



# *The Bulletin*

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

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## **THE SLOW SUICIDE**

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JULY 1972.

## 漫談香港「污染問題」

由六月五日起，聯合國在瑞典首都——斯得哥爾摩舉行為期十二天的研討會，談及「人類週遭環境」此一課題，以此項題目作討論之研討會尚為首次。會議之談論要點將着重地球資源之遞減及世界人口之劇增。

於上期本「會訊」內，總商會曾刊登一專文，記錄美國海洋生物學教授——施高博士——與商會會員討論有關海洋污染一事。於本期及下一期「會訊」中，我們將仔細察看香港本身之週遭環境所引起之問題，應採取之行動及各方面就此問題所提供之意見等。

很多人認為「環境」及「污染」等名詞只是為那些善心人、專家及奇異派人仕而特製之揶揄而已。

施高博士於該次「海洋污染」座談會中曾透露：「對此課題（海洋污染）關懷之人仕以為我們已清楚知悉海洋之奧秘，其實並不如是，我們只有很少有關這方面的科學資料。」

施高教授對於其他環境污染問題可能亦具同樣見地。在一方面，一些人認為香港已成為一名符其實的溝渠；但同時亦有人認為香港並不怎樣污穢——也許是一部份人仕對週遭之環境較為敏感。

「污染」此題目可明確地分兩大類——一類是關乎生、死問題；另一類是在乎個人的愛惡、習慣及教育等。

我們的食物若含有高度的毒素，那當然會成為有關生、死問題。但假若淺水灣沙灘上發現到垃圾堆積或海上浮滿了膠袋，這當然是不大嚴重。當然，這也是不大美觀，但對海浴者而言便不至生、死關頭那麼嚴重。

於「海洋污染」座談會中，施高博士曾談及假若地中海被毀滅，這乃是「美感學」上的悲劇，雖然這並不會對人類在生物上或

經濟上任何不利之處。但施高博士堅信假若蛋白質的纖維是吸滿了殺虫劑的話，這是相當使人驚駭。

稍為值得欣慰的就是目下之香港，許多的困難似乎是關乎美感這一回事。由於其獨特之地理環境、氣候和缺乏重工業，香港並未成為荒蕪之地。

一位在美國紐約執業的青年醫生數年前會居留本港，最近又再度訪港逗留兩月後說道：「在美國，工業應負起引致困難的大部份責任，但在香港而言，這兒並沒有重工業，因此人類和工業亦分担環境污染之責任。

我們這篇文章就是從各方面研究這污染問題。

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約在二千年前，新界是叢林密佈的一片。但漸漸地森林被斬除，繼而給雨水沖去泥土富庶的面層——現今在新界的地區頗為貧脊。

上述的例子正好描述了所謂「環境問題」是甚麼——也許你可稱它為生態學、或保養，或污染問題。當天然資源被用去或浪費後，並沒有得到補充，肥沃的土地變成貧乏；人類把土地利用只留回一個沙漠給後代，進一步而言，他遺留給子孫的只是死沉沉的一片。

至於新界之土地貧脊問題，現正藉着再植樹木加以補救。但雖然每年約有五十萬株樹木在該地區栽種，但很多却給大火所焚燒。在某些年份，有相等於被栽種數量的樹木被火燒毀了。人類的不小心引致彼等意欲保護生物的努力白費了。

在理想之生命循環中，我們不該有任何耗費。但在目下之世界，這再也並不真實。人口不斷膨脹因而使到人類的社會及經濟活動引致無謂的浪費，而此浪費程度已達到一

危險地步。

於處理環境污染此問題而言，香港可算是較別個地方緩慢。只在五年前政府才開始認真研究此問題。

本港之污染問題可分三大類——地面、空氣和水。地面之污染是最明顯的一類。市政衛生處每天收集二千四百多噸的垃圾，但仍有很多並未收集。在市區、海灣及鄉村，我們可看見廢物隨處撒佈。不幸地，在夏季時節，人們有更多空閒時間，而這污染問題亦趨嚴重。

有一位商人，當他每天從薄扶林區前往中區時，曾仔細研究該段地區共有多少個廢物箱。研究所得，他估計約在一哩距離便設有一廢物箱。但他快快地說：「你可看見廢物箱的四週散滿了垃圾。人們的投籃技術真壞，看上去，他們好像每次都投錯了目標。」

在木屋區的情況也許更壞。每當木屋建成後，隨着的便是由廢物、垃圾、包括動物屍首而引起之問題。情況較壞的地方包括菜園、啓靈、和吳屋等村落。在很多徒置區域，情況亦為嚴重，甚而危及健康。

在新界，通往船灣海淡水湖的公路是週末旅行人仕常到的地方，於過去十二年來，在那兒收集的廢屑差不多堆積如山。雖然此等廢屑的數量較諸於本港其他各地，如山頂區域或干諾道兩等地區為多，但這一切均顯示出香港面臨之困難之巨大。

廢屑等垃圾並非惟一土地之污染問題。在新界，農人們把約五十萬噸的豬糞加於泥土中。由於很多農田處於低窪地帶，農夫們並沒有其他清除糞屑的方法。此問題引致耕作上的蹂躪，繼而損毀了該地區之生態狀況。

在本港而言，「空氣污染」此問題不比其他較為發達之地區嚴重，因在該等地區，重工業為首要之邪惡。但任何駕駛人仕也知道這問題之存在。

在一九七一年，本港大約有十六萬四千輛登記之車輛，而其中百分之二十三是裝備有內燃機。發出之煙霧是污穢、令駕駛人仕所厭惡及防礙交通安全。在香港，內燃機的保養多屬不當，發出之煙霧及油膩是引致空氣污染之主要原因。用汽油作燃料之車輛噴出之炭氧化物在視覺上雖不大明顯，但亦會使空氣污濁。

於一九七一年，大約只有八千部登記之車輛，（佔全數之百分之五）想受廢汽系統之檢驗，其中只有五百五十輛受處罰，罰款為三十至五十元間。因此，這制度並未有效地對車主加以威嚇。由於目下車輛之數目日增，這問題亦因此日趨嚴重。

香港有賴其獨特之地理環境及氣候，故此並不受濃霧之影響。本港風勢源自東面，故此我們能策劃如何防此空氣之污染。污染之發源尤其來自工業區：如紅磡、觀塘及在鴨脷洲、青衣及紅磡區之發電廠。在一九七一年，勞工處之污濁空氣管制組曾到訪三百六十多間工廠而發覺百分之五十是排出過度之煙霧。違反了「空氣污濁」之條例最高罰款二千元。但只有少數工廠被罰繳此數目。

根據勞工處污濁空氣管制組在本年二月份出版之年刊指出，空氣污濁之程度在上升，中央市場地區之空氣之二氧化硫含量較諸於一九七零年已增加了三倍。大致上在紅磡區之空氣污濁程度亦加重，雖然該處之二氧化硫含量比較由污濁空氣委員會所定的為低。該年刊又指出。「……調查結果顯示空氣污染之情況與前無異。」

目下正在籌劃中的兩項新計劃給予空氣新威脅。其中一個是在青山建設之把海水化為淡水計劃。長春社——一個以保護香港環境為主之會社之秘書韋士德先生認為將從該處發出之硫磺二氧化合物可引致青山新區一帶空氣污染之嚴重問題。其次是計劃在南丫島興建之煉油廠，將會使該處之空氣及

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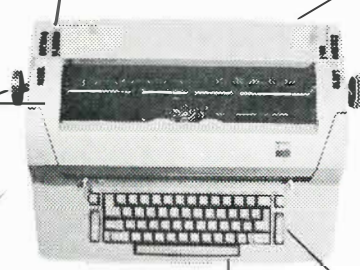
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# *The Bulletin*

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

IN Stockholm on June 5, a twelve day United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the first of its kind, began. The main focus of the Conference is the diminishing of earth's resources accompanied by the rapid growth of the world's population.

In the last issue of *The Bulletin*, the Chamber repeated a discussion on general marine pollution between Members and Professor Earl Segal, an American marine biologist. In this issue and the next issue we take a look at Hong Kong's own environmental problems and at the actions, plans or suggestions that have been put forward.

There are those who feel that words such as 'the environment' and 'pollution' are no more than yet another rallying cry for the do-gooders, the trendies, the professional agitators, and other weirdies.

In the discussion reported last month Professor Segal tellingly said: 'Those who are concerned seem to think that what goes on in the ocean is known. It isn't known. There is very little good scientific information.'

The Professor might well have made the same statement about other forms of environmental pollution. On the one hand, there are those who feel that Hong Kong is becoming a veritable sewer, while at the same time, there are those who maintain that

the Colony is not very polluted at all — just that some people are naturally more sensitive to their surroundings.

There are two distinct types of problem that have been linked under the general heading of pollution. One is literally a matter of life and death. The other is largely a matter of personal taste, or of custom and upbringing.

A concentration of toxic materials in foodstuffs is, or could eventually become, a matter of life and death. The presence of litter on the beach at Repulse Bay or plastic bags in the sea, is less serious. It may be unsightly and unpleasant, but it is hardly a matter of life and death to sun-bathers and swimmers.

Once again, Professor Segal summed up the distinctions well when he pointed out that it might be an aesthetic tragedy to let the Mediterranean die, but that it would not necessarily be to mankind's biological or economic disadvantage. But he left no doubt that concentrations of pesticides in protein tissues was something truly frightening.

Hong Kong can be grateful that at present many — if not most — of our problems are apparently of an aesthetic nature.

We have in our articles tried to look therefore at both sides of the problem—the extremely serious and the aesthetic.

## What are we leaving our Sons? HK's Environmental Problems—Part One

**T**WO thousand years ago the New Territories were completely forested. The forests were gradually cut down, thereby allowing rain to wash away valuable top soil — hence the barren appearance of much of the New Territories today.

This example illustrates dramatically just what the problem of the environment — call it the problem of ecology, conservation, pollution — what you will — is all about. A natural resource is used, perhaps squandered, and is not replaced. Land that was fertile becomes sterile. Man takes for his own use and leaves for his sons a desert. In the more extreme cases, he may literally be willing the death of his descendants.

The New Territories problem can be, and is being, corrected by reforestation. But although about half a million trees are planted each year, many are lost because of forest fires. In some years, in fact, as many trees are lost in fires as are planted. Once again, man's carelessness defeats his attempts to preserve life.

In the ideal life cycle, no waste is produced. In today's world, this is no longer possible. Population has grown to such proportions that man's activities both social and economic now lead almost inevitably to the production of waste on a scale that is reaching the critical level.

Hong Kong has been a relatively slow starter on the problem of its environment. It has only been within the last five years or so that Government has begun to study the question seriously.

Pollution in the Colony can be examined under three major categories — land, air and water. The first is perhaps the most visible and obvious of the three. The Urban Services Department col-

lects some 2,400 tons of rubbish every day. But there is plenty that is not collected. Litter can be seen everywhere — in the urban areas, the beaches and the countryside.

### Bad aim

One enterprising local businessman who commutes from the Pokfulam area to Central everyday, made a study of the number of litter baskets available in the area as he crawled along several mornings in the usual snarl of traffic in Western District. As a result of his survey, he estimated roughly one litter basket per mile. 'And you should see the trash around the baskets. People must have a terribly bad aim,' he said ruefully, 'and it wasn't even as if the baskets were full.'

A perhaps even worse problem is that of the squatters. Wherever squatter huts spring up, there immediately follows the problem of garbage and wastes, including the decomposing carcasses of animals. Some of the worst of these areas include those near Choi Yuen, Kai Ling and Ng Uk



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villages. The situation in some resettlement estates is, in many cases, just as bad, and constitutes a major health hazard.

In the New Territories on the road to Plover Cove—on which many weekenders travel—there has been an enormous mountain of rubbish which has been collecting over the past twelve years. Although this rubbish heap is perhaps an exaggeration of other similar dumps which existed or exist throughout the Colony, such as on the Peak or on Connaught Road West, it is nonetheless indicative of the size of the fight that Hong Kong has on its hands.

### Pig problem

Human garbage and waste is not the only land pollution problem. In the New Territories some half million tons of pig manure is dumped indiscriminately by farmers. Because much of the farm land is located in low-lying areas, there is no natural or other easy outlets for such waste disposal. The problem is causing havoc with farming, and ruining the general ecology of the area.

Air pollution in the Colony is not as serious as in the more highly developed countries, in which heavy industries are the arch villains. Still, Hong Kong does have problems, as anyone who drives will testify.

There were some 164,000 registered vehicles in the Colony in 1971 of which about 23 per cent have

diesel engines. Diesel smoke is dirty, irritating to drivers, and is a hazard to road safety. In Hong Kong where diesels are often poorly maintained, their smoke and oily dirt is a major source of air pollution. Petrol vehicles also pollute the air, although the carbon monoxide which they emit is visually less obvious.

In 1971 only 8,000 vehicles or approximately five per cent of the total number of vehicles registered in Hong Kong were inspected for exhaust emission, and only 550 vehicles were summoned for fines ranging from \$30 to \$50. These measures are certainly not sufficient to serve as a meaningful deterrent for most car owners, and as the number of vehicles in the Colony rises, the problem will intensify.

Hong Kong, because of its unique geography and climate, is luckily unlikely to suffer from smog. Its prevailing easterly winds permit planning to control air pollution from most major sources. These sources include in particular the industrial intensive areas of Hung Hom and Kwun Tong, and the power stations at Aplichau, Tsing Yi and Hung Hom. In 1971, the Labour Department's Smoke Control Unit covered 360 factories and found about fifty per cent of them producing excessive smoke. The maximum fine for air pollution is \$2,000. However, few factories have been fined this much.

**Con't**

✓  
*Date: August 3 (in English) August 4 (in Cantonese)*

*Time: Assemble at 3.30 pm  
First paper commences approx. 4.00 pm*

*Venue: Grand Ballroom, The Hongkong Hilton*

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According to the Unit's Annual Report, which was published in February of this year, the level of air pollution is rising, with the level of Sulphur Dioxide content in the air over the Central Market area having tripled during 1970. Meanwhile, general air pollution in Hung Hom has also risen, although the Sulphur Dioxide level is down and in fact below the level set by the Committee on Air Pollution. Nonetheless, the report concludes that, 'the monitoring . . . results show that the general pattern of air pollution remains much the same as before.'

### **Potential hazards**

Two new projects which are still in their planning stages, are viewed as potential pollution threats. One is the proposed desalting plant at Castle Peak. It is felt by the Secretary of the Conservancy Association, Mr. Michael Webster, that the Sulphur Oxide emitted by the plant may well cause a major pollution problem in Castle Peak New Town. The other project which is seen as a potential pollution hazard both for air and water, is the proposed oil refinery, which is now being considered for Lamma Island.

Hong Kong's harbour is reputed to be one of the best in the world, but some people feel that due to the ever-growing problem of water pollution, it is becoming questionable whether we can lay claim to

this assertion much longer. Yet, the Financial Secretary, Mr. Philip Haddon-Cave, who is also the Chairman of the Public Works Sub-Committee, in May of this year assured the public that the sewage disposal question is not as serious as it is made out to be. 'There are strong tidal races in the harbour which take care of most of the pollution,' he said. 'When most people talk of pollution in the harbour, it is generally only surface flotsam, because the harbour is scoured twice a day by tidal races.'

His statements are backed by a leading British survey firm which was contracted by Government to study the Colony's water pollution problem with respect particularly to the effects of sewage disposal and also from the standpoint of health, aesthetics and ecology. The survey covered Tolo Harbour, Victoria Harbour, and the tidal streams in Castle Peak and Tsun Wan. The firm concluded at the end of its study that there is no severe pollution around the Colony's seawaters except in a few isolated areas. Just where these isolated areas are was not stated, but the complete findings of the survey are expected to be published this month.

About 18 tons of refuse is picked up from the harbour everyday. And although the maximum fine for harbour pollution is \$4,000, ships are rarely fined more than \$800, and this is usually for oil

slicks. In one case, a ship's captain was fined \$200 for being responsible for a large oil slick covering an area of about 80,000 square feet. This works out at less than half a cent per square foot!

In the New Territories, the notorious source of pollution is the tanneries in Sheung Shui. The poisonous waste produced by the tanneries has killed livestock and poultry, and has literally ruined the streams. Although the tanneries were supposed to have left the area by the end of 1971, some are in fact still there and will not be moved until early 1973 when an area in Kwai Chung especially for such offensive industries is ready for occupation.

The full extent of the damage that water pollution has had on Hong Kong's marine life is unknown, but dead fish, sea snakes and so forth can be seen floating in the water, and there is a rumour that the oysters from Deep Bay are no longer edible. Should the pollution become worse, we may find ourselves in the same sad situation as Japan, where the Japanese have come close to ruining their major source of seafood.

Other types of environmental problems which confront Hong Kong include noise pollution and the need for better town planning. Studies have been carried out in both Central District and near Kai Tak airport, by Dr. N. W. M.

Ko, an acoustics expert, aided by a number of students of the Mechanical Engineering Department of Hong Kong University. In both cases the findings show that at certain times during the day, the noise level reaches heights beyond the tolerance of the human ear. Diesel engine cars were again cited as a major polluter in this category.

Pedestrian subways near the airport which become echo chambers when aircraft take off and land, factories, vehicles without proper silencers, and the incessant construction process were named as other offenders.

### Even on Sundays

Construction is a necessity for a growing city, but it is a more intolerable irritant than it might be because work often continues seven days a week from eight in the morning to eight at night, even in residential areas.

The Colony has also been criticised by architect, Mr. Jon Prescott, who feels that a number of Hong Kong's buildings are ugly, poorly kept up, badly situated, and in short, constitute a case of what has been called visual pollution.

Mr. J. D. Porteous, the former Chairman of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Town Planning Institute agrees with Mr. Prescott's criticism and has pointed out that more modern methods of town planning would result

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## Briefing

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

□ The complete '1972 Library Catalogue' of the Chamber's library has been printed and will be distributed to Members on a first-come-first-serve basis. Those interested are requested to contact Miss Veronica Loo (H-245075 Ext. 16) of the International Trade Department.

□ The Industrial Safety Training Centre of the Labour Department plans to organise a series of six 5-day training courses on industrial safety, beginning July 24.

These courses are open to Workshop Instructors, Technical Teachers, Foremen and Supervisory Personnel. Interested Members should contact Mr. A. H. Carter, Industrial Safety Training Centre, Labour Department, Canton Road Govt. Offices, 3rd floor, Canton Road, Kowloon.

□ Members interested in attending the next Chinese Export Commodities Fair in Kwangchow are asked to send in information to Mr. S. L. Chung concerning their interests in the Fair. Priority will be given to members of the China Area Section.

□ Members are again reminded of the Through-Transportation Symposium to be held in the Hong Kong Hilton Ballroom on August 3 and 4. (See ad. P. 10).

□ The seventh edition of the Hong Kong Manufacturers and Exporters Register, published by the Oriental Publicity Service, is now available. This latest edition is divided into a number of categories, with information on HK manufacturers and their products. Subscribers are also offered a free enquiry service, which informs them on market conditions in Hong Kong.

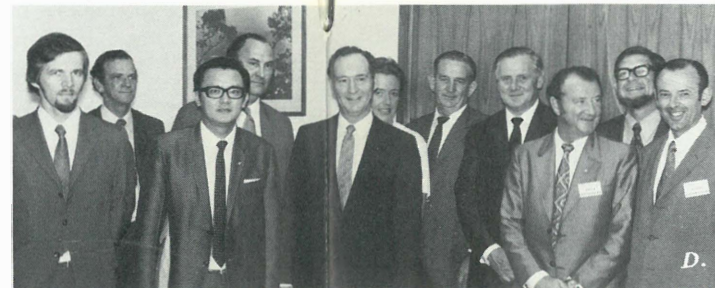
□ The Trade Development Council wishes to bring to Members' notice that the Hong Kong Enterprise Design Centre, which is associated with King's Advertising Company and a publication called Hong Kong Exporter is in no way connected with the TDC or its publication Hong Kong Enterprise.

□ 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. The Mandarin examination will be held on the afternoon of August 18, 1972 while the Cantonese one will take place on the morning of August 19, 1972. Candidates must register with the Chamber not later than 5 pm Tuesday, August 1, 1972. 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.



# Picture Briefing

- A. The travel group to Australia, seen here before their departure for Perth, left the Colony on May 13. Accompanying them was Philip Choy (3rd from left) of the International Trade Department. See also P. 18.
- B. The 16-member Rotterdam Europort-Delegation were shown the Chamber's slide presentation 'Take One Barren Rock' during their visit to the Chamber on June 5. Leader of the Delegation, the Lord Mayor of Rotterdam, Mr. W. Thomassen is seated left. Next to him is Mr. A. D. J. Brantenaar, Director General of the Rotterdam Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- C. The United States Electronic Data Processing Mission, accompanied by Mr. George Mu (right) of the American Consulate, visited the Chamber on May 26.
- D. Participants of the Australian Building Materials Display at the City Hall were guests of the Chamber at a slide presentation on May 8.
- E. The Chamber and the TDC hosted a cocktail party in the Blue Room of the Hong Kong Club for visiting members of the Young Presidents' Organisation on May 26. Seen from left to right are Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ford of Oklahoma, The Director, Mr. H. M. Marko of Michigan, Mr. Ronald F. S. Li and the Manager of the International Trade Department.



## Briefing - continued

□ A number of **changes** has been made in Committee personnel. In the **International Trade Committee**, Mr. L. A. Heming and Mr. Henry Fung have succeeded Mr. Henry Keswick and Mr. Fung Hon-chu. The Chairman, Mr. P. G. Williams has succeeded Mr. G. M. B. Salmon as Chairman of the **Arbitration Committee**. In the **Certification Committee** Mr. Henry Keswick succeeds Mr. Fung Hon-chu as Chairman. Mr. N. A. Rigg will serve as Chairman of the **Home Affairs Committee** in succession to Mr. H. P. Foxon.

□ On the invitation of the Director of Marine, the Shipping Committee, at a meeting on May 25, elected Mr. C. L. Pan of World-Wide (Shipping) Ltd. to serve on a working party to consider the **needs of locally domiciled seamen**.

□ A circular has been sent out to members of the Japan, Taiwan and South Korea Area Sections informing them of the possibility of a **business promotion tour to Japan**. In order to enable the Committee to arrange a suitable time and cities to visit, interested Members are asked to fill in the form and return it to Mr. Philip Choy at their earliest convenience. Members outside the Area Section may also join the tour. Priority, however, will be given to those in the Area Section.

□ The Secretary, Mr. R. T. Griffiths attended an ECAFE Preparatory meeting on International Container Traffic in Bangkok. It was to prepare for the **United Nations Conference on International Container Traffic** which will be held in Geneva in November/December 1972.

The purpose of this will be to **deal with administrative, technical and legal problems** — all of a practical nature — which should be solved at the world level in order to avoid the adoption at national or regional levels of conflicting procedures which might prove **difficult to reconcile**.

The questions to be discussed will cover safety; standardisation of sizes and weights; customs; inspection; testing and certification; identification and marking of containers; documentation; legal problems connected with the combined transport contract and how the conference will have to decide whether to recommend adoption of a draft Combined Transport Convention.

□ A booklet in both English and Chinese on **How to Register your Factory** has been published by the Labour Department. Copies of the booklet are available from the Chamber library and the Certification Department.

## When is a Preference Scheme Not a Preference Scheme?

**I**T IS not surprising that local businessmen should have expressed dismay and anger over the Japanese Generalised Preference Scheme — or, as far as Hong Kong is concerned, non-preference scheme.

Now the details of the scheme have been widely publicised. According to latest figures, some eight per cent of Hong Kong's exports may benefit from preference, a further 20 per cent are in items excluded from the scheme completely, while 96 items, comprising some 60 per cent of Hong Kong's exports to Japan, are specifically and solely excluded from the agreement. Furthermore, import of the items that do qualify for preferences is limited to 50 per cent of an annual tariff which is calculated on the low level of imports in 1968.

Hong Kong is not over-bothered about receiving benefits. We are quite able to face competition without preferential treatment. But we shall find it difficult to face the same competition if others are given benefits that we do not receive. And this is precisely what has happened.

It is hard to understand why Japan should have chosen to discriminate against Hong Kong. Their scheme not only unfair, but is maddeningly illogical.

Of the 96 items excluded solely from Hong Kong, some 37 are not exported to Japan. Some indeed are not even made here. And of

the items that are exported, Hong Kong is the principal supplier in only four cases. In fact, Hong Kong is very much a small supplier of many of the products that have been discriminated against. For example, Hong Kong exported only three per cent of Japan's imports of man-made fibre yarns in 1971, whereas Korea and Taiwan supplied 54 and 37 per cent respectively.

### The big WHY?

The effect on Hong Kong of exclusions may be positively harmful in that they may divert existing trade away from Hong Kong to Taiwan or South Korea to a greater degree than the tariff quotas might suggest. A Japanese importer, not being able to determine in advance whether imports from beneficiaries would attract preferences or not, would obviously set his pricing on the assumption he would pay normal duty. If he got the goods in at preference rates he would make a quick extra profit. Other things being roughly equal, therefore, the Japanese importer will tend to buy from beneficiaries on the off-chance of making that profit.

What then is the motive behind the Japanese decision? The Japanese treatment of Hong Kong in the matter of preferences apparently reflects the protectionism which has for so long characterised Japanese trade policies. But it seems incredible that anyone

con't p. 26

## Report from the Areas

Philip Choy 'down under'.

**H**ONG KONG made products are currently making rapid progress in Australian and New Zealand import markets. This was the main observation made by Philip Choy of the International Trade Department during his visit to these areas as Chamber representative with the recent travel group.

This trend was to be seen in practically all the major cities he visited, which included Perth, Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne, Wellington and Auckland. At the moment there is growing interest in trade with the South-east Asia region — including Korea and Taiwan, as well as Hong Kong. Trade Missions from New Zealand will be touring the areas later this year but will not be coming to Hong Kong. However, the Perth Chamber of Commerce and the Western Australia Chamber of Manufactures will be sending a joint trade mission to Hong Kong in November. With the assistance of the Australian Commission in Hong Kong, they will be holding a three-day exhibition at the City Hall displaying Australian products. Members of the mission will be interested in both buying and selling.

Mr. Choy found Perth interesting, not only because of its interest in trade with the Colony, but because of its potential growth as an economic centre. Western Australia is now enjoying sustain-

ed growth in capital investment, especially in mineral exploration and processing.

It is said that the region can absorb over half a million people over the next decade. Western Australia does, however, face a problem in communication and transport. The bulk of trade is mainly handled by head buying offices in Sydney and Melbourne.

While in Wellington, New Zealand, Mr. Choy learned that the New Zealand Government is considering the gradual phasing out of the existing import licensing control in the next five years, but this would be replaced by tariff control. If this change does come about, Mr. Choy believes that trade between Hong Kong and New Zealand would increase, although perhaps not substantially. He was also informed that the renewal date of import licences for the coming year is July 1, 1972.

Wellington possesses a new World Trade Centre which is well managed and impressive. The Import Section is due to be completed in some three months' time. It was suggested that a Hong Kong Week should be organised after its completion and Hong Kong exporters and manufacturers be invited to display their goods during the Week, free of charge but provided that they were not already represented in New Zealand. It is hoped that Members will be able to participate.

## Pick of the Press

Reprinted from the Financial Times, London

Scrap that annual report!

**W**HO benefits from the average company report? *Financial Times* writer Sheila Black has a clear answer — the printer. The glossy documents produced by many companies may swell the printer's profits but are of little value to anyone else, she contends. We reprint here her congratulations to a company in the UK that has broken new ground:—

The congratulations are not, as they might be, on yet another good year from Smith and Nephew Limited. The congratulations are for the new type of report and accounts which S and N gave their shareholders this year.

Gone is the expensive, glossy book through which few shareholders wade and which the financial analysts find far too unnecessarily like a sort of miniature *Vogue* or *Nova*, but with inadequate information.

Instead S and N simply printed their report and accounts in two distinct parts. On the one hand is a simply printed, totally informative booklet for the analysts and experts, on decent-quality, hard-wearing paper which is far from glossy.

The other contains everything an analyst could wish for with the small exception of a note about the firm's accounting principles. Next year, that will be included since "we have absolutely no secrets about it and tell anyone who asks," say the S and N directors. Tucked inside this wealth of information and figures is an Abridged Report for the shareholders who want only the basics. With a wide, pale-blue border so that it shows up if the two are handed out together, or

looks well if taken separately and alone, it is virtually a booklet that opens up into a wide leaflet.

On it, in large, bold, easy-to-understand type, is all that shareholders want or need to know. Correction — there is all and more; there is a good deal of information that the law does not require to be given.

### Telling it like it is

On this leaflet are essential results in large figures — the sales, pre-tax profit, tax, dividend, earnings per share, share-price high and low for the year, return on capital, number of shareholders with fewer or more than 5,000 shares, and number of employees. Last year's comparisons on all counts are lined up in the next column. Then come colour pictures of the company's products — which include such household names as *Elastoplast*, *Nivea* and the more glamorous *Gala* and *Mary Quant* cosmetics. Under each product group are bar charts, showing its percentage contribution to sales and profits. Such breakdowns are just the sort of things that analysts need and shareholders deserve. But most companies hold them back on the tired old

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grounds that they would help our competition.

On another page are press comments on S and N's performance, from all media, light or serious, critical or friendly. 'We felt it was more important for shareholders to know what other people think of us than merely to ask them to accept our own ideas of how good we are,' said Tony Leavey, deputy chairman. The balance sheet and profit and loss account backed the leaflet.

### Fat, glossy & unread

The S and N Board believes that company annual reports and accounts are the most unread documents published. Therefore, especially since the tendency is for them to become larger and glossier, they are grossly wasteful of time, money and effort without improving either shareholder or customer relationships. Fatter, glossier jobs have done nobody any good except the printers, is the S and N contention.

### Cutting costs

Not only is the annual report readable, but it costs less, in spite of a nearly 20 per cent rise in the print order. The comparative costs worked out like this: Last year, 34,000 copies of the report were printed at a cost of £8,300. This year 40,000 were printed at a cost of £3,800. However, to get a true comparison, it is necessary to allow for an eight

per cent increase in the printer's charges, which would at today's prices have given S and N a bill for £9,000 for a similar job to that produced last year. The real saving therefore is the difference between a unit cost of 26½p. and 9½p.

The simpler job was handled by S and N's own small design studio, rather than a costly contract printer. On top of all that, it was cheaper to post — and postage is a considerable item these days. That bill came to £1,400 instead of an estimated £2,400 for last year's weightier glossy at current rates. There has been the odd shareholder who said he felt the thing looks a bit cheap. I would not personally agree.

But there has also been praise for something that they can at last understand and something that is brief and yet detailed.

### Good PR

One final point. An extra print of the Abridged Edition for shareholders has been made to send out to new shareholders with a welcome note. So, besides making sense all round, it works out as a good public relations effort too. Most ordinary shareholders are not accountants, are terrified by figures, and find the chairman's statement incomprehensible. If shareholder democracy is ever to mean anything, these shareholders have to be catered for. Congratulations, Smith and Nephew.



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INTHKE651.

## **The good business Lunch**

**K**OWLOON has so far been ignored in our Business Lunch series. This is not intentional, but *Bulletin* staff have found difficulty in learning of new restaurants opening on the Kowloon side. If readers know of any interesting new ventures in Kowloon, we should be interested to hear of them.

However, to redress what has hitherto been an unfair balance, and to broaden the national scope of our research, we did try a Kowloon restaurant this month, one that specialises in Korean food.

The Seoul Palace, 5 Humphrey's Avenue, opened about two months ago. It is situated about half-way down Humphrey's Avenue, and is on the left hand side when approached from Nathan Road, close to the Humphrey's Hotel.

You have to go to the first floor to reach the operative part of things. Here, you will find a U-shaped room containing about twenty or so tables, so that the restaurant can accommodate some eighty people or perhaps a few more at a squeeze.

We arrived late-ish, about 20 minutes past one, just in case there was a one o'clock rush, but we need not have feared, since there was plenty of table space available. The lack of pressure on staff did have one fortunate outcome in that we were given what must be described as truly personal service. The pleasant and attractive young

lady (Cantonese — not Korean!) who showed us to our table was determined that we should have every assistance. She explained the menu, filling in the extensive gaps of our knowledge of Korean cooking.

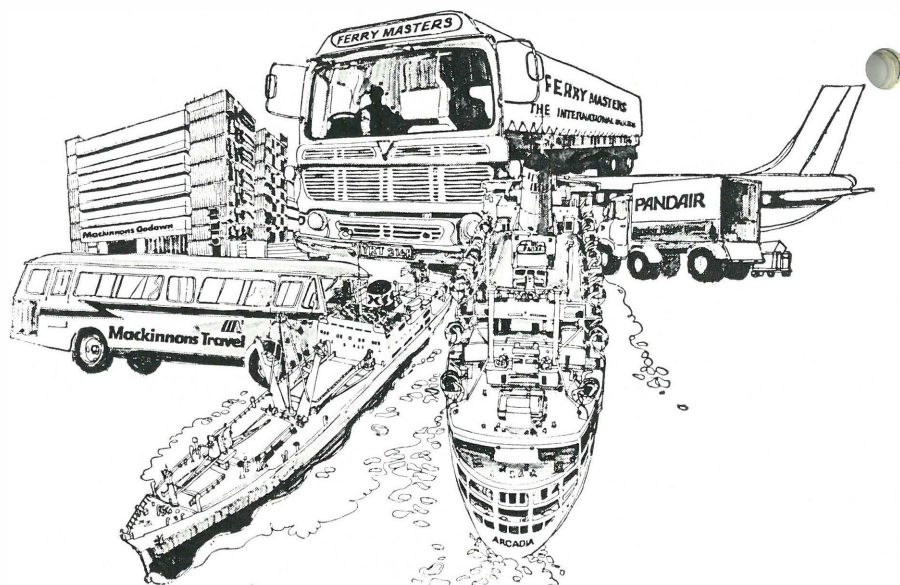
The menu is divided into several sections. First come the do-it-yourself barbecues, which is probably the version of Korean food most familiar to outsiders.

### **Speciality of the house**

Following the barbecues are stews —beef, pork, salt fish and so on. A section is then devoted to what are called 'full courses', which in fact are set *a la carte* meals featuring a speciality of the house as a main course with an appropriate array of secondary and side dishes. The menu also lists rice and soup dishes, noodle and soup dishes, and what are known as 'light' soups, ie, without the rice or noodles. A few samples of prices:—barbecue of fillet beef is \$10; the Seoul Palace Special (one of the 'full courses') is \$18.00; chicken stew is \$10; fish in hot sauce with rice is \$7.50; seaweed soup (or, as the menu insisted, *seawood* soup, but we gave them the benefit of the doubt) is \$4.00. Among the side dishes, Kim-Chi, the spicy pickled cabbage, is \$2.00 and jellyfish, or Hae-pa-ri to the cognoscenti, is \$5.00.

An adequate selection of drinks is available, with most brands of whisky at \$4.00 and of brandy at

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\$5.00. Several brands of beer, including Japanese beer, are stocked, and sake or ginseng wine is available at \$4.00.

We deliberately ordered a selection from different sections of the menu, but in the event our carefully thought out decision was perhaps unnecessary since some of the same dishes will appear if one orders one of the 'full courses' and this is perhaps the best plan for the newcomer. No doubt the young lady who helped us will be glad to advise others.

Our order in theory consisted of a Seoul Palace Special full course, a Bul-gogi full course, a pork barbecue and a chicken stew. We were assured that this would adequately meet the demands of three people.

What actually arrived was a plate of pork barbecue, a plate of beef barbecue (part of the Bul-gogi set course), a plate of raw oysters (part of the Seoul Special), the Chicken stew, a bowl of turnip and seaweed (or seaweed?) soup for each, about seven side dishes including Kim-chi, a bowl of rice for each, and a Chi-gai.

### Taste buds

Both barbecues were tender and well spiced and would be acceptable to the most conservative of guests. The Kim-chi was not too explosive, but then we had been assured by our young lady friend that the meal had been prepared so as not to over-extend our taste

buds. Even the side dish of spiced shredded turnip, which may not be everyone's idea of a delicacy, went down well.

### Interesting

The most interesting dish, and obviously one to be ordered by those determined to give the restaurant's Korean chef a fair test, was the Chi-gai. This was a stew containing shellfish, meat, egg, Chinese vermicelli, vegetables, and bean curd.

The quality of the tea served is worth commending. And for one who had not tried it before, the ginseng wine proved to be a taste he could accept without having to wince. Indeed, it seemed to blend well with the food.

The total bill, including the odd drink apart from the ginseng, came to \$80, with service charge and a suitably generous tip for the helpful young lady.

### Garlic

The restaurant itself is unpretentious in decor, but is light, pleasant and clean. Like one other restaurant mentioned earlier in this series, it is right for a lunch with colleagues and friends, rather than an appropriate background for clinching a million dollar deal.

The parting gesture from our young lady friend was a stick of chewing gum apiece, presented, so she told us, 'to keep away garlic for the afternoon'!

## WHAT ARE WE LEAVING— CON'T

in the creation of a better, more pleasant and healthy environment, especially for lower income households. He feels that the current town planning ordinance is some forty years out of date. These views are echoed by the Conservancy Association which has stated over and over again that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive policy for the development of land. In reply, Government has stated that it has such a plan for the development of land, but that the plan is not available to the public.

## Wildlife in danger

On the matter of ecology, the Conservancy Association has been emphasising the need to set up nature reserves in the Colony. Of particular importance, the Association notes, are the Mai Po Marshes. The various types of marsh once provided suitable conditions for a host of different species of birds such as the pheasant-tailed jacana and watercock, and yet this area of wetland is in danger of being ruined forever. The number of breeding birds is decreasing drastically, from a possible 350 different species to only about 70. The development of legal fishponds is cited as one cause leading to the destruction of these marsh areas.

## PREFERENCE SCHEME— CON'T

could believe that the grant of such limited preferences could pose any threat to Japanese industry; all the more so when consider the fact that Taiwan and South Korea — low cost producers if ever there were — are included without qualification in the Japanese preference scheme. The answer must presumably be that this has been largely an emotional action. Long memories of Hong Kong competition in third markets may have blurred the present day position. And of course there are political considerations as far as Taiwan and South Korea are concerned that do not apply to Hong Kong. But having said all that, it is still extraordinary treatment when you consider that Japan is Hong Kong's principal source of imports and now holds a quarter of the entire import market. In 1971, it ran a trade surplus with Hong Kong of the order of \$3,800 million, selling ten times as much as it bought from us. Japan has industrial investments in Hong Kong worth over \$260 million and has had a substantial stake in public works projects over the past few years. In these circumstances, the Japanese decision on preferences is puzzling, disappointing and irritating.

水染污。

香港之海港向被譽為世界上優良港口之一，但由於港內海水日趨污穢，很多人懷疑我們能否再享有此稱譽。但財政司夏鼎基先生於本年五月間宣稱：排除廢物此問題並非如大家想像中那麼嚴重。夏鼎基先生亦同時為工務小組委員會主席。據夏鼎基先生指出港海內的潮浪甚為急速，這也就解決海水污濁這問題。當人們談論污染時，他們是指海面飄浮之廢物而已。」

夏氏之意見受到一英國測量公司之贊同，該公司曾替香港政府研究海水污染之問題，彼等尤着重廢物之排除及有關健康上、美觀上及生態學上等各點。調查地區包括吐露港、維多利亞港及青山與荃灣區之海流。該次調查完竣後，該公司謂：除却一些地區外，香港之海水並無嚴重之污染問題。但該公司並沒有指明該少數地區在那兒。調查報告書將於本月內發表。

每天從海港收集之垃圾共十八噸之多。雖然把海港弄污之最高罰款為四千元，但船隻於用油漬弄污海水時很少被罰繳超過八百元之罰款。舉一例子，有一船長被檢控用油漬弄污約八萬方呎之海水時，只被罰二百元——這是相等於一方呎半分之罰款！

在新界，設於上水之皮革漂染製造廠是該區污染之源頭。來自皮革廠之有毒廢物對河流及家禽等至為有害，同時亦損毀了該處之河流。雖然該等工廠要在一九七一年底從該地區遷出，但有很多間仍在那兒營業至一九七三年初，當為彼等在葵涌創設之營業地區準備完竣後，他們才會從上水遷離。

海水污染對香港之海洋生物的影響程度仍是未知之素，但我們可見到不少魚類屍首等飄浮水面，人們亦傳說深灣的蠔大不如前。若污染之問題變本加厲，我們便會像日本一樣，主要之海產資源受到損毀。

香港所面臨之環境方面之問題包括聲音嘈雜之問題及需要較為良好之城市設計。

香港大學機械工程部一位音響專家——高華文博士在就讀該系之數位同學協助下，曾在中區及啓德機場研究該等地區之音響程度。調查所得顯示日間某一段時間內，該兩地區之音響程度超過人們的耳朵所能忍受。其他聲音繁雜的地方包括機場附近之行人隧道，於飛機起落時，該處之音響更為駭人，其他如工廠及建築工程等都是造成聲音嘈雜之一些因素。

對一個在發展中之城市而言，建設是不可少的，但令人煩擾的是甚而在市區，在一星期七天中從早上八時至晚間八時仍有建築工程在進行着。

一位名建築師——柏士葛先生曾批評香港有些大廈的建造不大美觀、位置不當和管理不善，他稱此情形為「視覺上之污染」。

皇家城市設計學院香港分院之前任主席布狄雅斯先生贊同柏士葛先生發表之批評。他又指出現代之城市設計方法會得到更優良、更悅目和健全之環境。布氏認為目下之城市設計法案已落後了四十多年。

香港政府對布狄雅斯之見解不表苟同，但一位訪港之美國環境及城市設計專家張持布氏之意見。

該專家謂：「我逗留此間歷時不久，但從我見的來說，我認為在城市設計上，香港要改革以適合現代之需要。尤其在新界，我們要預定發展之計劃，那區之工業及住宅區域之發展是有一定之形勢。」

該專家的意見得到長春社之贊同。該會曾屢次表示我們急需要一更徹底之在地發展計劃。在對此項建議作答時，政府宣稱該處已定有一土地發展計劃，但此計劃並未向大眾公開。

至於有關生態學上之問題，長春社曾強調本港應保存大自然。雖然香港被認為是野獸之庇護所，但該會認為在實際上這不算是什麼的一回事，因為在這方面，我們並無什麼法律條文規限。再者，雖然打獵活動是被

禁止，但並無什麼可阻止急速之市區發展之進度。

該環境保護協會認為尤其重要的是美蒲低窪地區。各類不同的沼澤為多種不同品種之種物生長之好地方，但該地區處被永遠毀

滅之邊沿。在那兒繁殖的鳥兒日漸減少，而由於合法魚塘之發展因而令到那些沼澤地域損毀。

本「會訊」在下期將談論解決本港有關環境方面疑慮之方法，敬希留意。

## 評「日本特惠關稅計劃」

本港商界人士對日本的普及特惠稅計劃表示失望和憤慨是不足為奇的。因為對香港而言，這是一個並無任何優待的計劃。

現在計劃的詳情已經週知，根據最近的數字，大概有百份之八的香港出口可能實受其惠，有多種貨品，大約佔出口百份之二十，則被摒棄於該計劃以外。其他有九十六種貨品，等於香港出口百份之六十，則指明香港製造的不包括在該項普及特惠計劃內。那些有資格享受特惠稅的貨品，其限額將為一九六八年進口數字百份之五十。而一九六八年的輸日水平甚低。

香港並不太注重享有特權。我們是在沒有優待下面對競爭的。但如果其他國家受優待而是我們得不到的，則我們很難與彼等競爭。日本對香港的差別待遇是很難令人了解的。他們的計劃對香港不但不公平，而且是不合邏輯的。

在被摒棄享受特惠稅的九十六種貨品中，有三十七種並不是輸往日本的，有些又不是在香港製造。關於那些是由香港輸入的貨品，其中祇有四類香港為主要供應者。實際上很多受差別待遇的貨品，香港祇是少量供應者。由於香港被摒棄，其所造成的損害比擬定限額時所預期到的還大。因為日下的貿易可能由香港而轉移往台灣及南韓。一個日本入口商，由於不能事先決定由受惠國輸入的貨物是否可以獲得特惠稅，於定價時所假設

其貨品是要付出正常關稅的。如果他輸入的貨品享有特惠稅，則他便可以轉瞬間獲得額外利潤。因此在其他條件相同下，日本入口商會向受惠國購物，希望有機會獲得較多利潤。

日本的決定其背後動機是甚麼呢？日本在特惠稅方面如此對付香港明顯地反映出日本的貿易保護主義，貿易保護主義是日本長期以來的貿易政策。但令人難以置信的是任何人竟然會認為給予香港有限的特惠稅可以影响到日本的工業。而台灣和南韓——成本較低的出產地則無條件地列入日本的特惠稅計劃內。

我們的答案一定要假設這主要是感情用事的行動，以往香港在第三市場的競爭可能記憶尤新以致蒙蔽了目下的環境。當然台灣與南韓有政治因素存在，而香港情形則迥然不同。但當我們想到香港為日本貨品主要市場時——日本貨的入口佔香港總入口四分之一，香港所受的對待仍然令人覺得太零別了。一九七一年香港對日本的貿易入超為三十八億港元，我們由日本的輸入較諸我們往日輸出約十倍。日本在香港的工業投資總值超過二億六千萬港元，而過往數年香港的工務計劃由日開承辦的亦甚為可觀。

實際上日本在香港所獲利益，與任何其他主要貿易國家比較，都勝一籌，在此情形下，日本在特惠稅計劃的決定是令人費解，失望和憤怒的。



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