

RESTRICTED



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 August 1982

Media Arrangements for Japan, China and Hong Kong

The Prime Minister has decided:-

- a) Not to give interviews for Hong Kong journalists before she leaves for the Far East.
- b) To see the three resident Chinese correspondents in London, on the basis of questions submitted in advance.
- c) To see the resident Japanese correspondents and to give short separate interviews to each of the five TV stations ending with a longer one for NHK.

All these interviews will take place in the week before the Prime Minister leaves.

I should be grateful if you could let me have a suggested line for the Prime Minister to take on the key issues, particularly on the future of Hong Kong. It would be helpful if the line could be approved by a Minister and reach me by 8 September.

A. J. COLES

Francis Richards Esq
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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cc to Pdiag

cc: Mr. Ingham

Mr. Ingham

AR 2/8

PRIME MINISTER

MEDIA ARRANGEMENTS FOR JAPAN, CHINA AND HONG KONG

May I suggest that you judge the attached recommendations from Bernard against the principal aim of your visit: to strengthen confidence in Hong Kong about the future.

You have authorised Sir Percy Cradock to tell the Chinese Government that our minimum aim for your visit to China is an agreed concluding statement that the two sides have agreed to have serious talks at official level about the future of Hong Kong. We have also asked the Chinese Government to avoid any public statement that would make this aim hard to achieve.

There is a distinct risk that if there is endless press comment between now and your visit (and I am not encouraged by the attached extract from today's Economist) expectations will be so built up that even a commitment to "serious talks" will fall flat.

My own preference would be that you should give no press interviews before you leave. But if you think it impossible to avoid them I hope you would agree that Bernard, who is quite willing to do so, should make it plain to the Japanese journalists that you are prepared to talk to them about Japan but not Hong Kong and that the Chinese journalists should be similarly controlled through the submission of questions in advance.

A.S.C.

30 July 1982

We shall have to give interviews, - and there will be press comment about Hong Kong. We shall be the better able to influence it by our comment through the media rather than by refusing to comment.

Agree Bernard's suggestion

1. MR COLES - to note - any comments?
2. PRIME MINISTER

cc Miss Stephens

MEDIA ARRANGEMENTS FOR JAPAN, CHINA AND HONG KONG

I would like to get your agreement in principle before the holidays to the media arrangements for your Far East tour.

Pre-tour

It is your practice, whenever possible, to give interviews in advance of a visit to foreign countries. In the case of this tour however we need to temper practice to what is sensible in view of the Hong Kong problem.

We have in fact had only one not very specific or firm request for interviews from Hong Kong - from HK TVB. On this basis I think we can very easily dispense with any pre-tour interviews for the Hong Kong media. In any case I would be prepared to argue it does not make much sense to give TV interviews a fortnight (as it would be) in advance of a visit.

Yes Content to rule out pre-tour interviews for Hong Kong journalists?

So far as China is concerned. There is much less objection to pre-tour interviews. We have had one request from Xinhua - the New China News Agency - who have submitted a list of pretty innocuous questions which do not mention Hong Kong.

But our Peking post has suggested that you might see the three resident Chinese correspondents in London together - Xinhua, People's Daily and Kwangming Daily.

I suggest you agree to do so on the basis of questions submitted in advance. This will give us control over subject matter and will not come amiss to Chinese journalists who do what they are told.

Content to see the 3 Chinese correspondents resident here on the basis of questions submitted in advance?

Japan

The interest in your visit is very considerable and I think you should encourage it though it will be hard work. Our Tokyo post also say that pre-tour interviews would go down well in Japan.

They suggest you should give two interviews to resident Japanese correspondents here:

1. for the writing press - ie. for the six newspapers and two press agencies represented in London; and
2. for the 5 TV stations.

You would not need to do these on the same day. Indeed there might be advantage in your giving the press interviews a day or two ahead of TV since the press publicity is likely to stimulate the public's interest in TV interviews.

Content therefore to see separately:

1. the press; and
2. TV, and to use the TV occasions to give short (5-10 minutes) separate interviews to each station ending with a longer one for NHK, the Japanese equivalent of the BBC; this will be hard work but the atmosphere will be more relaxed than at Summits when you regularly give 4 or 5 (albeit shorter) interviews?

On Tour

The draft programme already submitted to you includes the media schedule with press conferences in the course of the visit. I do not need to go into it now, except in one instance.

NHK, which as I have said, is the Japanese equivalent of the BBC, have asked if you would take part in an hour long discussion programme with an industrialist, an academic and a journalist. President Mitterrand did something similar when he was there in April; it went down well and was reportedly seen by 30 million people.

Our Tokyo post recommends you to agree to this. So do I, subject to your being satisfied with the panel (NHK are receptive to guidance) and your being able to fit in the recording (which is necessary to prepare sub-titles) on September 18 or 19 (Saturday or Sunday).

Agree in principle to taking part in proposed debate?

One other point about the tour. You will have plenty of opportunities in the course of it to play to the audience back home - eg. by way of radio and tv interviews.

Content to play it by ear and to advantage as on the India trip?

Travelling Media Party

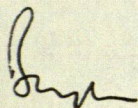
Finally, I would like to get your formal clearance to take a media party of up to 16 (which is the present maximum for accommodating them club class instead of steerage which is clearly not on for such a long tour).


The potential is somewhat reduced because hostilities at the Labour Party Conference will break out before your tour is over. But those currently applying for seats are:

✓ Jack Warden	-	D/Express (chairman of the Lobby)
✓ Michael Jones	-	Sunday Times
Robin Oakley or Gordon Greig	-	D/Mail
John Desborough	-	D/Mirror
Glyn Mathias + 3	-	ITN
Jim Biddulph + 3	-	BBC
Peter Harris	-	BBC External Services
Geoffrey Parkhouse	-	Glasgow Herald
Tony Austin	-	Liverpool Daily Post (pooling for English provincials)
Herbie Knott	-	Freelance photographer (who was on the India visit)

Bonnie Angelo - Time
Rosemary Lanford - Oriental Daily News
Isobel Hilton - Sunday Times

Content to take a media party up to the limit of club class seats?

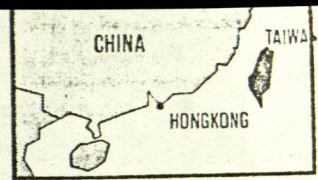


Yes 

B. INGHAM

29 July 1982

Hongkong isn't Port Stanley



Let Mrs Thatcher wave balance sheets, not flags, at China

The strong wills of Mr Deng Xiaoping, Mr Ronald Reagan and Mrs Margaret Thatcher converge on one point—off the south-east coast of China. All three are keen to preserve the freewheeling capitalist prosperity of Hongkong and Taiwan. However, China's ageing ruler wants these historical stains on China's map repainted Peking red. America's ageing president wants his old ally, Taiwan, to remain non-communist. And Britain's heroine of the Falklands wants her star colony, Hongkong, to stay British. Ample room here for conflicts that could end in landgrabs one day.

The Chinese are focusing on the future of Hongkong and Taiwan more sharply now than ever before, partly because of two approaching deadlines: Mrs Thatcher's visit to China in September; and the expiration, 15 years' investing and mortgaging time from this month, of Britain's lease on the New Territories which link Hongkong with China's Guangdong province. The Taiwan issue was thrust to the fore last year by Mr Reagan's promises to upgrade America's "unofficial" relations with the Nationalist government and to sell Taiwan some new military aircraft. Months of bargaining now look like producing a compromise about arms sales which could take the Taiwan question off the boil for the moment.

Still, Mr Deng wants to set China on course for redeeming its claims to long-estranged territories before his years, now 78, catch up with him. As a first step earlier this year, China laid a legal basis for reabsorbing Taiwan, Hongkong and the next-door Portuguese colony of Macao. A draft constitution provides for a new

category of "special administrative regions" which Chinese leaders have indicated could accommodate capitalist enclaves within China. The new constitution also omits the previous definition of China as a unitary state—opening the way, perhaps, for some sort of federation with these non-communist entities.

China wants the lot

Last month Mr Deng called a meeting of prominent Hongkong Chinese to hear their proposals for the future of Hongkong and to assert his own condition: that Chinese sovereignty be extended by 1997 to the whole of today's Hongkong colony—meaning the islands and Kowloon peninsula, which were ceded to Britain in perpetuity in 1842 and 1860, as well as the New Territories which were leased for 99 years in 1898. This was not the shocker it seemed. Britain has always assumed that the status of its ceded land would have to be reviewed in conjunction with the leasehold territories without which Hongkong could not survive. Mr Deng may actually have done Britain a service by coming to grips now with a question that has been hanging over an increasingly anxious Hongkong like a darkening cloud.

In London this week Mrs Thatcher conducted a consultation exercise on Hongkong not unlike last month's in Peking (though one hopes with less awe and more frankness from the invited advisers). The first principle the Hongkong braintrust is pressing on Mrs Thatcher is the need to distinguish between Britain's real interests—keeping Hongkong going as a financial

centre and a viable home for 2½m British passport-holders—and its imperial-nostalgia interest in things like the governor's plumes.

Britain starts out with one big advantage in its bargaining with China: the knowledge that China has much more to lose from a failure of confidence in Hongkong and its currency than Britain does. China earns about 40% of its foreign exchange in Hongkong—nearly \$7 billion a year—compared with Britain's notional \$100m. The intangible gains from Hongkong as an entryway to Asia and a mediator between China and the non-communist world are harder to quantify but here too the bigger beneficiary is probably China. Mrs Thatcher's job is to start convincing Mr Deng that all these benefits could be at risk if the Chinese pushed their claims beyond titular sovereignty towards real control. Most of the schemes advanced recently by China's friends—from turning Hongkong into an extension of the bordering Shenzhen economic zone to setting up a joint Chinese-British ruling council with an alternating governorship—seem unlikely to reassure investors that the spirit and security of Hong-

kong will really and truly not change.

For 10 years Britain has been catering to Chinese sensitivities by refraining from using the word "colony" about Hongkong. The thing to avoid now is drawing the wrong sort of analogy with the Falklands. Hongkong really is not defensible, let alone recapturable. Mrs Thatcher's visit to Peking in September will merely open a new stage of negotiations, which will probably continue for several years. The touchstone, for both sides, should be utility, not dignity.

There is less reason for optimism about Taiwan, because of the familial bitterness of the contest and because of the weight both sets of Chinese put on their sovereign pretensions. The Americans have a role to play in getting both to focus on practicality rather than pride—which, as in Hongkong, means promoting the continuing prosperity of a Chinese island. For the Americans it also means, while keeping Taiwan in a condition to defend itself, not falling into the trap of giving the Taiwanese weapons they want more for prestige than for defence. Mr Reagan seems to be getting the message at last. That is progress.

PRIME MINISTER

✓ N570
16/8

INTERVIEWS FOR JAPAN AND CHINA

You will have to give quite a lot of television and newspaper interviews. As usual, we are in great difficulty with your diary, but the week following your return from Balmoral is full (please see diary attached). The week beginning Monday, 13 September is the week of your departure.

You will remember that I am keeping Monday 13th free. On Tuesday 14 September would you be happy to have an interview with Japanese correspondents commencing at 0930 and the television interviews commencing at 1100 and running through till lunch.

Agree?

I haven't had around to say to Japanese correspondents. I should think the whole thing could be done in 1 hr + 60 minutes for each TV interview.

On Wednesday 15 September, would you be prepared to have an interview with Chinese correspondents at 0930 followed by an interview with the BBC World Service and COI radio.

Agree?

Yes - yes - 1 1/2 hours will be enough for everything

I am afraid this rather crowds you, but with no time the previous week there is little alternative.

CS

13 August 1982