



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

24 March, 1983

John Taylor

Hong Kong

*Sited date of letter
2.3.83*

I enclose a petition to the Prime Minister from the Heung Yee Kuk in Hong Kong asking the Hong Kong Government to inform the Kuk of the progress of talks on the future of Hong Kong. The petition was sent to us through the Governor's office.

You may like to acknowledge it in the normal way, sending your letter back to us for onward transmission to the Governor. I should also be grateful if we could have a word about how the substantive reply should be handled. The Department suggest that, since the Heung Yee Kuk is a statutorily established body in Hong Kong, with some prestige in the Territory, it would be appropriate for a reply to go from the Governor on behalf of the Prime Minister. (The Prime Minister met representatives of the Heung Yee Kuk at the reception at Government House during her visit to Hong Kong in September 1982). If you agree the Department will draft accordingly.

John Taylor
John Taylor

pp. (J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 March, 1983

Hong Kong

Thank you for your letter of 24 March about the letter to the Prime Minister from the Heung Yee Kuk. I enclose an acknowledgment and should be grateful if you would send it to the Governor of Hong Kong for onward transmission. With regard to the substantive reply, I agree that it would be appropriate for a reply to be sent by the Governor on behalf of the Prime Minister.

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 March, 1983

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 2 March setting out the views of the Heung Yee Kuk on the maintenance of the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. The contents of your letter are being studied and a reply will be sent to you in due course.

A. J. COLES

Mr. Lau Wong-fat

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Letter to: Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, British Prime Minister
(Via H.E. the Governor; SDA and RS(NT),
Hong Kong)

From: Mr. LAU Wong-fat, Chairman, Heung Yee Kuk
Mr. CHAN Yat-san, Chairman, Political Research
Committee, Heung Yee Kuk
Mr. HO Sun-kuen, Chairman, Legal Research
Committee, Heung Yee Kuk

Date: 2.3.83

Subject: Views on the Maintenance of the Stability and
Prosperity of Hong Kong

Text:

1. Immediately after your meetings with the Chinese leaders in Beijing in September 1982, a joint communique was published by China and Britain stating that diplomatic talks would be held by the two countries in order to solve the problem of Hong Kong's future with a common objective of maintaining Hong Kong's prosperity and stability. Looking forward, there are still 14 long years ahead before 1997 when the New Territories lease expires. Looking back, however, a mere 14 years seemed to have elapsed in just a wink. Thus, China and Britain should actively expedite the talks, with a view to seeking an effective solution acceptable to China, Britain and Hong Kong, and at the same time able to maintain Hong Kong's prosperity and stability so as to pluck up the confidence of Hong Kong people as well as international confidence in making long-term investments in Hong Kong.

2. Historically speaking, Britain acquired and has been administering Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories on the strength of three treaties. Nevertheless, from the legal point of view, Britain has to return to

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China the New Territories (including the Kai Tak International Airport), amounting to 92% of the total area of the Colony, leaving behind only the Kowloon Peninsula (south of Boundary Street) and the Hong Kong Island which have an area equivalent to 8% of the total area of the Colony. British administration of these remaining areas will hardly be viable even if Chinese chooses not to recover them. From the political point of view, as China declared in its memorandum to the United Nations in 1972 that the problem of Hong Kong and Macau was the result of a series of unequal treaties signed by China under coercion of the imperialists, Britain has therefore no grounds for argument when China proposes to recover the sovereignty over the whole of Hong Kong.

3. However, owing to the facts of history and the good relationship between China and Britain in the recent years (Britain was the first Western country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China), this problem that is left over by history may well be solved by discussions.

4. At the banquet held in your honour during your Beijing visit, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang said, "In the twelfth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, the programme for our country's comprehensive socialist modernization and constructions was laid down. China will continue with its open policy and actively expand its interflow with foreign countries on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. In developing our relations with other countries, the five principles of peaceful coexistence will be our basic guidelines."

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He also said explicitly, "There are still some historical problems in the Sino-British relations that remain to be settled. However, if only both sides will look at them from the viewpoint of a long-term strategy, develop the relations between the two countries and follow the five principles of peaceful coexistence when dealing with the problems, I believe that it will not be difficult to find a solution."

During our meeting with Mr. Liao Chengzhi, Vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress, in Beijing on 12.1.83, Mr. Liao also said that if Britain returned the sovereignty over Hong Kong to China, other issues were negotiable on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. He told us to put in greater efforts for the common interests of China, Britain and Hong Kong and to urge Britain to make early negotiation with China as it would not be advantageous to Hong Kong if the situation lingered on uncertainly for a long time.

5. In view of the above, we believe that if Britain make an early promise to return the sovereignty over Hong Kong to China, all other problems can be settled through negotiations so long as both China and Britain can be benefited on an equal and mutually beneficial basis. For example, Britain can make use of the land near Deep Bay in the New Territories, the lease of which will expire in 1997, to build an international airport in a joint venture with Shenzhen Special Zone in Kwangtung Province, China. China and Britain can then make a contract regarding the use of the airport for a number of years, thereby settling the future of Hong Kong. The construction of the

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international airport can prompt improvements to the sea and land traffic and telecommunications between Shenzhen and Hong Kong so that the prosperity of Hong Kong can be extended to the Special Economic Zone of Shenzhen. This is a good way for China and Britain to maintain the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong.

6. Hong Kong is a political, economic and cultural interflow centre of Britain in the Far East. If Hong Kong ceases to benefit China and Britain, diplomatic negotiations between the two countries will of course be affected. At present, when the Chinese are proceeding with socialist modernization and constructions in an all-round way, the maintenance of the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong should be of certain help to China's developments under the four modernizations programmes and should also provide certain benefits for Britain.

The New Territories Heung Yee Kuk is an organization representing the New Territories opinion. Now that China and Britain are having negotiations on the future of Hong Kong with reference to the New Territories lease which will expire in 1997, we request the Hong Kong Government to inform the Kuk of the progress of the talks. We promise to keep such information absolutely confidential before the Government makes public announcements. We would be most grateful if you would favour us with a reply.

新界鄉議局用牋

維持香港繁榮和安定的意見

一九八二年九月首相閣下到北京會見中國領導人後，中英兩國曾聯合發表公報說兩國會本着維持香港繁榮和安定的共同目的，通過外交商談來解決香港前途問題。從今日看一九九七年（新界租約期滿）尚有十四年餘長的時間距離；但回顧過去，十四年的時間恍如轉眼間即已消逝，因此，中英兩國宜積極地從速進行外交商談，尋求出一個能為中、英、港三方面可以接受而又能維持香港繁榮和安定的有效方案，以奠定香港人包括國際人士對香港長期投資的信心。

2 在歷史上英國是憑三條條約獲得及管理香港、九龍及新界。從法律觀點，英國在一九九七年六月卅日新界租約期滿時，理應將整個香港總面積百份之九

新界鄉議局用牋

十二的新界土地（包括啓德機場）交回給中國，而剩下九龍界限街以南及香港島祇佔整個香港總面積百份之八的土地，即使中國不收回，英國欲繼續管治也難以處理的。從政治觀點，當一九七二年中國向聯合國提交的備忘錄，聲稱香港與澳門問題係過去歷史上帝國主義者一連串逼使中國簽訂不平等條約而產生者，因此，對於中國提出要收回整個香港領土主權，英國方面在情勢上是難以爭論的。

3. 但是，基於歷史的事實及近代中英兩國的友好關係（查中華人民共和國建立之初，英國是西方國家中第一個與其建交的），如何去解決這個歷史上遺留下來的問題，是可以從長計議的。

4. 根據中國趙紫陽總理在歡迎首相閣下 訪問北京之宴會上曾說：「最近中國

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共產黨在十二次代表大會確定了中國人民爲全面進行社會主義現代化建設而奮鬥的綱領，繼續實行對外開放政策，在平等互利的基礎上積極擴大對外交流，和平共處五項原則將是我國同世界各國發展關係的基本指導原則。一

再又明顯表示：「在中英雙邊關係中，也還有歷史遺留下來的問題有待解決，但是祇要我們雙方都能用長遠戰略觀點看待，並發展中英關係，以和平共處五項原則爲準則來處理我們之間的問題，我相信這類問題是不難解決的。」

又 余等
於一九八三年一月十二日在北京會見中國人大常務委員會副委員長廖承志先生時，廖先生亦曾表示如英國交回香港領土主權，其他問題在平等互利的基礎上是可以商量的，他並着 余等
對中、英、港三方面之共同利益

新 界 鄉 議 局 用 牋

多作努力，並催促英國方面早日商談，拖下去局勢不明朗，對香港無好處。

5. 基於上述種種情況，我們相信如果英國早日承認將香港領土主權交回中國，其他一切問題祇要能使中英兩國在平等互利原則下獲益，是可以商談解決的。

• 例如英國可利用行將於一九九七年滿期之新界后海灣土地與中國廣東省深圳特區合作建設國際機場，中英兩國便可由此訂立有年期性使用的國際機場條約，從而解決香港前途，由國際機場建設之帶動，可以解決廣東省深圳與香港間之海上交通、陸上交通及電訊等，使香港之繁榮擴展至深圳經濟特區，此屬中英兩國維持香港繁榮和安定的一個良好辦法。

6. 香港是英國在遠東的政治、經濟及文化交流中心，倘若香港對中英雙方沒有利益的話，當然會影響中英兩國在外交上的商談。在今日中國人民為全面進

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行社會主義現代化建設的時候，香港能維持繁榮和安定，當對中國的四化建設有一定程度的幫助，而對英國也有一定的好處。

新界鄉議局係代表新界民意的機構，際此中英兩國商談香港前途有關新界在一九九七年滿期問題時，擬請香港政府能將中英商談消息見告，本局自當在政府未公開宣佈前絕對保守秘密。如何之處，敬祈示覆。

謹呈

新界政務署署長麥法誠先生 轉呈

政務司 鍾逸傑先生 轉呈

香港總督 尤德爵士 轉呈

英國首相 戴卓爾夫人

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何新權

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政治研究委員會主任：

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新界鄉議局
法律研究委員會主任：

何新權

一九八三年三月二日

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