

10 March 1984

All quiet on the election frontline

By Sashi Thapa

IT was a slow morning at the Kwai Ming Wu Memorial School of the Precious Blood in Tsuen Wan.

The playground was deserted apart from a few volunteers, proudly wearing their green or yellow sashes, drifting around.

The fence was festooned with pamphlets and posters promoting the candidates — social worker Albert Chan Wai-yip and solicitor David Yeung Fuk-kyong — but there wasn't a voter in sight.

Not an auspicious start for the much vaunted Regional Council Elections.

The yellow-sashed volunteer who had thrown in his lot with Mr Chan remained hopeful.

"Yes, it's been quiet. We only had about 176 voters

before lunch but we are expecting more after five o'clock."

Many of the young Tsuen Wan couples, he explained, worked in Central. He was sure they would come and vote later.

While our volunteer was enthusiastic and helpful, the man on the street displayed a more cavalier attitude.

One man scowled, when asked the way to another polling booth, muttering he couldn't care less. Another, rushing across the road, didn't even break his stride as he turned to hurl a dirty look our way.

Over at the Princess Alexandra Community Centre lunch boxes were being delivered for hungry volunteers. What they probably needed was a truckful of voters.

Legco member Martin Lee dropped by, chatted awhile before zooming off to his next port of call.

Next we headed for Tuen Mun. But again nothing stirred as we approached the town's polling booths.

Volunteers for district board member Ms Cheung Yuet-lan did look rather natty in their red and white sashes as they handed out pamphlets at the Shun Tak Fraternal Association Tam Pak Yu College in Yau Oi Estate.

But it was Mr Almon Poon Chin-hung's volunteers, wearing simple yellow armbands, who managed to grab the attention of four elderly women and direct them to the voting booth.

Our trip to Sha Tin took longer than planned. We

got stuck in a traffic jam in Kwai Chung for half an hour. But there was no hurry.

Peace and quiet reigned at the Baptist Lui Ming Choi Primary School in City One. The only things making any noise were the posters of management consultant Claudius Tony Soleman Lock, lawyer Tony Kan Chung-nin and training and manpower development manager Stanley Sum Yiu-cho, flapping in the breeze.

Most of the volunteers had opted for a long lunch.

When we returned half an hour later little had changed, just a few more volunteers who had wandered back from lunch.

Next stop, Sha Tin Town Hall, where, once again, the volunteers were in the

majority, waiting around for those elusive voters.

Our brief sojourn in Wong Tai Sin's St Patrick's School where aircraft technician Kan Chi-ho, school supervisor Cecilia Yeung Lai-yin and social worker Ng Ngok-shing were up for election, was just as uneventful.

We finally called it a day after popping in to the Kwun Tong Vocational Training Centre.

There a beaming volunteer proudly informed us that 330 votes had been cast by 3.30 pm.

"More people will be coming though," he said optimistically. "They are all at work at the moment."

We decided it was time to wend our weary way back to base.

It had been a long and extremely quiet day.