



file

cc: FCO

107

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

4 September, 1984

Thank you for your letter to the Prime Minister. . I have been asked to reply.

The Prime Minister is most grateful to receive the views of the Chamber of Commerce on this important subject. She is very much aware of the significance that Hong Kong people attach to the right to travel freely throughout the world. The question of nationality is still the subject of negotiation in the talks in Peking. As I am sure you will understand, the content of these talks has to be confidential for the moment. However I can assure you that our negotiators have been taking and will continue to take full account of views expressed in Hong Kong on this important subject. You will have noticed that Sir Geoffrey Howe also said on 1 August that we believed Hong Kong could look forward with confidence to an agreement which will enable Hong Kong residents to continue to enjoy the right to travel and move freely in and out of Hong Kong.

(C.D. Powell)

Mr. Jack C. Tang.

NR

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 August 1984

*Dear Charles,*

Hong Kong: Letter from Chairman of Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

We understand that Mr Jack C Tang, the Chairman of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce wrote to the Prime Minister about nationality (the text of his letter was sent to us by the Hong Kong Government). Once the top copy shows up, I recommend that you should reply to Mr Tang's letter on the lines of the attached draft, which has been cleared with the Hong Kong Government.

*Yours,*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

*Peter Ricketts*

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

D5R 11 (Revised)

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

PS/Prime Minister

DEPARTMENT:

TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Mr Jack C Tang  
 Chairman  
 Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce  
 HONG KONG

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

Thank you for your letter to the Prime Minister. I have been asked to reply.

CAVEAT.....

The Prime Minister is most grateful to receive the views of the Chamber of Commerce on this important subject. She is very <sup>much aware</sup> ~~conscious~~ of the significance that Hong Kong people attach to the right to travel freely throughout the world. The question of nationality is, ~~as Sir Geoffrey Howe said in Hong Kong on 1 August,~~ still the subject of negotiation in the talks in Peking. As I am sure you will <sup>understand</sup> ~~appreciate~~, the content of these talks has to be confidential for the moment. However I can assure you that our negotiators have been taking and will continue to take full account of views expressed in Hong Kong on this important subject. You will have noticed that Sir Geoffrey Howe also said on 1 August that we believed Hong Kong could look forward with confidence to an agreement which will enable Hong Kong residents to continue to enjoy the right to travel and move freely in and out of Hong Kong.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

~~Thank you for taking the trouble to write.~~

30 August 1984

CDD  
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Hong Kong : Futur 1416

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31 AUG 1984



FUTURE OF HONG KONG

ADVANCE COPIES

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PS  
PS/PS  
PS/MR LUCE  
MR BOYD  
D/D 3  
D/D  
PS LADY YOUNG  
SIR WEDDING

COPIES TO:  
POWELL  
MR CEES, NO. 10 DOWNING ST  
MR ROBERTS, NEWS DEPT  
SIR PERCY CRADOCK

IMMEDIATE  
ADVANCE COPY

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SECRET

FM HONG KONG 200915Z AUG 84  
TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2437 OF 20 AUGUST  
INFO IMMEDIATE PEKING

M.I.P.T.

FUTURE OF HONG KONG : NATIONALITY

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

BEGINS:-

DEAR MRS. THATCHER.

MY PREDECESSOR AS CHAIRMAN OF THE HONG KONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, JOHN MARDEN, WROTE TO YOU ON 7TH SEPTEMBER 1982, TO EXPRESS THE CHAMBER'S SUPPORT FOR THE EFFORTS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TO ACHIEVE THE BEST POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENT FOR THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

IT IS NOW CLEAR FROM RECENT STATEMENTS BY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE THAT THE BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTRATION WILL TERMINATE IN 1997 WHEN CHINA WILL RESUME SOVEREIGNTY OVER HONG KONG.

WE UNDERSTAND ALSO THAT THERE MAY STILL BE TIME FOR APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIONS ON IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE DRAFT AGREEMENT TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION.

IT IS IN THIS CONNECTION THAT I AM WRITING TO YOU NOW. YOUR GOVERNMENT IS OF COURSE WELL AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE TO HONG KONG OF THE MAINTENANCE OF THE MANY FREEDOMS WHICH WE PRESENTLY ENJOY.

ONE PARTICULAR FREEDOM HAS GREAT SIGNIFICANCE FOR HONG KONG'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY, THE RIGHT TO TRAVEL FREELY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN THE PURSUIT OF BUSINESS. THE QUESTION OF DUAL NATIONALITY AFTER 1997 FOR HONG KONG CITIZENS PRESENTLY ENTITLED TO HONG KONG PASSPORTS AS CITIZENS OF A BRITISH DEPENDENT TERRITORY WAS BROUGHT UP A NUMBER OF TIMES AND SUPPORTED STRONGLY DURING THE DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS ON HONG KONG'S FUTURE IN LATE MAY OF THIS YEAR. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE QUESTION OF TRAVEL DOCUMENTS FOR HONG KONG CITIZENS AFTER 1997 HAS ALSO BEEN DISCUSSED DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS IN BEIJING. IT IS NOT CLEAR HOWEVER WHETHER AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED ON THIS ISSUE AND IF SO WHETHER HONG KONG CITIZENS WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY FREEDOM OF TRAVEL UNDER SOME FORM OF DUAL NATIONALITY AFTER 1997.

CF  
Please keep.  
FCO will advise.

Sub  
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THE CHAMBER BELIEVES THAT DUAL NATIONALITY FOR HONG KONG CITIZENS AFTER 1997 COULD PROVIDE A REAL AND LASTING BASIS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF A HIGH LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE THROUGHOUT THE HONG KONG COMMUNITY, LEADING TO IMPROVED INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STABILISATION WITHIN THE HONG KONG SOCIETY. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO A DUAL NATIONALITY ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW HONG KONG TRAVELLERS TO ENJOY THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY BOTH CHINESE AND BRITISH OVERSEAS DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR OFFICES AFTER 1997. THIS IN TURN WOULD ENCOURAGE THIRD COUNTRIES TO CONTINUE TO ACCORD HONG KONG PASSPORTS THE SAME STATUS AS THEY NOW ENJOY AND TO REFRAIN FROM IMPOSING ADDITIONAL AND UNREASONABLE RESTRAINTS UPON HONG KONG TRAVELLERS.

THE FREEDOM TO TRAVEL IS FUNDAMENTAL TO HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC SUCCESS. IT WILL ALSO BE AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL CONFIDENCE IN OUR FUTURE. THE CHAMBER THEREFORE WISHES TO URGE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FOR DUAL NATIONALITY FOR HONG KONG CITIZENS AFTER 1997. THIS WOULD NOT PROVIDE HONG KONG CITIZENS WITH THE RIGHT OF ABODE IN BRITAIN BUT WOULD RECOGNISE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE AN EFFECTIVE ASSURANCE THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE WILL HAVE FULL AND UNFETTERED FREEDOM TO TRAVEL AFTER 1997.

THE CHAMBER WILL CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE IN ANY WAY IT CAN TO THE REALISATION OF AN EFFECTIVE AND JUST AGREEMENT ON OUR FUTURE AND IN MAKING ANY SUCH AGREEMENT SUCCESSFUL IN THE YEARS TO COME. WE ARE DEEPLY CONSCIOUS OF AND GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR YOUR PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND IN THE EFFORTS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TO ACHIEVE A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION.

YOURS SINCERELY,

JACK C. TANG  
CHAIRMAN.

ENDS.

HADDON-CAVE

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FUTURE OF HONG KONG

ADVANCE COPIES

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PS

PS/PUS

PS/MR LUCE

~~MR BOYD~~ BOYD

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PS

LADY YOUNG

SIR WEDDING

COPIES TO:

POWER  
MR COLLS, NO. 10 DOWNING ST  
MR ROBERTS, NEWS DEPT  
SIR PERCY CRADOCK

IMMEDIATE

ADVANCE COPY

SECRET

FM HONG KONG 200910Z AUG 84  
TO PRIORITY F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2436 OF 20 AUGUST  
INFO PRIORITY PEKING

FUTURE OF HONG KONG : NATIONALITY.

WE HAVE HEARD THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAS WRITTEN TO THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT NATIONALITY, IN A LETTER DATED 16 AUGUST. THE TEXT OF HIS LETTER WHICH IS BEING SENT BY COURIER SERVICE IS IN MIFT.

2. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS UNAWARE OF THE DETAILS OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN PEKING. HE WAS, OF COURSE, A MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION WHICH WENT TO CHINA FROM 19 TO 23 JUNE WHEN THEY WERE RECEIVED BY CHAIRMAN, DENG XIAOPING. IN THEIR RECORD OF THEIR DISCUSSION WITH LI HOU AND LU PING ON 21 JUNE THEY REPORTED THAT THESE OFFICIALS TOLD THEM THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT RECOGNISE DUAL NATIONALITY, BUT THAT CHINA WOULD ALLOW HONG KONG PEOPLE TO HOLD BRITISH PASSPORTS.

SUBSEQUENTLY A RECORD OF THE MEETING WITH MR. DENG ON 22 JUNE WAS PUBLISHED BY NCNA. IT CONTAINED NO REFERENCE TO NATIONALITY OR PASSPORTS.

3. ON ITS RETURN TO HONG KONG, THE DELGATION STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONS BEING ABLE TO LEAVE THE SAR ON BRITISH PASSPORTS AND OF FREEDOM OF TRAVEL.

HADDON-CAVE



No trace GR

? CF

GR Please check again

# The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

not in '82 filing

16th August, 1984.

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London,  
England.

*Dear Mrs. Thatcher,*

My predecessor as Chairman of the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, John Marden, wrote to you on 7th September 1982, to express the Chamber's support for the efforts of your Government to achieve the best possible arrangement for the future of Hong Kong.

It is now clear from recent statements by Sir Geoffrey Howe that the British responsibility for administration will terminate in 1997 when China will resume sovereignty over Hong Kong.

We understand also that there may still be time for appropriate representations on important aspects of the draft agreement to be taken into consideration.

It is in this connection that I am writing to you now. Your Government is of course well aware of the importance to Hong Kong of the maintenance of the many freedoms which we presently enjoy.

One particular freedom has great significance for Hong Kong's business community, the right to travel freely throughout the world in the pursuit of business. The question of dual nationality after 1997 for Hong Kong citizens presently entitled to Hong Kong passports as citizens of a British Dependent Territory was brought up a number of times and supported strongly during the debate in the House of Lords on Hong Kong's future in late May of

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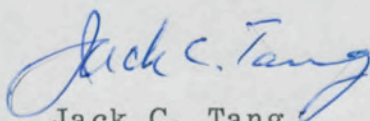
this year. It is understood that the question of travel documents for Hong Kong citizens after 1997 has also been discussed during the negotiations in Beijing. It is not clear however whether agreement has been reached on this issue and if so whether Hong Kong citizens will be able to enjoy freedom of travel under some form of dual nationality after 1997.

The Chamber believes that dual nationality for Hong Kong citizens after 1997 could provide a real and lasting basis for the maintenance of a high level of confidence throughout the Hong Kong community, leading to improved investment and economic growth and stabilisation within the Hong Kong society. We believe that the Chinese Government would have no objection to a dual nationality arrangement which would allow Hong Kong travellers to enjoy the services provided by both Chinese and British overseas diplomatic and consular offices after 1997. This in turn would encourage Third Countries to continue to accord Hong Kong passports the same status as they now enjoy and to refrain from imposing additional and unreasonable restraints upon Hong Kong travellers.

The freedom to travel is fundamental to Hong Kong's economic success. It will also be an extremely important element in the maintenance of local confidence in our future. The Chamber therefore wishes to urge the British Government to accept the proposal for dual nationality for Hong Kong citizens after 1997. This would not provide Hong Kong citizens with the right of abode in Britain but would recognise the responsibility of both Governments to provide an effective assurance that Hong Kong people will have full and unfettered freedom to travel after 1997.

The Chamber will continue to contribute in any way it can to the realisation of an effective and just agreement on our future and in making any such agreement successful in the years to come. We are deeply conscious of and grateful to you for your personal interest in the people of Hong Kong and in the efforts of your Government to achieve a successful solution.

Yours sincerely,



Jack C. Tang  
Chairman

Chairman  
The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

*Handwritten signature*

Dear Sirs,

Reference is made to your letter of the 27th July 1984 concerning the proposed extension of the period of validity of the Certificate of Residence for the purpose of applying for a passport.

The proposed extension of the period of validity of the Certificate of Residence for the purpose of applying for a passport is a matter which is being considered by the Government.

The Government will continue to contribute to the development of the economy and to the well-being of the people.

It is noted that the Government will have to consider the various aspects of the proposed extension of the period of validity of the Certificate of Residence for the purpose of applying for a passport.

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17 AUG 1984

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