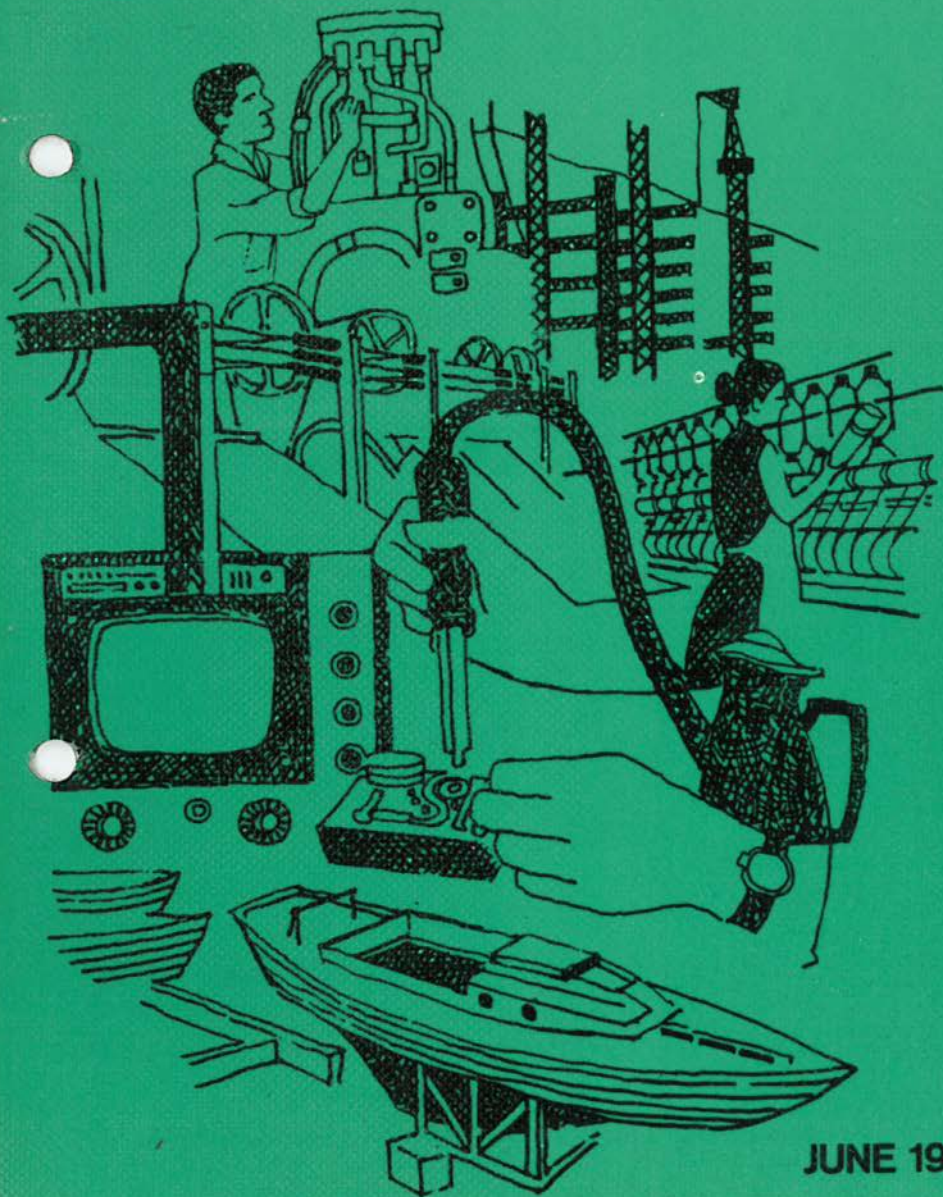




The Bulletin

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce



JUNE 1971

中文簡摘

繁榮是否已成去過？

一九七一年已過去了一半。直至今前為止，我們的經濟狀況，都是維持着常態。一方面出現一些常見的恐懼和威脅，而另一方面一些健全性的趨勢却穩定地持續着。

英國孜孜不息地與共同市場國家談判。富有的工業先進國家繼續辯論在聯合國貿易及發展會議之一般特惠計劃那幾個國家才可受益。美國仍然聲言對紡織品入口加以限制

在本港而言，工人的供應比以前更吃緊。租金不斷上升，物價普遍高漲，並未有那幾項是下降的。

根據初步的數字，今年首四個月，我們的出口比一九七零年同期僅增加百份之十。而一九七零年首四個月比一九六九年同期增加百份之二十三。換而言之，我們一九七一年的增長率比一九七零年同期減少了一半。轉出口的數字，看來較為令人放心，雖然所牽涉的數量比較起出口少。一九七零年首四個月的轉口增加了百份之十一。一九七一年同期却增加了百份之十八。

雖然出口增長率下降，但入口的增長率下降，並不與出口看齊。一九七零年香港一月份至四月份的入口比一九六九年增加了百份之二十五點七，而一九七一年首四個月比同期仍然增加百份之二十三點一。

以絕對值而言，我們通常都是入口多於出口，我們有形的貿易差額的缺口正在加寬。在一九六九年四月，首四個月的差額為五億二千五百萬，至本年底增至十六億九千六百萬。一九七零年四月，其數字為八億三千二百萬，至去年增至二十三億六千八百萬。一九七一年四月，其數字創下新高峯，超過了十五億二千五百萬，比七零年同期增加了百份之七十。

從現時到十二月還有一段很長的時間，日後的發展可能扭轉這個差額缺口加寬的局

面。在這一方面，往後數月可能成為重要的關頭，因為這一段時間正是許多出口商將聖誕節的訂單裝運到各地時候。但假若現時的趨勢持續，這可能表示背馳了六零年代下半年所獲得的一般經驗，那時的動向是有形的國際貿易差額趨向減少。

同樣重要的是一九七零年是七年以來第一次見到入口的增長率超過了出口的增長率

我們得正確地觀察事物，貿易差額本身並不是表示經濟成績最決定性的標誌，因為加上我們無形的收入，總收支上還是對我們有利。但由於旅遊業可能退減，和旅客的消費式樣有所改變，以為香港永遠可以失之東隅，收之桑榆的想法是不智的。

入口增加表示生活水準提高的說法很具吸引力。誠然，我們正輸入更多的奢侈品，上乘的食品、衣服、汽車、電視機等。這可能是真的，但決不是全部真相。

例如，我們食物入口的增長率——這是平均生活水準的基本標誌，與我們一般入口的增加成正比例。換句話說，我們可能吃得好一些（或者起碼消費在一些較昂貴的食物，但並不因此而減少了其他的入口）。

工業用的機械器材的入口有顯著的增加。一九六八年機械器材的入口佔總入口百份之八點三，一九六九年佔百份之九點九，一九七零年為近年來最高，佔百份之十二點二。於一九七一年，此趨勢似乎亦能繼續，首季的機器和運輸工具的入口佔總入口百份之十八

在此門類之下，當然包括一些非工業用途的器材，但無論如何，這是一個一般性的標誌，表示我們的廠家正走上重新裝備廠房的路徑。重新裝備廠房對香港的遠景是有利的，因為沒有新型及效能好的機器，我們便不能競爭。假如目前我們所付的代價是增加了入口賬單，這些錢仍然是值得花的，而且

從各方面看來，我們也付担得起，其實投資在新的設備是刺激經濟增長率的一項重要措施。

入口的工業原料漲了價，這是沒有人會否認的，在有些情形下，增加幅度太過峭峻。我們也多買了工業原料。

將一切情形都考慮後看來，入口工業原料的來價增加雖然可以部份解釋香港總入口數字增加，但無疑地並不是整個事實。又根據獲得的數字，似乎原料成本漲價本身，不可能對毛利壓力增加的主要原因。

關於出口方面，無疑地令人失望的表現的主要原因是美國市場沒有進展，首季輸美只增加百份之六，往年的增加是百份之二十至二十五的。誠然，我們另兩個大市場，英國和西德，都有良好的進展。經過去年軟弱無力的表現，輸英貨品增加了百份之三十三，特別令人欣慰。還有輸往澳洲貨品增加百份之二十，星加坡在港購貨增加了百份之三十八。

輸美緩慢的表現再次強調我們對這個市場何等依賴。美國貿易一減速，無論你在別的市場做得怎樣好，整個經濟便失掉了一些火光。

我們可能將美國市場令人失望的表現歸咎於美國經濟衰退，而這無疑地是事實的一部份。但或者有其他另外的一個解釋。本商會內部以簽發來源證的數目為香港對外貿易成就的晴雨表。雖然這不是絕對可靠，但簽證和出口有特殊關係。

直至今日為止，申請來源證的數目，差不多沒有多大變動，並無顯示出有往年那樣增加。舉例來說，直至本年四月份本會所收到的申請書為五萬六千份，比去年同期減少數百份。本文先前曾提及為聖誕節而出口之貨量之貨量之重要性。本會希望其數量可彌補目下之退減。

由出口商中詢問所得，及他們自動提出的評論，表示訂單短少並不是唯一的甚至特

別普及的難題所在。訂單是有的，或者說訂單可以獲得的，但出口商謂廠家沒法有足夠工人能依照客人所定期限交貨。

此項提議與勞工署處長最近之公佈吻合。該宣佈謂一九七一年第一季本港各工業有一萬個空缺，但祇有三份一獲得填補。勞工處統計，本港各工業缺少二萬三千工人。雖然這數目祇代表實際就業人數百份之四，但這個情形已做成一種阻滯，使一個好的增長率一個出色增長獲有所分別。

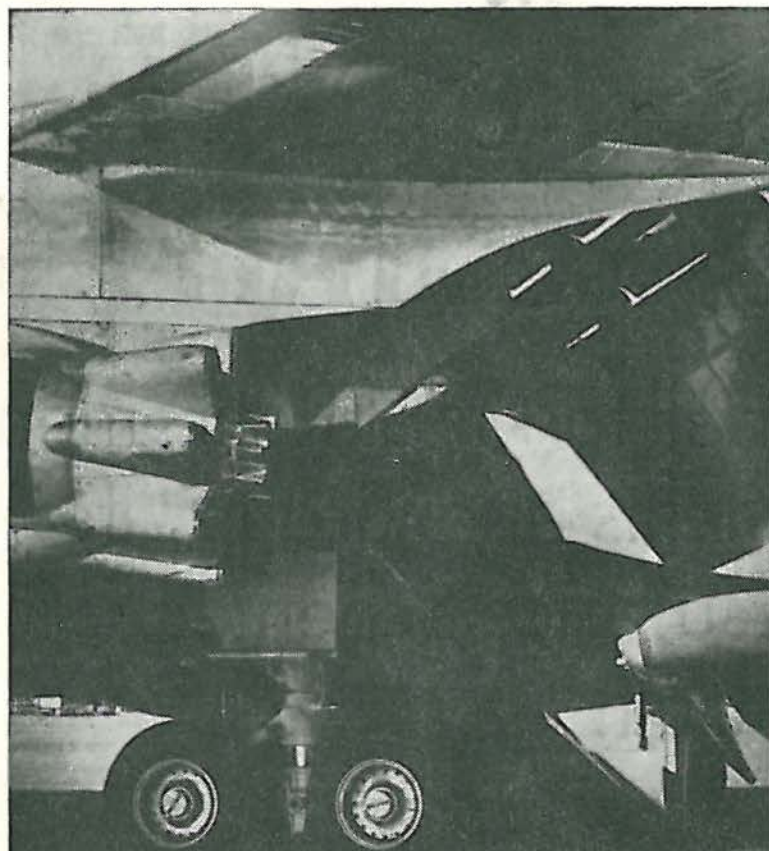
本文的目的不是討論勞工缺乏的原因。這缺乏是真的或者是由於管理不善而成，此一問題本刊可能日後加以研究。但目前的問題是出口增長下降和入口繼續增加都是由於內部不健全，並非外在市場的力量。雖然我們無法控制我們外銷市場的經濟動向，反對各國政府採取貿易限額措施，但我們對自己的經濟，尤其是勞工運用方面是可以加以控制的。因此我們需要集中精力去應付的不是聯合國貿易及發展會議的一般特惠計劃，不是共同市場，不是入口限制，而是怎樣去整頓自己的事務。

以多數國家經濟發展水準而言，我們仍然表現得很好，以絕對值而言，我們仍然比去年勝一籌。但我們能繼續下去而不鬆弛嗎？如果不能的話，為甚麼不能呢？

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The Bulletin

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

Several major changes were made to the Chamber's Constitution at the Chamber's Extraordinary General Meeting held on Monday, June 14th.

All members will soon receive their copies of the revised Memorandum and Articles of Association. However, for members' general information at this time, the implications of these changes are summarized below.

There have been two principal changes. The first allows for the establishment of a new advisory body — a Chamber Council, and the second allows a new framework for the working of the Chamber's Committees. Both changes are designed to encourage active participation in the Chamber's affairs by a wider cross-section of members.

The establishment of a Council is intended to make available to the Chamber an 'upper house' with a membership wider than the present General Committee, which can act as an advisory body to the Chamber on matters of top-level policy.

The Council will not replace the Chamber's General Committee — which under the constitution must remain the ultimate executive body — and will meet less frequently than the General Committee. All members of the General Committee will however be members of the proposed Council, together with other local businessmen of wide experience.

The Council will consist initially of some 25 members.

The second major change in the Articles allows the General Committee to delegate the power of appointment of all or part of the Chamber's Committee to particular groups of the Chamber members. This development can be associated with the recently announced establishment of eleven area sections of the Chamber, drawn from groups of members who have indicated their particular interest in trading with geographically defined markets.

These sections are now being formed and expect to meet within the next few weeks to elect members of their area committees. The Chairman of each area committee will sit on the International Trade Committee, which will advise the General Committee on the work of the newly formed International Trade Department.

Following from this, a further amendment to the Articles allows the Chamber's present sub-committees — which deal with matters such as shipping, taxation, certification etc. — to be known as 'Committees'. The work of the present Import and Export Sub-Committees will be taken over by the International Trade Committee and range of Committees will be extended to include new groups to advise on industry, home affairs, public relations etc.

The EGM also made several minor changes of a tidying up nature to the Articles, notably those covering the procedure for election of the General Committee, disciplinary action against members, etc.



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Is the boom over?

We are now half-way through 1971. So far this year, economic life has gone its normal course. There have been the usual crop of panics and threats. There has also been a steady continuation of some of the more healthy trends.

Britain plods on in its negotiations with the Common Market. The Rich Nation's Club continue to debate what concessions they will give under the UNCTAD Generalised Preferences Scheme and to whom they shall be given. The USA goes on making threatening noises about textile imports.

At home, the supply of labour grows, if anything, more tight. Rents continue to rise. Prices go up — few, if any, ever come down.

It has been a common or garden, ordinary, average, run-of-the mill half year.

Or has it?

According to the preliminary figures, during the four months to April this year, our domestic exports increased by just over 10 per cent in comparison with the equivalent period in 1970. However, in 1970 exports for the first four months had increased by 23 per cent over the figure for 1969. In other words our rate of growth during 1971 has been less than half that for 1970 during the same period.

Figures for re-exports show a more re-assuring pattern, although the volume involved is much smaller. In the first four months of 1970, re-

exports grew at a rate of over 11 per cent. In 1971 they have grown at a rate of 18 per cent.

While there has been a falling-off in the growth rate of exports, there has been nothing like an equivalent fall-off in the growth rate of imports. In 1970 imports into HK during January to April increased by 25.7 per cent over the 1969 total, whereas in 1971 the growth rate is still high at 23.1 per cent.

Trade gap widens

As, in absolute terms, we always import more than we export, our balance of visible trade gap is widening. In April 1969, the four month figure was \$525 million. By the end of the year it had reached \$1,696 million. In April 1970, it stood at \$832 million, rising to \$2,368 at the year-end. In April 1971, the figure reached a new high for this stage of the year at over \$1,525 million, an increase of over 70 per cent above the April 1970 figure.

It is a long time to go to December and trends established later in the year could well reverse this growing gap. In this respect, the next few months could be crucial since this is the time of year when many exporters ship their orders for the Xmas season. Yet if the trend is not reversed, it could signal a departure from the general experience of the latter half of the nineteen-sixties in which the overall movement had been towards

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a decrease in the visible adverse balance.

What is perhaps equally significant, 1970 saw a reversal of a seven year trend in which the rate of growth of imports was exceeded by the rate of growth of our total exports.

This trend can in fact be projected back for ten years, since the discrepancies in the early part of the period are really no more than minor fluctuations in a pretty clear overall pattern. It is to be hoped that the present phase is also a minor fluctuation, but unfortunately the current gap represents a larger margin than the differences referred to in the last sentence as 'minor fluctuations'.

To keep the position in true perspective, the balance of trade is not in itself the most crucial indicator of how the economy is performing, since this balance is turned into a favourable overall balance by our invisible earnings. But with noises being made of a possible drop-off in tourism, and an alteration in the spending pattern of tourists, it would be foolish to think that HK can always make up on the swings what it loses on the roundabouts.

Rising living standards

It would be tempting to say that the growth in imports is an indication of a rising standard of living — that we are importing more luxury goods, better foods, clothes, motor cars, television sets and so forth. This may be true, but it is very far from the whole truth.

The general rate of growth in our food bill for instance, which is a pretty basic indicator of the average standard of living, has more or less risen in proportion to our general import bill — in other words we may be feeding ourselves better (or at least on higher priced foodstuffs!) but we are not doing so at the expense of other imports.

Industrial re-equipment

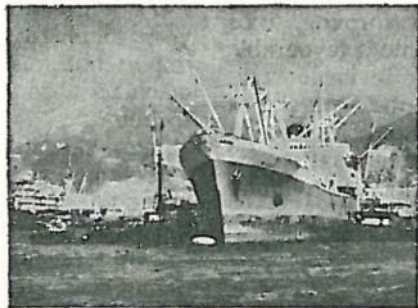
An increasing amount of our import bill is devoted to capital equipment for industry. Imports of capital goods rose from 8.3 per cent of the total import bill in 1968 to 9.9 per cent in 1969 and hit a high for recent years at 12.2 per cent in 1970. This trend appears to have continued into 1971, when for the first quarter of the year some 18 per cent of our total import bill was accounted for by the machinery and transport equipment section.

This category does admittedly include equipment not necessarily destined for industrial use, but is nonetheless a general indicator of a trend towards re-equipment by our manufacturers.

The 1971 growth in this category over the equivalent period last year was in fact a staggering 172 per cent, but it would be foolish to draw too many conclusions from this leap, since in this group of products a few large orders can artificially inflate the total.

Re-equipment is of course to HK's long term benefit, since without modern and efficient machinery in all

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areas of the economy, we will cease to be competitive. If in the meantime the price we have to pay for this is a higher import bill, it still represents money well spent — and, from an overall point of view, money we can still afford. Indeed, investment in new equipment is one important means of stimulating our rate of growth.

The price of imported industrial materials has of course also gone up — no one is attempting to deny that — and in some cases the increases have been steep. We have also been buying more materials.

On balance, while increased materials prices can in part explain HK's growing import bill, it is again most certainly not the whole story. And on the basis of figures available it seems unlikely that increased material costs are in themselves a major factor in any increase in pressure on margins.

Expansion in USA

Turning to the export side, undoubtedly the major reason for the disappointing performance is the lack of growth in the USA, where in the first quarter exports increased by only 6 per cent, as against the 20-25 per cent we have become used to. It is true that the next two largest markets, UK and Germany, showed a more healthy growth — the increase of 33 per cent in sales to the UK is particularly pleasing after a rather limp performance last year. And it was

heartening to see Australia record a hefty 20 per cent increase — not to mention the 38 per cent jump in Singapore's purchases.

The slow performance in the USA once again emphasises how dependent we are on this market. Slow down in the States, and no matter how well you do elsewhere, the whole economy loses some of its fire.

It would be tempting to ascribe the disappointing performance in the USA to the widely publicised American recession, and this undoubtedly is part of the story.

Chamber's gauge

But there is perhaps another explanation. The Chamber's own internal barometer of HK's success is the number of Certificates of Origin issued. This is not an infallible guide, and too much cannot be read into it. Some exporters may be obliged — or simply prefer — to do business with our competitors in the certification business. And the number of certificates issued records simply the number of shipments, not the size or value of transactions. But there is an overall relationship between the certificates we issue and the general trend of our performance in export markets.

To date the number of applications for certificates has remained more or less stable, and shown little of the growth characteristic of recent years. For instance, up to April this year just under 56,000 applications had

Con't. p. 25



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Briefing News from the Chamber ... and the rest of the world

□ An eight member **Hong Kong Economic Mission** visited Italy at the invitation of the Italian Government from May 9th to the 19th. The mission included members of the Chamber, the Chinese Manufacturers' Association, the Federation of Hong Kong Industries, the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce and the Indian Chamber of Commerce, and was under the Leadership of Mr. Leo T. H. Lee, a member of the Chamber.

As most major Italian products such as electrical appliances, motor vehicles and machinery already have representatives in Hong Kong, no import transactions were made during the mission. However, Mr. Lee reports that most of the mission members made promising contacts with buyers, and in some cases contracts were drawn up.

During their ten day visit, the mission attended a conference with the Italian Institute for Foreign Trade at which such subjects as freight rates, and joint ventures were discussed.

The members of the mission also called on the Milan Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Lee briefed the Milan Chamber on various aspects of Hong Kong trade, emphasising Hong Kong trade with Italy over recent years. (See also P. 14).

□ The Hong Kong Management Association is holding a Seminar on 'Effective Control for better Management' for senior management on Thursday July 15th, 1971 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Seminar will be led by Professor Robert Newton Anthony of the Harvard School of

Business Administration. Applications should be in by June 29th. For further information, please contact the Management Association, United Chinese Bank Building, 12th floor, 31-37 Des Voeux Road, Central.

□ The Chamber is helping in an investigation into increased premia or rents for **renewable Crown leases**. Members who hold leases which are due for renewal in the near future, can help the Chamber in this study by forwarding the following details:— 1) lot number 2) locality 3) whether the building is or was a) an existing pre-war building; or b) an existing post-war building 4) whether development is or was intended 5) nature/user of building 6) crown rent payable prior to renewal 7) market value of land as assessed for the purpose of renewing the lease 8) whether any special factors were taken into account in fixing market value of land 9) date on which market value of land was assessed 10) date of renewal of lease 11) terms for renewal a) premium, b) annual charge (comprising the total of commuted premium and Zone Crown rent) 12) whether the lessee opted for a or b in item 11. 13) term of renewal lease in years.

All replies will be kept strictly confidential and should be addressed personally to R. T. Griffiths at the Chamber. Please mark envelopes **Confidential: Crown lease**.

□ The Chairman, as a member of the Committee for the **Ghurka Welfare Appeal**, has asked that we bring

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A. Mr. Leo T. H. Lee, Leader of the Hong Kong Economic Mission, spoke to members of the Milan Chamber of Commerce on May 10th during the Mission's tour of Italy. (see also p. 13).

B. Some 40 new Members took part in a familiarisation tour of the Chamber on May 11th. Here they are briefed on the work of Certification Department.

C. Mr. N. B. M. Whitley, co-ordinator of this year's Festival of Hong Kong. (See Article p. 18).

D. Philip Au Yeung, the Hong Kong design student, now studying on a Chamber scholarship in New York, recently won first prize in a design competition sponsored by the International Wool Secretariat. Here is one of his winning designs, a bare midriff dress of pure double knit wool.

E. Mr. E. K. Lee, Director of the Korean Trade Centre, spoke to members of the Chamber's Korea Area Section on June 4th. Mr. Lee stressed the importance of investment and joint ventures as a means of developing the full potential for trade. This was the first meeting specifically arranged for members who have enrolled in the Chamber's new Area Section structure. Over thirty members attended the meeting.



F. The leader of the British Construction Industry Mission, Mr. J. A. de Normann (centre) and the Secretary of the Mission, Mr. P. G. Jordan, (left) called on the Chamber on April 30th. Among the subjects discussed were the potential here for building new products, and the proposed underground project. They are seen here with Mr. G. H. Pritchard, member of the Imports Sub-Committee.



Briefing - continued

the attention of members to this cause. Over the years, the Gurka regiments have been closely associated with Hong Kong, and their presence here has contributed to maintaining the stable political environment without which commerce could not have prospered. Members who would like to show their gratitude to these men should do so by donating to the appeal, rather than by sending contributions direct to the Chamber or the Chairman himself. The contributions should be addressed to The Secretary, Gurka Welfare Appeal, Victoria Barracks, Hong Kong.

□ The Chamber's next series of **Chinese Language Examinations** will be held according to the following schedule at the Chamber Offices, 9th floor, Union House.

Mandarin —

Afternoon, July 23rd

Cantonese —

Morning, July 24th

Candidates must register with the Chamber not later than 5 p.m. Tuesday, July 13th, 1971. An examination fee of \$50 per candidate will be charged.

Details of the syllabus and conditions for these examinations are available on application to the Chamber.

□ The Chamber's **Special Relief Fund** has been included among those charitable institutions or trusts of a public character which are exempt from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance. A list of other such approved institutions is available as in a supplement to the

Government Gazette of May 14, 1971.

□ A sound knowledge of English is essential to those working in commerce and industry — and to our export drive. To meet this need, the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of Hong Kong University offers a carefully devised and integrated series of **courses in the use of English**. General courses are offered for those who wish for a greater fluency in English for every day purposes, while courses in English for commercial practice are specifically related to the kinds of English used in commerce and industry.

Last year the Chamber sponsored several members of its senior staff, who took the Commercial Course. In every case they found the course well-organised and extremely beneficial. Members are encouraged to take the advantage of this program by sponsoring appropriate employees.

The courses will begin in September, but early applications are strongly recommended.

For further information and application forms, please contact Mr. D. J. Macintosh, Department of Extra-Mural Studies Universal House, 11th floor, Des Voeux Road, Central. Tel. H-456443.

□ The Lutheran Kwun Tong Vocational Training Centre will be offering a variety of **courses at both vocational and prevocational levels** during the 1971/1972 session. Applications for enrolment should reach the Centre by July 15, 1971. For a list of courses being offered and

other details please contact the Kwun Tong Vocational Training Centre, 5 Tsui Ping Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon. Tel. K-891238.

□ The Hong Kong Management Association will be offering a lecture and discussion section on **Managing your Purchasing Department** on Tuesday July 13th and 20th, 1971 in the evening. The lecturer will be Mr. R. Kivert of the Government Supplies Department. For further information, please contact the Management Association, United Chinese Bank Building, 12th floor. Tel. 234141.

□ The Hong Kong Trade Development Council will be organising a trade promotional mission to the **Frankfurt International Trade Fair**, which will be held from August 29th to September 1st in Frankfurt, West Germany. Members who are interested in taking part in this mission are asked to contact the TDC direct.

□ The Chamber has several copies of two recent publications — **Crystal From Germany** — a directory of German manufacturers and exporters dealing in domestic, decorative and illumination glassware, and **Technical Glass From Germany** — a directory of German manufacturers and suppliers of glass products for use in science and industry. Members who would like a copy of the above publications should contact Veronica Loo, Tel. H-237177 Ext. 42. Since the supply is limited, copies will be distributed on a first-come-first-served basis.

□ The Hong Kong Productivity Council will be offering the following training courses starting in June and July:—

Stock Control & Storeskeeping— given in Cantonese from June 28th to August 5th., fee \$250.

Material Management — given in Cantonese from June 29th to July 3rd, fee \$250.

Plastic Injection Moulding Technology — given in Cantonese from June 29th to August 3rd, fee \$280:

Plating on Metals — given in Cantonese from July 2nd to August 8th, fee \$280.

Job Evaluation — given in Cantonese from July 5th to August 5th, fee \$220.

Marketing and Advertising Seminar — given in English from July 7th to July 8th, fee \$250.

Budgeting and Budgetary Control — given in Cantonese from July 9th to August 27th, fees \$330, Part I \$120, Part II (Optional).

Manufacturing Problems of Hair Wig Industry — given in Cantonese from July 15th to September 9th, fee \$330.

Basic Training in Computer Programming — given in Cantonese from July 19th to Jan. 17th, 1972, fee \$900.

Basic Computer Concepts — given in Cantonese from July 19th to August 12th, fee \$160.

Safety Requirements of Electrical Products — given in Cantonese from July 22nd to August 23rd, fee \$220.

Help the Festival!

The pursuit of happiness is fast becoming a lost art, it seems. Luckily here in the Colony, there is the Festival of Hong Kong to remind people what it is all about.

The aim of the Festival is particularly refreshing — it is simply to give as many people as possible, especially the children and younger people, a good time. Fun, relaxation and enjoyment, what could be a more pleasant aim.

The first Festival was held in 1969 and those who were here for it will remember what a tremendous success it was. This year, the Festival of Hong Kong will be held from November 27th to December 6th and promises to be an even greater success.

How it began

The suggestion that Government should sponsor a festival for the people of Hong Kong arose at first after a very successful 'mini' festival in 1967. The proposal was then raised again in 1968 when it was learned that the Federation of Hong Kong Industries had decided not to stage another Hong Kong Week. At that point, Government picked up the ball and took on the role as co-ordinator of the Festival.

Government could not have made the 1969 Festival the success it was, however, if it were not for the whole-hearted support of the entire community. The Festival spirit was obviously highly contagious — businessmen, professional entertainers, students — people from every sector of the community contributed their time, effort, talents and money to make the 1969 festival a week to remember.

As a local Chinese businessman

noted at the time, 'I was deeply touched by the Festival. For the first time in my life I could see most people in Hong Kong really show their interest in something.'

With the experience gained from the previous Festival, the 1971 Festival of Hong Kong should be even bigger and better. It will be held a bit earlier in the year than it was in 1969, thus allowing more time between the Festival and the Christmas season. The basic programme will be the same as in 1969, but more rural areas will have their own programmes and there will be more events in general. As before, there will be three major events — the float parade, a two-day Fiesta, and a big show to be held in the Government Stadium similar to the military tattoo of the last Festival.

Time to get rolling

The Festival office is already humming with activity. It may seem as if the Festival is still a long way off — but when one considers the magnitude of the endeavour, and all the different aspects which must be co-ordinated in order to ensure that the Festival runs smoothly, six months is not a very long time at all.

The key to the Festival's success is participation. Going by the en-

thusiasm shown by the entire community in 1969, getting people to participate will probably not pose much of a problem. But in order to allow for as much time as possible for the preparations, individuals and the commercial sector of the community are being approached now to think about how they would like to take part in this year's Festival.

Happiness is participating

Participating in the Festival is like donating to a good cause — after all, what could be a better cause than to make children happy and to raise the morale of the whole community?

Participation can take any number of forms. One of the most popular venues for a commercial firm is to enter a float in the final procession. The floats entered in 1969 covered an impressive range of themes from man-in-space to traditional Chinese themes to pop themes. This year, the floats promise to be even more spectacular because only the best designs submitted will be selected. To allow contributors as much time as possible to get the floats ready for the procession to be held on December 6th, applications are due in by July 10th.

Other ways for a commercial firm to participate include the sponsoring of sports events, fashion shows, variety shows, pop shows, etc; providing the prizes in contests; providing the equipment, costumes or whatever else may be needed for an event; and so forth. The pos-

sibilities are endless and the Festival co-ordinators will welcome sponsorship in any form.

For example, the Chamber itself is supporting the Festival this year by sponsoring a commercial art competition. The competition is divided into junior and senior divisions. All full-time design students are eligible to enter the senior division, and all full-time students of a registered secondary school are eligible to enter the junior division. The winners of this competition, three in each division, will be awarded two-year scholarships provided by the Chamber. During the Festival, the Chamber will also sponsor an exhibition of the best entries to the competition.

Hong Kong Mardi Gras

The success of the Festival relies in great part on the enthusiasm and willing co-operation of the commercial sector of the community. Members who would like to take an active part in the 1971 Festival of Hong Kong, whether by submitting a float or sponsoring some event, are asked to contact the Festival Office, 4th floor, Fung House, soon.

There are festivals such as this held around the world, but the Festival of Hong Kong compares favourably with such famous festivals as the Mardi Gras. For those who were not here for the last Festival or for those who have forgotten—just wait until this year's Festival and see—it's going to be a sure winner!

What's a Heuga?



There are many Heugas—Heugaviva, Heugaflor, Heugafelt, Heugaberber, Heugalux and Heugaline. All are first quality carpet in tile form. All are loose laid, interchangeable, 100% colour fast and guaranteed not to shift or curl up at the edges.

Heuga Australia have taken great pains to ensure that they have a carpet tile that's right for every commercial or domestic application.

Heugalux and Heugaviva; for instance,

are soft, rich coloured tiles which are ideal for domestic use and yet quite versatile and Heugalux is strong enough to be commercially applied.

Heugaflor and Heugafelt are robust, long wearing tiles which are unsurpassed in their toughness and versatility and are ideal for areas of heavy traffic. Heugaline and Heugaberber are luxury carpet of the highest quality, perfect for the more discerning home, and equally at home in the more discerning office.



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Pick of the Press

Reprinted from the Financial Times, London

The Disaster Lobby at work

During a visit to Hong Kong earlier this year, the Chairman of the American Importers Association warned that one of the biggest problems local manufacturers will have to face in the US market is the growing of the Consumer Groups. Already legislation is pending — both on a national scale and at state or city level — that could affect the sales of some HK goods. The recent incidents over love-beads and allegedly poisonous kitchen equipment shows that HK is at risk. The Financial Times reports:—

The Nickname "disaster lobby" has been coined in the US for the people who complain about things that don't work: lawn-mowers that won't cut grass, or television sets that burst into flames. They are the indignant consumers.

Consumers, arise!

"Consumerism" is usually explained by what Henry Ford II, in a recent speech on the future of big business, referred to as "the changing spirit of the public". Up to that moment few corporate leaders or, for that matter, politicians had bothered to pay much attention to the public's spirit.

Over the last few years, armed with substantial and increasing evidence that they are being robbed, cheated, deceived, injured and killed by their purchases in the market-place, consumers have been jogged awake. They are demanding a voice in matters which concern their welfare and stronger protection against the negligent, indifferent or fraudulent practices of business and industry.

Although the consumer movement is now far bigger than any individual, its most effective advocate is still Raph Nader. Since his first appearance on the national scene in the early 1960s and his successful campaign

against the design weakness of General Motors' Corvair model, he has consistently proved what a single individual can achieve in the face of depersonalised, modern technology. Nader and his 200 Raiders at the Centre for Responsive Law have acted as the stimulus behind such legislation as the Automobile Safety Act, the Wholesome Meat Act and the Coal Mine Safety Act. Without Nader the public might never have been made aware of the dangers of dental X-Rays on pregnant women, or radiation from colour television sets or of the taste-enhancer, monosodium glutamate, when used in baby foods.

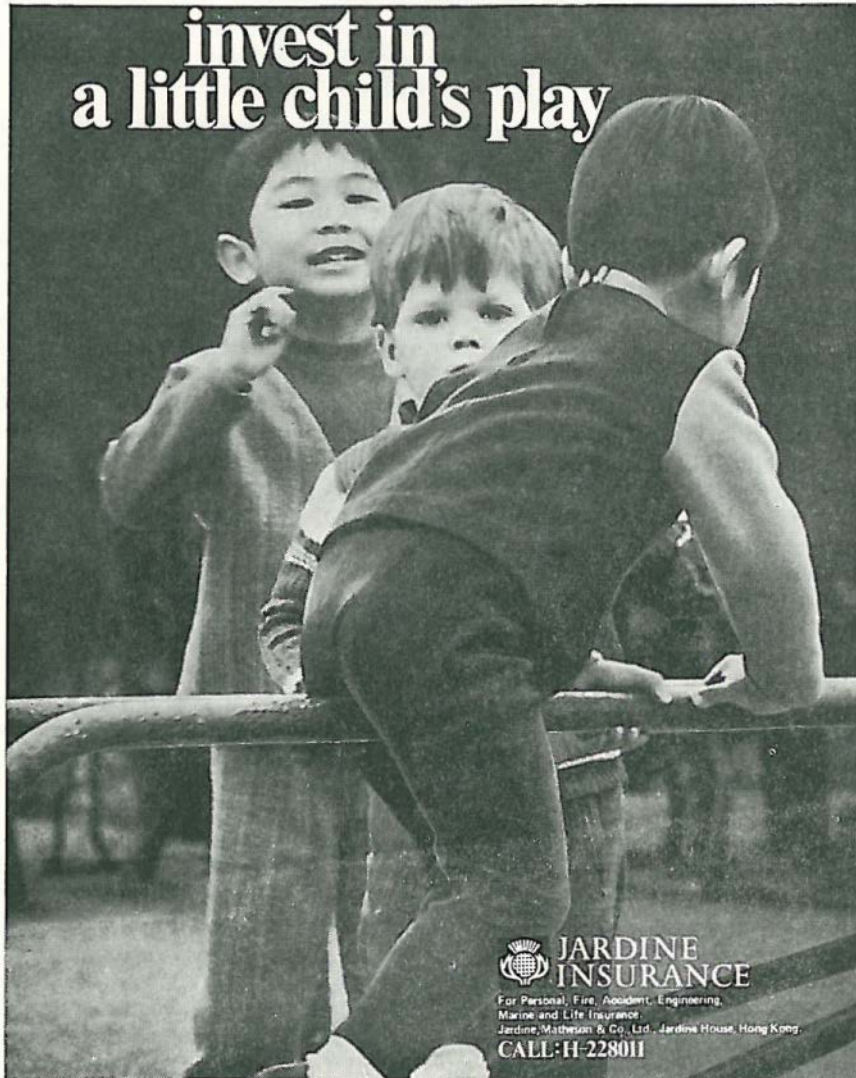
FTC — Alive and well

To-day, thanks to the blasting criticisms of Nader and the American Bar Association, there is a new and revitalised Federal Trade Commission. "It is alive and well and getting stronger every day," claims the new chairman, Miles Kirapatrik. To prove it the FTC is seeking preliminary court injunctions to stop deceptive sales practices and require restitution to consumers from offending companies. After 11 years of fruitless effort to stop the manufacturers of Geritol advertising that the tonic relieved "tired blood" in the over-40s,

A few dollars invested in your children now, gives them every chance in the future. Life assurance guarantees them a cash payment, for expenses like education or travel. Our name guarantees something else:

we'll still be around when they've grown up. Jardine Insurance has been in the business a long time, so we know the answers on assurance. Give a little thought to your growing investment.

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the FTC has finally taken the case to court, seeking \$1m. in penalties. The advertising has stopped. Among the targets for its current investigations are the claims made for enzyme detergents, aspirins, nutritional bread and hair-replacement processes.

Making manufacturers jump

On Capitol Hill consumer advocates and their sympathisers are making renewed efforts to push through the Congress a package of consumer legislation, much of which has been on the agenda for the last ten years. This year, for the first time the prospects for passage of some of the most important Bills look good.

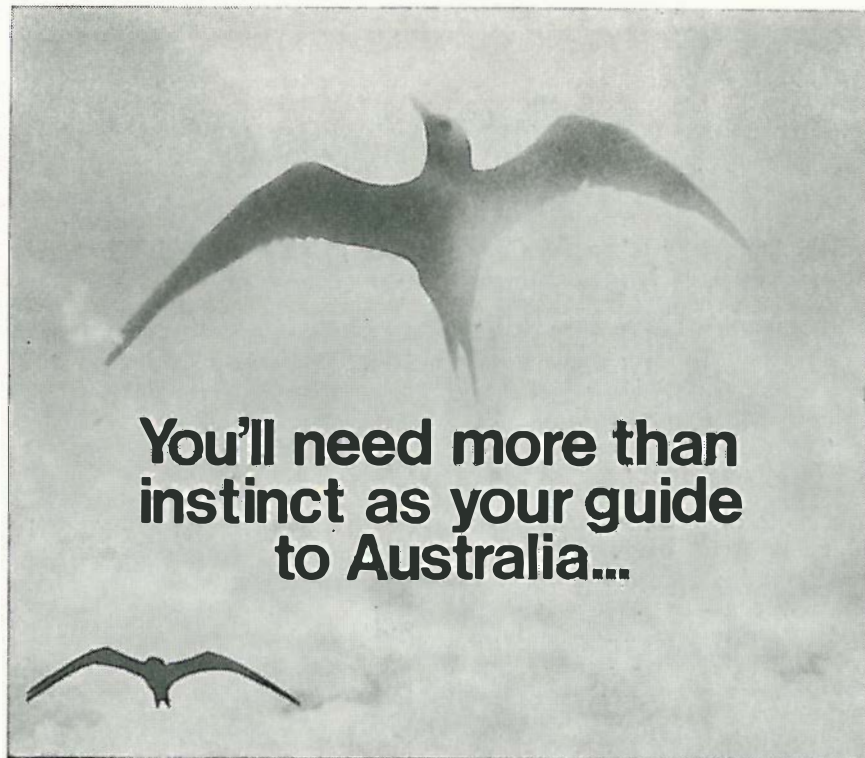
Action suits in Federal courts would permit a group of consumers to sue manufacturers for damages on behalf of all purchasers of a product. The lawyers' fees, which normally inhibit individual action, would be awarded by the court out of the successful damages. On average each year, 30,000 Americans are killed and 110,000 are permanently disabled "as a result of incidents connected with consumer products." Death and injury are caused, among other things, by television sets which catch fire, glass doors with no safety glaze, ladders which break, floor furnaces which scorch and burn, lawn-mowers which injure and toys which maim and disfigure. The Act is likely to set stiff mandatory standards.

Increased consumer activities are making the manufacturers jump. The makers of detergents have been forced

back into the research laboratories to find substitutes for phosphate and enzymes, which are under attack for poisoning fish and causing skin irritation. Meanwhile, the advertising claims for "new" and "improved" washing powders are maintaining a low profile on the television screens. Other firms are using the media to project a new, consumer-conscious image. Ford motor company has a "Ford listens better" campaign, and General Motors is testing a pilot project that would allow unhappy customers to telephone Detroit from anywhere in the country free of charge. Consumer hot-lines have been opened up by radio and television stations and by many firms and associations.

Winning consumer confidence

President Nixon's hopes for a quick economic recovery depend upon increased consumer spending. The consumer will be reluctant to fork out the extra dollars, unless he is confident that what is being done to improve the quality of his purchases is more than window-dressing.



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been received at the Chamber, which is a few hundred *less* than during the equivalent period of 1970.

Keeping in mind the comments made previously about the importance of export shipments for the Xmas season, the Chamber soon hopes to see this figure make up for lost ground.

Enquiries among exporters — and their spontaneous comments — suggest however that short order books is not the sole or indeed a particularly widespread cause of problems. The orders are there, or can be obtained, say many exporters, but the factories simply have not adequate labour to meet the customers' delivery dates.

Jobs vacant

This suggestion coincides with the recent announcement by the Commissioner of Labour, Mr. R. M. Hetherington, that over ten thousand new jobs became available in industry during the first quarter of 1971 but only about one-third of these were filled. Overall, according to Labour Department, industry in Hong Kong is short of some 23,000 workers. Although this represents just under four per cent of those actually in employment, the situation is sufficient to create a bottleneck that could make all the difference between an outstanding and a merely good rate of growth.

It is not the purpose of this article to discuss the reasons for the shortage of labour. Whether it is real, or an apparent shortage arising

from mismanagement of this vital resource is a question that the Bulletin may return to on another occasion.

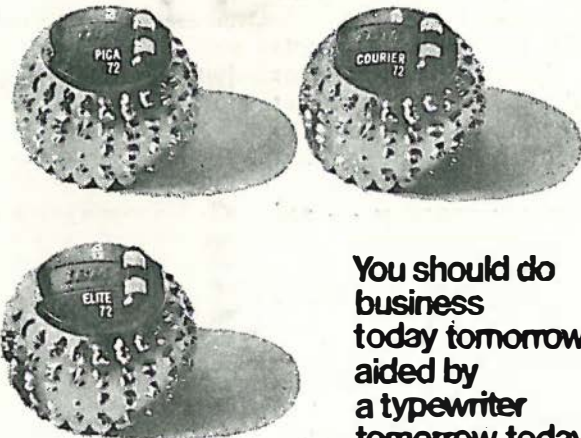
Internal weakness

For the present, the question that arises is whether the fall off in the growth of exports — accompanied by the continuing meteoric rise in imports — is simply the result of internal weaknesses rather than external market forces. Could it be that we are in some ways our own worst enemy? Although we have no control over economic events in our markets, and precious little control over trading restrictions imposed on us by overseas governments, we do have a measure of control over our own economy, and particularly our use of labour. Thus it could be that the real problem on which we should concentrate our energies is not Generalised Preferences, not the Common Market, and not import restrictions, but the means of setting our own house in order.

Still doing well

The answer to the question that was posed in the title of this article is 'no'. We are still doing well by the standards of most economies. And we are still in absolute terms doing better than we were at this time last year. But can we keep it up? And if not, why not?

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保護消費者

美國入口商聯會主席於今年初訪港時稱，本港廠家在美國市場面臨的最大問題是消費者組成的團體勢力日漸增強。足以影響一些本港製成品的法案，無論是全國性，各州或各市的，已經擬好，有待執行。最近發生的事件關於愛情咖啡及被指為有毒的廚房用具都顯示香港處境危險。金融時報作如下報導：

那些在美國專門投訴日用東西失靈的人，如剪草機不能剪草，或電視機失火等，已經被人起個綽號——「災難的走廊」。他們是那些憤怒的消費者。

亨利福特二世在最近一次演說談及大企業之未來，解釋「消費者主義」為「羣眾態度的轉變」。直至那時候為止，很少大企業家及政治客就那件事而論，或對羣眾態度加以注意。

過去數年來，消費者拿着他們在市場購回來的物品而發覺被騙甚或招致身體損害的證據，便大為震驚。他們要求在關係他們的福利事情上發言，並要求加強保護以免受工商界的疏忽，不關心，及欺詐措施的侵害。

雖然消費者運動已超越一己之力量，但最起作用的倡導者仍然是「尼特」此人。自從一九六〇年代初期首次在全國亮相及成功地指責「通用汽車公司」出產「高夫雅」型汽車在設計上的弱點那項活動後，他經常地一個人怎樣面對現代工業技術而獲得成就。「尼特」及其二百個追隨者在「反應法律中心」曾經在幕後促成「汽車安全法案」、「肉食衛生法案」、「煤礦安全法案」等的立例。沒有「尼特」一般人或許永不會發覺到牙齒X光對孕婦的危險，或者彩色電視的輻射，和味精用於嬰兒食物的害處。

今日，由於「尼特」及「美國法律公會」強烈批評之下，一個新的「聯邦商業委員會」復甦起來。他的主席「却畢德」宣稱：「這個組織是活的，而且情況良好，一天比一天強壯。」為了證明這個事實「聯邦商業委員會」現正尋求初步的法院禁制令，停止欺騙

銷售行為，並着令那些違法公司將財物歸還消費者。

在美國國會大廈消費者主義倡導者，正重新努力企圖使國會通過一批為消費者而立的法案。許多此等法案已經在議程上有十年之歷史。今年首次覺得有些重要法案可望獲得通過。

在聯邦法院的訴訟將准許一組消費者代表所有購買該製成品的消費者，要求製造商賠償。至於律師的費用，通常因數目龐大而令人裹足不前，將會由法院從賠償費代扣除。由於消費品所引起的意外，美國每年有三萬人死亡，十萬多人終身殘廢。死亡及身體損害是由於電視機着火，玻璃門沒有安全上釉的表面，梯級中斷，火爐焚燒，剪草機損害身體，玩具使身體某部份殘廢等。該法案將確定一些嚴謹的標準。

消費者的活動使製造商激動而緊張。清潔劑的製造商被逼回到實驗室去找尋磷酸鹽及酵素的代替品。因為這兩種化學原料因毒害魚類及引起皮膚發癢而受攻擊。目前那些在廣告上宣稱「新的」及「改良的」洗潔粉在電視螢光幕出現不多。其他公司則利用傳播媒介去創造對消費者關懷的新意像。福特汽車公司推行一個「福特比其他公司更願意聆聽消費者意見」的活動。通用汽車公司正試辦計劃，讓那些不滿意的消費者在全國任何各地打電話往「底特律」投訴，不收費用。各電台、電視，及很多公司都已開設與消費者通話的熱線。

尼克遜總統所望的經濟復原有賴消費增加。消費者除非對所欲選的物品，有信心，並認為是真正獲得了改良，否則是不願多花錢。

本會贊助香港節美術比賽

由於一九六九年第一屆香港節成績美滿、備受全港居民熱烈歡迎，故第二屆之香港節將於本年度十一月二十七日至十二月六日，如期舉行。

回顧一九六九年所舉行之香港節之成功，有賴於本港市民，尤其是商業機構及團體的踴躍參與。

本年度之香港節為期十天，而預料當較去屆出色和熱鬧；節目方面更是多姿多彩，其中包括一連串五光十色及設計不同的花車行列、聯歡大會及步操等表演。尤其本屆之花車大巡遊，將較去屆壯觀。意欲參加花車大巡遊之各商號，請於七月十日前與香港節辦事處接洽，以便安排巡遊次序等事宜。該辦事處設於本港中區干諾道中，馮氏大廈五樓。

香港節籌備會更歡迎各商行踴躍贊助大會之各項節目；如運動項目、時裝表演、歐西流行曲演奏等。大會亦希望各界人士能慷慨捐贈獎品予在香港節內舉行之比賽之優勝者。

本會於本屆之香港節將贊助一美術比賽。此項比賽分初、高二組。專攻設計科之學生可參加高級組，凡就讀中學之學生，均有資格參加初級組，每組之首、二、三名優勝者可獲本會頒發之獎學金。而獲獎之佳作將於香港節期內展覽，予各界人士參觀。

世界各地均有舉行類此香港節之節日。而我們之香港節全不比外國之狂歡日遜色。於去屆舉辦之香港節期間，港九、新界及離島各地均分別舉行多項節目慶祝佳節。居住在安老院、盲人院及孤兒院等機構之人仕皆有機會共享歡樂。全港每一角落在香港節期內充滿昇平愉快之氣氛。午膳時間，中區之皇后廣場圍滿了欣賞在那兒舉行露天時裝表演之人仕。去屆之香港節尤以花車大巡遊最受注目，使大會生色不少。該屆之花車行

列沿着彌敦道巡遊，吸引了大約五十萬位觀眾，更有數十萬之居民在家中欣賞由電視轉播之巡遊盛況。巡遊之項目又包括火龍、獅、雜技及舞蹈等演出，全程歷時約兩小時半。而與會參觀之羣眾皆極表歡欣。

本會舉行華語考試

本會於一九七一年七月份將舉行一組華語考試，詳情如下：

國語會話考試日期：七月廿三日。

粵語會話考試日期：七月廿四日。

考試地點：本會會址，於仁行十樓。

報名日期：考生應於七月十三日下午五時前到本會註冊。

費用：考試費用為每位五十元，於報名時一併繳交。

本年度一月至四月份 貿易統計分析發表

本年度一至四月份貿易統計分析，已由統計處發表，會員可到本會索閱。

此項統計分析，包括本港對外全部貿易，計有：英國、美國、加拿大、西德、日本、澳洲、瑞典、挪威、丹麥、瑞士、比利時、盧森堡、意大利、荷蘭、中國大陸、南非、法國、奧地利、葡萄牙、芬蘭、西班牙、印尼、台灣、菲律賓、韓國、巴基斯坦、多明尼加、阿爾及利亞、加納、尼日利亞...等。

香港貿易發展局 主辦西德貿易團

香港貿易發展局目下正籌備一往西德之貿易代表團，出席在法蘭克舉行之國際貿易展覽會。該展覽會為期由八月二十九日至九月一日。意欲參加之人仕，請直接與香港貿易發展局接洽。



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