



Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

I think we shall be remiss if we do not carry out the planning. May be Antony Acland consult other PUS's where necessary (keeping knowledge of the planning to the absolutely essential minimum of people):

22 March 1983

But the PUS's <sup>yes.</sup> must be done in the smallest possible circle with strict control over the copying of any documents <sub>not</sub>

A.S.C. 23/3

Dear John,

Future of Hong Kong: Civil Contingency Planning

In my letter of 3 February I asked if the Prime Minister was content for the FCO to approach several other Government Departments on various aspects of civil contingency planning. In your reply of 9 February you said the Prime Minister was not then persuaded that these steps were necessary and wanted first to consider the MOD's military assessment.

The Hong Kong Government are now approaching the point in their own contingency planning where they need help from the London end. In order to provide this we need advice, on the most restricted basis, not only from the MOD, but also from the Home Office, the Treasury and Bank of England (as outlined in my letter of 3 February), and the DOT (on shipping and aviation matters). In due course one or two other Departments may need to be involved.

Perhaps I should add that the purpose of this contingency planning is to ensure that Hong Kong is given the necessary help in meeting a worst case situation which might arise if the negotiations with China over Hong Kong's future run into difficulties. Important areas include control of immigration; public order; the maintenance of confidence and loyalty of the Hong Kong Civil Service, of the Police and Unofficials; ensuring food, water and oil supplies; dealing with aircraft and shipping interference by China; and the requisitioning of shipping and aircraft for supply purposes. They are an essential complement to our strategy on handling the negotiations.

/Given the



Given the stage reached in the Hong Kong Government's own planning, I should be grateful to know whether the Prime Minister can now agree to our consulting other Government Departments through the channel proposed in my letter of 3 February and on a strict 'need to know' basis. This is of course a different exercise from the sort of military contingency planning mentioned in the Defence Secretary's minute of 18 March.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

*Yours ever*

*John Holmes*

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Private Secretary

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Hong Kong

36

COPY NO. 3 OF 3

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*From the Private Secretary*

25 March, 1983

Future of Hong Kong: Civil Contingency Planning

Thank you for your letter of 22 March.

The Prime Minister agrees that, for the purpose of the civil contingency planning which you describe, other Departments may be consulted as necessary at the level of Permanent Under-Secretary. Mrs. Thatcher wishes the planning to be done in the smallest possible circle with strict control over the copying of any documents.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence).

ALDOLES

John Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

TOP SECRET