

OO WASHINGTON

IMMEDIATE

OO CG NEW YORK

ADVANCE COPY

OO BRUSSELS

No 10 DS
H/KG, London
Sir P Crockett
RC/mod

Ho/HKD
Ho/FEJ
Ho/Alan Dept
PS (6)
PS/Mr Luce
PS/PUS
Mr Donald
LRE

OO UKMIS GENEVA

GR 500

MS

CONFIDENTIAL

FM HONG KONG 101530Z JAN 84 CORRECTED VERSION

TO IMMEDIATE FOO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 98 OF 13 JANUARY

INFO IMMEDIATE HONGKONG, PEKING, HK GOVT REPS WASHINGTON, CG NEW YORK, BRUSSELS, UKMIS GENEVA

OUR TELNO 96 OF 13 JANUARY: INCREASES IN REGISTRATION TAX AND LICENCE FEES FOR TAXIS.

THE FOLLOWING WAS THE POSITION AT 2200 HOURS TODAY.

2. AT A MEETING CHAIRED BY THE ACTING GOVERNOR WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS AT 1700 HOURS AND AFTERWARDS WITH SEVERAL UMELCO MEMBERS, IT WAS AGREED THAT THE RESUMPTION OF THE DEBATE ON THESE MEASURES SHOULD BE BROUGHT FORWARD ONE WEEK TO BE DISCUSSED IN A SPECIAL SESSION OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ON 18 JANUARY.

3. EARLIER IN THE DAY THE SECRETARY FOR TRANSPORT AND UMELCO MEMBERS HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE BILLS AND UMELCO MEMBERS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO PROPOSE SUCH IN THE RESUMED DEBATE. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE ACTING GOVERNOR SHOULD MAKE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING THE BRINGING FORWARD OF THE DEBATE AND THAT IT WOULD BE MORE DESIRABLE FOR UMELCO TO ANNOUNCE SEPARATELY THEIR INTENTION TO PROPOSE AMENDMENTS TO BE BILL IN THAT DEBATE, MIFT CONTAINS THE FULL TEXT OF THE TWO ANNOUNCEMENTS.

4. IT WAS HOPED THAT THESE ANNOUNCEMENTS WOULD SOLICIT A POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM THE TAXI DRIVERS. BUT THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND HAS IN FACT DETERIORATED AND AT 1915 HOURS A GROUP OF DRIVERS TOLD THE SECRETARY FOR DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION THAT THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE ACTING GOVERNOR'S STATEMENT AND THE TAXIS BLOCKING TAIPO WOULD REMAIN IN PLACE AT LEAST UNTIL 13 JANUARY. THE SITUATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

THE SITUATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

HONG KONG ISLAND: TRAFFIC CONGESTION REMAINS SEVERE IN CENTRAL DISTRICT. BY 2000 HOURS BOTH EAST AND WEST BOUND CARRIAGEWAYS OF CONNAUGHT ROAD OUTSIDE THE FURAMA HOTEL WERE COMPLETELY BLOCKED BY TAXIS.

KOWLOON: AN ESTIMATED 2,000 TAXIS WERE COMPLETELY BLOCKING THE SOUTH BOUND CARRIAGEWAY OF NATHAN ROAD BY 1830 HOURS. IN THE FIRST INCIDENT SINCE THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS IN MIFT A LARGE CROWD GATHERED IN NATHAN ROAD TO JOIN DRIVERS SHOUTING DISAPPROVAL. AT 2035 HOURS AN ANGRY CROWD OF 200 FOLLOWED POLICE TO YAUMATEI POLICE STATION AFTER THEY HAD ARRESTED A MAN ABOUT TO THROW SOMETHING AT A GROUP OF POLICEMEN. SINCE 2100 HOURS AN UNRULY CROWD OF ABOUT 1,000 HAS BEEN ROAMING NATHAN ROAD WITH ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER OF ONLOOKERS AND VARIOUS VEHICLES HAVE BEEN STONED. CRIMINAL ELEMENTS HAVE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO CARRY OUT THREE ROBBERIES IN THIS GENERAL AREA.

NEW TERRITORIES: THE TAIPO ROAD BETWEEN TAIPO AND SHATIN HAS NOW BEEN COMPLETELY BLOCKED BY TAXIS. ABOUT 400 TAXIS ARE PARKED OUTSIDE SHATIN RACECOURSE AND ABOUT 700 ARE BLOCKING THE KWONG FUK ROAD INSIDE TAIPO. IN VIEW OF THE GENERAL SITUATION THE JOCKEY CLUB HAS CANCELLED SHATIN RACES TOMORROW AND A PRESS RELEASE TO THIS EFFECT WAS ISSUED AT 2135 HOURS.

5. PLEASE PASS A COPY OF THIS TELEGRAM TO SIR E. YOUDE. UNLESS THERE IS A MARKED DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION OUR NEXT SITREP WILL BE AT 0900 HOURS HONG KONG TIME TOMORROW.

HADDON-CAVE

NNNN