

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**Wednesday, 13th August 1969****The Council met at half-past Two o'clock**

[Mr PRESIDENT in the Chair]

PRESENT

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)
SIR DAVID (CLIVE CROSBIE) TRENCH, GCMG, MC
THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY
SIR HUGH (SELBY) NORMAN-WALKER, KCMG, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (*Acting*)
MR GRAHAM RUPERT SNEATH, QC, JP
THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS (*Acting*)
MR PAUL TSUI KA-CHEUNG, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY
SIR JOHN (JAMES) COWPERTHWAITTE, KBE, CMG, JP
DR THE HONOURABLE TENG PIN-HUI, CMG, ORE, JP
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE JAMES JEAVONS ROBSON, JP
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS
THE HONOURABLE DONALD COLLIN CUMYNN LUDDINGTON, JP
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER, NEW TERRITORIES
THE HONOURABLE JOHN CANNING, JP
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
THE HONOURABLE DAVID HAROLD JORDAN, MBE, JP
DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
THE HONOURABLE ARTHUR PATRICK RICHARDSON, JP
COMMISSIONER OF LABOUR
THE HONOURABLE BRIAN DENIS WILSON, JP
DIRECTOR OF URBAN SERVICES
THE HONOURABLE KAN YUET-KEUNG, CBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE FUNG HON-CHU, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE TSE YU-CHUEN, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE WOO PAK-CHUEN, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE SZETO WAI, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE WILFRED WONG SIEN-BING, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE ELLEN LI SHU-PUI, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE WILSON WANG TZE-SAM, JP
THE HONOURABLE HERBERT JOHN CHARLES BROWNE, JP
DR THE HONOURABLE CHUNG SZE-YUEN, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL ALEXANDER ROBERT HERRIES, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE LEE QUO WEI, OBE, JP
THE HONOURABLE OSWALD VICTOR CHEUNG, QC, JP

ABSENT

THE HONOURABLE GEORGE TIPPET ROWE, JP
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE

IN ATTENDANCE

THE DEPUTY CLERK OF COUNCILS
MR DONALD BARTON

PAPERS

The following papers were laid pursuant to Standing Order No 14(2): —

<i>Subject</i>	<i>LN No</i>
Subsidiary Legislation: —	
Abattoirs (Amendment) By-laws 1969.	
Abattoirs (Amendment) By-laws 1969 (Commencement)	
Notice 1969	109
Fire Services Ordinance.	
Duties of the Fire Services Department Notice 1969	110
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance.	
Declaration of Markets in Urban Areas to which the	
Ordinance Applies	111
University of Hong Kong Ordinance.	
Statutes of the University (Amendment) Statutes 1969	112

Reports: —

- Engineering Report on the proposed Container Terminal at Kwai Chung (published 13.8.69).
- Report on the Outbreak of Cholera in Hong Kong in July 1969 (published 13.8.69).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**Mentally retarded children**

1. MR P. C. WOO asked: —

Is Government aware that there are many mentally retarded children left unattended in their homes and what steps does Government intend to take to have these children cared for by Government or voluntary institutions?

DR P. H. TENG: —Sir, Government is aware that there are some mentally retarded children in this community who are being left unattended in the homes especially during the day time. As far as possible the Social Welfare Department arranges for the care and the institutional accommodation for these children, but the number of places available is insufficient for the medium and the severe grades. As we all know, Sir, Government has, on its plans, the building of the Siu Lam Hospital which is being built at the present moment to accommodate the severe

grade of mentally retarded children and it should be available for admission some time next year. The problem of mental deficiency concerns the Medical and Health Department for the medical and nursing care of the severe grade, the Social Welfare Department for the care and institutional training of the medium grade and the Education Department for the education of the low grade. Government has recently set up a Working Party Steering Committee to go into the various facets of mental deficiency, to make appropriate recommendations and also to co-ordinate action.

This Committee has already met twice and it has already been agreed that an assessment team be formed which will consist of a psychologist, a psychiatrist and a social worker. This is necessary to make an assessment and ascertainment of the degree of mental retardation starting with those who appear to be severely handicapped in institutions and at home. This is a necessary preliminary to the correct placement of the retarded in appropriate institutions and in day care centres. Residential accommodation is not necessarily the only answer to the problem in every case. Day care centres have a part to play in the whole programme and Government is greatly indebted for the devoted work of the voluntary agencies in handling the problem of mental deficiency in Hong Kong. However it recognizes the often insupportable burden placed on the parents of the severely mentally retarded children and I can assure my honourable Friend that when the question of residential accommodation is considered, every priority will be given to this group.

MR KAN: —Sir, if I may ask a supplementary question? This new institution which my honourable Friend has just mentioned—how many people is it intended to accommodate and to what extent does he consider it will solve the problem just been raised?

DR TENG: —The initial stage of planning is to accommodate 200 severe grade mentally retarded. But we have plans for increasing the number to 300 and I would suggest, Sir, that it will be very much more prudent to await the results of the survey of the assessment team in order to let us know the size of the problem so that we can proceed with the forward planning.

MR WOO: —Sir, I understand there are now 300 severe grade defective children in demand of care and attention. As the Siu Lam Hospital can only provide 300 in 1973, what other places of institution for care of children are contemplated by Government; and, if necessary, whether the steering committee should take this as a priority for consideration?

DR TENG: —Sir, I think the assessment team will include in its recommendations to the steering committee what special arrangements

[DR TENG] **Oral answers**

should be made to give accommodation meanwhile before the actual completion of the whole scheme of the Siu Lam to accommodate the 300 patients.

MR WOO: —Thank you.

Provision for severely mentally retarded people

2. MR WOO: —

It has been known that many severely mentally retarded children and adults have been housed in a number of voluntary institutions, *eg*, the Po Leung Kuk, which is not a proper place for these persons to be looked after. What steps does Government intend to take to remove these persons to other suitable and proper institutions for care and attention?

DR TENG: —In answer to this question, Sir, there are at present a number of mental defectives cared for in the Po Leung Kuk, in the Tung Wah Hospital, and in eight other institutions. Some of these patients are known to be severely retarded. A properly designed hospital, as I have said, at Siu Lam is being built, donated by the Royal Hong Kong Jockey Club. I would also mention, Sir, that when it is completed it will take over the care of the very severe grade and if it is found to be inadequate, then the accommodation will be increased to 300. I would also like to mention Sir, that during the interim period Government has spent a large sum of money for the conversion of the ward at Tung Wah Hospital for the temporary accommodation of the severe grade of mental defectives.

MR KAN: —May I ask a supplementary question, Sir? Is Po Leung Kuk in fact an institution intended to accommodate children of this type?

DR TENG: —It was not originally the intention of the Po Leung Kuk, neither does it come within its scope of activities. But, unfortunately, over the years, these children have been admitted. I think most of them belong to the medium grade of mental defectives. I would suggest, Sir, that it would be better to await the outcome of the survey of the assessment team so that the whole problem could be tackled on a rational basis.

MR KAN: —I am concerned with the Po Leung Kuk, Sir. Does my honourable Friend know whether or not the Directors of the Po Leung Kuk do in fact welcome taking care of children of this type?

DR TENG: —At the moment, Sir, they would like to get rid of these children. But unofficially I have heard that they are very keen to embark on a scheme whereby these types of children could be looked after in another institution which they are willing to build and sponsor.

Building plans

3. MR Q. W. LEE asked: —

In view of the revived activities in the property market, will the Government assure this Council that there is no delay, and will not be any, in processing and approving new building plans submitted to the Public Works Department?

MR J. J. ROBSON: —Sir, there has been a marked increase in the pressure upon the Buildings Ordinance Office and the number of proposals for new buildings submitted in the first six months of this year equalled the total of such submissions in 1968. In addition it is now necessary to consider the possible effect upon such submissions of the mass transit scheme, the long term road study and the proposals for urban renewal: all of which work is additional to that dealt with by the Buildings Ordinance Office up to late 1968. As a result delays in processing plans are now occurring, but these are mainly confined to buildings proposed in the western and central districts of Hong Kong.

The recent depression in the building industry led to a marked reduction in the volume of new work passing through the Buildings Ordinance Office and there was, therefore, no justification for filling the vacancies for staff which occurred during that period. Now, however, the staff are hard pressed and steps have been taken to fill the vacancies in the establishment approved for the office. Building Surveyors have, however, always been difficult to recruit and recent advertisements for local officers were fruitless. Recruitment from the United Kingdom is therefore in hand for six of the present ten vacancies and when this exercise is complete, consideration will be given to filling the other four vacancies from the United Kingdom if local recruits are still not available.

The indications are that the tempo of building will continue to increase but if the staff vacancies can be filled this year, I do not expect any great problem to arise.

Oral answers

Foreign investments

4. MR S. Y. CHUNG asked: —

What are the reasons for the declining trend in the number of new industrial projects in Hong Kong involving foreign participation and what action is Government taking to reverse this trend bearing in mind the fact that other countries like Singapore and Taiwan are getting increasing numbers of foreign industrial enterprises?

MR D. H. JORDAN: —Sir, while I cannot say with certainty what precisely were the reasons for the decline between 1964 and 1968 in new industrial projects involving foreign participation, I have no doubt that both political and economic factors played their part in the potential investors' decision-making.

And the fact that we had riots here in 1966 and more severe—and sensationally reported—disturbances in 1967 no doubt had an effect at the time on the confidence of potential investors.

There is of course a considerable time-lag in these matters so it is perhaps not surprising that the marked revival of confidence generated by our success in overcoming the difficulties of 1967 did not start to show in this particular field until this year.

So far as new projects that have commenced operation in 1969 are concerned, I do not have such detailed information as we obtained in our survey of the years 1964 to 1968. Nevertheless I think I can say that while there was a decline in 1967 and 1968 this did not necessarily establish a declining *trend*. There is some evidence that a revival may have begun.

I suggested, Sir, that both political and economic factors would play their parts in investors' decision-making. Among the economic factors that have been mentioned to us by potential investors are the availability of land and labour, and rising wages—but these are of course in large part a product of our continuing boom in manufacturing industry. At the same time, other countries in the region have been stepping up their efforts to attract foreign industrial investment.

The Industrial Development Branch of the Commerce and Industry Department has in recent years concentrated on assisting people who come here to investigate the possibilities of setting up a manufacturing operation, and in the last year or so we have expanded and improved our service to potential investors. But we have not been making a strong effort at *overseas* promotion.

We have however recently been considering further expansion of the responsibilities of this Branch and I am now engaged in discussions with the Colonial Secretariat and the Trade Development Council concerning collaboration and co-ordination between us in this important field.

DR CHUNG: —Is Government aware that, due to the export oriented nature of our manufacturing industry, foreign industrialists would not have the necessary incentive for siting their factories in Hong Kong unless the overall conditions and environments in Hong Kong are comparable to, if not better than, those in other competing countries in this region?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: —May I have your question again please Dr CHUNG? What is your question?

DR CHUNG: —My question, Sir, is—Is Government aware that, due to the export oriented nature of our manufacturing industry, unless we offer conditions comparable to those competing countries in this region, foreign investors will not choose Hong Kong as a site for their factories.

MR JORDAN: —I would agree, Sir, that this is something that we should have in mind. But, on the other hand, I think we should have to be pretty cautious about considering any measures that would provide additional incentives to overseas investors that would not be available to local investors too. We have to keep this in line for everyone, and the conditions in Hong Kong for industrial development and manufacturing industry, although we do not provide specific positive incentive in the way that some people do, can hardly be said, I think, to have inhibited the industrial development of Hong Kong.

Indoor Stadium

5. MR SZETO WAI asked: —

Will Government inform this Council what progress has been made in the planning of the Indoor Stadium, and where is it to be sited and whether its facilities will include those for conventions and trade exhibitions?

MR ROBSON: —Sir, sketch plans have been prepared for an indoor stadium with a capacity of 15,000 to be built over and in conjunction with the Tsim Sha Tsui Railway Terminus when this is moved to Hung Hom. The stadium could be used for the holding of large conventions since it is intended to air-condition it but as it is designed as a sports centre it would not readily operate as a self-contained convention centre.

[MR ROBSON] **Oral answers**

I have no doubt it would be possible for the indoor stadium to be used for trade exhibitions—when it is not being used for its primary purpose, *ie* for sporting activities and it is planned to have an unrestricted sports area of some 17,000 sq ft.

MR SZETO: —Sir, does my honourable Friend think that this is the best site for an indoor stadium, would there be sufficient facilities provided for transport by that time when the stadium is built, and how many years would be required to build the stadium?

MR ROBSON: —In respect of the siting, it was felt that this site over the railway would be ideal because the development envisaged will be a central focal point for all transport facilities. There will be bus services, train service, the ferry service and, in due course, possibly an underground railway. So we think this is an ideal site for the stadium. In connexion with, when it will or how long it will take to build—I think this is the question really—it is premature to guess at this one. If we were given money to go ahead now, and the plans were approved, it would still take possibly 4 years because it has to be done in conjunction with the building of the railway at this particular site.

MR SZETO: —Thank you, Sir.

Air pollution

6. MR SZETO: —

Can Government say what decision has been made in regard to the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Air Pollution which was established in 1966, and what measures this Committee has recommended to abate air pollution in Hung Hom in particular?

MR A. P. RICHARDSON: —Sir, the Committee on Air Pollution has so far submitted two Interim Reports to Your Excellency. These led in 1968 to the appointment of a Smoke Abatement Adviser in the Labour Department and to the setting up of a continuous monitoring programme to measure the sulphur dioxide content, sulphation rate and smoke densities at various points in the urban area. More recently approval has been given in principle for the setting up of a small air pollution control unit in my Department, subject of course to the necessary funds being voted by this Council. An application for the provision of further testing and monitoring equipment is now being processed in the Colonial Secretariat for submission to the Finance Committee. Staffing proposals for the new unit have now been drawn up and I shall be submitting them for approval this week.

Additional measures to combat air pollution are contained in a further report which was agreed in draft by the Committee on Air Pollution at a meeting held on the 29th of July and which is now being prepared for submission to you, Sir.

One particular measure has been taken to reduce air pollution in the Hung Hom area. Following discussions between the Committee on Air Pollution and the China Light & Power Co Ltd, the Company has taken steps to reduce the sulphur content of the fuel burnt from 2.5% to 1.5% between September and April each year. It is during these months that climatic conditions are least conducive to the dispersal of sulphur dioxide and other effluents.

MR SZETO: —Sir, I believe that one of the measures to reduce the air pollution is to increase the height of the chimneys. Has Government taken up this measure with the Power Company to increase the height of the chimneys? And just now my honourable Friend mentioned that, to reduce the sulphur content of the fuel used in the generation from 2.5% to about 1½%, I understand that will increase the cost of the fuel. Would this increase be sort of passed on to the power consumer—pass the bill to the consumer?

MR RICHARDSON: —Sir, if one could heighten the chimneys, stacks it would certainly help to solve the problem—but it is impossible because of the hazard to aircraft. I understand that extra cost for fuel is in the order of about \$7 million a year for the 8 months' period, but I have heard no suggestion that this extra cost is going to be passed on to consumers.

MR SZETO: —Sir, some of the existing chimneys of the power station were well below the ceiling height laid down by the Airport Regulations. In fact, some of the chimneys can be built up to about 150 feet high and yet 8 of them are about 126 feet high only. Can those chimneys be heightened—increased in height?

MR RICHARDSON: —Sir, I am not a particular expert on chimney heights, but I have been told that, to bring them up to the maximum possible height permitted in the area would be of no great use.

Containerization (1)

7. MR FUNG HON-CHU asked: —

Is it a condition of Government's lease of land to the Hong Kong & Kowloon Wharf & Godown Co, Ltd for a container freight station that the Company is required to provide facilities for container ships which are not self-sustaining?

Oral answers

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT): —Sir, although it is a condition of the lease that the land must be used to handle container traffic, it is not a condition that facilities for non-self-sustaining ships must be provided. I understand that the land available would be insufficient for the installation and efficient utilization of the type of equipment required by non-self-sustaining ships. I also understand that the Company has invited Consultants to study the feasibility of installing some type of crane but it will probably have to be a more modest type than the Gange crane.

Containerization (2)

8. MR FUNG: —

Is it envisaged on Government's part to enter into similar arrangements with other interested parties?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT): —Sir, in the case of the Kowloon Wharf and Godown Company, the land is being made available to enable the existing facilities owned by the Company to be adapted for the handling of containers. Government would be prepared, if suitable land is available, to come to similar arrangements with other companies in similar circumstances.

Containerization (3)

9. MR FUNG: —

What progress has been made in respect of the feasibility study on the prospects of a container terminal at Kwai Chung?

MR ROBSON: —Sir, honourable Members will recall that on the 9th October 1968, funds were voted for an engineering investigation and feasibility study of the site reserved at Kwai Chung for a container terminal. The Chief Engineer, Port Works, completed his report at the end of May 1969, which has now been printed. This report was tabled today and copies will now be put on sale to the public.

MR FUNG: —Sir, in view of what we have just heard about containerization, does my honourable Friend agree that the Port of Hong Kong is not modernizing in time to meet this containerization revolution?

MR ROBSON: —I think, Sir, this is an expression of opinion for, if some people say we are not going fast enough, some people are saying "don't go so fast". And I would have thought that perhaps we have just hit the happy medium.

MR FUNG: —Thank you. May I ask if any policy on financing and operating of the terminal has been made out?

MR ROBSON: —Sir, this is really not my province but, as far as I am aware, this is one of the matters which has yet to be finalized.

Containerization (4)

10. MR FUNG: —

Has the Marine Department in conjunction with the Department of Commerce and Industry projected the volume of traffic estimated to move to and from Hong Kong, the United States and Europe in the first half of 1970 which all public sources indicate will be the major geographical areas requiring containerized cargo?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT): —Sir, during the months of June and July this year 904 full containers were discharged and 677 full containers were loaded. Virtually all the containers were involved in the Hong Kong/United States trade. The Marine Department has estimated that between 2,500 and 5,000 full containers a month will be moving between Hong Kong and the United States and Europe during the first half of 1970.

DELEGATION OF FINANCIAL POWERS

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT) moved the following resolution: —

Be it resolved—

- (1) that, in accordance with the provisions of Colonial Regulation 223(2)(a), the Governor may sanction additional expenditure (on his own responsibility pending covering approval of the Finance Committee of this Council) where the total required under any individual subhead does not exceed the sum specified in the third column of the Schedule to this Resolution,
- (2) that, in accordance with Colonial Regulation 223(2)(c), authority is conferred upon the Governor to delegate such of the powers conferred upon him by Colonial Regulation 223(2)(a) and by this Resolution as are specified in the Schedule to this Resolution, to the extent specified in the third column thereof, to the public officers specified in the fourth column thereof and subject to such conditions, exceptions and qualifications as the Governor may prescribe,

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY] **Delegation of Financial Powers**

- (3) that, in accordance with Colonial Regulation 223(2)(c), authority is conferred upon the Governor to delegate any of the powers conferred on him by Colonial Regulation 223(2)(b) to the Financial Secretary and the Deputy Financial Secretary—
- (a) subject to such conditions, exceptions and qualifications as the Governor may prescribe; and
- (b) provided that the additional provision authorized does not exceed \$75,000 in the case of the Financial Secretary or half that amount in the case of the Deputy Financial Secretary.
- (4) that the Resolution passed by this Council on the 4th day of May 1966* be rescinded.

SCHEDULE.

(1) <i>Item.</i>	(2) <i>Subhead.</i>	(3) <i>Limits of Supplementary Provision.</i>	(4) <i>Authorized Delegate.</i>
I.	PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS		
	A. Supernumerary Posts	Such sum as may be required—	
		(1) in respect of a supernumerary appointment for—	
		(a) a replacement, where considered necessary, for a woman officer on maternity leave for the approved period of such leave;	Establishment Officer and Assistant Establishment Officers
		(b) a replacement, where considered necessary, for an officer on prolonged sick leave for the period of such leave;	Establishment Officer and Assistant Establishment Officers
		(c) a replacement, in the same or lower grade, for an officer on no-pay leave;	Establishment Officer and Assistant Establishment Officers
		(d) a substantive appointment to a post the previous holder of which is on leave prior to retirement; such appointment may date from the commencement of the previous holder's Pre-retirement leave in the case of a superscale or upperscale post, but there shall be an interval of at least six months in all other cases, provided that a shorter interval may be authorized in individual cases where the Establishment Officer considers that recruiting difficulties would be eased substantially thereby;	Establishment Officer only

* 1966 Hansard, page 276.

(1) <i>Item.</i>	(2) <i>Subhead.</i>	(3) <i>Limits of Supplementary Provision.</i>	(4) <i>Authorized Delegate.</i>
		(e) additional supernumerary posts in any class within a cadre, subject to the overall establishment of the cadre not being exceeded, for a period not exceeding two months; arising from a temporary need to over-establish that class for a specific purpose; e.g. as a result of a hand-over of officers of equal rank, in-service training courses or secondment to special duties.	Establishment Officer only
	B. Vacancies	(2) for the creation of— (a) a supernumerary post in a lower class against a vacant post in a higher class in the same grade; (b) a supernumerary post in one grade held against a vacant post in another grade which has a similar or higher salary scale.	Heads of Departments Establishment Officer and Assistant Establishment Officers
	C. Promotion or transfer	(3) for additional supernumerary posts for a period not exceeding one year, arising from the promotion or transfer of an officer in a grade common to several Departments (e.g. Administrative Officer, Executive Officer, Stores Officer, Clerk, Clerical Assistant, etc.) subject to the approved overall establishment in the class to which the officer is promoted or transferred, not being exceeded.	Establishment Officer
	D. Salaries based on rates applied by other Governments	(4) to cover a change in salary scale in all cases where rates of another administration are applied when such rates alter, provided that Finance Committee have initially approved the application of such rates.	Financial Secretary and Deputy Financial Secretary
	E. Honoraria	(5) for payment of honoraria not exceeding \$1,000 in any particular case and not involving new policy.	Financial Secretary
	F. Arrears and Adjustments	(6) for payment of arrears or adjustment of salary and allowances where no change in policy or principle is involved— (a) supplementary provision in the Personal Emoluments vote arising from arrears of salary and allowances or a salary and allowances award, where the commitment has been approved by Finance Committee; (b) supplementary provision where provision of funds is insufficient to meet expenditure arising from approved posts;	Financial Secretary and Deputy Financial Secretary Financial Secretary and Deputy Financial Secretary

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY] **Delegation of Financial Powers**

(1) <i>Item.</i>	(2) <i>Subhead.</i>	(3) <i>Limits of Supplementary Provision.</i>	(4) <i>Authorized Delegate.</i>
		(c) supplementary provision for overtime, honoraria or allowances, where the vote is insufficient, not involving any increase in rate, provided that supplementary provision for overtime does not exceed 10% of the vote or \$25,000 whichever is the lesser, and that in any case where it appears likely that there will be a continuing need for excess overtime covering approval is obtained from Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.	Financial Secretary and Deputy Financial Secretary
	G. New posts	(7) subject to the availability of funds in the Personal Emoluments vote, for the creation of Posts for Scale I and II staff additional to those established in the Estimates provided that the need for such posts is urgent and provided further that the increase shall not exceed 2½% of the establishment in each grade or 10 posts in each grade whichever is the lesser and that covering approval is obtained from Finance Committee at the earliest opportunity.	Financial Secretary
II.	OTHER CHARGES: Annually Recurrent (Including Public Works Recurrent, Miscellaneous Services, etc.)	(a) where the original Provision in the subhead is— \$0—\$50,000: not exceeding 30% or \$5,000 whichever is the greater; \$50,001-\$150,000: not exceeding 20% or \$15,000 whichever is the greater; \$150,001-\$500,000: not exceeding 15% or \$30,000 whichever is the greater- \$500,001 and over: maximum of \$75,000;	Financial Secretary
		(b) up to half the percentages and amounts stated in subparagraph (a);	Deputy Financial Secretary
		(c) virement between subheads, subject to the total additional Provision in the subhead to which funds are to be transferred not exceeding in any one financial year 10% of the original approved Provision of that subhead; and subject to the additional provision not involving any new principle;	Financial Secretary
		(d) virement between subheads, subject to the total additional provision in the subhead to which funds are to be transferred not exceeding in any one financial year 5 % of the original approved Provision of that subhead; and subject to the additional provision not involving any new principle.	Deputy Financial Secretary

(1) Item.	(2) Subhead.	(3) Limits of Supplementary Provision.	(4) Authorized Delegate.
III.	OTHER CHARGES: Special Expenditure (Including Public Works Non-Recurrent, Miscellaneous Services, etc.)	(a) in respect of the original approved provision in the subhead as in II(a) above, where no point of principle or change of policy is involved and subject to the authority being exercised not more than once in any financial year;	Financial Secretary
		(b) up to half the percentages and amounts that may be exercised by the Financial Secretary under sub-paragraph (a);	Deputy Financial Secretary
		(c) in respect of the overall estimate of any item as stated in the Estimates; as in II(a) above, subject to the authority being exercised only once during the life of an item: i.e. not annually;	Financial Secretary
		(d) up to half the percentages and amounts stated in sub-paragraph (c);	Deputy Financial Secretary
		(e) in respect of revotes; up to the overall estimate;	Financial Secretary
		(f) in respect of revotes; up to \$250,000;	Deputy Financial Secretary
		(g) in respect of the annual provision of any subhead extending over more than one year; up to the total estimate;	Financial Secretary
		(h) in respect of the annual provision of any subhead extending over more than one year; within the total estimate up to \$250,000.	Deputy Financial Secretary

He said: —Sir, in May 1966 this Council passed a resolution* covering the exercise of certain limited powers to approve supplementary provisions in anticipation of the covering approval of Finance Committee.

It has been discovered that the form of the resolution, as opposed to its content, is open to objection for the following reasons: —

- (i) paragraphs (1) and (2) of the 1966 Resolution reproduce, to some extent inaccurately, Colonial Regulations 223(2)(a) and (b) and purport to confer on the Governor authority which he already enjoys;
- (ii) the delegations to the Establishment Officer and Assistant Establishment Officers and Heads of Departments were *ultra vires* the provisions of Colonial Regulations.

The Resolution now before Council has therefore been properly redrafted in a simpler form contain clear references to the appropriate Colonial Regulations. Paragraph (1) of the Resolution retains the form of the earlier schedule, which has proved satisfactory in practice,

* 1966 Hansard, page 276.

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY] **Delegation of Financial Powers**

with minor textual amendments; while paragraph (2) seeks to obtain the authority of this Council for the Governor to sub-delegate to the public officers specified the powers conferred on him by paragraph (1). This is now in order as the Secretary of State has agreed that Colonial Regulation 223(2)(c), in its application to Hong Kong, should allow for delegation to named officers.

Paragraph (3) of the Resolution does not arise out of defects in the previous resolution but is a new proposal designed to expedite public business further. It seeks authority for the delegation by the Governor of his powers under Colonial Regulation 223(2)(c) to approve supplementary expenditure in cases where it is essential in the public interest that this should be at once. This delegation would be to the Financial Secretary and the Deputy Financial Secretary and subject to a limit of \$75,000 in the case of the former and half that amount in the case of the latter.

Question put and agreed to.

**SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS FOR THE QUARTER
ENDED 31ST MARCH 1969**

Council went into committee *pursuant to Standing Order No 58(2)*, to consider the motion standing in the name of the Financial Secretary (Sir JOHN COWPERTHWAITTE).

The Governor's recommendation signified by the Financial Secretary *pursuant to Standing Order No 23(1)*.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAITTE) moved: —"That this Council approves the proposals set out in Paper No 5 of 1968-69 (Final)."

He said: —Sir, the final schedule of supplementary provisions for the year 1968-69 covers a total of \$22.6 million. Of this sum, \$7.9 million was required for additional grants to aided schools due to the reduction of standard fees and increased salaries and special allowances for school staff; \$3.1 million to meet higher cost of salary payments by the Director of Medical and Health Services as a result of the Salaries Revision in April 1968, \$3.3 million to meet payments arising from adjustments to pensions as a result of the 1968 Salaries Revision and \$3 million as the first instalment of our subscription to the Asian Development Bank.

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

Question put and agreed to.

Council then resumed.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT) reported that the motion has been agreed to in committee without amendment.

Question agreed pursuant to Standing Order No 58(4).

**IMMIGRATION (CONTROL AND OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL
1969**

MENTAL HEALTH (AMENDMENT) BILL 1969

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO 3) BILL 1969

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES (KOWLOON AND NEW
TERRITORIES) (AMENDMENT) (NO 2) BILL 1969**

Bills read the first time and ordered to be set down for second reading pursuant to Standing Order No 41(3).

**IMMIGRATION (CONTROL AND OFFENCES)
(AMENDMENT) BILL 1969**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (SIR HUGH NORMAN-WALKER) moved the second reading of:—"A bill to amend further the Immigration (Control and Offences) Ordinance."

He said:—Sir, clause 2(a) of the bill will enable the Government to extend to Commonwealth citizens the controls which at present operate over the entry of aliens, and those controls will enable a visa system and a system of re-entry permits.

Clause 2(b) of the bill has the effect of removing a restriction which at present inhibits the Director of Immigration from issuing visas for such periods of longer than a year as may be appropriate in particular cases.

There are several reasons why the Government has felt it necessary to extend its powers of control to the entry of Commonwealth citizens. The position is now that almost all administrations, within and without the Commonwealth, have imposed controls on entry to their countries, including controls on unskilled labour. Hong Kong is thus in danger of occupying the unhappy position of being one of the last refuges in the world of the unskilled and unplaced labour of the Commonwealth. With our limited land resources, and our limited capacity to provide services, this is a situation which we must forestall.

[THE COLONIAL SECRETARY] **Immigration (Control and Offences)
(Amendment) Bill—second reading**

Another reason is that though we have evidence of a build-up in the inflow of unskilled labour we have no accurate statistics giving a breakdown of the entry of Commonwealth citizens by country of origin, by employment sought or by skills possessed. The introduction of a visa system will make it possible for these figures to be kept accurately in future, and enable the Government to assess trends and administrative requirements more accurately than is possible at the present time.

There is too the question of equity and general reciprocity. For instance, perhaps the administrations between which countries and Hong Kong there is most traffic are Pakistan, Australia, India, New Zealand, Singapore and Canada. All these impose in varying degrees restrictions at least as onerous as those that we now contemplate.

I would like to repeat what I have said before: that it is not the Government's intention to require the possession of visas by tourists or short term visitors who come here on business trips. Only those who wish to enter for employment or residence will require visas and subsequently re-entry permits. I should perhaps make it clear that in so far as education involves residence, those who come here for education will also require visas.

In my previous statement I said that the position of Commonwealth citizens already in Hong Kong would be safeguarded. It is I think desirable that I should develop this. To those Commonwealth citizens who wish to come here in future the criteria applicable to their first entry will be those applicable at present to aliens. In considering the question of Commonwealth citizens already here these criteria will not be applied, and re-entry permits will be available to them on request and on payment of the necessary fee. Visas will normally be made available for as liberal a period as is convenient within the regulations. The maximum period would be until shortly before the expiry of the passport issued by the home country of the person concerned. I should however make it clear that although the criteria applicable to new entrants will not be applied to Commonwealth citizens already here, a further criterion—that of good behaviour—will apply. Those who demonstrate that their presence in the Colony is undesirable because of ill-behaviour will not get re-entry permits.

Since the arrangements for the introduction of a visa system involve visa issuing authorities all over the world I am still not in a position to propose a definite date on which the new system will be introduced, but it is possible that I will be able to do so at a later stage of this bill.

Finally I would like to make it clear that no consideration of race, creed or colour will govern in any way the application of the visa system which this bill enables.

Question proposed.

Motion made (pursuant to Standing Order No 30). That the debate on the second reading of the bill be adjourned—THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR G. R. SNEATH).

Question put and agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum

The object of this amendment is to enable all immigrants, and not only aliens, to be required to obtain visas to enter Hong Kong, if this is thought to be necessary.

MENTAL HEALTH (AMENDMENT) BILL 1969

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR G. R. SNEATH) moved the second reading of: —“A bill to amend further the Mental Health Ordinance”.

He said: —Sir, honourable Members will recall the passage through this Council in June and July of this year of the District Court (Extended Civil Jurisdiction) Bill, which was then enacted. The purpose of that Ordinance was to transfer virtually all the civil jurisdiction vested in magistrates to district judges*.

However, caught up in the net of the various powers which were transferred was one under the Mental Health Ordinance which was exercisable by magistrates and justices of the peace. This was the power under section 31(1) of that Ordinance to order the temporary detention for the purposes of observation of any person who was thought to be mentally disordered.

It was not appreciated then just how many of these orders are required, and required moreover at short notice. It may be of interest to state that in the first half of this year the average monthly number of such orders was 120. A further problem is that a number of these cases occur in the New Territories where justices of the peace can be found but where district judges are somewhat rarer birds.

In consequence, therefore, it has been decided to introduce this bill which will restore this power to magistrates and to justices of the peace and they will exercise a concurrent jurisdiction in this matter with district judges.

* Pages 360-1, 426 and 428.

[THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL] **Mental Health (Amendment) Bill—
second reading**

Clause 4 of the bill, Sir, re-enacts the old section 71, which had been repealed. This is the section which confers on magistrates and justices of the peace the necessary ancillary powers of calling persons before them to give evidence when confronted with the request to make one of these orders.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order No 43(1).

Explanatory Memorandum

This Bill amends the principal Ordinance to empower a magistrate and a justice of the peace, as well as a District Judge, to make a temporary detention order under section 31.

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO 3) BILL 1969

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT) moved the second reading of: —"A bill to amend further the Inland Revenue Ordinance."

He said: —Sir, when the Acting Financial Secretary moved the second reading of the Inland Revenue (Amendment) (No 2) Bill at the sitting of this Council on 2nd July, he gave notice to honourable Members that he would, at the Committee stage of that bill, propose a minor amendment to sub-section (1) of section 65 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance to provide for the Board of Review to comprise not more than sixty members as opposed to the present forty. Upon the subsequent advice of my honourable Friend, the Attorney General, the Acting Financial Secretary withdrew his proposal and informed honourable Members that the amendment would be the subject of a separate bill. This is the bill now before Council*.

The Board of Review is constituted mainly for the purpose of hearing appeals from any person who has validly objected to an assessment but with whom the Commissioner of Inland Revenue has failed to agree. The Board heard twenty six cases in 1967 and twenty seven in 1968. In the first seven months of 1969, the Board has already dealt with twenty one cases, an increase which is the inevitable result of more persons becoming liable to assessment to tax. Additionally,

* Pages 410-1 and 469.

recent legislation has extended the appeal functions of the Board in several respects. An increase in the membership will not only enable the Board to deal with appeals more expeditiously, but also relieve the burden on the present members who are already devoting a large amount of their valuable time to these sittings.

The increase proposed, from forty to sixty members, is larger than the present increase in business justifies. I do not think it would be necessary for you, Sir, to appoint members immediately to all the twenty vacancies that would be created, but the proposal now before Council would enable the eventual appointment of a sufficiently large Board to meet any substantial increases in appeals in the future.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant Standing Order No 43(1).

Explanatory Memorandum

Clause 2 of the Bill increases the maximum membership of the panel for the Board of Review from 40 to 60.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES (KOWLOON AND
NEW TERRITORIES) (AMENDMENT)
(NO 2) BILL 1969**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (SIR JOHN COWPERTHWAIT) moved the second reading of:—"A bill to amend further the Public Transport Services (Kowloon and New Territories) Ordinance."

He said:—Sir, earlier this year the Company reported that the operation of its services no longer provided an adequate return such as was essential if it was to raise enough investment capital, either from its shareholders or by borrowing, to expand and improve its services. After examining the Company's present position and future plans, it was agreed with the Company that a reduction in royalty of 5% would give it an opportunity to earn a reasonable return this year from the improved services it is planning to introduce. The intention of the bill now before Council is to effect this reduction with retrospective effect to the start of the Company's financial year on 15th February 1969.

The bill also proposes an amendment to the Ordinance so that this Council may, by resolution, at any time amend the rate of royalty payable by the Company. At present it requires an amending bill.

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY] **Public Transport Services (Kowloon and
New Territories) (Amendment) (No 2)
Bill—second reading**

I would, Sir, draw attention now to two amendments to the bill which I shall be proposing at the Committee stage.

The first of these will involve the manner in which the royalty may be varied by resolution. The company is in a period of rapid transition in which it is particularly difficult to forecast its probable financial results for any considerable period ahead. It is proposed, therefore, in the interests of flexibility to enable Council to vary the rate of royalty either for a specified yearly period or until it is further varied by another resolution. In the event that the first method is used, the rate would automatically revert to the original rate of 20% at the end of the year unless another rate were fixed for the subsequent period. The amendment allows a resolution to have retrospective effect within the year in which it is passed.

The second proposed amendment will give effect to the presently proposed reduction to 15% by the first of these two methods, that is, the effect is limited to the current year, commencing 15th February.

Question proposed.

Motion made (pursuant to Standing Order No 30). That the debate on the second reading of the bill be adjourned—THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (SIR HUGH NORMAN-WALKER).

Question put and agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum

The purpose of this Bill is to reduce the royalty payable by the Kowloon Motor Bus Company from twenty *per cent* to fifteen *per cent* of the gross receipts derived from the services provided by the Company. Under clause 2(c) the Legislative Council is empowered to vary the rate of royalty.

2. This reduction will be effective as from the 15th February 1969.

PHARMACY AND POISONS BILL 1969

Resumption of debate on second reading (30th July 1969)

Question again proposed.

MR O. V. CHEUNG: —Sir, I have only one point to make on this bill. By clause 3(1)(g) it is provided for the appointment of a legal adviser to the Pharmacy and Poisons Board. Then by the later clause

15(2) it is proposed that this same person namely the legal adviser to the Board should be the legal adviser to any Disciplinary Committee which may be appointed to hold an enquiry into a complaint regarding the conduct of a registered pharmacist, or some similar matter,

As the legal adviser to the Board may have had to deal with the complaint before it reaches a Disciplinary Committee, and advise upon that complaint, I think it would be advantageous for a different person to be appointed to be the legal adviser of any Disciplinary Committee that might be appointed. This would accord with the principle that not only should justice be done, but should be seen to be done and will avoid it ever being said that judge and prosecutor in a case has been the same person.

Accordingly, at the Committee stage, I shall propose a small amendment to clause 15(2) which provide for the legal adviser to be appointed by Governor, but that he should not be the same person as the legal adviser to the Board.

I have discussed this matter with my Unofficial Colleagues and I am happy to say that the proposed amendment has their support.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR SNEATH): —Sir, if I may speak to this, I am grateful to my honourable Friend for the courtesy he did me in discussing this amendment in advance, and that enables me to say that, having considered it and provided, Sir, that the amendment is not too restrictive so that, in any particular case, Government's hands are tied as to who is appointed—subject to that, I hope I should be able to advise Government to comply with and go along with the amendment.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant Standing Order No 43.

MISREPRESENTATION BILL 1969

Resumption of debate on second reading (30th July 1969)

Question again proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant Standing Order No 43.

**PUBLIC HEALTH AND URBAN SERVICES (AMENDMENT)
BILL 1969**

Resumption of debate on second reading (30th July 1969)

Question again proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order No 43.

STAMP (AMENDMENT) (NO 2) BILL 1969

Resumption of debate on second reading (30th July 1969)

Question again proposed.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Bill committed to a committee of the whole Council pursuant to Standing Order No 43.

Committee stage

PENICILLIN (AMENDMENT) BILL 1969

Council went into committee to consider the bill clause by clause.

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

Clause 5.

DR P. H. TENG: —Sir, I rise to move that clause 5 be amended as set forth in the paper before honourable Members.

Proposed Amendment

Clause

5 That the new section 7A be amended by inserting after “sells” the following—

“by retail”.

The amendment was agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, was agreed to.

CORPORATE BODIES CONTRACTS BILL 1969

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

DISPOSAL OF UNCOLLECTED GOODS BILL 1969

Clauses 1 to 5 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

Bills—Third reading

DR P. H. TENG reported that the Penicillin (Amendment) Bill 1969 had passed through committee with one amendment and moved the third reading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the third time and passed.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR SNEATH) reported that the Corporate Bodies Contracts Bill 1969 had passed through committee without amendment and moved the third reading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the third time and passed.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (MR SNEATH) reported that the Disposal of Uncollected Goods Bill 1969 had passed through committee without amendment and moved the third reading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the third time and passed.

Committee stage**HONG KONG SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN INCORPORATION BILL 1969**

Council went into committee to consider the bill clause by clause.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: —With the concurrence of honourable Members we will take the clauses in blocks of not more than five.

Clauses 1 to 11 and the Schedule were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

Bill—Third reading

MR P. C. WOO reported that the Hong Kong Society for the Protection of Children Incorporation Bill 1969 had passed through committee without amendment and moved the third reading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made, and question proposed. That this Council do now adjourn—
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (SIR HUGH NORMAN-WALKER).

3.20 p.m.

Urban Renewal and Improved Transportation

MR SZETO WAI: —Sir, two weeks ago, my honourable Friend the Director of Public Works made known at a Housing Authority meeting that a planning and engineering feasibility study of a pilot scheme of urban renewal for an area between Hollywood Road and Queen's Road Central had been completed and accepted by Government. He further said there were numerous areas in the 250-acre urban renewal district in the Western and Sai Ying Pun district of the Island which "cried out" for immediate attention because of poor layout and absence of light and air.

Also, two weeks ago, my honourable Friend informed this Council that the Rapid Mass Transit consultants have again been commissioned by Government to carry out further study and engineering investigation of a modified scheme*. It is the co-ordination of the two subjects—urban renewal and modern communication facilities that prompts me to raise the matter to-day.

In its Report submitted to Government in 1965, the Working Party on Slum Clearance, of which I had the honour to be a member, recommended that the district bounded by Pottinger Street, Jubilee Street and Old Bailey on the east, Caine Road and Bonham Road on the south, Hill Road on the west and the water front on the north, should be scheduled as an Urban Renewal District. Within this district there are many pockets of blighted areas which contain substandard, dilapidated and potentially dangerous buildings in addition to their deficiency in public open space; the area for the pilot scheme

* Page 434.

recommended by the Working Party being the worst in so far as it contributes a potential danger to the health and safety of its inhabitants. There are other pockets of no less dilapidation but of predominantly commercial activities which cause great chaos to transportation with their narrow and disorderly street pattern. The area to the southwest of the Old Western Market is one of such pockets which "cried out" for immediate attention in the words of the honourable Director. Apart from the protection of health and safety of the inhabitants, one of the chief aims of urban renewal is the improvement of communications. This area with its poor and confused street use deprives Des Voeux Road—our most important main road in both the Central and Western Districts, of a continuity. The Long Term Road consultants have emphasized this fact and stressed that even the building of an elevated route along Connaught Road would not remedy the problem of traffic confusion in this area created by its poor layout, and have, therefore, recommended linking the two sections of Des Voeux Road to eliminate the present discontinuity. The major recommendation for this area is the realignment and widening of Queen's Road but its implementation will involve extensive demolition of property both old and post-war. However, to sew up the two sections of Des Voeux Road appears to be a much smaller and less painful operation, as almost one-third of the area that will be affected is either Government property or Government reservation, and of the remaining private properties, there are only a handful of modest post-war buildings, while at the junction of Des Voeux Road West and Bonham Strand West, a large vacant site exists.

On the Island Line of the recommended Rapid Mass Transit System, a Western Market Station is proposed in this area, and the consultants recommended co-ordination of urban renewal with the construction of underground railway to achieve both a new and efficient street pattern and a modern mass transport facility.

I have singled out this area with improvements in transportation especially in view, and I suggest that the consultants be asked to carry their engineering investigation beyond the old Dockyard land with a view to extending any mass transit construction we may embark upon in the immediate future to the Old Western Market. A mass transit line will effectively integrate the Central and the Western Districts; it will not only relieve surface traffic congestion between these two points, but also help to restore the prosperity that once flourished in the Western District. Post-war development have favoured the eastern section of the Island, and the many road improvement schemes now being carried out in the Eastern District show up glaringly the inadequacy and chaos in traffic in the West. It is quite inconceivable that while in one district, costly fly-overs and elevated roads are being vigorously pursued to improve traffic, yet in

[MR SZETO] Urban Renewal and Improved Transportation

another a blighted area is allowed to prolong the disruption of an important thoroughfare. As the Town Planning Board is now preparing an outline zoning plan for the Urban Renewal District, I hope communication improvements will be given their due weight in relation to amenities and environments, and the continuity of Des Voeux Road will be treated with the importance it deserves; and above all I hope Government will take early steps to prevent frustration of its implementation.

Sir, when the Government White Paper on Housing was debated in this Council in 1964*, I advocated re-development of some of the worst slum areas in the Western District in the manner as was then proposed for the old Dockyard land which unfortunately did not come off. The Mass Transit consultants have now focused the importance of their re-development in relation to transportation.

In 1965, when the Cross Harbour Tunnel Franchise was introduced in this Council, I advocated an underground rail terminal at the old Naval Dockyard in the form of a communication centre comprising surface transport transfer services, parking and shopping facilities to serve the great multitude of commuters†. Now after four years, the realization of such a scheme is, perhaps, nearer, and I hope the possibility could be extended to the Western District to revitalize that long neglected land.

3.28 p.m.

MR J. J. ROBSON: —Sir, as my honourable Friend has stated there are numerous areas in the 250 acres Urban Renewal District which cry out for immediate attention. The worst of these have already been earmarked for acquisition by negotiation and funds have been voted for this purpose. If the draft Outline Zoning Plan for the Urban Renewal District at present under preparation is approved by the Governor in Council, then all the land zoned and required for public purposes can, if necessary, be resumed.

Whilst I agree that ideally it would be desirable to link the improvement of communications with urban renewal, this brings many difficult problems in a district which is largely owned by private landlords. My honourable Friend will be aware of the length of time it takes to implement a simple road widening scheme in the congested areas to which he refers, as well as the cost to Government in resuming

* 1964 Hansard, pages 320-328 and 351-368.

† 1965 Hansard, page 502.

the necessary land. Although he rightly says that a Des Voeux Road link is desirable from the traffic point of view and would do much to straighten out the traffic system, it is relevant that the Long Term Road Study Consultants considered that the proposal was only feasible if the costs of demolition could be shared with a rapid transit scheme or an urban renewal programme. The new road could involve expenditure on the part of Government out of all proportion to the benefits which are likely to accrue from the proposal. There are at least eight post-war buildings along the route, some of considerable size, and I regret that my honourable Friend has been misinformed when he says that almost one-third of the area of land required is already Government property or Government reservation. To implement this proposal would also involve a considerable human problem in the uprooting of tenants from the old and relatively new buildings, all of whom would have to be rehoused.

When selecting the Pilot Scheme for Urban Renewal a number of different areas were considered including that to the south-west of the Western Market, but, in spite of the attractions of the associated Des Voeux Road link, the area between Hollywood Road and Queen's Road Central was selected as being potentially the most rewarding viewed simply from the aspect of improved social conditions within the specific locality. A recent investigation has, in my opinion, confirmed the wisdom of this choice. It would cost around \$35 to \$40 million to acquire the sites and properties required for the most economical Des Voeux Road link of which, say, \$10 million would be recovered by the sale of those areas of the lots which remained after construction of the road. This is more than the total cost of the land which has to be acquired for the selected 13 acre Urban Renewal Pilot Scheme which has been approved as a public purpose.

The Mass Transport Consultants have not yet commenced their further studies and engineering investigations of a modified underground railway system, but they will re-examine the feasibility and economic viability of the Island Line through the Western District, in conjunction with the planning proposals for the area. At this moment, therefore, it would be premature to comment further on the feasibility of the Island Line, but even if it was shown to be uneconomic, there may be a case for maintaining the terminus of the Tsuen Wan/ Kwun Tong Line in the vicinity of the Western Market and altering its alignment so that it ran under Des Voeux Road. It may also be that extension of this line one or more stages westward could also be justified and in this case consideration could be given to combining the work with a road link.

To sum up the acquisition of land and property in the Western Market area may be justified if this is needed both for the construction of an underground railway to link the Western districts of Hong Kong

[MR ROBSON] **Urban Renewal and Improved Transportation**

to the City and to Kowloon, and also for the urban renewal of the adjacent areas, and the provision of a much improved road system: but it is not justified at this moment in time for the road link alone.

Question put.

MR SZETO rose—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: —I am sorry, Mr SZETO, you cannot speak again.

Question agreed to.

NEXT SITTING

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: —Council will accordingly adjourn. The next sitting will be held on 27th August 1969.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes before Four o'clock.