



FCS/82/131

Await reply.

MR 15.
9HOME SECRETARYProposal by Hong Kong to describe British Dependent Territories Citizens as 'British Nationals' in Passports

1. As you know, there has been an exchange of correspondence between our two Departments about the proposal by officials of the Hong Kong Executive and Legislative Councils that the term 'British National' should be entered in British passports issued by the Governor of Hong Kong. You have recorded your strong opposition to the Hong Kong proposal, while we continue to see very strong foreign policy reasons, connected with the broader issue of the future of Hong Kong, for agreeing to it.
2. I recognise that this proposal raises very difficult issues for you as well as for us. It needs careful consideration and I do not think we should attempt to reach a decision before the Prime Minister's visit to Hong Kong. The issue is nevertheless bound to be raised with her while she is in Hong Kong. I suggest that the Prime Minister could take the line that she is aware of this issue and wanted to hear the views of the people of Hong Kong at first hand. She could say that we are carefully considering Hong Kong's suggestion and could undertake to give the matter urgent attention on her return.
3. If you agree, we will amend the brief for the Prime Minister on these lines before her departure and set out the background in a little more detail.

/I



4. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister.

FP

(FRANCIS PYM)

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Annit brief.

Ad 14/9

h.c.

FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY

PROPOSAL BY HONG KONG TO DESCRIBE
BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORIES
CITIZENS AS "BRITISH NATIONALS" IN
PASSPORTS

Thank you for your recent minute. I entirely agree with the line which you suggest the Prime Minister should take if this matter is raised with her in Hong Kong, although she might also indicate that we do see serious difficulties in the proposal that has been made.

I understand that the background brief for the Prime Minister will bring out the serious immigration difficulties which I believe the proposal entails.

I am sending a copy of this minute to the Prime Minister.

hsw

15 September 1982

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