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Call to woo HK students home

A LEGISLATOR has suggested giving more financial help to Hong-kong's overseas students in order to get them to return to the territory under contract.

Kingsley Sit Ho-yin said that raising tertiary education places from the present 7,000 to 25,000 by 1995 would waste taxpayers' money and lower the academic quality of students.

"To increase the number of tertiary education students is contradictory to the needs of society," he said.

"In fact, we have already reached the (1995) target if we include the many who receive their education abroad.

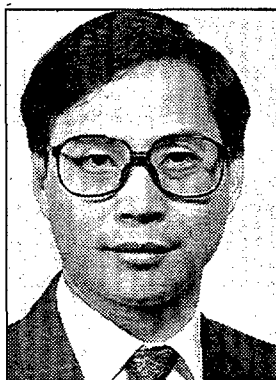
"We need technicians, rather than engineers and PhDs, to support the growth of our industry."

He said vocational schools accounted for 40 percent of tertiary students in Japan and 70 percent in Taiwan.

"Our education policy should not be set before the needs of our industry are worked out."

Mr Sit gave his views yesterday at an education seminar held by the Hong-kong Association for Continuing Education.

He Wong Kam-cheung, the vice chairman of the Hongkong Subsidised Secondary School Council, said he was worried that more students would



■ Mr Sit ... territory needs technicians.

prefer to attend university if teacher-training institutes were not able to offer degrees.

He said it was important to review the status of teacher-training institutes. "We must not recruit students with low qualifications. And we must not discourage those who choose to be teachers," he said.

A member of the Continuing Education Association, Lo Ming-tak, suggested that universities consider offering external degrees so that more qualified students could benefit.

The chairman of the Continuing Education Association, Desmond Lee, said the Government should gradually relinquish more autonomy to the council that makes decisions for universities.