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de v  
cpc.

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

7 March 1985

HONG KONG: JOINT LIAISON GROUP

Thank you for your letter of 6 March conveying the views of EXCO on the question of whether the Governor should be a member of the Joint Liaison Group.

The Prime Minister agrees that in the light of this advice it would not be appropriate for the Governor to be a member of the Group.

I agree that you should, if necessary, use the line set out in the last paragraph of your earlier letter although I hope everything possible will be done to avoid stimulating interest in the discrepancy between the Prime Minister's remarks at her press conference in Hong Kong and the decision now reached.

(CHARLES POWELL)

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

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*ech*  
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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 March 1985

*Prime Minister*

*Agree that  
the Governor should  
not be a member  
of the JLG?*

*CDP  
b/3*

*Dear Charles,*

*Re: JLG*

Hong Kong: Joint Liaison Group

In your letter of 28 January you said that the Prime Minister had noted the arguments against the Governor being a member of the Joint Liaison Group but wished to know the views of EXCO on this point before reaching a decision.

I attach a copy of Hong Kong telno 437 which records EXCO's firm recommendation that the Governor should not be a member of the Group. EXCO supported the arguments set out in my letter of 25 January against the Governor's participation and added the four additional arguments set out in the telegram.

In the light of this advice, Sir Geoffrey Howe recommends that the Prime Minister should agree that the Governor should not be a member of the Group himself. Discussions on the composition of the Group are still continuing, but it is likely that the Political Adviser and at least one other Hong Kong Government official will be included on it.

*[Mr. Boyd]*

I would also be grateful for your agreement to the line to take proposed in the last paragraph of my letter. We shall not need to deploy this until we are ready to announce the membership of the Group.

*Yr ever,*

*Peter Ricketts*

(P F Ricketts)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street

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ADVANCE COPIES  
HONG KONG AGREEMENT

12/12  
**IMMEDIATE**

PS  
PS/MR LUCE  
PS/PUS  
DR WILSON  
HD/ HKD  
HD/ YED

SIR P GRABOCK  
MR BURROWS, LEGAL ADVISERS  
MR ROBERTS, NEWS DEPT

GR 200  
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FM HONG KONG 011135Z MAR 85  
TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 437 OF 1 MARCH  
INFO IMMEDIATE PEKING

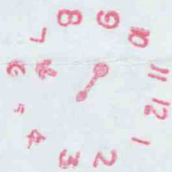
YOUR TELSNOs 264-5 AND 281: HONG KONG AGREEMENT: PARTICIPATION  
BY THE GOVERNOR

1. AT TODAY'S DISCUSSION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, MEMBERS RECOMMENDED FIRMLY THAT THE GOVERNOR SHOULD NOT (NOT) BE A MEMBER OF THE GROUP.
2. MEMBERS SUPPORTED THE ARGUMENTS IN PARA 23 OF THE PAPER, ADDING THE FOLLOWING:
  - (A) IF THE GOVERNOR WAS A MEMBER THIS WOULD REQUIRE THE CHINESE TO MATCH HIM WITH AT LEAST A VICE-MINISTER, CONFERRING AN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH PROFILE ON THE JLG.
  - (B) THIS WOULD IN TURN GENERATE FROM THE OUTSET CONCERN ABOUT THE FUNCTIONS OF THE JLG BECAUSE IT WOULD GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE CHINESE HAD DIRECT ACCESS AT A HIGH LEVEL TO THE HONG KONG ADMINISTRATION.
  - (C) IT WAS WISER IN HONG KONG TERMS TO GIVE THE JLG A ROUTINE CHARACTER AND TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, TECHNICAL TASKS IN ITS EARLY YEARS.
  - (D) IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT FOR THE GOVERNOR TO BE CONSTANTLY ABSORBED IN QUESTIONS OF DETAIL IN THE JLG, PARTICULARLY AS THE FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS PICKED UP.

YOUDE

NNNN

HONG KONG: Future: PE 17



6 MAR 1985