

22 April 1981

SCLP

500,000 earn under \$1,000 says survey

By PETER LOKE

As many as 500,000 workers in Hongkong are estimated to have a monthly income of less than \$1,000.

And right at the bottom, 84,000 workers are earning below \$200 a month.

This is disclosed in the last sample survey of the Labour Force in Hongkong by the Census and Statistics Department.

More than a million workers are estimated to earn between \$1,000 and \$1,999 each month.

Only an estimated 430,000 earned between \$2,000 and \$3,500.

Another 100,000 earned between \$3,500 and \$7,500.

At the top, earning more than \$7,500, are an estimated 38,000.

More than half the workers of a total of over 2.26 million were working in manufacturing in September when the survey was held.

Workers in textiles and clothing manufacturing formed the largest group of over 419,000.

But while the overall num-

ber of estimated workers rose from over 2.11 million in September 1979 to 2.26 million, textile and garment worker numbers only rose by about 8,000.

The number of construction workers increased quite substantially from 142,000 to 172,000.

There was also a significant increase of workers employed in the wholesale, retail trade and restaurant and hotel trades.

The numbers moved from 425,000 to over 460,000.

The increasing numbers show a healthy trend in steadily improving tourism as well as a revival of the entrepot trade here.

This is coupled with increases in the number of employees in the financing, insurance, real estate and business services, up from 91,000 to 110,000.

Educational information provided insights into the improving quality of life.

More than 556,000 have upper secondary education, 383,000 have lower secondary education and 653,000 have upper primary education.

Almost parallel with the number of workers drawing less than \$1,000 a month in wages, an estimated 460,000 workers have only lower primary or kindergarten or no schooling at all.

An estimated 91,000 workers are university graduates and another 80,000 have matriculation or upper secondary education.

The numbers with technical or vocational training also increased substantially from 23,000 in 1979 to 31,000 in September.

Finally, male workers outnumbered women workers by two-to-one.

The survey showed that the number of male workers passed 1.47 million while the number of female workers totalled 791,000.

The largest age group is for those between 21-29 (828,000), 30-39 (437,000) and 40-49 (362,000).

The number for the 50-59 age group was 281,000 and there were 148,000 workers aged 60 or over.

There are an estimated 210,000 workers aged 15-19.