



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

14 November 1984

Dear Charles,

Visit of the Prime Minister to Peking and Hong Kong

We have now received a reply from the Chinese to our proposals about the visit by the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary to Peking, and have also received the Governor's proposals for the Hong Kong leg. The Ambassador in Peking has been told that Premier Zhao Ziyang would warmly welcome the Prime Minister on the dates which we have proposed (although he would have preferred a longer visit). The purpose of this letter is to seek the Prime Minister's views on the arrangements for the two visits.

Programme for Peking

The Prime Minister will arrive in Peking late on 19 December. Following our exchanges with the Chinese it is now possible to envisage a programme for the day of 20 December on the following lines:

Early morning	<u>Welcoming ceremony and review of honour guard in Tiananmen Square.</u> Thereafter <u>signature ceremony.</u> Prime Minister and Zhao Ziyang to <u>sign agreement</u> (possibly attended by President Li Xiannian).
Late morning?	<u>Call on Chairman Deng Xiaoping.</u>
Middle of day	<u>Possible lunch given by President Li Xiannian.</u>
* Afternoon	Talks with Premier Zhao Ziyang.
Evening	<u>Banquet given by Zhao Ziyang.</u>

The Ambassador advises that even if there is a lunch given by President Li Xiannian we should accept that the banquet in the evening should also be given by the Chinese side. In view of the very short duration of the Prime Minister's visit, we do not think that any difficulty would be caused by the fact that the Prime Minister did not offer a meal.

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The Chinese envisage that substantive speeches, covering the whole range of bilateral relations, will be made by the two Prime Ministers at the banquet. In addition we consider it important that at the signature ceremony, which will be covered by the international media, short speeches should be made on the significance of the Hong Kong agreement. The Governor attaches particular weight to this, which would in his view have a positive impact in Hong Kong. He believes that the absence of any speeches would make the occasion appear flat. The Chinese are also ready to agree. In these circumstances we very much hope that the Prime Minister can agree to make two speeches: neither need be long.

You wrote to me about a meeting for the Prime Minister with British correspondents in Peking. We shall ensure that arrangements are made for this (perhaps after the banquet).

Participation in the Signature Ceremony

Participation at the signature ceremony will involve three categories of person:

- (i) Officials: In addition to the London party we propose that the Governor and his Political Adviser should be part of the UK delegation. The Governor has also argued strongly for the participation in the official delegation at the signature ceremony of certain Hong Kong officials, including those who took part in the negotiations at working level in Peking. He expects that the Chinese will arrange for all those officials who took part on their side to be present, and that it would be appropriate for their Hong Kong counterparts to be there. We hope that the Prime Minister can agree to what the Governor proposes: it would of course be on the understanding that these other Hong Kong participants would play no part in the Prime Minister's official talks, although they would probably be invited to the banquets.
- (ii) Unofficial Members of EXCO and LEGCO: The Governor has reported that the unofficials attach importance to being represented at the signature ceremony. We believe this would be entirely appropriate. The Chinese would be likely to resist any attempt on our part to make the unofficials part of the Prime Minister's delegation, and this would not be our intention: but we believe the Chinese would be ready to allow the unofficials to witness the ceremony, to identify them as such and to give them a status there appropriate to their position in Hong Kong. In view of the Prime Minister's views recorded in your letter to me of November, we have set this in hand.

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- (iii) Other Hong Kong Figures: It appears to be the Chinese intention to invite a number of other prominent Hong Kong figures, no doubt including Hong Kong members of the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. You will recall that Sir Y K Pao is hoping to be present.

If the Prime Minister sees no objection, we would aim in our discussions with the Chinese to arrive at arrangements for participation in the signature ceremony which would permit the attendance of Hong Kong officials and the unofficials on the basis set out above. We would agree that a group of Hong Kong people should be present as observers; insist that the group should be properly representative; and make it clear that we would expect to be consulted on the list of those to be invited. Our aim would be to ensure balanced representation and an appropriate status for the unofficials.

The Talks in Peking

The Chinese have asked what topics we would propose for the formal talks with Premier Zhao Ziyang. These talks will be relatively short, and we think it would be sufficient at this stage to indicate the main subject areas which we would propose to cover, as follows:

- (i) Hong Kong.
- (ii) Bilateral relations, including trade.
- (iii) International affairs, including:
 - (a) East/West relations and arms control
 - (b) Sino/Soviet relations
 - (c) South Asia
 - (d) Korea.

The talks with Deng are likely to cover Hong Kong as well as broad strategic international issues. We shall in due course submit to you more detailed proposals on the subjects to be covered in the talks, and on the briefing to be provided for the Prime Minister. Once the Prime Minister has been able to consider these, we could if necessary give the Chinese a more precise indication of the topics which we intend to raise nearer the time of the visit.

Timing and Content of the Announcement

The Chinese have asked about our intentions for the announcement of the visit. They have proposed that an

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announcement should be made simultaneously in London and Peking, in similar or identical terms. We do not in fact think that our announcement could be used verbatim by the Chinese side, as it will need to include a reference to the forthcoming Parliamentary Debate, and also to the Prime Minister's visit to Hong Kong. We propose that we should inform the Chinese that unless they see objection we will announce the visit in the following terms:

"At the invitation of Premier Zhao Ziyang the Prime Minister will visit Peking between 19 and 21 December. She will be accompanied by the Foreign Secretary. The main purpose of the visit, subject to the outcome of the debate in Parliament, will be to sign the agreement between the British and Chinese Governments on the future of Hong Kong. Mrs Thatcher will also hold talks with Chinese leaders.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary will then visit Hong Kong on 21 and 22 December. She will hold discussions with the Governor and will meet representatives of the Hong Kong community."

On timing, neither the Governor nor Sir R Evans would have any objection to an announcement in the fairly near future. The Governor points out that the Prime Minister's visit is already the subject of speculation in Hong Kong. However we think that it might be prudent to avoid any risk of criticism that we are disregarding the views of the Hong Kong people, and hence to delay the announcement until the outcome of the test of acceptability has been formally communicated to the Government. This would suggest that the announcement might be made in the week beginning 26 November. If the Prime Minister is content, we shall propose this timing to the Chinese. This would also allow time for the contacts which are envisaged with South East Asian leaders about the Prime Minister's visit there.

Programme in Hong Kong

Finally, we have discussed with the Governor the Prime Minister's programme in Hong Kong, which might be as follows:

Friday 21 December

Late morning	Arrive from Peking.
Lunch	With UMELCO at UMELCO Offices.
Early afternoon	Visit to a District Board.
Late afternoon	Reception at Government House for about 500 community and business representatives.

/7.00 pm



7.00 pm

Address, to be televised live, to joint meeting of the Executive and Legislative Councillors.

Dinner

At Government House for leading members of the community (about 40).

Saturday 22 December

Early morning

Press conference.

Leave Hong Kong.

Given the short duration of the visit and its context, the Governor has recommended that it should be focussed entirely on Hong Kong topics. Hence the proposal for a visit to a District Board, which would be particularly appropriate since the Boards will provide the electoral college for elections to the Legislative Council under the new proposals. We envisage that the Prime Minister's televised address would take the form of a major speech on Hong Kong's future and its prospects as a business and financial centre. The Governor considers that such a speech would be the best possible way of launching Hong Kong towards 1997 and boosting domestic and international confidence in its future. To have maximum impact the speech would need to precede the Prime Minister's press conference, and for this reason we hope that the Prime Minister can agree to hold the conference early on 22 December before her departure. It could be held as early as 8.30 and the Prime Minister's aircraft could leave half an hour after it ended.

Composition of the Delegation

As agreed, the Foreign Secretary is looking again at the question of taking industrialists in the Prime Minister's party: we shall let you have further advice on this subject.

I should be most grateful if you could seek the Prime Minister's views on the above points.

Yours ever,
P F Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
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is too much
on top of
the speeches
in Hong
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PC & the
Governor
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