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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

19 September, 1984

Dear Charles,

Future of Hong Kong: Prime Minister's Meeting with EXCO

Unofficials: Press Release

On previous occasions we have issued a press release following EXCO Unofficials' meetings with the Prime Minister. It will be particularly important to do so this time, as all eyes in Hong Kong are turned on London during the visit.

I enclose a draft of a press release, based fairly closely on previous examples. It does however make it clear the Unofficials have given Ministers their views on the draft Agreement. We shall not, of course, be able to announce HMG's decision on the agreement until Cabinet has considered it tomorrow, and until Chinese leaders have also agreed to accept it. In the meantime, we recommend that the public line should be that the Unofficials have given their advice, but Ministers will want to consider it collectively before taking a decision.

We also need to decide what line the Governor and Unofficials should take on their return to Hong Kong when they will be closely questioned by the press. We believe that they should stick closely to this press release. They should simply say that they have given Ministers their advice on the draft Agreement, and that this advice must for the moment remain confidential.

Mr Luce will discuss these matters with the Unofficials prior to their meeting with the Prime Minister.

Yours ever,

Peter Ricketts

(C D Powell)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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.....In Confidence

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary this evening had a meeting with the Governor and the Unofficial Members of the Executive Council of Hong Kong. The Minister of State / Mr Richard Luce, was also present.

CAVEAT.....

This was the fifth visit by the Governor and the Unofficials since July 1983. There was a full discussion of the draft text of the agreement on the future of Hong Kong which British and Chinese negotiators in Peking have now referred to their respective governments for consideration.

The Executive Council has throughout been kept fully informed about the negotiations between the British and Chinese Government.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

There was full recognition of the valuable role which the close consultations between Ministers and the Executive Council of Hong Kong have played throughout the negotiations. It was agreed that the same close /consultations

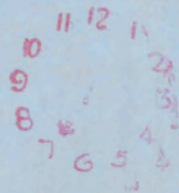


consultations would continue in the future.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary reiterated their admiration for the way in which the Unofficials had fulfilled this difficult role of advising the Governor and Ministers during the course of the negotiations.



19 SEP 1984





TEXT OF A STATEMENT FOLLOWING THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING  
WITH THE GOVERNOR AND THE UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF HONG KONG ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19,  
1984 AT 10 DOWNING STREET

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary this evening had a meeting with the Governor and the Unofficial Members of the Executive Council of Hong Kong. The Minister of State FCO, Mr. Richard Luce, was also present.

This was the fifth visit by the Governor and the Unofficials since July 1983.

This meeting took place on the eve of consideration by the Cabinet of the draft Joint Declaration by the United Kingdom and Chinese Governments on the question of Hong Kong.

The meeting had a thorough discussion of the draft text which British and Chinese negotiators in Peking had now referred to their respective Governments for consideration. This resulted in a full identity of views.

The Executive Council has throughout been fully consulted and informed about the negotiations between the British and Chinese Governments.

Her Majesty's Government place on record their recognition of the valuable part which the close consultations between Ministers and the Executive Council of Hong Kong have played throughout the negotiations. It was agreed that the same close consultations will continue in the future.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary expressed their understanding of the difficult role which the



Unofficials had had to play in advising Ministers and the Governor during the course of the negotiations. They reiterated their admiration for the way in which the Unofficials had fulfilled this role and for the way in which they had strongly represented the views and interests of the people of Hong Kong at all times.