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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

① London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

2 December 1981

You are committed to launching one of Sir Y.K.'s ships in this country (on 12 March). He has also asked you to launch one in Shanghai next September: you are "keeping this in mind". Agree attached draft reply to Sir Y.K.'s letter of 12 Nov.?

Dear Richard,

Amk 2/11

Yes no

- on GR file

Sir Y-K Pao wrote to the Prime Minister on 12 November. Lord Carrington has now received a reply to his letter to Y-K Pao, the text of which was cleared with you (my letter of 5 November refers).

I enclose a draft reply from the Prime Minister. We suggest this should be sent to Hong Kong by telegram so as to reach Sir Y-K Pao before his departure for China on 6 December.

There appears to be an inconsistency between Sir Y-K Pao's letter to the Prime Minister and his letter to Lord Carrington. In the latter it is clear that he is thinking in terms of the Prime Minister's participation in a launch ceremony in Shanghai (which is what we always thought to be the case); but in his letter to the Prime Minister it appears that he may envisage her launching one of his ships under construction at the Austin & Pickersgill yard.

If you think the Prime Minister's attitude to these proposals should be clarified further to Y-K Pao, you may wish us to make an appropriate addition to the telegram.

Yours ever,

PP (R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

Hong  
Kong

3 December 1981

Sir Y.K. Pao

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 2 December and, as I have already told you on the telephone, has agreed that the draft enclosed with it may be despatched.

MODBA

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats  
UNCLASSIFIED

Precedence/Deskby  
ROUTINE

ZCZC  
GRS  
CLASS  
CAVEATS  
DESKBY  
FM FCO  
PRE/ADD  
TEL NO

1 ZCZC  
2 GRS  
3 UNCLASSIFIED  
4  
5  
6 FM FCO 021600Z DEC 81  
7 TO ROUTINE HONG KONG  
8 TELEGRAM NUMBER

9 1. Please pass the following text of a letter from Prime  
10 Minister to Sir Y-K Pao before his departure for China on  
11 6 December. (Texts of related correspondence follow by bag.)  
12 Begins: Thank you for your letter of 12 November. I have also  
13 seen your letter of 24 November to Peter Carrington.  
14 I can understand your desire to press on with your ideas for the  
15 launching of your ships in Shanghai and in this country. But as  
16 we have not yet begun to discuss my proposed visit to China in  
17 any detail with the Chinese authorities, I think it would be  
18 premature to raise your ideas with them at this stage.  
19 I can tell you that no decision has yet been taken on the  
20 Governorship. But we realise its importance and have the  
21 matter under active consideration. ENDS

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//  
/

22  
23 CARRINGTON  
24 NNNN  
25

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
File number	Dept	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) PRIVATE SECRETARY		
Telephone number 233 4041		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

Hay Kay

NOTE FOR THE FILE

I spoke to Sir Y.K.'s London Secretary, Mrs Chu. She said that Sir Y.K. had written to the Prime Minister but had not mentioned the two possible dates. These are:-

1. Thursday 11 February for naming the ship
2. Friday 12 March for launching the ship

Both these would take place in the Sunderland Shipyard.

I told Mrs Chu that neither day was very convenient (particularly not Thursday 11 February as it was Cabinet and Questions on that day) but that we would be in touch again when we had received Sir Y.K.'s letter.

CT.

17 November 1981

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Sir Yue-Kong Pao C.B.E., LL.D., J.P.

WORLD-WIDE SHIPPING GROUP  
20/21ST FLOORS, PRINCE'S BLDG.  
HONG KONG  
TEL: H-242111

12th November, 1981.

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, MP  
Prime Minister  
No. 10 Downing Street  
London S.W. 1  
ENGLAND

*Dear Prime Minister,*

Thank you so much for your letter of 19th October and I am grateful for your favourable response to my invitation for a launch sponsorship although it is realized that any date within this year does not suit your busy schedule. As we are most anxious to have the honour of your presence, we have been in consultation with Austin & Pickersgill to have the ceremony moved back to the time of the vessel's delivery in early 1982 when a christening could take place and I will write you again as soon as a definite date is worked out. As required by the shipyard, we have already decided on "United Enterprise" as the name of the vessel and I trust you are in agreement with our choice.

I will have a short trip on 6th December to Beijing and then be in Shanghai to attend the Opening of the "Marintec China 81" Shipping Exhibition/Conference as a guest speaker. While in Beijing, I expect to be able again to meet with a few members of the top leadership and I very much hope to have the opportunity of a discussion later with you in London at a time of your convenience.

Whilst in Beijing, I shall no doubt be asked by the Chinese leaders about the situation in Hong Kong, and Sir Murray's succession next year which is of course of great interest to them as is it to all of us. I do hope that the decision will be made public in the near future and look forward to learning who our new "Chief Executive" will be.

With warm regards and best wishes,

*Yours Sincerely*  
*J. K. Pao*