

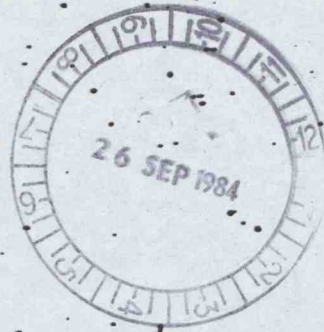
FUTURE OF HONG KONG

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PS
PS/PUS
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PS LADY YOUNG
SIR WEDDING



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FROM PEKING 260752Z SEPT 84
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 2531 OF 26/9/84
INFO IMMEDIATE HONG KONG AND UKMIS NEW YORK (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY).

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FUTURE OF HONG KONG: SIGNATURE OF AGREEMENT

1. AT MY DINNER LAST NIGHT FOR THE TWO DELEGATIONS, ZHOU ASKED ME WHETHER THERE WAS ANY SUBSTANCE IN REPORTS IN THE HONG KONG PRESS THAT THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT WELL VISIT PEKING TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT. I SAID THAT I HAD SEEN THESE REPORTS MYSELF, BUT COULD NOT ANSWER HIS QUESTION. ZHOU THEN SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT THE AGREEMENT WOULD BE SIGNED FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT BY A MINISTER OF CABINET RANK.

2. ZHOU WENT ON TO ASK WHETHER WE HAD ANY IDEAS ABOUT THE TIMING OF A VISIT BY ZHAU ZIYANG TO BRITAIN. DID WE THINK IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR ZHAO TO MAKE HIS VISIT BEFORE THE AGREEMENT HAD ENTERED INTO FORCE? I SAID THAT I HAD NO NEWS OR VIEWS TO PUT TO HIM. WAS HE IMPLYING THAT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT DID NOT THINK A VISIT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE IN ADVANCE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE,

3. ZHOU SAID THAT HE THOUGHT HIS LEADERS WOULD TAKE THE VIEW THAT A VISIT AFTER ENTRY INTO FORCE WOULD BE 'BETTER'. HE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS ANY LIKELIHOOD THAT WE COULD AGREE TO EXCHANGE INSTRUMENTS OF REATIFICATION BEFORE THE END OF JUNE 1985. I QUOTED TO HIM WHAT YOU HAD SAID TO WU IN YOUR MESSAGE OF 8 SEPTEMBER: I.E. THAT THE END OF JUNE WAS THE EARLIEST DATE BY WHICH MINISTERS COULD HOPE TO GET THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION THROUGH PARLIAMENT.

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