

7 Dec 1989

Appointees defended

THERE is a practical need to retain the Government appointment system at district board level to ensure a proper balance among different interests, the new Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Peter Tsao Kwang-yung, said yesterday.

Mr Tsao's statement was in response to a liberal pressure group's recent demand that all Government appointees be removed from the territory's 19 district boards by 1991.

The Government, however, has yet to decide on whether to change the proportion of its appointees on the district advisory bodies.

At present, a third of the some 470 district board members are selected by the

administration. Mr Tsao said a Government decision on the issue was expected by September next year.

He added that the Government did not have any plans at present to redefine the constituencies for the next district board elections scheduled for 1991.

The Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood earlier this week denounced the appointment system as a stumbling block on Hongkong's road for democracy.

Mr Tsao, formerly Secretary for Administration and Information, said a priority for his new office was to improve links between the district boards and the general public.