

S.C.M.P.

2 March 1984

Another 'yes' to NT council

Tsun Wan yesterday joined other New Territories districts pledging support behind the proposed regional council and putting more unofficials on the boards.

Five New Territories boards have now shown their enthusiasm for the proposals, especially for the regional council. Three — Yuen Long, Sai Kung and Islands — have yet to meet to discuss the issues.

At a Tsun Wan District Board special meeting of unofficial members yesterday, all except two were in favour of the proposed council.

But the Tsun Wan District Commissioner, Mr Adolf Hsu, chose to hold two separate closed meetings yesterday afternoon and today on the issue which attracted most local interest — the proposed split of Tsun Wan and Kwai Chung (including Tsing Yi) into two district boards.

All unofficials yesterday said they favoured an increase in the number of unofficials on the boards but agreed that seats for appointed members should be maintained to allow more diversi-

fied representation.

Mr Chan Po-fong said it was a step towards more open government.

Mrs Alice Cheong suggested that the 2:1 ratio of unofficials to appointed members should be made more flexible at the next election.

But she said the number of elected unofficials should be more than the sum of appointed and ex-officio members to give the elected the majority.

Members said they were aware that variation in population levels could allow some constituencies more than one elected member. They said the Government should consider this carefully when drawing up the boundaries.

Mr Hsu said future elections should be based on one candidate being elected for every 25,000 people instead of the present policy of one for every 50,000.

Members also said that representatives of unofficials should be allowed to attend meetings of district management committees to allow greater co-operation and co-ordination.

They also suggested that management committees be set up to oversee large community facilities and to take over the management of smaller facilities.

As for the setting up of a regional council, Mr Chan Koon-shing made a counter proposal that the Urban Council be dissolved to give way to the setting up of a greater city council which would include both Urbco and the new council.