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FM HONG KONG 030744Z FEB 83  
TO PRIORITY F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 179 OF 3 FEBRUARY  
INFO PRIORITY PEKING  
INFO ROUTINE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT OFFICE LONDON

MY TELNO 163 : FUTURE OF HONG KONG: PRESS COVERAGE

THE COMMUNIST TA KUNG PAO HAS REPRINTED WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE FULL TEXT OF THE 'CONTEMPORARY HISTORY RESEARCH' ARTICLE IN ITS 2 AND 3 FEBRUARY EDITIONS. (TEXT AND TRANSLATION FOLLOW BY BAG). THE ARTICLE, THE EXTENSIVE COMMENT ON IT IN THE HONG KONG COMMUNIST PRESS, AND ITS REPRINTING IN FULL ARE CLEARLY INTENDED TO UNDERLINE THE MESSAGE THAT NO SELF-RESPECTING CHINESE COULD TOLERATE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH IN ANY WAY PERPETUATED THE TREATIES.

2. AN EDITORIAL IN THE FINANCIAL TIMES ON 2 FEBRUARY ('THE REALITIES OF HONG KONG') HAS ATTRACTED SOME ATTENTION HERE. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND INDEPENDENT CHINESE LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS REPORTED A REUTERS SUMMARY. THE COMMUNIST WEN WEI PO AND THE INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL DAILY PUBLISHED EDITORIAL COMMENT ON 3 FEBRUARY. THE WEN WEI PO EDITORIAL, QUOTING SELECTIVELY FROM THE FINANCIAL TIMES ARTICLE, DESCRIBED IT AS SHARP AND CORRECT. THE MAINTENANCE OF THE STATUS QUO MEANT PRESERVING PROSPERITY THROUGH MAINTAINING THE EXISTING SYSTEM IN HONG KONG RATHER THAN BY EXTENDING BRITISH RULE. NOTHING COULD STOP CHINA FROM REGAINING SOVEREIGNTY OVER HONG KONG IN 1997. ON THE PREMISE OF RECOVERING SOVEREIGNTY, CHINA WOULD BE WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH ALL PARTIES TO PRESERVE HONG KONG'S PROSPERITY AND TO SHARE THE BENEFITS.

3. THE FINANCIAL DAILY AGREED THAT SOVEREIGNTY OVER HONG KONG BELONGED TO CHINA, BUT SAID THAT IN ORDER TO COME TO A COMPROMISE, BRITAIN SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON REFLECTING THE WISHES OF LOCAL PEOPLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE CHINESE SIDE SHOULD STOP REFERRING TO IMPERIALIST OPPRESSION BECAUSE THIS PERPETUATED THE DEADLOCK.

YOURS

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
ADVANCED

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

LIMITED

HD/HKGD

HD/FED

HD/PLANNING STAFF

HD/PUSD

PS

PS/LORD BELSTEAD

PS/PUS

MR GIFFARD

MR DONALD

SIR J BULLARD

PS/MR HURD

COPIES TO

SIR I SINCLAIR

MR ROBERTS

MR COLES

MR MARTIN

HONG KONG GOVT OFFICE  
LONDON

LEGAL ADVISER

NEWS D

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

ASSESSMENTS STAFF

CABINET OFFICE