOOKS OR HANDWRITTEN ENTRIES. AND THE INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER OF BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS MEANS THAT QUITE OFTEN ESSENTIAL EVIDENCE IS LOCATED OVERSEAS, INVOLVING FINANCIAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AS WELL AS INDIVIDUALS,+ HE SAID.

A CHANGE IN WORDING FROM +BANKER'S BOOK+ TO +BANKER'S RECORD+ WOULD MAINTAIN THE PRESENT PRINCIPLE OF ADMISSIBILITY BUT WOULD EXTEND IT TO COVER RECORDS KEPT BY ELECTRONIC AND OTHER MEANS SUCH AS COMPUTERS, TAPES, MICROFILM AND SO FORTH.

THE INTRODUCTION WAS ALSO PROPOSED OF AN ARRANGEMENT FOR ADMITTING EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS WHICH HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE RECORDS OF FOREIGN BANKS. SECONDLY, FOREIGN RECORDS OF A PUBLIC NATURE ARE OFTEN INCAPABLE OF PROOF IN HONG KONG BUT THE ORIGINAL FOREIGN RECORDS ARE INHERENTLY RELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION. FOR THE PURPOSE OF CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS, THEREFORE, THE BILL PROPOSES TO APPLY TO SUCH RECORDS MUCH THE SAME PRINCIPLE AS IN THE CASE OF BANKER'S RECORDS.

ANOTHER NEW PROCEDURE PROPOSED WOULD ALLOW THE HIGH COURT TO SEEK THE ASSISTANCE OF OVERSEAS COURTS IN OBTAINING DEPOSITIONS FROM WITNESSES AND, TO ENSURE A REASONABLY COOPERATIVE RESPONSE IN PROMOTING RECIPROCITY, THE PRESENT POWER OF THE HIGH COURT TO ASSIST OVERSEAS COURTS IS TO BE EXTENDED TO APPLY TO CRIMINAL MATTERS WHERE A PROSECUTION OVERSEAS HAS NOT YET BEEN INSTITUTED.

/MR THOMAS

MR THOMAS EMPHASISED THAT FAIRNESS WAS PRESERVED WITH THE NEW PROPOSALS.

+WE ARE SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO MODERN PROBLEMS THAT WILL NOT RESULT IN INJUSTICE,+ HE SAID.

+APPROPRIATE SAFEGUARDS ARE PROVIDED WITH RELATION TO HEARSAY EVIDENCE AND POWERS TO EXCLUDE CERTAIN EVIDENCE IS RESERVED.+

MANY INTERESTED BODIES IN HONG KONG HAD BEEN CONSULTED ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES, SAID MR THOMAS.

+A MEMBER OF THE LAW COMMISSION OF ENGLAND AND WALES WITH WHOM I HAVE EXCHANGED VIEWS SAID THAT HE ENVIED THE PROPOSED UPDATING OF OUR LAWS AND HOPED IT WOULD NOT BE TOO LONG BEFORE THE UNITED KINGDOM FOLLOWED SUIT. IT SEEMS THEREFORE THAT WE IN HONG KONG ARE AGAIN IN THE FOREFRONT OF LAW REFORM WITH THIS BILL,+ MR THOMAS SAID.

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HONG KONG ACADEMY - 'BEDROCK FOR ARTS TO PROSPER'
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THE HONG KONG ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS WILL PROVIDE THE BEDROCK ON WHICH THE ARTS WILL PROSPER, THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DENIS BRAY SAID TODAY.

DESCRIBING IT AS +ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF THE PERFORMING ARTS IN HONG KONG,+ MR BRAY SAID THE ACADEMY +WILL ENCOURAGE THE INTERACTION OF EASTERN AND WESTERN APPROACHES TO THE PERFORMING ARTS.+

THE ACADEMY WILL HOUSE FOUR SCHOOLS -- DANCE, DRAMA, MUSIC AND TECHNICAL ARTS -- AND THEIR CLOSE PROXIMITY WILL ALLOW FOR THE INTERACTION OF THE VARIOUS ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES, MR BRAY SAID.

IT WILL BE A MAJOR ADDITION TO THE TERTIARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF HONG KONG.

MR BRAY SAID THAT THE ACADEMY WOULD SHORTLY ANNOUNCE ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS THIS YEAR, WITH A GRADUAL BUILD-UP TO ITS FULL COMPLEMENT OF 600.

IT WILL OFFER A THREE-YEAR DIPLOMA COURSE IN EACH OF THE FOUR SCHOOLS, AND THE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION WITH GRADE E AND ABOVE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, CHINESE LANGUAGE AND THREE OTHER SUBJECTS, AND THE DEMONSTRATION OF THE NECESSARY DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OR POTENTIAL IN THE RELEVANT PERFORMING ARTS DISCIPLINE.

/MR BRAY

- 11 -

MR BRAY WAS SPEAKING WHILE MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE HONG KONG ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS BILL (1984) IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THE BILL, HE EXPLAINED, SEEKS TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS AS A LEGAL ENTITY. BUILDING WORK ON THE ACADEMY WAS MAKING GOOD PROGRESS AND MOST OF THE STAFF HAD BEEN RECRUITED -- AND IT WAS TIME TO GIVE THE ACADEMY STATUTORY EXISTENCE BEFORE ENROLLING ITS FIRST STUDENTS.

THE OBJECTS OF THE ACADEMY ARE +TO FOSTER AND PROVIDE FOR THE TRAINING, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN THE PERFORMING ARTS AND RELATED TECHNICAL ARTS,+ MR BRAY SAID.

THE ACADEMY IS ESTABLISHED AS AN INCORPORATED BODY WITH THE GOVERNOR AS PRESIDENT AND IS TO BE GOVERNED BY A COUNCIL COMPRISING THE DIRECTOR, TWO MEMBERS ELECTED BY THE ELIGIBLE STAFF FROM THEIR NUMBER, AND NOT MORE THAN 15 OTHER MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR, OF WHOM NOT MORE THAN SIX SHALL BE PUBLIC OFFICERS.

MR BRAY SAID ALSO THAT PERFORMING ARTS HAD TAKEN GREAT STRIDES IN HONG KONG AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMY AND HIS STAFF WERE MOST ENCOURAGED BY THE TREMENDOUS ENTHUSIASM AND TALENT FOUND IN HONG KONG.

THE BUILDING, HE SAID, +IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE ONE OF THE MOST ADVANCED OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD+.

+IN SPITE OF THE BUILDING'S COMPLEXITY IT STILL LOOKS AS THOUGH ITS COST WILL BE CONTAINED WITHIN THE ORIGINAL BUDGET AND THE BUILDING OPENED ON TIME,+ MR BRAY SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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HK POLYTECHNIC PLANS THREE MORE DEGREE COURSES * * * *

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC PLANS TO INTRODUCE THREE MORE DEGREE COURSES - IN CIVIL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING, AND DESIGN.

+THESE COURSES HAVE BEEN VALIDATED BY THE COUNCIL OF NATIONAL ACADEMIC AWARDS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR INTRODUCTION IN OCTOBER THIS YEAR,+ THE HON S.L. CHEN TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

TABLING THE 11TH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE POLYTECHNIC, COVERING THE YEAR ENDED JULY 31, 1983, HE SAID IT WAS A YEAR OF MODEST EXPANSION IN STUDENT NUMBERS.

/+BUT IT

+BUT IT WAS A YEAR OF INTENSIVE PREPARATION FOR A SIGNIFICANT MOVE UP-MARKET, THAT IS TO SAY TOWARDS THE INTRODUCTION OF THE POLYTECHNIC'S FIRST FIVE DEGREE COURSES IN OCTOBER LAST YEAR,+ HE SAID.

THESE DEGREE COURSES IN COMPUTING STUDIES, ELECTRONIC AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERING, SOCIAL WORK AND COMBINED STUDIES IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE HAD BEEN MANY TIMES OVER-SUBSCRIBED, MR CHEN SAID.

MR CHEN SAID THAT 90 PER CENT OF LAST YEAR'S GRADUATES WERE EITHER IN FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT OR WERE PURSUING FURTHER STUDIES BY OCTOBER 1983.

+THE REMAINING 10 PER CENT HAD NOT FOUND SUITABLE EMPLOYMENT AT THAT TIME, AND THIS WAS THE HIGHEST SHORT-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT PERCENTAGE IN THE 11-YEAR HISTORY OF THE POLYTECHNIC,+ HE SAID.

MR CHEN ALSO SAID THAT MOST OF THE PREPARATORY WORK FOR LAUNCHING THE NEW CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR HAD BEEN DONE IN THE PERIOD COVERED BY THE REPORT.

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INLAND REVENUE BILL EXPLAINED

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THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, INTRODUCED INTO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY, SEEKS TO GIVE LEGISLATIVE EFFECT TO SOME PROPOSALS MADE IN THIS YEAR'S BUDGET SPEECH, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID.

THESE PROPOSALS ARE TO :

- * INCREASE, FROM THE YEAR OF ASSESSMENT 1984-85, THE STANDARD TAX RATE FROM 15 PER CENT TO 17 PER CENT AND THE CORPORATE PROFITS TAX RATE FROM 16.5 PER CENT TO 18.5 PER CENT.
- * PROVIDE, FROM APRIL 1, 1984, MEASURES TO MINIMISE POTENTIAL LOSSES OF PROFITS TAX REVENUE (FOLLOWING THE REMOVAL OF THE INTEREST TAX CHARGE FROM INTEREST ON DEPOSITS WITH FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS), BY STIPULATING THE CONDITIONS WHICH MUST BE COMPLIED WITH IN ORDER TO QUALIFY INTEREST PAYMENTS AS DEDUCTIBLE EXPENSES IN THE COMPUTATION OF ASSESSABLE BUSINESS PROFITS.
- * EFFECTIVE FROM THE SAME DATE, BRING TO CHARGE TO PROFITS TAX SUMS RECEIVED BY OR ACCRUING BY WAY OF INTEREST TO BUSINESSES CARRIED ON IN HONG KONG. THESE SUMS HAD PREVIOUSLY ESCAPED THE TAX NET, EITHER BECAUSE THE DEPOSITS WERE DENOMINATED IN A FOREIGN CURRENCY, OR BECAUSE OF THE APPLICATION OF THE ARTIFICIAL +PROVISION OF CREDIT+ TEST.

/SIR JOHN

SIR JOHN SAID THAT THE BILL TABLED BEFORE THE COUNCIL TODAY REFLECTED CHANGES WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAD AGREED SHOULD BE MADE TO IT.

IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, HE SAID THE CHANGES HAD +EMANATED FROM MOST HELPFUL DISCUSSIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE WITH A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AD HOC GROUP, WITH WHOM AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON THE ACCEPTABILITY OF VARIOUS REPRESENTATIONS, WHILE RETAINING THE OVERALL PHILOSOPHY OF MY PROPOSALS.+

+I BELIEVE THAT THE CHANGES PROPOSED WILL MEET WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN PARTICULAR, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT LARGE. THEY SEEM TO BE FAIR,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

SPECIFICALLY, THE REFINEMENTS CONTAINED IN THE BILL :

- * MAKE CLEAR THAT THE NEW PROVISIONS WILL APPLY ONLY TO INTEREST PAYABLE OR RECEIVABLE ON OR AFTER APRIL 1, 1984;
- * PROVIDE THAT THE RELIEF PRESENTLY AVAILABLE TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN RESPECT OF FOREIGN TAXES SUFFERED ON INTEREST INCOME BROUGHT TO CHARGE TO TAX WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ALL OTHER CORPORATIONS MANAGED AND CONTROLLED HERE AND TO ALL OTHER PERSONS WHO CARRY ON BUSINESS HERE;
- * ENSURE THAT THOSE WHO PURCHASE MACHINERY OR PLANT OR STOCK-IN-TRADE ON CREDIT TERMS WILL RECEIVE A FULL DEDUCTION FOR ANY RELATED INTEREST PAYMENTS, PROVIDED THAT THE TRANSACTIONS INVOLVED ARE +AT ARMS LENGTH WITH PERSONS WHO ARE NOT CLOSELY CONNECTED TO THE TAXPAYER+; AND
- * REFINE THE DEFINITION OF AN 'OVERSEAS FINANCIAL INSTITUTION' TO PROVIDE THE COMMISSIONER OF INLAND REVENUE WITH POWERS TO REFUSE TO RECOGNISE ANY SUCH INSTITUTION IF HE IS OF THE OPINION THAT IT IS NOT ADEQUATELY SUPERVISED BY A SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY.

SIR JOHN SAID TWO FURTHER ISSUES HAD SURFACED.

+FIRST, THE POINT HAS BEEN MADE THAT INTEREST PAYMENTS IN RELATION TO PUBLICLY LISTED BONDS, ISSUED BEFORE APRIL 1, 1984, OUGHT NOT TO BE SUBJECT TO THE NEW CONDITIONS FOR DEDUCTIBILITY.

+SECOND, IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT INTEREST INCOME RECEIVED BY AUTHORISED UNIT TRUSTS SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO THE EXTENDED CHARGE TO TAX ON SUCH INCOME ON THE GROUNDS THAT THIS WOULD INHIBIT THE GROWTH OF THE UNIT TRUST INDUSTRY IN HONG KONG, TO THE DETRIMENT OF HONG KONG'S POSITION AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE.

+I HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS MAY COMMENT IN THESE TWO SPECIFIC AREAS. IT THUS SEEMS WISE FOR ME TO AWAIT THEIR VIEWS.

+COMMITTEE STAGE AMENDMENTS ARE STILL POSSIBLE. THE GOVERNMENT IS ALWAYS RESPONSIVE TO CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

WATER SUPPLY TO NT A CONTINUING TASK
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PROVIDING MAINS WATER TO NEW TERRITORIES VILLAGES AND SQUATTER AREAS IS AN ON-GOING EXERCISE, THE SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS, THE HON NICKY CHAN, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HONOURABLE CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT SOUGHT PROGRESSIVELY TO EXTEND WATER SUPPLY TO VILLAGES BY THE LAYING OF MAINS AND INSTALLATION OF PUMPING EQUIPMENT.

WHERE MAJOR WORKS WERE INVOLVED, SEPARATE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME ITEMS WERE CREATED FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS.

MINOR EXTENSIONS AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS WERE CARRIED OUT WITH FUNDS PROVIDED FROM RECURRENT VOTE UNDER DEPARTMENTAL ANNUAL EXPENSES.

MR CHAN SAID, APART FROM THOSE PROJECTS WHICH HAD ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED, A NUMBER OF OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS WERE IN HAND AIMED AT PROVIDING MAINS WATER SUPPLIES TO NEW TERRITORIES VILLAGES AND SQUATTER AREAS.

CURRENTLY THERE WERE FOUR CATEGORY A ITEMS IN THE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME FOR WORKS AND INSTALLATIONS WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE PROVISION OF WATER SUPPLY TO A TOTAL OF SOME 110 NEW TERRITORIES VILLAGES AND SQUATTER AREAS.

THEIR TOTAL ESTIMATED COST WAS \$44.4 MILLION.

OTHER PROJECTS WERE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF PLANNING WHICH, SUBJECT TO THE PROVISION OF FUNDS, WERE PROGRAMMED TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

+WHEN THAT HAPPENS, PRACTICALLY ALL THE REMAINING VILLAGES WITHIN REASONABLE REACH OF THE MAINS SUPPLY SYSTEM WOULD HAVE BEEN CONNECTED,+ MR CHAN SAID.

AS REGARDS MA WAN SPECIFICALLY, HE SAID DIFFERENT METHODS OF PROVIDING A SUPPLY TO THE ISLAND HAD BEEN CONSIDERED, AND THE PREFERRED SOLUTION WAS TO LAY A SUBMARINE PIPE TO CONVEY WATER FROM SHAM TSENG.

A FEASIBILITY STUDY WAS IN AN ADVANCED STAGE AND FIRM PROPOSALS WERE EXPECTED IN THE LATTER PART OF THIS YEAR WITH A VIEW TO SEEKING PUBLIC WORKS SUB-COMMITTEE'S APPROVAL FOR COMMENCEMENT OF WORK IN 1985/86.

CHECK KEPT TO ENSURE FISHERIES SUPPLY
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GOVERNMENT POLICY REQUIRED THE MAINTENANCE OF A RELIABLE SUPPLY TO THE COMMUNITY OF FRESH FISHERIES PRODUCTS, THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES, THE HON PIERS JACOBS, SAID TODAY.

THIS WAS PART OF AN OVERALL POLICY ON THE SUPPLY OF FOOD, HE SAID.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON ALEX WU IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, ON THE POLICY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF HONG KONG'S FISHERIES INDUSTRY AND OF MARICULTURE, MR JACOBS SAID THE GOVERNMENT ASSISTED THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE FISHERIES INDUSTRY IN A NUMBER OF WAYS.

IT PROVIDES AN ADVISORY SERVICE FOR FISHERMEN, GIVING GUIDANCE ON THE BUILDING OF NEW VESSELS, THE PURCHASE OF GEAR AND EQUIPMENT, THE USE OF MODERN NAVIGATIONAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, AND THE APPLICATION OF IMPROVED FISHING METHODS.

+ALSO, THE FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND, ADMINISTERED BY THE DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES SPECIFICALLY FOR DEVELOPING THE FISHING FLEET, AND THE FISH MARKETING ORGANISATION LOAN FUND, ARE IMPORTANT SOURCES OF LOAN FINANCE FOR FISHERMEN,+ HE SAID.

IN THE CONTEXT OF OVERALL POLICY, THE GOVERNMENT IMPOSED SOME CONTROL OVER THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARICULTURE WITH A VIEW TO INCREASING EFFICIENCY. BUT THE MARICULTURE INDUSTRY WAS SUBJECT TO CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED BY THE LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLE AREAS OF COASTAL WATER.

THE MARINE FISH CULTURE ORDINANCE ENACTED IN 1980 WAS THEREFORE DESIGNED BOTH TO PREVENT THE UNDESIRABLE PROLIFERATION OF MARICULTURE OPERATIONS IN COASTAL WATERS AND TO PROVIDE THE CONTROL NECESSARY FOR THE INDUSTRY TO INCREASE ITS EFFICIENCY.

SO FAR 26 MARICULTURE ZONES HAVE BEEN GAZETTED.

ALTHOUGH FISH PRODUCED BY MARICULTURE REPRESENTED A SMALL PROPORTION OF TOTAL FISHERIES PRODUCTION, THE INDUSTRY'S CHIEF VALUE WAS ITS CONTRIBUTION TO MEETING THE DEMAND FOR LIVE FISH, WHICH THE CAPTURE FISH INDUSTRY COULD NOT MEET IN FULL, HE SAID.

DEMAND FOR SCHOOL PLACES IN TUEN MUN WILL BE MET
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THE GOVERNMENT WILL MEET THE DEMAND FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL AND SPECIAL SCHOOL PLACES IN TUEN MUN BY 1990 BY ALLOCATING PUPILS TO SCHOOLS IN NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS, IF NECESSARY, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON COLVYN HAYE, SAID AT THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL MEETING TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

HE WAS REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY MRS PAULINE NG ON THE PROJECTED NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF SECONDARY SCHOOL AGE IN TUEN MUN BY 1990, THE PROVISION OF PLACES BY THEN, AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO COPE WITH ANY SHORTAGE.

THE PROJECTED NUMBER OF CHILDREN OF SECONDARY SCHOOL AGE IN TUEN MUN BY 1990 WAS 61 098, AND THE CURRENT FIGURES FOR PROVISION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES BY THEN STOOD AT 25 760. BUT MR HAYE EXPECTED THIS NUMBER WOULD BE EXCEEDED.

HE POINTED OUT THAT NOT ALL CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE 12 TO 18 WOULD DEMAND PLACES, PARTICULARLY THOSE OVER 15 YEARS OF AGE WHEN SCHOOLING WAS NO LONGER COMPULSORY.

+THE PLACES PLANNED FOR TUEN MUN BY 1990 WILL BE BASED ON SCHOOLS THAT ACTUALLY EXIST IN TUEN MUN AND WHICH WILL BE BUILT BETWEEN NOW AND 1990. ANY DEMAND IN EXCESS OF PLACES IN THESE SCHOOLS WILL BE MET BY ALLOCATION OF PUPILS TO NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS,+ THE DIRECTOR SAID.

REFERRING TO SPECIAL SCHOOL PLACES, MR HAYE SAID THE NUMBER OF SUCH PLACES PLANNED FOR TUEN MUN BY 1990 WAS 195 AND THE PROJECTED DEMAND IN THE DISTRICT BY THEN WAS 430.

THE SHORTFALL, HE SAID, WOULD BE SIMILARLY MET BY ALLOCATIONS TO SCHOOLS ELSEWHERE WITH VACANCIES FOR THE TYPE OF DISABILITY INVOLVED.

MR HAYE NOTED THAT THERE WERE SEVEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND DISABLED CHILDREN WOULD BE PROVIDED WITH TRANSPORT AND WITH BOARDING CARE WHERE NECESSARY.

EXPLAINING THE TERRITORY-WIDE ALLOCATION SYSTEM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES, HE SAID THAT +THERE IS A SYSTEM OF SCHOOL NETS WHICH ARE ADJUSTED ANNUALLY TO BALANCE DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF FORM 1 PLACES IN EACH DISTRICT BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE POSITION IN NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS.

+SELECTION AND ALLOCATION INVARIABLY SEEKS THE GREATEST CONVENIENCE TO PUPILS IN THAT WE DO NOT ASK THEM TO TRAVEL MUCH FURTHER THAN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD UNLESS THEY PARTICULARLY WISH TO DO SO AND PLACES ARE AVAILABLE TO MATCH THEIR WISH, BEARING IN MIND THE AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT.+

+IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET EVERY DISTRICT DEMAND WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOLS UNTIL THE PRESENT POLICY OF TERRITORY-WIDE ALLOCATION IS ABANDONED,+ HE ADDED.

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POLICE TO LOOK INTO PRIVATE LOCATION FILMING
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THE POLICE WILL SHORTLY BE LIAISING WITH FILM COMPANIES WITH A VIEW TO EXTENDING THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON LOCATION FILMING TO ALL PRIVATE PLACES TO WHICH THE PUBLIC HAS SIGNIFICANT ACCESS, THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY, THE HON DAVID JEAFFRESON, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THIS DECISION FOLLOWS A RECENT INCIDENT AT DIAMOND HILL MTR STATION WHEN SOME PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY WERE EXPERIENCING A REAL-LIFE EMERGENCY DURING A FILMING SEQUENCE, MR JEAFFRESON SAID IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM THE HON YEUNG PO-KWAN.

MR JEAFFRESON EXPLAINED THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT FOR FILM, TELEVISION OR ADVERTISING COMPANIES TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR FILMING IN PUBLIC PLACES IN HONG KONG.

HOWEVER, WHERE COMPANIES NEED TO FILM ON PRIVATE PROPERTY, INCLUDING MTR STATIONS AND TRAINS, AND THE OCEAN PARK, THEY USUALLY MAKE ARRANGEMENTS DIRECT WITH THE OWNERS.

+THE CODE OF PRACTICE DOES NOT INCLUDE A REQUIREMENT TO NOTIFY THE POLICE IN SUCH CASES, ALTHOUGH THE PROCEDURE HAS SOMETIMES BEEN FOLLOWED WHEN THE COMPANIES OR THE OWNERS HAVE CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY,+ MR JEAFFRESON SAID.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THAT OVER THE YEARS THE POLICE AND THE FILM COMPANIES HAD ESTABLISHED A WRITTEN CODE OF PRACTICE WHICH THESE COMPANIES, WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, FOLLOWED.

THE PROCEDURES WORK AS FOLLOWS:

- * THE COMPANIES GIVE THE POLICE AT LEAST FIVE DAYS' NOTICE OF THEIR INTENTIONS.
- * THE POLICE ADVISE ON LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO SAFETY, PUBLIC ORDER, PRIVATE PROPERTY, INCONVENIENCE AND OBSTRUCTION TO THE PUBLIC; ON THE SUITABILITY OF THE LOCATION AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSAL; AND ON SUCH SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AS THE WEARING OF UNIFORMS, THE USE OF VEHICLES AND OF EXPLOSIVES AND FIREARMS. THE POLICE WILL SUGGEST CHANGES WHEN THEY CONSIDER ANY ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSALS TO BE AGAINST PUBLIC INTEREST.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THAT IN MOST CASES, THE POLICE ALSO TAKE MEASURES TO PREVENT PUBLIC PANIC WHEN STAGED GUN BATTLES OR CAR CHASES ARE BEING FILMED.

HE EXPLAINED THAT FILM COMPANIES ARE NOT EXEMPT FROM THE LAW AND IN CASES WHERE POLICE ADVICE IS NOT HEEDED AND OFFENCES RESULT, THE OFFENDERS ARE PROSECUTED.

THE POLICE RECEIVE ABOUT 600 REQUESTS INVOLVING FILMING A MONTH, AND SO FAR THIS YEAR, ONLY ONE PROSECUTION HAS BEEN NECESSARY.

MR JEAFFRESON SAID THAT ANYONE SUFFERING FROM INJURIES AS A RESULT OF SUCH FILMING CAN TAKE CIVIL ACTION AGAINST THOSE WHO HAVE CAUSED THEM.

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METERED PARKING SPACE ADEQUATE FOR CARS -- YUE
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THE STANDARD 2.5 METRE BY 5 METRE ON-STREET METERED PARKING SPACE IS, WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS, SUFFICIENT FOR ALL MAKES OF PRIVATE CARS, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON JUSTIN YUE, SAID TODAY.

REPLYING TO QUESTIONS BY DR THE HON HENRIETTA IP, MR YUE SAID ALSO THAT THERE WERE NO SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS ON THE SIZE OF A VEHICLE PERMITTED TO USE A METERED PARKING SPACE.

+HOWEVER, IT IS ILLEGAL FOR A PARKED VEHICLE TO PROJECT OVER ANY OF THE LINES MARKING A SPACE OR TO OCCUPY MORE THAN ONE SPACE, UNLESS THE VEHICLE IS LONGER THAN ONE SPACE.

+A PERSON COMMITTING EITHER OFFENCE WILL BE ISSUED WITH A FIXED PENALTY TICKET,+ HE SAID.

WHERE MORE THAN ONE SPACE IS OCCUPIED, PAYMENT MUST BE MADE FOR EACH OF THE SPACES OCCUPIED OR PARTIALLY OCCUPIED.

ON THE QUESTION CONCERNING PROVISION OF PARKING PLACES, HE SAID PARKING FOR PRIVATE BUSES AND COACHES WAS CONSIDERED ADEQUATE.

PARKING FOR PUBLIC LIGHT BUSES WAS AVAILABLE AT PUBLIC LIGHT BUS STANDS DURING CERTAIN HOURS AND IN GOVERNMENT-OWNED MULTI-STOREY CAR PARKS, AND IT WAS ON THE WHOLE NOT A PROBLEM.

PARKING FOR GOODS VEHICLES, HE SAID, WAS +GENERALLY INADEQUATE+.

RECENTLY, HOWEVER, MORE ON-STREET SPACES IN INDUSTRIAL AREAS HAD BEEN DESIGNATED FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF GOODS VEHICLES AND NEW TEMPORARY OPEN-AIR LORRY PARKS HAD BEEN PROVIDED.

THE PROBLEM OF GOODS VEHICLE PARKING WAS BEING EXAMINED BY CONSULTANTS AS PART OF THE COMPREHENSIVE STUDY INTO THE ECONOMIC AND TRANSPORT ASPECTS OF THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY, CARRIED OUT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES.

THE CONSULTANTS WOULD BE PRESENTING THEIR FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS LATER THIS YEAR, MR YUE SAID.

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TWO LIQUOR BILLS INTRODUCED
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THE MAIN OBJECT OF THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 IS TO PROVIDE, WITH EFFECT FROM FEBRUARY 29, 1984, THE MEANS OF VALUING GOODS FOR DUTY ASSESSMENT PURPOSES, THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, THE HON SIR JOHN BREMRIDGE, SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+THIS IS REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT MY 1984 BUDGET SPEECH PROPOSAL FOR A MODIFIED AD VALOREM SYSTEM OF COLLECTING DUTY ON EUROPEAN-TYPE LIQUORS, OTHER THAN BEER, CIDER AND PERRY,+ SIR JOHN SAID, IN MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL.

/THE AMENDMENTS

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THE AMENDMENTS PROPOSED IN CLAUSES 2 AND 3 SEEK TO EMPOWER THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE SERVICE TO REQUIRE THE PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE VALUE OF DUTIABLE GOODS, WHILE CLAUSE 4 ADDS A NEW SECTION 26A WHICH PROVIDES CRITERIA FOR DUTY VALUATION PURPOSES.

+UNDER THE BILL, THE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS AND EXCISE HAS THE AUTHORITY UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES TO FIX A VALUE FOR DUTY PURPOSES AND THERE IS A PROVISION UNDER SECTION 26A(7) FOR AN APPEAL TO THE GOVERNOR AGAINST HIS DECISION,+ SIR JOHN SAID.

ALSO INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNCIL TODAY IS DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1984, WHICH SEEKS TO AMEND THE MINIMUM REQUIRED STRENGTH FOR WHISKY AND RUM FROM 43 PER CENT TO 42 PER CENT OF ETHYL ALCOHOL BY VOLUME.

THIS IS TO CORRECT A TECHNICAL ERROR FOLLOWING THE METRICATION OF THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES ORDINANCE, SIR JOHN EXPLAINED.

DEBATE ON BOTH BILLS WERE ADJOURNED.

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REGULATION 98 PROVIDES SAFEGUARD - HAYE
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THERE WAS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE PROMOTION OF POLITICAL AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE AMONG PUPILS, AND THE USE OF POLITICAL PROPAGANDA TO INDOCTRINATE AND SUBVERT, THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE HON COLVYN HAYE SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

REPLYING TO A QUESTION BY THE HON MRS RITA FAN, CONCERNING +REGULATION 98 OF THE EDUCATION REGULATIONS+, MR HAYE SAID IT +PROHIBITS CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, AND THE MANIFESTATIONS OF ACTIVITIES WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST OR THE WELFARE OF PUPILS OR OF EDUCATION GENERALLY.+

+IN OTHER WORDS, THE REGULATION IS A SAFEGUARD AGAINST THE POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION AND SUBVERSION OF PUPILS AND EDUCATION,+ HE SAID.

THIS SAFEGUARD WAS ENTIRELY COMPATIBLE WITH THE PLANS AND PROGRAMMES HE HAD OUTLINED AT THE LAST TWO MEETINGS TO PROMOTE AND STRENGTHEN POLITICAL AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM, MR HAYE SAID.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1984

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SAFE FOOD WRAPPING REQUIRED BY LAW
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LEGAL ACTION CAN BE TAKEN AGAINST ANYONE IN FOOD BUSINESS WHO FAILS TO TAKE REASONABLE STEPS TO PROTECT THE FOOD FROM THE RISK OF CONTAMINATION, INCLUDING CONTAMINATION FROM THE MATERIALS USED FOR WRAPPING OPEN FOOD.

THIS WAS STATED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY BY THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON HENRY CHING, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON ANDREW SO.

THIS LEGAL ACTION IS PROVIDED UNDER THE FOOD BUSINESS (NEW TERRITORIES) REGULATIONS AND THE FOOD BUSINESS BY-LAWS, MR CHING EXPLAINED.

COLOURED PLASTIC BAGS WERE SOMETIMES USED FOR WRAPPING SUCH FOOD AND SOME OF THEM HAD BEEN FOUND TO CONTAIN LEACHABLE METALS, HE SAID.

+THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT SUCH BAGS HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE OF ANY POISONING THROUGH THE CONSUMPTION OF ANY FOOD CONTAMINATED BY THEM.

+NONETHELESS, THE GOVERNMENT REPEATEDLY ADVISES THOSE ENGAGED IN THE FOOD TRADE OF THE POTENTIAL HEALTH RISK, REMINDS THEM OF THE PROVISIONS IN THE LAW UNDER WHICH THEY COULD BE PROSECUTED IF THEY WERE FOUND TO BE USING WRAPPING MATERIALS HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH, AND URGES THEM TO USE SAFER WRAPPING MATERIALS,+ HE SAID.

WHILE CONSIDERING EXISTING LEGISLATION ADEQUATE, MR CHING ADDED, +THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES, HOWEVER, TO SAMPLE AND ANALYSE WRAPPING MATERIALS AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE FOOD WRAPPED IN THEM.

+IF THE LEACHABLE METALLIC CONTENTS OF WRAPPING MATERIALS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY, WE WOULD NEED TO THINK AGAIN.+

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NO DISCERNIBLE TREND IN SUICIDES AMONG OLD
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THE SUICIDE RATES PER 100 000 PERSONS AT THE AGE OF 70 AND OVER WERE 45.3 IN 1981, 24.1 IN 1982 AND 38.1 IN 1983, THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE, THE HON HENRY CHING, TOLD THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

IN THE THREE YEARS, THE RATES FOR THOSE FROM THE AGES OF 65 TO 70 WERE 35.7, 25.2 AND 34.5, AND FOR THOSE FROM THE AGES OF 60 TO 65 WERE 29, 23 AND 30.8, MR CHING SAID, IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM DR THE HON HO KAM-FAI.

+I DO NOT THINK THERE IS ANY DISCERNIBLE TREND IN THESE FIGURES OF SUICIDE RATES AMONG ELDERLY PEOPLE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS,+ HE SAID.

HOTLINE TELEPHONE SERVICES RUN BY THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE SAMARITANS, AND COUNSELLING SERVICES PROVIDED AT CENTRES OPERATED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE AMONG THOSE AVAILABLE TO HELP ELDERLY PEOPLE UNDER EMOTIONAL STRESS, HE POINTED OUT.

+AND OF COURSE WE SHOULD NOT OVERLOOK THE HELP AND MORAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE FROM THE FAMILY, FRIENDS, NEIGHBOURS, CHURCHES AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS,+ HE ADDED.

A GREAT DEAL COULD BE ACHIEVED BY A CARING COMMUNITY IN HELPING THE ELDERLY TO PRESERVE THEIR SELF-RESPECT AND TO REMAIN SOCIALLY INTEGRATED, THEREBY FORTIFYING THEM AGAINST EMOTIONAL STRESS, MR CHING SAID.

+THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM IS TO GIVE EVERY ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE ELDERLY TO REMAIN WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, RATHER THAN TO WITHDRAW INTO INSTITUTIONS, AND IN PARTICULAR TO REMAIN WITHIN A FAMILY OR FAMILIAR ENVIRONMENT.

+SUCH SERVICES AS HOME HELP, DAY CARE CENTRES AND SOCIAL CENTRES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THIS AIM,+ HE SAID.

BUT EMOTIONAL STRESS COULD NOT BE AVOIDED ALTOGETHER, GIVEN THAT OLD AGE MIGHT BRING WITH IT SUCH DIFFICULTIES AS ILL-HEALTH AND FINANCIAL OR HOUSING PROBLEMS, HE STATED.

+IT IS IN THESE AREAS PARTICULARLY THAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN MOST APPROPRIATELY HELP, AND THERE ARE ON-GOING PROGRAMMES DESIGNED TO MEET THESE NEEDS OF THE ELDERLY AND SO TO ASSIST IN REDUCING SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT UNDERLYING CAUSES OF EMOTIONAL STRESS,+ MR CHING SAID.

HK SEEN AS 'PLACE OF COMFORT AND PRIDE'
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WITHIN THIS DECADE, ONE COULD SEE THE TREMENDOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO HONG KONG'S BUILDING DESIGN AND FACILITIES, FOR BOTH THE RICH AND THE POOR, THE HON CHARLES YEUNG SAID IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

+THESE IMPROVEMENTS, COUPLED WITH THE COMMUNITY'S INCREASING AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF GENERAL CLEANLINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL BEAUTIFICATION PROMOTED BY THE CLEAN HONG KONG CAMPAIGN, HAVE MADE HONG KONG A PLACE OF COMFORT AND PRIDE IN WHICH TO LIVE,+ MR YEUNG ADDED.

HE WAS SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, WHICH PASSED INTO LAWS TODAY, MAKING IT MANDATORY FOR REFUSE STORAGE CHAMBERS TO BE PROVIDED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS.

NOTING THAT THIS PROVISION HAD BEEN MOOTED AND ENDORSED BY THE CLEAN HONG KONG CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE TWO YEARS AGO, MR YEUNG SAID, +AS A MEMBER INVOLVED, I AM PLEASED TO SEE THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE CRYSTALLISED INTO A SIMPLE BILL.+

HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE PROPOSALS IN THE BILL, WHICH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED BY THE UMELCO ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS PANEL, HAD THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS.

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COLISEUM USE CLOSE TO FORECAST
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SINCE THE OPENING OF THE COLISEUM IN APRIL 1983, IT HAS BEEN USED ON 208 DAYS, REPRESENTING A UTILISATION RATE OF 57 PER CENT.

THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS, THE HON DENIS BRAY, GAVE THIS FIGURE TODAY IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE HON S.L. CHEN.

FORTY-FOUR WERE USED IN SPORTING EVENTS, REPRESENTING ABOUT 21 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL UTILISATION RATE IN THE FIRST YEAR.

THESE UTILISATION RATES WERE +REMARKABLY CLOSE+ TO THE FORECAST MADE BY THE DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES BEFORE THE COLISEUM OPENED, MR BRAY SAID.

THIS FORECAST WAS THAT THE COLISEUM WOULD BE USED ON 200 DAYS IN ITS FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION, WITH 40 DAYS BEING USED FOR SPORTING EVENTS.

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NEED TO ALIGN ORDINANCE

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THE OBJECT OF THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1984 WAS TO BRING THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) ORDINANCE (CHAPTER 237) IN LINE WITH THE NEW ROAD TRAFFIC LEGISLATION COMING INTO EFFECT IN AUGUST THIS YEAR, THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT, THE HON JUSTIN YUE SAID TODAY.

MOVING THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL, HE SAID :

+PRINCIPALLY, THE ORDINANCE HAS TO BE ALIGNED WITH THE ROAD TRAFFIC (PARKING) REGULATIONS 1983.

+IN PARTICULAR, THE NEW REGULATIONS HAVE A NEW DEFINITION FOR PARKING WHICH COMBINES AND SUPERCEDES THE DEFINITIONS FOR PARKING AND WAITING IN THE EXISTING REGULATIONS. HENCE ALL REFERENCES TO +WAITING+ IN THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS) ORDINANCE WILL NEED TO BE DELETED.

+OTHER AMENDMENTS IN THE BILL, HE SAID, SOUGHT TO ALIGN THE PRINCIPAL ORDINANCE WITH CHANGES ALREADY MADE IN OTHER ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS.

DEBATE ON THE BILL WAS ADJOURNED.

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FIVE BILLS PASSED

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FIVE BILLS WERE PASSED IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TODAY.

THEY WERE THE STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1984, THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE IMMIGRATION (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1984, THE BUILDINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984 AND THE EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1984.

THE FOLLOWING SIX BILLS WERE INTRODUCED AND READ A SECOND TIME: THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE DUTIABLE COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1984, THE INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1984, THE HONG KONG ACADEMY FOR PERFORMING ARTS BILL 1984 AND THE FIXED PENALTY (TRAFFIC CONTRAVENTIONS)(AMENDMENT)(NO. 2) BILL 1984.

DEBATE ON THEM WAS ADJOURNED.

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HONG KONG KEEPS UP GOOD BUSINESS

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BUSINESS IN HONG KONG CONTINUES TO DO WELL DESPITE ANXIETY ABOUT THE TERRITORY'S POLITICAL FUTURE, THE SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY, MR E.P. HO, SAID IN VIENNA ON TUESDAY (MAY 29).

MR HO, WHO IS ON A THREE-DAY VISIT TO VIENNA AT THE INVITATION OF THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT, WAS ADDRESSING AN AUDIENCE OF KEY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, DIPLOMATS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AUSTRIAN CHAMBERS, BANKS AND THE AUSTRIAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

+HONG KONG'S FINANCIAL SECTOR HAS RECENTLY ATTAINED AN IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL ROLE IN ADDITION TO CATERING FOR THE DEMAND OF OTHER SECTORS OF THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY, AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S NON-INTERVENTIONIST POLICY HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THIS DEVELOPMENT.

+HONG KONG ALSO ENJOYS A FAVOURABLE GEOGRAPHIC POSITION AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN JAPAN AND EUROPE, IN THESE DAYS OF ROUND-THE-CLOCK FINANCIAL MARKETS.

+AND WE FURTHER BENEFIT FROM BEING LOCATED IN THE SOUTH-EAST ASIAN REGION - WHICH HAS BEEN PERHAPS THE MOST BUOYANT AREA OF THE WORLD ECONOMY OVER THE PAST DECADE OR SO, AND SHOWS EVERY SIGN OF CONTINUING TO HAVE A RATE OF GROWTH GREATER THAN MOST OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD,+ MR HO SAID.

ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND STATISTICS, THE REGION'S SHARE OF TOTAL WORLD TRADE GREW IN THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD 1978-82 FROM 14 PER CENT TO 17 PER CENT. THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 68 PER CENT IN VALUE TERMS, CONSIDERABLY HIGHER THAN THE INCREASE OF 43 PER CENT FOR THE WORLD AS A WHOLE.

MR HO POINTED OUT THAT GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION WAS NOT SUFFICIENT IN ITSELF TO ENSURE HONG KONG'S GROWTH AS AN INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL CENTRE.

THE TERRITORY'S EXCELLENT COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD, THE PROVISION OF WELL EDUCATED AND WELL QUALIFIED LOCAL STAFF, AND A PLEASANT STABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR EXPATRIATE STAFF, WERE FACTORS ATTRACTING A WIDE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL FIRMS TO HONG KONG, HE SAID.

ON HONG KONG'S TRADING POSITION, MR HO POINTED OUT THAT THE LATEST UNITED NATIONS FIGURES SHOW THAT HONG KONG RANKS 20TH IN THE WORLD AS AN EXPORTER, AND 18TH IN TOTAL TRADE.

IN VALUE TERMS IN 1982, HONG KONG WAS THE WORLD'S LARGEST EXPORTER OF CLOTHING, TOYS AND DOLLS, AND PLASTIC FLOWERS; AND THE SECOND LARGEST EXPORTER OF WATCHES (AFTER SWITZERLAND), RADIO (AFTER JAPAN), AND DOMESTIC FANS (AFTER TAIWAN).

/+FOLLOWING THE

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+FOLLOWING THE OPENING UP OF CHINA'S MARKET, HONG KONG'S TRADITIONAL ROLE AS AN ENTREPOT HAS REVIVED STRONGLY. IN 1983, HONG KONG'S TOTAL RE-EXPORTS WERE VALUED AT HK\$56 294 MILLION (US\$7 740 MILLION), REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF 181 PER CENT OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD. CHINA WAS THE LARGEST RE-EXPORT MARKET, TAKING UP 22 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL RE-EXPORTS, WHILE THE FAR EAST AS A WHOLE (INCLUDING CHINA) TOOK 63 PER CENT,+ MR HO SAID.

HONG KONG'S TOTAL TRADE DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF THIS YEAR, AT HK\$94.6 BILLION (US\$12.1 BILLION), WAS 48 PER CENT UP ON LAST YEAR'S CORRESPONDING QUARTER. IMPORTS ROSE BY 43 PER CENT, DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY 51 PER CENT AND RE-EXPORTS BY 59 PER CENT.

ON THE MANUFACTURING FRONT, MR HO SAID THAT DESPITE PRESENT UNCERTAINTIES, IT WAS VERY MUCH BUSINESS AS USUAL IN HONG KONG.

THE ESTIMATED GDP IN 1983 INDICATES A GROWTH RATE OF 5.9 PER CENT IN REAL TERMS OVER 1982, COMPARED WITH 1.1 PER CENT IN 1982 OVER 1981. THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC EXPORTS IN 1983 WAS 26 PER CENT HIGHER THAN IN 1982, AND THE INCREASE IN REAL TERMS WAS 14 PER CENT.

+HONG KONG MANUFACTURERS ARE CONTINUING TO INVEST, PARTLY TO MEET THE CURRENT UPSURGE IN ORDERS, THOUGH WITH PERHAPS A LITTLE MORE CAUTION THAN PREVIOUSLY.

+RETAINED IMPORTS OF CAPITAL GOODS, WHICH HAD BEEN GENERALLY ON A DECLINING TREND SINCE THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1981, INCREASED BY FIVE PER CENT IN REAL TERMS IN THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1983: LARGELY DUE TO AN INCREASE IN RETAINED IMPORTS OF TEXTILES AND ELECTRICAL MACHINERY,+ MR HO SAID.

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MORE ELECTED MEMBERS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT

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THE NUMBER OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF SOUTHERN DISTRICT BOARD WILL BE INCREASED FROM SIX TO 11 AFTER NEXT YEAR'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTION, THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MR K.C. KWONG, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

+EACH CONSTITUENCY WILL HAVE TWO ELECTED MEMBERS, EXCEPT FOR STANLEY AND SHEK O, WHICH WILL HAVE ONE,+ HE SAID.

THE INCREASE IN ELECTED SEATS IS IN LINE WITH THE RECENT DECISION MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT TO FURTHER DEVELOP LOCAL ADMINISTRATION.

+IT IS IMPORTANT TO STRENGTHEN THE REPRESENTATIVENESS OF THE BOARD SO THAT MORE PUBLIC OPINION WILL BE REFLECTED AND THAT COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ENHANCED+, HE SAID.

/MR KWONG

MR KWONG WAS SPEAKING AT A PRIZE-PRESENTATION CEREMONY OF THE 1983/84 SOUTHERN DISTRICT SOCIAL SERVICES AWARD SCHEME, ORGANISED BY THE BOARD'S SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE.

HE SAID THE DISTRICT OFFICE WAS ORGANISING A SERIES OF SCHOOL AND FACTORY VISITS, AND SEMINARS TO HELP RESIDENTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE DISTRICT BOARD AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO REGISTER AS VOTERS.

+THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN APRIL ANALYSED IN DETAIL THE NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELIGIBLE VOTERS IN THE DISTRICT, AND A SCHEDULE FOR DOOR-TO-DOOR REGISTRATION VISITS, TO BE CARRIED OUT IN AUGUST, IS BEING DRAWN UP,+ MR KWONG SAID.

IN ADDITION, A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY WILL BE CONDUCTED AMONG 1 000 HOUSEHOLDS NEXT MONTH TO ASSESS THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT BOARD.

+THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY WILL ENABLE US TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE NEEDS OF LOCAL RESIDENTS, AND MAKE FULL USE OF OUR RESOURCES TO MEET THEIR NEEDS,+ HE SAID.

MR KWONG DESCRIBED AS A 'ONE-SIDED VIEW' THE THINKING THAT THE FUNCTIONS OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS WERE LIMITED BY THEIR CONSULTATIVE NATURE AND LACK OF EXECUTIVE POWER.

HE SAID THE DISTRICT BOARDS AND THEIR COMMITTEES HAD BEEN PLAYING THEIR 'WATCH-DOG' ROLE BY GIVING THEIR VIEWS ON, AND INQUIRING ABOUT THE WORK OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

+GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS HAVE TO CONSTANTLY REPORT PROGRESS OF THEIR WORK TO THE DISTRICT BOARDS,+ HE SAID.

MR KWONG POINTED OUT THAT WHILE THE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES WERE PLAYING A CO-ORDINATING ROLE AMONG GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS IN ENFORCING POLICIES, THE FORMULATION OF POLICIES AND WORK PRIORITIES AS WELL AS THE USE OF LOCAL RESOURCES WERE ALL BASED ON THE ADVICE OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS.

+A DISTRICT BOARD IS LIKE A DRUMMER AND A HELMSMAN WHO STEER THE DRAGON BOAT, WHILE BOARD MEMBERS AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ARE THE ROWERS WHO JOINTLY KEEP THE BOAT MOVING,+ HE SAID.

TODAY'S PRIZE-PRESENTATION CEREMONY WAS FOLLOWED BY A SEMINAR ON DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY MORE THAN 30 SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE DISTRICT.

ENGLISH INSIGHT FOR SAI KUNG RESIDENTS
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ENGLISH-SPEAKING RESIDENTS IN SAI KUNG WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DISTRICT AT A SEMINAR ON FRIDAY (JUNE 1) EVENING.

THE SEMINAR IS BEING ORGANISED BY THE LOCAL DISTRICT BOARD TO UPDATE ENGLISH-SPEAKING RESIDENTS ON LATEST DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND TO LET THEM LEARN MORE ABOUT THEIR LIVING ENVIRONMENT.

GUEST SPEAKERS AT THE SEMINAR WILL BE THE CHIEF TOWN PLANNER OF JUNK BAY NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, MR P.D. HINE; A SENIOR TRANSPORT OFFICER, MISS GRACE FUNG; AND AN ENGINEER FROM THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT, MR D.A. WEBSTER.

THE ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MISS CARRIE CHENG, WILL TALK ON DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLICITY WORK FOR NEXT YEAR'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS. EACH SPEAKER WILL TALK FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD'S SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE, MR ALEX BLUM, WILL CHAIR THE SEMINAR, TO BE HELD IN THE CHENG CHEK CHEE SECONDARY SCHOOL, STARTING AT 7.30 PM.

ALSO ATTENDING THE SEMINAR WILL BE THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICER OF SAI KUNG, MR JOHN DILLEY.

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SONG CONTEST TO PROMOTE VOTER REGISTRATION
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TWELVE CONTESTANTS WILL COMPETE IN THE ISLANDS DISTRICT AMATEUR SINGING CONTEST AT THE CARITAS ST. PAUL PREVOCAIONAL SCHOOL ON PEAK ROAD, CHEUNG CHAU, ON SATURDAY (JUNE 2) EVENING.

THE ISLANDS DISTRICT IS THE TENTH TO HOLD A SONG CONTEST TO ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO REGISTER AS VOTERS FOR NEXT YEAR'S DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS.

TWO DISC JOCKEYS FROM RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG, MR DERIC WAN AND MISS SUSANE HO, AND THE CHEUNG CHAU CHILDREN'S SINGING GROUP WILL BE GUEST PERFORMERS AT THE CONTEST. ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER, MR RAYMOND WONG, WILL OFFICIATE.

A LIMITED NUMBER OF FREE ADMISSION TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FROM THE ISLANDS DISTRICT OFFICE IN DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL, AND ITS COMMUNITY AFFAIRS BRANCH OFFICE IN CHEUNG CHAU AND MUI WO.

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1984 .

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GOVERNOR TO OPEN CLINIC
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THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, WILL OFFICIATE AT THE OPENING OF THE LI KA SHING SPECIALIST CLINIC ON FRIDAY (JUNE 1) AT 4 PM.

THE NEW CLINIC SITUATED AT THE SOUTHERN END OF THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL, HAS 49 CONSULTING ROOMS FOR ALL SPECIALTIES.

MR LI KA SHING, THE DONOR OF THE CLINIC AND DR K.L. THONG, DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, WILL ALSO BE PRESENT AT THE CEREMONY.

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BARONESS TO MEET PRESS
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BARONESS PHILLIPS, LORD LIEUTENANT OF GREATER LONDON, AND MRS G.P. DUNWOODY, MP, LABOUR, WILL HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE GIS THEATRE, BEACONSFIELD HOUSE, AT 11 AM, ON FRIDAY (JUNE 1).

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CHINESE MUSIC CONCERT
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A CHINESE MUSIC CONCERT WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY (JUNE 2) STARTING AT 8 PM AT THE AP LEI CHAU COMMUNITY HALL.

THE CONCERT IS PRESENTED BY THE MUSIC OFFICE OF THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT, AP LEI CHAU COMMUNITY HALL OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT AND THE MUSIC SOCIETY OF THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG.

THE EVENING PERFORMANCE WILL FEATURE VARIOUS CHINESE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SOLOS AND ENSEMBLES AS WELL AS CANTONESE OPERATIC MUSIC.

FREE TICKETS MAY BE OBTAINED ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS BY CONTACTING THE AP LEI CHAU COMMUNITY HALL, SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT, ABERDEEN (TELEPHONE NO. 5-551014) OR HONG KONG MUSIC CENTRE, MUSIC OFFICE, RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT, 9TH FLOOR, ARTS CENTRE, HARBOUR ROAD, HONG KONG (TEL. NO. 5-283257).

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1984

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EYE-DOTTING FOR NEW DRAGON BOATS
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THE ACTING SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, MR IAN MACPHERSON, WILL VISIT TAI PO AND NORTH DISTRICT TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

AT 10 AM IN TAI WONG YEH TEMPLE AT YUEN CHAU TSAI, HE WILL OFFICIATE AT AN EYE-DOTTING CEREMONY FOR TWO NEW DRAGON BOATS WHICH WILL TAKE PART IN THE RACES AT TAI PO ON MONDAY (JUNE 4).

AFTERWARDS, HE WILL CALL ON THE TAI PO AND SAI KUNG NORTH RURAL COMMITTEES.

IN THE AFTERNOON, HE WILL OPEN A VILLAGE ROAD AT SIU HANG IN FANLING AT 3 PM.

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WATER CUT IN TUEN MUN
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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO SOME PREMISES IN TUEN MUN WILL BE TURNED OFF FROM NOON ON SATURDAY (JUNE 2) TO 7 AM THE FOLLOWING DAY FOR MAINS WORK.

THE AFFECTED AREAS ARE ALONG LUNG MUN ROAD FROM TSING WAN ROAD TO TAP SHEK KOK, INCLUDING BUTTERFLY ESTATE, WU KING ESTATE, SIU SHAN COURT, MELODY GARDEN, TEMPORARY HOUSING AREAS 44 AND 45, BOYS' HOME, CHINA CEMENT CO AND CHINA LIGHT POWER STATION.

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