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FM PEKING 050856Z AUG 82

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 424 OF 5 AUGUST

INFO ROUTINE HONG KONG (PERSONAL FOR GOVERNOR)

MF HKop

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

1. K Y CHEUNG, NEWS EDITOR OF THE HONG KONG "MING PAO EVENING NEWS" CALLED ON PEIRCE TODAY AT THE END OF A SHORT VISIT TO PEKING. HE SAID THAT A "LEFT-WING HONG KONG PUBLISHER WHO HAD RECENTLY VISITED PEKING" (HE DENIED THAT THIS WAS FEI YIMIN) HAD TOLD HIM THAT PEKING INTENDED TO APPOINT A HONG KONG CHINESE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG BEFORE 1997. NOTHING ELSE WOULD BE CHANGED HOWEVER AND BRITISH CIVIL SERVANTS COULD CONTINUE TO WORK IN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT. PEIRCE POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS NOT REALISTIC TO EXPECT THAT THE STATUS QUO COULD SURVIVE IF THE GOVERNOR WERE APPOINTED BY PEKING. CHEUNG DID NOT DEMUR, BUT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN HIS SOURCE, WHOM HE SAID HAD BEEN RIGHT IN THE PAST ABOUT CHINESE THINKING.

2. CHEUNG SAID THAT HE HAD A FRIEND IN THE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT OF THE MFA, WHOM HE COULD NOT NAME, WHO HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR HONG KONG MATTERS. THE FRIEND HAD SAID THAT THE INTERNAL CHINESE DEBATE ON THE FUTURE HAD TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF A SIGNIFICANT, MAINLY MILITARY LOBBY WHICH COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY CHINA DID NOT SIMPLY TAKE BACK HONG KONG AND THROW OUT THE FOREIGN ADMINISTRATORS. THIS LOBBY MIGHT NOT HOLD SWAY, BUT IT WAS NOT WITHOUT INFLUENCE.

ATKINSON

LIMITED  
HKGD (4)  
FED  
PUSD  
PS  
PS/LORD BELSTEAD  
PS/PUS  
MR GIFFARD  
MR DONALD

COPIES TO  
MR BURROWS  
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NO 10 DOWNING STREET

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
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