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Ref.A084/242

MR COLES

Mr 207

f.a.

Hong Kong

I understand that you have asked about triad societies in Hong Kong, which were mentioned in paragraph 7 of JIC(84)(N) 15. I attach a very short note produced by the Assessments Staff.

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R P HATFIELD

20 January 1984

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Triad Societies

Triad societies originated as underground opposition groupings to the Manchu conquerors of China. They established a close sense of solidarity between members, reinforced by elaborate rituals and ruthless punishment of defectors. In Hong Kong the tradition has degenerated and the triads have become no more than criminal gangs (some of them involved in the international drug trade), but they retain their discipline and cohesiveness and are accordingly a force to be reckoned with in Hong Kong society.

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