

**A PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION
IN HONG KONG**

REPORT BY A VISITING PANEL

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NOVEMBER 1982

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THE PANEL OF VISITORS

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

30 November 1982

Mr K.W.J. Topley CMG
Secretary for Education
Government Secretariat
HONG KONG

Dear Mr Topley,

In the summer of 1981 you invited us on behalf of your Government to constitute ourselves as a Panel of Visitors to undertake an overall review of the education system of Hong Kong.

Considering ourselves privileged to have been asked, we took up the challenge embodied in the terms of reference for the review and spent a fortnight in the autumn of 1981 in a programme of intensive consultations and visits. This experience, supported by much reading, was reflected in an 'open draft' report which we discussed for four days last spring with representatives of the Government, including yourself, and with interested members of the broader community.

In undertaking our task, we have been much guided by the experience of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's 'Country Education Policy Review's' which have been operating for some fifteen years and in which two of us have participated. In this, we were particularly fortunate to have had the constant support of George Papadopoulos, Deputy Director for Education at OECD, who played the role of mentor and catalyst throughout the whole review process.

As far as purpose is concerned, we recognise that the people of Hong Kong try to adapt what they learn from overseas to fit the situation at home. Given the spate of internal sector-by-sector appraisals of the education system that have been conducted over the past seven or eight years it is not inappropriate for there to be some observation by outsiders. The review process itself can if so devised stimulate public discussion and focus attention squarely on fundamental problems which, for domestic reasons, may otherwise be skirted. Proposals for modification to policy and practice can be accelerated, and even generated, by the conduct of a review - sometimes even before a final report is presented. This seems to have already begun as a result of the airing that the Government decided to give to some of the basic issues raised in the earlier draft version of this document.

The review process can of itself lead to the formation of networks of like minds. A further benefit can be derived from comparisons drawn, however informally, by

professional peers such as we ourselves were presumably considered to be - people who have first hand familiarity with different social and cultural orientations.

In collaboration with you, we decided to adapt the general lines of the OECD procedure even though Hong Kong is not, for technical reasons, a member of that organisation. Our procedure was determined thus: background briefing prepared in consultation with the OECD Secretariat and one of our group; our visit to Hong Kong and report in draft form on the basis of our experience and reading; a review meeting to consider our draft; and our final report which incorporates ideas and perspectives arising from the review meeting.

While this report contains a number of suggestions for change and, we hope, improvement, we understand full well the unusual challenges that Hong Kong educators face. The range and complexity of educational objectives and the requirements they imply for learning resources places exceptionally high demands on your system. Consequently we have kept in mind that our recommendations need to be considered within the context of a unique area of the world, bridging as it does several cultures and societies. We recognise the great educational strides made in the recent past, but also the need to sustain efforts to enable further progress to be made.

The task is not an easy one and we do not underestimate the challenge involved. In a paraphrase of the centuries-old words of wisdom of that great public administrator and political commentator, the author of 11 Principe: "There is nothing more difficult to handle ... than introducing a new order. It has for enemies all those who do well out of the old order and has lukewarm supporters in those who will benefit from the new one."

We have resisted the temptation to become embroiled in fascinating but diverting technical detail (such as what incentive mechanisms might be devised to promote genuine bilingualism in the secondary schools) and we have left some problems untackled (such as instruments for financing schools and subsidising students) because, however significant, they are not central to the charter given to us. Instead we have concentrated on matters of broad principle relating particularly to the articulation of the several cycles of formal education and hence the smooth progression from preschool to university.

It is our wish that this report should be made publicly available together with the excellent briefing document developed for us by the Education Department and your Branch. Your Background Report is valuable

both for its substance and for the fact that it probably hastened the process of policy clarification: the very spelling out of policies can in itself be an exercise in formative evaluation. While we have of course drawn on data sources other than the Background Report, the structure and content of our document are predicated on the assumption that serious readers of our contribution will be able to turn readily to your Report for basic facts, figures and descriptions.

In the Appendices we list the individuals, organisations and institutions formally consulted and visited by us and also list the organisations and individuals who made open written representations. Although we make no comment on whether these papers should be published, our understanding is that their authors and/or custodians have the prerogative to decide who should have access to them. In our view the significance of many of them warrants their being read widely by the interested community.

We are satisfied that the process of this review will have a much deeper effect than its immediate product (i.e. our external analysis) because of the community self-evaluation that is being promoted. We have taken the Government-sponsored public discussion of key policy issues in which we engaged last spring as indications of such a process, and we feel confident that it is a healthy one and that it will continue.

We have high praise for all those who have developed with such commitment and good intent the whole education system in a period of unprecedented expansion of the territory's population. Several of these pioneers and reformers have been the 'life force' of this review. We record with pleasure the frank and open dealings we had with the Director of Education, Colvin Haye, and his senior officers. Our appreciation goes to our Special Advisers - Q.W. Lee and James McHugh - whose wisdom and judgment proved most valuable. We pay special tribute to John Winfield and other members of your Review team for their unfailing help and many kindnesses - both professional and personal - during all stages of the exercise.

We salute all those who sent in written representations and those who presented their views in person either in scheduled interview or 'on the run' as we moved around the territory. Exchanging ideas and coming to grips with other perspectives are the well-spring of robust education policies. This is what we have been actively engaged in doing, as have the hundreds of people who have been involved in one way or another in supplying us with material. Hence the thoughts and perceptions embodied in this document really belong to the people of Hong Kong: we present them to you in what we believe is a fair and straightforward way. We have been able to do this because we came to you as outsiders, having no parochial axes to grind, yet with some familiarity with ways of life similar to though

differing from yours. Already we feel ourselves being inescapably affected by the zeal and optimism that is carrying the people of Hong Kong so enthusiastically forward.

There could, of course, be a whole book written on each one of the topics which form chapters of this report. Education planning can no longer (if ever it could) be executed by the classic research-development-diffusion model, with a report constituting some kind of blue print. We have been selective about the key issues- those which have most to do with the linkages across the sectors and which affect students in their progression from Kindergarten onwards. We try to be practical in our commentary. The only proposals that have an even chance of becoming real solutions are those which the people of Hong Kong adopt for themselves, albeit prompted and assured by sympathetic visitors like ourselves. We prefer to point to desirable directions rather than to prescribe treatment for immediate ills.

To this end, we decided against presenting formal recommendations. Instead we have drawn attention in the text, by the use of broken underlining, to statements which have implications for policy and practice. We hope that this will be an encouragement to the reading of what we have to say in context and in the light of our terms of reference (Appendix I). For the same reason we have deliberately not provided a summary.

A useful next step may be to arrive at a set of priorities, grouped perhaps as follows: policy vs administration; long-term vs short term; high vs low resource implications. Consideration might be given to setting up an interim Education Commission (as suggested in Section II) in order to achieve coherent follow-up.

Finally, thank you for the solid backing that you personally have provided throughout the exercise. It has given us confidence in ourselves and faith in our project.

Yours sincerely,

John Llewellyn (Chairman)

Greg Hancock (Rapporteur)

Michael Kirst (Member)

Karl Roeloffs (Member)

SECTION I : THE REVIEW IN CONTEXT

General Background

I.1 Since coming under British rule in 1842, Hong Kong has been a crossroads of the East and the West. Today, Hong Kong could well be described as a unique and highly successful commercial conglomerate at the centre of world trade routes, with manufacturing and banking interests predominant. It is a prosperous and cosmopolitan society of more than five million people (predicted to reach seven million by the end of the century) occupying some 400 square miles of land.

I.2 As a thriving metropolis, Hong Kong faces problems not uncommon to other large and rapidly developing cities, such as overcrowding along with scarce low cost housing and limited recreational facilities despite governmental priorities in this direction. Yet Hong Kong residents enjoy personal freedom and this is attractive to refugees and immigrants - some 300 000 have arrived over the past three years.

I.3 Having become an important international clearing house, the Hong Kong economy rose upon the world economic boom of the 1960s and early 1970s and, despite a slowdown in the growth of the manufacturing sector, has not looked back because of having become a financial centre of world significance. Although the current world recession (domestic exports account for sixty per cent of GDP) and the related flatness in the local property market could have a noticeably adverse effect on the labour market and public finances, we were authoritatively advised of the anticipated real growth in GDP of seven to eight per cent per annum for the 1980s. This follows a decade in which real household incomes rose by nearly eighty five per cent.

I.4 While becoming increasingly westernised through trade, technology and the mass media, with attendant advantages and disadvantages, Hong Kong has until now been still very much shaped by traditional Chinese values. More is being heard, however, of how the fast-moving and crowded lifestyle is affecting the quality of interpersonal relationships; of how materialism and competitiveness are becoming more obvious. The charter of the British administrators in Hong Kong, the enormous population growth of the territory with its consequent strain on the machinery of government, together with the dominance of the family and business in Chinese life, have combined to promote what could be described as 'non-interventionist' public policies. This is undoubtedly

related to the pressure and willingness for prodigious work effort in all parts of the private enterprise sector. The Government allows Hong Kong's affairs to be conducted without the degree of economic direction that westerners have come to accept and expect. Nevertheless in 1981, the public sector expanded by some twenty-two per cent, against a ten per cent real growth in GDP, much of the increase being on capital expenditure.

The Educational Situation

I.5 As shown in the Government's Consolidated Accounts, the present public allocation to education is thirteen per cent of the territory's budget. (The peak proportion was in 1976-77 with a figure of nineteen per cent.) The changing relativities over time between outlays on the schools/college sector and on higher education are noteworthy (see Appendix VIII). These comparisons can only be understood against a background knowledge that public sector expenditure presently accounts for about one quarter of GDP; that public sector expenditure has been growing more rapidly than has GDP; that about half the capital works in Hong Kong are publicly financed and that about one tenth of public sector expenditure is investment; and that with GDP per head of population running at about \$4000, Hong Kong's domestic wealth can be compared with one of the poorer countries of Western Europe. Unlike western countries, prospects for continuing full employment in Hong Kong are good. Economic goals such as stabilisation are more in the forefront of the minds of the territory's public finance architects than are concerns about revenue raising. (The 1980-81 budget surplus was of the order of HK\$ nine billion.) Two of the key education finance questions are: how much is enough; and where should the marginal dollar be put? A pre-requisite to any response is an understanding of present-day educational structures and processes.

I.6 The current organisational arrangement of education in Hong Kong is set out in detail in Appendix VII and a pen sketch is provided here. For those who are unfamiliar with the historical antecedents, a brief outline is provided in Appendix X. Kindergartens for the three-to five-year-olds are privately run, although nominally supervised by government officials. Competition is fierce to acquire a place, firstly to commence schooling as early as possible, and secondly since a place in a better kindergarten is seen as a stepping stone into the primary school of one's choice. Although it is strongly discouraged officially, some kindergartens are reported to conduct entrance tests.

I.7 To cope with pupil numbers, most primary schools run two sessions daily to provide universal education. Chinese is the teaching medium and all pupils are taught English. A minority of parents send their children to private schools where fees are charged.

I.8 From primary school, students are assigned to any of the three main types of secondary schools - government operated, government subsidised and private schools - by means of the Secondary School Placement Allocation Scheme. Educational opportunities beyond fifteen years of age are determined by the Junior Secondary Education Assessment Scheme (JSEA).

I.9 The Hong Kong Certificate of Education (HKCE) is awarded to secondary students who successfully complete a five-year course in one or more of a broad range of subjects at any of the three types of secondary schools - Anglo-Chinese secondary, Chinese middle and secondary technical schools. A fourth type, the prevocational schools, are government subsidised and offer courses which are a blend of the general and the technical. Students with appropriate results in the HKCE may enter a one-year course in a Chinese middle school mainly as preparation for entry to the Chinese University of Hong Kong or a two-year course to prepare for the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination. The Government has successively increased the number of secondary schools.

I.10 The Government has acknowledged its responsibility to broaden education goals and objectives in order to meet the needs of all children. Since a review in 1977, the Government has been working to implement a policy of education for all the handicapped irrespective of type or degree of disability. Central to this policy is a programme of early identification. There are presently over fifty schools for the disabled and handicapped. Among the extra-education services are a television service to primary schools, begun in 1971 and extended to secondary schools in 1976. A special education section within the Department provides services for children with atypical needs.

I.11 The four government teacher training colleges offer full-time two- or three-year courses and a one-year advanced training programme. A loan and maintenance scheme is available to needy students in order to meet fees and living expenses. In-service training is offered through a part-time programme for teachers wishing to obtain a basic professional qualification.

I.12 For technical training, students may attend any one of five Institutes offering full or part-time classes, or the Hong Kong Polytechnic. The Polytechnic, which opened in 1972, replaced the Hong Kong Technical College. It is the largest single education institute in Hong Kong and is publicly financed through the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee. Following a review by the Council for National Academic Awards, the Polytechnic is to become the third degree granting institution in Hong Kong, thus taking some of the pressure off the two universities. In addition, there are three Approved

Post Secondary Colleges registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance, financed by a variety of mechanisms and offering courses of up to four or five years' duration.

I.13 The three tertiary institutions are largely government funded, complemented by some private and corporate benefaction. It is at this top end of the education scale that the full effects of the Government's education policies are being felt. Not only are more students progressing through the schools and hoping to go to university, but there are external pressures influencing the university population. Severe restrictions on overseas enrolments enforced in Australia and Britain (including steeply increased fees) and to a lesser degree in Canada and the USA, are forcing students to stay in Hong Kong. As an interim measure the Government has asked both universities to raise their growth rate by one third from three to four per cent annually for the three academic years, from 1981-82 to 1983-84. This means an annual increase in first year intakes of some twelve per cent. The 1980 annual intake to the universities was 2600.

Future Directions

I.14 Education in Hong Kong is predominantly a highly utilitarian means to economic and vocational ends. The emphasis in schooling has so far been by necessity on academic success, this at some cost to personal development and sense of personal fulfilment to the majority of students. Yet a key role of the educational enterprise in any society is to nurture its soul: the current problem is the balancing of competing demands for meeting quantitative shortfalls against qualitative improvement.

I.15 The education system has been modified and streamlined, and has tolerated many reviews; yet the Government and the people are looking still to the benefits of further analysis such as we are undertaking. The roles and goals of education are inextricably entangled with fundamental problems of community life and cultural issues. Culture is to us a complex unity, not a divisible entity and is inextricably linked to changing life styles and growing community aspirations. In a world of unknowns and uncertainties, we believe that there is no alternative but to strive for the highest educational standards for all. From our own backgrounds, as well as from what we understand to be the wish of the people of Hong Kong, we have based our comments on the assumption that Hong Kong will continue to be an open society, with freedom of the individual to choose within his or her range of ability, achievement and opportunity.

I.16 Hong Kong will ultimately get from its education system no more and no less than it puts into it. This is particularly important in view of the major issues confronting the people and the Government of Hong Kong in the years ahead. It is worthwhile dwelling on how much responsibility for resolving general (and sometimes unstated) public policy problems the education system should be expected to bear. There needs to be a general awareness and acceptance of the importance of appraising social progress and setting new priorities and directions. The chapters which follow are an attempt to contribute to that process.

SECTION II : POLICY AND PLANNING

II.1 We have deliberately accorded prominence to educational policy determination - with its implications for planning and implementation strategies - by placing our considerations in a separate section at the beginning of our Report. Given what the educational enterprise is about, its governance and management should be a model of public administrative theory and practice. Despite what is said and done about organisational structures, curriculum frameworks and financing instruments, it is the process of governance and management which determines the direction, pace and effectiveness of the educational enterprise. Harmonising the needs and expectations of the different individuals and groups involved (public and private sectors, government programmes/branches/departments, the legislature and the bureaucracy) requires inspired orchestral and composing skills.

II.2 A principal asset of Hong Kong is the capacity for hard work and the intellectual calibre of its people. Over the last thirty years great strides have been made in the extraordinary development of the education system; but we feel that the time has now come for a fresh look at policy and planning. This will be necessary to maintain and enhance Hong Kong's success in the fields of commerce and industry as well as to cater for the heightening social aspirations of its people in an increasingly complex cultural and political milieu. The development of a comprehensive, integrated and sophisticated education system is central to any scheme for the territory's future.

Processes

II.3 There is an impressive description in the Background Report of the machinery and processes of decision making, control, policy formation, planning and research. Development Plans, Five-year Forecasts, inter-departmental and intra-departmental working party reports abound. On the other hand, there is an equally complex mechanism for securing the funds in the annual budget. Education has not fared badly, at least in relative terms, over the recent years but expansion and increased policy commitment do not seem to have created what might be called a 'joint enterprise' spirit in the education community.

II.4 Rather, there is a 'we-they' attitude prevalent in the educational enterprise: between schools and the Education Department (referred to loosely as 'the government') ; between and within various arms of the administration; between administrative and departmental officers; but, interestingly, not as much as we might have imagined between locals and expatriates. There is a pervasive

feeling that responsibility for and knowledge about what is happening lies elsewhere; but no-one is sure where this is, or who holds the master plan. There is in short a noticeable lack of mutual trust and understanding. The current entanglement of public, voluntary, profit-making, and church-affiliated jurisdictions at the school level and of the miscellany of publicly subsidised and variously managed institutions in the post-school sector bears witness to this. Counting all the government and private instrumentalities, there is little doubt that the education system is over-administered. The plethora of jurisdictions and lack of forward planning capacity militate against efficient management.

II.5 We believe that the problem lies not in the dedication of those involved but rather in an absence of clearly set out and easily understood purposes and procedures. A fundamental confusion has crept in, perhaps only over recent years, between the task of managing the education system as it exists and the notion of policy formation with the necessary forward planning to achieve long term objectives. The education system seems over-administered in terms of minute bureaucratic surveillance of regulations yet under-planned in terms of strategic goals and the know-how to attain them. The existing administrative machinery is clearly inadequate for the leadership and monitoring responsibilities which the government has properly taken upon itself in respect of the education service. The complexity of the service is being heightened as it inherits the erstwhile custodial and socialising functions of the family. This does not seem to be sufficiently realised. While it was taken for granted that the education system was contributing faithfully to a better society, basic questions about the effectiveness of management and governance were rarely raised. However Hong Kong's educational institutions are now expected by some to maximise opportunity and redress inequity, and by others to reproduce the economic and social order.

II.6 It is worthwhile to consider what is meant by the forward planning of educational development. While there is still a strong attachment in government circles to what might be called 'technical' planning- for example, of trying to assess manpower requirements and making consequential adaptations to the system - there is a fortunate drift away from an allegedly value-free and mechanistic view of education-as-investment for both individual and society. Instead, we see a move towards the more 'political' approach of collating material, testing options and implementing action in terms of increasingly explicit sets of values.

II.7 The Government's Plans and Forecasts appear to be examples of this second generation approach which assumes that value statements about various positions can be expertly mapped and that stock can be taken of a range of feasible options. Overseas, as well as in some quarters in Hong Kong, the now serious doubts about the validity and utility of this concept of planning is giving rise to the formulation of a third generation approach - involving a move away from the stating of definite objectives in favour of pointing out broad directions.

II.8 We encountered in conversations with planners and with those who are supposed to take into consideration the advice of the planners a lingering tension and ambiguity. Some stood by precise, mechanistic and logical interpretations whilst others were more client-centred. This dichotomy is harbouring indecisiveness and sometimes confused reactions to interest group pressures. We feel that strenuous efforts should be devoted to raising the level of parent and community involvement in policy-formation (especially at the school level) and to engage as much expertise as can be marshalled (not only from within the bureaucracy) in planning.

II.9 At the system level in Hong Kong, as in most other places influenced by western trends, an interest in social distribution and equity is leading to claims by interest groups for a voice in determining what and how much is being distributed to whom: even in an activity such as education where authority patterns are traditionally very strong in Hong Kong because of Chinese mores, this is so. Yet we had conversations with people who expressed to us the dilemma of educational policies directed towards social cohesion and control being juxtaposed against those aiming at individual and minority-group freedom. The legitimacy of this tension seems to have been acknowledged in the virtual explosion of panels, committees and working parties, participatory devices that have been foreign to the local scene until recently. Despite the trend towards participatory governance, the technocratic planning techniques still being employed continue to cause problems.

II.10 At the school level, there is little sense of community despite the fact that many schools can be found clustered together geographically. Even where the siting of new facilities has been premeditated, these cannot be regarded as 'community schools' in the usual sense of that phrase. The extensive devolution of authority and responsibility to voluntary agencies in the education portfolio and the fact that these agencies are not federated on a neighbourhood basis

makes it impractical to contemplate 'local control' beyond that currently being contemplated in the school net schemes. Parental involvement with schooling is usually limited to formal parent-teacher associations meetings (where they exist) and to rare school visits when a child's problems prompt the teacher to call for the parent. Teachers tend not to see it as necessary or relevant to keep in contact with parents, or vice versa. Although resulting partly from the geographical distribution of schools, this would primarily seem to be caused by a strict and still widely accepted separation of roles between parents and teachers, and between home and school.

II.11 Any move towards greater participation in education decision making and policy formulation would add to existing pressures for the democratisation of the territory's government generally. This of course is connected with nationalist sentiment but is also an essential pre-requisite to sustaining community development. Thus, even the most well-intentioned reforms to educational governance have to be tempered by broader considerations.

II.12 We do not pretend to have detailed solutions but we are proposing mechanisms and processes which may be helpful in a situation where the organisational structure and set of administrative processes have become too unwieldy. We note with optimism that educational planning is becoming recognised by government as a public policy tool of acknowledged standing alongside social welfare and economic planning.

II.13 We turn then to the steps which in our view should be taken to shape the role of government in respect of the provision of educational services and opportunity more along the lines of comprehensive planning, policy formation and monitoring of outcomes, decisions about the detailed management of institutions being left to local communities and their supporting professionals. Groups make policy: individuals administer it.

II.14 On a particular aspect, we ~~suggest that effort should be directed towards~~ the development of a suitable system of ~~budgeting of human, physical, and financial resources~~. Admittedly this is a difficult task because analytical techniques are not readily available for relating educational benefits to costs, nor are benefits and costs easy to identify or measure. Nevertheless, greater exposure of the overall picture, even if it is initially a confusing one and of indicative value only, must be for the general good.

Machinery

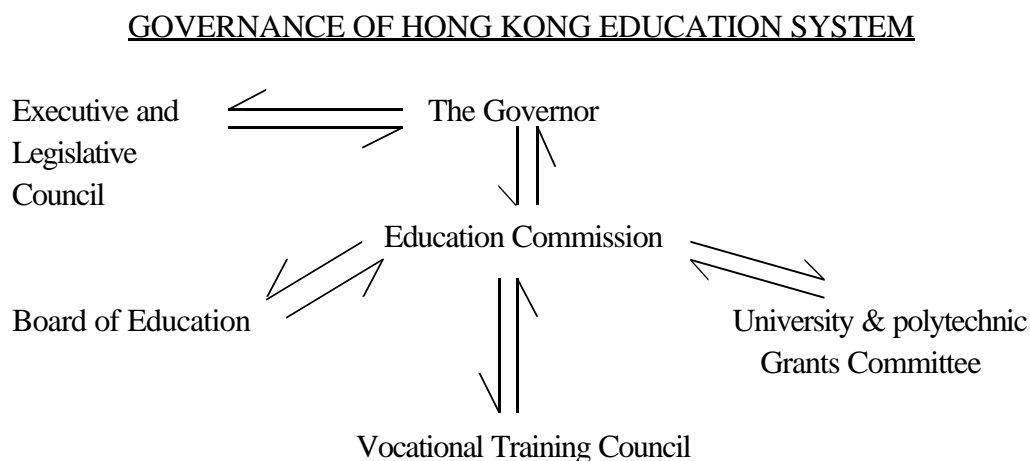
II.15 Rather than first presenting the argument which leads to our conclusions concerning the machinery of educational policy and planning, we instead set out our basic views below and supply the supporting argument subsequently. In this way we expect the general framework to be understood more readily.

II.16 We are conscious of the need for the most capable advisers to be used wisely and to avoid the limitations of an elaborate hierarchy in which process becomes a substitute for product. Nothing which we suggest in the following paragraphs is intended to diminish in any way the authority of the Governor nor to inhibit the responsibility which is duly exercised by the Legislative and Executive Councils. We suggest arrangements whereby the best advice may be made available to the government to ensure the orderly and balanced development of education in a way which will best serve the people of Hong Kong and facilitate the most effective use of their potential:

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Board of Education, the Vocational Training Council and the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee should be retained but with certain changes in membership, modus operandi and responsibilities as set out below.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 A co-ordinating body - an Education Commission - should be established through which these three agencies would provide advice to the government.

II.17 A diagrammatic representation of our proposal for the organisation of educational planning and policy - the governance of education - in Hong Kong is as follows:



The double-ended arrows indicate that any matters concerning the development of education may be referred in either direction. However, recommendations will only be in the 'upward' direction; the views of the Board/Council/Committee would be collated and commented upon (but where appropriate conveyed in full) by the Commission when their recommendations are presented to the government. We now examine the composition and functions of the four educational advisory bodies.

II.18 The Board of Education. Not only did we read and hear much about the workings of the Board, but we attended two of its meetings - one during our first visit and the second after Members had read our draft report. We are concerned both by the Board's numerical size and its sectoral representation. Topics raised for discussion almost invariably (and understandably) concerned that part of the educational process in which particular Board Members are actively engaged.

II.19 Our understanding is that there is little capacity or corporate willingness to address broad principles or long-term developmental planning (although it was put to us that in recent years references to the Board have been more to do with details of administration than with general policy). Nevertheless we did find useful the list of problem areas identified for us by an ad hoc committee of the Board. Any deliberative body constituted as is the Board will almost certainly devote much time and energy to tactics and little to strategy. Herein lies a strength and a value of the Board: it will enable the strategic planning and monitoring agency - the proposed Education Commission - to keep in contact with the views and problems of those who are actively engaged in the provision of educational services of various sorts. For this reason we suggest that membership of the Board could with advantage include representatives of the major interest pressure groups which at present have no recognised voice in educational governance. An alternative stratagem to secure this objective would be to maintain or even reduce the size of the Board but to require it to organise an open plenary session once or twice a year at which those groups not represented could freely express their views.

II.20 The Board could be a useful forum for those of its members and for Departmental officers who have the responsibility of policy and of administration. We see good reason for it to establish ad hoc working parties and standing committees not only to consider remits from the Commission but also to inquire into matters which fall within its brief. The thinking of the Board, shaped by its own deliberative and investigative machinery, would be conveyed to the Education Commission by the Board Chairman who would, of course, be a member of the Commission. The Board would have general oversight of all phases and aspects of school level education - K through FVII - and would continue to be serviced as at present by the Department of Education.

II.21 The Vocational Training Council. We were encouraged by the creation recently of this body which will have general oversight of the Technical Institutes and of industrial training. We note that the VTC Ordinance gives the Council statutory, executive power whereas the Board of Education is non-statutory

and advisory. We understand that it will be serviced by a new Department within the portfolio of the Secretary for Education. We see no reason to disturb this relationship. Much of what we have said about the Board of Education applies also to the Council. The training of technicians whether in the Technical Institutes or by apprenticeship schemes is so important to the future of Hong Kong that we believe that the Council should be broadly representative in its membership despite its specific functions.

II.22 The University and Polytechnic Grants Committee. The UPGC has done sterling work over the past decade or so in providing government with balanced advice on the financial needs of the universities and latterly also of the Polytechnic and the Baptist College. It has also become somewhat involved with long-term forward planning. Unfortunately its secretary, serving in a different role from that of the Committee's chief executive officer, has also been involved in the administration of various student finance schemes which must inevitably distract some of his own and his staff's attention from their main function. ~~We urge that these and any other straight administrative and/ or peripheral activities be located elsewhere.~~

II.23 We agree with the UPGC that it is not practicable to plan in detail the development of higher education more than six to eight years ahead. We are confident, as indicated later in Section III Chapter 5, that in the longer run Hong Kong will need at least two and possibly three more institutions of higher education and that the first of these should be a polytechnic with the authority and capacity to offer degree-level programmes. ~~Much attention should be given now to the establishment of an efficient organisation~~ to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the higher education needs of Hong Kong and to propose the most suitable courses of action at the appropriate times.

II.24 We are not convinced that the UPGC with its geographically disparate membership and relatively infrequent (and very expensive) meetings can do this with the drive and precision which is necessary at this time of rapid and urgent expansion. The UPGC is a prestigious body, a liaison between government and autonomous institutions; its diverse and experienced membership can bring weighty advice to bear. While we would not wish to jeopardise these hard-earned attributes, ~~we suggest that the UPGC establish an executive group~~ consisting mainly of local members

which can meet more frequently than the UPGC. This group should be enabled to identify and give preliminary views on various planning options which will ultimately assist the work of the committee of the whole. It ~~should also follow through on the monitoring of implementation strategies~~ for approved policies such as the nature and development schedule of the next higher education institution; the harmonisation of entry requirements for the two universities; the case for an overseas scholarship programme to speed the production of graduates in the short to medium term; the creation of a research fund to aid faculty training and recruitment; and the numbers and types of qualifications required in the longer term. These examples demonstrate the need for a flexible and efficient secretariat to serve the executive group and the committee itself.

II.25 The UPGC should concern itself wholly with the Universities, the Polytechnic(s) and post-secondary colleges and should retain its privilege of reporting its advice on the development and maintenance of these institutions to the Governor. However, in recognition that it is concerned with only one part of the educational system and that whilst it must strive to maintain excellence in higher education it must only do so in the context of the balanced development of all the sectors, ~~we recommend that this advice be channelled through the Education Commission~~ of which the UPGC chairman will be a member.

II.26 While not wishing to suggest name changing simply for the sake of change, it does seem to us that ~~a more suitable appellation for the UPGC~~, given the role we see for it, ~~would be HEPGC - the Higher Education Planning and Grants Committee.~~

II.27 The Education Commission. ~~We consider the establishment of a co-ordinating Commission~~ to be of prime importance. Having received and digested the views and recommendations of the Board of Education, the Vocational Training Council and the Higher Education planning and Grants Committee (or UPGC if the traditional title is retained), it will be able to bring to the Governor-in-Council consolidated advice on the needs of and priorities for the educational system as a whole and the most equitable and practicable responses to them. The Commission might also receive input from other quarters (e.g. manpower studies), on which it might ask for comment from one or more of these three constituent advisory groups.

II.28 The membership of the Commission ~~might be as follows~~:

6 unofficials:

3 persons of high standing in the community, one of whom will be chairman

Chairman, Board of Education

Chairman, Council for Technical and Vocational Training

Chairman, HEPGC

4 officials:

One each from Finance, Social Services, Economic Services; and the Secretary for Education who will serve as the Executive Member.

II.29 We would hope that the Chairman of the Commission would be, or would have been, a member of the Executive Council and that the two other members defined as 'persons of standing' would be men or women of such calibre as to make it likely that if they are not, nor have previously been appointed as Executive Council Members, are likely to be considered for such appointment in the future. The most stringent criteria should continue to apply to the selection of Chairmen of the Board, Council and Committee. All chairmen should have strong and continuing links with the world beyond the educational sphere.

II.30 ~~The Commission should be serviced by the Secretary for Education and members of his staff.~~ Indeed the role and function of Education Branch might well be thought of as becoming the Commission's Secretariat. In any case, it is necessary for there to be machinery for discussion and resolution of issues which concern more than one of its three advisory bodies (the Board, Council and Committee). Examples of these are teacher education (including technical teacher training), organisation of FVI and FVII, development of continuing education, and provision for minority and other special groups. To facilitate this, it is important that the Government Secretariat - Social Services, Economic Services, and Finance-be officially represented at a high level on the Commission. Whilst the Board, Council and Committee would not report directly to the Governor, these bodies would have the right to publish the advice they supplied through the Commission. Thus there would be no suppression of views, while at the same time differences of opinion could be accommodated.

II.31 In summary, we envisage the Board of Education, the Vocational Training Council and the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (the latter perhaps being given a more appropriate title) with much the same briefs as at present but with amendments to their membership and methods of working so that each would be accorded similar status in educational policy formation. We would hope that all three bodies, besides considering matters referred to them by the co-ordinating Education Commission, would initiate discussion and make recommendations on policy to the Commission. ~~We would expect that the Commission would have the formal authority and responsibility for advising the Governor on all matters relating to development and planning of education in Hong Kong and that it would have the power to enquire into such matters, and through its 'official members' to require~~

such information as would be needed to fulfil its functions.

II.32 We re-emphasise the point made in paragraph II.16 above that the comprehensive role of the Education Commission and its associate bodies will enhance the quality of decisions made by the Governor-in-Council. While it may appear at first sight that interpolation of another link in the chain of advice might slow down the decision-making process, we believe that this will not be the case because we are confident that the form of advice coming through the system via the Commission will relieve the highest echelons of government of much detail and will indeed expedite the taking of decisions and their implementation.

Research and Development

II.33 We saw little evidence of research and development in education. Those who work in schools are simply too extended to turn their minds to such matters, even if they were trained to do so. The colleges of education are not attempting any major research pursuits. In conversation with those engaged in research in the universities we were left with the impression that there has been little of what we would call policy relevant research, especially that of an interdisciplinary nature. There is need for in-depth research into curriculum development, teaching practices and the evaluation of pupil achievement. There is, however, an indication of some movement in the direction of policy analysis as reported in Chapter 4 of the Background Report and by the Education Research Establishment.

II.34 Our reason for raising the matter here is that the nature of research and development in the governance and management of the system poses basic problems which are not necessarily coterminous with those of the managers and the governors. We do not regard this as a bad thing: it is simply a fact which needs to be taken into account when thinking through the roles, goals and status of the various research agencies in the education enterprise. All the time we must ask ourselves what the impact of these types of activity is on classrooms and on children.

II.35 We turn in the next Section to a consideration of the major issues which in our view set the policy and planning agenda of the Education Commission and its constituent bodies for the remainder of the decade.

SECTION III. CHAPTER 1 : LANGUAGES IN THE CLASSROOM

Specifying the Problem

III.1.1 The education system in Hong Kong must aspire to higher goals than those of many other nations. The necessity for most students to learn two languages - English and Chinese - is an unusual privilege and burden, especially when one considers the particular problems which arise from the differences between the spoken language, Cantonese, and written standard Chinese. But the issue of languages in the classroom goes deeper than this. Language reflects the soul and culture of a people. Each language has its own images, proverbs, sense of humour and different thought structures expressing various facets of civilization. Thus it has cultural and economic ramifications (fostering the 'essence' of Hong Kong; helping the people of Hong Kong perform well on the world stage) as well as pedagogical and technical ones (in which language children learn most readily; how best to teach language skills).

III.1.2 This creates a demand for teachers with language competence that are rarely to be found in mass education systems. The time required for language instruction tends to 'crowd out' other curriculum areas such as physical education and the performing and visual arts. A school day in Hong Kong must have more time devoted to language than is the case in countries which are officially monolingual. Consequently, the Hong Kong education enterprise must either become very efficient in teaching and learning methods in order to meet the necessary variety of educational objectives - or (the enterprise) work harder and longer. There is simply not enough time in the school day or year to cope with the language requirement as well as to cover the other core subjects in the same depth that can be achieved in many other nations.

III.1.3 Our concern is with two principal issues in relation to languages in the Hong Kong education system: quality of language teaching in all schools; and the use of English in Anglo-Chinese secondary schools. The language teaching issue has been given considerable attention (for example, the recently announced 'language package' which, we are given to understand, is conceptually sound and reasonably resourced). This has come about because of widespread concern with the alleged downward spiral in language competence of Hong Kong students. Given the complications of this situation (spoken Cantonese and English; and writing in English and modern Chinese), we are not surprised that, as the participation rate of the school age population has increased, so might the average level of performance have declined.

The Medium of Instruction

III.1.4 Until recently, no one agency had the specific formal carriage of policy development in the area of the medium of instruction. At first glance, the various issues might be regarded as aspects of the one problem and thus susceptible to a single solution: an improvement in the effectiveness of English language teaching serving to overcome many of the difficulties surrounding the use of English as the medium of instruction. But no matter what strategies are used to improve language teaching in Hong Kong, the present lamentable situation concerning the use of English as a medium of instruction will remain because these measures do not confront the basic issue of whether it is possible to use a second language successfully as the vehicle for providing universal (compulsory) education in what is de facto, although not de jure, still a monolingual society as far as the vast majority of the population is concerned.

III.1.5 As newcomers to the scene, we asked the obvious question: as Hong Kong pupils have to learn a language which can be written in order to express themselves on paper, why not teach them to write in English, the accepted universal business language, rather than in Chinese? The answer lies, we were told, in the relatedness of Cantonese and putonghua (especially compared with, say, the difference between Cantonese and English). Cantonese and putonghua are linked linguistically (whereas Cantonese and English are clearly languages of a very different kind). All forms of Chinese use the same script, with differences of style, grammar and lexis. Cantonese, for example, has a number of characters which are unique to it and there are a number of words in Cantonese which do not have corresponding characters. The problem is that what is accepted as 'proper' written Chinese follows the rules of standard Chinese or putonghua. (To use an analogy which cannot be carried too far, a Scot might say 'twa' but write 'two'.) Nevertheless, a Cantonese speaker who cannot understand putonghua will be literate, given education. Putonghua or 'standard language' (sometimes called Mandarin) is not just a dialect - it is Chinese. Whether Cantonese is a dialect of Chinese or a language in its own right is a matter of linguistic (and political) debate.

III.1.6 Many Chinese speakers find it almost impossible to master English at the level of proficiency required for intricate thinking; and yet pupils from non-English speaking Chinese families have to express themselves in English at school. Under these conditions, more emphasis tends to be placed upon rote learning. If a pupil is expected to reformulate that which he or she has learned in English but has few words at his or her command to express these thoughts, what can be done except to regurgitate verbatim either notes taken during lessons or slabs from textbooks?

III.1.7 Education services in Hong Kong were, in earlier stages, directed towards well-to-do bilingual Chinese families who are both products of, and essential to, the orderly governance and economic prosperity of the territory. English language education therefore became synonymous with power and prestige. Whereas in the past the use of English as the language of instruction in secondary schools was restricted to the privileged few, in the course of the past two decades of education expansion it has now been extended in various degrees to more than eighty per cent of the secondary school population.

The Quality of Language Teaching

III.1.8 This has resulted in a dilemma for teachers and pupils alike. While some primary schools manage to teach English quite successfully, many do not; and so pupils spend a considerable portion of their (junior) secondary schooling coming to grips with the basics of writing and speaking English. When all subjects across the whole curriculum are taught in English, those subjects with a high language dependency (e.g. history) tend to become exercises in English language instruction. Even in the upper secondary school we observed such low standards of English in both teachers and pupils that the essence of the lesson was largely lost.

III.1.9 Despite clever use of 'chinglish' in the Anglo-Chinese schools and the popularity with teachers of courses offered by a number of agencies to improve their grasp of English, most teachers are by no means fluent and consequently their teaching efficiency is handicapped no matter how valiant are their attempts to master English. The situation has deteriorated markedly, we are given to believe, since the effects of the policy on localisation of teaching staff have begun to be visible. We consider ~~the 'localisation of staffing' policy ought to be amended~~ so that children in their first years of schooling might be exposed to native English speakers, engaged as ancillary staff either on a contract basis or accepted as helpers (e.g. the non-working spouses of British expatriates or other suitable English speakers). Such people should be given the benefit of even a brief form of training before moving into the schools to assist regular teachers and to supplement specially prepared audio-visual aids such as video-tape programmes.

III.1.10 Many of the problems associated with schooling in Hong Kong - excessive hours of homework, quiescent pupils - are magnified, even if not caused, by the attempt to use English as a teaching medium for students who, even if they proceed to university, prefer not to use it by choice. The problem is not really logistic, economic or academic: books can readily be translated and printed. Costs would be greater, although not prohibitively so; and we are led to believe that there would be some difficulty on

occasions in interpreting some western technical ideas in Cantonese terms. The crux of the matter is bound up with social status and labour market appeal.

III.1.11 The aspirations of upwardly mobile Chinese families (rather than the desire by the powerful of the political economy to dominate the scene) keep at bay any formal acceptance of Cantonese as a major medium of instruction, because of the preference for English. There seems to be a lesson for Hong Kong in Singapore's experience where it has proven socially and culturally impossible to use a local language as the medium of instruction; many leave school functionally illiterate not only in English, but also in Chinese.

III.1.12 Hong Kong ~~cannot afford to reduce the emphasis on English in its schools,~~ especially since its great neighbour, China, has afforded the teaching of English a high education priority. This is especially the case as Hong Kong's future is clearly intimately linked with China's. However, care should be taken that the pursuit of this policy simultaneously with that of introducing universal secondary education does not foster an elite caste of English users with the less linguistically competent being labelled as such by dint of their having Cantonese as the only instrument of communication. ~~It is feasible, we believe, for a cadre of resource staff to be established~~ so that every school in Hong Kong would have the part-time services of fluent speakers of English who are familiar with modern techniques of teaching English as a second language.

III.1.13 Underpinning all this is the fact that the education explosion and the increased competition resulting from scarce places in both the prestige schools and in higher education has made more difficult the task of providing an education service that, in terms of quality and opportunity, values all children equally. It is the form rather than the substance that still counts in Hong Kong where one is subject to the spectacle of a born-and-bred Hong Kong speaker of Cantonese going through the ritual of instructing Cantonese speaking pupils by means of a language in which both teacher and taught have very little competence.

III.1.14 We do not have to adjudicate on the debate as to whether or not thinking is sub-vocal speech, but ~~accept as a fact that the mother tongue is,~~ all other things being equal, ~~the best medium of teaching and learning.~~ There are sound political, cultural and psychological reasons to support this proposition. Education resource inputs, however, are rarely equal from school to school because of the nature of the peer group, quality of teachers, instructional methods, curriculum design, availability of learning materials, and so on. Much more would need to change in schools than just the medium of instruction before the full educational potential of using the mother tongue could be realised.

III.1.15 As most of the expansion in the school system over the past twenty or so years has been in the Anglo- Chinese sphere, the process of changing these schools from being highly selective and academic to becoming more comprehensive, is altering their character markedly. Despite the virtual guarantee, because of the admission procedures, that intelligent and diligent students will be selected (in the main, self-selected) into the prestigious schools, there is no assurance about the standard of English they bring to these schools. At the other end of the spectrum - in the least attractive schools which draw on the least able teachers and pupils - attempts to teach through the medium of English leave much to be desired; this could, be disastrous both for the individuals involved and for society at large.

Options

III.1.16 In the face of this situation, the decision as to which language, in what circumstance, for what purpose and for how much of the school day, is being left largely to individual schools, and even teachers. The Government seems ill-equipped either to advise or even to know what is actually going on throughout the system. As for the experts on this issue, each usually has his or her conceptually neat but often impracticable solution: no wonder the public at large is confused about the issue. Given the concerted efforts required in all areas of public policy to bring about changes in language patterns, ~~the Government ought to consider~~ linking its efforts in the educational sphere with concrete moves in other areas ~~in support of its 'two language' policy~~ - for example by insisting on modifications to current codes for advertising and media broadcasts.

III.1.17 An obvious way out of this problem area is for the Government to impose Cantonese as the medium of instruction in FI-III of all secondary schools so that the first nine years of schooling (PI-FIII) would be in the 'language of the heart'. A pragmatic variant on this would be to leave alone the small number of schools which have been genuinely successful in using English as the medium of instruction. However, not only the principled and pedagogically sound option but also its pragmatic and less attractive mutation are in reality unavailable to the policy makers for practical and political reasons. ~~One possibility is to embark on a long-term project of changing parents' and employers' attitudes towards Chinese as a teaching medium.~~ This would presumably entail a scheme of positive discrimination in favour of such schools, both in terms of resources (in particular to upgrade their standard of English teaching) and post-school opportunities (perhaps with a quota to assure a proportion of admissions from them to further study and the Civil Service).

III.1.18 A second way forward is to acknowledge the reality that much of the teaching and learning going on in Anglo-Chinese schools is in fact undertaken in both languages; and that the language policy of the Chinese middle schools can hardly be expected to continue when students and parents see that the pinnacle of the educational pyramid in the popular eye - medical studies - is taught principally in English at CUHK. This would open the way to serious attempts to improve the effectiveness of this reality by developing genuinely bilingual curriculum strategies. The Government should mandate that English be taught formally in K-P6 as a second language or first foreign language (depending on which instructional methodology is the more suitable for the pupils in particular schools). This would involve extra resources being made available to improve the English language competency of teachers of these grades. We suggest that putonghua be offered as a publicly financed but extra-curricula (Saturday or after normal school hours), and therefore optional, supplement for those who wish to enrol from p3/4 onwards.

III.1.19 In Hong Kong where proficiency in English is necessary for economic and political reasons, there is a classic public policy dilemma: whether to jeopardise the educational progress of the majority (and perhaps endanger the culture itself) in order to guarantee a sufficient number of competent English speakers; or to value the whole group (and in so doing conserve the culture) but accept the loss in capacity to deal with the international environment and hence a possible decline in the economic prosperity.

III.1.20 The dilemma lends itself to a typically Hong Kong solution, that of compromise. This would involve, in the long term, a shift towards complete mother tongue education in the early compulsory years through abandoning the fiction that the Anglo-Chinese and Chinese middle schools use only one language as the medium of instruction. Such a solution would support a wholehearted push towards genuine bilingualism after P6, including the tertiary level. From F1 there should be a progressive shift to genuinely bilingual programmes so that by the end of FIII students are receiving approximately half of their instruction in each language, with putonghua continuing to be an option which can be built into the secondary school timetable as well as being offered on an extra- curricula basis at public expense.

III.1.21 We conclude that the saving of appearances has led to an unfortunate lack of correlation between policy and practice. Now that the inherent problems have been recognised officially and that earmarked resources are available, we suggest that it is timely, given that improvement is being sought, to do what has to be done on grounds of principle rather than as a perpetual temporary expedient. To formalise the informal, to make de jure what is often de facto, can lead to desirable ends.

SECTION III. CHAPTER 2 : SORTING AND SIFTING

Role and Power of Examinations

III.2.1 What we are concerned with in this chapter is the character and role of examinations in the Hong Kong education system. Next to the 'language of learning' issue (and often connected with it) the frequency, nature and crucial importance of examinations for the educational and career chances were the prominent concern of students and teachers, parents and policy makers alike.

III.2.2 We do not intend to embark on a dissertation about the social and pedagogical bases of examinations. Examinations are a means of evaluation, motivation and assessment of the individual as well as of the system; they are used to determine whether a student meets the minimum requirements to enter a particular new stage in his or her educational career; and they are used to establish a ranking order among students as a basis for allocating a small number of places among a large number of applicants possessing the minimum qualification required.

III.2.3 These three functions of examinations apply world-wide. Clearly the last - using the ranking order to assign candidates to a limited number of places - is the one that causes most controversy. For while Hong Kong, like any advanced and wealthy society, should aim at providing a full range of educational options for the qualified student to choose from in the foreseeable future in Hong Kong, as in most highly developed nations, there will be more school leavers with good grades who want to train in particular professions than either the higher education system can absorb or than the society can use efficiently. If this is to be so, then selection based upon marks in achievement and/or developed ability tests seems more acceptable and equitable than other means such as family wealth or social status or predictive tests of potential.

III.2.4 In all liberal societies which have opened up access to post-compulsory education such sieving devices have been set up - be it for admission to more prestigious types of upper secondary education, or a numerus clausus for medical studies, or for certification prior to entry into the labour market. Ironically, the very introduction of compulsory education and the opening up of higher and further studies create the need for some such selection - through clinical means such as guidance and counselling, through economic incentives and disincentives, or through a meritocratic rank order of merit derived from tests and examinations.

III.2.5 For every 1000 pupils who entered P1 in 1968, some 480 were admitted to FIII in 1976, 120 entered FVI in 1979 and 55 survived to FVII in 1980. Education Department projections (see charts in Appendix VI) suggest that for every 1000 pupils entering P1 in 1981 about 890 will go on to FIII in 1989, 275 to FVI in 1992 and some 130 to FVII (or Upper Sixth) in 1993. While these figures indicate a 130 per cent increase in the FVI population and 150 per cent increase in FVII over a period of 13 years (an increase of about 7 per cent per annum) they are very low by comparison with the countries with which Hong Kong wishes to identify, economically and socially.

III.2.6 The particular weight placed on the examinations issue in Hong Kong derives from the following factors and their combined effect upon the individual student and his or her family:

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 the frequency of examinations;

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 the significance of each examination result for determining the educational options that remain open;

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 the importance of examination performance in shaping concepts of self-worth and peer status;

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 the constricting effect that external (i.e. non-school based) examinations have on the curriculum and character of the individual schools;

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 the risk of inequality of life chances arising from the great differences in quality among schools and from the fact that examination success in a given subject often depends not only on competence in that subject but also on fluency in a language that is a mother tongue to a few, a true second language to some and a first foreign language to most.

Incidence of Examinations

III.2.7 We have deliberately chosen to analyse the issue from the point of view of the individual child going through the system rather than of the policy maker who looks at the system with its imbalance of supply and demand and at the need for distributive mechanisms. We do so to press the point that even if this system worked well enough from the point of view of higher education and the labour market it is not acceptable either on educational or social policy grounds.

III.2.8 In the course of his or her school career, a child may go through as many as eight sets of examinations which go beyond diagnostic classroom assessment and which are all significant in opening up or closing off options for the student not only in education but ultimately in life. In many cases, there is an interview and some kind of appraisal to be gone

through before being accepted into a kindergarten of the parents' choice. The same, with a stronger element of formal testing, may occur for admission to a preferred primary school though official policy discourages the practice. Towards the end of primary school, there is a combination of internal assessment and academic aptitude testing (to scale the school assessment) as the basis for the all-important allocation to secondary school places. Form III - the last year of compulsory education - leads up to the Junior Secondary Education Assessment which runs from November to the following May. In Form V, students sit for the HK Certificate of Education Examination on which admission to FVI or other advanced and/or technical education alternatives depends. IN FVI, the HK Higher Level Examination is taken mainly by those who aim for a place at CUHK. Finally, in FVII there is the HK Advanced Level Examination whose main function is to establish entry qualification to HKU. In addition, many students take the English GCE (A and O levels) at the appropriate stages.

III.2.9 The very frequency of examinations is in itself disconcerting. When they are structured so as to dominate style and content of learning in the classroom as in Hong Kong, particularly at the post-compulsory stage, educational concern increases. The full scope of the issue, however, becomes apparent only if one takes into account how crucial examination results are, in relation to the performance of one's peers, in determining which future options remain. Again, this is not just a function of the scarcity of places at a higher level or in a given type of education but also of the great differences in quality among schools of the same level and kind. To be sure, a student's chance to get admitted to HKU strictly depends on performance in the HK Advanced Level Examinations as against the performance of his or her competitor; but the chance to perform well or even to have survived to FVII at all depends very much on the secondary school attended. The chance of having got into a school which would promise likely success is largely determined by how well he or she did in relation to their peers at the end of primary school; even there, the opportunity to perform well would have varied markedly not only according to individual ability but also according to which primary school he or she had attended.

III.2.10 If there is more than one sufficiently qualified applicant for a given place, a selection based on merit as measured by examination performance is more equitable than one based on other criteria such as family influence or wealth. This strengthens our view, however, that a society which upholds distributive justice and equality of opportunity as basic social policy objectives, accepts educational

qualifications as an entree to social and economic power and insists on compulsory secondary education, cannot condone the great differences of quality that exist among schools.

III.2.11 Our principal concern here is not the small number of traditional schools, often denominational, of high standard and prestige. We accept as a matter of fact that there will be schools which have a strong sense of individuality and which expect and receive from their pupils more than the usual. Such schools may cause policy problems - e.g. through recruitment from selected 'feeder' primary schools or even kindergartens (and we advocate measures to increase social mix in the intake of these schools) - but they are features that a liberal society can tolerate and indeed a mass education system may well profit from their existence (either as a challenge or as places where new ideas can be more easily developed or tried out). What we find unacceptable, on social as well as on educational grounds, is the situation wherein a large part of the students in compulsory secondary education (FI-III) are provided 'bought' places in private schools which in respect of basic quality criteria such as teacher qualifications and the scale and standard of physical facilities are below that used by the government for its own schools and set for those coming into the aid scheme.

III.2.12 This is where the impact of the examinations problem lies. At the completion of primary school, each child is placed into a 'band' of ability according to the results of school assessment and a procedure of scaling each school in relation to the others on the basis of an aptitude test of the P6 pupils. At the same time, parents get a list of about thirty secondary schools which are potentially available to their children. They are asked to indicate the order of priority in which they would choose schools from that list for their child. The choice is not just between different types of schools - e.g. Anglo-Chinese or Chinese Middle; co-educational or single sex; schools emphasising sports or music in extra-curricular activities; schools that are very strict and schools that are not-but much more between schools of higher and of lower standard.

III.2.13 Children who are not in the top 'bands' are likely to wind up in 'bought places' at private independent (profit-making) schools that were low on their parents' list of preferences. These children and their parents are unlikely to realize that the government pays to the school about HK\$1500 for each of them whereas their peers in band one, who obtained their first or second choice (i.e. a place in a government or aided school), would cost the taxpayer about three times as much. It has to be taken into account that simply because a government or aided school teacher usually earns considerably more than a private school teacher, this does not necessarily make

him or her more effective professionally; and the same can be said for such cost-related factors as class size or teaching load. Nevertheless, a correlation between cost and quality is generally accepted in the community. To have such gross differences among schools providing compulsory education cannot be justified any more than the practice of assigning about half of the pupils in compulsory education to schools that do not match parents' preferences. Nor is it acceptable to spend only about one third of the amount of public funds on the compulsory education of these students compared with those who obtain top grades at the end of primary school and therefore got into the secondary school of their choice - almost invariably an expensive one.

III.2.14 We are aware of government hesitancy in increasing the outlay per bought place: the increase might show up in the profits for school owners rather than in improvements in educational provision; and there would be a consequential increase in the cost of private places. We also recognise that under existing policy, all except 'good' bought places in FI- FIII are being phased out. Nevertheless, increased financial provision to the private school sector is necessary to the extent that it is expected to fulfil a public function - in this case, the provision of compulsory secondary education of acceptable standard. A government which enacts compulsory education up to a certain level must also be responsible for securing adequate provision for it. Besides, the private schools are in a 'catch 22' situation if, on the one hand, they are not allowed to charge any student more than the government prescribed fee for a bought place while on the other hand they are criticised for poor standards of physical and programme provision.

The Significance of Language Competence

III.2.15 Equality of educational offerings - and thus of opportunity to learn - is a pre-condition if there is to be equitable selection by competitive examinations, particularly within compulsory education. Another prerequisite is equality of chances to demonstrate in those examinations what one has learnt. In Hong Kong, the chance of a student to learn and to prove that learning depends in many cases on how well he or she knows English or how capable is his or her teacher in the language of instruction.

III.2.16 Thus the issue of the language of instruction is closely interwoven with the issue of examinations and their educational and social justifiability. There is an apparently easy answer to our criticism on both these scores: the people of Hong Kong have accepted the system up to now. Of course they want economic improvement and social mobility. They complain about insufficient and unequal provision. They favour the English language schools over the Chinese ones. They sit for more competitive examinations than they have

to. They criticise a teacher for lack of English competence rather more readily than for teaching in English or Chinese above the students' level of comprehension. This proves the tremendous drive of the Hong Kong people for advancement and their realization that formal educational qualifications and a good knowledge of English are important factors in determining the chances of advancement.

III.2.17 There also seems to be an element of safeguarding privilege by an elite whose children are more or less bilingual. Everyone should try by legitimate means to secure the best possible start for his or her child but we feel that public policies should look particularly to the needs of those whose starting positions are not so favourable. Furthermore, we are confident that greater justice in the unavoidable examinations selection procedure can be achieved without a loss in the mastery of English after leaving school if English is taught competently as a foreign language from the beginning of primary school and with the other subjects taught - and tested - in Chinese. We deal with this issue in detail in Chapter III.8.

III.2.18 Expansion of and qualitative improvement in facilities and teaching resources, together with learning and examining in the mother tongue, would make sorting and sifting by examinations more acceptable. Even then the sheer number and the frequency of examinations would remain a problem for all schools and students, particularly in their upper secondary years. Anglo-Chinese and Chinese middle schools offer five- year courses leading to the HK Secondary School Certificate of Education Examination (HKCE), with some students then proceeding into sixth form to take the 'H' and 'A' Levels. Secondary technical schools also prepare students for the HKCE, with a bias towards technical and commercial subjects. The prevocational schools are also now offering courses up to Form V, leading to the HKCE. It is not just the HKCE phase of schooling that is dominated by exams. In FVI the first set of exams (the 'H' Levels) is taken within a bare seven months of starting. The second set - the 'A' Levels - is taken in FVII. These two sets of exams bear little relationship to each other and, because examination syllabuses overshadow teaching syllabuses, there is no comprehensive curriculum for these final two years of schooling.

III.2.19 Thus, preparation for university examinations dominates post FIII education and has two major areas of impact in addition to those applying to the earlier years of schooling. First, there appears to us to be premature streaming of students into 'arts' versus 'sciences' specialisation. Students must choose one or the other because HKU requires high marks in only three subjects (the 'A' Levels approach) and, we were given to understand, does not pay real attention to English competence in all areas - in the case of

potential scientists. Arts students are cut off from taking much science even though their ability in this area is quite high (by western standards). Secondly, since only a very small proportion of students goes on to college or university, the vast majority receives less than full value out of post FV studies which are geared principally for university preparation. The FVI-VII curriculum cannot at present be easily broadened to include subjects that are not given major weight in the exams (e.g. computer science).

III.2.20 There are two stages at which to try for higher education entrance - at the end of FVI with the 'H' Levels for CUHK and at the end of FVII with the 'A' Levels for HKU - and many students try both. We do not dismiss out of hand the case for earlier entry into CUHK than into HKU; indeed we were impressed with the sincerity of students who argued for the benefits of the initial (additional) year. As discussed in Chapter III.5, it should be possible to retain the special character of CUHK (perhaps by an advanced entry scheme based on the HKCE), while still avoiding the need for separate examinations and hence allowing for the abolition of the 'H' Levels. We note with interest that since we advanced this idea some six months ago during our second visit to Hong Kong, a pamphlet has been circulated by CUHK advocating a particular approach to such a proposal ('New Approach to Selection of University Students', October 1982). It is important that the implications for the whole education system of suggested amendments to the matriculation requirements of any one institution are fully comprehended. Piecemeal adjustments are to be avoided.

Desirable Directions

III.2.21 We have in the preceding paragraphs ruled out any radical changes that would at best be wishful thinking anywhere and which in the context of the present system in Hong Kong would be naive. We accept that for the foreseeable future that there will be - our suggestions as to expansion in secondary and tertiary education notwithstanding - a need for selection and grading as a means of allocating a small number of opportunities among a large number of qualified applicants.

III.2.22 Given the devotion of the Hong Kong community to education, the gift and zest for learning of its young and the fact that compulsory secondary education has only recently begun to tap and develop this tremendous resource, increases in legitimate demand may well surpass the largest contemplated increases in supply. We accept in these circumstances that the allocation of educational opportunity will be based largely on demonstrated educational achievement, complemented by measures of aptitude and potential where practicable. We wish to add that we do not consider this an ideal situation, but we see no other realistic option.

III.2.23 So much for the principle. Our specific suggestions are based on the conviction that the effects of sorting and sifting through examinations are the more educationally harmful and socially unjust the deeper they reach down into the earlier stages of a child's development and educational career. They are further based on the consideration that the effects of examination and allocation procedures are especially harsh as long as there is no alternative or 'second chance'.

III.2.24 We suggest that every effort be made to ensure equality of resource standards among schools. ~~Places in primary schools should ideally be allocated on the principle that~~ for the residential address of each pupil ~~there should be several primary schools accessible~~. The preference of families would then depend increasingly upon such factors as location, family tradition, special features of curriculum but not on a general difference in standard.

III.2.25 ~~The Junior Secondary Education Assessment system (JSEA) should be abolished as quickly as possible. If creation of the corresponding number of places in government schools or in the aided sector is~~ not feasible (we understand that the residual bought places in FIV and FV account for about five per cent of the total provision), then the alternative should be ~~to improve the quality of the places where they are now~~. A way to do so would be to pay more for every bought place, to allow the school to charge private students more, and to define standards to make sure that the additional income is used for the intended purpose. The outcome of such a policy would be that private schools would become either good enough to be accepted into the aid scheme (given appropriate upgrading of physical facilities) or not good enough from which to buy places. This would be a step closer towards equality of educational opportunity within compulsory education as well as a means of taking the edge off the sifting process at the end of primary school.

III.2.26 In order to move towards greater equity in primary and junior secondary education, we suggest that ~~consideration be given to the idea of 'positive discrimination'~~, i.e. of giving special support to schools which, for instance, have produced or have had to accept a particularly high share of 'low band' pupils in transition from primary to secondary.

III.2.27 With the phasing out of the JSEA, ~~admission to senior secondary schools should then be based on internal assessment moderated~~ to accommodate differences in student ability and teacher expectations from school to school.

III.2.28 There is no case for extending compulsory schooling. However, ~~subsidised post-compulsory education should be available to anyone who wants it~~. Given the high regard for learning and school achievement among the people of Hong Kong, this may well amount to a virtual universal extension. As

impressed as we were with the efforts being made in the prevocational schools we visited, we nevertheless favour a comprehensive type of secondary schooling up to FV. We do not mean that every student should do the same subjects and learn the same things:

diversification and specialisation should be offered within the one school as well as among schools. The full range of options for a higher educational qualification or for entry into an apprenticeship, some other form of specialised training or directly into the labour market should, in principle, be open to every student up to the end of FV regardless of what type of school or programme he or she has previously undertaken - but not regardless of how well he or she performed generally and in particular subjects.

III.2.29 Achievement in (pre) vocational and in technical education should be suitably acknowledged as stepping stones to more advanced study. For example, a specified level of achievement in the technical institutes or in apprenticeship training should be considered as equivalent to other more general educational qualifications for entry to specific types of further education and training.

III.2.30 There should be increased effort to draw the teaching force into curriculum development and to improve the coordination between the organisations responsible for Curriculum and for Examinations. The aim should be to have a curriculum which is educationally sound and then to construct appropriate assessment instruments - not to let the curriculum be dominated by examination requirements.

III.2.31 The importance of reducing the number of examinations is immense. Specific proposals are made in Chapter III.5. At a minimum, however, if CUHK and HKU are to continue with different length courses, admission to CUHK should be based on performance in the HKCE examination at the end of FV. Matriculation would then be conditional on continuing success in FVI attested to by the school. Motivation during FVI would thus be maintained, but in an atmosphere of relative security. Upon leaving FV some students would know that they had a very good chance to get into CUHK and others would know already that they did not have a chance by the normal route. They could then decide whether to go through to FVII or to take up another option.

SECTION III, CHAPTER 3 : THE KINDERGARTENS

The First Hurdle

III.3.1 At present, the kindergartens (K), pre- school or pre-compulsory education, are the total responsibility of the private sector though they are nominally monitored by the government. Because there are only a handful of kindergarten specialists and inspectors in the Education Department to cover more than 700 schools, guidance and supervision is spread thinly. Indeed, until the late 1970s the Government paid little formal attention to K level education and had no defined policy framework. The official role of government was merely advisory, with early childhood development programmes left to voluntary agencies and private enterprise. There was no direct government financial aid, and intervention in preparing teachers or setting standards was extremely limited.

III.3.2 This absence of government concern is conspicuous, given the importance attached by parents to this starting point for their children's educational journey. There has been, and still is, considerable stress and academic orientation in Hong Kong's kindergartens. The school-day is given over to teaching basic scholastic skills often not covered until at least the early primary grades in western education systems; this is because kindergarten is the crucial first rung in the sorting and sifting principle that characterises Hong Kong education.

III.3.3 There is strong pressure by parents to enrol their infants in reputable kindergartens because these are the gateways to the most sought-after primary schools. Some kindergartens used to hold admission exams for three-year-olds, and it is rumoured that this procedure still continues sub rosa in some institutions. Preparation for the first grade (P1) entrance examinations has been the overriding concern of teachers and parents alike. Some of the examination papers we were shown contained more than ten different tests: general linguistic competence in Chinese and English, and numeracy are the core subjects. Individual oral and written tests can last for two hours. Although this almost unbelievable practice is officially forbidden, many schools feel compelled to continue with it owing to enrolment pressures.

III.3.4 Even in the less competitive kindergartens where the demands on children are more reasonable (at least by our standards) traditional methods of rote learning continue to be the norm. Activity methods are becoming somewhat more acceptable in the system albeit characterised by a shade of tokenism. But the concept is not compelling to most Hong Kong parents who see education as the highly didactic business of inculcating as much knowledge and as many skills as possible in the time allowed.

III.3.5 Rearing of infants in Hong Kong occurs in the home, kindergarten and child-care centres. Children are better looked after now than in the past (we understand that there was no ordinance concerning child -care until the mid-1970s) but their experience beyond the family is still rather randomly allocated between care centres and kindergartens. Where more than five children are looked after regularly, these child-care centres must legally be registered with the Social Welfare Department. Kindergartens come under Education Department surveillance because they provide schooling. In fact, many kindergartens serve as child-care centres but are able to enrol more children and levy considerably higher charges by dint of being labelled as education institutions. Kindergartens do not now have to conform to a defined staffing policy. Even child-care workers must attend a minimum fortnight's preparation course and supervisors must have had at least five years' experience. Our view is that very high priority be given to the training of the teachers of early childhood teachers. In particular, there should be within an amalgamated college of education (rather than the independent institution proposed in the White Paper) a teacher education faculty specialising in the pre-service preparation and continuing development of early childhood professional and ancillary staff. Implementation of the 1981 White Paper policy will go towards redressing this situation. This is very important since traditional patterns of child care are changing, with grandparents becoming less keen to act as baby-sitters and mothers becoming keener to enter the workforce. Consequently admissions to kindergartens are rising and entry ages are falling, markedly in some instances.

Increasing Governmental Concern

III.3.6 By 1980, over 85 per cent of the four - and five-year-olds in Hong Kong were enrolled in kindergarten, an increase of about 40 per cent over the past ten years. Parents had realised, long before any formal government recognition, the crucial role that early childhood activity plays in the ultimate development of the individual. Thus it was that the Government produced a public discussion document drawn from the work of two study groups - the Green Paper 'Pre-school Services and Primary Education' (April 1980). This was followed by the 1981 White Paper on the same subject. In 1981 the first major regulatory moves and policy pronouncements were made.

III.3.7 We are advised by the Education Department that maximum attention is being given to reform and to the general improvement of services. Child-care centres and kindergartens will be more strictly demarcated according to age groups. The starting age for kindergarten is being raised to three years and eight months. ~~The length of the kindergarten course ought not to be more than two years, thus linking up with the reduced primary school starting age of five years and eight months. A new scheme of means tested fee assistance was introduced in September. More young children from low income families now have a chance of adequate care and 'early start' opportunities before they enter the first cycle of compulsory schooling. We think that the fee assistance scheme for kindergartens and child-care centres, should be monitored to ensure that it provides both for equity among parents and for the balanced development of quality programmes between both types of early childhood provision. The present supply of kindergarten places will not, under this arrangement, need to be greatly increased (except in the new towns); but child care centres should be extensively developed and their rationale re-thought.~~

III.3.8 Child-care and kindergarten both should develop a strong concern for the child's social and personal development, creative and motor skills, concept formation, and linguistic competence. ~~More attention should be given to the construction of Chinese (rather than western) curriculum materials.~~ 'Activity' pedagogies seem most appropriate, with classes of not more than 35 pupils to allow this approach to operate effectively. We understand that college of education in-service professional development programmes for kindergarten teachers are planned so that by 1990 about three-quarters of this sector of the teaching service ought to be suitably qualified and prepared. These propositions (together with many others such as those relating to plant and equipment) form a coherent and contemporary policy platform which seems to indicate government willingness to commit substantial resources to early education. By redressing disparities in children's pre-school experiences, perhaps their life chances will move towards equality.

III.3.9 It is doubtful, however, that these measures can avail unless radical changes are made in primary school entry patterns so that selecting and screening pressures on kindergartens may be diminished. In the west, pedagogical reform has proved most effective by and large in those echelons of education where competitive examinations do not dominate the curriculum. Style and content will remain largely irrelevant for pupils and parents, and even teachers, where the race for the highest mark dominates the education landscape.

III.3.10 Educators stress the crucial importance of early childhood for long range development of adult potential. The earliest years are generally thought the most effective for prevention of potential problems in adult life. The old adage 'prevention is better than cure' is particularly apposite in this context. During the early formative period, physical and psychological capacities develop very rapidly; in particular languages are learned with greater ease when children are very young, especially through conversation. Expensive remedial efforts, often largely futile, attempt to redress inadequate attention to the early years. These resources would be better spent on preventative measures.

III.3.11 We have pointed out how Hong Kong's pre- school population faces intense academic pressure because of the harsh tradition of selection and allocation brought about by the limited places in preferred primary schools. To circumvent this situation, stronger measures are to be taken to prevent primary schools from setting entrance examinations and a district net system set up whereby as many children as possible are allocated to schools near their homes, taking parent choice into account. Schools are being allowed up to 65 per cent of discretionary places to fill first. This seems to have arisen as a concession to the powerful elite schools so that the authorities may successfully pursue their egalitarian policy. Recognising that many schools have long-established family ties, it is hard to envisage the new scheme working without a high degree of competition continuing for those discretionary places which, in lieu of written examinations, nevertheless probe for academic attainment and predisposition.

III.3.12 The Government's commitment to the abolition of primary entrance screening tests can thus be subverted in this circumstance. It is clearly impossible and undesirable to have government officials policing all interviews to preclude informal or indirect testing. Additionally, parents may move house or adopt proxy addresses in order that their children may be registered in the net for a desired school. The fact that such avoidance and evasion tactics can be seriously and openly talked about is an indication of the high preference for and influence of the renowned schools in the system.

III.3.13 We heard rumours of supposed fortunes being made by shrewd kindergarten owners. There seems to be a tremendous variation in fees which exacerbates disparity in quality of service offered from school to school. Not surprisingly, many of the best kindergartens incur the greatest financial outlays and

so charge the highest fees. However, we visited one kindergarten which was operating with the barest margin of income over expenditure and where teacher salaries were very low compared with those earned by teachers in primary and secondary schools; no doubt there are others.

System Support

III.3.14 Given its recent entry into the kindergarten policy arena and the great distance to go in developing a significant government role in this field, we believe that the administration lacks the necessary quality of infrastructure to improve the situation in toto at an appropriate pace. The Education Department should therefore pursue a more vigorous and innovatory approach to curriculum and methods for early childhood education and accept that additional resources will have to be directed to this end. We spell out this increased government role below.

III.3.15 There are no as yet full-time year-long teacher education programmes specifically for early childhood professionals. In 1981 there were 5300 kindergarten teachers but only one in every seven had received some type of professional training. Reliance on brief workshops and other rudimentary forms of in-service education has been necessary because teacher training facilities are not available. The Education Department and post-secondary institutions lack sufficient early childhood specialists. The size of the Department's staff in this area is totally inadequate even to monitor the regulations, much less to provide on site guidance and counselling to staff - let alone children. There should be a policy initiative concerning leadership training in the form of an intensive in-service programme for head teachers in kindergartens who can then assume greater responsibility for both the performance and development needs of their own staff.

III.3.16 The conceptual basis for distinguishing between regulations, fees and standards for child-care as distinct from kindergarten seems weak; policies are difficult to implement. The Education Department's manual is useful but gives little attention to child development or curriculum issues. The standards laid down for physical facilities are a big step forward but, given projected enrolment patterns, space shortages in Hong Kong's most populous areas may necessitate overcrowded kindergarten conditions for a longer time than the White Paper allows for. There ought to be a master plan and time scale beyond those proposed in the White Paper to extend and upgrade physical facilities and to articulate them with human resource requirements.

Options

III.3.17 We see the options available to government presenting themselves as differences in degree of financial and administrative involvement : there is no alternative but to become more interventionist in policy determination. There could be adherence to the status quo with reliance on the private sector for kindergarten provision, the major government role being minimal regulation; an incremental implementation of the 1981 White Paper but with, say, a ten year time horizon to meet major needs; vigorous implementation of the 1981 White Paper along with a strategy to accelerate the first steps; or a top priority given to early childhood education, devoting to it scarce skilled human resources in tandem with a greater share of the physical and financial resources, even at the expense of other echelons of the education system.

III.3.18 In the longer term, kindergartens should become part of the aided sector with the Government having a role similar to that which it undertakes in respect of primary and secondary education.

SECTION III. CHAPTER 4 : THE SCHOOLS

III.4.1 Our visits to schools in Hong Kong came at an auspicious time. The FIII students were completing the first ever nine-year unit of compulsory schooling, with more of them than ever before continuing on to FIV and beyond in a trend that will inevitably lead to eleven years of universal, basic education (though not compulsory or necessarily fully subsidised). We had read about supposedly inadequate and disparate standards, exacerbated by the too hurried imposition of compulsion - a move allegedly inspired by political and economic as well as educational motives. What did we find?

Primary

III.4.2 Although there are ample primary school places available overall, a few aided schools are extremely popular and competition to get into them is intense. This is because they 'feed' the preferred secondary schools. Of the 537 000 students in primary day schools in September 1981, there were 32 000 in government, 65 000 in private and 440 000 in subsidised schools.

III.4.3 Government primary schools are well staffed and equipped. Although they seem not to be the preferred choice of many parents, enrolment in them is now increasing after a period of decline. Attendance at private schools has been falling, presumably due to the fact that fee increases are not being accompanied by improvement in standards. This is in accord with the 1965 White Paper policy of expansion through the aided sector. The subsidised schools are at the top of the popularity poll.

III.4.4 Primary schools are mostly bi-sessional, with children attending for a period of about four and a half hours either in the morning or afternoon. School uniforms are a common feature, while pupils' demeanour is courteous and respectful (even compliant) to an extent almost unheard of in the so-called advanced industrialised societies. The endorsed starting age of six years is difficult to monitor (many begin earlier) and because of the practice of repetition a wide age range is to be found in any one class: for example, fifteen year olds are still to be found in P6. This underlines the prevailing and, we contend, the false assumption that all children can achieve a reasonable standard if they conscientiously repeat the same lessons often enough. Fortunately, there is a professional rule of thumb that repetition in the primary school should not exceed one year. The 1981 White Paper policy to ensure limits on age bands within any class should be vigorously enforced.

III.4.5 The present focus of primary schooling is as shown in Appendix Q of the Background Report. While English is taught as a subject, functional literacy in

English by the end of the primary programme is largely confined to those children for whom English was the medium of instruction: this is hardly surprising but is of increasing concern. Teachers and employers say that standards in English are declining, but this could be caused by a larger and more varied student body. Teaching methods are still highly formalised: neither the physical environment nor the inclination of the profession or the community is conducive to innovation. Student-centred approaches find it hard to compete with established subject-centred practices. There has tended to be a set of syllabuses rather than a total curriculum. Class sizes are extremely large by OECD standards and this inhibits any teaching style other than lecture or whole group tuition.

III.4.6 Although the 'activity approach' only operates in about ten per cent of schools, recent policy statements endorse it, particularly for the younger classes. We support this strongly, because how we learn is never separable from what is learned. As Socrates says in a justly famous passage in Plato's Republic, "Education is not ... the putting of knowledge into the soul as the putting of sight into blind eyes; it is an art of turning around which assumes the presence of the power to learn." Hence education is the dynamic art of conversion. The Government proposes that not only should all teachers be eventually given in-service education in this but also, as an incentive, that those who practice it be eligible for promotion even though they might not be responsible for a senior grade. There will be supplementary resources for schools employing such methods, thus allowing them to reduce class sizes to manageable proportions. Admirable as these innovations are, the real breakthrough will be to make more permeable the existing discrete subject boundaries which constrain this pedagogical approach.

III.4.7 Primary school leavers who wish to enrol in a public sector secondary school join the Secondary Schools Places Allocation (SSPA) scheme: a place in the queue is determined by moderated school assessments (through a centrally administered Academic Aptitude Test), parental choice of school, and twenty-four district nets. Children are placed within these districts according to five gradations of aptitude. Band by band, beginning with those assessed to have the highest scholastic aptitude, pupils are allocated randomly to the secondary schools within their net having regard to parental preference. Consequently some scholastically able children obtain places in the relatively few sought-after secondary schools even though they may not have been in the immediate or traditional 'feeder' primary schools.

III.4.8 Children in the feeder primary schools generally do not have to compete to the same extent because they benefit from the protection of a quota

system. At the other end of the scale there are schools whose destiny it is to deal only with band four and five students. This further depresses the climate in what are already unpopular schools, hence the creation of a downward spiral for the children of often poor and illiterate families.

III.4.9 There is poor co-ordination between the primary and secondary spheres of schooling which is reflected in their separate policy evolution and organisation. This lack of intersectoral co-ordination seems to exist among the several echelons of the Hong Kong educational enterprise and has already given rise to serious difficulties. The debate concerning the fairness and validity of the student allocation scheme is the more heated because of this disharmony. Central issues are about what the 'core curriculum' should be for compulsory schooling (P1-FIII), and who should decide, construct and monitor it, and what mechanisms might prove useful to break down the present rigid boundaries between the primary and secondary sectors.

Secondary

III.4.10 Secondary education in Hong Kong is provided through secondary grammar (Anglo-Chinese and Chinese middle), secondary technical and prevocational schools. In 1981 there were 403 secondary day schools of which 32 were government, 187 aided and 184 private. The table in paragraph 2.26 of the Background Report shows the distribution of enrolment by method of financing. Enrolments as at September 1981 were: secondary grammar, 403 000; and prevocational, 30 000. In the secondary grammar groups only 48 000 pupils (approximately 11 per cent) were in the Chinese-medium stream. Different classifications can be made according to other criteria such as medium of instruction, method of financing, length of programme, and examination results (see Appendix IX) which are as function of type of student enrolled as much as quality of educational programme. The separate but overlapping categories are detailed in Chapter 2 of the Background Report.

III.4.11 There is a seven year programme (FI-VII) in the Anglo-Chinese and secondary technical schools, a six year programme in the Chinese middle schools, and courses up to FV are now offered in the prevocational schools. While the technical schools offer a full range of courses and emphasise what might be considered practical and commercial subjects, the students enrolled in them do not have priority access to post- secondary technical studies; indeed, we found these schools to be remarkably similar to the grammar (Anglo- Chinese and Chinese middle) schools.

III.4.12 Over half of the grammar schools are private with the government 'buying' about half of their places in FI-III. The others are largely government supported. The 'grant' schools used to receive public aid under an old 'grant code': now they are treated by and large in the same way as other aided schools. Subsidised schools are newer institutions but are aided in virtually the same way as the grant schools. Assisted schools receive a lower subsidy than the other subsidised schools but most are progressing in stages to fully aided status. The Chinese middle schools are declining steadily in popularity, indicating a parental inclination for an English (language) type of secondary education.

III.4.13 Virtually all the secondary technical and all of the prevocational schools are fully funded by the Government. Despite the planned expansion of pre- vocational education, the small number of technical and prevocational schools perhaps reflect the lower status traditionally accorded in both Chinese and English societies to practical studies. This is not to say that a number of the secondary technical schools do not have good reputations: these are, by and large, grammar schools in disguise. A solid academic programme has still the most currency for ensuring a choice among a range of vocations. There should be linkages between and within vocational and general streams of secondary education so that no student is without a 'second chance', irrespective of the school to which he or she is assigned in the first place : excessive back-tracking is to be avoided.

III.4.14 The form and degree of government control over teachers in different types of school depend on the mode of financing. Teachers in government schools, which are under Education Department control, have public servant status and responsibility. Teachers in both subsidised schools and private schools operate by and large without close government supervision of their professional activities. Despite the existence of management boards, schools tend to be run autocratically. Parent and pupil participation is almost non-existent by most western standards and the general teaching staff is rarely involved in important school decisions.

III.4.15 In terms of organisation, there are similarities among schools. To the extent that we may generalise, secondary schools contain well over 1000 pupils, each cohort being broken up into about five graded classes of forty or more pupils. 'Floating' classes in FI-III permit more groups in the school than there are actual classrooms. Schools operate for approximately seven hours per day for five days a week, though a number of schools have Saturday classes as well. A six day timetable (even if the school operates only for a regular five day week) is quite popular.

The usual entry age is about twelve years and it is still possible to find age differences of four years within the same cohort or to notice young men and women over twenty years of age in the upper forms.

III.4.16 Learning conditions for children and working conditions for staff, both at school and home, are hardly satisfactory. Most of the schools we visited were spartan to say the least, with pupils filling the entire room - 40 to 45 per class. Some were blighted by high noise and we witnessed teachers using loud speakers and suspending their teaching several times in the course of a lesson. Our inspection of one or two examples of brand new schools was refreshing and encouraging - the scale and standard of provision seem to balance nicely community expectations and fiscal responsibility. Nevertheless, there is a depressing obviousness of the need for extensive refurbishing and rebuilding. The time is fast approaching when a massive injection of funds for building will be necessary to permit the upgrading of some of the entirely unsatisfactory facilities on the Island and in Kowloon, especially in the private sector. ~~What is needed is some lateral thinking about the provision and use of facilities:~~ perhaps the adoption of unconventional solutions such as the use of commercial or other premises to overcome peak enrolment pressures.

III.4.17 Most Hong Kong people live in high-rise dwellings with restricted living space. We are told of middle class families consisting of eight persons spread over three generations existing on a floor area of 400 square feet. Student homework often has to be undertaken to the accompaniment of radio and television and the distraction of other family pursuits. Because of this, publicly funded study rooms have been set up in selected areas. Some are under-utilised because they are uncomfortable but there are insufficient of these to meet demand in any event. There are stories of students studying beyond midnight when the other members of their families are asleep and even working on stairways or under street lamps not to mention the waiting areas of Kai Tak Airport. Even where study rooms are available, teachers complained to us that they are not open long enough nor are they conveniently situated for the great majority of students who seem resigned to undertaking four or more hours of homework each night. Similar difficulties confront teachers, thus impairing their efficiency.

III.4.18 The ramifications of three years of compulsory secondary education are now becoming clear. With virtually the whole junior adolescent age cohort now at school and with classrooms and schools overcrowded, there are forebodings and foreshadowings of an upsurge in delinquency and indiscipline - problems that until

now have mainly been known in Hong Kong through imported media stories. Most schools already undertake ability grouping even in FI and even those who claim not to do so indicated to us that it may become a necessity as the competition for subsidised places in FIV reaches a peak. We think pressures on students in the junior secondary forms will thus become intensified, with those not selected into the advanced streams tending to be left by the wayside. The heart of the problem is not the compulsory nature or type of schooling offered but rather domination of what goes on in school by the examination system. Examination syllabuses are detailed and prescriptive in response to teacher demands for full information about the syllabus to be tested. Teacher resistance could be expected to proposals for less specific syllabuses. We are encouraged that the examination syllabuses are in some cases becoming less prescriptive and detailed and in the case of FIV and V more closely connected with the teaching syllabuses to the extent of the two being fused: present thinking is to establish for each new syllabus an agreed content area, to be elaborated both as a teaching syllabus and an examination syllabus. Despite the apparent shortage of suitable and interested persons, increased rotation of membership of examination panels and subject committee members, together with the granting of a measure of school autonomy in curriculum choice, would allow more individuals to influence the secondary curriculum.

III.4.19 A small minority of schools operates outside the mainstream secondary education system. The English Schools Foundation (ESF) schools - six primary and three secondary - cater for much of the British and Anglophone population. The Government handed over its English Speaking schools to the ESF in 1979: a contributing factor was, we are told, that they were a political embarrassment. Pressures for improvement coming from parents and staff familiar with the higher resource standards in the west could not be met because of the parity of subsidy principle between the English and Chinese schools. The discontent caused by this is now becoming more vocal as spiralling costs push school fees ever upwards.

III.4.20 Other private schools, mainly for expatriate children, exist without any form of government subsidy. Example are the German-Swiss, International and Kellett schools, and those for Japanese and Indonesian children. They have adopted distinctive curriculum and teaching methods in accordance with their cultural traditions. The encounters among these schools and between them and the mainstream schools seem confined to the usual range of inter-school sporting and

cultural events, many of which are said to have a strong competitive flavour. The sectors remain as distant from one another as do the expatriate and local populations they are set up to serve.

III.4.21 FVI and FVII, often referred to as 'Lower and Upper Sixth', constitute the great divide between those students who terminate their formal education with the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCE) and those who aspire to higher education.

III.4.22 It is clear that the nature of the course work provided in FVI and FVII is increasingly significant in the debate about the future of post-school education and therefore merits careful consideration. It must be multi-purpose to provide for students proposing to proceed to the various strands of higher education, to employment in private enterprise and the civil service, and to study overseas. This calls for a diversity of subject options from which the student selects a combination best suited to his or her ultimate objective. If every secondary school attempts to provide FVI and FVII tuition, the number of course options of acceptable quality at any one of them will be very limited; despite increases in student numbers the size of most classes would be small and therefore costly; and there would be difficulty in acquiring suitable staff. Perhaps the FVI-FVII programmes could be consolidated in a smaller number of existing secondary schools (including Chinese middle schools) as a step on the way, perhaps, to creating separate 'sixth-form' colleges: the increased number and range of subjects able to be offered would cover the needs of students aspiring to alternative forms of further education than university or polytechnic as well as the needs of those hoping for immediate employment.

Curriculum and Teaching Method

III.4.23 The lessons we observed tended to be teacher-centred, with little use of aids beyond chalk and blackboard. In 'non-exam' years, the atmosphere seemed fairly relaxed, but in the examination preparatory forms all was deadly earnest and students were seen taking notes, laboriously completing model answers and learning texts by rote. (Incidentally, this was equally in evidence at the college of education we visited.)

III.4.24 Since the students are desperate to obtain their qualifications, and as teachers are judged professionally in terms of their students' results, the whole business is understandable. Discovery methods, team teaching and individualised instruction have

little appeal to parents, students and teachers in a situation where the ends require more didactic means. Obtaining a credential to ensure a job offer and if possible, upward social mobility (rather than providing an interesting and intellectually broadening curriculum) is the almost universally agreed objective. Teacher-dominated instruction of passive student audiences seems, with rare exception (such as the activity approach in primary and integrated science in secondary schools), to be the accepted way.

III.4.25 Student discipline is effected through a variety of classic procedures - splitting pupils into competitive houses, prefect systems, and so on. We understand that evening class students (of mature age) sometimes request permission to have a uniform. Punishment is rarely physical but usually takes the form of detention, extra work or verbal admonition. Many schools, especially the religious ones, explicitly encourage the upholding of the Confucian ethic alongside western views of the world. Thus, schooling embodies the traditional values of extreme orderliness, self-discipline and dedication. However there is some evidence of truancy, vandalism and disrespect on the fringe. Some feel that this change for the worse is the result of the introduction of compulsory schooling up until the age of fifteen and the ever-present influence of imported ideas.

III.4.26 The principal function of the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) presently is to produce suggested teaching syllabuses in the form of guidelines covering aims, pedagogical method and resources. These are developed by subject committees for the primary and secondary levels; FVI-VII subject committees have already been recently formed. A particular difficulty at the senior secondary level is the parallel existence of the Hong Kong Examination Authority (HKEA) syllabuses which are mostly simple statements of the subject matter to be covered. These are not to be confused with the teaching syllabuses developed by the Curriculum Development Committee subject committees, often chaired by members of the Advisory Inspectorate.

III.4.27 The HKEA is a self-financing public agency set up in 1977 to co-ordinate the various public examinations and deploy resources more efficiently. The Authority is advised on matters relating to school examinations by its School Examinations Policy Advisory Board which is made up of representatives from the universities, the Polytechnic, the colleges of education, post-secondary institutions, and school principals. The Board is in turn advised by HKEA subject committees for the 'A' and 'H' levels and for the HKCE.

III.4.28 There is a formal mechanism for co-operation and co-ordination between the two types of syllabus committees; this has not always been the case in practice. There were indications that conflict and discord sometimes result - to the detriment of students and teachers alike - because the exams are such powerful instruments in determining what goes on. Tension between the professional aspirations of subject committees and the seemingly inevitable constraints of public examination syllabuses makes curriculum development in Hong Kong arduous and frustrating. The job is made more difficult when clashes occur between factions on these committees: teachers; nominees of the higher education sector; and the Inspectorate. There were hints that it is teachers rather than academics whose attitudes tend to be conservative: we have heard the contrary point of view, too.

III.4.29 Our line of argument is that the emphasis in student assessment on formal selection and allocation should be lessened. This is elaborated in Chapter III.2. Therefore, ~~consideration should be given to transforming the role and function of the Hong Kong Examinations Authority~~ from that of controlling a public examination system to that of operating a course and student accreditation service on behalf of the schools and the post-school institutions. This would still provide for the quality of the education system to be independently and externally monitored, at least in terms of the relative performance of school leavers and the standard of courses offered. In addition, however, it would encourage the trying out of alternative assessment techniques to traditional, externally set and marked unseen written examinations. We think a title such as Accrediting Agency (AA) would be appropriate. We deliberately suggest the word 'agency' to connote that this body, while structured in order to allow it to make independent judgments, would be so governed as to be in the service of and to report to the Education Commission and its Boards/Committee Councils (see Section I). ~~It is therefore suggested that the AA have a board~~ or council including nominees of the Commission and an independent part-time unofficial chairman.

III.4.30 The litany of frustrations we heard about the production and implementation of syllabuses suggests to us that curriculum development in the sense that the term is used in OECD countries is thoroughly under- resourced across the entire system. The very fact that the terms 'exam syllabus', 'teaching syllabus' and 'curriculum' are not clearly separate notions in the minds of teachers tells a story in itself. ~~There is a need for more research capacity~~ to back up what is attempted. The Education Department's resources (human, physical and financial) in this area - including the Advisory Inspectorate and the staff of

its curriculum development section - are in our view quite insufficient for the task to be accomplished. Textbooks are mostly dull with little stimulus to spark creativity or for learning to learn. This says something about the present role and functioning of the Textbook Advisory Committee and also about publishers being keen to make easy profits by turning out material which has been under-researched and under-developed for the local scene. In the light of the relatively small market and the dearth of locally produced materials of adequate standard, publishers should be encouraged to produce more Chinese translations of suitably adopted English language materials. The potential value of resource centres and libraries is not widely appreciated by the teaching service and so the range of practicable teaching styles remains limited.

III.4.31 To encourage curriculum development efforts, especially in the post-Form III area, we believe there is merit in drawing the teaching service, as a professional force, into curriculum development and assessment practices. Strategies should be implemented to improve the co-ordination and communication between the agencies responsible for curriculum development and examinations. A genuine drive towards school-based curriculum selection and adaptation, together with school-based programme and pupil evaluation, would open up new horizons for teacher participation. This involvement would be from periphery-to-centre rather than the centre-to-periphery tradition which now permeates educational planning, policy making and innovation, limiting the number of teachers who can become involved in these activities. Every effort must be made to encourage innovation at the school level which, after all, is where the real work is being done.

Points of Concern

III.4.32 The principal features which strike us about the school level of the education system are:

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Student motivation and application verges on the fanatical, by western standards. Maths and science attainment is excellent by any standard: while preserving this, it should be possible to devote relatively more resources (including time) to meet shortfalls in other areas.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The curriculum is 'examination driven' through syllabuses designed for university preparation. The Education Department should be reorganised and resourced to provide a 'professional epicentre' for school curricula.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Proficient English-speaking teachers are in very short supply and their turnover is high. As more Form IV-V places become available, this

shortage will become increasingly critical. We urge the setting of definite targets for the acquisition (by a deliberate training and/or importation plan) of an adequate supply of competent speakers of English to work in the schools.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Technical and prevocational education is not sufficiently articulated nor is there an adequate link with the academic streams to allow students to switch streams without excessive backtracking.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Students spend too little time in critical or analytical thinking. The library is a symbol of a 'learning-to-learn' system, but use and provisioning of libraries seem to reflect a lack of understanding of their potential and importance.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The private independent schools are generally of low quality and there is no effective policy to remedy this either by upgrading or by closure. The standards of private schools with bought places should be raised to an explicitly defined level. As a corollary, subsidy rates for private schools with bought places should be increased to equate with those of the aided sector. The very low-rated schools should be eliminated from the pool and more places bought from the better schools.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Although classes are large, there is no advantage in reducing them in size unless concomitant steps are taken to improve teaching methods. Pedagogical reform is a prerequisite for reduced class size to have any real effect.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 With increasing retention and participation rates, the formal status of FIV and V studies needs further clarification. They presently 'float' between the end of 'basic' (free, compulsory) schooling and the beginning of 'upper secondary' education (generally thought to begin in FVI).

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Because of the current course patterns, there is too much wastage of effort and misdirection of talent as the vast majority of FVI and FVII students do not gain entry to the universities or the Polytechnic.

'Levelling-Up' School Quality

III.4.33 As we have pointed out, the basic education system is now in place and enrolments have expanded rapidly and impressively. The school system should

focus now on some of the challenges caused by this rapid enrolment build-up - the new issues relate to quality rather than quantity. For as places become available for all students who desire them (and we are confident that policy must in time reflect social demand for this), public expectations will turn to disparities among the qualitative aspects of education such as variations in the kinds of resources and outcomes of different schools.

III.4.34 There are striking variations indeed. Hong Kong has some of the best schools in the world in terms of student attainment. Products of these schools are accepted into the world's most prestigious universities. Sample examination papers that are reviewed in the United Kingdom reveal high standards of student performance and examiner expectation. The matriculation standards for Hong Kong's universities and Polytechnic are high. We are convinced that comments about falling standards are really a reflection of the rapid increase in participation rates: the average standard may fall, but the best are probably better than ever. Most of the schools, however, leave something to be desired. Facilities, teacher qualifications, examination results and other indicators of quality rank low. Students are allocated to these schools for various reasons including their test performances and lack of opportunity owing to the educational and economic status of their parents.

III.4.35 No education system has schools of uniform quality. The objective should be to gradually but persistently ~~raise the lower quality schools to the standards of the best~~. We do not advocate diminishing the existing resources or quality of the top-ranked schools in order to 'homogenise' educational opportunity.

III.4.36 Ironically, the resource allocation formulae seem to provide the least government resources to the schools which are regarded by the public as of the lowest quality. Moreover, the schemes of aid are not designed to improve the quality of lower-funded/lower- quality schools but essentially to leave them at their current level. Government subsidy policies in many countries specify minimum standards of pupil performance, facilities and/or teacher quality as a condition for receiving the aid more so than is the case in Hong Kong. In some countries, schools that are not at these standards have their aid adjusted so that within a certain time frame such standards are attained, provided that private financial effort is maintained. Subsidy policies should avoid excessive governmental interference in the day-to-day management of schools. Consequently, ~~the government should define broad parameters and expected outcomes~~ for all schools rather than prescribe detailed means and procedures.

III.4.37 The target of government policy should be the lower quality schools in terms of their resource base and capacity for improvement. The government could provide compensatory resources on top of its regular subsidy: this could be based on a variety of criteria such as low expenditures per pupil, inadequate facilities, poor qualifications of teachers or large numbers of disadvantaged children. Low quality schools could be visited by an accreditation team composed of teachers from other schools, Education Department officials and university and college faculty; this review team would work to a set of accreditation standards. Schools not meeting these standards would be given a specific amount of time and help to meet them. 'Levelling-up' could also focus on improving teachers. Schools with large numbers of minimally qualified teachers could be provided with supplementary resources for in-service training and for the opportunity for some staff to return to college or university for an upgrading programme: much of this teacher upgrading would concentrate on English language skills. After the level of teaching has been improved quality can be enhanced by allocating a greater proportion of high achieving pupils to some of the less popular schools: the very change in student mix will tend to raise standards. While there is evidence that intakes to the most sought after schools and to universities are now more representative of the population at large than was the case a decade ago, it is disconcerting that socio-economic background does have an influence upon school performance and hence upon the school attended. Special support should be given to raise the quantity and quality of resources in schools which have produced or have accepted a particularly large share of 'low band' pupils.

Suggested Action

III.4.38 Smooth progress of pupils through the system can best be facilitated by removing many of the barriers between sectors and strands. The idea of replacing points of discontinuity with transitional phases has profound implications both for curriculum development and student assessment practices. Consideration of the location and organisational form of the secondary programme is necessary. FIV and V should be accessible to all, regardless of scholastic potential, thus reflecting the evident social demand. The Government should make every effort to ensure equitable provision. This might lead to a concentration of FVI and FVII teaching in a small number of schools (including, possibly, Chinese middle schools) or by the complete removal of teaching at this level from the secondary schools and the establishment of new institutions concerned wholly and solely with

senior secondary programmes. There is evidence of senior colleges working effectively in several western countries. While there is little doubt that the latter alternative is, in an academic sense, better for students and teachers, there are logistic and political disadvantages. No secondary school will willingly give up its top forms, because these accord social status and prestige to the school. Travelling time for some pupils will be increased. As far as costs are concerned, there is in any case going to be a considerable need for new works and refurbishing because of the rising retention rate: the opportunity for 'rethinking' therefore presents itself.

III.4.39 FVI and FVII could be planned as a coherent two year programme for all who performed sufficiently well in the HKCE or who obtain admission by other criteria. Such a programme should be uninterrupted by any public examination and lead at the end of the period to formal certification. Within it there could be a comprehensive choice from vocational preparation to the purely academic. A reservation we have about the present senior secondary organisation is the intrusion of the Higher Level Examination some seven months into FVI and the premature bifurcation at FIV into arts and science specialisation as a backwash from current Advanced Level Examination requirements.

III.4.40 Students should be able to enter one or other of the higher educational institutions or take up employment in industry and commerce more smoothly than the present examination-ridden arrangements permit. If entry to the CUHK four-year course is still to be allowed at the end of Form VI, this could be achieved by a 'provisional' acceptance of students based on their performance at the end of Form V in the HKCE, elaborated as necessary by a statement from the school concerning performance in FVI. Indeed a similar accrediting process could operate for any student who wishes to terminate his or her school education during the FVI-FVII biennium. We advocate in the long term that ~~a system of accreditation be instituted on the basis of continuous assessment of student performance~~ for those who wish to terminate their secondary school education after Form V but prior to the end of FVII. Difficulties foreseen by those closely associated with the present examinations system are related to: the large number of schools involved, especially the private independent schools of poor quality and with a commercial motivation; professionalism being still spread rather thinly in the teaching force; the competitive environment and resultant pressures on teachers when grading their own pupils; the supply of competent persons for course evaluation; the cost of accreditation which could be higher than that of traditional examinations; public confidence in school

assessments; and acceptability to local and overseas universities and institutions. Nevertheless, a shift in the direction we propose would be desirable socially as well as educationally.

III.4.41 In the light of recent studies, the Education Commission should set up a task force to make specific recommendations on the organisation and provision of FVI-FVII education as a matter of urgency bearing in mind that the fundamental objective is the establishment of a multi-option two year series of curricula uninterrupted by any formal examination. We recognise that there may not be one single simple solution and that a number of the options we put forward may need to be subject to experimentation following the wide consultation. The trial grouping of these forms into one or two schools which are geographically adjacent, the creation of a sixth form college, the encouragement of particular options in certain schools are all possibilities which need to be tested. This could be expensive but in our view the educational provision at this level within the schools system is so important to the future of Hong Kong that not to experiment in this way would be a false economy in the long run.

III.4.42 The disparity in degree of government control over different types of schools should be lessened. Maximum authority and responsibility should be afforded all schools (government, aided and private) so that, within prescribed educational and administrative guidelines, a variety of modus operandi may develop. Schools should be left to manage their own affairs as far as is practicable, with the education portfolio being more concerned than is presently the case about general policy matters.

SECTION III. CHAPTER 5 : BEYOND THE SCHOOLS

The Present Pattern

III.5.1 The structure and content of secondary education in any education system is considerably affected by the nature of the post-secondary education which is available and to which students aspire. Several criteria loom large in policy making and planning for education in Hong Kong beyond the school level. Some hold that those who desire higher education should pay for a substantial part of it so that government spending does not increase excessively at this level where there can be good economic return for private investment. There is concern in some quarters that continued expansion in higher education could create a pool of under-employed graduates. Further, the growth of traditional university education is regarded in many quarters as being of dubious use to a rapidly expanding economy and dynamic society. As a result, there has been over the last two decades a diversification and expansion of post-secondary education through other types of institutions. These include the Polytechnic, the three colleges of education and the technical teachers' college, the three approved post-secondary colleges (Baptist, Shue Yan and Lingnan), and the technical institutes.

III.5.2 In Hong Kong the pinnacle of tertiary education has been the two universities. The small number of places available in them makes competition through the matriculation examinations particularly fierce. It is estimated that an equal number of students hold places in overseas universities as attend the two local ones. Over 10 000 now leave Hong Kong each year to study overseas. As the cost of overseas education rises this number could well fall, putting even more pressure on the scarce places at home. The Polytechnic has shown rapid growth. It now has a total of seventeen teaching departments grouped under three divisions: applied sciences, commerce and design, and engineering. In addition it has also two Institutes: medical/health care; and textiles/clothing. It is now preparing to offer degrees where the curriculum emphasis is on their applied nature and their relevance to Hong Kong.

III.5.3 From the point of view of manpower alone, ~~expansion of the technical institutes and sweeping improvements in teacher education~~ would seem to us to be clear priorities. There may, of course, be other specialised needs (e.g. in data processing) which can only be met by institution-specific solutions. Most likely, the plans to expand the universities and Polytechnic could be easily justified also from plausible labour need calculations. It seems to us, however, that considerations other than labour have come into play here. If one looks at Hong Kong society today-its energy, its competitiveness, the value it puts upon education, the degree of social mobility

apparently related to education, its age structure, and its comfortable exchequer - then the social pressure for further expansion is understandable, legitimate, and has to be met in some way. This would be so even if there were not such a convincing claim from the labour market perspective.

III.5.4 Part-time degrees may well provide a viable alternative to full-time university education though clearly they will put not only the students but also existing university staff, space and resources under considerable stress. The introduction of a 'university without walls' using the mass media is an attractive idea to us but does not seem likely in the foreseeable future mainly because of a questioning of what its viability and credibility would be. These surrogate forms of higher education are seen by some as stop-gap measures to meet the rapidly expanding demand for post-secondary education, rather than being based on the principles of continuing education. The very existence of the newly formed University of East Asia in Macau and its Open College, interested in drawing on the Hong Kong student population, has already called some of the traditional assumptions about the delivery of higher education into question. We note a recent decision by the Executive Council that the Open College should not be permitted to operate study centres in Hong Kong to supplement its distance learning programme; and that the UPGC should consider the question of a public-sector Open University type institution for Hong Kong.

III.5.5 HKU has served the territory well over many years in producing graduates, many of whom have had distinguished careers both locally and abroad. CUHK is more structured to providing an opportunity for university education for the students from the six-year programme Chinese middle schools (which at the time of its foundation accounted for more than one third of the total secondary school population) and offers a four-year undergraduate programme. This is in contrast to the three-year course at HKU which was designed primarily for matriculants of the Hong Kong A Level obtained after seven years of secondary schooling.

III.5.6 The government decided to support actively the establishment of a Chinese university (in terms of both language and cultural attitudes to education) by amalgamating three pre-existing colleges. This new concept developed satisfactorily so long as the source of suitably qualified student applicants remained plentiful. But over the years the population of the Chinese schools has progressively fallen : it is now around one-eighth of the total secondary school population and is still falling. In consequence the CUHK has had, in order to maintain its numbers, to tap the swelling stream of students moving through the Anglo-Chinese schools. When the intake of CUHK was wholly or mainly from the Chinese schools, the four-

year university degree course was appropriate. Indeed, for students in these schools, so long as there is no FVII, it will continue to be so. But for the student in the Anglo-Chinese schools the situation is much more complicated and, we are forced to conclude, even disruptive.

A Decade for Expansion

III.5.7 In the final two years of secondary school, students take the 'H' and 'A' levels. The two universities accept altogether at present about 2100 first-year students: only the top twenty per cent of those who satisfy the matriculation requirements actually win a place. Similarly, although there are nearly 16 000 first-year places in full-and part-time courses at the Polytechnic, the number of qualified applicants exceeds the number for whom places is available many times over. This is clearly a waste of talent and effort. As only two per cent of the relevant age group secure a university place, Anglo- Chinese school students feel they must take every chance to secure a niche by sitting for all examinations, often pursuing both the A Level and H Level curricula. An agonising decision faces many students accepted by CUHK at the end of their sixth year: should they accept a place at the university or complete the A Level programme in the seventh year and hope to be offered a place by the HKU? Our impression is that most students value a place at the HKU above one at CUHK. It is our understanding that if a student who has successfully completed his or her A Level course is not offered a place at HKU, he or she is not eligible for a place at CUHK for a further year: if he or she is then admitted the full four year course remains to be done, an effective waste of two years.

III.5.8 Our discussions with university and polytechnic faculty, students, schools, employers and a number of government department officials have satisfied us that ~~there is an overwhelming case for the expansion of opportunity for study at the degree level~~, with particular emphasis on degrees in technological subjects, and in courses for higher technicians. Any consideration of how such expansion might be achieved, and the rate at which it might take place, must take account of the constraints likely to be encountered.

III.5.9 Over the next ten to fifteen years the absolute size of the relevant age cohort will fall, but according to Education Department projections the number of students in FVI and VII (expressed as a proportion of the school population) will increase at an annual rate of approximately seven per cent. Some, but not all, students who are studying overseas will return to Hong Kong and enter the labour market. We understand that because of the world recession and increased fee charges in some of the more popular universities, the number of those returning has increased considerably in the last year or so. Unless

government intervenes to assist students in their overseas studies, this is expected to be a temporary phenomenon because the number going overseas is declining and consequently the number available to return will be small.

III.5.10 We have been told that the intake to the universities could be doubled without there being any significant drop in the quality of the entrants, and that the increased output of graduates in three or four years' time would still not satisfy employer demand. Such an increase would of course go some distance in satisfying the social demand for places in the immediate future, but not necessarily in the longer term. These considerations satisfy us that a considerable and rapid expansion of degree level and higher technician education is both necessary and desirable. The maximum feasible rate of expansion of existing tertiary level institutions needs to be determined in order to provide a larger proportion of higher education places of acceptable standard for the relevant age group by 1990.

III.5.11 It is never easy to assess the right proportion of the population of a country which should receive higher education. Projections of labour market needs have proved notoriously unreliable in many countries and in Hong Kong the situation is particularly difficult to assess because of the rapid changes likely in the industrial scene. These changes will occur as Hong Kong adapts its industry to exploit the 'high tech' trends in the advanced industrialised societies. While it is unlikely that Hong Kong will ever be a major initiator in the research and development of sophisticated processes, it may well be at the leading edge of their application.

III.5.12 It is generally recognised, and can be emphatically demonstrated, that the people of Hong Kong have an outstanding ability in mathematics and quantitative analysis. Entrepreneurs are capable of rapidly adapting to and capitalising upon evolving circumstances - for example, use of new materials and new technological developments. This ability, whether innate or learned, is widely spread over the social spectrum and is combined with a traditional respect for formal learning. Hence any education development plan which fails to heed the social pressures generated by parents and prospective students would not be in the best interests of the territory and may well prejudice a satisfactory resolution of the fundamental dilemmas facing the Hong Kong people in the 1990s.

III.5.13 There are, however, constraints on the rate of expansion of higher education, the two most important being the provision of buildings and the recruitment of properly qualified and motivated staff. We understand

that there is sufficient land available to the CUHK for it to accommodate 10 000 to 12 000 students. We are also told that so long as HKU continues to accommodate staff (in houses) and students (in halls of residence on its existing site) its maximum student capacity is in the order of 7000. It has been suggested to us that HKU could develop its academic facilities on two separate sites. We regard this as educationally undesirable and, in all likelihood, uneconomic, and so best avoided. We suggest as an alternative that consideration be given to the removal of all staff and student accommodation from the present site, the land thus being vacated to be used for academic buildings. We understand some proposals along these lines are already being investigated by the university. While the Polytechnic site appears to be almost fully utilised with the proposed transfer of certain courses to the technical institutes it should be feasible to accommodate some degree courses there from 1983.

III.5.14 These developments in the universities and the Polytechnic will not, however, meet the long term needs of Hong Kong for people with degrees and diplomas nor satisfy the social demand. We believe that urgent action should be taken to identify and acquire at least two sites for new institutions, the first of these being designated for a second polytechnic. But the acquisition and development of a new site takes a long time - it may be as long as ten years to the first student intake with a further three years before the first graduate is produced. The acquisition of new sites is therefore urgent.

III.5.15 It is relatively easy to determine that student numbers in higher education should be increased by a certain percentage or to a ceiling figure; it is more difficult to recruit staff of the highest calibre to teach them. (Incidentally, we suggest that increases be expressed in actual numbers of intake in the first year rather than as percentage increases: it facilitates the assessment of specific resource implications.) There are lessons to be learned from the British experience in the aftermath of the Robbins Report (1963) in which it was proposed that university expansion in the UK should not be based on manpower needs but rather on the principle that every student who had the ability (as determined by his or her GCE A Level results) should have the opportunity of higher education. The pressure from rapidly increasing student demand led to the establishment of new universities, the upgrading of many polytechnics to university status, and thence strong competition for staff. Some eighteen years later, many of these too- hurriedly appointed staff now occupy senior tenured positions.

III.5.16 We have no reason to doubt the calibre or the dedication of the academic staff of the universities and the Polytechnic - indeed most of those with whom we conversed would do credit to a good university anywhere in the world - but it would be less than honest to suggest that the higher education establishment of Hong Kong stands in the front rank of world academe. This is partly because of the very small numbers of post-graduate students with which faculty have to deal but also because of the relatively small output of original work. Perhaps this is because competition for a faculty is not nearly so fierce as for a student place. There are certain notable individual exceptions to this general statement, but it would be apposite to some. Hence we urge caution in the rate of increase of new staff and also suggest that the encouragement of post-graduate studies (both by the award of post-graduate scholarships and the establishment of a research fund and more research facilities) might well be helpful in the recruitment process and would go some distance in raising and maintaining the esteem of these Hong Kong institutions in the international academic community. Now is the appropriate time to adopt the highest standards in the acquisition of new academic staff. As a corollary, a post-graduate scholarship scheme should be established to reduce, in the longer run, the need for expatriates in strategically significant posts. Given that post-graduate scholars and tenured faculty need facilities and materials, an adequate research fund should be provided which can be distributed on a competitive basis to make academic life in Hong Kong more attractive to top flight scholars and scientists.

III.5.17 We consider that the UPGC (or its successor - see Section II) should bring forward advice to the government through the proposed Education Commission on:

- a) The establishment of a research fund to encourage post-graduate research in the universities and the polytechnic in order in the short run to attract high calibre expatriate staff and in the longer term to create a corps of locally born academic staff.
- b) The expansion of an overseas undergraduate scholarship scheme to run for a decade in the first instance in order to relieve the pressures on the existing institutions and to produce graduates in disciplines not adequately covered by the universities and the Polytechnic.
- c) The long term planning of the expanded provision of Higher Education: determine priorities and estimate of costs; ensure that building sites are acquired in good time and that the range of facilities required match the needs of industry, commerce and the people of Hong Kong.

Matriculation Problems

III.5.18 We have already commented on the present unsatisfactory situation in FVI and FVII of the Anglo- Chinese schools and have made some suggestions for rationalising the 'credentialling' system and improving the value of the two years at school following FV and the HKCE. Our opinion that the courses be arranged as a coherent two-year program leading to the A Level Examination is held for two reasons: the first is purely pedagogical; the second is that we assume that the usual entry path to HKU and to degree courses being developed in other institutions (the Polytechnic and Baptist College) will be similar. If this is true (and for the sake of the students of Hong Kong we hope it is) then the minimum entry requirement for the CUHK will become increasingly remote from mainstream student endeavour.

III.5.19 At its inception the CUHK sought to provide a distinctive education to students coming predominantly from the Chinese middle schools - which have no seventh year. While the entrance qualification required was therefore lower than that required by HKU, the opportunity was also taken to provide an 'extra' general studies first year course before the student began his or her three years of specialised subject readings. Over time, however, the entry into the CUHK has become much more heterogeneous. Of the students we spoke with, a minority had entered after a single sixth year; a considerable number had passed their A Levels; still others had worked for one or more years in industry or commerce. The age span for entry seems to be roughly from 17 to 22 years. Some of these students expressed resentment of what they termed 'marking time' in the general course rather than getting on with their in-depth studies; yet others welcomed it, as about one in every eight students of an entering cohort apparently changes his or her intended subject specialisation, partly perhaps as a result of the wider understanding acquired during the general studies courses.

III.5.20 The future depends a great deal on the prognosis for the Chinese middle schools and whether or not these schools are encouraged to develop a two-year post-HKCE programme; this is ultimately a matter for government to determine. However, if such a programme were available in both Chinese middle and the Anglo - Chinese schools, and if it were comprehensive coverage of the specialist and general as well as the academic and vocational, there could remain little justification for the continuation of the first year at CUHK as it now exists.

III.5.21 In our comments on CUHK we have emphasised the difficulties created in FVI and FVII by the existence

of the four-year degree structure of that university which makes student entry possible one year after the passing of the HKCE and success at the Higher Level Examination. We have suggested that ~~entry qualification to the two universities and the polytechnic should be harmonised~~. One means of effecting this is through the elimination of the first year of general studies at CUHK. We understand that there are many within CUHK who will not readily accept this conclusion and will argue with conviction that the current course structure provides an option which is ideally suited to the social and academic needs of many of the young people in Hong Kong. The Vice-Chancellor of CUHK has himself put this argument to us forcefully and we respect his judgment and dedication to an ideal. We agree that a four year degree course of which the first year is devoted to general studies can be pedagogically sound; such a course creates, however, particular and serious problems in Hong Kong - notably confusion in the provision of FVI and FVII studies and the derivative stress on the students in those forms. Further, many of the most gifted students are seeking entry first into HKU. If this continues, then the degree from CUHK as it is presently structured can never command the confidence and status that is accorded a degree from HKU.

III.5.22 Our suggested mechanism for alleviating some of the stresses at FVI-FVII will not remove them completely. We are convinced that CUHK has much to offer that is distinctive and valuable: ~~it would be a loss if the two universities became carbon copies of each other.~~

Suggested Action

III.5.23 Considerations such as those advanced in this section lead us to make three related proposals. The first is the maintenance of the existing organisational arrangements except that students who have passed their ~~A Levels would be granted exemption from the first general year at CUHK~~. The second is that matriculation to either university, the Polytechnic and any other degree granting institution ~~ought to be defined in terms of performance at the A Levels~~ (without necessarily ruling out schemes of provisional acceptance of certain students). This might obviate the need for the first year general course at CUHK and have implications for the course structure of other institutions. The way forward is ~~to harmonise the matriculation requirements~~ for the various post- secondary institutions, ~~including the abolition of the Higher Level Examination~~; this requires the ~~first year programmes at these institutions to be adapted accordingly~~. For those students who wish to terminate their secondary school education after Form V but prior to the end of FVII, in the long term we advocate that a system of accreditation be instituted on the basis of continuous assessment of student performance (see Chapter III.4.38-40).

III.5.24 Despite the increase in intake to the universities, the introduction of degree courses at the polytechnic and probably the Baptist College, and the prospect of harmonising the degree programmes at the two universities, we do not think that the existing framework will allow the projected increases in the output of graduates necessary to satisfy either social demand or the manpower needs of the economy (industry, commerce, teaching, and the civil service). This situation is aggravated by the probable significant decrease in the number of Hong Kong students studying overseas for reasons already advanced. We have been told that the cost of training a student overseas is far greater than that of providing for him or her in Hong Kong. It is indubitably true that the outlay is greater if the calculation is based solely on recurrent, expenditure, but if account is taken of the capital cost of building and equipping academic and domestic accommodation, then the relative cost differentials begin to disappear.

III.5.25 Bearing in mind the inherent difficulties in a hurried build-up of university and polytechnic staff of an appropriate calibre, and the time lag involved in bringing new institutions on stream, there is a case in the medium term for financing at varying rates of subsidy ~~the cost of educating selected Hong Kong students in overseas institutions~~. The need may well persist for a decade and in consequence we propose that ~~an overseas undergraduate scholarship scheme~~ be established, particularly (but not exclusively) in programmes of study not offered by the local universities. This would be a contribution to the provision of a highly qualified 'locally born-and-bred' cadre in the community. In the longer run it would reduce the dependence of the present and future higher education institutions and high technology based business enterprises on expatriate recruitment. In making these proposals, we are aware that in some instances the 'brain drain' to opportunities abroad may be exacerbated because of the greater exposure to alternatives brought about by such a policy; but we are convinced that the net yield will be in favour of Hong Kong.

SECTION III, CHAPTER 6: CONTINUING EDUCATION

Untapped Potential

III.6.1 As with some other areas which are outside the mainstream of educational policy and yet which deserve special attention in a modern society - such as creativity training, the arts, community education and youth and sports activities - continuing education has only been touched upon by us in our documentary analysis as well as in our investigations and conversations. Our reason was that our brief was focused on the main body of organised education wherein the issues are so complex and the time available to us was so short. Even though we were not able to do justice in our review to all areas of educational provision, the area of continuing education is so important to the future of Hong Kong and its people that we feel bound to devote specific attention to it. We base our comments on the background material prepared for us, vivid memories and notes of spirited presentations by voluntary adult education groups such as the Hong Kong Association for Continuing Education, and papers from HKU's Department of Extramural Studies and from Caritas.

III.6.2 While it would be irresponsible to base either a definite assessment or firm recommendations for future policy on our few impressions, we ~~wish to emphasise the growing importance of adult education in~~ modern societies in general and in a society like Hong Kong in particular. First, there ~~is the need to bridge the 'generation gap'~~: the present school age generation has a much higher level of educational attainment than previous ones; if such qualitative jumps occur within the span of active life of one citizen, 'second chance' offers are of particular importance to avoid friction between the generations. The craftsman who is now forty years old would, if he were twenty years younger probably be a technician or engineer: he should have the chance to qualify as one in order to contribute to the best of his ability to the economy, to realise to the highest possible extent his own ability and worth and so not to resent his son's better chances.

III.6.3 Secondly, there is the ~~need for 'social integration'~~. There are many citizens of Hong Kong today who grew up in a different society and who did not move to Hong Kong until after they had finished their initial formal education. For them it is particularly important not only to learn English as a condition for job security and advancement but also to learn what it means to live in and to become an integrated member of Hong Kong society. This is particularly pertinent to the large numbers of unskilled mainland immigrants who entered Hong Kong in the late 1970s and by whose efforts the territory's prosperity is being promoted.

III.6.4 Thirdly, there is the need for correcting 'educational bias'. About sixty per cent of the age group who continue beyond compulsory education are subject to a learning programme that is biased towards higher education - which between two to three per cent only will achieve. Almost all upper secondary students will, in a sense, be frustrated because they were not selected for higher education - for which they had been prepared. They will need special, vocationally directed courses to obtain occupational value from their high standard of general education.

III.6.5 Thus the need for continuing education in Hong Kong is justified on many grounds with the major arguments revolving around ideas of cultural development, of social change and notions of equity. Rapid and significant changes in modern society place demands upon the individual which cannot be adequately met by receiving a concentrated period of institutionalised learning in the early years of life. The type and scope of jobs in the future will be significantly different from what we know now; the traditional roles of institutions and individuals are changing and will change more rapidly in the future thus requiring continual adaptation. Furthermore, all members of society should have equal opportunity of realising their interests and aptitudes. Because education is accepted as significant in enabling the individual to remain in touch with the changing social and physical environment and in obtaining status, justice demands that access to education be broadened. Moreover, as individuals acquire more free time and leisure, they will increasingly demand opportunities for participation in a wide variety of educational and cultural facilities which cannot be provided by the formal educational institutions.

Principles

III.6.6 While we do not pretend that there is consensus about the nature, rationale and implications of continuing education, several guiding principles are worthy of note. In the first place, we believe that education should not be viewed as synonymous with formal schooling. The 'apprenticeship' notion of the school tends to reinforce attitudes towards education which view it as something that occurs only in the early period of life. Institutionalised patterns of learning are only part of a total education and, as such, need to be integrated with other agencies and activities which exist outside the institutions established specially for education. In the second place, our conviction is that education should not be the prerogative and perquisite of the few. Access to education for all at any period of life (even though,

perhaps, at different relative costs to society and the individual from stage to stage) ought to be a basic tenet and has inspired the proponents of continuing education in the use of technology as a means of maximising this access and of providing 'deferred' or 'intermittent' education opportunities after the end of compulsory schooling. Finally, continuing education can be a way to 'open up' existing education institutions. It could bring together more closely school education and out-of-school education under a community framework. For example, steps could be taken to build experience in the world of work and other constructive social activity not only into admission criteria for further education but also into curricula themselves. An innovation that we see gaining a degree of acceptance in Hong Kong is for those aspiring to trades and crafts to get broad systematic instruction in a given field of vocational activity, such as metal, wood, clerical, construction or commerce, and so on. Only after that year would he or she become indentured, and the time of apprenticeship under contract would be reduced. There could understandably be some resistance to this on the part of employers and their associations, but the process ought to continue of negotiating the content of that year and the consequences for the shop-based training component of the reduced apprenticeship.

Options

III.6.7 Despite the resource implications and the psychological barrier of people's unwillingness to take initiatives which call for a change in currently accepted roles (e.g. adults returning to school or teachers working side-by-side with people from outside the school who are not traditionally regarded as educators) a number of possibilities for Hong Kong stem from a consideration of the ideas presented above. The range of options set out below - none of which is mutually exclusive - is based on the guiding principles of continuing education being closely linked to the various 'cycles' of the formal education system of Hong Kong. The way forward lies in using - and encouraging - the existing educational and community framework. 'Blending' and 'facilitating' are the key words, not the building of physical edifices or organisational empires. We have in mind voluntarily organised learning networks, with centres in schools and institutes rather than in new structures.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Unlimited schools. The development of a network of 'unlimited schools' through say, an extension of present correspondence schemes (e.g. that of CUHK) and educational television: it would extend educational opportunity beyond the traditional age limits; provide for a widening of

access to education for all, particularly for people in the New Territories; and make it possible for those who have 'missed out' on education in earlier years to have worthwhile learning experiences later.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Increased use of school resources. A much greater use can be made of school resources either during the normal school day or by an extension of it (after hours or during holidays) to cater for people of school age or beyond who have left school and who wish to avail themselves of what the school offers for reasons of personal interest, to engage in 'refresher' courses or to gain qualification.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Work experience. Students alternating their school experience with work experience have considerable appeal in the context of continuing education. Choices by students are often made without adequate knowledge of the workplace. The rapid changes taking place in the work place and the increasing length of schooling make it increasingly difficult for an adequate set of different, 'real world' experiences to be given to young people to enable them to judge their interests and abilities in relation to demands of post-school life.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Flexible courses. One of the major difficulties relates to the rigidity of the traditional school course of study with respect to time. Linked with this is the inflexibility of certification requirements in that judgments concerning successful completion of courses are made at one point in time. Motivation to engage in such courses would be enhanced if they were more closely tailored to the time requirements of those who have left school-women with young families or people in jobs.

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Joint courses. Significant steps forward could be achieved by a group of institutions working on a co-operative basis (especially different kinds of institutions such as technical institutes, grammar schools, the Polytechnic and so on). A joint venture based perhaps in a particular community or region and including all interested bodies offers a real chance for the promotion of continuing education. We note that such linking already exists to some extent (for example, between the Advisory Inspectorate and the university extramural departments in the provision of in-service courses for teachers): the principle could easily be extended.

III.6.8 We wish to be specific on one point: with its small geographic size and its high technological standard, Hong Kong would be eminently suitable for a system of education by radio and TV, combined, for example, with week-end study camps and evening tutorials. Perhaps the recent initiative by the University of East Asia (Macau) and the Open College to which we referred in Chapter 5 may serve as a stimulant. We do not go into the technical details here but merely want to emphasise that we are thinking in terms of a large-scale, comprehensive alternative to institutionalised education on the school and technical education/vocational training levels as well as in higher education. Experience would be available from such existing systems as the Open University in the UK, 'Telekolleg' in Germany and Telescola in Portugal.

III.6.9 Against this background, we make three rather general statements which may form a foundation upon which to build concrete proposals:

- (a) There is a reservoir of idealism and experience in voluntary organisations for adult education, and it would be wise for public policy to acknowledge and support these.
- (b) There is a great need for 'second chance' offers through adult education: for example, in learning English or in obtaining formal education qualifications. In the current circumstances we accept that meeting such obvious needs should have priority over catering for leisure education.
- (c) Nevertheless, we endorse the idea of public subsidy for what may be termed 'cultural enrichment' courses: Hong Kong has an extremely rich cultural heritage upon which to draw - Chinese, European and (most interesting) the blending of the two.

We believe Hong Kong would profit from an increased exposure and sensitisation to these ideas and issues, perhaps by undergoing a green paper - white paper process in respect of continuing education. The responsibility for this would lie with the proposed Education Commission, aided by contributions from its three constituent advisory bodies - for schools, vocational training, and higher education. Continuing education is a comprehensive concept to be embraced by all sectors and levels of institutionalised education: it is not a single service to be annexed to one particular part of the administration. Co-ordination will be required.

SECTION III, CHAPTER 7 : SPECIAL GROUPS

Equity and Potential

III.7.1 All education systems acknowledge the fact that within their general provision particular categories of pupils require either additional or different help to enable them to develop their full potential. These special groups include pupils of exceptional ability (both generally and in specific areas) who deserve extra support and stimulation over and above that given to most pupils in the regular school system; and pupils with physical, emotional or intellectual characteristics which inhibit their functioning within the regular school system. For both, the twin educational objectives of maximum development of individual potential and the achievement of equality of opportunity require special efforts. The gifted child in Hong Kong is comparatively well provided for, except for those few whose potential might be stretched even more by part-time attendance at special interest centres which could be established in a number of fields. We were pleased to learn that arrangements are in hand to cater for those who are talented in music and dance. Our concern here is with policies and practices aimed at minimising the educational handicap experienced by disabled children and youth.

III.7.2 We wish to acknowledge the considerable progress that has been made in a relatively short period. The Education Department did not have a special education section until 1960. The 1977 White paper on Rehabilitation is a forward looking document whose potential significance has been recognised by too few policy makers and administrators. It is to be hoped that the valuable contribution being made currently by the Working Group on Special Education Provision for Children with Learning Difficulties in Ordinary Schools will be more readily appreciated: its reports should be published.

III.7.3 Schools and those who work in them need to develop knowledge and understanding of the circumstances which give rise to educational handicap in order that they may devise the curriculum, teaching methods, materials and forms of organisation to mitigate the effects of various social, economic and psychological conditions. Understandably, the resources and energy that have necessarily been spent to cope with Hong Kong's expanding regular educational services have eclipsed, until comparatively recently, concern for the particular needs of atypical children.

III.7.4 The United Nations in its declaration of the International Year of Disabled persons (IYDP), to which Hong Kong gave such positive recognition, made an important distinction between the terms disability and

handicap, defining disability as 'the measurable, functional loss resulting from an impairment' and handicap as 'the consequence of environmental and social conditions which prevent a person with a disability from realising his or her maximum potential'. This distinction is relevant to our educational beliefs, attitudes and practices. It is not within a school system's power to prevent disability; it is within its power to try to prevent handicap. It is this which provides a rationale for the equitable but not necessarily equal distribution of resources within the Hong Kong school system. Prejudices against the disabled need to be overcome in the face of superstition and ill-founded stereotyping. A community which sees its disabled members as having flaws rather than needs not only diminishes and impedes its disabled members, but also itself.

III.7.5 We recognise that this essentially western view is not necessarily shared by all cultures and that in the unique Hong Kong situation there are some who would reject such a value statement. Nevertheless, ideologies either dominate or perish, and so it is that we begin from the position that there are not two populations of children in Hong Kong schools - the able and the disabled - but a single population of children; and that individual differences are matters of degree, distributed along a continuum. Some children (perhaps three to five per cent of the total) have long-term and complex special needs and many (between ten and twelve per cent) at one time or another during the schooling process have short-term, transient special needs.

III.7.6 The concept of concentrating on needs rather than flaws enhances the individual by focusing on his or her strengths and potential contribution to society. This necessitates a move away from the category-based provision of services (e.g. of moderately mentally handicapped; maladjusted and socially deprived) to one which is needs-based and socially deprived) to one child. It is the child and his or her individual needs rather than some clinical type or category or cause which should be the focus for education. Steps should be taken ~~to re-orient the delivery of educational services~~ for atypical children from K onwards ~~by focusing on the nature of the provision offered rather than on labelling children~~ according to their ostensible disability.

III.7.7 Children have a right to be educated in the least restrictive environment. For the minority of severely disabled students there is obviously still a place for special schools and special classes. For the large majority of disabled students this might mean a regular school within their respective nets: this would reflect the major changes now taking place worldwide in special education provisions. Although segregated provisions are apparently cost-effective in that there is an identifiable provision to which

additional resources can be directed, this is outweighed by the inevitable labelling and stigmatisation that flows from segregation. Furthermore, it presents no side benefits for the mainstream population of children, as does integration which helps both the able and the disabled to learn to live, co-operate, and help one another. There is a need for this as there is evidence that some parents are not in favour of placing their children in special classes for personal or family reasons.

III.7.8 Educational needs cover all the growth areas: intellectual, physical, social and emotional. This is no less true of the least able child than it is of the most able. Optimum preparation for a satisfying and productive adult life requires maximum opportunity, consistent with needs, for membership of the regular school community. This means that ~~as far as possible, all children should be educated in their 'neighbourhood' school~~ - an elusive concept in Hong Kong (given the structure of educational governance) and one which we found to be regarded with some suspicion even by special education lobbyists who feel that disabled children might be swamped in the mainstream. Prejudice by some heads of schools who are apprehensive about possible ill effects of the presence of special classes to the reputation of their schools is another limiting factor. We understand that the idea of a pilot scheme along these general lines has already found favour with the Rehabilitation Development Co-ordination Committee. ~~New patterns of service must be designed to cater more effectively for~~ the increasing diversity of needs which are being recognised. In view of our advocacy of a 'least restricted environment' policy, with its implications for closer liaison with regular educational services, it seems appropriate to ~~vest the responsibility for special education with the Secretary for Education~~. Such a move would ensure consistency in policy and administration and would ensure that children with special needs could make full use of available educational opportunities and facilities.

III.7.9 A study of the way in which provisions for those outside the mainstream are administered provides an insight into the capacity of the machinery of government to be responsive to the special and the atypical. At present, policy responsibility for groups in special need resides in the Social Services Branch which keeps in close contact with the Rehabilitation Development Co-ordinating Committee (RDCC) and its apparatus. The creation of RDCC is seen by those in the community who are directly affected by these matters (e.g. the disabled and their families) as a giant step forward as it fosters an interdisciplinary approach - involving educators, medical and welfare professionals, and a shared concern by both the public and private sectors. However, because the responsibility for policy formation for regular education lies within the Secretary for Education's portfolio, there is now the opportunity to reassess where responsibility for special education should lie.

III.7.10 The recognition of a need for atypical provision to cope with factors which affect the pace, style and content of children's learning is of considerable policy significance. Where these differences are associated with, for example, adverse home circumstances, impoverished neighbourhoods, impairment of sensory or intellectual functioning, or membership of small minorities (e.g. the fishing communities), special arrangements may be necessary. Although these attributes do not inevitably lead to poor achievement and disturbed behaviour, such outcomes are more likely to occur if there is a failure to understand the implications of such situations and account is not taken of them in curriculum or organisation, or if the necessary financial and educational resources to meet special needs are not mobilised. Given the Programme/Branch/Department structure of public administration in Hong Kong, it might be advisable to develop and monitor a 'children's services' policy so that there is harmonisation of the Education, Health, Welfare, and Employment arms of government in respect of disabled children.

III.7.11 School principals must assume increased responsibility for the education of children with special needs, whether they be the least or the most able. In particular, special services for the disabled and for children with learning difficulties will be more readily accepted by the professional and lay community if positive attitudes towards this special group are fostered by educational leaders. School staffs generally will have to become more sensitive to these students and be expected to apply a wider range of teaching techniques. Pre-service teacher education should give more emphasis to preparing all teachers to deal with atypical children in the ordinary classroom. If a system of discovery, assessment and integration of disabled children is to be effective, a procedure which requires teachers in ordinary schools to recognise signs of special educational need, it is logical to suggest that all courses of initial teacher training including post-graduate certificate courses should include a component of special education. One of the most important factors is the need for all teachers to be able to recognise different needs, patterns and rates of development in children. Also, teachers should be aware of the range of special educational provision available. We doubt that the current and prospective part-time inservice courses for teacher trainers and the teachers themselves are adequate to the task of preparing them to deal with children having special needs. However inappropriate it might seem in the current climate, parents ought also to become active members of the education team. Priority should be given by the Curriculum Development Committee to programmes for children in special need given that there is a need to improve the school curriculum for this group. It seems appropriate that the main thrust of the work should come from within the Special Education Section.

III.7.12 From our own diverse experiences, we can identify four styles of providing resources in support of services for special groups. For most, multiple styles and services could apply:

Group:

Intellectually disabled
Physically and sensorily disabled
Slow learners and those with specific learning disabilities
Emotionally and socially disturbed
Ethnic minorities (and refugees)
Gifted and talented
Socio-economically disadvantaged
Geographically disadvantaged

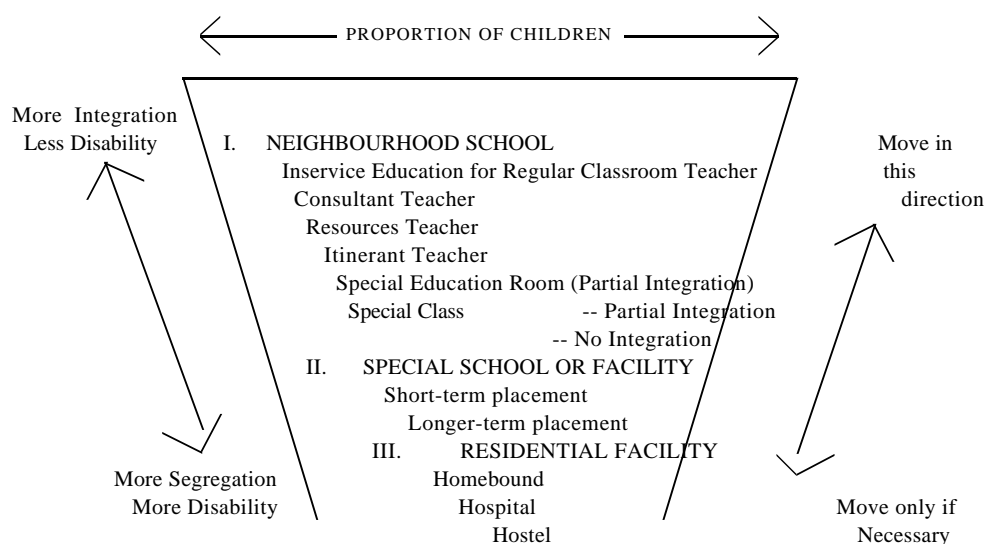
Style of Provision

To maintain or improve standards in identified districts
To achieve greater participation by under-represented groups
To supplement regular curricula
To provide alternative educational experiences

Type of Service

Specialist staff
Staff incentives
Grants and bursaries
Transport
Personal equipment
Facilities

The nature and severity of the disability largely determine the style of provision and type of service that is most practicable. The diagram below shows some of the options available.



III.7.13 The final choice as to which provision to select or make available for any child with particular needs ought to be more dependent upon organisational factors and the disposition of parents than upon any label attached to the child. The range of considerations include the following: structure of regular and special provisions; role of voluntary organisations; volume and means of subvention; community and parent attitudes; co-operation among institutions and with government; and laws of autonomy and control. As for long term organisation and planning, we see the need to provide a more unified and coherent advisory and support service for special education to ensure that such education starts before school and goes on after school. The prospects for adult and continuing education for disabled adolescents and adults should be explored further.

III.7.14 A major current problem seems to lie in the provision of special places for the intellectually disabled (slow learners especially) and the emotionally disturbed. The reasons for this revolve around finding suitable sites, sponsors, teachers and ancillary staff, psychological assessors and speech therapists. Principals and teachers of ordinary schools are generally apprehensive about this type of child. Recruitment of teachers with a suitable personality and genuine interest in teaching maladjusted children is difficult. The shortage of trained personnel arises from the rapid expansion of services over the past five years. Two types of special education staff are greatly in demand. There is a need for qualified teachers who, after relevant in-service training provided by the Education Department's special education section or a College of Education, would perform specialist functions such as screening, group testing and braille encoding. Other types of staff may still need training overseas because of the dearth of local facilities especially in educational psychology, speech therapy, audiology and educational counselling. In particular, an expanded and upgraded counselling and guidance service would generally assist in the education and care of children in special need.

III.7.15 The training of officers abroad has become increasingly difficult owing to the limited number of places available given that similar services have also been undergoing rapid expansion in other countries. With the opening of local courses at HKU, pressure in some fields for overseas places will gradually be lessened.

III.7.16 Staff promotion prospects and salary gradings seem to be based on the size of schools. This puts staff in special schools at a disadvantage because special schools are generally small. Nevertheless all professional staff in special schools receive specialist training and the demands of their work in

terms of time and expertise far exceed that which they would encounter in an ordinary school. There is a constant problem of recruiting and retaining staff for special schools and classes; consideration should be given therefore to ways of attracting and retaining skilled personnel in this demanding field in addition to salary incentives already available to them. The unit which has responsibility for administration of special education services itself encounters difficulties with shortages of expert staff to deal with specialist areas. An example of this is the lack of expertise available to supervise boarding care and transport for special schools.

III.7.17 Less frequently than hitherto does the word 'special' evoke thoughts of segregation in Hong Kong. Nevertheless it is clear that there are many pupils whose needs are only faintly being met by current provisions. These children are at the margin of mainstream classes or, in some cases, have been placed in special units or special schools. Their needs are a function of special talents or specific disabilities which are either not being recognised or not being met by regular classroom activity. We believe that two policy options ought to be considered.

Resource Teachers

III.7.18 First is the introduction of resource teachers (RT) to assist regular teachers to diagnose needs and to develop programmes. This would enable many more children in special need to remain in a mainstream setting and pursue their talents more effectively. Most regular teachers do not have the confidence, skill or time to meet these demands; it is in this context that the RT is useful. He or she could catalyse the development of appropriate skills in colleagues and assist in the formulation of programmes for individual children. The RT could not only provide a service for those presently not receiving specific assistance, but would also provide a more effective service for some children than that which currently exists. The role would require continuing evaluation as it would be an attempt to answer a topical need; the long-term future of the role would depend on developments in teacher training and in the delivery of education services generally. There is potential for the resource teacher approach to foster the integration of 'special' with 'regular' children.

The New Technology

III.7.19 A second option is to make much more use of the new micro-electronic technology. Programmability and low cost will have a major impact on the disabled in our societies. The area of special education could be a major beneficiary. Micro-electronic technology allows blind persons to type and have books read to them; deaf persons can hear and the disabled can be mobile; these are examples of successful application.

Such technology has a huge potential for providing programmes to challenge the gifted in our schools. As the variety of available software expands, students can be presented with more sophisticated materials. It also offers the disabled an opportunity to compete for employment on the open market. Devices used for sorting, electronic comptometer and automated production machinery are now quite capable of operation by disabled workers. Schools should be aware of the possibilities in this field and be willing to adjust their programmes accordingly. International consultation and collaboration in ways of using modern technology in special education or vocational training should be explored.

III.7.20 The influence of this technology is far reaching; aids to the disabled could mean a much greater degree of integration of students in schools. Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) at school and home could have a major influence on the presentation of lessons and in the skills being taught - and so, in turn, bearing impact on the nature of special schools in the future. Not only will the pre-service and in-service education of all staff (professional and para-professional) have to undergo a major transformation but the dilemma of possible trade-offs between teachers and machines could surface first in the special education area. CAI has not yet become as widespread as the early innovators predicted. One of the main reasons that CAI has not been widely adopted is the until now high cost of the equipment required to deliver lessons. The advent of the microcomputer has overcome this and in the future we can expect much wider application in schools. Of course, as personal microcomputers become as widespread in the community as television sets, there will be major implications for all aspects of education. Hong Kong is ideally suited - culturally, demographically, geographically - not only to derive benefit for its own people but to become market leaders of both east and west.

III.7.21 We have seen how general community awareness and appreciation of individuality is being reflected in a growing concern for services for the disabled. The same principles apply to educating all with particular needs, including the talented and gifted. There is pressure for more concentration on appropriate forms of provision than on classification and labelling, although classification is necessary to enable differential funding for those children requiring special individual plans; and there is a strengthening movement towards integration of children having special needs with regular students. All this is to be strongly encouraged. Hong Kong should build on the work of other countries, particularly in the curricula area. We sound two cautionary notes, however: integration is more expensive than segregation because of the need to spread specialist resources; and teachers in ordinary schools will have to undertake some in-service education. We believe the results will justify the investment of money, time and effort.

SECTION III, CHAPTER 8 : THE TEACHING SERVICE

An Assessment of Needs

III.8.1 No national education system can expect to have all its teachers of first-rate quality, yet this is something to aspire to. The problem of teacher quality in Hong Kong is attributable in large part to the responsive and rapid build-up in enrolments due to the virtual explosion in demand for education services over the past twenty years. Indeed, the successful implementation of mass education through to FIII during the 1970s accentuated an already evident teacher shortage. Hong Kong's expectations of its teachers are unusually high: many teachers should be (but are not) competent in two languages. Further, our proposals in the previous chapter would extend bilingualism to the primary grades and so require even more teacher retraining and upgrading.

III.8.2 A systematically phased-in plan for improved professional preparation of teachers is the necessary first step to raising the general quality of educational services. Each element of the education enterprise, and especially teacher training institutions, should have an integrated role in this plan. Teacher education faculties and facilities have not been able to keep up with the demand both for more teachers and for different training patterns. Government policy has required a simultaneous strengthening of training programmes (such as lengthening courses by a year) and increased output of new teachers. Now there is an increasing concern with the nature and rigour of preparatory programmes for kindergarten teachers and with acceptable child: teacher ratios in early childhood services.

III.8.3 Life in the schools is by no means comfortable and the role of the teacher is being fashioned anew as a result of education expansion. Class sizes are very large by western (OECD) standards with 35 to 45 pupils being not unusual. Though there are several teachers' organisations (e.g. the Government Schools Non-graduate Teachers' Union, the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union, the Association of Heads of Secondary Schools, Association of Lecturers in Colleges of Education) these by no means attract full membership, nor did they lobby us emphatically on key education issues, especially when compared with some of the lay bodies. However, this is par for the course in Hong Kong where unions do not yet have much political leverage. Perhaps this is why the strikes and resignations so typical of teacher behaviour in the west during a similar phase of expansion and restyling in the 1960s are absent in Hong Kong.

III.8.4 With the role of government in several sectors of education likely to expand, more and better teachers

will be required. Provision for the disabled and for pre-school children are two areas where the government is committed already. At this point, however, there are insufficient teachers in training to secure these objectives. Moreover, as the post FIII participation rate increases, more teachers will be needed.

III.8.5 While quantitative needs loom large, there is also the need to upgrade the quality of many long-serving but inadequately prepared teachers. Many primary school teachers have completed only one or two years of pre-service training and have had little access to in-service courses. The generally poor command of spoken and written English that we observed, together with often uninspired and stilted pedagogical approaches, suggests to us that major changes are warranted. This problem is not unique to Hong Kong. All nations are faced with the obligation of continually equipping both new and experienced teachers with the latest developments in curriculum and teaching techniques, and providing them with the opportunity to become acquainted with trends in educational thought.

III.8.6 Quantity and quality of teaching resources is related closely to the ability of education systems to recruit and retain the right kind of people. Recruitment depends partly on occupational prestige and remuneration levels, and partly on a vocational commitment to helping young people.

III.8.7 The quality and quantity issues surrounding the teaching service are so large and multi-dimensional that bold and urgent policy responses are required. We found little evidence of a staffing strategy with projections, forecasts, targets, and timetables for meeting teaching force requirements. There is only a rudimentary planning scheme to harmonise the build-up of teacher education institutions with changing professional manpower requirements. A blend of preparation modes (in-service versus pre-service) should be part of such a plan.

III.8.8 The experience of OECD nations regarding the benefits of expanding the number of teachers in order simply to reduce class size is instructive. While a strong case can be made for substantial reductions in pupil-teacher ratios, the large outlays involved in financing such a policy will only be worthwhile if teachers are willing and able to work differently with their fewer pupils. There is little to be gained by teaching 30 pupils in the same way as 40 might be taught. At present, teachers in Hong Kong have little opportunity to experiment with flexible small group techniques because their classrooms are packed and the

physical facilities are not conducive. In order to capitalise on the potentially high-yield investment in class size reduction, resources must be allocated simultaneously to allow for in-service activities to help teachers adapt their teaching styles to this situation.

Pre-service Preparation

III.8.9 It was never envisaged that the colleges of education would perform the task of preparing large numbers of teachers for the mass education role that is now expected of them. The colleges are small and have a consequent limitation on specialist facilities and depth of faculty, yet are expected to train a broad array of types and grade levels of teachers to cope with contemporary and likely future situations.

III.8.10 Teachers receive their pre-service training - with either English or Chinese as the medium of instruction - by entering one of the three general colleges (Northcote, Grantham or Sir Robert Black) for a three year course if they have obtained satisfactory results in the HKCE, or for a two year course if they have advanced level qualifications. In practice most college entrants have now completed at least one year of FVI and are often disappointed potential university graduates who accept college entrance in place of university entrance as very much a consolation prize. The high drop-out rate experienced by the colleges in the first term indicates that teaching is by no means a top vocational choice for all who begin at college. Further, many university graduates see teaching as a second choice and those with good degrees easily obtain more highly remunerative commercial or industrial employment. Many who become teachers often seem to be in search of an opportunity to raise their social and professional status.

III.8.11 Any successful programme for raising the quality of the primary schools has to have professional development at its heart; we were pleased to learn that the colleges have introduced activity approach ('learning by doing') programmes. However, merely increasing teaching skills is not enough: steps must be taken to enhance the status of primary school teachers and extend career structures for all. Courses should give close attention to means of adapting educational provisions to a range of individual differences. This should cover the types of support and specialist services available within and beyond the education system. Pre-service preparation, while continuing to permit student teachers to develop competence over the whole compulsory schooling field, should make allowance for specialisations.

III.8.12 Pre-service training is available for every type of teacher. For example, the Hong Kong Technical Teachers' College offers courses for qualified students wishing to teach in technical schools. The schools of education in the universities have increased their intake of secondary teachers to part-time in-service training programmes. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of the secondary school teaching force is without professional training. Pre-service teacher education should be conducted in a diversity of settings - universities, the Polytechnic and single purpose colleges of education - both as vocational preparation and as a component of more general 'educational studies' courses. Teacher education institutions should involve their associated schools in the formulation of goals and objectives for practice teaching and in the evaluation of student progress towards them. Further, for each school in which a substantial number of students are practice-teaching, institutions should ensure adequate liaison with the school. Teachers who are engaged in the supervision of practice-teaching should have an appropriate time allowance built into their daily programme rather than, say, supplementary remuneration. Close and co-operative relationships should be fostered, both formally and informally.

III.8.13 Primary school teaching in particular lacks prestige. This is aggravated by the fact that there are no degree courses to prepare primary school teachers, nor even a separate salary scale for primary graduates. Such omissions should be rectified. This, combined with a limited career structure, accounts for the number of primary school teachers who seek to work in the lower secondary forms for which they are also qualified or who move out of teaching. In order to extend career opportunities (as well as to raise the level of teaching competence in certain areas) a further one-year training course is offered in selected subjects. This also enables some non-graduates to teach in FIV and above. Further, primary school teaching staffs are composed largely of women. There is lower status attached in Hong Kong, as in many parts of the world, to occupations largely staffed by women. The causal connection is not obvious. Indeed, the problem is not easily solved despite the parity of salaries with other civil service positions requiring comparable basic qualifications: there is no compelling reason for the Government to raise salaries or improve conditions in order to attract the 'right' kind of teacher. Furthermore, teachers' unions, in keeping with most unions in Hong Kong, do not have much industrial muscle. So far the Education Department has little option but to train a greater quantity of those who are prepared to work under the present arrangement, or to defer retirement and recall retired officers.

III.8.14 We are told that enrolment quotas for the teachers' colleges fluctuate markedly, with little advance notice being given of government intentions. While applauding arrangements which avoid the poor co-ordination experienced by many other countries which have separate cadres for primary and secondary teachers, the expectations by the government of its teacher education institutions as presently structured are unrealistically high. English competence is necessary for teachers of the secondary forms in particular, and is desirable for all. Given the dimensions of this problem the colleges have too little instructional time and too few staff to create, for example, users of fluent English out of FV graduates within their two-or three-year programmes. A strengthening of the training capacity for teachers of English as a second language is warranted in the colleges. Additional personnel, resources and facilities will be required. The newly created Institute of Language in Education should have close involvement with the college faculty with a view to reaching large numbers of teachers early in their careers. The Institute will reach more teachers if it works through those who train as well as with teachers directly.

III.8.15 Steps to overcome the lack of professional training of graduates began in earnest in 1976, at which date we understand some 5000 of the 7000 university graduate teachers in the service had no formal teacher training. Both universities began to expand their day and evening programmes: at HKU for example, production has doubled over the past five years. While there is little financial or even career inducement within private schools, some of their graduate teachers are nevertheless seeking to upgrade their professional qualifications.

III.8.16 Although the government has not consciously planned each phase of pre-service teacher training to mesh with the expansion of student places, it is mounting initiatives to deal with the problems. The government has recently extended the length of teacher training at the colleges to three years and upgraded training opportunities for permitted teachers. Mandatory refresher training for all teachers who enter the service after 1981 is now firm policy. Again, the supply of places at the colleges, qualifications of the college faculty and the massive numbers of teachers to be trained or retrained implies that this objective will not be attained quickly. The government acknowledges the large number of permitted private school teachers in the first nine years who have no training at all, and contends that the solution is to training at all, and contends that the solution is to expand the public sector with its better standards and

thereby to force private schools with unqualified teachers out of the market. An alternative with more immediate benefits - if it were to be adequately subsidised by the government - would be to require a basic professional qualification of all private school teachers and to assist in these being attained and maintained. We consider it feasible to devise an explicit rolling plan that sets definitive and achievable targets for types of needed educational personnel, based on the nature and number of student places required in, say, triennial intervals over the next 10 to 15 years.

III.8.17 Given the interactive nature of these teacher education problems, the government is rightly concerned that overall policy development and co-ordinating mechanisms be established rapidly. There is already an expressed willingness to co-operate among the training institutions themselves, such as in the planning and operation of a new Pre-School Teacher Training Institute. Machinery for the harmonisation and balanced development of teacher education should be established - for example, a Teacher Education Committee of the Hong Kong Teaching Service (see paragraphs III.8.31-35) - with a brief to monitor and advise on the professional development needs of all types of education personnel.

III.8.18 The capacity of the colleges of education is strained. Faculty recruitment is hampered by lack of sufficient salary-and status-incentives. Eligibility for appointment is normally restricted to government school teachers. Selection procedures for all categories of staff involved in teacher education should be designed to ensure that each training programme is characterised by academic excellence, relevant kinds of professional study and well- supervised practical experiences. With a view to obtaining the best teacher training faculty possible, selection procedures should be broadened to incorporate applicants from aided and private schools as well as government ones. Continuing attention should be given to developing the pedagogical skills of the university and college faculty concerned with the preparation of teachers for schools.

Induction and In-service

III.8.19 Since regular classroom teachers work an average of six of the eight periods in a day, they have little time for self-initiated professional growth once they leave training college. Somehow this must change if the Hong Kong education system is not to become a horse-and-buggy institution in a jet age. A mark of a highly skilled occupation is that its practitioners have a high level of preparation according to standards set by the practitioners themselves. A major rationale

for in-service education of teacher in Hong Kong is that pre-service training is often too short. In this situation the temptation to try to cover too much ground in the initial courses is very strong; it can lead to superficiality and a loss of effectiveness. The chances of securing, in the near future, further widespread extension in the length of initial teacher education would appear to be slight; indeed, its desirability is somewhat dubious given the present world-wide uncertainty about the efficiency of traditional modes of pre-service education. Nevertheless, the provision of in-service courses for teachers could be stepped up. Now that policy requires all newly qualified teachers to attend certain in-service courses over the beginning years of their active professional life, initial courses of teacher education could presumably be made more effective over a narrower arena of professional education, in the knowledge that these pre-service courses were recognised to be only the first stage of an explicitly continuous process of professional growth. This would be especially profitable if, during their first year of work, beginning teachers were to enjoy a reduction in teaching load and professional responsibility.

III.8.20 Apart from the view that the inexperienced teacher should continue to undergo on-the-job training, there are other reasons why in-service education is important. First, social and educational change can make current professional practices obsolete or relatively ineffective in a short period of time; this applies to methods and techniques, tools, and substantive knowledge itself. Secondly, co-ordination and articulation of instructional practices require changes in the individual teacher. Even when each staff member is functioning personally at a highly competent level, the overall learning programme might still be in need of a synthesis which requires adjustments on the part of each individual. A third reason is that morale can be stimulated and maintained through in-service education and thus is a contribution to the pedagogical process in itself. Finally, it is important that heads of schools have access to ways and means of helping them perform their demanding leadership role.

III.8.21 In-service education should emphasise the necessity for teachers to acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding essential to the implementation of school programmes. Lasting improvements in the practices of teachers may be brought about by encouraging and assisting them to make a co-operative attack on problems; it is concerted efforts in areas of common interest that can be the most productive.

III.8.22 In-service education is the facet of teacher preparation which seems not to have been given the status it deserves in the resource allocation exercise. Perhaps this is because in-service education deals with quality rather than quantity. It is politically and bureaucratically easier to acknowledge and do something about a shortage of teachers than it is to recognise and hence have to do something about a disparity between good and poor teaching. A non-existent teacher is more of a liability than a poor one, in the public mind. The most common criticisms of in-service programmes which we heard from teachers were: failure of the activities to meet the perceived needs of classroom practitioners; implementation of programmes with inadequate human and material resources; and lack of participation of teachers in planning and operation of programmes.

III.8.23 There seem to be two fundamentally different conceptions in Hong Kong education circles about what might be done to help teachers improve their effectiveness. One view assumes that something is wrong with the way practising teachers now operate, and the purpose of in-service training is to correct this. Some who hold the 'defect' view believe that in-service education is necessary for those teachers whose weaknesses arise from a lack of exposure to the latest developments of instructional techniques. Others who hold this view are those with a tendency to focus on the behavioural aspects of teaching-its skill components-with often a reduced emphasis on understanding and values. The defect approach to in-service training begins with a judgment of weakness (often diagnosed by a person other than the teacher himself) and proceeds to suggest a remedy for correcting the weakness, usually through a training programme designed to change specific aspects of the teacher's behaviour in the classroom. We regard this as a negative and rather prescriptive attitude to in-service education but one which receives prominence in influential places-no doubt because of the unpalatable facts that there are some inadequate teachers and that many teachers require even basic training.

III.8.24 Quite a different approach has as its basic assumption the fact that teaching is a complex activity about which there is more to know than can ever be acquired by one person. Thus the rationale for learning more about teaching is less to repair an inadequacy than it is to seek greater professional competence. There is no one specific time or situation where a person becomes an effective teacher. There is also no clearly definable time at which a teacher stops being effective; although some teachers are obviously more skilled than others, those who perform the best conform to no single model of perfection.

III.8.25 From a 'growth' perspective, the central goals of in-service education are to help teachers to become progressively more sensitive to what is happening in the classroom and to support their efforts to improve. For, as we have previously mentioned and wish to emphasise, if teachers continue with the same teaching style and content, the expenditure of additional resources (for example, to lower the size of classes) can be wasted.

III.8.26 There is a wide assortment of in-service training activities which are the core ingredients of in-service education: for example, teacher consultation with university-based resource persons; sessions for the sharing of practices; 'internships' or exchanges; and vacation work sessions. Many of the conversations we had about in-service education were concerned with 'system initiated' rather than 'teacher initiated' professional development.

III.8.27 Perhaps one of the most significant and important movements overseas regarding in-service education is that of the establishment of teachers' resource centres. Many countries have set up some form of teachers' (or education) centres because of the benefits to individual teachers from the exchange of experiences with colleagues and with the concerned community, such as parents. It is important that centres, where provided, should be used as fully as possible. A local centre would better achieve its aim of acting as a focus for the interests of local teachers if it promoted a variety of studies both of subject courses and the curriculum as a whole. Not only would this be administratively economic but, more important, it would serve to stress the contribution which different areas of the curriculum can make to one another and thus facilitate the development of courses which cross ordinary subject boundaries; it could also help to reduce the tendency for subject specialists to work in isolation and thus foster a compartment-alisation of the curriculum. The same type of reasoning suggests that centres would deal with the interests of schools from K through to FVII.

III.8.28 Although they would be primarily set up to promote individual professional growth, centres could also make teachers familiar with developments in the system. Teachers' representatives could initially attend courses held by the Education Department in new system-wide programmes (such as the language package) and the local teachers' centres could allow for this information to be passed on. This step of enlarging the number of teachers familiar with new development work by using local centres could be supported wherever possible by teachers' unions, federations, universities, schools and colleges of education, and

professional subject associations. The way in which their help could best be given would take account of the wishes of the teachers themselves, expressed through their local teachers' centre.

III.8.29 Experience abroad suggests that successful teachers' centres would be those where from the beginning teachers were involved and are in a majority on any steering committee. Professional teacher associations have much to offer, both in terms of people with wide experience of committee work and in well-established lines of communication with members. School and system administrators and professional association leaders are the key to success. It would be necessary for the most influential of them not only, to have a benevolent sympathy towards the work of the centres but an active commitment to them; it is they who can give the greatest practical support and encouragement.

III.8.30 Teachers should be encouraged to accept responsibility for their own continued professional growth. The way forward lies in ~~career incentives~~, the establishment of ~~teachers' centres~~ and the fostering of ~~whole-staff development~~ activities as well as the already approved ~~policy of release time~~.

A Teaching Service

III.8.31 The title we have given to this chapter is suggestive of the importance we attach to viewing all teachers in Hong Kong schools, irrespective of level and sector, as members of a corporate professional entity. Just as there are dangers of inbreeding in small, insulated areas, so are there advantages in teachers feeling part of a collegial network of professionals.

III.8.32 We have deliberately avoided thinking of teachers as civil servants in the technical sense of that term, even though most teachers have their salaries subsidised from the public purse and some are in fact government officials. By and large careers across the Civil Service are not freely open to teachers, nor are teachers particularly interested in working outside their chosen field. It would be undesirable for the professional arm of the Hong Kong education system to be thought of as being governmentally controlled. Further, ~~we support the principle of the authority responsible~~ for a school or school system ~~having maximum freedom~~ to determine the number and type of persons needed within the resources available and to deploy those resources. Nevertheless, we are concerned with the lack of cohesion and indeed the absence of a sense of there being a teaching profession in Hong Kong as distinct from groups of teachers who work in particular schools.

III.8.33 ~~We believe this adds up to a case for consideration being given to the creation of a Hong Kong Teaching Service (HKTS) to which all practising education professionals would have to belong and with which aspiring teachers would have to be registered. The HKTS, perhaps administered as a statutory agency, with appropriate linkages to the Public Services Commission concerning the determination of pay and working conditions, would thus constitute a pool of registered teachers with a view to safeguarding the public interest. The various employing authorities (for government, subsidised and private independent schools from Kindergarten through to FVII) would draw their staff from the HKTS. A concomitant of registration would be the establishment by the HKTS (in collaboration with the Government and after consultation with interested parties) of 'floor level' salaries and conditions of work for all professionals. This should not be equated with uniformity and conformity. Different employment packages could be offered by the various school and school system authorities. We believe that the teaching profession should be given a new structure to improve its effectiveness through controlling the credentials of and, as a corollary, affording recognition to its members. It is timely for the Government to intervene in the setting and monitoring of standards required of teachers in all schools by creating a Teaching Service which would lay down foundation conditions of work which would be applicable to all teachers. The question of the advantages and disadvantages of an Education Service comprising all staff (ancillary as well as professional) is also worthy of consideration at a later stage.~~

III.8.34 The HKTS could also have considerable influence in persuading teacher education institutions about appropriate programmes; in promoting suitable induction of new professionals; and in encouraging cross-fertilisation of personnel practices across the sectors. For the different authorities which operate schools would continue: there is no question of all the sectors being coalesced into one monolithic system.

III.8.35 As far as conditions of service are concerned, we ~~think there is a case for the promotion structure and procedures to be amended~~ in order to create new types of positions, possibly of limited tenure, which are open to members of the HKTS allocated to the particular sector containing the position. Limited tenure appointments should be entertained for some promotions positions. ~~Consideration should be given to ways of encouraging more women~~ to accept positions of managerial responsibility in schools and in the Education Department.

Suggested Action

III.8.36 The government should formulate and publish a plan for providing adequate in-service upgrading

opportunities for existing teachers and for attracting and retaining an appropriate number of first-rate and well-prepared professionals in the teaching force.

This plan should specify the roles of universities, colleges and other preparatory institutions, and the part to be played by Education Department officials and by people in leadership positions in the schools themselves. The plan should also provide for a phase- in schedule. Because of resources constraints, priorities must be set among competing needs: for example, as between teachers for kindergarten, FV and beyond, and for the handicapped.

III.8.37 One focus should be an effort to prepare the faculty who will subsequently train the teachers. Prospective teacher training faculty should be sought from all schools which are publicly operated or subsidised. Enlarging the pool of teacher educators is a necessary first step in the expansion of pre- service and even in-service activities.

III.8.38 It will take a long time using traditional approaches to acquaint many of those currently employed with new methods or to prepare them for new types of pupils (such as the handicapped and young kindergarten children). One promising strategy is to have 'key' or 'master' teachers who are prepared intensively at a college or university. These teachers would then return to their schools and organise in-service courses for their colleagues either in their own school or at a teacher centre.

III.8.39 The present structure of separate collegiate institutions could be maintained along with the new pre-school institute and the technical teacher training college. Co-ordination mechanisms would have to be improved and faculty selection and stability improved. Each college ought then to have one or two special curriculum concentrations or prime foci. The existing colleges could be amalgamated to provide one comprehensive institution with first rate facilities and appropriate curricular breadth and depth. A second polytechnic could encompass the colleges within it; they could either become an integral part of the Polytechnic, or be federated in some way. Such a 'cross-fertilisation' would help close the wide gap in status and career opportunities between graduate and non-graduate; the colleges could be affiliated with either or both of the universities. The opportunity should be taken in any organisational rearrangement to explore new institutional models. Beyond these matters of organisation and structure lies the decision of whether to retain or amend the relative priority - even though it may not be deliberate - now afforded pre-service versus in-service education.

III.8.40 We believe that an amalgamated college of education within an existing or new higher education

institute (such as a polytechnic) would be desirable. This is based on the premise that teacher education institutions ought not be isolated, single purpose establishments but should be linked with strong and broadly-based institutions. If this is not immediately feasible, then the existing colleges should be federated to the maximum extent - including administration and staffing - leading to a comprehensive curriculum that assigns specialities (such as kindergarten teacher training) to particular campuses. It would be desirable to award a Bachelor of Education degree from such a college in recognition of the quality of the programme offered and to give incentive to students whose first preference is to attend a degree-granting institution. As part of this B.Ed., we would stress the importance of considerable practice teaching - short visits or internships - closely supervised by college faculty in collaboration with nominated supervisors in designated schools.

III.8.41 In order to retain good teachers we are of the view that there should be an expansion of opportunities for the classroom teacher to play an active role in curriculum development and in other school-level professional decisions. Teacher quality depends on professional satisfaction. Schools should be encouraged to adopt a more participatory form of decision making, especially in professional matters such as school organisation and programme. The up- grading of the physical condition of schools through improved building programmes would serve to keep good teachers within the service, who might otherwise be attracted by superior and more congenial work conditions in private enterprise.

III.8.42 Teachers in schools should have an influential role alongside college and university faculty not only in supervising practice teachers but also in identifying in-service and pre-service needs and in formulating means of meeting them. Senior members of school staffs should assume the professional responsibility for guiding beginning teachers: this should be formally recognised and rewarded.

III.8.43 The isolation of teachers from the world outside school is a very real contributing factor to student's and schools' isolation from the community. It would be advisable to provide opportunities for teachers to gain some experience in fields outside teaching; in the same way it would be useful for schools to be more directly exposed to 'experts' other than teachers (e.g. artists, technicians). They could be given access to schools as workplaces or perhaps an exchange scheme with teachers could be devised. Colleges of education should consider giving more

credit, in terms of priority for entry, to mature age applicants with outside work experience. Some thought might be given to the development, in the long term, of an 'interchange' scheme whereby members of the teaching service could earn occasional paid working leave and become attached to a public or private enterprise organisation, thus gaining a valuable professional development experience. Such schemes would require not only amendments to current staffing procedures and regulations but in all probability some form of incentive arrangement, at least at the outset. The benefits, however, in intersectoral co-operation and in bringing the schools in contact with contemporary society, could be enormous. Moreover, as in other countries which have gone through a similar process of development, it has to be accepted that the teaching profession is for many an avenue for social and professional mobility.

III.8.44 The new consultative arrangements between management and teachers at the school level and between schools and the Education Department seem to many at the 'chalk-face' to be still more in the nature of aspirations than actualities. The distinct teacher labour markets for government and aided sectors is clearly detrimental to the notion of a Hong Kong teaching service. Rank and file teachers have no effective say in the policies of the schools in which they work, let alone in the system as a whole: hence they find it hard to identify with and feel loyal to the overall policy goals of the system.

III.8.45 There is relatively favourable remuneration for non-graduate teachers in Hong Kong (particularly those in government schools) compared with similarly qualified members of the general workforce; therefore lack of financial incentive to attract able people cannot be the reason why, by western standards, the teaching we saw was generally unimpressive. Steps need to be taken to foster a sense of corporate professional identity through providing opportunities for teachers themselves (rather than vicariously through colleges of education or the universities) to take the initiative in setting up professional development schemes. Further, teachers in positions of responsibility must be afforded the time and the incentive to attend to their important professional leadership role in relation to more junior colleagues. Teachers in leadership positions should be given opportunities to participate in in-service courses designed to bolster their professional expertise. Provision should be made to increase the supply of part-time and casual teachers to take the place of colleagues attending in-service courses.

III.8.46 Our options for future policy have concentrated on the point of maximum leverage - teacher preparation. However, we believe that teacher effectiveness and management would be enhanced by the creation of a Hong Kong Teaching Service which would make available registered teachers to the respective authorities of all types of schools in the territory. A progressive implementation is warranted, to allow for those teachers presently employed whose qualifications and experience would deny them entry to such a Service.

SECTION III, CHAPTER 9 : LABOUR MARKET IMPLICATIONS

III.9.1 What can be said for most countries is especially true for Hong Kong: its development is dependent not only on the energy, skills and adaptability of its people, but also on external factors of world politics and economy. We have based our considerations on the assumption that Hong Kong will remain open to the world and will continue to allow its citizens to choose among the options that a free society presents. Within the scope of this assumption the two initial statements are not contradictory: reliance on the outside world of a society that has few natural resources serves to heighten its dependence on its human resources.

Manpower Needs

III.9.2 The political philosophy of Hong Kong - particularly its respect for the dynamics and flexibility of a free market in trade and labour - would not allow for a rigid manpower planning approach to educational expansion. However there is an undeniable connection between economics and labour market perspectives on the one hand and modes of educational planning on the other. Similarly, there is an interdependence between the educational aspirations and the economic/career ambitions of an individual. ~~Forecasts of the supply of and demand for special skills and qualifications are thus important data for the government to take account of~~ in forming policy and for individuals in making educational and vocational decisions.

III.9.3 We are acquainted with the various methods and models used to forecast manpower availability and need in respect of certain types and levels of qualification - notably in the engineer/technician/craftsman categories. We agree with the view that the service sector - trade, banking, administration, tourism - will continue to grow both in absolute terms and relative to primary and secondary industries as a contributor to GDP.

III.9.4 The lack of qualified labour in all areas of social and economic relevance, and over all levels of qualification, is obvious to everyone. The Secretary for the Civil Service spoke to us about the hundreds of university graduates in science, engineering, surveying, and law who were being recruited overseas. There are severe shortages in the social welfare areas. Technicians are in chronically short supply resulting in the inefficient use of professionals. That this will be an even greater hindrance to future development if positive action is not taken is generally recognised. Unlike some other countries, the qualification and credential ambitions of Hong Kong youth with regard to their preferred fields of training

and study correspond rather neatly to the perceived needs of the economy. Hence broad generalisations about the development of the educational system vis-a-vis future needs of the labour market can be made without recourse to arithmetic detail.

Vocational Preparation

III.9.5 Given the need for a larger and better qualified workforce, we now turn to the matter of what kind of credentials and preparation for working life education and training should provide. Some claim that in the course of the unavoidable process of modernisation, everybody will have to change his or her vocation several times and therefore it is preferable to put the emphasis on general education rather than on vocational training. It is deemed uneconomic and unwise to train for a particular trade or profession, there should be concentration on so-called general vocational education and the learning of general skills in order to be able to adjust to differing job situations. Others argue to the contrary that the kind and quality of initial professional or vocational training will be a central determinant for the whole of a person's working career; their argument is that shifts between jobs amount in many cases to changes in terminology for related activities and work content rather than in vocation.

III.9.6 We know by experience that the initial level of education reached to a large extent determines the individual's interest and ability to make use of further and adult education opportunities later. Young people who have not acquired a taste for, or at least some success at, learning in the first phase are unlikely to want to return later. This leads us to state a basic principle that no one should leave the basic cycle of schooling without a recognised certificate for employment purposes. This is an important rationale for investment in continuing education (see Chapter III.6).

III.9.7 Another debate surrounds the issue of job hierarchies. Technological change is supposed to result in many middle-level qualifications, including those held by skilled workers and white collar employees, becoming worthless. A small, though slowly growing number of highly qualified persons will, some say, do the challenging and interesting tasks while the majority of the workforce is reduced to routine activities such as operating numerically steered machinery or monitoring automatically processed data in clerical work.

III.9.8 In the light of the uncertainties of an export oriented economy in the face of increasingly protected overseas markets, of variable energy costs and of

the non-existence of local raw materials, Hong Kong has to concentrate on developing adaptive human capital. This should be done not only by expanding higher education and upper secondary education in terms of general education but also by concentrating on the provision of structured vocational education and training schemes. Through updated apprenticeship schemes combining part-time vocational school training with on-the-job vocational education and training, the whole of an age group could conceivably be provided with skills and experience which would be marketable to employers. In this way, we stress that an organised and synchronised transition from education to working life which is of the utmost importance would be achieved.

III.9.9 Increasing the qualifications of available labour does not mean that only university and polytechnic graduates are needed. The number and quality of trainees in other types of institutions should also be enlarged. While there has until now been a 'pyramid' of educational qualifications (with a broad base of untrained people) it now becomes possible to transform the 'pyramid' into an 'elipse' (with many people having middle-level vocational qualifications). This means wider participation by all groups in post-school education and a shrinking proportion of those without any vocational training. There is a need for nearly all formal courses to be expanded. This does not mean, of course, that we simply disregard the manpower aspect. The timing and sequences of expansion are influenced by labour statistics and forecasts (e.g. limits on staff recruitment rates influence the time- scale of higher education growth) and on broad assumptions as to long-term needs (e.g. craftsman/technician versus university graduate).

III.9.10 It seems to us that in working life in Hong Kong there is just about as close a correlation between levels of educational certification and career entry as elsewhere, yet we feel that for generating on-the-job skills, Hong Kong depends less than many other developed societies on structured, formalised learning. Presumably this can be explained by the small size of the average manufacturing shop, the prevalence of unsophisticated machinery and production techniques, the relatively low cost of labour militating against innovation, and the ingenuity and dexterity of the people. The question is, how long can this situation continue?

III.9.11 Over the past ten years or so of rapid education expansion, the number of apprenticeships successfully completed annually has been rising significantly. This is indeed surprising, because one would assume that the increased participation rates in upper secondary schooling would mean a drain on the

apprenticeship pool. However, this has been offset by the reduction in the number of those who left formal education immediately after the compulsory period without further schooling or training. The number of apprenticeship places taken up is also declining significantly; this has been partly due to cost considerations, to changes in the structure of industry and crafts, and to alterations in student preferences.

III.9.12 While we do not have a vision of a sudden quantum leap by Hong Kong into high-technology manufacturing, we feel quite certain that it is economically, as well as socially and individually important for Hong Kong to develop increasingly the tremendous potential of her population through formalised, structured learning (school- training shop, technical institutes, media courses). It also seems obvious that the contribution of cheap labour and simple production processes to the national domestic product will decrease as the input of activities such as banking and trade grows. Within each sector of the economy there will be a greater demand for the understanding of structures and processes, for initiative, and for adaptability to new products and techniques.

III.9.13 Against this background the education/training area where, from the point of view of labour market and economic productivity needs, there is the strongest case for expansion at the technician/craftsman level. If it were a question of putting a given amount of resources into either expanding Technical Institute facilities or university/polytechnic places - and if the criteria were strictly those of the needs of the economy - we should opt for the former. But Hong Kong's financial situation is such that the question need not be put as an alternative, and the criteria are, and should not be, exclusively economic. In a wealthy, free, dynamic, growth-minded society like that of Hong Kong, once upper secondary education has been made accessible to a large proportion of youth, it is simply impossible to keep higher education participation rates down at the two or three per cent level as it has been. Even if one should doubt the validity of the social demand argument, the lack of graduates in almost every important field in Hong Kong - evidenced by the large numbers of students going overseas to study - would suffice to press the case for expansion, especially because of the increasing difficulties for Hong Kong students to obtain a university training in the traditional centres abroad - UK and USA. As well, there is the time it takes from making the decision to expand to the date of the first output of graduates.

III.9.14 We have noted the various projects under consideration for increasing higher education capacity, both by upgrading the level of existing places from certificate to diploma and from diploma to degree status and by creating new ones. The interesting point to us is that the discussion is mainly about overall numbers and percentages - of student totals, of annual intake or of rates of increase - and not so much on differentiation by field (with the exception of medicine). Expansion for the next few years is envisaged almost universally as being quite properly distributed over all fields. We take this as another indication that there is an urgent need for more graduates generally. There are other, pragmatic arguments in favour of expanding proportionately rather than changing the balance: but if there were a clear difference in demand across areas, such arguments would carry less weight. The fact that engineering graduates are occasionally reported to be under-employed seems not to contradict this observation, but rather point to certain structural problems in the Hong Kong labour market - that the lack of supporting technicians is even more acute than that of engineers.

III.9.15 Nevertheless, neglecting clear priorities in less spectacular areas of education, particularly at the technician/craftsman level, is a danger. We fully accept the weight of official data which point to the low stock of graduates in technology, science and other fields essential to the development and governance of the territory; and for social as well as economic reasons ~~we urge the expansion in higher education as~~ argued in chapter III.5. However, the most striking and, from a strict labour market and economic view, the most disconcerting undersupply seems to us to be qualified personnel below the graduate level.

III.9.16 We engaged in frank discussion of these issues - expanding the existing universities and the polytechnic versus founding new ones; transferring the lower level courses from the polytechnic to the technical institutes; upgrading some of the polytechnic courses - and we have had ample documentation concerning them. Similarly, we were impressed with the comprehensive data available on expansion in secondary education. While the likely effect of increasing post-compulsory school attendance upon the structure of the labour force is not clear, we assume that the size and flexibility of the working population will compensate for temporary imbalances during periods of adjustment.

III.9.17 There is a broader issue behind all the layers and segments of the education and the labour market systems, of which policy makers must take account in order to fit the various pieces into a proper perspective - the issue of 'qualifications structure';

by this we mean the patterning of educational and vocational qualifications and skills over the population. The introduction first of universal primary and then of compulsory junior secondary education within less than a decade implies a tremendous change in that structure. The social and economic ramifications of this restructuring are probably of greater importance than the remarkable increase in available skills as such. The structure of employment and the catalogue of qualifications needed is altering as a consequence and will change even further.

III.9.18 On the policy level, this raises such questions as: what does it mean for society if the labour market is expanding with increasingly educated workers, if year after year the bulk of the workforce going into retirement is 'unschooled' and is replaced by young people with nine years or more of schooling? What does it mean if the job structure does not change but the qualification structure changes dramatically? From the point of view of educational policy in particular, once the promise of secondary education for everyone has been fulfilled, what are the implications? The FV leaver may in many respects be not much different in ability or aptitude from his elder brother or sister who left school ten years ago at an earlier age. Indeed, his or her labour market value may be quite similar. However, there will be a great difference in potential and expectations; the younger sibling will be more reluctant to accept unskilled work and the associated working conditions.

III.9.19 One's value in the labour market is becoming more strongly related to paper qualifications. 'Credentials inflation' is happening in earnest in Hong Kong, along with the phenomenon known in some countries as the 'cuckoo effect' whereby employers demand over time increasingly higher qualifications for the same job, thus 'throwing out of the nest' less formally qualified but still capable applicants who could perform the required tasks quite effectively. This also fosters under-utilisation of skills. Private tutors and night schools abound, aimed solely at certificate preparation: we are informed that over 20000 students outside the schools sit for the HKCE.

III.9.20 Expansion at the advanced levels of education and training implies a confidence that the society will absorb and profit from more sophisticated products of the education system. How will the Hong Kong economy - with its small firms and its tradition of on-the-job training - cater for and adapt to the increasing supply of relatively highly educated and trained youth? Perhaps ~~the government should~~ consider supporting the ~~expansion of subsidised inter-firm training facilities.~~

Once society has rightfully assumed responsibility for giving everyone the opportunity to acquire an advanced education qualification, the question arises of ensuring that this qualification becomes relevant for employment purposes. One means is for the government to assume the responsibility for ensuring genuine access for all to a marketable credential - involving formal education/training/work experience in both the public and the private sectors. By accepting a social responsibility towards the young generation, private enterprise and the government would be making a joint contribution to the training effort which should not be limited to what is estimated to be the precise need of a given craft or trade but should reflect the demands and rights of the young to have a vocational qualification.

SECTION IV : PROSPECTS AND PRIORITIES

IV.1 It is clear that the expansion of education in Hong Kong has been very rapid in terms both of the size of the system and the range of services it provides; nevertheless there is still very considerable room for further expansion, coupled with improvement in quality in most sectors. This has been recognised by the Hong Kong education authorities, as evidenced in their frank and even courageous observations which form the final Chapter, 'Prospects for the Development of Education' of the Background Report.

IV.2 We recognise the vast achievement of the last thirty years in welding a disparate and *ad hoc* collection of schools (reduced to virtually nothing during the Second World War) into the large and complex system that operates today. However, this rapid development has had certain consequences: in creating a climate for change it has also spawned a host of problems which have been exacerbated by sharpening public awareness. The call for their solution is making the search urgent.

IV.3 The motivation behind this push for expansion has been and continues to be social demand by a society which is culturally committed to education and mindful of its social status and mobility value. The prevailing ideology is an individually competitive one. Individuals can easily be thought of in ways which ignore the differences in economic and social power of the groups to which they belong. The needs of special groups must not be dissolved into a solution of atomised individual needs. All this underpins broader social considerations - particularly those to do with a growing economy. There is a need for a qualified labour force to fuel the economy; in turn, the economy will sustain further educational development. That both these circumstances are favourable to the future of education in Hong Kong contrasts sharply with the situation in many other countries where educational services are currently operating under severe resource constraints and are having their economic value questioned, especially by school leavers in a tight labour market.

IV.4 There is a deepening understanding in Hong Kong of the role of education as a public service. This brings with it more explicit pressures for a more equitable sharing of its benefits across society as a whole. Rising levels of education are affecting the social aspirations of various groups of society, across the board.

IV.5 Many of the system's problems are very obvious and therefore demand attention. It is as well to accept that some of these difficulties are perennial: for example, issues of equity and quantity. Though the focus and target of the social spotlight will alter as

positions and viewpoints change, an important capacity on the part of planners and policy makers is to identify trends and to develop coping strategies: this is the long-term agenda of educational governance in Hong Kong. The short-term need is to draw up a list of key priorities which warrant special attention, thus stating a claim for the resources and support required if education services are to be developed in the desired directions.

IV.6 It seems to us that there are five critical areas which bear on the immediate future development of education in Hong Kong. They all warrant urgent policy attention - as a basis for a coherent plan of action and to secure the resources necessary for their implementation. The order in which they are presented is not indicative of their ranking; they are all of top importance and should be handled concurrently. One priority is the establishment of a comprehensive language policy for the education system which does not neglect the current emphasis being placed on English in schools. Lack of language confidence and competence is one of the main impediments to learning throughout the population. Irrespective of the package of solutions chosen, a very significant investment will be needed in the scientific and technical knowledge base in order to apply solutions at the practical level: there will need to be research, experimentation and policy commitment to any chosen solution - this should not be underestimated. We favour a shift towards the universal use of the mother tongue in the formative years accompanied by the formal teaching of English as a first foreign language; this would lead progressively to genuine bilingualism in the senior secondary years.

IV.7 A second priority is related to teacher improvement, given that the effectiveness of any education system is largely determined by the capacity and commitment of the teaching service. A critical issue is the language competency of teachers in Hong Kong schools, which largely falls short of the bilingual proficiency needed for effective teaching. There are qualitative problems in raising the standards of the teaching service as a whole - those concerned with training and professionalism. There are also quantitative problems particularly as a result of new policy initiatives in the involvement of Government in kindergarten and the education of disabled children. Others are related to the cost, for example, of reducing pupil: teacher ratios.

IV.8 A third priority concerns the efforts being made to attenuate selection and allocation as it operates throughout the school system. Examinations dominate the Hong Kong education system, to its detriment. There is a need to relieve the strain of the present examination system on both teachers and students; there is also a need to improve the curriculum by making it more relevant to the

developmental needs of students rather than allowing it to be dominated by administrative procedures within the system.

IV.9 A fourth priority is related to the organisation of post-school education and access to it. Tremendous social pressures from students, parents and industry reveal a need for greater diversification of the educational opportunities available beyond FVII, so that pressure on tertiary institutions can be relieved and individuals encouraged to choose from more varied provisions related more closely to their interests, to the requirements of the labour market, and to the community generally. Until a new institution is built to cater for the vast numbers of qualified and aspiring students presently denied entrance to tertiary institutions, many will be forced to continue to study overseas, if they are to have access at all to higher learning.

IV.10 A fifth priority is the need to build up a standing capability to conduct research, to analyse and formulate policy options and to plan developments. This impinges on the community, the profession, the bureaucracy and statutory policy-making bodies. The governance machinery needs to be thoroughly overhauled.

IV.11 As for resource allocation, without becoming bogged down in the arithmetic of international comparisons and in the debate about which countries' efforts Hong Kong's should be related to, the aggregate of resources (public and private) going into the education system is, on a per capita basis, still unimpressive. This is so in terms of criteria such as financial outlays per student, capacity-to-pay of the economy, and sectoral emphases. We do not underestimate the magnificent rate of increase in public expenditure on education over the past twenty years - but then the base was very low. It is indubitably the case that whichever social and economic path Hong Kong follows, it will require greater allocation of staff, buildings and equipment for educational purposes. On the evidence we received we formed the conclusion that more could be allocated without detracting from other human-welfare services. The emphasis, in per capita expenditure terms, should be tilted more favourably towards the junior (rather than the senior) and the vocational (rather than the academic) branches of education.

IV.12 It should be noted that we have not touched on all issues. For example, the financing of education is of major significance - public versus private obligations, fiscal equity, fees, vouchers, 'user-pays' principal, consumption versus investment, interpretations of social demand - but it is not central to our terms of reference and so we have dealt with this vital matter only tangentially. This is simply one instance of a range of topics which should be scheduled for study in an ongoing programme of policy analysis of educational issues.

IV.13 What we have described above demands a forging of new relationships between the practical and the theoretical - even to the extent of rethinking the traditionally accepted structures of knowledge on which the institutional framework of education is based. How do we educate both for intellectual vigour and for confident, competent persons? How do we balance the need for developing expert and technological literate people against the need for cultural transmission which not only speaks to people in their fundamental humanity but also provides a basis upon which social and technological developments may themselves be evaluated? Here we end where the people of Hong Kong must begin: by talking about curriculum, by coming to grips with those theories of education, structures of knowledge and cultural maps which are to be harmonised so that their education system may flourish and hence their society continue to prosper.

TERMS OF REFERENCE GIVEN TO THE PANEL

(from Background Report)

The Panel was invited to proceed according to the following terms of reference:

Having regard to approved and proposed policies for the development of education in Hong Kong at all levels, to identify the future aims of the education system, to consider the coherence and effectiveness of the service, to identify areas which may require strengthening and to make recommendations on priorities in its further development. In particular, advice is sought on the relationship between the various sectors and levels of education and the place of teachers in the educational system.

Explanatory Notes on Terms of Reference

(as provided by Hong Kong officials in consultation with Chairman of Board of Education)

- (a) having regard to approved and proposed policies for the development of education in Hong Kong
 - Framework of whole review: 'approved' as in various white papers, decisions of the Governor in Council, etc.; 'proposed' as in green paper on primary/pre-primary services, but with departmental or branch planning, alternative courses of action under consideration and recommendations of working parties, etc. taken into account;
- (b) at all levels
 - from pre-primary to tertiary;
- (c) to identify the future aims of the education system
 - to comment on options for the further development of education in Hong Kong, including the questions posed in the final chapter of the official Background Report (account to be taken of the future manpower needs of Hong Kong);
- (d) to consider the coherence and effectiveness of the service
 - to consider whether the service as a whole is properly balanced and articulated to carry out the functions for which it was set up;

- (e) to make recommendations on priorities in its further development
 - development of the education system;
- (f) In particular, advice is sought on the relationship between the various sectors and levels of education
 - coherence and effectiveness; main concerns are with flow of pupils through the system, including selection and allocation procedures, diversity and fragmentation of system; possible simplification;
- (g) and the place of teachers in the educational system
 - the role of teachers in a broad sense - the adequacy of their professional development and the degree to which they participate in policy and planning, both within schools and within the educational system as a whole.

MAIN STAGES OF OVERALL REVIEW

Stage I : the appointment of the Panel of Visitors on the advice of the OECD Secretariat; the Visitors are thus independent and while approved by, were not selected by the Hong Kong Government; the Panel were given terms of reference (see Appendix I) - April 1981;

Stage II : the Hong Kong authorities prepared information on the Hong Kong education system for the Panel - June 1981;

Stage III : there was a public invitation for written representations to be sent to the Panel: a total of 56 representations was received and all were studied by the Panel - August 1981;

Stage IV : the Panel made a two week visit to Hong Kong when they met the individuals and groups who had made representations to them and visited a sample of schools and other educational institutions - November 1981;

Stage V : the Panel prepared a working draft of their Report as a basis for further discussion - December/February 1981/82;

Stage VI : the Panel returned to Hong Kong to discuss their draft report with the UMELCO Education Panel, the Board of Education, the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee, Government officials, and six invited overseas experts (Royal Professor Ungku A. Aziz, Vice Chancellor, University of Malaya; Mr. Chan Kai-yau, Director of Education, Singapore; Mr. Ernst Goldschmidt, Under Secretary, Ministry of Education, Denmark; Mr. James S. Hrabí, Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Education, Alberta, Canada; Mr. Akio Nakajima, Director, Upper Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, Japan; and His Excellency Mr. Arthur Maddocks, UK representative to the OECD). These discussions were supplemented by a broader debate in two public sessions chaired by George Papadopoulos, Deputy Director for Education, OECD, in which representatives of the main educational interest groups in Hong Kong participated actively - April 1982;

Stage VII : the Panel revised their Report in the light of: discussions and views expressed during their second visit; additional material coming to hand as well as changes to policy and practice during the eighteen month period of the Review - May/October 1982;

Stage VIII : the Report was submitted to the Governor via the Secretary for Education - November 1982.

INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS MET FORMALLY BY THE PANEL

Government Officials:

- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 His Excellency the Governor of Hong Kong
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Chief Secretary
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Financial Secretary
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Secretary for Education
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Secretary for Social Services
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Secretary for Economic Services
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Deputy Financial Secretary
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Director of Education and his directorate staff
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Commissioner for Labour and his directorate staff
- 錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Commissioner, Independent Commission against Corruption and his directorate staff

Association for Continuing Education

Association for Science and Mathematics Education

Association of Heads of Secondary Schools

Association of the Blind

Caput Schools Council

Catholic Board of Education

Coalition concerned with the FIII Examination

Council of Social Service

Education Action Group

Education Promotion Group

Education Research Group

Education Social Action Committee

Employers' Sector representatives:

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Chinese Manufacturers' Association

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Federation of Hong Kong Industries

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 The Employers' Federation of Hong Kong

Federation of Education Workers

Grant Schools Council

Polytechnic Staff Association

Prevocational Schools Council

Private Anglo-Chinese Schools Association

Professional Teachers' Union

Special Education Sector representatives :

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Chairman, Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled Hong Kong

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 General Secretary, The Hong Kong Association for the Mentally Handicapped

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Principal, Tse Wan Shan Red Cross School

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Caritas, Hong Kong

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。 Principal, Po Leung Kuk Ting May School

Subsidised Secondary Schools Council

Teachers' Association

The Board of Education

The Chairman and Secretary, University and Polytechnic Grants Committee

The Secretary, Hong Kong Examinations Authority and his senior staff

The UMELCO Education Panel

Union of Graduate Officers in Government Secondary Schools

Rev. Hon. Joyce M. Bennett

Dr. M. Board

Miss Yolande S. Chamm

Mr. Hui Wai-tin

Mr. Kwok Lam-Yuen

Mr. Lau Sung

Mr. Arthur E.F. Page

Dr. R.F. Simpson

INSTITUTIONS VISITED BY THE PANEL

Kindergartens

Daring Heart Kindergarten

Faith Methodist Church Kindergarten

Schools

Fuk Wing Street Government Primary School

Island Road Government Primary School

Sheng Kung Hui Holy Spirit Primary School

Baptist Lui Ming Choi Secondary School

St Marino Secondary School

Tak Yan Secondary College

CMA Prevocational School

Kowloon Technical School

Sacred Heart Canossian College

St Stephen's Girls College

Tung Chi College

Further and Higher Education Institutions

Haking Wong Technical Institute

Lee Wai Lee Technical Institute

Morrison Hill Technical Institute

Northcote College of Education

Hong Kong Baptist College

Hong Kong Polytechnic

Chinese University of Hong Kong

ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS MAKING OPEN
WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS TO THE PANEL

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Aided (Grant-Subsidised) Secondary School Vice Principals Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Association for Applied Linguistics
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Association for Continuing Education
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Association for the Mentally Handicapped
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Association for Science and Mathematics Education
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Association of the Blind
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Catholic Board of Education
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Chinese Language Campaign Ad Hoc Committee
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Chinese University of Hong Kong
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Chinese University of Hong Kong Student Union
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Chinese University of Hong Kong School of Education Alumni Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Coalition concerned with the FIII Examination
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Council of Social Service
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Education Action Group
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Education Research Group
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Federation of Education Workers
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	General Chamber of Commerce
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Group of Teachers in Government Evening Schools
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Graduate Association of Colleges of Education
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Hong Kong and Kowloon Educational Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Hong Kong University Students' Union

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Methodist Church
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Open College
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Pre-School Playgroups' Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Physical Education Teachers' Fellowship Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Society of Education
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Special Schools Council
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Subsidised Secondary Schools Council
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Teachers' Christian Fellowship
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Technical Teachers' College Alumni Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	The Academic Affairs Committee of the HK Polytechnic Student Union
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	The Chinese Language Society
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	The Chinese Manufacturers' Association
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Union of Graduate Officers in Government Secondary Schools
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Miss K.E. Barker
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr R. Bray
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mrs Chan
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Chan Chan-sing
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Chan Sin-Fun
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Miss Chan Suk-on
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Dr S.C. Cheng
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr David C.K. Cheung
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Chun Man-sang
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mrs P.C. Collier
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Dr A.R.B. Etherton
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr John Gibbons

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Ho Hok-lin
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Sister Jeanne Houlihan
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Hung Hing-wan
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr R.K. Johnson
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Sister Mary O. Lam
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Sung
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Lee Sau-wai
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Lee Sau-yan
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr P.C. Leung
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Lin Po-yi
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Professor R. Lord
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr John M. Miller
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Tai Man-bun
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Dr Tam Shang-wai
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Miss Maria Tong
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Wong Ching Kai and others
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Wong Dor-luk, Peter
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Wong Hung-yu
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Henry K.H. Woo
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Yip Hay-nin
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	Mr Yu Lok-shun
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	'A Teacher'
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	'A Long Oppressed'
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。	'A Concerned Parent'

錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。
錯誤! 尚未定義書籤。

'Honest C.M. Teacher'
'Kindergarten which fears closure'

STUDENT FLOW STATISTICS (DRAWN FROM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SOURCES)

- (1) Act. & est. retention rates of grade cohort for both sexes from Primary 1 to Form 7 in public and private schools, Hong Kong, 1965 to 1981

Retention per 1000 pupils who entered Primary 1

Possible Outlet for Form 3 Levers

School year pupils entered P.1														F.3 (Year attending F.3)	Technical Institute				
	P.1	P.2	P.3	P.4	P.5	P.6	F.1	F.2	F.3	F.4	F.5	F.6	F.7		Full Time		Part Time		Total
															(Enrolment)		Day (Provision)	Evening (Enrolment)	
1965	1000	805	812	788	729	645	494	423	364	319	293	95	39	364(73)	319	3	4	23	349
1967	1000	854	862	838	798	724	559	494	450	394	382	125	47	450(75)	394	5	4	24	427
1969	1000	892	905	892	859	795	627	580	546	500	470	139	61	546(77)	500	7	19	30	556
1971	1000	927	946	948	936	861	789	755	711	622	605	197	89	771(79)	622	9	28	35	694
1973	1000	951	958	954	918	873	916	850	771	692	685	223	103	771(81)	692	11	59	49	811
1975	1000	951	963	970	946	909	964	929	848	760	753	245	115	848(83)	760	14	73	58	905
1977	1000	974	1006	1017	984	949	1009	975	889	819	811	264	124	889(85)	819	20	102	63	1004
1979	1000	1001	1013	1013	980	949	1012	979	896	838	832	270	128	896(87)	838	20	100	61	1019
1981	1000	989	998	999	968	940	1004	974	894	852	849	276	132	894(89)	852	20	100	62	1034

- (2) Actual retention rates of grade and age cohort for both sexes from Primary 1 to Form 4 in public and private schools, Hong Kong, 1971 to 1979

Retention per 1000 pupils who entered Primary 1

Children aged 6 enter- ing P.1 in school year										
	P.1	P.2	P.3	P.4	P.5	P.6	F.1	F.2	F.3	F.4
1971	1000	826	770	720	697	634	597	564	509	425
1973	1000	858	805	769	724	704	707	651		
1975	1000	872	825	792	747	720				
1977	1000	900	863	826						
1979	1000	919								

- (3) Actual retention rates of grade and age cohort for Male from Primary 1 to Form 4 in public and private schools, Hong Kong, 1971 to 1979

Retention per 1000 pupils who entered Primary 1

Children aged 6 enter- ing P.1 in school year										
	P.1	P.2	P.3	P.4	P.5	P.6	F.1	F.2	F.3	F.4
1971	1000	814	746	684	659	593	565	512	455	365
1973	1000	846	789	737	684	660	665	595		
1975	1000	864	808	765	713	684				
1977	1000	892	848	799						
1979	1000	908								

- (4) Actual retention rates of grade and age cohort for Female from Primary 1 to Form 4 in public and private schools, Hong Kong, 1971 to 1979

Retention per 1000 pupils who entered Primary 1

Children aged 6 enter- ing P.1 in school year										
	P.1	P.2	P.3	P.4	P.5	P.6	F.1	F.2	F.3	F.4
1971	1000	840	796	760	738	679	631	621	568	491
1973	1000	871	824	803	768	752	752	712		
1975	1000	880	844	820	783	759				
1977	1000	909	880	855						
1979	1000	932								

(5) ACTUAL & PROJECTED BUILD UP OF FIRST YEAR PLACES ON COURSES OF TERTIARY EDUCATION (Full Time & Part Time) 1975-1993

YEAR	1975		1978		1981		1984		1987		1990		1993	
	Enrol.	% of age group	Enrol.	% of age group	No. of places	% of age group	No. of places	% of age group	No. of places	% of age group	No. of places	% of age group	No. of places	% of age group
(1) Post-Form V courses in technical institutes	2714	2.7	4768	4.3	8900	7.5	14260	14.6	15020	18.0	15020	18.1	15020	18.3
(2) Polytechnic	n.a.	-	16353	14.7	13040	10.9	13610	14.0	15310	18.3	17220	20.7	19370	23.6
(3) Colleges of Education (including Technical Teachers College)	576	0.6	518	0.5	989	0.8	870	0.9	1010	1.2	1010	1.2	1010	1.2
(4) School of Nursing	n.a	-	959	0.9	1400	1.2	2000	2.1	2500	3.0	2500	3.0	2500	3.0
(5) Assisted Approved Post-Secondary Colleges	1740	1.7	2386	2.1	2105	1.8	1900	2.0	1900	2.3	1900	2.3	1900	2.3
(6) Universities	2132	2.1	2555	2.3	2630	2.2	2910	3.0	3280	3.9	3690	4.4	4150	5.1
TOTAL	7162	7.0	27539	24.7	29064	24.4	35550	36.5	39020	46.7	41340	49.7	43950	53.5

<DIAGRAM>

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

		Capital Expenditure				Recurrent Expenditure			
		Total (\$m)	(% GDP)	\$ per head of population	\$ per student in sector	Total (\$m)	(% GDP)	\$ per head of population	\$ per student in sector
1966/67	School & College	45.413		13	52	889.004		245	1,026
	University	16.531		5	3,885	129.458		36	30,425
	Total	61.944	0.15	17	71	1,018.462	2.24	281	1,170
1971/72	School & College	74.286		18	65	1,319.574		326	1,158
	University	214.737		53	36,941	260.683		64	44,845
	Total	289.023	0.44	71	252	1,580.257	2.24	391	1,380
1976/77	School & College	140.754		32	120	1,967.245		443	1,679
	University & Polytechnic	89.850		20	5,564	528.128		119	32,703
	Total	230.604	0.22	60	194	2,495.373	2.54	562	2,101
1981/82	School & College	375.510		73	307	2,800.455		546	2,292
	University & Polytechnic	173.847		34	7,946	823.441		160	37,638
	Total	549.357	0.41	107	442	3,623.896	2.68	706	2,914

NOTE:

All dollars shown are 1981/82 constant H.K. dollars.

The Hong Kong Polytechnic began operation in August 1972. Its lower unit cost per student accounts for the drastic drop in the recurrent expenditure per student in the higher education sector in 1976/77 as against 1971/72.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AT PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

ACHIEVEMENT ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF SCHOOLS

F/M6 candidates excluded

Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination 1981

Type of School	Total Subjects Sat	Grade C +%	Grade E +%
Govt. & aided A/C	171,378	32.43	86.62
Govt. & aided C/M	33,322	25.73	83.81
Private schools A/C	292,117	6.55	41.98
Private schools C/M	38,914	8.41	45.81
Evening schools	74,673	5.26	47.83
Tut-Eng. only schools	2,887	1.80	42.71
Private Candidates	95,973	18.25	77.49

Hong Kong Higher Level Examination 1981

Govt. & aided C/M	7,677	33.69	72.95
Govt. & aided A/C (HL)	1,236	32.79	76.85
Govt. & aided F. 6	3,111	40.95	77.21
Private Schools C/M6&F.6	36,084	16.25	54.86
All day schools F.7	5,858	44.88	79.86
All evening schools	10,757	17.02	53.82
Private candidates	26,595	36.81	73.83

Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination 1981

Govt. & aided schools	21,129	33.73	88.10
Other day schools	12,360	10.69	65.70
Post Secondary Colleges	2,530	11.46	67.43
Evening Schools	4,294	5.47	49.42
Private candidates	9,463	17.87	74.43
School candidates	40,313	22.26	75.81
TOTAL	49,776	21.42	75.55

Source: EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

A CHRONOLOGICAL SKETCH OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN HONG KONG

On their arrival in Hong Kong Island one hundred and forty years ago the British found a population of some 5500 people with an education system consisting of a few Chinese schools, operating intermittently to provide the children of fishermen with some learning, basically founded on a traditional Confucian approach. A European style of teaching for the Chinese was introduced by missionaries who came to serve in China, while local Chinese schools received financial assistance from the Government. During the 1860s, in the context of religious-secular antagonism in education, there was a reorganisation of government schools and the opening of a government central school where emphasis shifted from the religious to the secular.

The development of education during this period had religious, economic and political purposes apart from the provision of schooling. For example, it promoted British and Chinese relations and it helped to set western standards in the work force. The Chinese themselves certainly were aware of the opportunities education afforded to take them from the pre-industrial into the modern world, while at the same time they wanted to retain the traditional Chinese view of education. The latter may be characterised as follows: idealisation of the scholar-official; attraction to theoretical studies; emphasis on rote learning and examinations; acceptance of the authority of the teacher; and absence of specific educational structures.

The scheme to provide government aid to village schools began in 1868. However, with pressure from the missionaries and the difficulty experienced in financing and administering a growing and diverse system of schooling, the Government gave religious institutions increased support. There was a consequent expansion of religious grant schools and a decline in the number of government, central and village schools and government aided schools. The number of 'vernacular' schools increased dramatically though most were ineligible for government support because they failed to meet prescribed standards. Their important role in educating the majority of the poorer Chinese and yet their inferior status continued into the twentieth century.

Two indications of the growing stature of education during the first decades of this century are the establishment of the University of Hong Kong and the passing of the Education Ordinance. The Ordinance provided for the registration and supervision of certain schools, mainly private, and was at the time the first such step anywhere in the British Empire. Expenditure on education increased from 0.3 per cent of government spending in 1853 to three per cent in 1913.

The 1930s saw attention being given to 'vernacular' education and the development of technical education, when the Junior Technical (later Victoria Technical) and Aberdeen Trade Schools were opened. There was also progress in rural schooling and education for girls, although the old Chinese adage that 'illiteracy in a woman is a virtue' is not yet entirely obsolete. The 1935 Burney Report found too much emphasis on English, the need to pay more attention to primary education in Chinese and the need for thorough analysis and forward planning throughout the education enterprise. By 1939 some tentative steps had been taken towards using Cantonese rather than English as the medium of instruction for subjects (other than English) in some of the lower forms of the Anglo- Chinese schools. Other improvements planned for the system, including new Chinese primary schools and a new subsidy code for education, were thwarted by World War II.

By 1940 Hong Kong's population had increased to over one and a half million. The Government perforce continued to engage in the numbers battle. The school population itself had increased from 19 500 in 1914 to 120 000 in 1940. By the end of the Japanese Occupation in 1945 the Hong Kong school population was estimated at fewer than 4000.

In post-war reconstruction some emergency measures were necessary. One of the most important of these measures was the adoption in broad outline of the Burney Report as post-war policy: this included recognition of the principle of equality, greater attention to primary vernacular education and increased subsidies to rural and urban vernacular schools. In the 1950s the government, voluntary bodies, businesses and individuals all contributed to widening education opportunities. Further importance was given to technical, adult and higher education. Greater control over the registration of schools was achieved through a new Education Ordinance. The Chinese University of Hong Kong was established in 1963.

Events in China in 1949 caused a huge influx of refugees. Hong Kong's population increased by about fifty per cent during the 1950s,

to reach the three million mark by 1960. The school population increased more than threefold to almost 800 000 at the time of the March-Sampson Report of 1963. This document set the parameters for the development of a policy to provide by 1971 a primary school education in a government or aided school for every child desiring such education. It also influenced policy to provide further opportunities for students in secondary, technical and special education areas, with the ultimate aim at this stage of offering every child seven years of full-time subsidised education.

Although Hong Kong's population grew in the decade from 1961 to 1971 by some 800 000 to almost four million, there was in fact a reprieve for the education authorities in the late sixties when the school age population remained static. This provided the opportunity for progress not only in the primary but in the secondary area. Technical and vocational education expanded and planning began for the Hong Kong Polytechnic. In addition, the first four-year programme to provide 4000 places for disabled and handicapped children was introduced and training of teachers for them given greater prominence.

The early 1970s saw further progress in the growth and maturation of the education system. Financial resources were available for expansion: the economy demanded more, people wanted more. By 1971 primary education for the six to eleven age group was free and compulsory. Primary and secondary curriculum development committees were established in 1972, more attention was given to teacher training and the powers of the Education Ordinance were strengthened. A corollary to this was the emergence of a public prepared to comment and to criticise.

From 1974, Government attention focused on a number of reviews to be conducted over the entire education spectrum. The 1974 White Paper proposed six years of free primary schooling and three years of subsidised secondary education for everyone. By 1980 the policy of compulsory and free education for primary and junior secondary students had been achieved and given wide support.