PRO52562 Report Covering the Involvement of British and Gurkha Troops during the Civil Disturbances of 1956, 1966 and 1967

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Report on the Riots in Kowloon and Tsuen Wan, 1956 pp. 20 and 21

October 11 “Report of the Riots…”

33. 180 men were detailed for the task and had orders to fire ball ammunition if necessary. The crowds of rioters gave way before this force which reached the junction without without getting to grips with the rioters or opening fire Here they joined the two units already on the spot in establishing a perimeter There were no five riot units (300 men)in the immediate vaccinity of the main road junction; stone throwing from the Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate to the immediate East was kept under control by occasional fire with Greener guns. But the sweep from the south was no effective as gangs of rioters were able to double back by side streets and emerge again on the main road behind the force at the junction and continue their destructive activities

34. During the period up to 2.0pm the whole of the area south and south west of Li Cheng Uk as far as the sea and south east beyond the junction was the scene of general and serious rioting with many cases of arson, looting and attacks on persons and property The Shamshuipo Post Office was attacked and many cars were set on fire At about 1.30 pm Mr Ernst SwissVice-Consul in hong Kong and his wife were attacked near the main road junction after the taxi in which they were travelling had been forced to stop by rioters. The taxi was overturned and set on fire and both passengers received burns of which Mme Ernst later died in hospital The driver escaped but a rioter was burnt to death on the spot and a second later later died of burns received at the time Seven men have been arrested and charged with Mme Ernst’s murder Soon after this the C.P. gave instructions that the main road and the junction should be fully secured, gun fire being used without hesitation where necessary. The A.C. set out himself at about 3.30pm with one riot unit; two Internal Security Troops of the 74 Light Ant-Aircraft Regiment were detailed to support him in a sweep up the main road to the junction Greener gunfire was opened by the police on stone-throwing rioters and side streets were progressively cordoned off by one of the riot units of the junction area that had moved south This sweep was effective and outflanking movements by the mobs were prevented. At 3.45pm two further Internal Security troops (from the 15th Medium Regiment R.A.) which replaced the first two at Police Headquarters were also ordered to the main road junction that was completely cordoned by 4.30pm with the assistance of these 4 military units (120 men)Mobile police patrols guarded the flanks and thereafter resistance in this area was gradually overcome.

25. At about 4pm the three battalions that had been ordered into Kowloon for cordon duty began arriving. Their arrival with the resolute use of firearms by the police had a markedly sobering effect throughout Kowloon especially in the North western area which was still the main source of disorder. Riotous crowds continued to create minor disturbances around the main road in the Li Cheng Uk area but otherwise the situation in this part of Kowloon became much quieter The main road junction was now strongly held by police riot units supported by a military column close to the north on the Taipo Road ; at dusk all cordon duty in this area was taken over by the detachments of the two Royal Artillery Regiments. At 5.45pm a conference was held in the Commissioner’s Control Room between the Officer Administering the Government, the commander British forces, the Acting Colonial Secretary and the C.P. at which it was decided that a curfew should be imposed. At 730pm the Curfew Order came into operation throughout Kowloon and was gradually enforced in the Shamshuipo district At about the same time all cross harbour ferry services were suspended Apart from one or two isolated cases of looting no further disorder occurred in that part of the city

36. The three infantry battalions which arrived in Kowloon from the New Territories between 4.0pm and 6.0 pm had completed deployment by 7.30pm when the curfew order came into operation in such a way as to divide Kowloon into three sections between which movement was controlled by security forces One battalion area comprised of the main riot centres in nw Kowloon, down to boundary st which separates the shamshuipo and mongkok districts just north of Kowloon police headquarters this area was bounded on the east by the railway line. The second included the districts of mongkok and Yaumati down to Austin road half a mile from the tip of the peninsula also bounded on the east by the line of the railway The third battalion was responsible for the area east of the railway line In each case the battalion headquarters was located at a divisional police station Air reconnaisance flights were arranged from the evening of October 11 th until October 14th each Auster aircraft carrying a police officer as an observer 22 sorties These were extremely valuable in reporting crowd movements and fires to police radio cars or to HQ.

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The officers of the Colony’s regular garrison conducted themselves in a commendably forebearing and good humoured manner but with a degree of firmness and resolution which was one of the main factors in the very rapid collapse of the large scale disorder during the evening of October 11th The military forces did not find it easy to open fire at any stage while they were on duty in Kowloon and Tsuen Wan Liaison between the military commanders and the police was excellent and the former readily assisted with transport and in other ways The important part played by the military hospital in Kowloon in dealing with casualties has already been mentioned in paragraph 44.

PRO50605 Report of the riot Compensation Advisory Board 1957 with Chinese Translation

Government statement on the Report of the Riot Compensation Advisory Board

1. 35 meetings

2. The Board recommends that ex gratia payments of varying amounts should be made by government in 610 cases (representing 676 individual applications) Government has considered these applications and has decided that they should be accepted without modification. The applicants will, therefore, now be informed of the amounts due to them and the method of payment to be adopted.

HKRS 163-1-2029 Payment arrangements for Riot Compensation

3/811/57

according to police report the deceased LEUNG Tong was challenged by police patrol at 14:30 hours on 12 October whilst at the junction of Un Chau St/Cheung Sha Wan Rd. He ran way was challenged again by police and after failing to stop was finally shot. He later died in Shamshuipo Police Station The claim was rejected outright by the Board.

His wife’s lawyer Peter Mo, for family representative Miss Ho Mo Ching – letter does not quite amount to what was argued in the left wing press

Writes letter : was ineligibility due to insufficient proof of difficulties of the families involved (47 cases) deceased is considered to have committed crimes during the riot or insufficient evidence to support the application? Application: 389/ 1459855

Deceased a good civilian who worked in Ngai Wah Clothing Factory Shamshui Po cheung sha wan road as a salesman 12 October he did not feel well and went on his way home yuen Chau st near cheung Sha Wan road where he was unfortunately attacked by a tear gas shell he died eventually and was brought for anatomical treat

I am 50 years old and living with deceaseds son Leung Kuin Hung who is only 12 years old solely depended on deceased who was a good civilian – I trust you confirm this by checking records at police stations since his death we have found ourselves in extreme destitution and can hardly maintain our living. I beg most respectfully for your kindedest reconsideration

Brutton and Co also handled many compo claims

Swiss ambassador got 1, 517 pounds CR 3/811/57

Hong Kong & Kowloon Spinning Weaving and Dying Trade Workers General Union, Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber andPlastic Workers General Union Hong Kong and Kowloon enamel Workers Union Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers Union Hong Kong Kowloon Chinese Farming and Agriculture Association both had loss and damage claims denied CR 3/811/57 would not give further info to Commr of Police

Unless garbled versions of our replies appear in the left wing press or the matter is pursued publically in any way by the left wing I would not personally favour any publicity, Do you agree DCS 18.9.57

Total Compensation paid out $HK 1,478, 965 File: DFS(F) 24.3.58

4,000 for personal injury was standard Peter Mo and Co was the firm handling majority of compensation claims

3. In one further case the application was voluntarily withdrawn. This calls for no action by Government. In 70 further cases the Board, after full consideration, recommends that no payments should be made Government has accepted this advice and the 70 applicants will now be informed that their applications have been rejected.

4. In section IX paragraph 2 of the report the Board refers to 184 further cases in which it is unable to make any recommendation e(16 of these 184 were “Associations”) The reason for this requires some explanation:-

(a) the Board was by its terms of reference required to restrict its recommendations for payment to cases in which it was satisfied that the applicant “has suffered or will suffer hardship which he cannot reasonably be expected to bear himself”

(b) in order to xomply with this direction the Board felt it necessary to ask all applicants to disclose inter alia the amounts of financial assistance which had aleady been received from other sources

(c) in the majority of cases full disclosure of such financial assistance was made and the Board took this information into account in assessing the residual degree of hardship to which the recommended payment from public funds would be related

(d) In the 184 cases referred to above the applicats neglected or refused to make any disclosure of financial assistance received from other sources in spite of a further request by the Board in some cases that such information be provided and in others there was given a warning by the Board

when the claimants were individuals and did not provide details of other payments 50% of the hypothetical award was paid to them on compassionate grounds.

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The purposes was to relieve all cases of genuine hardship suffered by innocent persons.

Personal injury incapacity from work destruction or damage to premises loss or damage to moveables other than vehicles motor vehicles and cycles

Unions : failure to declare the extent of receiving payments from other sources meant the government awarded special compensation of a fairly low amount believed by the trade unions to be insufficient CRLM 294/57 para 2

Hk Kowloon spinning weaving dying workers union asked for 40000 and did not get it

Garden co bakers and confectioners received 743, 000

Oriental soy and canning co ltd received 38, 500

15 August Acknowledgement of receipt of cheques 15 August 1957

pau hsing cotton mill 45 287

tai poung foodstuffs 18000

Tak Fung Co 36, 0000

Sin Chung co of Kowloon 31, 275

St china toys and metalware factory 262000

Chung king co48000

Canton metal window manufacturing 476000