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THE Bulletin

A Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce Magazine 香港總商會月刊

June, 1984
一九八四年六月號



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本文摘錄自執行董事每月報告。

Published by:

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

Swire House, 9th floor, Hong Kong

Telephone: 5-237177

Chairman: Jack C. Tang, OBE

Vice-Chairman: T. Clydesdale

Director: J.D. McGregor, OBE, ISO, FRSA, JP

Editorial Board: J.D. McGregor,

OBE, ISO, FRSA, JP

Harry Garlick Maureen Wong

Graham Jenkins Virginia Ng

Production: Li York Ling

Printer: South China Morning Post, Ltd., HK

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八百萬港客往中國旅遊

簡報匯編

出版人: 香港總商會

電話: 五-二三七一七七

主席: 唐驥千 副主席: 格士德

董事: 麥理覺

編輯部: 麥理覺 葛立科

黃慕賢 格林姆·曾健士 伍淑賢

美術製作: 李若稜

承印: 南華早報 未經許可 不得翻印

Sole Agent for Advertising Instructions:

Wadsworth Media and Marketing Service Ltd.

802 Far East Exchange Building

8, Wyndham Street, Hong Kong

Telephone: 5-266843

Telex: 60418 WADCO HX

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Swire House Office Available at Attractive Rental

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, occupying over 7,500 square feet of commercial premises in Swire House (9th floor) has purchased permanent premises in United Centre (22nd floor). The move to United Centre will be completed by the end of July 1984, leaving a Chamber certification office of about 1,500 square feet in Swire House.

As a result the Chamber has available about 6,000 square feet of office space in Swire House for sub-letting until January 1986 at an attractive rental. Extensions after the date can be negotiated with the Hongkong Land Co. Ltd. These offices are fully fitted out with lighting, airconditioning and carpeting.

Interested companies are invited to contact J.D. McGregor, Director of the Chamber (Tel: 5-237650).

Jimmy McGregor Reports...

Purchase of New Premises

I am pleased to advise members that John Marden, Nigel Rigg and I have signed a contract for the purchase of permanent premises for the Chamber on the 22nd floor of United Centre. The contract was signed on Thursday, 3rd May and marks a watershed in the history of the Chamber, first established in 1861 and presently Hong Kong's oldest and largest private sector trade organisation. The new premises occupy 10,400 sq. ft. gross and I have begun immediately the process of fitting out. This will take up to three months and I am planning on having the bulk of our operations transferred from Swire House to United Centre by the end of July, with the least possible disruption of services to our members. We shall continue to have a sizeable certification office in Swire House for some time and possibly permanently. Since we at present occupy 7,500 sq. ft. net floor area in Swire House and will continue to use 1,500 sq. ft. for certification purposes, I have obtained permission from the Hongkong Land Co. Ltd. to seek sub-tenants for about 6,000 sq. ft. not required and under rental contract until January 1986, ie. a period of 18 months from 1st August 1984. We shall begin a campaign to obtain sub-tenants within the next few days.

Incidentally, to mark this auspicious occasion, some member companies may wish to donate the cost of items of new furniture, for example, new chairs in our Boardroom or proposed new Committee Room and possibly other items. I would be delighted to hear from any interested member on this score.

I intend to utilize existing equipment and even fittings as far as this can be done in order to reduce overall initial expenditure and then to see what we might manage once the move has been made. I will keep members advised on progress.

Membership

At the end of April we had 2,638 members including 10 new members elected during the month. We have begun a substantial recruitment campaign which is beginning to produce results.

Annual General Meeting

This was successfully held on Thursday, 26th April when John Marden handed over to Jack Tang as the new Chairman of the Chamber. Tom Clydesdale was elected as Vice Chairman.

Committees

Taxation

The Committee met on 13th April to consider a submission to be made to UMELCO on the Public Revenue Protection (Inland Revenue) Order 1984. The submission was agreed and delivered to UMELCO a few days later also being copied for information to the Financial Secretary. The Committee expressed its views on certain taxation proposals and in particular on the proposal to tax offshore interest.

Legal

This Committee met on 19th April to consider Listing Requirements prepared by the Securities Commission. A submission was prepared and subsequently delivered to the Commissioner for Securities. Members are also considering a request for advice on Unfair Contracts legislation received from the Law Reform Commission.

New Arrivals

The next New Arrivals Course, to be held in May, is fully booked, with a waiting list of applicants. The course,

held twice each year, is very popular and almost always oversubscribed.

Trade Committees

Africa

The Committee met on 26th April to discuss, inter alia, whether additional measures might be taken to assist member companies experiencing difficulty in obtaining payment for shipments to Nigeria. The Chamber has already addressed the Nigerian Commission and several local bodies on this issue. The Nigerian Government has taken a number of measures to alleviate the present problems but it is hoped that these will produce firm results. A recent survey shows that Chamber members are owed at least US\$90 million in outstanding payments for exports to Nigeria many of which were shipped up to two years ago.

Arab

The Committee met on 10th April to consider the report on the joint Chamber/TDC Business Group which visited Dubai, Muscat, Doha and Cairo from 19th February to 6th March 1984. In view of the considerable success of this mission, the Committee proposed to organise jointly with the TDC a similar trade mission early next year to any four of the following countries: Abu Dhabi (U.A.E.), Aden (PDR Yemen), Sanaa (Yemen Arab Republic), Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Algeria, Libya and Tunisia.

Japan, Taiwan & Korea

Preparation for the Chamber's Goodwill Mission to Japan is well underway. A meeting was held on 19th April with Messrs. D. Matsunaga and H. Koizumi respectively representatives of the Fukuoka and the Nagano Prefectural Governments to discuss the programme for the mission. The Mission

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The Chamber in Action

visited Japan from 13th to 19th May.

On 14th April the Chamber received a Korean delegation led by Mr. Kim Hee Il, Director of Anyang Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Two-way trade prospects between Hong Kong and Korea were among the topics discussed.

North America

The Chamber hosted a luncheon on 9th April for a visiting delegation organised by the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and led by its President, Mr. James Wright.

The Chamber received on 5th April a delegation organised by the California State World Trade Commission and led by its Commissioner, Ms. Lily Lee. Hong Kong's current economic situation and opportunities for trade and investment were discussed.

The Chamber has actively supported the Canadian Commission in the organisation of Canadexpo '84 which will be held in the Hong Kong Exhibition Centre from 16th to 20th May 1984. Leaflets on this important trade event were circulated to all Chamber members during the month.

South Asia/Pacific

On 13th April the Chamber received an Indian trade delegation organised by the All India Manufacturers Organisation and led by Mr. S.S. Aggarwal. Two-way trade and areas for cooperation were discussed.

West Europe

Preparations for the Chamber Business Group to Europe in May are well in hand. A briefing meeting of participants was held on 11th April. 16 representatives from 13 Hong Kong companies will participate in this mission.

Organisation of a Chamber group to participate in the 22nd Overseas Import Fair "Partners for Progress" has begun. The Fair will be held in Berlin from 5th to 9th September 1984.

Leather '84

Organisation of this international trade exhibition is proceeding smoothly with an increasing Hong Kong participation. All available space in the Hong Kong Exhibition Centre has been taken up and the organisers, Hong Kong Trade Fair Ltd. have reported over 20 countries represented across a

wide range of products and services. The Chamber is pleased to be the sole sponsor and intends to sponsor Leather '85 in due course.

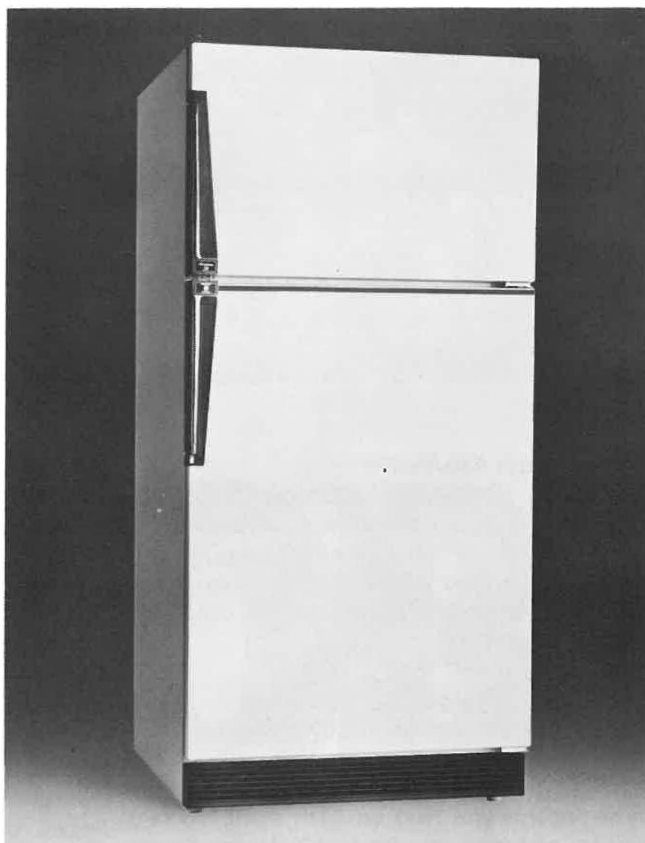
China

The China Committee met on 17th April to assess the results achieved during a visit to Beijing by a 9-member Chamber mission in March. Mr. Xie Jingwu of China National Aviation Corporation joined members for discussion on matters of mutual interest over lunch following the meeting.

The Committee noted that the proposed group visit to Xiamen has been postponed because of flight re-scheduling problems within China. The proposed visit to Zhuhai Special Economic Zone has also been postponed owing to senior staff movements within the administration of the Zone.

A number of investment opportunities in Sichuan, Shanghai and Anhui were notified to members.

A total of 100 Chamber members and staff visited Shekou on 3rd May to examine progress in the development of the area. The group will be led by Mr. E.B. Christensen, Vice Chairman of the China Committee. □



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Jack Tang ('Mr Textiles') chairs the Chamber

The Japanese market is the last world trade frontier Hong Kong's domestic exports must increasingly cross if industry is to grow and trade continue to thrive, says Jack Tang (57) the General Chamber's first Chinese chairman since it was founded in 1861.

Jack Tang, together with six other Chinese business leaders, was re-elected by the annual general meeting on April 26 to the Chamber's 20-member general committee and immediately afterwards elevated to Hong Kong's top commercial post in the private sector. The 6 ft. 1 in., 170 lbs. "Mr Textiles" (spinning, weaving and garments), who chomps his occasional cigar like an American, wears buttoned-down collars and has a quiet New England accent, served two years as the Chamber's vice chairman. He succeeds John L. Marden upon his completion of two successful years in office.

Usually, by almost tradition, the Chamber's general committee selects its vice chairman to follow its retiring chairman every two years. But the committee keeps its options open and formally appoints annually from its membership its choice for both top posts. Jack Tang has thus been in direct line for his new appointment for the past two years.

He is an American citizen by education from Shanghai at the Cambridge Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and at Harvard University. He took his first job with Mobil Oil in New York.

His appointment to the chairmanship (virtually by tradition two years ago) is hardly a sign of the times nor anything to do with political expediency as 1997 approaches.

Rather it recognises his Hong Kong 30-year career as an industrialist from one of the Shanghai families who pioneered the local industrial revolution. It acknowledges both the role Jack Tang has played in the economy and the active interest he has taken in the welfare of the Hong Kong community since he came to work here well-equipped educationally at the age of 28.

Jack Tang's appointment also looks appropriate at a time when Hong Kong's domestic exports to the United States are breaking records and generating post-recession prosperity for entrepreneurs and the workforce alike. But his view is that Hong Kong faces some danger from possible over-dependence on the U.S. market that accounts for more than 40% of our domestic exports.

He believes future growth of the export-led Hong Kong economy must come from new markets. That is why he zeroes-in on Japan where, he says, our trade promotion efforts must be concentrated.

"Our trade with Japan is very one-sided in Japan's favour," he emphasises. "There is no reason the Japanese cannot buy more from us if we provide quality and service."

That Hong Kong should set its sights on new trade objectives in current political uncertainty about its future typifies Jack Tang's outlook on living and working in our ever-enterprising and resilient community.

He says: "Our history shows we have never tended to be obsessed or too pre-occupied with the problems we have so often encountered that are beyond our control. Each crisis I have known has shaken some people out

but the vast majority have just gone on making a living and bringing up their families. They have educated their children and made better and better opportunities for them.

Father

"My father, (the late Mr. P.Y. Tang,) who came from Shanghai in 1948 and began spinning and weaving, did the same thing. Of course in those early days of Hong Kong's industrialisation he encountered all sorts of difficulties. Then came 1967 (the cultural revolution spill-over). But my father just went on manufacturing. In fact, we went ahead with our expansion in spinning right through 1967 and diversified into garments in 1970.

"I don't mean to say that the vast majority of us who remain now and who are getting on with the job are not concerned about 1997. We are all very much concerned. But we know we must carry on and that's what I'm doing."

Jack Tang is chairman and managing director of South Seas Textile Manufacturing Company Ltd. that has subsidiaries in Taiwan and Indonesia as well as textiles and garment plants in Hong Kong. He is putting the company money where his mouth is.

He plans telling the annual general meeting of his own company that his board has drawn up a budget which calls for capital expenditure on new equipment this year and next equivalent to its spending in the last six or seven years. He says: "My outlook for this year is optimistic and I am confident of the future."

He believes in the final analysis the fact that relative normalcy prevails on

the Hong Kong economic scene today is a tribute to Hong Kong people's resilience, indeed impatience to get on with their occupation at hand. During the past year one of the few sectors of the economy in a position to inject optimism into the economic scene has been the manufacturing industry. He wants to see it continue.

Jack Tang expects to see the Chamber in the coming years called upon to give its views on all the important issues that will arise. In formulating views he thinks two heads will always be better than one. He will work for more consultation which he sees as different to a mere consensus.

"I want to make better use of the talents represented on the general committee and to make use of the young and vigorous chief executives of Hong Kong's larger companies as well as the vast store of experience embodied in our other members.

"I would like to know more about the working of the many different committees within the Chamber that seek to promote our overseas trade relationships and advise on domestic social and economic issues. I want to promote more intercourse between those committees and the general committee and better understand their thinking.

"I shall also be talking to Jimmy McGregor, our director, on how we might perhaps engender more interest among our total membership," in which numerically Chinese firms are incidentally the biggest segment. "The internal administration has been running so well under Jimmy's direction that I don't intend to look over his shoulders. He has also done a good job in his contacts with, chambers abroad & inward missions, government departments, and other organizations in Hong Kong."

On the Chamber's external relations Jack Tang says he hopes to work very closely with Hong Kong's other major organisations, such as the Federation of Hong Kong Industries on important issues which concern Hong Kong as a whole and on the welfare of industry and trade. He sits on Federation's general committee.

"Since I'm a member of the Trade

Development Council I believe I can work very closely with the TDC in putting special emphasis on development of the Japanese market for Hong Kong production.

The Chamber's area committee for Japan, Korea and Taiwan sent in May a goodwill mission to three of Japan's most important prefectures, Fukuoka, Nagoya and Nagano. Simon Lee, committee chairman and mission leader, said the mission sought to complement the work of the Hong Kong-Japan Business Co-operation Committee at the level of the Chamber's counterpart organisations in these prefectures.

IDB member

Jack Tang is a member of the Industrial Development Board, a member of the Council of the Hong Kong Management Association, a member of the Hong Kong Association (Hong Kong branch) and a member of the Advisory Board of Lingnan Institute of Business Administration at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He is also a director of OO(H)L and the HK Shanghai Bank.

He is a past governor & vice president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, member of Hong Kong Polytechnic Council and a member of the Textile Advisory Board.

Through his professional training and 30 years' experience in industry and business Jack Tang has a more profound background than many on Hong Kong's basic problems and insight into those problems as well as his own intimate knowledge of industry. This must continue through his membership of the Industry Development Board, for example.

From his public remarks it is clear Jack Tang understands realistically the fragmented nature of both the industry and the services sectors of the economy where the average size of the Hong Kong firm is 18 workers. Only 3% of all firms in Hong Kong employ over 500 workers.

The 3% tend to be managed by expatriates or industrialists who are keenly aware of our international competition, such as Jack Tang's

own company. But Jack Tang publicly seems often to be worrying about how solutions proposed to industry problems can be made fairly to apply to the predominant small man, who employs those 18 workers and represents the backbone of Hong Kong industry.

At the Chamber's customary press conference prior to the annual general meeting and his appointment as Chamber chairman, Jack Tang said over 90% of local electronics companies employ less than 50 people and it was difficult to see how they would be interested in supporting long-term research projects.

He opposed a proposed levy of 0.03% on electronics exports to provide start-up funds for an Electronics Technology Development Centre (ETDC) suggested in a consultative study of the industry by the Hong Kong Productivity Council for the Industry Development Board (IDB), of which Jack Tang is a member.

Levy?

The study was referred to an Ad Hoc Working Group of the IDB chaired by Mr. E.P. Ho, Secretary for Trade and Industry. The Group found the proposals (and others) worthy of support but said it would be up to the industry to decide whether or not it wants a levy. But Jack Tang asked at the Chamber's press conference who was going to be mother in deciding how the money, from industry's pocket, collected by Government, will be spent for the benefit of all members in the electronics industry?

Jack Tang made his own views clear in *The Bulletin* last year on whether or not he thinks science and higher technology are Hong Kong's immediate industrial future. He suggested those who thought so should come down from Outer Space and get their feet planted firmly back on Hong Kong soil. "I'm not saying science and technology (robotics, biochemical engineering etc.) are not important but first a lot needs to be done here on our own small piece of this Earth," he said then.

Jack Tang, then vice chairman, said he thought improving productivity by industrial engineering systems and methods and energy conservation remained Hong Kong's first important practical and immediate objectives for manufacturers. He agrees with what the IDB has done to help manufacturers functionally improve their products through better design and improve quality through the setting up of quality certification labs.

Personally he advocates Hong Kong should help small manufacturers build their own in-house capability to achieve a practical productivity increase per man-hour. He says this can be done through introduction of things like control systems and process methods and by time and motion studies. He says this is the whole basis of industrial production engineering and production management.

But Jack Tang says: "I can't see our Government spending hundreds of millions of dollars to get Hong Kong into, say, a science park (as South Korea and Taiwan have done) only to be accused of helping a few. It is not on in my view."

Jack Tang says when he was a youth in Shanghai parents' views were respected and there was never any question about his being educated as an engineer, as his father was before him at MIT and also his own son, Martin, (three generations). But his father did allow him to say what sort of engineering he wanted to pursue.

He did his secondary education at the Shanghai Nanyang Model School where the emphasis was on science and he had become interested in chemistry. As a result he told his father he wanted to be a chemical engineer. And that was the discipline he graduated in from MIT before going on to Harvard to get a Master's degree in business management.

Jack Tang remains a member of the Corporate Development Committee of MIT. There the family name is enshrined in Tang Hall, a modern multi-storey graduate students' dormitory. At least a quarter of the students who stay there are Chinese from various parts of Asia, including Hong Kong.

Third generation

Jack Tang says he is the third generation of his family in textiles. His father used to tell him his grandfather had a very sensible philosophy about what he should do in industry. His grandfather said the family should stay in basic necessities like food, clothing, housing and transport.

He says his father followed his grandfather's advice to the letter. Before World War II in Shanghai he began a flour mill, vegetable oil processing and textiles. He also invested in a cement plant. After the war his father did the best he could in these same basics. But in transport the best he could manage was the Chrysler car agency.

"I guess being an industrialist must be in my blood," says Jack Tang. "But I'm not in the four necessities in Hong Kong. Here we have a rather small domestic market. Over 90% of what Hong Kong produces has to be exported. We mainly make what other people want. That's why I'm in textiles."

Jack Tang married his wife, Madeline, in Boston while going to the Harvard Business School. "She later typed my reports for me," he says.

Madeline's father worked in Shanghai for a leading international firm. She spent a lot of her childhood in Hong Kong as well as Shanghai. She finished her education at the Catherine Gibbs Secretarial School in the U.S.

The Tangs have three children, two daughters in San Francisco and

their married son Martin (34) who is a director of South Sea Textiles. Martin has given them their first grandchild but Jack Tang expects another soon from his married daughter who is in social psychology. The other daughter is in real estate management.

"I always make every excuse I can to stop over in San Francisco when I go abroad," Jack Tang says. He goes abroad four or five times every year. Two are usually long trips and he's away about a fortnight. He spent his 57th birthday on April 17 in Manchester, on a business trip to England.

Jack Tang's face lights up when he discusses his wife. He says Madeline has a sunny outlook on life. She's very much an outdoor person. She organises hikes and probably knows every nook and crannie of Hong Kong. He says it's Madeline's outdoors influence that gives him his usual sun tan. They go boating every Sunday When he's in town.

Tennis

Jack Tang says he actually has few hobbies. He plays some tennis. "I suppose I'm the type who gets very involved in what I'm doing in business." His work and leisure hours merge in textiles and garments. The Tangs entertain or are being entertained at dinner four or five nights each week. He says he has plenty of visitors to meet.

Jack Tang's day begins about 7.30 a.m. He's in the office about 9 a.m. and out usually at a business lunch. He says he lives the usual Hong Kong life. The Tangs have a wide circle of friends in the textiles industry and it is broadened by friends and acquaintances in public life and by the Tangs' many friends abroad. □

Achievements compare favourably with the rest of our region

It is now 10 years since consultants were commissioned to advise the Hong Kong Government on what should be done to protect the environment. Three of those years were taken up with the consultancy itself, which reported in 1977. What has been achieved since then?

Dr. S.B. Reed, Commissioner for Environmental Protection, lists among Hong Kong's successes:

- Enactment of three major ordinances for the control of air and water pollution and for waste disposal, together with amendments to existing legislation to control ventilation noise, construction noise at night and the emission of smoke from road vehicles.
- Establishment, staffing and equipping the Environmental Protection Agency to provide a multi-disciplinary team to deal with coordination, policy development and monitoring in the environmental field.
- Establishment of control units within various government departments to be responsible for implementing the new environmental legislation.
- Introduction of comprehensive monitoring programmes for air and water quality, noise and all types of wastes arising from construction and, at a cost of over \$6 billion, facilities for treatment and improved disposal of sewage.
- A marked improvement in the extent to which environmental considerations are incorporated into the physical planning process; and,
- Prevention of new nuisances and harmful effects as a result of control measures that have already been incorporated into major installations, such as the coal-fired power plants, cement works, chemical works, factories in the Industrial Estates and numerous others.

Dr. Reed says that despite these achievements, which stand favourable comparison with all other countries in the region and most beyond, the general public seems to feel that more should be done. Part of the reason for this may be that the environmental problems that have been averted don't make headlines. Or, when a problem is eradicated, its previous existence is soon forgotten and attention tends to focus on the next problem.

Yet, he says, pollution of the environment is something that affects all of us. In one way or another, all of us are the cause of it and equally we can contribute to avoiding or reducing it. Pollution effects can range from serious health risks to simple nuisances. But even a nuisance can be a very real problem to those affected.

Communications

Dr. Reed, who heads the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), says the need for good communications on environmental matters is a continuing one. Good communications are needed between the government and the public and industry as well. Within industry there is also a need for good communications between manager and the workforce to ensure good environmental practices.

He says it is important to promote this sort of environmental awareness and he points out the EPA has collaborated with the Building Contractors' Association in mounting poster campaigns aimed at reducing nuisance from construction noise and dust. Also EPA has held ad hoc meetings with industrial groups, such as the Federation of Hong Kong Industries to provide briefings on environmental matters such as arrangements for dealing

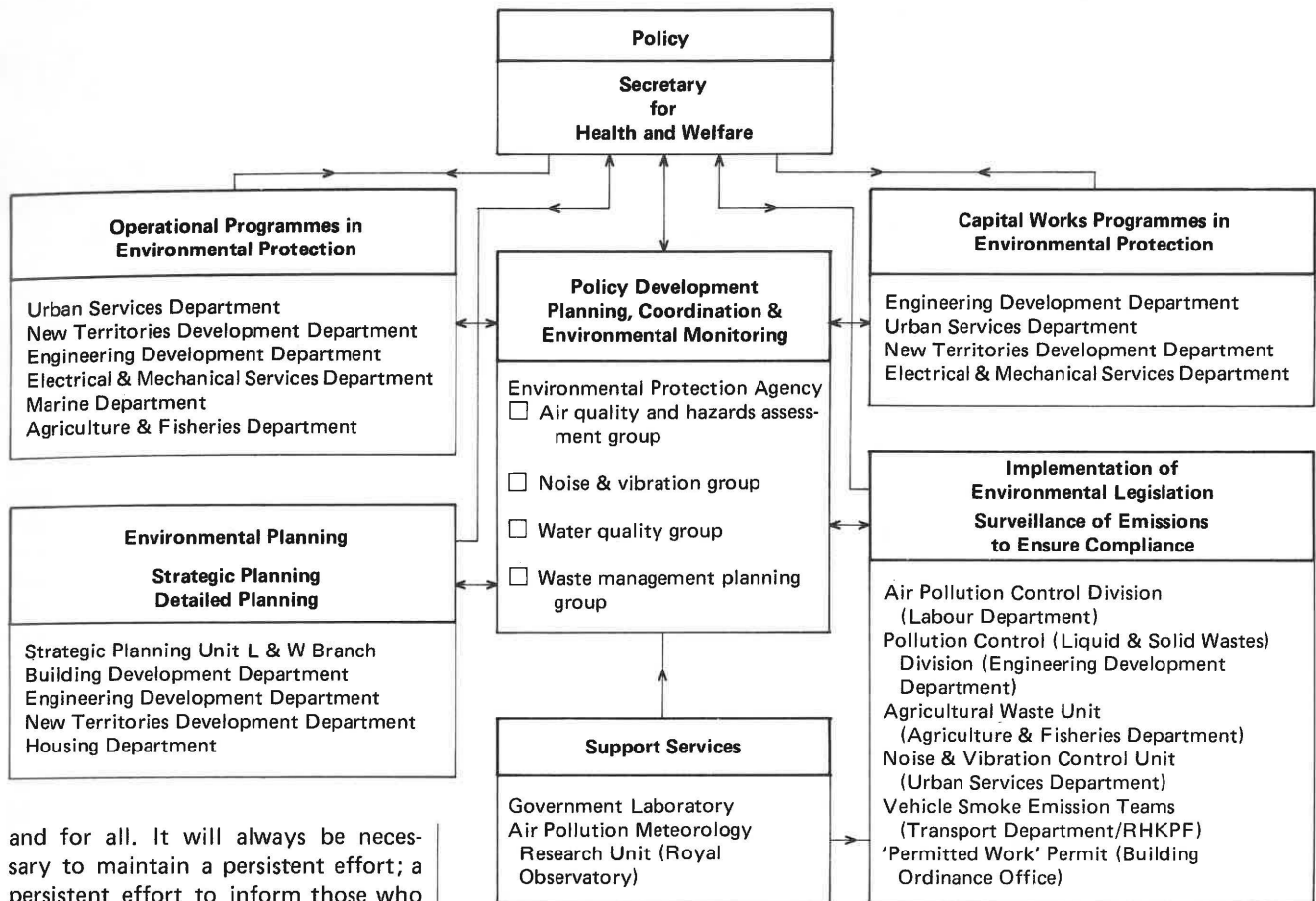
with toxic wastes.

Dr. Reed says excellent progress has been made in establishing good communications on environmental matters with organisations in neighbouring Guangdong and Shenzhen. Pollution does not, of course, respect man-made boundaries and it is important that the possible implications of the cross-boundary transport of pollutants are incorporated into any relevant plans. Initial discussions took place in January 1983 when the Director of the Guangdong Environmental Protection Bureau visited Hong Kong. These early contacts were followed up with a visit by a team from Guangdong to study detailed design and operational features of the air pollution monitoring network that has been established in Hong Kong.

In November 1983, the Commissioner for Environmental Protection led an interdepartmental delegation to Guangdong. During this visit it was agreed that the two sides should collaborate on environmental planning in the Deep Bay area where substantial new developments are in prospect both in Hong Kong and in Shenzhen. A detailed proposal on the form and extent of this collaboration was developed subsequently by a working group involving environmental specialists from Hong Kong, Guangdong and Shenzhen, which met in Shenzhen at the end of February 1984.

It was planned that this proposal will be agreed at a management level when the Director of the Guangdong Environmental Protection Bureau and senior colleagues visited Hong Kong last month.

The problem of improving environmental awareness and ensuring good communication on environmental matters is not one that can be solved once



and for all. It will always be necessary to maintain a persistent effort; a persistent effort to inform those who create pollution, whether by littering, driving smoking vehicles, bad management of industrial installations or by poor planning, of the damage they can do to people's health and well-being, and to make them aware of the often relatively simple steps they can take to minimise pollution.

The accompanying chart gives some idea of the complexity anyone faces when attempting to implement Dr. Reed's call for increased awareness. Henry Ching, Secretary for Health and Welfare, was recently reported as having said an overhaul of this complexity is in an advanced stage.

Mr. Ching said the changes meant identifying individual tasks which should be performed by the EPA instead of other departments. But he is reported to have said that the review would not call for any "full-scale changes."

The Secretary for Health and Welfare is said to have agreed that legislation on pollution control should balance the interests of small and traditional industries.

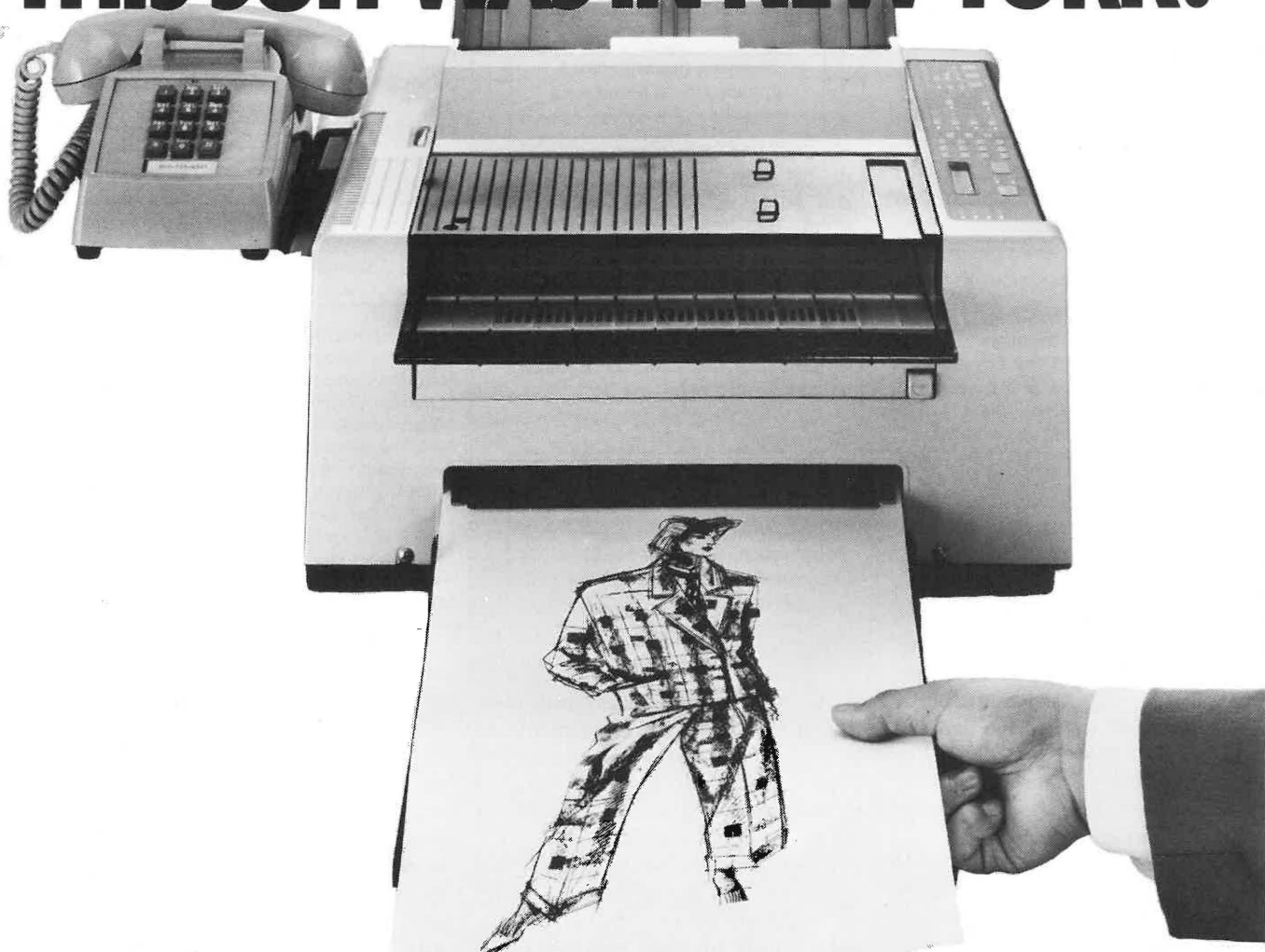
"There are certain economic activities which are incompatible with a community's wish to have an unpolluted,

or at least a reasonably clean, environment.

"This conflict cannot always be avoided, and sooner or later the decision must be made as to whether the pursuit of such activities should continue regardless of their pollution effect," he said.

One particular problem was agricultural farms, whose wastes had polluted rivers in the New Territories. □

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Because they live in urban areas that are less than a quarter of Hong Kong's 1,066 square kilometres most people don't have much of an opportunity to be familiar with its wild life — its animals, its birds, its vegetation and its insects. They have never seen nor heard a barking deer and would prefer to run a mile rather than meet a snake. But nowadays this doesn't mean they aren't familiar with its natural landscape — its sandy beaches, rocky foreshores, its woodlands and rather barren-looking hills. Scenic vistas are packed into the place and over the years they have become accessible and facilities increasingly provided to encourage that new accessibility.

The result last year was that more than eight million visits were recorded to Hong Kong's country parks and just as many went to the beaches. The legal provision for a rest day and more recently a week's holiday, besides a fairly liberal calendar of public and statutory holidays, is probably the main contributor to people's awareness of the natural environment that surrounds them, though they have no time to enjoy it on frantic workdays. The discovery that the natural landscape is a source of basic enjoyment hasn't vastly increased the number of Hong Kong's conservation activists. But a general interest in the preservation of the countryside is showing signs of developing.

The awakening can be seen in reports, like the one recently, that the barking deer is becoming extinct. Once, concern would have probably only been aroused if the report had been about a roaming non-existent tiger that might eat the unwary. But now interest does extend to conservation and beyond mere curiosity rather than once just the destruction of any potential danger believed to be coming from the natural environment.

A Government fact sheet on Hong

Kong's flora and fauna says wild animals, particularly mammals, are declining in numbers. It explains this is mainly because of increased urbanisation and greater use being made of the countryside by the urban population.

Civet cats and leopard cats, it says, may still be seen occasionally at night in the New Territories. Barking deer are now rare. However, they are occasionally heard in wooded areas of Hong Kong Island. Long-tailed macaques and rhesus monkeys (multiplied from escaped pets) may be seen in some wooded areas. They look for choice tit-bits from picnickers near Kowloon reservoirs.

Frank Lau, senior conservation officer at the Agriculture and Fisheries Department, is perhaps more re-assuring. He says people think there's less wild life than there actually is in Hong Kong. This is because our wild animals are nocturnal and urban dwellers don't have much of an opportunity to see them.

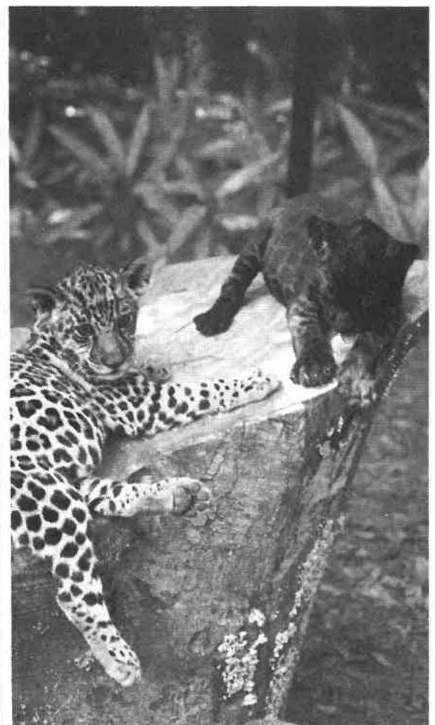
However, the population doesn't think our monkeys are becoming extinct. The monkeys are much more visible by nature.

The Hong Kong University trained scientist says there is no evidence that the barking deer (a rather lovable-look-

ing little creature with Bambi-like features from our own Disneyland) is becoming extinct. The seldom-seen small deer finds suitable habitat in our reservoir catchment areas. Of course, they should be kept that way.

Frank Lau says there are no endangered species in Hong Kong's wild life. Thanks, perhaps largely to Lord MacLehose and his personal interest in the countryside, the Government has taken a good deal of action to protect Hong Kong's wild life and continues to spend money on it.

For instance game hunting has been prohibited throughout Hong Kong since January 1, 1981. New Territories remote villagers can't now even shoot a wild boar. The liberated wild pig can enjoy his mudbath in village fields, eat the sweet potatoes and the tangerines in season. Only the police are allowed to cull them and this they do occasionally when villagers complain about damage.



Back in the urban areas we seldom hear what may have happened to some delinquent wild boar. We are usually more concerned with the human variety of delinquency in the urban environment. But in a way there is a developing relationship between the countryside and the control of our own social behaviour.

The crash park programme begun in 1976 with the setting up of the Country Parks Authority, making the countryside accessible to the public has added another dimension to the quality of life in Hong Kong. Now Hong Kong, especially in the winter months, goes bumper-to-bumper at weekends to our country parks for psychological therapy.

Natural origins

There literally hundreds of thousands happily breathe the fresh air in man's satisfying natural rural origins. May be they do take supermarket-packaged camp-fire food to barbacue, but they do undergo the beneficial therapy of ridding themselves of their pent-up tensions of crowded busy weekday urban life.

The spirit, too, is rejuvenated even if it is in innocent family pursuits like helping delighted children fly their kites put readily together from packaged kits sold at kiosks. The wind is free and it does something for the human spirit that is especially pertinent in Hong Kong nowadays.

It's great fun! And it's healthy fun, mentally and physically. It summons more vigour than sunbathing on our crowded beaches, though perhaps not the heights of excitement at the new Ocean Park.

A total of 21 country parks and two special areas have been established covering an area of 41,296 hectares of woodlands, open spaces and coastline. They include five country parks on Hong Kong Island.

Facilities provided in the parks include picnic sites with tables and benches, children's play apparatus, campsites, fireplaces for barbecues, litter bins and toilets. They are designed to blend with the natural environment.

Footpaths and nature trails provide easy access to the hills and the woodlands so that local people may enjoy Hong Kong's natural beauty. Guide-books for nature trails are available

and major paths are being constantly improved and waymarked in more difficult terrain.

A 100-kilometre walk called the MacLehose Trail, traverses the New Territories from Sai Kung in the east to Tuen Mun in the west. It is entirely within country park areas and has 33 campsites for hikers. A special area of Tai Po Kau caters for those who wish to study tree, plant, bird and insect life as well as providing pleasant and interesting walks.

Bringing the natural environment in closer touch (if not communion) with the population is a remarkable social accomplishment in a few short years. It parallels on a broader scale what Hong Kong much earlier did to make its very lovely beaches accessible to the people, through establishing bus routes and providing facilities for bathers. Many beaches now suffer from over-use at summer weekends – and pollution (*see p. 16*).

All this is putting a dent in the popular belief of those trapped in the urban environment who believe there is nothing to do with one's leisure in Hong Kong except to watch the races on TV and play mahjong. But it would be wrong to say it is yet a big dent. Eight million visits to the country parks means less than two visits a year on a per capita basis. The popular beaches in summer besides have a limited capacity.

The countryside has to be discovered in greater depth by more than relatively few of Hong Kong's people before it becomes a substitute for mahjong as a builder of society into its primary groupings, or even the popular habit of sitting watching the races with a telephone handy.

There is a lot to discover, even assuming it would not extend to disturbing the barking deer in its natural habitat, nor the civit cats and leopard cats wherever they are. It could come with education and the improving quality of life. But it will involve solving a tremendous transport problem. Fiscal measures are discouraging personal transport.

The irony in this ideal of greater interest in the countryside and, indeed, the rich natural beauty with which Hong Kong is endowed is, as the Government fact sheet on our flora and fauna says, that closer use is beginning already to destroy it. Yet education



generating interest in Hong Kong's rich natural endowment is the only way many will acquire a less careless attitude toward it.

The prevalent carelessness of the visitor to the country parks is seen in the litter he leaves. But this is not the major hazard the visitor sometimes creates. It is fire that kills both fauna and flora.

The statistics (*see box*) indicate the extent of the disaster over the past 10 years. However, the figures do provide hope that the fire hazard through man's carelessness is diminishing as a result of penalising legislation and the system that daily alerts the community to humidity and the danger of fire on radio and television.

Frank Lau says eroded areas are restored by planting species that are more tolerant of the harsh environ-



ment. They include trees that won't burn easily, withstand typhoons, etc. A crop is eventually nursed to flourish where native species can be later inserted and take shelter in the hardier vegetation.

He says the Agriculture and Fisheries Department plants some 600,000 trees every year. The New Territories Services Department plants another 500,000 seedlings.

The Government fact sheet on flora and fauna says the flora of Hong Kong, diverse in character and surprisingly numerous in species, provides an interesting phytogeographical link between the mainland of China and the islands of the Philippines. Many species typical of the Southeast Asian tropical flora occur here at the limit of their northern distribution range. It is estimated that about 2,500 species of vascular plants, both native and introduced, are to be found in Hong Kong. After centuries of cutting, burning and exposure, some of the hillsides give an overall impression of dry barren soil.

Country Park fire statistics for the past ten fire seasons

Fire Season (Year)	No. of fires attended by A.F.D.	Area Affected (Ha)	Trees Affected (No.)
1973-74	682	1,372	1,510,000
1974-75	159	228	63,000
1975-76	401	1,733	558,000
1976-77	545	2,295	1,102,000
1977-78	254	485	78,600
1978-79	231	452	43,000
1979-80	437	3,025	581,000
1980-81	281	820	15,900
1981-82	368	1,473	70,600
1982-83	204	846	30,300

However, the steep ravines often contain a dense vegetation that is particularly rich in low trees, flowering shrubs and ferns.

There are also small but well-developed woodlands near many of the older villages and temples. These so-called 'fung shui' groves owe their existence to protection by the villagers under ancient traditions relating to the interactions of wind 'fung', and water, 'shui'. The groves are rich in flora and represent remnants of the forest type which may well have covered sizeable areas of Hong Kong had similar protection been applied.

Many species of plants in Hong Kong are noteworthy for the beauty or fragrance of their blossoms. The *Bauhinia blakeana* (Hong Kong Orchid Tree) was discovered in 1908 at Pok Fu Lam, and was named after a former Governor, Sir Henry Blake. It is among the finest of the *Bauhinia* genus anywhere in the world and has been adopted as Hong Kong's floral emblem. It is now quite widely planted — being propagated by cuttings since, like most hybrids, its seeds are usually sterile.

Herbarium

At the Hong Kong Herbarium, which was founded in 1878, about 33,000 specimens are available for examination. These include more than 1,890 known indigenous species and varieties, and about 2,500 related species from adjacent regions of East and Southeast Asia. The herbarium also has the distinction of being the only one catalogued in the English language which deals comprehensively with a flora which is, to a certain extent, representative of Guangdong Province in China.

The herbarium, now housed on the ninth floor, New World Centre in Kowloon, is open to the public during office hours.

The *Checklist of the Birds of Hong Kong*, produced by the Hong Kong Bird Watching Society, lists 343 species of birds which have been recorded in an apparently wild state during the past 50 years. Of these, over 70 species have been recorded breeding in the territory.

The wide variety of local habitats contributes to the diversity of the birds. Though many people think of Hong Kong as a crowded city surrounded by

barren mountains, there are still pockets of ancient woodland, fairly large areas of pine forests, paddy and vegetable farmland, and a restricted area of marshland. The marshland in particular provides a suitable habitat for a number of breeding and migrant birds which would otherwise bypass Hong Kong.

Since 1969, the egret colony at Yim Tso Ha has been protected during the breeding season and access to the woodland is restricted from April 1 to September 30, every year. The Chinese Pond Heron, Little Egret and Cattle Egret regularly nest here, and one or two pairs of the rare Swinhoe's Egret and a small number of Night Herons have nested at Yim Tso Ha for more than 10 years.

The marine fauna of Hong Kong is exceedingly diverse. Though primarily tropical, it is an admixture of tropical South China Sea and temperate Chinese forms because of the seasonal fluctuations of warm and cold water and monsoon weather conditions. Its diversity has always attracted both the naturalist and ecologist, while its abundance is vital to the supply of protein to Hong Kong's population.

Of an estimated 1,500 species of fish on the South China continental shelf, clupeoids, croakers and bream are the most dominant groups in Hong Kong waters. Farther offshore, golden thread, big-eyes and others are also of high value to Hong Kong's fishermen. Most people have an instinctive horror of snakes though in general they are timid creatures and are anxious to give human beings the widest of berths. They are also nocturnal, and are rarely seen despite their ubiquity.

Most snakes in Hong Kong are harmless, with venomous snakes distinctly in a minority, both in species and number. Also, the number of known bites by highly-venomous snakes, and of death from snake-bites, are very few.

Eight species of snakes in Hong Kong are dangerously venomous to humans: the Banded Krait, Many-banded Krait, Macclelland's Coral Snake, Chinese Cobra, Hamadryad or King Cobra, Bamboo Snake, Mountain Pit Viper and Red-necked Keelback. □

What to do with the waste from our pigs?

In safeguarding the environment the New Territories has an indelicate perennial and mounting problem. It is what to do with the waste from its pigs.

Two years ago the Agriculture and Fisheries Department, which is responsible for this form of waste disposal, used to estimate the size of its problem was something like 1,400 tonnes each day. But now Y.C. Lin, senior environment protection officer with the department, says it's nearer a daily 2,000 tonnes. Some of it is used as fertiliser. But most of it is disposed of by NT pig-breeders by what is known in animal husbandry as the "wet muck-out" method. That is, it is hosed away and finds its way into polluted streams. Even Tolo Harbour has had to be gazetted a protected water zone to save it from biological death by regulating the pig waste onslaught.

In its dilemma of how to handle the mounting problem of the waste, the Government called in public health consulting engineers. The Agriculture and Fisheries Department is now in possession of a thick book and a lot of recommendations. But Y.C. Lin says it contains no new methods for the disposal of the NT's pig waste.

These are the "wet muck-out" method described above and the "dry muck-out" alternative in which the waste is mixed with straw and physically removed. Naturally pig-farmers, as astute economic agents, aren't all that keen about the latter method.

Public-spirited environmentalists are, of course, aware of Hong Kong's

pig waste problem though as a sensitive political issue it is overshadowed by developments like the nuclear generating plant proposed for Daya Bay. Indeed, it probably is recognised as incapable of solution unless Hong Kong does away with pig-breeding. But that would merely shift the problem to how to supply a rising population's demand for pork chops.

From China

A lot of pigs for market do, of course, come from China to help satisfy the pork chop demand, not to mention Hong Kong's appetite for *cha siu* etc. But exclusive reliance on China would hardly be a complete solution either.

Chinese imported pigs leave a nasty smell at Hung Hom railway station and that brings the NT problem a lot closer to the heart of Hong Kong's urban environment. Ironically this problem has been so far contained to the imaginatively-designed sitting-out area that surrounds the relatively new railway station and the adjacent Coliseum stadium, though doubtless to the chagrin of the public-spirited architects.

The odour that pollutes the sea air wafting in upon Hung Hom seems to have evoked few public complaints unlike the Kai Tak nullah. Thus city planners have escaped whatever scorn about their foresight might perhaps be considered publicly merited by critical environmentalists.

However, independent observation does suggest the new Hung Hom

sitting-out area is not as popular with the community in general as it might otherwise have been. At night it is mainly used by lovers seeking relative privacy. Thus this lonely yet worthy attempt by man to improve the Hung Hom environment has been unexpectedly thwarted by fundamentals like the community's penchant for pork.

Bill Andrew, senior engineer at the Agriculture and Fisheries Department says, in effect, the New Territory's pig waste problem in theory shouldn't exist at all. If only Hong Kong had enough farm land the waste would all be used as fertiliser just the same as animal waste problems are solved in countries endowed with more arable flat space than Hong Kong.

Pollution of NT streams is also related to scarce land. They can't clear the waste because they don't flow fast enough. Water that should go into the streams is diverted to our reservoirs.

Cynics might suggest this shows the negotiators of the NT lease in 1897 really lacked proper foresight about our pork-eating propensity and weren't nearly as avaricious as they ought to have been about leasing land. The result is that Hong Kong now seems stuck with its pig waste problem for at least another 13 years.

No one has suggested the smell and the water pollution ought to be on the agenda of the 1997 Beijing talks. Raising such an indelicate subject might well be misconstrued, though it could amount to a sizeable and useful daily gift for nothing more than goodwill.

Why it was never raised long ago seems a mystery. Logic would dictate it must have been. But then again it does involve making the sort of offer that would hardly cultivate better relations between sensitive neighbours. Anyhow, very little is exported though Hong Kong's reputation for entrepreneurial spirit might suggest otherwise.

Red wriggler

In these circumstances it is hardly surprising the Agriculture and Fisheries Department has seized upon every idea that comes up on how to cope more effectively with its literally massive pig waste problem. One imaginative possibility is now fairly well known.

That is the idea that Hong Kong should breed a worm species that would eat the waste and produce castings that could be exported as a rich fertiliser. The particular species is known as *lumbricus*

rubellus and is commonly called the red wriggler in many countries where what is described as annelidic recycling has been attempted.

The Bulletin exclusively reported the Agriculture and Fisheries Department's interest in the red wriggler well over a year ago. What has happened since then?

Y.C. Lin says the busy little worm that eats its own weight of anything, including plastic, in 24 hours, hasn't been forgotten or abandoned. A batch of worms imported from the Philippines is under the care of Professor Alan Griffiths at the University of Hong Kong. His discipline is botany and the red wigglers are doing nicely eating spent tea leaves, though our tea leaves problem is nothing like in volume Hong Kong's pig waste problem.

They have yet to get around to tackling even a small part of the Agriculture and Fisheries Department's massive real problem.

But one enterprising company has realised Hong Kong-produced red wigglers are a potential domestic and export industry in the form of marine culture fish feed and as bait for deep-sea fish capture.

Y.C. Lin says unfortunately the Hong Kong-raised red wriggler has a rather tough skin and a garlic taste. Garoupa will take them if they are ground down into pellets. But most fish don't like them all that much.

However, the enterprising local entrepreneur who sees potential in the red wriggler remains undaunted. He is importing red wigglers from France that don't have a tough skin nor a garlic taste.

The day may, therefore, yet arrive when what Hong Kong doesn't want from its pigs will be recycled into fat fish that used to be a large part of the community's healthy staple diet until fish got to be so expensive housewives had to cut down on the family fish intake. □

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The geo-technical problem of building on our hills

Hong Kong can be considered to be a large, unique and exciting geotechnical laboratory in that rapid and intensive urban development has been necessary on steep, soil-covered hillsides subject to extremely high seasonal rainfall. Though the territory's basic geology is simple, consisting almost entirely of granite and volcanic rocks, these rocks have been deeply weathered to form thick 'residual' soil layers. In many areas, there are overlying blankets of colluvium which has rolled down the hillsides from above. As a result, the fans of materials on mid-to lower-slopes are often just in equilibrium and can become unstable if not handled carefully from an engineering point of view. Furthermore, very little is known internationally about the shear strength behaviour of unsaturated soils, and the separate role of water infiltration and soil suctions are not fully understood by geotechnical engineers anywhere for the kinds of stability problems that abound in Hong Kong.

In 1972, a Mid-levels slope failure carried away a 12-storey occupied apartment and killed 55 people. Also in 1972 and again in 1976, high fill slopes on a housing estate liquefied during heavy rainfall, claiming 71 and 18 lives, respectively. The Geotechnical Control Office was subsequently established in 1977 to control land stability in the whole territory.

The GCO is one of five constituent Offices of the Engineering Development Department. In November 1983, the Geotechnical Control Branch of the Buildings Ordinance Office was amalgamated into the GCO, and the GCO was then restructured to result in a more efficient organisation. It is now in a better position to respond effectively to District Boards and to provide a wider range of professional

services to government. Each year, the Office spends about \$80 million on landslip preventive measures, including investigations and construction. The Office has almost 130 professional staff of some 12 nationalities with qualifications and backgrounds in geology, engineering geology, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, chemistry and even quarrying.

The GCO's head and Principal Government Geotechnical Engineer, Dr. E.W. Brand, described to *The Bulletin* the three main areas to which the GCO directs its efforts.

Planning

The first area is planning, research and development aimed at improving methods used for engineering designs. A terrain evaluation of the whole territory has been completed to assess the geotechnical limitations on land development, and this information has been made available to government planners. The Special Projects Division of the GCO is the research and development

arm within the Office, and results of work done are documented into manuals, design guides, specifications and technical notes for government and private sector use. Already published are the *Geotechnical Manual for Slopes* (1979) and the *Guide to Retaining Wall Design* (1982), both bestsellers among government publications. The second edition of the important *Geotechnical Manual for Slopes* will be published in June for sale to the public. There are many other practical engineering topics on which study is underway, including improved reclamation methods, site investigation techniques, slope stabilisation measures, construction and use of sanitary landfills, and the support of deep excavations.

The second area of the GCO's efforts is the long-term implementation of landslip preventive measures. It seems that design and construction practice in Hong Kong has not always been satisfactory, and the GCO has an ongoing investigation programme to identify those slopes and retaining



walls with sub-standard safety factors and to undertake appropriate preventive measures to remove any potential danger.

The third area of activity concerns the routine geotechnical control measures. The GCO services the Buildings Ordinance Office for its geotechnical requirements under the Buildings Ordinance, so that GCO has good direct control over the geotechnical aspects of private development projects. In addition, the designs of all government projects are checked for safety by the GCO.

"While we cannot eradicate slope failures altogether, we hope to eliminate the possibility of any major disaster of the kind that occurred in the seventies. We also aim to minimise failures in all engineered construction."

Though the geotechnical aspect of civil engineering design has improved substantially since the GCO came into being, Dr. Brand notes that certain problem areas still exist. The most important of these is the stability of slopes in squatter areas scattered all over the territory, many of which occupy the steepest hillsides. The only completely satisfactory solution is of course to clear all squatters and re-house the some 500,000 population. But when re-housing is not immediately possible, the GCO recommends permanent clearance where an immediate and obvious danger exists. The GCO also recommends, on geotechnical grounds, to the Housing Department which squatters should be cleared first. The Housing Department has itself launched the Squatter Area Improvement Programme which includes minor landslide preventive works which have helped to improve terrain safety. The GCO and the Housing Department continue to work closely together on this issue.

The Mid-levels is another difficult area for civil and geotechnical engineers. After the 1972 disaster, a Mid-levels Study was carried out by the GCO to examine the overall stability of the Mid-levels area of Hong Kong Island. The results of the study led to new legislation that requires certain special geotechnical design measures for all developments in that area.

The GCO has also identified in the territory several other areas as having geological and terrain characteristics that could lead to slope stability prob-

lems. Detailed geotechnical assessment studies at a scale of 1:2,500 have been completed for these areas, namely Pokfulam, Tsz Wan Shan, Cheung Sha, Fei Ngo Shan, Shauiwan, Chai Wan, Tai Wo Ping, North Tsuen Wan and Magazine Gap. The studies have revealed nothing alarming, Dr. Brand said, but careful planning and good standards of engineering are necessary in these particular areas.

Tunnelling

The GCO's work involves more than slopes: it extends to advice and control on aspects of tunnelling, reclamation, site formations and foundations. Certain aspects of the works of the Mass Transit Railway Corporation, particularly those in relation to the effects of tunnelling on nearby buildings, are checked and controlled by the GCO. However, Dr. Brand points out that tunnelling is perhaps the most difficult area in civil engineering as site problems are extremely difficult to assess and a lot depends on the contractors' skills in averting difficulties. "A design can be perfect on paper, but the execution is where the actual problems arise" he says. He adds that recent land subsidences along the MTR Island Line under construction occurred abruptly from hard to soft material, but the failures have had minimal effects on the surrounding structures.

One of the problems with land reclaimed from the sea is that it takes a very long time for soft mud at the bottom to compress, and this makes development on top difficult. A method to accelerate mud compression by installing "plastic drains" was used under a test embankment at the proposed replacement airport site in Lantau. The plastic drains proved effective and have since been used in other reclamation works such as the Island Eastern Corridor embankment at Sai Wan Ho. Geotechnical engineering information from the GCO is increasingly being made available to the public. A new Geotechnical Information Unit opened on 1st May contains all the site investigation information and a large number of case histories collected by the Office, and a free retrieval service is offered to the public. In the coming six months it is likely that a complete series of

Geotechnical Area Study reports, which evaluate the terrain of the entire territory of Hong Kong at a scale of 1:20,000, will also be available.

The Geological Survey Section of the GCO is working on a new geological map of the territory which will result in a new set of 14 geological maps at 1:20,000 for the entire territory. These will be produced over a period of eight years, the first scheduled to come out in 1985. Each Geological map will comprise two versions, one on bedrock geology and the other on superficial geology. The new maps will be far superior to the existing Hong Kong geological map produced 15 years ago at a scale of 1:50,000.

Some recent research at the GCO into Hong Kong's rainfall pattern in relation to its landslide pattern has come to the conclusion that very short-term high intensity rainfall is the main cause of slope failures, and not the quantity that has fallen in the past few days. In quantity terms, landslips are likely when the rainfall exceeds 70 mm in one hour and, whenever rainfall exceeds 175 mm in 24 hours, we can expect an appreciable number of landslips in the territory. These findings have led to changes in the criteria used for the Landslip Warning issued by the Royal Observatory in conjunction with the GCO.

It has been said that Hong Kong's GCO is one of the most advanced geotechnical units in the world, though its orientation may be different from some advanced countries. In Britain, for instance, Dr. E.W. Brand says, the emphasis is on research and development rather than direct control over practice as is the case in Hong Kong, whereas in parts of California geotechnical policies are also very much control-oriented because of the landslide problems.

As to plans for the future of the GCO, Dr. Brand says "Now that the overall situation is under control, we hope the GCO will gradually expand its geotechnical advisory services on engineering and design and produce more guidelines for practice. These activities are generally more stimulating than direct control work, though the control activities of the Office must of course be sustained." □

Our daily clean-up amounts to no less than 3,400 tonnes

Each day as many as 2,500 tonnes of solid refuse is collected from urban Hong Kong and another 900 tonnes from the New Territories. Urban refuse is collected free by the City Services Department (CSD) which maintains 134 specific refuse collection points cleared at scheduled times everyday.

About 80 per cent of urban domestic refuse collected is incinerated, the rest is dumped onto landfill sites in Kwun Tong and Junk Bay. All urban trade wastes are sent to similar landfill sites in Junk Bay, Plover Cove and Yuen Long.

CSD Staff Officer (Cleansing) B.Y. Kong lists the problems of collecting wastes in a sub-tropical and heavily built-up city such as Hong Kong. He says that daily collection is a must because of the high humidity, dense population and our preference for fresh food, particularly seafood, which renders a large proportion of organic refuse.

Frequent typhoons in summer have also forced the CSD to develop a whole system of typhoon strategies. As most refuse collection points are only built with one day's load capacity, CSD dustmen and refuse collection vehicles stop operating only when typhoon signal number 10 is up. During the storm CSD anti-flood gangs patrol and clear roadside fully traps wherever possible to control location flooding.

Refuse collection resumes immediately after typhoon signal goes down to number 9. Trunk roads and carriageways are cleared first, followed by sidewalks. Tree trunks and all organic refuse are also the first to be removed. He says that it normally takes CSD two to three days to present an acceptable street appearance after a typhoon, but last year the extraordinarily devastating typhoon Ellen caused so much backlog that it took CSD four weeks to clear felled trees in Kowloon Tong alone.

Town Planning Standard stipulates

that one off-street public refuse collection point should serve an area within a distance of 550 metres or a population of 22,000 persons, but in practice their actual number and location sites are severely constrained by scarce space and property development. This results in collection points flooded with refuse thus polluting the environment and, more often than not, collection vehicles being forced to load refuse on streets with minimal segregation from the public.

B.Y. Kong notes that the CSD has been long involved in the fight against private property developers to introduce changes in the Building Ordinance that would require new buildings to provide refuse collection space. He points out rather triumphantly that it

has recently been published in the Gazette that any building with a usable floor area of more than 1,320 square metres must provide its own refuse storage chamber, while those with more than 13,200 square metres usable floor areas must provide, in addition to storage chambers, collection bays within the plot areas for CSD vehicles to operate.

Hong Kong's refuse collection service can claim to be one of the world's most cost-effective, he says, because expensive kerbside collection (i.e. collection from individual households) has been kept to a few suburban areas such as the Peak and Shouson Hill. All housing estates, multi-storeyed buildings and commercial centres are served by the cheaper and efficient bin-lifting



vehicle collection method. The vehicles simply lift refuse from standardised containers in a bulk storage area for the building or the entire estate.

To improve service the CSD is constructing more off-street refuse collection points with enclosed structures and carbon filtration systems to reduce obnoxious smells. New collection vehicles installed with electric hydraulic pumps designed to reduce noise have also been introduced to the fleet. Two state-of-the-art "compaction trailer" type collection vehicles with interchangeable loading trunks to fit different refuse collection points are currently in trial use.

The Urban Council however, has abandoned the idea of giving out free paper or plastic refuse bags to the public. A survey done in 1982 showed that free refuse bags for the entire urban population would cost the Council as much as \$180 million a year while the Council's budget for that year was only \$1600 million.

Interestingly enough, refuse density can indicate the state of an economy. B.Y. Kong quotes a theory which states that as a society becomes more affluent, its refuse density tends to lower because consumers have more waste paper, wrapping materials and consumer goods packing boxes to dispose of. The average domestic refuse density in Hong Kong is 141 Kg/cubic metre. Density of commercial refuse from Central District is as low as 70 Kg/cubic metre due to the large amount of paper collected. Our average refuse density over recent months have continued to stay high, he says, which might indicate the population's overall spending power has yet to make a full recovery.

Street sweeping is another major CSD cleansing activity. Normally streets are swept manually four times a day. In areas like Yaumatei and Tsimshatsui where pedestrian traffic is heavy, streets are swept eight times a day. The CSD also has a fleet of 33 mechanical sweepers operating on fast-traffic roads and elevated highways once a day.

Gully traps are cleansed manually once a week and oiled to prevent mosquito breeding. Where traffic is fast, mechanical gully-emptiers, eight in all, are used. A free nightsoil collection service is provided to premises where flushing facilities are lacking. □

'Tarting-up' our city with trees against great odds

A tree means more than a tree to some governments, says R.F. Pollard, City Services Department Staff Officer (Gardens).

"In Singapore and Japan trees are recognised as outward signs of prosperity and culture, and planting forms an integral part of urban development policies. Whereas in Hong Kong public planting is a mere 'tarting up' operation for show," he says. He stresses that urban planting here is done in the face of great adversity and indifference as both public and private developers are by and large insensitive, if not hostile, to landscape planting.

The CSD gardens section is responsible for 10 government nurseries, planting, felling and plant maintenance. CSD nursery stocks supply over 90 per cent of the greenery planted by the section. In 1983 7,194 trees were felled, 51,744 pruned/treated and 23,819 planted. Comparative figures for 1982 are 878, 30,316 and 26,891, respectively. Over the 1979-83 five-year period annual average of trees planted was 19,169 and trees felled 2,827. Average ratio of tree planting to felling within the period is 6.67:1. Last year Typhoon Ellen felled as many as 6,000 trees and brought the planting-to-felling ratio down considerably. Currently for each tree felled three to four new trees are planted. Trees aside, 164,190 shrubs, 4,770 climbers/creepers, 164,431 ground cover plants, 2,302 bamboo plants and 209,399 seasonal flowering plants were planted in 1983.

The territory's physical environment is far from satisfactory for plant growth. Local soils are poor and subject to extreme drought or flooding. Terrain is steep with gradients often over 1 in 1.7 which is about the maximum inclination for turf to grow. Last but not least are typhoons.

A major typhoon 'kills' an average of 2,000 trees while damaging more. Periodic typhoon damage complicates the planner's choice of species as plants must be fairly resistant to wind, relatively fast growing and attractive. R.F. Pollard notes that another serious prob-

lem recently identified is the enormously destructive impact of wind knocked off huge solid surfaces such as concrete walls and highrise buildings, which fell trees in the direction of the wind.

To improve soil quality the CSD has introduced Chaiwan compost, a mixture of soil and fibrous material, to improve moisture absorption. The compost has helped speed up tree growth considerably, he says.

Terrain continues to be a major problem. Slope stabilisation is costly and often renders entire park projects economically infeasible. The Ko Shan Theatre Park, for instance, costs \$50.7 million of which \$6.7 million was spent on stabilising slopes. He believes that the high slope stabilisation cost was justified only by the huge overall expenditure of the project which of course includes the construction costs of the 3000-seat auditorium.

What worries R. Pollard most is the provision of land. Landscape planting gets low priority for land allocation and what the gardens section does get are either difficult slopes or derelict land along highways. Very often the department is asked to give up existing planted space to other departments or utilities and gets in compensation land unsuitable for planting without high construction costs. Town Planning Standard stipulates that eight hectares of planted open space should be provided for every 100,000 persons, but the ideal is rarely realised in urban areas for obvious reasons. "What we can and must do at the moment is to sustain the present quality of urban planting and not let the situation erode. Further progress or breakthrough is unlikely," he says.

The gardens section's two main programmes at present are Highway Amenity Planting and Raised Block Planting.

The department has long recognised that planting along highways is highly visible and therefore possibly more readily appreciated by the public. However, until 1977 no highway cons-

Our health indices are 2nd only to Japan

What is the state of health in Hong Kong? According to Dr. S.H. Lee, Deputy Director of Medical and Health Services (Health Services and Planning), not only is the population well protected from infectious disease hazards, our health indices also compare favourably with other Asian countries as well as U.K. and the U.S.A. Within the region our health indices are second only to Japan.

Health indices, he says, are accepted by the World Health Organization as international means to assess the level of health and socio-economic conditions of a country in order to determine the priority of assistance granted to that country. The indices also help local authorities to assess its population's health situation and prescribe policies. Health indices fall into four categories: mortality rates, life expectancy, leading causes of death and infectious diseases.

Table A

International Comparision of Vital Statistics

Country	Crude Birth Rate	Crude Death Rate	Infant Mortality Rate	Neo-natal Mortality Rate	Maternal Mortality Rate	
Hong Kong	15.4	5.0	10.1	7.0	0.07	(1983)
Philippines	30.3	7.0	56.8	N.A.	1.42	(1977)
Singapore	17.1	5.2	11.7	8.9	0.05	(1980)
Malaysia (Peninsula)	30.0	5.7	26.7	17.5	0.37	(1978)
Japan	13.6	6.2	7.5	4.9	0.20	(1980)
England & Wales	13.0	12.1	12.8	8.2	0.12	(1979)
Australia	15.4	7.4	10.7	7.1	0.10	(1980)
U.S.A.	15.3	8.8	13.8	9.5	0.10	(1978)

Source: Hong Kong data are derived from HK Vital Statistics System. International data are quoted from World Health Statistics Annual 1982 by WHO.

'Tarting-up' our city with trees

truction schemes contained formal landscape provisions. The best that the CSD could hope for was a little soil scattered over former derelict work sites which would support plant growth. But with concrete and services right beneath the surface and no water supply those areas were almost invariably hostile to plant growth. The situation has improved since 1977 when the Highways Office recruited its first landscape architect and a second in mid-1982 to advise on highway landscape construction. The Highways Office now provides all the hard landscape work, water supplies and often the soil and leaves CSD staff to tackle the soft landscaping.

Recent highway landscape projects completed, under construction or pending amount to 33, the biggest of which is Tsimshatsui East where planting is still going on along the main carriage-

way. Unfortunately, highway landscaping has been neglected with some newly completed projects planned in the early 'Seventies such as the Island Eastern Corridor. R.F. Polland thinks that the Corridor when opened will be a most unpleasant sight for residents in Taikoo Shing area to live with.

He adds that Highways Office structural engineers have always objected to planting creepers on flyovers and ramps for inspection reasons, an attitude he finds over-conservative. In Singapore, he says, bare concrete surfaces are considered ugly and every effort is made to cover flyovers with greenery. In practice the CSD and the New Territories Development Department have in fact commenced planting creepers along access ramps and flyover supports. The creeper trend is likely to accelerate considerably this year and in future.

Raised block planting has been devised to remove greenery from vehicle exhaust fumes, trespassing and litter and to give more depth for root growth. The Gloucester Road central reservation for instance is a raised block planting zone where greenery is planted on purpose-built elevated beds at one metre higher than ground level. The entire zone is complete with built-in automatic watering system. As our roads are increasingly widened, traditional avenue tree planting along sidewalks becomes difficult and will be extensively replaced by raised block planting.

Presently the Urban Council employs 1,700 staff comprising management, manual workers and three landscape architects for planning and execution of all planting matters. □

Mortality rates are divided into infant mortality rate (under one year of age and per 1000 live births), neo-natal mortality rate (under 28 days of age and per 1000 live births), maternal mortality rate (per 1000 total births) and crude death rate (per 1000 population). In 1983 Hong Kong's infant mortality rate is 10.1, neo-natal 7.0, maternal 0.07 and crude death rate 5.0. *Table A* shows how Hong Kong compares in the region and with U.K. and the U.S.A. Mortality rates are said to be direct indicators of the state of the physical environment, the level of midwifery care as well as ante-and post-natal services quality. Over the 1961-1981 period our infant mortality rate dropped from 37.7 to 9.7 (*Table B*) which is said to be among the lowest in the world. Also significant is crude birth rate (15.4 per 1000 population in 1983) which reflects the quality of family planning and the level of socio-economic development. Hong Kong's crude birth rate is the second lowest after Japan in the West Pacific region.

Life expectancy takes into account all mortality risks in a country at a child's birth and its life expectancy calculated. Hong Kong has improved its chances-of-survival index from 63.6 years (1961) to 72.2 (1982) for male and from 70.5 years (1961) to 78.3 (1982) for female.

In the 'Fifties the territory's leading causes of death were infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and pneumonia as a result of poor environment and low level of health. The pattern has completely changed in the past 30 years, our main death causes now being cancer, heart and hypertensive diseases,

Table C

Infectious Diseases Notifications

Disease	1961		1971		1981		1983	
	Case	Death	Case	Death	Case	Death	Case	Death
Quarantinable Disease								
Cholera	77	15	—	—	3	—	—	—
Endemic Diseases								
Amoebiasis	215	12	66	4	48	—	37	2
Bacillary dysentery	742	8	543	3	563	3	479	1
Enteric fever:								
typhoid	717	24	485	6	482	2	346	3
paratyphoid	25	—	30	—	18	2	23	—
Food poisonings:								
Outbreaks	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	175	—	169	—
Persons affected	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	666	—	642	1
Tuberculosis	12,584	1,907	9,028	1,250	7,729	489	7,301	446
Viral Hepatitis	N.A.	N.A.	357	16	1,738	26	1,783	28
Common Childhood Diseases								
Cerebral	36	26	5	1	18	1	13	1
Chickenpox	498	7	443	—	1,140	—	1,228	1
Diphtheria	1,334	109	25	2	—	—	—	—
Measles	1,727	435	591	4	249	—	888	2
Poliomyelitis	184	39	2	—	3	1	1	—
Whooping cough	47	1	2	—	2	—	—	—

cerebral vascular diseases, pneumonia, injury and poisoning in that order. The overall trend is towards degenerative, stress-and-strain diseases typical of technologically developed countries. Among cancer deaths lung cancer is the key killer, followed by cancer of liver, nasopharynx and stomach.

Infectious disease level is expressed by the number of cases notified in one year. Quarantinable infectious diseases, subject to the control of WHO International Health Regulations, include plague, cholera and yellow fever. Plague never came back to Hong Kong since the 'Twenties and cholera cases

are now mostly mild and "imported" from Vietnam and the Philippines where the disease is endemic. Hong Kong is fortunately not receptive to yellow fever because the particular mosquito vector is absent.

Childhood diseases

Another category of infectious disease is notifiable infectious diseases including common childhood communicable diseases like diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, measles etc. The category also includes endemic diseases such as tuberculosis, typhoid and viral hepatitis. Childhood communicable diseases are now either eradicated or brought under control through immunisation programmes while endemic diseases show overall low incidence (*Table C*).

1983 figures show that tuberculosis (7,301 cases, 446 deaths) and viral hepatitis (1,783 cases, 28 deaths) top both incidence and mortality rates among infectious diseases notified. Dr. S.H. Lee says that tuberculosis is more serious among adults as children and infants are now protected by BCG vaccination. Viral hepatitis A, transmitted through the oral route via contaminated food and drink, has to date no effective vaccine. A new vaccine

Table B

Birth Rate and Mortality Rates

Year	(A) Crude Birth Rate	(B) Crude Death Rate	(C) Neo-Natal Mortality	(D) Infant Mortality	(E) Maternal Mortality
1961	34.3	5.9	21.0	37.7	0.45
1971	19.0	5.0	12.6	18.4	0.14
1981	16.9	4.8	6.6	9.7	0.08
1983	15.4	5.0	7.0	10.1	0.07

Note: (A), (B) are per 1000 population
(C), (D) are per 1000 live births
(E) is per 1000 total births



was recently found effective for viral hepatitis B which is normally transmitted through contact with contaminated blood, blood products and body fluids.

From the medical point of view, Dr. S.H. Lee says, environment can be defined as the combined effects of total external influences on the health and well-being of the individual and the community. Environmental influences again fall into four categories, namely physical, biological, chemical and social. "However, it is extremely difficult to establish or assess the causal relationships between individual environmental factors and disease incidence as environmental effects on the body are invariably long-term and multi-factorial," he says.

Our physical environment is affected by the quality of air, water and even housing. Water quality is reflected in infectious disease level and the Water Supplies Department deserves credit for producing safe-to-drink, treated water. With few heavy industries, air pollution in Hong Kong is said to be

caused mainly by vehicle exhausts and dust from construction sites and material handling. But as our population is highly mobile and individual body resistance to pollutants varied, the actual effects of polluted air on the population's health has yet to be assessed.

Mosquitoes

While rodents, fleas and insects continue to be vectors in Hong Kong our biological environment has been by and large brought under control by the Urban Services Department, he says. The main concern now is mosquitoes which are potential carriers of malaria endemic in some of our neighbouring countries.

Chemical pollutants can be transmitted via air, soil, food or trade effluence. Natural occurring microbiological organisms like bacteria are also potential health hazards. However, he notes that few poisoning cases are related to our chemical environment.

Social environment is reflected in

mental health level in particular and human relationships of the community in general. Like all industrialised cities Hong Kong exhibits a high stress-and-strain level and schizophrenia is most common among local mental patients. Again, Dr. S.H. Lee points out, ill mental health must be studied with a multi-factorial approach taking into account the patient's genetic background, his threshold of resistance, the human relationships he lives with and often his physical surroundings such as how much privacy he has. Social environment problems are perhaps the most difficult to gauge and tackle.

Now that Hong Kong has built up an effective health infrastructure and brought infectious diseases under control, the future of our medical and health development will see several new trends emerging, he says.

Over the next 10 years Hong Kong's demography will contain a larger age group at and above 60 years old hence an increasing need for services for the elderly from medical care to housing. Accidents and injuries are also expected to rise as industrialisation continues, so there will be greater demand for rehabilitation. As to mental health, more genetic counselling will have to be done to minimise the incidence of congenital mental illness. Prevention of non-communicable but major killing diseases like cancer will be another emphasis in medical and health planning. He adds that the objectives and priorities to improve the existing health infrastructure are already laid down in a roll-forward, 10-year development plan reviewed annually by the Medical Development Advisory committee.

New needs and trends do not necessarily suggest that the Medical and Health Department will relax infectious disease preventive measures, says Dr. S.H. Lee. With 80,000 new born babies a year Hong Kong must continue to ensure that all are properly protected by immunisation. Furthermore, communicable endemic diseases still exist in epidemic proportions in some neighbouring countries geographically surrounding us and Hong Kong therefore must continue to alert itself to "imported" diseases from the large volume of international traffic into Hong Kong. □

Chamber's Tax Committee likes hearing from members

The TV series *Dallas* would probably not have got off the ground if J.R. Ewing had been a tax consultant.

Tax consultants generate little of the attention that attaches to property tycoons, ship owners, oil magnates, top financiers, or even speculatively inclined entrepreneurs.

They are usually regarded as the faceless men of the business world, hiding anonymously behind their ledgers — nowadays, computer — and lacking even the somewhat spurious glamour that attaches to such professions as marketing or public relations.

In a sense, it might be said that one only notices the activities of the tax specialists when one realises what might happen were they not around.

For instance, some proposals put forward in the 1984/5 budget have aroused a degree of controversy as it is alleged they will increase the prevalence of tax avoidance, and thus create extra employment for tax consultants. (Members will be acutely aware of the difference between tax avoidance (legal) and evasion (illegal).) However, few businessmen are sufficiently familiar with tax law to know exactly how these laws affect their companies.

A good example is the Bill being considered at the time this article went to print by the UMELCO, which arose as a result of Sir John Bremridge's budget proposals and which seeks, among other things, to tax interest earned by Hong Kong businesses from overseas sources.

It is probably fair to assume that few Chamber members could give a prompt answer if asked to define the 'provision of credit' test. Yet it is because this particular test was deemed to be inappropriate by the Financial Secretary and some of his advisers that the proposal to tax off-shore interest arose. (These at least were the technical reasons for the proposal, although cynics might suggest Sir John was more concerned with the simple mechanics of raising revenue, rather than finer points of tax law.)

Printed with this article is the text of

the two submissions made by the Chamber to UMELCO. Most members will probably find they make forceful reading and require little in the way of amplification in *The Bulletin's* editorial columns.

Both submissions were prepared by the Chamber's Tax Committee. At present, this consists of eight qualified men who work either as tax specialists within the profession or occupy senior positions concerned with financial matters in member companies.

Most are accountants, but two — including the Chairman, Ray Moore of Jardines — are lawyers; while one —



Ray Moore



Ian Harris

the Vice Chairman, Ian Harris of the Hongkong Bank — is an erstwhile employee of the Inland Revenue Department of the Hong Kong Government. Apart from the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the members of the Committee are Cameron Greaves, Deloitte, Haskins & Sells; David Flux, Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co.; Fong Hup,

Kwan, Wong, Tan & Fong; Norman Dicker, John Swire & Sons Ltd.; Tim Gallie, Charles Russell & Co. and Phillip Wong, The Amoy Canning Corporation, (HK) Ltd.

Between them, they represent a good cross-section of Hong Kong commercial interests. A ninth member of the Committee, U.S. tax specialist Paul Gillespie of Exxon until recently helped bring an international perspective to the Committee. Mr. Gillespie was however recently obliged to resign on being posted to New York. Harry Garlick, Assistant Director, acts as Secretary to the Committee.

In common with all other Chamber Committees, the Tax Committee does not meet simply for the sake of meeting. It meets in response to a specific need. This usually implies that the majority of meetings will occur round about the time of year when the Government budget is being prepared and introduced into the Legislative Council. But financial legislation is frequently introduced on other occasions, and the Committee will meet whenever there is a need to consider this legislation.

There are also on-going matters that are not strictly connected with new legislation that occupy the Committee. A good example is the running of the Inland Revenue Board of Review, which hears tax appeal cases. Although hearings before the Board now appear to be running smoothly, apart from a backlog in areas concerned with the overseas earnings of financial institutions, the Board was beginning to get behind in its work over the past year or so, partly because of seemingly inadequate procedures and partly because of a need to strengthen the Board at top level.

The Committee sees its role as both responsive and initiatory. Thus it can consider proposed new legislation, and from time to time, the Financial Secretary has sought the opinion of this Committee on various tax related matters. The Committee also puts forward suggestions on its own ini-

tiative.

A good example of the latter was a detailed scheme worked out by Committee members regarding relief allowable on interest payments for purposes of calculation of profits tax liability. (The scheme is too detailed for the pages of *The Bulletin* but examples of it can be made available to interested members.) The Government did not however take up this particular initiative — at least not for the time being. Members may also recall that the Chamber usually circulates them about October of each year, asking if they have any comments regarding tax matters that might require attention. As might be imagined, the suggestions that arise from this exercise are greatly varied, even insulting if true! No one has yet suggested abolishing profits or salaries tax, but some suggestions have come close to this. One issue that has been well and truly aired in the recent past is the question of separate assessments for working wives. Other suggestions put to the Committee are detailed points of tax law and often contain ideas that the

Committee feel are well worth pursuing.

All suggestions, no matter how seemingly eccentric, are examined, and if the Committee feels they have merit and are likely to be practicable, given the position of Government's finances at the time, they will be included in a submission to the F.S., or to whatever Government authority seems appropriate.

Sometimes a suggestion may be thought to have merit but fails to pass the practicability test, whereas in other cases a suggestion may be perfectly sound but be out in its timing.

The 1984/5 budget was felt to pose special problems, as Government was so obviously in need of new sources of revenue and it was clear that any suggestions that had the effect of limiting existing sources of revenue were unlikely to be entertained. For this reason, the Committee abandoned its usual annual survey of members views. The Tax Committee is concerned with Government tax policy and procedures on behalf of Chamber members as a whole. It does not assist the Chamber

in consideration of its liability to tax. This is a matter for the Directorate and for the Chamber's Treasurers, Price Waterhouse/Lowe, Bingham & Matthews.

The Committee is always interested in hearing of tax problems, and receiving suggestions from member companies. The Committee cannot help a member who has a problem arising from his own particular company circumstances — that must be a matter for one of the many able professionals whose services are available at a fee. But it would most certainly be interested of hearing about a problem that might affect the overall operation of any particular industry or sector of an industry, or which might affect the economy in the widest sense.

Needless to say, the Committee is primarily concerned with tax as it affects business, but other forms of tax, such as estate duty and other personal taxes are regarded as coming into its ambit. Members who feel they have a view that might interest the Committee are invited to contact Harry Garlick at the Chamber's offices. ➤

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Our Ref: GHG:116
9th March, 1984

Mr. M.D. Sargent,
Secretary General,
UMELCO Office,
Swire House, 12th Floor,
Chater Road,
HONG KONG.

Dear Sir,

1984/85 Budget Revenue Proposals

The Taxation Committee of the Chamber met on 5th March to consider the above proposals and will reserve detailed comment until they have had an opportunity of studying the draft amending legislation. They are however concerned that the proposals to tax offshore interest accruing to business carried on in Hong Kong will seriously weaken Hong Kong's role as a major financial centre. The Taxation Committee earnestly requests UMELCO members to consider the full impact of the proposals before they become law.

Members will be aware that the basis of taxation in Hong Kong is territorial, or in other words, only Hong Kong source income is subject to tax in Hong Kong. Although the Financial Secretary may attempt to persuade you otherwise offshore income is still offshore income and is treated as such by tax administrations throughout the world. In Singapore, for instance, offshore interest is not assessable unless it is remitted to Singapore.

In Paragraph 138, the Financial Secretary refers to the ability to place deposits in London or New York by a quick telephone call or telex message. Exactly the same considerations apply to transactions on offshore stock and commodity exchanges and financial futures markets, all of which are correctly treated by the Revenue as producing non-taxable offshore gains and non-deductible offshore losses.

There is no justification for discriminating against a business which invests surplus funds in offshore deposits instead of in currency futures, stocks and shares, commodities or precious metals, the gains from which are all tax free. There is equally no justification in discriminating against the company which prudently retains and deposits its surplus funds offshore as a protection against adversity. Why should the interest on such deposits be taxed when it would be wholly tax free if the funds were first distributed to shareholders and deposited by them? Is this the way to encourage prudent corporate management?

The effect of implementing this proposal would be:-

- (1) to force all Hong Kong businesses to operate on minimum levels of capital and to distribute or pass all surplus funds to shareholders or offshore associates for investment;
- (2) to drive away investment, finance and similar companies to other jurisdictions which do not seek to tax their offshore earnings;
- (3) to give rise to a whole new range of avoidance techniques so as to convert interest earnings into other non-taxable forms of income.

We are only too familiar today with the visiting circuses of foreign bankers, investment advisers, real estate agents and even Government ministers, all seeking to attract business away from Hong Kong in this era of political uncertainty. Nothing could be more calculated to lend success to their efforts than to impose tax on overseas interest earnings. This will be seen as the thin end of the wedge leading inevitably to tax on world-wide income merely because a business is located here.

Yours faithfully,



G.H. Garlick
Secretary
Taxation Committee

c.c. The Hon. W.C.L. Brown, C.B.E., J.P.,
Convener, UMELCO Monetary Policy Group.

The Hon. Q.W. Lee, C.B.E., J.P.,
Convener, UMELCO Trade and Industry Panel.

GHG:bl

Our Ref: GHG:207
30th April, 1984

Mr. M.D. Sargent,
Secretary General,
UMELCO Office,
Swire House, 12th Floor,
Chater Road,
HONG KONG.

Dear Sir,

Re: 1984/85 Budget Revenue Proposals

I refer to my letter of 9th March, 1984.

The Chamber Taxation Committee has now considered the proposed amending legislation published in the Government Gazette on 30th March, 1984 and wishes to re-affirm its opposition to the proposal to tax offshore interest as well as dealing with a number of other points of principle which arise from the proposed legislation and the Public Revenue Protection Order which was made on the date of publication.

Dealing first with the proposal to tax offshore interest:-

- (1) By contrast with the proposals to limit the deduction of interest, there has been no public consultation notwithstanding the fundamental departure from the source concept of taxation which has been the basis of the Hong Kong tax system since it was first imposed. It is wholly wrong for a measure of this significance to be introduced without prior consultation.
- (2) Despite the statement in Paragraph 139 of the Budget Speech that it is proposed that the charge to tax will be with effect from 1st April, 1984, the legislation, as drafted, will have a retroactive effect for every corporation whose financial year does not end on 31st March. For example, a corporation whose financial year ends on 30th June, 1984 will be taxed on its offshore interest earnings from 1st July, 1983 to 31st March, 1984, a period of nine months during which such interest earnings were free from tax under current legislation.
- (3) It is quite clear from Paragraph 138 of the Budget Speech that this proposal has been introduced only to meet the views of the present and former Commissioners of Inland Revenue that interest income which arises from operations in Hong Kong should be taxable. There is no logical basis or justification for differentiating between interest income and any other type of income which arises outside Hong Kong as a result of business operations carried on in Hong Kong. The "provision of credit" test which the Financial Secretary dismisses as artificial and inappropriate is in fact one which is applied consistently by the Courts throughout Commonwealth countries which have British type legal and taxation systems. It is the Financial Secretary and the Commissioner who seek to impose an artificial and inappropriate criterion, namely a quasi-residential test limited only to business income and even then seeking to differentiate between corporations and other forms of business enterprise by inclusion of the words "in respect of the funds of the trade, profession or business" only in the latter case. If Hong Kong is to adopt entirely different yardsticks to determine the source of income from those which are generally accepted, it cannot continue to claim to be a source jurisdiction.
- (4) It is stated in the explanatory memorandum that the change will have no significant revenue implications in 1984/85 and is expected to produce an annual additional yield of some HK\$350 million thereafter. For the reasons given below, the Committee does not believe that this extra revenue will be forthcoming but even if it were, is a sum of this magnitude sufficient to justify an announcement to the world that Hong Kong is departing from the source system of taxation which has been one of the cornerstones of its success? UMELCO Members already have seen correspondence in the Press pointing out the ease with which offshore interest income can be converted into other non-taxable forms of offshore income or removed altogether from the tax-paying group in Hong Kong. To counter such measures would involve new and complex anti-avoidance legislation and further reduce the attraction of Hong Kong as an offshore financial centre. In addition, such legislation would have very significant Public Service Staffing implications as the effective enforcement of anti-avoidance provisions invariably involves significant increases in staffing at the senior level.

The Committee believes that the Financial Secretary may have seriously under-estimated the implications of the proposal to tax offshore interest and urges that it be rejected. It is inconsistent with the status of Hong Kong as a financial centre and the measures adopted in 1982 and 1983 to abolish withholding tax on interest. As is mentioned below, there are other, and more effective, measures of raising revenue which do no violence to Hong Kong's well established system of source taxation.

Turning now to the proposals designed to eliminate or restrict the deductibility of interest in a number of different circumstances, the Committee whole-heartedly supports any measures which will effectively prevent the abuse of a tax-payer lending himself his own money so as to obtain a deduction from taxable income and a corresponding non-taxable offshore interest receipt. This can and should be prevented by appropriate legislation but the Bill, as now drafted, goes far beyond this and directly discriminates against a number of perfectly legitimate methods of financing from independent third parties which can only be damaging to Hong Kong borrowers and Hong Kong business. The Committee is aware that a number of other organisations are submitting technical criticisms of the proposed measures and will not, therefore, repeat such criticisms in this letter. It does, however, wish to place on record its opposition to the approach of discriminating against one type of independent third party lending as compared with another and wonders what possible justification there can be for denying interest deductions where money is raised by publicly quoted loan stock issues and the like. If

Government were a tax-payer, its recent public bond issue would provide a striking example of the illogicality in denying deduction of interest in loan funds of this nature raised through the market merely because the lender is not a financial institution.

Assuming that additional revenue is required, the Committee considers that the first and most effective measure which can be taken is to bring to an end the present position under which tax-payers can obtain an almost indefinite deferment of liability to tax on an interest free basis merely by filing an objection to the proposed assessment. The amount of tax involved in undetermined objections to assessments as at 31st March, 1983 was in the region of HK\$2.9 billion and is currently substantially over HK\$3 billion. Much of this represents revenue which should have been collected by Government and which is currently stood over on an interest free basis. Assuming that only one-half of this sum is actually payable by way of tax, the loss of interest represents almost 50 per cent of the amount which the Financial Secretary estimates will be derived from his proposals to tax offshore interest and the capital amount represents nearly four years of the estimated annual collection.

The current practice should be changed so that:-

- (i) Tax is only held over if valid reasons, including financial hardship, can be shown;
- (ii) Where tax is agreed to be held over, the amount finally determined to be payable should carry interest at market rates, which interest would not itself be a deductible expense;
- (iii) The procedures for dealing with objections must be streamlined and made more efficient — currently, there are many objections which, after six years, have not even reached Board of Review level.

If such measures are adopted, there will be no immediate increase in revenue and a direct disincentive to the filing of unnecessary and unjustified objections to assessments. However, the tax-payer will also need protection and there should be corresponding safeguards against arbitrary over assessment and against undue delay by the Revenue in processing objection cases. Some form of "ombudsman" outside the current objection procedures could be a valuable improvement in this regard.

Finally, the Committee questions the necessity for so swinging an increase in the basic rates of taxation. Although they have been announced as amounting to only a two per cent increase in each case, they represent respectively increases of approximately 12 per cent in corporate taxes and 13 per cent in personal taxes. Bearing in mind the inaccuracy of past Revenue estimates, the Committee feels that the imposition of a temporary surcharge of, say, five per cent on existing rates would be a better solution than a permanent increase in basic rates which, among other things, makes Hong Kong significantly less attractive from the taxation viewpoint than operations conducted in the Special Economic Zones just across the border.

Yours faithfully,



G.H. Garlick
Secretary
Taxation Committee

c.c. Sir John Bremridge, K.B.E., J.P.,
Financial Secretary

The Hon. W.C.L. Brown, O.B.E., J.P.,
Convener, UMELCO Monetary Policy Group

The Hon. Q.W. Lee, C.B.E., J.P.,
Convener, UMELCO Trade and Industry Panel

GHG:bl



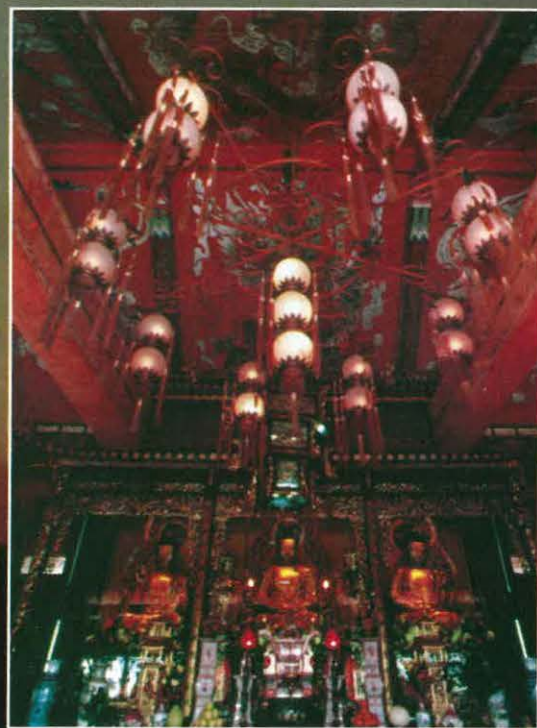
Typhoon Shelter, Causeway Bay



Ocean Park

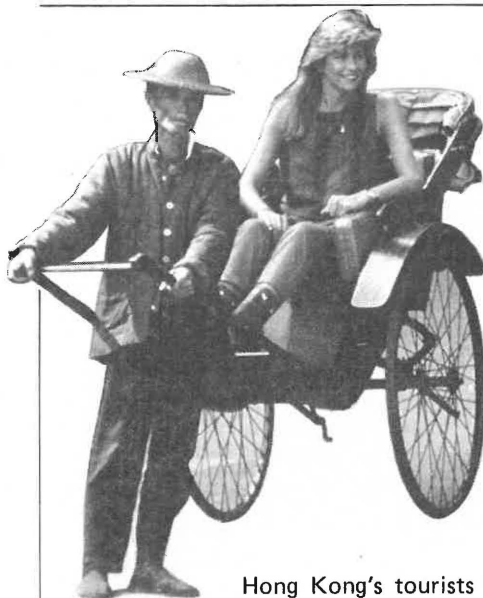


Cat Street



Po Lin Monastery, Lantau





There's added value now in the growth of tourism

Hong Kong's tourists can have added value just the same as the export products Hong Kong industrialists make. Both can swell the gross domestic product — and that is what tourism did manage to do in 1983.

Last year the number of visitors to Hong Kong increased by 6.4% (2,775,014) but the money they left behind increased by 29.7%. Even after allowing for inflation receipts were up an estimated 10% in real terms, according to John Pain, director of the Hong Kong Tourist Association.

He describes the first quarter figures for 1984 as equally encouraging. John Pain is aiming for a modest 6% increase in visitors for the whole of 1984. But the first three months produced a 7.8% increase and there is no reason the happily swelling number of arrivals should spend less instead of perhaps even more than in 1983 — creating still more added value.

As an invisible exports earner tourism continues to vie in worth with the electronics industry as a visible export dollar earner. One or the other this year will be Hong Kong's second biggest foreign currency producer, after garments and textiles that is way out in front of both.

If visitors show a 10% growth and hit 3 million in 1984 there is a good chance tourism could turn out to be more valuable to Hong Kong than consumer electronics manufacturing. The added value it earned from last year's record number has a lot to do with the sort of tourist the Tourist Association, travel agents, hotels, etc. try to attract. Their efforts, advertising and publicity, etc. are obviously on target.

About 70% of Hong Kong's visitors come on holiday. But of the rest some 20-odd% arrive for business reasons and their added value can be in the orders they place with manufacturers and service industries, quite apart from the shopping they may do.

The package tourist can also have added value if his fare and hotel have been paid by his overseas employer as a reward for good work. What's in his pocket when the package visitor arrives can be all spending money.

Irony

Per capita visitor spending in 1981 was HK\$3,022 which climbed 14.7% on 1980. In recession in 1982 it stood at HK\$3,137 a modest 3.8% increase over 1981. But it was HK\$3,913 in recovery in 1983, a 24.7% increase. Tourism as a percentage of the value of domestic exports then stood at 10.9% of the total, compared with 10.1% in 1981.

There is some irony in Hong Kong doing better from its constant stream of arriving tourists. The industry has its own hypothecated revenue to finance the Tourist Association's efforts raised from the hotel tax. By contrast a levy to provide start-up funds for an Electronics Technology Productivity Centre to help put more added value into Hong Kong's electronics exports is only in the proposal stage.

Besides, it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. The low exchange rate of the HK dollar to the U.S. dollar to stabilise Hong Kong's currency against the 1997 jitters has turned out to be a tourist attraction.

It makes Hong Kong's hotel tariffs relatively cheap compared say to Singapore where the relatively higher exchange rate of the Singapore dollar is now tending to price that tourist destination out of the Far East mar-

ket. The same tends to apply to its shopping.

Then there is the most ironic reason to top all ironic reasons why Hong Kong is doing better. It's getting a lot of 1997 publicity around the world. And it's the sort of publicity that causes potential tourists to make impulse-decisions.

Some are buying their fares to Hong Kong and booking their hotels to make sure they see the "miracle" city flourishing just in case it does go down the 1997 drain. It's publicity Hong Kong couldn't buy for money.

John Pain is, of course, circumspect about this gratuitous advantage. He says Hong Kong could be perhaps getting its comparative advantage out of what some of our neighbours are doing to themselves, such as the political scene in the Philippines.

Whatever may be the real impact on Hong Kong's incoming tourism of these several tangibles and intangibles, the facts both last year and this year so far are that it is visitor decisions in North America, Japan and Southeast Asia that are creating the new growth in the industry. And North America is again overtaking in growth rate of Japan that stood still for three years.

The number of arrivals from Canada is up 34.8% this year and was up 20% last year. The U.S. figures were up 19.5% last year and 26.3% this year. Malaysian tourists last year rose 22.2%, Singapore 20.6% and Thailand 13.8%.



The figures reflect post-recession conditions since the economic recovery in the U.S. and the speed of that recovery's impact on its East Asian trading partners.

But the Japanese yen, too, has greater value in Hong Kong since the Hong Kong dollar was linked last October to the U.S. dollar at the HK\$7.80:US\$1 rate. Visitors from Japan broke the three-year standstill and rose to 157,994 in the first quarter of this year compared with 143,476 for the corresponding three months of last year, a 10.1% increase.

Last year there were 502,175 visitors from Japan, a fall of 2.6% on 1982. But their per capita spending went up from \$2,772 in 1982 to \$3,234 in 1983. Thus, the slightly smaller number were more valuable to Hong Kong. Receipts from the burgeoning number of Japanese visitors this year could show a better boost from our low but now stabilised exchange rate.

John Pain points out a visit by an American to Hong Kong is a bargain compared with New York so far as hotel rates are concerned. He says in New York hotel rooms cost at least US\$70 but most cost around US\$150. That puts them in the HK\$600-1,200 range, far above the local range of hotel rates.

Hotel room occupancy in Hong Kong last year was around 83%, through rooms available increased from 17,415 in 1982 to 17,518 at the end of 1983. The estimate of rooms available in Hong Kong hotels by the end of 1984 is 18,670.

The estimate by the end of 1987 is 21,212 rooms. This compares with 15,000 rooms available now in Singapore and an estimated 30,000 in three years' time. Hong Kong growth will obviously be steadier though the big difference in available occupancy could generate more Singapore competition.

Hotels get about 27% of what visitors spend in their average 3.7 nights stay in Hong Kong. Shops last year got 56%. Ten years ago hotels got 15% and shops 61%. Visitors spend about 9% of their total Hong Kong expenditure on eating out, about 3% on tours and another 3% on entertainment.

The big spenders on a per capita basis came last year from South Africa (\$5,683), South and Central America (\$5,593), the Middle East (\$5,591)

and Australia (\$5,354). But the number of visitors from these places is insignificant except for Australia and New Zealand. The number from Australasia that arrived in the first quarter of this year was 59,670 a 12.9% increase on the corresponding period of 1983.

Visitors from the United States spend on average \$4,770 a head and from the Philippines \$4,549. The lowest spenders are from France (\$2,813), India (\$3,023), Singapore (\$3,127), Belgium (\$3,327) and the United Kingdom (\$3,355).

China travel

West Europeans who visited Hong Kong in the first quarter this year were 5.4% fewer than the same period last year. Southeast Asians generally increased only 0.3%, mainly due to a drop of 18.7% in Filipinos that offset the increases from Singapore and Malaysia. Taiwan visitors (43,063) were also slightly down on last year in the first quarter of 1984.

Passengers arriving on cruise ships fell 27.9% in the first quarter to 5,314 compared with the same period of last year. Arriving Argentinians this year totalled 93, a 34.4% increase of the number in the first quarter last year.

China travel continues annually to improve. China has brought more visitors to Hong Kong but the China-bound visitor (12%) is not a big Hong Kong spender.

John Pain says expanding air services and keener competition among airlines will probably be the chief generator in future of Hong Kong's tourist growth. He points out Cathay Pacific has begun new passenger services to Vancouver and Europe and United Airlines has just begun a new direct service to Seattle.

Besides the value for money the airlines, hotels, shops, etc. offer the Hong Kong visitor, the big city's physical changes are also an added attraction factor. Besides acquiring a physical "new look" since the building boom Hong Kong has an improving infra-

structure. New roads and tunnels and the MTR are enabling the tourist to do his sightseeing and shopping quicker and easier.

There has also been considerable development of resources for the tourist. Tours now are able to include Sai Kung, Lantau and Plover Cove. Ocean Park has been further improved.

There are places like Discovery Bay for the tourist to pack in some recreation. Then there are more country clubs, the Sung Dynasty Village, the Planetarium and new stadia.

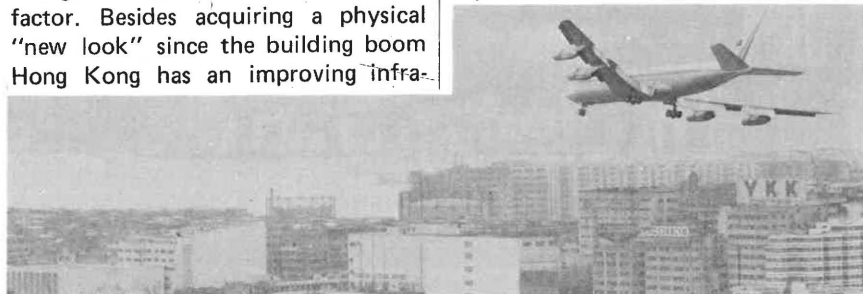
A convention centre and exhibition hall isn't yet a reality but it's closer to being one than ever before. There are special interest attractions like learning Chinese cooking and regular antique exhibitions and auctions. Arts Festivals punctuate the whole year.

John Pain says these things are enough to make 20% of Hong Kong's visitors extend their stay and many more to decide to come again. An important influence on these visitor decisions is the sort of service they receive. In hotels service has become a good deal more sophisticated from constant in-house training, etc. Even taxi-drivers now understand the meaning of showing courtesy to the visitor.

"Everything is building up rather nicely and the future looks pretty good for the industry," says John Pain.

"The principles we follow at the Tourist Association are three," he explains. "We seek nothing for the tourist that is detrimental to the local population. We attempt nothing beyond Hong Kong's competence or that runs counter to its long-term interests. We want only to protect Hong Kong's environment and its heritage."

He sees tourism's future problems in increasing urbanisation, the costs and demands on natural resources, the need for a new airport, how to achieve a balanced tourist intake with high added visitor value, and what support or opposition will confront the industry's future development. □



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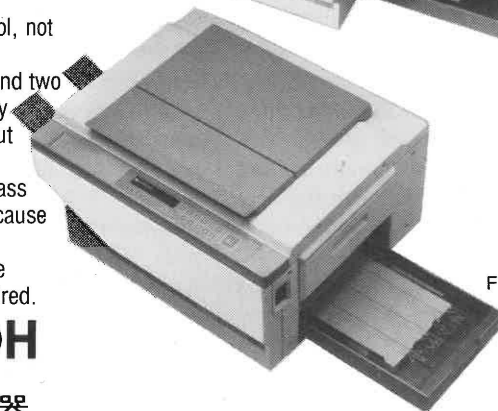
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Hotel occupancy up 3% in real terms last year

Sing Sheng, chairman of the Hong Kong Hotels Association, says the 1983 room occupancy rate of 83% represented in real terms a 3% increase on 1982 after allowing for the extra 800 rooms that became available. With no comparable increase in available rooms expected this year the occupancy figure could be expected in 1984 to equal last year's high rate or the industry could even achieve a better figure.

What this may mean in profitability would depend on the financial circumstances in which each of Hong Kong's hotels finds itself placed. Those that are new and have heavy financial obligations could still feel the effects of the constraints of 1982, the conservative upward adjustment in room rates and the discounts that are given in the summer months.

For them profitability is unlikely to change at all. But in the case of hotels where everything has been paid off profitability could amount to over 20%, some higher and some lower.

Sing Sheng, who is director and general manager of the Lee Gardens 900-room hotel in Causeway Bay, says the structure of the hotel room stock in Hong Kong divides into roughly 1,200 super de luxe rooms in hotels like the Regent, Peninsula and Shangri-la and some 15,000 rooms in tourist class hotels. These 15,000 rooms in the rest of the world would be considered in the 5-star category.

With all of them competing for business the result is that their rates compare more than favourably with New York and San Francisco, for example. Considering the amenities, service standard and staff ratios these hotels offer their room rates are extremely reasonable.

He says Hong Kong's 50-odd hotels are employing 25,000 staff. His Association's training committee has been most effective in establishing service standards working together with each hotel's own training department.

Training has concentrated on two areas. One is technical covering foods and beverages and how to serve. The second area has gone beyond into more sophisticated social aspects. These include language training, the habits and cultures of guests, nationalities and even the right choice of words to reinforce courtesy and service.

Sing Sheng says that while the government is not going out of its way to help the hotel industry neither does it hinder its progress. This attitude is unlike some governments that give the tourist industry special consideration because of the foreign currency it can earn.

Nevertheless Hong Kong has all the basic ingredients the industry needs. Visitor accessibility is being attained through its efficient roads network, good drainage, etc. The utility infrastructure such as electricity works well.

He thinks the industry has faced only one recent problem. China is suffering from a lack of repeat tourist business. Visitors found interest in seeing the mainland but are not prepared to "rough it" a second time.

China admits it lacks expertise in managing its hotels and is always looking to Hong Kong to help with its problems. This may lead to some drain of key people at certain levels from the Hong Kong industry.

However, Sing Sheng says, Hong Kong is an adaptable place. It is capable of replacing those who go to China to help lift standards in new hotels and the major renovation programmes in places like Shanghai.

He describes the tourist traffic from Hong Kong to China as high. But he says the actual international traffic is not over one million a year. □



200,000 Hong Kong tourists last year went to Japan

Last year 500,000 Japanese tourists visited Hong Kong and topped the list of all incoming tourists, followed by 452,000 visitors from the United States. Among the 4 million Japanese who travelled overseas in 1983, some 1.4 million headed for the U.S. and Hawaii. Hong Kong was the second most important destination, followed by Taiwan, South Korea and Europe. Hong Kong tourists visiting Japan in 1983 came third among all nationalities. The U.S. still topped the list (460,000), followed by Taiwan (367,000), Hong Kong (200,000) and Korea (196,000).

What does the average Japanese tourist expect of Hong Kong? Mr. Sogabe, Deputy Director of Japan National Tourist Organization, Hong Kong Office, told *The Bulletin* that since the Japanese turned middle-class after World War II, a keep-up-with-the-Joneses attitude about travelling overseas took shape and a travel boom emerged rapidly some 15 years ago. For the majority of Japanese tourists all they want of a trip is to see a foreign country. Hong Kong's high-rise concrete jungle, common in Japan only in large urban centres, and a different socio-cultural atmosphere satisfy their sense of exoticism. Another practical reason is cost. Many find it cheaper to come here than making a domestic trip within Japan. Mr. Sogabe however says that while domestic travel sponsorships are common fringe benefits granted by Japanese firms to employees, overseas trip awards are only limited to a handful of large corporations as part of their employee incentive programmes.

"Unfortunately the average Japanese tourist has a rather tarnished image of Hong Kong, particularly several years

ago when crime and pick-pocketing were rampant. The situation has since improved a lot and the Hong Kong Tourist Association deserves credit for their efforts to shake up Hong Kong's image," he says.

"Courtesy expectations is still a problem and perhaps reflects a deep cultural difference. The Japanese were domesticated and tamed by Shogun education for 200 years. The stamp shows, among other traits, in our extremely high expectations of services. Here in Hong Kong life is hectic and fast-changing. It is natural that Japanese tourists are at times disappointed with the quality of services here," he says. Despite that, though, the Japanese are not reluctant visitors to Hong Kong. Visitors from Japan have stayed fairly stable at 500,000 a year in recent years.

Less significant

While tourism is about Hong Kong's third dollar earner the industry in Japan is much less significant economically. Immediately after World War II tourism was once a means to induce rich Americans to spend foreign currency in Japan. But as Japan's manufacturing industries gathered momentum and the government made it a national policy to concentrate on foreign trade, the role of tourism began to subside. It was only when Japan's international trade expanded so much that it came to be labelled "economic invader" that the government resorted to tourism again, this time as a public relations means to build up the nation's positive image particularly in Europe and the U.S. he says.

Hong Kong tourists to Japan show

steady increase over the past five years. Last year 200,000 Hong Kong tourists visited the country, 14% up on 1982. From 1980 to 1982 the annual percentage increase against the previous year is 43%, 36% and 29% respectively. The diminishing percentage, he explains, only reflects a growing base figure and not necessarily diminishing interest in Japan among Hong Kong tourists. Roughly speaking, for every five Japanese coming to Hong Kong there are two Hong Kong tourists visiting Japan.

As part of Japan's renewed efforts to woo tourists the new Tokyo Disneyland has already attracted 10 million visitors from all over the world since its opening in April last year. Apart from prefectural tourism promotional efforts such as those in Kagoshima and Sapporo, the Osaka private sectors has planned an on-going programme of tourist-luring events extending right into the year 2000. One of the highlights was the 400th anniversary of Osaka Castle celebrated last year. Other major national events include the Science Expo'85 while and next Olympic Games in Seoul in 1988 that is expected to attract a lot of tourists through Japan.

Trained in diplomacy and acquainted with Sino-Japanese history, Mr. Sogabe believes the two-way tourist link between Hong Kong and Japan has fostered better understanding between the Chinese here and the Japanese. "I believe that tourism is by far the most effective means of bridging two nations, but this is only possible in peace time. One must learn from history and hope that the precious link would be spared from any political tension in future," he says. □

8 million go to China from HK every year

Bill Newport, chairman of the Hong Kong Association of Travel Agents, says Hong Kong is a unique place for travel considering it has a population of fewer than 5.5 million. Each year 4 million go to Macau, 8 million go to China, one million go overseas and 2.75 million come to Hong Kong from all over the world.

He says he expects China travel will increase 4-6% in 1984. And that's the area where 99% of the cases occur of travellers being defrauded by people who don't really belong in the travel agent business.

Bill Newport, who is managing director of Audio Tours and Travel Ltd., says HATA's long struggle with others to "clean up" these people got to the point in 1982-83 where there was a strong consensus favouring action. Legislation has been drafted but not yet published as a bill. Still, he expects something effective will happen before the end of the year and definitely before next Lunar New Year.

He expects the legislation to set up a Government office to supervise the industry with an advisory committee to help decide on what can and cannot be done in problem areas. Travel agents will then operate under licence and there will be criteria for issuing licences to newcomers.

He says the fraud problem recurs usually at Christmas, Lunar New Year and Easter. The Consumer Council was first called in to act but the Council had no real answer. The Travel Industry Council chaired by Harold Wu of Great Eastern Travel Ltd. then brought 400-500 operators in five organisations under one roof. It eventually had its representatives together with the Consumer Council and Government people on a Government organised

industry working group to solve the problem.

Bill Newport says there was no growth in local external overseas travel last year. This was due to economic conditions and the adverse political situation in the neighbouring Philippines. Restrictions imposed on Certificate of Identification holders has always been another general reason, though some countries are now loosening up. Thailand, for example, now allows a two weeks stay.

Airport tax

He is critical of the airport departure tax. He says Sir John Bremridge has, for instance, emptied the planes to China and filled the trains. The train fare to Canton is less than the airport departure tax.

He says there are five ways to get to China — air, sea, train, bus and to walk. The airport departure tax forces China travellers to go by the means that yield the least Government revenue. He thinks it would be fairer if everybody going to China had to pay a uniform departure tax.

He describes China as a shot in the arm to both the tourist and industry alike. It was one of the few destinations last year that showed a plus. Visitors to Hong Kong who once found it difficult to go there are now coming back on repeat Hong Kong visits because they can now go on into China.

He says in the United States travel is a way of life. But long trips have never been as popular as short ones. However, in economic recovery with Hong Kong and China only 12 hours away Americans are beginning to come in droves and Europe and Japan are beginning to discover this part of the world. □

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New members

Nineteen members joined the Chamber in May:-

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 Gloria Chin-Exports Ltd.
 Golden Hill Trading Co. Ltd.
 Green Tree Industrial Supplies
 H S Rathour & Co. (HK) Ltd.
 Kong Kiu Trading Co.
 Kun Fat Hong
 Main Leader Co. Ltd.
 Marvel Trading Company
 National Westminster Bank USA
 Nissin Transportation & Warehousing (HK) Ltd.
 Peter Trading Company
 Pope's International (HK) Ltd.
 Radio Centre
 Sunglo Pearl (International) Ltd.
 Tai Chong Cheang Steamship Co. (H.K.) Ltd.
 Telly (HK) Company Limited
 Unison Trader

Annual General Meeting

John L. Marden, retiring chairman told the annual general meeting of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce on April 26 that, though Hong Kong should seek new markets and develop its smaller ones, its greatest priority must be retention and expansion of its existing major export markets — the United States and the EEC. He said: Manufacturers and traders must produce to the exacting requirements of developed country markets whose consumers demand higher and higher standards of product and service.

"Because we export perhaps 90% of all the manufactured goods we produce, Hong Kong industries have not been able to shelter behind domestic protective barriers of any kind. Our industry competes in the world's market-places or it dies. Our traders deliver the right goods at the right time at the right price or they too cannot survive," John Marden said.

"The overall effect of this intense

competition is to ensure that Hong Kong stays very much alive; also, that our economy can adjust quickly to changing circumstances and opportunities. This is our strength and we must not allow it to deteriorate in any way."

Mr. Marden said: "This requires us to be able to maintain vigorous and sensi-

ble promotion of our major interests. Industry must have the means to stay on top; and this in turn requires close coordination between industry and Government so that sound planning of the industrial infrastructure shall continue to be possible. Also, that institutional support for industry can be introduced wherever necessary."



The hand-over of the chairmanship. Outgoing chairman John Marden (right) shakes hands with Jack Tang, incoming chairman who served for two years as John Marden's vice chairman.



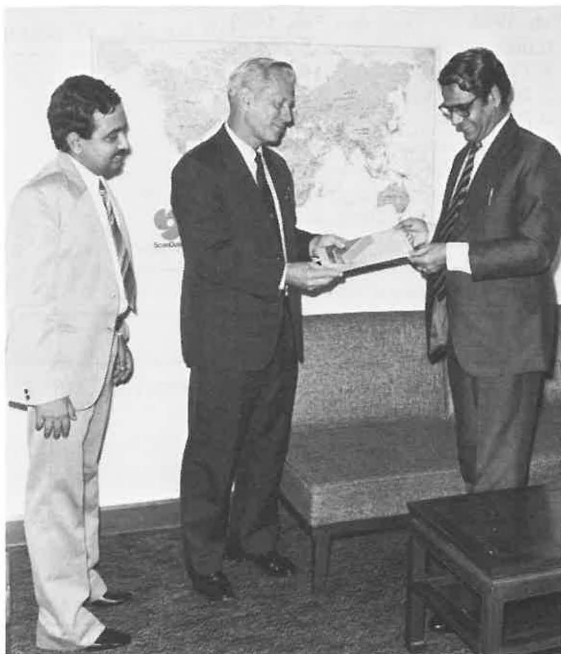
Philip Lai, chairman of the North America area committee, seconds the proposal to adopt the report of the General Committee at the annual general meeting. He emphasised the importance of the United States as a Hong Kong supplier as well as providing the major market for Hong Kong's domestic exports.



Director Jimmy McGregor (centre) talks with two General Committee members after the Chamber's AGM. They are W.C.L. (Bill) Brown (right) and H.C. Tang.



Simon Lee (third from left), chairman of the Japan, Korea and Taiwan area committee, at Kaitak airport on May 13 with the seven-member goodwill mission from the Chamber that visited the Japanese prefectures of Fukuoka, Nagoya and Nagano. From left: Ernest Leong, Chamber assistant director trade, Lowell Chang, managing director of Great China Trading Co. Ltd., Simon Lee, chairman of Sun Hing Group of Companies, A. Uesugi, credit manager, Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Kazuo Ishikawa, chairman Mitsubishi Corporation (HK) Ltd., K.S. Hyun, president Hong Kee Industry Ltd. and Stephen Chu, the Chamber's assistant manager, trade division.



Ramesh Dhall (right) deputy general manager of the Export-Import Bank of India with K. Muthukumaran called in May on Chamber director Jimmy McGregor. The Export-Import Bank is offering term finance through the medium of overseas banks to buyers of Indian capital goods. The interest rate is 8-10% (subject to change) with repayment periods of two to seven years.



Chamber director, Jimmy McGregor, being introduced by Bill Chan (China committee) to Liu Shaoshan, director of legal affairs department of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. Mr. Liu and his colleagues conferred on May 10 with the Chamber on patent rights.



The second visit of about 100 Chamber members to Shekou was on May 3, led by Eric Christensen (second from right), vice chairman of the China committee. In the centre of the picture is Urban Council chairman, Hilton Cheong-leen, who travelled in his capacity as a Chamber member. Others in the picture (from left), Xu Zhiming, representing China Merchants' Steam Navigation Co. Ltd., Cecilia Fung, the Chamber's assistant director for industry and Wang Jigui, vice-chairman of the China Merchants Shekou Industrial Zone who hosted the visit.



Members of the Chamber's one-day visit to Shekou on May 3 saw a hot-roller aluminium plant in action.

Trade in Progress

Hong Kong Overall Merchandise Trade (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983	% Change
Imports	30,647	21,703	+41
Domestic Exports	17,613	12,009	+47
Re-Exports	11,068	7,153	+55
Total Exports	28,681	19,162	+50
Total Trade	59,328	40,865	+45
Balance of Trade	-1,966	-2,541	
Visible Gap as % of Total Trade	6.41	11.71	

Imports : Major Suppliers (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983
China	8,060	5,130
Japan	6,730	4,689
USA	3,207	2,300
Taiwan	2,200	1,469
Singapore	1,721	1,557
UK	1,415	998
South Korea	905	598
Fed. Rep. of Germany	732	577
Switzerland	491	406
Australia	486	300

Imports : Major Groups (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983
Raw materials	13,726	8,346
Consumer goods	7,876	5,794
Capital goods	4,103	2,878
Foodstuffs	3,215	2,842
Fuels	1,725	1,843

Domestic Exports : Major Markets (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983
USA	7,542	4,627
Fed. Rep. of Germany	1,441	1,035
UK	1,338	922
China	1,199	635
Japan	609	425
Canada	583	412
Australia	556	357
Singapore	373	279
Netherlands	351	273
Switzerland	281	221

Domestic Exports : Major Products (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983
Clothing	6,211	4,195
Textiles	1,277	830
Toys, dolls and games	1,057	841
Watches	849	784
Electronic components for computer	723	305
Radios	570	409
Electric fans	321	147
Hairdryers, curlers and curling tong heaters	204	175
Footwear	158	107
Handbags	142	107

Re-exports : Major Markets (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983
China	2,931	1,134
USA	1,671	952
Singapore	720	656
Taiwan	701	347
Japan	686	352
Indonesia	636	835
South Korea	492	285
Macau	311	245
Australia	218	115
Thailand	211	153

Re-exports : Major Products (HK\$M)

	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1983
Textiles	1,630	874
Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances and electrical parts	1,061	509
Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	980	575
Chemicals and related products	955	629
Crude materials, inedible except fuels	774	495
Food	753	556
Photographic apparatus, equipment and supplies and optical goods, watches and clocks	663	529
Non-metallic mineral manufactures	473	310

Values and volume - monthly progress (HK\$M)

	Imports		Domestic Exports		Re-exports		Total Trade
	\$M	Quantum Index (1981:100)	\$M	Quantum Index (1981:100)	\$M	Quantum Index (1981:100)	\$M
1981	138,375	100	80,423	100	41,739	100	260,537
1982	142,893	98	83,032	97	44,353	97	270,278
1983	175,442	129	104,405	132	56,294	139	336,142
Monthly Average 1983	14,620		8,700		4,691		28,011
Jan. 1984	15,899	108	10,791	130	5,976	133	32,666
Feb.	14,748		6,822		5,092		26,662

Area Comparison (HK\$M)

	Imports	Domestic Exports	Re-exports
	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1984	Jan.-Feb. 1984
Asia (excluding China)	13,278	1,981	4,509
China	8,060	1,199	2,931
West Europe	4,517	4,530	667
IEEC	3,723	3,732	532
North America	3,411	8,132	1,811
Australia	486	556	218
Africa	337	307	294
Middle East	198	518	442
Latin America	158	177	120
Rest of World	202	213	76

太古大廈寫字樓 廉價出租

香港總商會已於統一中心二十三樓購置永久會址。總商會現於太古大廈十樓之辦事處面積超過七千五百平方呎，總商會於一九八四年七月底遷往統一中心後，將於太古大廈保留一簽証辦事處，面積約一千五百平方呎。

因此，本會於太古大廈現址將有約六千平方呎辦公室空間可供分租，租金吸引，租約至一九八六年一月屆滿。八六年一月後續約問題可與香港置地有限公司商議。供分租之辦事處裝修完備，包括照明、空氣調節及地氈。

有意商號請與本會執行董事麥理覺聯絡
(電話：五一二三七六五〇)。

麥理覺報告...

購置新會址

馬登、雷勵祖及本人已於五月三日星期四簽約購買統一中心廿三樓寫字樓作本會永久會址。香港總商會於一八六一年成立，現為全港歷史最久、規模最大的私營界貿易組織，購置會址象徵了本會歷史的分水嶺。新會址毛面積佔10400平方呎，裝修工程已於簽約後立即展開，估計裝修需時三個月。本人計劃將本會大部份運營操作於七月底前由太古大廈遷往統一中心，並盡量避免影響會員服務。

本會於太古大廈將暫時或永久保留一頗具規模的簽證處。

由於太古大廈現址淨面積為7500平方呎，除1500平方呎需保留作簽證處外，尚有6000平方呎空出，因此本人已取得香港置地有限公司同意，將剩餘空間據現時租約分租，租約將於一九八六年一月屆滿，即由一九八四年八月一日起計尚有十八個月。本會將於未來數日展開連串招租活動。

另外，為慶祝總商會置業盛事，部份會員商號可能有意捐款添置新傢俬，比方會議室或新設的委員會會議室座椅或其他項目。歡迎有意會員商號與本人聯絡。

本人希望盡量運用現有器材以至裝修以減低初步開支，待遷入後再估計情況。本人將繼續知會會員有關進展。

會員

本會會員於四月底共2638名，包括月內獲選加入的10名新會員。本會已展開招收會員活動，成效漸見。

周年大會

大會於四月廿六日順利舉行。當日唐驥千繼馬登履新為本會主席。格士德獲選為副主席。

委員會

稅務

委員會於四月十三日開會，討論就一九八四年公共收入保護令（稅務）向

兩局非官守議員辦事處提交的意見書。意見書經委員會同意後已於會後數日提交兩局非官守議員辦事處，副本並呈財政司參考。委員會就若干稅收建議、特別是海外利息課稅建議表達意見。

法律

委員會於四月十九日開會討論證券監理處製定的上市規則，並擬定意見書。意見書已於會後呈交證券監理專員。另法律改革委員會就不公平合約法例向本會諮詢意見，委員會正考慮有關事宜。

新來港外籍人士課程

下一課程將於五月舉行，名額已全滿，另有候補人多名。課程每年舉辦兩次，極受歡迎，名額通常供不應求。

貿易委員會

非洲

委員會於四月廿六日開會，重點討論如何提供額外措施，幫助索償運往尼日利亞貨物欠款有困難的商號。本會就此事已致函尼日利亞專員公署及其他本地組織。尼日利亞政府已採取若干措施以改善目前情況，希望會有確實結果。最近一項調查顯示，尼日利亞方面拖欠本會會員貨值起碼達9千萬美元，其中不少早於兩年前已付寄。

阿拉伯

委員會於四月十日開會討論貿易發展局與本會合辦中東貿易團報告書。該團於一九八四年二月十九日至三月六日往訪杜拜、莫斯科、多哈及開羅。鑑於該團相當成功，委員會建議於明年初再與貿易發展局合辦類似貿易團往訪下列國家中任何四國：阿布扎比（阿拉伯聯合酋長國）、亞丁（南也門）、聖那（阿拉伯也門共和國）、沙地阿拉伯、約旦、阿爾及利亞、利比亞及突尼斯。

日台韓

本會訪日團準備工作進展順利。委員會於四月十九日與福岡縣政府代表松永大郎及名古屋縣政府代表小泉博司開會，討論訪日團行程節目。該團將於五月十三至十九日訪日。

本會於四月十四日接待了由安陽工商會會長金海一先生率領的韓國代表團。討論項目包括港韓雙邊貿易前景。

北美

本會於四月九日設午宴款待溫尼柏商會訪港代表團，團長為溫尼柏商會會長 James Wright 先生。

本會於四月五日接待加州世界貿易專員公署代表團，該團由公署專員 Lily Lee 女士率領。雙方討論了本港目前經濟狀況及貿易與投資機會。

由加拿大專員公署舉辦的加拿大貿易展覽會將由一九八四年五月十六至二十日假香港展覽中心舉行。本會積極支持主辦機構籌劃工作。本會月內已將貿易展覽會傳單寄給所有會員商號。

南亞 / 太平洋

本會於四月十三日接待一印度貿易代表團，該團由全印度廠商組織安排，Aggarwal 先生率領。雙方討論了港印雙邊貿易及合作範圍。

西歐

本會五月訪歐洲貿易團準備工作正順利進行。四月十一日舉行了團員簡報會。該團共有來自13家本港商號的16名代表參加。

皮革八四

皮革八四國際貿易展覽籌備工作進展順利，本地商號參展者日增。香港展覽中心場地已預訂一空，據展覽會主辦機構香港交易會有限公司報告，參展者來自20多個國家，包括各式各樣的產品及服務。本會很高興擔任展覽會唯一贊助機構，並有意於來年贊助皮革八五。

中國

委員會於四月十七日開會，評價本會九人代表團於三月訪問北京的成果。中國民航公司謝靜吾先生於會後午餐加入討論關乎雙方利益問題。

委員會表示由於中國重整航機班次問題，建議中的廈門訪問團將延遲舉行。建議中的珠海經濟特區訪問團由於珠海區政府高層官員調動關係，也將延遲舉行。

有關四川、上海和安徽三地的若干投資機會消息已知會會員。

本會職員及會員共100人將於五月三日訪問蛇口，考察該區發展進度。該團由中國委員會副主席祈天順先生率領。

唐驥千（「紡織先生」）

履新總商會主席

香港總商會一八六一年成立以來首位華人主席唐驥千表示，香港工業如要增長，貿易要繼續繁榮，本地出口必須加強介入日本市場。

唐驥千與另外六位華人商界領袖於四月廿六日香港總商會周年大會上再度獲選進入成員20名的理事會，唐氏並隨即登上本港私營商界組織的最高職銜。

唐驥千有綽號「紡織先生」（紡、織及成衣）。身高六呎，體重170磅，操新英格蘭口音英語，喜歡敞開襯衫領口，間中也像美國人般嚼雪茄。唐氏曾任總商會副主席兩年，繼馬登兩年主席任期完滿結束後成為新主席。

香港總商會理事通常（幾乎是傳統慣例）推舉副主席繼任每兩年任滿的主席一職。不過理事會仍保留選擇權，每年都從理事會成員中正式委任主席及副主席兩職。因此，唐氏出任新主席是順理成章的。

唐氏來自上海，畢業於麻省理工學院及哈佛大學，現為美國公民。唐氏首份工作是任職紐約無比石油公司。

唐氏出任總商會主席（基於總商會傳統，此舉兩年前已可預見）並非與時勢有關，也非因一九九七逼近而作的權宜之計。

唐氏三十年來身為工業家貢獻良多。他生於來港發展的上海家族之一，上海家族是本港工業革命先鋒。今次獲委出任主席，象徵理事會稱許唐氏對工業界的貢獻。唐氏廿八歲返港工作，多年來不但在本港經濟扮演重要角色，更活躍參與社會福利活動，因此，今次委任也象徵理事會稱許唐氏在經濟及社會方面的貢獻。

今次委任，正值本地輸美出口屢破紀錄、並為實業家及勞動力帶來不景後的繁榮之際，時間十分恰當。不過，唐氏指出由於本港輸美出口佔本地總出口達四成，過份倚賴美國市場可能有危險。

唐氏相信本港出口帶動經濟的未來

增長必須來自新市場。因此他認為應瞄準目標，集中貿易推廣實力發展日本市場。

他強調說：「港日貿易一面倒且對日本有利。如果香港提供品質與服務，日本沒理由不能多買港貨。」

唐氏對處身香港這魄力十足又應變靈活的社會生活及工作自有一套看法，典型例子是他認為香港政治前景雖未明，但本港仍應著眼於新貿易目標。

他說：「香港歷史顯示，本港雖常遇到本身無法控制的問題，但我們從不受這些問題過份纏繞。我所知道的每次危機都嚇跑一些港人，但大部份人都繼續留在這兒謀生、養兒育女、供書教學、為下一代提供更好機會。」

「先父（唐炳源先生）就是一例。他一九四八年由上海來港，開始紡織事業。當時本港剛開始工業化，他自然碰上各式各樣的困難。然後是一九六七年暴動（文化大革命波及香港），但先父繼續經營製造業。事實上，整個一九六七年，我們都繼續發展紡織，一九七〇年開始多元化，進軍成衣業。」

「我不是說大部份現時在香港生活和工作的人不關心一九九七。我們都十分關注。但我們知道必須繼續工作，這正是我目前做的。」

唐驥千現為南海紡織股份有限公司主席及執行董事。南海紡織在台灣及印尼有附屬公司，在本港也有紡織及成衣廠。唐氏確實以公司資金將言論付諸行動。

唐氏計劃於南海公司周年大會上宣佈，公司董事局製訂的財政預算已準備在今年及明年以資本性開支購置新器材，金額相當於公司過去六、七年來的支出。他說：「我看好今年，對前景也有信心。」

他相信香港經濟今日得享相對安定的局面，歸根究底是香港人適應力強甚至求成心切的功勞。去年，本港數個有能力為經濟局面注入生機的範疇之一就是製造業，唐氏希望這會持續。

是製造業，唐氏希望這會持續。

唐氏希望香港總商會未來會就一切重要問題被邀表示意見。就製定觀點來說，他認為多一個腦袋思考總比少一個好。他會致力加強協商工作，並相信協商與一致協議不同。

「理事會有不少人材，我有意進一步人盡其材。本港各大機構有不少年青有為的高級行政人員，本會其他會員商號也擁有大量經驗，我有意重用這些人材和經驗。」

「本人對總商會屬下多個海外貿易促進委員會及本地社會經濟事務諮詢委員會的運作情況希望能加深了解，並加強各委員會與理事會之間的溝通及加深了解委員會的想法。」

「我也會跟總商會執行董事麥理覺商討怎樣加強整體會員的利益。」香港總商會會員中以華人機構佔大多數。

「總商會內部行政在麥氏領導下一直井井有條，我不必操心。」麥氏接觸海外商會及來港代表團方面表現出色，與本港政府部門及其他組織也有緊密聯繫。

有關總商會對外關係，唐氏指出他希望與本港其他主要組織像香港工業總會等緊密合作，於有關香港整體的重要事件及工業貿易利益的問題上努力。唐氏是工業總會理事會成員。

「由於我是貿易發展局成員，我相信能與貿易發展局緊密合作，重點發展港貨輸日市場。」

香港總商會日台韓委員會於五月派一友好團訪問福岡、名古屋及長野三個日本要縣。委員會主席及該團團長李國賢表示，友好團的目標是通過聯絡上述三縣的商會組織，補足香港日本經濟合作委員會的工作。

唐氏現任工業發展委員會、香港管理專業協會諮議會、香港協會（香港分會）及中文大學嶺南商學院諮詢委員會成員。

唐氏曾任香港美國商會副總裁，現為該會幹事。他也是香港理工學院理事

會及紡織業諮詢委員會成員。唐氏也是東方海外貨柜航業有限公司及滙豐銀行董事。

唐氏曾任香港美國商會副總裁及幹事。他也是香港理工學院諮議會及紡織業諮詢委員會成員。

唐氏的專業訓練和三十年工商經驗使他對本港基本問題的認識及洞悉比很多人都深入精闢，對工業的認識也極透徹。舉例說，他出任工業發展委員會就能發揮精闢見解，使工業受惠，因此他必須繼續參與該類組織。

唐驥千的公開言論顯示他明白香港製造及服務行業分割零碎的本質，本地商號的平均規模是僱用20名員工。全港商號只有百份之三僱用100名以上員工。

這百份之三的機構大部份由海外僱員或像南海紡織般由工業家管理，他們深知香港身處國際競爭。但唐氏的公開言論似乎顯示，他頗關注本港大部份僱用20名工人左右的小型廠家怎樣能從當局建議的工業問題解決方法中公平受惠。這類小廠是本港工業的骨幹。

唐氏於總商會周年大會前的例行記者招待會上表示，本港電子公司有九成以上僱用50名以下員工，對支持研究計劃很難會感興趣。唐氏於周年大會上履新。

他反對徵收百份之零點零三的電子產品出口稅作為電子科技發展中心成立基金的建議。該建議來自香港生產力促進中心為工業發展委員會就電子業進行的一份顧問研究報告。唐氏是工業發展委員會成員。

研究報告已提交以工商司何鴻鑾為主席的工業發展委員會特別工作小組審閱。小組認為上述（及其他）建議值得支持，但應否徵出口稅則可由電子業本身決定。不過，唐驥千於記者招待會上質疑，這筆政府從電子產品徵收的稅款，由誰來決定應怎樣花費才能使電子業所有成員受惠？

唐氏於去年的「工商月刊」中就香港短期工業前景應否走高級科技路綫表明立場。他說相信本港工業應走高科技

路綫的人應腳踏實地，考慮香港實際情況。「我不是說科學與科技（生化工程、機械人等）不重要，但香港這個小小的地方急需要做的還有很多。」他當時說。

唐氏當時是總商會副主席。他說本港廠家當下首要的目標仍是以各種系統、方法及節省能源方式促進生產力工業工程。工業發展委員會通過改良設計及成立品質檢定化驗所以幫助廠家改進產品功能的做法，他表示贊同。

他個人主張香港應協助小型廠家建立本身能力達致實際的人時生產力增長。他認為可行的方法是應用控制系統、資料處理方法及時間與動作研究。他說這是工業生產管理學的整個基礎。

不過他說：「政府沒可能花數以億計的金錢在香港設立科學公園之類的東西（像南韓與台灣的科學公園），這樣只會被批評為特別照顧少數人。我認為這不會發生。」

唐氏回憶說當年在上海，年青人都尊重父母的意見。由於他父親於麻省理工學院畢業，所以唐驥千受工程教育也順理成章。唐驥千的兒子唐裕年也畢業於麻省理工（即三代）。不過，唐驥千的父親也容許他選擇當哪一種工程師。

當時他讀的中學是上海南洋模範學校。學校很著重科學，他對化學也產生興趣。因此他向父親表示要做化工工程師。後來他果然在麻省理工修讀化學工程，畢業後再往哈佛取得商業管理碩士學位。

唐氏仍是麻省理工學院組織發展委員會的成員。麻省理工為紀念唐氏家族更興建了一座叫 Tang Hall 的現代化多層研究生宿舍。入住 Tang Hall 的學生，至少有四份一是來自東南亞包括香港的華人。

唐驥千說他是家族中從事紡織業的第三代。他父親生前曾說過，他祖父對選擇從事甚麼工業有一套很明智的哲學。他祖父認為唐氏家族應從事食品、衣著、房屋和交通等基本需要事業。

唐驥千說他父親緊守祖父的見解。第二次世界大戰以前，他在上海創辦了

麵粉廠和菜油加工廠，又做紡織生意，更投資水坭廠。戰後他仍在這類基本需要工業上盡力而為。不過，交通方面他只止於做佳士拿汽車代理。

唐驥千說：「可能我血中流著工業家的特質吧。不過在香港我可沒有從事衣食住行的生意。本地市場相當小，九成多本港產品必須外銷。海外需要甚麼我們就生產甚麼，所以我從事紡織這一行。」

唐驥千在哈佛大學讀碩士課程的時候跟黃月梅在波士頓結婚。他說：「後來她幫我打報告。」

唐黃月梅的父親當年在上海一家大規模國際機構工作。她童年大部份時間在香港和上海渡過，畢業於美國 Catherine Gibbs 秘書學校。

唐氏夫婦有子女三名。兩個女兒現居三藩市。兒子唐裕年現年卅四歲，已婚，是南海紡織董事。唐裕年已為唐驥千添了第一個孫子，另一位做社會心理學工作的已婚女兒也快將為他添第二個孫。另一個女兒從事地產管理。他說：「每次出門我都盡量找藉口在三藩市停一停。」每年他外遊四、五次。通常兩次時間較長，每次約兩星期。今年四月十七日，他在英國曼徹斯特一次商業行程中渡過五十七歲生辰。

唐驥千一談到太太神色立即明亮起來。他說唐黃月梅為人樂觀積極，十分喜愛戶外活動。她安排攀山旅行，對香港地勢瞭如指掌。只要他在香港，夫婦倆每星期天都揚帆出海。他說自己常保持健康的膚色是受了太太影響。

他說自己的嗜好不多，偶爾打網球。他說：「我想自己是那類極投入工作的人。」紡織和成衣業對他來說既是工作又是娛樂。唐氏一家每周總有四、五晚應酬，不是做東道就是做嘉賓。他說自己要會見很多訪客。

唐驥千每日早上七點半起床，九時左右回到公司，午間常要出席業務午餐。唐氏一家在紡織界交遊廣闊，加上公共活動及海外朋友的聯繫，社交圈子更趨廣闊。□

本港成就區內驕人

十年前，港府聘請顧問研究如何保護環境。顧問於一九七七年提交報告。究竟在這期間有甚麼工作成果？

環境保護專員聶德博士列舉香港部份成就：

- 執行三項主要條例，即控制空氣、水污染和廢物棄置，另外對現行法例作出修訂，以控制抽氣聲音、晚間建造聲音及道路汽車廢氣。
- 成立環境保護處，聘用職員及購置器材以提供具多種學科知識的人手，處理環境保護方面的協調、政策發展及監察工作。
- 於各政府部門成立控制小組，負責推行新環境保護條例。
- 推出全面計劃監察空氣及水質素、建造業噪音及所有建造工程產生的廢物；並耗資60億元興建污水處理

設備及改善污水排除方法。

——環境保護措施被納入自然環境規劃過程的程度大為增加，另外

——主要建設如燃煤發電廠、水坭廠、化工廠和工業邨工廠等都有包括控制污染措施，因此避免了對環境的新問題及不良影響。

聶德博士指出上述成績與區內所有國家甚至區外大部份國家比較都毫不遜色，不過，本港一般人士都認為可以做得更多。部份原因可能是該處成功避免了的問題沒成為頭條新聞。又或者當一個問題解決了便再沒人記得，注意力立刻集中在下一個問題上。

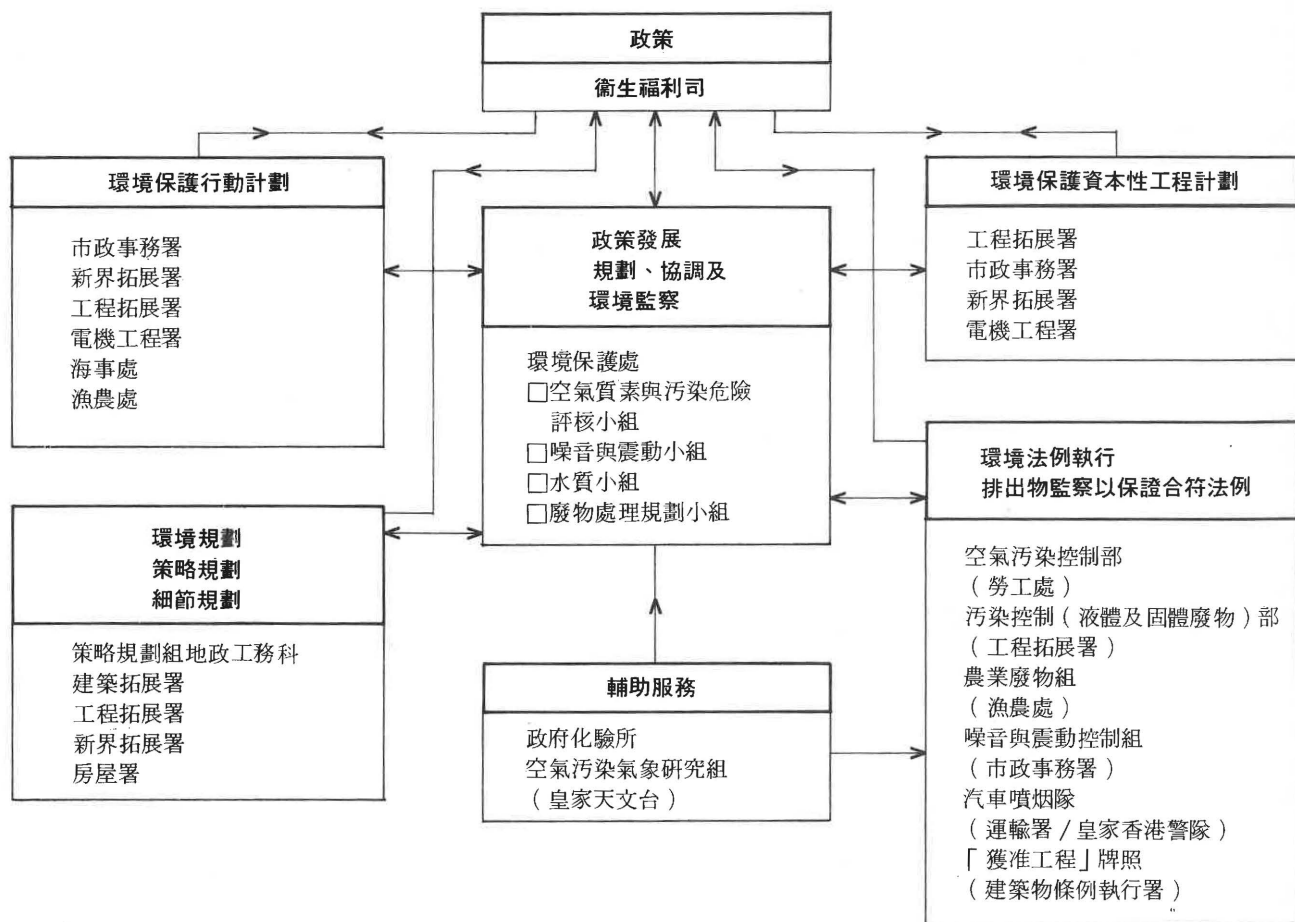
不過，他說環境污染其實對人人都有影響。我們每人都有份做成污染，同樣，我們每人都可幫忙避免或減少污染。污染的影響，輕者是簡單的干擾，重

者足以危害健康。不過，即使只是干擾，對受影響的人也是個問題。

聶德博士是環境保護處首長。他指出良好的溝通對環境事務將仍十分重要。政府、公眾和工業之間都需要良好的溝通了解。工業之內要妥善執行環境措施，經理階層與工人也需要做好溝通工作。

他指出提高保護環境意識很重要，環境保護處與建築承造商協會合作攪海報宣傳，目的就是減少建造業產生的噪音及塵埃干擾。環境保護處更與香港工業總會等工業組織舉行特別會議，提供有關環境事務知識，比方如何處理有毒廢料等。

他說該處與廣東及深圳多個組織就環境問題建立關係方面已有良好進展。污染自然不受人為邊界限制，因此，任



何有關計劃都必須考慮污染物越過國界的可能後果。

初步討論於一九八三年一月廣東環境保護辦公室主任訪港時進行。之後廣東一小組來港，研究本港已建立的空氣污染監察網的設計詳情及運作特色。

一九八三年十一月，環境保護專員率領一部門際代表團訪問廣東。訪問期間雙方同意合作於深灣區域進行環境設計。香港和深圳在深灣都會有新發展工程。一個包括香港、廣東及深圳三地環境專家的工作小組事後更製訂了是次合作的形式及範圍詳盡建議書。工作小組於一九八四年二月在深圳開會。

根據計劃，該份建議書於廣東環境

保護辦公室主任及其他高級官員上月訪港時，應於高層達成協議。

改善環境保護意識及加強各方面人士在環境事務上的溝通了解並非一次過解決得了的問題。不斷要努力做的，是教育那些不同方式製造污染的人：拋垃圾的、駕駛噴黑煙車輛的、管理工廠不當或規劃疏忽的，告訴他們這種行為對別人健康的壞影響，並提醒他們只要用很簡單的方法就能盡量減少污染。

附表大致顯示聶德博士說的提高意識要做起來每人面對問題的複雜程度。據報導，衛生福利司程慶禮最近指出，當局已深入檢視這複雜的制度。

程氏指出，未來的轉變是找出應由

環境保護處而非其他政府部門擔當的個別工作。不過，報導指出，程氏說檢討結果顯示「全面轉變」並無需要。

程氏據稱曾贊成控制污染法例應照顧到小型和傳統工業的利益。

他說：「有些經濟活動與社會人士希望環境全不受污染、或至少相當乾淨的想法是完全無法配合的。」

「這衝突實在無可避免。姑勿論這類工業的污染影響，我們遲早都要決定，究竟應否繼續發展這類經濟活動。」

具體例子之一就是農場，農場廢物在新界河流做成污染。 □

野生生物知多少

香港人生活的市區面積比全香港1,066 平方米的份一還要小，所以大部份港人對本地的動物、鳥類、植物和昆蟲等野生生物都很陌生。他們也許從沒聽過黃猄叫；寧願跑一哩路也不想碰見蛇。不過，這不表示香港人對本地天然環境不熟悉。香港的沙灘、石灘、林區和略嫌光禿的山丘，怡人景色比比皆是，多年來隨著交通網發展及新設備陸續落成，市民要郊遊更加容易。

去年往全港郊野公園旅行共錄得800萬次，到海灘去的也有同樣紀錄。香港人對大自然環境逐漸醒覺，主要原因可能是公眾及法定假期多，比方說每周必有一天法定假期，最近更規定每年有一周假期等。不過，香港人逐漸發現大自然景色是基本生活享受來源的同時，保護自然環境活動卻未見顯著增加。但迹象顯示，一般人對保護郊野的興趣正漸成型。

保護郊野意識提高的迹象之一，是最近有關黃猄頻臨絕種的報告。以往人們感興趣的，只是傳說本無其事的老虎游蕩的報導，但現時對保護環境卻比純粹好奇有更多興趣；以往的態度是要殲滅任何來自自然界的危險，現時卻慎重得多。

政府一份有關本港動植物的資料指出，本港野生動物數目，尤其是哺乳動物，正日漸下降。該份資料指出，下降原因是城市化增長，越來越多市區人口運用郊野。

資料指出，新界晚上偶然還可見到香貓和豹貓，黃猄已極少，不過在港島植林區還時不時可聽到它們的吠聲。長尾獼猴和恆河猴（逃脫寵物的後代）在某些植林區仍可見到。猴羣愛在九龍區水塘從旅行人士餵他們的食物中挑最好的吃。

漁農處高級自然環境主任劉善鵬卻較樂觀。他認為香港人低估了本港野生生物的數量，原因是野生動物是晝伏夜出的，城市人見到的機會不多。

不過，由於猴子天性比較引人注意，所以香港人並沒以為猴子也頻臨絕種。

劉氏是香港大學畢業的科學家。他說沒証據顯示黃猄正面臨絕種（黃猄是很可愛的小動物，有點像迪士尼筆下的小鹿斑比）。它們的棲息地是水塘集水



區。當然，這正是它們理想的生活居所。

劉善鵬說香港野生生物中沒有任何品種有絕種危機。功勞也許應歸麥理浩勳爵。麥理浩勳爵本人極喜歡郊野，他任內港府推行不少保護野生生物的措施，至今還持續在這方面花費。

舉例說，香港自一九八一年一月一日起已禁止打獵。新界偏僻村落的居民連野豬也不能打。野豬則自由自在隨意在田裏打滾、吃蕃薯和合時的鮮橘子。只有警察有權殺野豬。村民有關於野豬破壞財物的投訴時，警方也確實時不時



把野豬正法。

市區的人很少聽見甚麼「犯罪野豬」的消息，城市人較關心的是人的過失。不過，在郊野和城市人控制社會行為之間，某方面又有一種關係在發展中。

一九七六年港府成立郊野公園局，急速發展郊野公園及方便市民抵達，香港生活質素因此多了一個新天地。特別是冬天周末，香港人都擠去郊野公園找點心理治療。

成千上萬的人歡歡喜喜地呼吸郊外新鮮空氣。他們吃的也許是超級市場燒烤食物，但驅除一周積壓的緊張工作情緒，已是有益的治療。

即使玩的是簡單的家庭遊戲，像替孩子砌風爭等，精神也會振奮起來。風是免費享用的，對人的精神也有神奇作用。今日香港這點十分重要。

全港共有郊野公園21個及特別區2個，合共面積41,296公頃，包括林區、空曠地方和沿岸綫，也包括港島5個郊野公園。

公園設備有野餐地點，野餐枱檯、兒童遊戲設備、營地、野火燒烤地點、垃圾桶和廁所一應俱全。設計則盡量配合大自然環境。

遠足小徑和自然徑方便遊人觀鳥和到林區遊覽，享受自然美景。坊間可買到自然徑指南，主要路徑不斷改善，陡峭地區更有路標。

麥理浩徑全長100千米，東起由新界西貢向西攀越至屯門止。全程在郊野公園範圍內，有33個營地供爬山人士用。大埔徑更有特別區域，供遊人觀看樹木、植物、鳥類和昆蟲生活，還提供怡人又有趣的步行路綫。

短短數年間將市民與大自然的距離拉近（雖未至融會）是項出色的社會成績。早期港府創辦巴士綫和提供泳客所需設備，使香港人有機會享用到美麗的海灘，郊野公園建設規模雖龐大得多，但與海灘大眾化也很相似。本港海灘夏天周末往往因泳客太多出問題，另外還有污染（見下頁）。

上述種種發展，改變了香港人以為除了看電視轉播賽馬和打麻雀以外便沒甚麼可消磨閒暇的想法。不過轉變仍不大。郊野公園去年有800萬人次造訪，即是全港每人每年到郊野公園不夠兩次。熱門海灘在夏天的容量也有限。

要將郊遊取代麻雀，甚至代替手執遙控器坐看電視賽馬的習慣，香港需要更多人更深入發掘郊野的樂趣。

可發掘的有很多，也無需騷擾黃獐、香貓及豹貓的生活。如果本港教育改

善，生活質素上升，郊野生活會越來越受重視。不過交通是要解決的嚴重問題。港府財政政策並不鼓勵私人交通工具。

正如政府動植物資料文件指出，提高市民對郊野的興趣是理想目標，但諷刺的是，越多人郊遊，天然美景就越容易被摧毀。要使市民珍惜大自然，通過教育培養對本港自然美景的興趣是唯一方法。

遊人最疏忽的是垃圾，但這並非最嚴重的災害。摧毀動植物的是山火。

統計數字顯示（見圖）十年來的山火概況。不過，數字也顯示人為疏忽引起的山火次數一直下降，原因除立例懲罰外，通過電台電視廣播的每日濕度及火災危險警告訊號也有幫助。

劉氏指出，補救受侵蝕地區的方法，是栽種更能抵受惡劣環境的植物，比方不容易燃燒和可抵擋颱風的樹木等。這種地區往往可以種出相當好的人工栽種植物，然後利用這優點再種植原有的植物品種。

他說漁農處每年種樹約60萬棵，新界市政署則種另外50萬株。

政府動植物資料指出，本港植物特性各異，品種更多至驚人，跟中國大陸和菲律賓各島有相當有趣的植物進化學關係。很多典型東南亞植物品種在香港已屆分佈網的最北極限。估計全港約有天然及移植的維管植物共2,500品種。數百年多屢經砍伐、山火和侵蝕，山坡給人荒蕪的整體印象。不過，陡斜的峽谷上常有濃茂的植物，特別多的是矮樹，開花植物和蕨類植物。

較古老的村落和廟宇附近也有小型但生長得很好的林區，叫「風水」叢林，是村民因相信「風」與「水」互相影響足以控制人生際遇的傳統觀念而栽種的。叢林包含豐富的植物品種，以往香港大部份地區的樹林種類特色，遺跡在風水叢林中也可找到。

香港植物有不少品種是以外形美麗或芬芳怡人馳名的。洋紫荊（香港蘭樹）在一九〇八年於薄扶林發現，名字乃紀念一位前港督亨利布立克爵士。洋紫荊在香港因插枝栽種關係已十分普遍，不過，正如大多數混合品種，洋紫荊的種子都是不結果的。香港的洋紫荊是全球最優良的品種之一，也是香港市花。

香港植物標本室於一八七八年成立約有33,000個標本供閱覽，其中包括1,890本地品種及變種與2,500種左右來自東亞及東南亞區的相關品種。標本室另一優點，是具備本港唯一的英文標本目錄，而包括的植物品種確十分全面，



某程度上也包含了中國廣東省植物的主要部份。

標本室在九龍新世界中心十樓，辦公時間內開放供市民參觀。

香港觀鳥社出版的香港鳥類名單紀錄了過去50年來在本港發現的343種野生鳥類，其中70種以上曾在香港繁殖。

本港有多種不同特色的棲息地，促使鳥類品種繁多。香港雖然是個被荒蕪山丘包圍的城市，但仍有不少面積頗大的松林、稻田、菜田、少量沼澤和若干古老的林區。其中以沼澤最適合若干繁殖及候鳥棲息，沒有這些天然棲息地，鳥類都會過門不入。

自一九六九年起，鹽灶下白鷺聚居地於繁殖季節都受保護，每年四月一日至九月卅日禁止遊人往叢林區。中國塘蒼鷺、小鷺和牛背鷺常常於此聚集，而幾對罕見的黃嘴白鷺及小數夜鷺十多年前已開始在鹽灶下築巢而居。

本港海洋動物品種極多。雖基本上是亞熱帶地區，但由於冷暖水的季節性變化和季雨氣候，香港是南中國海亞熱帶和中國溫帶氣候的混合。海洋生物是本港人口食用蛋白質的重要來源，所以品種系列十分吸引自然學家和生態學家。



南中國大陸架上估計約有魚1,500種，香港水域以黃花魚和鯉魚最多。離岸較遠的水域，紅衫魚、大眼魚及其他品種對本港魚人也價值很高。

多數人對蛇都有種本能的恐懼，其實蛇一般是胆小動物，對人類敬而遠之。晝伏夜出，所以雖無處不在，卻很少給人見到。

大部份香港的蛇都是無毒的。毒蛇無論在品種或數量上都佔小數。另外，已知的毒蛇咬傷事件及因蛇噬致死個案均極少。

香港有8種極毒的蛇：黑黃相間金腳帶、黑白相間銀腳帶、珊瑚蛇、中國飯鏟頭、眼鏡蛇、青竹蛇、山穴腹蛇和紅脣游蛇。 □

過往十個火季郊野公園山火數字

火災季節	漁農處 處理之	影響範圍	影響樹木
(年份)	山火次數	(公頃)	(株)
1973-74	682	1,372	1,510,000
1974-75	159	228	63,000
1975-76	401	1,733	558,000
1976-77	545	2,295	1,102,000
1977-78	254	485	78,600
1978-79	231	452	43,000
1979-80	437	3,025	581,000
1980-81	281	820	15,900
1981-82	368	1,473	70,600
1982-83	204	846	30,300

如何處理豬糞是好？

新界在保護環境方面，面對一個粗俗、長期而日益嚴重的問題，就是怎樣處理豬糞。

負責清理豬糞的部門是漁農處。據該處兩年的估計，每日需處理1400噸。不過，漁農處高級環境護理主任林仰中表示，數字現已增至差不多每日2000噸。部份用作肥料，不過，大部份都被新界豬農以畜牧業中稱為「濕糞肥」方法處理，即是將豬糞通過管道排入河流，造成污染。政府也因此要通過憲報公佈將吐露港列為受保護水域，控制豬糞流量以保障水域內生物。

政府為解決豬糞這頭痛問題曾求助於公共健康顧問工程師，漁農處現已有厚厚一本書和大量建議。不過，林仰中指出這批建議書提不出任何處理新界豬糞的新辦法。

處理豬糞的方法，不外上文提及的「濕糞肥」法，及另外的一種「乾糞肥」法，即將豬糞混和禾草然後棄置。精打細算的豬農，對後者自然不會太積極。

關心公眾利益的環境保護人士當然知道豬糞問題非常嚴重，不過，建議中的大亞灣核電廠引起的政治敏感問題卻掩蓋了豬糞問題的迫切性。事實上，似乎已有人認為除非養豬業消失，否則香港是沒法解決豬糞問題的。不過，這樣做只會將問題轉移為怎樣滿足本港人口日益上升的豬肉需求。

當然，香港人對豬肉和叉燒等的需求有不少是靠中國豬隻供應的。但全部倚靠中國供應也不是完整的解決方法。

中國來豬在紅磡火車站留下陣陣難聞氣味，將這個新界問題結結實實帶到九龍市區中心的環境。諷刺的是，豬隻臭味只限於新火車站周圍設計得極富想像力的休憩地方及鄰近的紅磡體育館；不過，關心公眾利益的建築師相信定已十分懊惱。

紅磡海面污染空氣的臭味引起的投訴，似乎很少，遠不及啓德水路引起的抨擊。城市設計師倖免了公眾對他們缺乏先見之明的白眼，最愛找錯處的環境保護者也似乎向公眾默許了他們的成績。

不過，獨立的觀察意見確實顯示

，新紅磡休憩區受坊眾歡迎的程度比理想中低。晚上用這休憩區的，通常都是找尋幽靜角落的情侶。休憩區本來是要改善紅磡環境的，雖有孤軍作戰之感但饒具意義，可惜香港人太愛吃豬肉了，竟連紅磡休憩區也受影響。

漁農處高級工程師晏德賢表示，新界豬糞問題其實不應存在。如果香港像其他國家般有較多平坦耕地，本港也可像那些國家一樣把動物糞使用作肥料。

新界河流污染也跟土地稀少有關。河流流得不夠快，所以不能清去廢物。應該流入河裏的水都給改道流進水塘去。

愛講挖苦話的人也許會說，一八九七年談新界租約的人不夠眼光，低估了港人愛啖豬肉的癖好，他們租地也不夠貪婪。結果是香港似乎在至少十三年內都不會解決到豬糞問題。

氣味和水的污染問題至今未有人提出來啓進北京一九九七談判議程。在談判桌上提出這粗俗的題目可能會引起誤解，但單從一點良好的意願出發，說不定已會帶來相當可觀而有用的實際效果。

為甚麼長久以來都沒有人提出這問題是一個謎。單從邏輯看，這問題應該一早就有人提出來。不過，討論這問題產生的結果，卻未必會使兩個敏感的鄰居改善關係。無論如何，香港企業精神雖聞名世界，但這方面的出口卻很少。

這種情況下，漁農處自然想盡辦法應付名符其實「龐大」的豬糞問題。其中一個極有想像力的方法，現已廣為人知。

這意念就是香港應該繁殖一種會吃豬糞的蠕蟲，這蟲會產生一種脫落物，脫落物是豐富的肥田料，可供出口。這蟲的品種學名叫 *lumbricus rubellus*，在很多嘗試擾環節動物再循環的國家一般都叫紅蠕蟲。

「工商月刊」一年多前獨家報導了漁農處對紅蠕蟲的興趣。這年多來有甚麼發展呢？

林仰中指出這種小蟲在24小時內可以吃下跟本身體重相同的任何物體，包括塑膠，而這小蟲也沒有被遺忘或棄置。由菲律賓運來的一批蠕蟲現

正由香港大學的祈格福教授照顧。祈格福的專長是植物學，紅蠕蟲正乖乖的吃用過的茶葉。不過，香港的茶葉問題從數量來看，與豬糞問題根本沒法比。

這個方法要解決漁農處的大問題還有很長的路要走。不過，有一家香港公司已發現本港出產的紅蠕蟲可用

作人工繁殖海水魚飼料及深海魚餌，作為本地及出口工業都有潛力。

林仰中說香港土產的紅蠕蟲不幸有股蒜頭味，皮也硬得很。如果研成團狀，石斑也會吃，但大部份的魚都不大喜歡。

不過，看中紅蠕蟲生意的公司卻極具信心。該公司正由法國訂來沒有

蒜頭味、皮也不硬的蠕蟲。

魚是香港社會的主要食糧之一，不過，如果有朝一日豬糞會被再巡環而變為魚，魚價可能會貴得逼使家庭主婦減少買魚，不過，這一天仍未來到。 □

本港沿坡建築的土力工程問題

香港可說是個獨特又有挑戰性的土力工程大型實驗室，意思是本港快速及密集的城市發展，必須在陡斜且滿蓋泥土的山坡進行，而山坡卻受極多的季節性雨量影響。本港地質結構相當簡單，主要岩石是花崗岩和火山岩，經長期風化侵蝕後成為殘丘土質層。另外，不少地區都有層疊層的塌積土質，這種特殊的土層是從山坡上滾下來的堆積物。因此，山坡中部和下部的堆積物往往只能僅僅維持穩定，工程進行偶一不慎就會破壞了平衡。另外，工程界對未飽和土質拉力行為的了解仍不多，而對本港常見的斜坡不穩問題，工程界還未完全明白水份滲透和泥土吸力的獨立角色。

一九七二年，港島半山區一座12層大廈隨斜坡倒塌，15名大廈居民喪生。同年，秀茂坪一填土坡在大雨中倒塌，造成71人死亡；一九七六年，悲劇又舊地重演，釀成18人死亡。為控制全港斜坡安穩情況，港府於一九七七年成立土力工程處。

土力工程處是工程拓展署轄下5個辦事處之一。一九八三年十一月起，建築物條例執行處轄下的土力工程科正式納入土力工程處，土力工程處本身之後也改組加強效率。改組後該處對區議會建議和意見可作更快捷有效反應，對港府也能提供更廣泛的專業服務。土力工程處每年於防止山泥傾瀉措施（包括探測和建造工程）方面耗資約8000萬元。該處有專業人士130名，來自12個國家，分別有地質、地質工程、土木工程、機械工程、化學甚至採石礦專業資格。

土力工程處處長伯蘭德博士向「工商月刊」闡述該處三個主要工作範圍。

一是規劃、研究與發展，目標是改善工程設計所用方法。該處已完成了全港地勢重估工作，以衡量土地發展過程中必須注意的土力工程限制，有關資料已知會政府規劃師。負責研究發展工作的是該處轄下特別計劃部，研究結果並陸續出版成手冊、設計指南、規格和技術註釋等文獻供政府及私營界參考。已出版的資料有「斜坡土力工程手冊」（一九七七）及「護土牆設計指南」（一九八二），兩者均為政府刊物中的暢銷書；「斜坡土力工程手冊」第二版更將於六月出版發售。其他研究中的實用工程課題包括改善填海改法、探測施工地點技術、穩定斜坡方法、如何建造及應用垃圾堆填地及支撐深土鑽挖工程方法等。

土力工程處的第二個主要重點是防止山泥傾瀉措施的長遠執行工作。香港

的建築及設計水準並非全部令人滿意，該處的職責，是不斷審核斜坡和護土牆，發現安全因素不及標準即採取適當防禦措施，避免發生危險。

第三個工作範圍是常規性土力工程審核及監察。土力工程處為建築物條例執行處根據建築物條例審核一切私人樓宇發展計劃藍圖，所以有良好的直接監察作用。所有政府建設藍圖也必須經該處審核以保安全。

布蘭德博士說：「雖然我們未能完全制止山泥傾瀉，卻希望完全消除七十年代那類大災難重演的可能性。另一個目標是盡量降低所有建造工程發生意外的機會。」

他指出該處成立以來，本港土木工程設計已有長足進步，但仍有幾方面的問題未解決。最主要的是木屋區斜坡的安全問題。木屋區分佈港九新界，很多



碰巧都建在最斜的山坡上。唯一的徹底解決辦法當然是清拆徙置，但徙置50萬木屋區居民並非一朝一夕做得到，土力工程處可以做的，就是向當局建議優先清拆短期內會有危險的木屋區。該處也根據土力工程理由向房屋署建議那些木屋區應優先清拆。房屋署本身也推出了木屋區環境改善計劃，其中包括防止山泥傾瀉的小型工程，對穩定斜坡也有一定幫助。土力工程處與房屋署在木屋區安全方面將繼續緊密合作。

港島半山區對土木和土力工程師都是個棘手地區。一九七二年塌樓慘劇發生後，土力工程處做了一個半山區研究報告，重新審視整個半山地帶的地勢穩定情況。報告結果促使港府通過新法例，規定半山區內一切發展計劃必須包括若干土力工程設計措施。

該處也發現了全港幾處有地質上和地勢上某種特色的地區；這些特色有可能引致斜坡穩定問題。該等地區是薄扶林、慈雲山、長沙、飛鵝山、筲箕灣、柴灣、大窩坪、北荃灣和馬己仙峽，土力工程處並已為上述地區製作了1比2500的詳盡土力評價地圖。布蘭德博士表示，地圖並無顯示驚人的危險，不過在上述各區施工則需要額外仔細的規劃和高水準工程。

土力工程處的工作不止斜坡一項，還有挖隧道、填海、探測地盤和建築物地基等方面的諮詢和監管工作。地下鐵路公司的部份工程，特別是鑽挖隧道對

鄰近樓宇的影響，也是由該處審查控制。不過，布蘭德博士指出挖隧道也許是土木工程中最困難的工作，原因是施工地點出現的實際問題是極難衡量和預料的，承建商是否有避過困難的技巧非常重要。

「紙上的藍圖設計可以十全十美，問題總是在實際執行時發生。」他補充說港島地鐵支綫工程最近發生地陷，主要原因是鑽挖過程中突然遇上極不同的岩質。不過地陷事件對周圍建築物的影響極微。

填海方面，問題之一是底層的軟泥需要很長時間才壓緊變硬，影響地面發展計劃。加速壓緊過程的方法之一是在軟泥中插置「塑膠去水管」，土力工程處在大嶼山原訂興建第二個機場的地盤上一條試驗堤成功運用了這方法，證明相當有效。塑膠去水管方法現已廣泛應用於其他填海工程，位於西灣河的港島東區走廊路堤就是一例。

土力工程處的工程資料正逐漸開放給公眾人士應用。該處的「土力工程資料中心」已於五月一日啓用。中心資料包括土力工程處搜集的大量個案及探測地盤資料，公眾人士可免費享用翻查資料服務。該處於未來半年內更可能出版發售一完整系列的1比20,000全港土力工程分區地圖，全面分析評估港九新界的地勢情況。

該處的地質調查組目前正忙於製作一套全新的1比20,000香港地質圖，全套

有14張，估計於8年內可全部完成，第一張現定一九八五年出版。新地質圖比現行的版本清楚和詳盡得多。現時通用的香港地質圖比例是1：50,000，15年前製作。

該處最近有關香港雨量和山泥傾瀉關係的研究有了結果。研究發現，山坡倒塌的主因是短時間內雨量高度集中，而非坡塌前幾天的雨水量。以實數計，一小時雨量如超過70釐米，就有可能發生山泥傾瀉，而24小時內雨量如超過175釐米，本港就會發生相當多的山泥傾瀉事件。研究結果已使該處調整山泥傾瀉警告的計算準則。山泥傾瀉警告由土力工程處與皇家香港天文台聯合發出。

香港的土力工程處曾被稱為全球最先進的土力工程單位之一，不過與部份先進國比較，該處的工作重點卻有不同。布蘭德博士舉例說，英國的重點是研究發展而不像香港般直接控制工程工作，相反，美國加州由於山坭傾瀉問題，當地的土力工程政策跟香港一樣也非常重視控制審核工作。

有關土力工程處未來發展計劃，布蘭德博士說：「目前整體情況已受控制，我們希望能逐漸擴大土力工程諮詢服務，及出版更多供建築界參考的指南，這些工作比直接控制審核都更有挑戰性。不過，審核監察工作自然也不能鬆懈。」

日收垃圾三千四百噸

香港市區每日收集得的固體垃圾達2500噸，新界則每日收得900噸。市區垃圾由港九市政署免費收集，該署在全港市區有134個垃圾收集站，每日定時清理。

市區非商業性垃圾有八成焚化，其餘則運往官塘及將軍澳作堆填用。所有市區商業垃圾都運往將軍澳、船灣和元朗作類似堆填用途。

港九市政署清潔淨參事江博彥列出在香港這亞熱帶氣候及建築物林立的都市收集垃圾的困難。他說由於本港濕度高，加上香港人喜歡新鮮食物，特別是海產，垃圾中的有機物比率也自然高，所以必須每日收垃圾。

香港夏季颱風頻仍，港九市政署也因而發展出一整套颱風策略。由於大部份垃圾站只有一天容量，該署的裝卸垃圾工人和垃圾收集車不到十號風球懸掛都不停止工作。颱風期間，該署有「反泛濫小組」四處巡邏，盡可能保持路邊溝渠暢通，防止地區性泛濫。

颱風訊號一回降至九號，垃圾收集工作立即開始。最先清理的是主要道路和馬路，之後是行人路。他指出每次颱風後，港九市政署都要花兩三日才能使街道面貌清理得大致像樣，不過，去年襲港的颱風愛倫破壞力驚人，造成大量堆積垃圾，單是九龍塘一區吹落的樹，就花了港九市政署4個星期清理。

城市策劃標準指定，每隔550米或每2萬2000人須設一與街道隔開的公共垃圾站，不過本港因地少及地產發展關係，垃圾站的實際數量和地點都受嚴重限制。結果是垃圾站常溢滿垃圾污染環境，而垃圾車更往往被逼在與公眾毫無隔離設施的情況下在街道上起卸廢物。

江博彥說港九市政署長期以來都與私人發展商對抗，要求政府修改建築物條例，規定新建樓宇必須附設收集垃圾地點。他指出，政府憲報最近公報，任何樓宇可用樓面面積超過1320平方米，必須設垃圾房，而可用樓面面積超過13200平方米的樓宇，除垃圾房外還須在圖則內劃出地方作垃圾起卸站供港九市



政署的垃圾車操作。

江博彥說香港的垃圾收集服務可稱為世界上成本效率最高之一，原因是昂貴的行人路邊收垃圾方法（即逐家逐戶收集）只限於山頂及壽臣山等幾個近郊地區。所有屋邨、多層大廈和商業中心都是以較便宜且快捷的提桶式垃圾車收集方法處理。該類大廈或屋邨都備有存放大量垃圾的地方，垃圾車要做的，就是從標準的垃圾圓桶內提走垃圾。

港九市政署為改善服務正興建更多在街道以外的垃圾收集站，新設計的垃圾站四面圍封，裝有炭精過濾器系統以減少臭味。裝有電動水壓泵以降低噪音的新垃圾車也已加入服務。有兩部最新設計的「精密型」垃圾車已在試用中，特色是車身有幾款裝卸垃圾器可交替應用，以適應不同設計的垃圾站。

不過，市政局已放棄了派發免費紙袋或膠袋給市居裝垃圾的意念。一九八二年一項調查顯示，市政局如要向全部居民派發免費垃圾袋，每年需動用1億8000萬元，而市政局該年度的財政預算也不過是16億元。

有趣的是，垃圾密度可以反映經濟狀況。江博彥引述一個理論，指出社會越富裕，消費者就越多廢紙、包裝材料及消費品包裝盒要棄置，所以垃圾密度也越來越低。香港非商業垃圾的平均密度是每立方米141 千克。中環區的商業垃圾由於有大量紙張，因此密度只低至每立方米70 千克。他說過去本港幾個月的平均垃圾密度一直都頗高，也許反映出本港市民的整體消費力仍未完全復元。

港九市政署另一主要潔淨活動是掃街工作。一般來說街道每日由人手清掃4次。行人多的地區像油蔴地和尖沙咀則每日掃8次。港九市政署有33部機動掃街車，每日一次清掃所有車輪高速行駛的街道及天橋。

道路溝渠每周以人手清理一次，並在溝渠加油防止滋生蚊蟲。該署更為無水廁設備的樓宇免費清倒糞便。 □

綠化香港困難重重

港九市政署園務參事包勒指出，對某些政府來說，樹木的意義並不簡單。

他說：「星加坡和日本政府都認為樹木是繁榮和文化的象徵，而植樹是市區發展政策的重要部份。相反，樹木在香港只是粉飾門面的工作。」他強調香港的市區植樹工作，是面對很多困難和冷眼而進行的，原因是政府和私人發展商對美化環境大多是不敏感甚至有敵視心態。

港九市政署園務組負責10個政府苗圃及一切栽種、砍伐與樹木保養工作。該署轄下苗圃供應九成以上園務組栽種的植物。一九八三年砍伐樹木共7,194株，修剪及料理樹木51,744株，栽種樹木23,819株。一九八二年比較數字分別為878，30,316及26,891株。一九七九至八三年5年間，每年平均種樹19,169株，砍樹2,827株。該5年內平均種樹對砍樹比例是6.67比1。去年颱風愛倫摧毀6000株樹，使種樹對砍樹比例大幅下降。目前，每株砍下的樹大概有3至4株新種的樹取代。樹之外，八三年種

植的還有164,190株灌木、4,770株攀緣及匍匐植物，164,431株矮小植物，2,302株竹類植物及209,399季節性開花植物。

香港自然環境極不適合植物生長。本地泥土貧瘠，年中不是極旱就是水份太多。地勢陡斜，坡道經常超過1比1.7，而1比1.7已是草皮可生長的斜度極限。另外還有颱風。

一個大型颱風平均「殺死」2000株樹，損傷樹木更不止此數。周期性颱風肆虐，使當局規劃植樹人士更頭痛，因為選擇種植的品種必須抵得住相當風力、生長得頗快和好。包勒指出，最近發現的另一個嚴重問題，是風力碰上巨型固體平面物像三合土牆和高樓大廈後再反彈的龐大殺傷力，很多時將植物向正風向來源吹倒。

為改善土壤質素，港九市政署已轉用一種混合肥料，即將纖維物質混合泥土以改善吸水力。他說混合肥料已將樹木生長速度加快了很多。

地勢仍是主要問題。穩定斜坡工程

本港健康指數僅次日本

香港的健康狀況究竟怎樣？醫務衛生署副署長（衛生事務及計劃）李紹雄醫生表示，本港人口在防範傳染病方面受完善保障，本港的健康指數與亞洲各國甚至英美比較也毫不遜色。香港的健康指數在區內僅次於日本。

李氏指出，健康指數是世界健康組織用以衡量某個國家的健康及社會經濟水平狀況的國際方法，衡量目的是決定援助該國的優先次序。指數也幫助該國政府衡量國民健康狀況，製訂有關政策。健康指數分四大類：死亡率、平均壽命、死因及傳染病。

死亡率再分為嬰兒死亡率（1歲以下，每千個生存分娩計）、初生嬰兒死亡率（28日以下，每千個生存分娩計）、產婦死亡率（每千個總分娩計）及粗略死亡率。一九八三年，香港嬰兒死亡率是10.1，初生嬰兒死亡率7.0，產婦死亡率0.07，粗略死亡率5.0。表甲顯示香港與區內國家及英美的比較。

李氏指出，死亡率顯示出當地的環境狀況、產婦護理水平及產前與產後醫

療服務質素。一九六一至一九八一年間，本港嬰兒死亡率由37.7跌至9.7（表乙），目前，水平據稱是全球最低之一。另一重要數字是出生率（一九八三年每千人15.4），反映出本港的家庭計劃工作質素和社會經濟發展水平。本港出生率在亞太區內僅高於日本。

平均壽命指數是考慮嬰兒出生時當地一切可引致死亡的因素，根據公式計算出來。香港這個「生存機會」指數男性方面已由63.6歲（一九六一年）升至72.2歲（一九八二年）；女性則由70.5歲（一九六一年）升至78.3歲（一九八三年）。

五十年代，香港的主要死因是肺炎及肺炎等傳染病，原因是衛生環境惡劣及健康水平低。過去卅年來情況已全盤改觀。本港目前主要死因順序是癌症、心臟病及高血壓症、大腦血管病、肺炎、受傷及中毒。整體趨勢是退化及緊張壓力性疾病越來越嚴重，這是科技進步社會的特色。癌症引致死亡以肺癌最多，然後是肝、鼻咽和胃癌。

很貴，且常使整體公園計劃變成經濟上不可行。以高山劇場公園為例，建築費5,070萬元之中，有670萬是花在穩定斜坡方面。包勒認為高山劇場穩定斜坡工程這樣貴而仍能順利進行，原因是整個劇場公園計劃支出龐大，斜坡穩定費相對顯得合理。全部建築費自然包括有3000座位的劇院在內。

包勒最擔心的是土地供應問題。美化環境種植用地在政府派地的對象名單上的優先次序排得很低，園務組獲派的往往是很難處理的斜坡或公路旁的廢置土地。該署還不時要應政府要求放棄現有的已種植土地供其他政府部門使用，獲補償的土地卻往往不適合栽種植物，即使可以種也先要花大筆建設費。城市規劃準則指明每十萬人就應有8公頃綠化空地，市區內能實現這理想的顯然極少。「目前我們可以做而且必須做的，是保持現時市區種植的水平，不讓情況惡化。任何進展或突破都不大可能。」他說。

園務組目前的兩大工作是公路環境

綠化及高台種植。

港九市政署很久以前已知道沿公路種植樹木可見度很高，也許可以更容易給公眾欣賞。不過，一九七七年以前，所有公路建築計劃都不包括正式的綠化條款。當時港九市政署只要得到一點點公路旁地盤的廢棄土地種植，已經十分理想。一九七七年馬路部聘請首位環境建築師，八三年中增聘多一位，為公路環境建設工作提供意見。自此以來，情況已有改善。現時馬路部負責興建所有「硬」工程，包括供水設備及鋪泥，港九市政署則負責「軟」的綠化工作。

近期完成、興建中或等待處理的公路環境建築工程計劃達33個，以尖沙咀東部規模最大。尖沙咀東沿馬路的種植工作仍在進行中。可惜的是七十年代早期計劃的工程卻未有包括公路環境美化設計，港島東區走廊就是一例。包勒估計，東區走廊啓用後，對太古城一帶的居民來說會是一個很難看的景象。

他說馬路部的結構工程師一直都反對在天橋和斜坡上種植匍匐植物，所持

理由是阻碍工程人員檢驗建築物裂縫，不過包勒卻認為他們的態度太保守。他指出星加坡方面認為光禿禿的三合土表面是難看的，當地政府盡量用植物掩蓋所有天橋。香港方面，港九市政署和新界拓展署事實上已開始沿斜坡及天橋支柱種植匍匐植物。今年及未來，匍匐植物潮流預料會加速發展。

高台種植的作用，是使植物遠離汽車廢氣、踐踏和垃圾，並給植物根更深泥土生長。灣仔高士打道的中央綠化地帶就是高台種植的例子，高台高出地面約1米，植物種在特別製造的槽內，整個綠化地帶有自動灌溉系統。由於本港街道不斷擴闊，傳統的路邊植樹方法會越來越困難，因此高台種植會越來越普遍。

市政局目前僱用1,700名員工負責規劃及執行一切種植工作，包括管理人員、勞力工人及3名環境建築師。□

傳染病指數是一年內接獲通知的病症數字。檢疫傳染病如瘟疫、霍亂和黃熱病等檢疫工作都受世界衛生組織國際健康條例控制。瘟疫自二十年代以後一直沒再襲香港，本港現時發生的霍亂也大多是輕微的，且往往由越南和菲律賓「入口」。霍亂在越南和菲律賓仍是地方性流行病。香港由於沒有某一種蚊作傳病媒介，所以不會有黃熱病。

另一類傳染病叫「需通知傳染病」，包括常見的童年傳染病如白喉、百日咳、小兒麻痺症、麻疹等。另外還包括地方性疾病如肺病、傷寒及肺炎。香港的童年傳染病不是已全部撲滅就是透過免疫工作受到控制，地方性症病的整體發生率也低（表丙）。

一九八三年數字顯示，肺病（7,301宗，446人死亡）及肺炎（1,783宗，28人死亡）在傳染病中發生率和死亡率都最高。李紹雄指出，由於兒童及嬰兒多接受BCG疫苗注射，所以肺病在成年人中較嚴重。甲型肝炎經口腔道由污染食物飲品傳染，至今仍未發現有效疫苗。乙型肝炎因接觸污染的血液、血液產品及身體液體而傳染，至今仍未發現有效疫苗。

李氏指出，從醫學觀點來看，「環境」可界定為影響個人及社會健康的外

在因素的效果總和。環境影響也分為四大類：自然環境、生物環境、化學環境和社會環境。「不過，要建立或衡量個別環境因素與疾病發生率的果因關係非常困難，原因是環境因素對身體的影響總是長遠和交錯複雜的。」

自然環境受空氣、水甚至房屋質素影響。香港水質從傳染病水平可反映出來，本港水務署提供安全食水居功至偉。本地重工業不多，空氣污染大多來自汽車廢氣、建築地盤及搬動物料產生的塵埃。不過，香港人口流動性高，加上每人體質對污染物體有不同的抵抗力，所以空氣污染對本港人口健康的實際影響仍有待衡量。

生物環境方面，雖然市政事務署已很大程度上控制了鼠類、蚤和昆蟲等傳染媒介，不過傳染媒介仍未全部消滅。現在最大的憂慮是蚊，因為瘧疾是本港鄰近國家的地方性疾病，而蚊是潛伏的帶菌媒介。

社會環境的情況，從當地一般的人際關係，特別是人民的精神健康水平可反映出來。香港人跟所有工業化城市居民一樣，精神極緊張。本地精神病患者最流行的病是精神分裂症。不過，李紹雄更指出，研究精神病必須以多種成因的方法處理，全面考慮病人的遺傳背景

、抵抗程度、病人面對的人際關係、病人的生活環境譬如多少私人空間等。社會環境問題也許是最難量度也最難解決的。

李氏指出，香港既已建立起有效的醫務衛生基本建設，傳染病也已受控制，本港醫務衛生發展未來將出現幾個新趨勢。

未來十年，香港人口結構中60歲或以上的年齡組別將佔一更大比例，老人醫療服務以至房屋供應的需求都會增加。

本港工業繼續發展，意外及受傷事件預料會增加，康復服務的需求因此也會隨之上升。精神健康方面，該署會做更多有關遺傳知識的輔導工作，盡量減少天生精神病的發生率。另一重點是預防癌症等非傳染性疾病。他補充說，改善目前醫務衛生設施的目標及先後次序已訂出及收入十年醫務發展計劃，每年由醫務發展諮詢委員會檢討。

李紹雄醫生指出，新需要和新趨勢不表示醫務衛生署會鬆懈防止傳染病措施。香港每年有8萬名新生嬰兒，當局必須保證他們受疫苗保護。另外，部份鄰近國家的地方性疾病嚴重至傳染病程度，而這些國家地理上是包圍本港的。所以，香港必須繼續提高警覺，提防大量來港的旅客「輸入」傳染病。□

（數字表請參閱英文版）

總商會稅務委員會 喜聽會員意見

電視劇集「豪門恩怨」中的人物伊雲如果不是稅務顧問，故事也不會展開。稅務顧問比起地產大亨、船東、油王、頂尖兒金融家甚至傾向投機的企業家，引起的注意力似乎都少得多。

稅務顧問在人們心目中大多是商業世界中不露面的人，隱姓埋名躲在賬簿後面——現今是電腦後面——連市場拓展或公共關係人員常有的一點姿采也沒有。

可以說，只有當人們發現如果沒有稅務專家可能產生的後果時，才會察覺他們的重要性。

舉例說，一九八四至八五年度財政預算案部份建議由於據稱會增加避稅情況因此需要聘用更多稅務顧問，所以掀起爭論。（會員當然了解避稅（合法）和瞞稅（非法）的分別）。不過，清楚知道稅務法例怎樣實際影響公司的商人卻不多。

一個好例子就是兩局非官守議員於本文付印期間將考慮的法案。該法案由彭勵治爵士在財政預算建議中提出，目的之一，是向本港業務從海外來源賺得的利息抽稅。

不錯，如果要本會會員即時界定「提供貸款」審定方法，相信只有很少會辦得到。不過，正由於財政司及數位財政司顧問認為這方法不當，才引起徵收海外利息稅的建議。（起碼這些是這建議的技術性成因，當然也有愛挖苦的人士說財政司關心的只是一個籌措收入的簡單方法，而不是稅務法例的精微之處。）

本文附錄本會向兩局非官守議員辦事處提交的意見書。相信會員都會認為意見書相當有力，實毋須「工商月刊」編者多加闡釋。

兩份建議書都是由總商會稅務委員會擬定。目前，委員會由8位備認可資歷人士組成，分別為稅務專家及於會員商號出任財務事項高職人士。

委員會成員大部份是會計師，兩位

是律師（包括主席，即怡和的穆雅），而一位（副主席，即滙豐銀行的夏理斯）曾是香港政府稅務局僱員。

主席和副主席外，委員會成員是德勤會計師樓的格雷夫斯、畢馬域錢曹會計師樓的傅大偉、關黃陳方會計師行的方俠、太古洋行的狄克、查理士羅素會計師事務所的嘉理添及淘化大同工業有限公司的王華力。

上述人士相當廣泛代表了本港商界利益。委員會一度有第九位成員，艾克森公司的艾保羅曾為委員會帶來國際業務的新角度。不過艾保羅最近已調去紐約，因此必須退任。本會助理董事葛立科是委員會秘書。

稅務委員會並不定期開會，原因是不想為開會而開會。通常會議都是有具體需要才召開。即是說委員會會議最頻密的時間就是每年政府草擬及向立法局提交財政預算案的時候。不過，財務法例也常常在年中其他時間提出，所以每當有需要考慮條例立法，稅務委員會就會開會討論。

除新條例立法外，委員會也關注其他進展中的事項。例子之一是稅務檢討委員會聆訊稅務上訴案的運作問題。聆訊工作表面上進行順利，但仍有很多問題：一方面是與財務機構海外收入有關的積壓工作，另一方面是委員會過去年多來的工作已追不上時間要求，部份原因是程序似乎不足，而部份是因為檢討委員會高層實力有需要加強。

稅務委員會自視的角色，即要作出反應也要採取主動。所以，委員會不但考慮新法例，財政司也不時就各種有關稅務問題諮詢委員會意見。委員會也主動提交建議。

後者的例子之一，是委員會成員曾設計一個詳盡計劃，以計算應課溢利稅利息付款豁免額。（計劃內容詳盡關係，本刊無法撥出足夠篇幅刊登。但歡迎有興趣的會員索閱。）不過，港府——起碼暫時——並沒有考慮這建議。

會員可能記得，本會每年約十月左右都會發出通告，徵詢會員任何有關需注意的稅務事項的意見。

可想而知，個別會員提出的建議都非常不同。雖然未有人提出要取消溢利稅或薪俸稅，但部份建議已與這十分接近。最近引起相當多積極討論的，是外出工作已婚婦女獨立估稅問題。其他向稅務委員提出的建議是稅務法例的細則，其中包含的意念，委員會時常覺得值得深入考慮。

不管建議如何怪誕，委員會都會考慮一切建議。委員會如果覺得建議好而可行性高的話，會因港府當時的財政情況將建議提交財政司或任何恰當的政府機構。

有些建議構想中是好，但實際並不可行。有時一些建議是又好又可行，但時機不當。

一九八四至八五年度財政預算案被指為有特別問題，原因是政府急需開源，而任何足以限制現存收入來源的建議，看來都不會被考慮。因此，本會今年不會做每年例行的會員意見調查。

稅務委員會只為會員考慮整體政府稅務政策和程序，並不協助本會考慮本身的課稅問題。本會一切稅務問題都由董事層職員和本會司庫，即羅兵咸會計師事務所處理。

稅務委員會樂意聆聽稅務難題，也歡迎會員提出建議。委員會不會幫助會員商號解決公司本身的具體問題——這類服務可以以一定代價從專業人士方面得到。委員會有興趣知道的，是個別足以影響某行業或某行業部份人士的問題，這類問題甚至影響最廣義的經濟。

當然，由於稅務影響生意，所以是委員會最關心的項目。不過，其他像地產稅及個人稅等也在它職責範圍以內。假如會員認為委員會對自己的某種意見有興趣，歡迎來電或蒞臨本會聯絡葛立科。

一九八四至八五年度財政預算稅收建議

敬啟者：總商會稅務委員會於三月五日開會討論上述建議，並將於詳細研究修訂法例草案後始表示意見。不過，委員會擔心建議提出本港業務海外利息徵稅會嚴重影響本港主要金融中心的地位。稅務委員會衷心要求兩局非官守議員在建議成為法例前考慮其全面影響。

正如會員所知，香港稅制以領土性原則為基礎，意思是只有在香港賺取的收入才要在香港課稅。財政司雖然可能想說服各位情況並非如此，但海外收入始終是海外收入，舉世的稅務行政機構都是這樣處理。以星加坡為例，海外利息就不用課稅，除非利息已滙回星加坡。

財政司於段落一三八提到以電話或專用電報迅速將存款調往倫敦或紐約的能力。其實，同樣考慮也適用於海外股票及商品交易與金融期貨市場，而稅務局將上述數項全正確看待為生產毋須課稅海外盈利及不可扣除的海外虧損。

公司選擇將剩餘款項投資海外存款而不投資利息免稅的貨幣期貨、股票、商品或貴金屬，實在沒理由歧視前者的做法。同樣道理，公司為保障風險將剩餘款項以謹慎手法存放海外也沒理由受歧視。既然款項如果先派給股票持有人而由股票持有人存款可以完全免稅，為甚麼公司海外存款利息卻要課稅？這是鼓勵謹慎商業管理法的途徑嗎？

實施該建議會產生下列效果：

- (一) 逼使香港所有業務以最低資本水平運營，並將全部剩餘款項分派或撥給股票持有人或海外合夥人作投資。
- (二) 趕跑投資、金融及類似公司往其他不徵海外收入稅的司法制度底下。
- (三) 催生全新系列的避稅手法，目的是將利息收入轉為其他毋須課稅的收入形式。

今時今日我們見到絡繹不絕的銀行家、投資顧問、地產代理甚至各地政府大臣紛紛來港，想趁本港政治前景不明朗吸引本港業務外流。港府向海外利息課稅，正好助他們水到渠成。港府此舉可能最後演變成只因本港有業務就全球的收入都要課稅，後果可能十分嚴重。

此致

兩局非官守議員辦事處

秘書長

沙敬德先生

稅務委員會秘書

葛立科謹啟

一九八四年三月九日

一九八四至八五年度財政預算稅收建議

敬啟者：此信涉及本人於一九八四年三月九日發出函件。

總商會稅務委員會已考慮一九八四年三月卅日政府憲報公佈的修訂條例建議，並希望就徵收海外利息稅建議重申反對立場，另外也想就建議中若干原則性重點及於憲報出版當日提出的保障稅收令表示意見。

首先，有關徵收海外利息稅建議：

(一) 跟限制扣除利息的建議相反，是項建議並無經過公共諮詢協商，雖然建議精神基本上違背了本港稅制自始以來遵從的來源地稅務概念。此舉意義重大，不經事前協商而提交立法是完全錯誤。

(二) 財政預算案演詞第一三九段雖然指出該建議只會從一九八四年四月一日起生效，但草擬的新法例對所有財政年度並非於三月卅一日完結的公司將有追溯作用。比方說，某公司財政年度於一九八四年六月卅日終結，該公司由八三年七月一日至八四年三月卅一日的海外利息收入將需課稅，即是說有9個月在目前法例下毋須課稅的利息收入將需課稅。

(三) 財政預算案演詞第一三八段清楚顯示，是項建議純粹為了切合現任及前任稅務局局長的見解而提出。不過，要分別處理在香港以外地區因本港業務產生的利息收入和其他類型的收入，實無邏輯基礎。財政司指為「以假定作論據」及「不妥當」的「提供貸款」審定方法，其實是沿用英式法律及稅務制度的英聯邦國家法庭一貫使用的方法。要強加「假定的」和「不妥當」準則的其實是財政司和稅務局局長，那些準則就是只限於營業收入的「類似」業務所在地審定方法，更圖將公司及其他生意事業分開，方法是只將後者與「就該貿易、專業或業務」一段拉上關係。如果香港對決定收入來源地區採用的準則跟一般被接納的完全不同，香港稅制就不能再自稱是根據收入來源地的司法制。

(四) 財政司於註解備忘中指出，法例轉變對一九八四至八五年度稅收不會有太大意義，而他估計建議成為法例後，庫房每年將有3億5000萬的額外收益。基於以下理由，稅務委員會認為這筆收入不會出現，而即使真有額外收益，區區3億5000萬之數，難道就是充份理由使港府向世界宣佈，香港正放棄本港成功支柱之一的來源地區稅制？各位非官守議員從報章已看過報導，指出要將海外利息收入轉為其他毋須課稅的海外收入形式或乾脆將海外利息由在港納稅的集團扣除，實在十分容易。要對付這些手法，就涉及製訂更新更複雜的防止避稅法例，更加減低本港作為海外金融中心的吸引力。此外，此類法例需要大量公務員人手，因為要有效執行反避稅條款就必定要大量增加高級人員。

稅務委員會相信財政司可能過份低估了徵收海外利息稅建議的含意，並強烈要求當局將建議摒棄。建議與香港作為金融中心的地位不一貫，與一九八二年採納措施及一九八三年取消存款利息稅的精神也不一致。下文將指出，要增加稅收又不破壞本港基礎良好的來源地稅制，其實有其他更有效的方法。

至於為防止或限制若干不同情況下扣除利息的建議，委員會衷心支持任何有效地防止納稅人濫用權利的建議，包括向自己借貸以使應課稅收入獲扣除，及相應的海外利益課稅扣除額。這情況本來可以也應該受適當的法例制止，但今次草擬的法案卻遠超這一步而直接歧視若干從獨立第三者借貸的合法方法，這點對香港的借貸人和本港生意只會「有壞影響」。委員會知道數個其他組織將提交對建議作出技術性批評的意見書，因此不會在此信覆述。不過，委員會希望將其反對歧視一類獨立第三者放款人的立場記錄在案，也懷疑當局拒絕扣除利息課稅是否有合理根據，特別是所涉及資金是由上市股票發行等等途徑籌集而來。如果港府是納稅人，最近港府發行債券正好顯示，純因放款人並非財務機構而拒絕扣除從市場籌集得的資金的利息課稅額是多麼不合邏輯。

假設政府需要增加稅收，委員會認為首應考慮及最有效的可行措施，是取消目前納稅人只需向建議課稅額提出反對便可幾乎無限期免息拖欠稅款的做法。截至一九八三年三月卅一日，未定奪的反對課稅個案共涉及稅款達29億港元，目前已超過30億元。其中大部份是港府早應收取的稅款，但現時卻免息拖欠。假設此數只有一半是實際可收的稅款，政府損失的利息，達財政司海外利息徵稅建議預計收入的一半，資金額則相等於預計中4年總收益。

現時做法應改為：

- (一) 除非能提出合理原因，包括財政困難，否則不得拖欠稅款。
- (二) 當局批准拖欠的稅款，最後繳納的數目應包括以市場利率計算的利息在內，而利息本身不可作開支扣除。
- (三) 處理反對異議的程序必須簡化並增加效率。目前情況下，有很多異議個案擱置了6年還未上到檢討委員會。

如果採納上述措施，收入不會立即增加，而市民提出無謂又不合理的反對課稅額個案也會減少。不過，納稅人仍需受保障，當局必須製訂相應的防止隨意高估稅額及防止稅務局處理反對個案作不必要拖延的措施。在現行的反對程序以外成立某種形式的「冤情大使」可能是個良好的改善方法。

最後，稅務委員會對大幅提高基本稅率的必要性表示懷疑。雖然當局宣佈加幅只是百份之二，但實際增幅則是公司稅百份之十二而個人稅百份之十三。考慮稅務局過往的預算並不準確，委員會認為在現存稅率上加收比方說百份之五的附加費，比永久性提高基本稅率的做法較可取，原因之一，是加稅率使香港的吸引力從稅務角度看，比中國各個經濟特區都大為減少。

此致

兩局非官守議員辦事處
秘書處
沙敬德先生

稅務委員會秘書
葛立科謹啟

一九八四年四月卅日

旅遊業增長帶來附加價值



香港的遊客跟本港廠家製造出口產品一樣，都可以有附加價值。兩者都能擴大本地生產總值——旅遊業在一九八三年正做到這點。

去年來港遊客增加百份之六點四。(2,775,014)，但消費卻上升百份之廿九點七。香港旅遊協會執行總幹事潘恩表示，消費增長減去通脹後，實質增長仍達一成左右。

他形容一九八四年首季數字為「同樣令人鼓舞」。他的目標是一九八四年全年遊客增長達百份之六，這目標並不算高。不過，既然首季增長已達百份之七點八，陸續的來港遊客消費沒理由低過一九八三年水平，甚至可能比八三年高，從而製造更多附加價值。

旅遊業是無形出口收入，電子業是有形出口收入，而兩者在總值方面會繼續競爭。成衣及紡織業賺取外匯全港踞首，數字遙遙領先；估計今年製造外匯第二位的工業，不是電子就是旅遊。

一九八四年遊客如增長一成至300萬，旅遊業對香港的重要性極有可能較生產電子消費品大。

本港去年從遊客身上賺取的附加價值，跟旅遊協會、旅行社和酒店等努力吸引的遊客類型有關。他們在廣告及宣傳各方面的努力很明顯都擊中了目標。

本港旅客約有七成是渡假性質。其餘約有兩成多因業務來港，他們帶來的附加價值除購物外，還有與本港廠家及服務工業簽的訂單。

旅行團遊客如果是因工作表現出色而由公司招待免費來港機票及酒店住宿，他們也會有附加價值。這類遊客既不用負擔機票住宿，袋裏的錢自可全供花費。

一九八一年個別旅客消費是3,022港元，較一九八〇年上升百份之十四點

七。一九八二年經濟不景，消費企於3,137港元水平，較一九八一年略增百份之三點八。一九八三年復甦下，卻增至3,913港元，升幅達百份之廿四點七。一九八三年旅遊業佔本地出口值的百份比是百份之十點九，八一年則是百份之十點一。

遊客接踵而來，香港從中受惠，不過情況有點諷刺。旅遊業受港府先定稅收資助，即通過酒店稅資助旅遊協會。相反，為籌集成立電子科技發展中心基金徵收出口稅從而提高電子出口產品附加價值的建議，目前卻仍在磋商階段。

另外，香港前途問題引起的也非全是壞影響。為穩定因前途問題產生的恐慌局面，港府將港元以低匯價跟美元掛鉤，這點對遊客十分吸引。

港元匯價低使本港酒店費比其他地方便宜，星加坡就是一例。星元匯價較高，導致遊客在遠東區內有逐漸放棄星加坡的趨勢。星加坡購物生意也出現同樣情況。

不過，遊客增加還有一個最諷刺的原因——香港因一九九七問題舉世知名，很多遊客因此決定來港。

部份遊客又買機票又訂酒店來港旅行，為的是萬一香港這「奇蹟」城市在一九九七後消失，他們仍趕得及看看香港的繁榮。這種宣傳真是錢也買不來的。

潘恩對這種免費宣傳優勢自然非常審慎。他認為香港目前佔相對優勢，原因可能是鄰近國家本身出了問題，比方菲律賓的政局。

姑勿論種種有形無形因素對來港旅客的實質影響怎樣，去年和今年為旅遊業帶來新增長的遊客是來自北美、日本及東南亞。日本連續三年高踞增長率首位，但美國已重新趕上日本。

加拿大遊客今年增長百份之卅四點八，去年增長兩成。美國遊客今年上升百份之廿六點三，去年百份之十九點五。馬來西亞遊客去年上升百份之廿二點二，星加坡百份之廿點六，泰國百份之十三點八。數字反映出美國經濟復甦以來的不景後狀況，及美國復甦對其東亞貿易夥伴產生影響的速度。

自從港元與美元於去年十月以一比七點八匯價掛以來，日圓在港的幣值也增強。日本遊客人數打破三年來停滯局面，今年首季即躍上157,994水平，

較去年首季的143,476上升百份之十點一。

去年訪港的日本遊客共502,175名，較八二年下降百份之二點六。但個別消費則由八二年的2,772元增加至八三年的3,234元。因此，遊客數量雖較少，他們對香港的價值反而更大。港元匯價雖低但穩定，應能刺激陸續來港的日本遊客消費。

潘恩指出，美國遊客來港旅行，單算酒店費就比紐約便宜得多。他說紐約酒店房間最少收費70美元，但大部份都在150美元左右。折合港幣即高達600至1200元，比本地酒店收費水平高很多。

本港酒店房間雖由八二年的17,415增至八三年底的17,518間，但去年全港酒店房間租用率仍達百份之八十三，估計屆八四年底，全港酒店房間將達18,670。

212間。星加坡現有15,000酒店房間，三年後約增至30,000，比較起來香港較有利。星港兩地酒店房間的龐大差距可能刺激星加坡競爭，但香港的增長顯然會比星加坡穩定。

遊客平均留港三點七晚，酒店佔遊客消費約百份之廿七。商店去年佔百份之五十六。十年前酒店佔百份之十五，商店佔百份之六十一。遊客在本港的總開支中，百份之九左右用於外出飲食，約百份之三用於觀光團，另百份之三用於娛樂。

以個人消費計算，去年的大豪客來自南非(5,683元)、中南美(5,593元)、中東(5,591元)及澳洲(5,354元)。不過除澳洲及紐西蘭外，以上各地遊客人數都不多。今年首季來港的澳洲遊客是59,670名，較八三年同期上升百份之十二點九。

美國遊客平均每人在港消費4,770元，菲律賓遊客4,459元。消費最低的遊客來自法國(2,813元)、印度(3,023元)、星加坡(3,127元)、比利時(3,327元)及英國(3,355元)。

今年首季訪港西歐遊客較去年同期減少百份之五點四。東南亞人普遍只增加百份之零點三，主要是由於菲律賓人下降了百份之十八點七，抵消了星加坡及馬來西亞遊客的增長。八四年首季台灣遊客(43,063)也較去年稍降。

抵港客輪遊客今年首季較去年同期

下降百份之廿七點九，即跌至5,314名。阿根廷遊客今年首季共93名，比去年同期增加百份之卅四點四。

中國旅遊每年持續擴展。中國已有更多人來港旅遊，但這批必須返回中國的遊客（百份之十二）在香港的消費不大。

潘恩認為本港旅遊業未來增長的主要刺激因素，也許會是民航服務日漸擴大及航空公司之間加劇競爭。他指出國泰航空公司有新客機航綫飛溫哥華及歐洲，聯合航空也剛開設直飛西雅圖航綫。

訪港旅客除了得到航空公司、酒店、商店等的服務外，香港的都市面貌也是個吸引因素。建築業熱潮以來香港面貌煥然一新，而基本建設也不斷改進。新路、新隧道和地下鐵路使遊客無論觀

光或購物都更方便快捷。

供遊客使用的資源也有相當發展。觀光團現已可包括西貢、大嶼山及船灣等地點。海洋公園也擴大了規模。

遊客要有康樂活動可以去愉景灣這類地方。另外，鄉村俱樂部比以前更多，還有宋城、太空館和新運動場。

會議中心和展覽館雖未成事實，但成事的可能性目前比以往任何時期都高。另外，中式烹飪課程及經常性展覽和拍賣等都別具吸引力。年中更有形形色式的藝術節。

潘恩指出，以上種種足以吸引兩成訪港遊客延長留港時間，決定再來港的更不止此數。服務質素是影響遊客決定是否再來港的重要因素。本港酒店服務由於不斷加強員工訓練及其他改善措施

，較以往已細緻得多。即使是士司機，現在也明白甚麼是對遊客有禮貌。

潘恩說：「一切都進展得蠻不錯，旅遊業前景相當好。」

他解釋道：「旅遊協會緊隨三個原則。對本港居民有損的事我們不會為遊客做。香港能力不及、或抵觸本港長遠利益的事，我們不做。我們只想保護香港的環境和傳統。」

他認為旅遊業未來要面對的問題，包括都市化繼續增加、天然資源的成本及需求問題、新機場的逼切性、怎樣達到既均衡又有高附加價值的來港遊客人數，及旅遊業未來發展將面臨的支持或壓力。□

酒店租用率去年實質增長百份三

香港酒店業商會主席盛樹珩表示，一九八三年酒店房間租用率是百份之八十三，即使將800個新落成房間考慮在內，租用率比八二年仍有百份之三的實質增長。今年新落成房間數量估計會大為減少，因此租用率可與去年的高水平看齊，甚至創出更佳數字。

租用率情況對盈利的影響則視乎個別酒店的財政狀況。開業不久又負財務重担的酒店可能仍未能擺脫八二年種種壓力的影響，房間收費加幅保守，夏季更有折扣。

這類酒店盈利上升的機會很微。不過已經清付一切開業成本的酒店，利潤則可高至兩成以上，個別酒店高低不一。盛樹珩是銅鑼灣利園酒店董事及總經理。利園酒店有900房間。盛氏說香港酒店房間可粗略分為兩類：1200間超級豪華房間，分佈於麗晶、半島及香格里拉等酒店；另15,000間遊客級酒店房間。後者在世界各地都足以列入五星級酒店類。

競爭使本港酒店收費比紐約和三藩市等都相當便宜。從本港酒店提供的環境、服務水準及職員比率看，房間收費實在十分合理。

他說全港有50多家酒店，僱用員工25,000名。香港酒店業商會設有培訓委員會，委員會與各酒店本身的培訓部門合作，製訂服務標準。

培訓集中兩方面。一是技術性的，包括食品飲品及如何上菜。二是更細緻的社交訓練，包括語文訓練、了解客人習慣、文化背景和不同國籍人士。甚至怎樣選恰當的字眼去加強禮貌態度和服務質素。

盛樹珩指出，港府雖沒有特別幫助酒店業，但也沒有阻礙它發展。部份外國政府因酒店業可賺到外匯而給予特別照顧，港府的態度與他們不同。

不過，酒店業需要的基本材料本港一應俱備。高效率道路網及良好排水系統等使全港四通八達，方便遊客觀光。基本公用事業如電力也供應良好。

他認為本港酒店業近期只面對一個問題。遊客大多有興趣到中國大陸觀光，但國內酒店設備不夠，因此很少遊客再去中國旅行。中國在再訪旅客方面的生意不足。

中國承認缺乏酒店管理人材，並經常向香港尋求幫助。因此，本港酒店業某階層的主要人員可能會外流。

不過，盛氏認為香港適應力很強，填補外流人材的空缺不會有問題。往中國發展的，都去了上海等地協助提高新酒店水準和參與大型酒店翻新計劃。

他說香港往中國的旅客流量高，但實際國際旅客流量則每年低於100萬。□



廿萬香港遊客去年訪日

去年訪港日籍遊客共50萬名，佔各國來港遊客之首。美國遊客佔第二位，共45萬2000名。一九八三年有400萬日人外遊，其中140萬人往美國及夏威夷。香港是日本旅客第二個主要目的地，之後是台灣、南韓及歐洲。

一九八三年香港遊客訪日為所有訪日遊客國籍中第三位。美國仍是榜首（460,000），跟著是台灣（367,000），香港（200,000）及南韓（196,000）。

究竟一般日本遊客對香港有甚麼期望？日本觀光振興會香港事務所次長曾我部公一對「工商月刊」表示，日本於第二次世界大戰後中產階級化以來，對海外觀光漸形成一種人有我有的態度，約在十五年前迅速出現了旅遊業興旺局面。他說大部份日本遊客的目的，就是要看看一個外國地方。香港的「三合土森林」只有在大城市中心才會見到，而香港也有一股不同的社會文化氣氛，可以滿足日本遊客追求異國情調的心態。另一個實際考慮是錢。日本遊客來香港玩，往往比在日本國內旅行更便宜。不過，他指出一般日本公司的確為僱員提供國內旅遊資助作為福利之一，但海外旅遊獎金則只限於少數大機構。

「不幸的是一般日本遊客對香港的

印象都不大好，尤其是幾年前香港罪案和扒手猖獗的時候。近年來情況已大為改善，香港旅遊協會不遺餘力重振香港形象，也應記一功。」他說。

「不過，日本人對禮貌的要求仍是一個問題，也許反映出很深的文化分歧。日本人在幕府將軍教育下給馴服了二百年。這種教育塑造了很多日本人特有的性格，其中之一是我們對服務水準的要求極高。

「香港生活緊張多變且急速，日本遊客很自然對部份服務質素感到失望。」儘管這樣，日本人並非不願意來港觀光。日本來港旅客近幾年都保持每年50萬的穩定水平。

旅遊業在香港大概是盈利第三大的工業。相反，第二次世界大戰結束後，日本為吸引美國人到日本花外匯，旅遊業曾一度十分興盛。後來日本製造業一日千里，政府於是訂下國策集中發展外貿，旅遊業的角色開始下降。日本國際貿易不斷擴張，以至被人稱為「經濟侵略者」，日本政府有見及此，又再運用旅遊業作為國家公關途徑，在海外、特別是歐美兩地樹立日本的正面形象。

香港往日本觀光遊客於過去五年來有穩定增長。去年有20萬港人到日本旅遊，比八二年增加百份之十四。由一九

八〇至一九八二年，每年較上年的增長百份率分別是百份之四十三、百份之卅六及百份之廿九。他解釋說增幅下降只是反映出基本數字上升，不一定顯示香港遊客對日本興趣消減。粗略計算，每五名日本遊客來港就有兩名香港遊客往日本。

東京迪士尼樂園自八三年四月開幕後吸引世界各地遊客已超過1000萬人。迪士尼樂園是日本刺激國內旅遊業的建設之一。鹿兒島及札幌都分別舉行過促進旅遊業活動，另外，大阪私營界更籌劃了一連串直至二〇〇〇年的吸引遊客項目。高潮之一是去年慶祝大阪城堡400周年紀念。其他重要項目有八五年科學博覽會，而一九八八年漢城奧運會預料會吸引大量遊客途經日本觀光。

曾我部公一曾修讀外交學，熟悉中日歷史。他認為香港日本的雙邊旅遊聯系促進了日本人與香港的中國人之間的瞭解。

「我相信旅遊業是至今為止維繫兩個國家的最好方法，雖然只有兩國和平相處才可以這樣做。我們必須從歷史汲取教訓，希望這寶貴的聯系未來不會受任何政治緊張局面影響。」 □

香港旅行社協會主席紐普德表示，香港人口少過550萬，但從旅遊業角度看卻是個獨特的地方。每年香港有400萬人往澳門，800萬人往中國，100萬往海外，由全球各地來港的則有275萬人。

他預料一九八四年中國旅遊會增長百份之四至六，然而遊客遭旅行社行業以外不法之徒欺詐的事件，中國旅遊佔九成。

紐普德本身是導聲旅遊社執行董事。他說香港旅行社協會聯同其他行內人士長期以來都努力對付和「清理」不法之徒，八二至八三年間更有強烈的共同要求，希望港府採取行動。政府已草擬有關法例，但仍未以法案形式出版。不過，紐普德預料當局採取有效行動，即使不是今年之內也必會是農曆新年以前的事。

他預料新法例會成立一政府辦事處監察旅行社事業，並設諮詢委員會協助決定在出問題的範圍內甚麼可以做而甚麼不可以做。到時旅行社必須

持牌營業，發牌予新入行人士將有一定準則。

他說欺詐事件通常在聖誕、農曆新年和復活節一再發生。最初有關方面曾要求消費者委員會採取行動，但委員會沒有正式答覆。跟著，大東旅

每年八百萬港客往中國旅遊

遊有限公司兼旅遊業委員會主席吳坦將5個組織的400至500家旅行社納入一個組織之下。終於，旅遊業委員會、消費者委員會及政府各派代表組成一由政府成立的旅行社業工作小組，解決旅行社欺詐問題。

紐普德表示，去年本地海外旅遊開支並無增長。原因是經濟環境及菲律賓政局動盪。另一個一般性原因是外地對身份證明書持有人的限制，雖然部份國家已逐漸放鬆。比方泰國現已容許身份證明書持有人停留兩星期。

他批評機場離境稅。他認為彭勵治爵士加機場離境稅的後果之一，就是使往中國旅遊人士紛紛捨飛機而取火車，原因是機場離境稅比往廣東的火車票還要貴。

他說由香港到中國有5個方法：飛機、船、火車、巴士步行。機場離境稅逼使往中國旅遊人士選擇政府從中收益最少的交通方法。他認為較公平的做法，是規定每位往中國旅遊的人繳付相同金額的離境稅。

他說對旅遊業及旅行社業，中國旅遊都是一劑強心針。去年只有寥寥幾個旅遊目的地有增長，中國是其中之一。以前覺得很難到中國旅行的遊客，都紛紛再來港，原因是他們現在可以到中國去旅遊。

他說旅遊對美國人是一種生活方式，但短程旅行往往比長程流行。不過，美國經濟既一片復甦，而香港和美國只12小時之隔，美國遊客已開始湧至，歐洲及日本遊客也已開始發現香港。 □

簡報滙編

歡迎新會員

本刊歡迎十九間公司於一九八四年五月份加入本會，成為香港總商會會員。（新會員名單詳列今期英文版）。

香港總商會 周年大會

香港總商會卸位主席馬登於四月廿六日本會周年大會上對會員表示，本港雖必須努力尋找新市場及拓展小市場，但首要目標仍應為維持及擴展現有主要出口市場——美國與歐洲共市。

他說：「先進國消費人對產品水準及服務要求日高，廠家及貿易商必須遵照市場的嚴格要求生產。」

「由於本港產品九成外銷，工業界沒法受任何本地保障限制庇蔭。香港工業倘不在世界市場競爭就會滅亡。貿易商倘不準時以恰當價格交準貨也無法生存。」馬登說。

「激烈競爭的整體影響，是保證香港能生氣勃勃，另外，也使本港經濟能快速適應不停轉變的環境與時機。這是香港實力所在，不容有損。」

馬登先生說：「要保持這種實力，我們必須以積極及明智方式促進主要利益。工業必須設法長踞首位，而要臻此目標，工業界與政府也須緊密合作，使工業基建規劃能持續有良好水準，而每當有需要，工業界也能立刻獲得機構性支持。」



主席交職。卸位主席馬登（右）與新任主席唐驥千握手。唐氏於馬登任內曾任副主席兩年。



北美洲委員會主席雷康侯於本會周年大會上附議通過理事會報告。他強調美國作為本港供應國及港貨主要外銷市場的重要性。



執行董事麥理覺（中）於周年大會後與理事會兩位成員交談，分別為白朗議員（右）及唐翔千。

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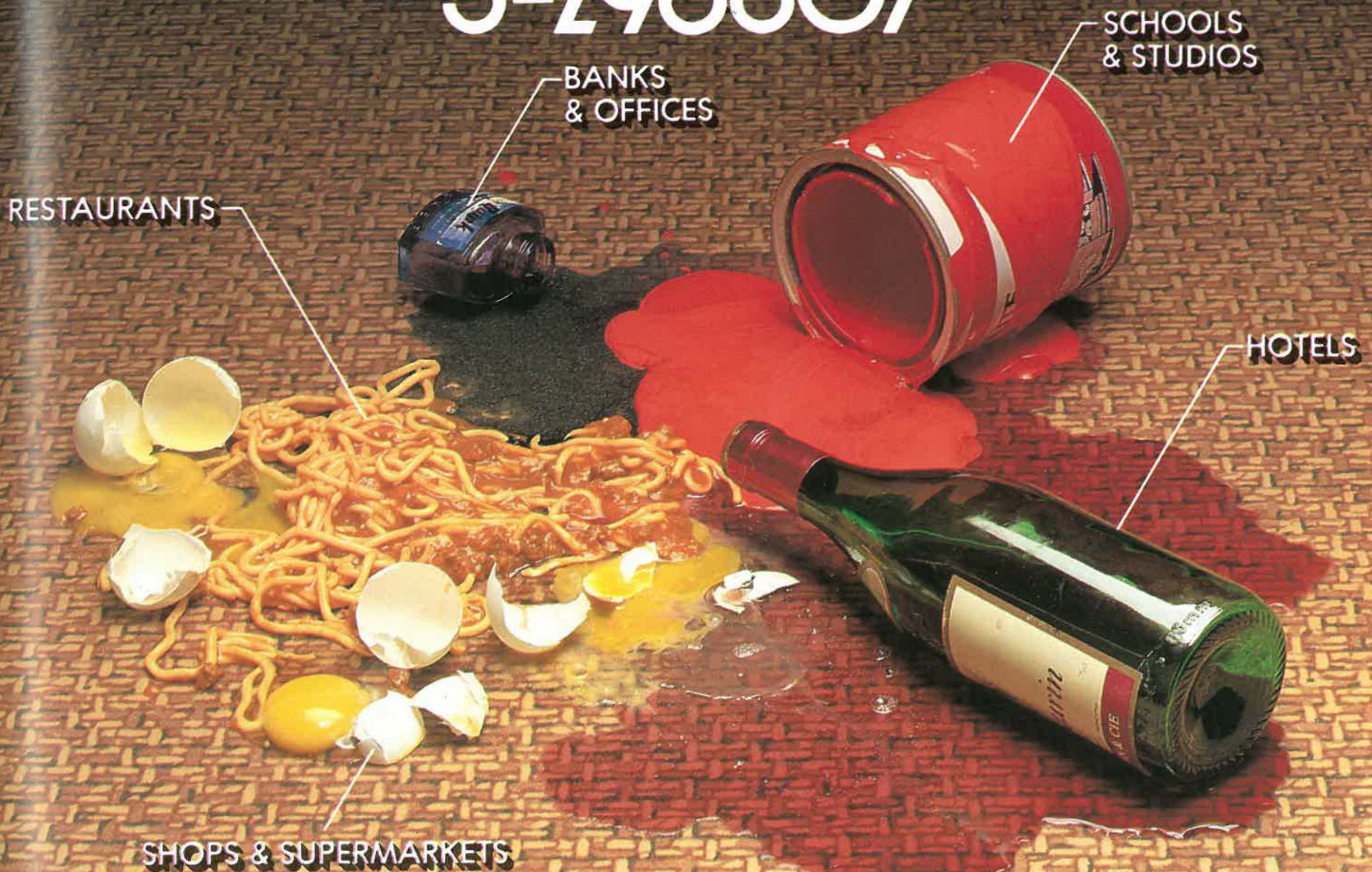
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