

31 Aug 1980

100,000 registered as voters

MORE than 100,000 people have registered as voters over the past two weeks, almost double the number who registered in a similar exercise three years ago.

The high response followed an expensive Government publicity campaign.

Regional Secretary (Hongkong and Kowloon) of the City and New Territories Administration, David Lan, said he was delighted to see the initial good response.

He attributed this to the introduction of direct elections to the Legislative Council — the first in Hongkong's constitutional development.

The Constitutional Af-

fairs Branch's registration and electoral office has received about 101,000 filled registration forms since the beginning of the six-week publicity exercise on August 15.

A Government official also said if past experience were an indicator, then the number of forms received would further increase as the campaign closed.

In 1987 only 59,000 people registered during the first two weeks.

There are 3.7 million eligible voters in the territory, but only 1.6 million, or 43.9 per cent, had registered in the past.

The \$5.2 million promotion would include 150 events in different dis-

tricts. A variety show gala was held last Saturday and it will be shown on television this weekend.

The regional committees of the liberal party, United Democrats of Hongkong, also joined the Government campaign with registration booths in busy spots throughout the territory on September 16.

Of those forms received, about 31,000 were mailed; the rest were collected by 19 district offices, whose temporary community organisers visited homes to invite people to register.

The main objective of this year's campaign is to attract young people to

join the electorate. Of 442,300 potential voters in the age group of 20-25, only 12 per cent have registered.

Executive and Legislative Council member and chairman of the Commission On Youth, Rosanna Tam, yesterday said she had sent 400 letters to youth organisations encouraging people between 21 and 25 to register.

"I know the voters registration rate is very low — about 12 per cent — among youth aged between 21 to 25 in the territory," Mrs Tam said.

She said the youth vote was important to the success of next year's election.