

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**Meetings of 12th and 13th May 1965 12th May****PRESENT**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)
SIR DAVID CLIVE CROSBIE TRENCH, KCMG, MC
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR DENIS STUART SCOTT
O'CONNOR, KBE, CB
COMMANDER BRITISH FORCES
THE HONOURABLE GEOFFREY CADZOW HAMILTON
ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY
THE HONOURABLE MAURICE HEENAN, QC
ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE HONOURABLE JOHN CRICHTON McDOUALL
SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE JOHN JAMES COWPERTHWAIT, CMG, OBE
FINANCIAL SECRETARY
THE HONOURABLE KENNETH STRATHMORE KINGHORN
DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE ALEC MICHAEL JOHN WRIGHT
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
DR THE HONOURABLE TENG PIN-HUI, OBE
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE WILLIAM DAVID GREGG
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
HONOURABLE PATRICK CARDINALL MASON SEDGWICK
COMMISSIONER OF LABOUR
THE HONOURABLE DAVID RONALD HOLMES, CBE, MC, ED
DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
THE HONOURABLE DHUN JEHANGIR RUTTONJEE, CBE
THE HONOURABLE FUNG PING-FAN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE KWAN CHO-YIU, CBE
THE HONOURABLE KAN YUET-KEUNG, OBE
THE HONOURABLE SIDNEY SAMUEL GORDON
THE HONOURABLE LI FOOK-SHU, OBE
THE HONOURABLE FUNG HON-CHU
THE HONOURABLE TANG PING-YUAN
THE HONOURABLE TSE YU-CHUEN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE KENNETH ALBERT WATSON, OBE
THE HONOURABLE WOO PAK-CHUEN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE JAMES DICKSON LEACH, OBE
MR ANDREW McDONALD CHAPMAN (*Deputy Clerk of Councils*)

ABSENT

THE HONOURABLE JOHN PHILIP ASERAPPA
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER, NEW TERRITORIES
THE HONOURABLE RICHARD CHARLES LEE, CBE

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28th April 1965, were confirmed.

PAPERS

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by Command of His Excellency the Governor, laid upon the table the following papers: —

| <i>Subject</i> | <i>LN No.</i> |
|--|---------------|
| Aims and Policy for Social Welfare in Hong Kong. | |
| Table of Changes. | |
| Quarantine and Prevention of Disease Ordinance. | |
| Prevention of the Spread of Infectious Diseases (Hei Ling Chau) Isolation Order 1965 | 61 |
| Resettlement Ordinance 1958. | |
| Resettlement (Amendment) Regulations 1965 | 64 |

MR D. R. HOLMES, by Command of His Excellency the Governor, laid upon the table a Report on an Export Credits Insurance Scheme for Hong Kong.

He said: —Sir, in presenting to Council this report by Mr R. A. FREEMAN of the British Export Credits Guarantee Department, I should like to recall certain recommendations which were made by the earlier Working Party, and to invite honourable Members' attention to some significant differences between those original proposals and the lines on which we now intend to proceed.

Dealing first with the initial staff problems I think Members are generally aware that it proved impossible to carry out one of the Working Party's main recommendations, namely that we should secure on secondment for at least two years the services of an experienced officer already engaged in this work in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere. When we sought to put this into effect we quickly found that experienced administrators in this field were very scarce indeed, and that no suitable officer could be spared to help us for any considerable period of time either from England, or from Australia, or from Canada.

However, in response to further representations, and as a most welcome gesture of help towards Hong Kong in this difficulty, the British Export Credits Guarantee Department did agree to release Mr FREEMAN, a recognized expert who had previously played a major part in setting up the Australian Export Guarantee Organization, to come to Hong Kong for about two months to advise specifically on staffing problems, and also to advise generally on the form which an

export credits insurance scheme should take in Hong Kong. While he was here Mr FREEMAN held discussions with representatives of a wide range of interests including industry, commerce, banking and so forth. Following his visit he presented the report which is tabled today.

Mr FREEMAN confirmed in this report the Working Party's conclusion that an export credits guarantee scheme was feasible here on the same general lines as that operating in Britain and other Commonwealth countries. He thought that the pattern of business in Hong Kong was, from the insurance point of view, very similar to a substantial part of the business covered by the British ECGD, and that a similar spread of risk would be necessary and appropriate in Hong Kong in order to avoid excessive vulnerability to loss and consequentially high insurance rates. In other words, an orthodox approach was both justified and desirable, and in his opinion offered the best chance of success.

Mr FREEMAN considered very carefully the Working Party's recommendation that an export credits insurance scheme should be operated as a division of an existing department of the Government. Whilst he found that the arguments were fairly evenly balanced he finally concluded that it would be preferable to set up an independent Statutory Corporation. This is the main respect in which the Freeman recommendations differ from the earlier proposals put forward by the Working Party. The arguments for and against this conclusion are carefully set out in Appendix B of the report.

The report goes on to recommend that the corporation, which Mr FREEMAN envisages as a one-man corporation, should be assisted on matters of policy and in the conduct of its business by a board of men prominent in business and in banking: the functions of this board would be advisory rather than executive.

Finally as to cost, it will, I am sure, come as no surprise that the proposal to enter this field of export credits insurance has substantial financial implications. Honourable Members will observe from paragraph 21 of the report that Mr FREEMAN suggests an initial grant of some \$10 to \$15 millions and postulates the assumption of contingent liabilities amounting perhaps to \$500 millions.

These then are the main features of this report. It envisages a statutory corporation, financed by the Government and functioning with the assistance of an advisory board. These proposals have been accepted by Your Excellency in Council, as providing a suitable institutional framework within which an export credits insurance scheme for Hong Kong could operate.

Following this acceptance of the proposals in principle, my department was instructed to put in hand the initial administrative work

related to the recruitment of staff, the drafting of legislation and similar preliminary tasks. Much the most important part of this preliminary work lies in the problem of recruiting three key men for the corporation, as follows:—

The corporation's chief officer, who will have full responsibility for running its business and for all policy matters within the framework provided by the law;

the second-in-command, who will be the executive head principally concerned with the business side of the organization and who in consequence must be fully conversant with underwriting work of this specialized kind; and

the officer responsible for all general administration, organization and planning; this man will need to have wide experience both of accountancy and of office management.

I am sure I need not say that it will not be easy to find suitable persons for these three posts. Nevertheless, some headway has already been made towards the implementation of Mr FREEMAN'S proposals, and the Finance Committee of this Council will be asked at an early date to consider the financial implications of such progress as has so far been made. I must however repeat what I had to say in the Budget debate, that I doubt whether we can expect to see this organization in being before mid-1966.

Finally, Sir, I take this opportunity of expressing the Government's gratitude to the Export Credits Guarantee Department of the United Kingdom Government for making available to us the services of a very suitable and experienced officer to advise us on these matters; and also to Mr FREEMAN himself for his report. The report has all the hall-marks of the professional touch (of which above all we stood in need) but at the same time I can commend it to honourable Members' attention as being easy to read, readily comprehensible by the layman, and thoroughly down-to-earth.

“STAR” FERRY COMPANY (SERVICE) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the First reading of a Bill intituled “An Ordinance further to amend the “Star” Ferry Company (Service) Ordinance 1951.”

He said: —Sir, this Bill seeks to amend the “Star” Ferry Company (Service) Ordinance 1951 and the Schedule to that Ordinance in order to permit the Star Ferry Company to operate a new service between the existing pier on Hong Kong Island and a berth on the Hung Horn Reclamation. The details are referred to in the Objects and Reasons

attached to the Bill where it is also explained that although the Ordinance itself makes provision for the amendment of the Schedule by resolution of this Council with the consent of the Company, in this particular case the Schedule is to be amended by clause 6 of the Bill before Council.

Sir, I am advised that the “Star” Ferry Company in concert with the Kowloon Motor Bus Company has already completed the preparatory work necessary for establishing this new service; and if this Bill is enacted I understand that the Company intends to inaugurate the service on the 1st June this year.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a First time.

Objects and Reasons

The “Objects and Reasons” for the Bill were stated as follows: —

The object of this Bill is to amend the “Star” Ferry Company (Service) Ordinance 1951 and Schedule to make provision for an additional service to be operated by the Company.

2. The new service is to run between Edinburgh Place and the Hung Horn Reclamation. It will be for fifteen months in the first instance with such extensions as Government may permit at the request of the Company (proposed new paragraph 1 (1)(b) of Schedule). The Company is to have an option to make this new service part of its concession, and it will then continue to be renewed in the same manner as the existing service (proposed new paragraph 1(2) of the Schedule). The Company will provide the Hung Hom terminal at Berth No.3 on the Reclamation. In the event of the service ceasing or of Government requiring the Company to use a pier in substitution, the Company may be required to demolish the terminal at Hung Hom or to sell it to Government at its value for salvage (proposed new paragraph 2(3) of the Schedule).

3. The Ordinance provides for the Schedule to be amended by resolution of Legislative Council with the consent of the Company, but in its present form the Ordinance authorizes only one service. Since it is desired to start the new service in the near future the Bill will, if enacted, amend the Schedule, and the consent of the Company to these amendments has been obtained.

FERRIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the First reading of a Bill intituled “An Ordinance further to amend the Ferries Ordinance.”

He said:—Sir, the existing section 9 of the Ferries Ordinance, Chapter 104, exempts from the operation of that Ordinance the ferry service run by the “Star” Ferry Company between the pier on Hong Kong Island and the pier at Kowloon Point. This Bill seeks to replace section 9 by a provision which will give exemption to any ferry maintained by the “Star” Ferry Company under its Ordinance and also to any ferry maintained by The Hong Kong and Yaumati Ferry Company under its Ordinance.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a First time.

Objects and Reasons

The “Objects and Reasons” for the Bill were stated as follows: —

The object of this Bill is to extend the exemption from the Ferries Ordinance to the new service to be operated by the “Star” Ferry Company, Limited, and at the same time to grant the exemption to the ferry services operated by The Hong Kong and Yaumati Ferry Company, Limited.

LAND REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled “An Ordinance further to amend the Land Registration Ordinance.”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clauses 1 and 2 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the Land Registration (Amendment) Bill 1965, had passed through Committee without amendment and moved the Third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Third time and passed into law.

SUMMARY OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Summary Offences Ordinance."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clauses 1 to 6 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the Summary Offences (Amendment) Bill 1965, had passed through Committee without amendment and moved the Third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Third time and passed into law.

RADIATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1965

DR TENG PIN-HUI moved the Second reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Radiation Ordinance 1957."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

DR TENG PIN-HUI reported that the Radiation (Amendment) Bill 1965, had passed through Committee without amendment and moved the Third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

The Bill was read a Third time and passed into law.

**SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS FOR THE QUARTER
ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1964**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the following resolution:—

Resolved that the Supplementary Provisions for the Quarter ended 31st December, 1964, as set out in Schedule No. 3 of 1964-65, be approved.

He said:—Sir, the Schedule before Council is the third list of supplementary provisions on the 1964-65 account. The total supplementary vote amounts to approximately \$51 million. Of this figure, Public Works Non-Recurrent, other than revotes, accounts for nearly \$22 million. Other substantial items are \$11 million required for the payment of interim allowances for the staff of grant and subsidized schools, and \$2.8 million for revised salary scales for the staff of the Chinese University.

All items in the Schedule have been approved by Finance Committee and the covering approval of Council is now sought.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

RADIATION ORDINANCE 1957

DR TENG PIN-HUI moved the following resolution:—

Resolved, pursuant to the provisions of section 14 of the Radiation Ordinance 1957, that the following regulations made by the Radiation Board on the 30th day of January, 1965 be approved—

(a) Radiation (Control of Radioactive Substances) Regulations 1965;
and

(b) Radiation (Control of Irradiating Apparatus) Regulations 1965.

He said:—Your Excellency, the two sets of regulations taken together as items 7(a) and (b) in the Order of Business are designed to ensure adequate control of and protection from all sources of ionizing radiation. The Radiation (Control of Radioactive Substances) Regulations 1965 apply to all undertakings which manufacture, store or handle radioactive substances. The general purport of these Regulations is to ensure the health and safety of all persons who may, either intentionally by virtue of their occupation or unintentionally, be liable to exposure to the radiations emitted by such substances. As this legislation applies primarily to factory proprietors and other industrialists, the principal authority for the powers contained therein is my honourable Friend the Commissioner of Labour.

The Radiation (Control of Irradiating Apparatus) Regulations 1965 are made not only to safeguard persons engaged in the operation of irradiating apparatus but also those who are intentionally exposed to ionizing radiation, as in the case of patients undergoing diagnostic or therapeutic procedures, and those who are unintentionally exposed by virtue of their being in the vicinity of the operation. As would be expected from the specialized nature of such apparatus the authority for these regulations is the Director of Medical and Health Services.

These two complementary sets of regulations cover, as far as possible in the light of present day knowledge, the control of substance and apparatus emitting ionizing radiations and are the result of long and detailed consideration by the Radiation Board.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS

ORDINANCE 1955

MR P. C. M. SEDGWICK moved the following resolution: —

Resolved, pursuant to the provisions of section 5 of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance 1955, that the following regulations made by the Commissioner of Labour on the 1st day of February, 1965, be approved—

Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Radiation) (Revocation)
Special Regulations 1965.

He said: —Sir, since Council has just approved the resolution moved by my honourable Friend, the Director of Medical and Health Services, that radioactive substances and irradiating apparatus should be controlled by regulations made by the Radiation Board, the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Radiation) Special Regulation 1957 will become redundant once the new regulations made by the Radiation Board come into operation and they should therefore be revoked.

In this connexion I would like to mention that I am arranging to send to all factory proprietors who have been granted written permission under the 1957 Regulations to make use of ionizing radiations for industrial purposes a note explaining in detail the differences between the old regulations and the new ones and the steps which they will have to take to comply with the requirements of the new regulations when they are brought into force in due course.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The question was put and agreed to.

STATEMENT OF AIMS AND POLICY FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the following resolution: —

Resolved that the White Paper entitled “Statement of Aims and Policy for Social Welfare in Hong Kong” tabled in this Council on 4th November, 1964, as modified by the Table of Changes dated May 1965, be adopted.

He said:—Your Excellency, in laying on the Table the White Paper entitled “Statement of Aims and Policy for Social Welfare in Hong Kong”, the Colonial Secretary said that the document was published for information, study and comment by the public in general and particularly by the voluntary social welfare agencies.

We have received in response a great deal of comment and advice from organizations which devote themselves to social welfare and charitable work (using “charitable” in its highest sense), from individuals, from the Press, and from many others who are interested in this vital subject. I should like to mention in particular valuable papers received from the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, and a number of social welfare agencies who are members of that Council, from the Hong Kong and Kowloon Joint Kaifong Research Council, the Reform Club, the Hong Kong Institute of Social Research, the Department of Economics and Political Science of Hong Kong University, the Hong Kong Social Workers’ Association, the Po Leung Kuk, and from many others.

Not all these bodies are in agreement. Indeed some hold diametrically opposing views, but many of them have made constructive suggestions towards the attainment of the common aim of improving the conditions of life of the less fortunate members of our community. Some have made proposals which go too far in that they suggest aims and objectives which are excellent in themselves, but are still so far in the future that it would be unrealistic to adopt them in present circumstances. But all these suggestions have been examined and, as a result, a Table of Changes has been drawn up containing amendments which it is proposed should be made to the White Paper. This Table has already been distributed to honourable Members, and has been tabled today.

I should like now to discuss certain matters of principle which have been raised by various persons and organizations who commented on the White Paper.

One of the main criticisms directed against the White Paper is that it is too cold and negative; that it gives the impression that the Government is interested in helping people only if they are potentially productive members of society; that we pay too much attention to the dollars and cents; and that the policy set forth is not abreast of the times.

This impression was conveyed principally by paragraph 13 of the White Paper, which listed the various groups which Government can assist from its present resources only when they are in special need. It seemed honest and realistic to list these groups, but I agree that this paragraph, in its original form, gave an unfortunate and erroneous impression; and in response to a number of representations the paragraph has been completely recast to indicate positively the groups that will receive priority in assistance. In its new form this disputed paragraph should make our purpose clearer. In addition, in a number of places in the Paper, words have been deleted which might suggest a grudging or niggardly level of help.

It was perhaps the insistence in the White Paper on the positive aspect of social welfare that has in part given a wrong impression. I should like to stress that the Government is most certainly interested in people as people and not only in their economic potential. We considered, and still consider, that it is important, in giving assistance, to help people to find a place in the community and to earn their own living, not only for economic reasons but because it is only thus that they can, in a modern community, maintain their self-respect and their human dignity. We thus stress the importance of positive rehabilitation, as opposed to the establishment of soup kitchens. Indeed, I should have thought that the positive activities of the Social Welfare Department in the fields of community and youth welfare, in the probation service, in the care and training of the physically and mentally handicapped, in family and child welfare, would have convinced anyone who had visited their institutions and centres, or read their reports, that a positive and creative desire to help their fellow men is the mainspring of all their operations.

But however generous we may wish to be, we cannot ignore the dollars and cents. It is dangerous to draw too close a comparison between a Government and a private individual. An individual can give with an open hand, and deny himself and his family as a result of his generosity. But a Government must take into account the needs of all the people. We must count the cost. In trying to assess a priority of miseries which can be alleviated from limited resources, it is essential to view all needs with a dispassionate eye. We, as a community, do not yet have sufficient facilities or trained people or indeed funds to undertake all the desirable tasks, and we would be performing an ill service if we pretended that we had. We have therefore attempted realistically to show how our resources could be distributed across a very broad range of human needs.

There has been some criticism of that part of the White Paper relating to voluntary agencies. Here we have a wide divergence of opinion. Some people put forward the view: "if voluntary agencies

can do it, let them do it, with Government subvention when necessary. A leading Catholic newspaper in an editorial enjoins Government, as newcomers, to enter the field of social welfare "with generosity, tact and humility". The Hong Kong and Kowloon Joint Kaifong Research Council advocate that "child centres, adult centres and all social activities operated by the Social Welfare Department should be handed over to Kaifong Associations, so that they may be carried on under the assistance and guidance of the Social Welfare Department."

On the other hand, a paper by members of the staff of the Department of Economics and Political Science of the University of Hong Kong says that voluntary agencies should only be ancillaries, specially relied on only in particular emergencies. This group goes on to say: "A broad policy is adduced; which, it is interesting to note, places first and foremost the participation of voluntary bodies." The group considers that "such a priority is unsound and inefficient, according to most present day thinking and practice."

I mention these opposing views, not in order to play one off against the other, but in order to show that there can be widely divergent views, genuinely and humanely felt, by different groups of people interested in helping their fellow men. Government stands firmly in the middle between these two sides, and consequently receives brick-bats from both. We consider, as was stated in the White Paper, and is even more clearly stated in the revised Paper, that both Government and the voluntary agencies have a vital part to play in this essential work and that best results can be achieved by mutual co-operation and co-ordination. I am glad to say that a number of organizations, including the voluntary agencies represented on the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, while making a number of useful criticisms and suggestions, have welcomed the opportunity for co-operative planning and action proposed in the White Paper. In this matter we stand firm: the Government could not do without the massive effort of the voluntary welfare agencies, and they in turn could not cover the field without the assistance of the Government.

There has been a suggestion in some quarters that those who work for voluntary agencies are dedicated and know what people really want, whereas those who work in the Social Welfare Department are merely doing their job. I cannot accept this view or its implications. The fact that a man is professionally trained, engages full-time in his work and receives a salary, does not reduce the warmth of his heart, and should indeed enable him to serve the people more effectively. I am confident that the members of the Social Welfare Department will continue to be guided by genuine concern and consideration for the people they are helping, and I am glad to have this opportunity of paying a tribute to them.

Some fears have been expressed that it is the intention to exercise control over the voluntary field. This is a subject on which I should like to make our position quite clear. When an organization is using its own funds, there is no Government control, other than that enjoined by law and the minimum supervision necessary to try to ensure that funds are not collected from the public for an ostensibly charitable purpose and then devoted to the material benefit of the collectors; and we should not delude ourselves into thinking that this can never happen. Apart from this, voluntary bodies are completely free to spend their own funds as they see fit. The Social Welfare Department would of course always be ready to offer guidance in the interests of co-ordination, the raising of standards and of positive social welfare principles; but offering guidance is a very different matter from exercising control.

But some supervision over the allocation and expenditure of Government subventions is inevitable. We are dealing with public money and have a duty to ensure that funds are allocated in accordance with social welfare policy and expended broadly for the purposes for which they were voted by this Council. Indeed one of the purposes of this Paper is to ensure that the policy is generally known and agreed, so that funds may be appropriately dispensed. But the Director of Social Welfare, while always ready to encourage and advise on request, does not seek to interfere in the day-to-day operations of the voluntary agencies.

An important addition to the Paper is the final paragraph which makes it clear that it is the intention to review the Statement of Aims at least every two years in consultation with the Social Welfare Advisory Committee and the Council of Social Service, so as to keep social welfare policy in tune with changing resources and the changing needs of the people of Hong Kong.

Within the last few days a suggestion has been made by the Social Welfare Advisory Committee that there should be some form of standing machinery for co-ordinating Government's social service policy in respect of housing, educational, medical and social welfare services. We shall certainly examine this suggestion, but I should like to sound a note of caution. We already have useful boards or committees to advise the Director of Education, the Director of Medical and Health Services and the Director of Social Welfare; and we shall shortly have a Housing Board. There is already a great deal of inter-departmental consultation and co-ordination on these matters. To superimpose another consultative body on top of these boards and committees, to co-ordinate policy before proposals reach the Executive Council or the Legislative Council, would in my preliminary opinion tend to bog things down instead of getting them done. This Government consults a variety of bodies before legislating or voting funds; indeed, we are often

accused of procrastination when we are in fact engaged in seeking views and opinions. Useful as these consultations are, we must be careful not to establish too many levels of consultation which might unduly delay practical matters. Above all, we must get on with the job. Nonetheless, this suggestion will certainly be examined with care.

There has been some criticism of the lack of statistics and precise plans as to what is proposed. It is true that inadvertently the words “programme” and “plan”, which have now been deleted, crept into the White Paper; but it is merely a Statement of Aims and Policies. If this Paper is approved, plans for the implementation of each aspect of social welfare will be prepared in consultation with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and the Social Welfare Advisory Committee. We wished to obtain agreement on the main policies before going into detailed forward planning.

Sir, I have attempted in this speech to describe the main comments which have been received concerning this White Paper, to indicate those which have been accepted and incorporated into the Paper; and to explain why certain advice cannot be accepted. The comments have been most valuable, and the Paper has, I believe, been greatly improved as a result.

In conclusion I should like to stress again that the White Paper proposes a joint enterprise, a co-operative effort between the Government and the people of Hong Kong. I am sure that the Statement of Aims, if approved by this Council, will do much to further a sound social welfare policy in Hong Kong.

With these remarks, Sir, I beg to move the Resolution.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY seconded.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:—The resolution is open to debate.

MR KAN YUET-KEUNG: —Your Excellency, the White Paper, tabled in this Council in November last, has not unnaturally aroused wide public interest. Since then, much valuable and constructive views and comments have come from many quarters—the Press, the Kaifongs, the Welfare Agencies, The Hongkong Council of Social Service, and many others in the social welfare field. These views have been carefully considered by unofficial members of the Council and as a result of several discussions which they had with the Director of Social Services the more important points raised have been incorporated in the Paper in its amended form. I am aware that there are still conflicting views on various aspects and, inevitably, there are some who still think that the policy as now envisaged does not go far enough, while others, the

more money-minded, consider that it goes too far. Nonetheless, I think it is fair to say that the Paper as now amended represents the accepted views, in broad principle of course, of a wide cross section of the public on our future social welfare policy. Some have suggested that the Paper is on a "take it or leave it" basis and that it would either be pigeonholed or used by Government as a "strait jacket" to restrict future developments. To allay any such misgivings, I ask that Government do now give an assurance that the policy would be interpreted flexibly, constructively and in a forward looking manner and that the policy itself will, as indicated in the new final paragraph 20, be kept under constant review, "so as to keep it in tune with changing resources and the changing needs of the people of Hong Kong."

Paragraph II (c) of the Paper perhaps needs stressing. It reads, "It (Government) should support and co-operate with voluntary organizations in a programme directed to the co-ordination of available resources, and to planning for the future improvement and necessary extension of voluntary social welfare services."

Speaking on the subject of co-ordination in social welfare work sometime ago, I said this, "Social welfare in Hong Kong derives great strength from voluntary effort displayed in many fields. Much of this work is very effective and many of the leading executive and committee members of voluntary agencies strive hard to see that their work is coordinated and dovetailed both with what other agencies are doing and with the operations of Government; but the impression which I have from taking part for many years in the work of several voluntary agencies and in the Social Welfare Advisory Committee, which advises Government every year on subventions to some 40 voluntary agencies, is that there is always further scope for co-ordination and for planning. I am convinced that through co-ordination and planning much more effective use can be made in many instances of money, staff and premises than at present."

The White Paper very rightly lays great emphasis on the important and invaluable role played by voluntary organizations. This was emphasized by my honourable Friend, the Colonial Secretary, a few moments ago. Clearly, the implementation of our new social welfare policy, indeed, the very success of our entire social welfare services, must in the last resort depend upon the full co-operation and coordinated efforts between the voluntary agencies and the Social Welfare Department and I particularly welcome the statement at paragraph 18 of the Paper which says that "A programme of social welfare services as now envisaged can succeed only through the combined efforts of both Government and voluntary organizations—having the same goals and a mutual understanding of how best the common good can be met. And it is to this end that both must work."

Other speakers today, Sir, will, I think, dwell on the subject of social security. I was rather amused to come across the following passage in a book—an authoritative book I may say—“Social security is a world-wide movement. More than 60 countries have programmes in effect; only the more primitive nations lack them.”. Sir, while I do not for one moment accept that Hong Kong is a “primitive nation”, I am extremely sceptical that in our present stage of development as a community, financially, socially and politically, we are in a position, now and for many years to come, to introduce a comprehensive social security programme such as is understood in the developed countries. It is better that we should strive to improve and extend and expand our existing social services gradually and continuously so far as our means permit us to do so.

It may be of some interest to note that in New Zealand, which claims to have “the world’s most advanced social security system”, the social security programmes, excepting workmen’s compensation, are entirely financed by way of a flat 7.5 per cent gross income tax, known as social security charge, levied against *all individuals* irrespective of income or number of dependents, plus a 7.5 per cent tax on all business income. I need not hazard a guess as to the sort of public reaction he will get if my honourable Friend, the Financial Secretary should attempt to impose such a charge !

MR S. S. GORDON: —Your Excellency, the nature of our debates in this Council is such that inevitably there is a certain amount of repetition and I trust you will bear with me if I repeat to some extent my honourable Friend Mr KAN’S introductory remarks. Whatever else it may have done, the Paper being debated today has probably provided one of the best examples in recent years of how our rather peculiar form of democracy in Hong Kong works out in practice. The original Paper introduced last November was bad enough to generate a considerable amount of heat. The Press, Civic leaders, social welfare workers and many others rushed into print to condemn some aspect to which they took exception. I suspect that some of the comments referred to by my honourable Friend, the Colonial Secretary, were penned during this heated period and before mature reflection on all the implications. The unfortunate paragraph 13 with its negative approach came under particularly heavy fire. Then meetings were called and representations prepared by the welfare organizations, by the Kaifongs and in fact by practically all our civic groups. In one way or another a substantial cross-section of our community has had its say. The Hong Kong Council of Social Service took on the immense task of coordinating the criticisms and of preparing suggested amendments to the Paper. Many more meetings took place with the Social Welfare Department which resulted in the changes in the original statement now tabled. The final result will certainly not please everybody

but we have come a long way, and the Aims and Policy, as amended, I is a document none of us need be ashamed of. I would like to record I a sincere tribute to Mr BARON, the Director of Social Welfare, for his I patience and co-operation throughout the lengthy negotiations. He has welcomed advice and criticism, and in fact has himself suggested a number of the amendments which are before us.

Having said that, let us look at some points of criticism which still remain.

First there is the reluctance of Government to commit itself to the wider use of cash assistance for the relief of destitution. It is well known that in many cases dry rations are sold at very much below their real value in order to provide cash desperately required for other needs such as the rent of a bed-space, clothing, or fuel to cook the rations. It may be said that the voluntary agencies can and do provide these requirements but because a man is destitute, why should he have to suffer the additional indignity of having to apply to several sources for his basic needs when they could all be provided by the Social Welfare Department in truly deserving cases. Again, I understand that the only relief available to the chronically sick from Government sources is dry rations although in many cases this must clearly be inadequate. There are many more examples and I submit that while Government must continue to co-operate closely with, and fully utilise the facilities of voluntary agencies, the Social Welfare Department should have a greater measure of discretion to give direct assistance in cash instead of in kind where the circumstances warrant.

Next, there is the question of co-operation among Government Departments. The amended paragraph 8 makes luke-warm reference to this, but in view of its importance and in spite of my honourable Friend the Colonial Secretary's caution, inter-departmental planning must become established procedure rather than a pious hope.

The statement in paragraph 11(b) that Government "should encourage and support where necessary a programme of fact-finding and research" needs some elaboration. Policies should be based on studies of need rather than on emotion or on one person's ideas. I think it is generally agreed that a substantial amount of research is necessary in Hong Kong and in order to avoid any accusation of bias, it would be preferable for studies to be undertaken by an independent body rather than by the Social Welfare Department. Does "encourage and support" mean "inaugurate and pay for"?

There has been some rather loose talk of fully comprehensive social security. I take this to mean an extension of workmen's compensation, the introduction of Health and Unemployment benefits and the provision of Old Age Pensions. All these amenities are commonplace in

developed communities and they must come to Hong Kong some time, probably by a gradual process. It should never be forgotten, however, that the provision of employment is the most important single factor in the existence of this Colony and we must not jeopardise our competitive position in world markets by trying to accelerate social development beyond our capacity. This does not mean that social welfare programmes can be shelved indefinitely and the Social Welfare Department should be encouraged to devote a part of its resources to investigating the feasibility of various social security measures. I personally would advocate starting with a study of a contributory scheme for providing pensions for the aged. Quite apart from the humanitarian aspect, at present we have a young population and the sooner we investigate this particular measure, the easier and cheaper will be its implementation.

The final paragraph of the original Paper stressed the need for a realistic point of view in social welfare services. While we would all agree with this, may I enquire if we are doing anything to build up a fund specifically for the continuance of welfare services in times of recession? Such a fund would be equally useful if the level of assistance from Overseas were to fall off. I am advised that, at present, donations from Overseas amount to around \$70 Million per annum, of which about half is in cash and the remainder in kind. This is a very large sum and it seems to me that we should be making plans to shoulder part of this burden ourselves. The nucleus of an emergency fund could be created by setting aside the whole of Government's income from the Jockey Club, which, including betting tax and profits tax, is a not inconsiderable figure.

I am glad to see that the Statement will be reviewed at least every two years. In addition machinery should be set up for planning programmes of service in co-operation with the voluntary organizations and, to be sure we get somewhere within a reasonable time, specific objectives must be set.

Finally I know that many of our social workers are worried by the apparently widely-held feeling that social welfare is a nuisance and a luxury. In modern society properly planned welfare services are not a drain on the economy: they have a constructive part to play and just as education and health services build a better community, so can welfare services form an integrating force. Proper planning should lay as much emphasis as possible on prevention rather than on cure; youth services rather than courts and jails; counselling rather than care for members of broken families. We need to change the attitude wherever it exists that there is something wrong with the person who needs help—being poor or handicapped is not a symbol of inadequacy

and people should not be condemned for this. Everything possible must be done to improve the community's sense of responsibility for its less fortunate members.

Sir, I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR FUNG HON-CHU: —Your Excellency, as a statement of Aims and Policy, as distinct from one of specific plans, the Paper before Council represents an honest effort by Government to provide a realistic framework for the development of future social welfare services in Hong Kong. Because of the lack of detailed plans, this policy statement has unfortunately brought forth criticisms that Government has no ultimate intent and assumes no specific responsibility in this field. Nevertheless, looking at it dispassionately, there is much to be said for the good sense and the realistic point of view that we find in this paper. Everyone, not least the Government, wishes to see these services expanded, but as everyone knows only too well, it is comparatively easy to expand, but when it comes to contracting or discontinuing them for whatever reason, the process could be a painful matter. The amendments will no doubt do much to remove certain misgivings and objections the original White Paper may have generated and they are, therefore, to be welcomed.

In commending this Paper, I would like to single out the fine principle that Government has seen fit to place emphasis on, namely, that of self reliance. By providing rehabilitation services and relief measures so as to help those in need to acquire or recover ability to stand on their own feet without extending such assistance beyond what is necessary, some of the abuses arising from a Welfare State could largely be avoided. It is not enough that we help them: what is more important, we must help them to develop a desire to help themselves. In this connexion, Government's endorsement of the Chinese tradition of self help and of treating relief measures as a family responsibility is correct in theory. It must, however, be admitted that a noticeable change in family circumstances has come about in recent years, which tends to weaken this fine tradition, and it is gratifying to note from the amendments to the White Paper that Government is alive to this shift of pattern and, instead of leaving them to their own resources, is to plan constructive measures to assist families and individuals to help themselves.

Apart from the question of finance, the main obstacle to providing expanded social welfare in Hong Kong is the availability of trained social workers of the right calibre. This is a point which is often overlooked by the critics of the White Paper. Government would be failing in its duty to the public, if it made money available without at the same time being satisfied that the money will be effectively and

properly spent. Indeed, this point was clearly explained by my honourable Friend, the Colonial Secretary. I understand that there is an acute shortage of trained social workers but that both the Universities and the Social Welfare Department are pressing ahead with programmes for expanding academic and in-service training. This must necessarily be a long-term solution and, in the meantime, I think it is essential to take steps to convince our young people that social work and service to the community do offer rewarding and satisfying careers. It is, therefore essential to maintain the status and importance of the profession in the public eye. Any relegation of the importance of this branch of social service will not only tend to stifle local interest in the work but may also cause our image abroad to suffer because of the wrong impression that this might create.

On youth Services, I would like to see Government adopt a more vigorous and diversified programme to counteract the mounting tendencies towards juvenile delinquency and to place this high in priority for funds. In planning recreational outlets for the surplus energy and initiative of young people, it is well to remember the varied and the changing tastes of our youths to-day. The programme will run the risk of failure, if we attempt to impose blindly the tastes and pursuits of another generation on the young people of to-day. We should aim at as diversified a programme as our resources would allow, so that these amenities will cater for as many categories of young people as possible. The distribution of outlets needs also to be properly planned so as to ensure their maximum use.

On the question of vocational training, the proposed establishment of an Industrial Training Advisory Council is welcome news and I hope that its establishment will lead to a rationalization of the various vocational training programmes now being operated by Government, by industry and by the various voluntary welfare bodies. In selecting people for vocational training, it is essential not only to train people who are in need of help but also to train them in the skills which will be needed in Hong Kong. In order to prepare a trainee for his rightful place in society and for his fullest contribution thereto, a careful survey ought to be made to ascertain what particular skills are likely to be in the greatest demand and what skills are essential to Hong Kong future economic and industrial development. This requires forward and co-ordinated planning. If vocational training is unco-ordinated and indiscriminate, the result may be a surfeit of one type of trained worker and a dearth of another. If there is a surplus, the training will in a sense be wasted as the trainee will then not be in a position to help himself.

Sir, in the hope that Government, when working out its programme, will give due thought to these my remarks as well as other suggestions

by voluntary agencies and in the knowledge that this statement will be reviewed every two years, I have pleasure in supporting the White Paper before Council.

MR TSE YU-CHUEN: —Your Excellency, I rise to make three observations on the amended Aims and Policy for Social Welfare in Hong Kong on the basis of the reality of the situation and whatever experience I have in social welfare services.

My first point is that the voluntary organizations should be given every support and should not be placed under Government control or other measures tantamount to the same effect. With a population approaching the four million mark, statistics show that the figures of birth rate are still ahead of those of the death rate. Therefore the responsibility of social welfare services in Hong Kong must be of necessity greater, while such pursuits have as a matter of fact taken on great complexity and importance. Considering that Government's resources in finance, materials and personnel in shouldering entirely the expanding burden of social welfare are limited especially in view of the rising population in proportion to time, there is a much felt need for the voluntary organizations to fill the gap. Even if the number of existing voluntary bodies is increasing from time to time, they are still not sufficient to meet the pressing demands at present.

For the sake of administering social welfare services to achieve greater results at less expense and efforts, it would seem inadvisable for Government to exercise any control over the voluntary agencies, lest they should be hampered in their development and growth. On the positive side, Government should encourage the increase of these voluntary organizations and channel or guide members of the community who are enthusiastic and interested in social welfare to join these voluntary organizations in order to have a greater build-up in the form of finance, materials and manpower and to take up a greater load of welfare work in the community.

With respect to those voluntary and charitable institutions which are well organized and operated on a non-profit basis, it is all the more necessary for Government to give assistance for the purpose of expansion on the basis of mass strength and wisdom. Though such a measure appears simple or commonplace, the result would be far reaching. If it is apprehended that social welfare activities may become complicated and wasteful in the course of operation. Government may well join with persons from those well organized and conducted voluntary bodies in social welfare activities to form a supervisory and guidance set-up. This new body will advise and guide all voluntary agencies in respect to their financial capability, material resources and human energy for disposal effectively to meet the present needs of the community.

My second point is with respect to the campaigns for fund raising—the voluntary organizations should be given encouragement and not control. There are never too many generous and kind hearted people in the community who are deeply concerned with public welfare and able to give away money or use their efforts to raise funds and to volunteer actively in welfare work. It is also true that people who are enthusiastic in the social welfare services or contribute substantially in this connexion are the sources of assistance and wield very great influence in the advancement of social welfare. Government should as much as possible give them the greatest encouragement in the form of mental satisfaction or civic distinction, so that they may be spurred through unrelenting efforts in making financial donations and rendering services for the cause. With respect to the voluntary organizations connected with social welfare services every assistance and facility should be accorded to them with the result that in the course of their work they may encounter smooth progress, satisfaction and enthusiasm in their labours.

In particular incentive and recognition may be awarded those deeply interested in raising funds and those generous people who make donations for the philanthropic cause. In this way high yields would no doubt be possible. On the other hand should there be undue interference in their activities or regulation of their management, it is feared that unfavourable repercussions and effects may follow and lower the morale of the volunteer workers and enthusiasts in contributing money or raising funds.

However, in a society there are always the sheep and the goats. Each is prompted by his own motive. Therefore Government in fact should not take an indifferent or laissez-faire attitude towards the voluntary organizations but should take appropriate steps in guiding and enlightening them. At the same time care must be taken to avoid what appears to be undue interference or control, because the advocacy of control is, as far as I can understand, repeated, though vaguely, in the Aims and Policy for Social Welfare in Hong Kong now under debate.

Thirdly, the suggestion of control or the euphemism of “leadership,” “consultation” and “co-ordination” is perhaps prompted, among other things, by a desire “to prevent overlapping and waste of efforts”. It seems to me that careful investigation and planning with respect to distribution of social welfare services in different localities would obviate duplication. It must be admitted that existing services are far from adequate in view of the dense and growing population as I stress earlier in my speech, and therefore some duplication may not necessarily be a waste but on the other hand may mean a well disseminated relief. Such overlapping, if actually in existence, might bring about comparison and competition and result in greater efforts being exerted and more money

expended in every needy nook and the corner which might have been neglected. Comparison and competition would also lay bare the deficiency of some voluntary organizations and the efficiency of others to the end that only the best are qualified to carry on the work. Thus the black sheep will be cleared from the fold.

Finally, while making these observations on how best social welfare services may be carried out to the greatest advantage of the community, I am happy to find that certain basic consideration in the Aims and Policy of Social Welfare in Hong Kong deserves wide support. I am in complete agreement with the statement that “voluntary effort is an essential element in a free community, if its citizens are to develop and maintain a sense of responsibility for the well being of others.” Another statement reads “Hong Kong is fortunate in always having had a large number of Chinese organizations which generously contribute in work and money to many forms of social service, particularly in the field of education and medicine, as well as in other traditionally Chinese approaches to social welfare. In so far as these groups may be enlisted further in the total social welfare effort, they constitute a very important potential.” I am much inspired by these remarks and look forward to greater efforts on the part of the public spirited citizens in Hong Kong.

MR K. A. WATSON: —Your Excellency, I find myself in very close agreement with my unofficial colleagues, and some of the things I am going to say may sound like a repetition. I agree with the caution of Mr KAN, not to go overboard on a fully comprehensive welfare state, as is found in New Zealand, and with Mr GORDON with his appeal for more research, and his denial that social welfare is a nuisance and a luxury.

But it does, apparently mean many different things to different people and since the publication of this Paper, the Director has been kept busy explaining that this was not intended as a plan or a programme —but as a statement of policy. Being a little puzzled myself about what exactly was meant, I looked up the word “policy” in the dictionary and there I found this definition: —

“craftiness; course of action adopted by government”.

Now, if anyone thinks I invented this happy conjunction, I refer them to the Concise Oxford Dictionary, 3rd edition. In the Pocket Edition this definition has been improved, and the word “craftiness” has been changed to “statecraft”.

Now, perhaps it is Government being proper crafty, and not wanting to commit itself too much that accounts for much of the unfavourable criticism this Paper has received. It has been deplored for its vagueness, its negative approach, and its financial timidity. It has been described

as unimaginative, pessimistic, shortsighted, outdated, inadequate, a policy of parsimony and an apologia for inaction. It has been suggested that a better title might have been "The Aims and Policy of the Financial Secretary on Social Welfare in Hong Kong" which I think is unkind. I hope that if Mr COWPERTHWAITTE speaks on this motion, he will show that his own views are much more liberal than those displayed in this Paper.

Not all comment has been adverse. It has been praised for its eloquent description of the ideals of social welfare, and the stimulus it has given to thought and discussion. The Council of Social Service says it is a forward step in building an integrated and strong community and, on behalf of the voluntary organizations, welcomes the invitation to a partnership. Even the Reform Club thinks that, with certain wide amendments, it would be an interesting and well-written statement, even though it thinks part of it is "marred by the tramlings of a stray hyena from the Treasury zoo", whatever that might mean.

The first section of the Paper is excellent. It contains an admirable account of the place of social welfare in modern civilization. Social Security, which heads the list, is described as the protection provided by society against those contingencies of urban life against which an individual cannot protect himself by his own ability and foresight. The reason and justification for an extended social welfare system and the value of collective responsibility for persons in need are emphasized. It states that "The ultimate objective must be of course to ensure that every individual be assured freedom from want and insecurity, and also equal opportunities in regard to health, education and employment".

Unfortunately, the Paper then goes on to consider what it claims are special conditions in Hong Kong which prevent this being achieved and concludes that "it would not be realistic to envisage comprehensive services or to introduce any further elements in a social security programme beyond the provision of relief services based on strict need, without very careful consideration of the potential effect on the economy."

As a result of protests, this stark and depressing doctrine has been modified, but does this indicate any change in Government's intentions? Does it mean to do anything to advance towards this ideal of social security and freedom from want? Is careful consideration in fact being given to the effect on the economy? There is no mention of it in the Paper. No one, apparently, has been given the task of making a detailed survey of the problems, of planning the programmes required, of considering the costs, and estimating their financial effect. The ideals so eloquently described appear to have been shelved indefinitely, while Government restricts its policy to "the provision of relief services based

on strict need,” and the rehabilitation of those who can be profitably rehabilitated. It proposes to omit all other social security measures, which in other countries play such a large part in welfare work.

The implications of this is that those who are going to remain in a permanent state of dependency, the aged, the chronically ill, the incur-ably handicapped, all those who cannot be rehabilitated, will only be entitled, in Government’s own unfortunate words, to the “minimum level of existence”. It is here that the description of “Back to the Poor-house” appears to be justifiable criticism. Much the same philosophy governed slave-labour camps. Feed those who were strong enough to work, and let the others starve. The words, “it is poor economy” are repeated time after time, as if economics were the only criterion and humanitarianism counted for nothing.

The fundamental question is whether Social Welfare and Social Security should be regarded as a valuable part of civilization, —or as a necessary evil. A fundamental duty of society is surely to provide protection against want, disease, hunger and suffering; these should be regarded as basic rights, and relief should be given on a reasonably adequate level. This is not a dole dished out by Big Brother, but something the citizen has voted for himself, and in accepting it in time of need he should lose no dignity.

This is not Socialist or Communist dogma. Social Security is accepted by all civilized governments whether they are Conservative or Labour, Republican or Democrat, and any party that tried to turn the clock back, and impose the Poor Laws would very soon be voted out of office.

Here in Hong Kong, the majority of people have little say in Government. They accept the present system because they believe that it is genuinely anxious to do what is best for the people. If the people did have a greater voice, there is no reason to suppose that they would be any less in favour of more comprehensive social welfare services than the people of, say, Britain, and we should therefore look very closely at the excuses given for not proceeding with them.

Government’s first reason is that extended help would weaken the Chinese tradition of family responsibility for its members who find themselves in need, and that it would be bad if they came to rely on Government and shed their own responsibilities.

Now, this seems to me to be a piece of wishful thinking. Most Chinese who have commented on it have been critical of Government’s reasoning. While agreeing that it is an ideal to be fostered, they claim that in present-day Hong Kong, it is impossible for more than a very few to practice it. The Council of Social Service queries the assumption

that Chinese traditions make it less necessary to provide the same services as in other countries, and suggests that it is dangerous to predicate a policy on the continued existence of an early way of life, based on a static rural community.

In any case there would be little justice in a system which left those in need, at the mercy of whether there were or were not extended families who would look after them. This is similar to conditions in feudal times in England, when the local baron looked after the peasants. Their well-being and protection depended entirely on his whim. Some people were cared for, others suffered, an unsatisfactory situation which was ended by the state taking over this responsibility. I suggest it is even more unsatisfactory in Hong Kong where the extent of this tradition of Fuk Lei is unknown. I suggest that our Baron, Mr BARON, should regard himself as the extension of the extended family and that Government should avoid the suspicion that it is either engaging in wishful thinking, or is trying to pass the buck.

Its other excuse is that we cannot afford to spend more on social welfare because of high densities, high rates of natural increase, serious overcrowding, the potential attraction of Hong Kong for immigrants, that total resources are limited, that the heavy expenditure on housing, medical care, education and water supplies must be met out of current revenue.

Now if some of these reasons sound a little out-of-date, it is perhaps because this Paper was, I understand, written several years ago. We are told that illegal immigration is now negligible and that our birth rate is falling. Our natural resources are the ability of our businessmen and the industriousness of our labour. In spite of the enormous sums we are spending on various forms of capital expenditure, all out of current revenue, we are still making, monotonously year after year, millions of dollars surplus.

Yet, throughout the Paper, there is a dominating note of timidity, as if someone was constantly breathing down the author's neck, saying, "It can't last, the boom will bust, don't let people expect too much, our present prosperity is a flash in the pan, we've only got \$900 million in the kitty, think what will happen in a recession."

But the growth of our economy during the past 10 years has been steady and continuous, and it is this that we should consider as normal and plan accordingly. Our prosperity is unlikely to be seriously affected except by a major war, in which case all aims and policies, plans and programmes will go by the board. But this cannot be a basis for planning. We must assume normal times, and I suggest that a ten year period is long enough to provide a criterion of normality.

Considerable emphasis has been placed on Hong Kong's "special" position. I think we ought to be honest and admit that the opposition to more comprehensive social welfare services is the fear that it will lead to increased taxation.

I am no more in favour of raising taxes than the next man. I realize the value and incentive of low taxation to our economy, but I don't think that we should regard our present system, or indeed any system, as being sacrosanct. I suggest we should not condemn worthy projects out of hand, merely because they will cost money. We should not be afraid to investigate, to find out the cost, to weigh this against the benefits to the community, and then consider the effect on the revenue and expenditure account.

It may be argued that too great a degree of social help weakens the incentive to work, and so is detrimental to the economy. But there are many forms of social insurance which are merely examples of prudence and foresight on a large scale. We do not condemn a man for putting his money in an endowment policy, to take care of the time when he is too old to earn a living. There can be no moral or economic objection to the state organizing a similar system on a national scale. As Mr GORDON has pointed out, it is generally held that social welfare services strengthen and integrate the community and should be regarded as a constructive force for good.

The fear that if we started introducing social security measures on a wider scale, enormous sums would be required and our rate of tax would immediately soar to British or New Zealand levels is quite unfounded. We could start some of the contributory schemes mentioned by Mr GORDON, such as an old age pension one, which would not cost Government much more than that of initiating and administering it.

The last paragraph in the paper reads as if Government considers social welfare services as luxuries which can be allowed in good times, but must be cut off in bad and when I mention the last paragraph I mean the last paragraph of the original version. Does this mean that even the present limited benefits will be reduced in a recession? Surely this is precisely the time when relief measures would have to be stepped up, not cut down. Is this not a very strong argument for a proper plan to build up reserves for such an emergency, through contributions to an unemployment fund, created through the years of prosperity. To wait until disaster hits, and then to complain that there are insufficient funds, that relief and other services will have to be withdrawn at the time when they are needed most, seems to me to be sheer bad housekeeping.

For such schemes, some money will be required, but it is unlikely to be enough to affect the tax structure. During the 5 years from 1959 to 1964, Government revenue increased by an average of \$182 million

a year, but the amount spent by the Social Welfare Department only increased by an average of \$600,000 a year. If growth continues at this rate, must all the extra \$182 million continue to be spent on other things, however important? Could not some of it be retained for an expanded Social Welfare service? I am sure that even if we cannot have the fully comprehensive schemes proposed by the Council of Social Service, we could improve greatly on our present services, without great expenditure or jeopardising our competitive position in commerce and industry.

May I also call for a programme of research and forward planning, of which almost no mention is made in the White Paper. We have very serious problems, and part of our policy should include the systematic study of them in order to devise ways of solving them. Although we are contributing substantial sums annually to the Asian Economic Institute in Bangkok, as far as I know we are giving nothing to any local research group such as the Institute for Social Research. Three years ago I was told that the Social Welfare Department intended setting up its own Research Council, but nothing appears to have been done. I hope this is not due to the fear that such a body would disclose conditions so bad that present policy will be shown to be quite inadequate.

Through the lack of this, we are now being asked to accept a Paper which gives no indication of the nature, extent and seriousness of our Social Welfare problems, and so makes it impossible to judge whether it offers an adequate solution or not, and which makes no specific mention of future developments.

Nor can we tell from the Paper, what are to be the qualifications for relief, how "destitute" a man has to be, and how much hardship would be suffered if they were strictly interpreted. I would like an assurance in this debate that no starving man or woman will be refused assistance because of inflexible requirements and strict implementation of the rules.

So far, I have confined myself to the shortcomings of the Paper, though I appreciate its many merits and the hard work that has gone into it. These I leave to be described by my colleagues, who are going to vote for it. I must, however, make clear that my criticisms do not extend to Mr BARON, the Director of Social Welfare, and his staff who would, I am sure, prefer a much more liberal policy, but who must carry out the one laid down for them by Government.

I believe this Paper with suitable revision and a declaration that Government intends to investigate and, if possible, introduce more comprehensive measures, could offer a satisfactory short-term policy, and I am therefore reluctant to vote against it.

But as it stands at present, I regret I cannot support a policy which calls for relief at the “minimum level of existence” for those who cannot be rehabilitated, a policy based on profit more than on humanitarianism, a policy which commends the constructive ideals of social security measures and then gives no indication of any willingness to consider any advance towards them, for reasons which do not convince me.

I shall therefore abstain from voting on this motion.

MR Woo PAK-CHUEN:—Your Excellency, from the comments and criticisms of this White Paper it appears that some of the critics have confused the function of social welfare services with that of the social services. Social service has been defined as “the provisions made by government or voluntary efforts to meet income maintenance, medical care, housing and recreational needs and provisions for the care and protection of special groups which have become recognized as essential community responsibilities in industrial society”. Social welfare services, however, have been described in an United Nations report on Methods of Social Welfare Administration as “the organization of means of putting persons into effective relationship with the social resources of which they stand in need”.

One can at once see that the work of social welfare services is much narrower than that of the social services.

I must admit that the social welfare services now proposed by Government to provide are not the “ideal” as advocated by the critics and particularly by my honourable friend Mr WATSON. But it is of course not just an “ideal” for Government to provide full social welfare services for the community of Hong Kong and I hope Government will take effective steps to implement what my honourable friend Mr WATSON has just mentioned in order to make Hong Kong a better place to live in.

One must not, however, forget that the Social Welfare Department was only established about seven years ago. Before that it was merely a section attached to the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs; within a comparatively short time the Department has grown and now has an establishment of 303 officers and welfare assistants. With such a short period of time I can see the reason why Government is very cautious in laying down the Aims and Policy for Social Welfare until such time as it is able to provide wider welfare services to the community, and we must accept the argument that Hong Kong at present is unable to afford to provide full social welfare services.

But I also wish to dispel the impression which some critics seem to entertain in their mind that the Social Welfare Department is mostly to provide “relief”. This of course is not true. The Social Welfare

Department is headed by a Director with 2 Assistant Directors (administrative and professional) and divided into 7 sections consisting of:

- (1) The Youth Welfare Section (including Community Organization)
- (2) The Probation Section (including Correctional Institutions)
- (3) The Special Welfare Services Section, i.e., services for the handicapped
- (4) The Child Welfare Section (including adoptions, day care and institutions for children)
- (5) The Women and Girls Section dealing with moral welfare
- (6) The Relief Section (public assistance and emergency relief)
- (7) The Training Unit.

The aims and policy of the White Paper are, with the co-operation of voluntary agencies, to provide for the care and protection of neglected and abandoned children; guardianship, probation and detention in approved schools; youth services; and rehabilitation in the broad sense of “helping to alleviate or prevent the causes of dependency” and doing “everything possible to enable destitutes to fit themselves for, and to find and retain, suitable employment; as well as relief of destitution itself.

These are not negative provisions but are services in the circumstances intended to be “realistic”. I therefore support this White Paper not as an end but as a start towards the goal for fuller and wider social services for the community of Hong Kong.

The next point I wish to make is that there should be a sufficient number of qualified professionally trained officers in social welfare work.

In February 1964 in the opening of the Kwun Tong Community Centre. Sir ROBERT BLACK said: “I can see an interesting and promising future in the social welfare sector of social service in Hong Kong for those young people who deliberately choose this career in the next few years and see in it a calling. They will have to become professionals, because social welfare is no longer a matter of condescension, of giving out a few dollars and hoping, may be, in this way, to contract out of one’s obligations to one’s neighbours. We need a scientific approach. We must make careful study of the human personality and of the consequences of economic pressures, of domestic and social pressures on the individual living in this energetic striving community of Hong Kong”.

I fully agree with these remarks and indeed the work of social welfare services is the work of professionals and not amateurs. In the development of social welfare services, the voluntary agencies in Hong Kong as in any other country in various stages of development do play an important role. It is only with trained personnel that their efforts would be efficient and fruitful. It must therefore be the responsibility of Government to see that fully qualified and professionally trained persons are engaged by both Government and the voluntary institutions even if this entails increased subventions. The University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong have departments for the education and training of graduates for social work and these graduates should be fully utilized for the careful planning and skilful administration of the services so that the aims and policy of this White Paper can be carried out successfully with a view to attaining full social welfare services in Hong Kong.

Finally, I wish to refer particularly to paragraph 16(d) of the White Paper, the original version of which reads as follows: —

“While it is reasonable to assume that all voluntary welfare organizations desire to help people, it is also true that conflicts may arise around motives. With some organizations, for instance, social welfare *per se* is not the primary objective, other motives may predominate. In such cases Government must concern itself to see that the organization is not working contrary to accepted social work principles, or in effect against the best interests of the individual”.

This paragraph was toned down because of objections by the voluntary agencies. There are, however, in Hong Kong, some institutions professing charitable objects but whose primary aim is not to help people. They are formed with other ulterior motives. Before any subvention is granted to such agencies Government should carefully scrutinize their activities. Perhaps in this respect the services of the Social Welfare Advisory Committee may be of great assistance.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the resolution before Council.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:—Sir, I move that the debate on the resolution before Council be adjourned until 2.30 p.m. tomorrow.

The question was put and agreed to.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:—Accordingly, that concludes the business for today, gentlemen, and I accordingly suspend the sitting of Council until 2.30 p.m. tomorrow.

13th May

PRESENT

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)
SIR DAVID CLIVE CROSBIE TRENCH, KCMG, MC
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR DENIS STUART SCOTT
O'CONNOR, KBE, CB
COMMANDER BRITISH FORCES
THE HONOURABLE GEOFFREY CADZOW HAMILTON
ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY
THE HONOURABLE MAURICE HEENAN, QC
ATTORNEY GENERAL
THE HONOURABLE JOHN CRICHTON McDOUALL
SECRETARY FOR CHINESE AFFAIRS
THE HONOURABLE JOHN JAMES COWPERTHWAITTE, CMG, OBE
FINANCIAL SECRETARY
THE HONOURABLE KENNETH STRATHMORE KINGHORN
DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE ALEC MICHAEL JOHN WRIGHT
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
DR THE HONOURABLE TENG PIN-HUI, OBE
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE WILLIAM DAVID GREGG
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
HONOURABLE PATRICK CARDINALL MASON SEDGWICK
COMMISSIONER OF LABOUR
THE HONOURABLE DAVID RONALD HOLMES, CBE, MC, ED
DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
THE HONOURABLE DHUN JEHANGIR RUTTONJEE, CBE
THE HONOURABLE FUNG PING-FAN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE KWAN CHO-YIU, CBE
THE HONOURABLE KAN YUET-KEUNG, OBE
THE HONOURABLE SIDNEY SAMUEL GORDON
THE HONOURABLE LI FOOK-SHU, OBE
THE HONOURABLE FUNG HON-CHU
THE HONOURABLE TANG PING-YUAN
THE HONOURABLE TSE YU-CHUEN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE KENNETH ALBERT WATSON, OBE
THE HONOURABLE WOO PAK-CHUEN, OBE
THE HONOURABLE JAMES DICKSON LEACH, OBE
THE HONOURABLE SZETO WAI
MR ANDREW McDONALD CHAPMAN (*Deputy Clerk of Councils*)

ABSENT

THE HONOURABLE JOHN PHILIP ASERAPPA
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER, NEW TERRITORIES

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:—Council is resumed. The question is that the White Paper entitled “Statement of Aims and Policy for Social Welfare in Hong Kong” tabled in this Council on 4th November, 1964, as modified by the Table of Changes dated May, 1965, be adopted. The debate may continue.

DR P. H. TENG:—Your Excellency, if I was asked to express in one word the policy set forth in this White Paper I should reply “rehabilitation”, using the word in its widest possible sense. Although I am not myself so much involved in such aspects as the social rehabilitation of the destitute or the delinquent, I am, however, very intimately concerned with the rehabilitation of those with physical or mental handicaps. This process is a continuous one, starting with congenital disability, injury or onset of disease and extending through medical treatment and therapy to education or re-education in skills which the person needs to become a productive or at least a self-sufficient member of the community. The full rehabilitation of each disabled individual obviously requires, therefore, the services at various stages of trained persons from a wide variety of disciplines—doctors, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, teachers, vocational instructors and many others. Throughout the whole process, skilled social workers, whether they are medical social workers in my Department or Social Workers in the voluntary welfare agencies or in the Social Welfare Department, play an essential part in helping the handicapped person to re-establish and maintain social relationships, whether within the family or in the wider community.

I have outlined the complex nature of the salvage processes needed to mitigate the physical or mental disabilities in order to emphasize the need for the closest co-ordination between all concerned if the rehabilitation of an individual is to succeed. Overlapping and duplication of efforts by small groups in limited spheres are not only uneconomical, both in money, and in trained personnel, but can often act to the detriment of the patient. I am of the considered opinion that every effort should be made to integrate the activities of small independent groups into the overall programme of established organizations which have similar aims and objects.

The profession of social work is, compared with that of medicine, a young one, but I am convinced of the need to build up that profession if the positive aims set out in the White Paper are to be attained. As Head of a major professional department and as the Chairman of the Board of Social Studies in the University of Hong Kong, and therefore concerned with the academic and practical training of social workers, I think I may claim to know as well as anybody the importance of high standards of knowledge, skill and experience if constructive and lasting results are to be attained. Social work, whether medical social work as

a service within my Department or in the various fields of social welfare which are the subject of this Paper, is most emphatically a highly-skilled job. We must replace the image of the Lady Bountiful with a basket of charitable gifts on her arm with that of a Social Worker who can really help people towards far more positive and permanent remedies for their personal or social ills.

We are living in an era in which the activities of society and indeed of daily living are increasing rapidly in complexity. Such words as "psychosomatic" appear more and more frequently and social diagnosis and social therapy are now required to supplement medical diagnosis and medical treatment. This is particularly well illustrated in the sphere of mental disturbances which may occur in some people when the strain and pressure of life becomes seemingly intolerable. Public assistance may and should be used as a positive service to "block the downward path" to destitution and degradation of individuals and families particularly when their earnings are interrupted by prolonged illness or permanent injury; youth and community services also contribute much to the mental health of the community, while adequate care of the aged may also relieve the medical services of heavy burdens.

I wish finally to refer to the fourth section of this White Paper which discusses the role of voluntary organizations. This section may have been somewhat misinterpreted as implying that the Government intends to impose greater control over the agencies working in the field of social welfare; it has even been read as disparaging to voluntary effort. I am sure that no such impressions were intended and I should like to pay my personal warm tribute to the many voluntary organizations in the medical field, which have assisted me in providing medical coverage for those in need; their work in hospitals and clinics and in the field of medical rehabilitation is of the greatest value no less than in the field of social welfare. The scale and effectiveness of voluntary effort is one of the special features of the social service picture in Hong Kong, for which I think all of us and all the people of Hong Kong should be extremely thankful.

In conclusion it must be noted that the effects of tabling the White Paper in this Council are likely to be of lasting value. There has been widespread stimulation of serious thought and discussion on the whole question of social welfare in Hong Kong and this, in itself, cannot but assist in the attainment of the aims set forth in the Paper.

Sir, I beg to support the resolution before Council.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY: —Your Excellency, I had not expected to be called upon to speak in today's debate but certain financial matters have been raised and my honourable Friend, Mr WATSON, has

implied, rather indirectly, it is true, that the policy under debate was largely dictated by me—as well as seeing fit to repeat an opprobrious, if slightly ludicrous, phrase of the Reform Club's about the Treasury. A personal contribution to the debate is perhaps therefore in order.

Curiously, I had very little to do with drawing up the policy in the White Paper, although I did have a certain amount to do with the decision to formulate a policy. It is not my view that we cannot afford increased expenditure on social welfare nor do I oppose increased expenditure; indeed, I favour it because, I think, that we can now afford it, so long as it is not indiscriminate. May I remind honourable Members that all subventions recommended by the Social Welfare Advisory Committee have been approved in recent years. But I am, I must confess, apprehensive about Government undertaking commitments without seeing a clear statement of what is aimed at and getting a clear idea of the probable future extent of the commitments. Social welfare services are peculiarly apt to 'grow up rapidly, and sometimes almost inadvertently, from small beginnings and a clear forward vision is of particular importance. This White Paper draws up the aims of policy and I look forward with considerable sympathy to the more concrete plans and programmes which will derive from it.

I always experience some difficulty in dealing with Mr WATSON, the kind of difficulty I think Alice must have had with her acquaintances in Wonderland or Through the Looking Glass, because he appears to reason on a totally different plane, in a different world. In yesterday's debate on Social Welfare he spoke rather, and at considerable length, on social security. I do not know if he thinks they are the same but they are in fact radically different. The difference, as I understand it, is that Social Welfare benefits are based on need, those of social security on contractual rights normally derived from contributions, and irrespective of need. I have said before in Budget debates that, at our stage of economic development and with the difficulties in the way of progressive personal taxation, public funds can be used to provide free or heavily subsidized services only on the basis of need, and not generally for the benefit of all, irrespective of need. That is why, for example, a full and free medical service for those who cannot afford to pay, and a cheap subsidized medical service for those who cannot afford the full cost, such as is our present aim, is more appropriate than a scheme of medical insurance to which all contribute and from which all receive a free service.

May I here interpolate a remark. A number of speakers have spoken of social security as being universal in all but the more backward countries. But the richest country in the world, I understand, has only a very incomplete social security system, and what there is is of comparatively recent creation.

I was, I thought, second to none in my confidence in the strength and resilience of our economy, but I find now that I am second, by quite a wide margin, to Mr WATSON. We have indeed had four wonderful years of economic expansion, achieved at the expense of some strain on our resources, but we cannot, I fear, rely on the continuance of growth at this level, as I pointed out in this year's Budget debate, if for no other reason than because the previous slack in the economy has been largely taken up. For this reason I cannot accept Mr WATSON'S argument as it stands. I think it is unrealistic to aspire at present to any system of contractual benefits, not based on need, where our future commitments might, before adequate reserve funds had been built up, be massive and uncontrolled. Possibly it may be argued from hindsight that we should, in our recent exceptional years, have put more aside than we have—but I wonder what public reaction would have been to increased taxation in years of surplus; public advice has been that we should spend our existing reserves. We have indeed a reasonable reserve as it is, but I doubt if it would go far towards meeting the other forms of expenditure for which Mr WATSON also from time to time advocates priority on a large scale.

There are, of course, certain types of social security which do not involve the danger of massive expenditure before adequate contributory funds have been built up. One of these has been specifically commended by my honourable Friend, Mr GORDON, that is, the provision of pensions for the aged. There are not the same objections to such a scheme, provided the people are prepared to pay the price for them and the practical difficulties can be overcome. We are therefore prepared to devote some serious study to the practicability of schemes of this kind.

Mr GORDON had inquired whether we are doing anything to build up a fund specifically for the continuance of welfare schemes in time of recession. We are not doing so specifically. I think it would be undesirable to do so specifically because the Colony's financial position, its reserves and its commitments, must be looked at as a whole, not as if each public service was in a separate watertight compartment; and the proper priorities of the moment must be applied to this disposition. I would find difficulty in justifying the raising of additional taxation to create such a fund, while we were still making substantial surpluses; and in some financial circumstances it would be difficult to avoid raiding such a fund to meet other commitments rather than doing so by imposing additional taxation. We do, of course, maintain a general reserve against bad times and the very obvious need to continue Social Welfare activities in time of recession is only one of the purposes we must keep in mind when considering its appropriate level. We do in fact have a special reserve, known as the Revenue Equalization Reserve whose original purpose was to serve specifically as a cushion against

a temporary fall in recurrent revenue. But we have not put any money into it since its original setting up in 1951 because the segregation of special reserves in this way does not really serve any practical purpose.

There might however be one form of exception to this general rule, that is, if an unusual, unorthodox or unpopular tax were levied specifically for, and in some way related to, such a fund, for example, a payroll tax. In these circumstances, it would be improper to use such a fund except for its special purpose; but even then, we should remember the fate of the British Road Fund of the twenties. This is the reasoning behind the proposed setting up of a special fund with the proceeds of the Government Lottery, past and future, to finance social welfare capital projects. I cannot myself think of any other special new and appropriate tax of adequate magnitude for this purpose that would gain general acceptance at present, but others may have ideas and I would certainly be happy to consider any that would make a special contribution to accelerating the achievement of our aims.

MR K. A. WATSON:—Your Excellency, I rise on a point of personal explanation. Mr COWPERTHWAITTE seems to make a distinction between social welfare and social security and apparently thinks I have confused the two. I believe that the latter is part of the former and I quote from the Paper, which says as follows—in paragraph 2:

“Social welfare services, as they have developed in Western industrial countries, usually include the following elements (not all of which, it is emphasized, are necessarily applicable to Hong Kong at present):

(a) Social Security

(b) Youth Services”

and it goes on to the various other ones. I think that supports my view that social security is part of the social welfare services.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:—Your Excellency, I have listened with great interest to the speeches of honourable Members on this important subject.

In view of what has been said in the debate I should like to re-emphasize that the policy advocated in the White Paper in fact goes well beyond one of minimum relief for the destitute. It is a positive and humane policy, dictated by genuine concern and understanding, now amended after full consultation with the voluntary agencies, designed to help people to get back on their feet and to lead fuller and happier lives. It recognizes the importance of independence, and proposes that everything possible should be done to help people to become self-supporting so that they may lead their lives with pride and dignity. Particular emphasis is placed on assisting young people so that their invaluable energy and initiative may direct itself towards the common good.

We are not of course opposed to a full range of social security schemes, but there are many problems to be overcome before such a policy could be instituted in Hong Kong. To mention just a few of them, there is the mobility of the population, the comparatively large number of self-employed persons here, the lack of data on which to base decisions on the proper levels of contributions and benefits—itsself largely arising from the mobility of the population—, and the grave difficulties of protecting the system against improper over-disbursements. Moreover, it is by no means yet certain that there is any general understanding here of the contributory nature of these schemes, or any general willingness to make the contributions necessary under them. Nevertheless, these difficulties are clearly not wholly insuperable; but we consider it best to concentrate first on that which is immediately attainable. The more distant goals will certainly be kept in sight, and the policy is to be reviewed regularly.

I should now like to reply to the various points which have been made in this debate.

As Mr Y. K. KAN has said, unofficial members were closely consulted on the amendments to be made to the original White Paper, and their suggestions and advice have been of the greatest assistance.

Mr KAN has asked for an assurance that the policy will be interpreted flexibly and constructively and be kept constantly under review. I certainly give that assurance.

Mr S. S. GORDON asked that the Social Welfare Department should have a greater measure of discretion to give direct assistance in cash instead of in the form of foodstuffs, where the circumstances warrant. I appreciate that cash grants might at times meet individual needs more satisfactorily, and this suggestion will be further examined.

Mr GORDON doubts whether, despite my explanation, interdepartmental co-operation and co-ordination are as good as they should be. He may well be right, and, as I said yesterday, we shall see what improvements can be made.

On the question of fact-finding and research, I entirely agree with Mr GORDON that “policies (for social welfare) should be based on studies of need rather than on emotion or on one person’s ideas.” The Social Welfare Advisory Committee has recently been considering proposals for research; and I understand that there is good prospect of finding finance for the purpose. Meanwhile the Hong Kong Council of Social Service has, as recently mentioned in the Press, proposed a major research study on the factors operating in Chinese family life in Hong Kong, to be sponsored jointly by the Council and the Social Welfare Department and conducted under appropriate expert direction. This proposal is now being discussed between the Council and the

Department. The Council's initiative and its suggestion that such a survey should be jointly sponsored are very welcome; and I can allay Mr WATSON'S fears that we are afraid of the results.

I endorse the remarks of Mr FUNG Hon-chu about the importance of training people for social welfare work, and can add little to what he has so ably said.

I agree in particular with his observations about the importance of finding suitable outlets for the surplus energy and initiative of young people; and indeed much of the effort of the Social Welfare Department is directed towards help for the young, not merely to prevent their becoming "juvenile delinquents", but to help them to live fuller and happier lives. Incidentally, I wish that we could find a more acceptable expression than "juvenile delinquents". We do not speak of "adult delinquents", although there are in fact more "adult delinquents" than "juvenile delinquents". The energy, initiative and high spirits of youth are the greatest assets of the community, and it is important, as Mr FUNG says, that suitable and modern outlets be found for them. The White Paper indeed stresses the value of youth services above all.

I cannot go all the way with Mr TSE Yu-chuen in respect of control over the voluntary agencies, but I repeat what I said yesterday —that we do not exercise control over an agency's own funds or operations. And I agree with him in paying tribute to all those who organize fund-raising drives and who give generously for charitable purposes.

Like the Financial Secretary, I find myself in some difficulty in commenting on Mr WATSON'S speech. He made so many statements with which one is in agreement, and which, to my knowledge, have not been placed in question by this Government, and so many statements with which one disagrees completely, that it is difficult to know where to begin.

I must, however, refer to his statement that he "cannot support a policy which calls for relief at the 'minimum level of existence' for those who cannot be rehabilitated." No one has asked him to do so. The phrase 'minimum level of existence' occurs only in the first part of the Paper, which Mr WATSON describes as "an admirable account of the place of social welfare in modern civilization", and occurs in this context:

"These services (that is, social welfare services) may be conceived merely to sustain the individual at a minimum level of existence during the period of his dependency, or may be directed to helping him to regain where possible his former measure of self-sufficiency. It is obvious that the latter course is preferable."

It is an unfortunate misinterpretation to suggest that the former policy is advocated in this White Paper. The whole emphasis of the Paper is on constructive help, and I find it rather depressing that after all the valuable discussion there has been on this Paper, this erroneous impression still remains.

Concerning those who, despite all efforts, cannot be rehabilitated, the Paper says:

“In addition, Government will continue to offer relief services to the aged and those of the handicapped who are chronically dependent; and should also be ready to encourage, and where feasible to support and assist, voluntary welfare agencies in providing further services in all these cases,”

Indeed Government is already doing this and is giving financial support to infirmaries and homes for the aged.

Mr WATSON also makes play with the phrase “it is poor economy”, but refrains from quoting the complete phrase: which is—“In other words quite apart from the obvious dictates of humanitarianism, it is poor economy to sustain non-productive members of the community if by rehabilitation measures they can become partially or fully productive.”

This also comes from the first part of the White Paper, and is intended to show that from all points of view, both humanitarian and economic, positive rehabilitation is desirable.

Mr WATSON also suggested that in stressing the importance of family responsibility. Government is trying to “pass the buck”. The paper says:

“Unfortunately, the circumstances of many families in Hong Kong present them with great practical difficulties in this traditional “self-help”; and there are a number of unattached individuals. Public assistance can be constructively used to help families to help themselves. Other services which are beyond the normal ability of families or individuals need to be provided, e.g. rehabilitation of the handicapped.”

I see no evidence here of any buck-passing. There is no intention of denying help to families.

I enjoyed Mr WATSON’S jest that according to the dictionary the word “policy” means “craftiness”. Once again, his argument would perhaps have been weaker if he had quoted the full definition, which includes the expressions “political sagacity” and “prudent conduct”!

Mr WATSON has asked for an assurance that no starving man or woman will be refused food because of inflexible requirements and strict implementation of the rules. I should find it surprising if Mr WATSON really believes that starving people have been or will be refused food by the Social Welfare Department; but I give the required assurance.

Sir, I have felt it necessary to deal at some length with these points because I consider that this is too important a subject to be obscured by misinterpretations.

Mr P. C. Woo did much to redress the balance by mentioning the various activities already undertaken by the Social Welfare Department, and I agree with his thoughtful observations on the need for skilled and trained people to implement this policy.

Sir, I am glad to see that the White Paper, amended with the help and guidance of all the people who have commented on it, including the honourable Members of this Council, has won general support in this Council. It is our intention, in close collaboration with the voluntary agencies, to continue and accelerate the humane, constructive and forward-looking policies of the Social Welfare Department; to help those who are in need, with full sympathy and understanding, to maintain their self-respect and regain their independence.

This stage in our deliberations on social welfare policy having been reached, it will now be possible for the Social Welfare Department to proceed, in consultation with the Social Welfare Advisory Committee and the Hong Kong Council for Social Service, to formulate more detailed plans for its implementation. Indeed, I understand that a start has already been made on this difficult and complex task.

If this Resolution is approved, the amended White Paper will be reprinted and will shortly be available for all who wish to study it.

The question was put and agreed to.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR:—That concludes the business for today, gentlemen. Council stands adjourned until 2.30 p.m. on the 26th May.