

15

SECRET

GPS 380

SECRET

FM HONG KONG 040910Z MAR 83

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 299 OF 4 MARCH 1983

INFO IMMEDIATE PEKING

FUTURE OF HONG KONG: VISITORS TO PEKING

A NUMBER OF VISITS BY HONG KONG PEOPLE TO PEKING ARE APPARENTLY IN PREPARATION. THE MOST IMPORTANT IS PROBABLY A GROUP OF ABOUT 10 PEOPLE IN THE 35-45 AGE RANGE WHO HAVE BEEN INVITED BY NCNA. THE GROUP INCLUDES 4 UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (ALLEN LEE, MRS. SELINA CHOW, CHEUNG YAN-LUNG AND STEPHEN CHEONG). OTHERS APPROACHED INCLUDE MARTIN LEE, QC, MARY LEE OF THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW AND HONG KONG OBSERVERS, AND CHRISTINE LO OF THE OBSERVERS, AS WELL AS LECTURERS FROM THE TWO UNIVERSITIES. ALLEN LEE WAS ORIGINALLY INVITED WITH THE FACTORY OWNERS ASSOCIATION BUT DECLINED: NCNA HAVE BEEN PRESSING HIM TO GO ANYWAY). THE REACTION OF THE LEADING MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WHICH WAS FIRST APPROACHED SOME TIME AGO WAS THAT THEY WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION, SUBJECT TO UNDERSTANDING ON THREE POINTS:-

(A) THERE WOULD BE NO PURPOSE IN SEEING LIAO CHENGZHI WHOSE VIEWS WERE WELL KNOWN. THEY WOULD WANT TO SEE ONE OF THE TOP LEADERS, EITHER DENG XIAOPING OR ZHAO ZIYANG.

(B) NCNA WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT PEKING MIGHT NOT WISH TO HEAR THE VIEWS THEY WOULD EXPRESS. THEY DID NOT LIKE THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS FOR HONG KONG, DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE POSSIBILITY OF AUTONOMY, AND WOULD LEAVE HONG KONG RATHER THAN SUBMIT TO CHINA'S PROPOSALS. THEY WOULD STATE THESE VIEWS IN PEKING.

(C) THEY WOULD INSIST UPON THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING THEIR VISIT. (THE NCNA WERE APPARENTLY UNHAPPY ABOUT THIS POINT.)

2. THE GROUP HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TOLD BY LI JUSHENG OF NCNA THAT THEY WOULD SEE EITHER DENG OR ZHAO, PROBABLY THE LATTER: THAT IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT THEY WOULD EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS FREELY: AND THAT NCNA WOULD DO WHAT THEY COULD ON PUBLICITY. THE TIMING OF THE VISIT IS NOT YET SETTLED BUT IF COULD BE IN MAY.

SECRET

/ 3. THERE

SECRET

3. THERE IS A MORE IMMEDIATE PLAN FOR A NUMBER OF EDITORS OF INDEPENDENT CHINESE LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN HONG KONG TO VISIT PEKING IN MARCH OR APRIL, ACCOMPANIED BY THE EDITORS OF THE TA KUNG PAO AND WEN WEI PO. THE PURPOSE IS TO RECEIVE A BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON CHINA'S POSITION ON THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG. THE BRIEFING IS TO BE CONFIDENTIAL AND (IN THEORY) NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

4. MEMBERS OF THE HEUNG YEE KUK ARE TRYING TO ORGANISE A FURTHER VISIT TO PEKING. ACCORDING TO CHAN YAT-SUN, FORMER CHAIRMAN AND A MEMBER OF THE PREVIOUS DELEGATION, THEY EXPECT TO GO AGAIN SHORTLY AND TO SEE DENG XIAOPING.

YOUDE

FUTURE OF HONG KONG

LIMITED

HD/HKGD

HD/FED

HD/PLANNING STAFF

HD/PUSD

PS

PS/MR HURD

PS/LORD BELSTEAD

PS/FUS

SIR J BULLARD

MR GIFFARD

MR DONALD

COPIES TO

SIR I SINCLAIR LEGAL ADVISER

MR ROBERTS NEWS D

MR COLES NO 10 DOWNING STREET

MR MARTIN ASSESSMENTS STAFF
CABINET OFFICE

2

SECRET