

H-K Standard

13 March 1983

1997 triggers capital flow to Queensland

THE uncertainty over the 1997 issue and the current recession, have resulted in a flow of capital from Hongkong to Queensland, Australia.

The premier of Queensland, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, who was in Hongkong on a three-day trade promotion tour, said this at a press conference yesterday.

He also revealed that he had received many investment inquiries about Queensland.

He admitted that there has been a considerable flow of Hongkong capital to Queensland, in the present uncertain political climate, but refused to say how much was involved.

Mr Bjelke-Petersen was accompanied by a 28-member of the Queensland Confederation of Industry Trade Mission which has about 1,000 members. The mission left for home yesterday.

The chairman of the confederation, Terry Parry said Hongkong's current recession had indirectly benefited Queensland's trade prospects.

"Some of our mission members have already made

arrangements for some local businessmen to tour Queensland to look at projects that can be mutually beneficial for long-term investment," he said.

"A lot of Hongkong money has already flown to Queensland and I expect to see more," he said.

Mr Parry also revealed that some local investors were seeking joint ventures in Queensland's mining industry.

Other investment areas include the property market and tourism, he said.

Commenting on the bid by some investors who try to obtain resident status by buying property in Queensland, Mr Bjelke-Petersen said this posed a problem, but he hoped to change Australia's newly-elected Labour government's view about foreign investors.

He believed they should be allowed to come and go freely without restrictions, otherwise it would be difficult for them to oversee their commercial activities,

since they move from place to place.

He hoped the new Labour government would make "realistic and sensible judgment" on private enterprise and foreign investments, he said and pointed out that the prospects of a Labour government had resulted in about HK\$14 billion being transferred out of Australia.

Mr Bjelke-Petersen said Queensland was an attractive place for investors and that 46 per cent of the foreign investment in the country was being placed in Queensland.

Queensland's value of exports to Hongkong was over \$104.7 million in 1981-82. The state wants to expand its overseas markets for food, building materials and other manufactured goods.

The major items from Hongkong to Queensland include a wide range of manufactured products such as electrical machinery, textile yarn and fabrics, apparel and clothing accessories.