"NO EVIDENCE"

Hong Kong's transport system has been inadequate for as long as I can remember, and I have lived in Hong Kong for well over twenty years.

A bus company's dream here seems to be every bus packed like a tin of sardines at all hours of the day, to ensure the highest profits. At a minimum of comfort to the passengers, of course. Now that Hong Kong and Kowloon are joined by an under-sea cross-harbour tunnel, buses travel overcrowded to an alarming degree, often with passengers standing upstairs. Some of these buses do not even provide an overhead rail for passengers to hang on to, creating intolerable conditions. Requests even for straps or rails, provided as a matter of course by most bus companies in the world, have until recently been ignored here. As the cross-harbour route is more expensive than other routes, many buses from less lucrative routes have been diverted to it.

Bus companies in Hong Kong hold monopolies, the terms of their franchises claiming to protect the profits of the companies and to provide adequate service to the public. Particular attention has always been paid to the profit angle, but complaints to the Government about inadequacy are always met with the response, "How does one measure adequacy?" The answer to that question can be found by those who travel on buses; but Government servants never do, so they remain in ignorance of what adequacy means.

In a hot, sticky climate like Hong Kong's, walking to work or to school is a trial that no one will endure unless there is no alternative. And that is how illegal transport was born. In all the years I can recall in Hong Kong, anyone who could afford to own a car regardless of its roadworthiness has been able to run an illegal taxi service by picking up passengers waiting at bus stops.

But it was in 1967 that illegal transport really came into its own. The disturbances in that year resulted in strikes among public transport workers. The Government "solved" the problem by advising the company owners to dismiss all striking workers, thus setting a fashion aimed at destroying industrial action that has prevailed in Hong Kong ever since. Since about 90% of the bus company workers are left-wing trades union members, their dismissal virtually eliminated public transport by bus. This was the hey-day for illegal
car and van drivers, who saved the workers' day, in the manner of Dunkirk on a more lofty and memorable occasion. Anything that ran on wheels became public transport.

I cannot help believing that in Hong Kong there is a deliberate policy to withhold legalisation of a public demand because it is more profitable in some quarters to shut one's eyes to the illegality. The Government cannot be so blind that it fails to recognise a public need. The Triad Societies are certainly not blind to public needs. They never fail to jump on the illegal bandwagon and make their fortunes by squeeze; indeed, they go one better than that: they harass what is legal and protect by gangsterism what is illegal, be it hawking, gambling, or public transport. And this they do with impunity, because corrupt police and Government servants in turn protect them.

These gangsters with their police friends were not slow to cash in on illegal transport, which took the form of illegal taxis (pak pai) and illegal small buses (later called mini-buses). These gangsters mapped out routes for the mini-buses, controlled queues of passengers, and demanded payment from all drivers. Those who refused to pay were beaten up or even murdered; some were summoned on false traffic charges, a clear indication of police involvement in the racket. Whether it was true or not I cannot say, but at any rate it was in line with common practice, that a policeman who could memorise the numbers of illegal taxis for the purpose of summoning them if they had not paid up, or allowing them to do as they liked if they had, would be promoted. This may be going too far, but in any case, illegal transport became big business, run by a joint corporation: gangsters and police. It was also profitable for drivers, who resented, but nevertheless paid up, what was demanded.

The public liked the new but illegal form of transport, the mini-buses. A little cramped they were too, but at least everyone got a seat, and as drivers were out for fares, they offered good and courteous service. Many would-be passengers, however, refused to ride in this illegal transport, as one never knew when police would force them all to get off (the driver not having paid his squeeze); besides, it was risky to ride in vehicles without the necessary insurance in case of accident.

An agitation began to have the mini-buses legalised. While admitting that mass transport is the only real answer to traffic congestion, I felt that in the absence
of mass transport, the only way was to legalise the mini-buses, for the safety of the passengers, and also to try to stop the squeeze. When I brought this before the Transport Advisory Committee (of which I was a member), the then Commissioner laughed at the suggestion. "Legalise those things," he ridiculed. I had only intended that they should be legalised for a limited number of years while the mass-transport solution was being studied. Six months later, the same Commissioner who had laughed at me to scorn made the proposal to legalise the mini-buses as a permanent means of transport. What had changed his thinking in that short space of time I think only he could answer.

So mini-buses were legalised at the end of 1969. Very strict regulations were laid down for their operation, including punitive measures that do not apply to any other form of transport. Licences were to be extremely high, $3,000 per annum, yet for their money the mini-bus drivers were to get only strict regulations, limitation of routes and stopping places, with the impounding of their mini-buses for breaking regulations.

Familiar as I was with Hong Kong's system of corruption, I saw in these strict regulations the certainty of corruption. I cannot help feeling that those who laid down the regulations were aiming at additional means of squeeze; or it could have been sheer stupidity. Needless to say I went on record as opposing any such strictures as providing a ready means of corruption. Nor did I prove wrong.

It is common practice for Government servants, either through ignorance or corruption, to state glibly that illegal operators or offenders against the law always "like" to offer payment to circumvent the law. This could be true in some cases; more often it is the fact that they either pay up or accept a summons, whether or not there has been any offence committed. And it was not difficult to squeeze mini-bus drivers, regardless of whether they had or had not broken the law. The penalty of impounding their buses for a week or more resulted in loss of livelihood for two shift drivers, loss of profit for the owner, and deterioration of the buses so impounded, either through natural elements, or through deliberate damage done by police while the vehicles remained in the compound. Not content with this stern punishment, the Transport Department further threatened a regulation that after three impoundings, the licence would be cancelled. This was going too far, and when disturbances seemed inevitable, this proposal was quietly dropped.
But the impounding continued, and there is no doubt whatever that it swelled the coffers of the corruption. It took a fair minded Magistrate like the late and much-respected John Millar to reject the order to impound; other members of the Judiciary supported his views.

But the Hong Kong bureaucracy has a quick solution to all objections by the Judiciary, no matter what the crime: they simply make the punishment statutory, or, if that is rejected, they make it automatic, departmental policy, without reference to the courts. And this the Transport Department did immediately upon John Millar's rejection of the impounding regulations. The mini-bus drivers will forever cherish the memory of the just Magistrate, John Millar.

But to return to the racketeering after legislation of the mini-buses. The squeeze collectors gave themselves the fancy name of "regulators", that is, they regulated who had the right to pick up passengers at the mini-bus termini. Those who failed to pay up were warned, reported, and either beaten up, summoned, or both. Nor did drivers have to pay one regulator alone: a driver who operated from Kowloon to Yuen Long had to pay the thugs at the Jordan Road terminal, again at Tsuen Wan, and once more at Yuen Long, since thugs have their territorial districts of operation. Many of the racketeers were triad members, and some were ex-police. It is common for men dismissed from the police to become collectors and racketeers on behalf of their former buddies.

I had always been on good terms with the mini-bus drivers; most of them, though not all, are decent men just trying to earn a decent living by their skill. Business acumen is a special quality of the Chinese that has saved them from starvation when other nations in the same situation might have given way to despair. When faced with difficulties over the strict regulations, therefore, the mini-bus drivers came to me to represent them in the Transport Advisory Committee. I sent several petitions on their behalf to the Government, and I believe that I was able sometimes to get over a few points that helped to resolve at least the problem of cancelling licences.

One point in which I repeatedly failed was the problem of corruption. I could not get it over that the regulations were being used for squeeze, and the Commissioner of Police repeatedly accused me of being
prejudiced against the police. Yet at one time Peter Fitzroy Godber sat on the Transport Advisory Committee as representative of the traffic police—a man later found to be in possession of millions of Hong Kong dollars that he had certainly never earned in his job in the Police Force. On one such occasion of confrontation, the Commissioner demanded that I withdraw my statement; I refused as I knew it was correct. It was a great pity that Mr. Sutcliffe was himself prejudiced enough to disbelieve me.

I found the Anti-Corruption Branch as unreceptive as the Commissioner. In their eyes, it was always my job, not theirs, to investigate and check out all the evidence. Whether I gave evidence or not, the answer was always the same, that the allegation was without foundation; or there was no evidence at all. One Government servant, still serving so I cannot name him, told me that when action was taken on evidence of corruption given by him, resulting in prosecution, his promotion was stopped henceforth. Members of the public fare worse with that Branch. I have seen them go into the Anti-Corruption office full of enthusiasm to cooperate and tell all they know. After hours of ruthless questioning they come out wishing to withdraw the charges.

On this occasion, I went to the Anti-Corruption Branch with some misgivings, but also with a little hope, because at last I had a mini-bus driver who really wanted to give evidence. This driver, Mr. Mak Pui Yuen, was so fed up with the situation that he offered to drive the head of the Anti-Corruption Branch, Mr. Peter Law, in person to see for himself how the money was collected. The plan was to be secret. Only Mr. Law, Mr. Mak and myself would know the plan, and even Mr. Law would not be told our destination.

To make sure that no one else was listening in to the conversation inviting Mr. Peter Law, I went personally to his office, and explained why I had arrived without an appointment—I did not want to talk over the telephone, I explained. When I offered to go with him and Mr. Mak to see the money-collecting, he jumped at the chance. "Any time, any place", he said. "The operation will be kept secret." He had already had a previous interview with Mr. Mak. "I keep his file locked in this drawer," he told me, indicating a drawer in his desk. "No one will know who the informant was," he assured me. I almost believed him, sceptical as I was by this time of any member of that branch.
My informant then arranged the outing, and again I took the journey across the harbour to ask Mr. Law if he was free on that day to go with us. I told Mr. Law that the date arranged was 8th April, 1969, at 10 a.m. We were to meet him at the ferry but the journey was not divulged.

One would expect a head of a Department to keep a diary of his appointments. Mr. Law checked and said he could go that day. He made no objection to not being told the destination.

When I arrived home after seeing Peter Law, I received a phone call. It was Mr. Law himself. He informed me that he had discovered that on that day arranged for our outing, he had an appointment, a meeting at the Colonial Secretariat, in the early afternoon. He wanted to know how far we were going, so as to estimate whether or not he could get back on time. I assured him that we would get him back by lunch if we could set out half-an-hour earlier. In order not to treat him like a child, I mentioned that we were going to the New Territories.

About half-an-hour later, Mr. Law rang again. He had just heard, he said, that the meeting scheduled for the afternoon was to take place in the morning instead. Would it be all right if he sent his Second-in-Command instead? By this time I could not have cared who came, since all this had been on the telephone, in spite of my explanation as to why I did not use the phone. Besides, with my own close contacts with the Government, I know it is most unlikely that a meeting scheduled for the afternoon will be changed to the morning, as Government meeting schedules are tight and inflexible. I half-heartedly agreed.

When we met that morning, Mr. Morgan (Law's Second-in-Command) told me that he had brought with him two car-loads of detectives, "just as witnesses, in case we see anything." Does his own chief believe him so little that he needs witnesses? Would Mr. Mak and I not have been enough witnesses to support the word of a senior police officer? Mr. Mak was positively angry and thought I had tricked him. "What is the purpose in going?" he asked. "I recognise one of those men, as he squeezed me when I was a hawker."

We drove half-heartedly to Tsuen Wan, our conversation mainly consisting of Mr. Morgan's efforts to prove how honest his Department was. On reaching
Tsuen Wan, we decided to call off the operation. Of course, there was no corruption in sight.

When I arrived home I wrote out a report about the affair, showing how Peter Law made a promise and broke it, and showing the sequence of events. I sent it to Mr. Law and asked him to confirm or correct it; failure to do so, I said, would mean that he had no objection.

Mr. Law eventually confirmed, but with plenty of excuses. He insisted that only he and Mr. Morgan knew the purpose of the trip. As a man trained for the Special Branch, I find it hard to believe that Mr. Law foresaw no possible leakage in the phone calls. Mr. Law must be totally naive if he believes that it is not possible to stop a whole corrupt operation in the whole of Hong Kong for one day. In fact, I now believe that his purpose in not coming personally was just for that reason. If we had seen the corruption, he would have had to take action. If there had been none to see, we should have known that he had leaked out the news in order to stop it for that day. But by sending another man and a number of detectives, no one could be pinpointed for blame.

To support his contention that no one knew of our plan, he informed me that one of the cars carrying the detectives actually lost the party, indicating that they did not know our destination and were trying to follow our car but lost their way. He must think I too am naive. Did they set out with no means of contacting each other? Are detectives so inefficient that they lose their quarry even when in a friendly party all waiting for each other? One shudders to think what would happen if such nitwits were chasing a real quarry! Besides, it was not necessary for the men to know our destination: operations everywhere for that time could easily be suspended as the police have daily links with the gangsters who operate the racket. Mr. Law must really believe me to be naive!

Mr. Law has repeatedly invited people to go personally to see him. He can talk, I agree. But I am not deceived, and in spite of his invitations I have never on any occasion returned to see him. This was the second occasion on which I had found him unreliable. If ever I make such a plan again, I shall make it public that I have done so, and let the official answer to the public.
This episode almost destroyed the confidence of my informant in myself too. It took me a long time to convince him that I was just as angry and disgusted about it as he.

This kind of action always has an adverse effect. It was now clear to the gangsters that they had coverage right from the top, and from that time on the racketeers became more brazen, operating openly, as will be seen by what followed a few months later.

In the early months of 1970 it looked as if there might be demonstrations by mini-bus drivers, who were being harrassed with more and more stringent regulations and squeezed each time for more and more money. By April, 1970, they were so angry at the beatings, intimidation and false summonses that they took photographs showing thugs collecting money at Jordan Road Ferry, with police standing by watching. They passed these photographs to me, and also gave me details of several men who had been intimidated, beaten or falsely summoned after refusing to join the racket.

Having completely lost faith in the Anti-Corruption Branch, I decided to write to Chief Superintendent of Traffic, Mr. Peter F. Godber, giving him details of two of these complaints, stating all names, and the police numbers of the police involved. The letter was written on 2nd May, 1970. Mr. Godber replied on 13th May, saying that he had sent the complaint to the Anti-Corruption Branch (in spite of my request not to do so) and that branch "tells me after conducting extensive enquiries that there have been no complaints of intimidation nor can he (Peter Law) find any evidence to support the complaints you mentioned." I had mentioned the photographs, but did not send any, partly because I thought the shop and the photographer might have been traced and intimidated, and partly because I thought it was up to the police to make proper investigations themselves. However, Mr. Godber in his reply asked me to pass on the photographs to the Anti-Corruption Branch, and he added: "At this stage there would appear to be no facts or evidence to support the claims made by the people who brought this matter to your attention." I had had enough, and refused to send the photographs. The complainants, whose names I had given, had not even been questioned, so the whole incident had been resolved without questioning those most deeply involved. Why play games any longer? I made up my mind to go and do my own investigations and take my own photographs. I took a witness, and expected to have some difficulty, partly because anyone
can detect me on sight, and partly because I was not sure that I could see the operation on a chance visit.

It was much easier than I expected.

But let me deviate slightly.

Ten days after receiving Mr. Godber's report, my informant was gazetted "Unreliable Informer". The entry in the Gazette shows the photograph, name, address, the number of his mini-bus, and everything possible, including his giving of information to me, to make him a target for police. The report went on to say:

"This man, since 1958, authored numerous allegations of corruption and malpractices against police and Resettlement Department personnel. None have ever been substantiated.

"Since 1964 he has operated a van service between Yuen Long and Jordan Road and has been responsible for a continual stream of unsubstantiated complaints of corruption and intimidation by Traffic Branch personnel. He directs most of these complaints either through Mrs. E. Elliot (sic) or directly to A.C. Branch and has offered his services as an informer to A.C. Branch... "Under no circumstances is he to be used as a police informer."

The whole screed was repeated in Chinese in the Gazette. Thus the informer on corruption became the accused; the intimidated was accused for being the intimidator; the honest became the dishonest; and vice versa. What sin he had committed in reporting corruption to me and to the Anti-Corruption Branch has yet to be explained. That he intimidated police officers is an unfounded allegation that has never been proved by the police: but of course police do not have to prove anything; their word, based on hearsay or sheer malice is enough. The public alone are expected to prove their allegations, and even when they do, they are still not accepted. That the man himself was intimidated can be proved by the pile of summonses he acquired after making his reports on corruption, and also by the fact that, since this publication in the Gazette, he has been unable to drive his mini-bus for fear of becoming the target of police violence and injustice. So much intimidated was he that he would not allow the news to be made public until long after it happened, and by that time, no one was willing to listen. I have attempted personally to inform the Governor, as well as Members of Parliament in Britain, but no one is interested in
knowing how the police can destroy a man who crosses the path of their corruption.

However, this episode, if examined, damns the whole C.I.D., the Traffic Department and the Anti-Corruption Branch, since the Gazette does not even try to hide the fact that informers on corruption are treated as liars, their evidence is discarded, and they are intimidated. Mr. Peter Law has never even attempted to give a satisfactory explanation as to how this man who wanted to help was destroyed — except to deny that he was the one who informed the C.I.D. about Mr. Mak's reports.

My own anger over this affair knew no bounds. I was determined to clear this man and at the same time expose the phoney nature of the Anti-Corruption Branch's so-called investigations of evidence. I was so angry that Godber had found "no evidence" in spite of the clear evidence of the photographs given to me by the drivers, that I decided to go personally, and see the racket for myself.

It was Dragon Boat Day, 1970, when I set off with an English friend as a witness and a camera to photograph anything I might see. We went to the Jordan Road minibus terminus, the point indicated by the "Unreliable Informer". I found more evidence than I could have dreamed of finding. No doubt encouraged by the protection given to them by all branches of the police involved, the thugs were openly operating. I saw each driver hand over a dollar, which the rogues were clinking in their hands to attract the next driver due for fleecing. At least six men were collecting, and I recognised one of them as appearing in the photographs given to me by the drivers: his face was unusual and I could not mistake him. First one, then a second and later a third policeman came on the scene and watched the money being collected. Incredulous, I approached the policemen and asked them why they were allowing such a racket to go on. "This is not a racket," they said, "These drivers want to give the money." They invited me to go with them while they questioned the drivers about their willingness, but when they did so, they took the thugs with them. It was a farce to imagine that any driver would protest while surrounded by thugs. I felt sick and disgusted, but went on taking photographs quite openly: it was obvious that the police knew they would not be blamed for allowing the racket to go on.
One point I wanted to clear up was whether the drivers really "wanted" to give the money as a reward for "regulating" the buses which needed no regulator. I therefore boarded one bus and pretended I was going to Yuen Long. When the bus set off and was out of hearing of thugs and police, I asked the driver, "Do you drivers really want to give this money?" He laughed bitterly: "Want to?" he roared. "You die if you don't". He drew his finger across his throat to illustrate. This confirmed my fears that it was nothing short of intimidation.

I returned home, wrote the story detail by detail, had the photographs printed, and sent it to all the newspapers. It hit the headlines with pictures, on 11th June, 1970.

Rediffusion Television did a very good programme on the incident, interviewing a police spokesman and myself individually, but arranging the interviews like an exchange, question and answer. The police spokesman denied that there was a racket or that anyone had reported any racket; I followed showing the letter I had written to Godber reporting the racket. The programme was so convincing that there was a public outcry, and many Europeans who had not believed me before were convinced: Chinese, of course, need no convincing as they know the truth. In the end the police lamely admitted that there had been a mistake, a report had been made, and was under investigation. A few days later, a few men were arrested for the operation at Jordan Road Ferry, and the whole operation went underground, only to be reported to me again two years later, and again denied by the Police. I do not know if the men arrested were the real racketeers: certainly no police were included. I wrote to Godber, asking to see photographs of the arrested men, offering to identify them, offering to be a witness in the case. He did not reply. That is how the public are treated when they "Report Crime" and obey the call to "Be prepared to go to court as witnesses." The Police do not want witnesses, because they often charge the wrong persons, often drug-addicts standing in for the racketeers.

One newspaper editorial on this subject hit the nail on the head. It said: "Spokesmen for the Police managed to strain the credulity of the public again this week with denials of any knowledge of racketeering in the operation of mini-buses in Kowloon." The editorial added: "It almost seemed that the authorities
were more interested in discrediting the source of this particular complaint than in seriously investigating the allegation." The newspapers did not at that time know about the complete discrediting of the informant who supplied me with the facts that led me to expose Jordan Road terminal: This accurate informant remains to this day gazetted "Unreliable Informer".

The Police have always relied upon public fear or apathy, lack of sustained pressure by the press, and the attitude of most Europeans which is to maintain the status quo at any cost. These factors are responsible for the glossing over of similar incidents, until they disappear into oblivion. Thus the problem never gets solved, it worsens, and leads us nearer to collapse of the whole rotten structure. Other corrupt Asian regimes have fallen because of failure to root out this cancer that destroys the whole tissue of our society.

Therefore, no one cared when my accurate informant lost his means of livelihood; and when eventually he did speak up again, no one was interested. But the drivers cared when the racket continued in another form, in 1972.

The 1972 racket took a different turn. Collecting money in the open where photographs could be taken left the Police open to exposure by persons like myself determined to fight corruption. Next time it was all organised indoors.

In December, 1971, a Cleaning Company calling itself the "Great Continental" (Tai Chow) was registered in the Business Registration Department of the Hong Kong Government. Its location was a well-known building in Mongkok, Kowloon. Its job was supposed to be cleaning mini-buses. Its purpose was to carry on the squeeze.

Soon after its establishment, many mini-bus drivers reported to me that they were being approached while driving their buses by men claiming to be detectives. They were ordered to join the cleaning company at a cost of $80 a month, failing which they would find themselves with summonses for traffic offences: there was also some intimidation. Many drivers were already employing cleaners for their buses and were unwilling to pay $80 for a non-existent service. Those who agreed to pay were given stickers for the front and back of their buses, a round one like a licence for the front, and an oblong one like an advertisement for the back: thus a traffic policeman approaching from back or front could see whether the driver had paid his fee: those
who paid could break regulations if they wished; those who did not pay were issued with summonses whether or not they had broken the law. I have a sample of each of these labels of the Tai Chow Cleaning Company, and I have taken photographs of buses to which they were stuck.

It should be noticed that it is illegal to put stickers of any kind on a minibus: mini-bus associations had applied many times and been refused permission to use such stickers for their members. Yet not a word was said when this phoney company issued stickers: indeed, the illegal stickers signified that an unwritten law had been obeyed, the law of corruption. One may argue that the Police may not have noticed the stickers. If so, they have no right to be in the force if they see less than members of the public. They lost no time in noticing them when mini-bus drivers voluntarily stuck up my election notices in their buses in 1971: they were arrested immediately.

Drivers soon began to report action taken against them when they did not display the stickers. One man received three summonses within four days after refusing to join the company, but he was able to produce bills to prove that his bus was under repair in a garage on the days stated on the summonses. When I showed these to Mr. Ringer, Traffic Chief in Kowloon, he came up with the brilliant suggestion that perhaps the garage people were running his bus around. Indeed, it was not in fit condition to run around. Ringer then suggested that perhaps there was some illegal bus running around using this number. I told him if such things were happening he should be doing something about it. Eventually the summonses were all cancelled.

Other bus drivers said their new buses were being called in for checking on the grounds that the body-work was in poor condition. I examined these buses. One was in very good condition with only a short scratch down one side. The other was completely new, upholstery and outside body-work. I asked Mr. Ringer to step outside his office and see for himself. He refused. Later he reported that possibly the drivers had had their buses repainted to show to me. Their registration numbers proved that they were new buses, and there was no sign of any renewal of paint. Besides, members of the public are not all liars as police try to make out. One just cannot win, as ingrained corruption in the Force has brought up the answers to all questions.

The drivers hate these bus check-ups because they
waste a whole day going for the check, and they also have to pay a bribe to get clearance. In the long run, therefore, it is cheaper to join the racketeers - and this the police well know.

On this occasion I took the mini-bus drivers' complaints to the Governor, since I knew it was a waste of time to go to the Anti-Corruption Branch. I had been a guest at Government House the previous week, and been treated most courteously by the Governor, and driven away in a car provided by him. Yet when I took the drivers' petition single-handed to the gates of Government House, police rushed forward and closed the gates as if it were an invasion force arriving. My petition was received by a policeman on duty, and it gave details of the 1970 and 1972 racket.

Perhaps it was unfair to expect the Governor to act independently so soon after his arrival in Hong Kong. He was polite and showed concern, but insisted that the Police were the right ones to deal with the matter. I had to reject his advice to go to the Anti-Corruption Branch, as I knew their method of procedure: one has to have a receipt or something like that to prove corruption, or there is said to be "No evidence". The operator of the cleaning company, however, closed shop, threatening to sue me for libel. It was a great pity he did not do so, as I could have filled the court with witnesses, who would have gone to court but not to the Anti-Corruption Branch. I am sure the Police must have advised him not to expose the racket in court.

I did throw out the suggestion that corruption could be indicated by checking to see how many summonses were issued to non-members of the cleaning company, and how many to members. My challenge was ignored: it might have proved too much!

The organisers of this racket, all high in the police, were named to me, and I reported these to the Government, suggesting an examination of the assets of the persons concerned. I received no acknowledgement. However, I did notice a case in court in which one of these same police was accused of assaulting a driver; but the case was destroyed when the complainant was discredited as being a drug addict. Police often discredit a complainant by this method.

Nor did the mini-bus racket end there. However,
there is an end to my investigations as the police now have the perfect plan of receiving their bribes right inside the Traffic Office at San Po Kong, where prying eyes like mine can neither see it nor photograph it. I have reported how this racket is carried on, but, true to type, the reply always comes back "No evidence".

There have been three kinds of rackets: when I investigated two of them I found them to be factual. Is there any possibility that the third one is an "unfounded allegation" - a favourite police term for the truth. I have no doubt that the San Po Kong Traffic Office racket is a fact. And as police have no intention of stopping such rackets but actually support, encourage and protect them, there is little hope of dealing with this one.