

## **BDOHP: INTERVIEW WITH SIR ROBIN MCLAREN.**

### **BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS**

Born 14 August 1934

- p 2. Education and entry to FO
- 2-4. Hong Kong 1959-60. (Comments on language training and sea travel)
- 4-5. Peking, 1960-61
- 5. FO, 1961-4 (Far East Department; Assistant Private Secretary to the Lord Privy Seal, 1963; Arab-Israeli desk)
- 6. Rome, 1964-8 (1967 visit by Wilson and Brown)
- 6-7. Assistant Political Adviser, Hong Kong, 1968-70
- 7-8. FCO, 1970 (home postings)  
Deputy Head, Western Organisations Department, 1974-5
- 8-9. Counsellor and Head of Chancery, Copenhagen, 1975-8 (includes comments on Ann Warburton as Ambassador)
- 9-11. Head of Hong Kong and General Department, 1978-9
- 12. Head of Far Eastern Department, 1979-80
- 12-18. Political Adviser, Hong Kong, 1981-5 (talks on transfer to China)
- 18-19. Ambassador to Manila, 1985-7
- 19-20. Assistant Under-Secretary (Asia/ Far East) 1987-90. (More on Hong Kong transfer talks)
- 20. Deputy Under-Secretary (Americas/Asia) 1990
- 20-27. Ambassador to Peking, 1991-94 (again focussing on Hong Kong)

## BRITISH DIPLOMATIC ORAL HISTORY PROGRAMME

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**It's the 31st July 1996. My name is Jane Barder and I'm talking to Sir Robin McLaren. Sir Robin retired from the diplomatic service in 1994 as Ambassador to China. He was appointed CMG in 1982 and KCMG in 1991. Sir Robin where were you educated?**

I was educated first at a village school in Sussex during the war then at an old fashioned grammar school of the type that have now been abolished. It was known as the Richmond and East Sheen County Grammar School. At the age of fourteen I was sent to a public school, Ardingly College. I went a lot later than I would normally have done because I had a hand injury that required a lot of medical attention. I stayed there until I got a scholarship in history to St John's College, Cambridge which I applied to because one of my teachers had been there. I also applied for a scholarship to an Oxford college because another of my teachers had been there but I got the Cambridge one first and wisely took it. At Cambridge I read history and at the end of my time there arose the question of what I would do next and I had really no idea. I thought that I might possibly stay in universities but also tried for the civil service examinations. I hadn't even thought of the Foreign Service at that stage but during the three days of tests and interviews at the civil service commission, while I was discussing subjects which I had nominated myself such as foreign policy (because I had read history) the Observer, who must have been from the diplomatic service (and I did once know who he was but have forgotten) said 'Why don't you apply for the Foreign Service?' and I replied that it had never even occurred to me - which it hadn't. I think that year they must have been a bit short. And he said 'Well it's not too late and if you want to apply you can'. And so I said 'Why not'? And I did and found at the end of the process that I had been accepted for both the Home Civil Service and the Foreign Service with slightly higher marks for the latter. I think that was important but I was also rather intrigued by the idea of the Foreign Service that I'd never thought of before. And at the end of the day I said I'd join it and so I did.

**And soon after that you then went to become a language student in Hong Kong. Was that equally chancy?**

It was really because it wasn't then the practice as it subsequently became for all new entrants to spend a year in the Office before there was any question of being sent abroad to be a language student. At that time you either went into the office into a department or you went on language training - in both cases after a very short training course which was just an introduction to the Service lasting no more than three weeks. During that time I think we were all given some kind of aptitude test to see if we could learn hard languages or not. I passed this test and was therefore offered the chance to learn a hard language. I remember I enquired about Russian but was told that there were plenty of Russian speakers because many people had learned Russian during their National Service so they weren't interested in training people in Russian and I said 'Well, what languages have you got?' and they said, basically, 'Arabic, Arabic, and Arabic'. I said no, I didn't think I was interested on the grounds that I knew nothing about the Arab world. At the time there were all these Arab posts and I didn't think that it would be wise to commit myself and so I asked what other languages they had. Turkish, I think, was mentioned. But among the other languages that were mentioned was Chinese which I had never thought about which seemed to me to be something which would be worth the effort. Here was this vast country with a tremendous civilization going through a tumultuous revolutionary process and I thought it sounded fascinating. It was also a specialisation which would not, in anticipation at least, turn out to be exclusive. There would be the chance, perhaps unlike Arabic, to do other things during the course of my career. So I said I'd like to do Chinese and that was agreed and I was packed off with another Foreign Office student, Christopher Howells, who sadly died in 1984 of a brain tumour. We were first sent to SOAS where we did an academic year and then out to Hong Kong. The Foreign Office over the years has chopped and changed in its ways of teaching Chinese but until very recently it was always a year in a British institution and then another in Hong Kong. We tried Taiwan briefly but it didn't work and for the last I think three years we've sent people for their second year to Peking and that has proved much better, though it wouldn't have been practicable in earlier years for a number of reasons. So I started at SOAS. In later years SOAS was persuaded into providing a special course for Foreign Office students but we just did the first year of the normal undergraduate course and then went out to Hong Kong. And at that stage, of course, the normal

way of travelling those long distances was by sea. I noted that in Douglas Hurd's reminiscences on the radio he implied that there was a choice and that he might have chosen to go by air. I don't think that was actually true then or for a long time afterwards, until probably the late sixties, because it was much cheaper to send people out to distant posts by sea with your luggage and to send you first class, than to send you economy by air. And that was the way the Office did it. They didn't really count the amount of time you took; it wasn't a factor. Of course, it took a month to get over there and it was very exciting to somebody who had never been outside Europe before which, of course, I hadn't.

**And the normal pattern which you followed was that you did that year in Hong Kong and immediately transferred to Peking?**

I was transferred to Peking in 1960. I spent about eighteen months in Peking and then went back to the Office. China was a very strange place to go to at that time. Most Americans, when they talk about when they first went to China, are talking about, at the earliest, the 1970's. But in 1960 China was a very closed environment. It was only just over ten years since the Communists had taken over.

**And very few other diplomatic posts there?**

Very few. Britain had been the first major Western country to recognise Peking, in January 1950. It didn't immediately lead, as we thought it would, to the establishment of full diplomatic relations. We found ourselves with a mission in Peking which had been left over from the past. It was there and was labelled 'mission for the negotiation of diplomatic relations' and it wasn't until 1954 in the margins of the famous Geneva conference on South East Asia after the Korean war that we agreed with China to establish diplomatic relations but even then it was at chargé d'affaires level, largely because we continued to maintain a consular mission in Taiwan. We said that was consistent with our having diplomatic relations with Peking because our consular relations were only consular relations and our consular mission was under instruction to have contact only with the Taiwan provincial authorities which were separate from the so-called government of the ROC. But that didn't wash with Peking and it wasn't until 1972 that we finally agreed to give up that consulate and, along with the Americans, negotiated the establishment of full diplomatic relations and the exchange of Ambassadors. So, for all that previous period we only had a diplomatic mission under a chargé d'affaires.

**Who was head of mission?**

My head of mission when I got there in 1960 was Michael Stewart who had no Chinese credentials but was quite a distinguished diplomat of the old school. I think he retired as Ambassador to Greece but China was something out of the ordinary for him. My head of Chancery there was Teddy Youde who was already then in his second term in China and was tremendously knowledgeable.

**The Amethyst man.**

Yes, the Amethyst man.

**Who was later to enjoy a very distinguished career.**

Much more distinguished than mine.

**So in 1961 you went back to the Foreign Office?**

1962. It was my first time and I had three different jobs. Firstly, I was working in the Far East department where I began as Korea desk Officer and assistant to John Morgan who was the Head of the China section. My head of department was Arthur De la Mare, a Japanologist of the old school who always referred to the Chinese as 'the Celestials' in the pre-war manner. Then I became Assistant Private Secretary to Ted Heath. It wasn't during the period when he was going around seeking British entry in to the EEC. It was just after the General had said no. After the collapse of the negotiations Heath remained a cabinet minister at the Foreign Office which, unusually, had two cabinet ministers, the Foreign Secretary Lord Home and Ted Heath who was the Lord Privy Seal. We were picking up the pieces really, trying to decide what European policy we could pursue in light of the General's refusal to allow British entry. I did that until shortly after Heath left and Lord Carrington took over. Then I was appointed as the Arab-Israel desk officer in the old Eastern Department. So I had to learn all about those things. I think I was brought in because the department was actually full of Arabists and other Middle Eastern specialists like David Hannay and Terry Clarke. Alan Goodison was the assistant. The purpose, I think, of bringing me in was that I knew nothing about it at all and therefore could not be accused by a highly suspicious Israeli embassy of being prejudiced in favour of the Arabs.

**Did that confirm you in your view that you'd made the right choice in choosing China?**

Yes, but I found it all interesting. I learned a little bit, as I had to, about the history of it all and I could see just how difficult it had been right from the start and how it

was to go on being immensely difficult.

**Then another foreign posting but this time in Europe. How did that come about?**

Well, I'm not sure exactly. I think it was the policy after you'd done a bit of your specialisation to send you to do something different. I was sent to Italy because I'd claimed some knowledge of Italian, which was true. I did know a bit of Italian. I had an Italian grandfather. I'd not studied Italian at school but I had while I was in the Navy, in my spare time. But I can't say that my knowledge of it was that great and it may be that I had exaggerated slightly and that was why they sent me.

Anyway, I was appointed as Private Secretary to the Ambassador, Jack Ward. The Foreign Office was rather generous in allowing Ambassadors to have private secretaries in those days. I didn't stay in that job very long, about a year I suppose and, for the remainder of my three and a half years in Rome I was the Embassy's expert on Italian politics in the Chancery. I served for the first part of my time with Douglas Hurd, who was then in his last diplomatic service post.

**So what was the relationship with Italy at the time? Were there any problems as you can recall?**

It was not a very different Italy to the one now. There was a succession of governments. My four years were presided over by the unfortunate Aldo Moro, subsequently murdered by terrorists. Our own British relations were by and large pretty good. Our earlier efforts to join the EEC were continued largely by the Labour government and I remember there was one visit in 1967 when Harold Wilson and George Brown came on one of their swings through Europe in order to try to persuade people that they were interested in Europe. And it was patently obvious to everybody that they were simply not on speaking terms.

**And their private secretaries, did they get on?**

I don't remember. But it was a good time for us because I was newly married and our two daughters were born in Rome. We had a lot of Italian friends. My wife learned to speak very good Italian. She had a degree in Spanish and it took her little time to convert to Italian and she did it very well. We lived in a nice house south of Rome. The Embassy and offices and the Residence were both then in the Villa Wolkonsky, which we'd taken from the Germans after the war. We'd taken it from the Germans because our own embassy had been blown up by Jewish terrorists - a great coup for them at the time.

**So that was 64-68 and then in 1968 you went back to Hong Kong.**

I went back to what was really a new job. There had for some time been a practice whereby the Foreign Service provided secondees to the Hong Kong government to look after its foreign relations - principally but not exclusively with China, and the volume of the work had become such during the Cultural Revolution that it was thought that the Political Adviser needed an Assistant. The first such assistant was Emrys Davies who did it for a year or so. When he left I took over from him as the second Assistant Political Adviser. There was a gap between which was filled by George Walden who had just completed his language training and was subsequently sent to Peking.

**Was that still a First Secretary post? And the political advisor? Was he Counsellor?**

Yes. My Political Adviser was Arthur Maddocks who had no knowledge of China. A very nice man who subsequently was the number two in Canada and his last job (he was a first class economist) was as Ambassador to the OECD. Anyway, he was Political Adviser but as he knew nothing about China it gave me more scope.

**Were you technically advising the Governor? Who was he?**

David Trench who was the last Colonial Service Governor because after him came Murray Macle hose, the first of the ex Diplomatic Service governors, which was what all of the subsequent ones were, other than the last Governor of all, Chris Patten.

**But you only did that for a year?**

No. I did it for eighteen months. I was then summoned back to London to take charge of home postings in the Personnel Operations Department. In fact, I might not have done that had there not been a misunderstanding. At that time the standard length of service in Hong Kong was supposed to be two years but the Foreign Office thought it was eighteen months for some reason. The Hong Kong government were surprised that I was dragged back so early. And so my next job was in the administration and I was in charge of all the home postings which was quite a stressful job because you had to fill all the departmental jobs below counsellor level and you also had a hand in the counsellor appointments. If there were posts which suddenly became vacant abroad you had really to fill them from London because it was easier to send someone from London than to transfer an officer from one post to another post abroad. It meant that you had to be like a juggler, keeping several balls in the air at once and not allocating people finally until you were pretty sure what slots would need to be filled. It was very interesting but quite stressful. I did that for about two and a half years. I then arranged my own transfer to a department which I judged would be extremely busy and would give me useful experience. This was the old

Western Organisations Department where I succeeded Rodric Braithwaite, who I'd known in Rome as Assistant Head. He had succeeded Douglas Hurd in Rome. WOD was the department which handled all NATO and other matters to do with Western defence like the WEU. Because NATO was intimately concerned we also became involved in the establishment of the CSCE and also of the MBFR process for mutual and balanced force reductions. So we were tremendously busy. We had a very able department which included Crispin Tickell, who was Head of it and showed great agility and ability in dealing with all these issues. We had John Kerr, who I had put in place to succeed Michael Alexander in what was, perhaps, the most demanding of the desks, the one dealing with nuclear issues where you had to gain the confidence of the MOD and deal with many things on your own. We had Andrew Burns, now a Deputy Under Secretary, and we had Christian Adams who became Ambassador in Bangkok, who sadly died the other day. So we had a pretty able crop of desk officers. I stayed there for two and a half years and became Deputy Head of Department for the last year of that.

**And then you went off to Copenhagen.**

That in a sense was an accident because I had originally been posted to Israel as the number two. We thought we were going to Israel for quite some time -at least two months. I had been accepted by the then head of the post, Bernard Ledwidge, and had corresponded with him. We made enquiries about schools. Then the posting got changed to Copenhagen and the only explanation I have is that it was thought that some European expertise would be better for me. Denmark had joined the Community with us, so they were fairly new members as well as members of NATO and it was felt that this would be a better posting.

**And there you were head of Chancery.**

I was political counsellor, head of Chancery and number two. In fact it was slightly awkward because the commercial counsellor there was senior to me. It was a good posting because it was the only time when we had all our children with us other than when they were very small and there was an excellent international school where our two daughters went and were very well taught and our young two year old son went to a Danish kindergarten which was excellent for him. I think that it was possibly not as challenging as other places though it was not uninteresting.

**Dame Ann Warburton was your...**



Well, not to begin with. I had Andrew Stark first. He was in his last post and then, to his intense annoyance, for his final year he was dragged back to mastermind the Foreign Office contribution to the CPRS review in 1976. He was chosen because he had been Chief Clerk. He was very cross and I can now understand why. There was absolutely nothing in it for him to go back and do this totally thankless job, but it was good for the Service to have someone like him doing it. But there he was enjoying the Danish life he had organised for himself there only to be dragged back. And so Ann Warburton came.

**She was the first woman Ambassador.**

Well, she was strictly not the first woman Ambassador because Eleanor Emery had been High Commissioner in Botswana so she'd been the first female head of mission and, of course, before her Dame Barbara Salt had been appointed Ambassador to Israel and then sadly became very ill and was unable to take up her appointment. To her should have belonged the honour but it didn't. But certainly Ann Warburton was the first woman to be head of mission with the title Ambassador in a foreign country. So in turn I became the first person to be number two to a woman Ambassador. But we got along fine. She stayed in Denmark for about seven years. Her last post was as Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva where she'd worked before so she had ample suitable experience for that.

**But then you went back again to the Office in 1978, back to China affairs.**

Yes, I went back to become head of what was then the Hong Kong and General Department. In fact, from then onwards China and Hong Kong in my career were never far away - only once was I not concerned with these issues and that was when I was Ambassador to the Philippines, though arguably I was still pretty close then. So I became head of the Hong Kong and General Department. The 'and General' bit meant my department had within it what was left of the old Colonial Office which is to say it dealt with a number of bits and pieces which were thought to be of concern to dependent territories. So we had a little section which handled the appointment of Governors of dependent territories. We had people who dealt with such issues as stamps for dependent territories, there was a procedure which required the approval of the Queen. And we had one thorny political issue; the death penalty in dependent

territories. There was a Labour government at the time and there were a number of West Indian territories which wanted to execute criminals and the government was determined that they shouldn't. There was also Hong Kong. Most of my time was spent in dealing with Hong Kong issues and it was at that time that the future started to be thought of. There were some very complex and lengthy exchanges with the Governor as to whether the time had come to start raising the issue of the future with the Chinese.

**And this was under a Labour government?**

Yes. David Owen had plans to go to China in 1979. In the end he didn't go because there was a general election. But the then governor, Murray Maclehoose, received an official invitation to go to China, the first such invitation to be made by the Chinese to a Governor of Hong Kong. That invitation was a sign that the relationship was becoming closer and mutually beneficial and that the Cultural Revolution years were behind Hong Kong. This was all part of Deng Xiaoping's new approach, the four modernisations, the opening to the outside world in the course of which Hong Kong's relationship to China was transformed. Before then literally the only way you could get from Hong Kong to China was to travel by rail to the border bridge, walk across the bridge to the railway station on the Chinese side and catch another train to Canton. In 1978 'through' trains were negotiated swiftly followed by air services to an increasing number of Chinese cities, bus services and hydrofoil services up the Pearl River. All that reflected the fact that economic links between Hong Kong and China were developing rapidly. It was the time when special economic zones were being established to encourage investment, when Hong Kong companies were taking the lead in establishing joint ventures in China. It was a time of burgeoning economic links. So it seemed that there might be a window of opportunity for the British to start talking to China about the future. At the same time there was a technical issue which had raised its head which was to do with land leases in the New Territories. If you consider that the part of Hong Kong which was leased, as opposed to ceded in perpetuity, occupies some 92% of the land area of Hong Kong you can see that the New Territories loomed fairly large. In the time of Murray Maclehoose the New Territories was where the new development was taking place because there was simply nowhere else for it. All the power generation was in the New Territories and so on. So as you can see

the New Territories were very important. It had been the practice for land leases to be granted in the New Territories only up to 1997, three days before the expiry of the main lease. One needs to explain here that in Hong Kong all land is owned by the Crown and leased to those who use it and every time land is leased the government extracts a premium which obviously enables the Hong Kong government to maintain healthy finances. But, whereas in the ceded parts of the Hong Kong territories the Hong Kong government could grant leases for as long as it wished (usually they were for ninety nine years, in a few cases nine hundred and ninety nine years) in the New Territories they could only grant leases which expired in 1997. That meant that the term of these leases was steadily decreasing and Murray Maclehoose had detected that there was concern among investors, particularly their legal advisors about this diminishing time and felt that something ought to be done, if it could be. During my time as Head of the Hong Kong Department we were wrestling with this problem and eventually, to cut a long story short, it was agreed that it would be something Murray Maclehoose would raise when he went to China in 1979, by which time the general election had been announced and it was clear that David Owen would not go. So Murray Maclehoose did go and he raised this issue with Deng Xiaoping. Rather unusually he saw Deng Xiaoping before he had substantial meetings with anyone else. The normal practice for a foreign visitor when he goes is that he has his lower level discussions first and only then does he have the honour of a meeting with the leader of the day. That for the Chinese has two advantages: the honour can be withheld if the visitor does not come up with what he was supposed to come up with and, secondly, the great leader can be briefed about the concerns of the visitor so there can then be time to consider how to respond to them. But anyway, this didn't happen on this occasion and Murray Maclehoose didn't get a very clear answer out of Deng Xiaoping beyond the fact that he could tell investors that they could set their hearts at ease, which he did. In practice what the Chinese meant was that they were not ready at that time to deal with the Hong Kong issue. Taiwan was top of their list. Normalisation of diplomatic relations with the United States had recently taken place and with the abrogation of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the ROC, which had been included in that process the Chinese probably felt that the process of unification with Taiwan would become easier. It was only when it became clear that they were not making any progress on

Taiwan, probably somewhere in late 1981 or early 1982, that the Chinese decided to turn their attention to Hong Kong.

(End of side one)

I think we were discussing the Maclehorse approach to China in 1979. I should add that in November/December 1979 I changed departments from Hong Kong to Far East. I had always wanted to be head of the Far East Department because I had been there early on and the opportunity came. But I continued to take an interest in all these toings-and-froings with China but it gave me a wider scope as well - it also took away most of the general dependent territories issues in which, on the whole, I was not terribly interested. The new appointment gave me a number of trips. For example, I went with Francis Pym on the first ever visit by a Defense Secretary to China. He was accompanied mainly by MOD officials but the Foreign Office said that he had to take someone from the Foreign Office with him. I subsequently went with Lord Carrington, in the spring of 1981. He had intended to go to China in the autumn of 1980 and we had actually set off for Peking via the United Nations. It was the week that Foreign Secretaries always spent at the UN. But a Middle East crisis blew up and Lord Carrington decided that he would have to postpone his visit to China in order to deal with this Middle Eastern business. We were in uncertainty for quite some time. We were in New York for a bit, then Washington and spent a weekend there before finally going back to London without going to China at all. The visit was re-arranged for the spring of 1981 and that was one of several attempts we made at the time to embark upon serious discussion with China over the future of Hong Kong. But not very successfully.

**Had the change of government in 1979 made any difference to the approach?**

Not really. I think the only difference it made was that whereas David Owen had been planning to go to China in 1979 the change of government meant a new Foreign Secretary and China was not one of his priorities. He did go eventually but he did not intend it to be one of the early things he did. After that I had been in London for over three years. I was called over to see Teddy Youde, who was then Chief Clerk and also the DUS responsible for China and the Far East. This was in anticipation of his appointment as Governor of Hong Kong,

although at that time it was not finally decided. (He had suffered from heart trouble and had to have a by-pass operation.) Teddy Youde summoned me in his capacity as Chief Clerk and said, "would you like to go to Hong Kong as Political Adviser? We'll make it a senior grade job." I agreed and succeeded David Wilson in that job in October 1981. That was in the lead up to the opening of negotiations with the Chinese and Mrs Thatcher's visit. There were various indications that the Chinese were ready to turn to the future of Hong Kong. But Mrs Thatcher's attention was not yet seriously turned to Hong Kong because of the Falklands War. Preparations for discussions with China went on but senior ministers were understandably unable to turn their minds to it because of the war. And we had a new Foreign Secretary, of course. One of the outcomes of the Falklands War was Lord Carrington's resignation and Francis Pym became Foreign Secretary. In the end Mrs Thatcher went to Peking in September of 1982 and as a result of that came the announcement that the two leaders had held friendly talks on Hong Kong, each explaining their positions, and had agreed that negotiations would take place through diplomatic channels with the object of preserving the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. That short announcement, of course, covered up a vigorous argument and a lack of agreement about what the object of those discussions should be.

**Were you on that trip?**

No, I wasn't. I was in Hong Kong but I was, of course, there at meetings when she subsequently came back to Hong Kong to explain what she'd been up to and I was present at her famous press conference when she announced that the treaties were valid and got roundly denounced for doing so by the Chinese.

**Who was with her?**

The Ambassador, Percy Cradock was with her and Alan Donald who was the Under Secretary in London.

**Was it Charles Powell?**

No, her Private Secretary was John Coles at that time.

**And presumably there were de-briefing sessions?**

There were lots of de-briefing sessions. What in essence the Chinese wanted as they subsequently made very clear during the lengthy talks about talks that took place between Cradock and the Vice Foreign Minister, was an acknowledgement from us that sovereignty over the whole of Hong Kong lay

with China; only then would they negotiate the details. We, of course, did not wish to give away that card in advance. At that stage the hope (and it was a hope rather than an expectation and also what the people of Hong Kong wanted) was that we could find some means of trading a concession on British sovereignty with a Chinese agreement that we could go on administering the territory. It was only when some weasel words were found to get round the obstacle of principle that the Chinese had erected that we were able to get beyond the stage of talks about talks. Before formal negotiations began in the summer of 1983 there was a further series of hurdles to be surmounted. The Chinese insisted that since the negotiations in their view were simply about Britain handing back Hong Kong to them, it was a matter between Britain and China and not a matter for the people of Hong Kong. On the British side there was a wish, in so far as it was possible, to involve Hong Kong in decisions which were, after all, about the future of the people who lived there and not just about the territory. So we sought to get Hong Kong people into the British negotiating team. The best we could do was to get Teddy Youde, Governor of Hong Kong and me accepted as British officials. So two members of our five-man negotiating team were from Hong Kong. We were accepted by the Chinese because we were British. They would not accept members of the Hong Kong government in the team. For the very first round (but only for the first round) Teddy took with him his press adviser, a senior Hong Kong government official concerned with information who was Hong Kong Chinese, but that idea was scuppered. The Chinese wouldn't allow it after there was a row after Teddy had come back from a visit to London and was asked who he was going to be representing in the talks and he had answered, as the people of Hong Kong would have expected, but perhaps undiplomatically, "the people of Hong Kong, who else?" And the Chinese made a tremendous fuss about all this. Teddy was a British official. Only the Chinese could represent the people of Hong Kong etc etc. So after that they would not allow him to take his press adviser. There was also a British minister, Richard Luce, one of a succession of junior ministers from the Foreign Office with responsibility for Hong Kong who spoke about the Hong Kong people being involved and he made the analogy of a three-legged stool and again was denounced by the Chinese. Nonetheless the British government had this dilemma of how to involve Hong Kong people in negotiations which clearly could not be conducted in public - against a

background of the Chinese releasing details of what was going on but claiming that they were only telling people what their position was. And the only way that could be done was to make the Governor's Executive Council, an appointed body which included weighty Chinese Hong Kong figures and acted as a sort of cabinet, privy to all the details of the negotiations and to involve them and ensure they were consulted about policy changes. For this purpose Teddy Youde took them to London for meetings with the Foreign Secretary, by then Geoffrey Howe, and Mrs Thatcher at various points in the negotiations. To their enormous credit they never leaked any details though there must have been huge pressures upon them because they were aware that they were among the few people who knew exactly what was going on. They must have been conscious, therefore, that a huge responsibility lay with them. Their advice was usually on the side of being tough, on holding out for more. Eventually, in about September of 1983, it became clear that we could no longer hold to this position of arguing for the maintenance of British administration. The Chinese brought home the delicacy of the situation after one round by disagreeing that we could include a phrase in the press communiqué that the round had been useful and constructive. The background was that after the first round we agreed that we would not reveal what had been discussed but what we would say was that the discussions has been useful and constructive. In round two it was clear that we would again have to say something about the discussions and that the press would analyse very closely what would be said. We realised that if we chose different words we would have to find different words again for subsequent rounds. So in the end we thought we had better stick to "useful and constructive". And so we did until whenever it was, the sixth round or thereabouts, when the Chinese said we couldn't say that. The Chinese leader at the time must have had a sense of humour because he said that this would make the communiqué too long! The result was that there was a panic in Hong Kong and the \$HK fell through the floor and very swiftly there had to be put in place a very cunning mechanism which linked the \$HK to the \$US and that is a mechanism which remains today. Anyway, that helped to convince the British side that we had to find some means of getting round this difficulty about British administration and it was a delicate matter because, while we clearly couldn't get any further without some concession on this point, Mrs Thatcher had to be convinced and she was not

easy to convince. Eventually a formula was produced by Percy Cradock to the effect that we were willing to explore whether means other than the continuation of British administration could be found to preserve the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong. The implication was that we would be looking at a future under which China would have sovereignty and administration even though we had hitherto argued that British administration was the glue that held the whole thing together. In effect we would be saying: 'Well, we will try to negotiate on the basis of your plan and see whether we can build into it sufficient detail to satisfy us, Parliament and the people of Hong Kong, that the kind of future that the Chinese envisaged would work'. What the Chinese had by then made plain to us was that they envisaged a situation in which China would have sovereignty but Hong Kong would have a high degree of autonomy, that Hong Kong would become the first of what they called special administrative regions, that it would remain a free port and continue to use the \$HK, and an international financial centre, that it would continue to use the Common Law, have its own judiciary and so on. What we had to do in the negotiations was to add flesh to that skeleton. It was clear that we would sooner or later have to get down to the negotiation of an actual text rather than exchange ideas and we eventually got to the point when a special working group was set up in the summer of 1984. To satisfy the Chinese it had to be led by someone from the Foreign Office. David Wilson, then Assistant Under Secretary of State in the Foreign Office was chosen. We had a Foreign Office Legal adviser and a Legal adviser from Hong Kong and one or two other specialists and we sat down and began to negotiate the details.

### **In Peking?**

It was all in Peking. We began by negotiating in one group but eventually we had to split into two groups and I was asked to lead the second group which dealt with some issues which were proving intractable to do with nationality, right of abode, civil aviation and land. Land became the subject of a special annex. Nationality proved so sensitive that it had to be dealt with in a separate exchange of memoranda which was outside the agreement but regarded as part of it and so we dealt with these issues in that way. The negotiations usually took the form of the British producing texts and the Chinese commenting on them but sometimes the Chinese would produce their own texts and we would give comments on those. We found ourselves negotiating sometimes in



Chinese, sometimes in English. We had to devise a means during this phase of consulting London overnight so that we could get instructions back the following morning. But we also needed the close involvement of the Hong Kong government. The Hong Kong government's expertise had been essential throughout the process starting at the stage when we were trying to educate the Chinese government about the Hong Kong systems and how they worked. This could only be done by inputs from Hong Kong. So the Hong Kong government set up its own special mechanism for servicing the negotiations called the General Duties Branch and they were involved throughout but even more so when we got down to the negotiation of specific texts. And we worked heaven knows how many hours daily, from very early in the morning until late at night. We dispatched our telegrams as soon as we could but it was seldom before eight or nine in the evening. Hong Kong had to wait for our telegrams, then they had to make their comments on them which tended to be done anywhere between 2.00 and 3.00 in the morning local time. They then dispatched their comments to London where they usually arrived around lunchtime London time. A team headed by Percy Cradock who was policy adviser looked at them and then returned instructions which reached us the next morning. So it was a hugely complicated exercise and we had to have views not only on English language texts but Chinese ones. In that we were helped by having a British-invented word processor which could operate on Chinese language texts. It had a system whereby the computer could, at the touch of a button, change the text into what is called Chinese telegraph code in which each character is known by a four figure number. The Chinese telegraph code text could then be encyphered and if it all worked the process could be reversed at the other end. But the Chinese never had that and one of Mrs Thatcher's gifts to her Chinese counterpart when she finally signed the Joint Declaration was one of these wizard machines. We never knew what happened to it.

### **Were Mrs Thatcher and Geoffrey Howe taking a detailed interest?**

Geoffrey Howe took an extremely close interest in it all. He came out twice to Peking at critical moments in the negotiations to resolve difficult issues and took a very keen interest in the whole question, both then and for as long as he was Foreign Secretary. Mrs Thatcher also took an interest, of course, when she was required to do so and she was required to at intervals. Of course she saw all the key

telegrams and other papers but she also became involved whenever Teddy took members of Exco back to London for consultations. One could talk for hours about this process; it was very fascinating. I don't think I have ever worked as hard as I did while engaged in the negotiation of the texts; the whole thing took about four months. The only time we ever had off regularly was Sunday mornings though we did have ten days break in the middle when I got back to Scotland where my wife and family had installed themselves for the summer.

**It sounds frightful. And that was in 1984?**

That was the summer of 1984. We finished the process in September 1984. It was curious, the Chinese had set a September deadline earlier on in 1984 and had sought initially to use it against us to hurry us up. In the end the deadline probably worked more in our favour than in theirs because the Chinese were obviously under instruction to conclude the agreement by then and they were the ones who were in a hurry. We had no deadlines of our own but we worked hard with them to get the texts finished. As for the end result, some may say, that all the Joint Declaration was, was what the Chinese were going to do anyway. They had decided they would take this one country, two systems concept they'd originally devised for Taiwan and apply it to Hong Kong. And what did we do? I think the answer is that we got it down in much more detail than the Chinese ever intended, the definition of the systems that would be preserved. You only have to look at the text of the Joint Declaration to see that it was a considerable achievement to get the Chinese, against their instincts, to set out everything in so much detail.

**And this is important because they are the kind of society where they will observe detail.**

I think so. Subsequently almost all of this was incorporated almost verbatim into their own Basic Law for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, i.e a mini-constitution. The process of drafting the Basic Law, which was a Chinese responsibility though the British had some input, went on for nearly five years, from mid-1985 until it was approved and published in the spring of 1990.

**So then after that you had a bit of a change of scene.**

Yes, I was given a bit of leave and was then sent off to Manila to be Ambassador. I can't say I'd ever thought of going to the Philippines or even wanted to but in fact it turned out to be absolutely fascinating. We were there for the most exciting times there could have been politically. We began with

the last nine months of the Marcos regime. His reign was by then visibly crumbling but I saw something of his style. And then there was the extraordinary Presidential election, the so-called snap election at the end of 1985 which Marcos had gambled would enable him to divide the opposition and be re-elected with only a certain amount of fiddling of the votes. That tactic was scuppered in the end by the action of the splendid Cardinal Sin who persuaded the two rival parties to join forces and run on one ticket with Mrs Aquino as the Presidential candidate and Doy Laurel as Vice President. So they ran as a united opposition ticket and quite clearly won the election. There was tremendous courage shown by ordinary people and a great outflow of democratic spirit akin to that which was subsequently seen in Eastern Europe. Marcos claimed that he had won the election but the unofficial but generally accurate count done by the opposition showed clearly that he hadn't. And it was only a matter of time before the inevitable came and the February revolution took place. I was rather sad, incidentally, that the tenth anniversary this year went virtually unnoticed in the British press.

**Mrs Marcos is back in the Philippines now.**

She's back but the Philippine government are pursuing her for her ill-gotten gains. She got herself elected to Congress. She's now trying to leave again, she says, to get her eyes dealt with. She's an extraordinary figure.

**Could you see during that nine months that you saw them in power what it was that brought her to that position?**

Well, she was the wife of the President, but she also had certain qualities. She openly acknowledged at a dinner I had with her that the Philippine people wanted someone to look up to, they want a star, not some dowdy old frump. 'And I give them that', she said. And she did in some curious way, so, despite her many unpleasant qualities, she remained very popular among the deprived classes. Not popular enough, but popular.

**And you were there for two years?**

Well, we were there for just under two years. That was because of the sad death of Teddy Youde in December 1986. David Wilson was chosen to be his successor and David Wilson needed a successor in London. At that time the Assistant Under Secretary who was in charge of Asia and the Pacific in the Foreign Office was concurrently the head of our side of the Joint Liaison Group which was the body set up under the Joint Declaration to deal with its implementation. So it meant they had to look for somebody of the right seniority who knew about all this and there really wasn't anybody except me. I didn't

really want to do an Assistant Under Secretary job, having had two senior grade jobs already but I was persuaded that the requirement was there and that I had to go and do it. I had to do my first round of JLG negotiations while I was still Ambassador to the Philippines. I returned to London to bring myself up to speed, went to Hong Kong for the negotiations, then flew back to pack my bags and say goodbye (well, Sue did all the packing) And it was quite a grind doing that AUS job because I had Asia and the Pacific (including the Indian subcontinent) as well as having to do all these detailed Hong Kong negotiations. The arrangement was that there were three plenary meetings a year. Each one took four days at a time, so I had to do those and they required a lot of preparation. From 1988 onwards, under the terms of the Joint Declaration, the Joint Liaison Group had to have its principle base in Hong Kong which meant we had to set up an office there. The Chinese brought their whole team down including their leader. We established an office but initially without its leader there. I had a counsellor who was running it but I had to supervise it from London while doing all the other things. Subsequently all this was split up.

**I was wondering whether there were considerations of splitting it up?**

Well, we were anyway going to send Tony Galsworthy to Hong Kong as the first resident leader of the British side of the Joint Liaison Group. His appointment was slightly delayed by the 1989 Tiananmen massacre and all that but eventually he went in the autumn of 1989, so I had some two and a half years doing these two jobs. In 1990 I became the DUS until I was sent to Peking in the summer of 1991.

**Who was PUS at that time?**

Patrick Wright.

**Did he take a particular interest at the time?**

No, he left it to the experts. Latterly the PUS' s have tended to devote themselves to these service-wide issues that they've had to deal with, and to areas where ministers wanted advice or, if advice appeared to be lacking, they would intervene in a sort of fire-fighting role as David Gillmore did subsequently. They were keeping an eye on what the main political issues were, seeing whether ministers were happy with the relationships they had with the DUS's and AUS's they were dealing with, and making sure that the machine was serving the government in the way that ministers wanted.

I mentioned that I went to China in mid 1991 as Ambassador. It was a job I'd always

wanted so I was delighted to have it. It was a period, of course, when Hong Kong was bound to predominate. It made the life of a British Ambassador quite different from the lives of all other western Ambassadors with the possible exception of the United States because Hong Kong was a big substantive political issue and none of the other ambassadors had anything like it to deal with. The other Western ambassadors had their own political issues but they weren't as big as Hong Kong. As it turned out, much of my time in Peking was spent dealing with Hong Kong issues which meant that I was unable to do many of the things that other ambassadors did, like travel. I *did* travel as much as I could but it was rather sad. When I first lived in China travel was pretty limited, very limited indeed. It was the period of mass starvation which the Chinese were naturally keen to hide from foreign diplomats so our travel was restricted to major cities. Now that I was back as Ambassador there were still parts of the country closed to foreigners, but most places were open and yet many of my efforts to travel got frustrated by Hong Kong business. For example, there was a visit of European Ambassadors to Tibet which I had to cancel because of Hong Kong, there was a trip down the Yangtse Gorges which was arranged which again I had to cancel and so on. However, Hong Kong was very fascinating. Right at the beginning of my time there the Prime Minister came and it was a difficult visit to manage because we were still so close to Tiananmen at that time, just two years. The western countries had imposed a series of sanctions (well, not technically sanctions because that word was not used, but measures designed to demonstrate their disapproval of what the Chinese had done) which included a ban on high level visits. Mr Major was the first western Prime Minister after the Japanese to go to China. Moreover, his visit took place in the wake of the failure of the Soviet coup attempt. The preparations were difficult and when the press arrived they were walking several feet off the ground - because Communism had collapsed in the Soviet Union the collapse of Communism in China must, they felt, be imminent as well. It made for a very difficult visit. Hong Kong negotiations were also attached to it. Percy Cradock came out shortly beforehand, there was the memorandum on the new airport to sign and there were details still to be negotiated during the visit. So, it was a fascinating visit but a somewhat taxing one. Thereafter, of course, within six months, there came the decision that David Wilson would be replaced by a political governor.

(END OF SIDE TWO TAPE ONE)

Then it came to the appointment of a political governor to succeed David Wilson. I think one should say here that this inevitably had some effect on the way in which Hong Kong issues were dealt with. A practice had grown up over the years whereby there was a kind of triangular debate where Hong Kong policy was concerned. The debate would be between the Governor of Hong Kong who was responsible for Hong Kong and naturally had a very large voice, the Ambassador in Peking and his staff who would comment on the Chinese dimension, and officials in London who would have their own view and ministers who would then take decisions in the light of all the advice they'd received and their own perceptions of what the political priorities were in the UK. This continued after Chris Patten's appointment but the weighting changed. Whereas the Governor's had always been the strongest of these voices because he, after all, had responsibility for administering the territory, it became much stronger after Chris Patten was appointed, if only because of who he was: a heavyweight British political figure on close terms with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. So naturally his voice was that much stronger. That did not mean that my role as Ambassador to China changed. I still gave the best advice I could. But it meant that one always knew that the Governor had this political base that nobody else had. But, of course, it also meant that it was imperative to work with the Governor and I hope that I managed to establish a relationship with him that enabled me to do that. It's certainly true that his arrival and his announcement of his electoral reforms preoccupied me for most of the rest of the time I was Ambassador. Apart from anything else the whole of 1993 was taken up firstly with talks about talks and then by negotiations. It was almost like the talks which led to the Joint Declaration only on a more limited topic.

Chris Patten and his electoral reforms have become controversial in the United Kingdom. It is sometimes forgotten that he did not invent democracy in Hong Kong. Direct elections had been thought of back in the early 1980's when there were green and white papers on the subject. It was in the early 1980's that the LEGCO was first given an indirectly elected element. In 1988 that was extended and in 1991 a proportion of the members were directly elected for the first time, following long and difficult discussions with the Chinese. Chris Patten was faced with the job of making proposals for elections due to be held in 1995 which would be the

last elections under British administration. There was an understanding between us and the Chinese that those elected in 1995 would, provided certain criteria were met, continue beyond the change of sovereignty until fresh elections were held in 1999. This is where the whole thing becomes immensely complicated and I don't think there is time to go into detail, but I should simply say that the principal Chinese requirement was that these elections should conform to the Basic Law model. Now the Basic Law itself is obscure on this question because, although it lays down a precise formula for the 1999 legislature, it does not lay down anything precisely for 1997. This was because it was understood that it would be a continuation, the assumption being that what would be in place in 1997, elected in 1995, would have been discussed between the two sides. Now, when Chris Patten came as Governor we were three years before the elections and one might think that he could have waited a bit but the fact of the matter is that the whole question of these last elections was already the subject of lively and intense debate in Hong Kong. So the Governor immediately came under great pressure to produce proposals as to how he would run the elections and he felt he would have to do so in his first "state of the nation" address, traditionally given by the Governor at the start of the LEGCO year in October (i.e. within a few months of his arrival in May 1992). So he drew up proposals in which he sought, broadly speaking, to conform to the model for 1999 in the Basic Law but to interpret that in as democratic a spirit as he reasonably could. Now, my view is that any British governor whoever he may have been would have found himself under intense pressure to interpret the Basic Law as democratically as possible because these were, after all, the last elections to be held under British administration. What happened was that Chris Patten drew up proposals that were communicated to the Chinese some time before his October speech firstly in general terms and then in detailed terms and the Chinese indicated that they did not like them.

**They were communicated through you?**

First by the Foreign Secretary and then through me. Chris Patten concluded, nevertheless, that he would announce his proposals while making it plain in his LEGCO address that they were proposals and not decisions and that they were subject to discussion with the Chinese. The Chinese chose to take huge umbrage at this. They did receive Chris Patten subsequently in October 1992 in Peking, on what was his first and

only visit to China as Governor. But they made plain by the way they treated him that they were very much in a huff over what he had done. His offense in their eyes was twofold. First was that he had published detailed proposals that had not been cleared with them in advance; secondly was the nature of the proposals themselves. In terms of the first offence the Chinese claimed that any proposals ought to have been discussed in secret with them before they were announced and agreement should have been reached with them beforehand. And as far as the substance was concerned they claimed (though the British government disputes) that they ran counter to agreements reached between the two Foreign Secretaries in an exchange of messages in early 1990, which subsequently, at the height of the dispute, were published by both sides (so that is in the public domain). We maintain that these exchanges did not constitute an agreement in the terms China claim them to be. Well, Chris Patten has come under great criticism from some in this country for going ahead with publication of his proposals against Chinese opposition. The problem for him, I think, was that if he had declined to publish anything then first of all he would have disappointed people in Hong Kong. Secondly, if he'd then conducted negotiations in secret this would have been very difficult for him. It would have been known that discussions were going on and impossible to keep them secret. There would have been huge pressure from the Hong Kong public, press and the LEGCO to know what was going on. It would not have been possible to satisfy that demand and would have put him in an awkward position. In any case we were then faced with a long period of stalemate. There was an offer on the table from Chris Patten to negotiate. The Chinese response was 'withdraw your proposals then we'll start talking'. Neither side was prepared to back down. Eventually, at the very beginning of 1993, I had a series of talks about talks that were rather similar to Percy Cradock's talks before the opening of the Joint Declaration negotiations. During the course of these preliminary talks we edged towards an understanding that we would discuss electoral arrangements and we eventually agreed that the discussions would be on the basis of the Joint Declaration, the Basic Law and 'agreements and understandings already arrived at'. The Chinese insisted on that wording because they wanted a specific reference to the 1990 correspondence which, in their view, constituted an agreement. In our view it did not. But it meant that in the subsequent seventeen rounds, fourteen of which I led, we began with the Chinese



insisting we withdraw our proposals, we saying we *had* proposals on the table and that, if they did not like them, they should produce their own. They said that we should present new proposals before they produced any themselves and we had a very long negotiation conducted against a background of huge Hong Kong press interest so that then, as indeed before, I found myself besieged almost daily by the press. They would wait outside my residence which was close to the office and try to talk to me. They would also assemble outside the office when they knew it was nearing time for me to leave. I concluded that rather than be photographed with microphones trailing and not saying anything it was better to say something even if there was nothing new to say. But I had to be very careful over what I said, particularly when the Chinese had just released something new, for example when Deng Xiaoping was quoted as having said something of a particularly threatening nature going back to his talks with Mrs Thatcher, that kind of thing. It was really quite tricky. There was a time, for example, when the opening took place of the National People's Congress just at the point in the negotiations when we made an announcement which the Chinese didn't like. Premier Li Peng already had a pretty unfriendly passage about Hong Kong and Britain and in the version of his "work report" made available to delegates, observers and the media he then changed and toughened it still further on delivery. I found myself sitting in this huge hall with batteries of cameras trained on me. Then, to the astonishment of my diplomatic colleagues, I was pursued by the press outside and asked for my comments on what Li Peng had said. So it was all quite high profile and I had to go down to Hong Kong frequently to discuss things with the Governor.

Sadly, in the end we were not able to reach an agreement and early in 1994 the decision was made by the Governor to publish legislation that was not agreed by the Chinese, which led to further denunciations and the eventual passage of legislation along the lines of the original proposals, followed by more denunciations. The position now is that the Chinese have said that the LEGCO which was duly elected under the Governor's original proposals will be dissolved in 1997 and they will appoint a new legislature to take its place until new elections can be held. The uninitiated would suppose from all this that the Governor's proposals represented democracy red in tooth and claw - full frontal

democracy. In fact, it really was nothing of the kind. It requires considerable expertise to distinguish between what the Governor was proposing from what the Basic Law set out for 1997 because we were not talking about a fully directly-elected legislature under anybody's proposals at this stage. What we were talking about is a legislature of sixty people elected in three different ways: a third of it by direct elections in geographical constituencies, another half or thirty members elected from what were called 'functional constituencies', that is, professional and social groupings, a concept invented by us in the early 1980's and subsequently adopted by the Chinese for incorporation into the Basic Law and another ten members (a sixth) elected by an Election Committee. But the differences really relate to technical questions such as 'how should the new functional constituencies be constituted'? and the make-up of the election committee. The Governor's principle was that the elections, whatever form they took, should be as democratic as possible. It was necessary to have new functional constituencies because there had been only 21 in the LEGCO elected in 1991. The Governor also wanted to reform abuses which had developed in the original function constituencies. He chose to make the new ones as democratic as possible by making them large. Under his proposals the new ones were drawn from the entire working population thus giving them, in effect, a second vote. He also wanted to constitute the election committee in a way that was not the same as it was in the provisions of the Basic Law for 1999. So you can see these are pretty technical differences but then we are not, as I said, talking about democracy red in tooth and claw. But it is this dispute that has sadly bedevilled Sino-British relations over Hong Kong ever since. It's got easier in the last year but even so the Chinese insist that they will abolish the LEGCO elected in 1995 and will not allow the intended through train to cross the 1997 barrier.

There are many issues we have not discussed but the main issue at the end of the day will be "has Britain discharged its responsibilities to the people of Hong Kong as honourably as possible ?" One issue which rose with particular force was the issue of nationality and right of abode. The people of Hong Kong, not surprisingly, were very frightened by what happened in 1989 and believed that if Chinese troops could behave like that in Peking they could behave in the same way in Hong Kong, if sufficiently provoked. Whether that is right or not is beside the point; the fear was aroused. And that led to a demand backed by LEGCO and the Governor, David Wilson, that all those Hong Kong

people (3.5 million) who were British Dependent Territories Citizens, that is those who were British citizens by birth, should be given the right of abode in Britain. (They had earlier had that right removed). That pressure led the British government to conclude that something must be done but what was demanded could not be conceded. The argument from Hong Kong was that if you gave people the right to go to Britain in extremis that would give them the confidence to stay in Hong Kong. In other words it was not a matter of immigration, we were only talking about a confidence boosting measure. Politicians in the UK didn't see it in that way. The government took the view that you could not give people a right on the basis that they would not exercise it - that would be irresponsible. So the end result was the Hong Kong Nationality Act under which 50,000 heads of family and their dependents were given full nationality on the basis of a complex points system which took as a model the kind of system used by Canada. That is one issue that some will debate until the end of time: whether the only way that Britain could have discharged its responsibility to Hong Kong was to grant all the people the right of abode somewhere else, given that sovereignty was being returned to a Communist regime which, despite all its reforms, still maintains a one party authoritarian rule. There aren't any easy answers to these questions. At the end of the day politicians have to work within the bounds of what they judge to be politically possible domestically.

**Would you say that David Wilson was supportive?**

Yes, in the aftermath of 1989 he felt obliged to support the demand which came very strongly from Hong Kong.

**So when you left in August 1994 how did you feel about relations with China?**

They were still very tricky. They were clearly going to continue to be so. But there were a few rays of light and in the end I felt that, despite their dissatisfaction with the trend of our policy and with the Governor personally, the Chinese would see there was merit in securing our cooperation for the hand-over as far as was possible rather than in keeping us at arms length. And this, I think, is what has happened. Negotiations on many of the outstanding issues have been resumed, some fruitful, some not. There will always be a mutual suspicion but I think there is at least a reasonable degree of cooperation despite this.

(END OF TRANSCRIPT)