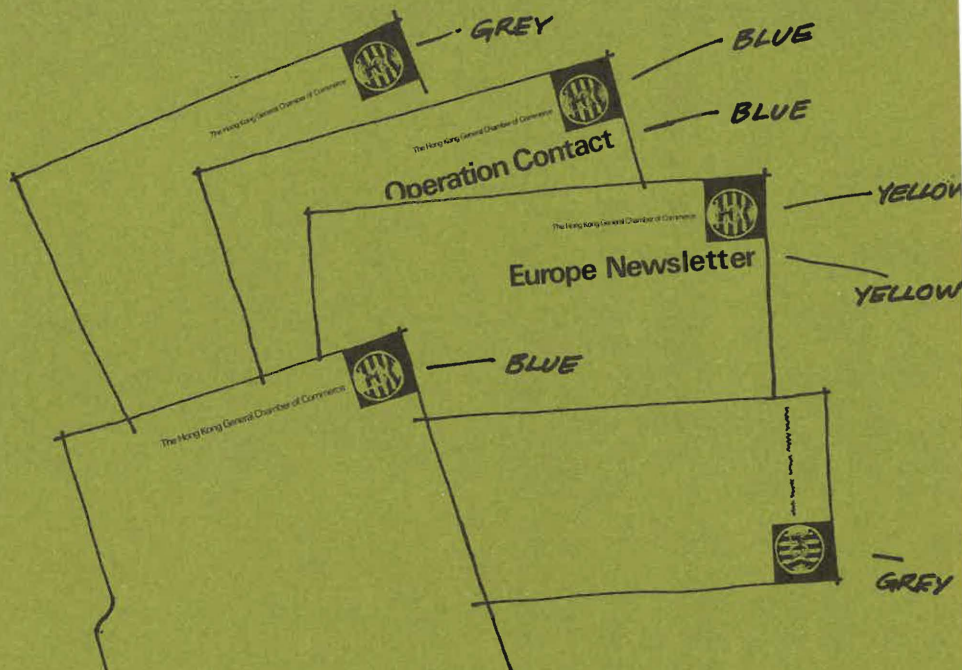




# The Bulletin

The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce



'The Chamber sends us too much paper and  
sometimes we don't even know what to do  
with it...'

find the answer on Page 5

APRIL 1974

# 貿易談判頗易為？

(本「會訊」在原則上常儘量避免刊登任何演詞稿件——尤其此等稿文已見諸各報章。但以下一文乃工商署署長竇華先生所發表之演詞，深入談論與我們貿易夥伴在貿易磋商過程中有關工作事宜，料為各會友所渴望閱讀，茲繕如下，以饗會友。)

「我常覺得自己相當幸運——因為我愛旅遊，辯論及發言——而我目下的工作正包括這三點。去年，我的旅程共達二十萬空哩。

我的職守的銜頭是工商處副處長，處理商業聯絡。在實際工作上，我是香港政府之主要貿易談判人員，代表香港政府與我們易夥伴國家政府之代表要員在香港及海外舉行談判，商討有關貿易決策。

我所談及之「談判」之主旨並非為發展貿易，而是減少貿易在發展上所遇到之阻力。換言之，我們盡量使貿易途徑明朗無阻。而假若有所障礙時，我們便要設法獲到最有利之條件。

我所談及之官式談判有異其他商業上之談判。簡單說來，兩位商人談討合約時，有一方是想買入，而另一方是希望賣出的。假若相互條件並不如理想，大家可放棄交易，或尋找另一解決方法，換言之，兩方均擁有相當彈力談判據點。

相反地，當代表政府出席談判貿易協定時，對方乃代表其政府，意欲把貿易制限加諸香港。

香港為一自由貿易海港，我們並無因為要保護本港工業而制限入口，更無一關稅壁壘，除非在極端情形下，香港並不會摒棄其自由海港政策。

我們在談判事項之成績如何呢？

答案該是「並不太壞」——這是因為我

們在事前作充份的準備，而當談判完成後，我們又遵守所立之協議。因此，在國際貿易上，香港備受讚譽。

另一方面，我們得到一些國際協定的保障，該等協議使有關國家間之貿易關係有一定的指引。對香港而言，「一般貿易及關稅之協定」使香港對不平等及不合理的對待得到保障。世界八十多個國家對此協定頗為尊重，彼等之貿易佔世界貿易百份之九十。

「一般貿易及關稅協定」之基本原則為「最受惠國之規則」。在一九五零及六零年代，假若我們仍像一九三零年那樣沒有這一協定合議時，香港在國際貿易上便不可能有今天的成就。許多工業在各主要市場便會遇到障礙。

既然有了「一般貿易及關稅協定」，為甚麼又要舉行貿易談判呢？這是由於並非大家都遵守所立訂之規則，而香港之紡織業亦由此故而受影響，進而影響我們的經濟。

在一九五零年年代，不少國家，尤其亞洲國家之紡織業有超卓表現，至今西方紡織業黯然失色。於此政治形勢下，國際對「一般貿易及關稅協定」之規條便有漠視。

因而於一九六零年，便訂下國際一新合議，以處理紡織業貿易上之困難。去年年末，於此合約期滿時，本港紡織品出口過半是受制限，而此等制限是根據此一合約之條款擬定。

在過去多年來，我們與美國、加拿大、瑞典、挪威、德國、澳洲、歐洲共同市場各國及英國均達成管制協議。但困難並未全被解決。去年，我們在日內瓦逗留多月，商討綿織、羊毛及人造纖維之新規格。此等新規格較以前所訂為佳。

現在讓我簡畧談述一下談判進行之情形。我不希望大家以為弱小的香港受強國欺凌。紡織貿易談判通常是在友善及合理情勢下進行。出席人仕分兩方，均為其代表國家發言。雖然有關談判各項準備工作乃由一組人員負責，但在實際談討磋商時便只有兩位人士作發言人。因此定要作充份準備工作後才使談判會談進行順利。

換言之，隊友們向發言人提供一切參攷資料及意見，但發言人首先定要澈底明白於談判中所採取之對策，以求達到預期之目標。

代表香港出席談判之人員通常為工商署工作人員。我的同僚於過去多年來對此談判工作得到不少經驗。對方出席談判人士常較我們人數眾多，彼等來自各不同政府機構，例如美國之談判代表來自美國工商部、勞工部、農業部、甚至白宮。

猶記得我會帶領一三人隊伍往布魯塞爾，踏進談判會議室時，只見四方會議桌之三邊共座會談人員二十八名，彼等均為歐洲共同市場代表；再者，會議室內滿佈傳譯人員，精通英、法、德、意及荷蘭各國語言。

可惜的是，會談人員均樂意以英語交談。但由於所用措辭及名詞有異，因而語言上，仍多少有點隔膜。

在本年，貿易談判之程序表較我們預期中更為繁忙。

在下月，美國代表團將蒞港重討香港及美國間之織品合約，隨之，我們要舉行一連串海外會談，這包括加拿大、奧地利、瑞典、挪威及歐洲共同市場，也許亦包括希臘。

貿易談判內容並非單純以紡織品為題，國際會議相談課題將與香港有重要關係——如世界貿易之基本規條等。此等會議將在日內瓦舉行。」

## 本會刊物，煥然一新

為使各會友對本會所寄遞之各類會訊消息等刊物易於閱讀，本會於最近將各刊物加以簇新整頓，風格煥然一新，現刻被「改裝」之刊物為「商業通告」及「貿易區通訊」等兩類刊物。

此舉始於去年秋季，本會公共關係部人員仔細致力研究商會及會員間之消息傳遞方法，進而予以合適改善。

本會刊物繁多——如「商業諮詢資料冊」、「全體會員通告」等均是，而彼等面積大小不同，格式亦有異。公共關係部有見及此，便着手策劃一一改善，使會員們於閱讀時省却了笨拙之感。

首先，本會決定了每星期二為「郵遞日」，若非例外，一切刊物均於星期二投遞遞送各會員，而各會員將可在星期三或星期四收到刊物。

刊物之內容，風格及編印形式有簇新的整理及設計，每份首頁均為大綱撮要，使該刊物內容可一目瞭然，而省却許多詳細閱讀之時間。

刊物之設計為本港一著名設計公司之心得。彼等曾先後被委聘負責本會多項設計工作，因此對本會所需頗為稔熟。

設計家首先使刊物紙張大小劃一，進而又利用不同顏色，以分別出各類不同刊物。因此本會國際貿易部每貿易區之「貿易區通訊」均各有一不同顏色以示分別。

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# Getting the Message Across

## — the Chamber's plan for keeping you in the picture

'**T**OO much paper is sent to us and sometimes we don't even know what we're supposed to do with it.' This was typical of some comments received by the Chamber last Summer when, under the guidance of PA Management Consultants, a survey was carried out among a representative sampling of the Membership into the effectiveness of the Chamber's service.

We hope the same Members have noticed one or two changes in the style of Chamber communications over recent weeks. The new appearance of the *Operation Contact* circular, for instance, and for those in area sections, the *Area Newsletters*. They are the first steps in a scheme to bring a new degree of order, and, it is hoped, clarity, to all Chamber mailings, so as to save your time and to improve the Chamber's service to you.

The PR Department, as the Chamber's 'communicators', was asked to look into the position last autumn.

It was apparent that communications are sent out to achieve a variety of purposes. Some are for action, — the regular *Trade Enquiries* circulars, for instance. Others are for information — which, depending on one's business and interests, could be of greater or lesser relevance. Some go only to sections of the membership; others to the entire membership.

Add to this the variety of sizes, shapes and colours of paper used by the Chamber. This made it not only difficult for a Member instantly to tell one item from another, but had repercussions for the ordering, handling and storage of paper.

Where to start? As in so many similar exercises, the best plan seemed to take one obviously simple means of effecting a partial improvement and to work outwards from that.

It seemed likely that a cost saving could be realised and that Members' time would be saved if mailings could be restricted to a maximum of one per week. A little thought suggested that Tuesdays might be the best mailing day. This would allow the Chamber the Monday and if need be the Tuesday itself to prepare any last minute items for inclusion, and given normal handling by the GPO, mail could still be expected to reach the Member by the Wednesday or Thursday, thus allowing him a day or so to process it before the week-end occurred.

The appearance, content and general presentation of material has also been submitted to improvement. The objective here is, firstly, to help Members to recognise a particular item more or less instantly, so that time is not wasted in deciding who, if anyone, should deal with it; and secondly, to convey to Members some idea of the contents as quickly as possible, so that they may decide whether the item is of interest, and then to absorb it quickly.

Pat Printer Associates, a firm of graphic designers, who had already handled a fair amount of work for the Chamber and were therefore familiar with our activities, were brought in. They were briefed on our objectives, including that of reducing costs, given samples of existing material and told



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to go away and think up a comprehensive approach to all items.

From this stage, the various phases of the exercise developed more or less concurrently. On the visual and materials handling side, paper sizes have now been standardised. After investigation, it was decided that a quarto (8¼ in. x 10⅞ in.) size meets most of the Chamber's requirements. The advantages of this are already apparent — for a start, it is found that the fourteen different sizes of envelope previously carried by the Chamber are largely redundant.

How does a Member identify the different items? Pat Printer Associates have devised a colour code whereby each item is firstly put into a category depending on its nature, and is then allocated a colour within that category. One obvious category for instance is the *Area Newsletters*. These are allocated a 'family' of colours, and each individual area is given a colour within that family. This together with changes in layout and typography means that a particular newsletter should be identifiable at a glance. The Chamber's logotype or symbol, which was essentially the Chamber's 'chop', has been modified so as to make it the key component in the colour scheme, and it now appears in the various colours at the top right corner of all Chamber communications. Examples of the artwork are featured on the front cover of this *Bulletin*.

Traditionalists might be interested to know that the 'modernisation' of the logotype echoes an already existing

but little used version of the symbol — that appearing on the main entrance to the Chamber's offices.

On content, the plan is for the PR Department to inject a more 'journalistic' approach into material by simple devices such as greater use of contents' lists, headlines and the relegation of detail to appendices — or where detail seems in any case unnecessary, to scrap it ruthlessly.

January 1st 1974 was the day for implementing the new scheme. But to allow for any ironing out of bugs, implementation is to proceed in stages. The first two guinea pigs are the *Operation Contact* circular and the various *Area Newsletters*.

By now Members should have adjusted to the new style of these, and, we hope, will find it an improvement. The next stage will be to marry the *Trade Enquiries* and *Bulletin* into this pattern, and so on through all the other 'bits and pieces' put out.

By the mid-year, all communications should fit into the pattern, and Members will be relieved of the need to sift through papers from the Chamber on perhaps several days a week, and can confidently expect to be able to despatch Chamber business within a single short period.

Finally, have any savings in the Chamber's administration yet been apparent? Well, it is of course early days, and as we pointed out the system is at present in the change-over stage. But by the end of the year the income and expenditure statement should give some measure.



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# Commerce with Comecon

**T**HE following short report is based on an informal talk given to members of the Chamber's East Europe Area Section by Len Dunning, Executive Director of the TDC.

In total the Comecon market has a population of 350 million people. In 1972 it absorbed 19 per cent of global imports overtaking West Germany as the world's second largest import market. Total imports of Comecon represent approximately 70 per cent of total imports of the United States — the world's largest import market.

If we exclude the USSR, import value per capita for some individual Comecon countries compares very favourably with that of the United States, e.g. Czechoslovakia, GDR, Hungary and Bulgaria, each has higher per capita import value than the United States.

The foreign trade of Comecon countries showed a strong expansion in 1972. Imports were up 22 per cent to US\$43.5 billion with exports up 58 per cent to \$42.3 billion.

Intra-Comecon trade accounted for 62 per cent in total trade in the area in 1972. Intra-Comecon trade as a percentage of total trade in the area is decreasing and imports from the rest of the world are growing at a faster rate than imports in the Comecon. For instance, between 1971 and 1972 the role of Intra-Comecon trade decreased in East Germany, from 65 per cent to 63 per cent, in Hungary from 62 to 60 per cent and particularly in Poland, from 64 to 58 per cent.

In 1973 Hong Kong's direct trade with Comecon included exports at HK\$35 million, re-exports at HK\$1 million and imports at HK\$160 million. Export growth was over 200 per cent, representing 0.2 per cent of HK's global exports, and imports by 55 per cent accounting for 0.6 per cent of Hong Kong's global imports. Hong Kong has a large deficit with the Comecon countries, which in 1973 amounted to HK\$134 million.

There is reason to believe that a substantial amount of trade is taking place with Comecon through third countries, particularly West Germany, Switzerland and Austria.

## Markets in Comecon

In 1973 Hong Kong's total exports to the Comecon were distributed as follows: GDR: 68.1 per cent, USSR: 16.8 per cent, Hungary: 8.7 per cent, Poland: 3.0 per cent, Czechoslovakia: 2.3 per cent, Rumania: 0.7 per cent, Bulgaria: 0.4 per cent.

The TDC's promotional efforts have been concentrated so far in the GDR and have met with some success. In 1970 Hong Kong had no exports to the GDR, but by 1973 GDR had risen to be Hong Kong's major market within the Comecon absorbing 24 million dollars of Hong Kong goods, almost all of it in clothing. The GDR has now become Hong Kong's largest market for children's cotton knit trousers and overalls, Hong Kong's 9th market for men's cotton slacks and jeans and 10th largest market for women's cotton slacks and jeans, non-knit and 10th market for men's man-made fibres pullovers.

# Clothes, Catwalks and Customers

## A look at the 1974 HK R-T-W Festival

**T**HREE o'clock in the afternoon. Saturday, 2nd March. The lights dim; the soundtrack bursts into life, the lights rise again. Out down the catwalk come the models and swaying to the music as they exhibit the clothes that are to make or break Hong Kong in the world of pret-a-porter over the next twelve months.

The Seventh Hong Kong Ready-to-Wear Festival had begun and for a week the Ballroom of the Hilton, its lobby and the fourth, fifth and sixth floors, were handed over to the Trade Development Council, so that they might show the world what HK is capable of.

The huge ballroom housed a T-shaped catwalk, stretching lengthwise across the room. This took up two-thirds of the area. From one end were three openings with sliding screens where models momentarily posed for the camera behind the screen and then as the door slid aside, moved down the catwalk. The remainder of the ballroom had been turned into a static display area where items of clothing with the conspicuous 'Made in Hong Kong' label hung on racks, divided into categories such as jeans and tops, anoraks and skiwear, separates, men's outfits, etc. The children's items were a disappointment, not in their quality but because there were so few of them. Almost half the racks were empty.

Saturday's first show was a press preview, for local and overseas journalists. The evening presentation was for local VIPs, including HE the Governor. Sunday evening was devoted to the buyers, over 1,000 of them. The evening was divided into two shows and these two were the Festival highlights.

And the clothes presented in the gala? They were up-to-the-minute style-wise and in the colours of the season. Items ranged from the Colony's best-selling items, jeans and casual wear to the ornate evening look for which Hong Kong has always been famous. Jeans and casual wear, in the standard blue denim and other colours, were followed by knitwear for men and women featuring the 30's and novelist Scott Fitzgerald's Great Gatsby look. Wool, leather and suede coordinates also made appearances. Then it went on to tennis and ski outfits, for both spectator and players. Spring came in light colours, as was summer wear. These included shirt-waisters, long skirts, swimwear, the Sailor look with pleated skirts, cotton day dresses, etc.

The Buyers' Previews were held on the following Monday and Tuesday and these expanded on the theme of the gala. Each participating firm showed samples from its collection.

Meanwhile on the fifth and sixth floors, the participants, each with their own showroom, stood ready to answer queries and hopefully to take down orders.

Credit for this year's organisation and presentation go to Frank Goldberg and Julius Schofield. For Mr. Goldberg, the 1974 Festival will be his last major project for the Trade Development Council where he has

worked since 1967; he is returning to his native Holland at the end of March. Mr. Schofield, together with his female partner, runs a London firm called Indesign. He decided on a simple catwalk show with mild lighting effects to emphasise the clothes, not to detract from them with the grimmickry that has sometimes occurred in the past. The music matched the mood of the clothes, ranging from the Now hits to Ethel Merman in the 1940's.

Hong Kong's clothing exports last year reached a value of HK\$7,425 million, an increase of 21.5 per cent over 1972. The USA remained at the top of the list of markets with 30.5 per cent of clothing exports, a 5.6 per cent increase over 1972. The UK regained its second position with 19.2 per cent of exports. West Germany made off with 18.8 per cent of HK-made clothing. Together these three markets accounted for 69 per cent of clothing exports in 1973.

The medium and smaller markets also did well. Japan recorded a spectacular increase in purchases of 193.8 per cent. As a market for Hong Kong clothing, Japan leapt from eighth to fourth position. The Netherlands, Sweden, Canada all showed shares of over three per cent of total clothing exports.

Such smaller markets as Australia, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Norway and Libya increased their clothing imports from Hong Kong in 1973. Significant growth rates recorded include 75 per cent for Switzerland, 58.5 per cent for Australia, and 48.1

per cent for Austria. Among the even smaller markets, Italy, Belgium and US Oceania recorded dynamic increases of 109.2 per cent, 92.5 per cent and 88.7 per cent respectively.

The most significant factor to emerge from the 1973 figures was the decreased share of total clothing exports going to the USA. While still the Colony's largest market and with HK exports still on the up and up, the USA's share of Hong Kong's exported garments had diminished by five per cent over 1972.

## Market diversification

It appears that Hong Kong has at last succeeded, if only on a small scale at this stage, in market diversification. Figures now show that locally-manufactured garments are selling in larger quantities in more markets. The EEC, Scandinavia, Japan, Australia, Canada — all these markets show potential for HK's line of ready-to-wear. These markets were well represented at this year's Festival.

A breakdown of the buyers shows that not only are they arriving in increasing numbers but also from an increasing number of smaller market areas. Representatives this year span 25 countries. The Australian contingent appeared large, with their unmistakable accent widely heard throughout the week. American, Japanese, German, French, British and an assortment of other nationalities were evident, keeping the interpreters in their brown and beige uniforms on their feet throughout the Festival.

And their comments? The Aus-

tralians were enthusiastic about future business. They said that Hong Kong had achieved a standard readily acceptable in Australia but cautioned that shipping space was a problem and if companies were forced to resort to air freight, costs would double.

Orders are the objective of the Festival for most participants but hardly the be-all and end-all of it. Opportunity is perhaps a more appropriate term. The Ready-to-Wear Festival Organising Committee set its objectives as 'to attract attendance by overseas buyers so as to create the maximum number of opportunities for Hong Kong garment manufacturers and exporters to meet them and thereby increase their exports.' And there were over 1,300 opportunities this year, in 1973 there were 1,266, in 1972 there were 1,001, 854 in 1971, 798 in 1970. The figure gets lower as we head back to 1967, the year a 'Festival of Fashion' was inaugurated. Now the organisers are worrying about saturation, a problem of success?

### **Quality in question**

What of the quality of this year's exhibits? Perhaps an indication of just how far down the road of quality Hong Kong has travelled are the comments made by visiting journalists and buyers to the earlier Festivals. Sue Dobson, a journalist from South Africa, said in 1970, 'There was no specific stamp on the designs to say "Hong Kong"!'. Well, now we have a stamp and it stands for quality and therefore should be used widely to show the world that Hong Kong is no

longer a copier (although we do copy very well!) but we can also convert and create.

This was most aptly put to test with the only 'grimmicky' idea in the entire show. H-O-N-G-K-O-N-G were the widely used letters of the alphabet. The models wore handprinted shirts with HK scenes or letters. Most stunning of all was a set of evening wear in simple style but with colourful Hong Kong locations applied on to the hem. There was the Connaught Centre, the harbour, junks and so on. A German editor here in 1970 commented, 'In style there is not much influence from the new Paris and Rome trends. Daily wear generally (knitted and others) good but perhaps not so very interesting for export, judging from the prices.' The knitwear category was very interesting in 1974 and practically stole the show. Already the knitted group are reporting favourable buyer reaction.

The most audible criticism of Hong Kong ready-to-wear in the past has been of design or rather the lack of it. This year however the criticism on this point, although still heard, has been less vocal. Hong Kong's pret-a-porter range as seen at the Seventh Ready-to-Wear Festival was not innovative enough to be called original but it was well-made and in tune with the times. Most important of all, the clothes were saleable, and for Hong Kong's 3,411 garment establishments and their 145,652 workers, and for those foreign businessmen who have invested over HK\$83 million in the industry, saleable garments is what matters.

# Briefing

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

□ **Mr. F. W. P. Bentley**, Managing Director of Shell Company (HK), has accepted the **General Committee's** invitation to join it.

□ The Chamber's next series of **Chinese Language Examinations** will be held on **April 19 and 20** at the Chamber offices, 9th floor, Union House. The Mandarin examination will be held on the afternoon of April 19 while the Cantonese will take place on the morning of April 20. Candidates must register with the Chamber not later than 5 pm Tuesday, April 9. 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.

□ It has been proposed that the limit on **numbers of members of Chamber Committees**, other than the General Committee, should be removed. It was felt that the **present ceiling of eight is no longer adequate** to cover all the interests that should be represented on particular Committees, notably the Shipping, International Trade and China Area Committees. After discussion, the **General Committee has decided to propose to members of the Chamber an amendment of the Articles of Association which would retain the optimum figure of eight** in normal circumstances but would give the **General Committee authority to appoint more members if it is considered necessary** for the proper functioning of the Committee. It has also been decided to amend the

Articles of Association so as to **allow newly joining members to pay their first year's subscription in quarterly instalments pro rata.**

Both proposals will be put to the Membership at an **EGM, following the Chamber's AGM at 5.30 p.m. on 1st April (Hilton Hotel ballroom).**

□ **The Chamber's Income and Expenditure Account** for the year ended 31st December, 1973 **shows an excess of expenditure over income of \$75,618.** This deficit has arisen largely from an exchange loss in the devaluation of the US Dollar. Generally, expenditure has been kept within bounds and the only other large, exceptional charge were fees paid to management consultants.

□ **A Summer Work Experience Scheme** has been organised for this summer by the SCM Post and the Hong Kong Association of Careers Masters. This joint venture is **aimed at providing a chance for secondary students who have completed Form Five to obtain experience** from industrial and commercial organisations.

A selection board will allocate students for interviews by participating firms. **Support for the scheme is requested** from member firms willing to offer students work during the summer. Those interested are invited to contact Miss Rose Lau of the Education Department, 5-778311 ext. 157 or Mr. J. Lai, Vice-Chairman of the HK Association of Careers Masters at 3-015191 or Mr. Kenneth Pang of the Circulation Department of the SCM Post at 5-620161 ext. 63.

# Picture Briefing

- A The Chamber, the American Chamber, the HK Tourist Association and the American Women's Association joined together on February 13 to present a charitable donation to the Sports Association for the Physically Handicapped. The donation was sent to the Chamber by an American businessman with a request to forward it to the charity.
- B The Chamber hosted a luncheon for VIP guests at the Ready-to-Wear Festival on March 5. R.T. Griffiths, Secretary of the Chamber, (left) welcomes guests.
- C Mr. Len Dunning, Executive Director of the TDC was the guest speaker at a Chamber luncheon held on February 25. He was speaking on the subject of trade opportunities with the COMECON countries. At right is Chairman of the East Europe Area Committee, Mr. John MacKenzie. (See also page 9).
- D Detective Constable Lau Biu was awarded a cash grant from the Chamber's Special Relief Fund on February 22. He was attacked by thugs while on duty. Picture shows Detective Constable Lau being commended by Chamber Chairman Mr. P. G. Williams. Looking on at centre is Chief Inspector L. C. Sew of the Triad Society Bureau and at right, Mr. K. L. Yuen, RHK Police Welfare Officer.
- E A trade mission from Trinidad called on the Chamber on February 25 and held discussions with members of the Central America Area Committee.
- F Mr. G.P.T. Carpenter, Chairman of the 'HK for New Arrivals' Committee is the subject of this month's 'Pen Profile'. (See page 18).

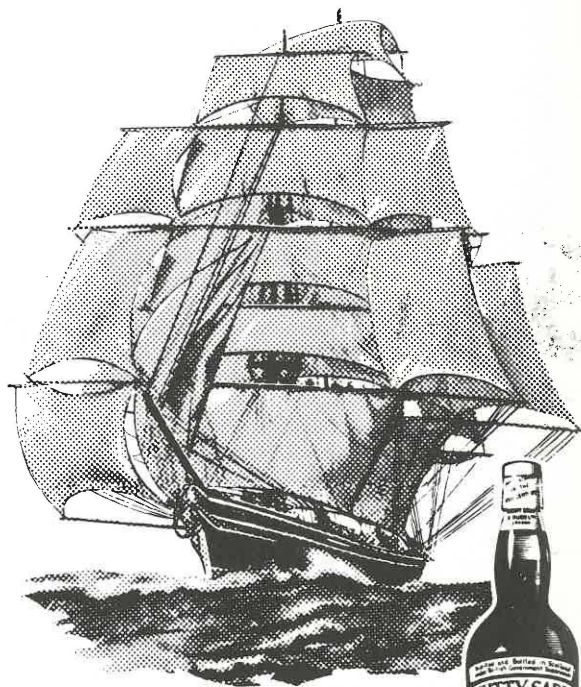






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## Briefing - continued

**A Land Sales Forecast for the period April 1 to September 30, 1974 is now available** from the Chamber, the Crown Lands & Survey Office (PWD) and other Government offices.

**Preparation for a joint Chamber/TDC Business Group to Africa is going ahead** and Mr. Robin Chiu of TDC has just returned to Hong Kong after a pre-mission visit to Lagos, Nairobi, Johannesburg and Durban. Response has so far been encouraging. Clement Tsang of the Chamber will accompany the Group.

**The Federation of Hong Kong Industries is publishing a set of Metrication Guide Series, designed to help industry to adapt to the metric system.** The first in the series will give engineers, technologists, tradesmen and apprentices engaged in industry comprehensive information of the International System of Units; the advantages in using such units; the reasons for metrication in Hong Kong and the conversion of other units into the International System and vice versa.

The first brochure, **'The International System of Units' (in English)** is priced at **HK\$12 per copy.** A Chinese translation will be available later. Those interested in this publication should contact the FHKI at 3-659061. Subsequent publications in the series will be devoted to the use of metric system in particular sectors of industry.

The Chamber has reviewed the donor scholarships which it has in the past awarded to the former Hong

Kong Technical College. After discussion with the Deputy Director of Education (Technical) and the Principal of the Polytechnic, **it has been decided to offer to the Polytechnic, scholarships valued at \$400 per annum for one year at a time.**

**A further \$400 per annum is offered to the Morrison Hill Technical Institute for a period of three years.**

The Chamber has awarded cash awards to local winners of the **Royal Commonwealth Society Essay Competition.**

The prize winners, in order of merit, are: Class A — Rebecca Lo of St. Paul's Secondary School, Stella Lee of St. Francis' Canossian College, Agnes Young of Sacred Heart Canossian College; Class B — Lusanna Siu of St. Francis' Canossian College, Giannina Da Roza of Sacred Heart Canossian College, Eddie Hioe of St. Paul's Co-educational College; Class C — Zainab Minu and Sheila Wong both of St. Francis' Canossian College and Helen Yip of Sacred Heart Canossian College.

**A pamphlet entitled 'Guide to the provisions for holidays with pay in the Employment Ordinance',** in both English and Chinese has been issued by the Labour Department. The leaflet outlines the legal entitlement of employees to statutory holidays under the provisions of the Employment Ordinance. The provisions are effective from January 1, 1974.

A limited number of copies are now obtainable from the Chamber.

# Pen Profile

## G.P.T. Carpenter

**I** THINK it would be wise to be a rich peasant in the future,' announced G.P.T. Carpenter matter-of-factly. 'In fifteen to twenty years, we could be working like mad trying to earn money which will never be able to buy sufficient for our needs. Then it may have to be back-to-the-land in order to survive.

'Ten to twenty acres of land should be enough for one to be reasonably self-sufficient. In Australia or New Zealand perhaps, or somewhere else with a suitable climate.'

Formerly of the Gurkhas and now Staff Co-ordinator of John Swire & Sons (HK) Ltd., the erstwhile soldier, present business executive, and future farmer, is tall, lean and relaxed.

Gerald Patrick Trevor Carpenter was born in England but had spent his childhood in Southern Rhodesia where his parents farmed. The family returned to UK just before the outbreak of World War II.

'It was after the war when I was nineteen that I joined the Second Gurkhas. There wasn't much choice of jobs after the war years. The Army promised to be interesting and there did not seem much chance of another large-scale war coming up.

### Good life

In fact, life with the Army then was a good one. There was always something going on, a certain amount of excitement and travel.

'The place where I stayed longest was Malaya. I was there in the 1950s during the insurrections and got to see a lot of jungle warfare. I felt reasonably at home in the Malayan jungles. They're not really as dangerous as the novel writers would have you believe once you have a familiar-

ity with them. Talk of snakes is just a box-office draw.'

In the course of his army career, he also worked in India, Singapore, Sarawak, North Borneo (now the Malaysian State of Sabah) and of course Hong Kong. There was a stint attached to the French Army in Hanoi during 1951, service in Germany, the Ministry of Defence and guerilla-combat again in Sarawak during 1964-1966. Lieutenant-Colonel Carpenter left the Gurkhas only three years ago.

### Plain Mister

'All that, however, is part of the past', he says. 'I now enjoy being plain "Mister". Asia and Asian countries consist of a vast scene which one person can never understand in a life time. And this is what makes the Far East so very fascinating. The army gave me the chance to acquire a broad familiarity with the East and its peoples.

'I joined John Swire & Sons (HK) three years ago and in my capacity as Staff Co-ordinator with primary responsibility for personnel matters for the expatriate staff, I am essentially involved with people. I enjoy my work because I like people.'

Pat Carpenter is now Chairman of the Chamber's 'HK for New Arrivals' Planning Committee and on this subject he was able to expand eloquently.

'My basic interest in people is the reason why I'm caught up with the course and the concept of the course. One of the results of the extremely rapid expansion of business and commerce in Hong Kong in recent years has been the additional expertise needed which cannot all be immediately found within the Colony. Many expatriates have poured in the colony and because of high staff costs and the rapid tempo of business, these new arrivals have tended to be pre-occupied with material matters and so they have inevitably side-stepped a normal involvement in the community at large in Hong Kong.

'I don't think this is healthy at all because a gap could develop between an element representing only 1½ per cent of the population and the majority of the local Chinese community representing 98½ per cent of the population.

### **Short-cut**

'It is obviously not easy for young expats. to get an acquaintance with some of the grass root matters in Hong Kong society and I feel, in company with others, that a course like the one the Chamber is running, does at least provide these people with a short-cut to some basic understanding of the environment in which they have come out to work and live.

'Our first course had some very favourable criticisms and there is an obvious demand for it. The Chamber intends to run it as a regular feature, say twice a year. I must stress however, that the aim of the course is only

to introduce the new arrival, and perhaps some not so-newly-arrived people, to some of the problems and background to Hong Kong. They themselves must develop their own knowledge and experience of the place and the people subsequently.'

### **The hub & the quiet**

Pat Carpenter apparently has gone out and done that himself. 'Of all places I've been to, I like Hong Kong best because to me it is a very complex place. There are many problems here but the people and the place are so varied. Hong Kong is what I consider to be the hub of the East.'

On the other hand, Hong Kong has another side for Mr. Carpenter — the quiet and untouched rural spots. He loves boating and is also fond of exploring areas off the beaten track — parts of Lantau, a classical Shang-hainese house he found tucked away enroute to Tai O, less known parts of the Sai Kung Peninsula, the hills in the Castle Peak area and villages remote and timeless, completely out of contact with the city of Hong Kong. 'Extraordinarily beautiful and rewarding places if one takes the trouble to look for them. I am also fond of tennis, squash and golf.'

Pat Carpenter was married in Hong Kong in 1955. His three children are at present at school in Europe. 'Did the Carpenters have any trouble with all the constant travelling and moving?

'Oh no, we love travelling and can all speak different languages. I suppose we are used to it by now.'

# Our Man at the Conference Table

## Bill Dorward of DC&I throws light on HK's negotiating procedures

*The Bulletin* as a rule prefers to avoid reprinting speeches — especially if they have already been reported in the local press. The following talk given by Mr. Bill Dorward from the Department of Commerce and Industry will however be of exceptional interest to Members, as it gives deeper insight into the work involved in negotiations with our trading partners.

I think I can count myself fairly fortunate. I have always been interested in travelling; I have always enjoyed a good argument and I have always welcomed opportunities to talk. In my present job I get paid for doing all three; although I must confess some of the charms of travel have faded for me; last year I must have logged something like 200,000 miles by air.

My official title is Deputy Director, Commercial Relations, Commerce and Industry Department. What this means effectively is that I am the Chief Trade Negotiator for the Hong Kong Government. This involves representing Hong Kong in discussions, consultations and negotiations, at home and abroad, with officials representing the Government of our main trading partners. Sometimes these negotiations are bilateral, sometimes they are multilateral.

The negotiations that I am speaking about are generally for the purpose not of developing and expanding trade but rather minimising interference with its development. In other words we try to keep the trade lanes open. And where they have got to be restricted, for one reason or another, then our job is to try to get the best terms possible.

Many of you are businessmen and therefore are no strangers to negotiations. But there is, I think, quite a

substantial difference between commercial negotiations and the official ones in which I get involved. Put at its simplest, when a couple of businessmen get together to negotiate a contract presumably there is a buyer who wants to buy and a seller who wants to sell provided the terms suit them. If the terms do not suit them, each has the option of walking away and trying to find another source or outlet. This option means that each has a degree of negotiating strength.

When you negotiate trade agreements for the Hong Kong Government, by contrast, generally it is because the fellow on the other side of the table is representing a Government which wants some restrictions placed on trade from Hong Kong. Naturally, therefore, the Hong Kong negotiator doesn't want to be there in the first place.

### Softer line

In a lot of bilateral negotiations between country A and country B, country A, which wants the trade restricted, has got to bear in mind that country B could take some action which would be, to put it mildly, unhelpful to country A's interests in some other aspects of trade. Or, put it in another way, country A might be prepared to take rather a softer line if country B was prepared to make some

generous concession to country A. In other words, the opportunity generally exists for a trade off.

But of course Hong Kong is a free port. We really have no concessions to give in the normal sense because we do not restrict imports to protect local industry nor do we have a Customs tariff. It is also well known here and abroad that except under the most extreme provocation Hong Kong would not move away from its free port policy to retaliate. So this leaves us with very little negotiating clout, as they say.

## **Reputation**

Well how do we make out? The answer, surprisingly is, I think, not too badly. This is not achieved by silver-tongued eloquence, although obviously it helps if you can string your words together in a coherent and effective way. I think that the secret of our modest success is that we do our homework very thoroughly and, when we make a deal, we live up to it. As a result Hong Kong has, I believe, a reputation in international trade policy circles for knowing its business and acting with integrity. And believe me that reputation is worth money in the bank.

Of course the game is not without its rules and we do have the protection of certain international agreements which lay down a code of behaviour for trade relations between those who are parties to them. The basic set of rules which have provided Hong Kong with its main protection against unfair and unreasonable treatment are in the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, usually known as the GATT. The rules of the GATT are respected, more or less, by over 80 countries which between them represent nearly 90 per cent of world trade.

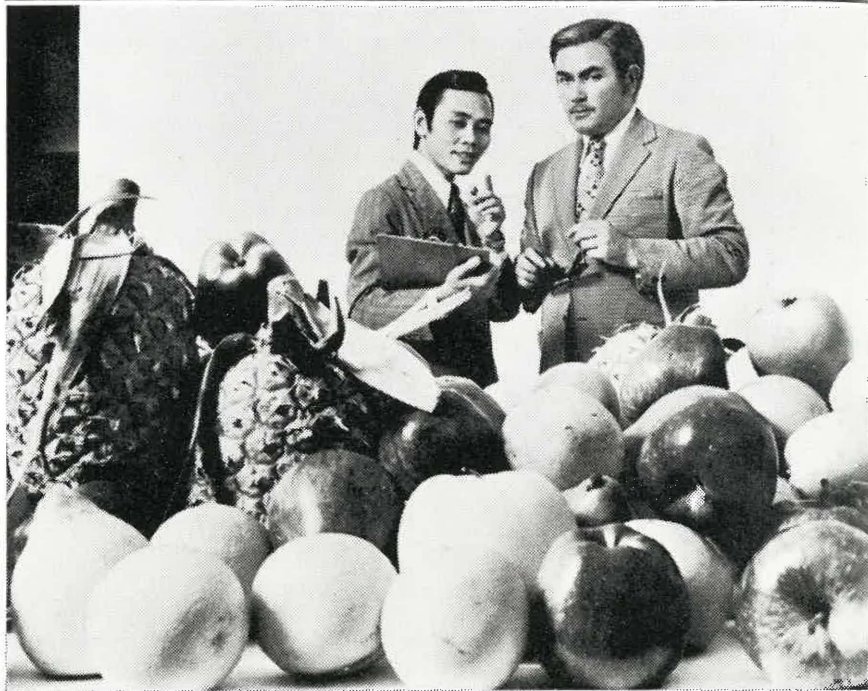
The fundamental principle of this agreement is known as the most-favoured-nation rule. I don't think I can stress too strongly how important the protection of the GATT has been for Hong Kong. If the situation in the 1950s and 1960s had been similar to what it was back in the 1930s when there was no GATT, then I seriously doubt if Hong Kong's success in international trade would have been nearly as great. Many of our industries would have found themselves faced with barriers of one kind or another in important markets as soon as they had begun to penetrate those markets.

## **Not all obey the rules**

You might very reasonably ask why, if that is the case, do we have so many well publicised restrictions on Hong Kong's trade; and why for that matter, do we have to enter into trade negotiations. Well, the short answer is that not everyone obeys the rules and, in any case, like all good rules this one has an exception. It so happens that the exception affects the industry on which Hong Kong's economy is so heavily based, the textiles industry.

Back in the late 50s it became apparent that the young and effective textiles industries of a number of countries, mainly in Asia, were posing a serious competitive threat to the old established (and often old fashioned)

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textile industries of the Western world. This created a political situation of such dimensions that it threatened to break down international respect for the rules of the GATT.

And so a pragmatic solution was found and a new international agreement was negotiated to take care of the *special* problem of trade in cotton textiles. That was in 1960. When that international arrangement expired at the end of last year, over 50 per cent of Hong Kong's textile exports were subject to restrictions negotiated more or less in accordance with its terms.

Over the years we had reached restraint agreements with the United States, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Germany, the Benelux countries, Australia, the European Economic Community and the United Kingdom. But the problem had still not been solved, and last year we spent many months in Geneva negotiating a brand new set of rules to cover trade in cotton, wool and man-made fibre textiles.

### **End up happier**

These rules are generally more favourable from our point of view than the old ones and I hope that when we get round to negotiating under them this year we shall end up with a happier situation for the Hong Kong textile industry.

Perhaps I might say a few words about how these negotiations are actually conducted. I would not like to give you the impression that in them poor little HK is being brow-beaten by major countries. In most

instances our opponents in these consultations behave in a civilised and reasonable manner, and textiles negotiations are usually conducted in a friendly, if slightly theatrical atmosphere between two delegations of Government officials. Conventionally, one person speaks for each side.

### **Homework & Exam.**

The preparation for the event is, of course, a team effort but when you actually get down to the argument it is generally desirable and more effective if only one person makes the case. For that person the negotiation is a very interesting and often exciting challenge. Rather like an examination, it is a situation where if you have not done your homework thoroughly, it is virtually too late. And if you make a mistake there is little chance of clawing it back.

The other members of the delegation can look up references, supply you with facts and figures and pass notes with good ideas. All of this is very helpful but the spokesman still has to be clear in his own mind about where the details fit to the overall strategy and the appropriate tactics to achieve that end. And inevitably some of the negotiating has to be done in private, off the record sessions between the two spokesmen.

These negotiations are not just horse trading, where one side suggests a large number and one side a low number and gradually they meet in the middle. The conference room is a long way from Cat Street. Textile



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restraint agreements are complicated, intricate things in which both sides try to strike a balance of advantage. And one who is in the textile trade will tell you that it is not so much the amount of quota they are given in so many square yards but more the rules under which they may use that quota which really count. The dollars and cents are in the fine print.

### **We don't miss the tricks**

The Hong Kong delegations in these negotiations are usually drawn entirely from the Commerce and Industry Department. My colleagues have, over the years, developed considerable expertise in this business and I do not think they miss many tricks. The delegations on the other side of the tables usually outnumber us, sometimes considerably, and are generally drawn from a whole variety of Government agencies. The United States delegation, for example, might consist of representatives of the Departments of State, Commerce, Labour and Agriculture, as well as the White House.

Perhaps the most intimidating situation for a small Hong Kong delegation is to walk in to face the European Economic Community. I remember leading a three-man delegation in Brussels; when we walked in to the conference room there were 28 representatives of the EEC on the other three sides of a square table. In addition the room was ringed round with glass booths containing simultaneous interpreters translating everything that was said into and out

of five languages — English, French, German, Dutch and Italian.

For the most part, however, we are very fortunate in that most of the negotiators we have to deal with are willing and able to speak to us in English. Even so, there are still language problems, perhaps most noticeably when we are dealing with the Americans. As George Bernard Shaw once said, the British are separated from the Americans by a common language. I only have to remind you of the different meanings on each side of the Atlantic of words like vests, braces, garters and so on and you will appreciate that there are many pitfalls in the way of reaching mutual understanding.

The year ahead contains a heavier negotiating schedule than any we have ever known. Starting next month, when an American delegation will come here to renegotiate our Hong Kong/US textile agreement, we shall be involved in a whole series of negotiations, mainly overseas, with Canada, Austria, Sweden, Norway, possibly Greece, and definitely the European Economic Community. This last one promises to be one of the biggest ever, now that the EEC contains nine member states, including Britain. And it will not stop with textile negotiations. Already on the schedule are international meetings of real significance to Hong Kong, mainly to be held in Geneva. These will be concerned with fundamental rules of world trade and I doubt if there is anywhere in the world where these are more important than right here.

# Did You See That . . . .

*Hong Kong businessmen are among the most travelled in the world. Since so many spend a large part of the year outside the Colony, it is easy for a major event to occur which may escape notice. To help keep the travelling businessman up-to-date, we summarise here some of the more important recent business events. We cannot guarantee the reliability of all items quoted, but if you wish to know more about the report, please refer to the source quoted.*

□ Oil supplies to HK have been cut by about 10 per cent compared with September 1973 (Keung Sheung Daily News — Feb. 10)

□ The long awaited Securities Bill passed its third and final reading in Legco on 13th February. (Most papers — source Government Information Services 5-233191).

□ The Financial Secretary has signed the letter of intent inviting the Japanese consortium to tender for construction of the Mass Transit Railway. This does not mean that the contract is now signed — but it is the penultimate step towards concluding a contract (Most papers — source Government Information Services).

□ Escalating costs have forced the developers to drop their plans for the construction of the proposed Marco Polo Hotel near the Ocean Terminal. Instead an office and shops block will now be constructed. (SCMP — 20th February).

□ The UK Government has signed the new MTA on textiles on HK's behalf (most papers — source Government Information Services 5-233191).

□ The new bridge linking Tsing Yi Island with the mainland was formally opened by HE The Governor on 28th Feb. (Most papers — source Government Information Services).

□ The report prepared by consultants Cremer and Warner on the TAL/Tao consortium's proposal for an oil refinery/petrochemical complex on Lamma Island gives the project the all clear. It says that the complex could be operated 'in a completely acceptable environment.' (SCMP — 6th March)

□ And on the inflation front, price increase have been announced by, among others, Shell, Caltex and Mobil oil companies (20th Feb.), and by China Light and Power Company (26th Feb.) (announced in most papers). Increasing prices for rice are leading to demands for government intervention (widely commented on in Chinese press — eg. Wah Kiu Yat Po and Sing Tao Yat Po — 6th March). On a more optimistic note, Tai Kung Po reports that the price of plastics materials has dropped 25 per cent and that supplies should be normalised by June, according to the Chairman of one of the trade associations (Tai Kung Po — 20th Feb.)

□ Meanwhile, the Financial Secretary in the budget (27th Feb.) sent up the price of smoking, drinking and motoring, plus one or two other prices, and introduced a few concessions, notably on depreciation allowances for machinery (for full details apply Government Information Services 5-233191).

上述一舉已於本年一月起實施，相信各會友對此亦有所留意。

公共關係部對每份刊物內容均審慎加以整頓，予以合適標題大綱，使會員易於閱讀及明瞭，更可免費時失事。

除「商業通告」，及「貿易區通訊」外

，本會刊印之「商業諮詢資料冊」及「會訊」均會一一改革，以上述格式為依歸。

我們希望在本年年中，本會全部刊物之形式皆劃一。

於本會內部行政而言，此舉之得益尙言之過早，假以時日，定可見其功效及收益。

## 郭本德先生簡介

太古有限公司：郭本德先生——於最近被委任為本會新增之「蒞港人仕訓練課程策劃委員會」之主席。

郭氏生於英國，但自幼則隨父母於非洲羅德西亞南部居住，自第二次世界大戰爆發時，才返回英國家鄉。

大戰結束後，郭氏剛十九歲，投身郭爾畧兵團服務。

據郭本德先生謂：「於其時，由於戰爭剛結束不久，就業機會之選擇有限。軍戎生涯頗為別緻，而我亦可藉此獲旅行機會。」

郭氏續謂：「我在馬來亞逗留時間最為長久。那是一九五零年代，而又經歷了不少森林之戰。我最嗜愛該處叢林，實際上森林全不如小說作家所描那末危險。」

於從軍期間，郭氏足跡遍佈印度、星加坡、沙勞越，北婆羅洲（現即馬來西亞聯邦之沙巴）及香港。

於三年前郭氏退出軍隊行列而加入太古有限公司服務，負責處理公司外籍職員之人事事宜。郭氏樂於與人相相處，故對其現刻之工作甚為嗜愛。

郭氏謂：「亞洲及亞洲各國景象繁遷，使人响往迷離。由於在軍隊服務使我有機會在亞洲工作，因而對東方及其人氏有所認識。」

於談及本會主辦之「蒞港人仕訓練課程

」之觀感時，郭本德先生謂：「於近年來，由於香港工商業發展快速，對專門技倆有特別需求，可惜此等技倆又不可於旦夕獲得。」

「不少外籍人仕因而湧至香港工作，但由於薪金高而商業發展快速，此等人仕均費神致力研討其工作事項，缺乏了對香港社會一般的認識及關注。」

「我不以為這是健康的現象。到港工作之外籍人仕為本港總人口之百份之一點五，而中國人仕則為人口總數之百份之九十八點五，上述現象使前者與後者，產生一隔膜濠溝。」

郭氏指出：對一位年青的外籍人仕說來，若要他能一一明瞭香港社會上細節，頗為不易。因此彼此認為本會所為彼等之辦之訓練課程可使在港工作之外籍人仕對週遭環境有基本認識，由於彼等在此工作為居住，此一認識是不可缺少的。

此課程於去年首次舉辦時，甚獲好評，而本會希望能繼續此一計劃，每年定期舉辦兩次。

郭氏強調：「此項課程之目的是向首次蒞訪本港的人仕介紹一些此間之困難及背境

而已，彼等需自我再深入研究，以對香港及居民有更詳盡的了解。」

對其本身而言，彼甚喜愛香港。

彼解釋道：「香港是如此繁雜，這兒的困難，人們及地方又是林林種種。」

郭氏嗜划船取樂——尤其放舟大嶼山、大澳、西貢、及青山等一帶清幽地區。郭氏工娛閒暇，亦愛網球及高夫球。

郭氏已婚，有子女三人皆在歐洲供讀。

## ◀ 短訊一束 ▶

△ 蜆殼有限公司總經理彭德禮先生於最近被選委為本會董事局董事。

△ 本會將聯同貿易發展局聯袂合辦一貿易訪問團前往非洲各地。貿易發展局人員於最近曾往該地之拉哥斯、乃洛比、約翰尼斯堡及德爾班作初步考察工作。據稱商界人士對是次訪問團之籌辦反應甚佳。

△ 本會最近頒發現金獎贈予「殖民地論文比賽」獲獎之本港優秀學生，彼等分別為聖保祿中學、聖芳濟各書院、聖心書院及聖保羅男女校之學生。

△ 南華早報與香港輔導教師協會，現刻聯同主辦一「學生暑期工作計劃」。目的為使中學五年級畢業生在工商界得就業機會，藉此爭取工作經驗，進而被長期取錄。

予此計劃支持之商號將組成一「遴選委員會」，向僱主推薦適合之學生。

彼等希望工商界人士能鼎力支持此項計劃。閣下商號如有空缺職位，可與下列人士接洽：教育司處劉碧登女士（電話 5-778311-157），香港輔導教師協會副主席黎先生（電話 3-015191），或南華早報彭健欽先生（電話 5-620161-63）

△ 總商會於前每年曾頒贈獎學金予香港工專學院。最近與教育司處副處長（工專科）及香港理工學院校長磋商後，決定將獎學金贈予理工學院，同時亦贈獎學金予摩理臣山工業學校。

△ 本會將於四月十九日及二十日於本會辦事處分別舉行國語及粵語會話考試。意欲參加應試者需於四月九日前報名，費用為每位五十元正。考試範圍詳情請逕向本會查詢。

△ 勞工處已編印完備一有關勞工有薪假期小冊，談及勞工法例下之有薪假期事宜，欲知詳情，可逕向本會索取小冊乙份。

△ 香港工業總會現正印行一套十進制指導叢書，以求協助工商界人士適應與本港有貿易往來之大部份地區，現已廣泛採用之十進制度。

據悉，十進制之重要意義，早在國際間獲得普遍接受，國際單位制度現已成為一國際標準，故香港亦需對十進制加以採用。今後，國際單位定在香港廣泛使用。

工業總會出版之十進制叢書第一種，乃對工程師、高級技師、貿易人士及工業中之學徒，提供國際單位制之詳盡參考資料、解釋使用國際單位制之優點及香港改用十進制之理由，並介紹國際單位與其他單位之換算辦法。

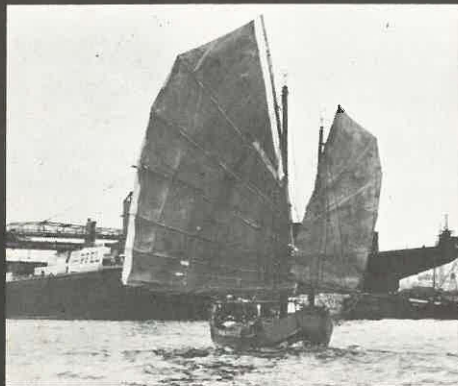
十進制叢書第一種出版後，將來陸續印行之書籍，將集中說明十進制在紡織、工程及建築等工業中之用途。

據悉，出版十進制叢書之作用，為使工商界人士有所準備，以有條不紊與合乎經濟之方式改用十進制。

第一次出版之小冊子以英文印行，名為「國際單位制度」，定價每本十二元。此小冊子之中文譯本，稍遲亦將印行。

如欲訂購，請逕與工業自會接洽。電話（3-659061）。





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