

# A 'despairing' Elsie slams British Government Minister

MRS Elsie Elliott, who is campaigning to obtain elected members on the Legislative Council, said in London today she felt "disillusionment and almost despair" after a meeting with a British Government Minister.

Mrs Elliott and three colleagues on the Urban Council met for 70 minutes with Lord Goronwy-Roberts, Foreign and Commonwealth Undersecretary.

A Foreign Office spokesman said a wide range of

questions was discussed but there was no question of the minister promising to take up any points because the visit was essentially a courtesy call.

He said the councillors were in London on a visit to the Greater London Council.

The spokesman said the minister listened to all the points made because he is "particularly interested in Hongkong — he was there last January. However, some of the points put to him were outside his powers," the spokesman said.

The points about condition in the Hongkong ranged from elections to the censorship of children's books, the spokesman added.

He said the councillors "expressed their individual views so the meeting went on a long time. The minister thanked each one at the end."

Mrs Elliott said she had expected more attention would be paid to their complaints of social and political neglect in Hongkong.

"The British Government shuts its eyes because Hongkong is good for business," she said.

Mrs Elliott, veteran political campaigner who played a leading role in exposing corruption in the Hongkong police department, said she supported the demands of the "Movement for Representation in Government", a Hongkong reform body which wants the appointed members of the Legislative Council replaced by elected representatives and a universal franchise.

Mrs Elliott said at present only 34,000 of Hongkong's 4.3 million population applied to register to vote and they had to meet property and educational qualifications.

Half of the Urban Councillors were elected and half were appointed but there were no elections to the more powerful Legislative Council.

Mrs Elliott said a non-elected body was a barrier to a thorough-going investigation of corruption which she claimed remained widespread despite recent trials.

Mrs Elliott came ahead of her colleagues to London in the hope of delivering to the minister a letter from the reform movement urging changes in the administration.

"The minister, however, said he couldn't arrange it and called all of us in together," Mrs Elliott said.



• ELSIE Elliott.

Her colleagues were John Mackenzie and Peter Chan Po-fun, who are appointed Urban Councillors, and Miss Cecilia Yeung, an elected member.

Miss Yeung said she was not so disappointed with the meeting as Mrs Elliott.

"Lord Goronwy-Roberts listened to us," she said. "We made a lot of complaints about social problems, about schools and unemployment and housing. But I think in England the people are too self-satisfied. They do not really want to know about our problems."

— by Graham Heathcote of AP