



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 1984

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SECRETARY OF STATE MEETS PRESS  
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THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER THIS (WEDNESDAY) AFTERNOON:

+WHEN I WAS IN HONG KONG LAST WEEK I SAID THAT I WOULD KEEP YOU INFORMED ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS IN PEKING. I KNOW VERY WELL HOW CRUCIAL THEY ARE FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. SO I WELCOME THIS CHANCE TO BRING YOU UP TO DATE.

MY VISIT TO PEKING WAS DEVOTED ALMOST ENTIRELY TO THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG. I WAS ABLE TO HAVE LONG DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER WU XUEQIAN, PREMIER ZHAO ZIYANG AND CHAIRMAN DENG XIAOPING.

THE PURPOSE OF MY VISIT WAS:

- TO REVIEW PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS;
- TO MAKE REAL HEADWAY ON THE REMAINING ISSUES;
- AND, ABOVE ALL, TO STRIVE FOR THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULT FOR THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG. THAT IS MY OVERRIDING OBJECTIVE.

I AM GLAD TO SAY THAT VERY SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE. WE HAVE AGREED:

- FIRST, THE FRAMEWORK AND KEY CLAUSES OF AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL PRESERVE HONG KONG'S UNIQUE ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND WAY OF LIFE;
- SECONDLY, THAT THIS AGREEMENT AND ITS ANNEXES WILL ALL BE LEGALLY BINDING;
- THIRDLY, SATISFACTORY PROVISIONS FOR LIAISON AND CONSULTATION AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE AGREEMENT.

IN ADDITION, THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT WILL APPLY IN HONG KONG FOR 50 YEARS AFTER 1997 WILL BE PRESCRIBED WITH SUFFICIENT CLARITY AND PRECISION TO COMMAND THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE, WORK, TRADE AND INVEST HERE.

/THIS PROGRESS .....

THIS PROGRESS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE UNLESS THE TWO SIDES HAD APPROACHED THEIR TASK WITH STATESMANSHIP AND DETERMINATION TO SUCCEED. THE CONCEPT OF +ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS+ IS A FARSIGHTED ONE AND HOLDS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG.

A GOOD DEAL STILL REMAINS TO BE DONE IN ORDER TO COVER ALL THE ASPECTS OF HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND WAY OF LIFE WHICH I DESCRIBED IN MY STATEMENT IN APRIL. THERE ARE MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE TO BE SETTLED. THE NEGOTIATORS WILL CONTINUE THEIR WORK. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL WANT TO JUDGE THE AGREEMENT AS A WHOLE AT THE END OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. SO TOO WILL THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.

BUT ALREADY I CAN TELL YOU THAT HONG KONG CAN LOOK FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE TO AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ESSENTIAL PROVISIONS:

- IT WILL PRESERVE HONG KONG'S FAMILIAR LEGAL SYSTEM AND THE BODY OF LAWS IN FORCE IN HONG KONG. BY THAT I MEAN THE COMMON LAW, RULES OF EQUITY, ORDINANCES, SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION AND CUSTOMARY LAW. WITHIN THAT GENERAL FRAMEWORK, POWER TO MAKE LAWS WILL CONTINUE TO LIE WITH THE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES OF HONG KONG; AND JUDICIAL POWER, INCLUDING THE RIGHT OF FINAL APPEAL, WILL BE VESTED IN THE COURTS OF HONG KONG.
- THE AGREEMENT WILL ENABLE HONG KONG TO CONTINUE TO DECIDE ITS OWN ECONOMIC AND TRADE POLICIES; TO MAINTAIN ITS STATUS AS A FREE PORT AND A MAJOR MANUFACTURING AND TRADING ECONOMY- AND TO PRESERVE THE RIGHTS OF OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY AND FREE MOVEMENT OF GOODS.
- IT WILL PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF HONG KONG'S STATUS AS A SEPARATE CUSTOMS TERRITORY. HONG KONG WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATING IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND TRADE AGREEMENTS SUCH AS THE GATT; TO CONTINUE TO ENJOY EXCLUSIVELY ITS OWN EXPORT QUOTAS AND TARIFF PREFERENCES- AND TO ISSUE ITS OWN CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN FOR HONG KONG PRODUCTS.
- IT WILL PROVIDE FOR HONG KONG TO MANAGE ITS OWN FINANCIAL AFFAIRS AND TO USE ITS FINANCIAL REVENUES EXCLUSIVELY FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES.
- IT WILL PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUING CONVERTIBILITY OF THE HONG KONG DOLLAR AND THE FREEDOM TO MOVE CAPITAL INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG.

/- IT WILL .....

- IT WILL CONTAIN ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTINUITY OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE AND FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF PENSION RIGHTS.
- IT WILL MAINTAIN HONG KONG'S SYSTEMS OF PORT MANAGEMENT, SHIPPING AND THE FREE OPERATION OF PRIVATE SHIPPING BUSINESS.
- IT WILL ENABLE HONG KONG RESIDENTS TO CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE RIGHT TO TRAVEL AND MOVE FREELY INTO AND OUT OF HONG KONG.
- IT WILL PROVIDE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF HONG KONG'S EDUCATION SYSTEM, WITH ITS WIDE RANGE OF DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. IT WILL PRESERVE THE PRESENT FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF EDUCATION AND THE FREEDOM TO PURSUE EDUCATION OVERSEAS.
- IT WILL PROVIDE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF ALL THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS WHICH THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG NOW ENJOY.

THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST. WORK IS STILL IN PROGRESS TO COVER SATISFACTORILY A NUMBER OF MATTERS IMPORTANT TO HONG KONG'S WAY OF LIFE AND ECONOMY. I HAVE IN MIND, FOR EXAMPLE, LAND, CIVIL AVIATION AND NATIONALITY.

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH DISCUSSION ABOUT THE IDEA OF A JOINT GROUP AND THE ROLE IT MIGHT PLAY IN HONG KONG.

BEFORE I COME TO THIS, LET ME EMPHASISE ONE POINT THAT IS FIRMLY AGREED BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND CHINESE GOVERNMENTS. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF HONG KONG UNTIL 1997. LET THERE BE NO DOUBT THAT WE SHALL FULFIL THAT RESPONSIBILITY RIGHT UP TO THAT DATE.

EVEN AGAINST THAT CLEAR BACKGROUND OF CONTINUING BRITISH ADMINISTRATION UP TO 1997, EVERYONE RECOGNISES THE NEED FOR CLOSE CONSULTATION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND CHINA. IF HONG KONG IS TO CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE BENEFIT OF ARRANGEMENTS ESSENTIAL TO ITS TRADE AND ITS ECONOMY AND IF IN 1997 THERE IS TO BE A SMOOTH TRANSITION, ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE MADE IN GOOD TIME.

FOR THIS PURPOSE WE HAVE AGREED TO ESTABLISH A JOINT LIAISON GROUP. IT WILL COME INTO BEING WHEN THE AGREEMENT COMES INTO FORCE. IT WILL MEET IN PEKING, LONDON AND HONG KONG. LATER, FOUR YEARS FROM NOW, IT WILL ESTABLISH ITS PRINCIPAL BASE IN HONG KONG. IT WILL CONTINUE TO MEET IN LONDON AND PEKING AS WELL.

/THE GROUP'S .....

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THE GROUP'S TERMS OF REFERENCE HAVE BEEN PRECISELY DEFINED. THE GROUP WILL HAVE THREE FUNCTIONS: LIAISON, CONSULTATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT, AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION. IT HAS ALSO BEEN AGREED IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE THAT:

THE GROUP WILL NOT BE AN ORGAN OF POWER ;

IT WILL HAVE NO SUPERVISORY ROLE ;

IT WILL PLAY NO PART IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HONG KONG.

THE CHINESE LEADERS HAVE GIVEN ME FIRM AND SPECIFIC ASSURANCES ON THESE POINTS.

LIAISON AND CONSULTATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE NECESSARY AFTER 1997. THE GROUP WILL, THEREFORE, CONTINUE ITS WORK UP TO THE YEAR 2000.

I SAID IN APRIL THAT WE WERE WORKING TO A PROGRAMME WHICH TAKES ACCOUNT OF CHINA'S WISHES AND OF OUR OWN REQUIREMENTS. UNDER THIS PROGRAMME, WE AIM TO COMPLETE OUR WORK AND INITIAL AN AGREEMENT BEFORE THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG WILL WANT TO SEE THE FULL TEXT OF THE AGREEMENT AND ANNEXES AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT THEY HAVE TIME TO CONSIDER IT. THERE WILL BE A PERIOD FOR EXPLANATION, DISCUSSION AND DEBATE. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF HONG KONG OPINION WERE ANNOUNCED A FORTNIGHT AGO. THIS IS A VITAL PART OF THE PROGRAMME.

WHEN THIS ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN MADE, IT WILL THEN BE FOR PARLIAMENT TO DEBATE THE AGREEMENT, TAKING FULL ACCOUNT OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN HONG KONG. IF PARLIAMENT AGREES, THE AGREEMENT WILL BE SIGNED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.

FROM WHAT I HAVE SAID YOU WILL SEE THAT SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. I BELIEVE IT HOLDS OUT THE PROSPECT OF AN HISTORIC AGREEMENT: AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL PROVIDE FOR A HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY; UNDER WHICH ADMINISTRATION WILL BE IN THE HANDS OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE THEMSELVES; AND UNDER WHICH HONG KONG'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS, ITS DISTINCTIVE WAY OF LIFE AND ITS POSITION AS A FINANCIAL TRADING AND INDUSTRIAL CENTRE WILL BE SECURED.

THOUGH THERE IS STILL A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE, I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE ARE ON COURSE FOR A CONCLUSION WE SHALL BE ABLE TO COMMEND BOTH TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND TO THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.+

QUESTION ONE, .....

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QUESTION ONE, LOUIE KING BIN, TA KUNG PAO:

+CHINA'S LEADERS DESCRIBE THE DISCUSSION AS DEMONSTRATING A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION. WHAT KIND OF ACCOMMODATION DID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT MAKE DURING THE SINO-BRITISH TALKS? HOW DID IT HELP THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO REACH WHAT YOU CALL AN HISTORIC AGREEMENT?+

ANSWER:

+WELL, AS I HAVE SAID IN MY STATEMENT, WE HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER IN A SPIRIT OF MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION AND COOPERATION WITH OUR OWN CLEAR OBJECTIVE AND IN A SPIRIT OF GIVE AND TAKE. THAT IS THE PATTERN AND STYLE OF ANY NEGOTIATION AND IT IS ON THAT BASIS WE HAVE REACHED THE POINTS WHICH I HAVE DESCRIBED TO YOU IN MY STATEMENT TODAY.+

QUESTION TWO, LINDA JAIVIN, ASIAWEEK:

+WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS, YOU SAY THAT THIS AGREEMENT AND ITS ANNEXES WILL ALL BE LEGALLY BINDING. UNDER WHAT LAW WILL IT BE LEGALLY BINDING? EXACTLY HOW WILL IT BE LEGALLY BINDING? AND IS IT POSSIBLE, AS SOME RECENT REPORTS HAVE SUGGESTED HERE, THAT SOME OF THE POST-1997 ARRANGEMENTS, THE DETAILS OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS, WILL BE ENSHRINED IN ONE OF THE ANNEXES WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED LESS BINDING THAN THE OTHER PARTS OF THE AGREEMENT?+

ANSWER:

+NOW, I HAVE MADE VERY CLEAR IN MY STATEMENT THAT THE ANNEXES WHICH WILL CONTAIN ALL THE PROVISIONS I HAVE BEEN DESCRIBING WILL BE EQUALLY BINDING IN AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT. AND AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT IS, OF COURSE, THE HIGHEST FORM OF COMMITMENT POSSIBLE BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES.+

QUESTION THREE, DINAH LEE, WASHINGTON POST/INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE:

+MANY IN HONG KONG HAVE LOOKED FOR A CONTINUING BRITISH LINK TO ADMINISTRATION AFTER 1997. I NOTE THAT YOU MAKE IT VERY CLEAR IN YOUR SPEECH THAT THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP WILL PLAY NO PART IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HONG KONG. HOWEVER, WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE WORK OF THE GROUP BETWEEN 1997 AND THE YEAR 2000 COULD QUALIFY AS A BRITISH LINK AND IS THERE ANY USEFUL PURPOSE FOR CONTINUING THE GROUP'S WORK AFTER THE YEAR 2000?+

/ANSWER: .....

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ANSWER:

+THE YEAR 2000 IS THE YEAR UP TO WHICH IT HAS BEEN AGREED THE GROUP WILL CONTINUE INTO EXISTENCE. IT WILL HAVE THE SAME FUNCTIONS AFTER 1997 AS BEFORE 1997 UP TO THAT DATE. IT WILL ENABLE BOTH SIDES, INCLUDING GREAT BRITAIN AFTER 1997 UNTIL 2000, TO CONTINUE TO CONSULT ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT. I THINK IT IS AN IMPORTANT FEATURE THAT THE GROUP WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE THE SAME FUNCTION DURING THAT PERIOD AS IT HAS HAD BEFORE.+

QUESTION FOUR, TSUI MING YUEN, WEN WEI PO:

+DURING YOUR RECENT VISIT TO PEKING, HAVE YOU DISCUSSED THE GREEN PAPER ON MORE REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT FOR HONG KONG WITH THE CHINESE LEADERS? IF YES, THEN WHAT ARE THE OPINIONS OR COMMENTS OF THE CHINESE LEADERS ON THIS ISSUE? MOREOVER, THE GOVERNOR HAS POINTED OUT THAT THE SUGGESTIONS OF THE GREEN PAPER CONSIST OF TWO PRINCIPLES, OF WHICH ONE IS TO ENSURE THAT THE VARIOUS SYSTEMS CARRIED OUT WITHIN THESE 13 YEARS COULD NOT AFFECT THE CONTINUITY AFTER 1997. IN THIS CASE, HOW CAN YOU GUARANTEE THE ABOVE PRINCIPLE CAN BE FULFILLED IN ORDER TO SERVE CHINESE INTERESTS AFTER 1997?+

ANSWER:

+AS YOU KNOW, THE GREEN PAPER HAS BEEN PUBLISHED AND IS STILL BEING CONSIDERED WITHIN HONG KONG. IT OUTLINES THE CHANGES IN THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT ARE VISUALISED DURING THE YEARS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD. THERE HAS BEEN NO DISCUSSION OF THE GREEN PAPER IN PEKING, BUT I HAVE DRAWN ATTENTION IN MY STATEMENT TO THE FACT THAT IT IS VISUALISED THAT AFTER 1997 HONG KONG PEOPLE WILL STILL CONTINUE TO GOVERN HONG KONG.+

QUESTION FIVE, STEPHEN JESSELL, BBC, PEKING:

+DID YOU DISCUSS WITH CHINESE LEADERS THE POSSIBLE STATIONING OF THE PLA, THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY, IN THE TERRITORY AFTER 1997? WHAT WAS THEIR POSITION? DID THEY GIVE YOU ANY NUMBERS?+

ANSWER:

+I KNOW THERE HAS BEEN SOME COMMENT ABOUT THAT. IT IS NOT RIGHT FOR ME, AT THIS STAGE, TO SAY ANYTHING MORE HERE.+

/QUESTION SIX, .....

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QUESTION SIX, CHAN CHUNG-KWAN, ORIENTAL DAILY NEWS:

+COULD YOU RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY FOR BRITAIN AND CHINA TO MAKE SOME FORM OF ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE ARRANGEMENT OF HONG KONG IN SOME INTERNATIONAL OCCASIONS -- SAY THE UNITED NATIONS ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN THE COMING SEPTEMBER -- SO AS TO INCREASE THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF THAT LEGALLY BINDING AGREEMENT?+

ANSWER:

+NO. WE ARE WORKING TO CONCLUDE AN INTERNATIONALLY BINDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO SOVEREIGN STATES WITHIN THE PROGRAMME THAT I HAVE SET OUT. AND THAT WILL, AS I SAY, BE A MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE AND CONCLUSION.+

QUESTION SEVEN, THERESA MA, FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW:

+SIR GEOFFREY, COULD YOU PLEASE TELL US IF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG CAN LOOK FORWARD TO AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL CONTAIN AN ESSENTIAL PROVISION TO PRESERVE THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION IN HONG KONG BEYOND 1997?+

ANSWER:

+AS I HAVE SAID IN MY STATEMENT, WE HAVE ALREADY REACHED AGREEMENT ON MANY IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF CONTINUED HONG KONG ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF MANY IMPORTANT FEATURES OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE OF HONG KONG. ALL THAT IS BEING NEGOTIATED IN THE CONTEXT, AND WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK, OF A SYSTEM WHICH WILL PERMIT THE CONTINUANCE OF A HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY FOR HONG KONG.+

QUESTION EIGHT, KAYSER SUNG, TEXTILE ASIA:

+SIR GEOFFREY, IN YOUR STATEMENT YOU HAVE SAID THAT THE FUTURE STATUS OF HONG KONG IN THE GATT WILL BE MAINTAINED AS IN THE PRESENT PATTERN. UNDER THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENT HONG KONG IS UNDER THE BRITISH MEMBERSHIP, AND IF THE TRANSITION IS THROUGH, HOW CAN HONG KONG CONTINUE TO BE REPRESENTED UNDER THE BRITISH MEMBERSHIP? FURTHERMORE, BRITAIN HAS BEEN URGED TO SPONSOR HONG KONG TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER IN THE GATT. HAS THIS BEEN DISCUSSED DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS?+

/ANSWER: .....

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ANSWER:

+WHAT I HAVE SAID IS THAT THE PRESENT STATUS OF HONG KONG IS SOMETHING WHICH IS OF IMPORTANCE BECAUSE IT DOES HAVE, NOT JUST IN THE GATT, BUT IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, AN IMPORTANT INDEPENDENT POSITION WITH A NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT RIGHTS ALREADY SET OUT FOR HONG KONG. AND THE IMPORTANT THING, WHICH AS I HAVE SAID IN MY STATEMENT THE AGREEMENT WILL SECURE, IS A CONTINUANCE OF THAT SAME DEGREE OF INDEPENDENCE WHICH HONG KONG NOW ENJOYS - ALTHOUGH UNDER DIFFERENT AUSPICES.+

QUESTION NINE, LAI TING YIU, HONG KONG ECONOMIC JOURNAL:

+IT SEEMS THAT YOU APPRECIATE AND ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF TWO SYSTEMS WITHIN ONE COUNTRY. I WANT TO ASK ON WHAT GROUNDS YOU BUILD YOUR CONFIDENCE ON THIS POLICY AND IN THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG= AND DO YOU SEE ANY UNSOLVABLE CONFLICT BETWEEN CHINESE COMMUNISM AND HONG KONG CAPITALISM IN THE LONG RUN -- SAY AFTER 2000? IF SO, WHY DO YOU ACCEPT THIS CONCEPT?+

ANSWER:

+I THINK THE CONCEPT, AS I SAID IN MY STATEMENT, OF TWO SYSTEMS WITHIN ONE COUNTRY WITH PLAIN, EXPRESS AND CLEAR PROVISION IN THE AGREEMENT, FOR THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF HONG KONG CAPITALIST SYSTEMS IS A MOST IMPORTANT VISION. IT IS A MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF STATESMANSHIP TO HAVE VISUALISED THAT ARRANGEMENT -- THE TWO SYSTEMS TO EXIST ALONGSIDE EACH OTHER IN ONE COUNTRY. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT IT IS IMPORANT FOR US TO SECURE THE RIGHT CONCLUSIONS IN THE AGREEMENT. I THINK THE BEST ASSURANCE OF THAT PROSPECT, WHICH IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT ONE, IS A BINDING, CLEAR, INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT. AND THE FACT IS THAT WE HAVE IN OUR RECENT TALKS IN PEKING MADE VERY SUBSTANTIAL STRIDES TOWARDS ACHIEVING JUST THAT.+

QUESTION 10, SALLY BLYTH, RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG:

+YOU HAVE MADE IT QUITE CLEAR, SIR GEOFFREY, THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP; AND THAT YOU HAVE HAD SOME ASSURANCES FROM CHINA. BUT HAVE YOU HAD ASSURANCES FROM THE CHINESE SIDE THAT THEY WON'T INTERFERE IN THE AFFAIRS OF HONG KONG BEFORE 1997? AND THE FACT THAT THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP WILL BE BASED HERE IN 1988 - DO YOU NOT FEEL THAT THIS WILL PSYCHOLOGICALLY UNDERMINE THE AUTHORITY OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG IN THE MINDS OF THE HONG KONG PEOPLE AND PEOPLE ABROAD?+

/ANSWER: .....

ANSWER:

+IT IS FOR THE REASONS THAT YOU HAVE IN MIND THAT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE GROUP DO CONTAIN THE PRECISE PROVISIONS I HAVE SET OUT IN MY STATEMENT, THAT THEY HAVE BEEN UNDERWRITTEN BY THE PRECISE ASSURANCES THAT I WAS GIVEN VERY FIRMLY BY THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP. THAT MUST ALSO BE SEEN, OF COURSE, ALONGSIDE THE PLAIN AGREEMENT TO WHICH I REFERRED= THAT BRITISH ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE UP TO 1997 - AND THAT PROPOSITION TOO HAS THE FIRM SUPPORT OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT.+

QUESTION 11, WONG YING-WAH, ASIA TELEVISION HONG KONG:

+SIR GEOFFREY, ACCORDING TO YOUR DISCLOSURES SO FAR, THE WAY FOR YOU TO FULFIL BRITISH COMMITMENT TO HONG KONG PEOPLE IS BY SEEKING AN INTERNATIONALLY BINDING AND DETAILED SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT. WHAT IF THE ASSESSMENT OFFICE YOU PROPOSE TO SET UP FINDS OUT THAT MOST HONG KONG PEOPLE ARE AGAINST SOME CONTENTS IN THE AGREEMENT? COULD THE AGREEMENT - COULD THAT CONTENT - BE AMENDED? AND, IF NOT, HOW COULD THE BRITISH SIDE FULFIL THEIR COMMITMENT?+

ANSWER:

+I THINK IT IS NECESSARY TO BE CLEAR ABOUT THIS - IN ANY INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS OF THIS OR COMPARABLE KIND, BOTH SIDES NEGOTIATE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT AS A WHOLE, WHICH HAS TO BE CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE. IF EITHER SIDE WERE TO SEEK TO RESERVE THE RIGHT, HAVING REACHED THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, AS IT WERE TO START AGAIN, THEN THE OTHER SIDE WOULD, UNDERSTANDABLY, SEEK TO OBTAIN THE SAME RIGHT. AND THE AGREEMENT WOULD NOT BE EVEN AN AGREEMENT THAT COULD BE INITIALLED. SO BOTH SIDES WORK TOWARDS THE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT AS A WHOLE AND IT THEN HAS TO BE CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE. IT IS BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THAT THAT WE HAVE BEEN TAKING SO MUCH CARE TO CONSULT WITH HONG KONG, WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF HONG KONG PEOPLE, WITH EXCO, WITH MEMBERS OF LEGCO, IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE WHAT WE WANT; WHICH IS AN AGREEMENT WHICH, WHEN CONSIDERED AS A WHOLE, CAN BE HONOURABLY COMMENDED TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT. IT IS ON THAT BASIS THAT THE QUESTION WILL HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED - BUT IF I DECIDED TO TRY AND RESERVE THE RIGHT TO START AGAIN THEN IT WOULD BE A MOST INCONCLUSIVE ARRANGEMENT. SO THAT IS NOT THE WAY WE WORK.+

QUESTION 12, MELINDA LIU, NEWSWEEK:

+YOUR STATEMENT MAKES NO MENTION OF RESPONSIBILITY AFTER 1997 FOR INTERNAL SECURITY OR DEFENCE. IN THE PAST THE CHINESE HAVE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT INTERNAL SECURITY. DOES THIS MEAN THAT CHINA WILL TAKE OVER INTERNAL SECURITY RESPONSIBILITY AND WHAT PROVISIONS WILL BE MADE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CURRENT HONG KONG POLICE FORCE WHO MAY NOT WISH TO REMAIN HERE AFTER 1997?+

/ANSWER: .....

ANSWER:

+WELL, ON THE FIRST QUESTION THAT YOU RAISED, THAT IS, OF COURSE, AN IMPORTANT ASPECT ON WHICH IT IS PLAIN THAT DEFENCE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS WOULD BECOME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CHINA, BUT THAT THE MATTERS THAT YOU HAVE DISCUSSED AFFECTING INTERNAL AFFAIRS IN HONG KONG WOULD REMAIN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HONG KONG SAR GOVERNMENT. AND, OBVIOUSLY, THE POINT YOU HAVE RAISED ABOUT THE POSITION OF THOSE SERVING, NOT JUST IN THE POLICE BUT IN OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES, IS AN IMPORTANT ONE WE HAVE VERY MUCH IN MIND.+

QUESTION 13, HUGH DAVIES, DAILY TELEGRAPH:

+SIR GEOFFREY, CHINA HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF CATAclysmic UPHEAVALS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. MR DENG XIAOPING, WHOM YOU MET YESTERDAY, WAS HIMSELF PURGED TWICE, HIS SON WAS REPORTEDLY HURLED OUT OF A WINDOW BY RED GUARDS AT PEKING UNIVERSITY. WHAT SORT OF GUARANTEES HAVE YOU MANAGED TO SECURE TO ENSURE THAT HIS SUCCESSORS SIMPLY WON'T RIP UP THE AGREEMENT?+

ANSWER:

+I THINK ONE OF THE FEATURES WHICH IS MOST NOTEWORTHY ABOUT THE POSITION OF CHINA AND THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT IS THE RESPECT WHICH IT SHOWS FOR INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. IT IS FOR THAT REASON THAT WE ARE SEEKING TO ACHIEVE A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT OF THE KIND THAT I HAVE DESCRIBED AND HAVE MADE SUCH IMPORTANT PROGRESS TOWARDS THAT AND THE PROSPECT OF INCREASING AND CONTINUED PROSPERITY, BOTH IN CHINA ITSELF AND, ON THE FOOTING OF THIS AGREEMENT, IN HONG KONG -- THOSE ARE THE BEST ASSURANCES FOR THE FUTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT.+

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION, HUGH DAVIES:

+HAVE YOU HAD ANY WRITTEN GUARANTEES ON THAT?+

ANSWER:

+HAVE YOU GOT ANY WRITTEN GUARANTEES ABOUT THE FUTURE OF ANY NATION IN THE WORLD THAT FACES THE PROSPECT OF TWO OR THREE ELECTIONS IN THE NEXT 15 YEARS? THERE IS A LIMIT TO THE GUARANTEES THAT ANY STATESMAN, OR ANY COMMENTATOR, CAN GIVE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF ANY KIND. BUT LIVING IN THE REAL WORLD, CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IN HONG KONG, THE BEST ASSURANCES WE CAN GET ARE THE ASSURANCES THAT WILL BE CONTAINED IN THE BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT.+

QUESTION 14: MICHAEL NOBLE, AFP.

+IN THE CASE OF RHODESIA THE PEARCE COMMISSION REJECTED, OR FOUND THAT LOCAL PEOPLE REJECTED, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S DEAL. THE THEN BRITISH GOVERNMENT ABANDONED THE DEAL. CAN HONG KONG PEOPLE BE SURE THAT, IF THE ASSESSMENT OFFICE FINDS THAT HONG KONG PEOPLE REJECT THE DEAL, THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL REJECT THE DEAL AS IT DID IN RHODESIA?+

ANSWER:

+OBVIOUSLY, THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT OFFICE, WHICH WILL BE CONSIDERING THE WHOLE RANGE OF HONG KONG OPINIONS FROM HONG KONG PEOPLE, FROM THE HONG KONG MEDIA, AND ASSESSING THEM TOGETHER, WILL BE A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT. BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU ONCE AGAIN THAT THE OBJECTIVE TO WHICH WE ARE WORKING, THE REASON WHY WE HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING THESE NEGOTIATIONS SO TENACIOUSLY AND WITH SUCH CLEAR OBJECTIVES, IS TO SECURE AN AGREEMENT COVERING ALL THE KEY POINTS I HAVE DESCRIBED WHICH WE CAN HONOURABLY COMMEND TO THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG AND THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT.+

QUESTION 15 (IN CHINESE), VIVIAN MAK, COMMERCIAL RADIO:

+I'M FROM COMMERCIAL RADIO. I HAVE A QUESTION ON THE JOINT WORKING GROUP. FIRST OF ALL, HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL SIT ON THE WORKING GROUP AND WILL HONG KONG OFFICIALS BE REPRESENTED? SECONDLY, ON WHAT BASIS HAVE YOU DECIDED THAT THE GROUP WILL CONTINUE TO WORK UNTIL THE YEAR 2000 AND WHY IS THAT AFTER FOUR YEARS THE WORKING GROUP WILL BE BASED IN HONG KONG?+

ANSWER:

+THAT'S A LOT OF QUESTIONS IN A SHORT TIME. YES, WE HAVE CONSIDERED THE SIZE OF THE GROUP. IT WOULD HAVE FIVE MEMBERS ON EACH SIDE, TO BE APPOINTED BY EACH SIDE, AND IN DOING THAT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT HONG KONG INTERESTS WILL BE FULLY REPRESENTED. THERE'S ALSO AGREEMENT ON A LIMITED NUMBER OF SUPPORTING STAFF .... SECRETARIES AND INTERPRETERS AND DRIVERS AND SO ON. AS TO THE QUESTION ABOUT THE DATES THAT I'VE DESCRIBED, THOSE DATES CLEARLY EMERGE FROM THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS IN WHICH WE'VE BEEN TAKING PART, AND THEY DO, I BELIEVE, REPRESENT A SENSIBLE SET OF COMPROMISES BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES.+

QUESTION 16, SUNG SHUK-WAI, SING TAO JIH PAO:

+SINCE THE AGREEMENT IS LEGALLY BINDING, IF ANY OF THE PARTIES VIOLATES THE AGREEMENT, WHAT WILL THE OTHER PARTY DO?+

ANSWER:

+THE POSITION WILL BE EXACTLY THE SAME AS IN ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT, THAT EACH SIDE TO A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT WILL OBVIOUSLY MAKE THE STRONGEST PRESENTATIONS TO THE OTHER BY WAY OF COMPLAINT IN ORDER TO GET IT REMEDIED, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT IS THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH IT IS BUILT, UPON THE FOUNDATION OF NEGOTIATIONS CONDUCTED OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME IN GOOD FAITH IN ORDER TO TRY AND REACH A BALANCE OF THE INTERESTS OF THE NATIONS INVOLVED, BECAUSE IF IT IS AN AGREEMENT THAT MEETS THE BALANCE OF THOSE INTERESTS, THEN IT IS AN AGREEMENT THAT HAS THE BEST POSSIBLE CHANCE OF BEING UPHELD AND THE INTERESTS, AS I'VE SAID IN MY STATEMENT, WHICH ARE FOREMOST IN OUR MINDS THROUGHOUT ALL THESE NEGOTIATIONS, ARE THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.+

QUESTION 17, JOHN RODGERS, REUTERS:

+SIR GEOFFREY, JOHN RODGERS OF REUTERS. OF THE REMAINING ISSUES THAT ARE STILL TO BE RESOLVED IN THE FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS, WHAT ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT FROM BRITAIN'S POINT OF VIEW?+

ANSWER:

+I WOULDN'T LIKE TO IDENTIFY IN ADVANCE WHAT QUESTION OR QUESTIONS ARE OR MAY BE THE MOST DIFFICULT. I'VE GIVEN YOU IN MY STATEMENT AN EXAMPLE OF THREE MATTERS THAT ARE CLEARLY MOST IMPORTANT - LAND, CIVIL AVIATION AND NATIONALITY, BUT IF IT WAS POSSIBLE IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS TO PREDICT IN ADVANCE WHICH WAS GOING TO BE THE MOST DIFFICULT, THEY WOULD BE LESS DIFFICULT THAN THEY ARE.+

QUESTION 18, DINAH LEE, WASHINGTON POST/INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE:

+WILL PEKING RESERVE THE RIGHT TO APPROVE OR VETO LAWS, NEW LAWS MADE IN HONG KONG? YOU SAY THAT THE POWER TO MAKE LAWS WILL CONTINUE TO LIE WITH THE LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES OF HONG KONG, BUT IT'S NOT CLEAR WHETHER PEKING WILL ACTUALLY HAVE THE FINAL SAY.+

/ANSWER: .....

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ANSWER:

+NO, BUT THAT'S THE POINT OF THE WORK THAT IS BEING DONE IN ORDER TO SECURE A CONCLUDED AGREEMENT, AND OF THE WORK THAT I'VE DESCRIBED. I'VE DESCRIBED THE ARRANGEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN AGREED, WHICH WILL LEAVE LEGISLATIVE POWER, IN THE FIELDS WE'VE DISCUSSED EARLIER ON, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE HONG KONG LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES. JUST AS, IF I MAY SAY SO, IN THE UNITED STATES, CERTAIN POWERS ARE ASSIGNED TO THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND CERTAIN TO THE STATE AUTHORITIES- IT IS THAT KIND OF ARRANGEMENT, AND WHAT IS BEING ESTABLISHED IS HONG KONG AS A SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION WITH POWERS AS DEFINED IN MY STATEMENT, WHICH PLEASE STUDY AGAIN.+

QUESTION 19, SIMON FUNG, RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG:

+SIR GEOFFREY, YOU HAVE JUST TOLD US NATIONALITY IS STILL AN ISSUE REMAINING TO BE RESOLVED, BUT TIME AND AGAIN THE CHINESE LEADERS HAVE TOLD US THEY WILL TOLERATE HONG KONG PEOPLE HAVING DUAL NATIONALITY AFTER 1997. DOES IT MEAN THEN IT IS BECAUSE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO GIVE THE HONG KONG PEOPLE BRITISH STATUS THAT CAUSED THE PROBLEM TO REMAIN OUTSTANDING?+

ANSWER:

+I THINK IT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT FOR ME TO EMBARK HERE ON A DISCUSSION OF THE PRECISE NATURE OF THAT ISSUE, SINCE IT IS STILL THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER NEGOTIATION.+

QUESTION 20, JONATHAN MIRSKY, THE OBSERVER, LONDON:

+I NOTE THAT THERE ARE 10 PARAGRAPHS IN YOUR STATEMENT OF PARTICULAR ISSUES AND THEY HAPPEN TO HAVE BEEN THE FAMOUS 10 CHINESE POINTS OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, THE 10 CHINESE OFFERS. YES, EXACTLY 10 IF YOU COUNT UP THE DASHES. I'D LIKE TO KNOW HOW, WHAT HAS BEEN SETTLED BY BRITAIN, AND THEN IF YOU INCLUDE THE LIAISON GROUP, CAN YOU SAY HOW SUBSTANTIALLY IT HAS VARIED FROM WHAT THE CHINESE HAVE HAD ON OFFER FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS?+

/ANSWER: .....

ANSWER:

+ON YOU SECOND POINT, AGAIN I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO DISCLOSE THE NATURE AND PATTERN OF THE NEGOTIATIONS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE, SAVE TO INDICATE TO YOU SIMPLY THE CONCLUSIONS AT WHICH WE HAVE ARRIVED. JUST AS IT WOULD BE UNFRUITFUL TO SPECULATE ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS IN ADVANCE AND WHILE THEY ARE STILL GOING ON, SO IT WOULD BE EQUALLY UNFRUITFUL TO SPECULATE ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS IN RESPECT OF MATTERS ALREADY AGREED, SO I'VE GIVEN YOU THE POSITION THAT HAS BEEN AGREED ON THAT. SO FAR AS THE 10 POINTS CONTAINED IN MY STATEMENT ARE CONCERNED, I THINK THE ONLY SIGNIFICANCE YOU SHOULD READ INTO THAT IS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COUNT THEM AND WE HAVEN'T BOTHERED. THERE IS NO CONNECTION WHATSOEVER BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF PARAGRAPHS THERE AND ANY PREVIOUS STATEMENTS OR PROPOSITIONS BY ANYBODY.+

QUESTION:

+IT'S NOT THE NUMBER I'M TALKING ABOUT. OF COURSE IT'S NOT THE FACT THERE WERE 10. I JUST WANT TO KNOW HOW THIS VARIES FROM THE 10 POINTS THE CHINESE HAVE HAD ON OFFER, NEVER MIND THE EXACT NUMBER OF YOUR PARAGRAPHS.+

ANSWER:

+WELL, AGAIN I'M NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS VARIATIONS BETWEEN WHAT DIFFERENT SIDES HAVE SAID AT DIFFERENT TIMES BECAUSE I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THERE IS NO CONNECTION BETWEEN YOUR RECOLLECTION OF 10 CHINESE POINTS AND THE 10 PARAGRAPHS THAT HAPPEN TO APPEAR IN MY STATEMENT. THE POINTS I'VE COVERED ARE THE POINTS WHICH I AM IN A POSITION TO SET OUT AS CLEARLY AS I HAVE NOW AND I SUGGEST THAT FURTHER TEXTUAL ARCHEOLOGY WOULD BE UNREWARDING.+

QUESTION 21 (IN CHINESE), UNIDENTIFIED REPORTER:

+YOU SAID THAT YOUR VISIT TO CHINA ACHIEVED A LOT OF RESULTS. IS THIS GRADUAL PROGRESS OR HAS THERE BEEN A BREAKTHROUGH WHILE YOU WERE IN CHINA? WHAT SORT OF COMPROMISE DID BRITAIN HAVE TO UNDERGO?+

ANSWER:

+I'M IN THE PRIVILEGED POSITION OF KNOWING THE QUESTION, I'M SORRY. THE QUESTION WAS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PROGRESS MADE IN MY NEGOTIATIONS IN PEKING, DOES IT REPRESENT A BREAKTHROUGH= WHAT KIND OF CONCESSIONS DID BRITAIN HAVE TO UNDERGO, THE TRANSLATION WAS. THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, AS I SAID EARLIER ON, IS THAT WE HAVE INDEED MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS, SOME SUBSTANTIAL POINTS REMAIN, CERTAINLY WE'VE BROKEN THROUGH ON THE MAIN PROBLEMS. IN ACHIEVING THAT, WE HAVE, AS I SAID EARLIER ON, BEEN WORKING TOGETHER, AS ANY NEGOTIATORS MUST DO, IN A SPIRIT OF GIVE AND TAKE, AND IN DOING THAT WE HAVE BROKEN THROUGH ON THE MAIN PROBLEMS, BUT SUBSTANTIAL POINTS STILL REMAIN.+

QUESTION 22, JILL HARTLEY, SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST:

+COULD THE FOREIGN SECRETARY GIVE US AN ASSURANCE THAT ALL THE POINTS IN THE AGREEMENT WILL BE ENSHRINED IN THE BASIC LAW AND CAN WE STILL HAVE AN AGREEMENT IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SEEK A SOLUTION TO THOSE THREE CRUCIAL STICKING POINTS YOU HAVE MENTIONED TO US TODAY IN YOUR STATEMENT?+

ANSWER:

+THOSE THREE POINTS ARE AMONG THOSE ON WHICH WE SHALL HAVE TO REACH CONCLUSIONS BEFORE WE COMPLETE THE NEGOTIATIONS. AND ON YOUR FIRST QUESTION THE ANSWER IS YES.+

QUESTION 23, YAU LUI, TA KUNG PAO ENGLISH WEEKLY:

+SIR GEOFFREY, YOU MENTIONED IN YOUR STATEMENT THAT THERE WAS STILL A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE. CAN YOU MENTION SOME OF IT?+

ANSWER:

+WELL, I'VE IDENTIFIED THREE OF THEM, ALSO IN THE STATEMENT.+

QUESTION 24, REX MCDONALD, COMMERCIAL RADIO:

+CAN YOU BE A LITTLE BIT MORE ELABORATE, A LITTLE ON THE PHRASE 'A HIGH DEGREE OF AUTONOMY' AFTER 1997. FOR EXAMPLE, HOW WILL THE GOVERNOR BE CHOSEN?+

ANSWER:

+WELL, I'VE ALREADY INDICATED HOW FAR I CAN GO AT THIS STAGE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IN FILLING OUT THAT PHRASE, BUT I'VE IDENTIFIED A NUMBER OF PLACES ON WHICH IT IS ALREADY CLEAR THAT HONG KONG WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE ITS OWN DECISIONS ABOUT ITS OWN POLICIES. I CAN'T GO FURTHER TODAY.+

QUESTION 25: NANCY LEE, TVB:

+HOW MANY ANNEXES WILL THERE BE AND CAN YOU TELL US THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF EACH OF THEM?+

ANSWER:

+I THINK THAT IF I BEGIN SPECULATING ABOUT THAT I MIGHT LEAD TO ALL SORTS OF CONCLUSIONS. THERE WILL BE ANNEXES; THEY WILL BE OF THE SAME FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT - OF BINDING FORCE AND VALIDITY.+

/QUESTION 26: .....

QUESTION 26: SIU CHOK-KIN, KUNG SHEUNG DAILY NEWS:

+SIR GEOFFREY, YOU SAID JUST NOW THAT AFTER 1997 THE EXTERNAL DIPLOMACY RIGHTS OF HONG KONG WILL GO BACK TO CHINA. WHAT WILL HAPPEN BETWEEN HONG KONG AND TAIWAN THEN? IS THERE A SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT LISTED IN THE SINO-BRITISH AGREEMENT? IN HONG KONG WE KNOW THERE ARE A LOT OF WRITERS AND PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THEM?+

ANSWER:

+THAT IS NOT SOMETHING I THINK I CAN USEFULLY MAKE ANY COMMENT ON AT THIS STAGE.+

QUESTION 27: VIVIAN MAK, COMMERCIAL RADIO:

+THE FIRST QUESTION: WHY IS IT THAT THE GROUP HAS TO BE BASED HERE IN FOUR YEARS' TIME? THE SECOND QUESTION IS: DURING YOUR VISIT TO BEIJING HAVE YOU DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD FOR HONG KONG?+

ANSWER:

+THE ANSWER IS THAT THE DATE OF ARRIVAL IN FOUR YEARS' TIME IS ONE OF THE MATTERS THAT HAS EMERGED FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS. THAT IS THE DATE OF THE LOCATION OF ITS PRINCIPAL BASE IN HONG KONG. AND, YES INDEED, WE HAVE DISCUSSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TRANSITION= IT IS FOR THAT PURPOSE, AMONGST OTHERS THAT THE GROUP HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH THE THREE FUNCTIONS I HAVE DESCRIBED: LIAISON, CONSULTATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT, AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION.+

QUESTION 28, NG SIU-CHUN, COMMERCIAL DAILY:

+YOU SAID THAT THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG BROUGHT SINO-BRITISH RELATIONSHIPS TO A HIGHER LEVEL. WHAT IS YOUR COMMENT ON THIS?+

ANSWER:

+I DON'T THINK I DID SAY THAT, BUT I AM PREPARED TO COMMENT ON THE POINT THAT YOU ATTRIBUTE TO ME. THE POINT, I THINK, THAT IS TO BE TAKEN ACCOUNT OF IS THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS ARE TAKING PLACE BETWEEN TWO SOVEREIGN STATES - BRITAIN AND CHINA - AND PLAINLY IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY SHOULD BE CONDUCTED ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT BETWEEN THOSE TWO STATES. PLAINLY IF THEY ARE SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO AN IMPROVEMENT OF SINO-BRITISH RELATIONS, WHICH MUST BE A GOOD THING, NOT JUST FOR CHINA AND BRITAIN, BUT FOR HONG KONG. THAT IS ONE OF THE REASONS, THEREFORE, WHY WE ARE SEEKING TO SECURE, A FULL AND BINDING AND SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT. BUT THE OVER-RIDING PURPOSE OF THOSE NEGOTIATIONS IS TO TAKE ACCOUNT AND SAFEGUARD THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE OF HONG KONG.+

QUESTION 29, PATRICIA PENN, AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION:

+WOULD SIR GEOFFREY SEE ANY USEFUL PURPOSE IN CONTINUATION OF THE LIAISON GROUP AFTER 2000. WOULD YOU SEE ANY USEFUL PURPOSE IN ITS CONTINUATION AFTER 2000?+

ANSWER:

+I THINK THAT IF YOU GO BACK TO THE HISTORY OF THE NEGOTIATIONS YOU MAY REMEMBER ALL THE DISCUSSIONS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE ABOUT WHAT MAY HAPPEN AFTER 1997, ON WHICH I EXPRESSED OUR CONCLUSIONS IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE I GAVE ON APRIL 20, AND IT IS AGAINST THAT BACKGROUND WE HAVE REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT THE CONTINUATION OF THE LIAISON GROUP BEYOND 1997 TO THE YEAR 2000 CERTAINLY DOES HAVE A USEFUL PART TO PLAY - AND WE HAVE AGREED IT. I THINK THAT BEYOND THAT IS TO SPECULATE BEYOND THAT WHICH I HAVE DESCRIBED, BEYOND THAT WHICH I AM OFFERING.+

QUESTION 30, LAU CHI-MAN, COMMERCIAL RADIO:

+FROM NOW UNTIL REACHING AN AGREEMENT HOW MANY ROUNDS OF TALKS WILL THERE BE?+

ANSWER:

+I CAN'T SAY PRECISELY BUT THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE GOING ON IN THE SAME BROAD WAY WITH WORK CONTINUING IN THE NORMAL ROUNDS OF DISCUSSION AS WELL AS IN CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP THAT'S BEEN WORKING ALONGSIDE THE NORMAL ROUNDS. I CAN'T SAY PRECISELY HOW MANY THERE WILL BE.+

FINAL STATEMENT BY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE:

COULD I MAKE JUST ONE COMMENT AT THE END OF THIS PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH IS TO EXPRESS MY THANKS TO THE JOURNALISTS AND NEWSPAPERS AND TELEVISION AND RADIO STATIONS AND MEDIA OF HONG KONG, BECAUSE DURING MY TWO VISITS WE'VE HAD TO LIVE WITH EACH OTHER, SOMETIMES TALKING TO EACH OTHER FREELY, SOMETIMES TALKING TO EACH OTHER NOT AT ALL. YOU'VE BEEN VERY PATIENT WITH ME AND I'VE MUCH APPRECIATED THE WAY IN WHICH WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO CONDUCT OUR RELATIONSHIPS, IF THAT'S THE RIGHT WAY OF PUTTING IT. MAY I ALSO SAY A WORD OF RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE IN THE YEARS AHEAD, NOT JUST OF THE MEDIA WHICH YOU REPRESENT BUT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF HONG KONG, AND ALSO TO PAY A TRIBUTE TO THE VALUE OF THE ADVICE WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF EXCO AND OF LEGCO, WHO ALL PLAY A VERY CRUCIAL PART IN SHAPING AND REPRESENTING THE OPINION OF HONG KONG AND WHO WILL ALL HAVE A CONTINUING IMPORTANT PART TO PLAY IN THE FUTURE OF HONG KONG IN THE YEARS AHEAD. THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH INDEED.

+A MOST ENCOURAGING PROSPECT FOR HK+

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AFTER ATTENDING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GOLD AND SILVER EXCHANGE THIS EVENING (WEDNESDAY) THE GOVERNOR, SIR EDWARD YOUDE, SAID THAT SIR GEOFFREY HOWE HAD PAINTED A MOST ENCOURAGING PROSPECT FOR HONG KONG.

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20 UNOFFICIALS TO SPEAK ON GREEN PAPER

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TWENTY UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO SPEAK IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TOMORROW (THURSDAY) ON THE MOTION BY THE HON ROGER LOBO WELCOMING GOVERNMENT'S PUBLICATION OF THE GREEN PAPER ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN HONG KONG AND COMMENDING IT TO THE PUBLIC FOR EXAMINATION AND COMMENT.

IN ADDITION, SIX QUESTIONS WILL BE ASKED, DEALING WITH A VARIETY OF MATTERS.

AMONG THE QUESTIONS WILL BE ONE ASKING GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER INTRODUCING A STATUTORY REQUIREMENT FOR DEPOSIT-TAKING COMPANIES TO SUPPLY BORROWERS WITH INFORMATION RELATING TO THE RATE OF INTEREST REQUIRED TO BE FURNISHED BY MONEY LENDERS.

OTHERS WILL CONCERN +THE CMB BUS CASE AT HAPPY VALLEY+, POLICY REGARDING WAITING AND PARKING ON THE ROAD WITH RESPECT TO STREET LIGHTING, THE COMPUTERISED CENTRAL REGISTRY FOR THE DISABLED, ILLEGAL MEDICAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN SIGNBOARDS, NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND ON TELEVISION, AND HEPATITIS B VACCINE FOR PATIENTS REQUIRING DIALYSIS.

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HOUSEHOLD VISITS TO ENCOURAGE VOTING

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A SERIES OF DOOR-TO-DOOR PUBLICITY VISITS TO ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO REGISTER AS VOTERS IS BEING LAUNCHED BY THE ISLANDS DISTRICT OFFICE.

STAFF OF THE OFFICE WILL VISIT VILLAGES AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS ON CHEUNG CHAU, PENG CHAU, LANTAU AND LAMMA ISLANDS FROM NOW TILL THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

+DURING THE VISITS, TEMPORARY COMMUNITY ORGANISERS AND LIAISON OFFICERS WILL EXPLAIN TO RESIDENTS THE WORK OF THE LOCAL DISTRICT BOARD, AND HELP ELIGIBLE RESIDENTS FILL IN THE REGISTRATION FORMS,+ A DISTRICT OFFICE SPOKESMAN SAID.

/+THEY WILL .....

+THEY WILL ALSO DISTRIBUTE PAMPHLETS AND SOUVENIRS TO THE RESIDENTS.+

LETTERS, WITH THE DATES AND TIMES OF THE VISITS, WILL BE SENT TO INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLDS A FEW DAYS IN ADVANCE, WHILE RURAL COMMITTEE LEADERS AND VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES WILL ALSO BE NOTIFIED BEFOREHAND.

THE HOUSEHOLD VISITS FORM PART OF A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES TO PUBLICISE THE SIX-WEEK VOTERS' REGISTRATION EXERCISE, WHICH BEGINS ON AUGUST 15, AND THE DISTRICT BOARD ELECTIONS ON MARCH 7.

OTHER PUBLICITY PROGRAMMES WILL INCLUDE AN OPEN FORUM ON AUGUST 12 FOR RESIDENTS TO AIR THEIR VIEWS AND MAKE SUGGESTIONS ON LOCAL ISSUES, VISITS TO LOCAL ORGANISATIONS, A MOBILE EXHIBITION ON THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT BOARD AND THE PUBLICATION OF A DIARY TO REMIND RESIDENTS OF THE REGISTRATION AND ELECTION DATES.

POSTERS AND SIGNBOARDS CARRYING THE REGISTRATION MESSAGE WILL ALSO BE PUT UP AT VANTAGE POINTS IN THE DISTRICT.

THE SPOKESMAN REMINDED RESIDENTS THAT ANYONE OVER 21 YEARS OF AGE WHO HAS RESIDED IN HONG KONG FOR AT LEAST SEVEN YEARS, IS ELIGIBLE TO REGISTER AS A VOTER.

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HK JING YING TO PERFORM IN UK  
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FIFTEEN TALENTED YOUNG MUSICIANS AND DANCERS SELECTED BY THE RECREATION AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT WILL BE LEAVING HONG KONG TONIGHT (WEDNESDAY) TO PARTICIPATE IN THREE INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FESTIVALS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

THEY WILL REPRESENT THE TERRITORY UNDER THE BANNER OF HONG KONG JING YING, AND GIVE MONTH-LONG PERFORMANCES AT FOLKLORE FESTIVALS IN SIDMOUTH, BILLINGHAM AND MAIDSTONE.

THE TOUR IS AIMED AT WIDENING THE HORIZONS OF LOCAL YOUNG AMATEUR MUSICIANS AND DANCERS, AND AT IMPROVING INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING THROUGH ARTISTIC ENDEAVOUR.

THE GROUP, WHICH WILL BE SEEN OFF AT THE AIRPORT BY MUSIC ADMINISTRATOR MRS DORIS HO, WILL RETURN TO HONG KONG ON AUGUST 28.

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PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL PLACES PROVE POPULAR  
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THE NUMBER OF FORM 1 PLACES IN PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS FOR THE COMING ACADEMIC YEAR HAD BEEN OVERSUBSCRIBED BY 300 PER CENT, INDICATING THEIR POPULARITY WITH PARENTS, MR MICHAEL LEUNG, THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SAID TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

SPEAKING AT THE GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY OF THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS YOW KAM YUEN PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL, HE SAID THAT MORE THAN 10 400 APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED FOR ABOUT 3 200 PLACES.

AT PRESENT THERE ARE 13 PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS IN HONG KONG, INCLUDING THE CMA CHOI CHEUNG KOK PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL WHICH WILL OPEN THIS SEPTEMBER IN TUEN MUN. THEY WILL PROVIDE A TOTAL OF OVER 11 500 PLACES FROM FORM 1 TO FORM 5 IN THE NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR.

MR LEUNG SAID MORE PLACES WOULD BE AVAILABLE WITH THE COMPLETION OF 11 MORE PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.

PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOLS ARE GOVERNMENT-AIDED SCHOOLS PROVIDING FIVE YEARS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION AIMS AT PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE CRAFT APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME AND THE TWO YEARS OF SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION, AT PREPARING STUDENTS WITH BETTER RESULTS FOR THE HONG KONG CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION AND FOR TECHNICIAN PROGRAMMES.

+ I HOPE PARENTS CAN NOTE THEIR CHILDREN'S INTERESTS SO THAT THEY CAN MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE IN CHOOSING A SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR THEIR CHILDREN. IN THIS WAY STUDENTS WITH POTENTIAL CAN FULLY DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS IN THE INDUSTRIAL FIELD, + MR LEUNG SAID.

LOCATED IN SHA TIN, THE YOW KAM YUEN PREVOCATIONAL SCHOOL WILL BE A CO-EDUCATIONAL ONE, PROVIDING 16 CLASSROOMS, NINE WORKSHOPS AND SEVEN SPECIAL ROOMS, AND ACCOMMODATING 1 000 STUDENTS.

ITS CURRICULUM WILL INCLUDE TECHNICAL-PRACTICAL SUBJECTS SUCH AS LIGHT METALWORK AND FINISHING, AND PRINTING.

MR LEUNG COMMENDED THE TUNG WAH GROUP OF HOSPITALS FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN PROMOTING EDUCATION.

THE GROUP RUNS OVER 30 PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS, AND KINDERGARTENS.

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SEMINAR FOR TUEN MUN INDUSTRIALISTS

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FACTORY OPERATORS IN TUEN MUN WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN ABOUT PRODUCTION AND MARKETING SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT FROM A SEMINAR TO BE HELD TOMORROW (THURSDAY).

THEY WILL ALSO BE INFORMED OF THE POTENTIALS OF THE NEW TOWN DURING THE THREE-HOUR SEMINAR, STARTING AT 2 PM.

THE SEMINAR IS JOINTLY ORGANISED BY THE TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND THE HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE, AND SPONSORED BY THE LOCAL DISTRICT BOARD.

GUEST SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE THE SENIOR PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER OF HONG KONG PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE, MR ANDY NG; THE MANAGER OF YKK ZIPPER COMPANY (HK) LIMITED, MR CHAN WU-CHING; AND THE MANAGER OF TRADE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (TSUEN WAN OFFICE), MR PETER CHING.

THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MR RICKY FUNG, AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE OF THE DISTRICT BOARD, MR YIP HING-CHUNG, WILL OFFICIATE AT AN OPENING CEREMONY.

APART FROM TRADE ASSOCIATIONS' REPRESENTATIVES, DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE ALSO BEEN INVITED TO THE SEMINAR, WHICH WILL BE HELD IN THE DANCE STUDIO OF YAN OI TONG COMMUNITY AND INDOOR SPORTS CENTRE IN TUEN MUN.

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NEW ENQUIRY CENTRE FOR YUEN LONG

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A SECOND PUBLIC ENQUIRY SERVICE CENTRE OF THE YUEN LONG DISTRICT OFFICE WAS OPENED IN FAIRVIEW PARK TODAY (WEDNESDAY).

LOCATED AT UNIT 4C, BLOCK D IN THE TOWN CENTRE OF FAIRVIEW PARK, THE CENTRE IS OPEN FROM 8.45 AM TO 5.15 PM FROM MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS, AND FROM 9 AM TO 12 NOON ON SATURDAYS.

SERVICES PROVIDED AT THE CENTRE INCLUDE HANDLING OF GENERAL ENQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS, EXPLANATION OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES, DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT FORMS AND PUBLICITY LEAFLETS, AND REFERRAL OF CLIENTS WHO REQUIRE LEGAL ADVICE.

/SPEAKING AT .....

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SPEAKING AT TODAY'S OPENING CEREMONY, THE DISTRICT OFFICER, MR JAMES WILSON, SAID WITH THE GROWING POPULATION IN THE NEW TOWN, MORE ENQUIRY CENTRES WOULD BE SET UP IN OTHER PARTS OF THE DISTRICT IN FUTURE.

HE NOTED THAT THE AIMS OF THESE CENTRES WERE TO PROVIDE A BETTER SERVICE TO LOCAL RESIDENTS AND TO IMPROVE THE COMMUNICATION LINK BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND THE GOVERNMENT.

+IN FACT, WITH THE SETTING UP OF THE DISTRICT BOARDS TWO YEARS AGO, RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED WITH MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO CHANNEL THEIR VIEWS TO THE GOVERNMENT,+ HE SAID.

THROUGH THE BOARD'S MEET-THE-PUBLIC SCHEME, MEMBERS WERE ABLE TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE RESIDENTS AND HELP SOLVE THEIR GRIEVANCES, HE SAID.

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CONTAINER PARK SITE FOR RENT  
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A KOWLOON BAY SITE WHICH IS TO BE USED FOR PARKING CONTAINER VEHICLES IS BEING OFFERED ON SHORT-TERM TENANCY BY THE LANDS DEPARTMENT.

THE SITE, AT THE JUNCTION OF KAI CHEUNG ROAD AND WANG KWONG ROAD, MEASURES 9 500 SQUARE METRES.

THE INITIAL 18-MONTH TENANCY IS RENEWABLE QUARTERLY AFTERWARDS.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING TENDERS IS AUGUST 17.

TENDER FORMS, NOTICES AND CONDITIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE LANDS DEPARTMENT, MURRAY BUILDING, 5TH FLOOR, GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG- AND THE DISTRICT LANDS OFFICE (KOWLOON EAST), YAU MA TEI CAR PARK BUILDING, 10TH FLOOR, 250 SHANGHAI STREET, KOWLOON.

THE TENDER PLAN CAN ALSO BE INSPECTED AT THESE PLACES.

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FOOTBRIDGE FOR POK FU LAM ROAD

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A COVERED FOOTBRIDGE IS TO BE BUILT ACROSS POK FU LAM ROAD NEAR HONG KONG UNIVERSITY TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IN THE AREA.

THE HIGHWAYS OFFICE OF THE ENGINEERING DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT HAS AWARDED A \$1.92 MILLION CONTRACT TO EXCEL ENGINEERING COMPANY LTD FOR THE PROJECT WHICH IS PART OF THE FIFTH STAGE OF THE POK FU LAM ROAD WIDENING PROGRAMME.

THE SECTION OF POK FU LAM ROAD NEAR THE UNIVERSITY HAS RECENTLY BEEN WIDENED TO THREE LANES AND THE 24-METRE-LONG FOOTBRIDGE WILL REPLACE THE EXISTING SIGNAL-CONTROLLED CROSSING NEAR CHIU SHEUNG MIDDLE SCHOOL. IT WILL BE TWO METRES WIDE AND WILL BE CONSTRUCTED IN PRESTRESSED CONCRETE.

THE FOOTBRIDGE IS EXPECTED TO BE READY BY APRIL NEXT YEAR.

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MAINS WORK ON LANTAU

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FRESH WATER SUPPLY TO CERTAIN PREMISES ON LANTAU ISLAND WILL BE TURNED OFF FROM 10 AM TO 5 PM ON FRIDAY (AUGUST 3) FOR WATER MAINS WORK.

ALL PREMISES IN TAI O WILL BE AFFECTED.

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