

# \$150m boost for police force

## Major recruitment campaign begins

Reports by ANN OUON, FRANK CHOI, JIMMY LEUNG, TSANG SHUK-WA, JOHN TANG and VIOLA LEE

THE police will receive more than \$150 million next year to start a rapid recruitment drive in order to take over border patrol duties from the British Garrison in 1990.

The proposal was endorsed by the Finance Committee in a move to beef up the Police Tactical Unit over the next five years.

Although the session was barred to the news media, it is understood that the proposed amount included \$144 million for salaries and recurrent operation costs, \$4.7 million for recurrent administrative costs and about \$64 million for non-recurrent expenditure and equipment.

Last night the Commissioner of Police, Mr Raymond Anning confirmed that about 2,000 officers would be recruited into the force over the next three years.

He said they would be absorbed into the Police Tactical Unit which will take over illegal immigrant duties from the garrison.

This follows an agreement between Britain and China that the police force will be responsible for internal security in 1997 when the last of the 12,000-strong garrison leaves Hongkong.

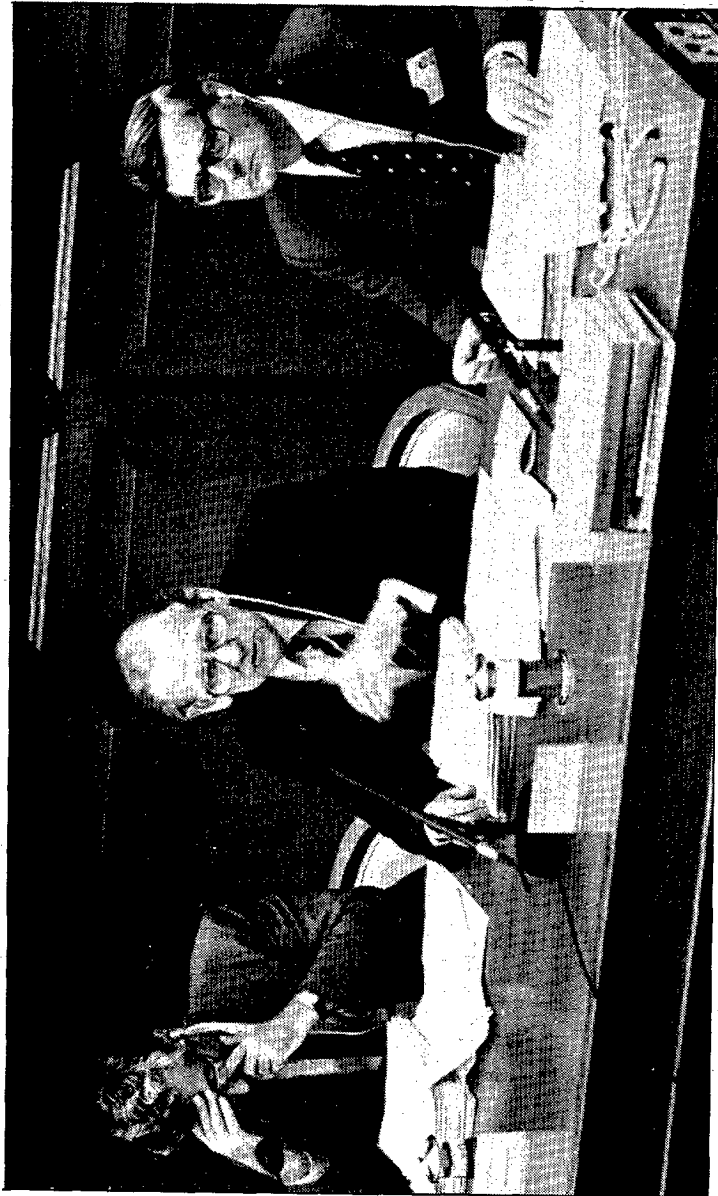
Initially, Mr Anning said three or four companies would be added to the Police Tactical Unit's present strength of six companies over the next three years. Each company consists of 170 men.

In addition, the police will start boosting their communications system at the border in 1989 in a program that should be completed by 1991.

Over the next three years beginning on April 1, 1988, the annual recruitment target for the police will be 340 men. This is separate from the force's normal annual recruitment program.

About 150 civilian staff would be needed to run the border patrol headquarters as a backup to the PTU.

To cope with the growth of the force, the detective training school near Kai Tak



Picture by C.Y. YU

Mr Piers Jacobs, Mr David Ford and Mr John Yaxley at yesterday's Finance Committee meeting.

airport will be expanded.

Work has already begun to modify the Royal Hongkong Regiment's (the Volunteers) training camp so that new recruits can be trained in internal security and anti-illegal immigrant duties.

The police will continue to use their own facilities for training before eventually taking over the facilities used

by the British forces.

"We cannot expand too quickly as the facilities at the Aberdeen Police Training School will not be able to cope with too large an intake," the source said.

A total of 1,422 young men would be recruited into the force this financial year ending March 31 next year, an increase of more than 400

officers compared with last financial year.

The bigger intake was also required to fill the vacuum of retiring police officers who reach compulsory retirement at the age of 55.

About 200 officers retired or resigned from the force annually, the source said.

"It would be safe to say that the manpower of the

police force would be boosted by about 2,000 officers over the next five years regardless of resignations or retirement," the source said.

Under the existing Defence Costs Agreement with Britain which expires in March, Hongkong pays 75 per cent of \$1.7 billion while Britain pays 25 per cent of

the force's bill.