

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**Wednesday, 13 July 1983****The Council met at half past two o'clock****PRESENT**

HIS HONOUR THE DEPUTY TO THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)
THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF SECRETARY
SIR CHARLES PHILIP HADDON-CAVE, K.B.E., C.M.G., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY
SIR JOHN HENRY BREMRIDGE, K.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
MR. MICHAEL DAVID THOMAS, Q.C.

THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS (*Acting*)
MR. DAVID AKERS-JONES, C.M.G., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ROGERIO HYNDMAN LOBO, C.B.E., J.P.
DR. THE HONOURABLE HARRY FANG SIN-YANG, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LO TAK-SHING, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE FRANCIS YUAN-HAO TIEN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KENNETH WALLIS JOSEPH TOPLEY, C.M.G., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER

THE REVD. THE HONOURABLE JOYCE MARY BENNETT, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LYDIA DUNN, C.B.E., J.P.
DR. THE HONOURABLE HENRY HU HUNG-LICK, O.B.E., J.P.

THE REVD. THE HONOURABLE PATRICK TERENCE MCGOVERN, O.B.E., S.J., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALAN JAMES SCOTT, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT

THE HONOURABLE PETER C. WONG, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE WONG LAM, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ERIC PETER HO, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY

DR. THE HONOURABLE RAYSON LISUNG HUANG, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHARLES YEUNG SIU-CHO, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN MARTIN ROWLANDS, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE

THE HONOURABLE JAMES NEIL HENDERSON, O.B.E., J.P.
COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR

DR. THE HONOURABLE HO KAM-FAI, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALLEN LEE PENG-FEI, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ANDREW SO KWOK-WING, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE HU FA-KUANG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE WONG PO-YAN, O.B.E., J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE JOHN MORRISON RIDDELL-SWAN, O.B.E., J.P.
DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

THE HONOURABLE DONALD LIAO POON-HUAI, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR HOUSING

THE HONOURABLE WILLIAM CHARLES LANGDON BROWN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN KAM-CHUEN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN JOSEPH SWAINE, O.B.E., Q.C., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE COLVYN HUGH HAYE, C.B.E., J.P.
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

THE HONOURABLE STEPHEN CHEONG KAM-CHUEN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. SELINA CHOW LIANG SHUK-YEE, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE IAN FRANCIS CLUNY MACPHERSON, O.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION (*Acting*)
REGIONAL SECRETARY (NEW TERRITORIES), CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES ADMINISTRATION

THE HONOURABLE MARIA TAM WAI-CHU, J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE HENRIETTA IP MAN-HING

THE HONOURABLE HENRY CHING, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE

THE HONOURABLE LAWRENCE WILLIAM ROBERT MILLS, J.P.
REGIONAL SECRETARY (HONG KONG AND KOWLOON), CITY AND NEW TERRITORIES
ADMINISTRATION

THE HONOURABLE CHAN NAI-KEONG, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS

DR. THE HONOURABLE LAM SIM-FOOK, O.B.E., J.P.
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES (*Acting*)

THE HONOURABLE MRS. ANSON CHAN, J.P.
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE (*Acting*)

THE HONOURABLE YEUNG KAI-YIN, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES (*Acting*)

THE HONOURABLE PATRICK JOHN WILLIAMSON, J.P.
SECRETARY FOR SECURITY (*Acting*)

THE HONOURABLE JAMES KERR FINDLAY
LAW DRAFTSMAN (*Acting*)

ABSENT

THE HONOURABLE ALEX WU SHU-CHIH, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHEN SHOU-LUM, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHEUNG YAN-LUNG, M.B.E., J.P.

IN ATTENDANCE

THE CLERK OF COUNCILS
MR. ROBERT IAN WILLIAM UPTON

THE CLERK TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MRS. JENNIE CHOK PANG YUEN-YEE

Affirmation and Oath

Mr. YEUNG Kai-yin made the Affirmation of Allegiance and Mr. J. K. FINDLAY and Mr. P. J. WILLIAMSON took the Oath of Allegiance. They then assumed their seats as Members of the Council.

Papers

The following papers were laid pursuant to Standing Order 14(2):—

<i>Subject</i>	<i>L.N. No.</i>
Subsidiary Legislation:	
Insurance Companies Ordinance 1983. Insurance Companies (Actuaries' Qualifications) Regulations 1983	207
Employees' Compensation Ordinance. Employees' Compensation (Amendment) Regulations 1983	208
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Food Business (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983.....	209
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Frozen Confections (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983.....	210
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Milk (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983	211
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Funeral Parlour (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983	212
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Undertakers of Burials (New Territories) (amendment) Regulations 1983.	213
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Places of Amusement (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983 .	214
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Swimming Pools (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983.....	215
Places of Public Entertainment Ordinance. Places of Public Entertainment (Amendment) Regulations 1983.....	216
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance. Offensive Trades (New Territories) (Amendment) Regulations 1983	217

<i>Subject</i>	<i>L.N. No.</i>
Registration of Persons Ordinance. Registration of Persons (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 1983	218
Waterworks Ordinance. Waterworks (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 1983	219
Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance. Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance (Amendment of First and Second Schedules) Order 1983	222
Registration of Persons Ordinance. Registration of Persons (Application for New Identity Cards) (No. 3) Order 1983	223
Air Navigation (Overseas Territories) Order 1977. Authorizations by the Governor	224
Legal Practitioners Ordinance. Articled Clerks (Amendment) Rules 1983	225
Legal Practitioners Ordinance. Barristers (Qualification) (Amendment) Rules 1983	226
Employees' Compensation Ordinance. Employees' Compensation (Rules of Court) (Amendment) Rules 1983	227
Chinese Permanent Cemeteries Ordinance. Chinese Permanent Cemeteries Rules 1975	228
Inland Revenue Ordinance. Inland Revenue (Interest Tax) (Exemption) (Amendment) (No. 3) Notice 1983	229
Evidence Ordinance. Evidence (Authorized Persons) (No. 6) Order 1983	230
Hawker (New Territories) Regulations. Restriction of Hawking in Special Areas (New Territories) Notification 1983	231
Insurance Companies (Register of Insurers) (Prescribed Fee) Regulations 1983. Corrigendum	232
Sessional Papers 1982-83:	
No. 58—Supplementary provision for the quarter ended 31 March 1983.	
No. 59—Supplementary provision for the quarter ended 31 March 1983 (Final).	

No. 60—Customs and Excise Service Welfare Fund Income and Expenditure Account with Balance Sheet and Certificate of the Director of Audit for the year ended 31 March 1983.

No. 61—Annual Report of the School Medical Service Board for the year ended 31 March 1983.

No. 62—Report of the UMELCO Police Group 1982.

Oral answers to questions

Interest rates

1. MR. SO asked in Cantonese:—

政府如何確保香港銀行公會訂定的利率對本港整體經濟最為有利？

(The following is the interpretation of what Mr. SO asked.)

How does the Government ensure that the interest rates set by the Hong Kong Association of Banks are in the best interests of our overall economy?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY:—Sir, in accordance with section 12(1) of the Hong Kong Association of Banks Ordinance, the Committee of the H.K.A.B. from time to time makes binding rules as to the maximum rate of interest which may be paid in respect of a range of HK dollar deposits. Prime rate is established following on a decision by the H.K.A.B. on deposit rates by a statement of intent from the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank and the Chartered Bank. Their prime rate is normally observed by other banks, but there is of course no restriction on banks' ability to quote any rate for their loans that they may choose. Loans may be at rates higher than prime or they may be lower. Moreover, there is a growing tendency for major borrowers to press for presently low Hibor rates i.e. reflecting inter-bank rates.

Rules adopted by the H.K.A.B. with regard to the maximum rate of interest payable by members on HK dollar deposits also in accordance with section 12 follow after such consultation with the Financial Secretary as he shall consider appropriate. I confirm that there is prior discussion in every relevant instance between the Chairman of the H.K.A.B. and the Secretary for Monetary Affairs (who is party to my views) and that I, as Financial Secretary, take direct part whenever it seems necessary. I also confirm, therefore, that the Committee of the H.K.A.B. takes full account of Government's views, which may be hard or soft according to the circumstances. Mr. SO will appreciate that the current chairman of the H.K.A.B. is a distinguished Member of this Council and I pay tribute to his and the Committee's deep sense of responsibility in an area of maximum importance to Hong Kong as a whole. This means that they must necessarily consider not only their own interests as bankers but the broader

interests of the total community. They do. There is naturally occasion for intelligent argument about where these community interests lie. Moreover there is often no obvious cut and dried solution and we need to find a responsible and educated consensus in situations in which there is always room for many opinions. Prior consultation with Government is an essential part of this process. In my opinion it works well.

Computerization of passenger checking procedures

2. DR. HO asked:—*Will Government consider the feasibility of computerizing the passenger checking procedures at immigration control points?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Yes, Sir, A study of the feasibility of computerizing these procedures has been started.

DR. HO:—*Sir, can this Council be informed as to how long it will take to complete the study?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Not at this stage, Sir. It is a very preliminary study of the feasibility of instituting this idea. It will be a matter of months, though, not years.

Noise and dust from construction sites

3. DR. HENRY HU asked:—*What measures are taken by Government to reduce the nuisance of noise and dust emanating from construction sites?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—Sir, all contractors working on construction sites are bound by the existing laws governing noise and dust nuisance. This need to comply with the law is reiterated as a Condition of Contract in the case of contractors employed on Government projects. In addition, Government contracts include requirements for the contractor to muffle plant and equipment which might create a noise nuisance to the general public, and in respect of dust nuisance, to take measures such as watering and wheel washing, and for demolition works, the erection of dust screens.

In the private sector, contractors are bound only by existing laws and by such conditions as responsible developers might impose upon them or which responsible contractors might voluntarily adopt. The Government, through the Environmental Protection Agency is giving the utmost encouragement to a welcome initiative taken by the Building Contractors Association in producing a programme of self-restraint aimed at tightening up its members' compliance with the existing law and at introducing a voluntary Code of Practice to deal with construction noise which is at present legal but nonetheless annoying.

DR. HENRY HU:—*Sir, during a UMELCO visit about two weeks ago, we received the same kind of complaint in Wong Tai Sin area about the Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital situation —many patients there were prevented from having proper medical care because of the nuisance of dust and noise from the construction sites nearby. Will the Government do something in that area to improve the situation?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—*Sir, the site in question is a site formation for housing estates undertaken on behalf of the Housing Authority. Measures are being taken to improve matters and I am informed by the Housing Department that watering of the site pave road is now done regularly with water cart and spray, and that a solid timber fence along the Sha Tin Pass Road opposite the Hospital is to be put up in place of the existing wire mesh fence. Furthermore, by about September, earth moving lorries will be able to use the newly constructed road in the Chuk Yuen Estate to gain access to Lung Cheong Road and thence to the dumping ground, instead of the currently used Sha Tin Pass Road outside the Hospital. I believe these measures should considerably improve matters.*

MISS DUNN:—*Can I infer from the main answer that while laws and contract conditions exist, these are not vigorously enforced?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—*These are in fact vigorously enforced. Despite the very large number of construction sites in existence, the number of complaints received are not all that many. In respect of noise the average is 29 per month, in respect of dust they are even rarer: there are only two per month received by the Lands and Works Branch.*

MISS DUNN:—*Given that the people in Hong Kong are resigned to living in crowded and noisy conditions, would Mr. CHAN agree that the number of complaints should not constitute a guage for the level of complaint?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—*Nuisance is, of course, a subjective matter (laughter). Obviously, when it gets beyond a tolerable stage people will complain. I suggest it is difficult to set any scientific standard for the acceptable level of noise by the Government.*

REVD. JOYCE M. BENNETT:—*Sir, is action taken when a complaint is raised?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—*Yes, complaints are always investigated. Let me briefly go through the procedures. When a complaint refers to nuisance during the day time, the matter is brought to the attention of the contractor or the authorized person responsible with a view to reducing the nuisance, and when necessary the advice of the Environmental Protection Agency and of the Health and Welfare Branch is sought. If a complaint refers to nuisance during the restricted hours, where the contractor has not got a permit for carrying out*

work with mechanical plants during the restricted hours, then the complaint is again brought to the attention of those responsible, that is, the Authorized person in case of private sites, and project engineers or architects in case of Government sites, to remedy the matter. If necessary, we follow up by asking the Police to take action. Again, in certain cases, we consult the Environmental Protection Agency. Complaints are always followed up and, wherever possible, we advise the complainant of the outcome.

Armed robberies

4. MR. WONG LAM asked in Cantonese:—

- (甲) 直至目前為止，本年度的持械行劫案件共有多少宗？
- (乙) 與去年同期比較如何？
- (丙) 鑒於持械劫匪使用暴力者日益猖獗，政府是否認為已經動用足夠警務人員去防止和應付這些罪案？

(The following is the interpretation of what Mr. WONG Lam asked.)

- (a) *How many cases of armed robberies have there been so far this year;*
- (b) *how does the position compare with the same period last year; and*
- (c) *in view of the increasing violence of armed robbers, is the Government satisfied that sufficient Police officers are deployed to deter and combat such crimes?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Sir, since January 160 robberies have been reported in which firearms or pistol-like objects were used. In 21 real firearms were involved.

These figures compare directly with 148 such cases in the same period last year in 17 of which firearms were used.

The Government can never be complacent about a situation like this. However, the detection rate for these crimes is relatively high. 11 of last year's 17 cases have so far been detected and five of this year's already. The Commissioner is satisfied that within present resources, and realistically speaking, sufficient Police officers are employed to deter and combat these crimes.

MR. WONG LAM asked in Cantonese:—

閣下，這麼多械劫案，是否與換領新身份證有關呢？

(The following is the interpretation of what Mr. WONG Lam asked.)

Sir, there are many armed robberies. Is it related to the issue of new identity cards?

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—I am not aware, Sir, of any relationship between the issue of new identity cards and the number of armed robberies in the territory.

Statement

Report of the UMELCO Police Group for 1982

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Sir, included in the papers laid on the table this afternoon is the UMELCO Police Group Report in 1982. It provides a succinct written and statistical account of the group's work and I commend it to Members.

Anyone reading the Report cannot but be struck by two things:

The continuing dynamism of the Group in seeking to improve both its own and C.A.P.O.'s execution of its terms of reference; and

The time and effort required by the Group's members to deal with the ever increasing workload.

I was privileged six year's ago to be the Group's first secretary. Then it had to consider less than 100 cases a month; now it is nearly 300. We as a community are most fortunate to have people who are prepared to put aside so much of their own time for this task.

I must also pay tribute to the staff of the Complaints Against Police Office. Investigating complaints against one's colleagues is an often thankless and unpleasant duty. The high and impartial standards they continue to maintain are a credit not only to themselves but to the force as a whole.

Government Business

Motions

ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE

THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT moved the following motion:—That the period for which there remains in force the limit on the number of motor vehicles which may be registered as Hong Kong and Kowloon taxis, specified in the Taxis (Hong Kong and Kowloon Taxis) (Limitation on Number) Notice 1983 published as Legal Notice No. 23 of 1983 be extended to 1 February 1984.

He said:—Sir, I rise to move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper. It provides, under section 7E(3) of the Road Traffic Ordinance (Chapter 220), that the period for which there remains in force a limit on the number of motor vehicles which may be registered as Hong Kong and Kowloon taxis be

extended to 1 February 1984. The limit, which is specified in Legal Notice No. 23 of 1983, is 15 000.

This extension will permit urban taxi licences to continue to be issued at the rate of 100 per month as ordered by the Governor in Council.

Question put and agreed to.

ROAD TRAFFIC ORDINANCE

THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT moved the following motion:—That the period for which there remains in force the limit on the number of motor vehicles which may be registered as New Territories taxis, specified in the Taxis (New Territories Taxis) (Limitation on Number) Notice 1981 published as Legal Notice No. 230 of 1981, be extended to 31 January 1984.

He said:—Sir, I rise to move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper. It provides, under section 7E(3) of the Road Traffic Ordinance (Chapter 220), that the period for which there remains in force a limit on the number of motor vehicles which may be registered as New Territories taxis, be extended to 31 January 1984. The limit, which is specified in Legal Notice No. 230 of 1981, is 3 000.

This extension will permit New Territories taxi licences to continue to be issued at the rate of 50 per month as ordered by the Governor in Council.

Question put and agreed to.

FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS ORDINANCE

THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR moved the following motion:—That the Construction Sites (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 1983, made by the Commissioner for Labour on 22 June 1983, be approved.

He said:—Sir, I move the resolution standing in my name on the Order Paper for the approval of the Construction Sites (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations 1983, which I made on 22 June 1983. In accordance with section 7(3) of the Factories and Industrial Undertakings Ordinance, these regulations have been submitted to Your Excellency and are now referred to this Council for approval.

The Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations were enacted in 1973 and were subsequently amended in 1978 to remedy certain deficiencies in the light of experience. The present amendment regulations are an attempt to improve further the effectiveness of the existing regulations, particularly with regard to safety of working at height.

The construction industry continues to account for the largest number of accidents in any single industry. In 1982, there were 19 198 accidents including 74 fatalities in the construction industry. These represent 42 percent of all industrial accidents and 67 percent of total fatalities. 'Falls of persons' accounted for 2 874 including 35 fatalities. These represent 15 percent of the total construction accidents but as high as 47 percent of total fatalities.

Accidents involving 'falls of persons' are largely due to workers falling from height, which are generally serious and mostly the results of working on scaffolds or platforms without adequate safety precautions, or working near unfenced openings, corners or edges. An analysis of the 35 fatal accidents resulted from 'falls of persons' in 1982 revealed ten falling from scaffolds, seven from working platforms, six over floor edges or through floor openings and three from ladders.

These aspects of safety are at present dealt with by regulation 45 of the principal Regulations, which requires generally that working platforms, floor openings and other dangerous places should be securely fenced to a height of not less than three feet or to be 'otherwise protected to the satisfaction of the Commissioner'. The general provisions of this regulation need to be defined more specifically to improve safety of working at height.

As a partial measure to this end, the Factory Inspectorate in 1980 drew up jointly with the Building Contractors' Association and the Hong Kong Scaffolding Merchants General Association a code of practice on safety of working on scaffolds. Members may recall that on 8 July 1981 when I replied in this Council to Dr. Ho Kam-fai's question on safety of scaffolding workers, I undertook to examine the possibility of transferring some parts of this code into law. The code has proved workable in practice and now the main provisions of this code have been incorporated into these amendment regulations.

The main purposes, therefore, of the amendment regulations are to make more detailed provisions by creating a new Part VA consisting of 19 more specific regulations for safety of working at height to replace regulation 45 of the principal Regulations. Under these new regulations there must be safe access to and egress from every workplace and suitable scaffolds or ladders for working at height. Any erection, alteration and dismantling of scaffolds must be undertaken by competent workers and under the supervision of competent persons. Proper construction and maintenance of various types of scaffolds and ladders, and of boatswain's chairs are specified. A scaffold must be inspected at least once a month by a competent person who should report in the prescribed form to the contractor concerned.

Working platforms, gangways etc. must be properly constructed and guarded by railings, and openings, corners, edges and other dangerous places must be securely fenced to prevent workers from falling. In situations where it is impracticable to prevent workers from falling by fencing etc., safety belts and safety nets will have to be provided. Where safety belts are provided the workers must use them.

I am also taking the opportunity to deal with the deficiencies in regulation 40 of the principal Regulations, which requires any excavation, shaft, pit or opening to be fenced or covered, except when work is actually in progress. The exception in this regulation has allowed such dangerous places to be left unprotected even in situations where the fencing or covering does not prevent the progress of work. This regulation is now amended to require such dangerous places to be protected, whenever practicable, even though work is actually in progress. A new regulation is also introduced to prohibit the operation of mechanical earth moving equipment in construction sites by untrained or young persons.

The opportunity is also taken to convert the imperial units of measurement in the principal Regulations into metric units in accordance with Government's metrication policy.

The Labour Advisory Board has been consulted on the proposals for these regulations and has endorsed them. The Building Contractor's Association and the Hong Kong Scaffolding Merchants General Association have been consulted on the detailed provisions of these regulations and their views have been taken into consideration before these regulations were made.

I appreciate that contractors may need time to make the necessary adjustments to comply with the requirements of the regulations. I therefore propose that the Regulations should come into operation about six months from now, probably with effect from 1 February 1984. In the meantime the Factory Inspectorate will give publicity to inform the public, especially the construction industry, of the details of this new legislation. The existing Guides to the Construction Sites (Safety) Regulations will also be amended to include these new provisions.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion (in Committee)

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 MARCH 1983

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 MARCH 1983 (FINAL)

Council went into Committee, pursuant to Standing Order 58(2), to consider the motion standing in the name of the Financial Secretary.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the following motion:—That this Council approves the proposals set out in Paper Nos. 58-59.

He said:—Sir, I move the motion standing in my name in the Order Paper.

The schedules of supplementary provision for the fourth and fourth (final) quarter of the financial year 1982-83 cover a total amount of \$1.8 billion. Major items include \$1.09 billion for various salary adjustments for the civil service and staff of subvented organizations arising from the 1982 pay trend survey and the implementation of recommendations of the Standing Commission; \$251 million to meet additional expenditure arising from a revision of the basic rates of payment and an increase in caseloads for both public assistance and special needs allowances; \$134 million for increased expenditure arising from the pensions and gratuities adjustments; and \$96 million to meet increased expenditure arising from a higher level of Government donation to the Grant and Subsidized Schools Provident Fund Schemes.

The schedules bring the total supplementary provision for 1982-83 to \$3.4 billion. Because of savings found under other subheads, however, —in other words reduced expenditure arising out of many reasons—net expenditure at \$34.6 billion for the full financial year 1982-83 was actually \$925 million less than the original estimate. I believe that Members will recognize the bite of controls, and the sterling efforts of many vote-controllers to whom I extend my thanks.

Finance Committee has approved all the items in the schedule. The purpose of this motion is simply to seek the covering authority of this Council.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Council then resumed.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY reported that the motion had been agreed to in committee without amendment.

Question agreed by the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 58(4).

First reading of bill

EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Bill read the first time and ordered to be set down for second reading pursuant to Standing Order 41(3).

Second reading of bills

EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

THE COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR moved the second reading of:—‘A bill to amend the Employment Ordinance’.

He said:—Sir, I move that the Employment (Amendment) Bill 1983 be read a second time.

In the address at the opening of the last Session of this Council on 7 October 1981, Sir, the then Governor informed Members that proposals to extend the sickness benefits under the Employment Ordinance to protect those employees who may be sick for quite long periods and are unable to work had been formulated, with the agreement of the Labour Advisory Board and both sides of industry. The Employment (Amendment) Bill 1983 is to implement these proposals.

Under the existing provisions of the Employment Ordinance, an employee is entitled to one day's paid sick leave for one completed month of continuous employment. This paid leave can be accumulated to a maximum of 36 days. The Bill proposes that paid sick leave may be earned at a rate of two days in a month in the first three months of continuous employment and four days a month thereafter, and that it may be accumulated to a maximum of 120 days. However, an employee may only take up to 90 days of paid sick leave during any one sickness if he does not require hospitalization, and up to 120 days if hospitalization is necessary.

The Bill also proposes to prohibit the termination of service of an employee during any period of paid sick leave unless his employer pays him wages in lieu of notice, an additional sum equal to seven days' wages and the full sickness allowance to which he would have been entitled during his sickness. It also proposes that these payments should be made within seven days of the termination of his service.

The other proposed amendments in the Bill are consequential amendments which are necessary for tidying up purposes.

Sir, I move that the debate on this motion be now adjourned.

Motion made. That the debate on the second reading of the Bill be adjourned—
COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR.

Question put and agreed to.

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

IMPORT AND EXPORT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983**Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)**

Question proposed.

MR. STEPHEN CHEONG:—Sir, introduction of the Import and Export (Amendment) Bill 1983 is most timely.

Whilst there is no doubt that the economy of the United States, our major export market, has shown signs of steady upturn, there is, on the other hand, growing protectionistic sentiments in the United States textile and apparel industries. This has indirectly contributed to the many E.A. calls on our industry in the year 1983. Some of these calls are totally unjustified and, therefore, to further strengthen our Trade Department's effort in counteracting against such protectionist sentiments, we need to be sure that we have taken every possible measure in discharging fully our obligations under the current bi-lateral agreements. This Bill when enacted, and if properly enforced, will be a further step in the right direction.

On the enforcement side, Sir, I urge the operating departments to step up their vigilance in order to protect and maintain Hong Kong's image of being a responsible trading partner of the highest integrity.

Sir, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—Sir, I would like to thank Mr. CHEONG for his support on this Bill, and I would only like to assure him that the enforcement departments do intend to enforce the provisions vigorously because it is the intention of the Government, as stated by Mr. YUE in introducing this Bill, to maintain Hong Kong's integrity as a responsible trading partner.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

**FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (AMENDMENT)
BILL 1983****Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)**

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)

Question proposed.

DR. FANG:—Sir, the inclusion of nursery classes for three year olds under the ambit of education, as proposed in the Bill, will solve the existing dilemma and streamline the administrative arrangements on the provision of pre-primary education to our young children. It will be welcomed by kindergarten operators and parents alike.

I would like to congratulate the Administration on its speedy response to problems and success in producing acceptable solutions. Its willingness to listen, readiness to appreciate problems, and promptness in taking remedial measures assure us that we have a good public administration and an open Government.

Sir, I therefore have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

REVD. JOYCE M. BENNETT:—I was delighted to learn that changes were to be made in the Education Ordinance to enable nursery classes to continue to be operated in schools as part of kindergartens. I should like to thank the civil servants concerned with this Bill for listening to the criticisms of the operators of kindergartens who resented the proposals to separate the education of the youngest children from the two years of kindergarten schooling. Basically we should learn from this Bill that the Government cannot make changes in long-existing institutions without consulting those institutions. Unfortunately the earlier legislation developed without that proper consultation. It was not until the legislation to separate the education of the three year olds from the kindergarten and place them under the Child Care Centres Ordinance registered with the Social Welfare Department had passed that the Directors of Education and Social Welfare Departments agreed to hold a series of meetings with representatives of the kindergarten operators. These meetings have resolved the inherent difficulties in those new arrangements. This Bill is the result of those discussions. Let us note with pleasure that our Officials do listen to their critics and change their proposals. Thank You.

Before concluding my support of this Bill, I should like however to urge the Government to exercise proper supervision of the kindergartens. There must be

a rapid increase not only of the training of kindergarten teachers, but also of the expertise in the Education Department and in the number of kindergarten inspectors. No one can read of reports of teachers' cruelty to a kindergarten child and remain complacent about the early years of our children's education. I am glad all three years of kindergarten education will now be squarely the responsibility of the Education Department.

Sir, I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill.

MRS. CHOW:—Sir, first, I would like to thank the Director of Education and the Director of Social Welfare for the prompt and responsively way in which they handled the reaction which was triggered by the Education (Amendment) Bill and the Child Care Centres (Amendment) Bill, both of 1982.

They listened most sympathetically and constructively to the kindergarten operators who were anxious about the fact that the creation of the then new legislation seemed to cast doubts on the legitimacy of their nursery classes. Now we welcome the fact that this most recent legislation not only removes the kindergarten operators' fears, but also brings the administration of such classes under the correct umbrella—that of the Education Department.

However, I would like to draw attention to the need for some flexibility in applying the lower age limitation of three years old for entry to nursery classes, bearing in mind that the lowest limit for entrance to kindergarten is three years and eight months. Obviously, this will have to be approached with common-sense on the part of the parents, the operators of the nursery classes and the authorities.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION:—I am most grateful to Dr. Harry FANG, Mrs. Selina CHOW and Miss Joyce BENNETT for their helpful suggestions and support of this Bill.

I am particularly gratified that they see the Bill as tribute to a responsive and responsible administration, and I can assure them that what they have said today will be very much in mind as we seek to implement the improvements to nursery and kindergarten education envisaged in the White Paper and given force by this legislation.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

CHILD CARE CENTRES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983**Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)**

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATES CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983**Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)**

Question proposed.

MR. ALLEN LEE:—Sir, I rise to support the Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation (Amendment) Bill 1983.

The object of this Bill is to expand the present purposes and powers of the Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation to enable it to grant short term leases of land within the estates for non-industrial purposes. It will allow any land held by the Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation, which is not immediately salable for industrial use, to be made temporarily available for other purposes such as open storage and possibly, temporary housing.

Sir, in supporting this Bill, I feel I must say a few words about the industrial estates. I expressed my concern over the development of industrial estates in my speech to this Council on 26 March 1981. At that time, I felt the progress had been too slow in attracting investments into the estates and I suggested the Government should re-examine several critical areas such as promotion, criteria and conditions of lease. I am glad to see something has been done but unfortunately it is not for the purpose of attracting industrial investments. May I take this opportunity to suggest again that an objective review should be conducted with the purpose of attracting investments into the estates. In my opinion, it is as critical as ever that we need investments in our industrial estates.

With these remarks, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—Sir, I would like to thank Mr. LEE for his remarks in supporting the motion.

As a member of the Board of the Industrial Estates Corporation, I know that the question of how to attract more industrial investments into the estates is very much in the minds of the Board. The Board's keen intentions in this regard are reflected in the recent advertisement on sites at Yuen Long Industrial Estate. For this exercise a range of varying lot sizes and plot ratios are being offered and tenderers need only fulfil the Definitive Criteria for selection, i.e. industrial process:—

- (a) must be of a nature or requirement which prohibits them from being carried on in an ordinary multi-storey industrial building; and
- (b) must not be declared to be offensive trades under the Offensive Trades (New Territories) Regulations.

In addition, it is intended that there would be no requirement for prior commitment in respect of machinery investment and annual production.

I am sure the Corporation will continue to keep their letting policies under objective review bearing in mind of course, the original purpose for which the Corporation was set up.

I thank Mr. LEE for his support, and, Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

LAND ACQUISITION (POSSESSORY TITLE) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

PROBATE AND ADMINISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (29 June 1983)

Question proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order 43(1).

Committee stage of bills

Council went into Committee

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

IMPORT AND EXPORT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 6 were agreed to.

FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 8 were agreed to.

EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

CHILD CARE CENTRES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATES CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

LAND ACQUISITION (POSSESSORY TITLE) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 14 were agreed to.

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 and 2 were agreed to.

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

PROBATE AND ADMINISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 and 2 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

Third reading of bills

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL

IMPORT AND EXPORT (AMENDMENT) BILL

FACTORIES AND INDUSTRIAL UNDERTAKINGS (AMENDMENT) BILL

EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

CHILD CARE CENTRES (AMENDMENT) BILL

HONG KONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATES CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

LAND ACQUISITION (POSSESSORY TITLE) BILL

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) BILL

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) BILL and the

PROBATE AND ADMINISTRATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

had passed through Committee without amendment and moved the third reading of each of the Bills.

Question put on the Bills and agreed to.

Bills read the third time and passed.

Unofficial Member's Motion

‘A PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN HONG KONG’

REVD. P. T. MCGOVERN moved the following motion:—That this Council receives with approbation the report ‘A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong’ and commends it to Government as a basis on which the continuing improvement of education in Hong Kong should be implemented.

He said:—Sir, the motion before the Council reads as follows:

‘That this Council receives with approbation the report “A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong” and commends it to Government as a basis on which the continuing improvement of education in Hong Kong should be implemented.’

I have decided to initiate this debate by quoting from a letter. I do this because the writer of the letter is much more experienced in the field of education than I am, and has a much greater standing in the community than I have. The letter also expresses clearly most of what I would like to have said when I first read the report. It is addressed to the Editor of the South China Morning Post (13.5.1983) and reads as follows: I quote:

‘It is not often that a commission invited by the Government to make a report discloses the truth, rather than what it is guided by its terms of reference to propose.

The four-man team of educational experts is therefore to be congratulated on the sincerity of its findings and proposals. And the Government is to be congratulated on permitting the truth to emerge by not placing limitations in the terms of reference.

The previous report, made 20 years ago and known as the Marsh-Sampson report, gave its authors the impossible condition of producing more and better education without spending more money.

The result was the catastrophic and shortlived experiment in reducing a six-year primary course to five years. Hopefully no further catastrophe of this kind will result from the 1983 report.

There is only one point. Most of the recommendations of this report are identical with proposals made by Hong Kong educationalists for the past 20 years, and indeed their findings were based on liaison with those who had been pressing for reform.

We do have our experts here, their expertise coming from long years of experience in the field if not from book-learning. We could have saved a lot of time and money by listening to them years ago—as the four-man team indeed quite fairly advised the Government to do in future.

Why then spend a further six months to print the report and waste another three months consulting public opinion? Delaying tactics to take the planners into the next school year without necessitating action on the report?

The report of the team is a concise collection of public opinion, and any further opinions could only be adverse, if it has any adversaries. If the Education Department were to conduct an opinion poll in the educational world, the result would probably be an overwhelming “yes” to the proposals.

Have any steps been taken to implement any of the proposals, such as preparation of new books or translation of English books, to implement the language-medium recommendation for students up to Form three?

Loss of time means loss of discipline control over those students who sit in school and learn nothing through English, but are incited to learn much more from vice and crime outside school.

Language was number one in the team’s priorities, and I am sure it is the first priority in the minds of all teachers except those who get the cream of the students in their classes.

Money saved on education is likely to be money spent on crime control. Why not take the positive solution? Why not inject a new incentive at once into education by using “the language of the heart”?

The letter is signed (Mrs.) E. ELLIOT.

I am happy to be associated with such an eminent person and to adopt her words as a means of expressing my personal views.

I turn now from my personal views of the report to those of the UMELCO Education and Manpower Panel. The Panel met several times at some length. It must be somewhat unusual that I am able to report that the twelve Unofficial Members who attended the Panel meetings on what is a broad and controversial subject, reached unanimous agreement on no less than 20 points specifically covered in the report as well as on a general principle and three other points not directly referred to in the report. That makes twelve Unofficial Members agreeing unanimously on 24 different aspects of this much discussed subject. This must be such a rare achievement that it gives me pleasure, as Convener of the Panel, to give you all 24 points of our collective wisdom in summary form. Other speakers will no doubt deal with some of the points in greater detail, and at such length as befits the seriousness of the subject under discussion.

On general principle

1. The report should not be shelved. Appropriate recommendations for improvements to the education system should be implemented as an on-going process.

*On specific points covered in the report**(in the order presented, paragraph reference in bracket)*

2. The lack of harmony and over-administration in the existing education system should be remedied (para. II 4 and II 5).
3. An Education Commission with statutory status should be established to oversee the formulation of education policy in Hong Kong. The unofficial members should be reinforced by additional professional input while the number of official members should be reduced (para. II 28).
4. The use of Chinese as the medium of instruction from P. 1 to F. III, with a wholehearted push towards genuine bilingualism after P. 6 is supported. Curriculum development, textbook selection and public examinations should be rationalized up to F. 7 to allow schools and students opportunities to use Chinese if they so wish (para. III 1.17 and III 1.20).
5. The use of Chinese as a medium of instruction should not be compulsory. Government should encourage it by stating publicly that there is no need to use English alone for teaching in schools (para. III 1.17).
6. The Junior Secondary Education Assessment System (J.S.E.A.) should be abolished as quickly as possible. Subsidized senior secondary education should be available to any one who wants it. A comprehensive range of subjects should be offered up to F. 5 (para. III 2.25 and III 2.28).
7. Bought places should be phased out in the long term. The quality of schools concerned should be improved in the meantime (para. III 2.25).
8. The Curriculum Development Committee needs to be overhauled and strengthened. The Curriculum should not be dominated by examination requirements (para. III 2.30).
9. Kindergartens should become part of the aided sector (para. III 3.18).
10. Sixth form colleges should only supplement but not replace the existing matriculation classes in schools. Additional F. 6-7 places can thus be provided for students who can advance to that level (para. III 4.22).
11. A multi-option two year curriculum for F. 6-7, uninterrupted by formal examinations should be established (para. III 4.41).
12. Opportunities for study at degree level should be expanded (para. III 5.8).
13. Entry qualifications to post secondary institutions should be harmonised (para. III 5.23).

Members will, I hope, notice and appreciate the Panel's succinct brevity of expression. We wisely refrained from suggesting the means of achieving this harmony—whether it be for example to aim at having Form 5 plus one year Form 6 plus four years university, or Form 5 plus two years Form 6 and 7, plus three years university. Or some other system. We decided that this is an administrative problem, and we are happy to leave its solution to the Administration. (*laughter*)

14. Hong Kong is well suited for a system of education by radio and TV (para. III 6.8).
15. The whole question of special education should be studied in greater depth than that achieved in the report (section III, chapter 7).

16. Education for handicapped children should not be a 'service'. It should be integrated into the main stream of education (section III, chapter 7).
17. Individual needs of handicapped children, rather than their categorization, should be the focus of education for the handicapped (para. III 7.6).
18. The career structure of teachers in special education should be improved to attract and retain suitable personnel (para. III 7.16).
19. The quality of teachers should be improved (section III, chapter 8).
20. The concept of the Hong Kong Teaching Services is supported as one of the ways to improve teacher quality (para. III 8.33).
21. Agreed that there is a strong case for expansion of training at the technician/craftsman level (para. III 9.13).

On points not covered in the report

22. The importance of arts subjects should be emphasized. They should not be treated as inferior to science subjects.
23. The severe lack of properly managed school libraries, public reading and study rooms should be remedied.
24. Without being in breach of Standing Order No. 23, as a general observation, we agree that money spent on education is money well invested in the future of Hong Kong.

Sir, I have given a brief personal view point and a summary of the 24 points unanimously agreed by the UMELCO Education and Manpower Panel. I leave further elaboration to my Unofficial Colleagues.

Sir, I beg to move.

DR. FANG:—Sir, no child is born alike. But they all need to be nourished and taught on how to become useful members of society when they grow up. We have accepted, through providing nine years of free education to every child in Hong Kong, that children from poor families should not be denied the opportunities for schooling.

If we accept that education is important to every child despite differences in their family background, surely we must accept that education is also important to every child no matter what their physical or mental abilities are. The Panel of Visitors made emphasis on this point in section III Chapter 7 of their report that 'there are no two populations of children in Hong Kong Schools—the able and the disabled—but a single population of children; and that individual differences are matters of degree, distributed along a continuum'.

I would not only agree with them but also urge Government to abolish the idea of classifying special education as a service. The disabled child should rightfully enjoy the full range of facilities and opportunities available to all our children.

Sir, with these remarks, I have pleasure in supporting the motion before Council.

MR. LO:—Sir, I believe that we must improve the quality of teaching in our schools. To this end I wish to make a proposal for increasing the effectiveness of the teaching service. It is based on the recommendations made in section III, Chapter 8 of the Llewellyn Commission's report on the Hong Kong Education System. This section deals in the main with the need to improve the quality of teaching in Hong Kong schools and identifies the instrument by which such an improvement may be brought about, that is to say, teacher preparation (III 8.1 and III 8.46). Among the weaknesses in the present teaching service identified by the Llewellyn Commission are the inadequate pre-service preparation of teachers in the private sector (III 8.12), the block to the career advancement of non-graduate teachers (III 8.11) and the inadequate resources allocated to in-service training (III 8.19). My present proposal is for a coherent and systematic approach to overcoming these problems among others. In essence there are three parts to my proposal:

Part I, I propose an improvement of the quality of young people entering the teaching profession, by means of higher entrance requirements for the Colleges of Education, and simultaneously upgrading the courses provided by the Colleges to the status of a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree conferred by the Universities.

Part II, I propose a continuing programme of modular in-service education and training courses which I shall hereafter refer to as INSET courses for practising teachers, supported by career and salary incentives, which eventually lead to the award of a B.Ed. degree.

Part III, I propose a required disclosure of staff standards by schools in the private sector leading ultimately to a scheme of accreditation of the schools.

Dealing with Part I of my proposal I underline the need for a much higher quality in pre-service teacher preparation. At present the qualification required for admission to a pre-service course at one of the three general Colleges of Education is an unspecified number of passes in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination. There is some indication that even this is not a minimum requirement. If, in the long term, the quality of the teaching profession in Hong Kong is to be significantly improved, then it is desirable that the Colleges of Education should raise their entry requirements to a specified number of passes at Advanced Level (taken after two years in the Sixth Form). There is some indication, indeed, that a growing number of successful applicants to the Colleges do already have an advanced level qualification. The object of this move is to increase the academic quality of the young men and women who will be teachers of future generations of school children for thirty or forty years of their professional lives.

At the same time, the quality of the pre-service training they receive at the Colleges of Education should be improved. The Llewellyn Report criticizes the faculty of the Colleges of Education as being drawn from too narrow a catchment area (teachers in Government schools only), and as having too few

salary and status incentives to upgrade their professional skills (III 8.18). It is worth mentioning at this point as an example of this state of affairs that in the English departments of all three Colleges of Education, I understand there is not one native speaker of English employed to train Hong Kong's future English teachers.

One way of improving this situation is to institute a course leading to a B.Ed. degree based in the Colleges of Education but externally validated, say, by the Universities. This would also be in line with the recommendations made by Llewellyn for greater co-ordination amongst the Colleges within the framework of an existing or new higher education institute (III 8.40).

Part II of my proposal deals with the problem of existing teachers and the methods by which they could be encouraged to upgrade their skills.

While an improvement in the intake and the standards of pre-service teacher training courses will in the long run produce a beneficial effect on the standard of teaching in schools, it is obviously desirable at the same time to increase the efficiency of the teachers at present practising their skills in schools for two reasons. First, the increase in quality of teachers joining the profession proposed in Part I will take a number of years to have its full effect on teaching in schools; moreover, if a highly qualified young teacher joins a school whose staff is backward by comparison, there is pressure on him to conform to the lower standards of the colleagues he is joining. Secondly, the Llewellyn Report points out that the professional growth of teachers throughout their careers is necessary in order to update their knowledge of their subject and ways of teaching it, to increase the possibilities of co-operation among teachers across the curriculum, and to boost morale (III 8.19).

However, if in-service training courses are to realize their full potential, two conditions must be met. Firstly, there needs to be a system of incentives to encourage *all* teachers to attend in-service courses and not just the enthusiastic minority who attend at present. These incentives could be either of the positive variety, such as awarding additional points on the salary scale to those teachers who successfully complete substantial in-service training, or of the negative variety whereby a bar to increments on the salary is placed for those teachers who do not attend courses or a little of both.

Secondly, INSET courses need to be co-ordinated into a modular system in which successful completion of a specified number of INSET modules would lead to the conferral by the Universities of a B.Ed. degree of an equivalent status to the pre-service B.Ed. degree I have referred to in Part I. This modular approach to continuing teacher education would ensure a smooth career progression for practising teachers and would eliminate the barrier which at present exists for non-graduate teachers. Individual INSET modules should be offered in a variety of formats—day-release, part-time, summer school or even full-time—at a variety of institutions—the Colleges of Education, University Schools of Education, Advisory Inspectorate Centres, the Institute for

Language in Education, British Council—and should cover a wide range of topics judged to be professionally relevant to Hong Kong teachers, such as the latest developments in their subjects (e.g. computer studies for mathematics teachers), more efficient pedagogical approaches (e.g. activity learning and small group teaching), and the linguistic skills required to teach subjects effectively through the medium of English in secondary schools (e.g. specialized courses in English for teachers of science and technology).

Part III to my proposal deals with the problem of private schools and the methods by which they could be encouraged to upgrade the quality of the teaching staff. The standard of education that children receive at the majority of private schools is considered in the Llewellyn Report to be low (III 4.32) and recommendations are made to bring private schools more into line with the Government or aided sector (III 4.42) and to raise their quality (III 4.35). Given the system of pre-service and in-service certification of teachers proposed in Parts I and II, it is desirable to make use of this system in the accreditation of private schools. If private schools were required to make public the qualifications held by all teachers on their staff, then, on the one hand, parents would have a clearer idea of the relative quality of the schools they were considering sending their children to (see III 2.12) and, on the other hand, there would be a strong incentive for private schools to upgrade the qualifications of their teachers (see III 2.13). Moreover, and this is an added bonus to the scheme, at a certain point in this upgrading process, when the school management, building and teachers could be shown to be of the desired quality, then a certificate of accreditation could be granted to the school to show that in all respects it was of an equivalent standard to schools in the Government or aided sector.

Sir, when tackling the problem of quality in Hong Kong schools, teacher preparation is the lever identified by the Llewellyn Report as of the greatest potential value (III 8.46). These proposals which are made for better pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers outline a practical way of approaching the problem. If implemented, they should lead to a better quality of teaching throughout primary and secondary schools and moreover, by requiring accreditation of private schools on the basis of their teachers' qualifications would gradually eliminate the distinction between the private and the Government aided sectors, a distinction which is at present so detrimental to our education system.

What I have said makes it obvious that I welcome the Llewellyn Report which has provided the springboard for my proposal. Schools, unlike Universities and Polytechnics, affect all children. Their quality will have a profound effect on our future generations and thus our future. I fully appreciate that it would be an monumental task to upgrade that quality. Let us begin at once.

REVD. JOYCE M. BENNETT:—Sir, the motion under debate is one of the most important which this Council has had before it for some time. It involves the

whole future of our children; their future is in our hands today as we consider whether or not the Government should use the report 'A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong' as a basis for continuing its improvements in the education of our children. I sincerely urge all our Members to support the motion and I shall show that such improvements are the natural continuation of policies already accepted by this legislature.

We must certainly first accept a frequently heard comment on this report. There is not a great deal new in it. Many of the suggestions made have already been put forward by our local educationalists. To my mind, this is most encouraging and provides an added reason for our acceptance of these proposals. The Panel has not, in the main, made recommendations that are too extreme for effective implementation. The fact that the Education Department has already moved along the lines of certain proposals is a cause for satisfaction.

Language in Education

I shall mention first the question of language in education. The Government has already taken some steps to improve language teaching by implementing in many schools both Chinese and English remedial teaching for the students most in need of this extra help. The Institute of Language in Education is in the process of being established, although we have not yet succeeded in recruiting a Director. Now we need to go further and have the Government give positive encouragement to the use of Chinese as the medium of instruction. Better Chinese textbooks must be produced before many schools will venture to change to education in the mother-tongue. Commercial publishers have been cautious about embarking on the large scale publication of textbooks in Chinese because the proportion of Chinese Middle Schools to Anglo-Chinese Secondary Schools has dwindled in the last 20 years. To embark on the publication of translations of some of the excellent textbook material in the English language requires some philanthropic assistance. Commercial publishers have been seen to be hesitant to embark on producing more Chinese textbooks for the Hong Kong market in face of uncertainty from the Government as to whether or not schools will be encouraged to use them. My suggestion is that the Government sponsors translators for some of the best English material and the services of the printing workshops of the Correctional Services be enlisted. The Government Printer cannot be enlisted for the production of these experimental materials. The Government Printing Department is far too overworked on its present site and with its present staffing. The Correctional Services Department could well be given the job of printing good Chinese textbooks and teaching aids for our teachers. By working closely with their instructors a very fine scheme of rehabilitation could be combined with a much needed service to our schools. We note with pleasure recent reports of prisoners in England helping to produce Braille material for blind students.

I am convinced that many secondary schools would willingly turn to teaching in the medium of Chinese in Forms I to III if sufficient good Chinese books were available. I do not think that compulsion should be used to make these changes.

I know that already most new secondary schools and many older ones are using a great deal of Chinese in their teaching. Indeed I would say that Hong Kong has already gone far to implement 'mother-tongue' education. I remember when I came to Hong Kong in 1949 that it would have been impossible to hear Chinese used in so-called 'English' schools in the teaching of Mathematics, Science, the Social Subjects, P.E. and Music. Today in all these subjects you will hear Chinese being used as the medium of instruction in Forms I-III and frequently right through those Anglo-Chinese schools up to the public examination classes of Forms V, VI and VII. The Government must recognize and encourage this. One other important encouragement to Chinese medium schools will be to provide 'A' Level courses in the Chinese language to supplement what we have already for the Certificate of Education and Higher Level Examinations. We must give equal opportunities for every student to go to the top class in our secondary schools regardless of the language used for instruction.

Before leaving the language issue, I would like to give my reasons for not wishing to see schools compelled to use Chinese from Primary One to Form III. However desirable this is from an educational point of view, at present it is clear that many parents, perhaps most parents, believe otherwise. If we act too soon, before we have educated the parents, I am sure the only result will be to increase the number of children studying in private schools. We must at all costs avoid this, as we must ensure that an 'English education' does not become, I quote from the report, 'synonymous with power and prestige,' which the report incorrectly in my opinion assumed to be the case at the moment. I have observed over many years, with great joy, the education of many children of the poor and underprivileged alongside their wealthier friends. Unfortunately with the abolition of a competitive examination into Form I and the establishment of a netting system to confine children to their own area for schooling, there are already danger signs that the schools with the best teachers of English will be entirely filled with children from middle and upper class backgrounds. I therefore agree with the suggestion of enlisting the support of expatriate wives to help with spoken English in a voluntary capacity. My own school, serving the underprivileged children of East Kowloon, has already done this most successfully during the last 15 years. It is important too that each aided school be given adequate housing support for the overseas teacher of English. Already such teachers can be employed and their air fare covered, but most aided schools cannot use overseas native teachers of English because of the problems of accommodation. I consider these problems could be overcome if the Government actively pursued a policy of the recruitment of English teachers of English for secondary schools in the public sector and for its teacher training colleges. There is a considerable correlation between the falling off in English standards and the implementation of the localization policy in our Colleges of Education. To bring in more teachers from England to teach English should be welcomed. China is doing this. Singapore has embarked on a large-scale engagement of English teachers of English so that when learning of this, I became quite envious on behalf of our own deprived areas.

Technical Education

There would be other advantages in engaging native speakers of English. These teachers could help educate our schools on the advantages of increasing practical and technical education. This has been given lip-service only by the Government up to the present. The inspectorate in such subjects as Home Economics, Dressmaking, Art and Commerce to name subjects favoured by girls is grossly understaffed, with inadequate promotion prospects. Yes, of course I favour the abolition of the J.S.E.A. but I cannot support many of those Form IV students studying an entirely academic programme. If we allow students weak in academic subjects to enter Form IV, they may well become failed and disgruntled Form V graduates. Now that we select Form IV students by a common selection assessment, the Form IV place has added attractions. Beware lest we are encouraging inadequate performers who will be no asset to the community. What studies are the Government making to discover the attitudes of factory workers who left school at Form III and Form V? Are the schools adequately prepared to provide the right courses for the Form III promoted students who have not adequately completed their academic courses in Form III? Fortunately my school is a technical school so we can provide a programme with only the basic English and Chinese languages and three or four technical, practical subjects. One student who did so is graduating this year and the staff agreed she should receive our School Graduation Certificate, because following such a reduced programme she has made great strides. But how many schools have the facilities to do this? The Government many years ago embarked on improving our facilities for technical education, but so far we have not reached our goal, our hope must be that this Report should provide the added incentive. One incentive for the student entering the Technical Institute after Form III will be to ensure that after two years' study at the Technical Institute he obtains a certificate of General Education, of similar standing to his friends who have continued their studies at the Form IV and Form V levels in our Prevocational and Secondary Schools. Just as we have to educate the parents regarding using Chinese as the medium of instruction, so we must persuade them of the value of technical and practical courses at the secondary level. Too many in Hong Kong equate education with book-learning.

Bought Places and Sixth Forms

The next topic on the Unofficials' list of items unanimously supported was the phasing out of bought places and the improvement in the meantime of the schools where such places will inevitably be bought in the short term. I have spoken on this before, so do no more today than refer to my speech on 27 October 1982 in this Chamber. Similarly I have on other occasions urged the Government to harmonize the entry qualifications to the post-secondary institutions. How sad it is today that too often the school curriculum is dominated by examination requirements. Certainly the Sixth Form course should be two years uninterrupted by formal examinations. I look for the further increase in Sixth Form places and in this respect I am pleased to report that several schools this year are grateful to the Government for increasing their

Sixth Form classes. Sixth Form Colleges would help many students who have gained adequate Form V results, but whose schools do not provide a Sixth Form course. However such specialized Sixth Form Colleges should supplement the present system, not replace the existing matriculation classes in our secondary schools.

Special Education

Although I would like to speak on kindergartens at length, as well I have already spoken on that subject earlier this afternoon, so I shall now move on to the important question of special education. There has been some changes since the Panel of Visitors was in Hong Kong. Special Education has already been placed under the Secretary for Education and Manpower, but it is still not fully integrated into our system. Special education is still separate from the other schools as a service, implying that handicapped children are not worthy of proper education, but of something special that is not fully ranked as education. Indeed we must get away from the present system of categorization and consider rather the needs of the child. Let me give an example, on last Saturday at the Speech Day of the Hong Kong School for the Deaf, I met a 16 year old student who had left there after Primary 3. He had gone to the special Government classes for the partially deaf. Progressing satisfactorily in them, he had been allocated a Form IV place in an ordinary Middle IV class. But without the assistance of adequate peripatetic teachers, he has been at the bottom of the class and has lost heart in his studies. If we were to consider his needs, we would provide adequate support for him and for similarly placed blind students in ordinary classes. A teacher with one such handicapped student in a class of 40 needs the support of the specialist teacher on a regular basis. Otherwise these handicapped students will become submerged in the system. The whole question of special education should be studied in far greater depth than the four visitors had time to give it. We could well have one whole debate on the subject.

Before I leave the subject however I must urge the Government to continue the process of upgrading the career structure of teachers in special education. So far monetary reward has been almost the sole encouragement to teachers to embark on the teaching of handicapped children. However in the Government service there must be evolved better career prospects. This year the in-service training in special education has been conducted at the Sir Robert Black College of Education. But there has been no special incentive for lecturers in Special Education. I understand the lectures are given by people at Assistant Lecturer rank, whose salary is no better than that of a Graduate Master or Mistress teacher. In fact these lecturers are themselves handicapped as they themselves have received inadequate preparation. It is only now that the Hong Kong University has appointed one lecturer for special education as an experiment on a temporary basis. Not enough use is made of the expertise already available in the Special Schools in organizing special lectures.

The Teacher

I should like to lay considerable emphasis on the Report's section III, Chapter 8 which concerns the Teaching Service. Just as the Report has some hard things to say about the administration of education in Hong Kong, so it has some severe things to say about our teachers. The Report urges us to upgrade the quality of our teachers. Who can disagree with this? However I would remind you that many schools owe much to faithful and devoted teachers who with poor facilities, overcrowded classrooms and outmoded courses have achieved great success with many of the students under their tuition. Look around this Council Chamber today and those educated locally could name many fine teachers that they know. Those teachers put in untold hours of overtime to help some poor or backward student to overcome some natural disability. Those in the schools today are grateful that Government has at last agreed to increase the number of staff. The 1982-83 school year saw the increase of two Graduate language teachers. This September there will be a third to improve pupil counselling and guidance and community involvement and extra-curricular activities. These three graduates are part of Government's plan to provide a total of five additional teachers in each standard-size Government and aided school. This is excellent, but I have been alarmed recently to sense that possibly the Government was dragging its feet regarding the two non-graduate teachers to be provided in 1984 and 1985. There are ominous signs that an excuse will be made that there are insufficient non-graduate teachers available to implement the scheme. The Government must not back-track on its promises regarding the improvements in the educational system. This year I know that there were about 400 redundant primary school teachers; the graduates of the Technical Teachers College have not found it easy to get jobs suitable for their qualifications. There are many Baptist College graduates who will make good non-graduate teachers. The schools need extra teachers in post not only in 1982 and 1983, but also in 1984 and 1985. With their help the curriculum can be diversified, new subjects of a more practical nature offered and real participation in extra-curricular activities and community service can be carried out.

Conclusion

I urge the Government to continue to implement the improvements to the educational system. Some have already been started, others have been promised. This Report has pointed to other ways improvements can be made. Full justice cannot be given in one short speech. But before I conclude I must endorse the establishment of the Education Commission answerable to the Governor himself. This pattern of administration has much to commend it and I trust that there will be an independent professional to head it up. We need someone with sufficient authority to ensure that the financial purse strings are loosened to enable these great improvements to be put into effect (*laughter*). We need someone with imagination to ensure that untapped sources of money can be uncovered. We introduced nine years free education before we could really afford it. The general public have been enthusiastic in their reception of this Report and its call for more and more improvements in the educational field.

Clearly such improvements will cost money, but I believe our local people are willing to pay more for better schools and educational opportunities for their children. To deny these improvements on grounds of finance will not be acceptable to our community. There are plenty of people who could be paying more for the education of their children. I suggest consideration should be given to finding extra money for financing education from those middle and upper class families with children. Undoubtedly this is an unusual and bold suggestion, but one which would be much appreciated by the poor and deprived members of our society whose children have no choice but to accept a bought place in an inferior secondary school. The future of our society depends on our future citizens. If we truly have confidence in the future of Hong Kong we shall be willing to dip deep into our pockets to finance a better education system for the children of our workers who have made Hong Kong the dynamic and exhilarating place that it is today.

Sir, I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. PETER C. WONG:—Sir, education is a subject close to the hearts of all parents and affects every one of school age and adults who aspire to widen the horizon of their knowledge. It is thus a topic of universal importance, touching as it does the life of every citizen in the territory.

The appointment of a panel of visitors to study the Hong Kong educational system reflects the Administration's commitment to broaden education goals and objectives and to implement improvements as an on-going process. The Report, which has been published for public comment, is well presented and its recommendations deserve careful consideration.

As several of my Unofficial Colleagues are speaking this afternoon, I shall confine myself to one topic.

I would repeat my call for a third university which I made in a speech in this Council on 24 March 1982. I spoke of the importance of education, of the serious lack of university places and of my belief that the time was ripe to set in motion the planning of such an institution.

Events of the past 12 months have proved that my suggestion was not wide of the mark. We have witnessed the go-ahead for a second polytechnic, which would eventually provide degree courses. The Planning Committee under the able chairmanship of Sir S. Y. CHUNG is making good progress and Hong Kong can look forward with pride to the establishment of a second polytechnic in the not too distant future. Having said that, I still hold the view that there is a need for a third university. In support of my contention, may I quote paragraph III 5.14 of the Report—

‘These developments in the universities and the Polytechnic will not, however, meet the long term needs of Hong Kong for people with degrees and diplomas nor satisfy the social demand. We believe that urgent action should be taken to *identify and acquire at least two sites for new institutions*, the first

of these being designated for a second polytechnic. But the acquisition and development of a new site takes a long time—it may be as long as ten years to the first student intake with a further three years before the first graduate is produced. The acquisition of new sites is therefore urgent.’

This statement is difficult to refute and I would urge Government to proceed as soon as practicable with the planning of a third university. Such action would be in line with the recommendation contained in the Report. In fact, Government is already implementing the first part of this recommendation.

In the concluding paragraph of my speech I said—

‘It will never be easy for those of us who are fortunate enough to have the benefit of university education to fully appreciate the frustration of those who are deprived of it. I agree with the Financial Secretary that we should not let our hearts rule our heads. Fortunately, in the case of higher education, both sentiment and logic will argue for early expansion. Surely, the key to our future success rests heavily on the adequate supply of able and suitably qualified graduates. It would be in the public interest, and indeed in the Government’s own interest, to give this matter the highest priority.’

In His Excellency the Governor’s address to this Council on 6 October 1982, His Excellency said that it was (and I am sure it still is) the policy and the firm intention of the Government to invest vigorously in the future of Hong Kong and its people. In a recent speech entitled ‘Present Day Realities’, His Excellency was reported as saying— ‘Personally, I believe the question of education to be of the highest importance for the future of Hong Kong.’ Is there any doubt then that resources spent on tapping our greatest asset—people—through an effective education system will be our best and most valuable investment? Surely, we have a clear duty to meet the education explosion with foresight and intelligent planning.

I have deliberately refrained from discussing the question of financial implication. With your permission, Sir, may I use a standard Government phrase—‘It is all a matter of competing claims and priorities’. I have shown that there is a need. It is Government’s responsibility to decide on the priority.

Sir, with these brief remarks, I support the motion.

DR. HUANG:—Sir, Father MCGOVERN has spoken for all of us Members of the UMELCO Education and Manpower Panel on the Report ‘A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong’. In adding my own few words in support of the motion, I seek only to emphasize those aspects of our common cause which are particularly important to me or on which I may be able to throw some additional light. The fact that such a degree of unanimity exists among us in our positive reaction to the Report is an indication of the comprehensive and practical way in which we believe the Panel has tackled its review. The Report is massive in its scope and outspoken in its honesty. I hope that the strength and unison of our support for the Panel’s recommendations will ensure that a

serious attempt is made to implement them and to make firm decisions in those areas in which it has pointed to the necessity for formulating policy. It would be a great pity if the sheer comprehensiveness of the Report was used as justification for delay and obfuscation.

On the question of the language of instruction, I can speak from my own experience and my experience with students. It is my considered view that the mother tongue is the most effective medium of instruction for Forms 1-3 and that it is desirable for Chinese, both written and spoken, to be the primary means of communication at this level. Cantonese is used widely already as the spoken medium in the classroom in most schools, but textbooks in Chinese should be introduced as soon as practicable, perhaps to start with in subjects such as History and Geography. This would not negate our efforts to achieve bilingualism by the end of secondary education, provided there is adequate teaching of English as a second language. There is no doubt whatsoever that bilingualism should be the aim we must strive to achieve since English will continue to be a key to the world's store of knowledge, and since it is essential as an international means of communication in commerce and industry, particularly for a place like Hong Kong. Nor can we neglect the teaching of Putonghua, at present given little emphasis in the school curriculum, since the importance of Putonghua in Hong Kong is bound to increase over the years.

I support the recommendation that the entrance qualification to the Universities and Polytechnics should be harmonized (III 5.21), and would go further to suggest that in due course there should be one single agency for the whole of Hong Kong to receive and process applications for admission to these institutions.

I support the recommendation that Forms VI and VII should form an integrated two-year course in a comprehensive range of subjects (III 4.39). It would be a good thing too if greater interchangeability between the institutions of higher learning were made possible: for instance students reaching certain levels in the polytechnic degree courses or students completing the freshman or sophomore year at the Chinese University should be able to transfer to the University of Hong Kong at the appropriate level, or vice versa.

For a population of nearly six million, 12 000 university places must be considered quite inadequate—a view I have expressed over the years, in this Council and elsewhere, and I thoroughly endorse the Panel's view that 'there is an overwhelming case for the expansion of opportunity for study at the degree level'. Even among some under-developed countries, the young have greater access to higher education than ours in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Polytechnic is to award a number of degrees and a new polytechnic will soon come into being, and these steps will provide some alleviation of the problem. So too will the introduction of external study for degrees if Government decides to move ahead with the proposals already submitted to it for some time. However, whatever else is done, there still remains an unanswerable case for the

establishment of a third university. Only this would make a real impact, and if it were to start operation in the early 1990s, planning would have to begin now.

As I said earlier, it would be a great pity if the recommendations made in the Report were to be abandoned or put aside because of their sheer comprehensiveness. For it is only too easy to succumb to the temptation simply to shelf the Report and wait till next year or the next decade. All the recommendations which, through Father MCGOVERN, we have singled out for special urging have, of course, considerable financial implications and so have those I have emphasized. We all know that just now funds are in short supply but we hope that this will not continue to be the case for too long. Some of the areas of deficiency reviewed by the Report are so glaring that they deserve priority action whatever the financial situation. I quote from paragraph III 4.16: 'Most of the schools we visited were spartan to say the least, with pupils filling the entire room—40 to 45 per class. Some were blighted by high noise and we witnessed teachers using loudspeakers and suspending their teaching several times in the course of a lesson'. Statements like this are indeed worrying, and show that in physical facilities alone, our education system, despite improvements we have been making over the years, has yet a long way to go. I know of a research project which was set up to ascertain the effect of noise on the learning capabilities of school children in Hong Kong. Children were taken from their ordinary classrooms to noisy experimental situations especially created. The project had to be abandoned when it became apparent that the controlled noise levels of the experiments were already an improvement on the actual condition which many of the children had to contend with in their own classrooms (*laughter*).

It is important at this stage, whatever the financial situation, that the Government establish which of the principles and recommendations contained in the Report should be adopted and move inexorably to a phased implementation of them. The quality, as well as the quantity of education available, must be steadily and resolutely improved. Whatever our other priorities, education must be among them as Hong Kong faces an increasingly competitive world of industry and commerce. For Hong Kong's only resources are its human resources. These are the resources which have brought about Hong Kong's prosperity in the past and will determine how we fare in the future.

With these remarks, Sir, I support the motion.

MR. CHARLES YEUNG:—Sir, my first real contact with education policy was when I was appointed to the Board of Education some seven years ago. I was somewhat puzzled to find that the Board, being constituted under the Education Ordinance, has only a limited jurisdiction and there was no comprehensive planning body to deal with the full spectrum from pre-school to adult education.

I am therefore pleased to welcome the report by the visiting panel on the overall education system of Hong Kong, the instigation of which should be a credit to the Board of Education and the Government.

I am particularly pleased to endorse its recommendation of establishing an Education Commission which is the thing closest to my heart for a long time. Its composition and modus operandi are matters of lesser moment and any defect found in future evaluation will be fully capable of being rectified without impairing the fundamental function. I, therefore, do not wish to dwell on them.

The report has drawn a vivid perspective of our education by setting it against the background of our own social and demographic development. Education is but one of the many facets of services and facilities which have to be provided for the rapidly growing population of Hong Kong. Though there are deficiencies and unsatisfied wants in many areas, we can boast that in the field of education no child under 15 is without a school place and no young and able person is denied of higher education for lack of means. For all its efforts and achievements, our Government has to be congratulated. So are the parents, teachers and those concerned in the provision and management of education.

It is already an exploit that the Government can provide enough school places for so many children within such a short span of time. To find enough qualified teachers to man the classrooms is even more difficult. I am therefore pleased to note that the report has correctly diagnosed our problems and made very sensible suggestions on the improvement to the standard of schools and teachers.

The medium of tuition has been a focal point of debate for a long time mostly in connection with linguistic competence, communicative efficiency and over-loading curriculum and homework. The report recommends the use of the mother tongue as the means of tuition in primary schools with English being taught as a second language, progressing in reverse proportion leading up to bilingualism. Such a recommendation is, I believe, in resonance with the general wish of the community and will fit into our special international outlook. To achieve true bilingualism, I believe that children should be exposed to native qualified English teachers at their receptive age as recommended by the report. It will be costly and difficult but not impossible. However, teaching with Cantonese as a medium in the primary schools should not be compulsory but should be at the discretion of the school authority, as uniformity often fails to cater for different situations and no two situations are the same. Learning Chinese alone is difficult and it will take many years of intensive study to master it. Language teaching in school should be aimed at the efficiency of communication, leaving the art and beauty of language to the individual's further pursuit in future. This will lighten the load of the curricula and homework.

Sorting and shifting by means of formal examination or otherwise is a necessary device to channel students in an equitable manner to various streams

of higher education and training. I agree with the report that students should be subject to minimum pressure and anxiety during the process and to this end the fewer examinations the better. The internal assessment of the schools and other suggestions to replace formal examinations are sensible but they need the complement of the full feeder school system to allay the worry of promotion to inferior schools. I would further add that our young generation is always aspiring for tertiary and professional education leading to a better and wider job prospect and a higher standard of living. Their objective is circumscribed and pre-conditioned by the university faculty entrance requirements. Their effect has permeated down in shaping and moulding prematurely the curriculum and syllabus of the secondary schools, thus becoming a discentive to general learning and development of a fuller life in future. There is no single solution to this thorny problem and it is an appropriate subject of in-depth examination by the proposed Education Commission.

In this connection, I would like to see the Education Commission having effective influence over the admission policy of the universities and other tertiary educational institutions. Sir, I am not unaware of the claim of full autonomy by the universities which is based historically on the British model and will be jealously guarded. The development of our institutions of higher learning should however change with time, keeping pace with our social objectives and falling in line with our special environments.

Fortunately our halls of higher learning have taken due cognizance of our peculiar situation in framing their respective policies. The differences found in our two universities, polytechnic and other post-secondary colleges are strong testimonies of their strife to cater for the special circumstances and diverse needs of our society. The door to internationalizing our tertiary education is opened by the multifarious and different patterns and approaches adopted by the institutions. This may on the one hand avoid the need of direct intervention of university autonomy and on the other mitigate the harsh effect of streaming and specialization at too early a stage in the education process.

I am in general agreement with other parts of the report which I do not propose to elaborate. It is understandable that the report, for the sake of brevity and readability, cannot possibly deal with all the matters concerning education. I shall, however, be remiss not to mention some aspects which have been omitted from the report.

The report has not dealt with the special situation of education in areas outside the metropolitan Hong Kong. This may appear to be too detailed to the panel of visitors. I would therefore like to make a plea that the Education Commission may be disposed to look into details of the schools in the N.T. in such aspects as the elevation of school standards and facilities, incentive for teachers' preference, the equitable distribution of good secondary schools and the accessibility of higher institutes of learning, including opportunity for adult and continuing education. In this respect, Sir, I have a special interest to declare.

Another aspect which may be usefully dealt with by the Education Commission is the means by which the Government of Hong Kong may secure more opportunities for our students to study abroad in all fields of learning and profession, not only for the purpose of making up our own deficiencies but also to promote our image as an international centre. The people of Hong Kong have to reach out to the world so as to improve its infra-structure of internationalism. This is vital to our financial as well as our political future.

Sir, with these remarks, I have great pleasure in supporting the motion.

4.30 p.m.

HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT:—At this point, I think Members may welcome a respite. I suspend the meeting for 15 minutes.

4.45 p.m.

HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT:—Council will resume.

DR. HO:—Sir, I share the gratitude and appreciation of the general public and professional teachers in the release of the Report by the Visiting Panel of international education experts. The Panel successfully undertook a thorough review of the entire spectrum of the education system in Hong Kong, critically analyzed the fundamental issues, and came up with recommendations which are in general sound, pragmatic and worthy of implementation. The Panel's recommendations are intended in the long term to improve our education system in such a manner that it will promote greater equality of opportunity for every member of society and that it will contribute more effectively towards the cultural, social and economic developments of Hong Kong. Today I wish to address myself to three areas of concern.

I. *Policy and Planning in Education*

At present, we have three bodies independently vested with the responsibilities for policy-making and planning on education: the Board of Education, the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee and the Vocational Training Council. The lack of co-ordination among these bodies is blantly obvious and consequently leaves Hong Kong without a viable mechanism which monitors the overall educational planning in a holistic manner. The Education Commission proposed by the Visiting Panel may serve to rectify this deficiency. The functions and terms of reference in respect of the Commission should, in my view, be restricted to co-ordinating resource needs of the various sectors of the educational system and serve as a forum for mutual consultation among the three policy making bodies. We should guard against excessive centralization of control over policy and planning in education to the extent that rigidity, autocracy and inefficiency may become rampant. The autonomy, initiative and participatory governance inherent in the current three planning bodies (in particular the U.P.G.C. and the V.T.C.) should be retained and further nurtured.

To the extent that the proposed Education Commission confines itself to be a co-ordinating and consultative machinery, there would appear to be no need for it to have as its chairman an Executive Councillor. An appropriate mix of members in the Commission with distinguished social standings and educational expertise would make it a vigorous and effective organization. An unofficial majority in the Commission's composition is highly desirable, as this tends to generate credibility to the public.

II. *Languages in the Classroom*

While recognizing the fact that 'Hong Kong cannot afford to reduce the emphasis on English in its schools', the Visiting Panel acknowledged that 'the mother tongue is the best medium of teaching and learning'. Unequivocally the Panel recommended the policy of bilingualism in education. It asked the Government to mandate that Cantonese as 'the language of the heart' should be used for teaching in the first nine years of schooling from Primary I to Form III, and that English should be taught formally in kindergarten to Primary 6 as a second language or first foreign language. I fully endorse this recommendation. Competency in the Chinese and English languages in the multi-national context of Hong Kong will enhance its contribution to business, industrial, educational and cultural developments in the region as well as internationally. The ends have been rightly identified, but finding the means to achieve them represents a real challenge to the Government. I can not claim to have the panacea, but I would like to offer the following for consideration.

Environmental support is essential for learning a language properly and expeditiously. A wide range of good quality publication in English is available in Hong Kong for an individual who wants to learn the English language. However, the situation is not the same for high-standard textbooks and general reading materials in modern Chinese. Therefore, the Panel's advocacy of the use of Chinese in the classroom must first and foremost be augmented by the production of instructional, reference and general reading materials in well-written Chinese for our students. Constrained by the profit motive, publishers would respond to this demand cautiously and reluctantly. Greater and more courageous Government leadership and initiative is therefore urgently required. The establishment of a Chinese Language Foundation, first initiated in 1980 along with a package of measures to improve the language proficiency of the teachers and fostering the study of Chinese and English in schools, should be further pursued. Apart from the production and distribution of instructional, reference and general reading materials in well-written Chinese, which will undoubtedly contribute towards cultivating and promoting good reading habits and communicative skills of our students, the Foundation can perform other significant functions, namely: to elevate the status of Chinese in the community, to promote wider use of Chinese in our daily life and to provide consultancy services in the teaching and use of Chinese.

I have just mentioned reading habits. This is an important area in which much improvement in the students' language, communication and thinking abilities can be achieved. Students should be encouraged to read extensively and to cultivate it as a habit. Apart from the practical knowledge that a student can acquire, the process will lead him to appreciate the usage of the language (be it Chinese or English) in different settings.

Schools with proven success in using English as the medium of instruction should be permitted to continue that tradition. However, in order to promote genuine bilingualism, these schools should be encouraged to provide more instruction in Chinese language, so that their students can not only achieve a good command of English, but also attain an adequate proficiency of Chinese as a means of cultural enrichment.

In the same vein, more resources in terms of language teachers and modern teaching aids and facilities must be allocated to those schools with inferior standards. Opportunities and incentives should be provided for teachers in these schools to upgrade their proficiency and teaching skills in languages.

III. *Kindergarten Education*

I am gratified to note that the Visiting Panel urged the Government to take a more interventionist role towards kindergarten education and to bring it within the aided sector in the long term. Kindergartens should receive as much policy attention and resource allocation from the Government as primary and secondary schools do.

To bring the quality of kindergarten education up to a satisfactory level in the long run, a number of actions have to be taken now. The first and foremost task is to provide training for kindergarten teachers. Among the existing 5 000- strong kindergarten teachers, less than 15% have received any type of professional training. At the present rate of pre-service and in-service training provided by the Education Department, only three quarters of the currently practising teachers will have the benefit of formal training by 1990. These estimates of trained teachers do not take into account the annual wastage by retirement, resignation and dropping-out, which, unfortunately, is pretty high. The unattractive salary scales, poor career prospects and low professional status which have contributed to the high wastage must also be rectified as soon as practicable.

The quality of many kindergarten teacher trainers also needs to be improved. A good number of them do not have the formal professional training themselves, nor do they have adequate field experience in teaching in kindergartens. Their knowledge is primarily derived from textbooks, which are written for use in the western culture. In Europe and America, pre-writing exercises are in the form of lines and circles, which help to develop the skills of writing Latin-based alphabets. I have heard some trainers adhering strictly to this method of teaching, and insisting that kindergarten teachers should teach the Chinese toddlers to faithfully do such pre-writing exercises. We all know

that Chinese characters are square in shape and are made up of lines and strokes which are very different from circles; the harmful effect of such rigid adherence to western teaching methods is obvious.

Greater Government intervention in kindergarten education must result in more frequent inspection, supervision and guidance by the Inspectors from the Education Department. The Education Department now has 12 inspectors in the Kindergarten Section and they have to cover more than 700 kindergartens. Guidance and supervision is therefore spread thinly. To ensure the proper implementation of the innovative teaching methods such as 'learning through play' approach the establishment of the inspectors needs to be considerably expanded.

Learning by active participation is the best method of learning for all ages. To properly use the method 'Activity Approach' requires mature, well-trained and creative teachers. But the current contingent of kindergarten teachers, with their substandard professional training and meagre educational background, have made the fuller use of this imaginative teaching method difficult. Should this method be imposed on these ill-prepared kindergarten teachers, lasting harm might likely be done to our young learners. Therefore, the quality of the pre-school teachers must be improved by way of training as a matter of urgency.

Financial input is necessary for uplifting the quality of kindergarten education. To set a minimum salary commensurate to the experience and qualification will not only help to attract dedicated and trained teachers, but also foster a healthy professional identity among the practitioners. At present, there is generally no difference in remuneration between a trained and an untrained teacher. Thus, there is little incentive for self-improvement among the kindergarten teachers.

Unlike many child care centres which usually have recourse to private funding sources to cover the cost of equipment, facilities, refurbishment and initial expenditure, most kindergartens have to look to their operators as the sole provider of the needed funds. The operators often have to raise the necessary fund by increasing fees, but this method may run the risk of deterring the parents from sending their children to the kindergarten, thereby resulting in diminished income for the kindergarten. Providing the public with a basic education is tantamount to investment in human resources. As the Government is benevolent and enlightened enough to make primary and junior secondary education free for all children up to the age of 15, it should consider to expand this benevolent policy downward to cover pre-school education. This policy of free provision will pay political dividends in that 'by redressing disparities in children's pre-school experiences, perhaps their live chances will move towards equality'.

With these comments and suggestions, Sir, I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. SO delivered his speech in Cantonese:—

督憲閣下：本人曾參與行政立法兩局非官守議員教育統籌小組為研究「香港教育透視—國際顧問團報告書」所召開的會議，亦曾留意本港教育界人士對該報告書內容所發表的意見。除了贊成孟神父剛才代表小組所列舉的十多項意見外，亦希望趁這個機會提出一點對本港學生有相當大影響而報告書並沒有提及的問題。

香港一般的居住環境擠迫和嘈吵。電視機、收音機、街上行走的汽車或人們耍玩麻雀牌時都發出吵耳的聲浪，這些環境都嚴重地影響學生們溫習功課，自修或應付考試，夏天的情況更甚。所以學生們常常利用機場候機室等地點，大會堂梯間及其他公眾建築物作為溫習功課的場所。

政府雖然資助一些志願機構在公共屋邨或青少年中心內辦理自修或閱讀室，但為數不多，資助的範圍和金額亦不大。據數字顯示，目前在青少年中心內辦理而受資助的閱讀室共有六十所，設在公共屋邨內同時獲得租金及差餉資助的閱讀室則祇有二十間。鑑於香港的特殊環境，上述數字顯然反映僧多粥少的情況。「工欲善其事，必先利其器」，良好的溫習和閱讀環境，是學生們所需要的基本工具之一。故本人認為政府應重視這個問題，廣設有合適人士管理的圖書館、溫習室和閱讀室，供有需要的學生應用，以配合我們改善香港教育的努力。

督憲閣下，本人謹此陳辭，支持動議。

(The following is the interpretation of what Mr. SO said.)

Sir, I have attended meetings of the UMELCO Education and Manpower Panel to scrutinize the report by a visiting panel 'A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong' and have been monitoring what people in the education field have said about it. Besides agreeing with the multiplicity of points made a while ago by Father MCGOVERN on behalf of the Panel, I have a few other points to make which, though of substantial concern to students in Hong Kong, have not been mentioned by the report.

Living conditions in Hong Kong are generally crowded and noisy. With noise coming from television, radio, vehicular traffic or mahjong, students revising their lessons, studying on their own or preparing for examinations are badly affected. Summer months are even worse. That is why very often students go to public places like departure lounge in the airport or staircases in the City Hall to study.

The Government does subsidize a few voluntary agencies in the running of study rooms or reading rooms in public housing estates or youth centres, but their numbers are limited. The scope and size of subvention are likewise limited. According to available statistics, the number of subsidized reading rooms in youth centres at present is 60, while those receiving rent and rates subsidies in public housing estates numbered only 20. In the light of Hong Kong's peculiar conditions the above figures reflect an acute shortage of study room facilities in the Territory. A Chinese saying has it 'if a craftsman wants to do well in his trade, he has to sharpen his tools first'. A good environment in which to study and read is one of the basic 'tools' which students need. I think the Government should take the matter seriously and set up, in sufficient numbers, libraries,

study rooms and reading rooms managed by qualified personnel to cater for the needs of students and as part of an overall effort to improve education in Hong Kong.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN:—Sir, education is a vast subject and one could find libraries of literature written on it. It is therefore difficult to say much in a short debate which can best be described as a drop in an ocean of knowledge. I shall therefore leave the specialized points to my learned Colleagues and confine myself to the general ones.

There is no doubt that education is important in training and shaping the younger generation to meet the future requirements of the society. Such high ideals were the same originally in the orient and the occident.

Take Greece which was the cradle of western education, the Spartans trained their youths and place great emphasis on physical fitness, courage and obedience making them good soldiers which was essential to their survival as Sparta was surrounded by powerful enemies. The Athenians had a very different attitude towards life and educated their youths as well-balanced individuals i.e. physically sound and intellectually alert.

In China, for some 2 000 years before the turn of this century, education was almost completely influenced by Confucian teachings. The original objectives were to develop the individual as a whole man through liberal education. It was recognized that the Government and the Family both had responsibilities in educating their youths. There was no class distinction in education and education was available to all. Even in the remote villages there were schools or private tuition for the children. Etiquette, music, archery, horsemanship, calligraphy and mathematics were the original major subjects. It was a great pity that the aspiration to become Mandarins through the civil service examination system which made the Chinese intellectuals gradually handed over archery and horsemanship to the professional soldiers and mathematics to the artizans and merchants and music to the artists, the latter four occupations were all considered lower than the Mandarins. This shift discouraged intellectual curiosity and creative and critical thinking which made the progress of the Chinese civilization fell behind the west after the Industrial Revolution.

In short, education should be able to produce citizens with the right knowledge, attitude and skills to be beneficial not only to oneself or ones family but also to the society.

Periodic review of the education system is therefore essential to monitor our course and if required make improvements to reflect the changing needs of our society. The appointment by the Government of a panel of educators of international fame is therefore timely and an open-minded way of having an independent look into this vital subject which would have long lasting effects on our society in the years to come.

This report 'A Perspective on Education in Hong Kong' which is generally well received by the public, came unfortunately at a time of tight budget and one may have to sort out our priorities and implement those items which are vital and which we could afford.

For example, the lifting of the flood-gate to Form IV and Form V and provide continuous general education is ideal, but given that every parent and student would wish to have university education, would it dry up the enrolment source for vocational training? A society can not live with only bachelors, masters and doctors, we require a good mix of all occupations to survive, especially more technicians and craftsmen to support and diversify our industries. Even with Form V graduates, people prefer to be white collars workers and sit in an air-conditioned office. It is therefore essential before lifting the flood-gate, that craft courses should be boosted with additional hours in English, mathematics and science to bring them at a par to Form V and thus the apprentice or craftsman certificates would have the same social and education standing as a Form V graduate. The student taking the vocational stream would therefore only be different in that they have a technical bend. For those who try hard, the path leading to higher technical education should be open to them. Life-long frustration may lead to anti-social attitudes. This is only my personal opinion, no doubt the Vocational Training Council will have their official views.

The medium of instruction has for some time been a very controversial issue, but with the deteriorating standard of English the use of the mother tongue has to be accepted. Whilst Chinese students across the Border are feverishly learning English, it is ironic that we may have to acknowledge taking one step backwards.

But Hong Kong is not the only officially bilingual territory in the world, some examples are English and French are spoken in Canada, Flemish and French in Belgium, Czech and Slovak in Czechoslovakia and French, German and Italian in Switzerland. It is a legacy of their history and signified the peaceful co-existence of various races under one flag.

Furthermore, Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan city and an important business, financial and tourist centre. English is spoken not only due to our British connexion but essentially it is a universally recognized business language. Whilst we can have interpreters in our conference rooms but we cannot tell our tourists to learn Cantonese before they come here (*laughter*) or inhibit our business and tourism. It is therefore important that our school graduates should be fluent in English not only for employment purposes but also for tertiary education abroad. There may now be more Hong Kong students studying in universities in English speaking countries in the three continents of Europe, America and Australia than those in our own universities.

Especially in advanced scientific subjects, one gets direct and first hand knowledge from English publications. It takes time to lay ones hands on such publications and then more time is required to get them translated into Chinese.

As good translators with scientific knowledge are not plentiful one may not get the full flavour out of the original.

The learning of English as a second language is an indispensable part of education in Hong Kong. Parents and students should be left with an option for studying in the English or Chinese stream.

Although bilinguals differ in their skills, constant use due to contact and learning at an early age are the keys to fluency of the language. I have seen many examples of Chinese or foreign children learning English and Cantonese with amazing speed in kindergarten and primary schools. It is important to break through the spoken and I repeat *spoken* English barrier at kindergarten age by exposing them to expatriate English teachers. Grammar and written English can come at a later stage. English conversation, foreign customs and manners should also be taught at the same time. If one argues on grounds of localization, I would ask them to try sending expatriate teachers who have taken a course in Cantonese to teach Chinese subjects and I shall be interested to see the results (*laughter*).

With these observations, Sir, I support the motion.

MRS. CHOW:—Sir, before I proceed to different areas covered by the report, may I first express my gratitude as one of many concerned and interested parents not only to the panel of visitors who took so much pains to compile the report after extensive consultation and research, but to all those officials, unofficials, educationists and volunteers who have assisted in one way or another. A word of thanks is certainly due to the Board of Education, under the leadership of its able chairman, which has contributed so much in initiating and realizing this much needed study. Let us not forget but in the absence of a local member on the panel, Mr. Q. W. LEE'S role as special adviser to the Panel, must have assisted our visitors greatly. At long last a comprehensive future plan for the educational developments of our community can and must now be activated.

The report is indeed stimulating and all-embracing. It touches on all aspects of our existing education system, and points the way to the future. It is now up to us to define priorities in the context of resources we can afford.

There is little doubt in my mind that top priority should be awarded to the building and development of schools, with all the necessary supportive services, giving consideration first and foremost to the nine years of compulsory education to which we have already committed ourselves. I am echoing the thinking of the panel of visitors who made the point that emphasis, in per capita expenditure terms, should be tilted more favourably towards the junior branches of education. Apart from the fact that this segment consists of the biggest number of our student population, it also embodies the stages that pose the most problems. I refer to the allocation of Form I places and the Junior Secondary Education Assessment System (J.S.E.A.) which is required to eliminate 35% of the students from the aided sector. At present, we have had to tolerate the allocation of at least 25% of primary 6 children into Form I bought

places of some sub-standard private schools. The more alarming prospect is that this situation is unlikely to change in the next four years, unless we deal with the matter urgently by speeding up our school building programme on the one hand, and upgrading the standard of teachers and facilities in the more satisfactory private schools by the granting of specified subsidies for such purposes on the other. This would enable the phasing out of sub-standard bought places in Form I to Form III which are the causes of many social problems relating to young people such as juvenile crime and anti-social behaviour. Ultimately however, the long term solution must be the building of more schools, for this would not only resolve the problems that exist for Form I to III, but also provide for more places in Form IV and V, and thereby easing the pressure on students and parents that is exerted by the J.S.E.A.

I have spoken many a time in this Chamber on my objection to the J.S.E.A. In the absence of any other fairer method to eliminate a third of the Form III students from the aided sector. I have finally, albeit reluctantly come to the conclusion that the J.S.E.A. would have to stay but I must stress—only for the time being. I still maintain that the administrative justification for the J.S.E.A. does not make it educationally acceptable or desirable. Therefore, Government should take positive steps towards realizing its ultimate abolition. I therefore urge the Government to face the problem squarely, and to make full provisions for senior secondary and vocational places by launching the necessary building programmes. It is here that we build the broad base of our society, and we stand or fall by it.

Next, in my view, comes the pre-school years. I am convinced that eventually this should become part of the aided sector when resources permit. In the meantime, every effort should go into the training of teachers. Special courses must be planned to cater for in-service as well as pre-service training. The development of curriculum and teaching material should also be taken on board. There must be a gradual upgrading of teachers' qualification as well as employment conditions.

It has been said many a time that the insistence on the use of English as medium of instruction can become an obstacle to learning. The fact is that in many Anglo-Chinese schools, teachers are already using Cantonese quite widely. There is no reason why Cantonese should not be used if the school chooses to do so. Equally I am against the introduction of compulsory use of Cantonese, as some schools have used English quite successfully, and their students would be deprived of their chance to master English should Cantonese be enforced indiscriminately. The argument for compulsory enforcement is that without it, parental pressure would force all schools to use English, including those that are not equipped with teachers with adequate English skills, which would in turn affect the students. It is therefore essential on the one hand for Government to endorse the choice of the schools, whichever it may be, and to come up with the proper teaching material in support of that choice, and on the other to ensure that the teaching of the second language provides satisfactory

results. At the end of the day, however, we must keep up our valuable tradition of being a bilingual society.

Two years ago the Director of Education announced the establishment of an Institute of Language in Education with the aim to raise professional standards of English and Chinese teachers. At the same time the Educational Research Establishment of the Education Department was to undertake research into problems relating to language of instruction. Also there was a working group set up to examine the feasibility of establishing a Chinese Language Foundation. It would be useful to review the present position as this will no doubt help to improve the overall standard of both languages, Chinese and English, to be taught in schools.

At this juncture, I would like to express support for our panel of visitors' extremely important point on the need to level up in terms of the quality of our schools. They have said that we have some of the best schools in the world in terms of student attainment. They have also pointed out that most other schools leave something to be desired. The Objective should be to gradually but persistently raise the lower quality schools to the standard of the best. We do not advocate diminishing the existing resources or quality of the top-ranked schools in order to homogenize 'educational opportunity'.

These top-ranked schools are very often referred to as elite schools. With the universalization of educational opportunities which has undoubtedly been welcomed by one and all, this word 'elite' is no longer a compliment. Schools so described seem to be forced into a position of disadvantage and have had to defend the status which they have achieved over many years of dedication and hard work on the part of their principals and teachers. The standard they have set, of which they have always been proud and which they now have to defend, should be respected and protected. However I suspect this cannot be done if the present system of Primary one places allocation system continues. Present criteria allows for only 65% of the student intake to remain in the hands of the schools, while the 35% remaining are reliant on the computer. Of the 65%, 30% are reserved for children of the district while 35% are for children outside the district. However the point system is so designed that children with elder brothers and sisters already in a school have an overwhelming advantage over other children. This point system takes the choice out of the hands of parents who have to find a place for a first-born or who wish to place their younger children in a different school from their elder. It also takes the choice out of the schools in a few years time when the second or third child of a family reaches school age and are automatically eligible for a place in the same school as the first child. In other words, in a number of years schools will not be in a position to control student intake, and thus are deprived of a major decision which affects the final outcome.

Some such schools have already expressed concern over this, and the Education Department has advised them to go private. I have reservation with this suggestion. For it would mean that some of our best schools would have to

increase their fees so astronomically that the less affluent but academically brilliant students would not be able to afford to attend them. I would like to propose a mid-way in the form of a block grant, administered along similar lines as the English Schools Foundation, which would subsidize top-ranked schools while giving a higher degree of freedom to principals as regards student intake. In so doing, history and standard in education will not be sacrificed in the name of social equality.

I note with interest the panel of visitors' observation that a university without walls using the mass media is an attractive idea, but does not seem likely in the foreseeable future.

Hong Kong prides itself as one of the most advanced cities in the world today. The advent of the second Polytechnic is seen as a necessity. Yet we are still looking at an annual intake of a dismal 2 500 students into the two universities. It is therefore in my view, a matter of urgency that we identify the need for a third university.

Given the general acceptance of the mass media, the accessibility to a radio and television set in most households, the physical compactness of Hong Kong itself, and the shortage of university education opportunities, a public sector open university, effectively using the mass media, should be actively explored.

Finally I find the suggestion of the establishment of an Education Commission most worthy of support. It is essential that one body should have an overall view of all aspects of education. Furthermore, apart from the structure proposed in the Llewellyn report, its membership should contain some participation of professional educationists who have had extensive experience in the field in order that the Commission can conduct its deliberation against a background of deep knowledge and understanding of past and present conditions.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MISS TAM:—Sir, 350 million years ago in a freshwater swamp fish began to invade and colonize the land. These pioneers had to solve two problems in order to survive: to move around without water and escape from predators and to obtain oxygen from the air without a lung.

There is one fish alive to-day which can demonstrate how to do these things. It is a Malaysian mudskipper. It has developed in each of the front pair of its fins a fleshy base supported internally by bones. And so these fins become a pair of crutches with which the mudskipper levers itself forward. In order to breathe out of water the fish first holds some water in its mouth and then while on land swills it over the lining of its mouth by rolling its head to extract the oxygen and then takes it in with ease. Thus the mudskipper feeds on the insects and other invertebrates that swarm the muddy land and survives, like their ancestors which first invaded the land.

Human beings, after over 570 million years of evolutionary struggle now rules the earth. Our special talent is not in our ability to move across muddy land or to extract oxygen from water but in being able to accumulate knowledge and communicate them between one individual and another, and from one generation to another, through the records kept on stone cave walls, in scrolls, books and computer systems, and each recipient or generation of recipients can sift through accumulations of facts and extracts a seed of significance that would lead to higher wisdom. I call this special talent education.

Having established the importance of education to mankind, allow me to point out that good education systems depend on a good curriculum.

The UMELCO Groups' view

While we may express ourselves in different ways, the members of the UMELCO Education and Manpower Panel shared the belief that giving proper education to the younger generation in Hong Kong is the best investment we can make for them in the future. I support the setting up of the Education Commission and the other suggestions as announced by Father MCGOVERN in his speech earlier on today.

Among the list of suggestions the following ones will involve major changes in the development of the operational curriculum of our schools:—

1. The use of Chinese as the medium of instruction from Primary 1 to Form 3 with a wholehearted push towards genuine bilingualism after primary 6.
2. Curriculum Development, text book selections and public examination should be rationalized up to Form VII to allow schools and students opportunities to use Chinese if they so wish.
3. The Curriculum Development Committee needs to be overhauled and strengthened and curriculum should not be dominated by examination requirements.
4. A multi-option two years curricula for Form VI and VII uninterrupted by formal examination should be established.

The Experts' View

In the O.E.C.D. Panel's report itself the following suggestions also call for vigorous measures to improve our curriculum:—

1. (Chapter III 3.8) 'Child-care and kindergarten both should develop a strong concern for the child's social and personal development, creative and motor skills, concept formation and linguistic competence. More attention should be given to the construction of Chinese (rather than western) curriculum materials.'
2. (Chapter III 3.14) 'The Education Department should therefore pursue a more vigorous and innovatory approach to curriculum and methods for early childhood education and accept that additional resources will have to be directed to this end.'

3. (Chapter III 4.5) For primary schools ‘teaching methods are still highly formalized. Neither the physical environment nor the inclination of the profession or the community is conducive to innovation. Student-centred approaches find it hard to compete with established subject—centred approaches. There has tended to be a set of syllabuses rather than a total curriculum.’
4. (Chapter III 4.13) ‘Between vocational and general stream secondary education there should be linkage in their academic programme so that no student is without a second chance.’

Special Education

There is also the need of devising a special curriculum with teaching aid for ‘revised’ resource class pupils and special class pupils, and supplementary teaching material for remedial teaching classes. It will assist the special education staff to formulate their curriculum in adherence to guidelines laid down by the Curriculum Development Committee.

Some current problems in the Curriculum Development Committee (C.D.C.)

The existing C.D.C. consists of one main committee, 42 subject committees at kindergarten, primary, secondary and sixth-form levels, and a textbook committee with 28 Textbooks Reviewing Panels.

The main committee, chaired by the Assistant Director of Education (Chief Inspector of Schools), has 32 members. The members represent various divisions of the Education Department, Colleges of Education, tertiary education institutions and universities, heads of schools and kindergarten, and teachers. The secretary of the H.K. Examinations Authority is also a member. The terms of reference (listed out in appendix I) of the C.D.C. are wholly geared towards academic training of students, with no reference to their development as individuals with a sense of value, nor do they relate school education with changing social demands, i.e. we have a purely ‘academic curriculum’ and no ‘social curriculum’.

The want of a social curriculum has led to soul searching debates on whether moral education should now be taught in schools as a subject or by some other means. I wish to suggest that the increasing co-ordination between education and manpower planning is obvious and the need of satisfying social demands (in the types of educated talents we need) must be written in the C.D.C.’s terms of reference. At the moment, it is not there.

Also, in order to relate curriculum objectives to social demands the C.D.C. should report specifically, directly and regularly to the Board of Education. The Unofficial Members of the Board who are not in the teaching profession may participate in the formulation of curriculum development and relate them with the development in other fields (such as industry and commerce). In the United Kingdom, Canada and many European countries curriculum development is influenced not only by the views of teachers but also by members of the

community and the central Government. Hong Kong should not be an exception to this sound practice.

The Subject Committees

The subject committees come in three unrelated divisions—kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools. e.g. there is a Chinese language subject committee for Kindergartens, a second one for primary schools, a third one for secondary schools. These committees are served by members of the teaching profession and university lecturers who volunteer their services. Meetings, I understand from some of the members, take place on *ad hoc* basis and many members are not active. The few reports or recommendations that are made to the main committee are scrutinized by the members of the main committee who do not teach in the relevant subjects. As a result of that we have a truncated view, as opposed to an overall view, of each subject as how they should be taught from kindergarten to secondary school.

Now that we are asking for a cohesive curriculum from kindergarten to Form VII the division between kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools subjects committees must be eliminated so that for each subject there is only *one joint* committee in charge of its curriculum development from kindergarten to Form VII.

Textbook Committee

The textbook committee members are all Education Department officers. The Textbook review panels under this committee is in charge of reviewing textbooks submitted by publishers. Reviewers who are either teachers or staff of the Education Department are appointed by the Chairman of the Textbook Committee to review the books to see if it meets the standard required for use in schools and for publication. It has, until recently, relied on the *ad hoc* service of reviewers who volunteered to review the books. I was told that some reviews took three-five months.

The O.E.C.D. experts, commenting on our text books, said that ‘Textbooks are mostly dull with little stimulus to spark creativity or for learning to learn. This says something about the present role and functioning of the Textbook Advisory Committee and also about publishers being keen to make easy profits by turning out material which has been under-researched and under-developed for the local scene...’. Obviously the quality control lies with the review panel and I am glad to hear that the Education Department is now testing out a practice to pay the reviewers for their work on a contract basis. I hope this can tighten the quality control on our textbooks and if the new practice produces good results it should definitely be continued.

Strengthening the C.D.C.

I have earlier on listed out the main suggestions made by the UMELCO group and the O.E.C.D. experts which, if accepted by the Government, will be within the C.D.C.’s scope of responsibilities to discharge. However, as the O.E.C.D. experts observed (at Chapter III 4.30) ‘The litany of frustration we heard about

the production and implementation of syllabuses suggests to us that curriculum development in the sense that the term is used in O.E.C.D. countries is thoroughly under researched across the entire system. There is a need for more research capacity to back up what is attempted. The Education Department's resources (human, physical and financial) in this area—including the Advisory Inspectorates and the staff of its curriculum development section—are in our view quite insufficient for the task to be accomplished.'

I believe that the Curriculum Development Committee needs to be overhauled and strengthened. If it remains an under-nourished camel it will not be able to take another straw, nor can it help to carry out the final decisions on any reform on our education system. (Sir, this view is shared by the honourable CHEUNG Yan-lung)

Proficiency in English

I would now like to turn to the subject of language.

Given Hong Kong's position today as an international centre of finance, shipping, trade, industry and tourism, we cannot afford to 'devalue' the English language, because bilingualism is one of our assets.

The report reveals that 'in particular languages are learned with greater ease when children are very young, especially through conversation.' Yet in our schools, oral English is not a priority.

Not everyone is a born linguist, but even those with an aptitude for languages must be given every chance to practise their oral English as well as their written English. English conversation classes should therefore be compulsory because only if our students speak English regularly will they really learn it as a language. It is simply not good enough for teachers to do all the talking. Moreover, conversation classes should be conducted by native English speakers so that our students may emerge as fluent and confident speakers of English too.

Conclusion

In the final paragraph of the Report, we were asked to consider, 'How do we educate both for intellectual vigor and for confident, competent persons?' In my humble view, the accent should be on 'persons', each with different gifts, abilities and aspirations. We must make it possible for them to develop their gifts and abilities, and to achieve their aspirations.

To use my biological and evolutionary analogy once again, education will help our younger generation to develop special cells, enabling them to transform and progress from the world we have today to a much advanced and enriched one awaiting their exploration.

With these observations, Sir, I support the motion.

Appendix I

Curriculum Development Committee

The terms of reference of the C.D.C. are:

- (i) to devise balanced curricula to cater for pupils of varying abilities at different levels;
- (ii) to set up curriculum objectives for the guidance and reference of schools;
- (iii) to promote curriculum innovations based on the contemporary needs of pupils in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools;
- (iv) to assist schools in planning activities for pupils so that they are taught to the fullest development of their capabilities;
- (v) to seek to ensure that the Hong Kong Examinations Authority examines the C.D.C. syllabuses in all public examinations;
- (vi) to seek to ensure the C.D.C. curricula becomes the natural core for initial and in-service training courses for teachers and
- (vii) to provide procedures for continuous assessment, evaluation and improvement of any recommended curriculum.

DR. IP:—Sir, as my Unofficial colleagues have covered all the important features of this report, and as I wouldn't like to digress into small points, I will entertain Members of this Council after such a long day again with what my Colleagues have said, but in a lighthearted fashion, and put *THIS MESSAGE* across, '*What is important, is important, must be repeated, must be done!*'

Sir, the report, '*A perspective on Education in Hong Kong,*' enables us to pause for a moment, and experience through history how our education system has evolved; and then to see it as it really is, in another man's eyes. I would like to share with this Council, not the story about the mudskipper but the *story* it has told me and the *picture* it has painted for me.

The story goes like this . . . 'Once upon a time ago, a boat carrying some Chinese workers, all speaking one of 5 dialects arrived at a barren island. They decided to build a house on a hill as fast as they could. However the *language barrier prevented them to agree among themselves on the purpose of the building.* Among them were 5 experts, a Cantonese bricklayer, a Swatowese carpenter, a Shanghaiese mechanic, a Fukien electrician and a Hakka plumber (*Educators for Kindergarten; Primary, Secondary, Postsecondary Schools; and Tertiary Institutions*). Each expert led their workers who spoke his dialect, inexperienced though they were, and directed them to construct this house in his own discipline according to his own plan. The task was difficult as each expert had to train his inexperienced workers while demanding high expectations from them.

While all worked very hard at their job . . . and we must give them credit, there were heated arguments over the *limited materials, over what went where, and over what was to be done first* etc. The many problems were rarely resolved, because nobody could speak more than one dialect or knew more than one

discipline to give a fair judgement. However, through these heated arguments, most of them began to speak a few words of another's dialect and knew a little about another's discipline. As a result, some alterations were made to adapt to each other but not enough.

Since everyone worked so hard and so quickly, within a very short time, the building was near completion. Everyone was *immensely proud of his own masterpiece*: the bricklayer . . . his bricks, the carpenter . . . his woodwork, the mechanic . . . his machines, the electrician . . . his lighting, and the plumber . . . his waterpipes.

One day, some guests arrived in another boat, and the islanders welcomed them with joy. At last, they had a chance to show off their masterpiece.

This was what the guests found: As they walked towards the building, there were poor quality steps leading up the hill (*Kindergarten Education*). The building was a four-storey high, steep pyramid, with a wide base (*Primary, Secondary, Postsecondary, and Tertiary Education*). It was dizzy just to focus on the roof of the structure (*the faint hope of University Education*). The levels of the third and fourth floors were split (*laughter*) and it made the building appear six-storey high at certain angles. Not one of the guests could figure out what the building was for (*Purpose of our Education System*). But there was no doubt about it, the workmanship for each discipline was first class, considering the short time taken to achieve this remarkable feat.

In general, there were doors and staircases which led to nowhere (*lack of prospects*) (*laughter*). There were curious big holes, at the top of each staircase, which one have to hurdle across before one can reach that floor (*examinations*). There were big doors leading to small rooms (*insufficient School and University places*). There were no windows or fire escapes on the fourth floor. Except for one very narrow staircase which appears undirectional, there was no other entrance to it.

There were other minor irregularities too, all spelling discordance in the various disciplines of workmanship. Waterpipes opened in the middle of the sitting room. Rooms were without light fittings and machines stood idle for want of electricity supply.

Looking across the sky, the guests also saw a smaller building on a hill nearby (*Special Education*), which *some workmen built in their spare time* (*laughter*). There were broken steps leading up to that hill too and the bridge from the main building was unstable (*inadequate integration*). The guests were unable to see it clearly but what they saw at a distance was not very satisfactory.

The minute that the guests asked about the purpose of the building, commented on the curious state of the construction, or put forward suggestions for improvement, this immediately brought about the same *heated arguments* among the 5 experts and their workers. *None of them were prepared to sacrifice their completed product to make way for changes in the improvement of the building as a whole.*

While the guests retreated to a corner to discuss their findings, so did each of the experts with his workmen. The Cantonese bricklayer, the Swatowese carpenter, the Shanghaiese mechanic, the Fukien electrician, and the Hakka plumber, each came up with his own plan, on how the other four should make way for him. To avoid bringing on further heated arguments, the guests *proposed certain changes in writing, aiming at improving the utilization of the existing building.*

This is what they proposed: ‘We must find a “man” (*Education Commission*), who speaks all dialects and who is knowledgeable of all the disciplines of work, sufficiently to be *respected by all the five experts and their workmen.* “He” must decide on the *purpose* of the house. “He” must act as a project manager in the reconstruction of this building. “He” must have the *authority to decide on and put into effect a plan* which is best for the community. While doing so, “he” *must have adequate resources to implement the changes, large or small.* Changes may take place in certain discipline, more so than others, but the final outcome is for the best of the people. The co-operation of all would be necessary and would come about if *all concerned looked wider and further ahead to the future.* There should not be any bias for one isolated small finished product. The *changes* will take time.

While looking for this “man”, *implementation* of the proposals made in the report *must begin!*

Just as the steps to the building on the hill, which forms the crucial access to it be reinforced; so must *Kindergarten Education, which form the basis of our education, be subsidized and improved.*

Just as the hole at the top of the staircase be bridged to prevent a fall; so must *unnecessary examinations be abolished* to avoid the label of a failure.

Just as small rooms from a big door be made larger; so must *our capacity for secondary education be increased.*

Just as the irregularities in the interior of the building be altered in a coordinated fashion; so must *the curriculum development be planned better.*

Just as the stairs and the doors which lead to nowhere be led some where; so must there be *opportunities for Chinese Middle Schools’ students to further their education.*

Just as the split levels of the third and fourth floors be made uniform storeys; so must *the duration of post-secondary education, and entrance to and duration of University education be harmonized.*

And, just as the pyramid shape of the building be made less steep, so must higher tertiary education be expanded.

Just as the narrow staircase to the fourth floor be widened, alternative access to it made and exit from it be available; so must the *concept of the Open University be considered.*

Just as the diligent workers who received shorter than ideal “on the job training” be given a chance of being re-educated; so must *our teachers be given further opportunities to substantiate themselves, particularly in languages.*

Just as the language barrier was the cause of chaos in the construction of this building; so must we *not let history repeat itself by indulging in monolingualism.*

Just as learning a second language inadequately be unable to solve the problem of the building; so must we *aim for true bilingualism.*

Lastly, just as the little house on the other hill need a thorough look; so must *special education be given a detailed overall review.*’

Sir, building an education system is like building a house. It must have strong foundations and access to it must be made good. We must decide on its purpose. We must have an overall project manager to implement and constantly review and revise the plans. It is a remarkable feat for us to have achieved what we have in education, in such a short time. Now we have time to pause, (*I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG!*). We must therefore consolidate, and reshape our education system to adapt to the changing demands. Let us show the world in the next century, that *students from Hong Kong not only excel in their studies, but are also healthy in their physique, broad in their perspective, mature in their outlook, and responsible in their community.*

Sir, *many proposals* to improve our education system were given in the report. Sometimes *alternative routes* were suggested. Some can be achieved with *financial resources*. Some *changes take time* to develop. Some changes can only be implemented after reviewing other changes which have to take place first. Some changes are *relatively more urgent* than others. All such changes must be *phased in*, in the implementation.

To implement this report, we *MUST HAVE* ‘*An Education Commission*’ with *statutory powers* to *formulate* and *co-ordinate* *All education policies* in Hong Kong. The Commission can and must continue to *improve education* in Hong Kong based on this report, through the *executive arms of The Government.*

If and when, and I hope this would be soon, the ‘Education Commission’ is established, with the *EXPERTS* who have *no declared interest*, let us give *THEM whole hearted support in their monumental task.* In the meantime, let the *Administration GET ON* with the *implementation of those parts of the report which NEED NOT WAIT.*

Sir, with these comments, I will conclude, by repeating the motion before Council, which all my Unofficial colleagues agreed on, ‘*WE RECEIVE WITH APPROBATION THE REPORT, “A PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN HONG KONG” AND COMMENDS IT TO GOVERNMENT AS A BASIS ON WHICH THE CONTINUING IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION IN HONG KONG SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED.*’

I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER:—Sir, in rising to propose an amendment to the motion before this Council, I am sure all Members will wish me to deal with all their points in detail—however long it keeps us while I speak, because I'm not second to Members in liking the sound of me speaking. Indeed I must express the appreciation of the Government for the interest of Members in educational matters which are vital to our welfare.

I do note indeed that Dr. IP says that the Commission should include experts with no declared interest; that this afternoon we have had many experts and none of them have declared an interest although a large number of them have to my knowledge unsuitable interest in the matter. Still no objection to that. Only Charles YEUNG declared an interest in the New Territories in his speech (*laughter*).

I should make clear the object of the amendment which I have tabled. It is not intended to be combative or divisive, rather the contrary. It is intended to broaden the basis of consensus to provide a form of words which all members can agree without embarrassment.

I should make clear also at this stage that I may not, this afternoon, be able to reply to all speeches and certainly not in detail. This is not because the Government does not care about education. The Government cares a great deal about education but because the issue is not the report as such but rather consultation on the report.

The advice of the Executive Council freely given and which the Government has accepted is that the public should be consulted. The motion as set down is inconsistent with the Government's position. The Government is committed to a series or sequence of actions: receiving the views of the public, collating these views and seeking again the advice of Executive Council. The Government has obligation to complete this process of consultation.

This does not mean that the Government is indifferent to the report or to educational progress, far from it. Father MCGOVERN has suggested that the Government intends to bury the report. This is not so. The Government will examine all the recommendations in the report in the light of public comment to decide whether they should be implemented.

Indeed, our record on this is very good. At the end of 1980 the Governor in Council decided that there should be a Commission. A few months later, we appointed a Commission. In April 1982 they arrived and they came back in November of the same year to produce the draft open report . . .

6.00 p.m.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:—Sir, may I, in accordance with Standing Order 68, with your consent move the suspension of Standing Order 8(2), so that today's business may be concluded.

Question put and agreed to.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER:—Sir, the Commission came back and in due course, they produced the report which we published and we shall carry on with this process—we shall follow through. As is usual with this Government we don't renege on our promises, we mean business with the report. At this very moment, the District Boards and other bodies which include the Board of Education and subsidized schools council are debating this report. Therefore to bestow upon the report the status of agreed policy as the primary motion implies would have the effect of shutting off further public consideration and discussion. Is this the wish of Members? I hardly think so. Are they so confident of what everybody thinks on this wide range of topics? I cannot believe that Members have such a narrow intent to tell the people of Hong Kong what to think and to close off public discussion so soon, so abruptly and so commandingly drowning out all music but their own. I think, therefore, they will see the virtues of the amendment which I have tabled. This amendment does not derogate from the report one iota or jot but distances the supporters of this amendment by a short and respectful distance until public opinion has had a full opportunity to express itself.

By supporting this amendment Members will be making a valuable contribution to open discussion of this report, because they will then be providing ideas around which public opinion can crystalize, rather than having lowered a shutter which excludes further discussion as does adherence to the original motion. I believe that Members have been misled, not by Father MCGOVERN, but perhaps by their eagerness for educational progress and reforms into reducing the opportunity of the public to be heard in this important debate.

I should turn now to individual contributions to this debate. We cannot deny to Father MCGOVERN the role of being first: his litany of agreed points is impressive, but I was sorry not to hear Father MCGOVERN'S order of priority for action.

I was a little puzzled that he said the report is all true, that it is a statement of public opinion, that we didn't need to publish it, but having published it we should then put it all into action; and that we shouldn't need further public opinion because anything that we heard subsequently would be adverse. I was a bit confused by that.

Mr. Lo gave us a profound description of the deficiencies of teacher preparation and he makes extremely interesting remarks about developments in teacher education which I cannot go into in detail this afternoon except to say that the quality of students entering Colleges of Education is improving remarkably. We are also considering the B.Ed. degree, but you cannot see that as a panacea. But further discussion of his speech must wait for another occasion.

Mr. Peter C. WONG has called for a third university and indeed the Government is busy identifying sites. I have been trudging round myself to look for this. I notice also that he says heads should rule hearts in educational matters, though Father MCGOVERN says that it is the language of the heart to which we should listen. I am not sure whether they can still both vote for the same motion (*laughter*).

Mr. Andrew So calls for better study facilities outside the schools. Indeed this is an important area. The Government is doing something and in due course we should no doubt do more. But this is a topic of living conditions which is almost beyond education itself.

Mrs. Selina CHOW helps us to define priorities, and she was one of the few Members who did talk about priorities and she did give due weight to the role of Mr. Q.W. LEE in this important report. She has said that the key thing is to start with schools and to do things here. She also enquires about the institute of language in education. It has been set up, it is working, it has produced good graduates and it will be expanded next year. The Education Research establishment is making a three-year study one of which has been completed, I believe.

Miss Maria TAM provided some notes on mudskippers and she also went into great detail about curriculum development which is indeed an important area, and we should take note of this.

I should now consult my note-book for things that other Members may have said which I didn't have any pre-notice of. Miss BENNETT made a major speech crowning her service in this Council with a really splendid survey of all the things that are going on in education and that should go on. I did notice her views about teachers of English and I notice that other Members also thought that we should have native teachers of English in the schools. Such was the variety of things that she has mentioned. It would be hard for me to deal with any of these things in any detail. She was indeed one of the few Members who had something to say about how we should pay for all this and she said let the rich pay—whether by taxation or higher fees she was not specific, but she did give an indication of the direction in which we should go, in order to see that payment for these things took place.

I must turn now to Mr. Rayson HUANG. He commends U.C.C.A., and he also talks of interchange ability and transfer in the higher education system, something I am glad to say is largely in his own hands and so *he* can do something about it (*laughter*). I note also that he calls for more university places and degree courses and a third university. He also refers to the Spartanness of our schools—but, of course, I note Mr. K. C. CHAN *praised* the Spartans whereas Spartanness, according to Dr. Rayson HUANG, is a bad thing. This is not the unanimity for which I hoped on this occasion—it'll make my life much easier (*laughter*).

Mr. Charles YEUNG called for us to do something in the New Territories more than we are doing at present, and indeed we do take note of this. He also made note of the Commission. The Commission indeed was another topic that engaged Members but they don't all seem to have the same view of it. Miss BENNETT wanted a professional at the top and Dr. Ho Kam-fai, I believe, wanted the powers of the Commission to be severely restricted. On the other hand, Dr. IP said that the Commission should be statutory. I cannot harmonize all their views myself although I see I'm called upon to harmonize the entry into universities. The Unofficial Members, those who have spoken—the Group, Father MCGOVERN'S faction—are confident that harmonization is possible but they were too discreet to go so far as to say *how* it should be done. That was to be left to braver souls, I notice (*laughter*). If this is the way in which Father MCGOVERN proposes to solve problems, it is clear that he is right to leave these things to the Administration (*laughter*).

And so I am left only with Dr. IP who says we must do everything and indeed other Members have suggested that we have got to do everything, perhaps to do it all at once. This is the point that really worried me—that it is awfully difficult that in something like education, even if the Financial Secretary did, as Miss BENNETT subtly said, loosen the purse-strings, to do everything at once. But I'm not going to make a big fuss about money or indeed about this unanimity except to say that it is noticeable that Father MCGOVERN had three agreed points which went *beyond* the actual ambit of the report. Mr. YEUNG wanted to do something about the New Territories which was not in the report; Dr. HUANG asked for some decision making process that was not in the report. There are other things not in the report and indeed there was disagreement about the major recommendation of the report for an Education Commission. This is something that by no means we say shouldn't be done, but we have to think very carefully before we do it. In fact, the Government agrees that the total report does have merit, but to endorse it as the *only* source of wisdom on educational matters appears excessive; and Members' own practice, if not their prescience, appears to agree with me that they do not take it as the basis for educational development, but merely an interesting guide, something about which you can talk and develop new ideas in the educational field. Therefore, until public opinion has been fully heard and the further advice of Executive Council has been taken, such a posture of total agreement with the report is premature. The Government has therefore tabled an amendment tempering and broadening the original motion.

Sir, I call for support for this reasonable amendment.

Proposed amendment

That the motion be amended by leaving out the words—

‘as a basis on which the continuing improvement of education in Hong Kong should be implemented.’

and inserting instead the following words—

‘as a valuable contribution to the consideration of future policy on the development of education in Hong Kong.’

Question proposed

REVD. P. T. MCGOVERN:—After that eloquent discourse, Sir, I will try to reduce it to a shorter form of words. Apparently the motion as worded offends in that it prevents the broadening of the basis of consensus, that the consultative position has been taken up, and the public should be consulted, and Government is obliged to continue that process; and that somehow the motion as worded is incompatible with that process and an Executive Council decision, that it is shutting off further discussion and it demands total agreement with the report. In fact, it seems to demand total agreement with a faction of this Council.

This of course, is not the meaning of the motion as proposed. Perhaps the first simple thing to point out is that it is not, in the wording of the motion, proposed as *the* basis on which the continuing improvement of education in Hong Kong should be implemented. It is proposed as a basis, one basis. There could be hundreds of others. It in no way excludes any other opinions by the public now, and between now and 31 August or after 31 August.

The original motion was very carefully worded, and reworded until agreed by the Panel. It was also submitted to a full UMELCO meeting where no-one expressed any desire for further changes. This version politely compliments the Administration by conceding that there already existed improvements in education in Hong Kong. The clear main message is that we are asking for a continuation of the implementation of such improvements. In plain English, Members have heard enough talk about education; we now want action. And we want action to be based principally, I might say—I wouldn't exclude that possibility—on this report as well as on any other thing that comes up for discussion between now and 31 August and thereafter. That the report should be a basis of discussion or of implementation of policy does not mean that the Government must accept every detail of every suggestion in the report, nor does it mean that it must be done to-day. The motion is worded to use the word '*continuing*' improvement. It is already happening. Many of the things suggested in this report have long since been adopted by Government and we are asking for the continuing implementation of these things and other things in the report. But the thing that really puzzles me is that this motion seems in any way to appear to pre-empt some sort of an Executive Council decision after 31 August. This seems to be some misreading of the words. What we are asking today in this Council in this motion is: this Council is asked to accept a motion telling Government what this Council thinks Government should do. We are not the Executive Council; we are one part of Government but we are not the policy making body and all you are asked to do to-day is simply to pass a motion asking the Government to take a certain line of action. It is *one*

expression of public opinion, some people say mis-timed, but we are, I hope, giving an example to the public to take an interest in this subject and, like us today, make representations to Government on what we think they should do. That in no way interferes with a decision that the Executive Council may take after August because they can take it like any other one—accept it or reject it. It is merely our opinion and wish as part of the public and, therefore, as far as I can see, it in no way contradicts the present policy of looking for comments. We are giving comments to-day ourselves. It in no way interferes with the policy making that will come out of those comments. I think that should be sufficient to express what our motion means. It is based, I agree, more on implementation than on more talk, shall we put it that way. And at this hour of the evening I am sure I shall get a few extra votes if I propose the motion as that there should be less talk about education and more action.

But my main complaint is that the proposed amendment removes that idea of implementation and substitutes for it consideration of future policy. Consideration could go on interminably. It could lead to no action. I'm not saying necessarily that it would and I am not attributing bad faith to anybody that this might happen. But it can happen and we have had many years of discussion on education. We now have an excellent document and we recommend that you should vote in favour of a motion which puts our point of view to that effect to Government, and because the amendment removes that call to action, the amendment is unacceptable and therefore I would recommend that Members vote against the amendment.

MR. CHARLES YEUNG:—Sir, I have the privilege of comparing very carefully the part of the motion which the Secretary for Education and Manpower has sought to introduce and amend. In that part, the original motion has 16 words while the Secretary's amendment has 18. It does not mean that longer is better nor the shorter the better, but it is a way to illustrate that I tried to be very careful in reading it, and I discern that there are three actual basic elements in the two motions. I can equate them to a head, a body and a heart.

In the original motion, the part that concerns us now is, first of all, the body, ('the basis'); the second is the 'continuing improvement', and the third is the 'implementation' which is the head. In the proposed amendment, the body is 'a valuable contribution' and the heart is the 'consideration' and the head is the 'development' of education. I invite Members to look very carefully at these three essential organic portions of a human being.

Let us examine the head first. First, the original motion says 'implementation', while the amendment tries to say 'consideration'. In 'implementation' we have progressive thinking, while the word 'consideration' means pedantic or bureaucratic thinking. This is my version, Sir: it may be wrong. We examine the heart. We have the original motion saying 'continued improvement', while the amendment tries to suggest 'development' which is slightly inferior, but I don't have anything to say against this too much. Now we examine the body. The

original motion says a whole ‘basis’—a whole body with limbs, while the amendment suggests ‘valuable contribution’ which equates to a body without limbs.

So, after careful examination, Sir, the result would be: in the original motion we find a person with a head, a body with limbs and a heart, while in the amendment sought, we find a strange animal without a head, without limbs and with an inferior heart. On this ground, Sir, I recommend to Members, Officials and Unofficials, to vote against the amendment.

REVD. JOYCE M. BENNETT:—Sir, I must oppose this amendment very strongly. When the Unofficials knew that the report had arrived on November 1982, they wanted to read it as soon as possible. They and many others in the educational field were unhappy that it was not available to the public until early May with the request for comments to be submitted to the Secretary for Education and Manpower by the 31 August 1983. Clearly, once again, an important educational document was put before the schools at the end of the school year when public examinations had already started, when the schools were coming up to their own internal examinations and the busy time of writing reports and testimonials, engaging new staff and planning for the new school year was upon them. Despite all this, many meetings have been held by educationalists to discuss the report. Everywhere we have heard the comment. We have had enough talk and consideration. We want action. This report must not be pigeon-holed or shelved. The Unofficials at their own internal meetings, reflected that sense of urgency among the public, that demand for action. Hong Kong has two Councils, especially empowered to advise the Governor. I am glad to have had the opportunity to-day to speak on Father MCGOVERN’S motion and urge action. I cannot, therefore, accept any amendment to cut out a call to continue to improve education in Hong Kong, on the basis of this report. There are plenty of parts of the report about which we are united and on which we need action. The community demands it, and we have reflected their wishes in the debate to-day. I urge everyone to do as I, and oppose this amendment.

DR. HUANG:—The proposed amendment from that master of debate, our Secretary for Education and Manpower, is what I would call a Topleysian stroke. It apparently in part supports the motion but in fact ingeniously diverts it from its main thrust calling for decision and action. It seems to me that if the amendment were adopted, the amended motion, if carried, would result in the report taking its first step today to one of those dusty shelves where many of its predecessors have gone and are then forgotten. (*Officials:—No! Rubbish!*) It is being put to us that no decision should be taken until further public opinion is obtained. Did we not call in the Panel for the very reason that in the past we had had in many areas of education such a divergency of public opinion that we did not know what to do with it. Did not the Panel itself comprise international experts from Britain, continental Europe, Australia and the U.S.A.? Did they

not obtain public opinion from a very wide circle before writing its report? Does Government now intend, when more public opinion has been gathered, to do the report all over again and perhaps to call in yet another panel? During my last six years in this Council's service, Sir—and I am very grateful for the invaluable experience I have gained; I have learned a lot from my honourable Colleagues among many of whom I found valuable friendships—my Unofficial Colleagues have impressed me in the main as modest and gentle people, on occasions functioning as a sort of opposition in this Council, but at all times a loyal and exceedingly polite opposition. And when so many of us as is happening to-day speak with one voice on our strong conviction about this report, I hope that that voice will be heeded.

Sir, I oppose the amendment.

MR. LO:—Sir, in transmitting the report to Mr. TOPLEY, the Secretary for Education as he then was, the panel of visitors saw fit to include the following sentence which I shall quote 'The review process itself can, if so devised, stimulate discussion and focus attention squarely on fundamental problems which, for domestic reasons, may otherwise be skirted.' When I first read that I felt sure that the Government would not wish to skirt fundamental issues. However, now that the Administration seeks to reject the very modest commitment sought in the motion, I fear for the worst. May I urge the Secretary for Education and Manpower as he now is, to withdraw his proposed amendment. If he persists, I would urge Members to vote against him, as I shall.

MR. SO delivered his speech in Cantonese:—

閣下原有的動議是有坐言起行決心改革香港教育的含義且不會左右或艇誦膝 外的人士對這個重大問題的討論所以本人認為教育及人力統籌司所提出的修是不應被接的。

(The following is the interpretation of what Mr. So said.)

Sir, the motion contains the idea of implementation of educational reform in Hong Kong. It will not shut off further discussion by other people outside this Chamber, so I think the Secretary's proposed amendment should not be accepted.

MR. SWAINE:—Sir, it's a pity we've got to choose between the two versions. I must say in the course of this afternoon, my mind has drifted from one to the other. In each case, the Council is asked to receive with approbation the report. In each case, the report is commended to Government. I am, however, assured by Father MCGOVERN'S closing speech that the motion was carefully prepared and that there was no intention in the formulating of the motion that there should be pre-empted any public discussion of the report or any decision by Executive Council in the normal way. I would, therefore, support the motion as originally worded and vote against the amendment.

MISS DUNN:—Sir, like Mr. SWAINE, I found myself throughout this debate wavering over the two forms. But it seems to me it would be a great pity that the substance and spirit of this important debate should be lost over the semantics—over the wording of the motion. I think we are all agreed, in spirit at any rate, what ought to be done and what has to be done in the field of education. Father MCGOVERN has qualified his motion. It seems to me that there is now no conflict between the original motion and the amendment proposed by Mr. TOPLEY. I hope the Government can see fit to withdraw that amendment.

MR. PETER C. WONG:—Sir, I rise to support Father MCGOVERN in opposing the amendment proposed by the Secretary. I cannot do better than by stressing two points already made by Father MCGOVERN. The motion was very carefully worded and it was worded in such a way as to give Government a great deal of flexibility. It does not bind Government in any way or to any specific course of action. The key phrase in the original motion is ‘a basis’ which is by no means exclusive. It will certainly not shut out any comments to come. Point two, we want action from Government. The amendment proposed by the Secretary is too vague and too general and as such it must be rejected. It differs in spirit from the original motion. I therefore commend it to my Unofficial Colleagues to vote against the amendment.

MR. LOBO:—I was to abstain in keeping with the decision taken by the Executive Council to resolve this in August. But on hearing Father MCGOVERN and also on what Miss DUNN have said, there is indeed no conflict of interest, and I suggest that the amendment be withdrawn.

6.30 p.m.

HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT:—Council is suspended.

7.00 p.m.

HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT:—Council will resume.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER:—Sir, I ask leave of the Council to withdraw the amendment in my name.

I now rise to speak to the motion. It is clear from what Father MCGOVERN and other Members have said on the amendment that the motion is not meant to be inconsistent with the Government's position. It has now been made clear that the motion is not meant to exclude consideration of the public consultation which is continuing. It is not claimed that this report is the only basis for the formulation of policy, nor is it suggested that the Government must proceed tomorrow to implement the recommendations in the report as a fixed blueprint. I must make very plain. The Government has no intention of dragging its feet and

indeed there is nothing in our record in recent years that suggests that we do not pursue agreed policies vigorously. Finally, the Government has made it quite clear how it sees the sequence of events unfolding. In our understanding the motion is not inconsistent with this sequence, and the sequence of events derives from the advice of the Executive Council, freely given as recently as April this year. In these circumstances I and my Official Colleagues are now prepared to vote for the motion. (*applause*)

Question put on original motion and agreed to.

Adjournment and next sitting

HIS HONOUR THE PRESIDENT:—I congratulate honourable Members on a debate which has been both enlightening and enlivening to our proceedings this day, and I now, with considerable pleasure, adjourn this Council in accordance with Standing Orders until 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday 27 July.

Adjourned accordingly at five minutes past seven o'clock.