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A.J.C. ²²/_{u.}

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FM HONG KONG 191005Z NOVEMBER 82

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TELEGRAM NUMBER 1345 OF 19 NOVEMBER

INFO PRIORITY PEKING (PERSONAL FOR AMBASSADOR)

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MY TELNO 1334 AND CLIFT'S TELELETTER OF 25 OCTOBER

FUTURE OF HONG KONG: CONSULTATION

1. UMELCO HAVE WRITTEN TO THE CHIEF SECRETARY RECALLING THE COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG (CF THE PM'S PRESS CONFERENCE ON 27 SEPTEMBER AND PARA 146 OF MY LEGCO ADDRESS) AND ASKING WHETHER WE ARE YET IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS HOW CONSULTATION SHOULD BE CONDUCTED. WE SHALL NEED TO REPLY TO THIS LETTER AND LORD BELSTEAD MAY BE QUESTIONED ON THE ISSUE DURING HIS PRESS CONFERENCE HERE.

2. WE CAN POINT TO THE GOVERNOR AS THE MAIN CHANNEL OF CONSULTATION AND REFER TO THE LETTER PATENT AND ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS UNDER WHICH HE IS REQUIRED TO CONSULT EXCO ON ALL IMPORTANT MATTERS. OUR SECOND POINT OF CONSULTATION IS WITH UMELCO. MY REGULAR MEETINGS WITH THEM, OF WHICH THE MEETING ON 27 OCTOBER WAS ONLY THE LATEST IN THE SERIES, MEETS THE NEED AT THIS LEVEL.

3. I DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF WIDER CONSULTATION IN MY TELNO 881. IT IS FAR TOO EARLY TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVE IN SEEKIN VIEWS ON A WIDER SCALE. THERE IS NO PROPOSITION ON WHICH WE COULD BASE ANY PUBLIC CONSULTATIVE PROCESS AND WE WOULD NOT WANT, AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE, TO ENCOURAGE ANY SUGGESTION THAT EXISTING MEANS OF ASCERTAINING THE VIEWS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INSUFFICIENT. IN THIS CONNECTION THERE ARE SUGGESTIONS BEING MADE THAT DISTRICT BOARDS SHOULD BE CONSULTED. THIS IDEA IS PREMATURE AND BOARD CHAIRMEN (WHO ARE OFFICIALS) ARE BEING BRIEFED TO DISCOURAGE ANY IDEAS WHICH BOARD MEMBERS MAY HAVE OF PUTTING THE ISSUE ON THE AGENDA. BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT WILL

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BE USEFUL POLITICALLY TO STRESS THAT THE CHANNELS FOR THE EXPRESSION OF VIEWS ON THE ISSUE OF THE FUTURE REMAIN CONSTANTLY OPEN, AND TO THIS END BOARD CHAIRMEN ARE BEING INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY UPWARDS ANY VIEWS WHICH MEMBERS, INDIVIDUALLY OR COLLECTIVELY, MAY ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE WISH TO EXPRESS.

4. ON THIS BASIS WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO REPLY TO UMELCO THAT CONSULTATION WILL BE THROUGH THE NORMAL MACHINERY OF EXCO AND UMELCO. ADDITIONALLY, GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN RECEPTIVE AND GIVE DUE WEIGHT TO ANY VIEWS WHICH MAY BE EXPRESSED THROUGH THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF CONSULTATIVE BODIES, THE MEDIA ETC. GIVEN THE WIDE RANGE OF EXISTING CHANNELS IT IS NOT EXPECTED THAT THERE WILL BE ANY NEED, AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE, TO INTRODUCE ANY SPECIAL NEW CONSULTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS.

YOUDE

THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
ADVANCED

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

LIMITED

HD/HK & GD

HD/FED

HD/PLANNING STAFF

HD/PUSD

PS

PS/LORD BELSTEAD

PS/PUS

MR GIFFARD

MR DONALD

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SIR I SINCLAIR LEGAL ADVISER

MR ROBERTS NEWS D

MR COLES NO 10 DOWNING STREET

MR MARTIN ASSESSMENTS STAFF
CABINET OFFICE

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