

PRIME MINISTER

MEDIA ARRANGEMENTS FOR JAPAN, CHINA AND HONG KONG

May I suggest that you judge the attached recommendations from Bernard against the principal aim of your visit: to strengthen confidence in Hong Kong about the future.

You have authorised Sir Percy Cradock to tell the Chinese Government that our minimum aim for your visit to China is an agreed concluding statement that the two sides have agreed to have serious talks at official level about the future of Hong Kong. We have also asked the Chinese Government to avoid any public statement that would make this aim hard to achieve.

There is a distinct risk that if there is endless press comment between now and your visit (and I am not encouraged by the attached extract from today's Economist) expectations will be so built up that even a commitment to "serious talks" will fall flat.

My own preference would be that you should give no press interviews before you leave. But if you think it impossible to avoid them I hope you would agree that Bernard, who is quite willing to do so, should make it plain to the Japanese journalists that you are prepared to talk to them about Japan but not Hong Kong and that the Chinese journalists should be similarly controlled through the submission of questions in advance.

A. J. COLES

30 July 1982