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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 October 1982

Dear John,

AR 11/10
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Future of Hong Kong: Public Comment
on Anglo/Chinese talks

You asked in your letter of 5 October for advice on:

- a) a line for the Prime Minister to take in Parliament;
and
- b) line to be taken with the media.

As you know, several PQs on the future of Hong Kong and the outcome of the Prime Minister's talks in China have been tabled for the second half of October. It might be helpful if the Prime Minister were to make a statement in Parliament on her visit to the Far East which would include a short passage on Hong Kong and which, as you suggest, could be drawn upon thereafter. We are giving urgent thought to this and will be putting forward a proposed statement soon.

As for the line for use with the media, specifically on the question of Anglo/Chinese talks, I attach extracts from the text of what the Governor has told the Legislative Council on 6 October and a draft line for use with the media here (the gist of which you already know). This line would also be useful for our posts abroad and could be incorporated in a guidance telegram to them, if you agree.

Yours ever
J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

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DEFENSIVE LINE TO TAKE WITH THE MEDIA AND OTHERS ON THE ANGLO/
CHINESE TALKS ON HONG KONG

Meetings in Peking to follow up the Prime Minister's visit have begun through diplomatic channels. As was made clear by the Prime Minister in her press conferences in Peking and Hong Kong, the content of these talks must remain confidential. No timetable for these talks has been set. The extent and level of Hong Kong's participation on the British side will be decided in accordance with the requirements of the talks. The Governor of Hong Kong will be consulted throughout and will participate as and when necessary.

6 OCT 1982

