

OFFICIAL RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 13 July 1995

The Council met at half-past Two o'clock

PRESENT

THE PRESIDENT

THE HONOURABLE SIR JOHN SWAINE, C.B.E., LL.D., Q.C., J.P.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY

THE HONOURABLE MRS ANSON CHAN, C.B.E., J.P.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

THE HONOURABLE SIR NATHANIEL WILLIAM HAMISH MACLEOD, K.B.E., J.P.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

THE HONOURABLE JEREMY FELL MATHEWS, C.M.G., J.P.

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

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

DR THE HONOURABLE DAVID LI KWOK-PO, O.B.E., LL.D., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE PANG CHUN-HOI, M.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE SZETO WAH

THE HONOURABLE TAM YIU-CHUNG

THE HONOURABLE ANDREW WONG WANG-FAT, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE EDWARD HO SING-TIN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE RONALD JOSEPH ARCULLI, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MARTIN GILBERT BARROW, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS PEGGY LAM, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS MIRIAM LAU KIN-YEE, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LAU WAH-SUM, O.B.E., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE LEONG CHE-HUNG, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MRS ELSIE TU, C.B.E.

THE HONOURABLE PETER WONG HONG-YUEN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALBERT CHAN WAI-YIP

THE HONOURABLE VINCENT CHENG HOI-CHUEN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MOSES CHENG MO-CHI

THE HONOURABLE MARVIN CHEUNG KIN-TUNG, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHEUNG MAN-KWONG

THE HONOURABLE CHIM PUI-CHUNG

REV THE HONOURABLE FUNG CHI-WOOD

THE HONOURABLE FREDERICK FUNG KIN-KEE

THE HONOURABLE TIMOTHY HA WING-HO, M.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL HO MUN-KA

DR THE HONOURABLE HUANG CHEN-YA

DR THE HONOURABLE LAM KUI-CHUN

DR THE HONOURABLE CONRAD LAM KUI-SHING, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE EMILY LAU WAI-HING

THE HONOURABLE LEE WING-TAT

THE HONOURABLE ERIC LI KA-CHEUNG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE FRED LI WAH-MING

THE HONOURABLE MAN SAI-CHEONG

THE HONOURABLE STEVEN POON KWOK-LIM

THE HONOURABLE HENRY TANG YING-YEN, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JAMES TO KUN-SUN

DR THE HONOURABLE SAMUEL WONG PING-WAI, M.B.E., J.P.

DR THE HONOURABLE PHILIP WONG YU-HONG

DR THE HONOURABLE YEUNG SUM

THE HONOURABLE HOWARD YOUNG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ZACHARY WONG WAI-YIN

DR THE HONOURABLE TANG SIU-TONG, J.P.

THE HONOURABLE CHRISTINE LOH KUNG-WAI

THE HONOURABLE ROGER LUK KOON-HOO

THE HONOURABLE ANNA WU HUNG-YUK

THE HONOURABLE JAMES TIEN PEI-CHUN, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE ALFRED TSO SHIU-WAI

THE HONOURABLE LEE CHEUK-YAN

ABSENT

THE HONOURABLE HUI YIN-FAT, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE MARTIN LEE CHU-MING, Q.C., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE NGAI SHIU-KIT, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE LAU WONG-FAT, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE JAMES DAVID MCGREGOR, O.B.E., I.S.O., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE SIMON IP SIK-ON, O.B.E., J.P.

THE HONOURABLE TIK CHI-YUEN

IN ATTENDANCE

THE CLERK TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
MR RICKY FUNG CHOI-CHEUNG

PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 4AA, HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR,
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHRISTOPHER FRANCIS PATTEN, ATTENDED TO
ADDRESS THE COUNCIL AND TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS.

PRESIDENT: Would Members please remain standing for the Governor?

CLERK: His Excellency the Governor.

PRESIDENT: The Governor will answer questions on the three topics which have been indicated to Members. A Member who has asked a question may for the purpose of seeking elucidation only ask a short follow-up question. A show of hands please? Mr Allen LEE.

MR ALLEN LEE (in Cantonese): *Mr President, the Governor has called a Summit on the drug problem in March this year. Could the Governor inform this Council what progress has been made up to the present on actions against drugs? Currently, syringes can be found everywhere in housing estates and many young people residing in these estates often smell thinner, but I fail to see any substantial action taken by the authorities concerned to tackle this problem. I think the people of Hong Kong are eager to know what substantial action the Governor will take to resolve these problems?*

GOVERNOR: I am grateful to the honourable gentleman for that question. He will recall that at the Summit that I called in March, we set out at the end of discussion an action programme for the Government and we have just reported on the first quarter of implementation of that programme. It covered a number of issues from preventive education and law enforcement to the importance of more research and the importance of enhancing the work of rehabilitation and treatment, which we do in the community. But in addition, we also followed up the over 40 points that were raised by those who attended the Summit and we have just given our reaction to those points and to Action Committee Against Narcotics's comments on them and we will be continuing to report quarterly to all those who attended our Summit, and to the community as a whole, on the measures which the Government is taking to implement both our original action programme and the ideas that were put forward at the Summit.

Perhaps I can say two additional things. First of all, the reason, and the Honourable Member has alluded to this, for our giving this programme such priority was the alarming rise in figures of drug abuse, particularly as far as the under 21's are concerned. In the period from 1989 to 1994, the percentage increase of drug abusers in that age group was over 229%. I am pleased that the latest figures that we have had show for the first time a fall in the number of newly reported drug abusers. The first quarter figures for this year compared with the first quarter last year show a drop of just under 30%; but that is not a reason for complacency. It may prove as we get more figures during the year that that was a blip rather than the beginning of a new trend. So I do not think there is any reason at all for us to stop giving these programmes the support and attention which they deserve.

The second point I want to make concerns an idea which has been advanced, I know, by a number of legislators and was advanced at the Summit to which I referred. That is the proposal that we should establish a fund for combating drug abuse and that we should put into it the money, the proceeds of drug trafficking which are confiscated in successful convictions. I think there are some arguments against that proposition which have been put from time to time, particularly, of course, the uncertainty of that source as a main source of funding. But the proposal that we should establish a special fund for tackling drug abuse is one that we are taking very seriously in the Administration and we intend to put some proposals to this Council and to the community in the autumn. But, I repeat, we will continue to report on the implementation of both our action programme and on our reaction to the large number of proposals which were put to us during the Summit itself.

MR AL LEN LEE (in Cantonese): *Mr President, at present in housing estates in particular, I myself also witness many young people brazenly take drugs, smell thinner and inject drugs, and syringes can really be seen everywhere. I asked the residents how the problem should be resolved. They said that they did not see the police patrolling, especially in the evening and at night. As the residents are afraid of these young people and will stay away from them as far as possible or pretend not to have seen them, so the number of cases reported by the residents are certainly not accurate. I believe that the problem will become increasingly serious and the authorities concerned must take concrete action to tackle it. The residents feel that there are not enough policemen to carry out patrol duties, in fact no one pays any heed to them, and they are afraid of the youngsters. However, as many cases occur in housing estates, I think the Government must keep an eye on this matter. The residents feel that the youngsters behave in that way because there are not enough policemen. Could the Governor inform this Council whether that is really the case?*

GOVERNOR: The police were of course involved in the Summit in March, and they have been involved in all our discussions on implementing our action programme. They recognize the importance of working with the community, with the Fight Crime Committees and with schools and colleges in combating drug abuse and I can assure the Honourable Member that they give this considerable priority. They have indeed over the last year enjoyed some remarkable successes in the seizure of drugs, but I think we all recognize the importance, as the Honourable Member mentioned, of adequate police presence on the streets and in the estates. I have witnessed some of the consequences of the phenomenon to which the Honourable Member refers on visits to some housing estates — the stairwells which are used for the exchange of drugs; the places on the windows where drugs and money are left and are exchanged; the syringes which are found in the morning when other children are going to school. Those are all signs of the drug abuse which we wish to fight vigorously. And of course an active police presence, as well as better measures to educate

young people about the dangers of drugs are an essential part of a successful programme.

PRESIDENT: Mr Henry TANG.

MR HENRY TANG: *Mr President, my question concerns the rule of law. I think we all agree Hong Kong today has a very high standard of rule of law and I cannot agree more that it is our top priority. In fact, if I paraphrase what the Chief Secretary had said, it is our core policy to maintain the rule of law up to and beyond 1997. Can you, Mr Governor, explain or elaborate, what you intend to do between now and 1997 that will further strengthen the rule of law, other than what we are already doing today? In other words, what additional measures do you intend to put into place that will assure us of this rule of law, or strengthen the rule of law that we already have?*

GOVERNOR: I hope the Honourable Member will be patient if I set out some of the things that we wish to do, at length. And in the light of recent discussions in this Chamber, and in the spirit which I agreed with the Honourable Member, Mr CHENG, on the way in, that this session should have as its motto "Peace and Love", I will be gentle and as calm as possible in setting out the Government's programme.

But I say first of all, that the most important thing that we can do that we can do with this Council — to secure the rule of law in Hong Kong, is, at the end of this month to place on the statute book the legislation on the Court of Final Appeal, which was, I guess, the trigger for yesterday's debate. And perhaps I can just say, ever so gently, a word about that, albeit in the absence of one or two of the main participants in the debate. It is conceivable (I make the point in parenthesis) that the reason why they keep on getting the agreement we reached with China so wrong, that the reason why they keep on saying things about the Court of Final Appeal Bill which are so damagingly wrong, is that they are so rarely in the Chamber to actually discuss the issue with the Governor when he turns up to talk about it.

I think that we suffer in Hong Kong from an epidemic of what we call at home, Craddockitis, and it is something which affects not just dyspeptic retired ambassadors; it clearly goes wider than that. And there are a number of ingredients to the disease, a number of symptoms. There is a belief that one has a monopoly of virtue, a belief that one has a monopoly of wisdom about what is right for Hong Kong, a belief that one has a monopoly of concern about the things which have made Hong Kong so special, and a belief that unless everybody else agrees with you and follows your own analysis, that, as far as Hong Kong is concerned, is the end of the road. Hong Kong is doomed unless people always agree with you. Those are some of the symptoms of this epidemic.

I just say in that spirit of peace and love and reconciliation, which I mentioned earlier, to those who hold that particular view, that they might occasionally ask themselves this, when they are considering the Court of Final Appeal and the agreement that we reached with China: Does the Chief Justice not believe in the rule of law? The Chief Justice supports the agreement and the Bill. What about the Chief Secretary and the Financial Secretary, and the Attorney and the Solicitor General, and the Director of Public Prosecutions? Do they not support the rule of law in Hong Kong? What about eminent silks on my Executive Council like Mr Denis CHANG and Mr Andrew LI? What about the Law Society? What about the chambers of commerce? What about the international chambers of commerce? What about the Australian, American, Canadian, Japanese and South Korean Governments, all our major trading partners, who support the agreement on the Court of Final Appeal? Do they not believe in the rule of law?

I really think that people should sometimes, perhaps, consider a little more coolly whether they are really always, always right. And maybe they should consider that before they are wall to wall on Cable News Network telling the rest of the world that Hong Kong is finished in 1997. There is the world of difference between pointing to possible dangers in the future, asking for reassurances about them, trying to prevent those dangers galloping round the corner — a world of difference between that, which is what the Administration has been trying to do, and saying that the rule of law after 1997 is a dead duck. Because if people start believing that, then the consequences for Hong Kong's prosperity and the consequences for the jobs of ordinary men and women here in Hong Kong, are very severe indeed.

So the first thing this Administration is going to try to do, as hard as we have tried to do anything, as hard as we tried to get into place last year fair provisions for elections in Hong Kong, is to secure the passage of that Bill on to the statute book because I think if we were to fail in that, it would be extremely bad for Hong Kong and extremely damaging for the rule of law.

Secondly, the honourable gentleman is very patient — I will be swifter and even more loving — secondly, and I believe that this is important too, we must make sure that the administration of justice is in as good order as possible. That is why we want to see more courts operating, that is why we want to see more judges on the bench, that is why we want to see more resources put into adequate provision of Chinese language facilities in our courts, that is why we want to see us dealing with the backlog of cases more rapidly in the future.

Thirdly, we have to try to ensure, with China, that we complete the programme of localization and adaptation of laws. And I can come back to that point in a moment. We are doing pretty well with the localization of laws. The main problem on the adaptation of laws focuses on what officials call the modalities of adaptation, rather than the overall process. We have got to finish the review of legislation which we have begun to ensure that our laws are all in line with the Bill of Rights. And we have, continually, to ensure that our police,

who are by I think general estimate the finest Police Force in Asia, continue to be properly resourced and to get all the support from the community which they deserve.

Thanks, not least to the efforts of our police, our crime figures in Hong Kong have been extremely good over the years, better, according to Interpol comparisons, as I have said before, than those for example in Singapore. And our figures for violent crime have been continuing to fall. So those are some of the things I believe that we have to do in order to secure the rule of law here in Hong Kong — the rule of law which is one of the principal reasons for the success and decency of this community.

MR HENRY TANG: *Mr President, I was rather anxious to raise my hand because this is going to be the last chance I have to ask you a question. I think, obviously, you have referred to an epidemic of Craddockitis, and in normal society, any kind of epidemic must be eradicated. What do you intend to do to eradicate Craddockitis? (Laughter)*

GOVERNOR: I intend to consider to shed geniality and light on every argument in which I am involved, and to continue to rebut firmly but I hope courteously, arguments which I believe to be profoundly ill-conceived, profoundly ill-judged and profoundly against the interests of this extraordinary community.

PRESIDENT: Mr Edward HO.

MR EDWARD HO: *Thank you, Mr President. Mr Governor, according to some recent reports, in the coming few years there could be a number of senior civil servants retiring, thus creating a vacuum at the top of departments. And according to those reports, the Government may have to resort to engaging people outside of the Civil Service, coming in to take up these posts.*

Mr Governor, my question really is directed to the situation in professional departments. First of all, I do not believe that there has been enough opportunities for professionals working in those departments to be able to rise to the very top, that is, to head departments, to become Policy Secretaries and so forth. So my question is whether there is any policy to increase the opportunities for these people and also to give them training in management, so that they are not just considered to be architects, engineers or surveyors but that they can actually become people in the top management, as heads of departments, as Policy Secretaries rather than to enlist people from outside and thus hurting the morale of the people who have been working in the departments for years and years ?

GOVERNOR: It is an important question. I would just say, before coming to the main points that the Honourable Member makes, that I can think of a recent example of somebody coming in from outside to head a largely professional part of the Government who has done an outstanding job. And I think the Honourable Member and I both share the same regard for the Secretary in question. And under his leadership, we have actually seen very good professionals brought on to take over from him in due course.

The Secretary for the Civil Service was giving evidence this morning to the relevant Legislative Council Panel and, I am sure, answered this question more eloquently and knowledgeably than I will do. But there are two points that I want to focus on.

First of all, yes, there may be civil servants leaving the Administration over the next couple of years. In two years' time, there will be a Governor leaving the Administration too. But so far, I think it is fair to say that while we understand the possible dangers, some of the language which has been used about departures has been extremely extravagant, when you actually look at what has been happening in individual departments and across the Civil Service as a whole. Wastage from the Civil Service over the last 12-month period was running at just over 5%, though admittedly in directorate posts the wastage was about 11%. It is also true to note that a large number of those in the Directorate are in what I think is called the "retirement zone" and could find themselves in a year or two's time facing difficult personal choices about what was most in their financial interest. So, we are not unaware of the problems that we could face and other organizations face, particularly the professional staff.

The second point I wanted to make is, we have been trying to address this particular issue with our training programmes and the Secretary for the Civil Service was addressing that particular issue this morning — training right across the board. We have reviewed our overall training policy and we have also put a lot more resources, not least in terms of personal interest, into training to try to ensure that our professionals are in the position which the honourable gentleman quite properly said they should be in, in which they can take charge of departments and show general management skills. For that purpose, a number of them have had the advantage of management courses abroad as well as management courses in Hong Kong. So we will continue to put emphasis on training and hope that we can avoid the problem which the honourable gentleman mentioned.

Of course, the most important thing for us to do of all is to ensure that the morale of the Civil Service remains as high as possible before and after 1997, so that as many of our excellent civil servants as possible remain in the public service doing as good a job in the future as they do today.

PRESIDENT: Mr Frederick FUNG.

MR FREDERICK FUNG (in Cantonese): *Mr President, China and Britain have reached agreement on the issues of the Final Court of Appeal and financial arrangements for the Airport, and the Chief Secretary, Mrs Anson CHAN, has gone to Beijing to hold discussions with Chinese officials. All these give Hong Kong people a more optimistic outlook that those issues relating to our future and the transition, such as the No.9 Container Terminal and the localization of our laws, may be tackled. However, a very important knot to Hong Kong people, to politicians in particular, has not yet been untied and tabled in the agenda for discussion. Could the Governor inform this Council whether the smooth transition for the three tiers of government be discussed again in future? Whether the issue of smooth transition for the three tiers of government be discussed again in a certain way with the Chinese side now or in the future?*

GOVERNOR: We talked for 17 rounds about our attempt to secure a smooth transition for the three tiers of government in 1993 and alas, despite the concessions and accommodations offered by the Administration — concessions and accommodations which I am sure would not have commanded universal assent in this Chamber, we were not able to secure an agreement at the end of the day.

What is the situation now? The situation is one in which we have had the first two rounds of elections to district boards and Municipal Councils which have been elected for the first time by direct election. We had virtually all their members directly elected. And we have had for the first time these first virtual direct elections; we have had a record number of candidates and a record voter turnout. 60% higher as I recall in the district boards than the previous elections and I think 40% in the Municipal Council elections higher than the time before. Now we have the Legislative Council elections coming over the horizon in September in which a number of Honourable Members will be engaged. I am sure those elections will be as successful as the district board and Municipal Council elections.

We have now got, I think a record percentage of voters registered, around 65% in the geographical constituencies. And in the functional constituencies, there will be about 15 times as many people eligible to vote as was the case last time, well over a million. So I am sure those elections will be successful and we will have as a result a broadly elected Legislative Council, freely and fairly elected which should of course be able to continue with some appropriate mechanism to take account of Chinese sovereignty in 1997 until 1999.

That for me offers every opportunity of a smooth transition. I have not in the past, did not yesterday, do not today, will not in the future regard the steady process of democratization in Hong Kong and its effect on this Chamber

as in any way a threat to the stability or prosperity of Hong Kong. Rather the reverse. And I hope that after their experience of fighting the Legislative Council elections in September, following their experience of fighting the elections for the district boards and Municipal Councils, some of the candidates most normally associated with the People's Republic of China's criticisms of what we have been doing in Hong Kong will come to share our view that there is nothing to be frightened of in a decently elected Legislative Council in Hong Kong.

So I think that the best way of securing a smooth transition is to make sure those elections in the autumn take place as efficiently and smoothly as possible and then for the Legislative Council to go on behaving over the next years as constructively as it has, I am sure, usually tried to behave in the last four years.

MR FREDERICK FUNG (in Cantonese): *I would like to raise a follow-up question: I believe that Mr PATTEN is also aware that the NPC has adopted a resolution last year that they would not employ existing methods to elect the three tiers of government after 1997. Could the Governor inform this Council that in the process of future communications between Mr PATTEN and Chinese officials, would the smooth transition or the smooth transition through a certain form for the three tiers of government be put on the agenda for discussion with China?*

GOVERNOR: Well, as far as we are concerned, it is always on the agenda. But it is not the Government of Hong Kong which is threatening a smooth transition. We have put in place arrangements which are entirely in line with the Joint Declaration and the Basic Law. We think they are arrangements which are in Hong Kong's interests. We think they are arrangements which, I guess September will demonstrate, have the broad support of people here in Hong Kong and I see no reason to disrupt or dismantle those arrangements.

Among the many things I am not responsible for in the world, one of them is the National People's Congress. I see absolutely no reason at all why anyone should regard it as necessary in 1997 to dismantle the Legislative Council which the people of Hong Kong will have elected in 1995. But, I do not want to be provocative, that is my situation, always has been, always will be.

PRESIDENT: Mr SZETO Wah.

MR SZETO WAH (in Cantonese): *Mr Governor, someone has just mentioned an epidemic, saying that that epidemic has to be exterminated. This reminds me of another epidemic which seriously affects the rule of law. At courts, there is an increasing number of people suffering from amnesia, and outside courts, many*

politicians also suffer from this illness and forget what they have said. Could the Governor inform this Council how can this illness be cured?

GOVERNOR: Well, one way of curing it is for politicians to be reminded of what they have said in the past. If one politician who was eloquent yesterday was here today, I would have reminded him of what he said about acts of state in 1988. But when I was a Member of the House of Commons at Westminster, there were two, not rules, but two pieces of etiquette that one normally followed. The first was if you had taken a vigorous part in a debate, you turned up subsequently to hear the reply and the second was that if somebody was not present you did not criticize them too vigorously. So I will at least follow my part of the bargain in commenting on the Honourable Member's answer on politician's amnesia.

There is something else which politicians occasionally do. Again I recall when I first became a Member of Parliament, there was a man who used to stand outside the tube station at Westminster bearing a sandwich board saying the world is going to end next year. Now I regarded that always as a manifestation of freedom of speech but I did not regard it as being a prediction which was likely to come true and indeed when I left the House of Commons 14 years later, he was still there and the world still had not ended. I do not think that sort of gloomster soundbite approach to politics is very helpful. I do not think it is very helpful to Hong Kong though it does fill up the airwaves, I agree. But amnesia, I repeat, is I think best treated by remembering what one has said in the past. You, of course, sensibly sometimes have to adjust your position. Times change and that sometimes requires one to change with the times and to explain why you have done so.

MR SZETO WAH (in Cantonese): *Mr Governor has just said that if someone is suffering from amnesia, he should always be reminded of what he has said. I would like to know whether the Governor has something to remind me, which I have said but forgotten?*

GOVERNOR: I was not referring to the Honourable Member who is here and I recall much that the Honourable Member has said, not least about parrots, with interest and occasionally, when he was being at his most witty, amusement as well. I can assure the Honourable Member that I was not accusing him of having forgotten something he had said in the past. I am sure he never does that having been a distinguished head teacher in the past.

PRESIDENT: Dr Conrad LAM.

DR CONRAD LAM (in Cantonese): *Mr Governor, I believe that Mr PATTEN share the same thoughts with me that the able officials sitting on the right side of the Governor have made great contributions to Hong Kong. As a matter of fact, many of them would like to continue to serve the people of Hong Kong after 1997. Perhaps Mr PATTEN has also heard of a Chinese saying, "every new sovereign brings along his own courtiers". Could Mr PATTEN inform this Council that as your officials have done a lot of things for you and as they wish to continue to serve Hong Kong people after 1997, what have you done in the past and what will you do in the coming two years to help them realize their ideal?*

GOVERNOR: I certainly would not wish to describe my senior colleagues and officials as brooms or brushes, particularly since I think in Hong Kong's recent political history brushes have some unfortunate connotations. But I take the Honourable Member's point that we should be seeking to secure for the Civil Service the maximum opportunities for future service for as many people as possible who wish to continue to work for Hong Kong.

I think there are a number of things we can do. First of all, we can give our officials the maximum opportunity of learning more and at first hand about the People's Republic of China (PRC) and PRC officials, the officials with whom they will be working and co-operating hand in hand in the future. That is why we started the Qinghua course which I proposed in 1992 to Director LU and so far I think 170 of our officials have taken advantage of those courses and we will be running more courses at Qinghua University in the future. And I would like to pay credit to the University and to all those who have been involved in the courses for the extremely imaginative and effective courses which they have been running.

We have also got to make sure that our Civil Service have all the language skills which they will require to work with Chinese colleagues in the future. We want a Civil Service which is biliterate and trilingual. So we have been putting more resources into, in particular, Putonghua courses, into Chinese writing courses and into Cantonese training for some of our expatriate civil servants. Those points are important.

But we also want to try to ensure that Chinese officials have the maximum knowledge compatible with the integrity of our Civil Service and with the importance of retaining the morale of our Civil Service. We want to ensure that Chinese officials have the maximum understanding of the way the Hong Kong Government works and the maximum understanding of the personalities and aptitudes and abilities and curricula vitae of all those who make the Hong Kong Administration work so smoothly. We are happy to help in building bridges in that direction as well between Chinese officials and the Hong Kong Administration.

So, I think it is a two-way process. Introducing our officials more to China and Chinese administrators and doing the reverse as well. I am sure that without being in any way arrogant, that given Hong Kong's record of good, clean, decent and effective public administration, that process of getting to know one another will be one which is much welcomed by Chinese officials and is a process from which I am sure they will learn as much as we do.

DR CONRAD LAM (in Cantonese): *Mr President, I think Mr PATTEN realizes that some pressure borne by the Branch Secretaries arise from the repulsion for Mr PATTEN by Beijing. I wonder whether Mr PATTEN would do something in future to help alleviate the pressure on the Secretaries such as gradually becoming "invisible" in the high political echelon, and one way to achieve this is that, in the coming legislative year, Mr PATTEN may perhaps ask the Chief Secretary to take his seat to answer questions raised by Members of the Legislative Council?*

GOVERNOR: I think the Chief Secretary has enough to fill her 24-hour day without taking on additional responsibilities. But what the Honourable Member will know, I have been saying for at least 18 months, is that the closer we got to 1997, the more I would wish to delegate responsibilities and authority to my senior officials and the more I would want to bring them on and involve them, not only in the decision-making of Hong Kong but in the presentation of the Administration's policies to the public of Hong Kong. That not only makes sense in general management terms, but it clearly makes sense given the reality of 1997. After 1997, unless there is some miracle of which I am not yet acquainted, I will not be here but most of my senior officials will be and it is important that they and politicians in Hong Kong are involved more and more in the administration of the territory. That is a sensible way for the Governor to behave and it is the way in which the Governor intends to behave.

Can I just add one other point. I regard my colleagues in the Administration as working for Hong Kong. I think they work in the best interests of Hong Kong now and will work in the best interests of Hong Kong after 1997, and I do not think that they will or should feel any schizophrenia because of 1997 and the transition and the change of sovereignty. They are working and working extremely effectively for the people of Hong Kong. That is the way it is today and that is the way I am sure it will be after the transition.

PRESIDENT: Mr Peter WONG.

MR PETER WONG: *Thank you, Mr President. Mr Governor, as Governor of Hong Kong and if today happens to be your birthday and you are given three wishes, what will those three wishes be?*

GOVERNOR: A British ambassador in Washington was once asked a similar question at Christmas time, asked what he would most like, and gave a reply, and heard on the radio the next morning that the French ambassador had been asked what he would most like and said, "World peace"; that the Soviet ambassador had been asked what he would most like and he had said, "An end to civil wars"; and the British ambassador had been asked what he would most like and replied, "A box of crystallized fruits". (*Laughter*)

What I would most like is, first of all, for Hong Kong and the people of Hong Kong to be trusted by the future sovereign to play the part in the continuing opening up of China, the successful transformation of the Chinese economy and Chinese society, in the way in which I think the people of Hong Kong want to be given the chance of playing that role. I do think it is important that leaders in the PRC should recognize how committed the majority of people are in Hong Kong to a successful transition in 1997. But they do want, I think, to feel that they are trusted and not because of the values and decency which they cherish regarded as in any way a threat.

Secondly, I would hope in particular that the rule of law which has been one of the main reasons for Hong Kong's success, could survive, as I am sure it will, intact after 1997, and that our experiences in Hong Kong of the rule of law would perhaps help those Chinese officials who have been talking with considerable interest about the development of legal structures in China.

And thirdly, I would — I hope the Honourable Member will excuse a personal remark — very much hope that I would be able to come back to Hong Kong after 1997, though perhaps not for a little while, and see a community as successful and prosperous and decent, thriving, giving an example to the region and the world, as much as is the case today. And I do not like crystallized fruits.

PRESIDENT: Dr TANG Siu-tong.

DR TANG SIU-TONG (in Cantonese): *Mr Governor, earlier Mr LU Ping and the Foreign Minister QIAN Qichen have met Mrs Anson CHAN. I wonder how you feel as the boss or ruler of the Hong Kong civil service? Furthermore, according to your estimation, when will you meet them? It is because if the Governor meets them, it would certainly be of much help to enhance civil service morale and stability.*

GOVERNOR: I do not feel like a big boss, nor yet like a big brother, but I am, as the Honourable Member said, responsible for the administration of Hong Kong and work in that endeavour hand in glove with an extremely talented and committed group of senior officials. I hope as many of them as possible will have the opportunity over the coming months, over the coming two years, of

meeting Director LU and his senior officials, and that the meetings that the Chief Secretary had in which she was treated with the exquisite courtesy which she thoroughly deserved, will be followed by meetings with others in Hong Kong.

There were certain understandings and agreements about the regularity of meetings between the Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office and the Governor of Hong Kong which, alas, have been departed from over the last two and a half years. All I will say is that I would be happy — I would be delighted — to meet Director LU or any of his colleagues whenever they wished.

I notice that one political party in Hong Kong, the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment of Hong Kong (DAB), has recently suggested that it would be a good idea if the Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office and the Governor met. It is not always the case that the DAB and I see eye to eye. I try my best. On this occasion, I totally agree with them that it would be desirable. And regardless of whether or not we were able to agree everything on whatever agenda was before us, I think it would have a considerable impact on confidence in Hong Kong and on the morale of the Civil Service.

So I live in gentle hope. But so long as that is not possible, then others will have to undertake those meetings and I am sure that they will carry a message from the Hong Kong Government with eloquence and spirit and will always be able to show their dedication to the interests of Hong Kong. Hong Kong people running Hong Kong after 1997 will not include the last British Governor.

MR TANG SIU-TONG (in Cantonese): *Could the Governor inform this Council whether you will have a chance to meet Mr LU Ping or the Foreign Minister QIAN Qichen after the meeting between the British Foreign Secretary and the Chinese Foreign Minister?*

GOVERNOR: I think that very much depends on Chinese officials. I would be delighted to meet them before that summit or after that meeting, but it really depends on them. It is an important meeting, important because there is a new British Foreign Secretary and I am sure that he will want to take that early opportunity of getting to know Vice-Premier QIAN Qichen. There are still a number of important issues that we have to resolve. There is still too much of a logjam in the Joint Liaison Group, despite the successes of this summer. So there will be plenty for them to talk about in areas like air service agreements, adaptation of laws, nationality issues, the civil service transition, and so on. A lot for them to discuss and I am sure that they will have — whether or not they can always agree — as congenial and civilized a discourse as Mr HURD and Vice-Premier QIAN Qichen always used to have.

PRESIDENT: Mr Andrew WONG.

MR ANDREW WONG asked (in Cantonese): *Mr President, the press have been describing Mr Governor as sitting on "the hot seat" lately, while others described him as sitting on "back seat". Of course, when he takes a high profile, the seat on which he sits may be rather hard indeed, but if he takes a low profile the seat will be fairly soft. I believe, Mr Governor, Mr President and the Secretary General will have found something different with the seats they sit on today - today's are soft seaters. Of course, I have to thank Mr President and the Secretary General, who, at my request, arranged to have a more comfortable chair for Mr Governor. I want to start with some lighter questions. I wonder how Mr Governor is feeling when he is sitting on this new chair. Has he found it more comfortable?*

GOVERNOR: I have to say to the Honourable Member in a spirit of self-deprecation, that because of my build, the material in which the chair is made is not normally of the greatest importance to me. (Laughter) But I am grateful to the Honourable Member for making what would anyway have been reasonably comfortable, even more comfortable. This may be the hot seat, it may even be, from time to time, the back-seat, but I can assure the Honourable Member that his taste in chairs has ensured that it is a comfortable seat.

MR ANDREW WONG (in Cantonese): *Mr President, my follow-up question is: never ever try to be a backseat driver, otherwise it is going to be very serious. Since chair is being discussed - and "chair means a role", he who is a Governor or a Chief Executive may have two roles to play, one of which is like that of the President of Singapore, or that of the Queen of Great Britain. If such a role is taken, Mr Governor should be likened to the Queen, and Mrs Anson CHAN, the de facto Chief Executive. But if Mr Governor continues to play the role the way he is playing right now, then in the future when Mrs Anson CHAN becomes the Chief Executive, she will play the role Mr Governor is playing now, and whoever will be under her will be nothing but a subordinate. If such be the case, it will be hard to have an accountable government. I hope during this transitional period, particularly in these remaining two years, the Governor will play a diminishing role. I did not say this for any particular reason. It was not that I have any doubt about his ability, not that I have doubt about his integrity, and definitely not that I have any doubt about his sincerity. It just seems that this is a right thing to do. This may be a better way to hold a chair, so that one may "reign but does not rule" while holding a chair. That may be a better role to play. I hope the Governor will answer us on this question.*

GOVERNOR: While it is true that I am not entirely beyond ambition, I should say to the honourable gentleman that my ambitions do not include the establishment of a new royal line. (Laughter) In all our recent experience, it rains quite enough in Hong Kong without me reigning too.

As I said before, given the localization of the public service and given the development of our representative institutions like this Council, I think it is entirely appropriate for the Governor, the closer we get to 1997, to delegate more and to ensure that more decisions are taken by those Hong Kong people who will be running Hong Kong after 1997.

But, that does not mean that there will not be difficult decisions for the Governor to make, that there will not be occasions when the Governor has to act as a buffer or a lightning-conductor in order to make it possible for other people to do their jobs, that it will not be necessary from time to time for the Governor to draw a line in the sand and say how far the Administration is prepared to go and where it is not prepared to go. I think that is a role which I sketched out for myself publicly at least 18 months ago, though some people were rather surprised when I did so.

I am fortunate in having a sufficiently talented team of senior officials to enable me to delegate more with complete confidence in the ability of my colleagues to carry out and implement their decisions. So with reservations — and declining from the honourable gentleman the offer, not this time of a comfortable chair but of a throne — I sympathize with much of what the honourable gentleman has said.

PRESIDENT: Dr LAM Kui-chun.

DR LAM KUI-CHUN: *Mr President, I wish to change the subject to the third topic listed for today, that is, the fight against drugs. In this area there is general agreement that the key to the fundamental solution lies in adequate preventive education. The bulk of this work in Hong Kong is done by non-governmental organizations and the main difficulty encountered by these organizations is the perpetual lack of funds. Because of this, organizations are losing staff fast, as they are unable to offer long-term contracts. And the main reason for this difficulty seems to be that funds for non-governmental organization work against drugs are allotted as a low priority item in the Security Branch. And my question is, what does the Government plan to do to boost funding for preventive education against drugs? Will it, for example, agree to setting up a trust fund to generate a predictable, dependable source of financial resource for this purpose?*

GOVERNOR: I am sure that the honourable gentleman who knows so much about this subject would concede that it is not only the Security Branch which is the donor of funds for work in the preventive education field. There are also, of course, resources from other parts of the Government, from the Education Department, from the Social Welfare Department and so on.

But nevertheless, I have a good deal of sympathy with the main thrust of his question and that is why, as I indicated earlier, we are, during the discussions on public spending this summer, looking with some urgency at the arguments for the establishment of a trust fund to deal with drug abuse, funding among other things educational programmes, and I hope that we will have some announcements to make about that after the summer break, if there is for all the Members of the Council a summer break. Certainly in the autumn we will make a clear announcement about that and I hope it will satisfy the honourable gentleman.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT SITTING

PRESIDENT: In accordance with Standing Orders, I now adjourn the Council until 9.00 am on Wednesday, 19 July 1995.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-six minutes to Four o'clock.

