GR 1600 SECRET SECRET DESKRY 2510002 FM PEKING 250820Z MAY 83 A.y. C. 25 TO IMMEDIATE FCO TELNO 494 OF 25 MAY RPTD INFO IMMEDIATE HONG KONG. MY TELNO 489: FNTURE OF HONG KONG 1. THE FOLLOWING IS A MORE COMPLETE REPORT OF MY MEETING WITH YAO GUANG ON 24 MAY. EVEN SO. SINCE THE MEETING WAS HIGHLY REPETITIOUS IT IS ONLY A DISTILLATION. 2. I SPOKE ACCORDING TO THE TEXT OF YOUR TELMO 308 AND HANDED YAO A COPY OF MY SPEAKING NOTE. YAO THANKED ME AND ASKED FOR MY VIEWS ON MODALITIES. COMPOSITION OF DELEGATIONS 3. I SAID THAT, AS I HAD SAID LAST OCTOBER TO ZHANG WENJIN, WE PROPOSED THAT THE TALKS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN PEKING, INITIALLY AT LEAST, BY SMALL TEAMS, THE BRITISH SIDE LED BY MYSELF. THE GOVERNOR AND THE POLITICAL ADVISER SHOULD ATTEND THE FIRST SUBST-ANTIVE MEETING, AND I SHOULD ALSO LIKE TO HAVE GALSWORTHY, EHRMAN AND PEIRCE FROM THE EMBASSY. THEREAFTER THE BRITISH TEAM WOULD DE CHOSEN ACCORDING TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEGOTIATION, NORMALLY INCLUDING PARTICIPATION FROM HONG KONG. WE WISHED TO BE FLEXIBLE. 4. YAO ASKED WHETHER THE FIVE PERSONS MENTIONED ABOVE WOULD BE FULL MEMBERS OF THE UK TEAM OR ''SPECIALISTS''. T TOLD HIM WE MADE NO SUCH DISTINCTION. THEY WOULD BE FULL MEMBERS. WITH REFERENCE TO MY REMARK ON FUTURE PARTICIPATION FROM HONG KONG, YAO ASKED WHAT WOULD BE THE STATUS OF THE HONG KONG PARTICIPANTS. WOULD THEY BE MEMBERS OF THE UK TEAM? I SIAD THEY WOULD. YAO SAID HE HAD RAISED THE QUESTION BECAUSE THERE TALKS WERE BILATERAL BETWEEN CHINA AND BRITAIN. 5. YAO SAID HE HTHOUGHT THERE WAS NO GREAT DIFFICULTY ABOUT THIS QUESTION. THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD CONSIDER OUR PROPOSALS. SINCE THEY WERE THE HOSTS AND WE THE GUESTS, THEY WISHED TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO SUIT OUR CONVENIENCE. HE SAID THAT AFTER HEARING THE BRITISH OPINION THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD STUDY IT AND FORM ITS TEAM ACCORDINGLY. WHEN I ASKED IF I WAS THEREFORE TO TAKE IT THAT HE AGREED WITH MY PROPOSALS HE COULD ONLY SAY THAT THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD TAKE THEM INTO ACCOUNT WHEN FORMING THEIR OWN TEAM. THE QUESTION COULD BE DISCUSSED FURTHER AT OUR MEXT MEETIN.

SECRET

/ AGENDA

SECRET AGENDA 6. I PROPOSED THAT AT THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE MEETING BOTH SIDES SHOULD PRESENT THEIR VIEWS ON THE PRESENT SYSTEMS IN HONG KONG IN ORDER TO PREPARE THE WAY FOR MORE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS. I ASKED FOR YAO'S COMMENTS ON THIS SUGGESTION.

7. AT THIS STAGE YAO BECAME HOPELESSLY CONFUSED, I WAS REQUIRED TO REPEAT PARA 6 ABOVE, AND THE INTERPRETER BECAME INCREASINGLY FRUSTRATED AS SHE TRIED TO EXPLAIN TO YAO WHAT HAD BEEN SAID. EVENTUALLY HE REPLIED THAT THE CHINESE VIEW WAS THAT THE SUBSTANT-IVE TALKS SHOULD FOLLOW AN AGENDA TO BE AGREED BEFORE THEY BEGAN. THEY THEREFORE WANTED AN AGENDA FOR THE WHOLE SERIES OF TALKS. YAO QUOTED THE THEE-POINT AGENDA PROPOSED IN ZHAO'S LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER IE. (A) THE FORM OF TRANSFERENCE OF SOVEREIGNTY: (B) COOPERATION BEFORE 1997: (C) COOPERATION AFTER 1997.

8. I TOLD YAO THAT I NOTED WHAT HE HAD SAID AND THAT EVERYTHING IN ZHAO'S LETTER HAD RECEIVED AND WOULD RECEIVE THE CLOSEST ATTENTION. BUT CONSIDERATION OF QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY WOULD HAVE TO FOLLOW DISCUSSION OF ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD GUARANTEE THE FUTURE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY OF THE TERRITORY. IT WAS SIMPLY A QUESTION OF FOLLOWING. THE LOGICAL SEQUENCE, AS SET OUT IN MY PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER. THAT IF CERTAIN CONDITIONS WERE MET, SHE WOULD BE PREPARED TO RECOMMEND THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY. IN OUR TALKS WE NEEDED TO EXAMINE LHETHER THOSE CONDITIONS WOULD BE MET. MY PROPOSAL WENT AGAINST NEITHER THE MEANING NOR THE SPIRIT OF ZHAO'S LETTER. INDEED IT FOLLOWED BOTH LETTERS VERY CLOSELY.

9. YAO SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF WHAT TO DISCUSS FIRST, AND WHAT TO TAKE NEXT AND SO ON, COULD BE DISCUSSED. HE LAUNCHED INTO A REHEARSAL OF CHINA'S BASIC POSITION ON HONG KONG, QUOTING FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETINGS HERE IN SEPTEMBER. THE THREE-POINT AGENDA IN ZHAO'S LETTER WAS BASED ON THAT POSITION. THE FORM OF SOVEREIGNTY WAS THE FIRST POINT. HE THEN SAID THAT TIME WAS RUNNING ON AND WE SHOULD MEET AGAIN TO DISCUSS MODALITIES. SUDDENLY PULLING A WRITTEN DRIEF FROM HIS POCKET, HE READ AN EXCERPT SAYING THAT CHINA COULD NOT ACCEPT BRITAIN'S LINKAGE OF THE TRASFER OF SOVEREIGNTY WITH CERTAIN PRECOMDITIONS. NOT COULD IT ACCEPT SOME OF THE ''WORDING'' OF THOSE PRECONDITIONS. IT WAS UNREASONABLE. YAO THEN ADDED THAT CHINA WANTED TO BEGIN SUBSTANTIVE TALKS IN ONE OR TWO WEEKS TIME, AND SAID HE WAS OPTIMISTIC.

10. I SAID THAT WE ALSO WANTED TO BEGIN QUICKLY. FOR THAT REASON I HAD HOPED WE MIGHT AGREE THE MODALITIES AT THIS MEETING. BUT THE MINISTER APPEARED UNABLE OR UNAUTHORISED TO RESPOND TO MY POINTS OR TO MAKE PROPOSALS OF HIS OWN. HE HAD NOT EVEN HARD MY PROPOSAL ON TIMING AND YET HE WAS ALREADY PROPOSING WE SHOULD END THE MEETING AND CONTINUE OUR DISCUSSIONS AT A LATER DATE.

11. I REFERRED TO ZHAO'S THREE-POINT AGENDA AND SAID THAT WE HAD NO INTENTION OF EVADING THE ISSUE OF SOVEREIGNTY. BUT WE HAD TO DEAL WITH ONE THING AT A TIME. WE COULD NOT DO EVERYTHING IN ONE MEETING. I ENVISAGED A WHOLE SERIES OF SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS WITH AMPLE TIME FOR BOTH SIDES TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON ALL ASPECTS OF THE QUESTION.

12. YAO SAID THAT I HAD NOT ANSWERED HIS POINT ABOUT ZHAO'S AGENDA, NOR GIVEN THE BRITISH REACTION TO IT. I RETORTED THAT I HAD DONE SO AND HAD GIVEN HIM A GOOD DEAL OF EXPLANATION BESIDES. I RESISTED ANOTHER ATTEMPT BY YAO TO END THE MEETING AND SAID THAT I HAD HOPED TO MAKE REAL PROGRESS ON MODALITIES NOW. I STRESSED AGAIN THAT YAO WAS INACCURATE IN SAYING THAT WE WERE EVADING ZHAO'S AGENDA. WE WERE READY TO DEAL WITH ALL THREE POINTS IN TALKS. BUT WE HAD TO BEGIN SOMEWHERE. WE WISHED TO BE FLEXIBLI. WE WOULD OF COURSE COVER ALL ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM BUT IT WAS SUCCEEDING ROUND.

13. YAO SAID THAT THE BROAD LINES OF AN OVERALL AGENDA SHOULD BE AGREED. CHIMA COULD BE FLEXIBLE ABOUT THE ORDER OF DISCUSSION. BUT THE QUESTIONS TO BE DISCUSSED SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED BEFOREHAND.

14. I REPLIED THAT IN THAT CASE I SAW NO DIFFERNCE BETWEEN US.
AS I HAD ALREADY SAID, WE SHOULD DISCUSS ALL THE QUESTIONS MENTIONED IN THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN OUR PRIME MINISTERS. BOTH SIDES
APPEARED TO BE FLEXIBLE ABOUT THE ORDER IN WHICH THESE COULD BE
TAKEN. YAO INTERJECTED THAT WE HAD TO BE CLEAR WHAT SHOULD BE
TAKEN FIRST, AND WHAT SECOND ETC. I POINTED OUT THAT THIS WAS A
DIRECT CONTRADICTION OF WHAT HE HAD SAID BEFORE.

15. YAO SAID THE CHINESE POSITION IN A NUTSHELL WAS THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN AGENDA AND THAT IT SHOULD BE ZHAO'S THREE-POINT AGENFA. I THEN OFFERED OUR FALL-BACK FORMULA, THAT THE FIRST MEETING SHOULD CONSIST SIMPLY OF STATEMENTS BY BOTH SIDES. YAO HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING THIS. HE ASKED WHETHER THEY WERE TO BE PRESS STATEMENTS (EXCLANATION MARK). I CAREFULLY EXPLAINED THE PROPOSAL, BUT YAO SIMPLY REITERATED THAT THERE MUST BE AN AGENDA AND THAT CHINA FAVOURED THE ONE IN ZHAO'S LETTER. ONCE AGAIN I SAID THAT ALL THOSE TOPICS WOULD BE COVERED IN THE

16. YAO ASKED WHETHER WE THEREFORE AGREED THAT THE TALKS SHOULD FOLLOW ZHAO'S FORMULA. I REPLIED AGAIN THAT WE WERE READY TO DISCUSS ALL THE QUESTIONS MENTIONED IN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS' LETTERS. I COULD NOT SEE WHY THIS NOT SATISFY THE MINISTER. I SUGGESTED THAT, IF IT WOULD HELP, WE MIGHT PERHAPS AGREE ON A FORM OF WORDS TO THIS EFFECT. BUT IT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE (NEXT WORD UNDERLINED) BOTH PRIME MINISTERS' LETTERS AS ITS BASIS, NOT JUST ONE.

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17. YAO ASKED FOR MY IDEAS. I TOLD HIM I HAD ALREADY PUT FORWARD SEVERAL FORMULAE AND HAD DONE MY BEST TO MEET HIS DIFFICULTIES SO AS TO EXPEDITE THE START OF SUBSTANTIVE TALKS.

18. YAO SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE BRITISH SIDE DID NOT WANT TO EVADE THE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS RAISED DURING THE TALKS SO FAR, AND IN THE PRIME MINISTERS' LETTERS. THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD CONSIDER OUR PROPOSALS AND HOPED WE WOULD CONSIDER THE THREE-POINT AGENDA IN ZHAO'S LETTER.

#### TIMING

19. I SAID WE WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN SOON, SAY EARLY JUNE, BUT ASKED YAO TO PROPOSE SPECIFIC DATES. HE WANTED TO LEAVE THIS UNTIL THE OTHER QUESTIONS WERE SETTLED, BUT PROFESSED TO BE HOPEFUL OF AN EARLY START.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

20. I STRESSED THE NEED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY, AS INSTRUCTED IN YOUR TELNO 307, AND REFERRED TO SEVERAL RECENT ARTICLES IN THE HONG KONG PRESS. YAO SAID THAT THE CHINESE SIDE DID NOT REVEAL THE CONTENT OF THE TALKS AND COULD NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HONG KONG PAPERS. THE STORIES IN QUESTION WERE NOT THE CONSEQUENCE OF LEAKS FROM THE CHINESE SIDE. YAO ADDED THAT THE CHINESE HAD NOTED THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN.

21. THE MEETING ENDED AFTER TWO HOURS, AND IT WAS LEFT THAT YAO WOULD SUMMON ME FOR A FOLLOW-UP MEETING AT HIS CONVENIENCE. SEE MIHFT FOR COMMENT.

CRADOCK

REPLATED AS REQUESTED

#### FUTURE OF HONG KONG

LIMITED

HD/HED

HD/FLANNING STAFF

HD/FUSD

PS

PS/MR HURD

PS/LORD BELSTEAD

PS/FUS

SIR J BULLARD

MR GIFFARD

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MR MARTIN ASSESSMENTS STAFF
CABINET OFFICE
MR FLOWER PUSD
MR COLES NO 10 DOWNING ST.

SIR A PARSONS
NO 10 DOWNING STREET

SECRET

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FM PEKING 241120Z MAY 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 489 OF 24 MAY
INFO IMMEDIATE HONG ONG.

A.J. C. 3

#### FUTURE OF HONG KONG

- 1. I CALLED ON VICE FOREIGN MINISTER YAO GUANG THIS AFTERNOON TO DELIVER OUR REPLY TO PREMIER ZHAO'S LETTER OF 28 APRIL. I SPOKE AS INSTRUCTED IN YOUR TELNO 616 AND LEFT A COPY OF MY SPEAKING NOTE. YAO GUANG EXPRESSED HIS THANKS.
- 2. I THEN RAISED THE QESTION OF MODALITIES AND FOUND MYSELF
  INVOLVED IN A SESSION WHICH WAS LONG, OBSCURE AND UNFRUITFUL
  EVEN BY THE HIGH STANDARD SET IN PREVIOUS MEETINGS WITH YAO GUANG.
  HE WAS CLEARLY WITHOUT AUTHORITY TO DECIDE ON ANY POINT AND COULD
  ONLY NOTE AND REPORT. HE OFTEN SEEMED NOT TO UNDERSTAND FULLY WHAT
  WAS BEING SAID AND REQUIRED CONSTANT REPETITION.
- 3. HE SAID THAT THE QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF DELEGATIONS WAS UNLIKELY TO CAUSE GREAT DIFFICULTY. BUT HE SUCKED HIS TEETH FOR A LONG TIME OVER OUR REFERENCE TO PARTICIPATION FROM HONG KONG. HE WANTED TOBCLEAR WHETHER THE HONG KONG CONTINGENT WOULD BE MEMBERS OF THE UK TEAM OR JUST 'SPECIALISTS'. HE EMPHASISED THAT CHINA SAW THE TALKS AS BILATERAL BETWEEN CHINA AND BRITAIN.
- 4. THE QUESTION OF TIMING WAS LEFT VERY VAGUE, YAO SIMPLY
  REITERATING THE CHINESE WISH TO HOLD SUBSTANTIVE TALKS AS SOON
  AS POSSIBLE.
- PARTICULARLY OBSCURE, IT WAS PLAIN THAT HE WAS TERRIFIED OF
  ACCEPTING ANY AGENDA WHICH WAS NOT THE THREE POINTS IN ZHAO'S
  LETTER OF 28 APRIL, IE METHOD OF TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY,
  COOPERATION BETWEEN NOW AND 1997, AND AFTER 1997. HE ALSO PROPOSED
  THAT WE SHOULD TRY TO DRAW UP A BROAD BRUSH AGENDA COVERING
  ALL FUTHER SUBSTANTIVE TALKS. HE CONSIDERED OUR FIRST PROPOSAL,
  NAMELY, BOTH SIDES PRESENTING THEIR VIEWS ON THE PRESENT SYSTEMS,
  INADEQUATE AS AN ANSWER TO THE POINTS IN ZHAO'S LETTER. HE DID
  NOT CACT WELL TO, AND PERHAPS DID NOT UNDERSTAND, OUR FALL BACK
  PROPOSAL THAT THE FIRST ROUND SHOULD CONSIST OF STATEMENTS BY
  BOTH SIDES.

  SECRET

- 6. IT WAS LEFT THAT THE CHINESE SIDE WOULD REFLECT ON OUR PROPOSALS AND ZHAO WOULD SUMMON ME FOR A FURTHER MEETING.
- 7. I RAISED THE QUESTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY AS INSTRUCTED AND RECEIVED THE STANDARD RESPONSE, THAT THE CHINESE SIDE PAID GREAT ATTENTION TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND THAT THEY COULD TAKE NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT APPEARED IN THE HONG KONG PRESS.
- 8. THE ABOVE IS A VERY SUMMARY REPORT OF A 2 HOUR MEETING. I SHALL BE TELEGRAPHING IN GREATER DETAIL TOMORROW.

CRADOCK

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

LIMITED

HD/HEGD

HD/FED

HD/FLANKING STAFF

HD/FUSD

PS

PS/ME HURD

PS/LORD BELSTEAD

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MR ROBERTS NEWS D

MR MARTIN ASSESSMENTS STAFF

CABINET OFFICE

MR FLOWER PUSD

MR COLES NO 10 DOWNING ST.

SIR A PARSONS NO 10 DOWNING ST

SECRET

GR 610
SECRET
DESKBY 2511002
FM PEKING 250935Z MAY 83
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 494A OF 25 MAY
RPTD INFO IMMEDIATE HONG KONG.

MIPT: FUTURE OF HONG KONG

1. DISCUSSION WITH YAO IS ALWAY
WESTERN FRONT, BUT ON THIS OCCA
HE SEEMED IN A STATE OF MENTAL

# SEGRET

AJE

A. J. C. 26,5

- 1. DISCUSSION WITH YAO IS ALWAYS REMINISCENT OF A WET DAY ON THE WESTERN FRONT, BUT ON THIS OCCASION THE MUD WAS DEEPER THAN USUAL. HE SEEMED IN A STATE OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL TORPOR. HE MAY HAVE BEEN ILL OR UNDER MEDICATION. HE WAS ALSO OBVIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT BEING IN SOME WAY OUTSMARTED AND CONSEQUENTLY RELUCTANT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ASCONSTRUCTIVE EXCHANGE. HE IS CONFIDENT ONLY WHEN HIS JOB IS TO TRANSMIT MESSAGES OR EXECUTE PRECISEINTRUCTIONS. ON THIS OCCASION HE CLEARLY HAD NO AUTHORITY TO AGREE ANYTHING.
- 2. DESPITE THIS, YAO PROTESTED THAT THE CHINESE WANTED TO BEGIN SUBSTANTIVE TALKS SOON AND THAT THEIR ATTITUDE WAS BOTH FLEXIBLE AND POSITIVE. I AM PREPARED TO BELIEVE THE FIRST PART OF THIS, AND I DO NOT THINK THERE HAS BEEN ANY CHANGE OF HEART SINCE ZHAO'S LETTER. THE FAULT LIES PARTLY IN THE NATURE OF THE MAN I AM DEALING WITH, AND PARTLY IN THE NATURE OF COMPLICATED BUREAUCRACY HANDLING THIS PROBLEM ON THE CHINESE SIDE. THE SIMPLEST WORK-CANNOT BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT LONG DELAYS.
- 3. THE QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF TEAMS AND TIMING SHOULD BE RELATIVELY SIMPLE, THOUGH THERE MAY BE RESERVATIONS ABOUT HONG KONG CHINESE PARTICIPATING. IT IS ON THE AGENDA THAT THE REAL DIFFICULTIES HAVE ARISEN. YAO CLEARLY WANTED MY AGREEMENT THAT TALKS COULD BE CONDUCTED PURELY ON THE BASIS OF ZHAO'S LETTER, USING HIS THREE-POINT AGENDA. OBVIOUSLY WE CANNOT ACCEPT THAT. BUT IT IS ALSO OBVIOUS THAT WE SHALL NOT MAKE PROGRESS IF WE DO NOT TAKE ACCOUNT OF ZHAO'S THREE POINTS. YAO OFFERED SOME FLEXIBILITY ON WHICH PART OF THE FULL AGENDA CAME FIRST AND WHICH SECOND. BUT WHAT I THINK HE WAS LOOKINB FOR WAS AT LEAST A BOW IN THE DIRECTION OF ZHAO'S LETTER AND AM ASSURANCE THAT SOVEREIGNTY WOULD NOT BE EVADED. I THEREFORE TOLD YAO THAT WE WERE READY IN THE FULL COURSE OF THE TALKS TO COVER ZHAO'S THREE POINTS AS WELL AS THE POINTS RAISED IN MRS THATCHER'S LETTER. ALTHOUGH THIS DID NOT GET ME ANYWHERE WITH YAO YESTERDAY (FOR THE REASONS IN MY PARA 1), I BELIEVE THAT SOMETHING ALONG THESE LIMES MAY BE SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE CHINESE NEED FOR A BROADBRUSH AGENDA, BASED ON ZHAO'S LETTER.

A REVISED AGENDA PROPOSAL, IN THE FORM OF WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS
TO ME AND TO LEAVE ANOTHER SPEAKING NOTE WITH HIM. HE MIGHT
THEREBY BE LESS WARY OF A PEBATING RUSE ON MY PART, AND HE WOULD
HAVE SOMETHING MORE ''AUTHORITATIVE'' TO TRANSMIT TO HIS
SUPERIORS. I SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING TEXT: BEGLNS. IN ORDER TO
MEET THE WISH OF THE CHINESE SIDE FOR A BROAD AGENDA COVERING THE
WHOLE XOURSE OF THE FORMAL TALKS, THE BRITISH SIDE PROPOSES THAT,
DURING THE COURSE OF THE TALKS, MATTERS RELEVANT TO THE FUTURE
OF HONG KONG SHOULD BE DISCUSSES, IN PARTICULAR THE THREE SUBJECTS
MENTIONED IN PREMIOR ZHAO'S LETTER AND THE POINTS RAISED IN MRS
THATCHER'S LETTER, SO AS TO ENABLE REMAINING DIFFERENCES ON POINTS
OF PRINCIPLE TO BE RESOLVED IN A MANNER SATISFACTORY TO BOTH SIDES.
ENDS.

5. I HAVE DELIBERATELY OMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO THE PRECISE AGENDA FOR THE FIRST ROUND. THIS, I THINK, WOULD BE BETTER LEFT FOR A PERSONAL COMMENT BY ME. I WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE FIRST ROUND SHOULD CONSIST OF OPENING STATEMENTS BY BOTH SIDES.

CRADOCK

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

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