

SECRET

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FROM PEKING 210745Z MAR 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

MS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 253 OF 21/3/83

REPEATED FOR INFO TO IMMEDIATE HONG KONG

MY TELNO 252: FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

1. WESTERN EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT INFORMED US ON SATURDAY THAT PREMIER ZHAO WAS TOO BUSY TO SEE ME AND THAT HE HAD INSTRUCTED YAO GUANG TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE ON HIS BEHALF. YAO WOULD LET US KNOW WHEN HE COULD RECEIVE ME.

2. IN REPLY, WE TOLD WED THIS MORNING THAT I WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED THAT A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM MY PRIME MESSAGE MINISTER HAD BEEN TREATED IN THIS WAY. SINCE IT WAS, HOWEVER, OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE THAT THE MESSAGE SHOULD BE DELIVERED WITHOUT DELAY, I WOULD AGREE TO GIVE IT TO YAO AND SHOULD LIKE TO DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CALL AT 4 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH.

COMMENT

3. IT WAS PREDICTABLE THAT ZHAO WOULD AVOID SEEING ME FOR AN INTERVIEW ABOUT A MESSAGE WITHOUT PRIOR WARNING OF THE CONTENTS AND I JUDGED IT ILL-ADVISED TO HOLD OUT FOR A HIGHER LEVEL WHEN OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE MUST BE TO GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND TO GIVE IT THE BEST CHANCE OF FAVOURABLE CONSIDERATION. NEVERTHELESS CHINESE BEHAVIOUR HAS BEEN DISCOURTEOUS AND I INTEND, IN DUE COURSE, TO DRAW MFA'S ATTENTION TO THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS TREATMENT AND THAT ACCORDED THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR IN LONDON.

CRADOCK

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

LIMITED

HD/HKGD

HD/FED

HD/PLANNING STAFF

HD/FUSD

PS

PS/MR HURD

PS/LORD BELSTEAD

PS/FUS

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SIR I SINCLAIR LEGAL ADVISER

MR ROBERTS NEWS D

MR COLES NO 10 DOWNING STREET

MR MARTIN ASSESSMENTS STAFF
CABINET OFFICE

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