

OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS**Wednesday, 23 November 1983****The Council met at half past two o'clock****PRESENT**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)
SIR EDWARD YOUDE, G.C.M.G., M.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF SECRETARY (*Acting*)
SECRETARY FOR HOME AFFAIRS
MR. DENIS CAMPBELL BRAY, C.M.G., C.V.O., J.P.

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

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

THE HONOURABLE ROGERIO HYNDMAN LOBO, C.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE DAVID AKERS-JONES, C.M.G., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

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

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

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

THE HONOURABLE LYDIA DUNN, C.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.

DR. THE HONOURABLE THONG KAH-LEONG, C.B.E., J.P.
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

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

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

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 GERALD PAUL NAZARETH, O.B.E., Q.C., J.P.
LAW DRAFTSMAN

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

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

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

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

DR. THE HONOURABLE HENRIETTA IP MAN-HING

THE HONOURABLE PIERS JACOBS, O.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES

THE HONOURABLE DAVID GREGORY JEAFFRESON, C.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR SECURITY

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

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

THE HONOURABLE RONALD GEORGE BLACKER BRIDGE, J.P.
COMMISSIONER FOR LABOUR

THE HONOURABLE CHAN YING-LUN

THE HONOURABLE MRS. RITA FAN HSU LAI-TAI

THE HONOURABLE MRS. PAULINE NG CHOW MAY-LIN

THE HONOURABLE PETER POON WING-CHEUNG, M.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JAMES NEIL HENDERSON, O.B.E., J.P.
SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER

ABSENT

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

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

THE HONOURABLE HU FA-KUANG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE YEUNG PO-KWAN, C.P.M.

IN ATTENDANCE

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

Papers

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

<i>Subject</i>	<i>L.N.No.</i>
Subsidiary Legislation:	
Immigration Ordinance Immigration (Vietnamese Refugee Centres) (Designation) (Consolidation) (Amendment) Order 1983.....	360
Immigration Ordinance Immigration (Places of Detention) (Amendment) (No. 3) Order 1983.....	361
Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance Antiquities and Monuments (Declaration of Monument) (No. 9) Notice 1983.....	362
Public Health and Urban Services Ordinance Designation of Public Funeral Hall Order 1983	363
Coroners Ordinance Places for Post-Mortem Examination (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 1983 ...	364
Air Navigation (Overseas Territories) Order 1977 Authorizations by the Governor	365
Legal Practitioners Ordinance Admission and Registration (Amendment) Rules 1983.....	366

Sessional Papers 1983-84:

- No. 17—Hong Kong Examinations Authority—Programme of activities from 1 September 1981 to 31 August 1982 with certificate of the Director of Audit with balance sheet as at 31 August 1982 and statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31 August 1982 together with statement of receipts and payments for the year ended 31 August 1982.
- No. 18—Hong Kong Productivity Council and Centre—Annual Report 1982-83.
- No. 19—Hong Kong Trade Development Council—Annual Report and Accounts 1982-83.
- No. 20—Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation—Annual Report 1982-83.
- No. 21—Urban Council—Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the year ending 31 March 1985.

District Board and Urban Council elections

1. MR. SO asked in Cantonese:—

政府可否告知本局：—

- (甲) 有關區議會和市政局的選舉，目前共有多少名已登記的選民？
- (乙) 一九八二及八三年內，已登記的選民而實際參與區議會及市政局選舉的，每年各有百分之幾？
- (丙) 政府現正採取甚麼行動，以鼓勵更多市民登記為選民及參與選舉？

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

Will Government inform this Council:—

- (a) *the current number of registered voters for District Board and Urban Council elections?*
- (b) *the percentage of registered voters who actually took part in the main elections of District Board members and Urban Council members in 1982 and 1983 respectively?*
- (c) *the action Government is taking to encourage more people to register as voters and to participate in these elections?*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY:—Sir, the Final Register of Electors now contains the names of 904 916 registered voters. They are all eligible to vote at District Board elections. Of this total number, 708 119 are resident in the urban areas and are therefore also registered voters for the Urban Council elections.

The turnout rates in percentage terms of registered voters at the District Board elections and the Urban Council elections in 1982 and 1983 were as follows:—

the New Territories District Board Elections in March 1982	— 51.3%;
the Urban Areas District Board Elections in September 1982	— 35.5%; and
the Urban Council Elections in March 1983	— 22.4%.

The Government has decided to launch a major publicity campaign on all aspects of the District Administration Scheme in 1984-85 (next financial year) with a view to full scale community involvement in order to enhance public interest in and understanding of the work of the District Boards. Sir, there are vigorous publicity programmes to promote the registration of electors in 1984 and to encourage the registered electors then to vote in the next general District Board elections to be held in March 1985.

The Hang Lung Bank

2. MRS. FAN asked:—*Will Government make a statement on the present position of the Hang Lung Bank since its acquisition by Government in September this year?*

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY:—Sir, having acquired ownership only two months ago it is too early to make a meaningful statement about the position of the Hang Lung Bank. But its problems have turned out to be greater and more difficult to resolve than first seemed likely. This is, I fear, a normal experience in such matters. As we lift up stones, further bugs crawl out.

I am grateful, however, to Mrs. FAN for asking her question as it gives me an opportunity to repeat part of what I said in this Chamber on 27 September when I introduced the Hang Lung Bank (Acquisition) Bill. I then said that the Government stands behind the bank's depositors and that the Hang Lung Bank under sound management will in due course revert to private ownership. There has been no change in this position. I want to make this statement again because I have been told that in some quarters doubts have been expressed about the Government's intentions. I hope that this re-affirmation of the Government's stand will dispel these doubts.

Sir, I would also like to take this opportunity to express the Government's appreciation to the Board, management and staff of the Hang Lung Bank for their recent toils. I am particularly grateful to the able members of the new board, of whom two are present here this afternoon.

'Spent conviction' scheme

3. MISS TAM asked:—*Will Government state whether it intends to implement a 'spent conviction' scheme such as that provided for in the U.K. by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:—Sir, different statutory 'spent conviction' schemes have been introduced in the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. Their common feature is that a convicted offender after a specified number of years is permitted to say nothing about his previous conviction in his business and social dealings, such as in applications for jobs, hire purchase, insurance and the like. Members may think that is an encouragement to offenders who go straight to live down their past. But obviously the fact of a conviction cannot be forgotten for all purposes. If an offender is reconvicted, it is generally thought that the judge ought to be aware of spent convictions. And it is a fact of life that foreign countries not subject to Hong Kong laws may require applications for visas to be filled in correctly and accurately, however far back in the past the information about convictions is sought. So offenders cannot expect too much from any statutory scheme.

My Chambers, together with Security Branch are continuing to examine the kind of scheme that might suit Hong Kong. There is the problem of the line to be drawn between serious offences which cannot be overlooked and less serious offences which can properly be wiped out. There is also a balance to be struck between the purposes for which offences can be overlooked in the interests of rehabilitation and the social and political needs of the community for which full disclosure is paramount. We are also looking forward to receiving the report which the Hong Kong Branch of 'Justice' hope to publish next month in order to take account of their proposals as well.

Accordingly, it is the hope of the Administration next year to publish a short report and a draft bill for public discussion. It is recognized that this is a topic on which the public will wish to express views. This kind of measure will only succeed if its purpose are well understood and the public has been fully consulted.

Mass robberies in high-rise buildings

4. DR. HO asked:—*Will Government inform this Council—*

- (a) the number of cases of mass robbery in high-rise buildings within the last three months and the number of such cases that have been solved;*
- (b) the total number of victims involved in these incidents; and*
- (c) what measures are being taken to curb such criminal activities?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—

- (a)* Sir, defining 'mass robbery in a high-rise building' in terms of recent cases where two or more robbers have robbed groups of people on the lower floors of high-rise buildings, since the beginning of September there have been 31 cases. So far, the police have successfully investigated two of them. The police are still investigating the remainder. Successful detection of such crimes is extremely difficult. The robbers leave no evidence. They invariably tie up their victims so that they can be well away from the scene by the time the victims have freed themselves and raised the alarm. If all they steal is money, then the robbers are most unlikely to give themselves away when they come to dispose of the stolen property.
- (b)* There were 233 victims.
- (c)* The immediate measure the police are taking to stop these robberies is to increase patrolling within multi-storey buildings in the areas where the robbers are most likely to operate. As well as the beat patrols by the Uniform Branch, the police are deploying officers from the Criminal Investigation Department and the Emergency and Tactical Units. They are concentrating their efforts on the hours when most of these robberies occur.

In the longer term, crime prevention measures must generally be improved in these multi-storey buildings. The Police Crime Prevention Bureau, with full support from district officers, District Fight Crime Committees and various other local residents' organizations, is implementing a programme aimed to educate building managers and tenants in the basic measures that should be taken to prevent crime on their property. Officers of the Crime Prevention Bureau have considerable expertise on this subject and are only too pleased to respond to requests for advice.

Another longer term solution to this problem is to ensure that the entrances and other common areas in buildings are designed in such a way as to make life difficult for criminals. On 10 November, I mentioned in this Council that the Fight Crime Committee would be examining the possibility of devising a code of practice to encourage this point to be taken fully into account in the design of new buildings in future. The Committee has set up a working group to consider this possibility. And the results so far are encouraging—and not just in respect of new buildings. The Working Group is also developing for the Fight Crime Committee some ideas on how to help the Police Crime Prevention Bureau to make owners and occupiers of existing buildings more conscious of what they can do to make crime more difficult.

DR. HO:—*Sir, I understand that only a small number of victims make reports to the police about the robberies. In the Government's opinion, how can the tenants of high-rise buildings be encouraged to co-operate with the police in preventing these criminal activities and what actions has Government taken so far to solicit such co-operation?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—One thing we never know is to what extent crime is not reported. What we are aiming at in the working group of the Fight Crime Committee is to get in contact via one means or another—and we've got reasonable ideas as to how it may be done—with the occupiers of individual flats in multi-storey buildings, to make them conscious of the sort of steps they should take to make sure that, say, burglars can't get in, and to encourage them to report any crime that they experience to the police. But this is rather early days; the working group is working on this issue. It will report to the Fight Crime Committee. If the Fight Crime Committee agrees we will then go ahead. This seems to us the obvious thing that we can do as of now. But, of course, the Crime Prevention Bureau is constantly going to individuals trying to encourage them towards this end.

MRS. CHOW:—*May I ask the Secretary for Security whether in these crimes violence is being used and whether there are any casualties?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Yes, Sir, in some of these crimes violence is used. I mean, violence is used, for example, to tie up the victims so that they cannot raise the alarm as soon as the robbers disappear. Robbery, by definition, is a crime of violence.

Smells from Kai Tak nullah

5. MR. LO asked:—*Will Government please state what is being done to get rid of the foul smells which have offended Kai Tak residents for many years and give such an unfavourable impression to visitors to Hong Kong?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—Sir, Mr. LO will be glad to be reminded that there is a phased programme of work in progress, aimed at combatting the polluted state of the Kai Tak nullah, which is the main source of the smells to which he refers. Incidentally, Mr. LO describes these smells as foul but we only recently heard them referred to as capitalistic. (*laughter*) Perhaps a compromise would be to quote Somerset MAUGHAM out of context: 'a faint aroma of something strange and half-forgotten'.

Phase I of this programme, which was begun last year, provides for the up-rating of existing pumping facilities and the installation of new pumping stations, in order to intercept the polluted dry weather flow in the upper stretches of the Kai Tak nullah and redirect it away from the nullah into the sewerage system. Phase II, which is being recommended for upgrading to Category A of the Public Works Programme at the forthcoming Annual Review, provides for the dredging of the accumulated sediment in the lower part of the nullah and in the channel running alongside the Airport, and for direct oxygen injection into the water in the lower part of the nullah to assist in improving its quality. Both these phases, at a total estimated cost of some \$50 million, are expected to be largely completed by mid-1985.

Should a significant pollution problem remain after completion of Phases I and II, proposals will be put forward for a third phase comprising the dredging of the typhoon shelter at the seaward end of the nullah, and the mechanical aeration of the water in the whole of the channel adjacent to the Airport. The need for this phase will be judged in the light of the results of Phases I and II.

MR. LO:—*Sir, will Phase III be upgraded to Category B as soon as possible so as to avoid lengthening the lapse of time that may be anticipated to arise between the time when the results of Phases I and II are known and the time when Phase III is put into effect?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—Yes, Sir, Phase III will be upgraded at an appropriate time so as to avoid any such delay.

MR. LO:—*Finally, Sir, does the Secretary for Health and Welfare expect that members of the public who live close to that smell could be as poetic about it as he was? (laughter)*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—I should hope so, Sir. (*laughter*)

MR. STEPHEN CHEONG:—*Sir, the Secretary for Health and Welfare has dealt with adequately the main source of the Somerset MAUGHAM aroma; what other sources have been identified and what actions are being taken to contain them?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—*Sir, I think I can safely say that the main offending nuisance does arise from the Kai Tak nullah; I am not aware of any other source unless perhaps Mr. CHEONG might be referring to the hawker who I believe sells 臭豆腐 on the corner. (laughter)*

Law and order on railway property

6. MR. WONG LAM asked in Cantonese:—

自九廣鐵路公司於一九八二年成立以來，當局曾在火車上及車站範圍內捕獲多少個扒手，又該公司職員如何協助當局在該範圍內維持治安？

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

How many pick-pockets have been arrested on trains and on railway premises since the incorporation of the K.C.R. in 1982, and what assistance is being provided by staff of the Corporation towards the maintenance of law and order on railway property?

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—*Sir, since 1 February 1983 when the K.C.R. became incorporated there have been 229 reported cases of pickpocketing on the K.C.R.'s trains and railway premises. Arrests were made in 68 of these cases. Twenty-three of these arrests occurred on trains and 45 on other railway property.*

As regards the second part of my honourable friend's question, Management have issued clear instructions to Corporation staff that they must assist in maintaining law and order on railway property. The powers necessary to do so exist under two Ordinances. The Kowloon-Canton Railway Ordinance (Chapter 372) empowers a railway employee to arrest, without warrant, any person he suspects of committing an offence under the Ordinance. This power relates primarily to the enforcement of regulations and by-laws made under the Ordinance and concerns such matters as trespassing on railway property, not paying fares and hawking. Then, under the Criminal Procedure Ordinance (Chapter 221) railway employees, like all other citizens, also have the power of citizen's arrest in circumstances in which they suspect that an offence, such as pickpocketing has been committed.

As I have said, the K.C.R.'s Management has instructed Corporation staff to exercise these powers to the full whenever possible. But we must not forget that the primary responsibility K.C.R. staff is to run the railway safely and efficiently. Sometimes this obligation must take precedence over spending the time required to apprehend a person who appears to have committed an

offence. This conflict between obligations occurs particularly at smaller stations where few staff are available and at busy times when inner suburban trains might be carrying anything up to one thousand five hundred passengers at three and a half minute intervals.

MR. WONG LAM asked in Cantonese:—

閣下，根據保安司說，九廣鐵路公司的員工，主要任務是最安全和最有效的辦法操作火車，有時工作人員就算發現有人似乎觸犯條例，必先履行上述的責任然後才將涉嫌的人逮捕，請問保安司，假如在繁忙時間之內，有人被扒手偷了錢包，究竟這個職員先處理秩序還是先捉拿扒手呢？

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

Sir, according to the Secretary for Security, the staff of K.C.R.'s primary responsibility is to run the railway safely and efficiently so that sometimes even though they have detected some illegal activities, they have to fulfil their primary responsibility first before they would arrest the culprits. So I would like to ask the Secretary for Security, if during peak hours somebody reports to them that there is pick-pocketing, what would they do?

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Sir, if they had time—they are pretty stretched at peak hours—they would report the matter to the police. Now the police have a presence at all stations as part of their normal beat patrolling. We are also particularly exercised by the high level of pickpocketing type of crime on K.C.R. trains, much higher than on the M.T.R., and the police are now giving very serious consideration to the possibility of having part of their force dedicated to policing the K.C.R. just as they have part of their force dedicated to policing the M.T.R. I think if they can conclude that they ought to have a force so dedicated and get the necessary posts, my honourable friend's point will be well met.

MR. SO:—*Could I ask whether the K.C.R. management has requested a special team of police to be assigned to maintain law and order within the boundary of the stations?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Yes, Sir, the K.C.R. has always maintained very good relations with the police as far as policing the stations themselves is concerned. Our latest idea is that they should also police the trains themselves with a dedicated force instead of just policing the boundaries of stations or within the stations as part of beat patrols, and then they do actually also have some plain clothes policemen on the trains themselves at the moment—not, obviously, enough to stop robbers performing.

MR. WONG LAM asked in Cantonese:—

閣下，根據保安司說在火車上巡邏，而火車卡是不相通的，請問用甚麼方法來巡邏呢？

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

Sir, according to the Secretary for Security, they do deploy police officers on trains, but as the carriages do not have a thoroughfare, how many officers do they deploy?

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Sir, my honourable friend is getting me into the technicalities of policing I honestly cannot tell how, if I were a police constable, I would police the K.C.R. electric trains and I have also got to confess that I have not even been on one.

Legislation to control the optical profession

7. MR. SO asked in Cantonese:—

關於擬訂法例以管制驗眼師行業方面，請問目前情況怎樣？

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

What is the current position regarding the preparation of legislation to control the optical profession?

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—Sir, legislation to control the optical profession comprises, initially, some simple amendments to the Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance and, subsequently, new regulations to govern the registration and discipline of persons in the profession.

It is intended that the bill to amend the Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance, which will also contain matters relating to other supplementary medical professions, will be introduced into this Council during the current session. It will then be possible for the necessary regulations to be made.

Some difficult policy issues will, however, have to be resolved before the legislation can effectively be implemented. Chief amongst these is the question of the desired standards that optometrists should reach before they become eligible for registration. These issues would normally be a matter for the statutory board which would be established, under the Supplementary Medical Professions Council, in respect of the optical profession. This board cannot, however, be established until the legislative amendments I mentioned earlier are made. Consideration is therefore being given to the appointment of an interim advisory committee to provide the Government with expert advice pending the establishment of the statutory board. It is hoped that it will be possible to appoint this advisory committee shortly.

Water quality

8. MR. S. L. CHEN asked:—*Will Government state whether the water quality of the streams feeding the pump-house on the River Ganges in the New Territories constitutes a threat to public health?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—Sir, the water quality of the stream feeding the pumphouse on the River Ganges in the New Territories will not constitute a threat to public health as far as abstraction for public water supply purposes is concerned.

The River Ganges Pumping Station was planned for the abstraction of flood flows in the River Ganges to augment other water resources in Hong Kong. A water quality survey carried out prior to the implementation of the scheme showed that the quality of water was suitable for abstraction during periods of flood flows. When the first heavy summer rainstorm occurs, the water in the River Ganges is allowed to run downstream to effect flushing and flood pumping only commences when the water quality is acceptable. The water is pumped to Plover Cove Reservoir and is diluted in this large body of water prior to treatment at the treatment works. The final water from the treatment works is subject to stringent quality control before it is supplied to consumers. The quality of supply conforms in all respects, both chemically and bacterio-logically, to international standards for drinking water recommended by the World Health Organization.

MR. S. L. CHEN:—*Sir, may I ask the Secretary for Lands and Works firstly over what period the water quality survey was carried out before the implementation of the scheme and, secondly, how is it decided that the water quality is acceptable before commencement of pumping?*

SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS:—The water quality survey was carried out for a sufficiently long period to enable us to decide that the pumpable yield was economical in terms of total yield. The normal practice is to let the flood water flow to waste in the first 24 hours after the rainstorm, then ammonia content tests are carried out by sampling the flood water and we only pump when the ammonia content falls below standards laid down for E.E.C. countries for pumping river water direct into treatment works.

Computerization of passenger checking procedures

9. MR. BROWN asked:—*Will Government inform this Council whether there are plans to automate immigration control procedures at the Airport, so as to avoid delays to the public?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Sir, in answer to a question from Dr. HO Kam-fai on 13 July this year, the Acting Secretary for Security informed this Council that a study of the feasibility of computerizing the passenger checking procedures at all immigration control points including the Airport had been started.

The Government's Data Processing Agency completed last month the first part of the study. Briefly, the Agency has looked at the work the Immigration

Department has to undertake at control points and the methods it is using at present to meet these requirements. It has studied the methods in the context of estimate of the growth in passengers to be processed over the coming years. After considering various other options, it has concluded that a computer based system seems to be the answer. It has identified the improvements that can be achieved to the quality of the Department's services by this means and the savings in staff that could be achieved. In the light of these findings, the Data Processing Agency is now moving on to the second part of the study to determine a suitable computer configuration and the cost of it. As 500 terminals and 40 terminal printers in 15 locations will be involved, this task will not be a particularly easy one.

MR. BROWN:—*Sir, can the Secretary for Security inform us when the second part of this study will be completed?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—*Sir, as I said the task is not an easy one and I think we would be putting quite a lot of pressure on the Data Processing Agency if we gave them six months to complete it.*

Public assistance

10. MR. CHEUNG YAN-LUNG asked:—*What steps are taken to ensure that recipients of public assistance are able to maintain an acceptable living standard and that the total income they receive is neither too little nor too much for this purpose?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—*Sir, the amount of public assistance paid in any particular case is calculated on the basis of approved rates and has regard to the circumstances of the recipient and his family.*

Public assistance is intended to bring a family's income to a level where basic needs, such as food and clothing, can be met. The amount of assistance therefore takes into account the size of the family and the family's income. The cost of accommodation is covered separately by a rental allowance, and other allowances are paid for special expenses. Supplementary payments are also made for long term and old age recipients.

The amount of public assistance paid in any particular case will thus vary from time to time, depending upon the family's circumstances as they change. Reviews of the amount of public assistance paid are conducted in all cases, and the frequency of these reviews depends of the nature of the case. For example, if the breadwinner has low earnings or is unemployed, the case may be reviewed monthly; in certain family cases, the review may be conducted every three to four months; and in cases where the circumstances tend to be more stable, such as those involving elderly persons, a review may be conducted every two years.

As a result of these reviews, the amount of public assistance is adjusted, upwards or downwards, as necessary to take account of the changed circumstances. In this way, the correct amount of assistance is determined so that the total income received is neither too little nor too much.

While these reviews are designed to determine the correct amount of public assistance in each case, the adequacy of the assistance given is largely dependent upon the approved rates. These are kept up-to-date by reference to an index of prices. The last up-dating was in June 1982; proposals for a further up-dating are currently being examined and should shortly be put to the Finance Committee of this Council.

Court exhibits

11. MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN asked:—*Is the Government satisfied with the system of handling Court exhibits or prospective Court exhibits in criminal cases and, in particular, those exhibits which are valuable such as cash or drugs?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Sir, Court exhibits and prospective Court exhibits in criminal cases are handled in accordance with the Police Orders governing the handling and storage of all property held in police custody. In the case of cash and drugs to which Mr. CHAN referred in particular, there are rules dictating where given amounts may be stored. The greater the value, the more storage is the responsibility of more senior officers ending, as it were, with large amounts of cash being stored in the Treasury's vaults and large quantities of drugs in a specially designed store in Police Headquarters.

The police review the procedures from time to time. The latest review resulted in the introduction of a number of measures within the last eighteen months designed to strengthen the supervision and security of all property in their care. On 5 November 1983, the Public Accounts Committee of this Council reviewed the Director of Audit's Report for 1982-83 on the handling of property by the police and expressed satisfaction with the present procedures.

In addition to the reviews, two experimental schemes have been introduced to reflect the major restructuring of command levels and general reorganization of the police at regional and district levels in 1982. One scheme is designed to deal with the situation in busy urban police stations. The other is applicable to smaller stations with less staff. Both schemes are designed further to centralize and to improve the handling and storage of property in the custody of the police. Detailed examination of these experimental systems in action, including a Corruption Prevention study undertaken by the I.C.A.C., has shown that they are workable and effective. A study on how to implement a full scheme is now in hand and the new systems should be introduced next year.

But following a recent incident involving a court exhibit, the Police Crime Wing is checking yet again how exhibits are to be handled under the proposed

new systems. Thus I think we can say that the new systems will be as effective as they possibly can be. But in the final analysis the safe custody of the valuables must depend to a certain on the integrity of those handling them.

MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN:—*Sir, has the Government detected any case in which substantial quantities of drugs in custody were substituted before their disposal or destruction?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—Well, Sir, there is the recent case where it appears that cash was taken out of an envelope and in its place were put pieces of paper. This particular crime was detected when the Court asked for the envelope to be opened and then in it was found paper instead of cash. That is the only case I am aware of.

MR. CHAN KAM-CHUEN:—*Sir, I just wish to clarify. What I wish to know concerns substantial quantities of drugs, not cash, in custody being substituted before their disposal or destruction?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY:—No, Sir.

MR. LO:—*Sir, following on the reply given by the Secretary for Security, could this Council be informed what is the Secretary for Security's view of the integrity of those handling the exhibits?*

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT:—I am not sure, Mr. LO, that I am going to allow that question, at least not without notice.

MR. LO:—It arises from the last sentence, Sir, of the reply.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT:—I understand that, Mr. LO. Perhaps you would like to submit it in writing.

Red tides

12. MR. CHEUNG YAN-LUNG asked:—*What action has been taken to prevent 'red-tide' affected seafood from being marketed, and will Government state how further outbreaks of red-tide in Hong Kong waters can be prevented?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—Sir, standing arrangements exist for the staff of those departments whose work habitually takes them into the marine environment to report instances of red tides to the Agriculture and Fisheries Department, which acts as the focal-point for follow-up action. The Urban Services Department is also immediately alerted whenever red tides are sighted.

Should the red tide affect any area of fish-farming, the farmer would be warned not to sell his fish for human consumption pending tests. If the tests showed that the fish were not fit for human consumption, they would be destroyed.

These standing arrangements are designed to ensure that fish rendered unfit for human consumption as a result of red tides do not reach the markets.

Shellfish need to be watched more carefully because of their ability to absorb and accumulate a higher level of toxin and other pollutants. For this reason, shellfish are regularly tested as a safety precaution.

These arrangements, Sir, cannot, however, guarantee that seafood affected by red tides never reaches the market. We must therefore also rely upon the commonsense and good-citizenship of all concerned, including the consumer, to ensure that affected seafood is neither marketed nor eaten. All retailers and wholesalers of fish have been individually warned in writing that it is an offence to sell seafood unfit for human consumption, and they have been advised of the possible danger posed by red tides and the need therefore to check the sources of their supplies.

It should not be assumed that all seafood affected by red tide invariably poses a danger to health, and therefore that the marketing of such seafood should always be prevented. Most red tides in Hong Kong contain no toxic matter at all, and with one recent exception, even where such matter has been found it has been in such minute quantities as to give no cause for alarm. When fish die as a result of such red tides, they normally die from lack of oxygen in the same manner as if pulled from the sea in a fisherman's net.

It is not possible, in the present state of knowledge, to prevent red tides. They are a worldwide problem and, to an extent, a natural phenomenon. Studies internationally have not yet established their causes. It is known, however, that they are not caused simply by pollution, although it is clear that pollution is a factor without which red tides are less likely to occur. To this extent, the various programmes upon which we have embarked to control and reduce pollution may hopefully have a beneficial effect upon the incidence of red tides in Hong Kong waters.

MR. CHEUNG YAN-LUNG:—*Sir, may I ask what steps have been taken to ensure that a representative sample of seafood is taken for analysis and how long would such analyses take?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—*Sir, I think I have explained that, in the event that red tide is sighted in such a location as to give rise to the possibility of it affecting fish farms, samples are taken; I think I can assure Mr. CHEUNG that the samples taken are of a representational nature. As to how long it would take for the sampling to be carried out, I believe, Sir, that it is a matter of one or two days.*

MR. CHARLES YEUNG:—*Sir, may I ask the Secretary as to the capacity of testing the samples in Hong Kong?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—*I am afraid, Sir, I have no details at my fingertips as to the capacity but I can assure Mr. YEUNG that it is adequate. It is, however, somewhat limited in nature at the moment in that the Government does not have a toxicologist and this is something of a hindrance. However the matter is being actively studied at the moment.*

MRS. FAN:—*May I ask the Secretary since he said that the consumers should have the good sense not to eat the food or buy the food, has the Government done anything to explain to the consumers under what circumstances such food should not be purchased or eaten?*

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE:—*Sir, I think it is important to stress as I hope I had in my original reply that most of the red tides that do occur in Hong Kong have no toxic matter in them at all. It is therefore important that no-one should be unduly alarmed about the situation. I would have hoped that we could rely adequately on the good sense of the individual to make sure that the food that he does eat is obtained from a reliable source.*

Exhibition centre

13. MISS DUNN asked:—*In view of his recent statement that this Council's interest in the Exhibition Centre dated from 1977; that a series of steps had been taken by the Government since then and that, inter alia, the process indicated 'systematic action by the Government ... consistent with the need to ensure... viability'; does the Secretary for Trade and Industry agree that there have been persistent calls from trade and industry and leading associations for the provision of exhibition facilities since the 1950s and is it not a fact that as early as 1964 an internal Working Party of the then Commerce and Industry Department reported to the then Financial Secretary 'a permanent exhibition facility would be of advantage to the economy ... and there (was) already a demonstrated demand for an exhibition ... site'; and that further under the direction of the then Financial Secretary, a Committee was formed comprising of Urban Councillors and representatives from various Government departments and later the newly formed T.D.C., and I might add, Sir, one of the Government representatives was the then Assistant Director of Commerce and Industry, the then Mr. Philip HADDON-CAVE. This Committee reported in 1967 that there was indeed a need for an Exhibition/Convention Centre; that this should be combined with an indoor sports stadium in one complex at Hung Hom; that such a complex would be viable and that the cost of the Exhibition Centre component was estimated by a firm of consultants to be around £ 910,000?*

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—I fear the preamble to Miss DUNN's question is based on a misapprehension of what I said in this Council in the debate on the Motion of Thanks a few weeks ago. I have checked both the printed text of my speech as distributed to Members, as well as a recording of what I said. My actual words were 'A review indicates that this Council's rekindled interest in the Exhibition Centre project may be dated from Mr. Alex WU's speech of 26 October 1977. . .'. This, Sir, is materially different from what Miss DUNN attributes to me 'that this Council's interest in the Exhibition Centre dated from 1977'.

On the occasion in question I also referred briefly to the then Secretary for Economic Services' reply of 10 November 1977 to Mr. WU. The text of that speech is at pages 211 and 212 of Hong Kong Hansard for Session 1977-78. With your permission, Sir, I have placed before Members a full extract of this record for their ease of reference and in the hope it provides the information Miss DUNN seeks.

MISS DUNN:—*Sir, may I suggest that by focusing on semantics the Secretary for Trade and Industry has overlooked at least the first part of my question which was whether he agreed that calls for exhibition facilities in fact date from the 1950's?*

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—Well, Sir, I think whether I agree or not on what the position was in 1967 is hardly relevant as I was then an Assistant Director of Fisheries. (*laughter*) Undoubtedly there have been vocal demands for a long time, but by reference to the former Secretary for Economic Services' reply of November 1977 that the Commissioner for Industry and Customs was gathering material to support his view that an exhibition centre was greatly needed and would be widely used, it would appear that it was not accepted by all, even in 1977, that an irrefutable case had been established and viability demonstrated. Indeed, the 1979 Report of the Advisory Committee on Diversification also stressed that the viability of any exhibition centre project had to be ascertained.

MISS DUNN:—*Sir, may I now refer to the extract from Hansard which the Secretary for Trade and Industry kindly provided. While entirely accepting that there are always competing demands on the Government's limited resources and therefore the exhibition centre was not accorded sufficient priority in 1967 which was the gist of the reply in Hansard, can the Government say why this project was not pursued in the decade after 1967 when Hong Kong enjoyed double digit growth throughout most of that period?*

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—Sir, it is easy to say that this or that should have been done sometime in the past but Miss DUNN has not suggested what other projects might have given way in favour of the exhibition centre project. Should we have reduced the provision of public housing? Perhaps we might have been a little less ambitious in building up to our current target of a

minimum of 35 000 flats a year? Put in another way, our public housing population increased from about 850 000 in 1967 to 2¼ million to-day, an increase of 1.4 million. Should we have rehoused fewer of them? We achieved 100% provision of primary school places at the end of the 1960's and proceeded to provide universal, free and compulsory primary education from 1971 which was then extended to nine years of universal, free and compulsory education to Form III or the age of 15 at the end of the 70's. Should we have held back some of those programmes, or perhaps the rehabilitation programme? In 1967 the Chinese University campus development was only just starting. Does Miss DUNN suggest that we might have diverted public funds from that project to the exhibition centre project, or perhaps the Polytechnic which was also developed over this last decade should have been axed, or perhaps the Dental School or the Prince Philip Dental Hospital or indeed some other hospital should have been sacrificed instead?

MISS DUNN:—*While we are all, I am sure, impressed with that political plea from the heart, may I ask finally, Sir, does Mr. Ho agree that, by omitting what took place before 1977, his recent statement in this Council was at best incomplete, and can he now understand that at least some of us think that the decision-making process connected with the exhibition centre spanning over 30 years lacked a sense of urgency?*

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—Sir, I can understand Miss DUNN's annoyance that my answer was somewhat shorter than her original question (*laughter*) but I do assure her that I am not out to establish any records. As regards how far back I ought to have gone, I think it will be agreed by all that it would have been absurd for me to have gone back to 1851 and the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park to consider whether we should have provided our own Crystal Place, or indeed it would have been no less ridiculous if we looked back to the Wembley Exhibition in the 1920s. So it is a question of degree, and I think the explanation given by the Secretary for Economic Services in 1977 adequately covered the history.

MR. STEPHEN CHEONG:—*Sir, I am most impressed with the eloquence of the Secretary for Trade and Industry. There is just one point I would like to take up and that is, Sir, if the Government agrees that in 1967 the report already commits the viability and the need for the exhibition centre and given the fact that there were other resources to be diverted to, given also that the Government has always wished for private sector participation in projects of this kind, would it be necessary then in 1979 and 1980 for us to have another consultancy and thereby resulting in a further loss of at least two years—two critical years when the property market was in a much healthier state and that private developers could have been found to undertake the project?*

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—Sir, perhaps I might just remind Mr. CHEONG that it was not just the Government in the corridors on the fifth floor of

this building which reached the conclusion that the project's viability had not been established. The Advisory Committee on Diversification was largely composed of leading citizens in the private sector and they too in their report stressed the need for viability to be ascertained.

MR. ALLEN LEE:—*Sir, would the Secretary make a statement with regard to any recent progress that has been made of the exhibition centre?*

SECRETARY FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY:—*Sir, I have little to add to what I said in this Council a couple of weeks ago. The paper is in the process of being finalized for submission to Your Excellency in Executive Council.*

MISS DUNN:—*Sir, may I please, with your permission, after this meeting give the Secretary for Trade and Industry a copy of the report in 1967 to which I referred in my original question and signed by numerous Government officials which clearly indicated that the project would have been viable?*

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT:—*You may, Miss DUNN.*

Statements

Hong Kong Trade Development Council Annual Report and Accounts 1982-1983

MISS DUNN:—

Introduction

Sir, tabled today is the Annual Report of the Trade Development Council for the financial year 1982-83.

The year under review was not an easy one for the promotion of trade. Throughout the period, the worldwide economic recession affected the demand for consumer manufactures in our major markets.

Activities in 1982-83

Despite this unfavourable environment, the Council continued to maintain a high level of promotional activities. These included attendance at 28 trade fairs and exhibitions, ten outward business groups, four high level economic missions overseas, 11 research projects and 12 general promotional and publicity events, among a total of some 80 major projects during the year.

As a matter of policy, the Council decided to increase its promotional efforts in Japan, a market whose vast potential had barely been tapped. Our research had identified that the main reason Hong Kong manufacturers had not made a

greater in-road into the Japanese market had been due to difficulties in penetrating the complex Japanese distribution system and in overcoming a considerable 'image' problem connected with Hong Kong products.

To overcome the first obstacle, the T.D.C. developed a number of high profile promotions with well-known chain store groups which, because of the nature of their operation, were quick to realize the higher margins offered by Hong Kong products. In other words, they were prepared to by-pass the traditional complicated and expensive distribution systems to take advantage of the better profits offered by the sale of Hong Kong products.

To tackle the image problem, a major fashion gala was held in Tokyo attended by some three thousand trade and government leaders and the media, featuring top quality Hong Kong garments. This event was successful in creating a positive image among opinion formers and received very favourable media coverage. I am glad to say that we are already beginning to see the fruits of these efforts in this current year and it is our aim to continue to maintain a high level of promotional efforts in this market.

A significant new initiative during the year was the first T.D.C. economic delegation to China. The delegation visited Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Shenzhen, which helped to open new channels for our developing trade with China in these provinces. We also established contacts with our Chinese counterpart, the Chinese Committee for the Promotion of International Trade (C.C.P.I.T.). These contacts are being maintained at the working level and we have had the pleasure of receiving several officials and delegations from the C.C.P.I.T. since then. As a follow up, we will be holding the first ever trade fair devoted exclusively to Hong Kong products in Guangzhou next January.

Highlights of current year

Our traditional markets continue to receive a high proportion of the Council's efforts, especially as these markets emerge from recession. Among other projects we have scheduled an important promotion in New York next January. This is being arranged to coincide with the annual convention of the National Retail Merchants Association—a body representing 45 000 top retail outlets throughout the U.S.A. This will include a gala fashion presentation as well as a major product exhibition. In addition, agreement has been reached with the world famous Harrods department store in London to mount, in March next year, a store-wide promotion of Hong Kong products. It will be Harrod's biggest ever promotion devoted to overseas merchandise.

T.D.C.'s work in perspective

Sir, the T.D.C. is often perceived as being largely concerned with staging glamorous, high profile events. This is understandable because such promotions tend to attract extensive media coverage.

While these large-scale promotions are necessary and indeed very valuable in promoting the image of Hong Kong as a producer of high quality merchandise, they, in fact, represent a small fraction of the T.D.C.'s work. The bulk of our activities are carried on without fanfare.

A significant element of the work of the T.D.C.'s 30 offices and correspondents around the world is taken up by the processing of thousands of individual trade enquiries and maintenance of close liaison with overseas authorities charged with the development of trade. They also continuously provide current information about Hong Kong to the overseas media.

To give you some idea of the extent of this day to day work, during the year under review, the T.D.C. processed over 120 000 specific trade enquiries. It looked after 130 incoming trade missions to Hong Kong from all over the world; and handled over five and a half thousand research enquiries from the Hong Kong business community through our economic Information Unit. At the same time, the T.D.C. Head Office published over one and a half million copies of trade magazines, brochures and pamphlets and disseminated several hundred press articles about Hong Kong business to the international media.

Such activities are the staple of sensible and pragmatic trade development—the means by which the T.D.C. provides effective and relevant support for Hong Kong's business community. Over the years, the T.D.C. has become a model which many other countries strive to emulate.

Prospects

While the global economic background to the T.D.C.'s work last year was clearly unfavourable, economic developments in the current financial year point to an upturn in international trade. Indeed, this has been clearly evident from Hong Kong's trade figures in recent months.

Among our major markets, the United States economy has shown signs that the recovery in demand should be sustained. In Europe, this trend has been less well defined, but there are, I believe, grounds for hope that the recovery will be more pronounced in 1984.

Sir, the T.D.C. is poised and ready to take full advantage of this improved trading outlook, while remaining flexible and alert to shifts and changes in demand both here and abroad. Although the lower value of the Hong Kong dollar has placed some strains on our finances, given that most of our expenses are overseas, we are planning for an expanded, dynamic and cost-effective programme of activities.

Before concluding, Sir, I should like to pay tribute to my predecessor, Sir Y. K. KAN, who retired from the Council last year. During his tenure as Chairman, Sir Y. K. steered the T.D.C. in a distinctive and personal style which will be remembered by all at the T.D.C. and by a large number of friends and officials around the world.

Annual Report of the Hong Kong Productivity Council for the year ended 31 March 1983

MR. ALLEN LEE:—Sir, among the various papers laid on the table of this Council today is the Annual Report of the Hong Kong Productivity Council for the year ending 31 March 1983.

I am pleased to report a satisfactory progress for the Hong Kong Productivity Centre in a rather difficult year which witnessed a continued economic downturn in Hong Kong due to the global recession and other adverse factors. Fee income derived from services rose by 26% over 1981-82 while the staff establishment increased by 4%. These figures demonstrate the growing acceptance of the work of H.K.P.C. by industry and Government accompanied by a sustained improvement in internal efficiency and productivity.

The results of a series of structural changes in H.K.P.C.'s operations are beginning to emerge. With the implementation of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Diversification, and the adoption of a deliberate management policy which encourages the development and integration of staff expertise, H.K.P.C. is now adopting a more active approach in the industry support field.

In addition to assisting existing factories, the Hong Kong Productivity Centre undertakes development projects which create a greater impact on our industrial community. During the year, the Centre completed a major techno-economic study on the electronics industry which should provide good data and guidelines to assist in the more detailed analysis of the requirements of this industry and the planning of industry support facilities. Other projects which are being undertaken for Government include a technology transfer study and a study on the design of multi-storey factory buildings. In addition, the Council is considering a proposal to promote industrial automation in Hong Kong. It is particularly encouraging to note the good response of industry to facilities which have been established. These facilities include a Microprocessor Application Laboratory, a Heat Treatment Unit, a Metals Finishing Laboratory and an Environmental Control Service.

During the year under review, there was a rapid increase in demand for H.K.P.C. microprocessor application services. A development role has clearly been emerging and is now recognized. The Centre is now in a position to undertake work capable of generating multiplier effects. The Heat Treatment Unit has demonstrated the optimization of tool quality through heat treatment.

With the centralization of most activities within the Headquarters, the Hong Kong Productivity Centre is now able to operate more effectively as a united and cohesive entity dedicated to providing an integrated range of services to industry. With the continued support of Government and industry, I have every

confidence that the Hong Kong Productivity Centre will be able to further expand its role in the improvement and diversification of industry in Hong Kong.

Annual Report of The Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation for the year ended 31 March 1983

MR. WONG PO-YAN:—Your Excellency, the Annual Report of The Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation for the year ended 31 March 1983 is among the papers laid on the table of this Council to-day.

The Report records the progress of the Tai Po and Yuen Long Industrial Estates, both of which are being managed and developed by the Corporation.

The year ended 31 March 1983 was beset by economic difficulties and unfavourable trading conditions. Nevertheless, it is gratifying to be able to report that notwithstanding this adverse investment and reinvestment climate common to all major market economies, the Corporation achieved some progress during the year.

There are now 38 companies at Tai Po and one at Yuen Long. Of these, 21 have commenced manufacturing. These 39 companies represent a total investment of H.K.\$1,300 million in land, building, equipment and machinery.

Tai Po Industrial Estate

During the year, four more companies were granted sites on the Tai Po Estate, namely, Thomas De La Rue (Hong Kong) Ltd., Hong Kong Oxygen & Acetylene Co. Ltd., The Wing On Foods Co. Ltd. and Builders Federal (Hong Kong) Ltd. With the addition of these companies, the list of products to be manufactured on the Estate would be broadened to include banknotes and other types of security documents, high purity gases, food processing and packaging, and steel and aluminium curtain walling.

The year also witnessed the commencement of production of three companies at the Tai Po Estate, namely, Daido Concrete (Hong Kong) Ltd., B.B.C. Brown Boveri Ltd. and the Winner Food Products Ltd.

These three successfully completed projects are good illustrations of the confidence shared by local and overseas investors in the future of Hong Kong. Japanese, Swiss and U.S. interests are represented in these business ventures respectively and they are solid evidence that support the fact that Hong Kong has not failed to attract overseas investment even during difficult times.

Furthermore, in testimony to the favourable infrastructure provided by the Estate, Daido Concrete has applied and subsequently been granted a second site in September 1983 for the expansion of their operation, and Carlsberg Brewery H.K. Ltd. celebrated the expansion of their brewery at Tai Po in October 1983 with an additional investment of \$20 million to increase production by 50%.

The Standard Factory Block already completed will soon be leased to a local manufacturer and development of the third stage at Tai Po Estate is meanwhile progressing satisfactorily.

Yuen Long Industrial Estate

Although construction work at Yuen Long Estate has progressed more slowly than planned, the Estate is now due for completion by the end of 1983. It is pleasing to note that the first factory on the Estate, that of Messrs Modern Metal & Refining Limited, has recently been completed and has commenced operations.

The coming on stream of large areas of land at Yuen Long has created a short-term surplus, and necessitated an approach to Government for the loan repayments to be rescheduled.

Following a review of the Corporation's selection and leasing policies and procedures, the Board decided to offer sites at Yuen Long Estate by means of tender to companies which satisfy the definitive criteria. This leasing of land by means of tender supplements the normal application method and it is hoped that this direct approach will encourage more progressive industrialists to take advantage of the facilities offered by the Estate.

Meanwhile, to utilize the relatively large areas of land becoming available at Yuen Long, the Government has, by an amendment to the Corporation Ordinance and Conditions of Grant, authorized the Corporation to grant short-term leases of land for storage purposes, thus enabling income to be derived from the land immediately available without compromising the long term objectives.

In view of current market conditions, the Corporation has revised its programme for the construction of Standard Factory Blocks but is proceeding with one block at Yuen Long Estate, which is due for completion early in 1984.

Land Premium

To reflect realistically the current market rate for land and property, the land premium has been reduced from HK\$925 to HK\$800 per square metre with effect from 1 July 1983. It is hoped that this reduction will help to stimulate interest.

Conclusion

I would like to emphasize that the introduction of these procedural modifications in no way changes the Corporation's policy of ensuring that the Industrial Estates meet the objective of broadening Hong Kong's industrial base.

Finally, Sir, I would like to echo the Corporation Chairman's concluding observation that we are beginning to see a turnaround in world economic conditions and that the year from 1 April 1983 will see the sustained growth of industrial development in Hong Kong, towards which I am sure the Corporation will continue to make a valuable contribution.

Government business

Motions

IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY moved the following motion:—That section 18(3) and Parts VIIA and VIIB of the Immigration Ordinance shall expire on 31 December 1984.

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

Section 18(3) of the Immigration Ordinance was enacted in January 1979 to provide that Vietnamese refugees, having been refused permission to land in Hong Kong, are subject to removal from Hong Kong by an Immigration Officer *at any time* and not just within two months as applies to others refused permission to land. By virtue of section 18(4), section 18(3) will expire on 31 December of this year unless extended by resolution of this Council.

Parts VIIA and VIIB of the Ordinance were enacted in August 1979 to deal with the problem of trafficking in illegal immigrants. For example, they create various offences for persons who aid illegal immigrants to get into Hong Kong and they provide for the forfeiture of the property involved. By virtue of sections 37M and 37T, these two Parts also will expire on 31 December 1983.

Although the arrival rates of both categories of unauthorized entrants have fallen in 1983 (that of illegal immigrants by almost two thirds and that of Vietnamese refugees by about half of their 1982 levels), the problems both of Vietnamese refugees and of trafficking in illegal immigrants are still with us. Accordingly the motion before Council seeks to extend the legislation to which I have just referred.

While with the issue of the new identity card going so well the prospects of our mastering illegal immigration are reasonably good, in the case of Vietnamese refugees the future remains bleak. We have over 600 more refugees now than we had at the start of 1983, and resettlement prospects for newcomers are now very poor. Under the resettlement criteria the few remaining resettlement countries are currently applying, only about one in ten of those refugees now arriving here has any realistic prospects of resettlement in these countries. While arrivals so far this year are down by over 50% on arrivals during the same period last year, departures for resettlement are down by two thirds. Even at the current rate of resettlement, and with no further arrivals here, it would take four years to resettle those already in our open and closed centres, over 3 000 of whom have already been here for over three years.

It is against this background that I must stress this Government's determination to maintain its current firm policy towards any further uninvited arrivals from Vietnam, and to maintain all the legislative powers necessary to

enforce it. It is because it remains also our firm intention that these problems should not be with us permanently, that this motion seeks this Council's approval for extensions of the current provisions for only a further year until 31 December 1984.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ORDINANCE

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY moved the following motion:—That sections 34A, 34B and 34C of the Merchant Shipping Ordinance shall expire on 31 December 1984.

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

In January 1979, the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Ordinance enacted sections 34A, 34B, 34C and 34D into the main Ordinance to provide for the forfeiture of a vessel in certain circumstances involving the carriage of excess passengers. This provision was enacted as part of the measures to counter the substantial number of Vietnamese refugees arriving in Hong Kong by sea.

By virtue of section 34D, these sections will expire on 31 December 1983 unless they are extended by resolution of this Council. As I have just explained when moving the previous motion, the problem of Vietnamese refugees is still with us and we continue to need the provisions of sections 34A, 34B and 34C. But for reasons which I have also just explained, we are seeking an extension only until 31 December 1984.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

MEDICAL CLINICS ORDINANCE

THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE moved the following motion:—That the powers conferred on the Registrar of Clinics by section 8 of the Medical Clinics Ordinance shall cease to be exercisable on 31 December 1986.

He said:—Sir, I move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper, the purpose of which is to extend for a further three years the powers of the Registrar of Clinics to exempt certain clinics from the statutory requirement to have a registered medical practitioner.

The Medical Clinics Ordinance, enacted in 1963 to prevent the spread of clinics of doubtful standards, requires that a clinic must have a registered medical practitioner responsible for the medical management of that clinic and the practice of medicine therein.

It was not, however, the intention to bring to an abrupt close all clinics which did not meet this requirement, many of which were run by charitable or nonprofit making bodies and were performing a useful function.

The Registrar of Clinics was therefore given powers to exempt from the requirement any clinic which was in existence before 1963, and which could satisfy him of certain minimum standards.

These particular powers of the Registrar were limited to a specified period, but provision was made in the Ordinance for the period to be extended by Resolution of this Council. The period has been extended from time to time, was last extended for three years in January 1981, and unless further extended will thus expire on 1 January 1984.

There are now 282 exempted clinics as compared with 387 immediately after the enactment of the Ordinance. The number is declining with the passage of time, but those remaining still provide a useful service at a reasonable cost, and it is therefore proposed to extend for a further three years the Registrar's powers to exempt them from the requirement to have a registered medical practitioner, without which exemption most, if not all, would be forced to close. Their activities are supervised by the Medical and Health Department, their standards are still satisfactory, and their closure would not be in the public interest.

Sir, I beg to move.

Question put and agreed to.

First reading of bills

ENTERTAINMENTS TAX (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL 1983

TELECOMMUNICATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

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

Second reading of bills

ENTERTAINMENTS TAX (AMENDMENT AND VALIDATION) BILL 1983

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the second reading of:—'A bill to amend the Entertainments Tax Ordinance and validate the collection of duty at cross-betting meetings'.

He said:—Sir, I move that the Entertainments Tax (Amendment and Validation) Bill 1983 be read the second time.

This Bill seeks firstly to make it clear that a cross-betting meeting is an entertainment, and thus requires to be treated in the same way as a race meeting for the purposes of the principal Ordinance, and secondly to back-date this provision to 17 September 1983. The Bill also seeks to validate the collection of tax at cross-betting meetings prior to that date.

Entertainments tax has been collected on payments for admission to all cross-betting meetings held during 1981-82 and 1982-83 racing seasons. Recently doubts have arisen as to whether a cross-betting meeting was a race meeting within the definition of entertainment under the Entertainments Tax Ordinance. These doubts were confirmed on legal advice. It was never the intention that admission to cross bettings should be treated differently from admissions to race meetings. This amendment is aimed at removing any doubt.

Since the beginning of the current racing season on 17 September 1983, entertainment tax is not being collected pending the enactment of this amendment Bill.

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

Motion made. That the debate on the second reading of the Bill be adjourned— THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY.

Question put and agreed to.

TELECOMMUNICATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

THE SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES moved the second reading of:—'A bill to amend the Telecommunication Ordinance'.

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

This Bill does not introduce any new principles, but provides for a number of miscellaneous changes to the principal Ordinance.

The first of the proposed substantive amendments (clause 3), concerning the use of radiocommunication apparatus on vessels in Hong Kong waters, is designed to take account of present day circumstances. The development of maritime communications requires the revision of section 10 of the principal Ordinance to ensure that its provisions adequately cover the use of all existing

and likely new forms of radiocommunication including the maritime satellite service and the prospective introduction of a public maritime mobile radio telephone service.

The Bill (clause 4) also deals with the use of radiocommunication apparatus on board a vessel or aircraft and provides that this use must not cause interference with other telecommunication services except where life or the safety of an aircraft or vessel is at risk.

Clause 5 repeals section 38, which empowers the Governor to prescribe charges for messages exchanged with vessels and aircraft. Such charges will henceforth be specified in the same way as other telecommunication charges, that is, by Cable and Wireless (Hong Kong) Limited, with the approval of the Telecommunications Authority, in accordance with the terms of that company's licence of 1 October 1981.

Lastly, Sir, the Bill contains a number of other minor amendments which are described in the Explanatory Memorandum or whose purpose is self evident.

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

Motion made. That the debate on the second reading of the Bill be adjourned—
SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC SERVICES.

Question put and agreed to.

MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (12 October 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).

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (9 November 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).

ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (9 November 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. 3) BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (27 July 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).

CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG BILL 1983

Resumption of debate on second reading (9 November 1983)

Question proposed.

DR. FANG:—Sir, I welcome the formal establishment of the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong with the enactment of this Bill. It will assure our industries of an adequate supply of technically trained and educated manpower. It will also provide our young persons wishing to join the industrial/commercial sector with

an increased opportunity in getting the necessary preparation. But I think the most important implication is the show of confidence in the territory's future by embarking on this huge education project. It shows that we are not looking ahead for just ten or 20 years. We are investing in our people and we are planning on much longer terms.

Sir, the Bill has been studied by the Legislative Council Social Services Group of Unofficial Members. We support all its provisions. It is noticed, however, that clause 12 allowed the business of the Council of the City Polytechnic to be dealt with by circulation to its members. At first it is felt that this provision might result in certain controversial subjects by-passing discussions at full Council meetings. We are satisfied after being informed by the Administration that the provision is intended to enable simple matters to be transacted efficiently, and that any subject proposed to be dealt with by circulation will be brought back for discussion at full Council meetings if any of its members so suggests.

We also noticed that clause 7(f) empowered the City Polytechnic to provide residential accommodation for students. We hope that this provision will not merely be contingent, and serious considerations can be given to the provision of students' hostels, say for 20-30% of the student population. Apart from facilitating social interaction among students, such hostels will also provide those who come from poor families and remote districts with a better place for study.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. S. L. CHEN:—Sir, I rise to support the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong Bill 1983 which will give statutory effect to the founding of Hong Kong's second Polytechnic. When moving the second reading of this Bill, the Secretary for Education and Manpower paid tribute to the hard work and dedication of the Chairman of the Planning Committee for the City Polytechnic, Sir S. Y. CHUNG, and his colleagues, in completing a complex planning task in a relatively short space of time.

It has been my privilege to have served as Deputy Chairman of the Planning Committee since its formation in June of last year, and on behalf of my Chairman and fellow Committee members I would like to thank the Secretary for Education and Manpower for his kind and generous remarks. I can personally testify to the accuracy of his assertion that this was a hard working committee, like any other chaired by Sir S. Y. CHUNG, but it was hard work of the most rewarding kind. I am pleased to say that we have had the fullest possible co-operation and support from all levels of the Government, including the Universities and Polytechnic Grants Committee, for which we are most grateful.

Special mention should be made of the administration of the Hong Kong Polytechnic, which provided the Committee not only with secretarial and

logistical support, but also with access to a wealth of information and data which it has carefully computerized over the past decade and which enabled the Committee to predict future trends and estimate resource requirements with speed, accuracy and confidence which would otherwise not have been possible. Whilst there is no intention, Sir, that the Hong Kong and City Polytechnics should be identical twins, or that the first should in any sense be regarded as the parent of the second, there can be no doubt that in the birth of this new Polytechnic, the Hong Kong Polytechnic has played a competent and significant role.

There is clear evidence, Sir, of an increasing demand by the young people of Hong Kong for a Polytechnic-type of tertiary education, and an increasing demand also by local commerce, industry and community services for Polytechnic-trained graduates. It was, I believe, a timely decision by the Government to establish a second such institution, and I am confident, Sir, that with the enactment of this Bill, the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong will be off to a good start.

With these words, Sir, I support the Bill before Council.

DR. HO:—Sir, I welcome the City Polytechnic of Hong Kong Bill 1983 which provides for the establishment of a second institution of higher technical education. This piece of legislation will not only lead to an increase in the supply of a technologically competent manpower to meet the need of our community for industrial diversification, but also reflect the Government's confidence and vigorous investment in the territory's future.

However, I wish to add that a proper industrial infra-structure and a sound economy require contributions from technical personnel at all levels, from technologists and technicians to craftsmen and operators. Therefore, it is imperative for the Government to ensure a balanced development of technical manpower and avoid a top-heavy strategy in training. The dangers of an excessive supply of technologists trained at universities and polytechnics are obvious. A balanced mix of Generals and rank and files, so to speak, is a more viable proposition.

I would therefore like to see that the Vocational Training Council and the Technical Education and Industrial Training Department, which have done excellent jobs in co-ordinating, promoting and administering technical education and industrial training at the technician and craftsman levels, are given the same strong support, if not more, by the Government.

With these remarks, Sir, I support the motion before Council.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER:—Sir, I would like to thank Dr. FANG, Mr. CHEN and Dr. HO for their support of this Bill.

I note Dr. FANG's remarks about hostels, however the siting of the City Polytechnic was very carefully considered to give maximum accessibility to both full-time and part-time students.

I agree with Dr. Ho that a balanced development of technical manpower is important and the Government will certainly aim to achieve this in planning our technical education and industrial training.

Finally, Sir, it has given me particular, personal pleasure to have been able to introduce this Bill after my close association with the early stages of the project, and I can readily confirm Mr. S. L. CHEN's acknowledgement of the very great contribution made by the staff of the Administration of the Hong Kong Polytechnic. Sir, to-day a new major educational institution will have been formally launched, may every success attend 'all those who sail in her'.

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

MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 3 were agreed to.

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 4 were agreed to.

CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG BILL 1983

Clauses 1 to 25 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

Third reading of bills

The ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the

MASS TRANSIT RAILWAY CORPORATION (AMENDMENT) BILL

INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) (NO. 4) BILL

ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING-OFFENCE POINTS) (AMENDMENT) BILL

INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES (AMENDMENT) (NO. 3) BILL and

CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG 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.

Adjournment and next sitting

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT:—In accordance with Standing Orders I now adjourn the Council until 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 7 December 1983.

Adjourned accordingly at fourteen minutes past four o'clock.