

**OFFICIAL REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS****Wednesday, 11 May 1988****The Council met at half-past Two o'clock****PRESENT**HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (*PRESIDENT*)

SIR DAVID CLIVE WILSON, K.C.M.G.

THE HONOURABLE THE CHIEF SECRETARY

SIR DAVID ROBERT FORD, K.B.E., L.V.O., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

MR. PIERS JACOBS, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

MR. JEREMY FELL MATHEWS, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LYDIA DUNN, C.B.E., J.P.

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

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

THE HONOURABLE HU FA-KUANG, O.B.E., J.P.

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

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

SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

THE HONOURABLE CHAN KAM-CHUEN, O.B.E., J.P.

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

THE HONOURABLE STEPHEN CHEONG KAM-CHUEN, O.B.E., J.P.

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

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

THE HONOURABLE MARIA TAM WAI-CHU, O.B.E., J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE HENRIETTA IP MAN-HING, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHAN YING-LUN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS. RITA FAN HSU LAI-TAI, O.B.E., J.P.

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

THE HONOURABLE YEUNG PO-KWAN, O.B.E., C.P.M., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE KIM CHAM YAU-SUM, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN WALTER CHAMBERS, O.B.E., J.P.

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE

THE HONOURABLE JACKIE CHAN CHAI-KEUNG

THE HONOURABLE CHENG HON-KWAN, J.P.

DR. THE HONOURABLE CHIU HIN-KWONG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHUNG PUI-LAM

THE HONOURABLE THOMAS CLYDESDALE, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE HO SAI-CHU, M.B.E., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE HUI YIN-FAT  
THE HONOURABLE RICHARD LAI SUNG-LUNG  
DR. THE HONOURABLE CONRAD LAM KUI-SHING  
THE HONOURABLE MARTIN LEE CHU-MING, Q.C., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE DESMOND LEE YU-TAI  
THE HONOURABLE LIU LIT-FOR, J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE NGAI SHIU-KIT, O.B.E., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE PANG CHUN-HOI, M.B.E.  
THE HONOURABLE POON CHI-FAI  
THE HONOURABLE HELMUT SOHMEN  
THE HONOURABLE SZETO WAH  
THE HONOURABLE TAI CHIN-WAH  
THE HONOURABLE MRS. ROSANNA TAM WONG YICK-MING  
THE HONOURABLE TAM YIU-CHUNG  
DR. THE HONOURABLE DANIEL TSE, O.B.E., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE ANDREW WONG WANG-FAT  
THE HONOURABLE LAU WONG-FAT, M.B.E., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE GRAHAM BARNES, C.B.E., J.P.  
SECRETARY FOR LANDS AND WORKS  
THE HONOURABLE RONALD GEORGE BLACKER BRIDGE, O.B.E., J.P.  
SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER  
THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL LEUNG MAN-KIN, J.P.  
SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT  
THE HONOURABLE EDWARD HO SING-TIN, J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE GEOFFREY THOMAS BARNES, J.P.  
SECRETARY FOR SECURITY  
THE HONOURABLE ELAINE CHUNG LAI-KWOK, J.P.  
SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION (*Acting*)

**ABSENT**

DR. THE HONOURABLE HO KAM-FAI, O.B.E., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE MRS. PAULINE NG CHOW MAY-LIN, J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE HILTON CHEONG-LEEN, C.B.E., J.P.  
THE HONOURABLE DAVID LI KWOK-PO, J.P.  
PROF. THE HONOURABLE POON CHUNG-KWONG

**IN ATTENDANCE**

THE CLERK TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
MR. LAW KAM-SANG

**Affirmation**

Miss Elaine CHUNG Lai-kwok made the Affirmation of Allegiance.

**Papers**

The following papers were laid on the table pursuant to Standing Order 14(2):

*Subject* *L.N. No.*

## Subsidiary Legislation:

Merchant Shipping Act 1979 (Hong Kong) Order 1980 Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners and Others) (Rate of Interest) (Hong Kong) Order 1988 .....	139/88
Inland Revenue Ordinance Inland Revenue (Interest Tax) (Exemption) (Amendment) (No.4) Notice 1988.....	140/88
Tax Reserve Certificates (Fourth Series) Rules Tax Reserve Certificates (Rate of Interest) (No.3) Notice 1988 .....	141/88

## Sessional Papers 1987-88:

- No. 57—The Prince Philip Dental Hospital Hong Kong—Report by the Board of Governors for the period 1 April 1986-31 March 1987
- No. 58—Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation Annual Report 1987
- No. 59—Report of the Finance Committee on the Draft Estimates of Expenditure 1988-89

**Addresses by Members presenting papers****Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation Annual Report 1987**

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Sir, in accordance with section 4(5) of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation Ordinance, the annual report and accounts of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation for the year ending 31 December 1987 are tabled today.

1987 was a successful year for the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation. Profitability improved substantially and all revenue generating activities showed healthy growth. A net profit of \$276 million was achieved. This was more than

twice the \$117 million achieved in 1986, and the \$47 million loss accumulated since the formation of the corporation in 1983 was thus eliminated. Total revenue for the year amounted to \$964 million, 31 per cent higher than that for 1986. The corporation's current and non-current liabilities at year end were \$394 million and \$191.2 million respectively.

The five business areas of the corporation all performed well. The heavy rail carried over 136 million passengers during the year, an 18 per cent increase over 1986. Railway facilities have been upgraded and train capacity increased progressively to cater for the needs of the growing number of passengers.

Freight traffic on the railway continued to grow in the year. While outgoing freight to China registered a significant growth of 24 per cent to 1.1 million tonnes, imports from China recorded a modest gain of 5 per cent to 3.48 million tonnes. In order to cope with the anticipated substantial growth in freight traffic in the coming years, the corporation is actively discussing with the Government the development of a new freight terminal. Meanwhile, the corporation is looking into ways to provide additional temporary freight handling facilities.

Visible progress was made during the year in the construction of phase I of the light rail transit system in the north-west New Territories, due for commissioning in August this year. The corporation has also embarked on the design work of six additional regional links to complete the full regional system.

Good progress has been achieved on the two property development projects above the Light Rail Transit Pierhead terminus and depot in Tuen Mun, and detailed arrangements for a package development deal involving three sites along the existing KCR mainline has been made. The corporation has also commenced studies on the feasibility of having property development above the remodelled KCR depot and workshops at Ho Tung Lau.

Sir, the corporation's buses commenced operation in September, providing feeder services to the KCR and internal services in the north-west transit service area, with encouraging passenger growth in the last quarter. Additional order for buses has been placed to provide the necessary back-up for the light rail transit system.

The Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation has demonstrated its success as a responsible and efficient corporation rendering a variety of transport and associated services to the community. With the funds generated from the railway operation, the corporation is planning to undertake a number of major infrastructural projects and to upgrade the railway facilities so as to keep pace with the continued population growth in the New Territories and the growth in passenger and freight movements between Hong Kong and China.

Finally, Sir, I would like to congratulate the chairman and the board, and the management and staff of the Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation on their outstanding performance and excellent results, and to thank them for their hard work during the year.

**The Prince Philip Dental Hospital Hong Kong—Report by the Board of Governors for the period 1 April 1986-31 March 1987**

MISS DUNN: Sir, tabled today is a report on the activities of the Prince Philip Dental Hospital together with a statement of account for the financial year from 1 April 1986 to 31 March 1987.

Mention is made in the report, Sir, of the excellent results achieved by the students in the 1987 final examination. This is fine testimony to the very high standards being maintained by the teaching staff of the Faculty of Dentistry and to the dedication, hard work and personal talents of those young men and women who have decided to make dentistry their chosen profession. We can all feel confident that the achievements attained so far will have the continuing effect of enhancing the professional standards of dental practitioners available to the public of Hong Kong.

Sir, the faculty is also assuming an important role as a centre of dental research in the region. In addition to the teaching of undergraduate students, the faculty is committed to providing post-graduate studies for its own graduates and also for graduates of universities overseas. The research work carried out both by those students and by staff ensures that the faculty is at the vanguard of modern developments in dentistry. The hospital is also now the headquarters of the South East Asia Division, the newest division of the International Dental Research Association. The faculty continues to maintain close contacts with Faculties of Stomatology in the People's Republic of China with senior staff from time to time presenting lectures in those faculties and holding visiting teaching appointments there. Conversely visits to the Prince Philip Dental Hospital have been made by many senior dental staff from sister faculties in the Mainland.

Nearer to home senior students with their teachers have participated in outreach community dental health projects often in areas of Hong Kong presently underserved by oral health care facilities, and the services provided have been greatly approved by the public.

It is difficult to imagine that less than 10 years ago, No.34, Hospital Road, was an empty site. In the intervening years a dental teaching hospital, arguably one of the finest in the world and certainly in this region, has been built and four groups of qualified dentists have been produced. This, Sir, is a great tribute to those people who planned the building, developed the curriculum and generally managed the operation of the hospital and the teaching of the students. One of those, Prof. C.E. RENSON, Foundation Professor in the Department of Conservative Dentistry who was a member of the board of governors during the year under review, retired from the faculty at the end of June last year. It is appropriate and befitting that I record in this Council, the appreciation of the board of governors of the invaluable contribution which Prof. RENSON has made to the development of dentistry in Hong Kong. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

Since completion of the year under report, Sir, Mr. Andrew LI, has succeeded me as chairman of the Board of Governors of the Prince Philip Dental Hospital. It has been a pleasure and a privilege for me to have been associated with this fine institution and its governing board since 1981. I wish Mr. LI every success and my best wishes go to all those who work and study at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital.

### Oral answers to questions

#### Certificates of No Criminal Conviction

1. MRS. TAM asked: *In relation to the issue of Certificates of No Criminal Conviction, will Government inform this Council of the following:*

- (a) *the offences which are recordable by the police for the purpose of withholding the issue of such certificates;*
- (b) *the authority which has the discretion to amend the list of recordable offences;*
- (c) *what criteria are used in deciding which offences should be recordable; and*
- (d) *how are offences covered by the spent conviction scheme treated in these certificates?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, some of these points have already been answered in the acting Secretary for Security's letter of 8 April 1988 to the convenor of the OMELCO Security Panel, and I have agreed that this letter may be circulated to Members.

The answer to the first part of the question is that the police do not maintain records of offences for the purposes of withholding the issue of Certificates of No Criminal Conviction. The police maintain records in order to help them fulfil their statutory duties and for legal purposes in court proceedings. The police are therefore primarily concerned with local conditions when considering what offences should be the subject of record. Certificates of No Criminal Conviction are documents that are issued only because they are requested by foreign governments for immigration and student visa purposes. When considering either a certificate, or the reasons given for not issuing a certificate, foreign governments would of course apply their own standard of judgement based on legal conditions in their own countries.

As regards part (b) of the question, it is the Commissioner of Police who has the responsibility for determining what crimes or offences should be contained in the list of recordable offences.

With regard to part (c) of the question, the commissioner, in coming to a decision on any particular offence considers:

- first, the gravity of the offence;
- second, the attitude in law to the offence with regard to the penalty that can be imposed;

third, the requirements of the courts for knowledge of previous convictions when considering sentence; and  
fourth, the prevalence of the offence and the community's attitude towards it.

The list of recordable offences is reviewed annually by the police. Those which are considered to justify removal under the criteria to which I have just referred are omitted from the list, and other offences may be added. In general, the recordable offences include those which are particularly serious such as murder, manslaughter, rape, abduction, robbery and other violent crimes, or crimes which are regarded as particularly obnoxious or anti-social by the community. At present, there are some 94 recordable offences and I should be happy to make available copies to Members. I should emphasise that any person who applies for a Certificate of No Criminal Conviction, with a previous conviction for an offence which is no longer recordable, is issued with a certificate.

Regarding the last part of the question, the spent conviction scheme has no bearing on the issue of Certificates of No Criminal Conviction. Applicants for visas or immigration permits to certain countries are required by those countries to state whether they have ever been convicted of an offence. This would be regardless of the fact that the Certificates of No Criminal Conviction may certify that he has no record according to the current police list of recordable offences. Whether or not the conviction is regarded as spent under Hong Kong legislation is immaterial. These countries wish to be informed of any convictions so that they can form their own judgement of the suitability of the applicant. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Ordinance was designed to cater for local conditions. It cannot proscribe the attitude which other states should take to offences, and it cannot be used to remove any individual's responsibility to make a full disclosure of offences if required to do so for emigration purposes. These matters are discussed more fully in paragraphs 11-15 of the paper 'A spent conviction scheme for Hong Kong—a proposal' published by the Attorney General's Chambers in December 1984.

However, to assist applicants with a recorded conviction which is regarded as 'spent' in Hong Kong by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Ordinance, the police clearly endorse any letters of refusal to grant a certificate with a chop, stating that:

'This conviction is regarded as spent in Hong Kong by virtue of section 2(1) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Ordinance.'

The authorities receiving the letter will know from this endorsement that the offence is regarded as trivial and is not given any further consideration in Hong Kong. They will, however, as I have said, in any case exercise their judgement, and are free to disregard offences that are not yet considered as 'spent' in Hong Kong, or are not even covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Ordinance.

MRS. TAM: *Sir, may I refer to paragraph 4 of the answer? Could the Secretary for Security inform this Council whether it would not be simpler to make reference to the maximum penalty of an offence in deciding whether it should be recordable, rather than to rely on a list of very subjective criteria?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, under the law as it is at the moment, the commissioner has a duty to come to his decisions based on these criteria. This has been recently supported in a court case, Sir.

MR. MARTIN LEE: *Sir, as I have got a long prepared supplementary question, I have given prior notice of it to my hon. neighbour, the Secretary for Security. Bearing in mind that the legislative intent behind the Rehabilitation of Offenders Ordinance is to allow an individual to erase a past minor misdeed, and bearing in mind that the Attorney General's statement when this Ordinance was introduced that it was a modest proposal which might be extended at a later time; will the Administration inform this Council whether it is prepared to conduct an urgent review of the scheme under this Ordinance and in particular on the following:*

- (1) *whether the Commissioner of Police should be allowed to circumvent the clear spirit and intent of this Ordinance by revealing an individual's 'spent' conviction to overseas immigration authorities;*
- (2) *whether the Administration feels that the time has now come to expand the scope of the scheme along the lines of the corresponding British legislation; and*
- (3) *whether the power of the magistrate to order the conviction not to be recorded be reinstated, a proposal which enjoys the support of the Hong Kong Bar Association and the Law Society of Hong Kong as well as the Magistrates' Association?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, although strictly outside the main point of the question, I am prepared to ensure that the points raised by my hon. Friend are properly considered together with any additional representations received from the Bar Association and the Law Society.

MR. SOHMEN: *Sir, the Secretary for Security has said that any person who applies for a Certificate of No Criminal Conviction with a previous conviction for an offence which is no longer recordable is issued with a certificate. Does the annual change in the list of recordable offences not create an inequity or half-truth because whether a certificate is issued or not is then determined by the date the application is lodged even though the offence might have been recordable at the time it was committed?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: That is correct, Sir. The list of recordable offences which at present number 94 is reviewed annually; sometimes new offences are added and sometimes offences are taken off. Sir, my hon. Friend is correct in what he has said but it does not, of course, mean that when confronted with the question from the foreign consulate, 'Have you ever been convicted?', the individual is absolved from answering it truly.



MR. PETER C. WONG: *Sir, in paragraph 5 of the Secretary's answer, the Secretary states 'applicants for visas or immigration permits to certain countries are required by those countries to state whether they have ever been convicted of an offence'. How does the Secretary reconcile this statement, Sir, with his answer in the last part of the previous paragraph which states 'I should emphasise that any person who applies for a Certificate of No Criminal Conviction with a previous conviction for an offence which is no longer recordable is issued with a certificate'?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: *Sir, I think that the point raised in the previous question is substantially the same here. The two are not related. The Commissioner of Police's list of recordable offences is one thing and what the consulate asks and how the applicant replies is another thing.*

MRS. TAM: *Sir, again I would like to refer to paragraph 4 of the answer. In view of the considerable amount of subjective judgement required by the criteria and the need to make reference to social attitude, would it not be more appropriate for the Governor in Council to decide what offences should be on the list, and would the Government consider issuing guidance notes for members of the public applying for Certificate of No Criminal Conviction informing them of the list of recordable offences, and of the policy behind granting Certificate of No Criminal Conviction?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: *Sir, the authority for the commissioner to decide on these crimes, as I have explained in the letter to the convenor of the OMELCO Security Panel, is under the Police Force Ordinance and the commissioner's prerogative in this respect has been upheld by the judicial review in the recent case of Regina v. Li Hok-ming. The Commissioner of Police assesses society's attitude. I accept this can be adjudged as subjective. But the Commissioner of Police has reference to a wide range of information from the public, from courts and from legal practitioners, from district fight crime committees and other bodies. Statistics on reported crimes also provide a very useful measure against which to assess opinions. As regards the last part of the question, this is certainly something which I can consider, Sir.*

### **Conditions of service for subsidised school teachers**

2. MR. SZETO asked (in Cantonese): *The Education Department has recently introduced two changes to the conditions of service of subsidised school teachers concerning: (1) the payment of compensation for resignation without sufficient notice; and (2) the calculation of maternity leave for female teachers. Will Government inform this Council whether the teachers' union and schools councils concerned have been consulted about these changes, and whether amendments have to be made to the contracts of all subsidised school teachers as a result of introducing these two changes?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Sir, under the provisions of the Employment Ordinance, an employee may terminate his contract of employment without notice by paying the employer an amount equal to the employee's wages during the period of notice specified in the contract. In the case of aided school teachers, the codes of aid provide for a teacher who resigns without notice to pay back one month's salary. If a teacher, after giving proper notice, thereafter terminates the contract, the Employment Ordinance provides that he should pay the employer an amount proportional to the unexpired period of notice.

Because there was some doubt as to whether the codes of aid for schools were in line with the Employment Ordinance, the Education Department sought legal advice. The advice received was that a teacher who terminates his employment without giving the required period of notice should be liable to pay to the school an amount equivalent to his wages for the full period of notice. Where the teacher gives insufficient notice he should be liable to pay to the school an amount equivalent to his wages for the balance of the period of notice. As a result, the Education Department issued a circular amending the codes of aid.

As this was felt to be a technical amendment to bring the codes of aid more closely in line with the law, consultation was not thought to be necessary. Nevertheless, at a meeting with the Education Department on 15 December, the schools councils were informed of the proposed amendments. The change as announced was intended to provide schools with amended guidelines applying to new contracts. Existing contracts were not affected.

In view of the considerable interest which this change has generated, the Education Department has now arranged for meetings with the schools councils and teachers' associations to clarify the issue and to resolve any problems. Meanwhile, the circular has been withdrawn pending this consultation.

Sir, I turn now to the question of maternity leave. Under the Employment Ordinance, an employer is required to give six weeks' post-natal leave. The codes of aid, however, state that a teacher may return to work between four and six weeks after giving birth, subject to medical advice. After consultation with the Commissioner for Labour, it was clear to the Education Department that a teacher must be given the legal minimum of six weeks' post-natal leave. The codes of aid have therefore been amended to provide for this, and school managements have been so informed. Since this was a legal requirement, no consultation was felt to be necessary. The Education Department is now studying the implications for existing contracts.

MR. SZETO (in Cantonese): *Sir, I am glad to know that the Education Department has already withdrawn the circulars two days ago. And I am also glad to hear that the Education Department will arrange meetings with the school councils and the*

*teachers' associations on 17 May. However, the two circulars made the arrangements immediately effective. How do we treat the period from the time the circulars were issued to the time they were withdrawn? If some schools have already signed contracts with new teachers within this period or have calculated the maternity leave according to the circular, will the Education Department try to remedy the situation?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Sir, I will draw the director's attention to this point and ask him to consider it during this consultation period I referred to.

MR. SOHMEN: *The Secretary's answer seems to suggest that the codes of aid do not comply with the Employment Ordinance. On the question of maternity leave, it is suggested that consultation is not necessary because all that is being done is to bring the codes of aid in line with the law. On the other hand, on the question of the notice period, consultation is now considered necessary even though the codes of aid will only be brought in line with the law. Why is there a difference?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Sir, there is no choice about complying with the law but it may be possible to comply with the law in different ways. On the maternity leave provision, there does not appear to be any room for manoeuvre. On the other provision, it is possible we may devise some other way to comply with the law other than the one proposed in the original circular.

MRS. FAN: *Sir, it is always easy to be wise after the event. However, it does appear that the Education Department probably with good intentions and valid reasons has caused unnecessary worry and concern among teachers in the aided sector. Would the Secretary agree that such actions in future should at least be accompanied with full explanation to the parties concerned to reduce any misunderstanding?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Sir, I am sure it is the director's intention as far as possible to explain any changes in conditions to those concerned.

MR. SZETO (in Cantonese): *Sir, will the Government inform this Council whether the Employment Ordinance provides only the minimum conditions and the codes of aid can provide more favourable terms to teachers than those specified in the Employment Ordinance?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Yes, Sir, the codes of aid do already provide more favourable conditions than the minimum provided in the Ordinance. One good example is the maternity leave provisions we have just spoken about which provide for full pay whereas the Ordinance only provides for two thirds pay.

**Immigration control at Kai Tak Airport**

3. MR. CHENG asked: *Will Government inform this Council if it is aware that Hong Kong residents have experienced inconvenience in getting through the immigration control counters at the Kai Tak Airport and whether or not it will take measures to ensure that lines designated for residents are truly reserved for them and that their documents can be speedily processed?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, the Government is aware that some Hong Kong residents have experienced inconvenience in getting through immigration control at the Hong Kong International Airport during peak hours because the lines designated for them are sometimes also used by overseas visitors.

A segregated system achieves its best results if residents and non-residents are processed in separate halls, with separate resources. The immigration facilities at Kai Tak Airport were, however, only designed for what is called open front clearance. The Government, nevertheless, recognises that Hong Kong residents should be cleared through immigration control as speedily and efficiently as possible and has designated certain counters for them. In addition, whenever resources permit, the Immigration Department deploys regulators in the halls to help passengers queue in the right lines.

Although these facilities are important for Hong Kong residents, it is necessary to ensure that visitors are also given courteous and expeditious service. This would certainly not be achieved if visitors were required to queue in long lines while they could see resident counters being relatively under-used. A partial solution could be the allocation of fewer counters for residents, but this would not be in keeping with the service intended for Hong Kong residents. To strike the right balance, and to achieve the best use of his resources, the Director of Immigration has concluded that the counters should be used flexibly, taking into account the traffic situation at the time.

Unfortunately, given the constraints presented by the design and layout of the airport, it is not possible to enforce a rigid segregation of passengers.

Improvements will, however, be introduced in the next few months, including computerisation, additional immigration counters and more immigration staff to cope with the increased workload. It is expected that these measures will go some way to reducing the overall waiting time, and will allow more scope for the Immigration Department to ensure that counters designated for residents are more exclusively used by residents. The department will monitor the effectiveness of these new facilities.

MR. CHENG: *Sir, will the Secretary for Security elaborate on the way in which regulators of the Immigration Department identify residents and non-residents in the hall and help them queue in the right lines?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, I suspected that I would get a question like this and I took the precaution of going out to the airport yesterday and see for myself precisely how this was done. The regulators are Immigration Department's staff. They are experienced and I was struck with the ease and the speed with which they were able to decide who was likely to be a Hong Kong resident or not a Hong Kong resident. In assessing whether they should direct particular people to an under-used line, they paid particular attention to whether the person was old, incapacitated, or had small children.

MRS. CHOW: *Sir, may I suggest, instead of the present system where the regulation of traffic to the counters is left to incoming travellers, that the Administration gives consideration to having two main queues, one for Hong Kong residents and the other for non-residents, each with a regulator at the top of the queues so that the flexibility of the use of counters could be achieved by co-ordination between the two regulators while neither Hong Kong residents nor visitors would be inconvenienced.*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, I very much doubt whether the layout of the airport will allow that sort of procedure to be followed. It is as I have said an open front plan. The stage V extension of the airport which is due to be completed by the end of the year is designed to provide even more immigration counters spread out laterally and the space 'vertically' (in the approach to the counter) would not permit the two long lines that Mrs. CHOW has suggested. The number of arrival counters will in fact be increased from 52 to 90 and the number of departure counters from 46 to 76. I would suggest that we see how this system works and then consider whether further review is necessary.

MR. SOHMEN: *Sir, I believe the basic problem is not really the segregation of residents from non-residents but the overall waiting time. Could the Secretary for Security advise us what he expects the reduction in the processing time will be when computerisation is completed?*

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: There are two points here, Sir. The computerisation is designed primarily to allow Hong Kong residents with Hong Kong identity cards, while they are at the counters, to get through quickly by using their cards; in that case the actual waiting time at the counter will be reduced to something like 36 seconds. But I think the time referred to by Mr. SOHMEN was more the overall time taken by the passengers to get through.

At present, according to a survey conducted in March this year, 61.9 per cent of arriving passengers was cleared through immigration within 15 minutes, 28.2 per cent within 16 to 30 minutes while 9.9 per cent waited for more than 30 minutes. If I might add, for departures, the times are rather better and 90.3 per cent of passengers are cleared within 15 minutes, 9.4 per cent within 16 to 30 minutes and only 0.3 per cent wait for longer than 30 minutes. Now we do not

think this is good enough. We do not think this is as it should be. And the plan which I mentioned for additional counters, additional immigration staff and the computerisation for Hong Kong identity cards at the counter will, I hope, provide a better service.

### **Written answers to questions**

#### **Protection for Hong Kong residents working abroad**

4. MR. TAM asked: *In view of the increasing number of local residents taking up employment abroad, will Government inform this Council what measures are being taken to ensure that these workers are given full protection as provided under the Employment Ordinance and the Employees' Compensation Ordinance?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Sir, statutory protection for this category of workers is provided by the Contracts for Employment Outside Hong Kong Ordinance to safeguard the interests of manual workers who wish to take up employment wholly or partly outside Hong Kong.

This Ordinance requires the employer or his duly authorised representative to enter into a written contract with the worker. The contract must be signed by the worker and attested by the Labour Department before he leaves Hong Kong for employment.

The Ordinance requires that the contract must contain information about rates of wages and overtime, days and hours of work, rest days and public holidays. It must also provide for varying or terminating the contract and make the employer responsible for providing passages to and from the place of work for the worker.

The contract must also specify the employer's liability to pay for medical expenses and compensation for work injury. In essence, the rights and obligations defined in the contract must be broadly in line with those provided under the Employment Ordinance and the Employees' Compensation Ordinance, both of which relate to employees in Hong Kong.

In so far as manual workers are concerned, the protection provided by the Contracts for Employment Outside Hong Kong Ordinance is considered adequate. An employer or his agent may be prosecuted if he fails to enter into a written contract with a manual worker before departure or induces the worker to depart from Hong Kong for employment before the contract is attested. Upon conviction, an employer is liable to a fine of \$50,000. In 1987, four prosecutions were taken out against employers for offences under the Ordinance and resulted in four convictions with fines totalling \$8,000.

The Labour Department assists workers in settling disputes by conciliation. If conciliation fails, a case may be referred to the Labour Tribunal for adjudication upon request from the parties involved. In 1987, the Labour

Department handled 65 disputes of this nature and helped to settle 26. Thirty-three cases were referred to the Labour Tribunal for adjudication and the remaining six were withdrawn.

The Ordinance does not, however, apply to non-manual workers leaving Hong Kong for employment. An unknown number of local people are working outside Hong Kong. Their main protection is by means of a written contract with their employers or their local agents. If they encounter difficulties in obtaining contractual entitlements, the Labour Department assists them in resolving the problems by conciliation after their return to Hong Kong.

The Labour Department is now reviewing the Ordinance, particularly whether its scope should be expanded to cover non-manual workers.

The Employees' Compensation Ordinance does not yet cover work injuries which are sustained outside Hong Kong. We will shortly be proposing amendments to the Ordinance to expand its scope to cover work injuries to Hong Kong workers who are employed by Hong Kong employers to work outside Hong Kong.

### **Extra-curricular activities at secondary schools**

5. MRS. TAM asked: *Since September 1986 when Government began to provide in phases additional certificated master posts in secondary schools with 15 classes or more to take charge of extra-curricular activities and student counselling, what improvements have been made to promote extra-curricular activities in secondary schools and what improvements are still necessary? Does Government intend to consider strictly defining and monitoring the actual work undertaken by these teachers, and what are the reasons for its decision?*

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Sir, of the five additional teaching posts provided in stages for each standard size government and aided secondary school since 1982, one is intended to strengthen student counselling in the schools and another to strengthen extra-curricular activities. As far as extracurricular activities are concerned, the additional post enables the school principal to appoint a team of teachers, headed by a co-ordinator, to take responsibility for the planning and the conduct of extra-curricular activities by all teaching staff throughout the school.

In June 1987, an officer of the Education Department was appointed to serve as secretary to the Hong Kong Extra-Curricular Activities Co-ordinators' Association with a view to providing more professional support to this organisation, whose main objective is to better promote extra-curricular activities in schools. This officer provides assistance to the association in a number of areas, particularly in organising extra-mural courses, and arranging seminars and workshops for the co-ordinators. At the same time, the Education

Department is pushing forward the development of centrally organised extra-curricular activities on a territory-wide scale. These include the Community Youth Club Scheme, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Summer Youth Programmes, all of which attract large numbers of participating students.

It is considered inappropriate to lay down instructions on the duties to be undertaken by the additional teachers provided to strengthen extra-curricular activities since school principals must be given the discretion to deploy their staff as they see fit given their awareness of the aptitudes, interests and abilities of their staff and students. Instead, the Education Department believes that the focus should be to monitor the end result, that is, the overall quantity and quality of extra-curricular activities provided by each school. This monitoring is undertaken by district education officers during their regular visits to schools.

As regards further improvements, the Education Department plans to establish an extra-curricular activities section in the Advisory Inspectorate in order to give further assistance on a regular basis to schools and teachers in the development of extra-curricular programmes. The establishment of this section will also assist the department in determining the direction of future developments and any additional resources needed.

## **Government Business**

### **Motions**

#### **PENSIONS (INCREASE) ORDINANCE**

THE CHIEF SECRETARY moved the following motion: That the Second Schedule to the Pensions (Increase) Ordinance be amended with effect from 1 April 1988—

- (a) in Part I by adding the following—
  - ‘21. The adjusted pension under paragraph 20 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (b) In Part II by adding the following—
  - ‘20. The adjusted pension under paragraph 19 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (c) in Part III by adding the following—
  - ‘20. The adjusted pension under paragraph 19 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (d) in Part IV by adding the following—
  - ‘19. The adjusted pension under paragraph 18 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;



- (e) in Part V by adding the following—  
‘18. The adjusted pension under paragraph 17 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (f) in Part VI by adding the following—  
‘17. The adjusted pension under paragraph 16 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (g) in Part VII by adding the following—  
‘16. The adjusted pension under paragraph 15 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (h) in Part VIII by adding the following—  
‘15. The adjusted pension under paragraph 14 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (i) in Part IX by adding the following—  
‘13. The adjusted pension under paragraph 12 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (j) in Part X by adding the following—  
‘12. The adjusted pension under paragraph 11 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (k) in Part XI by adding the following—  
‘11. The adjusted pension under paragraph 10 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (l) in Part XII by adding the following—  
‘10. The adjusted pension under paragraph 9 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (m) in Part XIII by adding the following—  
‘9. The adjusted pension under paragraph 8 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (n) in Part XIV by adding the following—  
‘8. The adjusted pension under paragraph 7 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (o) in Part XV by adding the following—  
‘7. The adjusted pension under paragraph 6 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (p) in Part XVI by adding the following—  
‘6. The adjusted pension under paragraph 5 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (q) in Part XVII by adding the following—  
‘5. The adjusted pension under paragraph 4 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (r) in Part XVIII by adding the following—  
‘4. The adjusted pension under paragraph 3 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;
- (s) in Part XIX by adding the following—  
‘3. The adjusted pension under paragraph 2 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’;

- (t) in Part XX by adding the following—  
‘2. The adjusted pension under paragraph 1 may be further increased by 6 per cent.’; and
- (u) by adding the following after Part XX—

‘PART XXI

*Applicable to a basic pension based on a salary in force  
from 1 April 1987 to 31 March 1988 inclusive*

1. The basic pension may be increased by 6 per cent.’.

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

The Government’s declared policy is to maintain the original purchasing power of civil service pensions, including pensions payable under the Widows and Orphans Pension Scheme and under the Widows’ and Children’s Pensions Scheme. This is achieved by periodic pension adjustments in line with movements in the Consumer Price Index (A).

Sir, during the latest review period from 1 April 1987 to 31 March 1988, the moving annual average of the Consumer Price Index (A) rose by 6.5 points or 6.2 per cent. In line with established practice, it is proposed that a pension increase of 6 per cent should be awarded with effect from 1 April 1988.

The total cost of increasing all pensions by 6 per cent is estimated at \$49.8 million for a full year. This is a statutory charge which may be authorised by resolution of this Council under the appropriate Ordinances.

Sir, I beg to move.

*Question proposed, put and agreed to.*

## **WIDOWS AND ORPHANS PENSION (INCREASE) ORDINANCE**

THE CHIEF SECRETARY moved the following motion: That the Schedule to the Widows and Orphans Pension (Increase) Ordinance be amended by adding the following—

- ‘44. The pension calculated on the total contributions up to 31 March 1987 inclusive plus the total increases in pension up to 31 March 1988 may be increased by 6 per cent with effect from 1 April 1988.
45. The pension calculated on contributions from 1 April 1987 to 31 March 1988 inclusive may be increased by 6 per cent with effect from 1 April 1988.’.

He said: Sir, my explanation on the first motion standing in my name on the Order Paper equally applies to the subject of the second motion standing in my name. I therefore beg to move.

*Question proposed, put and agreed to.*

### **First Reading of Bills**

#### **BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

#### **ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING LICENCES REGULATIONS AND REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF VEHICLES REGULATIONS) (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

#### **INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

#### **STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

#### **SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

*Bills read the First time and ordered to be set down for Second Reading pursuant to Standing Order 41(3).*

### **Second Reading of Bills**

#### **BANKING (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the Second Reading of: 'A Bill to amend the Banking Ordinance'.

He said: Sir, I move that the Banking (Amendment) Bill 1988 be read a Second time.

The Bill seeks to give legislative effect to the proposals in this year's Budget to increase with effect from 1 April 1988 the fees payable by banks and deposit-taking companies. As these fees were last revised in 1986, an 8 per cent increase is proposed. I estimate that this will yield an additional \$11 million in the current financial year.

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

*Question on adjournment proposed, put and agreed to.*

**ROAD TRAFFIC (DRIVING LICENCES REGULATIONS AND  
REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF VEHICLES REGULATIONS)  
(AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the Second Reading of: 'A Bill to amend the Road Traffic (Driving Licences) Regulations and the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations'.

He said: Sir, I move that the Road Traffic (Driving Licences Regulations and Registration and Licensing of Vehicles Regulations) (Amendment) Bill 1988 be read a Second time.

The Bill seeks to give legislative effect to the proposals in this year's Budget to increase the fees for certain driving and vehicle licences with effect from 2 March 1988. As these fees were last revised in 1987, a 6 per cent increase is proposed. I estimate that this will yield an additional \$62 million in the current financial year.

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

*Question on adjournment proposed, put and agreed to.*

**INLAND REVENUE (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the Second Reading of: 'A Bill to amend the Inland Revenue Ordinance'.

He said: Sir, I move that the Inland Revenue (Amendment) Bill 1988 be read a Second time.

This Bill seeks to give legislative effect to the taxation concessions proposed in this year's Budget. These include the reduction of the standard rate of tax from 16.5 per cent to 15.5 per cent and the rate of profits tax payable by corporations from 18 per cent to 17 per cent. In addition to revisions in the graduated scale of tax rates and the amount of allowances, this Bill also seeks to introduce an allowance of up to \$15,000 for working wives. The amendments will take effect from 1 April 1988.

Sir, I estimate the cost to General Revenue of implementing these proposals to be approximately \$1,780 million in the current financial year, and \$2,790 million per annum thereafter at present levels of chargeable income.

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

*Question on adjournment proposed, put and agreed to.*

**STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY moved the Second Reading: 'A Bill to amend the Stamp Duty Ordinance'.

He said: Sir, I move that the Stamp Duty (Amendment) Bill 1988 be read a Second time.

The Bill seeks to give legislative effect to the proposals in this year's Budget to introduce with effect from 1 April 1988 a revised scale of stamp duty payable in respect of conveyances on sale. I estimate the cost of implementing these proposals to be around \$300 million in the current financial year.

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

*Question on adjournment proposed, put and agreed to.*

**SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

THE SECRETARY FOR SECURITY moved the Second Reading of: 'A Bill to amend the Societies Ordinance'.

He said: Sir, I move that the Societies (Amendment) Bill 1988 be read the Second time.

The aim of the Bill is to enable an unnecessary charge to be removed. At present section 9(2) of the Ordinance requires a fee to be charged for inspection of the registers of societies maintained by the Commissioner of Police as Registrar of Societies. This charge was intended to deter casual browsing and was set at a nominal \$1. The commissioner has pointed out that many requests to consult the registers come by telephone, making a charge impractical and that, in any case, administrative measures can be taken to deter frivolous access to the registers. Consequently it is proposed to amend section 9(2) to remove the obligation to charge a fee.

It is intended that if this Bill is enacted, the rules made under the Societies Ordinance will be amended to delete the \$1 charge and substitute administrative procedures, which will enable the Registrar of Societies to prevent casual reference to the registers, should such measures be necessary.

Opportunity will also be taken to update the Ordinance by substituting the words 'Hong Kong' in place of 'the Colony', wherever this occurs.

Sir, with these remarks, I move that the debate on this motion be adjourned.

*Question on adjournment proposed, put and agreed to.*

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (ELECTORAL PROVISIONS)  
(AMENDMENT) BILL 1988****Resumption of debate on Second Reading (27 April 1988)**

*Question proposed, put and agreed to.*

Bill read the Second time.

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

**EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988****Resumption of debate on Second Reading (27 April 1988)**

*Question proposed, 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.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (ELECTORAL PROVISIONS)  
(AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

Clauses 1 to 8 were agreed to.

**APPROPRIATION BILL 1988**

Heads 21 to 194 were agreed to.

The Schedule was agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 were agreed to.

**EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988**

Clauses 1 to 5 were agreed to.

Council then resumed.

**Third Reading of Bills**

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL reported that the

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (ELECTROAL PROVISIONS)  
(AMENDMENT) BILL 1988

APPROPRIATION BILL 1988 and the

EMPLOYMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 1988

had passed through Committee without amendment. He moved the Third Reading of the Bills.

*Question on the Bills proposed, put and agreed to.*

Bills read the Third time and passed.

**Member's Motion****Report on youth policy**

MRS. TAM moved the following motion: That this Council takes note of the Report on Youth Policy.

She said (in Cantonese): Sir, I move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper. In recent years, there has been a sudden increase in public concern and regard for youth development. That is, to some extent, the result of circumstances. The Sino-British Joint Declaration has established a historic watershed in 1997 for Hong Kong, the community needs to be fully prepared for the new situation. In this process, we have awakened to the fact that, in order to maintain Hong Kong's stability and prosperity and to meet the great challenges of the time, it is essential to have a new generation of citizens who have had healthy development and have a sense of belonging and are committed to the future of the community. It is against this background that youth development has seen a resurgence of public recognition and attention.

This approach, based on objective circumstantial need, regards youth development as purely a tool, or a means, towards social or political goals; but once the results do not seem to meet the original goals, or if the goals seem to be

achievable by other means, youth development is often cast aside, due to lack of incentive. Actually, youth development is not merely valuable as a tool, but carries intrinsic value. Youth development helps personal development and growth, and helps them to realise personal potentials and create good character. So youth development should not be subject to temporal or special constraints. The Government and the community have responsibility at all times to develop youth, only current circumstances have provided additional impetus. Youth development is conducive to social development and youth development is of intrinsic value in enhancing personal development, for these two parallel reasons, it should be recognised and advocated.

In the past, although the Government has made effort and some progress in youth development, there remains a fatal flaw, which is, the lack of positive planning and clearly defined direction. Previously, the Government has not affirmed targets and the direction of youth development in the context of social development. As a result, government programmes and plans for the young people are passive, work targets are often negative. They centre on the prevention problems, rather than the development of youth potential. In the past, there has been a lack of co-ordination between government departments and voluntary agencies in the provision of youth services. That has given rise to duplication, omissions, piecemeal efforts, narrowness in scope and uneven distribution, as well as lack of co-ordination in the provision of services and that has adversely affected the results. Such an approach or philosophy in youth programmes, not only stands in the way of better development, but most important of all, it lags behind current needs. The question that we should ask ourselves today is 'Should Government not clearly indicate its commitment and responsibility to youth development and fulfil it through specific action, and should not the community devote greater and comprehensive discussion to how best to develop our youth?'

The report on youth policy is the result of 18 months work by the Central Committee on Youth. The report affirms the need for specific expectations and requirements in youth development, and concludes that the Government is obliged to make clear commitment towards the future development of youth as well as setting up clear direction and targets and to achieve those targets through more effective deployment of resources and co-ordination.

In considering the needs of young people and the community's expectation of them, I think the emphasis should be placed on the integration of youth needs and social development. There are several focal points in the report concerning youth development, such as, maintaining mental health of young people in an urban environment, promoting their social and political awareness and participation, providing opportunities for international exposure, to widen their breadth of mind and to establish international perspective. To provide more educational opportunities to meet their desire for more education and to envisage the influence of the electronic media on the growth and development of



our youth. Sir, I believe that the approach of integrating youth needs and social development is not only uncommon in the youth policies in other countries, but would certainly be an uncommon achievement in Hong Kong's history. Herein lies the value and significance of the report.

Furthermore, in the course of drafting the report, the committee has carefully considered several important issues. The first issue is the balance between comprehensiveness and flexibility in policy. A youth policy must be substantial and specific in content, as a document outlining future direction, but if there is excessive detail, initiative of relative departments may be stifled and the policy would have to be amended time and again to suit changing circumstances. In order to strike a balance, the committee feels that the focus of such a policy should be to lay down clear objectives and specific direction for youth work.

The second issue is the balance between central leadership and public participation. Youth policy is to be formulated centrally and the Government must remain committed to youth development work, but that does not mean that there must be central leadership in every respect. Hong Kong is a plural society and all along youth work has depended on shared commitment and effort by both government and non-government bodies. Such a partnership should not change with the advent of a policy on youth. Therefore, the proposed youth policy is not a set of rules but rather a document for guidance. To ensure that government and non-government bodies follow and support that policy, there must be ample opportunities for consultation in formulating the policy and for non-government participation in its implementation. Therefore, the committee has, in the course of drafting the report, been in frequent contact with non-government bodies, listening to their views. We have arranged for a three-month consultation period from the publication of the report, to receive public criticism. The committee has also proposed the establishment of a commission on youth, comprising directorate officers and members of a cross-section of our community, to be in charge of the implementation of the policy. The committee emphasises the need for the commission to maintain close links with voluntary agencies, local organisations and other advisory bodies, for greater co-operation and co-ordination.

The third issue on which the committee gave careful deliberation, is the effect of 1997 on the policy itself. As I have said, changes on Hong Kong's political horizon are certain to prove a challenge for the young people of today and tomorrow. 1997 cannot be ignored in formulating policy. On the other hand, the challenges of our political future is by no means the only factor determining the needs of our youth. Urbanisation, economic development, advancement in information technology, are equally significant challenges on the budding generation. Therefore, the committee has avoided either playing down or playing up the 1997 factor. We have attempted to arrive at broad objectives. The report has given full treatment to the 1997 factor but has also balanced that against other factors. Recommendations in the report include those made with

1997 in view, such as, the proposal to strengthen social and political awareness, and to encourage political participation but also those made on account of other factors, such as, the maintenance of mental health. Sir, I am confident that putting the 1997 factor in its due place, no more no less, would enable us to form a youth policy that would truly meet the needs and aspirations of our youth.

Today, more than 10 Members, who have the interests of young people at heart, will be speaking on the report. I would like to thank them for their concern and I hope that more in our community will voice their views, also criticisms, so that we will have an ideal youth policy.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

*Question proposed.*

MR. CHEONG: Sir, the future of Hong Kong has been uppermost in our minds ever since the start of the Sino-British negotiations. Many important and at times heated debates in connection with our future have taken place in this Chamber over the past few years. Yet, looking back and pondering over what has transpired, somehow I cannot help but having a nagging feeling that we might have fallen into the trap of concentrating too much on just one factor, namely, the development and evolution of our future political system. Have we not run the risk of losing sight of the importance of other factors that are of equal significance to our future?

Many parents would say that they are living not only for themselves but more importantly for their children. Have we not repeatedly heard that it is only for their children that they are taking the plunge to emigrate? Should we not accept that the future of Hong Kong will be very much the future of our youth? Hence, this debate on youth policy is indeed timely. For me at least, it helps to refocus my mind on an issue that has a crucial bearing on the future of Hong Kong. In short, if our youth are not adequately prepared to meet future challenges we, or they, will not have a future.

What then are the challenges? How do we identify them? Having identified them, how should Government allocate resources into establishing programmes designed to help our youth to meet those challenges successfully? What is Government doing now and what improvements are needed? Sir, these are but only a few questions for which answers must be found. There are certainly more and hopefully this debate will help bring our community to focus on this issue.

Sir, through the hard work of our community, coupled with some luck, Hong Kong has become increasingly affluent. Our children now have a much cosier environment in which to grow up in. At home, they are generally more pampered than their forefathers. At school, they are enjoying the fruit of our education system which, rightly or wrongly, works on the assumption that the less competitive pressure on our children the better. Furthermore, advancement in mass media technology has presented our children with more distractions from their learning processes.

A combination of all these factors has helped to tame, in my view, somewhat the hard working spirit of our youths. This may be acceptable up to now but if we were to look further ahead, we should be aware of the fact that world advancement in technology will surely bring the world closer together. As a result, our community will face much more fierce competition from other communities of the world in our quest for further economic advancement. Our youth today will be the pillars of our community tomorrow and they will have to bear the brunt of that competition.

It will be difficult indeed to maintain our economic well-being without putting in considerable hard work and effort. For our youths to sustain the kind of economic benefits they have been exposed to, they need to develop the skills to handle tough and difficult situations. They should not be encouraged or conditioned to think that the community owes everyone a living, and that, from cradle to grave, Government can always be looked upon as the natural provider. In my view, our future economic successes will be very much dependent upon the ability of our community to continue to appreciate and accept the value of hard work.

We must also learn to work more together as a team in meeting challenges from our competitors. Our youth should therefore be provided with the opportunities to be exposed to programmes designed to enhance their experiences on the benefits of hard work, team work and collective wisdom. This is the area where Government-sponsored programmes will be most meaningful.

Before I close, Sir, I would like to pay tribute to the significant work done by the Central Committee on Youth chaired by my hon. Colleague, Mrs. Rosanna TAM. We should be thankful for their work and their report should really provide a good foundation for any further efforts. I support fully their recommendations for Government to formulate a youth policy and then to establish a commission on youth.

With these remarks, Sir, I support the motion.

MRS. CHOW: Sir, in 1985, I was fortunate enough to serve with a group of extremely enthusiastic and relatively young people in a committee to co-ordinate the numerous celebrations staged by hundreds of organisations over the territory in honour of the International Youth Year. One of the more lasting recommendations that emerged was that the focus on youth affairs should not be allowed to fade, and the impetus provided by the year should serve as the momentum for a more concentrated effort to determine and shape the youth policy most suited to the needs of our community.

The Report on Youth Policy published by the Central Committee on Youth fulfilled this task admirably, and I would like to speak in support of it.

The proposed commission on youth is, of course, quite necessary to spearhead thought and action related to the formation and implementation of a youth policy. I am, however, somewhat concerned that little emphasis is given to the

importance of leadership and commitment this commission must provide. What guarantee is there that its advice will be accepted? Furthermore, as matters pertaining to youth can cut across a number of policy areas, will the co-ordinating branch be able, however willing, to encourage co-operation and co-ordination in the implementation of the proposed policy at all times? What if such encouragement is resisted by some key departments in the bureaucratic machinery? I hope those queries are not to be dismissed as expressions of negative cynicism. These are positive efforts to avoid the obstacles intentionally or unintentionally mounted by negative forces that we, non-officials, have all come across in our work within Government.

But it would be quite wrong to think that it is all up to Government. The success hinges on the joint effort of Government and the community. The realisation of goals depends very heavily on the education and training of youth leaders.

Not enough is done, in my opinion, to sharpen common sense and independence in our young people. It is true that young people nowadays, more than ever, are left on their own, often relied upon by their parents to make major decisions. But how much help are they getting from their families, schools, peers and the community? How many choices are made and decisions taken on knowledge and analysis? How much demand is made on the young to take responsibility seriously and sensibly for themselves and others? How broad and deep is their vision? How far can they see beyond themselves and the world that immediately surrounds them? Some of the answers can already be found in the survey results contained in the report. They are neither surprising nor encouraging.

Surely, one of the most important priorities in the youth policy must be to find a way to teach our young people, not so much what to think, but how to think for themselves and others, by being knowledgeable, objective, logical and rational. Youths with leadership qualities must be recognised and given further opportunities of training and exposure. After all, they, not we, will be the pillars of a Hong Kong which needs to be even more self-reliant than today.

I remember, Sir, when I was a broadcaster, those were the days we worked hard at attracting young people to the box, with only with average success. Nowadays, the influence of television on the young can be felt easily, even without the confirmation of statistics.

There is no doubt that the standard of television production here matches anywhere else in the world in technique and entertainment value. But with the exception of government productions, it fails miserably in living up to the two other key functions and effects of television, that is, to inform and educate. And our young people, who are most susceptible to such influence, stand to lose a great deal. Producers often argue that art, particularly popular art, has to reflect real life so, if in real life young people behave immorally, talk badly, act and

react violently, abuse freedom by forsaking self-discipline and respect for others, all these are truthfully and realistically portrayed everyday in our most powerful and influential media. I cannot and will not be convinced that a force with such persuasive influence on thought, could be totally free of moral responsibility, particularly towards our young. Television, more than any other media, must be acutely aware of its power and the social responsibility that must accompany the exercise of that power; and no excuse should it allow itself to forgo that burden. Paradoxically, and in spite of producers' quests for realism, dramatic licence is often stretched beyond the limit of propriety, in scenes blatantly contrary to practices and conventions and truth of different trades, industries and professions in real life.

A recent finale of a controversial drama serial, depicting a courtroom scene, was the subject of serious criticism and ridicule in our legal and judicial circles, but was, at the same time, applauded by a great many young people who said they were deeply touched by its realism. Will these people ever know that what saw could never have happened in a courtroom in Hong Kong? Who has to answer for the ignorance that results?

Many, of course, would look to the Broadcasting Authority to act as the effective monitor. Although I have every confidence in the authority, I maintain it is the responsibility of the media to set its own standards and any external regulation should only be a safety net. I would, therefore, call on our otherwise very, very successful media to rectify this rather unsatisfactory but eminently important aspect under its direct control.

Sir, I fully support the formation of the proposed commission and, in its work to formulate a youth policy, due weight will be given to the training of leadership and independence in our young people. Furthermore, the development and effect of television will be recognised, hopefully, and allocated a place of prominence.

Sir, I support the motion.

DR. IP: Sir, I rise first to congratulate my colleague Rosanna, and the members of the Central Committee on Youth on their completion of the report on youth policy. I support their recommendation of setting up a commission of youth and feel that it is long felt needed.

There is no doubt that young people are important to our community. We have all gone through the period of youth and most remember it with pleasure and delight. But this is not so for some!

I would like to highlight some of the crucial findings of the report. 82 per cent of our youths spend most of their spare time watching television. Less than 42 per cent of our youths engage in physical activities during weekends and public holidays. 48 per cent of our youths feel under pressure of varying degrees. And only 64 per cent of our youths consider their future to be bright and encouraging! Is this how we want our youth to grow up?

If I were to quote from a very informative paragraph of the report, 'Youth is a critical transitional period of human development—a time of life for the search of self identity, the development of abilities and potentials, the acquirement of skills and knowledge for coping with the adult world, the re-evaluation of values learnt during childhood and the exploration of meaning in life under the influence of various environmental factors.'. When care is not taken to ensure a successful transition during youth, all the untoward effects of lack of self identity, lack of self esteem, immoral standards, and inability to cope with adult life results! This in turn leads to the development of the socially destructive behaviour of juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, prostitution and the less immediately obvious self destructive mental illness in later adult life.

The future lies in the prevention of this maladaptation during this critical transitional period of human development. Other than giving support to the findings of the report I have the following additional recommendations.

There exist deteriorating moral standards among our young! A study of the moral attitudes of our youth should therefore be addressed and moral education strengthened within the family and the schools.

A study should be made into the risk factors giving rise to problems of youth such that early identification and intensive counselling could offset the need for prosecution and rehabilitation.

The normal standards of physical and mental development of adolescents in Hong Kong are lacking. The Paediatric Department of the Chinese University should be given support in their failed attempts to apply for a research grant to study the same. Furthermore, with the increasing hospital admissions of adolescents into children's wards, adolescent medicine should be developed as a specialty under Paediatrics.

Paediatricians are most aware of the common disparity between the physical, mental, psychological, emotional and academic development during adolescence. Often it is psychological and emotional development which lags behind. Problems often arise when significant disparity exist between the different facets of development. For example, an adolescent with heightened sexual needs may not have the mature mentality to accept its consequences.

Sir, physical recreation in the form of sports is vital for our youth and should be actively promoted for this age group. Not only does it benefit health, it is also a useful channel to divert excess energy, so abundant in youth, for a useful cause.

Parents of our young have gone through youth in a simpler environment and often fail to understand the demands faced by our youth today. A multidisciplinary workshop should be organised to educate parents and workers with youth on the different aspects of adolescent development, their needs, problems and management. I believe the Hong Kong Child Health Foundation has provisionally scheduled to do this in November this year.

Last but not least, Sir, it is often those less educated who, coupled with neglect by their poor and broken families and seeing little future ahead for themselves, enter the world of crime and prostitution to satisfy their own material needs. It is this group of youth that special efforts should be made to offer them a bright future with vocational, technical training and the apprenticeship scheme. They should be given better opportunities and facilities, so that they too should be made to feel contributory to Hong Kong.

Sir, I conclude with a request to the early formation of a commission of youth, to formulate, review and update a youth policy, in Hong Kong.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. CHAN YING-LUN (in Cantonese): Sir, when I was a youth I learnt that following the right or the wrong way involves only a very subtle change. I am very concerned about the youth problem because of my personal experience. I was often discriminated by the friends around me when I was six, and I was beaten up when I was around 16 or 17 and I was also extorted for protection fees later on. Fortunately, I had some very good classmates and good teachers who helped me and only with their help was I able to resist the temptation of going astray. Now I understand that it is, indeed, very difficult for one to live under such surroundings and resist temptations. I had grown to believe that if I could help the young people to turn a new leaf, then my life would have been spent very worthily. I have tried to come into contact with some marginal youths in soccer pitches, but I could not go very frequently and I was not professionally trained. That is why I felt very frustrated and that is why I also respect very much the social workers and teachers who devoted their time to helping the young people to turn a new leaf. I think that they have led a very meaningful life.

But the Government has not paid much attention to youth counselling. Youth counselling has played a very small part in all the government administration affairs. The Government has ignored the importance of this area. I can cite an example. At the entrance to a village in Shau Kei Wan squatter areas, you can always see a crowd of delinquents loitering thus causing threats and psychological burden to the residents there. The villagers suspect that they have taken drugs and four fires have broken out recently in the village and the residents had already gathered enough evidence to show that two of the fires broke out mainly because of the candle-light parties held by the delinquent youths in two empty huts. But the Government did not do anything to chase them away, neither did the Government send anyone to counsel the young people, and the villagers were really very, very angry. Regarding the youths, they feel that it is indeed a great pity that they lead such lives.

Sir, are there any parents who do not want their children to grow up healthily? Are there any teachers who do not want their students to grow up to be useful members of the society? Although the responsibility for teaching our

young people does fall on the shoulders of our parents and teachers, there are many factors which are simply beyond the control of parents and teachers. The Government also has a great responsibility to provide a good environment for our young people to grow up and good studying opportunity.

Although Hong Kong is a free society which respects personal right, but we know that our young people, who are under-aged, are not mature enough to make good judgements and so the society still has the responsibility to educate them. The Government should take the initiative, and we should have good co-ordination and co-operation in order to have healthy successors. That is why I support the recommendation of the Central Committee of Youth. We think we should provide more facilities and opportunities to young people in both physical and psychological aspects. We should set up a commission on youth, which will have a close co-ordination with other youth associations and provide advice to the Government on youth policy. We should also take up the task to review our youth policy regularly. I think that the commission on youth should take up some special tasks regarding marginal youths, and to address special problems:

First of all, through the close co-ordination of government departments, local organisations and other advisory committees, we should take care of the young people who are growing up in low-income families, living in poor environment or in single parent families. Most of the parents would not have the time to teach them. They may not know how to, even if they wanted to. And if we can help the young people to educate their children, we will be able to prevent our young people going astray.

Secondly, I hope that the education authorities will promote moral education and youth counselling in schools.

Thirdly, the Government should take note of one thing, that is, there are a lot of unscrupulous businessmen taking advantage of our young people. They are selling and renting out comic books, spreading improper concepts, or even pornographic magazines or video tapes. All these will have adverse psychological effects on youths. The Government should try to address the issue and find solutions.

Fourthly, we should study the reasons why young people usually go astray when they take up part-time jobs. We know a lot of young people are easy to get part-time jobs, so we should try to take preventive measures.

Sir, the mentality and the needs of the young people are ever changing. We cannot use the measures of a decade ago today again. What we are doing now may not be applicable to the young people 10 years from now and so our youth policy should be reviewed and it should adapt to our changing environment. After we understand the mentality and the needs of young people, we must do something. The young people today are much smarter than we are and if we do not take action, then they will criticise us by saying that all we can do is talk.

Sir, I support the motion.



MR. YEUNG (in Cantonese): Sir, young people, in particular young intellectuals, are the backbone as well the vital force of society. Since they play an increasingly important role in our society today, their behaviour and contribution will have a very far-reaching and significant impact on the future of the whole society.

The Report on Youth Policy points out that apart from their constructive elements, young people possess destructive potentials which may threaten the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. The report also refers to the surveys on the needs and aspirations of young people as well as the community's expectations of them. The findings of these surveys indicate that there is a need for more guidance to enhance the physical and mental health of our young people. As a matter of fact, it has already been pointed out by experts in student counselling that young people are greatly influenced by social and cultural trends. Under such influences, young people in school may lose interest in study, resulting in poor academic results or even breaking of school regulations, and disobeying their parents and teachers and eventually becoming problematic students. There are various causes for the formation of problematic students, such as the family background, parental supervision, personal perspectives and value judgements, as well as school performance and influence by peer groups. Today, many young people often have very wrong concepts. They usually mistake indulgence for freedom, discipline for repression, violence for heroic deeds and kindness for out-dated virtue. There is not the slightest thought of 'goodness' on their mind. We should never forget that young people are full of vigor. They have great desire for independence, but are generally weak-minded. They have love for adventures, but are easily susceptible to other people's suggestions. We have to take into account that all these psychological factors may turn our young people into potential criminals.

From a psychological point of view, the greatest crisis in youth is the search for self-identity. While they strive for freedom and independence and try to pretend that they are grown-ups, they are at a loss as to what they should do and long for the understanding and care of the adults. That is why they are sometimes rather rebellious and self-centred because they want to assert themselves so as to attract attention. Their desire to be themselves is very strong. Apart from self-centredness, they are also subject to the influence of their peers. In many public housing estates, it is very common for the young people to gang up, that is, so as to say, the so-called 'mountain-topism'. Under the influence of peer groups, many of them could easily associate themselves with triads and end up in an inextricable dilemma. People generally feel that problems faced by these youths are a matter of deviation from social norms and some people consider them as serious social issues.

As Hong Kong is facing tremendous changes and great challenges, we believe the future development of our society depends on the good-will, unity and involvement of its people, particularly the young people. As our young people have an important role in society and it is our responsibility to keep the society

moving, the question is how are we going to implement changes to bring improvement to our society. The report points out that according to the findings of the two surveys, young people aspire for education opportunities and Hong Kong needs to enhance social awareness and political participation among young people. To improve our society, we must therefore start with education. We should provide our young people with an education that can develop their personal abilities as well as foster their sense of civic responsibility. To promote a system of education that instils social awareness does not mean to drive our young people to stage demonstrations, to put up posters, to seize and occupy public premises and to stir up chaos and uprisings. It should be an education which aims at making the students realise what problems are confronting our society, cultivating among them a responsible attitude of dealing with these social problems and promoting in them the sympathy in seeking solutions to these problems. It is also an education which enables the students to be aware of their responsibility and the pressing need of the time and have the determination and ability of getting these problems solved. We should understand that self interests are closely related to the interests of the society at large. Thus, we should develop in our young people a strong sense of fair-mindedness, as opposed to all forms of discrimination and favouritism. Such an attitude should be adopted by the whole society and cultivated among the students. Our young people should be encouraged to overcome problems or difficulties in our society or the world, and to actively take up the responsibility in finding solutions to these problems.

Sir, to tackle this problem, it requires not only knowledge and understanding, but also the drive and ability to co-operate with others, organisational ability and leadership. It is essential to promote the development of such abilities and qualities through our education system. In carrying out a successful social education programme, the society itself should take upon certain responsibilities. The voluntary organisations which provide youth services should try their best to instil into the young people the right moral concepts of our community and enlighten their civic awareness through field work and personal participation, so that the young people may, through such actual experience, understand the basis of social order and have a better understanding of the qualities of a good citizen, such as being helpful, co-operative, sympathetic and having concern for others. The upbringing of the young people today is a crucial factor in determining the success of the future administration of Hong Kong. Today's young people will be the future leaders of Hong Kong. They should have broad knowledge and wide perspectives, be able to speak and act boldly and have good judgement. Only when members of the community are clear-minded, have good ability to distinguish right from wrong and have a high level of civic consciousness can we place hope on the future government of Hong Kong for ensuring democracy in its real sense for the people of Hong Kong.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. CHUNG (in Cantonese): Government will move to what is an era of high autonomy in 1997. We need to cultivate a new generation which can take over our tasks.

I feel that whether we take it from the angle of the needs of our young people, or from the angle of the community's expectation of today's youths, the important point of this policy is that we should find a suitable means by which our new generation can maintain stability and economic prosperity in a period of changes.

In the past, much has been done for the young people by the Government and community organisations. However, the fact is young people, which form more than 50 per cent of our population, what they actually see and hear and view are often very different from what they should be exposed to. During a period of personal development there are a number of points which we should note. Moral standards are not in line with education. As we develop a more democratic system of Government, there is a large number of immigrants. Polling stations are surprisingly less crowded than off-course betting centres of the Jockey Club. Some investment markets have turned into casinos for speculation. Out of every 10 films, nine are graded not suitable for children. As more adults give up smoking, more young people take up the habit. Even though penalties have become heavier, juvenile delinquency increases. Nearly all educational publications and television programs need to be subsidised.

In short, in Hong Kong, socially, politically, economically and culturally, the basic attitude is materialistic and utilitarian. This is not isolated, subjective individual cases but rather general phenomenon created by objective conditions.

In a community where personal gains always come first, to formulate a policy which can meet our changing society is indeed a mission both important and difficult.

I agree with the recommendations of the Report on Youth Policy. We should set up a co-ordination system for the existing system so that we can formulate a youth policy that is both practical and comprehensive. However, this policy can only be taken as the guide in principle for the future development of services for the young and should not be binding upon any organisation now providing services for the young.

I think the ideal approach is for the Governor to appoint a commissioner, who will be responsible for implementing this co-ordination system and formulating other relevant measures. The function of the commission is merely to offer assistance to relevant organisations according to policy so that there will not be any duplication or inadequacy in the provision of various services. The overall provision of services will, therefore, be developed in a more balanced manner. The allocation and use of resources will also be better.

Besides establishing the commission on youth we should also set up an advisory committee. We can, perhaps, call it youth council. It should be made

up of people who are representative. This new advisory board should be able to give advice on existing conditions and the development of a youth policy in Hong Kong. Its recommendations and activities organised should be submitted to or reported to the commissioner for reference. At the same time, it should play a monitoring role in youth matters.

Sir, in co-ordinating youth services and setting up a youth council, the Government shows that it will further commit itself and take up the initiative in helping the young people in Hong Kong to develop properly. This is an actual need in such changing times.

However, we must take note of one point. We must show our young people the correct direction in forming a youth policy which suits the changing circumstances in Hong Kong. It is not an easy task at all. We must face an actual need and mend our existing system. For instance in Hong Kong, Chinese and English cultures are equal. However, the official languages are not given equal treatment. Consequently, we need to make fair adjustments regarding entrance qualifications for the universities and terms of employment in the Civil Service.

We must, in our society, establish fair and reasonable values so that everyone, particularly young people with aspirations, can realise their ideals through free competition. Only then can we hope to formulate and implement effectively a comprehensive youth policy. Consequently, our youth policy should first aim at the maintenance of the rule of law and freedoms. These are just principles. As for methodology, there are three main points:

First, there should be more constructive facilities and fewer leisure activities and games. We should strengthen practical education. In examinations, ethics and technical development should carry equal weight. Training and guidance should be given to young people to find their ideal careers. Selection should be by merit. These should be the first tasks of the youth policy.

Second, in helping young people to develop properly, practical work should take precedence over theorising. For instance, civic education done in the form of actual participation, organisation and committee elections, community service, are all good ways to develop a youth policy.

Three, model youth elections and youth activities sponsored by youth organisations should be promoted as a form of encouragement. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, community services provided by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, the Comments and Current Affairs of the Hong Kong Federation of Students and their activities and outstanding elections sponsored by the Hong Kong Junior Chamber of Commerce, Lions International are all examples worthy of note.

Sir, today was the tomorrow of yesterday and becomes the yesterday of tomorrow. Our young people today will be the future of Hong Kong. They inherit the past and lead to the future. We live in changing times and we need to

formulate a suitable youth policy. This is an important task directly related to the future of Hong Kong.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. HUI: Sir, I join my colleagues in discussing an urgent issue which Hong Kong has taken for granted for so long. It is my hope that this debate may galvanise the Government in the mapping out a youth policy which is a panacea for our long standing youth problem.

Growing up in an affluent society, the youths of Hong Kong today face great social conflicts and challenges that make them materialistic, opportunistic, superficial and aimless, lacking the progress of the older generation. Our young people come under pressures from study, examinations and work, largely neglecting the moral, civic and sex education, and demonstrating inadequate language skills. Addicted to the electronic media, few of our youngsters today take part in voluntary work, wanting in political and social awareness. We have, therefore, a profile of Hong Kong's youth being an individual of unbalanced growth, instead of an all-round, mature, responsible citizen. True, Hong Kong has been spared the burden of modern hippies roaming the streets of western countries, or student rebels confronting the police with petition placards; but the fact that we have in our midst a lost generation who appear perfectly normal to us is far more threatening.

What have we done with our unique cultural heritage, apart from frowning with indignation or pointing an accusing finger at youth today? Have parents tried to help their teenage children to cope with the frustrations of adolescence, or have they simply left the task entirely to the schools? Have our education programmes considered the creative needs of young people, instead of emphasising academic achievements? Are our manpower policies optimising young persons' potentials through career guidance, or are they only policies of labour supply and demand?

The answers to these questions reveal a significant fact. While our social policies include young people among services targets, none of them are geared towards meeting the ever-changing needs and aspirations of youth. At a time when one quarter of our population are undergoing a critical period in their lives, searching for working skills, moral values and self dignity and identity, our society has paid little attention to their problems that have been misinterpreted in terms of juvenile delinquency, drugs and school drop-outs affecting only the minority. In this regard, the principles listed in the Report on Youth Policy have succeeded to articulate the long felt needs of our youth, putting into proper perspective the rationale behind the youth policy for Hong Kong which was first proposed in 1972. Here, Sir, I wish to stress that as Hong Kong goes through the transitional period before 1997, the overriding principle of our youth policy ought to be to equip youth who are the pedestal of Hong Kong society to become our future leaders. Sardonicly, Sir, our discussion on

constitution reforms so far have not focussed attention on how to facilitate the participation of young people in the development of Government policies that will be affecting them.

I also subscribe to the call made by the report for Government to make a long-term commitment to youth development, since this commitment will signify public investment placed in youth, which will, in turn, help young people to commit themselves to Hong Kong. However, I would go one step further beyond the theoretic framework presented by the report, that is, to urge Government to translate these principles into directives, filtering down to the administrative level. This way, policy decisions will be made with special emphasis on young people, not 'when necessary and justified', but as part and parcel of policy formulation. Invigorated youth policy decisions are expected to bring about reforms in our educational system and revised labour legislation, such as the long service payment scheme affecting young workers, in order to maximise opportunities for education and employment for youth. To foster the healthy development of young people, youth work that supplement formal education is likely to expand while volunteer service is to be promoted. To encourage youth participation in community affairs, it is envisaged that family life education promoting harmonious family and interpersonal relationships, and leadership training and civic education will be conducted with concentrated efforts. Indeed, we need more social policy programmes designed to enhance young people's status in society.

The foregoing outlines some priorities of an ideal youth policy which has to be supplemented with concrete plans and schedule for implementation, without which a set of principles will only remain a paranoia. Sir, the most exigent task now in hand is to set up the proposed commission for youth which is the only guarantee for smooth co-ordination of various government departments working towards the same direction to ensure consistency and quality of policies. On top of the commission's proposed functions, however, I would suggest that the commission should closely monitor various social policies and recommend legislative changes affecting the well-being of young people. This high-power commission, to be headed by a commissioner for youth, should feature membership drawn from related disciplines. The importance of youth's participation in the commission's work cannot be over-emphasised, if our youth policy is to meet the emerging needs of young people in a rapidly changing environment.

Sir, it has taken us some two decades to get the ball rolling for formulating a youth policy for Hong Kong. The ironical nonchalance towards the policy demonstrated by young people themselves serves as writings on the wall. If we have contributed to their indifference by dragging our feet over the youth policy in the past decade, Sir, the time has now come for us to get the youth policy off the ground, and to show the younger generation how much we care for them. For what our parents provided for us in the good old days, we owe it to our younger generation who deserve a better deal from us.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. LAI (in Cantonese): Sir, the Community Building Policy Committee set up the Working Party on Youth Policy to review the need for a comprehensive youth policy. As a result, on 25 April, the Report on Youth Policy was published. I welcome the recommendations of the report. The report briefly outlines the ills in the provision of youth services, but has also given direction to youth policy and suggests future implementation of youth policy should be in line with our social structure. The report has clearly pointed out what needs to be done as far as developing youth services is concerned. It is recommended to Government that there should be a central consultative and co-ordinating body so that there will be closer links between the government departments and other voluntary agencies concerned in order to achieve greater efficiency.

However, the Central Committee on Youth has not provided a specific way of implementing policies for the Young people; to make up for that inadequacy I would like to suggest that district-based youth conferences be set-up.

They should be comprised entirely of young people and structurally follow that of the district boards. There should be one youth conference for each district. In such forums, young people should be allowed to speak their minds, and to discuss youth affairs in each district. Such youth conferences should have an opportunity of discussing various things pertaining to youth. In this way, the young peoples' views can be reflected to the commission on youth. There should also be members from youth conferences sitting on the commission on youth. Since the commission is consultative and co-ordinatory in its nature, executive functions should be handed instead to the Social Welfare Department, City and New Territories Administration, Education Department and the Municipal Services Branch. I am sure the idea of youth conferences will facilitate better reflection of opinions.

The purpose of setting up youth conferences will not only provide an opportunity of nurturing political talent and political participation, but will also more importantly increase the thinking ability and analytical power of young people in general as well as provide an opportunity of getting to know oneself and to develop personal potentials.

Civic education for young people is more important now than ever. The Joint Declaration provides for a high degree of autonomy in Hong Kong and by 1997, a group of young people who have grown up and were born in Hong Kong will take the place of the older generation of colonial officials and they have the responsibility of governing Hong Kong well. Their management efficiency and administration will have decisive impacts on Hong Kong's stability and prosperity. Ten years from now, these young people will be in their 30s, and they will be in the years of greatest contribution.

How should we go about civic education for the young people? I think the youth conferences can play a very important role and they can tie-in with district boards which will be helpful to the implementation of future administration policies.

With greater economic prosperity and development, many young people turn towards materialism and hedonism and they tend to forget the social obligations they have. They are not fully aware of the circumstances around them and are sometimes lost as to what their future holds. I think that youth conferences can enable young people to get a better understanding of themselves and of society in general and let them understand that by fulfilling their obligations society as a whole can benefit.

Youth problems reflect the inadequacies in school and family discipline. Teachers can only discipline students within the school. When the students leave school, they come under the discipline of their parents, but today, many parents go out to work and the students have nothing to do after school. They loiter on the street and, sometimes unfortunately, get involved in triads. This is detrimental not only to the young people themselves but also to society as a whole. In order to make up for the inadequacies of family and school discipline, the Government should provide more recreational and cultural activities, especially in the new towns, and provide more supporting services.

Recently, there have been many cases of youth leaving home, running away from home, and it seems that every day there are one or two such cases on average. This is something that we should pay attention to. It is quite possible that they meet with unruly elements once they leave home and so I suggest that the Social Welfare Department and voluntary agencies should help these people and channel them towards healthy and wholesome activities and come under the better influence of group life and change their stubborn characters.

The young population will continue to be large. At present, the number of people between the ages of 10 and 25 account for 25.7 per cent of Hong Kong's total population. In the next 10 years, the same group will comprise 20.2 per cent of the population. This will have both positive and negative effects on Hong Kong's development. In 1985, the International Year of the Youth gave an opportunity for public attention on matters of youth. I hope that the Government will take the lead in implementing a youth policy so that the people here will continue to pay attention to youth and do something positive for them.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

DR. LAM (in Cantonese): Sir, the following figures are sufficient to show the importance of young people to Hong Kong. There are 1.4 million young people between the ages of 10 and 25; working youths between the ages of 15 and 25 account for 32 per cent of Hong Kong's total labour force. A youth policy is necessary to deal with the important question of how to tap the rich source of talent involving such a large number of young people.

The Central Committee on Youth in its Report on Youth Policy places at the top of the list of principles to be considered the item: 'to maximise opportunities and facilities for formal and informal education.' On the point of view of priority, education is indeed an important step to develop youth potential. In



the face of economic change, the role of education which serves as an important part in youth policies formulation should be in line with social development. It should provide manpower for the society and to enable an educated public to adapt to life in the community and prepare them for employment.

Education in Hong Kong now obviously falls short of that objective. Secondary education is mainly focused on training students through grammar schools for the tertiary sector and later for professions or managerial posts. The adverse consequences of such undiversified secondary education to train students for post-secondary level are obvious.

Nine years of free education and more senior secondary places have meant that more youths are receiving tertiary-oriented secondary education. Young people are full of hope especially in the secondary education phase. However, the reality is that only a very small minority of them can enter tertiary institutes and those who fail are branded with the mark of failure. Failure of the examination institutionises and rationalises their inferior status. Apart from the failure to enter tertiary institutes, what many saddens them most is that young people find that they are ill-equipped for their employment. They find that their secondary education has not fully prepared them for anything other than tertiary education and that there is little practical value apart from grammar education. The frustration of failure plus the anxieties about the future prospects come as a double blow.

The first Report of the Education Commission suggests that by 1991, 95 per cent of those at the age of 15 should be provided with school places. If the suggestion was materialised, this would mean that more youngsters will not be able to have tertiary places.

The Government in fact has not ignored the situation and has provided a way out by investing heavily in vocational training. However, the pace is far too slow, and compared with the resources put on secondary schools, the resources for the former are negligible.

Apart from education, another issue worth noting is the issue of increasing young peoples' political and social awareness and helping them to develop critical and independent thinking. As 1997 approaches and as Hong Kong turns from its closed political structure to more open representative government, young people have more and more opportunities of making decisions on important issues. Such changes in the system affect young people the most, for young people of today are the main-stay of our society in the future.

We cannot develop critical thinking and judgement overnight. Adequate information and flexible application of principle are necessary.

The first step to help young people develop their analytical powers and judgement is to encourage them to get a better understanding of different political thoughts and political systems and overcome long held political taboo. Civic education as being taught now in Hong Kong seems to fall short of both objectives.

Changes of the times have added new meaning to civic awareness and responsibility. Young people will be our administrators of the future. Not only are they charged with maintaining Hong Kong's stability and prosperity, but they will also have to learn communication with China and to establish numerous relationships with China. Therefore, during the transition period, we should advocate China's economic and modern Chinese history among youngsters and even history of the Chinese Communist Party as well as the Chinese political institutions. We should not take sensitivity as an excuse to refrain from solving significant problems.

The contents of our youth policy is, of course, important, but what is more important is implementation of the policy and I would like to make two points in this connection.

First, the Government must provide a commitment of resources and support and endorsement of the youth policy.

Secondly, the youth policy must get participation by both non-government bodies and youths.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. DESMOND LEE (in Cantonese): Sir, there is no perfect society on earth. Therefore, young people have to shoulder the responsibility of battering future society. That is why the development of youths is very important to a community. Hong Kong is facing the 1997 question and our youths have an especially important role to play here. Unfortunately, our young people are not doing too well as far as community involvement and political awareness are concerned. According to survey findings, 99 per cent of our young people never express any views to the Government while 85 per cent of them have never participated in any voluntary work. When it comes to matters that touch on their interests directly, like the Student Travel Subsidy Scheme, our young people can be quite responsive. Of course, I agree that the students did have the right to fight for that. On the aspect of only a handful of young people over 21 registered as voters and turn out to vote, I would think that in a materialistic society, heavy school work, a lack of youth leaders to guide young people towards community involvement are reasons contributing to our youths' apathy. The education sector should review post-Form V and tertiary curriculum with a view to lightening school work and enriching the substance of education. At the same time, in training social workers and teachers, more attention should be paid to the shaping of youth leaders. The Government should consider lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 so that young people can be given civic rights earlier, and through the process of exercising them get trained and grow. In doing so, the civic mindedness of our young people can be reinforced.

Talking about community involvement and civic mindedness, I agree with what the report says about young people's knowing China and having a broad international outlook. Knowing China is more than just hearing others' views

without digesting. Young people must form their own opinions and judgement objectively. For example, compared to other countries, China does have a longer history, but as far as the development of law and a system of government are concerned, China lags far behind the West. Young people should break through from merely engaging in hollow patriotic talk. They should identify the weakness of their country while learning from the strength of the West, such as its respect for law and human rights before they can play the role of building a better society for tomorrow.

Education is a major service for the development of our youths. Hong Kong spends an average of \$9 billion on education every year. It is difficult to ask for a lot more money in this area, yet in terms of cost-effectiveness and the substance of education, there is a great deal of room for improvement. Funds for education, including both government provisions and private contributions are, to a large extent, spent on school building programs. Such construction programs may be pleasing to the eyes and stand for lasting values, but they do not directly help training teachers or students, that is, nurturing people. I hope the allocation of resources can be reviewed with a view to spending more on nurturing people, for example, strengthening teachers' training both prevocationally and on-the-job so that teachers can keep abreast of our ever changing society and become more efficient. Moreover, the ratio between school social workers or counsellors to students should be improved so that the physical and emotional development of the students can be well supervised. In Hong Kong, most of the parents are working parents. Therefore, young people may not be getting as much attention at home as they need. Schools and community service agencies should deploy more manpower to take up counselling work and to fill the gap.

Young people are under a lot of pressure because of examinations. This is because when it comes to examinations like school certificate examinations, high level examinations, so much is at stake for a person. Examination results determine one's future. That is why many students make repeated attempts at examinations. To sit for an examination time after time is very damaging to a young person's growth. Repeated failures would drive a young person to resenting society. Hong Kong must expand its adult education so that working youths, who fail to get into university, can use their leisure time to study thereby relieving them of the pressure of letting their fate being sealed by one single examination. Open learning institutes will come on stream very soon. I hope more degree courses will be provided to meet our youths' aspirations for further education. According to certain surveys, 52 per cent of the respondents wish to go to tertiary institutes. The demand for such places is, indeed, great.

I support the setting up of a commission on youth, but I do not think members of that commission should assume a leading or co-ordination role, least it would result in undue interference or social conditioning. Young people have various kinds of needs. Each delivery agency, therefore, should maintain its individuality and the Government should help our youths to cultivate

independence and a spirit of self determination to prevent social conditioning. To mould young people into a standard shade like what South Korea, Singapore and Mainland China do, is not in line with Hong Kong's free and open society and I hope that senior government officials will be sitting on the commission to formulate policy, and also priorities should be set for easy implementation.

With these remarks, Sir, I support the motion.

MR. LIU (in Cantonese): Sir, the young people of today will become our successors tomorrow. Therefore, any government that has an eye on the future will attach a great deal of importance to the development and the growth of young people. In May 1986, the Government set up the Central Committee on Youth to conduct a review with an objective of ascertaining whether we will need a youth policy in Hong Kong. This has shown the sincerity and farsightedness of the Government.

Within a short span of 18 months, the Central Committee on Youth has completed two surveys on our young people, and has also made comparisons and analysis of the youth policies in 10 different countries. The exhaustiveness of the committee is indeed admirable.

In the past, Hong Kong did not have a youth policy, but all along, we have been paying much attention to the growth and development of our young people. We have devoted much financial resources for our young people in areas such as education, employment, recreation and social welfare so that they can have a all-rounded growth.

The growth of our young people involves a wide scope of problems. In fact, a lot of government departments, in varying degrees, are already doing things which are closely related to a young people's policy, and a lot of voluntary agencies have already made our young people their servicing target. The problem now is to co-ordinate our existing work and resources and to seek for further development so that our young people will have a more comprehensive development and so that we will not waste our resources.

The commission on youth as recommended by the committee, will, I am sure, be able to take up the co-operating role to a certain degree, but since the commission's role will only be advisory, it will not have any executive power. In fact, the committee has suggested that in order not to avoid overlapping of work at the district level, there is no need to have district youth committees. This is, of course, a wise decision because the committee understands that the existing central and district systems are already very complicated. However, if we do not clearly outline the channel of executive recommendations, I am afraid that we will have to fall back on the existing system and in the end, all the district committees will have to take up the job of implementing the recommendations of the commission, and they may find this an added burden to their original work.

There are a number of youth problems in Hong Kong and I would like to say something on the more serious ones.

First of all, we know that the mass media is very influential on our young people. The young people today can be called the television generation. Their outlook on life actually is shaped by the movies that they see and the popular songs that they listen to. Apart from the entertainment function, the mass media should also play the role of education. So, when we discuss the problem of youth policy, we should also take into account of how we can ask our mass media to provide a more positive function on young people.

The Broadcasting Authority to be set up certainly will be able to play a very positive role in this area. It can monitor the mass media and urge the mass media to provide better programs.

The Film Censorship Bill to be enacted shortly will certainly be able to protect our young people from bad influences.

Finally, I hope that the cable television stations to be set up will provide better educational and topical programs. We hope that it will provide us with more diversified and high quality programs so that the mass media can perform a more positive social function.

Sir, with these remarks, I support the motion.

MR. TAM (in Cantonese): Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate all members of the Central Committee on Youth headed by our colleague, Mrs. Rosanna TAM, and its Working Party on Youth Policy. Throughout the past two years, they have studied and developed with a view to finding a youth policy acceptable to the whole community. I have no doubt that they have spent all efforts in order to find a direction to solve a thorny problem.

In the 1970s, many people in this society as well as organisations including the Hong Kong Council for Social Service have already urged the Government to draw up a comprehensive youth policy. Nevertheless, it is only until the late 1980s, after the various activities organised to celebrate the International Year of the Youth, that the community once again urged the Government to draw up a youth policy, and hence the decision to form the committee. The objectives of the committee are to provide an opportunity of self development for the youths and also to materialise the society's aspiration for the youths. However, according to my understanding the committee encountered difficulties once it started its work.

I understand that there are two major areas of problems. One of the areas is that it will affect the existing system and will affect the relevant departments and agencies which are providing youth services. Secondly, some people in the community have reservations on having a comprehensive youth policy. They fear that this is equivalent to restricting social development. I have the following comments regarding this issue.

The report reflects that the authorities worry about whether a comprehensive youth policy will be treated as a means to restrict social development. Therefore, it opts for the present recommendation. Generally speaking, whether the Government has a definite policy on a certain issue or not and what are included and what are omitted in the policy, that, in itself, is already a means of restriction on social development. From this point of view, the recommended youth policy with a comprehensive set of principles for youth development is, in fact, another means of restriction on social development. Actually it is not different from a comprehensive youth policy materially. In my opinion, any type of policy has an implication of restriction on social development and that cannot be used as a guideline for selection of a proper policy.

Moreover, the report also reflects public concerns that such a policy will bring about a central authority to take charge of the youth matters, which would imply introducing a substantial restriction on social development; hence the present recommendation is suggested. However, I think that from a practical point of view, a more comprehensive and concrete youth policy may not necessarily bring about a central authority to impose restriction on social development on young people. In fact, there is no need for us to have a central authority to take care of all youth matters. In actual fact, whether a policy is comprehensive or not, has no direct bearing on the structure and functioning of the operational authority.

In general, I agree that we should have a set of new policies to define various development directions for our youth. However, I look forward to a youth policy which is more comprehensive and detailed than the present recommended one. The youth policy should contain concrete proposals of how to reach the relevant objectives. I agree with the committee that we should retain the present operational structure, but at the same time, there should be a standing committee to take charge of all youth matters and to make recommendations to the Government.

Finally, I want to point out that the present recommendation has apparently listed out a whole set of principles for youth development. Nevertheless, there are obvious shortcomings. According to the report's analysis on the trend of social development, Hong Kong will become a Special Administrative Region of China with a high degree of autonomy in 1997. Our young people will inevitably be affected by this change. The report also points out that the people of Hong Kong will become increasingly involved in the administration of the territory. This is something that their predecessors are not expected to do at the same stage of life. The report has clearly recognised that the trend of social development is a challenge to our young people, but I would like to query why the proposed new policy basically can only touch upon the challenge brought about by the trend of social development, but provide no mentions as to how to help the young people accept the future identity of being Chinese nationals when China resumes sovereignty over Hong Kong. I also want to ask while we can encourage young people to take part in community affairs and provide them

with opportunities to possess an international perspective, why do we not also give them chances to gain experiences and understanding about China? I firmly believe that the experience of community participation is very important but international exposure is also valuable. However, I believe too that we should provide the young people with more choices so that they can develop their national sentiment and identity with the Chinese race.

With these remarks, I support the Motion.

MR. EDWARD HO: Sir, there is a Chinese saying that 'what happens to a child at the age of three will determine what he will be at the age of 80' (三歲定八十) What the ancient Chinese knew about child psychology is only now scientifically established.

The impact of early mother-child relationship on the later life of the child was demonstrated by a series of experiments with monkeys in the 1960s. Wire-and-terrycloth mother-surrogates were used as substitute mothers and it was found that the adverse effect of deprivation on the baby monkeys produced powerful side-effects later in life.

Psychologists cannot agree at what particular time a person's character and behavioural patterns would start to be influenced by external stimuli. Some even suggest that this may have started in the prenatal period, that is, when the embryo is still in its mother's womb.

Certainly, there is no doubt that the parents' early influence on the child: their relationship with each other, their love and warmth, or the lack of them, will contribute to how a child will behave and whether or not he will be mentally and physically equipped to overcome crises in his later life.

Most of today's problems with youth, such as juvenile crimes, drug abuse, runaway kids, teenage pregnancy, can be traced back to a hostile family environment. Many of these problem youth either come from broken homes, or have parents who would not or could not provide them with the very essential elements of love and care.

But are parents the only ones to be blamed?

By the age of four or five, the child would have already emerged from the shelter of his home to enter into the environment of the school. After that, his waking hours will be spent more with his teachers and his peers than with his parents, brothers and sisters. The school has, in more ways than one, taken over his training from his parents. Irrespective of his family background, his abilities and potentials, his education will be extremely structured which will produce someone who conforms to others of his age.

He will be constantly graded by his teachers so that his yardstick of success is how well he fares in his class in terms of academic achievements.

The pressure of school work on our youth is a well known fact. It is not uncommon for a 10-years old child to have to spend five hours each day after school to finish his home work (taking into account certain amounts of daydreaming and distractions in between). Hardwork is not necessarily a bad thing, provided that there is more in our system of education for an all round development of our young people. Apart from the pursuit of knowledge, they must be given the opportunity to be equipped with the right attitude and values to become a well-adjusted and useful citizen in our community.

Yes, we can gather from the Report on Youth Policy that opportunities are abound outside of school hours for our young people to participate in all sorts of extra-curricular social and sports activities. But, how many do actually take part? Since these activities are outside of the school system, how many young people, and indeed parents, would consider them worthwhile activities? After all, these activities do not contribute directly to what they were conditioned to believe as the ingredients of success, namely, academic achievements.

Coming back for a moment to those parents who are guilty of neglecting their children. There are family-life education classes sponsored by the Social Welfare Department and by voluntary organisations. But then the parents who participate in these activities are by definition the motivated ones. They do not include the problematic ones who are extremely difficult to reach.

We have been told by experts that parents have very significant and lasting effects on their children. But how many of us parents have been taught how to develop the right attitude before we have a child on our own hands?

A voluntary organisation that I am associated with, the Hong Kong Society for Child Health and Development, recently sponsored the compilation by a team of experts of a curriculum for teaching Form I to Form III students on the subject 'On Becoming a Parent'. This very worthwhile project received very warm support from seven schools. I hope that their experience in this pilot scheme will eventually benefit not only the particular students involved but also our system of education.

The length of this debate prevents me from covering adequately all that I would like to say about the way we educate our youth. I can perhaps summarise by saying that there should be a wider perspective in our education system: one that aims to develop to the fullest the potentials of our youth not only in academic achievements, but also in the development of their physical and mental health; and in the cultivation of their moral values and attitudes.

The Central Committee on Youth and the Working Party on Youth Policy under the leadership of Mrs. Rosanna TAM have done an excellent job in the preparation of a Report on Youth Policy. I welcome their recommendation on the creation of a commission on youth. As enumerated in the report, there are vast amounts of activities and programmes for youth presently provided by government departments and voluntary organisations. The proposed



commission on youth will have achieved a great number of its objectives if it serves to co-ordinate and to optimise these very diverse activities in the most productive manner for the benefit of our youth, the most valuable asset of our community.

Sir, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE: Sir, it is clear from the speeches made in today's debate that Members generally are very concerned that young people in Hong Kong should be given every possible help to develop into mature and responsible members of the community. Whilst part of this responsibility must rest with the family, the Government has always recognised that it should promote an environment conducive to the proper development of young people, and also provide appropriate services for those children and young people who have particular needs or problems. It may be helpful if I give a brief account of these services.

The Social Welfare Department and the voluntary agencies work closely together to promote respect for, and cohesion within, the family through family life education programmes. They also work together to give young people the opportunity to develop their character, personality, leadership and social skills through participation in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities. These activities, which are in the main organised by the 281 subvented children and youth centres, are very popular with young people and it is intended that a further 171 centres should be set up during the next five years. There are also a number of uniformed youth organisations, such as the Scouts and the Guides which are specifically intended to encourage young people to develop their independence and sense of civic responsibility. In addition, social workers working at the district level promote the establishment and strengthening of smaller independent youth groups.

A number of Members have mentioned the need to help young people who have social, emotional or behavioural problems, or who may not be making the most of their educational opportunities. In order to provide guidance and counselling to students who are experiencing problems of this kind, voluntary agencies operate the subvented school social work programme. Under this programme, all secondary schools are served by school social workers at a ratio of one social worker for every 3 000 students. This ratio was improved recently, and a further review is to take place later this year.

To provide help for all young people with behavioural or other problems who cannot be reached by school social workers, often because they have dropped out of school, a number of voluntary agencies provide an outreaching social work service. At present, there are 18 outreaching social work teams which operate in areas which such young people are known to frequent. These teams identify and make direct contact with youths who are in need of guidance and counselling or other social work services. The outreaching social work service

has achieved encouraging results and it is intended that it should be expanded through the addition of six more teams during the next three years.

The Social Welfare Department is also involved in the provision of a variety of services for young offenders. In cases of minor offences where a probation officer feels that residential training would be inappropriate, an offender is often placed on a non-residential probation order and required to undergo counselling and any other special treatment considered necessary. Alternatively, a court may make a community service order which requires the offender to perform unpaid work for the benefit of the community. This community service order approach is quite new to Hong Kong and is at present the subject of a two year pilot scheme in three magistracies. On the completion of the pilot scheme, the results will be assessed and a decision taken whether to extend the arrangements to all the magistracies. So far the indications are that this scheme is proving quite successful, and is being well used by the courts.

For more serious offences, the court may decide that a young person should be placed in a residential institution such as a remand home or a reformatory school. The Social Welfare Department currently operates seven of these institutions, each of which provides a disciplined and controlled environment where offenders can receive academic, prevocational and social training. After-care services, including counselling, family visits and assistance with accommodation, job and school placements, are provided for all young offenders who are committed to residential institutions.

Whilst there is sufficient number of places in these residential institutions to meet the present demand, the department plans to provide a new home for girls in Tuen Mun and to re-provision two of the boy's homes.

I hope that I have said enough to reassure Members that the Social Welfare Department and the subvented welfare agencies already provide a comprehensive range of social work based services to help our young people grow up into responsible members of the community and to provide help for those who have particular problems. These services are co-ordinated through the mechanism of the Social Welfare Five-Year Plan, which is reviewed at regular intervals in collaboration with the voluntary agencies through the Council of Social Service. Sir, while it is a sad fact of life that there are young people in our society, as in all others, who go astray, I think it would be quite wrong to give the impression that they represent a majority or even a large proportion of Hong Kong's youth. I believe that most of our young people are prepared to study and work hard and to behave responsibly, and this can only be a good augury for the future of Hong Kong.

Sir, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND MANPOWER: Several Members have referred to the question of the adequacy and quality of educational provision, and I had originally intended to speak on this topic. However, I did speak on it at some

length last week and on reflection I think perhaps it is not really necessary for me to speak on it again today.

Sir, several Members have spoken of the need for guidance work in schools. This is an area where we have made encouraging progress. To provide for this need we have provided additional teaching posts in all secondary schools since 1982. In 1986, we issued a suggested guide on guidance work, on which we have received extensive feed-back from schools. We conduct training courses for guidance teachers and in October 1986, we started a two-year pilot scheme to strengthen the professional support available to them.

I should now like to say a few words about how we introduce new courses and programmes in the schools. As a general rule, any innovation is first tested as a pilot project in selected schools. It is then evaluated and modified as necessary before being offered for adoption in all schools. The programme 'On Becoming a Parent' mentioned by Mr. Edward HO, is a good example of this, although this particular programme is remarkable in that it originated from the enthusiasm of a few committed individuals rather than through the normal curriculum development process. This programme is being run by eight professionals in relevant fields who share a conviction concerning the need of proper and timely parent education for future generations. Three years ago, they pooled their expertise and started to work in their own spare time and using their own resources on a parent education curriculum. Two years ago, they secured the sponsorship of the Hong Kong Society for Child Health and Development, referred to by Mr. HO. This enabled them to initiate a pilot project in seven secondary schools. Once the pilot scheme has been completed, we shall have a tried and tested body of materials and ideas which will be available to all teachers in junior secondary classes.

Several Members have spoken on the importance of moral education. The Government recognises this and the general school curriculum has been revised to reflect greater awareness of the key importance of this subject.

In 1981, we issued general guidelines on moral education in schools. The Education Department prepares reference materials on moral education and circulates them to schools. Close contacts between schools and homes are promoted through various communication channels such as parents day, speech day and open day. Students are encouraged to take part in extra-curricula activities. The Education Department organises an exhibition on moral education every two years. This year's exhibition will be held in July and will be on the theme 'Caring and Sharing'.

Sir, I hope that today's debate will help to increase public interest in this subject and so help to increase our parents' support for activities designed to help the moral development of their children.

Sir, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR SECURITY: Sir, I have noted with interest the points made by Members in respect of juvenile delinquency. This is something which all societies face in varying degrees, and it seems to prevail particularly in intensely urban settings where, if there is a lack of guidance, proper discipline, opportunity or facilities, young people are sometimes forced to fall back upon their own resources, which may be often meagre and some will inevitably gravitate towards crime, and towards gang and triad involvement.

It is unfortunately a fact that juvenile crime in the seven to 15 years age group in Hong Kong rose by 64 per cent between 1983 and 1987, although the number of crimes committed by young offenders aged between 16 and 20 dropped by 6 per cent. Shop thefts and miscellaneous thefts and serious assaults were the main offences, a large proportion of which took place in the new towns.

In my own policy area the response by the Government has been in two directions: first, to encourage young people to play a meaningful part in the community, and thereby to help them to steer clear of delinquency, by means of schemes and organisations which encourage young people to develop their own abilities and character, while at the same time offering a valuable service to the community. Amongst these, I would include the cadet schemes of the Civil Aid Services, the Junior Police Call and the Junior Leaders of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers). Thought is also being given to the introduction of a cadet scheme for young people wishing to serve in the Auxiliary Medical Services.

The second mode of response has been through the Fight Crime Committee and its Standing Committee on Young Offenders, and Research Sub-Committee. These meet regularly to discuss problems relating to juvenile delinquency, and have identified a number of further measures to be introduced this year. These include a scheme of renunciation of triad membership; a package of teaching materials for use in schools warning students of the dangers of triad involvement; outward bound courses to help rehabilitate young offenders; and extensive publicity campaigns warning against involvement with triads and discouraging shop theft. In this context, the Fight Crime Committee is keen to receive comments on the measures which it has adopted and welcomes any suggestions on ways to alleviate the problem of juvenile delinquency.

However, I accept that these measures upon which I have touched very briefly can, at best, constitute but two facets of a many sided subject on which Members have spoken imaginatively and comprehensively. If, as a result of these deliberations and consultation on the Report on Youth Policy, there emerges a greater degree of benefit for the youth of Hong Kong it will be time and effort well spent.

Sir, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND INFORMATION: Sir, in the course of this debate, several Members referred to the pervasive influence of the broadcasting industry on our young people.

The need for television stations to provide balanced programming is well recognised by the Broadcasting Authority.

At present, the four television stations broadcast a total of 77 hours of children and youth programmes each week: this represents between 13 per cent and 20 per cent of the total broadcast time on each channel. In addition, four hours of educational television are broadcast per day, Mondays to Fridays, while schools are in session. Members will be glad to know that the new licence conditions for the television stations now being drafted, will make clear their responsibility to provide a proper balance of information, education and entertainment programmes with due impartiality and accuracy and to avoid offence to good taste and decency. It is expected that when cable television is introduced, provision will be made for more specialised programmes for youth and children.

Mrs. Selina CHOW mentioned the confusion of social values among young people. She attributed this partly to the influence of unreal characterisation on television. Guidelines are set out by Government on what is considered suitable for broadcast and programmers are asked to exercise vigilance, especially during family viewing hours.

The years between innocence and experience are character forming. While we would wish to impart ideals of what the world should be, our children should also know what the real world is like.

Mr. CHAN Ying-lun referred to the harm caused to young minds by violent and sexually explicit comic books and video tapes. I can assure Mr. CHAN that Government is determined to take action against vendors of such material. We shall continue to refer offensive material to the Obscene Articles Tribunal which was established in September last year. We shall also be appealing to district boards, school authorities and outreach social workers for assistance.

Sir, I support the motion.

SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION: Sir, many Members have spoken today on the subject of youth and the problems faced by our young people. I am very grateful to them for their interest in the matter and for the useful comments they make. My official colleagues have already responded to some of the specific points raised and I shall not therefore repeat them.

In Hong Kong, we have often said that our greatest asset is our people. Young people within the age group of 10 to 25 account for more than one quarter of this most valuable asset, and constitute about 23 per cent of our work force. The Government is fully aware of the profound importance of youth to the overall development of our society and recognises that youth deserves special care and attention. It is imperative that our young people should be properly groomed and equipped for the tasks and role they will have to face when they grow up. Some people tend to see youth as a problem, and consider it to have destructive potentials if not guided properly. However, our youth

problem is no worse than that in other countries and as the Secretary for Health and Welfare has just said, most of our young people, grew up without experiencing any problem.

Youth is not a homogeneous group in which all face similar problems, have similar needs, and require similar services and facilities. The needs of our young people tend to vary depending on the stages of development and circumstances they are in. In view of their broad and diversified needs, Hong Kong has developed a fine tradition of providing our young people with a full range of services and facilities in the changing circumstances. The Government, on its part, seeks to cultivate our young people on two different levels. On a general level, there is the community building strategy which aims to foster among our young people a sense of belonging, mutual care and civic responsibility. These objectives are promoted through purpose built facilities such as community centres for group and community activities, formation of residents' organisations, encouragement of public participation on matters affecting their daily life, and campaigns to fight crime, to clean Hong Kong, to fight corruption and so on. Activities such as the summer youth programme and commonwealth exchange scheme are also designed to meet the special needs of our young people.

On a functional level, there are Government policies and related services on areas such as education, vocational training, recreation and culture, rehabilitation and employment counselling, to meet the basic needs of our young people. Most of these great varieties of services are designed to enable our young people to exercise a freedom of choice. The objective is to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge so that they may find a positive role to play in the community.

In view of our aims to treat young people as an integral part of our society and to meet their different needs in mental, physical and cultural development, it is not possible to apportion precisely the resources devoted to the services for our young people. However, Members may wish to note that for instance out of the Government's total Budget in 1987-88, nearly 20 per cent is spent on education for our young people, \$270 million for welfare services for youth, and \$800 million on recreational, cultural and sports programmes. Furthermore, a considerable proportion of the services for young people is also provided by the voluntary sector. The Government values this spirit of partnership, and looks forward to further co-operation with the voluntary sector so that our services can continue to improve to meet the changing needs of our young people and help them achieve balanced development.

Sir, many Members have pointed out the need for youth leadership training, particularly to help equip our young people to face the challenges which lie ahead of them. I share their views. There exist a considerable number of young persons in our society who have the potential to become youth leaders and indeed leaders of our society when they grow up. They should, however, be

properly trained. Such training is being provided by a number of government departments and the voluntary sector, both locally and overseas. It would be useful to further develop such training programmes to impart the knowledge, skills and techniques necessary to prepare our young people for their future and increase their awareness of their roles and responsibilities.

Sir, on 23 April 1986, I informed this Council that the Government would establish a Central Committee on Youth to advise the Government on matters relating to youth development, to research into the needs and aspirations of our young people, and to examine the need for a comprehensive youth policy. After 18 months of deliberation, the Central Committee on Youth has now produced a report on youth policy. In compiling its report, the committee has examined the present system of provision of services to our young people, studied the youth policies of 10 other countries, visited a cross-section of agencies and organisations, organised public seminars, carried out two surveys on the needs of youth and on the community's aspirations on youth. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Mrs. Rosanna TAM, who is the chairman of the committee, and to all members of the committee, for their hard work in compiling the report.

I understand the Central Committee on Youth will, during the next three months, seek views and comments from interested parties on its report before submitting its final report and recommendations to the Government. I am sure the views raised by Members during today's debate will also be taken into careful consideration by the committee. I look forward to the completion of the committee's task.

With these remarks, Sir, I support the motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

### **Adjournment and next sitting**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT: In accordance with Standing Orders I now adjourn the Council until 2.30 pm on Wednesday, 18 May 1988.

*Adjourned accordingly at eighteen minutes to Six o'clock.*

(*Note: The short titles of the motions/Bills listed in the Hansard have been translated into Chinese for information and guidance only; they do not have authoritative effect in Chinese.*)