



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

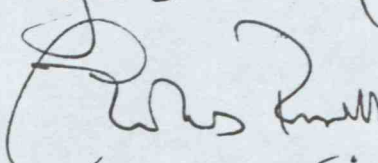
27 November 1984

*Dear Peter,*Hong Kong Agreement: Test of Acceptability

Thank you for your letter of 26 November enclosing the reports submitted by the Assessment Office and the independent Monitoring Team on the test of acceptability in Hong Kong.

The Prime Minister has noted the very satisfactory conclusions of these reports. She agrees that they should be published as a White Paper on 29 November.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of members of OD(K) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

(C.D. POWELL)

P.F. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

You will wish to
be aware of the
intention to publish
the reports on Thursday.

26 November 1984

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Dear Charles,

They are very satisfactory.

C.D.P. 26 xi.

[I have retained the full text, which are bulky. The summary is a good one.]

Hong Kong Agreement: Test of Acceptability

The Foreign Secretary has now received the reports submitted by the Assessment Office and the independent Monitoring Team on the test of acceptability in Hong Kong. In his absence at the Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels he has asked me to circulate the full text of both reports to the Private Secretaries to members of OD(K). Since the report of the Assessment Office is lengthy I also enclose a summary of its conclusions, drawn from Chapter 5 of the report.

Sir Geoffrey proposes that these two reports should be published as a White Paper on the morning of Thursday 29 November to enable Members of Parliament to study them over the weekend. I understand that the Debate is likely to take place on 5 December (it may possibly need to be resumed later in the week). The debate in the Lords will be on 10 December.

The central conclusion of the Assessment Office Report is that "most of the people in Hong Kong find the draft agreement acceptable". The Report also notes that the agreement was judged acceptable by all the principal representative bodies in Hong Kong, by the overwhelming majority of organisations and groups and by most of the individuals who expressed their views. It adds that this overall picture of general acceptance is confirmed by reports by and through the media, as well as by the findings of various independent opinion surveys carried out in Hong Kong. In this connexion the report in today's Daily Telegraph about the findings of an opinion poll part-funded by UMELCO and published by the South China Morning Post and others over the weekend is seriously misleading. Despite the Telegraph's headline "Hong Kong plagued by Doubts and Fears for Future", we understand that about 80% of interviewees in this poll recognised that the agreement was either "very good" or "quite good" for the people of Hong Kong, although many of course expressed reservations on individual points.

/The Assessment

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The Assessment Office report itself lists in some detail the comments received on every individual aspect of the draft agreement. These naturally range from favourable to critical. It is, however, valuable that this very comprehensive list of the views expressed by people in Hong Kong should be set out in a form which will be available to the Chinese Government. It will also be a helpful basis for the dialogue with the Chinese Government which will take place within the Joint Liaison Group on all aspects of the implementation of the agreement.

The report of the Independent Monitoring Team records their satisfaction that the Assessment Office performed its duties impartially; faithfully followed the procedures prescribed for it; and accurately analysed and assessed the submissions which it received. The Monitors unreservedly endorse the central conclusion of the Assessment Office report quoted above.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries of members of OD(K), and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

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REPORT OF THE ASSESSMENT OFFICE: MAIN CONCLUSIONS

Reaction to the invitation to comment on the draft agreement has been vigorous and sustained and the views received provided a credible basis on which to make an assessment:

- the response has come from a wide cross-section of the community
- the views expressed have in the main been well presented and carefully thought out.
- the number of submissions from all sources, both direct and indirect, totals 3,557: of these 2,494 have been sent directly to the office and 1,063 are items monitored through the media.
- of the direct submissions, 1,815 came from individuals and 679 from organisations or groups representing very large numbers of people.

Most of the people of Hong Kong find the draft agreement acceptable. This conclusion is supported by the consistency of the views expressed:

- the overall picture from reports by and through the media is one of general acceptance.
- all the principal representative bodies have unequivocally placed on record their view that the draft agreement is acceptable.
- the overwhelming majority of organisations and groups which expressed their views found the draft agreement acceptable.
- most of the individuals who expressed a view on the question of overall acceptability found the draft agreement acceptable.
- the findings of various independent opinion surveys indicated general acceptance.



A wide range of views from outright praise, to qualified acceptance, to rejection has been expressed.

Overall acceptance of the draft agreement has in many cases been accompanied by expressions of concern and anxiety about its implementation.