



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Prime Minister.

London SW1A 2AH

To be aware.

7 December, 1983

A.S.C. 2/12.

Dear John,

Future of Hong Kong: Briefing the Opposition

In your letter of 19 April in reply to John Holmes' letter of 18 April you said that the Prime Minister was content for Mr Pym to brief Mr Healey, Mr Steel and Dr Owen on the future of Hong Kong, including our general position on sovereignty. Mr Pym spoke to Mr Steel and Dr Owen on 5 May. The briefing of Mr Healey did not take place because of the General Election.

It would now be helpful to provide Mr Steel and Dr Owen with further briefing on developments since May and to bring Mr Healey into the picture. Parliamentary interest generally has increased considerably in recent months. Sir Geoffrey Howe therefore proposes, as he mentioned to the Prime Minister on Tuesday, to speak soon to the three Opposition leaders on Privy Councillor terms.

There is also a good case for some factual briefing of Opposition backbenchers (we have already provided some information to Conservative members). We shall be putting this in hand shortly.

Yours ever,

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

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