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FCS/85/331

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17/12

LORD PRIVY SEAL

Hong Kong: Nationality Order in Council

1. Thank you for your letter of 5 December. I hope that it will be possible to debate the Hong Kong Nationality Order in Council in the Commons in the first week after the House returns, and shortly thereafter in the Lords. If we delay too long there is a danger that Hong Kong will feel that Parliament is not sufficiently interested in its affairs.
2. Tim Renton is leaving on a Far Eastern tour on 17 January from which he will not return until 28 January and I hope therefore that it will be possible to have the Commons debate during the first few days of the new session.
3. In the House of Lords, Janet Young will be available from 14 January onwards.
4. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister, the Lord President, the Home Secretary and other OD(K) colleagues.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

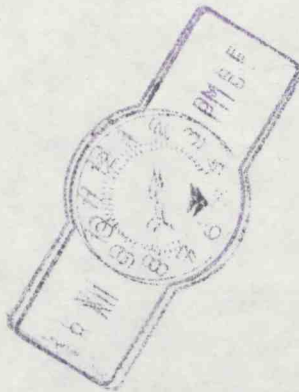
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

17 December 1985

HONG KONG

PASSPORTS

OCT-82



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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

5 December 1985

Dear Geoffrey,

HONG KONG

Thank you for your minute of 25 November supporting Douglas Hurd's proposals for an early debate on the draft Hong Kong Nationality Order In Council.

I quite understand the commitment to having a preliminary debate on the White Paper so that any points arising can be considered before the draft Order In Council is laid formally. While I recognise the arguments for having a debate in the Commons before the Christmas Recess it seems to me that we would not want to discuss this so soon after the debate in the Legislative Council of Hong Kong that we seem to be giving to real consideration to views expressed in that debate. I propose therefore to fix the debate for sometime in the first week when the House returns in the New Year.

I am writing in similar terms to Douglas Hurd: and copying this letter to recipients of his letter of 19 November.

Yours
John Biffen

JOHN BIFFEN

Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe MP
Secretary of State for
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

HONG KONG

PASSPORTS

OCT 82



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QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

12 December 1985

Dear John,

*EDP
12/12*

HONG KONG

Thank you for your letter of 5 December about the timing of the Hong Kong nationality debate.

I had suggested a debate before Christmas to avoid points raised on the White Paper gaining too much momentum, but I quite understand what you say, and I do not press the point. I accept your proposal that the debate should instead be arranged in the first week back after the recess, and I am grateful to you for suggesting this. It would also be very helpful if the debate in the Lords could take place the week after.

I am copying this letter to the recipients of yours - the Prime Minister, the Lord President, to other OD(K) colleagues, John Wakeham, Bertie Denham, and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Conner,
Doyler.*

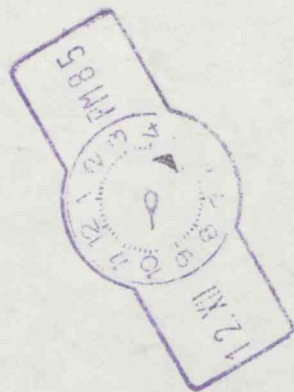
The Rt Hon John Biffen, MP

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PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

5 December 1985

CDP
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Dear Douglas.

HONG KONG

Thank you for your letter of 19 November proposing an early debate on the draft Hong Kong Nationality Order In Council.

I quite understand the commitment to having a preliminary debate on the White Paper so that any points arising can be considered before the draft Order In Council is laid formally. While I recognise the arguments for having a debate in the Commons before the Christmas Recess it seems to me that we would not want to discuss this so soon after the debate in the Legislative Council of Hong Kong that we seem to be giving to real consideration to views expressed in that debate. I propose therefore to fix the debate for sometime in the first week when the House returns in the New Year.

I am writing in similar terms to Geoffrey Howe: and copying this letter to recipients of his minute of 25 November.

Handwritten signature of John Biffen

JOHN BIFFEN

Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP
Home Secretary

HONG KONG
PASSPORTS

OCT 82

