

S.C.M.P.

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## 7-day leave plan under fire

Garment factories will find it almost impossible to give their staff one week's full paid holiday a year, a spokesman for the Federation of Hongkong Garment Manufacturers said yesterday.

This is because local manufacturers schedule production as they receive orders.

The spokesman also pointed out that workers might seek jobs in other factories during their seven day leave period because there are inadequate recreational facilities here.

"Superficially he might seem to be enjoying his holiday," the spokesman said "but in reality he is taking an opportunity to increase his income.

"This kind of situation will very likely induce high labour turnover rates and cause a serious disruption in production schedules."

He pointed out that garment manufacturers are burdened with the quota problem. They also face stiff competition from neighbouring countries with lower production costs.

He went on to say that the introduction of severance pay will greatly reduce a factory's ability to seek loans from banks, which in turn will retard growth and threaten the very survival of Hongkong's garment industry.

The spokesman said his

federation in the past had endorsed most Government proposals it considered would help the development of industries and the well being of the workers.

He felt, however, that the proposed labour legislation will jeopardise the strong economy of Hongkong which took years of hard labour to build.

On June 15 this year, there were 6,685 garment factories employing 233,158 workers. This represents 20 per cent of the establishments and 30 per cent of the labour force in the manufacturing sector, the spokesman said.