



The Bulletin

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce



AUGUST 1970

COVER: The Au Yeung name may be as famous as the Dior name one of these days. Philip Au Yeung, the winner of last year's Fashion Design Competition sponsored by the Chamber, is now half-way through his two-year course at the New York Fashion Institute of Technology — and everything indicates that he is going to make a name for himself in his chosen field. Not only is he extremely talented — as the cover and center page sketches show — but during this one short year, he has also managed to produce a remarkably good academic record, and built-up experience by free-lancing for one of New York's top designers.

In Brief

News and announcements
from Hong Kong and abroad

□ The Chamber's Secretary, **Mr. J. B. Kite**, has been recently appointed by the Governor to serve on the Rent Increases Advisory Panel.

□ The Morrison Hill Technical Institute will conduct several **part-time day-release courses** for apprentices in industrial firms when the new academic term opens in September.

These courses will include carpentry, joinery and cabinet making, plumbing and pipe fitting, painting, decorating and polishing, motor vehicle (apprentice) mechanics, engineering craft (apprentice) and workshop instructor training.

For more information, please contact the Institute in Wan Chai.

□ The Hong Kong Technical College will introduce a **full-time company secretarial course** later this year to train company secretaries, especially for medium and small firms.

The course is designed to help students obtain the professional qualifications needed for membership of the Corporation of Secretaries and the Institute of Chartered Secretaries in Britain.

It will be a three-year course covering accountancy, economics, company law, and secretarial and administrative practice.

For more information, please contact the Technical College.

□ The Hong Kong Trade Development Council has put out two **survey reports**. One is on the U.S.A., E.E.C. and U.K. Markets for Imported Radios and the other is on the Australia

Market for Imported Toys. Both reports are available for members' perusal in the Chamber library.

□ The Australian Trade Commission has presented the Chamber with a beautifully designed book entitled **Consult Australia, a guide to Australian professional consultants**. The book is available to members in the Chamber's library.

□ **Two new trade directories** have just been received by the Chamber library. One, a German publication entitled *Who Supplies What*, deals with trade in West Germany. The other, the *East Trade Directory* covers trade in all the major countries in the Far East, Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

□ The Hong Kong Trade Development Council has brought to the Chamber's attention that a new edition of *Apparel '70* is due to be published in early September. Members can purchase this and future editions **direct from the TDC** office at HK\$6 per issue. The TDC general trade promotional magazine, *Hong Kong Enterprise* is also available direct from the TDC at an annual subscription of HK\$30.

□ **Hong Kong trade statistics** for the period of January-June 1970 analysed from the published figures of the Census and Statistics Department are now available to members. These include H.K. Overall Trade, H.K. trade with U.K., U.S.A., Canada, West Germany, Japan, Australia and all other significant markets.

Continued

As members may know, the Trade and Industry Advisory Board Committee has recommended that commercial banks and the Government should establish a scheme to assist small scale industries with loans for the purchase of new plant and machinery.

The complete report on this proposal is available at the Chamber. The Chamber is keen to have members comments on the scheme. Any member wishing to have the opportunity to comment should contact Harry Garlick (H-241381).

The main provisions of the scheme as proposed, are as follows:

The Committee defines a small scale factory as one directly employing not more than 200 workers with a total proprietor's fund of not more than \$600,000. (Over 95 percent of the factories registered with the Labour Department fall within this Category.)

The scheme should be operated for a trial period of three years and the total money loaned during this period should not exceed \$10 million.

The organiation which is entrusted with the responsibility for administering the scheme should be capable of analysing the financial position of the applicant for a loan and assessing the technical and financial position of the project for which he seeks a loan. A report to the bank of the client's choice would then be made together with advice to the client, through the bank, when appropriate.

It is believed that the Hong Kong Productivity Center may be able to provide these reporting services.

Loans under the scheme would be made direct to a client by the participating bank of his choice, who would have the power to attach any additional conditions to the loan above those that might be recommended by the scheme's central organisation or even to refuse a loan.

Commercial banks and Government should accept an agreed proportion of the commercial risk in every loan granted and the profits and losses should be shared in the same proportion.

The interest rates charged by participating banks should reflect the cost of money at any given time, the degree of risk and the cost of the insurance cover provided by Government. There should also be an additional on-cost reflecting the cost of the scheme's central organisation.

Any scheme set up should not preclude the possibility of extending medium term guarantees through the banking system to enable small scale industry to obtain finance from machinery suppliers.



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The Bulletin

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce
Union House, August

One might be forgiven for thinking that the developed nations such as the United States and United Kingdom have no problems worth speaking of, when compared with, say, some Asian nations.

But obviously one would be wrong. The USA is apparently on the verge of national disaster because some of its citizens choose to save the odd dollar by buying competitively priced imports rather than domestically produced goods.

Likewise, we all know that the UK has had balance of payment problems, although, to the direct observer, this appears to have little reflection in the standard of living of British people.

The link is that both countries are seeking similar answers to their problems. The United States seeks to impose quotas on imported goods, while the UK seeks admission to the Common Market, which could also make life more difficult for our exporters.

So Hong Kong has its problems too. But it can be galling to think that one may be penalised simply because one has been successful.

The Earl of Selkirk put the case for Hong Kong very fairly in a recent Parliamentary debate.

"Here you have, in point of fact, an economic miracle; a combination of British and Chinese genius that has produced something where nothing existed before.

"Let us remember that it is probably the most important dependent territory governed from Westminster. We are responsible for it.

"If we go into these negotiations (i.e. for the Common Market) it is for us to maintain our responsibility and to see that Hong Kong gets a fair deal in Europe. If Hong Kong were a backward country we could probably make an easy arrangement.

"It may be that they can climb over a 15 per cent general tariff, and if they do so, well and good; but it is still our duty to see that they get a fair deal and that the result of their ability to create and develop their own territory is not thrown aside."

Sir John Cowperthwaite, the Financial Secretary, has received assurances from Her Majesty's Government that 'it would make every effort to protect the Commonwealth's position during negotiations for Britain's entry into the Common Market'.

We wonder what this really means? It is difficult to imagine HMG publicly stating that it would *not* try to safeguard the Commonwealth's position.

It would have been gratifying to have received a somewhat more specific assurance from HMG. For all we know, it appears that Hong Kong may be regarded exactly as some of the larger and more developed parts of the Commonwealth, for which Britain long ago disclaimed any meaningful political responsibility.

Chairman: G. M. B. Salmon; *Vice Chairman:* P. G. Williams; *Secretary:* J. B. Kite; *Assistant Secretary:* R. T. Griffiths; *Business Promotion:* S. L. Chung, W. S. Chan, A. Chung, P. Choy, Miss C. Fung; *Certification:* A. C. C. Stewart, F. M. Castro, W. K. F. Wang, C. T. Wu, H. Cheng; *Public Relations:* Harry Garlick, Lee Sherard; *Membership:* C. Tsang; *Office Supervisor:* V. Wong.

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Plain man's guide to U.S. quotas

For Hong Kong, the proposed legislation on import quotas being considered by the US Government could result in a set back to trade not only with the USA, but also — as the results of a "trade war" — with markets throughout Europe. However, the current situation does not call for panic and the possible effect of quotas is still surrounded by many 'ifs' and 'outs'. Furthermore, at this stage the facts of the situation are likely to change from week to week. To try to clear up some of the confusion surrounding the US moves, we give an account of the situation as it is at time of going to press (mid-August).

Will the move to bring in quotas affect Hong Kong?

Almost certainly. But it must be emphasized that the Bill proposing quotas is not yet law, but merely in the drafting and voting stage. It seems likely, however, that the Bill in some form — but not necessarily its present form — will become law.

What sections of Hong Kong industry could be affected?

At the moment the Bill has been drafted by the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee so as to affect specifically the textiles and the footwear industries. The Bill also contains provision that could affect other industries. When Congress reassembles in September, it must be voted on by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House will probably vote on the Bill under a 'no amendment' rule that will preclude any alteration. But it is though possible that the Senate may try to amend it by including specific products of other industries. President Nixon must, however, approve the Bill

before it becomes law, and he has said that he will not sign it if it refers to items other than textiles.

If the President refuses to sign the Bill, is that the end of the matter?

No. The Bill then goes back to Congress for reconsideration and it must be re-passed by a two-thirds majority. At that stage the President must sign it. All Mr. Nixon can buy from a refusal is time. But time, of course, means time for political negotiation and second thoughts.

Will all Hong Kong textiles be affected?

Virtually all, and particularly man-mades, wool and mixtures. Cotton, which is covered by separate international agreements is theoretically exempt, but the position is by no means clear when it comes to garments made from cotton or cotton mixtures. The garment trade is especially vulnerable since last year garments exports to the U.S. accounted for 90 per cent of our total textile exports to the U.S.A., and

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How about footwear and other products?

In general, the provisions of the Bill that apply to textiles also appear to apply to footwear. The parts of the Bill that apply to other industries do not necessarily provide for the imposition of quotas, but simply for restrictive action, which might, for instance, take the form of higher tariffs.

Outside textiles and footwear, the Bill leaves a lot of discretionary power in the hands of the President, and the procedures involved in implementing this power are somewhat complex. But steel, rubber goods and electrical and electronic products have all been mentioned as possible targets for restrictive action. Hong Kong would be affected by restrictions on the latter two, but at this stage it seems unlikely that quotas will be imposed on them. The Bill also contains a concession affecting chemicals and one or two other items, but these are of little interest to Hong Kong.

How will quotas be determined?

This is the crunch question, and no one yet knows the final answer. In the case of textiles and footwear, the Bill at present says that quotas, which will start in 1971, will be by country and by category, and will be based on the average imports

within these limits during 1967, 1968 and 1969. After 1971, quotas will allow for some year-by-year growth in imports, but any increase will be geared to growth in demand in US domestic consumption. If, of course, US consumption declined, there could in theory also be a reduction in quotas.

If quotas take the form you have outlined, to what extent could our textile trade suffer?

It's too soon to say. The important point, of course, is not how much we export, but how much we earn in Hong Kong Dollars by exporting. By trading-up, we could, therefore, possibly maintain our level of earnings, even though the yardage or number of items exported may be held down. Whether or not we can trade-up is very much a matter for the individual company to decide. The real danger is not so much the likelihood of an absolute drop in export earnings, but a stifling of our rate of growth. The rate of growth is in many ways the crux point of the whole problem.

From Hong Kong's point of view, are there any favourable aspects to the Bill?

Certainly. As we have stressed, the Bill is not yet law and favourable alterations could be written in before it becomes law. Secondly, there are likely to be several 'escape clauses' that could operate in Hong

Chamber News

Kong's favour. Official U.S. spokesmen have stressed that the effects of the Bill will in practice be much less restrictive than they seem in print. Some indeed have called it the most liberal trade bill ever.

What are these 'escape clauses'?

Firstly, a voluntary agreement between the U.S.A. and an exporting nation such as Hong Kong would take precedence over the imposition of quotas.

Will Hong Kong negotiate?

This depends primarily on Government, as advised by, for instance, the Textiles Advisory Board. Government is, of course, watching the situation closely and is in touch with the U.K. Government, and other affected parties. Obviously, a decision to negotiate, and — more importantly — on what terms to negotiate, would be taken only if there seemed to be an advantage in doing so.

Are there any other 'escape clauses'?

Definitely. The Bill is likely to leave a great deal of power in the hands of the President to be used at his discretion. Apart from conducting negotiations on voluntary restraint, he can also, for example, waive quotas for any

product from any country if it did not disrupt U.S. markets or if the supply of articles from domestic sources is insufficient to meet demand at reasonable prices. It is impossible to say how this might be interpreted or whether it could affect Hong Kong.

Taking all points into account, does the Chamber believe Hong Kong will suffer?

Our crystal ball is no better than the next man's. But experience of similar crises suggests that Hong Kong's adaptability will help it to come through reasonably unscathed. But this does not lessen the need for being alert and planning ahead.

What can the individual company do?

Keep itself informed and plan ahead. Companies with a large investment in man-mades, wool and garments are advised to study carefully legislation when it is published, and to follow its progress through Congress. They will, of course, keep in close touch with customers, agents, etc. in the States, and seek their advice. We have already mentioned the possibilities of trading-up. Forward planning decisions on commitment of capital must obviously be carefully thought through. There is yet no need for panic or precipitate action.

□ The Chamber is planning to sponsor a mission to the United Kingdom in October/November of this year. It will have the full cooperation and support of Chambers of Commerce in London, Birmingham and other trade centers in England. The object of the mission will be the fostering of two-way trade.

Fourteen members have already indicated their interest in participating. Other members who wish to join, should apply to the Chamber before the end of August.

□ A few days remain for members to put in their order for this year's Chamber Christmas Card. Circulars with samples of the card have been sent to all members, but a sample can also be seen at the Chamber.

□ During July, the Business Promotion Department dealt with 1,318 enquiries for importers and exporters and handled 66 trade complaints. The Department also issued or endorsed 197 letters of introduction for members to various overseas trade organisations.

□ The Exports sub-committee met on July 23rd to review the operation of the Punched Card trade enquiries system. At that time, they approved the extension of the system to cover 20 major export markets by the addition of Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, South Africa, Malaysia, Republic of Viet-Nam, Thailand and Indonesia to the existing 12 markets. The Committee also approved the compilation of a comprehensive "Exporter/

Manufacturer Member Record". Any member who has not already been asked to submit up-to-date details for this record should contact S. L. Chung immediately.

□ Forty-four French students, sponsored by the Paris Chamber of Commerce and French Ministry of Education, visited the Chamber on July 6th as part of an economic and social study tour of the Far East. They were briefed on Hong Kong's economy and the work of the Chamber. On a follow-up visit, the students discussed marketing in Hong Kong with executive Chamber staff.

□ A "following-up progress" meeting for present and immediate past holders of Chamber scholarships was held on July 31st. Eight scholars attended. After being briefed on the work of the Chamber, they talked of their career progress to date. Six, who had finished their studies and were working, all appeared to have done well in finding suitable positions in their chosen field. Of the other two, one past scholarship holder was still in Graduate School in Business Administration while another had won a grant to study Marketing at Keio University in Japan.

□ A familiarisation visit to the Chamber for new members was held on August 6th. More than 40 new members attended. This was the second of such visits to be organised recently by the membership department.

Fashionline New York, sketches from Philip au Yeung



Pick of the Press Reprinted from Commerce International, London

The New Freedoms

This article, by John Bosworth, appeared in the independently-edited magazine of the London Chamber of Commerce. Some of the suggestions made in the final paragraph, illustrating ways in which Chambers of Commerce can contribute to a greater internationalisation of business, are in fact practised by the Hong Kong Chamber in our reception of overseas visitors. Do members receive an equally helpful reception when overseas? We should be interested to hear from any members having constructive suggestions on the ways in which overseas Chambers — or even our own Chamber — could help smooth their overseas visits.

One of the most irritating of modern assumptions is the idea that, lead by student disciples of the permissive society, we are escaping from the repressions of the Victorian age into a new era of broadening liberty. In fact, our great-grandfathers enjoyed and exploited a range of personal and commercial freedoms which our great-grandchildren may still be fighting to recover.

Ever since 1945 we have been painfully picking up the old threads of natural liberty. Aided by gradual progression in GATT and stimulated by such occasional spurts of political decision as Marshall Aid and the European Common Market, we are groping our way back to a situation in which businessmen may be able to take a ticket and go where the hell they like.

International trade can be harnessed to a wide range of constructive purposes. As men and women in all

countries enjoy easier access to more and cheaper material goods, profound reforms will result in many sectors of communal and individual habit and thinking.

Every businessman is potentially an ambassador, a student, a teacher, a reporter and a publicist. More and more of them are moving about the world and by now must surely be the largest single sector of personal international communication.

Do they content themselves with interviewing the agent, securing the order, signing the contract, investigating the complaint? Or do they also make the best of their growing opportunities for contributing to the longer-term growth of world trade by enlarging international understanding and making practical contributions to the need for interchange of views and experience?

At the 24th Congress of the Federation of Commonwealth Chambers of Commerce held in Hong Kong last May, the Federation Secretariat touched on the possibility that Chambers of Commerce can make a unique and notable contribution to deeper international understanding based on the material requirements of modern world trade.

Organic Institutions

With the "socialisation" of business, exemplified by the mounting concern with environmental pollution, Chambers of Commerce are moving into a most responsible and influential position because, unlike many other representative organisations constituted

on some arbitrary basis of special trade interest or activity, Chambers are organic institutions made up of business and professional people in patterns corresponding to their natural local setting. The great problem of sophisticated communities is to ensure not only that governments are responsive to the wishes and needs of the governed but also that there are adequate, sufficiently sensitive means of two-way communication to make sure that essential messages are promptly passed and readily understood.

Wider Use

Chambers of Commerce have the central organisations and the direct access to a very wide spread of membership which can guarantee such communication with and for almost every business community in the free world.

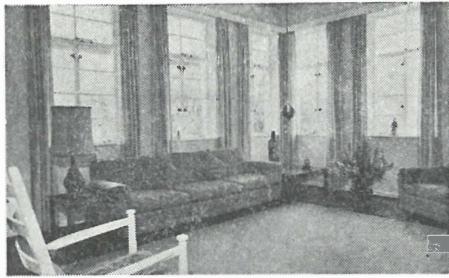
The International Chamber of Commerce opens its doors and committee rooms to companies and organisations including individual and associated Chambers from every part of the world. The Bureau of Chambers of Commerce maintains liaison on a world level between Chambers of Commerce in all member countries, and the Federation of Commonwealth Chambers of Commerce has special links with the UK and with numerous local Chambers.

Anyone who can see the business opportunities in growth through change in global terms can also appreciate the

resources of assistance, information and introduction potentially available in this interlocking structure of the world Chamber of Commerce organisation.

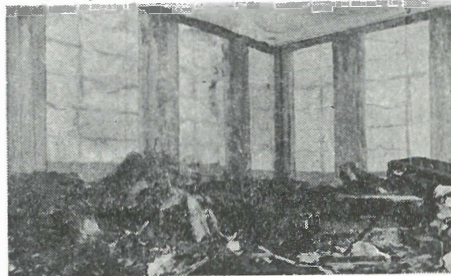
Perhaps the time has come to explore that potential with an eye on the possibility of some conscious co-ordination for wider use. Some sort of international Chamber of Commerce temporary membership, an arrangement for basic office and secretarial facilities for visitors to major Chambers throughout the world, an "open" house, on prior application, at appropriate Chamber functions which might be interesting to overseas visitors, and better systems of drawing on the personal experience of members returning from overseas travels for the general benefit of Chamber colleagues could all widen the scope and value of Chamber of Commerce activities over and above the normal services of overseas trade promotion and market reports which are already a major feature of most Chambers' activities.

As soon as the basic framework of welcome and access is improved one can depend on the ordinary commercial acumen of international businessmen to produce proposals for further uses and facilities. The general suggestion for greater use of the International Chamber network thrown out at the Commonwealth Federation Congress could well be taken as a hint that this particular work of far-sighted commercial charity could well begin at home — and at once.



Household insurance is the sort of thing many people don't realise we're involved in.

They seem to think we only insure international shipping lines and other giant businesses. We do of course; but we're involved in insurance on a much more personal level as well. From the house you live in and your wife's jewellery, to your family car and your children's future ... whatever it is, your insurance is backed by our size and experience. So, although we're a big company offering security to other big companies, we're also very much geared to care a lot about the personal things you care a lot about, too. Call us first.



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Polishing the Chamber's Image

A look at Public Relations Department

"Public Relations" is a very elusive and highly adaptable term. Used loosely and with some imagination, it can be interpreted in an almost endless variety of ways.

A Public Relations Officer (PRO) is often asked, "What is it that you really do?"—well, it obviously depends a great deal on who and what kind of an organisation he works for.

At the Chamber, the Assistant Secretary in charge of the Public Relations Department is Harry Garlick, and with one executive assistant, Lee Sherard, he *is* the Department.

A PRO's Day

To better understand the work of this Department at the Chamber, let's take a look at a normal day in the life of this PRO and his assistant.

9:00 a.m. — All is calm in the office. The day's newspapers are scanned quickly for any news which might concern Hong Kong's trade and commerce — or any articles which were prepared and released by the Department the day before.

9:30 a.m. — The telephone rings. It's the business editor of the Star. "Oh, hello Raymond, what can I do for you? Well, if the U.K. does join the Common Market, I think Hong Kong . . ."

This is the third time this week this question has been asked.

9:45 a.m. — The telephone rings again. It is RTV this time asking whether it can come to interview someone about the U.K. dock strike and

what repercussions it could have for Hong Kong Exporters. An appointment is set for the afternoon.

10:00 a.m. — Harry Garlick wonders when those 10,000 booklets, which the Department prepared to promote Hong Kong and The Chamber to overseas businessmen, will be in—the printer promised 12:00 Noon 'at the latest'.

11:00 a.m. The Chamber's new advertisement is ready. The account executive comes over with a proof.

The advertisement is approved and a discussion ensues on when and in what publication it will make its debut.

The Department advertises in locally published journals circulated in Hong Kong's overseas markets. It also advertises in the special supplements and editions featuring Hong Kong, published by newspapers and magazines in the U.S., U.K. and other countries.

12:05 p.m. — The department works quietly. An article is being prepared for the next Bulletin, and the finishing touches are made on a draft of a booklet for members describing the services which the Chamber offers.

2:30 p.m. — A Trade Mission arrives at the Chamber to discuss business opportunities in Hong Kong. The Department has made arrangements for members to talk to the press later, and the Chamber's photographer is at the meeting to "cover" the event.

Still no booklets.

4:30 p.m. — The last hand is shaken and the Mission leaves. Harry

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WANCHAI 334-336, Hennessy Road, Hong Kong	H-740737	LAI CHI KOK 277-281, Lai Chi Kok Road, Kowloon	K-879449
CAUSEWAY BAY 46, Yee Wo Street, Hong Kong	H-760033	TSIM SHA TSUI 12, Granville Road, Kowloon	K-663760
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OVERSEAS BRANCHES

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WORLD-WIDE CORRESPONDENTS

Garlick immediately starts working on a press story about the Mission, and the new businesses they are interested in starting in Hong Kong. The story will be sent out to all local news media via the Government Information Services first thing the next morning.

4:45 p.m. — The PRO growls under his breath — “Where are those booklets?”

Just then the booklets arrive and are stacked in three big piles in the office.

5:00 p.m. — The other Chamber staff begin to pack up for the night. Harry Garlick and Lee leaf through the booklets in silence.

The silence lengthens and darkens. Then, “Oh, the idiots!” After nursing the publication from the first line to the last period, from each of the successive steps of the artwork and design done by a well-known advertising agency — until finally it seemed

that the Chamber had turned out something it could be rather proud of — all those hours of rethinking, revising, proof reading and now *this* arrives? Everything is fine, but for reasons best known to themselves, the printers had put all the covers on upside down!

5:30 p.m. It's too late to get in touch with the printer.

So another normal day for the Chamber's Public Relations Department draws to a close.

The Public Relations Department for an organisation like the Chamber definitely has many built-in hazards.

There are *so* many toes that can be stepped on by “The spokesman for the Chamber” (which is Harry Garlick's alter ego).

One problem that he finds particularly aggravating is the assumption that a PR man's only duty is to feed information to the press, or to prevent them from gaining access to information.

PRESSure

“In some cases confidence must of course be preserved. It's in no-one's interests — including the journalist himself — to spoil a delicate set of negotiations, for example, by issuing a premature story,” he says.

“Most PR men probably spend between nil and one per cent of their time covering-up for their employer. On the other hand, they probably spend up to ten or more per cent of their time trying to persuade their employers to be more forthcoming.”

The press is not the only medium of communication a PRO must deal with, and in many cases the press is not even the major vehicle for a public relations project. At the Chamber for example much more time is spent on the production of publications than on press relations.

Nonetheless, when press or TV reporters ask meaningful questions, the Department tries its best to answer, either personally, or by putting the journalist in touch with a suitable specialist. Sometimes, however, there just isn't an answer to the question that has been asked.

Not everyone would go for our fabulous food

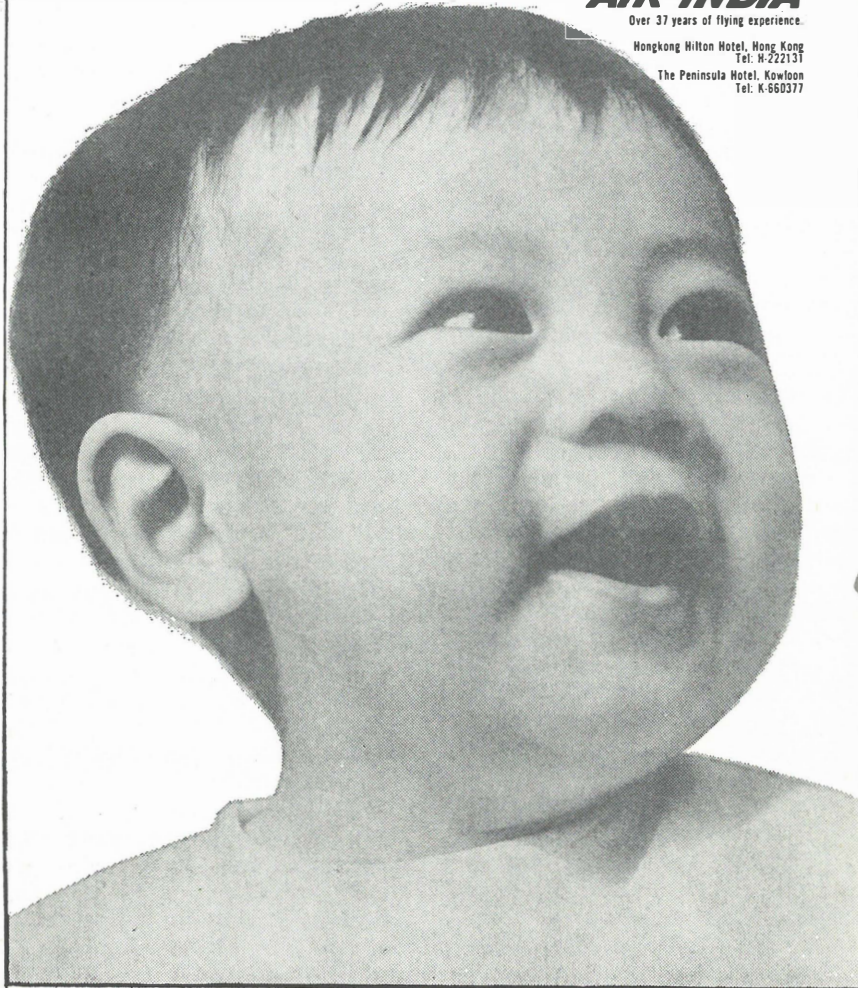
Everyone loves babies, and we're no exception. We take great care of them before, during and after the flight. But we don't expect them to appreciate the fact that Air-India offers exciting food for the grown-ups. What they want is a nice mushy beef dinner followed by strained prunes and a hefty drink of milk.

Baby food. And baby food is what Air-India has for babies. With a comfy cot to sleep it off in afterwards. They can also have a fan to play with and a magazine or two to rip to pieces. Who are we to argue? In twenty years time they could be our best customers.

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Turning to publications, for a two-man show, the Department turns out a lot in sheer bulk. On a regular basis to keep members informed, there are the two fortnightly trade publications, the Bulletin, the Annual Report and the membership list. It also frequently sends out stories to the local press concerning Chamber activities, and comments on various aspects of Hong Kong's commercial scene. Moreover, the Department expects to be starting a regular Hong Kong newsletter for distribution to overseas Chambers of Commerce soon.

Recently, the Department has turned out (well, almost turned out) a booklet describing business opportunities in Hong Kong for overseas businessmen. It is also in the process of updating a handbook describing the Chamber's services to members.

From time to time, the Department also produces other special brochures, for example, a booklet on careers for graduates, which it published at the request of the H.K. University Appointments' Board.

Special Activities

The Department gets involved in all sorts of other activities too. For example, Harry Garlick found himself sitting on the Committee for this year's Hong Kong Ready-to-Wear Festival, which was a very pleasant duty indeed.

He was also tapped, together with the energetic Assistant Secretary of the Membership Department, Clement

Tsang, to be 'chief cook and bottle-washer' for the FCCC Congress. With hardly room for a breath in between, he helped organise the banquet which the Chamber gave in honour of the International Press Institute Assembly.

However, these activities are rather special and occur infrequently. Far more often the Department finds itself involved in an unexpected flurry of activity over situations which suddenly arise in other Departments of the Chamber.

Ubiquitous

When the Business Promotion Department has VIP visitors it must entertain, when the Certification Department changes its documents, when a new Chamber scholarship is to be awarded, when membership rises sharply — the Public Relations Department is involved in it all, in one way or another.

Recently, when the Business Promotion Department was flooded with hundreds of letters from U.S. secretaries asking about job opportunities in Hong Kong, the Public Relations Department, both members, found themselves combing the magazine stands in the back alleys searching for the magazine containing the article which started it by painting a glowing picture of Hong Kong as the In Place for those who wanted to work a little and play a lot.

"Whoever the author is, she's obviously a thwarted fiction writer," grumbles Harry Garlick.



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中文簡摘

你對美國進行「入口配額管制」知多少？

美國政府考慮立法管制「入口配額」一事可說是第二次大戰後對國際貿易增長大開倒車。在香港來說此舉不但打擊對美國貿易，而且還可能波及歐洲市場。下列各項問題是為幫助了解現階段局勢而設。

(一)問：「入口配額」此舉是否牽連香港？

答：這是必然的。但這議案還要經過詳細草議與表決才能成為法律，雖然看來這是勢在必行。

(二)問：香港那些工業將受影響？

答：美國眾議院「歲收委員會」提議管制紡織品及鞋之入口，但提交眾議院及上議院訂表決時，該兩院可能要求加入其他工業貨品一並管制。美國立法程序是一切法案要總統通過才可以成為法律。尼克遜曾表示他將拒絕簽署該法案如該等限制包括紡織品以外的貨品。

(三)問：如美總統拒絕簽署該法案，此事是否就此了結？

答：否。該法案將擱回兩院。若兩院再度投票以三分二多數通過，那末總統就要非簽署不可。所以尼克遜總統唯一可以做到的是拖延時間，但多一些時間可使各有關方面作進一步考慮和政治上磋商。

(四)問：香港紡織品是否受到影響？

答：整個紡織業都受到影響，尤其是人造纖維和羊毛混紡。製衣業之處境尤為考慮，因為自去年起，百分之九十的輸美紡織品都是成衣。

(五)問：那麼製鞋業和其他貨品又怎樣？

答：這大概言之過早。製鞋之管制問題詳情，目前尚不大清楚。至於該法案可能涉及的其他貨品有鋼鐵、橡膠製成品、電子和電器製成品。其中電子和電器製成品的管制可能影響本港。

(六)問：「入口配額」是如何裁定？

答：這是一個相當複雜的問題。以紡織業而言，「入口配額」多少是根據各國各品類在過去兩、三年內入口數量而定。

「配額」將容許入口逐年減增，其減增率則視其國內需求而定。

(七)問：如「配額」裁定如你所料，則本港紡織業所受影響如何？

答：這又言之過早。但假設限額由本年開始，成衣輸美可能比去年少三分之一。

(八)問：那麼我們是否在絕望邊緣？

答：這也不然。第一，這議案還未成法律，修改餘地尚多。第二，這法案其中可能有些豁免條款對香港有利。

(九)問：甚麼豁免條款呢？

答：例如：香港與美國有自動限制協議在先，「配額」一事不能立即實行。港方可在六個月期內與美進行談判。如談判失敗後，「配額管制」才能實行。

(十)問：香港會否進行談判？

答：這要看紡織業諮詢委員會向政府提供之意見而定。目前政府正密切注意此事情之發展。

(十一)問：還有其他的豁免條款嗎？

答：當然有。這議案將會給予總統許多斟酌之餘地。

(十二)問：美國為甚麼要這樣做？

答：因為美國有些政派以為低價入口貨品對其紡織業打擊甚大。再者，美國人也許不滿日本及歐洲共同市場對美貨入口諸多限制而引起反感。

(十三)問：商會方面認為香港會受影響嗎？

答：我們的蠶測並不比別人為佳。但從過去經驗看來，香港人最能適應環境，我們可望安渡難關。

(十四)問：商行應如何打算？

答：大家應密切注意事情發展，隨時準備應付計劃，而無須張惶失措。

商會在國際中之重要性

(本文轉載倫敦商會會刊，原文作者為約翰·保斯維爾先生。)

在現社會裏，其中一個最令人煩擾的假設就是以爲我們已走出了維多利亞時代的壓制而進入一個自由的新紀元。但其實，我們的祖先已享有多方面的人身和商業的自由。這些自由可能我們的子孫還要爲它的爭取而奮鬥。舉個例來說：護照是旅行必備之證件，但在十九世紀時人們對它一無所知。因爲除了要到帝俄或少數閉關自守的地區外，護照這東西是不需要的。

同樣地，在二十世紀初，商業活動甚爲自由，資金可隨意轉換而不受國際匯律制度束縛，國際貿易是由一羣久經世故的商人處理，他們的經商範圍超越種族和國界。

第一次大戰把這世界推入國家主義的盒子裏，而三十年代的世界不境引致戰時的愛國狂熱一轉而爲商業侵略主義。夾在關稅壁壘和商業限制中，使最強大的工業國家也要退回到自己垂死的市場去。這樣，造成各種壓力使人們覺得不惜一切，也要再來一次大戰。

自一九四五年以來，我們痛定思痛，慢慢地重拾以往應有的自由。由於「日內瓦貿易及關稅協定」的緩緩協和受到「馬歇爾援助計劃」和「歐洲共同市場」等政治性決定的刺激，我們再度重見天日，使商人們得隨意重到各地經商。

國際貿易的增長，「歐元」和「亞元」市場的創設，商業旅行的繁密和商業管理原則的傳播，又適逢軍事壓力下降，這種種都加速各項國際商業活動。這些活動需要財源、資源、機械和配件、工人和管理等的最佳配合。這些來源除受稅收、金融供應，貸款和公司法例等限制外，是需要超越國界的。

國際貿易可以達成很多有意義的目的，由於不同國籍的人們能自由到各地選購商宜的貨品。此等通商可深深地改變各階層人仕的生活習慣和思想。

由於商業上的需要，人們學習了各種語言。這些語言將會留爲溝通政治諒解和經濟方面的企望與難題的橋樑。運輸貨物的交通工具有所改良及運費之低降，也間接造成商人更多旅遊的機會。十進制與米突制的普遍採用也是促進貿易的好辦法。其實，每一個商人都可能是代表他自己國家的特使，他亦

師亦生，身兼記者和宣傳家之職。這些人足跡遍世界各地，人數也越來越多，爲國際旅遊最大之成員。

他們是否以接見代理、獲得訂單、簽訂合同和調查商業投訴便感到滿足而沾沾自喜呢？或者他們會利用此等機會與對方交換意見和經驗使國際間能進一步互相了解，更爲長期性國際貿易滋長而作貢獻。

本年五月在香港舉辦之第二十四屆英聯邦總商會會議席上，該會秘書處會提及商會間在國際貿易中可加深國際間了解之可能性。由於工商業日形「社會化」——此舉可從對「環境污損」之關注看出來，商會之處景，就責任和影響力來說，至爲重要。因爲商會的成員多爲當地工商界及專業人士所組織，其代表性與一些專爲某特別利益或活動所組成之團體有所分別。在品流混雜的社會裏，最大問題不但是使政府對其轄下人民的願望與需要有所反應，而是務求「上情下達」和「下情上達」這兩條路暢通無阻。商會是溝通官民隔膜最好的媒介。

國際總商會歡迎各地區性商會及各工商業機構向彼垂詢各項事宜，英聯邦總商會則與英國及其屬下各國保持密切關係。任何人看見國際形勢好轉而增進貿易機會，都體會到商會間互相維繫可以對他有諾大的幫助。譬如國際間商會設立臨時會員。商會對海外到訪人士安排辦公室和秘書，歡迎外賓參加商會活動，和設法將會外出作業務旅行之會友所得經驗，傳達給其他會友借鏡。此等措施當可擴大一般商會現有的活動範圍，如海外貿易推進及市場研究報告等。

在英聯邦商會聯會會議時會提及擴大商會國際性之活動範圍。我們應立即着手向此目標邁進。



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