



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Prime Minister.

London SW1A 2AH

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It would surely be much better
 presentationally for you to see EXCO before
 cabinet. We should run to get Sir C. Howe
 back from Germany to have a meeting
 with EXCO on the evening of 19 September.
 Yes not Agree?
 Dear Charles,

3 September 1984

Future of Hong Kong: EXCO Visit to London

As you know, before the Prime Minister postponed her trip to South East Asia, it had been intended that EXCO should visit London and see her on 12 September.

We had always considered this date earlier than was desirable, since it seems likely that we shall still be locked in combat in Peking then. However, if the initialling is to take place in the last week of September the EXCO visit to London would have to take place at the latest in the week beginning 17 September. The Foreign Secretary is away from 17-19 September, which leaves 20 and 21 September. I should be grateful if you could let me know whether the Prime Minister could see EXCO on either of these days, and if so whether the fact of the forthcoming visit and the call at No 10 can be made public. It will otherwise leak.

The only slight drawback to this timing is that if the Prime Minister wishes to put the final text of the agreement to Cabinet before initialling, this would have to be done on 20 September, and thus before she has seen EXCO. As you will have seen, the Governor has represented that the call should therefore take place by 19 September. This will not be possible, given the Foreign Secretary's absence. But we do not in any case think that it is an insuperable obstacle, since EXCO's views will already be known to us before they come. If absolutely necessary, and if the Prime Minister wished, it would be possible to circulate copies of the Agreement to the Cabinet after EXCO's visit.

(P F Ricketts)
 Private Secretary

John Lewis,
 Peter Ricketts

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cc: PC
Hess

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

4 September, 1984

FUTURE OF HONG KONG: EXCO VISIT TO LONDON

Thank you for your letter of 3 September about EXCO's visit to London.

The Prime Minister agrees with the Governor that it would be much better if she were to see EXCO before discussion of the Agreement by Cabinet on 20 September. I understand that it would in fact be possible for Sir Geoffrey Howe to return from Germany in time for a meeting on the evening of 19 September. I have, therefore, arranged for the meeting to be held at 1800 hrs on Wednesday, 19 September. There is no objection to the fact of the visit and the call at No.10 being made public.

(C.D. Powell)

P. Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.