

S.C.M.P.

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A case of supply and demand, says Ding

About 100,000 men in their most sexually active years will not be able to find wives due to the shortage of women in Hongkong in their age group, Dr L. K. Ding said yesterday.

According to last year's census, there were 98,000 more males than females in the 20 to 39 year age group, Dr Ding told the Y's Men's Club of Kowloon.

Their sexual desires have to be catered for and prostitution may be a viable solution, he said.

"If prostitution is not legalised, consumers will have to pay more for the service. If it is legalised, the market force of supply and demand will

come into play and prices will go down," Dr Ding said.

"We must admit that sex is just as important as food. In a free society like Hongkong, pontification and moralising is not going to solve the prostitution problem."

Dr Ding, however, said prostitution is a form of sexual discrimination against women because all existing laws are stacked against them.

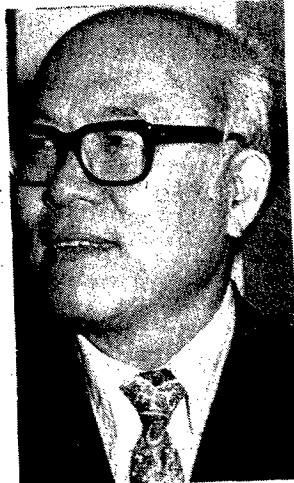
"Men treat women as sex objects, but I think this will not exist in a society where everybody is equal," he said.

He blamed some men for being hypocritical because they condemn prostitution in public but support it privately.

Of the three vices in Hongkong, Dr Ding said Government has made a genuine effort to combat drugs and gambling, but its handling of the prostitution problem leaves a lot to be desired.

"There are so many loopholes in the existing legislation that it just cannot effectively control prostitution. For example, a one-person brothel is legally not considered as a brothel. It becomes illegal only if there are two or more prostitutes," he said.

Instead of spending so much time and manpower to



Dr Ding

combat prostitution, Dr Ding feels the police should concentrate on triads and real criminals.

Prostitution is a victimless crime since a great number of the women enter the profession voluntarily, mainly for financial reasons, he said.

Since the setting up of the ICAC, syndicated corruption, which is one of the chief consequences of prostitution, has been virtually wiped out, he said.

Forced prostitution and the number of gang rapes have also declined, he said.