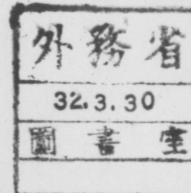


HONG KONG



REPORT
ON
THE RIOTS IN
KOWLOON AND TSUEN WAN,
OCTOBER 10TH TO 12TH, 1956,
TOGETHER WITH COVERING DESPATCH
DATED THE 23RD DECEMBER, 1956,
FROM
THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG
TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES



Price: \$ 4.50

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DESPATCH FROM THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

No. 2150

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HONG KONG

23rd December, 1956.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herewith my Report on the riots which took place in Kowloon and Tsuen Wan two days before my return to Hong Kong in October. The narrative of events has been compiled from all available sources and the passage in Chapter V which deals with the responsibility for the disorders is based on the results of investigations carried out to date. It is possible that further information may still come to light on this but I would not expect it to affect the broad conclusions drawn in the Report.

2. To obtain a proper assessment of these riots, the conditions in which they broke out and the problem which they presented to the authorities, it is essential to understand something of the resettlement areas which were the focus of the disorders in Kowloon and the people who inhabit them. For the last three years the Hong Kong Government has undertaken a vigorous campaign to rehouse the hundreds of thousands of homeless persons, for the most part refugees from the mainland, whose closely packed squatter huts dotted all over the urban areas of the Colony have constituted a very serious fire and health hazard. Of the 200,000 persons so far resettled some 125,000 are housed in three areas of 7-storey blocks of rooms, the object being partly to make the maximum use of the very limited flat building land available and partly to house the maximum number of people with the maximum speed at a rental which they can afford to pay; this will of course only permit the provision of the barest amenities. It has been necessary to build these resettlement blocks in the urban areas in order that the inhabitants may be housed near their work; they would otherwise have preferred to continue to squat in the streets and on the hill-sides. The people themselves for the most part live at a bare subsistence level; they own little or no personal property; the great majority have no real stake in the Colony. Employment is difficult and in some cases indifferently paid. They are people who have fled from their homeland and it is not surprising if their fate has engendered a sense of frustration and bitterness. Though many of them may have no strong political convictions, for the most part

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they bear resentment against the present regime in China to which they attribute their present hardships, and it is understandable that such political affiliations as they have incline to the Nationalist cause. This background explains the dryness of the timber which was waiting to be ignited by any suitable spark, while the density of population in the area in which they live (which must be about the highest in the world) explains the difficulties with which the police had to contend in trying to break up and quieten large gatherings of unruly persons. Mob emotions are fickle and unpredictable and when turned to their own purposes by gangsters and criminals can be a formidable weapon.

3. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that the riots in Kowloon were planned beforehand. On the contrary, all the indications are that they started spontaneously. Had they been planned, moreover, for any specific purpose it is certain that they would have been much more widespread and would very probably have embraced the Island as well. In fact, they were confined for the first 24 hours almost entirely to a small but densely populated area in the North-West of the Kowloon peninsula. What is certain is that from a very early stage the disorders were exploited for their own purposes by gangs of criminals, hooligans and Triad Societies. It is significant that nearly half the reported crime in the Colony occurs in the northern part of Kowloon, which was the main centre of the rioting. As a result of the intensive Police action taken during the disturbances many members of these gangs are now in custody. Because property chiefly attacked by the rioters belonged to supporters of the present government in China (and in particular those which had flown the Communist flag on October 1st) it has been suggested in some quarters that the riots were planned by agents working for the Nationalist cause. The truth is that the riots in Kowloon were spontaneous and those taking part were agents of no one but themselves, people of Nationalist persuasion egged on by criminals bent on personal gain and power. In Tsuen Wan, although there is no evidence of any planning prior to the outbreak of disorder in Kowloon, it would appear that people of Nationalist persuasion joined in collaboration with Triad gangs to redress old scores and to attempt to win a dominant position in the labour world.

4. I turn now to the sequence of events and the way in which the situation was handled. In assessing this it is necessary to avoid the use of hindsight in the light of after knowledge and to consider the situation as it presented itself from time to time. The original incident at the Li Cheng Uk resettlement area was of a not unexpected nature, given the occasion and it was indeed to deal with any such incidents that substantial Police precautions had been taken. Even when the trouble revived in the evening of the 10th there was still no reason to suspect anything more behind it than the irresponsible activities of crowds whose temper was excited and temporarily inflamed by the celebration of an anniversary on which

ii

feelings always run high. Throughout that first night therefore when the disorders were confined to a very limited area of the town it was the object of the Police firstly to contain them and prevent them spreading, and secondly to subdue them by conventional Police methods which would not inflict any serious casualties. This was in my view both a right and understandable course. It is the duty of the Police to win and keep the confidence of the people among whom it is their task to move and mix every day. They must rightly therefore refrain from using lethal weapons or other methods which may provoke lasting hostility between themselves and the population they exist to serve, until it has become absolutely clear that they cannot prevail by the conventional methods. In the event their tactics during the first night appeared to have been fully justified when quiet had been restored in the early hours, and, with the movement of public transport and other signs of normality on the morning of the 11th, there was every reason to hope that, with the passing of the anniversary which had been the occasion for the high feelings engendered, the heat of those feelings would have fallen below the flashpoint and the troubles be at an end. This outcome however would not have suited the gangsters who were now fully alive to the opportunities the situation offered. When the troubles broke out again shortly before 10 a.m. on the 11th it was clear that the threat to law and order was very much more serious, and the Police at this point were given emphatic instructions that whatever force was necessary to suppress the disorders, including the use of firearms, must be used without hesitation and the situation brought under control without delay. At the conference held at 12.30 p.m., when it had become clear that even with these more severe methods the Police were not achieving their object and that the chief reason was the difficulty of getting to grips with the rioters owing to the very mobile and fluid character of the mobs, the decision was taken to call in military assistance and the Commander, British Forces, decided to deploy three battalions to cordon off the affected areas.

5. Some criticism has been voiced because the Military were not called in earlier. While it is no doubt true in the light of after knowledge to contend that if their services had been called on at an earlier stage the situation would have been brought under control more quickly, the justification for doing so was not so apparent at the time. The Military are not auxiliary Police; the responsibility for quelling civil disorders rests on the civil authorities and, only when it is clear that the civil authorities are unable to achieve this by their own resources, are they justified in calling on the Military for assistance. Up to the time that renewed rioting broke out on the morning of the 11th, I consider there were good grounds for judging that the situation could be handled by the Police. I think the most that can be said is that the decision to call on the Military might have been taken earlier on the morning of the 11th, though even at that time it was not unreasonable to see whether the more aggressive

iii

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Police tactics would produce the desired result. It is also pertinent to record that up to the time the decision was taken to call for military assistance in Kowloon there had not been a single fatal casualty, other than those due to the accident to the fire engine. That is the general picture. As regards the particular case of Tsuen Wan, the facts are that on the night of the 10th and until the late afternoon of the 11th the riots had been confined to a limited area of Kowloon with the resettlement areas as the focal points. The Police had to maintain their normal cover everywhere but were too hard pressed in Kowloon to spare reinforcements as a precautionary measure elsewhere. But since Tsuen Wan was potentially explosive with its large number of left wing and right wing factory workers, and since the movement of troops necessarily takes time, it would probably have been wiser to have anticipated the developing situation and, on the first sign of trouble, to have called for military assistance in the expectation that it would be required. One must however, as I have stated earlier in this paragraph, be careful not to judge in the light of after knowledge.

6. There are a number of lessons to be learnt from the sequence of events and from which further measures will be considered to improve our equipment for handling any similar outbreaks in the future. I shall be addressing you later on these and will only mention two directions in which I consider improvements must be made as soon as possible,—Police communications and mobility. It is very difficult in rioting of this kind to obtain a clear picture of what is happening, to assess the developing situation and to estimate what progress is being made in bringing it under control. It is therefore essential that those on the spot should keep in the closest touch with headquarters and be in a position to make frequent reports and receive instructions. In addition it may happen that an incident, reported to headquarters, will find a party of Police, available perhaps two streets away, but unaware of what is happening and out of touch with headquarters. In such a case more Police units have to be sent out from headquarters with consequent wastage of manpower. Difficulties were experienced with the use of radio cars on this occasion, since they were especial targets to the rioters and their retention at the scenes of disorder would have involved too many Police in their protection. It is also essential that Police units should be able to move quickly to and from an incident to ensure the most economical use of manpower. For this there must be adequate Force transport. These and other matters will all be examined.

7. It only remains to say that the Police conducted themselves with great restraint and fortitude, and although 44 out of the 60 fatal casualties were inflicted by the Police, they did everything possible to minimize casualties. The Military too performed their task with efficiency and good humour and showed great consideration throughout in their dealings with the civil population.

8. These deplorable events serve once again to draw attention to the very real problems presented by the influx of population into the small urban areas of Hong Kong and Kowloon, which have produced conditions of unparalleled overcrowding and the attendant threat to law and order that arises therefrom. The world conscience which has recently been roused by the plight of about 100,000 refugees from Hungary might well be awakened to the situation of five to six times that number who fled into Hong Kong in 1949-50. Within its limited resources of land, materials and money the Hong Kong Government has done and is doing all it can to ameliorate the conditions of these homeless refugees; but without substantial emigration to reduce the numbers or outside help to supplement Hong Kong's capacity to absorb them, the task is slow and uphill. In the meantime the risk of a similar outbreak to that which took place in October will be ever present and require increased vigilance.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(signed) A. GRANTHAM
Governor

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ALAN LENNOX-BOYD, M.P.

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REPORT ON THE RIOTS IN KOWLOON
AND TSUEN WAN
OCTOBER 10TH TO 12TH, 1956

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
CHAPTER I.—Introductory	1
CHAPTER II.—Narrative (Kowloon)	5
CHAPTER III.—Narrative (Tsuen Wan)	29
CHAPTER IV.—Summary of Casualties and Damage	44
CHAPTER V.—Comments and Conclusions	48

MAP APPENDIX

- A. General map of Kowloon, with parts of the New Territories and of Hong Kong Island.
- B. Street map of part of Kowloon.
- C. Sketch map of the Tsuen Wan area.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

- C.P.: Acting Commissioner of Police.
- D.C.: Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police.
- A.C.: Assistant Commissioner of Police, Kowloon and New Territories District.
- S.D.I.: Sub-divisional Inspector of Police, Tsuen Wan.
- 24 F.E.R.: The 24th Field Engineer Regiment.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

October 10th, the anniversary of the Chinese Republican Revolution of 1911, is celebrated annually as the principal Nationalist Chinese Festival, known as the "Double Tenth"; and October 1st, the anniversary of the formal establishment of the Central Peoples' Government of the Peoples' Republic of China in 1949, is commemorated annually as the principal Communist Chinese Festival. On these occasions buildings are decorated, fire crackers discharged and indoor political meetings are held by supporters of the respective régimes, usually in trade union premises, restaurants or theatres. The flags of the Chinese Peoples' Government and of the Nationalist Government in Formosa, as the case may be, are extensively flown on trade union buildings, commercial and business premises and private houses. These celebrations arouse a considerable degree of political feeling; it has always been recognized in Hong Kong that there is a danger of disorder on these occasions and precautions are taken every year as a matter of course. These include control of meetings and functions, prohibition of outdoor public meetings and processions and special vigilance by all branches of the Police Force. Police leave is stopped and the Force is brought to a state of readiness; efforts are made to get information of any plans which might lead to breach of the peace, a watch is kept on known political centres, extra patrols and search parties are sent out and riot units stand by.

2. The conditions of extreme overcrowding in the urban areas of Hong Kong and the resettlement of immigrants require brief mention here, since they form an important element in the background to the riots. The population in 1945 at the end of the Japanese occupation was about 600,000; it is now estimated at over 2½ millions; 2 millions or more of these people live in the built up areas round the harbour, of whom over a million live in Kowloon. There had been a large influx, perhaps amounting to a million, by the end of 1946; a second large influx, amounting to some half a million, consisted of refugees who entered the Colony during the later stages of the civil war

See Map A

in China, in 1949 and 1950; these were predominantly of Nationalist, or at least anti-Communist, sympathies and many came from North or Central China, without previous connexions with Hong Kong; they are as yet integrated to a limited degree only with the local Cantonese community. The refugees now living in the Colony include all classes of people; the majority are poor people who may have seen better days, for instance as property owners or business men, or as officials or soldiers serving under the Nationalist Government in China. They see little chance of resuming their former life in their homes in China and, as is common with exiles, their temperament has often been soured by adversity.

3. These people are now scattered all over the Colony but a great number originally found shelter in squatter huts on the hillsides surrounding the urban area on both sides of the harbour, or, where they could afford to do so, bought out tenement and flat dwellers at tempting prices, thus inducing the latter to live in squatter shacks. There are about 300,000 people still living as squatters, but about 200,000 have been resettled by the Government in the last few years, over half of them in three resettlement estates situated on the north western edge of Kowloon. Each estate consists of a group of ten to twenty five 'H' shaped seven storey blocks, containing some 350 to 800 rooms each and housing anything from 2,000 to 4,000 people. Reading from west to east, the population of the three estates (all of which feature in the narrative which follows) is: Li Cheng Uk 33,000, Shek Kip Mei 55,000 and Tai Hang Tung 38,000. These three highly concentrated groups comprising over 125,000 people in all are predominantly in sympathy with the Nationalist cause and opposed to the present government of China; this opposition is mainly a matter of personal feeling, though many are loosely organized in right wing labour unions and other bodies. The estates are all fringed on the north by steep foothills and the first two are bounded on the south and west by congested streets of tenements, through which run two main roads, one to the western extremity of the New Territories at Castle Peak and the other to the central part of the New Territories at Taipo and the frontier with China 24 miles away. The junction of these two main roads, a focal point during the riots (referred to below as the main road junction), lies immediately west of the Shek Kip Mei estate. The general population density of this whole area of north west Kowloon is estimated roughly at some 2,000 people to the acre.

See Map B

4. Another feature of the local scene are the Triad Societies. These originated in China some three centuries ago as secret societies composed of patriots working to overthrow the Manchu Ching Dynasty and restore the native Ming Dynasty to the throne. Some of these societies supported the revolutionary movement of Sun Yat Sen and one of the leaders came to Hong Kong in 1897 on Sun's instructions and formed a society named the Chung Wo Tong, the object of which was to rally support for Sun's movement among Chinese residents of the Colony. After the revolution of 1911, in which the patriotic aims of this Society were fulfilled, it proliferated into a group known as the Wo group, consisting now of over 20 Triad Societies with a membership roughly estimated at some 50,000; these societies, together with other but smaller groups, degenerated into "strong arm" gangs engaged in "protection" and extortion rackets and other forms of crime, while preserving in some degree the Triad rituals. They organize and "protect" opium divans, brothels etc., control pimps and pickpockets and prey upon hawkers and shopkeepers and also purport to "arbitrate" in disputes within their "territory". In recent years they have attracted more members and gained greater power; while they have for very long been unlawful societies, it is most difficult to bring the process of law to bear on individual members because the Chinese hold these societies in great dread, fearing brutal reprisals if they assist in exposing their activities to the authorities. Until 1949, deportation provided an effective deterrent for Triad activities and it was possible to keep a fairly tight rein on these gangs. Deportation has since become largely impracticable and serious crime has increased. Prosecution before the Courts with a view to imprisonment is less effective because it is very difficult to find witnesses to give evidence against Triad members in open Court. One of these Triad Societies, known as "14K" originated in Canton during the Nationalist regime as a semi-official underground organization of a political character, its members being mostly Nationalist army personnel and minor officials. With the influx of refugees into the Colony this Society was established in Hong Kong and has gradually gained influence; it has lately increased its membership, drawn largely from poor refugees, including many youths. The activities of the members of this "14K" Triad group have in recent years been almost entirely those of gangsters and racketeers. There is some evidence that during the past year the "14K" group has been expanding its membership and its activities in an attempt to attain

a position of dominance in Kowloon, particularly in the north western district. These gangster societies have a strong position in the squatter areas and consequently in the resettlement estates. It should be emphasized that Triad gangs are always organized for concerted action whenever opportunity offers, each with its couriers, leading thugs and fighting members.

5. The establishment of the Hong Kong Police Force is some five thousand rank and file with four hundred and seventy five Inspectors and sixty Officers. The effective strength is less than five-sixths of this, owing to vacancies, leave etc. The Force normally operates in three shifts in the twenty four hours, reduced to two shifts of twelve hours each in an emergency. There are nearly sixty police stations or posts, including frontier posts, and 24 marine police craft in the Colony which require to be continuously manned; in addition, it is essential that the specialized sections of the Force, the Criminal Investigation Department, Special Branch, Communications and other units should function at full pitch during disorders. The numbers available for riot duty are therefore limited by these requirements. Three permanent emergency units exist, totalling five riot units or some three hundred men; all members of the Force are trained for riot duty and each of the nine police divisions can muster on average two units and Headquarters another three, making twenty six riot units or one thousand five hundred and sixty men in all; allowance must of course be made for periods of rest between operations. Six units were employed during Phase 1 of the disorders; during the evening and night of October 10th the force was built up to eighteen units and as the riots developed and spread on October 11th a maximum of twenty one riot units or one thousand two hundred and sixty men was employed. The Force is controlled by the Commissioner in emergency conditions from an operations room which adjoins the Colony control room; this has direct telephone and wireless contact by a variety of channels with the two District Control Rooms, where the Assistant Commissioners in charge of Kowloon and New Territories and of Hong Kong Island Districts exercise their command; from this room all messages passing within the Force radio network can be monitored. A Secretariat and a military liaison officer are posted in the operations room when circumstances so require. The two District control rooms have direct wireless contact with all their divisional police stations, with police launches etc. and also have accommodation for the commander of military internal security forces, so as to form a joint headquarters.

4

6. There was no indication of any kind prior to October 10th, 1956 that there would be violent anti-Communist demonstrations or disturbances on that day. It was however known that the Nationalists intended to celebrate the day in Hong Kong on the largest scale yet, with a view to offsetting the celebrations on October 1st. On the morning of the "Double Tenth" it was evident that decorations and preparations for the celebration were more elaborate than in previous years; many private houses were extensively decorated and, as on earlier occasions, some of the more notable displays were in and around the squatter and resettlement areas in Kowloon. Exhaustive investigation has not revealed the existence of any planning of the disturbances prior to the incident at Li Cheng Uk described immediately below; nor is there evidence of collusion with any outside agency.

CHAPTER II

NARRATIVE (KOWLOON)

The dispute over the flags

(*Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate: October 10th
11.00 a.m.—2.00 p.m.*)

7. It was decided at a meeting of the Resettlement Policy Committee of the Urban Council held on October 3rd, 1956 that inhabitants of the resettlement estates should be warned not to stick paper flags or other decorations on the walls of the buildings, as they had been found difficult to remove afterwards. The resettlement staff were instructed accordingly. There was no objection to the display of flags on poles or on strings. At Shek Kip Mei, the oldest of the three estates, the warning was disseminated among settlers through the Kai Fong or Neighbourhood Association; some flags stuck on the walls in this estate were actually removed by the settlers themselves on October 10th, at the instance of the Kai Fong, as being pasted up contrary to instructions. At Tai Hang Tung which was the next estate to be built, a celebration committee had been set up for October 10th and formed a convenient channel of communication between the staff of the Resettlement Department and the residents. In Li Cheng Uk, the most recent estate, where only one block had been built by the previous October, no representative body exists, but representations from settlers were dealt with by the staff in accordance with the instructions given.

5

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October
10th
9.0 a.m.

8. On October 10th at about 9.0 a.m. a junior member of the Resettlement Department, who was in charge of Li Cheng Uk Estate and had quarters on the top floor of Block G, the central block, noticed some small Nationalist flags and a number of Nationalist symbols stuck on the walls of the block; he and the officer in charge of that block removed the flags, but were unable to reach two large "Double Ten" symbols (each consisting of two joined crosses, the Chinese character for ten), which were pasted in an inaccessible but very conspicuous position on the outer wall of the crossbar of this 'H' shaped block which faces down a street leading to the main road. These two large symbols were partially removed about 10.30 a.m. The fact that after midnight on October 9th flags and "Double Ten" symbols were pasted on the walls of Block G, including the top floor which is occupied by the quarters of the staff, while little attention was paid to the other ten blocks in the estate, suggests that this may have been a deliberate challenge to the officer in charge of the estate by settlers who considered him unduly strict in his control of their decorations. That officer knew that his superior, the Resettlement Officer in charge of Estates, was visiting Li Cheng Uk on the morning of the 10th; this reinforced his intention to see that the instructions were observed and no flags pasted up. There is no reason to believe that the officer in charge of the estate was acting otherwise than in good faith in doing everything in his power to see that his instructions were observed.

11.0 a.m.

9. Soon after 11.0 a.m. a crowd including many children began to collect in front of the Resettlement Office and there were requests for money to replace the flags which had been removed and torn in the process. A small police party arrived and the officer in charge tried unsuccessfully to persuade the crowd to disperse; by this time 300 to 400 people had collected and were demanding that the flags be replaced. Two members of the resettlement staff then pasted up six or seven flags, hoping to pacify the crowd, which started to drift away in small groups. Shortly before this, at about 11.45 a.m., the Divisional Superintendent of Police of the area visited the scene and went off to report by telephone to the Assistant Commissioner in charge of Kowloon and New Territories District (referred to below as the A.C.), at Police Headquarters, Kowloon. When he returned to the Resettlement Office, he

11.45 a.m.

6

found that the crowd was beginning to collect again and was asking for an apology from the resettlement officer concerned for having had the flags removed. The latter had meanwhile left the estate and a more senior officer, the Resettlement Officer in charge of Estates, had arrived. By this time the crowd had increased again to some 500. There was however no sign of hostility and the A.C.'s orders to the Superintendent on the spot were to play the incident down and avoid a show of strength, which he considered would be likely to exacerbate the situation, one which at that time did not seem different from the sort of localized incident which might occur on an occasion of national celebration. The A.C. discussed the position with the Acting Deputy Commissioner at Colony Headquarters on Hong Kong Island (referred to below as the D.C.) and it was agreed that it called for tact and persuasion rather than for force.

October
10th

10. There was then a demand that fire crackers should be discharged by the resettlement staff, a traditional form of apology, and a supply was sent for. While the crowd was waiting for these at least one agitator was noticed to be engaged in rousing tempers among people of Nationalist sympathies who formed the great majority of those who had assembled. By 1.15 p.m. the crowd had grown to about 2,000, most of whom were interested spectators from the resettlement blocks; the police were reinforced to a strength of four sections (32 men). At 1.30 p.m. the fire crackers arrived but did not satisfy some members of the crowd, who had apparently decided to exploit the situation. Demands were then made by spokesmen such as that 100,000 fire crackers should be provided, to hang from top to bottom of the block, that portraits of Sun Yat Sen and Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek should be erected on the block with a large Nationalist flag, and that the officer in charge of the estate should apologize publicly before the crowd and in Chinese newspapers. Although most of the crowd did not seem hostile, it became clear before 2.0 p.m. that an easy settlement of this affair was unlikely.

1.15 p.m.

1.30 p.m.

2.0 p.m.

The course of the riots

11. Paragraphs 13 to 43 describe the general course of the riots in Kowloon; the sequence is chronological except where clarity is served by dealing with a particular incident or area as a whole. Reference to the maps in the Appendix, on which the location of the various incidents numbered in the margin is indicated, may assist the reader to follow the sequence of events "on the ground".

7

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Phase 1

Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate and adjacent streets to the south (October 10th, 2.0 p.m. - 3.20 p.m.)

October 10th
See Map B

12. During this first phase disorder was confined to the resettlement estate and a congested area of one block to the south west, bounded by the main Castle Peak Road. At the end of this phase there was a lull of some three hours. The A.C. had already ordered all operations rooms in his command to be fully manned and instructed riot units to be ready to move at short notice. The D.C., and through him the Acting Commissioner of Police (referred to below as the C. P.), at Colony Headquarters on Hong Kong Island across the harbour was kept continuously informed of the situation.

2.0 p.m.

13. At 2.0 p.m. the A.C. was on his way to the scene from his Headquarters in the centre of Kowloon about a mile away, with one riot unit of 60 men. On arrival he stationed the riot unit close by, ready for action but out of sight of the crowd, while he met the Divisional Superintendent, who had been on the scene since about 11.45 a.m., at the Resettlement Office in Block A, the block nearest to the main road. The A.C. estimated the crowd at this time at about 1,000; the people did not seem to be in a hostile mood and the crowd was tending to thin out. At about 2.15 p.m. a cheer went up and it was found that one room of the Resettlement Offices had been broken into from behind and a member of the staff assaulted; the offices were put under police guard and the injured man sent to hospital. The crowd seemed curious but still not hostile.

2.15 p.m.
Incident 1

2.25 p.m.

Incident 2

14. About 2.25 p.m. another member of the staff who was seeking to leave the area was chased by part of the crowd down the street to the main road, where he was severely assaulted; when a police party arrived this man, who was bloodstained from his injuries, had taken refuge in a lorry and was surrounded by some 300 people. He could not be extricated to be taken to hospital until 3 sections of police (24 men) had been mustered to clear a path through the crowd. The crowd then turned on the police and pelted them with mineral water bottles from a nearby shop. The A.C. considered that a baton charge would not be effective with the number of police on the spot and decided to use tear smoke. Four shells were fired and the crowd dispersed along the Castle Peak Road and back into the resettlement estate. This incident proved to be a turning point: hitherto the animosity of the crowd, composed mainly of settlers of Nationalist sympathies, had

8

been directed against the resettlement staff, for "interference" with the display of flags on the "Double Tenth". The police had now rescued their intended victim and this provided the opportunity for the lawless element in the crowd to direct its feelings against the forces of law and order. While the Nationalist flag was used by the rioters as a symbol throughout the ensuing disorders, the original dispute was largely forgotten from this moment.

October 10th

15. Shortly after this a second riot unit from the nearest Police Station at Shamshuipo, half a mile away to the south, arrived in Castle Peak Road and 4 further riot units were ordered to the scene. At about 2.30 p.m. when these reinforcements arrived, the A.C. had under his direct control 6 riot units (about 360 men). He placed two units at the junction of the two streets leading from Castle Peak Road to the resettlement estate. Almost at the same moment thick black smoke was seen from the direction of the estate and one unit was despatched to investigate. It was heavily stoned from the verandahs of two resettlement blocks, and three tear smoke shells had to be fired to drive the stone throwers indoors. On reaching the Resettlement Offices at the corner of the estate, the police party found them looted and partially on fire; a large bonfire of the furniture and records was burning outside. The fire brigade was sent for and extinguished the blaze by 3.0 p.m.

2.30 p.m.

Incident 3

16. As a result of police action, the crowds were now dispersing from the immediate area. The A.C. ordered Block A (in which the offices were located) to be cordoned off with a line of "knife rests" through the surrounding streets and this was done without interference. Traffic began to flow normally again along Castle Peak Road. By 3.20 p.m. all crowds had dispersed and the situation was quiet. The A.C. decided that it was best to avoid attracting attention to the area by leaving large forces there and ordered four riot units to return to their stations, leaving two, one manning the cordon of "knife rests" and one in reserve. On the C.P.'s instructions, the D.C. visited the area about 3.30 p.m. and found everything quiet; he reported that there was no reason to expect any renewal or extension of the disturbances.

3.20 p.m.

17. The scene of these events was an area less than 400 yards square running from the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate to the main Castle Peak Road, and situated in the north western suburbs of Kowloon, over three miles in a direct line from the tip of the peninsula; the crowds concerned had consisted very largely of settlers, known to be Nationalist partisans, and therefore in a state of enthusiasm on the "Double Tenth". The disorders des-

9

RA'-0413

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October
10th

cribed had specific origins on the spot and were not planned. There was no ground during this lull for expecting the much more serious and widespread rioting which developed later in the day, but the police remained in a state of instant readiness. The military Commander of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Garrison was kept informed. Arising out of this incident two people had been arrested and three or four injured.

Phase 2

(October 10th 6.30 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

- (a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo areas
- (b) Mongkok area (to the South)
- (c) Tai Hang Tung area (East of (a)) and beyond

(a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo Areas (October 10th 6.30 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

6.30 p.m.

18. At about 6.30 p.m., by which time workers had returned home and had had their evening meal, crowds of young men started to collect along the "knife rest" cordon in the Li Cheng Uk area and the temper of the crowd changed. Abuse was shouted at the Police, some stones were thrown and there was an increasing attitude of defiance and mounting excitement; police instructions to disperse were ignored. It is now known that as early as 6.0 p.m. Triad Society members were being mustered to exploit the situation; this undoubtedly had a bearing on the temper of the crowd at this stage. Two riot units from Hong Kong Island were now made ready to move across the harbour.

7.0 p.m.
Incident 4

At about 7.0 p.m. two very large Nationalist flags appeared in the crowd near the north west corner of the cordoned area, following which the "knife rests" were partially broken down at this point; a barrage of tear smoke fired by a section of 8 men dispersed this crowd successfully. The A.C. then arrived with reinforcements consisting of four riot units (240 men). He used his forces to break up the crowds and prevent them reforming and decided to include in the cordoned area the tenement block between it and the Castle Peak Road, but not to enlarge it further and thereby tend to spread the disorder to the south. However, loose crowds continued to assemble round the cordoned area and the police were stoned at intervals. At 8.10 p.m. the A.C. ordered a drive with two riot units, one on either side of the block in the centre of the estate, which with a tear smoke barrage succeeded in clearing the immediate area; at the same time the "knife rest" cordon was extended down

8.10 p.m.
Incident 5

10

to the main road, as previously decided. On the south eastern edge of the cordon an aggressive crowd caused a large disturbance outside a cinema at about 8.35 p.m.; this crowd was driven back by tear smoke but continued to stone the police at intervals. A few minutes later a riot unit cleared this crowd to a distance of two blocks to the south east with tear smoke and the cordoned perimeter was correspondingly extended and the two side-streets blocked off where they join the Castle Peak Road. There were now six blocks included in the cordon.

October
10th
Incident 6

Incident 7

19. The situation between 8.0 and 9.30 p.m. was that disorder gradually spread south and east from the Li Cheng Uk area, but was contained on a line about half way to the main road junction. The object of the police during this period was to restrict the area of disturbance and prevent it spreading towards Kowloon and at the same time to disperse the crowds, which were still composed mainly of local residents, and induce them to return to their homes. In the immediate surroundings of Li Cheng Uk the police held a perimeter embracing some six tenement or resettlement blocks in considerable force, but were not able to get to grips with rioting crowds on the southern and eastern edges of the area who were confining themselves mainly to "tip-and-run" stoning attacks on the police. From about 9.30 p.m. the situation within the perimeter was reasonably well under control. But fresh outbreaks of rioting began to develop to the south, centred on the main road junction and overflowing into side-streets. A number of vehicles, including some containing service personnel, were attacked. It is now known that about 10.0 p.m. a crowd about 1,000 strong, led by 14K and Wo On Lok Triad members carrying Nationalist flags, emerged from the Shek Kip Mei Estate, began stoning vehicles and later attacked the Garden Bakery (see paragraph 23). By 10.30 p.m. rioting on a large scale was taking place at the main road junction, where cheer leaders and groups with Nationalist flags were seen inciting the crowd to yet further disorder. To meet this serious situation 2 riot units arrived from the south and the A.C. redeployed 3 units from the Li Cheng Uk area. Police at road blocks previously set up at Shatin and Tsuen Wan were instructed to stop vehicles entering Kowloon from the New Territories and other blocks were set up near Police Headquarters to stop north bound traffic. At about 10.15 p.m. the D.C. left Colony Headquarters to take command at the Kowloon Control Room, since it was clear that the A.C. must continue to direct operations at the scene of disorder for some time. At this stage the A.C. in charge of Hong Kong Island was ordered to be specially vigilant against any spread of disorder across

10.30 p.m.

Incident 8

11

RA'-0413

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October 10th the harbour and Special Branch personnel were sent out to report from near the scene of the many incidents which were now occurring. As the evening wore on it was realized that the situation was becoming increasingly serious. With the spread of disorder, the tactics of the mobs changed; they became very mobile over a widening area of Kowloon, melting away on the arrival of the police, and regrouping in a nearby street to continue attacking vehicles, shops and so on. It was difficult to bring the police units to bear on these rapidly shifting gangs which did not present easy targets for baton charges or the effective use of tear smoke, despite the C.P.'s instructions that it should be used in good quantity.

Incident 9 20. Meanwhile two fire engines had arrived to deal with a small fire in a street parallel to the main Castle Peak Road; soon after turning into the main road on its return journey at about 10.0 p.m. the leading fire engine, a Dennis Rolls Royce machine carrying a 55 foot fire escape ladder, met a heavy fusillade of bricks, pieces of concrete and bottles thrown by crowds of rioters who also attempted to block its passage. The driver was struck on the head by a stone and lost control of the vehicle which crashed into the crowd, mounted the pavement and pinned several people against a wall at the side of the road. Two people, one a woman, were killed outright and one died in hospital as a result of this accident, while five of the crowd were seriously injured. While the injured members of the crowd were being put on stretchers and loaded into ambulances, which had been heavily stoned on their way to the scene, the rioters continued to discharge showers of stones from the roadside and from verandahs and rooftops, one of the injured being hit by a stone as he was being carried on a stretcher to the ambulance. This serious accident and the deaths and injuries caused contributed to inflaming the temper of the crowd. At about 11.0 p.m. a military ambulance was stoned at the same spot, the driver was knocked unconscious and the ambulance crashed into the back of the disabled fire engine, which has since proved a total loss. Soon after the first accident the Deputy Chief Officer set out for the scene in a land rover of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Some 400 yards short of the junction the vehicle was forced to a standstill by crowds and the D.C.O. with a sub-officer completed his journey on foot, leaving the driver in charge of the vehicle. Shortly after this the driver was surrounded and stoned and had to escape to save his life.

Incident 11 The crowd then overturned the appliance and set it on fire; it also became a total loss. These incidents illustrate the situation at this time in the vicinity of the main road junction. In an area some 400 yards square, of which the

junction formed the north east corner, eight police riot units, later increased to eleven, continued to be heavily engaged with large mobs of rioters in a running fight which persisted until about 3.0 a.m. on October 11th.

21. At about 11.20 p.m. the Officer Administering the Government accompanied by the Acting Colonial Secretary visited the C.P. in his control room. The latter reported the situation fully, including details of police dispositions and the degree of force and weapons used; he explained that he had been reluctant, despite the gravity of the disorder, to instruct his men to abandon the policy of resorting to the use of fire arms only in extreme circumstances. It had by now become clear that members of the regular Police Force would begin to suffer from fatigue if the riots continued throughout the night, as many of them had already been on duty all day without relief; it was therefore decided to mobilize the Police Auxiliaries. By 4.0 a.m. over 600 men had come on duty; by 8.0 a.m. on October 11th, 1,150 had reported and the total later reached 1,551. The Auxiliaries provided one riot unit and took over the entire radio control at Kowloon Police Headquarters; they also manned police stations, radio vans and harbour launches and provided escorts, patrols and guards, until their demobilization at 4.0 p.m. on October 15th. This proved a most valuable accession to police strength. At 11.20 p.m. a broadcast request was made to the public to keep away from the affected areas and this was repeated at intervals until midnight; similar warnings were given on the morning of October 11th and at intervals thereafter until the curfew was imposed. Shortly after midnight joint military and police headquarters in Kowloon were manned (see paragraph 32 below).

22. In the original area of disturbance at Li Cheng Uk bands of rioters continued in sporadic stoning attacks against the police which were kept in check with tear smoke. At 2.0 a.m. the police post in the resettlement estate, a room normally manned by one constable, was reported attacked; it proved that an attempt had been made to break into the post, which was soon afterwards evacuated. The situation at Li Cheng Uk gradually became quieter until at 3.30 a.m. one riot unit was ordered to return to Kowloon Headquarters for action elsewhere; by 4.0 a.m. there were no further incidents and at 6.0 a.m. the remaining riot unit was withdrawn to Headquarters.

23. Meanwhile, a serious fire started at the Garden Bakery, a large mechanized bakery housed in a concrete building of 3 storeys in the angle of the two main roads

October 10th-11th facing the junction. 12 lorries belonging to the Company and parked behind the building were set on fire by the rioters at 11.25 p.m. and the building was stoned; the ground floor of the Bakery was involved before midnight and burnt fiercely owing to inflammable stock. Poles with burning material attached were thrown through the broken windows of the building and helped to spread the fire. The fire brigade was subjected to a barrage of stones both en route and at the scene of the fire and required constant police protection. A path had to be cleared by police for the turncock as the water valve was close to the crowds; meanwhile the second floor of the Bakery, containing flour stocks, was ablaze. The fire, which might have spread disastrously up Castle Peak Road, was energetically attacked and brought under control after about two hours.

Midnight Incident 14 24. At about midnight the situation from the police point of view was that a large crowd of rioters was still centred round the main road junction and near the Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate to the east of it, while other crowds were rioting in streets to the south west of the junction. The A.C. decided to clear Yen Chau Street, the important street running south west from the junction past the Shamshuipo Police Station to the harbour. This was achieved with one riot unit which had to fire tear smoke repeatedly at gangs of rioters in the side streets. Meanwhile, after a very tough and protracted fight, the police Incident 15 gradually secured a firm control of the main road junction. Between midnight and 4.0 a.m. at least six shops in this area, including a goldsmiths and two Garden Bakery branch shops, were looted by Triad gangs.

October 11th 2.30 a.m. Incident 16 25. The centre of resistance now moved south along the main road from the junction; there was a fire in the roadway at the first crossing beyond the junction and barricades at the second and third crossings to the south. At 2.30 a.m. the A.C. began a drive down the road and decided to use sickening smoke. He succeeded in breaking through the barricades and clearing the main road for about a thousand yards beyond the junction. The C.P.'s appreciation in the small hours of October 11th was that there were still mobs of 100 to 700 engaged in arson and serious assaults and attacks on property in Shamshuipo but that, starting from about 2.0 a.m., these had become less severe and by 3.0 a.m. had been reduced by continuous and widespread police action to scattered cases of disorder by small groups of hooligans. Nevertheless he considered it advisable, at 4.30 a.m., to obtain the agreement of the Station Commander Kai Tak that the latter would be responsible for protecting the airport, thus relieving the police of this responsibility.

14

(b) Mongkok and area to the South
(October 10th 11.0 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

26. The Mongkok area is habitually heavily crowded in the evenings; this was the state of affairs until midnight on October 10th. But groups of hooligans began to collect about 11.0 p.m. at two road crossings in the northern part of Nathan Road near the Mongkok Police Station, which is about a mile south of the main road junction. These groups became riotous and cars were stoned and some members of the Regular Forces injured; there was some looting in this area by gangs, mostly consisting of Wo group Triads. At about 1.30 a.m. part of a riot unit broke up these crowds, numbering several hundred, with tear smoke. Until about 5.30 a.m. gangs of hooligans roamed the Nathan Road area as far south as Austin Road (which is about half a mile from the tip of the Kowloon peninsula), looting and throwing stones. These disorders were gradually brought under control by the police until by about 6.0 a.m. the area was quiet.

October 10th 11.0 p.m. Incident 17
October 11th 1.30 a.m.
6.0 a.m.

(c) Tai Hang Tung area and beyond
(October 11th 12.30 a.m. - 6.0 a.m.)

27. At 12.30 a.m. a report reached the control room at Kowloon Police Headquarters that suspicious persons were assembling near the Heung To School, a recently constructed private school of Communist complexion about a quarter of a mile north east of the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate which, in common with the other two estates further west, contains settlers of predominantly Nationalist sympathies. A quarter of an hour later it was reported that the police post in this area (a room manned by a constable) was on fire. An Inspector with 16 men was sent to investigate and found the post looted and the contents burning outside. Later information connects this incident with 14K and Wo On Lok Triad gangs. The party was then very heavily attacked by mobs in the area and by settlers from the verandahs of the resettlement blocks and was forced to withdraw without reaching the school, during which it suffered severe injuries, one inspector and four constables being later admitted to hospital. This party met a riot unit south of the area which used tear smoke to disperse these rioters, and held a line keeping them contained in the resettlement estate. At 1.15 a.m., in answer to another call from the school, a second police party was despatched; this party arrived at a point overlooking the school and reported no sign of disorder. The party therefore withdraw. At 1.50 a.m. a further report

October 11th 12.30 a.m. Incident 18
12.45 a.m.
1.50 a.m.

15

RA'-0413

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Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

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October 11th was received from the school that some 70 people seemed about to try to set the buildings on fire, but no forces could be spared at that time from the main riot centres in the built-up areas to investigate. Further calls were received and at 3.30 a.m. a riot unit south of the area was detailed to visit the school; at the same time the A.C., who was still at the main road junction, received an urgent message that the school was on fire. He left at once for the school with one riot unit, later meeting the second unit which was already on its way there. The A.C. with the two units passed through the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate without opposition; on arrival at the school at about 4.30 a.m. he found a large pile of furniture etc., on fire outside; parts of the main building had caught fire but the structure was not seriously threatened. It appears from later inquiry that the first attack on the school was repulsed by the staff; between 3.0 and 4.0 a.m. the mob set fire to an adjacent hut and forced their way into the compound, looting the ground floor of the school and setting fire to the furniture etc. outside. The A.C. entered the school and found some 20 members of the staff in an upper room. 11 men, suspected of the arson, were also found in the building and taken into custody. The police put out the fire in the building and the Fire Brigade which had meanwhile arrived extinguished the fire outside. A police guard of four sections of a riot unit was placed on the school and the staff evacuated the building on police advice for their own safety. Meanwhile two minor incidents were reported from Kowloon City, further east near the airport, during the small hours; and information was received at about 3.45 a.m. that a crowd was wrecking a traffic pagoda near the airport entrance. This crowd was dispersed by the police.

3.45 a.m. 28. By 6.0 a.m. on October 11th the whole of Kowloon was quiet. All riot units were recalled for rest and replaced by strong mobile patrols, the streets were cleared of wrecked vehicles and the omnibus services were resumed. The object at this stage was to restore conditions in Kowloon to normal at first light on the morning after the "Double Tenth". At 8.45 a.m. the D.C. returned to Colony Headquarters to report to the C.P. In doing so, he expressed the opinion that since there had been such widespread disorder and the situation had been exploited by criminal gangs any recurrence would merit stern measures. The C.P. agreed that if disorder broke out again this would imply a planned extension of the riots, and must be met with stronger force including the use of firearms wherever justified. In maintaining the policy restricting the use of firearms hitherto, the C.P. was influenced by the fact that

16

there were still many curious spectators in the crowds and that firing might have resulted in heavy casualties including injury to these passive elements.

29. The rioting had so far occurred on the afternoon, evening and night of the "Double Tenth" festival, when the Nationalist sympathizers who form such a large proportion of the population of north western Kowloon were in any case elated and disposed to demonstrate their opposition to the present régime in China; and were therefore ripe for exploitation by Triad and criminal gangs. It was a reasonable expectation that, since the police had gained control of the rioting in the early hours of October 11th, the cold light of the morning after the festival day would find the celebrants less apt for any further mischief to which the gangsters might seek to incite them. During this second phase a total force of some 1,100 police was in action, excluding small patrols. The weapons used were baton, tear smoke, both as shells and as grenades, and in the later stages sickening smoke. A few shots were fired by individual officers but only in self-defence. Casualties were two killed in the accident to the fire engine (a third died later), some twenty people seriously injured, including one suffering from a gunshot wound, and fifty with minor injuries. The police had suffered a good number of casualties, including ten serious enough for hospital treatment, of whom one was detained in hospital. Some 140 arrests had been made.

Phase 3

(October 11th 10.0 a.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

- (a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuiipo
- (b) Mongkok and Yaumati (to the South)
- (c) Eastern and north eastern Kowloon

(a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuiipo
(October 11th 10.0 a.m. - 7.30 p.m.)

30. The hope that the disorders would not extend beyond the "Double Tenth" was not realized and this second lull proved to be not much longer than the first, some four hours. Shortly before 10.0 a.m. on October 11th a police patrol reported being stoned by a large crowd near Li Cheng Uk, the Resettlement Estate where the riots started. A riot unit arrived and succeeded in driving a

October
11th
10.0 a.m.
Incident 20

17

RA'-0413

0075

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October
11th

large and excited crowd of rioters off one road junction on the main Castle Peak Road in this neighbourhood, but had not sufficient numbers to disperse them from the area; a further unit reached the scene, sickening smoke was fired, and the crowd broke but reformed out of range. With the arrival of a third unit, the main Castle Peak Road was cleared and kept open and the crowds were scattered down side streets with the assistance of tear smoke. At about midday Triad gangs, continuing their activities of the previous day, looted two provision stores and two factories in Castle Peak Road. Later other gangs forced occupants of cars to buy Nationalist flags at a number of points in the Kowloon peninsula. Flags were also sold by Triad members on bicycles or in cars. At about 12.45 p.m. a large crowd was seen to be gathering near the main road junction and building a barricade across the Castle Peak Road 100 yards to the north west; this barricade was smashed by an armoured car on its way to deliver supplies of smoke to the riot units at Li Cheng Uk, and the crowd round it dispersed with the aid of tear smoke shells fired by the crew.

12.45 p.m.

Incident 21

Incident 22

31. Simultaneously another mob of some 500 assembled in the next street south of the barricade, and began to surge down the street towards the Shamshuipo Police Station 500 yards away, burning two motor vehicles in the street on the way. This mob was led by a man carrying a Nationalist flag, a common feature throughout the disturbances. Yet another crowd of about the same size was rioting in the area between the Police Station and the sea. These moves were considered a threat to the Police Station; the Divisional Superintendent successfully broke up these mobs with Greener gunfire and blocked off a number of side streets in the area; an armoured car arrived in the rear of those fleeing northwards and scattered them. Meanwhile riotous mobs in very large numbers continued to collect round the main road junction and for a mile or more to the south along the main road and in streets on both sides of it. Two more riot units were ordered to this area, making a total of 5 (300 men). These renewed disorders developed very rapidly despite the police reinforcements which were rushed to the scene of the first outbreak. The mobs were even more mobile and elusive and tear smoke had the effect only of dispersing the rioters for a short time and at one spot. Among the tactics employed by the mob was the lighting of bonfires of wood and paper in the streets to attract fire engines, which were then violently attacked from the street and surrounding buildings; the Fire Brigade was unable during this period to answer calls without a police escort. It was clear to the C.P. that the riots had passed beyond the stage of being traceable to mob hysteria due to the national day, and were

being fomented and fanned by criminals for their own ends; the confession of two avowed members of Triad Societies, arrested during the morning, that these Societies were among those inciting and directing the mobs tended to confirm this appreciation. Since normal tactics were not effective in securing control quickly the C.P. issued emphatic directions soon after 10.0 a.m. that the rioting must be brought under control with the minimum of delay by any necessary means and that if circumstances justified it there should be no hesitation in opening fire on the rioters.

October
11th

32. At 12.30 p.m. a Conference was held between the Officer Administering the Government, the Commander British Forces, the Acting Colonial Secretary and the C.P. at the operations room at Police Headquarters, at which the situation was reviewed. The mobs had hitherto been able largely to escape the punitive action of the strong forces of police deployed against them by evasive tactics, for which the crowded maze of streets and tenements in the affected areas lent excellent cover; even when their activities had a focus during particular acts of arson or looting they made little attempt to fight off the police but scattered in front of them, only to regroup out of sight. The chief need therefore was to confine the mobs of rioters within limited areas and pin them down so that the police might be able to bring full force to bear on them. It was decided at the Conference to use troops in support of the police. There had been close contact throughout the riots between Police Headquarters and Headquarters Land Forces and Hong Kong and Kowloon Garrison Headquarters, the latter situated near the tip of the peninsula. On a police situation report at 9.0 p.m. on October 10th the Garrison Commander had warned two Artillery Regiments that they might be required for internal security operations and at 11.0 p.m. each Regiment had been ordered to place two Internal Security Troops (30 men in each Troop, total 120 men) in a state of immediate readiness. Shortly after midnight the joint Military and Police Headquarters in Kowloon had been manned. At 10.0 a.m. on October 11th one infantry battalion had been warned by Headquarters Land Forces to be ready to move to Kowloon at an hour's notice and at 11.30 two other battalions, together with the scout cars of the Armoured Regiment, the 7th Hussars, had been given similar instructions. At 1.45 p.m. these three battalions and the scout cars were ordered to move to Kowloon.

12.30 p.m.

1.45 p.m.

33. A drive was launched at 2.0 p.m. by riot units in force from Kowloon Police Headquarters which was on the fringe of the rioting at the time, to free the main road and side streets of crowds as far as the junction. Three units

October
11th

(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 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 now five riot units (300 men) in the immediate vicinity 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 not 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 2.0 p.m. the whole of the area south west and south 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 1.30 p.m. M. Ernst, Swiss Vice-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 died of burns received at the same 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 3.30 p.m. with one riot unit; two Internal Security Troops of the 74th Light Anti-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 from the junction area which had moved south. This sweep was effective and out-flanking movements by the mobs were prevented. At 3.45 p.m. two further Internal Security Troops, (from the 15th Medium Regiment R.A.), which had replaced the first two at Police Headquarters, were also ordered to the main road junction which was completely cordoned by 4.30 p.m. 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.

35. At about 4.0 p.m. the three battalions which had been ordered into Kowloon for cordon duty began arriving.

20

Their arrival, together 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 round the main road in the original 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 by 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 5.45 p.m. 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 7.30 p.m. 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 instances 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 4.0 p.m. and 6.0 p.m. had completed deployment by 7.30 p.m. when the Curfew Order came into operation, in such a way as to divide Kowloon into three sections, between which movement was controlled by the security forces. One battalion area comprised the main riot centres in north western Kowloon, down to Boundary Street 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 reconnaissance flights were arranged from the evening of October 11th until October 14th, each Auster aircraft carrying a police officer as observer. 1900 Air Observation Post Flight, Royal Air Force made 22 sorties and the Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force 3, each of about an hour. These were extremely valuable in reporting crowd movements and fires to police radio cars or to Headquarters.

21

RA'-0413

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(b) Mongkok and Yaumati
(October 11th 2.30 p.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

October 11th 2.30 p.m. Incident 24
37. About 2.30 p.m. riotous crowds collected south of Police Headquarters along Nathan Road, which runs up the centre of the Kowloon peninsula; these crowds were being incited to violence by gang leaders and the police repeatedly used tear smoke and opened fire on them; during this period a provision store with stocks of goods from China was looted by Triad gangs which also smashed traffic signs and lights in the streets and stoned the Canton Provincial Bank, causing slight damage. Police Headquarters and the Mongkok Police Station were stoned later in the evening. Despite the curfew, it was not until about 11.0 p.m. that order was restored in this district. The difficulty was to bring force to bear on comparatively small bands of hooligans which ran riot over a wide area and broke up temporarily on the approach of police parties. At 8.30 p.m. a report of a large crowd at the Jordan Road junction, less than a mile from the southern tip of the peninsula, proved exaggerated; but small groups of hooligans were abroad in this neighbourhood, intent on looting and destruction. By 1.0 a.m. this most southerly area of Kowloon was quiet, and remained so.

(c) Eastern and north eastern Kowloon
(Kowloon City, Hung Hom and Ngau Chi Wan)
(October 11th 5.30 p.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

October 11th 5.30 p.m.
38. Most of the serious incidents which occurred during the evening and night of October 11th took place in three principal districts on the eastern side of Kowloon, an area so far scarcely affected. The main source of disorder was undoubtedly the highly congested district immediately west of the Kai Tak airport which has for long been a haunt of Triad Societies, "strong arm" gangs and criminals; immediately south of this lies a road junction, close to the western end of one of the airport runways. South of this again there was a series of incidents, particularly in Hung Hom, a reclaimed area projecting into the harbour to the east on the level of Jordan Road. At one stage the disorder spread east beyond the airport where some factory and other buildings were attacked and looted. The first report from the eastern side of the peninsula, at 5.30 p.m., was of a crowd on the main road to the airport near Hung Hom Police Station numbering about 300. This crowd was not disorderly, being composed mainly of factory workers, and was easily dispersed by a small force of police. A much more serious situation developed shortly afterwards at the road junction on the edge of the airport.

22

October 11th—12th Incident 25
Here there is a very large omnibus terminal where it was reported that many buses had been abandoned, while a crowd of several hundred had assembled on the open ground which forms the runway extension. The Divisional Superintendent from Kowloon City turned out with a riot unit and found a crowd of some 2,000 who scattered over the open ground and showered the police with stones. A particularly active and truculent mob was also assembled in a narrow street running northward from the road junction into the heart of Kowloon City. The whole of this neighbourhood rapidly became crowded with mobs of rioters who refused to disperse and were not dislodged by tear smoke. It was necessary to fire with Greener guns before the crowd could be broken up and driven northwards. The road junction was then cordoned off and held in strength. Between 3.0 p.m. and 9.0 p.m. small gangs armed with hammers and iron bars forced shopkeepers in this district to buy flags for amounts from \$5 to \$20 each; flags were also forced on motorists, pedestrians and householders. At 7.30 p.m. a crowd of about 200 south of the junction had to be dispersed with gunfire. Two further incidents occurred during the night, one outside a branch of the left wing Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union north of the junction, where a Triad gang of about 40 was stoning the premises; on being ordered to disperse this gang turned on the police who had to fire; the other incident was at midnight, when it was reported that a crowd of 50 to 100 people was breaking into the Yee Wo Tai Weaving Factory north of Kowloon City. It transpired that some stock had been taken and a small gang ran away when the police arrived. At 1.30 a.m. a second report reached the police and this time it was found that the factory had been ransacked; the police party sent to the scene opened fire on the looters killing four; 36 suspects were arrested. This area remained quiet for the rest of the night. In Hung Hom further south, which was the second main area of disorder on the eastern side of the peninsula, crowds were reported in two or three streets near the docks. A small police party was heavily stoned in this area about 8.45 p.m. and was forced to use its revolvers to avoid being overrun; one person was killed and another wounded, after which the crowd began to break up. Soon after, a police armoured car arrived and completed its rout. There was some looting of shops by gangs about 7.30 p.m.

October 11th 7.30 p.m. Incident 26
October 11th/12th Midnight Incident 27
October 12th 1.30 a.m. Incident 28
October 11th 8.45 p.m. Incident 29
October 11th 9.15 p.m. Incident 30
39. Further to the north east beyond the airport in Kun Tong Road there was a report at 9.15 p.m. of trouble at the Amoy Canning Factory; the manager informed a police inspector who arrived by car to investigate that an

23

RA'-0413

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October 11th hour earlier a gang had threatened to wreck his factory if he did not hoist the Nationalist flag, which he did. Soon after, an officer of the R.A.F. Regiment at the airport informed the inspector that three small factories nearby, an iron works, a cotton factory and an ornamental stone works, had been fired and damaged; the Royal Air Force had detained seven suspects in connexion with these incidents. When he arrived at the R.A.F. guard room, the Inspector was told by a sentry of a fire visible in the Ngau Tau Kok resettlement area. On its way up the hill to the area, the police car stuck and was surrounded by a gang of 30 armed with heavy clubs. Gun and revolver fire drove off this gang and four were arrested. The fire proved to be a bonfire of furniture etc. looted from two huts. On its way back to Kowloon City Police Station, which it reached about midnight, this police party removed various obstructions erected across the main road which borders the airport.

11.0 p.m. Incident 32 At about 11.0 p.m. a patrol car discovered a strong road block about half a mile south of the road junction on the edge of the airport; a police party reinforced the crew of the car and a number of shots were fired at a scattered mob which was stoning the police; the block was then removed. Two rioters were killed, one injured and six arrested. One further case of arson reported during the night was at the resettlement area at Ho Man Tin near the railway west of Hung Hom. The resettlement offices were found to be ransacked but a fire had already been extinguished when the police arrived; the labourers' quarters had also been looted. No rioters were found on the scene. Between 8.0 a.m. on October 11th and 8.0 a.m. on October 12th a further 367 persons had been arrested.

10.40 p.m. Incident 33

Phase 4

(October 12th 9.30 a.m. - 2.0 p.m.)

40. The initial Curfew Order required all persons to remain within doors from 7.30 p.m. on October 11th to 10.0 a.m. on October 12th throughout the Kowloon peninsula from Lai Chi Kok on the west to the district beyond the airport on the east. As is apparent from the preceding paragraphs, this Order was not fully observed during the night; it was the first of its kind ever made in Hong Kong and came into operation at only about an hour's notice after being announced by radio. It took time for the public generally to appreciate what was expected of it and for the first few hours of the curfew the security forces warned curfew breakers without making arrests. But the curfew provided these forces with powers which were essential for the purpose of isolating the active mobs of rioters. As news of the measures taken to enforce the curfew, including

24

the many arrests made later, spread through the city, the passive element progressively left the streets, thus enabling the forces of law and order to concentrate on their main task. The curfew continued throughout Kowloon for 24 hours from 10.0 a.m. on October 12th. But breaks of two hours, "staggered" in five zones were permitted for distribution and purchase of food. It was extended at the same time to Tsuen Wan to the north west (see Chapter IV below) and to Shatin over the hills to the north; at 7.30 p.m. it was further extended 6 miles beyond Tsuen Wan to include the Sham Tseng area. At 10.0 a.m. on October 13th it was lifted from the first zone in the tip of the peninsula, which enabled some ferry services to be resumed, and twenty four hours later throughout Kowloon; but was re-imposed on the nights of the 14th and 15th from 6.0 p.m. to 7.0 a.m. in the north western district which had been the focus of the riots. In the Tsuen Wan area the curfew remained in operation, with two-hour breaks, until 10.0 a.m. on October 16th. During the morning of October 12th many people continued to leave their homes for reasons unconnected with the disturbances and military forces at the cordon points and police patrols made numerous arrests. There were also cases of looting and arson committed by relatively small gangs and some large crowds collected. But disorder did not take on the character of concerted mob violence and nowhere assumed the menacing proportions of the two previous days; the situation steadily improved during the afternoon and night as the curfew was more rigidly enforced.

41. At 9.0 a.m. on October 12th troops broke up a crowd collecting on the Castle Peak Road from the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate and half an hour later police in an armoured car had to fire tear smoke at Shek Kip Mei to drive indoors a crowd, largely of settlers, which though not really hostile refused to disperse. Shortly before 10.0 a.m. near Li Cheng Uk another crowd of 500 to 600, mostly people intent on shopping at a market nearby, had also to be dispersed indoors with tear smoke. At 10.20 a.m. troops stopped a large crowd which was trying to cross the cordon from the south to their homes in the resettlement areas. Repeated attempts had been made, with some success, to loot a provision shop on the main road in the Mongkok district; the previous day the police had fired on looters at this spot, killing two, and on October 12th a police party, arriving near the shop in response to a telephone call, again opened fire, killing one looter and driving the rest of the gang away; two other attacks later in the morning were driven off by the police. At 11.30 a.m. two shops in the main road near Li Cheng Uk, both selling produce from

25

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October
12th
12.30 p.m.

Incident 38
2.0 p.m.

Incident 39

China, were attacked and set on fire; one of these had been looted on the previous day, together with a neighbouring toy shop which also carried stocks of Chinese goods. Fairly large crowds collected and the Fire Brigade was stoned at one stage, but the crowd, which was not as a whole aggressive, was dispersed with tear smoke. The two fires were extinguished by 12.30 p.m. but the entire contents of the two shops were either looted or burnt. Further north along the main road a party of police which was attacked had to fire, killing one person. At 1.45 p.m. the offices in the Ho Man Tin Resettlement Area in central Kowloon were again set on fire; the perpetrators had left by the time the police and Fire Brigade arrived. At about 2.0 p.m. another fire occurred at the Heung To School behind the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate; the police party left in charge there earlier (see paragraph 27) had withdrawn the previous evening as the area was quiet. When the police arrived they met with no opposition and there was no sign of those responsible for the fire. The Fire Brigade reached the scene shortly before 3.0 p.m., but the school fire hydrants had been smashed and no outside supply of water was available; the fire could not therefore be effectively tackled. After this no further acts of violence were reported in Kowloon. Police patrols were active and continued to arrest curfew breakers and suspected looters. From the time of the original fire at the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Office at 3.0 p.m. on October 10th until this second fire at the School, a period of about 48 hours, the Fire Brigade had dealt with 17 fires in Kowloon, some of which were trivial while others were serious outbreaks. Fire appliances were unable to reach nine further fires, mostly of motor vehicles or looted stock burning in the streets. Fire engines, ambulances and uniformed personnel were singled out for attack by the rioters and had to be constantly protected by the police. The Brigade consists of 540 officers and men and was reinforced on October 11th by some 200 men of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Six vehicles of the ambulance service made some 45 journeys and conveyed about 80 patients to hospital during the same period. The Brigade, the Auxiliaries and the Ambulance Service did their duty well and without flinching in adverse conditions.

Phase 5

(October 12th 2.0 p.m.—October 16th 10.0 a.m.)

42. It was now clear that the security forces had firm control of the situation. The police were therefore able to concentrate their attention on seeking out and arresting the

26

rioters, looters and arsonists and on collecting evidence to bring the perpetrators of the disorders before the Courts for punishment. During the afternoon and night of October 12th widespread raids were made on boarding houses and other premises in Shamshuipo and Yaumati districts and also on Hong Kong Island. A raid was also made in a small area of Kowloon City at about 3.0 p.m. 200 suspects were arrested and a quantity of looted goods recovered. During a raid at Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate about 6.30 p.m. a few warning shots were fired by the police to enforce orders to settlers to keep indoors; 490 arrests were made there. Up to midnight on October 12th over 1,170 people had been arrested, of whom nearly 800 had been charged before Court with rioting or kindred offences, or with breach of Curfew Orders. On October 13th a large screening operation took place at Li Cheng Uk, where the riots had their origin, lasting from dawn until midday; over 1,000 men were arrested on suspicion and marched away with the assistance of two military Internal Security Troops. A similar raid in the Tai Hang Tung area between 3.30 and 7.0 p.m. resulted in the arrest of some 700 suspects. Military forces assisted in these operations and continued during the day to arrest numbers of curfew breakers and hand them over to the police to be dealt with according to law. To enable the police to investigate the very large number of suspects, the Emergency (Detention) Regulations 1956 were made on October 14th. These empowered the police to hold suspects for inquiry for 14 days, as opposed to the normal 48 hours, without bringing them before a magistrate, with extensions of a like period at the Governor's discretion.

October
12th

3.0 p.m.

6.30 p.m.

October
13th
Dawn

3.30 p.m.

43. On October 14th, when the curfew was lifted throughout Kowloon at 10.0 a.m., two battalions of the Regular Forces, with attendant scout cars, returned to their camps but remained on call. The remaining battalion together with two Internal Security Troops from the Royal Artillery remained on duty and re-imposed a cordon round the north western area, which was placed under curfew again at 6.0 p.m.; police made further arrests of curfew breakers during the evening in this area. Next morning the remaining battalion returned to camp, leaving two Internal Security Troops on hand at Police Headquarters Kowloon. The police enforced the curfew in the north western area again on the night of the 15th and on the morning of the 16th it was finally lifted, all troops returned to barracks and the joint Headquarters ceased to be manned.

October
14th
10.0 a.m.

27

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Effect on essential services in Kowloon and return to normal conditions

44. The imposition of the curfew at short notice disrupted a number of services provided by Government or the utility companies. Cross-harbour ferry services were discontinued at Government request, except for a few special ferries run for the benefit of essential services or to assist stranded people to return home; motor bus and taxi services were brought to a standstill and the local train service ceased, although trains bringing people from China on October 12th and 13th, many of them returning Hong Kong residents, were allowed to run into Kowloon where arrangements were made to pass a total of over 3,000 passengers through curfew areas or across the harbour; a few other trains were run for special purposes. Passengers travelling by air were conveyed under police escort to and from the Peninsula Hotel at the southern end of Kowloon and the airport, or brought there from Hong Kong Island direct by launch and, while five aircraft were directed elsewhere by their companies, there was very little interference with normal passenger air services. No passenger ships arrived or departed during October 11th and 12th. Scavenging and conservancy services, the distribution of fresh fish and vegetables, and of rice, and postal services, were initially brought to a standstill; utility companies whose continued and efficient operation was of great importance during the riots such as the telephone, electricity, gas and rediffusion companies, together with departments of Government such as Urban Services, Waterworks, Public Relations, Radio Hong Kong, the Royal Observatory and the New Territories Administration had difficulty at first in maintaining their operations as essential staff and supplies were unable to move through the curfew areas, and across the harbour. This was particularly serious in the case of the Medical Department as the Kowloon and Lai Chi Kok hospitals were overflowing with casualties, at a time when it was difficult to move essential staff and supplies and to discharge the less serious cases through the curfew zones. If it had not been for a generous and timely offer of assistance from the 33rd General Military Hospital which opened its doors to admit civilian casualties, there would have been a risk of a temporary breakdown. These difficulties were gradually overcome by improvisation and with the aid of police or military escorts, or in some cases by the loan of military transport.

45. Transport services in Kowloon and the cross-harbour ferries began to run again as soon as the curfew allowed; scavenging and conservancy was resumed on the night of October 12th and operated normally from the

following day; from October 12th, bulk supplies of vegetables, and from the following day of fish, were brought into markets in Kowloon and sold during the two-hour breaks in the curfew periods; quantities sold were normal (except for imported vegetables) by October 15th although prices remained slightly inflated for a time; beginning on October 13th special steps were taken to move supplies of rice across the harbour since, while supplies never in fact ran short, the price rose slightly; postal services returned to normal by October 16th. Other essential services not depending on distribution by road or water succeeded in maintaining their operations at the full pitch required by the emergency.

CHAPTER III

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS IN TSUEN WAN

Description of the area

46. The Tsuen Wan area is a centre of light industry, particularly textiles and enamelware, on the main road running westwards close to the sea from Kowloon to Castle Peak; the town of Tsuen Wan is situated some 8½ miles from the tip of the Kowloon peninsula, or 5½ miles from the junction with the Taipo Road which was the chief centre of rioting in Kowloon. Tsuen Wan itself is a town to all appearances, but is composed of a group of some eight old Chinese villages, joined together by recently constructed houses and shops; two of these villages, Muk Min Ha and Hoi Pa, feature in the narrative which follows. The population of Tsuen Wan town is about 60,000. See Map A See Map C

47. The principal industrial area stretches along the main road from Kwai Chung some two miles east of the town to a point about two miles west of the town. There are 75 registered factories employing over 12,000 workers, of whom 3,000 are women; another two or three thousand work in smaller concerns. Some 5,000 of these workers are employed in textile mills. At Sham Tseng about five miles west of Tsuen Wan lie the Hong Kong Brewery and the Factory of Kowloon Textile Industries Ltd., a mill employing some 1,100 workers. In the textile factories the workers, who are not inhabitants of Tsuen Wan, are for the most part housed in dormitories and eat communally; they do not have their families with them and so have no stake in the place other than their employment. A large proportion are of Nationalist or Communist sympathies; it is natural that feeling should run high and disputes occur between the two groups of workers, living as they do at very close quarters; there is particular danger of this at the time of

the two festivals, October 1st and October 10th (see paragraph 1). Many of the industrial workers in this area are members of trade unions. In Hong Kong the unions fall, with few exceptions, into two groups, namely those affiliated to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions which is Communist in sympathy (referred to below as left wing unions), and those affiliated to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Trade Union Council which is Nationalist in sympathy (referred to below as right wing unions). At a rough estimate, half the workers in Tsuen Wan are members of trade unions, about equally divided between right wing and left wing unions, while half or perhaps more do not belong to any union but are generally speaking anti-Communist in sympathy. The unions with which this narrative is concerned, among a number of others with branches in Tsuen Wan, are, on the left wing:—

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber and Plastic Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Enamel Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union;

and on the right wing:—

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Cotton Spinning, Weaving, Dyeing and Printing Trade Workers' General Union.

This last Union has its headquarters in the Hung Hom district of Kowloon, and has factory committees or factory representatives at the larger textile factories in Tsuen Wan.

Preliminary

48. On October 1st, 1956, Chinese Communist flags were flown from a number of factory dormitories and other buildings at Tsuen Wan, including left wing union premises, in celebration of the national day of China. One of the factory dormitories from which Communist flags were flown was that attached to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, situated about 300 yards west of the Police Station, which employs some 110 left wing workers. The management of this factory does not permit national flags to be flown from the factory itself but allows the workers to put up decorations and flags in the dormitory. Early on the morning of October 1st, 1956, a non-Communist worker living in the

dormitory of this factory pulled down one of the Communist flags and a lantern decoration which had been put up by left wing occupants of the dormitory, who then protested to the management; the man responsible was subsequently persuaded to replace the flag and decoration and to apologize to the left wing workers, thus apparently closing the incident.

49. On October 9th, right wing workers in this dormitory put up Nationalist flags and decorations, including the slogan "Long live the Chinese Republic" in large characters in the windows of the dormitory, in preparation for their celebrations on the following day. As was customary, a staff official of the management inspected the dormitory in the late evening of October 9th; he required the right wing workers to remove the slogan as it was considered likely to cause undue offence to left wing workers in the dormitory. This request caused some indignation amongst the right wing workers who then decided to remove all flags and decorations, which they did during the early hours of October 10th. There was no trouble at the time but the management's action was undoubtedly resented. The story was circulated among right wing workers in the area that the management had forbidden the employees of this factory to celebrate their national day; this story was believed and led to agitation among the workers. The incident was not reported to the police.

50. It has since been discovered that a number of meetings had been held by right wing workers in the Tsuen Wan area before October 10th at which the celebrations on the national day were discussed and planned. At a meeting held on October 4th by the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill Committee of the right wing Union it was decided to decorate the factory and to appeal to other Unions for support if the management objected. Meetings were also held by a committee to organize general celebrations at the Tsuen Wan Theatre and the Wah Hing School, these being presided over initially by a Vice-Chairman of the right wing Union. On the evening of the 10th a group of people who were not workers but included Nationalist partisans and members of Triad Societies held a special meeting at the Wah Hing School, after the "Double Tenth" celebrations were over, at which the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill incident was discussed. It was agreed that support would be given to the right wing workers at this factory from "other sources", believed to imply Triad gangs. On October 11th at midday the same people again met at the school; it was stated at this meeting that at 5.0 p.m. that day the management of the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill would be required by Union

representatives to fly the Nationalist flag, to dismiss all left wing workers and to discharge the official who had objected to the decorations on October 9th; right wing workers from other factories and Triad members would collect outside the factory in support; active members of the crowd would be recognizable by a handkerchief tied round the left wrist or a Nationalist paper flag in the jacket breast pocket; a system of flag signals between the factory and the Wah Hing School was also arranged. In the afternoon of October 11th Committee members at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill requested four other factories each to send 50 workers to the factory at 5.0 p.m. that day. As a sequel to this series of meetings, starting on the evening of October 10th when disturbances were known to have broken out in Kowloon, the events in Tsuen Wan followed a pattern, particularly in the case of the incidents at factories; for instance the leader of each section of the crowd controlled his gang by whistle in many cases; buildings to be attacked were distinguished by large Nationalist flags planted in the ground in front; demands made upon the management of factories generally included the flying of the Nationalist flag, dismissal of left wing workers and a privileged position for the right wing Union; in at least three cases "protection" money was extorted in addition; assaults on left wing workers were general throughout the riots.

51. The Police Force stationed in Tsuen Wan consisted of two Sub-Inspectors, one being the officer in charge, or Sub-divisional Inspector (referred to below as the S.D.I.) and 70 other ranks. The Station area is a sub-division of Shamshuipo in north western Kowloon. Police patrols were increased, as in other areas, on October 10th and Special Branch personnel were posted to the town. Reports were regularly made to Shamshuipo Divisional Station. When he heard news of the rioting in Kowloon, the S.D.I. put up a road block at the eastern end of the town, manned by 8 men. Seven patrols of two constables each kept the main road and streets under observation and a further patrol of a section visited villages north of the road. The S.D.I. with a detective sergeant paid regular visits to his men on patrol.

See Map C

52. Nothing unusual occurred during October 10th or the morning of the 11th. During the afternoon, a Revenue Officer reported being stopped by a group of 10 men carrying Nationalist flags and forced to transport them in his van from Sham Tseng to a point little more than a mile short of the town. The S.D.I. went and challenged these men who said they were right wing workers employed by Major Contractors Ltd. and had heard rumours that their decorations in the town were to be destroyed by left wing

workers. They dispersed on being called upon to do so. The employees of this Company, engaged on tunnel work in connexion with a new reservoir at Tai Lam Chung a few miles west of Tsuen Wan, are thought to include many ex-Nationalist soldiers and Triad members. October 11th

Outbreak of disorder

53. At about 4.30 p.m. a detective sergeant in the course of patrol found a group of about 50 women textile workers, dressed in white blouses and black skirts with straw caps on their heads, close to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill. This group, which came from an adjoining factory, was shouting demands in chorus to the factory management to put back the Nationalist flags, referring presumably to those which the workers had themselves removed two days before in the circumstances described in paragraph 49; a crowd began to collect, consisting largely of male factory workers dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, some of whom started shouting and abusing the factory management; it should be explained that the male and female dress described is worn by people of Nationalist sympathies for meetings, rallies or demonstrations. The S.D.I., who had now arrived, and the sergeant warned these people to disperse and tried to reason with them but the women continued shouting and groups of people began to converge from all directions, among them some men carrying large Nationalist flags on long bamboo poles which they stuck in the earth just outside the factory. The crowd, estimated at about 500 at this stage, began to get excited and its temper worsened when a group of men recognized to be employees of Major Contractors Ltd. appeared. The S.D.I. then returned to the Police Station to report the situation and collect a police party. There was no feeling against the police at the time and he was not obstructed as he walked the 300 yards along the road. The instructions he received from his Divisional Superintendent at Shamshuipo Police Station were to return at once to the scene with three sections of police and to attempt to disperse the crowd with baton charges and, if necessary, with tear smoke. 4.30 p.m. Incident 40

54. When he got back to the factory with this police party who were armed with batons, tear smoke and three Greener riot guns, and included some plain clothes detectives (total about 30 men), the S.D.I. found the crowd had increased, that there were more flags and that the factory had been stoned and many windows broken. The crowd was threatening to burn down the factory and there were several people with cans of petrol or kerosene in their hands. The main demand was that Nationalist flags should be hoisted at once on the factory building itself; the

October
11th

detective sergeant suggested to a member of the staff that it would be advisable to comply but none of the staff on the premises were prepared to give the order; instead a notice had been posted on the gate asking the workers to wait for proper negotiations. The S.D.I. left about nine of his force in charge of police vehicles parked a short distance away, including a Land Rover equipped with wireless, and advanced towards the crowd with his men. The situation in the road outside the factory was very confused at the time; passers by on foot or in buses or cars were being attacked, and parts of the crowd were trying to overturn and set fire to vehicles in the roadway while others were putting up a barricade of stones across the road. The police party did what it could to prevent assaults and damage to vehicles but became entangled with the crowd in the process and lost formation. The S.D.I. ordered his men to prepare to use tear smoke but there were several buses and a petrol lorry close by, surrounded by the crowd, and he decided that the use of smoke shells would be dangerous until these vehicles had been moved on. At this stage the S.D.I. was instructed by radio to use Greener gunfire if necessary, but he considered that in the situation in which the police found themselves and in view of their weak fire power this would serve only to inflame the crowd, without resulting in the restoration of order; moreover some people in the crowd were heard to shout that the buses and passengers would be burnt if the police opened fire. Meanwhile some of the crowd had climbed into the factory and opened the main gate from inside; fire crackers were discharged nearby, apparently as a signal, and part of the crowd surged into the factory, bursting through a section of police drawn up outside the gate. Once inside, the crowd ran riot, setting fire to cotton and to a van parked in the compound; kerosene was poured on the floors and ignited with matches. Some broke into the workers' dormitory, and looted or smashed the contents and assaulted left wing workers. A number of the police party entered with the crowd and tried to prevent arson and assault but, acting individually in the face of a large mob, were ineffective. Meanwhile police vehicles which were threatened by a section of the mob were successfully defended by a corporal with a sten gun, but a motor van nearby was overturned and set on fire. It was clear by this time that the police had no control over the situation; it was feared that arms carried by the party might fall into the hands of the mob, or that it might successfully attack the Police Station, where there was a force of only 16 men at the time, and take the stocks of firearms kept there. The S.D.I. was therefore authorized to withdraw and defend the Station. The party returned inside the Police Station about 7.15 p.m. and, as will appear

7.15 p.m.

34

below, the military authorities were at once requested to take steps to restore order in the town. October
11th

55. Meanwhile a series of demands had been laid upon the management by spokesmen of the right wing workers inside the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill. At about 5.30 p.m. five spokesmen had visited the management and demanded that the Nationalist flag be flown, left wing workers discharged and the staff official who had ordered the decorations to be removed on October 9th dismissed; these demands were not accepted. Later, at the height of the attack on the factory, two of these five introduced to the mill manager a stranger who appeared to be in some authority over the rioters; this man demanded that flags be hoisted by the manager and the largest string of fire crackers obtainable discharged, under threat of burning down the factory; he also demanded a thousand dollars. On this being paid by the management, he ordered the fire which had been started to be extinguished and led the mob out of the factory. Later still, after a meeting in the factory canteen, leaders of the right wing workers in the factory repeated earlier demands and added others, such as that new employees should be engaged only through the Union Committee which should be recognized by the management and that no Union member should be dismissed. Under duress the management accepted these demands, after which this factory was not further attacked.

56. At 6.0 p.m. a report reached Police Headquarters on Hong Kong Island from the Special Branch post in Tsuen Wan that a crowd had assembled at 5.15 p.m. outside the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, where there was a dispute with the management over the flying of Nationalist flags. News of the withdrawal of the police party inside the Police Station reached the Commissioner's control room at 7.15 p.m. The C.P. decided that he could not spare police reinforcements from Kowloon or elsewhere for Tsuen Wan. He therefore requested the Commander British Forces, who was in the control room at the time, to move military forces into Tsuen Wan to take control of the area. The latter agreed to this request. 7.15 p.m.

57. There was an interval between the withdrawal of the police at about 7.15 p.m. and the arrival of the military internal security force from the west at 9.30 p.m., punctuated by the arrival and passage through the town of an escort force from the Green Howards between 8.0 and 9.0 p.m. During this period left wing union and other premises were attacked and looted by the rioters and the inmates brutally assaulted and humiliated. While the rioting was in progress at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, a section of the

35

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October 11th Incident 41 mob left the factory and made for the Welfare Centre of the left wing Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber and Plastic Workers' General Union, a stone hut on the hillside north west of the factory; the occupants fled and the crowd broke in, ransacked the premises and broke the windows and roof. The main body of the mob which was now between 500 and 1,000 strong moved eastwards to the Police Station; when the defenders threatened Bren gun fire, the mob continued to the east. Passing the junction of the road to Sek Kong the mob, led by men with large Nationalist flags, attacked three groups of left wing Union premises. The first group Incident 42 consisted of adjacent buildings lying in the Muk Min Ha area some 600 yards from the Police Station, first a clinic and dispensary run by the Federation of Trade Unions for members of its affiliates, together with quarters for the staff above, and secondly the welfare centre, co-operative store and library of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union and the welfare centre of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union, both housed in rooms on the first floor of adjacent houses in the village; the inmates attempted to defend these premises but the mob broke in, looted the buildings, burnt the furniture etc. outside and assaulted the occupants severely, taking those who failed to escape with them. Six employees of the clinic, four of them women, were dragged out from the first floor of the building; in the two welfare centres were 31 people in all, who resisted the attacks; they were bound in pairs with pieces of cloth and haled off by the mob. Four of those assaulted in this incident later died of their injuries. A house adjoining the welfare centres which was formerly used as a canteen was also ransacked. Moving about 1,000 yards further east along the main road, the mob attacked Incident 43 a second group of three buildings, the local branch of the Society of Plantations, a barber's shop close by which had flown Chinese Communist flags on October 1st and the premises of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union; at the last the occupants numbering about 21 were assaulted and one later died of his injuries. These buildings were all ransacked and the furniture smashed to pieces. The Union premises were also fired with the aid of kerosene. The leader of the mob during these attacks carried a large Nationalist flag on a bamboo pole which was planted in front of the place to be attacked.

58. The rioters divided at this stage into two sections. One section took the occupants of the left wing premises which had been ransacked, some 60 people in all, to the Castle Peak Road in the centre of Tsuen Wan where

there were two "pailaus" or large bamboo structures with Nationalist decorations and pictures, erected for the celebration of October 10th, one near the Hung Lin Bakery and one near the Tsuen Wan Theatre. Here they were Incident 44 mercilessly assaulted and beaten so that many became unconscious. A number of them had their outer clothing torn off during the course of the brutal attacks made on them; there is no evidence of rape. The other section of the mob entered Hoi Pa Village south of the main road and attacked a third group of buildings, the School of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union and the local branch of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Enamel Workers' General Union. At the latter the occupants Incident 45 resisted the mob for some time; finally the building was fired, the defenders forced out, caught by the mob, violently assaulted and taken off to the Castle Peak Road where they were beaten again. The buildings attacked were all ransacked and some nine adjoining houses and the Hoi Pa Restaurant received incidental damage at the hands of the mob. At about this time a convoy of the Green Howards arrived on the eastern outskirts of Tsuen Wan. On seeing them, the rioters built a barricade of stones across the road at the eastern end of the town through which the convoy broke soon afterwards; the mob then scattered into side streets, leaving their victims lying by the roadside, some severely injured and others lying still to avoid being further assaulted. It was this scene which gave rise to the story that sixty dead bodies had been seen in Tsuen Wan. The total dead or fatally injured in the whole Tsuen Wan area proved to be 8. (See paragraph 68 below).

59. Military Headquarters had had at 7.0 p.m. a report of rioting in Tsuen Wan, with an indication that the situation of the police there was serious; five minutes later Headquarters Land Forces warned the 24th Field Engineer Regiment at Tai Lam Camp, 8 miles west of Tsuen Wan, to prepare for internal security operations there; Regimental Headquarters and four field troops, each of one officer and thirty other ranks, were detailed for this and began to prepare for the move. At 7.40 p.m., this force was ordered to restore order in Tsuen Wan and to establish a joint Army and Police Headquarters there. At about 8.0 p.m. an escort party of two officers and 10 men from the Green Howards, with ration trucks, were proceeding from Lai Chi Kok north west of Kowloon to their camp in the New Territories, when they found the main road blocked at the eastern end of Tsuen Wan and could see fires and rioting going on in the town; they deployed across the road and were joined by two platoons sent by their Commanding Officer at 8.20 p.m. with orders

October
11th

to clear the road blocks and see the convoy through onto the Sek Kong road, which joins the coast road in Tsuen Wan; the Commanding Officer heard soon after that other troops were already on their way to Tsuen Wan from the west. The convoy was passed through by about 9.0 p.m.

60. Meanwhile the force from the 24th Field Engineer Regiment (referred to below as 24 F.E.R.), consisting of four officers and 120 other ranks, with Regimental Headquarters, left Tai Lam Camp at 8.53 p.m. and arrived at the western end of Tsuen Wan at 9.22 p.m. They found large crowds and boulders blocking the road but their entry, in heavy vehicles, was not actively opposed; they arrived at the Police Station at 9.30 p.m. and the Acting Commanding Officer of the Regiment took over from the S.D.I. The situation as it appeared to 24 F.E.R. when they took over at 9.30 p.m. at the Police Station was that in the factory area west of the town crowds had partially blocked the road with boulders for 250 yards, burnt a car and three motor cycles and damaged the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill by fire; these crowds were in hostile mood. There was also considerable movement on foot between the east and west of the town past the Police Station; the town area east of the junction of the road north to Sek Kong appeared from the main road to be fairly orderly.

11.0 p.m.

61. A field troop was sent with a bugler and police interpreters to order everyone off the streets by 11.0 p.m. Moving west to the edge of the factory area this party saw few people and no rioting in progress; to the east of the Police Station no crowds were seen near the road, but some ten injured people were lying by the roadside near the Wah Hing School and another four near the Silk Weaving Workers' Union premises, together with a pile of burnt furniture and papers. Soon after the return of the troop, a party of military and police left the Station to attend to the injured and picked up about 60 people in all near the various buildings attacked by the rioters and the Wah Hing School; they were taken at about 11.0 p.m. to the Lady Maurine Health Centre in the eastern part of the town and the more serious cases sent to hospital in Kowloon. At about this time two field troops were sent out, each with some 12 police, to enforce the "curfew". This was not easy as groups dispersed in one area only to collect elsewhere, and in some instances refused at first to disperse; in one case a patrol was faced with a crowd of about 400 which was with difficulty induced to disperse within a time limit of 5 minutes. At about 11.30 p.m. a troop of 24 F.E.R. met one company of the Green Howards with scout cars of the 7th Hussars some 400 yards east of the Sek Kong road

11.30 pm.

38

junction. This force had been clearing the eastern part of the town and now enforced the "curfew" in the road running south alongside Hoi Pa village to the sea. No further disorder took place in the town itself, but several incidents affecting the neighbouring factories occurred during the night.

October
11th

62. At about 10.30 p.m. the factory of the Oriental Soy and Canning Co. which lies on the other side of Tsuen Wan Bay about a mile south east in a direct line from the Police Station was attacked by a mob of 100. Earlier in the evening an ex-employee had extorted two sums of money on a threat that the factory would be damaged; and after an anonymous telephone call a Nationalist flag had been hoisted. The mob failed to break the metal grilles guarding the windows but forced two employees inside by threats to open the gates; they then smashed furniture etc. with which they made a bonfire outside and burnt a motor van; the interior of the factory also caught fire. The workers' quarters were likewise ransacked and fired. The workers themselves had taken refuge on the hillside behind and were uninjured. At about 11.15 p.m. the fire at the factory was seen from the Police Station; by half past midnight troops had escorted a fire engine to the scene and the fire was extinguished. Incident 46

63. At about 11.0 p.m. it was reported that a group of 40 people were threatening the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill No. 2, formerly the New China Textile Factory, 1½ miles east of the town; they did in fact raid the dormitory and assault left wing workers, who were forced to "kowitz" and repeat anti-Communist slogans. An hour earlier a gang of ten had smashed and burnt the contents of a hut near the factory which was used by left wing workers as a recreation centre; the seven inmates escaped. A patrol of the Green Howards later reported that all was quiet at this factory. Incident 47

64. Four other factories in the immediate vicinity of Tsuen Wan were visited by crowds of rioters during the night. These incidents followed a pattern; in each case a mob collected outside the factory carrying Nationalist flags, demands were made by spokesmen of the crowd under threat of burning down or looting the factory and the management generally acceded under duress. Left wing workers were assaulted whenever the mob could lay hands on them. Outside the Textile Corporation Factory a mob assaulted left wing workers entering the building at 6.30 p.m. Rioters re-assembled there at 9.0 p.m.; work stopped and all but some 30 left wing workers left the factory; three right wing employees of this factory then entered and demanded that the thirty workers still inside should Incident 48

39

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October 11th-12th be dismissed and handed over to the mob. These thirty resigned and left by a side gate, but were caught by the mob, beaten and forced to "kowtow" and shout anti-Communist slogans. Later a gang forced its way into the dormitory at this factory, dragged out the left wing workers and forced them to march in procession along the road to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill and back carrying a Nationalist flag.

Incident 49 The South Sea Textile Factory was visited four times by mobs during the evening; work stopped and on the third occasion five unknown men entered and forced the management to let them hoist a number of Nationalist flags; on the final visit four spokesmen demanded the dismissal of left wing workers but the management temporized and the mob left the vicinity. A crowd of 200 to 300 arrived outside the South Textiles Factory at about 8.0 p.m. on October 11th, carrying Nationalist flags and shouting; three right wing employees of the factory entered and demanded that flags be hoisted, that all left wing workers be dismissed, that the right wing Union be recognized and engagements and dismissals be subject to its approval, and that workers be paid during any stoppage of work. The assistant manager acceded under duress and signed a document which has since been recovered. About midnight a patrol visited this factory, where a crowd was reported, and found about 1,000 people who appeared by their dress to be right wing workers. They refused to disperse but eventually agreed to leave the roadway. At about 8.0 a.m. the next day, October 12th, a small crowd visited the Pacific Worsted Mills. Five spokesmen demanded that left wing workers be dismissed, that engagements and dismissals be subject to the approval of the right wing Union, which should be encouraged by the management, and that certain employees should receive increased pay; the management accepted these demands in writing under duress and the crowd dispersed.

Incident 51

October 12th 65. By the small hours of October 12th the general situation in the immediate area of Tsuen Wan was quieter. Meanwhile at Sham Tseng, some 4 miles to the west of Tsuen Wan, the Kowloon Textile Factory Committee of the right wing Union had called a meeting at 8.0 p.m. on October 11th, which was attended also by workers from Tsuen Wan factories and employees of Major Contractors Ltd., believed to be Triad members. It was agreed that demands should be laid upon the management of this factory, supported by a gathering of right wing workers, that the Nationalist flag be flown and left wing workers dismissed. A crowd arrived outside the Kowloon Textiles Factory about 2.0 a.m. and the Chairman of the Union Factory Committee demanded that the Nationalist

2.0 a.m. Incident 52

40

flag be hoisted and work stopped. Meanwhile the crowd began stoning the factory and some of them climbed in and forced the watchman to hand over the keys and open the gates. About 100 people rushed in and overturned three cars in the compound, setting alight to one of them. One group forced open a strong box and took three shot guns and ammunition; two of these guns were later found smashed and thrown into the sea. While this was going on, a workers' spokesman demanded that, in addition to stopping work and hoisting the flag, the management should dismiss left wing workers and recognize the right wing Union. The factory engineer accepted the conditions under duress and signed a paper to this effect; he also promised to pay \$2,500 the next day for five Nationalist flags; two of the leaders who were workers from this factory signed the paper and one of them then announced to the crowd that the conditions had been accepted. Whistles were blown as a sign for withdrawal, one large and four small Nationalist flags were hoisted and the rioters bowed three times before them. The leader then seized a motor truck belonging to the factory in which parties of rioters were driven to the South Sea Textiles Factory in Tsuen Wan; as the crowd left, boulders were rolled on to the roadway as a block. At about midnight the house of a left wing film actress between Sham Tseng and Tsuen Wan, which was used as a recreation club by workers, was ransacked by a group believed to have included some from the Kowloon Textiles Factory. At Sham Tseng village small gangs broke into a shop, two huts and two stone houses, one used as a welfare and recreation centre of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union and looted and wrecked the premises.

October 11th-12th

Midnight Incident 53

Midnight Incident 54

66. The four troops of 24 F.E.R. spent the rest of the night in active patrols to ensure that the people kept off the streets. A report at 7.30 a.m. that the Hong Kong Brewery at Sham Tseng was being attacked proved false. At 8.25 a.m. the 27th Light Battery R.A. was ordered to the Brewery. At 10.0 a.m. on October 12th a Curfew Order came into force in Tsuen Wan, extended at 7.30 p.m. to cover the Sham Tseng area. This remained in force, with two-hourly intervals between noon and 2.0 p.m. daily, until 10.0 a.m. on October 16th.

October 12th 7.30 a.m. 10.0 a.m.

67. At about 11.0 a.m. on October 12th some 640 left wing workers were brought to the Police Station from the direction of the factories to the west by a group of right wing workers; they were allowed to remain in the compound for protection until the afternoon of October 14th

41

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when they were moved to the South Sea Textile Factory with a police guard. Many other left wing workers left the factory area during the riots, either taking to the hills to the north or making their way to Kowloon. During the day a number of reports of expected disorder reached the police, but none of these proved well founded; they were a natural product of nervousness on the part of factory staffs. On October 14th reinforcements of 120 police moved into temporary accommodation at the South Sea Textiles Factory and at the Hong Kong Brewery at Sham Tseng; at 8.0 p.m. on October 14th the bulk of the military force was withdrawn and the remainder left on October 15th, handing back control to the police.

Casualties in Tsuen Wan

68. Eight deaths are known to have occurred as a result of the riots in the Tsuen Wan area, six after admission to hospital, and one on the way to hospital; one body was found in the street near Hoi Pa village on October 11th; in all these cases death was due to injuries inflicted with blunt instruments. 63 other serious casualties were taken to hospital in Kowloon of which 54 were admitted. 46 other injured people were treated at the Lady Maurine Health Centre at Tsuen Wan. All the dead have been identified and all persons reported missing in the Tsuen Wan area since the riots have been accounted for.

Arrests

69. During the night of October 11th joint military and police patrols made 42 arrests for rioting and unlawful assembly in the vicinity of the Police Station. Early in the morning of October 14th a large force of military and police sent from Kowloon conducted a sweep from the factory area in the west to the junction of the Sek Kong Road in the east and arrested some 600 suspects. At 3.0 p.m. the same day a further 42 arrests were made in the rest of Tsuen Wan.

General

70. The principal characteristics of the riots in Tsuen Wan were: firstly a degree of organization among the mobs, which were led by men with large Nationalist flags, responded to whistle blasts, used a system of white wristbands as a mark of recognition and were amenable to withdrawing from a factory, the management of which had hoisted this flag, paid the requisite protection money or met other demands; secondly, the concerted and destructive

attacks on buildings housing Communist sympathizers, whether union premises, houses or shops, together with the brutal and humiliating treatment of the occupants, especially if they attempted to defend their premises; thirdly the cases of extortion under threat of arson or wholesale destruction of a factory and through the widespread forced sale of Nationalist paper flags; fourthly the tendency to use the occasion of disorder to pay off old scores either against the political opponent or the former employer; and fifthly the attempt to establish right wing unions in a position of monopoly by securing undertakings in writing from factory managements that left wing workers would be dismissed and replaced by people acceptable to these unions.

Effect on the labour situation in Tsuen Wan and return to normal conditions

71. On the morning of October 16th, when the curfew was finally lifted, the only factories which could not resume operation owing to damage were the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill and the Oriental Soy and Canning Factory. Nearly all the other factories and mills resumed work on that day, many with their labour force depleted by arrests or by absence owing to nervousness. Later in the day a drift away from the textile factories developed. This was initiated apparently by the left wing unions calling their members to headquarters in Kowloon to report on their experiences during the riots; the right wing workers then became afraid of reprisals and also began to leave. On the two succeeding days only about a third of the labour force was at work in the mills. By October 22nd some 70% had returned, but a few days later rumours of plans for reprisals or for further violence were in circulation, associated with the birthday of Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek on October 31st. These appeared to be without any solid basis whatever but served, with the removal of a police riot unit quartered in one of the factories to a less conspicuous location in the neighbourhood, to cause general alarm; some workers left for Kowloon, while others did not report for the night shift. The managements of several textile factories, finding their labour force reduced again to some 30%, thought it advisable to grant holidays at the end of the month. Meanwhile the police increased their strength considerably and made it plain that they were ready for any fresh outbreak. The rumours proved unfounded and no incident occurred on October 31st; thereafter the labour situation in the Tsuen Wan area rapidly improved. By November 2nd it was virtually normal.

CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY OF CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE

Casualties

72. 443 casualties are recorded by the hospitals, 59 fatal. Of the remaining 384, 151 were cases of minor injury treated in hospital and sent home. There were 233 admissions, of which some were discharged by October 18th without detailed records. Details of injuries, sex and age in 164 cases recorded were as follows:—

Casualties admitted to Hospitals of which detailed records exist
(Excluding those who died after admission)

Injury	Adult		Juvenile (under 18)		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Head Injuries.....	15		1		16
Fractures	6	1	3	1	11
Burns	1		1		2
Gunshot Wounds	61	11	7	3	82
Other severe injuries	6		1		7
Minor injuries.....	36	6	4		46
Total.....	125	18	17	4	164

There were probably many more cases of injury which did not reach the hospitals; for instance, a police surgeon set up a first aid post at Police Headquarters Kowloon and treated many cases which were not sent on to hospital; moreover a number of the injured rioters no doubt deliberately concealed their wounds in order to avoid attracting the attention of the police. Of the 59 fatal casualties, 31 were

dead on arrival at hospitals and 23 died in hospital. Details of cause of death, sex and age are as follows:—

Analysis of deaths

Cause of Death	Adults				Juveniles (under 18)		Total
	Male		Female		Male (no females)		
	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	
Fire Engine accident	1	1		1			3
Blunt instrument	5	3					8
Gunshot							
(1) Greener Gun.....	13	18				2	33
(2) Other ball ammunition	6	1			1		8
(3) Smoke Shell			3				3
Burns			2	1			3
Multiple injuries.....	1						1
Totals.....	26	28	1	1	1	2	59

The injuries which resulted in death were caused as follows:—

- (a) by the Police—
 Gunshot
- | | |
|-------------------|----|
| Gunshot | 41 |
| Smoke shell | 3 |
| | 44 |
- (b) by the rioters—
 In Tsuen Wan (see paragraph 68)
- | | |
|---|----|
| In Tsuen Wan (see paragraph 68) | 8 |
| Accident to the fire engine (incident 10) ... | 3 |
| Burns (incident 23) | 3 |
| Suicide while in custody | 1 |
| | 15 |

Two of those who died of burns and the man who committed suicide were rioters and the fatal injuries sustained were due to their own actions. Where a particular incident is known to have resulted in one or more deaths, this is mentioned in the narrative; but most of those shot by the police did not die on the spot and it is not possible to relate more than a few of these deaths to a particular

time or place with any certainty. The number of deaths which occurred in each district was as follows:—

See Map B	Shamshuipo	24
	Yaumati	5
	Mongkok	1
	Kowloon City	9
	Tsuen Wan	8
	Unknown	12

55 of the dead have so far been identified, 43 by relatives or friends (10 directly and 33 by photographs), 7 by criminal records and 5 by names only, given by themselves when admitted to hospital; 4 are unknown. A missing persons inquiry bureau was established at Kowloon Police Headquarters and relations of missing persons were publicly invited to come to the bureau to check photographs or particulars available of the dead, the injured and persons in custody. 13 of the dead rioters had previous criminal records. There were no fatal casualties among the security forces. 4 officers and 13 other ranks of Her Majesty's Regular Forces were injured and of these 1 officer and 3 other ranks were admitted to hospital; 107 members of the Police Force were injured, of whom 8 were treated in hospital and 1 detained. One fatal casualty was of a European (see paragraph 34) and 7 European civilians were admitted to hospital with injuries.

Damage

73. The damage caused by the riots resulted mainly from arson and looting. In many instances it has proved impracticable to obtain more than a rough estimate, generally supplied by the owners or occupants of the premises or property damaged. It is evident that the figures are in many of these cases considerably inflated, and some had to be based on replacement value without allowance for depreciation. The following is a brief summary with an indication of the types of property involved (\$16=£1):—

IN KOWLOON

(1) <i>Industrial and commercial</i>	
(a) The Garden Bakery (preliminary estimate by the management based purely on replacement cost)	\$3,000,000
(b) Small factories and other concerns, including four weaving factories, a toy and a metal factory and a stone works	500,000

46

(c) Some thirty shops including provision stores, goldsmiths, bookshops and four small film studios	\$300,000
(2) <i>Some twenty private houses, flats, etc.</i>	50,000
(3) <i>Schools</i>	250,000
(4) <i>Private vehicles</i> About twenty destroyed by fire and fifty damaged, including seven burnt and five damaged at the Garden Bakery	200,000
(5) <i>Government buildings</i> consisting of offices, police posts and quarters in resettlement areas and slight damage to a post office	50,000
(6) <i>Other Government property</i> including two fire engines, other vehicles, street signs, traffic signals, etc.	170,000

IN TSUEN WAN

Damage by fire and looting to factories, trade union and similar premises and minor damage to private property	250,000
--	---------

74. In Kowloon, all but one of the small factories looted or burnt, and nearly all the thirty shops and private houses are believed to have displayed Chinese Communist flags or decorations on October 1st. Most of the stores which were looted had products from China on sale. Private cars were in general indiscriminately attacked and burnt as obvious targets for mob violence, especially if they did not fly the Nationalist flag or pay protection money. The Government property damaged fell into two categories, namely premises in resettlement areas, and vehicles, street signs etc. on which the rioters could readily lay hands. In Tsuen Wan all the union premises and nearly all the private property looted or set on fire were buildings used or occupied by left wing sympathizers; the circumstances in which factories were damaged have been described in Chapter III. It is proper to add that the fact that left wing premises were, generally speaking, singled out for attack, looting and arson, does not necessarily imply that the rioters were all strong Nationalist supporters. In many cases, criminal gangs intent on creating disorder as a cloak and a lever for increased extortion sought to exploit the emotions aroused by the "Double Tenth" celebrations and made use of the Nationalist flag to this end. This aspect is dealt with more fully in the succeeding chapter.

47

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CHAPTER V

COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

75. The course of the riots in Kowloon fell naturally into three phases, separated by two short intervals. During the first phase, lasting from 2.0 p.m. to 3.20 p.m. on October 10th, the officials and property of the Resettlement Department were initially the target of attack, until the police intervened to protect an officer from renewed assault and so drew the animosity of the crowd. This was composed almost entirely of settlers although there are reports of strange faces being seen among them; there is no doubt that many settlers are members of Triad and criminal gangs and would not be slow to grasp such a favourable opportunity for challenging law and order. This phase was short but during the ensuing lull word was passed round in Triad circles that disorder had broken out at Li Cheng Uk connected with the removal of Nationalist flags by officials, a situation by which "the brothers" (the term used by these gangsters) should seek to profit. In the second phase, lasting from 6.30 p.m. on October 10th until 6.0 a.m. on October 11th, Triad gang leadership came increasingly to the fore. At first members acted individually but there is evidence that by 10.0 p.m. organized gangs led by men carrying large Nationalist flags were debouching in force from Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate; in the small hours of October 11th a series of shops in Shamshuipo, all with Communist connexions, were looted by mobs each led by Triad gangs from the Wo or 14K groups, at a time when the operations of the police were concentrated at the main road junction immediately adjacent to this estate which was continually invested by large mobs of rioters. After 10.30 p.m. on October 10th the rioters became at once bolder in their defiance of the police, for instance in building barricades of boulders, overturned cars etc. across the main roads, and also more adept at evading baton charges or tear smoke. During the third phase from 10.0 a.m. on October 11th until the small hours of the following morning, (with which events took a much more serious turn in that the riots could no longer be associated directly with the "Double Tenth" celebrations), a further series of shops and small factories were looted by Triad gangs which became increasingly determined and destructive during the morning and early afternoon. Occupants of cars, and in Kowloon City shopkeepers, were forced under threat of assault to "buy" Nationalist flags, a characteristic form of extortion. The police were being strongly attacked throughout this period and were obliged to resort increasingly to firearms.

See
paragraph
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This, and the arrival of regular troops to cordon the disturbed areas, caused organized resistance by large mobs to crumple rapidly. By midnight only scattered gangs of looters remained active in Kowloon.

76. The extremely high population density of north western Kowloon, estimated at some 2,000 people to the acre, is a factor which needs to be constantly borne in mind in considering the handling of the riots. In this district the streets are, except late at night, continuously thronged with people of all ages going about their business. If anything unusual such as a traffic accident or an altercation occurs, a crowd of hundreds collects almost at once, becoming a densely packed mass of thousands of people in a few minutes, unless the situation is dealt with rapidly. In the resettlement estates, the inhabitants of only one of the smallest blocks would form a crowd of 2,000 if they all came into the street at once. The Shek Kip Mei Estate with a population of 55,000 housed in 25 blocks lies a stone's throw from the main road junction and provided both a huge reservoir of manpower and a convenient and safe place of retreat during the rioting at this spot. The population of the urban areas of Kowloon north of Jordan Road, as shown on Map B, approaches a million; the residential area is very small relative to the population. In such overcrowded conditions police movement is hampered and leaders of the mob have little difficulty in sheltering behind a screen of curious onlookers which includes many women and children. It is noticeable in photographs taken during the riots, while the police were being stoned or were firing tear smoke shells, that small boys were often in the forefront of the crowd; in such conditions the police were reluctant to risk killing passive by-standers, including children, by resort to firearms; moreover since the gangs of rioters often did not stand their ground when the police appeared but scattered and fled, an order to fire would in many cases have involved shooting into the backs of a retreating mob. Yet, unless they open fire, the police are at a disadvantage in a scattered game of tip and run in a maze of streets; moreover the typical tenement building has a series of balconies on each floor which are ideally suited for pelting the police in the street below with any handy missile. Large stones and blocks of concrete, too heavy to be thrown, were in fact dropped on police units and vehicles and on fire engines from these points of vantage. In the resettlement estates a police party is confronted with a seven-tiered erection with continuous verandahs on both sides of the street, all teeming with people who may be either harmless spectators or thugs armed with brickbats or heavy stones. Tear smoke or

sickening smoke require concentration if they are to be effective; in these riots really suitable targets such as small and compact stationary or advancing crowds seldom presented themselves. When fired at a rapidly retreating group of rioters, or upwards at verandahs from which the police are being stoned, tear or sickening smoke has little effect. In these circumstances the crowds soon lost their fear of smoke, which proved a disappointing weapon in preventing the riots developing to a stage at which the use of firearms could no longer be avoided. Even gunshot has much less impact on crowds sprinkled with rioters, whether on verandahs or scattering through side-streets at a distance from the advancing police, than when ringleaders of a compact mob are brought down.

77. Watch and ward is the primary role of the Police Force; police training stresses the necessity for co-operation with the public and for tact and persuasion and the minimum use of force. It must be the duty of any police force to exercise the greatest possible restraint in the handling of disorder and to resort to firearms only in self-defence, to save life or where there is a grave and continuing threat to public order. In maintaining this attitude until it was evident beyond all doubt, both that a determined and prolonged onslaught was being made on the rule of law in the Colony, and also that all deterrents short of firearms had been fully employed without success, the Acting Commissioner of Police directed the operations of his Force in consonance with its accepted role and functions.

78. The Hong Kong Police Force has to police a highly developed and congested sea port with a population of over two millions, together with rural areas, islands, a highly indented coastline and the frontier with China. To meet large scale riots the structure of the Force requires to be suddenly and drastically changed and almost the whole Force regrouped in a number of ad hoc mobile units. This change was successfully carried through and in general the police functioned well as a security force; in particular, the discipline and steadiness of the men in face of heavy and constant stoning was admirable. The fluid tactics of the mobs made it necessary for police formations to be highly flexible and mobile; the small number of armoured cars available proved invaluable, but limitations of transport and communications had the result that the men in action could not always be deployed to best advantage.

79. The extreme mobility of the mobs in Kowloon may be attributed partly to the natural desire of the rioters to keep out of range of police batons, smoke grenades and shells and in the later stages gunfire; but this mobility was

due even more to their lack of any very definite objective other than the creation of a state of general disorder and weakened police control in a widening area of the city, so as to induce an atmosphere congenial to their further criminal activities. This lack of any definite objective was one of the most important elements in the situation in Kowloon from the police point of view. It made it impossible for the police to anticipate the likely targets of mob action or to deploy in advance of any new outbreak of violence. It must be conceded, therefore, that the initiative lay with the rioters throughout the early stages of the disturbances and until the main trouble centres were cordoned off and the curfew imposed. While there is ample evidence, from subsequent interrogation, of organized Triad activity there is indication neither of co-ordinated central control of the riots by a superior Triad or other body nor of any planning of the disturbances before the initial outbreak at Li Cheng Uk on the afternoon of October 10th. These gangster organizations, in common with "protection" and extortion gangs of the same kidney in other parts of the world, retain the close-knit "blood brotherhood" of a secret society; each gang preys continuously upon the inhabitants, especially the small traders, of a particular district which is regarded as its exclusive "territory". They need to make no special plans before exploiting a favourable situation; all that is required is a message or sign passed rapidly round in the particular "territory" that members should muster on business. These gangs favour the Nationalist cause because some have political origins and most are composed largely of Nationalist sympathizers. Having succeeded in causing widespread disorder on the "Double Tenth", when the flag-symbol is ever present, the gangs then directed their attacks at premises which only ten days earlier had displayed the Communist 5-star flag. Furthermore, by using the Nationalist flag as a symbol and cover, purely gangster elements, who possibly had no overt political affiliations themselves, managed to obtain or enforce the support, either active or passive, of large numbers of people whose political sympathies were strong but who were not necessarily disposed to violence.

80. As has been explained in Chapter I, the areas of refugee squatter huts were strongholds of the Triads, who have not relaxed their grip on the same clientèle now rehoused in the resettlement estates. On October 10th the gangs centred in the Shek Kip Mei Estate saw their chance, while the police were heavily engaged at Li Cheng Uk, to exploit resentment felt against the Resettlement Department over the affair of the flags, and consequently against

the authorities including the police, and to incite the crowds to destroy the property of Communist sympathizers; on the following day the gangs in Kowloon City and Yaumati seized their opportunity for extortion and looting while the police were fully occupied in Shamshuipo district. The rapidity with which resistance on a large scale collapsed when the police began to use firearms without hesitation and regular battalions were seen moving into Kowloon. The force tends to confirm the conclusion that the rioters had no planned objectives and were prepared, as soon as they saw that the tide was turning, to abandon their efforts to create a state of general disorder. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that gangs of this nature have, in Hong Kong as in other places, a stake in disorder which yields increased dividends not merely at the time, through extortion under immediate threat of assault or arson, but for as long as the fear of renewed violence induces their victims to pay an increased premium in "protection" money. The more brutal and ruthless the gangs when they have a chance to run riot, the richer and more prolonged their harvest. It is significant that during the year ending in March 1956 some 75% of the cases of reported crime in the Colony originated in Kowloon; and over 45% of the total occurred in the northern part of Kowloon, that is in Shamshuipo and Kowloon City districts, the two main centres of rioting. Evidently the criminal gangs confined their operations during the riots very largely to the "territory" from which their income as racketeers is drawn. The conclusion that the rioting in Kowloon was instigated and fanned by criminals, for criminal and not political or other ends, is confirmed not only by this geographical concentration in the more lawless districts of the Colony but also by the fact that no attacks were made on the main administrative or business centres, whether on the mainland or on Hong Kong Island.

81. In Tsuen Wan the riots also grew out of objections to some of the decorations for the "Double Tenth". There is no evidence of planning prior to October 10th; but it does appear both from the information later obtained about the meetings of October 10th and 11th, and from the similarity of many of the demands made on factory managements that, encouraged by news of the riots in Kowloon, right wing union leaders in Tsuen Wan and other anti-Communist elements made a concerted attempt to intimidate factory managements, with a view to inducing them to expel left wing workers and to recognize the right wing union as the sole representative of the workers. The

See paragraphs 50 and 65

attacks on left wing union and other premises and the severe assaults on their occupants developed when the mob at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill had roused itself to a state of frenzy and hysteria by its successful acts of violence and destruction, and then found itself no longer opposed by the police and was temporarily able to run riot in the town without restraint. It must be remembered that there has been bitter rivalry between the right wing and left wing trade unions in the Colony for a number of years. Particularly strong feelings are engendered when workers of opposite political sympathies work, and also live, side by side as in the Tsuen Wan area. Rivalry is intensified during the period of celebration of the two national days in October and violent incidents have occurred from time to time, leaving old scores to be settled on one side or the other.

82. The Army units which took part in the suppression of the riots consisted firstly of the 15th Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery and the 74th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, from Kowloon which supported police drives from Police Headquarters Kowloon northwards to the main road junction and assisted in the cordoning and security of the junction during the afternoon and evening of October 11th; secondly of three infantry battalions, the Green Howards, the North Staffordshire Regiment and the Northamptonshire Regiment, with scout cars of the 7th Hussars, which were moved into Kowloon from the New Territories during the same period to cordon the areas of rioting, as shown on Map B; and thirdly of the 24th Field Engineer Regiment, which took over control of Tsuen Wan at 9.30 p.m. on the same evening. This latter unit was subsequently reinforced by the 27th Light Battery, Royal Artillery, the 15th Field Park Squadron, Royal Engineers and elements of the 7th Hussars. In addition, mobile patrols visited various parts of the New Territories and Internal Security troops stood to on Hong Kong Island. The officers and men of the Colony's Regular Garrison conducted themselves in a commendably forbearing 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 large scale disorder during the evening of October 11th. The military forces did not find it necessary 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.

83. Many arrests were made by the police during the riots. Extensive screening operations took place on October 12th, 13th and 14th and many suspects were taken into custody, both in Kowloon and in Tsuen Wan. The search for those responsible for the disorders has been vigorously pursued since then and further investigations have resulted in more arrests. Over 6,000 people in all have been arrested, of whom some 3,000 were released after being questioned. A further 1,455 were charged with breach of Curfew Orders and 1,241 of these were convicted and sent to prison for periods ranging from 7 days to 2 months, while 214 were fined, bound over or discharged. Up to the end of November 740 of the remaining persons in custody had been charged with more serious offences committed in Kowloon and many had been convicted, while others were awaiting trial. The position at the end of the month may be summarized as follows:—

(Offences committed in Kowloon)

Offence	Convicted	Awaiting trial	Acquitted or discharged	Total
Murder	—	7	1	8
Riot and unlawful assembly	51	176	140	367
Looting	119	11	29	159
Wounding	—	1	—	1
Triad membership	103	41	37	181
Possession of arms	2	1	5	8
Breach of Deportation Order	16	—	—	16
TOTAL	291	237	212	740

Prison sentences imposed range as follows:—

For riot: 6 months to 2 years.

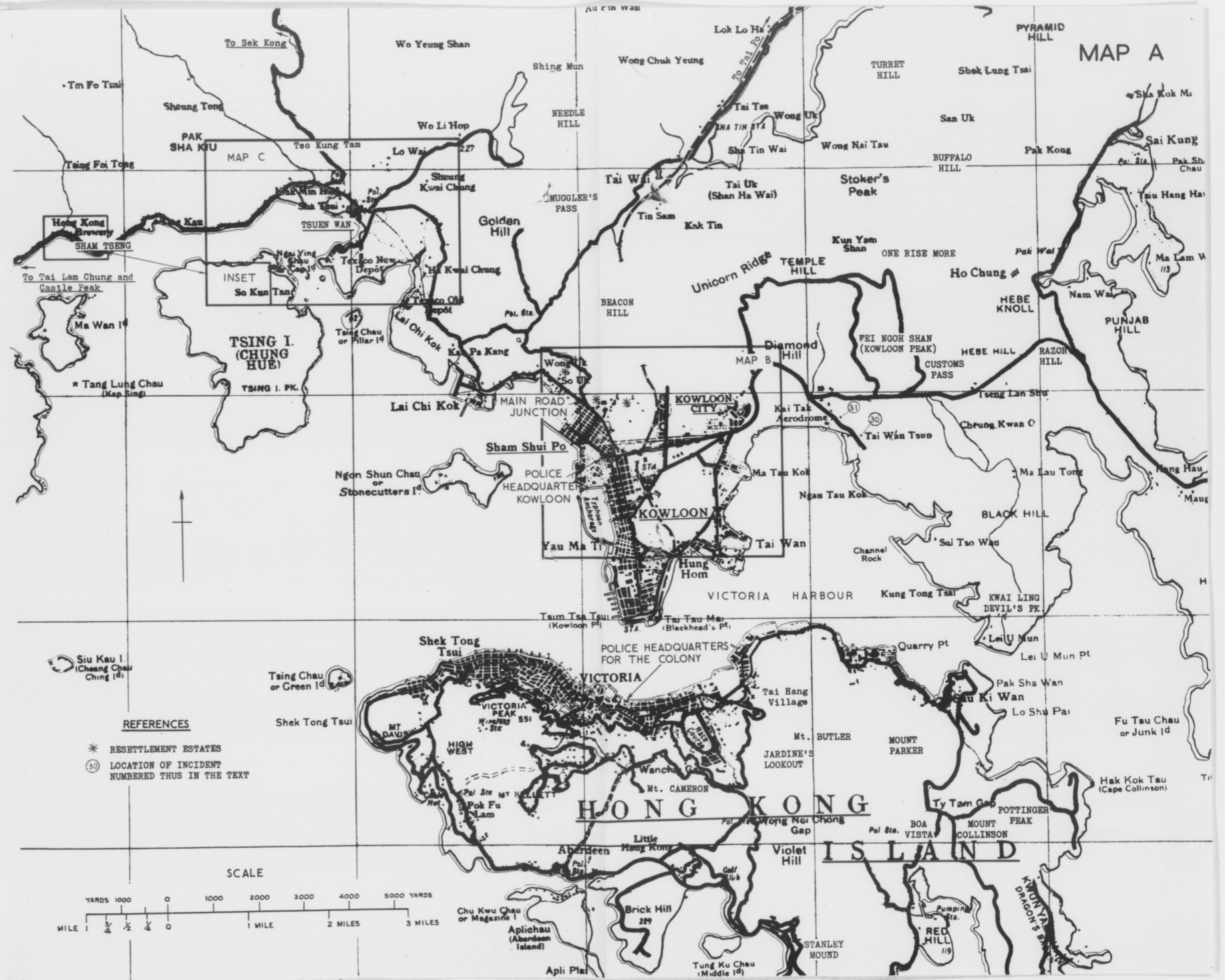
For riot with membership of a Triad Society: 1 year to 3 years.

For Triad membership: 6 months to 2 years.

For looting: up to 1 year.

In connexion with the looting of the Yee Wo Tai Weaving factory in Kowloon City in the early hours of October 12th (Incident 28), a total of 91 people have been charged, 58 with rioting or Triad offences, (6 convicted and 52 awaiting trial) and 33 with looting (23 convicted and 10 discharged); for

offences committed at the Heung To School (Incident 19), 17 people have been convicted of looting and 4 of Triad offences; in connexion with the attack on two shops in Castle Peak Road (Incident 37) 31 people have been convicted and sentenced for looting. A further 146 people were charged on November 27th with offences committed in Tsuen Wan; a total of 186 charges were laid, including 167 of riot; other charges included arson, intimidation and riotous assault. All these cases were pending at the end of November; and some 600 people remained in custody while investigations continued. All cases so far disposed of have been heard in the Magistrates' Courts, the jurisdiction of which extends to a maximum sentence of two years' or in the case of consecutive sentences three years', imprisonment. The more important of the cases still pending will be the subject of committal proceedings for trial in the higher Courts, which are empowered to impose heavier sentences. It is necessary to add that the strenuous efforts of the police to ensure that all those responsible for the disorders are duly punished according to law have been considerably hampered by general reluctance on the part of witnesses, particularly witnesses of the rioting in Tsuen Wan, to come forward and give evidence.

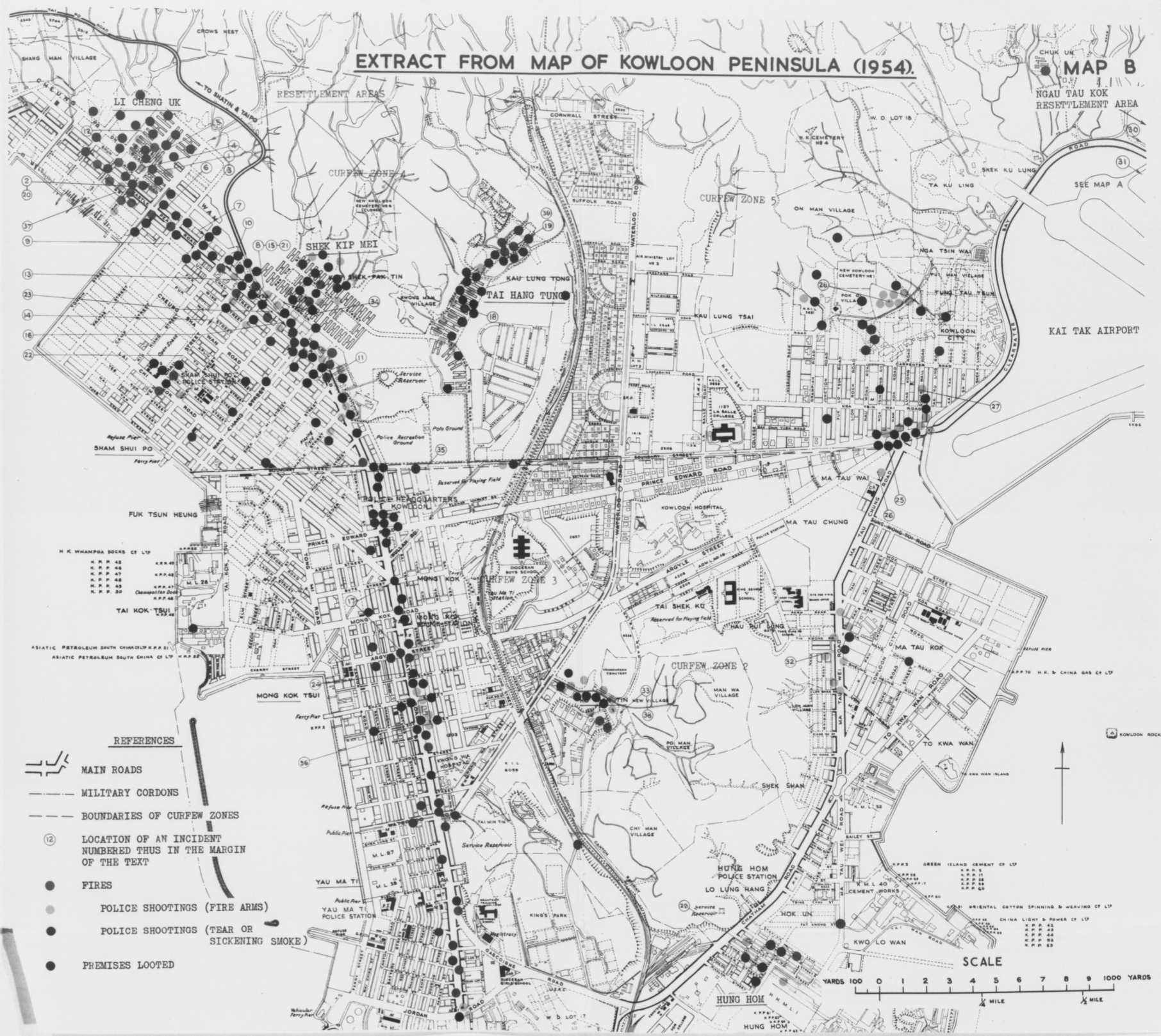


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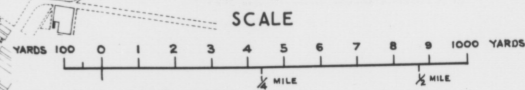
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EXTRACT FROM MAP OF KOWLOON PENINSULA (1954).

MAP B
NGAU TAU KOK
RESETTLEMENT AREA



- REFERENCES
- MAIN ROADS
 - MILITARY CORDONS
 - BOUNDARIES OF CURFEW ZONES
 - LOCATION OF AN INCIDENT NUMBERED THUS IN THE MARGIN OF THE TEXT
 - FIRES
 - POLICE SHOOTINGS (FIRE ARMS)
 - POLICE SHOOTINGS (TEAR OR SICKENING SMOKE)
 - PREMISES LOOTED



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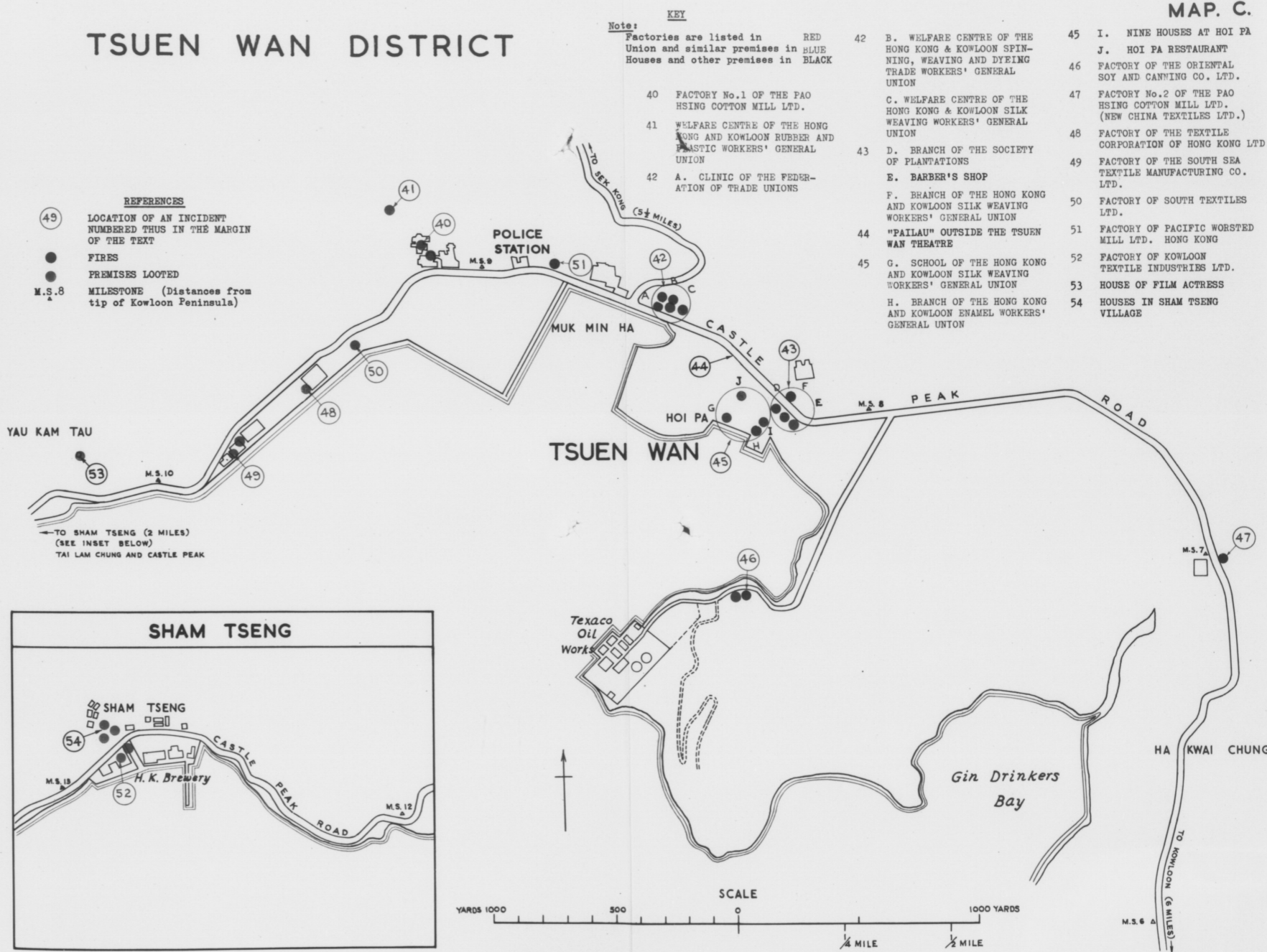
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TSUEN WAN DISTRICT

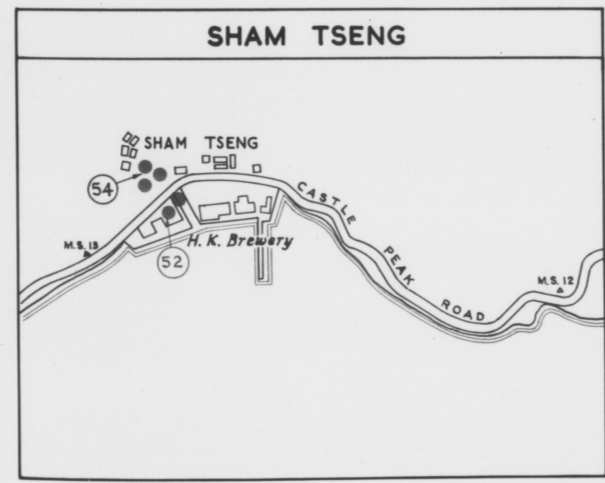
MAP. C.



KEY
 Note: Factories are listed in RED
 Union and similar premises in BLUE
 Houses and other premises in BLACK

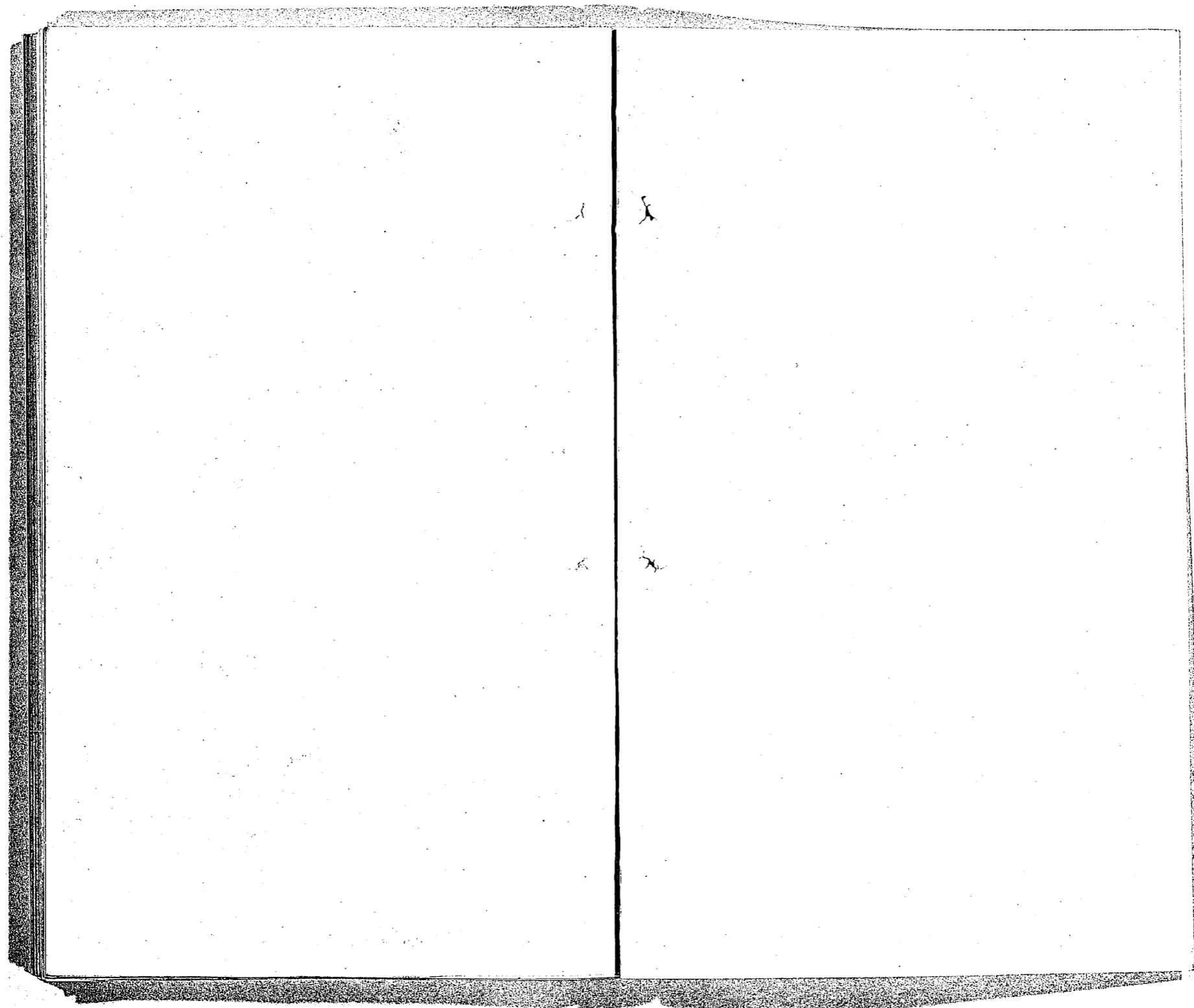
- 40 FACTORY No.1 OF THE PAO HSING COTTON MILL LTD.
- 41 WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON RUBBER AND PLASTIC WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- 42 A. CLINIC OF THE FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS
- 43 D. BRANCH OF THE SOCIETY OF PLANTATIONS
- 44 "PAILAU" OUTSIDE THE TSUEN WAN THEATRE
- 45 G. SCHOOL OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- H. BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON ENAMEL WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- 42 B. WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG & KOWLOON SPINNING, WEAVING AND DYEING TRADE WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- C. WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG & KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- F. BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- 45 I. NINE HOUSES AT HOI PA
- J. HOI PA RESTAURANT
- 46 FACTORY OF THE ORIENTAL SOY AND CANNING CO. LTD.
- 47 FACTORY No.2 OF THE PAO HSING COTTON MILL LTD. (NEW CHINA TEXTILES LTD.)
- 48 FACTORY OF THE TEXTILE CORPORATION OF HONG KONG LTD.
- 49 FACTORY OF THE SOUTH SEA TEXTILE MANUFACTURING CO. LTD.
- 50 FACTORY OF SOUTH TEXTILES LTD.
- 51 FACTORY OF PACIFIC WORSTED MILL LTD. HONG KONG
- 52 FACTORY OF KOWLOON TEXTILE INDUSTRIES LTD.
- 53 HOUSE OF FILM ACTRESS
- 54 HOUSES IN SHAM TSUNG VILLAGE

- REFERENCES**
- (49) LOCATION OF AN INCIDENT NUMBERED THUS IN THE MARGIN OF THE TEXT
 - FIRES
 - PREMISES LOOTED
 - M.S. 8 MILESTONE (Distances from tip of Kowloon Peninsula)



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HONG KONG



REPORT
ON
THE RIOTS IN
KOWLOON AND TSUEN WAN,
OCTOBER 10TH TO 12TH, 1956,
TOGETHER WITH COVERING DESPATCH
DATED THE 23RD DECEMBER, 1956,
FROM
THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG
TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES

Price: \$ 4.50

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DESPATCH FROM THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

No. 2150.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HONG KONG

23rd December, 1956.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herewith my Report on the riots which took place in Kowloon and Tsuen Wan two days before my return to Hong Kong in October. The narrative of events has been compiled from all available sources and the passage in Chapter V which deals with the responsibility for the disorders is based on the results of investigations carried out to date. It is possible that further information may still come to light on this but I would not expect it to affect the broad conclusions drawn in the Report.

2. To obtain a proper assessment of these riots, the conditions in which they broke out and the problem which they presented to the authorities, it is essential to understand something of the resettlement areas which were the focus of the disorders in Kowloon and the people who inhabit them. For the last three years the Hong Kong Government has undertaken a vigorous campaign to rehouse the hundreds of thousands of homeless persons, for the most part refugees from the mainland, whose closely packed squatter huts dotted all over the urban areas of the Colony have constituted a very serious fire and health hazard. Of the 200,000 persons so far resettled some 125,000 are housed in three areas of 7-storey blocks of rooms, the object being partly to make the maximum use of the very limited flat building land available and partly to house the maximum number of people with the maximum speed at a rental which they can afford to pay; this will of course only permit the provision of the barest amenities. It has been necessary to build these resettlement blocks in the urban areas in order that the inhabitants may be housed near their work; they would otherwise have preferred to continue to squat in the streets and on the hill-sides. The people themselves for the most part live at a bare subsistence level; they own little or no personal property; the great majority have no real stake in the Colony. Employment is difficult and in some cases indifferently paid. They are people who have fled from their homeland and it is not surprising if their fate has engendered a sense of frustration and bitterness. Though many of them may have no strong political convictions, for the most part

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they bear resentment against the present regime in China to which they attribute their present hardships, and it is understandable that such political affiliations as they have incline to the Nationalist cause. This background explains the dryness of the timber which was waiting to be ignited by any suitable spark, while the density of population in the area in which they live (which must be about the highest in the world) explains the difficulties with which the police had to contend in trying to break up and quieten large gatherings of unruly persons. Mob emotions are fickle and unpredictable and when turned to their own purposes by gangsters and criminals can be a formidable weapon.

3. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that the riots in Kowloon were planned beforehand. On the contrary, all the indications are that they started spontaneously. Had they been planned, moreover, for any specific purpose it is certain that they would have been much more widespread and would very probably have embraced the Island as well. In fact, they were confined for the first 24 hours almost entirely to a small but densely populated area in the North-West of the Kowloon peninsula. What is certain is that from a very early stage the disorders were exploited for their own purposes by gangs of criminals, hooligans and Triad Societies. It is significant that nearly half the reported crime in the Colony occurs in the northern part of Kowloon, which was the main centre of the rioting. As a result of the intensive Police action taken during the disturbances many members of these gangs are now in custody. Because property chiefly attacked by the rioters belonged to supporters of the present government in China (and in particular those which had flown the Communist flag on October 1st) it has been suggested in some quarters that the riots were planned by agents working for the Nationalist cause. The truth is that the riots in Kowloon were spontaneous and those taking part were agents of no one but themselves, people of Nationalist persuasion egged on by criminals bent on personal gain and power. In Tsuen Wan, although there is no evidence of any planning prior to the outbreak of disorder in Kowloon, it would appear that people of Nationalist persuasion joined in collaboration with Triad gangs to redress old scores and to attempt to win a dominant position in the labour world.

4. I turn now to the sequence of events and the way in which the situation was handled. In assessing this it is necessary to avoid the use of hindsight in the light of after knowledge and to consider the situation as it presented itself from time to time. The original incident at the Li Cheng Uk resettlement area was of a not unexpected nature, given the occasion and it was indeed to deal with any such incidents that substantial Police precautions had been taken. Even when the trouble revived in the evening of the 10th there was still no reason to suspect anything more behind it than the irresponsible activities of crowds whose temper was excited and temporarily inflamed by the celebration of an anniversary on which

ii

feelings always run high. Throughout that first night therefore when the disorders were confined to a very limited area of the town it was the object of the Police firstly to contain them and prevent them spreading, and secondly to subdue them by conventional Police methods which would not inflict any serious casualties. This was in my view both a right and understandable course. It is the duty of the Police to win and keep the confidence of the people among whom it is their task to move and mix every day. They must rightly therefore refrain from using lethal weapons or other methods which may provoke lasting hostility between themselves and the population they exist to serve, until it has become absolutely clear that they cannot prevail by the conventional methods. In the event their tactics during the first night appeared to have been fully justified when quiet had been restored in the early hours, and, with the movement of public transport and other signs of normality on the morning of the 11th, there was every reason to hope that, with the passing of the anniversary which had been the occasion for the high feelings engendered, the heat of those feelings would have fallen below the flashpoint and the troubles be at an end. This outcome however would not have suited the gangsters who were now fully alive to the opportunities the situation offered. When the troubles broke out again shortly before 10 a.m. on the 11th it was clear that the threat to law and order was very much more serious, and the Police at this point were given emphatic instructions that whatever force was necessary to suppress the disorders, including the use of firearms, must be used without hesitation and the situation brought under control without delay. At the conference held at 12.30 p.m., when it had become clear that even with these more severe methods the Police were not achieving their object and that the chief reason was the difficulty of getting to grips with the rioters owing to the very mobile and fluid character of the mobs, the decision was taken to call in military assistance and the Commander, British Forces, decided to deploy three battalions to cordon off the affected areas.

5. Some criticism has been voiced because the Military were not called in earlier. While it is no doubt true in the light of after knowledge to contend that if their services had been called on at an earlier stage the situation would have been brought under control more quickly, the justification for doing so was not so apparent at the time. The Military are not auxiliary Police; the responsibility for quelling civil disorders rests on the civil authorities and, only when it is clear that the civil authorities are unable to achieve this by their own resources, are they justified in calling on the Military for assistance. Up to the time that renewed rioting broke out on the morning of the 11th, I consider there were good grounds for judging that the situation could be handled by the Police. I think the most that can be said is that the decision to call on the Military might have been taken earlier on the morning of the 11th, though even at that time it was not unreasonable to see whether the more aggressive

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Police tactics would produce the desired result. It is also pertinent to record that up to the time the decision was taken to call for military assistance in Kowloon there had not been a single fatal casualty, other than those due to the accident to the fire engine. That is the general picture. As regards the particular case of Tsuen Wan, the facts are that on the night of the 10th and until the late afternoon of the 11th the riots had been confined to a limited area of Kowloon with the resettlement areas as the focal points. The Police had to maintain their normal cover everywhere but were too hard pressed in Kowloon to spare reinforcements as a precautionary measure elsewhere. But since Tsuen Wan was potentially explosive with its large number of left wing and right wing factory workers, and since the movement of troops necessarily takes time, it would probably have been wiser to have anticipated the developing situation and, on the first sign of trouble, to have called for military assistance in the expectation that it would be required. One must however, as I have stated earlier in this paragraph, be careful not to judge in the light of after knowledge.

6. There are a number of lessons to be learnt from the sequence of events and from which further measures will be considered to improve our equipment for handling any similar outbreaks in the future. I shall be addressing you later on these and will only mention two directions in which I consider improvements must be made as soon as possible,—Police communications and mobility. It is very difficult in rioting of this kind to obtain a clear picture of what is happening, to assess the developing situation and to estimate what progress is being made in bringing it under control. It is therefore essential that those on the spot should keep in the closest touch with headquarters and be in a position to make frequent reports and receive instructions. In addition it may happen that an incident, reported to headquarters, will find a party of Police, available perhaps two streets away, but unaware of what is happening and out of touch with headquarters. In such a case more Police units have to be sent out from headquarters with consequent wastage of manpower. Difficulties were experienced with the use of radio cars on this occasion, since they were especial targets to the rioters and their retention at the scenes of disorder would have involved too many Police in their protection. It is also essential that Police units should be able to move quickly to and from an incident to ensure the most economical use of manpower. For this there must be adequate Force transport. These and other matters will all be examined.

7. It only remains to say that the Police conducted themselves with great restraint and fortitude, and although 44 out of the 60 fatal casualties were inflicted by the Police, they did everything possible to minimize casualties. The Military too performed their task with efficiency and good humour and showed great consideration throughout in their dealings with the civil population.

iv

8. These deplorable events serve once again to draw attention to the very real problems presented by the influx of population into the small urban areas of Hong Kong and Kowloon, which have produced conditions of unparalleled overcrowding and the attendant threat to law and order that arises therefrom. The world conscience which has recently been roused by the plight of about 100,000 refugees from Hungary might well be awakened to the situation of five to six times that number who fled into Hong Kong in 1949-50. Within its limited resources of land, materials and money the Hong Kong Government has done and is doing all it can to ameliorate the conditions of these homeless refugees; but without substantial emigration to reduce the numbers or outside help to supplement Hong Kong's capacity to absorb them, the task is slow and uphill. In the meantime the risk of a similar outbreak to that which took place in October will be ever present and require increased vigilance.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(signed) A. GRANTHAM
Governor

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ALAN LENNOX-BOYD, M.P.

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**REPORT ON THE RIOTS IN KOWLOON
AND TSUEN WAN
OCTOBER 10TH TO 12TH, 1956**

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
CHAPTER I.—Introductory	1
CHAPTER II.—Narrative (Kowloon)	5
CHAPTER III.—Narrative (Tsuen Wan)	29
CHAPTER IV.—Summary of Casualties and Damage	44
CHAPTER V.—Comments and Conclusions	48

MAP APPENDIX

- A. General map of Kowloon, with parts of the New Territories and of Hong Kong Island.
- B. Street map of part of Kowloon.
- C. Sketch map of the Tsuen Wan area.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

- C.P.: Acting Commissioner of Police.
- D.C.: Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police.
- A.C.: Assistant Commissioner of Police, Kowloon and New Territories District.
- S.D.I.: Sub-divisional Inspector of Police, Tsuen Wan.
- 24 F.E.R.: The 24th Field Engineer Regiment.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTORY

October 10th, the anniversary of the Chinese Republican Revolution of 1911, is celebrated annually as the principal Nationalist Chinese Festival, known as the "Double Tenth"; and October 1st, the anniversary of the formal establishment of the Central Peoples' Government of the Peoples' Republic of China in 1949, is commemorated annually as the principal Communist Chinese Festival. On these occasions buildings are decorated, fire crackers discharged and indoor political meetings are held by supporters of the respective régimes, usually in trade union premises, restaurants or theatres. The flags of the Chinese Peoples' Government and of the Nationalist Government in Formosa, as the case may be, are extensively flown on trade union buildings, commercial and business premises and private houses. These celebrations arouse a considerable degree of political feeling; it has always been recognized in Hong Kong that there is a danger of disorder on these occasions and precautions are taken every year as a matter of course. These include control of meetings and functions, prohibition of outdoor public meetings and processions and special vigilance by all branches of the Police Force. Police leave is stopped and the Force is brought to a state of readiness; efforts are made to get information of any plans which might lead to breach of the peace, a watch is kept on known political centres, extra patrols and search parties are sent out and riot units stand by.

2. The conditions of extreme overcrowding in the urban areas of Hong Kong and the resettlement of immigrants require brief mention here, since they form an important element in the background to the riots. The population in 1945 at the end of the Japanese occupation was about 600,000; it is now estimated at over 2½ millions; 2 millions or more of these people live in the built up areas round the harbour, of whom over a million live in Kowloon. See Map A. There had been a large influx, perhaps amounting to a million, by the end of 1946; a second large influx, amounting to some half a million, consisted of refugees who entered the Colony during the later stages of the civil war

in China, in 1949 and 1950; these were predominantly of Nationalist, or at least anti-Communist, sympathies and many came from North or Central China, without previous connexions with Hong Kong; they are as yet integrated to a limited degree only with the local Cantonese community. The refugees now living in the Colony include all classes of people; the majority are poor people who may have seen better days, for instance as property owners or business men, or as officials or soldiers serving under the Nationalist Government in China. They see little chance of resuming their former life in their homes in China and, as is common with exiles, their temperament has often been soured by adversity.

3. These people are now scattered all over the Colony but a great number originally found shelter in squatter huts on the hillsides surrounding the urban area on both sides of the harbour, or, where they could afford to do so, bought out tenement and flat dwellers at tempting prices, thus inducing the latter to live in squatter shacks. There are about 300,000 people still living as squatters, but about 200,000 have been resettled by the Government in the last few years, over half of them in three resettlement estates situated on the north western edge of Kowloon. Each estate consists of a group of ten to twenty five 'H' shaped seven storey blocks, containing some 350 to 800 rooms each and housing anything from 2,000 to 4,000 people. Reading from west to east, the population of the three estates (all of which feature in the narrative which follows) is: Li Cheng Uk 33,000, Shep Kip Mei 55,000 and Tai Hang Tung 38,000. These three highly concentrated groups comprising over 125,000 people in all are predominantly in sympathy with the Nationalist cause and opposed to the present government of China; this opposition is mainly a matter of personal feeling, though many are loosely organized in right wing labour unions and other bodies. The estates are all fringed on the north by steep foothills and the first two are bounded on the south and west by congested streets of tenements, through which run two main roads, one to the western extremity of the New Territories at Castle Peak and the other to the central part of the New Territories at Taipo and the frontier with China 24 miles away. The junction of these two main roads, a focal point during the riots (referred to below as the main road junction), lies immediately west of the Shek Kip Mei estate. The general population density of this whole area of north west Kowloon is estimated roughly at some 2,000 people to the acre.

See Map B

4. Another feature of the local scene are the Triad Societies. These originated in China some three centuries ago as secret societies composed of patriots working to overthrow the Manchu Ching Dynasty and restore the native Ming Dynasty to the throne. Some of these societies supported the revolutionary movement of Sun Yat Sen and one of the leaders came to Hong Kong in 1897 on Sun's instructions and formed a society named the Chung Wo Tong, the object of which was to rally support for Sun's movement among Chinese residents of the Colony. After the revolution of 1911, in which the patriotic aims of this Society were fulfilled, it proliferated into a group known as the Wo group, consisting now of over 20 Triad Societies with a membership roughly estimated at some 50,000; these societies, together with other but smaller groups, degenerated into "strong arm" gangs engaged in "protection" and extortion rackets and other forms of crime, while preserving in some degree the Triad rituals. They organize and "protect" opium divans, brothels etc., control pimps and pickpockets and prey upon hawkers and shopkeepers and also purport to "arbitrate" in disputes within their "territory". In recent years they have attracted more members and gained greater power; while they have for very long been unlawful societies, it is most difficult to bring the process of law to bear on individual members because the Chinese hold these societies in great dread, fearing brutal reprisals if they assist in exposing their activities to the authorities. Until 1949, deportation provided an effective deterrent for Triad activities and it was possible to keep a fairly tight rein on these gangs. Deportation has since become largely impracticable and serious crime has increased. Prosecution before the Courts with a view to imprisonment is less effective because it is very difficult to find witnesses to give evidence against Triad members in open Court. One of these Triad Societies, known as "14K" originated in Canton during the Nationalist regime as a semi-official underground organization of a political character, its members being mostly Nationalist army personnel and minor officials. With the influx of refugees into the Colony this Society was established in Hong Kong and has gradually gained influence; it has lately increased its membership, drawn largely from poor refugees, including many youths. The activities of the members of this "14K" Triad group have in recent years been almost entirely those of gangsters and racketeers. There is some evidence that during the past year the "14K" group has been expanding its membership and its activities in an attempt to attain

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a position of dominance in Kowloon, particularly in the north western district. These gangster societies have a strong position in the squatter areas and consequently in the resettlement estates. It should be emphasized that Triad gangs are always organized for concerted action whenever opportunity offers, each with its couriers, leading thugs and fighting members.

5. The establishment of the Hong Kong Police Force is some five thousand rank and file with four hundred and seventy five Inspectors and sixty Officers. The effective strength is less than five-sixths of this, owing to vacancies, leave etc. The Force normally operates in three shifts in the twenty four hours, reduced to two shifts of twelve hours each in an emergency. There are nearly sixty police stations or posts, including frontier posts, and 24 marine police craft in the Colony which require to be continuously manned; in addition, it is essential that the specialized sections of the Force, the Criminal Investigation Department, Special Branch, Communications and other units should function at full pitch during disorders. The numbers available for riot duty are therefore limited by these requirements. Three permanent emergency units exist, totalling five riot units or some three hundred men; all members of the Force are trained for riot duty and each of the nine police divisions can muster on average two units and Headquarters another three, making twenty six riot units or one thousand five hundred and sixty men in all; allowance must of course be made for periods of rest between operations. Six units were employed during Phase 1 of the disorders; during the evening and night of October 10th the force was built up to eighteen units and as the riots developed and spread on October 11th a maximum of twenty one riot units or one thousand two hundred and sixty men was employed. The Force is controlled by the Commissioner in emergency conditions from an operations room which adjoins the Colony control room; this has direct telephone and wireless contact by a variety of channels with the two District Control Rooms, where the Assistant Commissioners in charge of Kowloon and New Territories and of Hong Kong Island Districts exercise their command; from this room all messages passing within the Force radio network can be monitored. A Secretariat and a military liaison officer are posted in the operations room when circumstances so require. The two District control rooms have direct wireless contact with all their divisional police stations, with police launches etc. and also have accommodation for the commander of military internal security forces, so as to form a joint headquarters.

4

6. There was no indication of any kind prior to October 10th, 1956 that there would be violent anti-Communist demonstrations or disturbances on that day. It was however known that the Nationalists intended to celebrate the day in Hong Kong on the largest scale yet, with a view to offsetting the celebrations on October 1st. On the morning of the "Double Tenth" it was evident that decorations and preparations for the celebration were more elaborate than in previous years; many private houses were extensively decorated and, as on earlier occasions, some of the more notable displays were in and around the squatter and resettlement areas in Kowloon. Exhaustive investigation has not revealed the existence of any planning of the disturbances prior to the incident at Li Cheng Uk described immediately below; nor is there evidence of collusion with any outside agency.

CHAPTER II

NARRATIVE (KOWLOON)

The dispute over the flags

*(Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate: October 10th
11.00 a.m.—2.00 p.m.)*

7. It was decided at a meeting of the Resettlement Policy Committee of the Urban Council held on October 3rd, 1956 that inhabitants of the resettlement estates should be warned not to stick paper flags or other decorations on the walls of the buildings, as they had been found difficult to remove afterwards. The resettlement staff were instructed accordingly. There was no objection to the display of flags on poles or on strings. At Shek Kip Mei, the oldest of the three estates, the warning was disseminated among settlers through the Kai Fong or Neighbourhood Association; some flags stuck on the walls in this estate were actually removed by the settlers themselves on October 10th, at the instance of the Kai Fong, as being pasted up contrary to instructions. At Tai Hang Tung which was the next estate to be built, a celebration committee had been set up for October 10th and formed a convenient channel of communication between the staff of the Resettlement Department and the residents. In Li Cheng Uk, the most recent estate, where only one block had been built by the previous October, no representative body exists, but representations from settlers were dealt with by the staff in accordance with the instructions given.

5

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October
10th
9.0 a.m.

8. On October 10th at about 9.0 a.m. a junior member of the Resettlement Department, who was in charge of Li Cheng Uk Estate and had quarters on the top floor of Block G, the central block, noticed some small Nationalist flags and a number of Nationalist symbols stuck on the walls of the block; he and the officer in charge of that block removed the flags, but were unable to reach two large "Double Ten" symbols (each consisting of two joined crosses, the Chinese character for ten), which were pasted in an inaccessible but very conspicuous position on the outer wall of the crossbar of this 'H' shaped block which faces down a street leading to the main road. These two large symbols were partially removed about 10.30 a.m. The fact that after midnight on October 9th flags and "Double Ten" symbols were pasted on the walls of Block G, including the top floor which is occupied by the quarters of the staff, while little attention was paid to the other ten blocks in the estate, suggests that this may have been a deliberate challenge to the officer in charge of the estate by settlers who considered him unduly strict in his control of their decorations. That officer knew that his superior, the Resettlement Officer in charge of Estates, was visiting Li Cheng Uk on the morning of the 10th; this reinforced his intention to see that the instructions were observed and no flags pasted up. There is no reason to believe that the officer in charge of the estate was acting otherwise than in good faith in doing everything in his power to see that his instructions were observed.

11.0 a.m.

9. Soon after 11.0 a.m. a crowd including many children began to collect in front of the Resettlement Office and there were requests for money to replace the flags which had been removed and torn in the process. A small police party arrived and the officer in charge tried unsuccessfully to persuade the crowd to disperse; by this time 300 to 400 people had collected and were demanding that the flags be replaced. Two members of the resettlement staff then pasted up six or seven flags, hoping to pacify the crowd, which started to drift away in small groups. Shortly before this, at about 11.45 a.m., the Divisional Superintendent of Police of the area visited the scene and went off to report by telephone to the Assistant Commissioner in charge of Kowloon and New Territories District (referred to below as the A.C.), at Police Headquarters, Kowloon. When he returned to the Resettlement Office, he

11.45 a.m.

6

found that the crowd was beginning to collect again and was asking for an apology from the resettlement officer concerned for having had the flags removed. The latter had meanwhile left the estate and a more senior officer, the Resettlement Officer in charge of Estates, had arrived. By this time the crowd had increased again to some 500. There was however no sign of hostility and the A.C.'s orders to the Superintendent on the spot were to play the incident down and avoid a show of strength, which he considered would be likely to exacerbate the situation, one which at that time did not seem different from the sort of localized incident which might occur on an occasion of national celebration. The A.C. discussed the position with the Acting Deputy Commissioner at Colony Headquarters on Hong Kong Island (referred to below as the D.C.) and it was agreed that it called for tact and persuasion rather than for force.

October
10th

10. There was then a demand that fire crackers should be discharged by the resettlement staff, a traditional form of apology, and a supply was sent for. While the crowd was waiting for these at least one agitator was noticed to be engaged in rousing tempers among people of Nationalist sympathies who formed the great majority of those who had assembled. By 1.15 p.m. the crowd had grown to about 2,000, most of whom were interested spectators from the resettlement blocks; the police were reinforced to a strength of four sections (32 men). At 1.30 p.m. the fire crackers arrived but did not satisfy some members of the crowd, who had apparently decided to exploit the situation. Demands were then made by spokesmen such as that 100,000 fire crackers should be provided, to hang from top to bottom of the block, that portraits of Sun Yat Sen and Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek should be erected on the block with a large Nationalist flag, and that the officer in charge of the estate should apologize publicly before the crowd and in Chinese newspapers. Although most of the crowd did not seem hostile, it became clear before 2.0 p.m. that an easy settlement of this affair was unlikely.

1.15 p.m.

1.30 p.m.

2.0 p.m.

The course of the riots

11. Paragraphs 13 to 43 describe the general course of the riots in Kowloon; the sequence is chronological except where clarity is served by dealing with a particular incident or area as a whole. Reference to the maps in the Appendix, on which the location of the various incidents numbered in the margin is indicated, may assist the reader to follow the sequence of events "on the ground".

7

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Phase 1

Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate and adjacent streets to the south (October 10th, 2.0 p.m. - 3.20 p.m.)

October 10th
See Map B
12. During this first phase disorder was confined to the resettlement estate and a congested area of one block to the south west, bounded by the main Castle Peak Road. At the end of this phase there was a lull of some three hours. The A.C. had already ordered all operations rooms in his command to be fully manned and instructed riot units to be ready to move at short notice. The D.C., and through him the Acting Commissioner of Police (referred to below as the C. P.), at Colony Headquarters on Hong Kong Island across the harbour was kept continuously informed of the situation.

2.0 p.m.
13. At 2.0 p.m. the A.C. was on his way to the scene from his Headquarters in the centre of Kowloon about a mile away, with one riot unit of 60 men. On arrival he stationed the riot unit close by, ready for action but out of sight of the crowd, while he met the Divisional Superintendent, who had been on the scene since about 11.45 a.m., at the Resettlement Office in Block A, the block nearest to the main road. The A.C. estimated the crowd at this time at about 1,000; the people did not seem to be in a hostile mood and the crowd was tending to thin out. At about 2.15 p.m. a cheer went up and it was found that one room of the Resettlement Offices had been broken into from behind and a member of the staff assaulted; the offices were put under police guard and the injured man sent to hospital. The crowd seemed curious but still not hostile.

2.25 p.m.
Incident 2
14. About 2.25 p.m. another member of the staff who was seeking to leave the area was chased by part of the crowd down the street to the main road, where he was severely assaulted; when a police party arrived this man, who was bloodstained from his injuries, had taken refuge in a lorry and was surrounded by some 300 people. He could not be extricated to be taken to hospital until 3 sections of police (24 men) had been mustered to clear a path through the crowd. The crowd then turned on the police and pelted them with mineral water bottles from a nearby shop. The A.C. considered that a baton charge would not be effective with the number of police on the spot and decided to use tear smoke. Four shells were fired and the crowd dispersed along the Castle Peak Road and back into the resettlement estate. This incident proved to be a turning point: hitherto the animosity of the crowd, composed mainly of settlers of Nationalist sympathies, had

8

October 10th
been directed against the resettlement staff, for "interference" with the display of flags on the "Double Tenth". The police had now rescued their intended victim and this provided the opportunity for the lawless element in the crowd to direct its feelings against the forces of law and order. While the Nationalist flag was used by the rioters as a symbol throughout the ensuing disorders, the original dispute was largely forgotten from this moment.

15. Shortly after this a second riot unit from the nearest Police Station at Shamshuipo, half a mile away to the south, arrived in Castle Peak Road and 4 further riot units were ordered to the scene. At about 2.30 p.m. when these reinforcements arrived, the A.C. had under his direct control 6 riot units (about 360 men). He placed two units at the junction of the two streets leading from Castle Peak Road to the resettlement estate. Almost at the same moment thick black smoke was seen from the direction of the estate and one unit was despatched to investigate. It was heavily stoned from the verandahs of two resettlement blocks, and three tear smoke shells had to be fired to drive the stone throwers indoors. On reaching the Resettlement Offices at the corner of the estate, the police party found them looted and partially on fire; a large bonfire of the furniture and records was burning outside. The fire brigade was sent for and extinguished the blaze by 3.0 p.m.

16. As a result of police action, the crowds were now dispersing from the immediate area. The A.C. ordered Block A (in which the offices were located) to be cordoned off with a line of "knife rests" through the surrounding streets and this was done without interference. Traffic began to flow normally again along Castle Peak Road. By 3.20 p.m. all crowds had dispersed and the situation was quiet. The A.C. decided that it was best to avoid attracting attention to the area by leaving large forces there and ordered four riot units to return to their stations, leaving two, one manning the cordon of "knife rests" and one in reserve. On the C.P.'s instructions, the D.C. visited the area about 3.30 p.m. and found everything quiet; he reported that there was no reason to expect any renewal or extension of the disturbances.

17. The scene of these events was an area less than 400 yards square running from the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate to the main Castle Peak Road, and situated in the north western suburbs of Kowloon, over three miles in a direct line from the tip of the peninsula; the crowds concerned had consisted very largely of settlers, known to be Nationalist partisans, and therefore in a state of enthusiasm on the "Double Tenth". The disorders des-

9

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October
10th

cribed had specific origins on the spot and were not planned. There was no ground during this lull for expecting the much more serious and widespread rioting which developed later in the day, but the police remained in a state of instant readiness. The military Commander of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Garrison was kept informed. Arising out of this incident two people had been arrested and three or four injured.

Phase 2

(October 10th 6.30 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

- (a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo areas
- (b) Mongkok area (to the South)
- (c) Tai Hang Tung area (East of (a)) and beyond

(a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo Areas (October 10th 6.30 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

6.30 p.m.

18. At about 6.30 p.m., by which time workers had returned home and had had their evening meal, crowds of young men started to collect along the "knife rest" cordon in the Li Cheng Uk area and the temper of the crowd changed. Abuse was shouted at the Police, some stones were thrown and there was an increasing attitude of defiance and mounting excitement; police instructions to disperse were ignored. It is now known that as early as 6.0 p.m. Triad Society members were being mustered to exploit the situation; this undoubtedly had a bearing on the temper of the crowd at this stage. Two riot units from Hong Kong Island were now made ready to move across the harbour.

7.0 p.m.
Incident 4

At about 7.0 p.m. two very large Nationalist flags appeared in the crowd near the north west corner of the cordoned area, following which the "knife rests" were partially broken down at this point; a barrage of tear smoke fired by a section of 8 men dispersed this crowd successfully. The A.C. then arrived with reinforcements consisting of four riot units (240 men). He used his forces to break up the crowds and prevent them reforming and decided to include in the cordoned area the tenement block between it and the Castle Peak Road, but not to enlarge it further and thereby tend to spread the disorder to the south. However, loose crowds continued to assemble round the cordoned area and the police were stoned at intervals. At 8.10 p.m. the A.C. ordered a drive with two riot units, one on either side of the block in the centre of the estate, which with a tear smoke barrage succeeded in clearing the immediate area; at the same time the "knife rest" cordon was extended down

8.10 p.m.
Incident 5

10

to the main road, as previously decided. On the south eastern edge of the cordon an aggressive crowd caused a large disturbance outside a cinema at about 8.35 p.m.; this crowd was driven back by tear smoke but continued to stone the police at intervals. A few minutes later a riot unit cleared this crowd to a distance of two blocks to the south east with tear smoke and the cordoned perimeter was correspondingly extended and the two side-streets blocked off where they join the Castle Peak Road. There were now six blocks included in the cordon.

October
10th

8.35 p.m.
Incident 6

Incident 7

19. The situation between 8.0 and 9.30 p.m. was that disorder gradually spread south and east from the Li Cheng Uk area, but was contained on a line about half way to the main road junction. The object of the police during this period was to restrict the area of disturbance and prevent it spreading towards Kowloon and at the same time to disperse the crowds, which were still composed mainly of local residents, and induce them to return to their homes. In the immediate surroundings of Li Cheng Uk the police held a perimeter embracing some six tenement or resettlement blocks in considerable force, but were not able to get to grips with rioting crowds on the southern and eastern edges of the area who were confining themselves mainly to "tip-and-run" stoning attacks on the police. From about 9.30 p.m. the situation within the perimeter was reasonably well under control. But fresh outbreaks of rioting began to develop to the south, centred on the main road junction and overflowing into side-streets. A number of vehicles, including some containing service personnel, were attacked. It is now known that about 10.0 p.m. a crowd about 1,000 strong, led by 14K and Wo On Lok Triad members carrying Nationalist flags, emerged from the Shek Kip Mei Estate, began stoning vehicles and later attacked the Garden Bakery (see paragraph 23). By 10.30 p.m. rioting on a large scale was taking place at the main road junction, where cheer leaders and groups with Nationalist flags were seen inciting the crowd to yet further disorder. To meet this serious situation 2 riot units arrived from the south and the A.C. redeployed 3 units from the Li Cheng Uk area. Police at road blocks previously set up at Shatin and Tsuen Wan were instructed to stop vehicles entering Kowloon from the New Territories and other blocks were set up near Police Headquarters to stop north bound traffic. At about 10.15 p.m. the D.C. left Colony Headquarters to take command at the Kowloon Control Room, since it was clear that the A.C. must continue to direct operations at the scene of disorder for some time. At this stage the A.C. in charge of Hong Kong Island was ordered to be specially vigilant against any spread of disorder across

10.30 p.m.

Incident 8

11

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October
10th

the harbour and Special Branch personnel were sent out to report from near the scene of the many incidents which were now occurring. As the evening wore on it was realized that the situation was becoming increasingly serious. With the spread of disorder, the tactics of the mobs changed; they became very mobile over a widening area of Kowloon, melting away on the arrival of the police, and regrouping in a nearby street to continue attacking vehicles, shops and so on. It was difficult to bring the police units to bear on these rapidly shifting gangs which did not present easy targets for baton charges or the effective use of tear smoke, despite the C.P.'s instructions that it should be used in good quantity.

Incident 9

20. Meanwhile two fire engines had arrived to deal with a small fire in a street parallel to the main Castle Peak Road; soon after turning into the main road on its return journey at about 10.0 p.m. the leading fire engine, a Dennis Rolls Royce machine carrying a 55 foot fire escape ladder, met a heavy fusillade of bricks, pieces of concrete and bottles thrown by crowds of rioters who also attempted to block its passage. The driver was struck on the head by a stone and lost control of the vehicle which crashed into the crowd, mounted the pavement and pinned several people against a wall at the side of the road. Two people, one a woman, were killed outright and one died in hospital as a result of this accident, while five of the crowd were seriously injured. While the injured members of the crowd were being put on stretchers and loaded into ambulances, which had been heavily stoned on their way to the scene, the rioters continued to discharge showers of stones from the roadside and from verandahs and rooftops, one of the injured being hit by a stone as he was being carried on a stretcher to the ambulance. This serious accident and the deaths and injuries caused contributed to inflaming the temper of the crowd. At about 11.0 p.m. a military ambulance was stoned at the same spot, the driver was knocked unconscious and the ambulance crashed into the back of the disabled fire engine, which has since proved a total loss. Soon after the first accident the Deputy Chief Officer set out for the scene in a land rover of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Some 400 yards short of the junction the vehicle was forced to a standstill by crowds and the D.C.O. with a sub-officer completed his journey on foot, leaving the driver in charge of the vehicle. Shortly after this the driver was surrounded and stoned and had to escape to save his life.

10.0 p.m.

Incident 10

11.0 p.m.

Incident 11

Incident 12

12

junction formed the north east corner, eight police riot units, later increased to eleven, continued to be heavily engaged with large mobs of rioters in a running fight which persisted until about 3.0 a.m. on October 11th.

October
11th

21. At about 11.20 p.m. the Officer Administering the Government accompanied by the Acting Colonial Secretary visited the C.P. in his control room. The latter reported the situation fully, including details of police dispositions and the degree of force and weapons used; he explained that he had been reluctant, despite the gravity of the disorder, to instruct his men to abandon the policy of resorting to the use of fire arms only in extreme circumstances. It had by now become clear that members of the regular Police Force would begin to suffer from fatigue if the riots continued throughout the night, as many of them had already been on duty all day without relief; it was therefore decided to mobilize the Police Auxiliaries. By 4.0 a.m. over 600 men had come on duty; by 8.0 a.m. on October 11th, 1,150 had reported and the total later reached 1,551. The Auxiliaries provided one riot unit and took over the entire radio control at Kowloon Police Headquarters; they also manned police stations, radio vans and harbour launches and provided escorts, patrols and guards, until their demobilization at 4.0 p.m. on October 15th. This proved a most valuable accession to police strength. At 11.20 p.m. a broadcast request was made to the public to keep away from the affected areas and this was repeated at intervals until midnight; similar warnings were given on the morning of October 11th and at intervals thereafter until the curfew was imposed. Shortly after midnight joint military and police headquarters in Kowloon were manned (see paragraph 32 below).

22. In the original area of disturbance at Li Cheng Uk bands of rioters continued in sporadic stoning attacks against the police which were kept in check with tear smoke. At 2.0 a.m. the police post in the resettlement estate, a room normally manned by one constable, was reported attacked; it proved that an attempt had been made to break into the post, which was soon afterwards evacuated. The situation at Li Cheng Uk gradually became quieter until at 3.30 a.m. one riot unit was ordered to return to Kowloon Headquarters for action elsewhere; by 4.0 a.m. there were no further incidents and at 6.0 a.m. the remaining riot unit was withdrawn to Headquarters.

October
11th
2.0 a.m.

Incident 12

6.0 a.m.

23. Meanwhile, a serious fire started at the Garden Bakery, a large mechanized bakery housed in a concrete building of 3 storeys in the angle of the two main roads

Incident 13

13

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October 10th-11th facing the junction. 12 lorries belonging to the Company and parked behind the building were set on fire by the rioters at 11.25 p.m. and the building was stoned; the ground floor of the Bakery was involved before midnight and burnt fiercely owing to inflammable stock. Poles with burning material attached were thrown through the broken windows of the building and helped to spread the fire. The fire brigade was subjected to a barrage of stones both en route and at the scene of the fire and required constant police protection. A path had to be cleared by police for the turncock as the water valve was close to the crowds; meanwhile the second floor of the Bakery, containing flour stocks, was ablaze. The fire, which might have spread disastrously up Castle Peak Road, was energetically attacked and brought under control after about two hours.

Midnight Incident 14 24. At about midnight the situation from the police point of view was that a large crowd of rioters was still centred round the main road junction and near the Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate to the east of it, while other crowds were rioting in streets to the south west of the junction. The A.C. decided to clear Yen Chau Street, the important street running south west from the junction past the Shamshuipo Police Station to the harbour. This was achieved with one riot unit which had to fire tear smoke repeatedly at gangs of rioters in the side streets. Meanwhile, after a very tough and protracted fight, the police gradually secured a firm control of the main road junction. Incident 15 Between midnight and 4.0 a.m. at least six shops in this area, including a goldsmiths and two Garden Bakery branch shops, were looted by Triad gangs.

October 11th 2.30 a.m. Incident 16 25. The centre of resistance now moved south along the main road from the junction; there was a fire in the roadway at the first crossing beyond the junction and barricades at the second and third crossings to the south. At 2.30 a.m. the A.C. began a drive down the road and decided to use sickening smoke. He succeeded in breaking through the barricades and clearing the main road for about a thousand yards beyond the junction. The C.P.'s appreciation in the small hours of October 11th was that there were still mobs of 100 to 700 engaged in arson and serious assaults and attacks on property in Shamshuipo but that, starting from about 2.0 a.m., these had become less severe and by 3.0 a.m. had been reduced by continuous and widespread police action to scattered cases of disorder by small groups of hooligans. Nevertheless he considered it advisable, at 4.30 a.m., to obtain the agreement of the Station Commander Kai Tak that the latter would be responsible for protecting the airport, thus relieving the police of this responsibility.

(b) Mongkok and area to the South
(October 10th 11.0 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

26. The Mongkok area is habitually heavily crowded in the evenings; this was the state of affairs until midnight on October 10th. But groups of hooligans began to collect about 11.0 p.m. at two road crossings in the northern part of Nathan Road near the Mongkok Police Station, which is about a mile south of the main road junction. These groups became riotous and cars were stoned and some members of the Regular Forces injured; there was some looting in this area by gangs, mostly consisting of Wo group Triads. At about 1.30 a.m. part of a riot unit broke up these crowds, numbering several hundred, with tear smoke. Until about 5.30 a.m. gangs of hooligans roamed the Nathan Road area as far south as Austin Road (which is about half a mile from the tip of the Kowloon peninsula), looting and throwing stones. These disorders were gradually brought under control by the police until by about 6.0 a.m. the area was quiet.

(c) Tai Hang Tung area and beyond
(October 11th 12.30 a.m. - 6.0 a.m.)

27. At 12.30 a.m. a report reached the control room at Kowloon Police Headquarters that suspicious persons were assembling near the Heung To School, a recently constructed private school of Communist complexion about a quarter of a mile north east of the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate which, in common with the other two estates further west, contains settlers of predominantly Nationalist sympathies. A quarter of an hour later it was reported that the police post in this area (a room manned by a constable) was on fire. An Inspector with 16 men was sent to investigate and found the post looted and the contents burning outside. Later information connects this incident with 14K and Wo On Lok Triad gangs. The party was then very heavily attacked by mobs in the area and by settlers from the verandahs of the resettlement blocks and was forced to withdraw without reaching the school, during which it suffered severe injuries, one inspector and four constables being later admitted to hospital. This party met a riot unit south of the area which used tear smoke to disperse these rioters, and held a line keeping them contained in the resettlement estate. At 1.15 a.m., in answer to another call from the school, a second police party was despatched; this party arrived at a point overlooking the school and reported no sign of disorder. The party therefore withdraw. At 1.50 a.m. a further report

October 11th was received from the school that some 70 people seemed about to try to set the buildings on fire, but no forces could be spared at that time from the main riot centres in the built-up areas to investigate. Further calls were received and at 3.30 a.m. a riot unit south of the area was detailed to visit the school; at the same time the A.C., who was still at the main road junction, received an urgent message that the school was on fire. He left at once for the school with one riot unit, later meeting the second unit which was already on its way there. The A.C. with the two units passed through the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate without opposition; on arrival at the school at about 4.30 a.m. he found a large pile of furniture etc., on fire outside; parts of the main building had caught fire but the structure was not seriously threatened. It appears from later inquiry that the first attack on the school was repulsed by the staff; between 3.0 and 4.0 a.m. the mob set fire to an adjacent hut and forced their way into the compound, looting the ground floor of the school and setting fire to the furniture etc. outside. The A.C. entered the school and found some 20 members of the staff in an upper room. 11 men, suspected of the arson, were also found in the building and taken into custody. The police put out the fire in the building and the Fire Brigade which had meanwhile arrived extinguished the fire outside. A police guard of four sections of a riot unit was placed on the school and the staff evacuated the building on police advice for their own safety. Meanwhile two minor incidents were reported from Kowloon City, further east near the airport, during the small hours; and information was received at about 3.45 a.m. that a crowd was wrecking a traffic pagoda near the airport entrance. This crowd was dispersed by the police.

28. By 6.0 a.m. on October 11th the whole of Kowloon was quiet. All riot units were recalled for rest and replaced by strong mobile patrols, the streets were cleared of wrecked vehicles and the omnibus services were resumed. The object at this stage was to restore conditions in Kowloon to normal at first light on the morning after the "Double Tenth". At 8.45 a.m. the D.C. returned to Colony Headquarters to report to the C.P. In doing so, he expressed the opinion that since there had been such widespread disorder and the situation had been exploited by criminal gangs any recurrence would merit stern measures. The C.P. agreed that if disorder broke out again this would imply a planned extension of the riots, and must be met with stronger force including the use of firearms wherever justified. In maintaining the policy restricting the use of firearms hitherto, the C.P. was influenced by the fact that

16

there were still many curious spectators in the crowds and that firing might have resulted in heavy casualties including injury to these passive elements.

29. The rioting had so far occurred on the afternoon, evening and night of the "Double Tenth" festival, when the Nationalist sympathizers who form such a large proportion of the population of north western Kowloon were in any case elated and disposed to demonstrate their opposition to the present régime in China; and were therefore ripe for exploitation by Triad and criminal gangs. It was a reasonable expectation that, since the police had gained control of the rioting in the early hours of October 11th, the cold light of the morning after the festival day would find the celebrants less apt for any further mischief to which the gangsters might seek to incite them. During this second phase a total force of some 1,100 police was in action, excluding small patrols. The weapons used were baton, tear smoke, both as shells and as grenades, and in the later stages sickening smoke. A few shots were fired by individual officers but only in self-defence. Casualties were two killed in the accident to the fire engine (a third died later), some twenty people seriously injured, including one suffering from a gunshot wound, and fifty with minor injuries. The police had suffered a good number of casualties, including ten serious enough for hospital treatment, of whom one was detained in hospital. Some 140 arrests had been made.

Phase 3

(October 11th 10.0 a.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

- (a) *Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo*
- (b) *Mongkok and Yauwati (to the South)*
- (c) *Eastern and north eastern Kowloon*

(a) *Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo*

(October 11th 10.0 a.m. - 7.30 p.m.)

30. The hope that the disorders would not extend beyond the "Double Tenth" was not realized and this second lull proved to be not much longer than the first, some four hours. Shortly before 10.0 a.m. on October 11th a police patrol reported being stoned by a large crowd near Li Cheng Uk, the Resettlement Estate where the riots started. A riot unit arrived and succeeded in driving a

October
11th
10.0 a.m.
Incident 20

17

RA'-0413

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October
11th

large and excited crowd of rioters off one road junction on the main Castle Peak Road in this neighbourhood, but had not sufficient numbers to disperse them from the area; a further unit reached the scene, sickening smoke was fired, and the crowd broke but reformed out of range. With the arrival of a third unit, the main Castle Peak Road was cleared and kept open and the crowds were scattered down side streets with the assistance of tear smoke. At about midday Triad gangs, continuing their activities of the previous day, looted two provision stores and two factories in Castle Peak Road. Later other gangs forced occupants of cars to buy Nationalist flags at a number of points in the Kowloon peninsula. Flags were also sold by Triad members on bicycles or in cars. At about 12.45 p.m. a large crowd was seen to be gathering near the main road junction and building a barricade across the Castle Peak Road 100 yards to the north west; this barricade was smashed by an armoured car on its way to deliver supplies of smoke to the riot units at Li Cheng Uk, and the crowd round it dispersed with the aid of tear smoke shells fired by the crew.

12.45 p.m.

Incident 21

Incident 22

31. Simultaneously another mob of some 500 assembled in the next street south of the barricade, and began to surge down the street towards the Shamshuiipo Police Station 500 yards away, burning two motor vehicles in the street on the way. This mob was led by a man carrying a Nationalist flag, a common feature throughout the disturbances. Yet another crowd of about the same size was rioting in the area between the Police Station and the sea. These moves were considered a threat to the Police Station; the Divisional Superintendent successfully broke up these mobs with Greener gunfire and blocked off a number of side streets in the area; an armoured car arrived in the rear of those fleeing northwards and scattered them. Meanwhile riotous mobs in very large numbers continued to collect round the main road junction and for a mile or more to the south along the main road and in streets on both sides of it. Two more riot units were ordered to this area, making a total of 5 (300 men). These renewed disorders developed very rapidly despite the police reinforcements which were rushed to the scene of the first outbreak. The mobs were even more mobile and elusive and tear smoke had the effect only of dispersing the rioters for a short time and at one spot. Among the tactics employed by the mob was the lighting of bonfires of wood and paper in the streets to attract fire engines, which were then violently attacked from the street and surrounding buildings; the Fire Brigade was unable during this period to answer calls without a police escort. It was clear to the C.P. that the riots had passed beyond the stage of being traceable to mob hysteria due to the national day, and were

18

being fomented and fanned by criminals for their own ends; the confession of two avowed members of Triad Societies, arrested during the morning, that these Societies were among those inciting and directing the mobs tended to confirm this appreciation. Since normal tactics were not effective in securing control quickly the C.P. issued emphatic directions soon after 10.0 a.m. that the rioting must be brought under control with the minimum of delay by any necessary means and that if circumstances justified it there should be no hesitation in opening fire on the rioters.

October
11th

32. At 12.30 p.m. a Conference was held between the Officer Administering the Government, the Commander British Forces, the Acting Colonial Secretary and the C.P. at the operations room at Police Headquarters, at which the situation was reviewed. The mobs had hitherto been able largely to escape the punitive action of the strong forces of police deployed against them by evasive tactics, for which the crowded maze of streets and tenements in the affected areas lent excellent cover; even when their activities had a focus during particular acts of arson or looting they made little attempt to fight off the police but scattered in front of them, only to regroup out of sight. The chief need therefore was to confine the mobs of rioters within limited areas and pin them down so that the police might be able to bring full force to bear on them. It was decided at the Conference to use troops in support of the police. There had been close contact throughout the riots between Police Headquarters and Headquarters Land Forces and Hong Kong and Kowloon Garrison Headquarters, the latter situated near the tip of the peninsula. On a police situation report at 9.0 p.m. on October 10th the Garrison Commander had warned two Artillery Regiments that they might be required for internal security operations and at 11.0 p.m. each Regiment had been ordered to place two Internal Security Troops (30 men in each Troop, total 120 men) in a state of immediate readiness. Shortly after midnight the joint Military and Police Headquarters in Kowloon had been manned. At 10.0 a.m. on October 11th one infantry battalion had been warned by Headquarters Land Forces to be ready to move to Kowloon at an hour's notice and at 11.30 two other battalions, together with the scout cars of the Armoured Regiment, the 7th Hussars, had been given similar instructions. At 1.45 p.m. these three battalions and the scout cars were ordered to move to Kowloon.

12.30 p.m.

1.45 p.m.

33. A drive was launched at 2.0 p.m. by riot units in force from Kowloon Police Headquarters which was on the fringe of the rioting at the time, to free the main road and side streets of crowds as far as the junction. Three units

19

RA'-0413

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October
11th

(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 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 now five riot units (300 men) in the immediate vicinity 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 not 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.

1.30 p.m.
Incident 23

34. During the period up to 2.0 p.m. the whole of the area south west and south 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 Shamshuiipo Post Office was attacked and many cars were set on fire. At about 1.30 p.m. M. Ernst, Swiss Vice-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 died of burns received at the same 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 3.30 p.m. with one riot unit; two Internal Security Troops of the 74th Light Anti-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 from the junction area which had moved south. This sweep was effective and out-flanking movements by the mobs were prevented. At 3.45 p.m. two further Internal Security Troops, (from the 15th Medium Regiment R.A.), which had replaced the first two at Police Headquarters, were also ordered to the main road junction which was completely cordoned by 4.30 p.m. 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.

4.0 p.m.

35. At about 4.0 p.m. the three battalions which had been ordered into Kowloon for cordon duty began arriving.

20

Their arrival, together 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 round the main road in the original 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 by 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 5.45 p.m. 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 7.30 p.m. the Curfew Order came into operation throughout Kowloon and was gradually enforced in the Shamshuiipo district. At about the same time all cross-harbour ferry services were suspended. Apart from one or two isolated instances of looting no further disorder occurred in that part of the city.

October
11th

7.30 p.m.

36. The three infantry battalions, which arrived in Kowloon from the New Territories between 4.0 p.m. and 6.0 p.m. had completed deployment by 7.30 p.m. when the Curfew Order came into operation, in such a way as to divide Kowloon into three sections, between which movement was controlled by the security forces. One battalion area comprised the main riot centres in north western Kowloon, down to Boundary Street which separates the Shamshuiipo 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 reconnaissance flights were arranged from the evening of October 11th until October 14th, each Auster aircraft carrying a police officer as observer. 1900 Air Observation Post Flight, Royal Air Force made 22 sorties and the Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force 3, each of about an hour. These were extremely valuable in reporting crowd movements and fires to police radio cars or to Headquarters.

See Map B

21

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(b) Mongkok and Yaumati

(October 11th 2.30 p.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

October 11th 2.30 p.m. Incident 24
37. About 2.30 p.m. riotous crowds collected south of Police Headquarters along Nathan Road, which runs up the centre of the Kowloon peninsula; these crowds were being incited to violence by gang leaders and the police repeatedly used tear smoke and opened fire on them; during this period a provision store with stocks of goods from China was looted by Triad gangs which also smashed traffic signs and lights in the streets and stoned the Canton Provincial Bank, causing slight damage. Police Headquarters and the Mongkok Police Station were stoned later in the evening. Despite the curfew, it was not until about 11.0 p.m. that order was restored in this district. The difficulty was to bring force to bear on comparatively small bands of hooligans which ran riot over a wide area and broke up temporarily on the approach of police parties. At 8.30 p.m. a report of a large crowd at the Jordan Road junction, less than a mile from the southern tip of the peninsula, proved exaggerated; but small groups of hooligans were abroad in this neighbourhood, intent on looting and destruction. By 1.0 a.m. this most southerly area of Kowloon was quiet, and remained so.

(c) Eastern and north eastern Kowloon

(Kowloon City, Hung Hom and Ngau Chi Wan)

(October 11th 5.30 p.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

October 11th 5.30 p.m.
38. Most of the serious incidents which occurred during the evening and night of October 11th took place in three principal districts on the eastern side of Kowloon, an area so far scarcely affected. The main source of disorder was undoubtedly the highly congested district immediately west of the Kai Tak airport which has for long been a haunt of Triad Societies, "strong arm" gangs and criminals; immediately south of this lies a road junction, close to the western end of one of the airport runways. South of this again there was a series of incidents, particularly in Hung Hom, a reclaimed area projecting into the harbour to the east on the level of Jordan Road. At one stage the disorder spread east beyond the airport where some factory and other buildings were attacked and looted. The first report from the eastern side of the peninsula, at 5.30 p.m., was of a crowd on the main road to the airport near Hung Hom Police Station numbering about 300. This crowd was not disorderly, being composed mainly of factory workers, and was easily dispersed by a small force of police. A much more serious situation developed shortly afterwards at the road junction on the edge of the airport.

October 11th—12th Incident 25
Here there is a very large omnibus terminal where it was reported that many buses had been abandoned, while a crowd of several hundred had assembled on the open ground which forms the runway extension. The Divisional Superintendent from Kowloon City turned out with a riot unit and found a crowd of some 2,000 who scattered over the open ground and showered the police with stones. A particularly active and truculent mob was also assembled in a narrow street running northward from the road junction into the heart of Kowloon City. The whole of this neighbourhood rapidly became crowded with mobs of rioters who refused to disperse and were not dislodged by tear smoke. It was necessary to fire with Greener guns before the crowd could be broken up and driven northwards. The road junction was then cordoned off and held in strength. Between 3.0 p.m. and 9.0 p.m. small gangs armed with hammers and iron bars forced shopkeepers in this district to buy flags for amounts from \$5 to \$20 each; flags were also forced on motorists, pedestrians and householders. At 7.30 p.m. a crowd of about 200 south of the junction had to be dispersed with gunfire. Two further incidents occurred during the night, one outside a branch of the left wing Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union north of the junction, where a Triad gang of about 40 was stoning the premises; on being ordered to disperse this gang turned on the police who had to fire; the other incident was at midnight, when it was reported that a crowd of 50 to 100 people was breaking into the Yee Wo Tai Weaving Factory north of Kowloon City. It transpired that some stock had been taken and a small gang ran away when the police arrived. At 1.30 a.m. a second report reached the police and this time it was found that the factory had been ransacked; the police party sent to the scene opened fire on the looters killing four; 36 suspects were arrested. This area remained quiet for the rest of the night. In Hung Hom further south, which was the second main area of disorder on the eastern side of the peninsula, crowds were reported in two or three streets near the docks. A small police party was heavily stoned in this area about 8.45 p.m. and was forced to use its revolvers to avoid being overrun; one person was killed and another wounded, after which the crowd began to break up. Soon after, a police armoured car arrived and completed its rout. There was some looting of shops by gangs about 7.30 p.m.

October 11th 9.15 p.m. Incident 30
39. Further to the north east beyond the airport in Kun Tong Road there was a report at 9.15 p.m. of trouble at the Amoy Canning Factory; the manager informed a police inspector who arrived by car to investigate that an

October 11th
 Incident 31
 hour earlier a gang had threatened to wreck his factory if he did not hoist the Nationalist flag, which he did. Soon after, an officer of the R.A.F. Regiment at the airport informed the inspector that three small factories nearby, an iron works, a cotton factory and an ornamental stone works, had been fired and damaged; the Royal Air Force had detained seven suspects in connexion with these incidents. When he arrived at the R.A.F. guard room, the Inspector was told by a sentry of a fire visible in the Ngau Tau Kok resettlement area. On its way up the hill to the area, the police car stuck and was surrounded by a gang of 30 armed with heavy clubs. Gun and revolver fire drove off this gang and four were arrested. The fire proved to be a bonfire of furniture etc. looted from two huts. On its way back to Kowloon City Police Station, which it reached about midnight, this police party removed various obstructions erected across the main road which borders the airport. At about 11.0 p.m. a patrol car discovered a strong road block about half a mile south of the road junction on the edge of the airport; a police party reinforced the crew of the car and a number of shots were fired at a scattered mob which was stoning the police; the block was then removed. Two rioters were killed, one injured and six arrested. One further case of arson reported during the night was at the resettlement area at Ho Man Tin near the railway west of Hung Hom. The resettlement offices were found to be ransacked but a fire had already been extinguished when the police arrived; the labourers' quarters had also been looted. No rioters were found on the scene. Between 8.0 a.m. on October 11th and 8.0 a.m. on October 12th a further 367 persons had been arrested.

11.0 p.m.
 Incident 32

10.40 p.m.
 Incident 33

Phase 4

(October 12th 9.30 a.m. - 2.0 p.m.)

40. The initial Curfew Order required all persons to remain within doors from 7.30 p.m. on October 11th to 10.0 a.m. on October 12th throughout the Kowloon peninsula from Lai Chi Kok on the west to the district beyond the airport on the east. As is apparent from the preceding paragraphs, this Order was not fully observed during the night; it was the first of its kind ever made in Hong Kong and came into operation at only about an hour's notice after being announced by radio. It took time for the public generally to appreciate what was expected of it and for the first few hours of the curfew the security forces warned curfew breakers without making arrests. But the curfew provided these forces with powers which were essential for the purpose of isolating the active mobs of rioters. As news of the measures taken to enforce the curfew, including

the many arrests made later, spread through the city, the passive element progressively left the streets, thus enabling the forces of law and order to concentrate on their main task. The curfew continued throughout Kowloon for 24 hours from 10.0 a.m. on October 12th. But breaks of two hours, "staggered" in five zones were permitted for distribution and purchase of food. It was extended at the same time to Tsuen Wan to the north west (see Chapter XI below) and to Shatin over the hills to the north; at 7.30 p.m. it was further extended 6 miles beyond Tsuen Wan to include the Sham Tseng area. At 10.0 a.m. on October 13th it was lifted from the first zone in the tip of the peninsula, which enabled some ferry services to be resumed, and twenty four hours later throughout Kowloon; but was re-imposed on the nights of the 14th and 15th from 6.0 p.m. to 7.0 a.m. in the north western district which had been the focus of the riots. In the Tsuen Wan area the curfew remained in operation, with two-hour breaks, until 10.0 a.m. on October 16th. During the morning of October 12th many people continued to leave their homes for reasons unconnected with the disturbances and military forces at the cordon points and police patrols made numerous arrests. There were also cases of looting and arson committed by relatively small gangs and some large crowds collected. But disorder did not take on the character of concerted mob violence and nowhere assumed the menacing proportions of the two previous days; the situation steadily improved during the afternoon and night as the curfew was more rigidly enforced.

41. At 9.0 a.m. on October 12th troops broke up a crowd collecting on the Castle Peak Road from the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate and half an hour later police in an armoured car had to fire tear smoke at Shek Kip Mei to drive indoors a crowd, largely of settlers, which though not really hostile refused to disperse. Shortly before 10.0 a.m. near Li Cheng Uk another crowd of 500 to 600, mostly people intent on shopping at a market nearby, had also to be dispersed indoors with tear smoke. At 10.20 a.m. troops stopped a large crowd which was trying to cross the cordon from the south to their homes in the resettlement areas. Repeated attempts had been made, with some success, to loot a provision shop on the main road in the Mongkok district; the previous day the police had fired on looters at this spot, killing two, and on October 12th a police party, arriving near the shop in response to a telephone call, again opened fire, killing one looter and driving the rest of the gang away; two other attacks later in the morning were driven off by the police. At 11.30 a.m. two shops in the main road near Li Cheng Uk, both selling produce from

October
12th
12.30 p.m.

Incident 38
2.0 p.m.

Incident 39

China, were attacked and set on fire; one of these had been looted on the previous day, together with a neighbouring toy shop which also carried stocks of Chinese goods. Fairly large crowds collected and the Fire Brigade was stoned at one stage, but the crowd, which was not as a whole aggressive, was dispersed with tear smoke. The two fires were extinguished by 12.30 p.m. but the entire contents of the two shops were either looted or burnt. Further north along the main road a party of police which was attacked had to fire, killing one person. At 1.45 p.m. the offices in the Ho Man Tin Resettlement Area in central Kowloon were again set on fire; the perpetrators had left by the time the police and Fire Brigade arrived. At about 2.0 p.m. another fire occurred at the Heung To School behind the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate; the police party left in charge there earlier (see paragraph 27) had withdrawn the previous evening as the area was quiet. When the police arrived they met with no opposition and there was no sign of those responsible for the fire. The Fire Brigade reached the scene shortly before 3.0 p.m., but the school fire hydrants had been smashed and no outside supply of water was available; the fire could not therefore be effectively tackled. After this no further acts of violence were reported in Kowloon. Police patrols were active and continued to arrest curfew breakers and suspected looters. From the time of the original fire at the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Office at 3.0 p.m. on October 10th until this second fire at the School, a period of about 48 hours, the Fire Brigade had dealt with 17 fires in Kowloon, some of which were trivial while others were serious outbreaks. Fire appliances were unable to reach nine further fires, mostly of motor vehicles or looted stock burning in the streets. Fire engines, ambulances and uniformed personnel were singled out for attack by the rioters and had to be constantly protected by the police. The Brigade consists of 540 officers and men and was reinforced on October 11th by some 200 men of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Six vehicles of the ambulance service made some 45 journeys and conveyed about 80 patients to hospital during the same period. The Brigade, the Auxiliaries and the Ambulance Service did their duty well and without flinching in adverse conditions.

Phase 5

(October 12th 2.0 p.m.—October 16th 10.0 a.m.)

42. It was now clear that the security forces had firm control of the situation. The police were therefore able to concentrate their attention on seeking out and arresting the

26

rioters, looters and arsonists and on collecting evidence to bring the perpetrators of the disorders before the Courts for punishment. During the afternoon and night of October 12th widespread raids were made on boarding houses and other premises in Shamshuipo and Yaumati districts and also on Hong Kong Island. A raid was also made in a small area of Kowloon City at about 3.0 p.m. 300 suspects were arrested and a quantity of looted goods recovered. During a raid at Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate about 6.30 p.m. a few warning shots were fired by the police to enforce orders to settlers to keep indoors; 490 arrests were made there. Up to midnight on October 12th over 1,170 people had been arrested, of whom nearly 800 had been charged before Court with rioting or kindred offences, or with breach of Curfew Orders. On October 13th a large screening operation took place at Li Cheng Uk, where the riots had their origin, lasting from dawn until midday; over 1,000 men were arrested on suspicion and marched away with the assistance of two military Internal Security Troops. A similar raid in the Tai Hang Tung area between 3.30 and 7.0 p.m. resulted in the arrest of some 700 suspects. Military forces assisted in these operations and continued during the day to arrest numbers of curfew breakers and hand them over to the police to be dealt with according to law. To enable the police to investigate the very large number of suspects, the Emergency (Detention) Regulations 1956 were made on October 14th. These empowered the police to hold suspects for inquiry for 14 days, as opposed to the normal 48 hours, without bringing them before a magistrate, with extensions of a like period at the Governor's discretion.

October
12th

3.0 p.m.

6.30 p.m.

October
13th
Dawn

3.30 p.m.

43. On October 14th, when the curfew was lifted throughout Kowloon at 10.0 a.m., two battalions of the Regular Forces, with attendant scout cars, returned to their camps but remained on call. The remaining battalion together with two Internal Security Troops from the Royal Artillery remained on duty and re-imposed a cordon round the north western area, which was placed under curfew again at 6.0 p.m.; police made further arrests of curfew breakers during the evening in this area. Next morning the remaining battalion returned to camp, leaving two Internal Security Troops on hand at Police Headquarters Kowloon. The police enforced the curfew in the north western area again on the night of the 15th and on the morning of the 16th it was finally lifted, all troops returned to barracks and the joint Headquarters ceased to be manned.

October
14th
10.0 a.m.

27

RA'-0413

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Effect on essential services in Kowloon and return to normal conditions

44. The imposition of the curfew at short notice disrupted a number of services provided by Government or the utility companies. Cross-harbour ferry services were discontinued at Government request, except for a few special ferries run for the benefit of essential services or to assist stranded people to return home; motor bus and taxi services were brought to a standstill and the local train service ceased, although trains bringing people from China on October 12th and 13th, many of them returning Hong Kong residents, were allowed to run into Kowloon where arrangements were made to pass a total of over 3,000 passengers through curfew areas or across the harbour; a few other trains were run for special purposes. Passengers travelling by air were conveyed under police escort to and from the Peninsula Hotel at the southern end of Kowloon and the airport, or brought there from Hong Kong Island direct by launch and, while five aircraft were directed elsewhere by their companies, there was very little interference with normal passenger air services. No passenger ships arrived or departed during October 11th and 12th. Scavenging and conservancy services, the distribution of fresh fish and vegetables, and of rice, and postal services, were initially brought to a standstill; utility companies whose continued and efficient operation was of great importance during the riots such as the telephone, electricity, gas and re-diffusion companies, together with departments of Government such as Urban Services, Waterworks, Public Relations, Radio Hong Kong, the Royal Observatory and the New Territories Administration had difficulty at first in maintaining their operations as essential staff and supplies were unable to move through the curfew areas, and across the harbour. This was particularly serious in the case of the Medical Department as the Kowloon and Lai Chi Kok hospitals were overflowing with casualties, at a time when it was difficult to move essential staff and supplies and to discharge the less serious cases through the curfew zones. If it had not been for a generous and timely offer of assistance from the 33rd General Military Hospital which opened its doors to admit civilian casualties, there would have been a risk of a temporary breakdown. These difficulties were gradually overcome by improvisation and with the aid of police or military escorts, or in some cases by the loan of military transport.

45. Transport services in Kowloon and the cross-harbour ferries began to run again as soon as the curfew allowed; scavenging and conservancy was resumed on the night of October 12th and operated normally from the

following day; from October 12th, bulk supplies of vegetables, and from the following day of fish, were brought into markets in Kowloon and sold during the two-hour breaks in the curfew periods; quantities sold were normal (except for imported vegetables) by October 15th although prices remained slightly inflated for a time; beginning on October 13th special steps were taken to move supplies of rice across the harbour since, while supplies never in fact ran short, the price rose slightly; postal services returned to normal by October 16th. Other essential services not depending on distribution by road or water succeeded in maintaining their operations at the full pitch required by the emergency.

CHAPTER III

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS IN TSUEN WAN

Description of the area

46. The Tsuen Wan area is a centre of light industry, particularly textiles and enamelware, on the main road running westwards close to the sea from Kowloon to Castle Peak; the town of Tsuen Wan is situated some $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the tip of the Kowloon peninsula, or $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the junction with the Taipo Road which was the chief centre of rioting in Kowloon. Tsuen Wan itself is a town to all appearances, but is composed of a group of some eight old Chinese villages, joined together by recently constructed houses and shops; two of these villages, Muk Min Ha and Hoi Pa, feature in the narrative which follows. The population of Tsuen Wan town is about 60,000. See Map A See Map C

47. The principal industrial area stretches along the main road from Kwai Chung some two miles east of the town to a point about two miles west of the town. There are 75 registered factories employing over 12,000 workers, of whom 3,000 are women; another two or three thousand work in smaller concerns. Some 5,000 of these workers are employed in textile mills. At Sham Tseng about five miles west of Tsuen Wan lie the Hong Kong Brewery and the Factory of Kowloon Textile Industries Ltd., a mill employing some 1,100 workers. In the textile factories the workers, who are not inhabitants of Tsuen Wan, are for the most part housed in dormitories and eat communally; they do not have their families with them and so have no stake in the place other than their employment. A large proportion are of Nationalist or Communist sympathies; it is natural that feeling should run high and disputes occur between the two groups of workers, living as they do at very close quarters; there is particular danger of this at the time of

the two festivals, October 1st and October 10th (see paragraph 1). Many of the industrial workers in this area are members of trade unions. In Hong Kong the unions fall, with few exceptions, into two groups, namely those affiliated to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions which is Communist in sympathy (referred to below as left wing unions), and those affiliated to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Trade Union Council which is Nationalist in sympathy (referred to below as right wing unions). At a rough estimate, half the workers in Tsuen Wan are members of trade unions, about equally divided between right wing and left wing unions, while half or perhaps more do not belong to any union but are generally speaking anti-Communist in sympathy. The unions with which this narrative is concerned, among a number of others with branches in Tsuen Wan, are, on the left wing:—

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber and Plastic Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Enamel Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union;

and on the right wing:—

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Cotton Spinning, Weaving, Dyeing and Printing Trade Workers' General Union.

This last Union has its headquarters in the Hung Horn district of Kowloon, and has factory committees or factory representatives at the larger textile factories in Tsuen Wan.

Preliminary

48. On October 1st, 1956, Chinese Communist flags were flown from a number of factory dormitories and other buildings at Tsuen Wan, including left wing union premises, in celebration of the national day of China. One of the factory dormitories from which Communist flags were flown was that attached to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, situated about 300 yards west of the Police Station, which employs some 110 left wing workers. The management of this factory does not permit national flags to be flown from the factory itself but allows the workers to put up decorations and flags in the dormitory. Early on the morning of October 1st, 1956, a non-Communist worker living in the

dormitory of this factory pulled down one of the Communist flags and a lantern decoration which had been put up by left wing occupants of the dormitory, who then protested to the management; the man responsible was subsequently persuaded to replace the flag and decoration and to apologize to the left wing workers, thus apparently closing the incident.

49. On October 9th, right wing workers in this dormitory put up Nationalist flags and decorations, including the slogan "Long live the Chinese Republic" in large characters in the windows of the dormitory, in preparation for their celebrations on the following day. As was customary, a staff official of the management inspected the dormitory in the late evening of October 9th; he required the right wing workers to remove the slogan as it was considered likely to cause undue offence to left wing workers in the dormitory. This request caused some indignation amongst the right wing workers who then decided to remove all flags and decorations, which they did during the early hours of October 10th. There was no trouble at the time but the management's action was undoubtedly resented. The story was circulated among right wing workers in the area that the management had forbidden the employees of this factory to celebrate their national day; this story was believed and led to agitation among the workers. The incident was not reported to the police.

50. It has since been discovered that a number of meetings had been held by right wing workers in the Tsuen Wan area before October 10th at which the celebrations on the national day were discussed and planned. At a meeting held on October 4th by the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill Committee of the right wing Union it was decided to decorate the factory and to appeal to other Unions for support if the management objected. Meetings were also held by a committee to organize general celebrations at the Tsuen Wan Theatre and the Wah Hing School, these being presided over initially by a Vice-Chairman of the right wing Union. On the evening of the 10th a group of people who were not workers but included Nationalist partisans and members of Triad Societies held a special meeting at the Wah Hing School, after the "Double Tenth" celebrations were over, at which the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill incident was discussed. It was agreed that support would be given to the right wing workers at this factory from "other sources", believed to imply Triad gangs. On October 11th at midday the same people again met at the school; it was stated at this meeting that at 5.0 p.m. that day the management of the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill would be required by Union

representatives to fly the Nationalist flag, to dismiss all left wing workers and to discharge the official who had objected to the decorations on October 9th; right wing workers from other factories and Triad members would collect outside the factory in support; active members of the crowd would be recognizable by a handkerchief tied round the left wrist or a Nationalist paper flag in the jacket breast pocket; a system of flag signals between the factory and the Wah Hing School was also arranged. In the afternoon of October 11th Committee members at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill requested four other factories each to send 50 workers to the factory at 5.0 p.m. that day. As a sequel to this series of meetings, starting on the evening of October 10th when disturbances were known to have broken out in Kowloon, the events in Tsuen Wan followed a pattern, particularly in the case of the incidents at factories; for instance the leader of each section of the crowd controlled his gang by whistle in many cases; buildings to be attacked were distinguished by large Nationalist flags planted in the ground in front; demands made upon the management of factories generally included the flying of the Nationalist flag, dismissal of left wing workers and a privileged position for the right wing Union; in at least three cases "protection" money was extorted in addition; assaults on left wing workers were general throughout the riots.

51. The Police Force stationed in Tsuen Wan consisted of two Sub-Inspectors, one being the officer in charge, or Sub-divisional Inspector (referred to below as the S.D.I.) and 70 other ranks. The Station area is a sub-division of Shamshuipo in north western Kowloon. Police patrols were increased, as in other areas, on October 10th and Special Branch personnel were posted to the town. Reports were regularly made to Shamshuipo Divisional Station. When he heard news of the rioting in Kowloon, the S.D.I. put up a road block at the eastern end of the town, manned by 8 men. Seven patrols of two constables each kept the main road and streets under observation and a further patrol of a section visited villages north of the road. The S.D.I. with a detective sergeant paid regular visits to his men on patrol.

52. Nothing unusual occurred during October 10th or the morning of the 11th. During the afternoon, a Revenue Officer reported being stopped by a group of 10 men carrying Nationalist flags and forced to transport them in his van from Sham Tseng to a point little more than a mile short of the town. The S.D.I. went and challenged these men who said they were right wing workers employed by Major Contractors Ltd. and had heard rumours that their decorations in the town were to be destroyed by left wing

See Map C

32

workers. They dispersed on being called upon to do so. The employees of this Company, engaged on tunnel work in connexion with a new reservoir at Tai Lam Chung a few miles west of Tsuen Wan, are thought to include many ex-Nationalist soldiers and Triad members. October 11th

Outbreak of disorder

53. At about 4.30 p.m. a detective sergeant in the course of patrol found a group of about 50 women textile workers, dressed in white blouses and black skirts with straw caps on their heads, close to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill. This group, which came from an adjoining factory, was shouting demands in chorus to the factory management to put back the Nationalist flags, referring presumably to those which the workers had themselves removed two days before in the circumstances described in paragraph 49; a crowd began to collect, consisting largely of male factory workers dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, some of whom started shouting and abusing the factory management; it should be explained that the male and female dress described is worn by people of Nationalist sympathies for meetings, rallies or demonstrations. The S.D.I., who had now arrived, and the sergeant warned these people to disperse and tried to reason with them but the women continued shouting and groups of people began to converge from all directions, among them some men carrying large Nationalist flags on long bamboo poles which they stuck in the earth just outside the factory. The crowd, estimated at about 500 at this stage, began to get excited and its temper worsened when a group of men recognized to be employees of Major Contractors Ltd. appeared. The S.D.I. then returned to the Police Station to report the situation and collect a police party. There was no feeling against the police at the time and he was not obstructed as he walked the 300 yards along the road. The instructions he received from his Divisional Superintendent at Shamshuipo Police Station were to return at once to the scene with three sections of police and to attempt to disperse the crowd with baton charges and, if necessary, with tear smoke. Incident 40

54. When he got back to the factory with this police party who were armed with batons, tear smoke and three Greener riot guns, and included some plain clothes detectives (total about 30 men), the S.D.I. found the crowd had increased, that there were more flags and that the factory had been stoned and many windows broken. The crowd was threatening to burn down the factory and there were several people with cans of petrol or kerosene in their hands. The main demand was that Nationalist flags should be hoisted at once on the factory building itself; the

33

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October
11th

detective sergeant suggested to a member of the staff that it would be advisable to comply but none of the staff on the premises were prepared to give the order; instead a notice had been posted on the gate asking the workers to wait for proper negotiations. The S.D.I. left about nine of his force in charge of police vehicles parked a short distance away, including a Land Rover equipped with wireless, and advanced towards the crowd with his men. The situation in the road outside the factory was very confused at the time; passers by on foot or in buses or cars were being attacked, and parts of the crowd were trying to overturn and set fire to vehicles in the roadway while others were putting up a barricade of stones across the road. The police party did what it could to prevent assaults and damage to vehicles but became entangled with the crowd in the process and lost formation. The S.D.I. ordered his men to prepare to use tear smoke but there were several buses and a petrol lorry close by, surrounded by the crowd, and he decided that the use of smoke shells would be dangerous until these vehicles had been moved on. At this stage the S.D.I. was instructed by radio to use Greener gunfire if necessary, but he considered that in the situation in which the police found themselves and in view of their weak fire power this would serve only to inflame the crowd, without resulting in the restoration of order; moreover some people in the crowd were heard to shout that the buses and passengers would be burnt if the police opened fire. Meanwhile some of the crowd had climbed into the factory and opened the main gate from inside; fire crackers were discharged nearby, apparently as a signal, and part of the crowd surged into the factory, bursting through a section of police drawn up outside the gate. Once inside, the crowd ran riot, setting fire to cotton and to a van parked in the compound; kerosene was poured on the floors and ignited with matches. Some broke into the workers' dormitory, and looted or smashed the contents and assaulted left wing workers. A number of the police party entered with the crowd and tried to prevent arson and assault but, acting individually in the face of a large mob, were ineffective. Meanwhile police vehicles which were threatened by a section of the mob were successfully defended by a corporal with a sten gun, but a motor van nearby was overturned and set on fire. It was clear by this time that the police had no control over the situation; it was feared that arms carried by the party might fall into the hands of the mob, or that it might successfully attack the Police Station, where there was a force of only 16 men at the time, and take the stocks of firearms kept there. The S.D.I. was therefore authorized to withdraw and defend the Station. The party returned inside the Police Station about 7.15 p.m. and, as will appear

7.15 p.m.

34

below, the military authorities were at once requested to take steps to restore order in the town. October
11th

55. Meanwhile a series of demands had been laid upon the management by spokesmen of the right wing workers inside the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill. At about 5.30 p.m. five spokesmen had visited the management and demanded that the Nationalist flag be flown, left wing workers discharged and the staff official who had ordered the decorations to be removed on October 9th dismissed; these demands were not accepted. Later, at the height of the attack on the factory, two of these five introduced to the mill manager a stranger who appeared to be in some authority over the rioters; this man demanded that flags be hoisted by the manager and the largest string of fire crackers obtainable discharged, under threat of burning down the factory; he also demanded a thousand dollars. On this being paid by the management, he ordered the fire which had been started to be extinguished and led the mob out of the factory. Later still, after a meeting in the factory canteen, leaders of the right wing workers in the factory repeated earlier demands and added others, such as that new employees should be engaged only through the Union Committee which should be recognized by the management and that no Union member should be dismissed. Under duress the management accepted these demands, after which this factory was not further attacked.

56. At 6.0 p.m. a report reached Police Headquarters on Hong Kong Island from the Special Branch post in Tsuen Wan that a crowd had assembled at 5.15 p.m. outside the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, where there was a dispute with the management over the flying of Nationalist flags. News of the withdrawal of the police party inside the Police Station reached the Commissioner's control room at 7.15 p.m. The C.P. decided that he could not spare police reinforcements from Kowloon or elsewhere for Tsuen Wan. He therefore requested the Commander British Forces, who was in the control room at the time, to move military forces into Tsuen Wan to take control of the area. The latter agreed to this request. 7.15 p.m.

57. There was an interval between the withdrawal of the police at about 7.15 p.m. and the arrival of the military internal security force from the west at 9.30 p.m., punctuated by the arrival and passage through the town of an escort force from the Green Howards between 8.0 and 9.0 p.m. During this period left wing union and other premises were attacked and looted by the rioters and the inmates brutally assaulted and humiliated. While the rioting was in progress at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, a section of the

35

RA'-0413

0124

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October 11th Incident 41 mob left the factory and made for the Welfare Centre of the left wing Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber and Plastic Workers' General Union, a stone hut on the hillside north west of the factory; the occupants fled and the crowd broke in, ransacked the premises and broke the windows and roof. The main body of the mob which was now between 500 and 1,000 strong moved eastwards to the Police Station; when the defenders threatened Bren gun fire, the mob continued to the east. Passing the junction of the road to Sek Kōng the mob, led by men with large Nationalist flags, attacked three groups of left wing Union premises. The first group consisted of adjacent buildings lying in the Muk Min Ha area some 600 yards from the Police Station, first a clinic and dispensary run by the Federation of Trade Unions for members of its affiliates, together with quarters for the staff above, and secondly the welfare centre, co-operative store and library of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union and the welfare centre of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union, both housed in rooms on the first floor of adjacent houses in the village; the inmates attempted to defend these premises but the mob broke in, looted the buildings, burnt the furniture etc. outside and assaulted the occupants severely, taking those who failed to escape with them. Six employees of the clinic, four of them women, were dragged out from the first floor of the building; in the two welfare centres were 31 people in all, who resisted the attacks; they were bound in pairs with pieces of cloth and haled off by the mob. Four of those assaulted in this incident later died of their injuries. A house adjoining the welfare centres which was formerly used as a canteen was also ransacked. Moving about 1,000 yards further east along the main road, the mob attacked Incident 43 a second group of three buildings, the local branch of the Society of Plantations, a barber's shop close by which had flown Chinese Communist flags on October 1st and the premises of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union; at the last the occupants numbering about 21 were assaulted and one later died of his injuries. These buildings were all ransacked and the furniture smashed to pieces. The Union premises were also fired with the aid of kerosene. The leader of the mob during these attacks carried a large Nationalist flag on a bamboo pole which was planted in front of the place to be attacked.

58. The rioters divided at this stage into two sections. One section took the occupants of the left wing premises which had been ransacked, some 60 people in all, to the Castle Peak Road in the centre of Tsuen Wan where

there were two "pailaus" or large bamboo structures with Nationalist decorations and pictures, erected for the celebration of October 10th, one near the Hung Lin Bakery and one near the Tsuen Wan Theatre. Here they were mercilessly assaulted and beaten so that many became unconscious. A number of them had their outer clothing torn off during the course of the brutal attacks made on them; there is no evidence of rape. The other section of the mob entered Hoi Pa Village south of the main road and attacked a third group of buildings, the School of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union and the local branch of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Enamel Workers' General Union. At the latter the occupants resisted the mob for some time; finally the building was fired, the defenders forced out, caught by the mob, violently assaulted and taken off to the Castle Peak Road where they were beaten again. The buildings attacked were all ransacked and some nine adjoining houses and the Hoi Pa Restaurant received incidental damage at the hands of the mob. At about this time a convoy of the Green Howards arrived on the eastern outskirts of Tsuen Wan. On seeing them, the rioters built a barricade of stones across the road at the eastern end of the town through which the convoy broke soon afterwards; the mob then scattered into side streets, leaving their victims lying by the roadside, some severely injured and others lying still to avoid being further assaulted. It was this scene which gave rise to the story that sixty dead bodies had been seen in Tsuen Wan. The total dead or fatally injured in the whole Tsuen Wan area proved to be 8. (See paragraph 68 below).

59. Military Headquarters had had at 7.0 p.m. a report of rioting in Tsuen Wan, with an indication that the situation of the police there was serious; five minutes later Headquarters Land Forces warned the 24th Field Engineer Regiment at Tai Lam Camp, 8 miles west of Tsuen Wan, to prepare for internal security operations there; Regimental Headquarters and four field troops, each of one officer and thirty other ranks, were detailed for this and began to prepare for the move. At 7.40 p.m., this force was ordered to restore order in Tsuen Wan and to establish a joint Army and Police Headquarters there. At about 8.0 p.m. an escort party of two officers and 10 men from the Green Howards, with ration trucks, were proceeding from Lai Chi Kok north west of Kowloon to their camp in the New Territories, when they found the main road blocked at the eastern end of Tsuen Wan and could see fires and rioting going on in the town; they deployed across the road and were joined by two platoons sent by their Commanding Officer at 8.20 p.m. with orders

October
11th

to clear the road blocks and see the convoy through onto the Sek Kong road, which joins the coast road in Tsuen Wan; the Commanding Officer heard soon after that other troops were already on their way to Tsuen Wan from the west. The convoy was passed through by about 9.0 p.m.

60. Meanwhile the force from the 24th Field Engineer Regiment (referred to below as 24 F.E.R.), consisting of four officers and 120 other ranks, with Regimental Headquarters, left Tai Lam Camp at 8.53 p.m. and arrived at the western end of Tsuen Wan at 9.22 p.m. They found large crowds and boulders blocking the road but their entry, in heavy vehicles, was not actively opposed; they arrived at the Police Station at 9.30 p.m. and the Acting Commanding Officer of the Regiment took over from the S.D.I. The situation as it appeared to 24 F.E.R. when they took over at 9.30 p.m. at the Police Station was that in the factory area west of the town crowds had partially blocked the road with boulders for 250 yards, burnt a car and three motor cycles and damaged the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill by fire; these crowds were in hostile mood. There was also considerable movement on foot between the east and west of the town past the Police Station; the town area east of the junction of the road north to Sek Kong appeared from the main road to be fairly orderly.

11.0 p.m.

61. A field troop was sent with a bugler and police interpreters to order everyone off the streets by 11.0 p.m. Moving west to the edge of the factory area this party saw few people and no rioting in progress; to the east of the Police Station no crowds were seen near the road, but some ten injured people were lying by the roadside near the Wah Hing School and another four near the Silk Weaving Workers' Union premises, together with a pile of burnt furniture and papers. Soon after the return of the troop, a party of military and police left the Station to attend to the injured and picked up about 60 people in all near the various buildings attacked by the rioters and the Wah Hing School; they were taken at about 11.0 p.m. to the Lady Maurine Health Centre in the eastern part of the town and the more serious cases sent to hospital in Kowloon. At about this time two field troops were sent out, each with some 12 police, to enforce the "curfew". This was not easy as groups dispersed in one area only to collect elsewhere, and in some instances refused at first to disperse; in one case a patrol was faced with a crowd of about 400 which was with difficulty induced to disperse within a time limit of 5 minutes. At about 11.30 p.m. a troop of 24 F.E.R. met one company of the Green Howards with scout cars of the 7th Hussars some 400 yards east of the Sek Kong road

11.30 p.m.

38

junction. This force had been clearing the eastern part of the town and now enforced the "curfew" in the road running south alongside Hoi Pa village to the sea. No further disorder took place in the town itself, but several incidents affecting the neighbouring factories occurred during the night.

October
11th

62. At about 10.30 p.m. the factory of the Oriental Sui and Canning Co. which lies on the other side of Tsuen Wan Bay about a mile south east in a direct line from the Police Station was attacked by a mob of 100. Earlier in the evening an ex-employee had extorted two sums of money on a threat that the factory would be damaged; and after an anonymous telephone call a Nationalist flag had been hoisted. The mob failed to break the metal grilles guarding the windows but forced two employees inside by threats to open the gates; they then smashed furniture etc. with which they made a bonfire outside and burnt a motor van; the interior of the factory also caught fire. The workers' quarters were likewise ransacked and fired. The workers themselves had taken refuge on the hillside behind and were uninjured. At about 11.15 p.m. the fire at the factory was seen from the Police Station; by half past midnight troops had escorted a fire engine to the scene and the fire was extinguished.

Incident 46

63. At about 11.0 p.m. it was reported that a group of 40 people were threatening the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill No. 2, formerly the New China Textile Factory, 1½ miles east of the town; they did in fact raid the dormitory and assault left wing workers, who were forced to "kowtow" and repeat anti-Communist slogans. An hour earlier a gang of ten had smashed and burnt the contents of a hut near the factory which was used by left wing workers as a recreation centre; the seven inmates escaped. A patrol of the Green Howards later reported that all was quiet at this factory.

11.0 p.m.
Incident 47

64. Four other factories in the immediate vicinity of Tsuen Wan were visited by crowds of rioters during the night. These incidents followed a pattern; in each case a mob collected outside the factory carrying Nationalist flags, demands were made by spokesmen of the crowd under threat of burning down or looting the factory and the management generally acceded under duress. Left wing workers were assaulted whenever the mob could lay hands on them. Outside the Textile Corporation Factory a mob assaulted left wing workers entering the building at 6.30 p.m. Rioters re-assembled there at 9.0 p.m.; work stopped and all but some 30 left wing workers left the factory; three right wing employees of this factory then entered and demanded that the thirty workers still inside should

Incident 48

39

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October 11th-12th be dismissed and handed over to the mob. These thirty resigned and left by a side gate, but were caught by the mob, beaten and forced to "kowitz" and shout anti-Communist slogans. Later a gang forced its way into the dormitory at this factory, dragged out the left wing workers and forced them to march in procession along the road to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill and back carrying a Nationalist flag.

Incident 49 The South Sea Textile Factory was visited four times by mobs during the evening; work stopped and on the third occasion five unknown men entered and forced the management to let them hoist a number of Nationalist flags; on the final visit four spokesmen demanded the dismissal of left wing workers but the management temporized and the mob left the vicinity. A crowd of 200 to 300 arrived outside the South Textiles Factory at about 8.0 p.m. on October 11th, carrying Nationalist flags and shouting; three right wing employees of the factory entered and demanded that flags be hoisted, that all left wing workers be dismissed, that the right wing Union be recognized and engagements and dismissals be subject to its approval, and that workers be paid during any stoppage of work. The assistant manager acceded under duress and signed a document which has since been recovered. About midnight a patrol visited this factory, where a crowd was reported, and found about 1,000 people who appeared by their dress to be right wing workers. They refused to disperse but eventually agreed to leave the roadway. At Incident 51 about 8.0 a.m. the next day, October 12th, a small crowd visited the Pacific Worsted Mills. Five spokesmen demanded that left wing workers be dismissed, that engagements and dismissals be subject to the approval of the right wing Union, which should be encouraged by the management, and that certain employees should receive increased pay; the management accepted these demands in writing under duress and the crowd dispersed.

October 12th 65. By the small hours of October 12th the general situation in the immediate area of Tsuen Wan was quieter. Meanwhile at Sham Tseng, some 4 miles to the west of Tsuen Wan, the Kowloon Textile Factory Committee of the right wing Union had called a meeting at 8.0 p.m. on October 11th, which was attended also by workers from Tsuen Wan factories and employees of Major Contractors Ltd., believed to be Triad members. It was agreed that demands should be laid upon the management of this factory, supported by a gathering of right wing workers, that the Nationalist flag be flown and left wing workers dismissed. A crowd arrived outside the Kowloon Textiles Factory about 2.0 a.m. and the Chairman of the Union Factory Committee demanded that the Nationalist

2.0 a.m. Incident 52

October 11th-12th flag be hoisted and work stopped. Meanwhile the crowd began stoning the factory and some of them climbed in and forced the watchman to hand over the keys and open the gates. About 100 people rushed in and overturned three cars in the compound, setting alight to one of them. One group forced open a strong box and took three shot guns and ammunition; two of these guns were later found smashed and thrown into the sea. While this was going on, a workers' spokesman demanded that, in addition to stopping work and hoisting the flag, the management should dismiss left wing workers and recognize the right wing Union. The factory engineer accepted the conditions under duress and signed a paper to this effect; he also promised to pay \$2,500 the next day for five Nationalist flags; two of the leaders who were workers from this factory signed the paper and one of them then announced to the crowd that the conditions had been accepted. Whistles were blown as a sign for withdrawal, one large and four small Nationalist flags were hoisted and the rioters bowed three times before them. The leader then seized a motor truck belonging to the factory in which parties of rioters were driven to the South Sea Textiles Factory in Tsuen Wan; as the crowd left, boulders were rolled on to the roadway as a block. At about midnight the house of a left wing film actress between Sham Tseng and Tsuen Wan, which was used as a recreation club by workers, was ransacked by a group believed to have included some from the Kowloon Textiles Factory. At Incident 53 Sham Tseng village small gangs broke into a shop, two huts and two stone houses, one used as a welfare and recreation centre of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union and looted and wrecked the premises.

Midnight Incident 53

Midnight Incident 54

66. The four troops of 24 F.E.R. spent the rest of the night in active patrols to ensure that the people kept off the streets. A report at 7.30 a.m. that the Hong Kong Brewery at Sham Tseng was being attacked proved false. At 8.25 a.m. the 27th Light Battery R.A. was ordered to the Brewery. At 10.0 a.m. on October 12th a Curfew Order came into force in Tsuen Wan, extended at 7.30 p.m. to cover the Sham Tseng area. This remained in force, with two-hourly intervals between noon and 2.0 p.m. daily, until 10.0 a.m. on October 16th.

October 12th 7.30 a.m. 10.0 a.m.

67. At about 11.0 a.m. on October 12th some 640 left wing workers were brought to the Police Station from the direction of the factories to the west by a group of right wing workers; they were allowed to remain in the compound for protection until the afternoon of October 14th

when they were moved to the South Sea Textile Factory with a police guard. Many other left wing workers left the factory area during the riots, either taking to the hills to the north or making their way to Kowloon. During the day a number of reports of expected disorder reached the police, but none of these proved well founded; they were a natural product of nervousness on the part of factory staffs. On October 14th reinforcements of 120 police moved into temporary accommodation at the South Sea Textiles Factory and at the Hong Kong Brewery at Sham Tseng; at 8.0 p.m. on October 14th the bulk of the military force was withdrawn and the remainder left on October 15th, handing back control to the police.

Casualties in Tsuen Wan

68. Eight deaths are known to have occurred as a result of the riots in the Tsuen Wan area, six after admission to hospital, and one on the way to hospital; one body was found in the street near Hoi Pa village on October 11th; in all these cases death was due to injuries inflicted with blunt instruments. 63 other serious casualties were taken to hospital in Kowloon of which 54 were admitted. 46 other injured people were treated at the Lady Maurine Health Centre at Tsuen Wan. All the dead have been identified and all persons reported missing in the Tsuen Wan area since the riots have been accounted for.

Arrests

69. During the night of October 11th joint military and police patrols made 42 arrests for rioting and unlawful assembly in the vicinity of the Police Station. Early in the morning of October 14th a large force of military and police sent from Kowloon conducted a sweep from the factory area in the west to the junction of the Sek Kong Road in the east and arrested some 600 suspects. At 3.0 p.m. the same day a further 42 arrests were made in the rest of Tsuen Wan.

General

70. The principal characteristics of the riots in Tsuen Wan were: firstly a degree of organization among the mobs, which were led by men with large Nationalist flags, responded to whistle blasts, used a system of white wristbands as a mark of recognition and were amenable to withdrawing from a factory, the management of which had hoisted this flag, paid the requisite protection money or met other demands; secondly, the concerted and destructive

attacks on buildings housing Communist sympathizers, whether union premises, houses or shops, together with the brutal and humiliating treatment of the occupants, especially if they attempted to defend their premises; thirdly the cases of extortion under threat of arson or wholesale destruction of a factory and through the widespread forced sale of Nationalist paper flags; fourthly the tendency to use the occasion of disorder to pay off old scores either against the political opponent or the former employer; and fifthly the attempt to establish right wing unions in a position of monopoly by securing undertakings in writing from factory managements that left wing workers would be dismissed and replaced by people acceptable to these unions.

Effect on the labour situation in Tsuen Wan and return to normal conditions

71. On the morning of October 16th, when the curfew was finally lifted, the only factories which could not resume operation owing to damage were the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill and the Oriental Soy and Canning Factory. Nearly all the other factories and mills resumed work on that day, many with their labour force depleted by arrests or by absence owing to nervousness. Later in the day a drift away from the textile factories developed. This was initiated apparently by the left wing unions calling their members to headquarters in Kowloon to report on their experiences during the riots; the right wing workers then became afraid of reprisals and also began to leave. On the two succeeding days only about a third of the labour force was at work in the mills. By October 22nd some 70% had returned, but a few days later rumours of plans for reprisals or for further violence were in circulation, associated with the birthday of Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek on October 31st. These appeared to be without any solid basis whatever but served, with the removal of a police riot unit quartered in one of the factories to a less conspicuous location in the neighbourhood, to cause general alarm; some workers left for Kowloon, while others did not report for the night shift. The managements of several textile factories, finding their labour force reduced again to some 30%, thought it advisable to grant holidays at the end of the month. Meanwhile the police increased their strength considerably and made it plain that they were ready for any fresh outbreak. The rumours proved unfounded and no incident occurred on October 31st; thereafter the labour situation in the Tsuen Wan area rapidly improved. By November 2nd it was virtually normal.

CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY OF CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE

Casualties

72,443 casualties are recorded by the hospitals, 59 fatal. Of the remaining 384, 151 were cases of minor injury treated in hospital and sent home. There were 233 admissions, of which some were discharged by October 18th without detailed records. Details of injuries, sex and age in 164 cases recorded were as follows:—

Casualties admitted to Hospitals of which detailed records exist
(Excluding those who died after admission)

Injury	Adult		Juvenile (under 18)		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Head Injuries.....	15		1		16
Fractures	6	1	3	1	11
Burns	1		1		2
Gunshot Wounds	61	11	7	3	82
Other severe injuries	6		1		7
Minor injuries.....	36	6	4		46
Total.....	125	18	17	4	164

There were probably many more cases of injury which did not reach the hospitals; for instance, a police surgeon set up a first aid post at Police Headquarters Kowloon and treated many cases which were not sent on to hospital; moreover a number of the injured rioters no doubt deliberately concealed their wounds in order to avoid attracting the attention of the police. Of the 59 fatal casualties, 31 were

dead on arrival at hospitals and 28 died in hospital. Details of cause of death, sex and age are as follows:—

Analysis of deaths

Cause of Death	Adults				Juveniles (under 18)		Total
	Male		Female		Male (no females)		
	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	
Fire Engine accident	1	1		1			3
Blunt instrument	5	3					8
Gunshot							
(1) Greener Gun.....	13	18				2	33
(2) Other ball ammunition	6	1			1		8
(3) Smoke Shell		3					3
Burns		2	1				3
Multiple injuries.....	1						1
Totals.....	26	28	1	1	1	2	59

The injuries which resulted in death were caused as follows:—

(a) by the Police—		
Gunshot	41	
Smoke shell	3	44
(b) by the rioters—		
In Tsuen Wan (see paragraph 68)	8	
Accident to the fire engine (incident 10) ...	3	
Burns (incident 23)	3	
Suicide while in custody	1	15
		<u>59</u>

Two of those who died of burns and the man who committed suicide were rioters and the fatal injuries sustained were due to their own actions. Where a particular incident is known to have resulted in one or more deaths, this is mentioned in the narrative; but most of those shot by the police did not die on the spot and it is not possible to relate more than a few of these deaths to a particular

time or place with any certainty. The number of deaths which occurred in each district was as follows:—

See Map B	Shamshuipo	24
	Yaumati	5
	Mongkok	1
	Kowloon City	9
	Tsuen Wan	8
	Unknown	12

55 of the dead have so far been identified, 43 by relatives or friends (10 directly and 33 by photographs), 7 by criminal records and 5 by names only, given by themselves when admitted to hospital; 4 are unknown. A missing persons inquiry bureau was established at Kowloon Police Headquarters and relations of missing persons were publicly invited to come to the bureau to check photographs or particulars available of the dead, the injured and persons in custody. 13 of the dead rioters had previous criminal records. There were no fatal casualties among the security forces. 4 officers and 13 other ranks of Her Majesty's Regular Forces were injured and of these 1 officer and 3 other ranks were admitted to hospital; 107 members of the Police Force were injured, of whom 8 were treated in hospital and 1 detained. One fatal casualty was of a European (see paragraph 34) and 7 European civilians were admitted to hospital with injuries.

Damage

73. The damage caused by the riots resulted mainly from arson and looting. In many instances it has proved impracticable to obtain more than a rough estimate, generally supplied by the owners or occupants of the premises or property damaged. It is evident that the figures are in many of these cases considerably inflated, and some had to be based on replacement value without allowance for depreciation. The following is a brief summary with an indication of the types of property involved (\$16=£1):—

IN KOWLOON

(1) Industrial and commercial	
(a) The Garden Bakery (preliminary estimate by the management based purely on replacement cost)	\$3,000,000
(b) Small factories and other concerns, including four weaving factories, a toy and a metal factory and a stone works	500,000

(c) Some thirty shops including provision stores, goldsmiths, bookshops and four small film studios	\$300,000
(2) Some twenty private houses, flats, etc.	50,000
(3) Schools	250,000
(4) Private vehicles	
About twenty destroyed by fire and fifty damaged, including seven burnt and five damaged at the Garden Bakery	200,000
(5) Government buildings	
consisting of offices, police posts and quarters in resettlement areas and slight damage to a post office	50,000
(6) Other Government property	
including two fire engines, other vehicles, street signs, traffic signals, etc.	170,000

IN TSUEN WAN

Damage by fire and looting to factories, trade union and similar premises and minor damage to private property	250,000
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74. In Kowloon, all but one of the small factories looted or burnt, and nearly all the thirty shops and private houses are believed to have displayed Chinese Communist flags or decorations on October 1st. Most of the stores which were looted had products from China on sale. Private cars were in general indiscriminately attacked and burnt as obvious targets for mob violence, especially if they did not fly the Nationalist flag or pay protection money. The Government property damaged fell into two categories, namely premises in resettlement areas, and vehicles, street signs etc. on which the rioters could readily lay hands. In Tsuen Wan all the union premises and nearly all the private property looted or set on fire were buildings used or occupied by left wing sympathizers; the circumstances in which factories were damaged have been described in Chapter III. It is proper to add that the fact that left wing premises were, generally speaking, singled out for attack, looting and arson, does not necessarily imply that the rioters were all strong Nationalist supporters. In many cases, criminal gangs intent on creating disorder as a cloak and a lever for increased extortion sought to exploit the emotions aroused by the "Double Tenth" celebrations and made use of the Nationalist flag to this end. This aspect is dealt with more fully in the succeeding chapter.

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CHAPTER V
COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

75. The course of the riots in Kowloon fell naturally into three phases, separated by two short intervals. During the first phase, lasting from 2.0 p.m. to 3.20 p.m. on October 10th, the officials and property of the Resettlement Department were initially the target of attack, until the police intervened to protect an officer from renewed assault and so drew the animosity of the crowd. This was composed almost entirely of settlers although there are reports of strange faces being seen among them; there is no doubt that many settlers are members of Triad and criminal gangs and would not be slow to grasp such a favourable opportunity for challenging law and order. This phase was short but during the ensuing lull word was passed round in Triad circles that disorder had broken out at Li Cheng Uk connected with the removal of Nationalist flags by officials, a situation by which "the brothers" (the term used by these gangsters) should seek to profit. In the second phase, lasting from 6.30 p.m. on October 10th until 6.0 a.m. on October 11th, Triad gang leadership came increasingly to the fore. At first members acted individually but there is evidence that by 10.0 p.m. organized gangs led by men carrying large Nationalist flags were debouching in force from Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate; in the small hours of October 11th a series of shops in Shamshuipo, all with Communist connexions, were looted by mobs each led by Triad gangs from the Wo or 14K groups, at a time when the operations of the police were concentrated at the main road junction immediately adjacent to this estate which was continually invested by large mobs of rioters. After 10.30 p.m. on October 10th the rioters became at once bolder in their defiance of the police, for instance in building barricades of boulders, overturned cars etc. across the main roads, and also more adept at evading baton charges or tear smoke. During the third phase from 10.0 a.m. on October 11th until the small hours of the following morning, (with which events took a much more serious turn in that the riots could no longer be associated directly with the "Double Tenth" celebrations), a further series of shops and small factories were looted by Triad gangs which became increasingly determined and destructive during the morning and early afternoon. Occupants of cars, and in Kowloon City shopkeepers, were forced under threat of assault to "buy" Nationalist flags, a characteristic form of extortion. The police were being strongly attacked throughout this period and were obliged to resort increasingly to firearms.

See
paragraph
4

This, and the arrival of regular troops to cordon the disturbed areas, caused organized resistance by large mobs to crumple rapidly. By midnight only scattered gangs of looters remained active in Kowloon.

76. The extremely high population density of north western Kowloon, estimated at some 2,000 people to the acre, is a factor which needs to be constantly borne in mind in considering the handling of the riots. In this district the streets are, except late at night, continuously thronged with people of all ages going about their business. If anything unusual such as a traffic accident or an altercation occurs, a crowd of hundreds collects almost at once, becoming a densely packed mass of thousands of people in a few minutes, unless the situation is dealt with rapidly. In the resettlement estates, the inhabitants of only one of the smallest blocks would form a crowd of 2,000 if they all came into the street at once. The Shek Kip Mei Estate with a population of 55,000 housed in 25 blocks lies a stone's throw from the main road junction and provided both a huge reservoir of manpower and a convenient and safe place of retreat during the rioting at this spot. The population of the urban areas of Kowloon north of Jordan Road, as shown on Map B, approaches a million; the residential area is very small relative to the population. In such overcrowded conditions police movement is hampered and leaders of the mob have little difficulty in sheltering behind a screen of curious onlookers which includes many women and children. It is noticeable in photographs taken during the riots, while the police were being stoned or were firing tear smoke shells, that small boys were often in the forefront of the crowd; in such conditions the police were reluctant to risk killing passive by-standers, including children, by resort to firearms; moreover since the gangs of rioters often did not stand their ground when the police appeared but scattered and fled, an order to fire would in many cases have involved shooting into the backs of a retreating mob. Yet, unless they open fire, the police are at a disadvantage in a scattered game of tip and run in a maze of streets; moreover the typical tenement building has a series of balconies on each floor which are ideally suited for pelting the police in the street below with any handy missile. Large stones and blocks of concrete, too heavy to be thrown, were in fact dropped on police units and vehicles and on fire engines from these points of vantage. In the resettlement estates a police party is confronted with a seven-tiered erection with continuous verandahs on both sides of the street, all teeming with people who may be either harmless spectators or thugs armed with brickbats or heavy stones. Tear smoke or

sickening smoke require concentration if they are to be effective; in these riots really suitable targets such as small and compact stationary or advancing crowds seldom presented themselves. When fired at a rapidly retreating group of rioters, or upwards at verandahs from which the police are being stoned, tear or sickening smoke has little effect. In these circumstances the crowds soon lost their fear of smoke, which proved a disappointing weapon in preventing the riots developing to a stage at which the use of firearms could no longer be avoided. Even gunshot has much less impact on crowds sprinkled with rioters, whether on verandahs or scattering through side-streets at a distance from the advancing police, than when ringleaders of a compact mob are brought down.

77. Watch and ward is the primary role of the Police Force; police training stresses the necessity for co-operation with the public and for tact and persuasion and the minimum use of force. It must be the duty of any police force to exercise the greatest possible restraint in the handling of disorder and to resort to firearms only in self-defence, to save life or where there is a grave and continuing threat to public order. In maintaining this attitude until it was evident beyond all doubt, both that a determined and prolonged onslaught was being made on the rule of law in the Colony, and also that all deterrents short of firearms had been fully employed without success, the Acting Commissioner of Police directed the operations of his Force in consonance with its accepted role and functions.

78. The Hong Kong Police Force has to police a highly developed and congested sea port with a population of over two millions, together with rural areas, islands, a highly indented coastline and the frontier with China. To meet large scale riots the structure of the Force requires to be suddenly and drastically changed and almost the whole Force regrouped in a number of ad hoc mobile units. This change was successfully carried through and in general the police functioned well as a security force; in particular, the discipline and steadiness of the men in face of heavy and constant stoning was admirable. The fluid tactics of the mobs made it necessary for police formations to be highly flexible and mobile; the small number of armoured cars available proved invaluable, but limitations of transport and communications had the result that the men in action could not always be deployed to best advantage.

79. The extreme mobility of the mobs in Kowloon may be attributed partly to the natural desire of the rioters to keep out of range of police batons, smoke grenades and shells and in the later stages gunfire; but this mobility was

due even more to their lack of any very definite objective other than the creation of a state of general disorder and weakened police control in a widening area of the city, so as to induce an atmosphere congenial to their further criminal activities. This lack of any definite objective was one of the most important elements in the situation in Kowloon from the police point of view. It made it impossible for the police to anticipate the likely targets of mob action or to deploy in advance of any new outbreak of violence. It must be conceded, therefore, that the initiative lay with the rioters throughout the early stages of the disturbances and until the main trouble centres were cordoned off and the curfew imposed. While there is ample evidence, from subsequent interrogation, of organized Triad activity there is indication neither of co-ordinated central control of the riots by a superior Triad or other body nor of any planning of the disturbances before the initial outbreak at Li Cheng Uk on the afternoon of October 10th. These gangster organizations, in common with "protection" and extortion gangs of the same kidney in other parts of the world, retain the close-knit "blood brotherhood" of a secret society; each gang preys continuously upon the inhabitants, especially the small traders, of a particular district which is regarded as its exclusive "territory". They need to make no special plans before exploiting a favourable situation; all that is required is a message or sign passed rapidly round in the particular "territory" that members should muster on business. These gangs favour the Nationalist cause because some have political origins and most are composed largely of Nationalist sympathizers. Having succeeded in causing widespread disorder on the "Double Tenth", when the flag-symbol is ever present, the gangs then directed their attacks at premises which only ten days earlier had displayed the Communist 5-star flag. Furthermore, by using the Nationalist flag as a symbol and cover, purely gangster elements, who possibly had no overt political affiliations themselves, managed to obtain or enforce the support, either active or passive, of large numbers of people whose political sympathies were strong but who were not necessarily disposed to violence.

80. As has been explained in Chapter I, the areas of refugee squatter huts were strongholds of the Triads, who have not relaxed their grip on the same clientele now rehoused in the resettlement estates. On October 10th the gangs centred in the Shek Kip Mei Estate saw their chance, while the police were heavily engaged at Li Cheng Uk, to exploit resentment felt against the Resettlement Department over the affair of the flags, and consequently against

the authorities including the police, and to incite the crowds to destroy the property of Communist sympathizers; on the following day the gangs in Kowloon City and Yaumati seized their opportunity for extortion and looting while the police were fully occupied in Shamshuipo district. The rapidity with which resistance on a large scale collapsed when the police began to use firearms without hesitation and regular battalions were seen moving into Kowloon in force tends to confirm the conclusion that the rioters had no planned objectives and were prepared, as soon as they saw that the tide was turning, to abandon their efforts to create a state of general disorder. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that gangs of this nature have, in Hong Kong as in other places, a stake in disorder which yields increased dividends not merely at the time, through extortion under immediate threat of assault or arson, but for as long as the fear of renewed violence induces their victims to pay an increased premium in "protection" money. The more brutal and ruthless the gangs when they have a chance to run riot, the richer and more prolonged their harvest. It is significant that during the year ending in March 1956 some 75% of the cases of reported crime in the Colony originated in Kowloon; and over 45% of the total occurred in the northern part of Kowloon, that is in Shamshuipo and Kowloon City districts, the two main centres of rioting. Evidently the criminal gangs confined their operations during the riots very largely to the "territory" from which their income as racketeers is drawn. The conclusion that the rioting in Kowloon was instigated and fanned by criminals, for criminal and not political or other ends, is confirmed not only by this geographical concentration in the more lawless districts of the Colony but also by the fact that no attacks were made on the main administrative or business centres, whether on the mainland or on Hong Kong Island.

81. In Tsuen Wan the riots also grew out of objections to some of the decorations for the "Double Tenth". There is no evidence of planning prior to October 10th; but it does appear both from the information later obtained about the meetings of October 10th and 11th, and from the similarity of many of the demands made on factory managements that, encouraged by news of the riots in Kowloon, right wing union leaders in Tsuen Wan and other anti-Communist elements made a concerted attempt to intimidate factory managements, with a view to inducing them to expel left wing workers and to recognize the right wing union as the sole representative of the workers. The

See
paragraphs
50 and 65

attacks on left wing union and other premises and the severe assaults on their occupants developed when the mob at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill had roused itself to a state of frenzy and hysteria by its successful acts of violence and destruction, and then found itself no longer opposed by the police and was temporarily able to run riot in the town without restraint. It must be remembered that there has been bitter rivalry between the right wing and left wing trade unions in the Colony for a number of years. Particularly strong feelings are engendered when workers of opposite political sympathies work, and also live, side by side as in the Tsuen Wan area. Rivalry is intensified during the period of celebration of the two national days in October and violent incidents have occurred from time to time, leaving old scores to be settled on one side or the other.

82. The Army units which took part in the suppression of the riots consisted firstly of the 15th Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery and the 74th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, from Kowloon which supported police drives from Police Headquarters Kowloon northwards to the main road junction and assisted in the cordoning and security of the junction during the afternoon and evening of October 11th; secondly of three infantry battalions, the Green Howards, the North Staffordshire Regiment and the Northamptonshire Regiment, with scout cars of the 7th Hussars, which were moved into Kowloon from the New Territories during the same period to cordon the areas of rioting, as shown on Map B; and thirdly of the 24th Field Engineer Regiment, which took over control of Tsuen Wan at 9.30 p.m. on the same evening. This latter unit was subsequently reinforced by the 27th Light Battery, Royal Artillery, the 15th Field Park Squadron, Royal Engineers and elements of the 7th Hussars. In addition, mobile patrols visited various parts of the New Territories and Internal Security troops stood to on Hong Kong Island. The officers and men of the Colony's Regular Garrison conducted themselves in a commendably forbearing 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 large scale disorder during the evening of October 11th. The military forces did not find it necessary 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.

83. Many arrests were made by the police during the riots. Extensive screening operations took place on October 12th, 13th and 14th and many suspects were taken into custody, both in Kowloon and in Tsuen Wan. The search for those responsible for the disorders has been vigorously pursued since then and further investigations have resulted in more arrests. Over 6,000 people in all have been arrested, of whom some 3,000 were released after being questioned. A further 1,455 were charged with breach of Curfew Orders and 1,241 of these were convicted and sent to prison for periods ranging from 7 days to 2 months, while 214 were fined, bound over or discharged. Up to the end of November 740 of the remaining persons in custody had been charged with more serious offences committed in Kowloon and many had been convicted, while others were awaiting trial. The position at the end of the month may be summarized as follows:—

(Offences committed in Kowloon)

Offence	Convicted	Awaiting trial	Acquitted or discharged	Total
Murder	—	7	1	8
Riot and unlawful assembly	51	176	140	367
Looting	119	11	29	159
Wounding	—	1	—	1
Triad membership	103	41	37	181
Possession of arms	2	1	5	8
Breach of Deportation Order	16	—	—	16
TOTAL	291	237	212	740

Prison sentences imposed range as follows:—

For riot: 6 months to 2 years.

For riot with membership of a Triad Society: 1 year to 3 years.

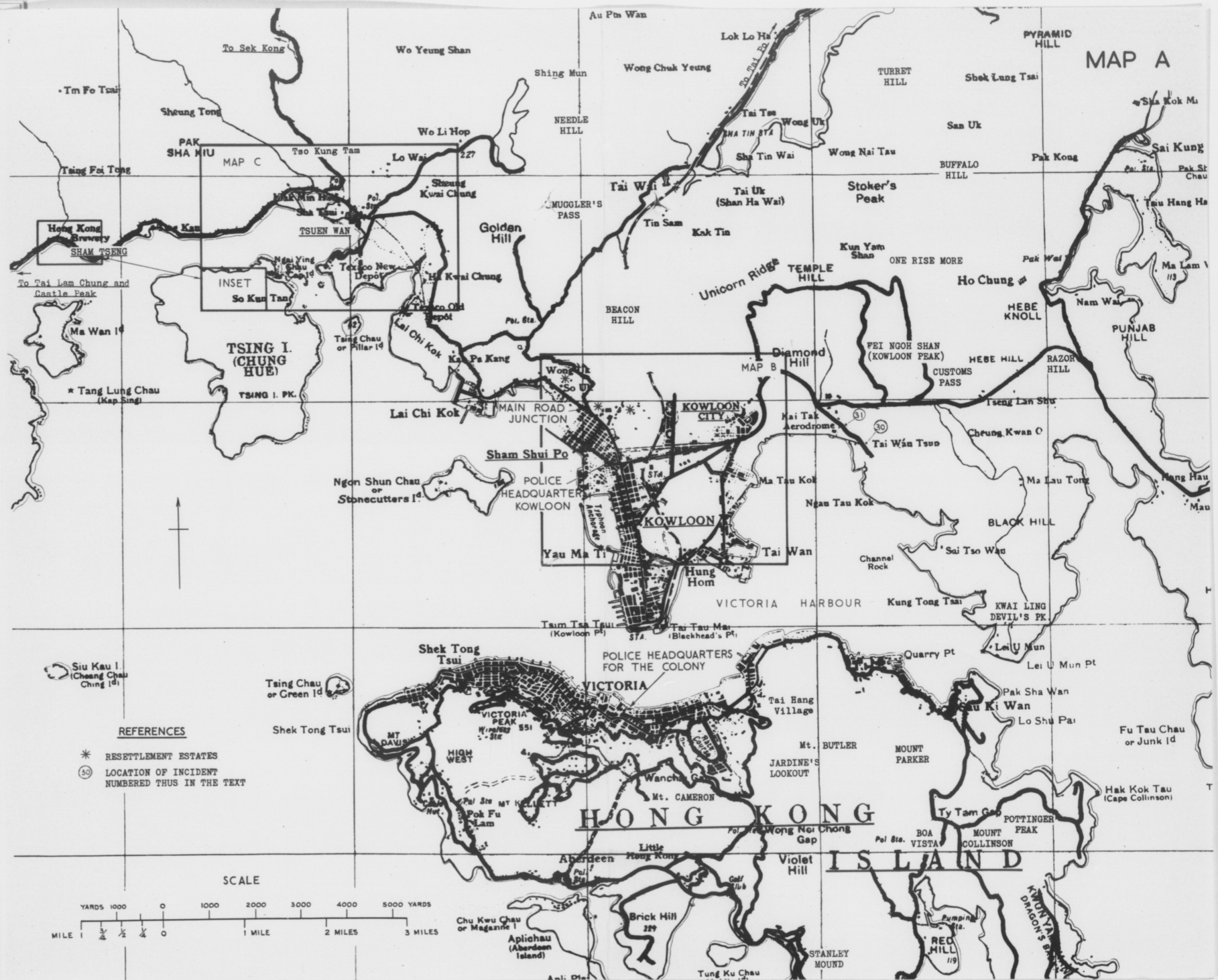
For Triad membership: 6 months to 2 years.

For looting: up to 1 year.

In connexion with the looting of the Yee Wo Tai Weaving factory in Kowloon City in the early hours of October 12th (Incident 28), a total of 91 people have been charged, 58 with rioting or Triad offences, (6 convicted and 52 awaiting trial) and 33 with looting (23 convicted and 10 discharged); for

offences committed at the Heung To School (Incident 19), 17 people have been convicted of looting and 4 of Triad offences; in connexion with the attack on two shops in Castle Peak Road (Incident 37) 31 people have been convicted and sentenced for looting. A further 146 people were charged on November 27th with offences committed in Tsuen Wan; a total of 186 charges were laid, including 167 of riot; other charges included arson, intimidation and riotous assault. All these cases were pending at the end of November; and some 600 people remained in custody while investigations continued. All cases so far disposed of have been heard in the Magistrates' Courts, the jurisdiction of which extends to a maximum sentence of two years' or in the case of consecutive sentences three years', imprisonment. The more important of the cases still pending will be the subject of committal proceedings for trial in the higher Courts, which are empowered to impose heavier sentences. It is necessary to add that the strenuous efforts of the police to ensure that all those responsible for the disorders are duly punished according to law have been considerably hampered by general reluctance on the part of witnesses, particularly witnesses of the rioting in Tsuen Wan, to come forward and give evidence.

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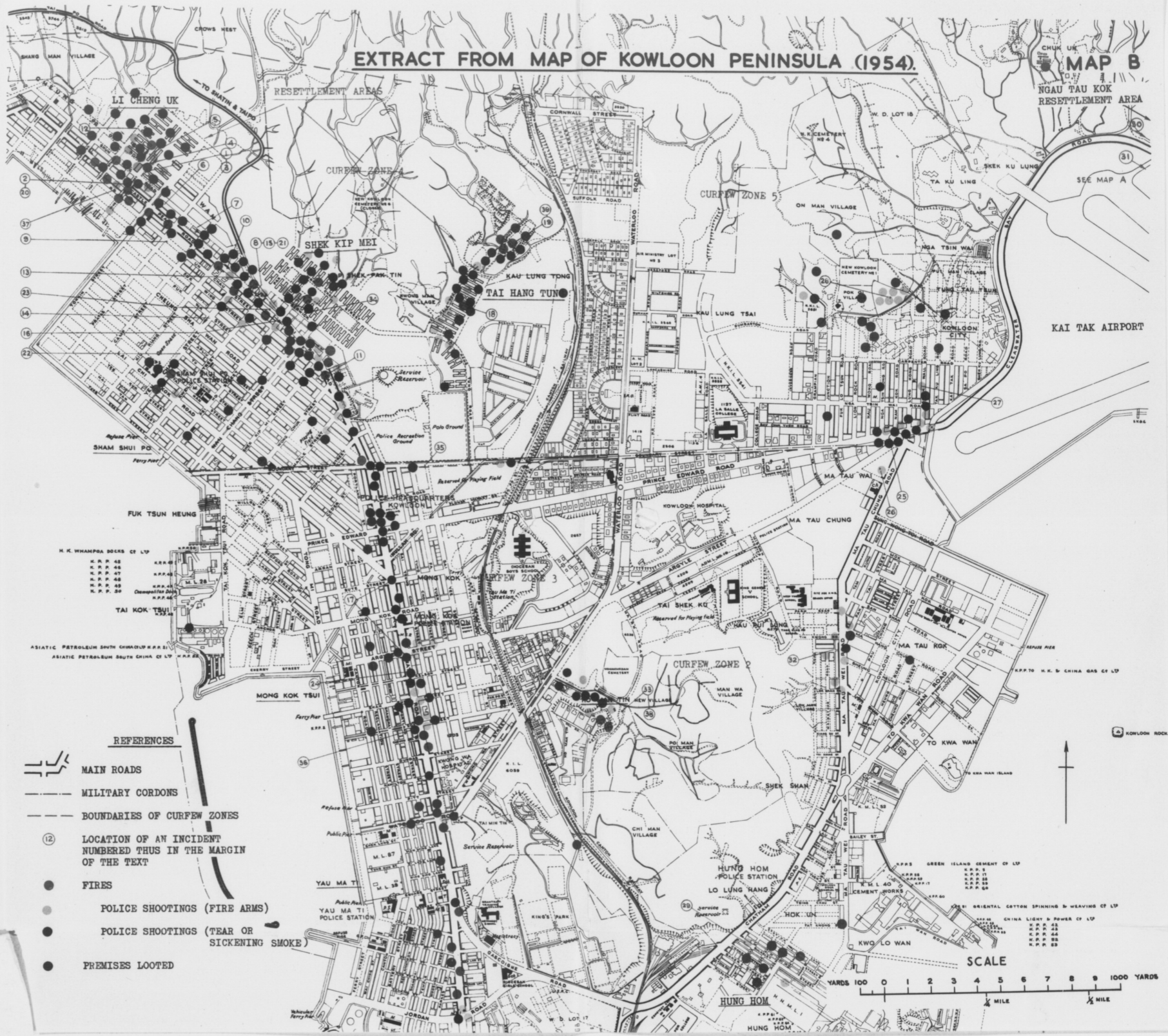
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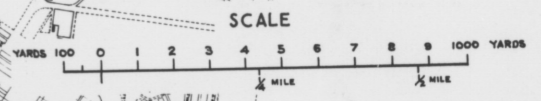
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EXTRACT FROM MAP OF KOWLOON PENINSULA (1954)

MAP B
NGAU TAU KOK
RESETTLEMENT AREA



- REFERENCES
- MAIN ROADS
 - MILITARY CORDONS
 - BOUNDARIES OF CURFEW ZONES
 - LOCATION OF AN INCIDENT NUMBERED THUS IN THE MARGIN OF THE TEXT
 - FIRES
 - POLICE SHOOTINGS (FIRE ARMS)
 - POLICE SHOOTINGS (TEAR OR SICKENING SMOKE)
 - PREMISES LOOTED



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TSUEN WAN DISTRICT

KEY

Note: Factories are listed in RED
Union and similar premises in BLUE
Houses and other premises in BLACK

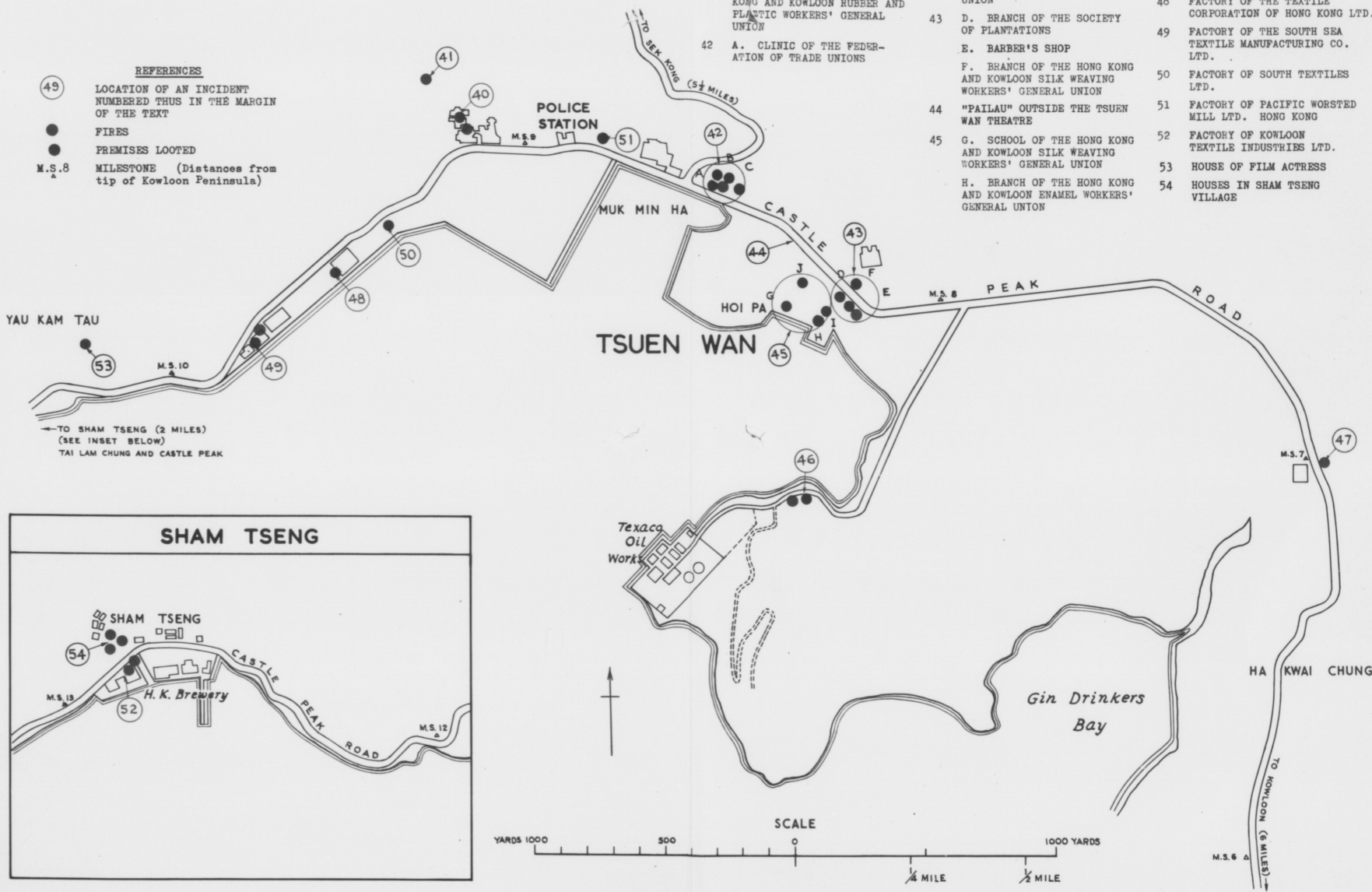
- 40 FACTORY No.1 OF THE PAO HSING COTTON MILL LTD.
- 41 WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON RUBBER AND PLASTIC WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- 42 A. CLINIC OF THE FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

- B. WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG & KOWLOON SPINNING, WEAVING AND DYEING TRADE WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- C. WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG & KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- D. BRANCH OF THE SOCIETY OF PLANTATIONS
- E. BARBER'S SHOP
- F. BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- 44 "PAILAU" OUTSIDE THE TSUEN WAN THEATRE
- G. SCHOOL OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION
- H. BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON ENAMEL WORKERS' GENERAL UNION

MAP. C.

- I. NINE HOUSES AT HOI PA
- J. HOI PA RESTAURANT
- 46 FACTORY OF THE ORIENTAL SOY AND CANNING CO. LTD.
- 47 FACTORY No.2 OF THE PAO HSING COTTON MILL LTD. (NEW CHINA TEXTILES LTD.)
- 48 FACTORY OF THE TEXTILE CORPORATION OF HONG KONG LTD.
- 49 FACTORY OF THE SOUTH SEA TEXTILE MANUFACTURING CO. LTD.
- 50 FACTORY OF SOUTH TEXTILES LTD.
- 51 FACTORY OF PACIFIC WORSTED MILL LTD. HONG KONG
- 52 FACTORY OF KOWLOON TEXTILE INDUSTRIES LTD.
- 53 HOUSE OF FILM ACTRESS
- 54 HOUSES IN SHAM TSENG VILLAGE

- REFERENCES**
- (49) LOCATION OF AN INCIDENT NUMBERED THUS IN THE MARGIN OF THE TEXT
 - FIRES
 - PREMISES LOOTED
 - M.S.8 MILESTONE (Distances from tip of Kowloon Peninsula)



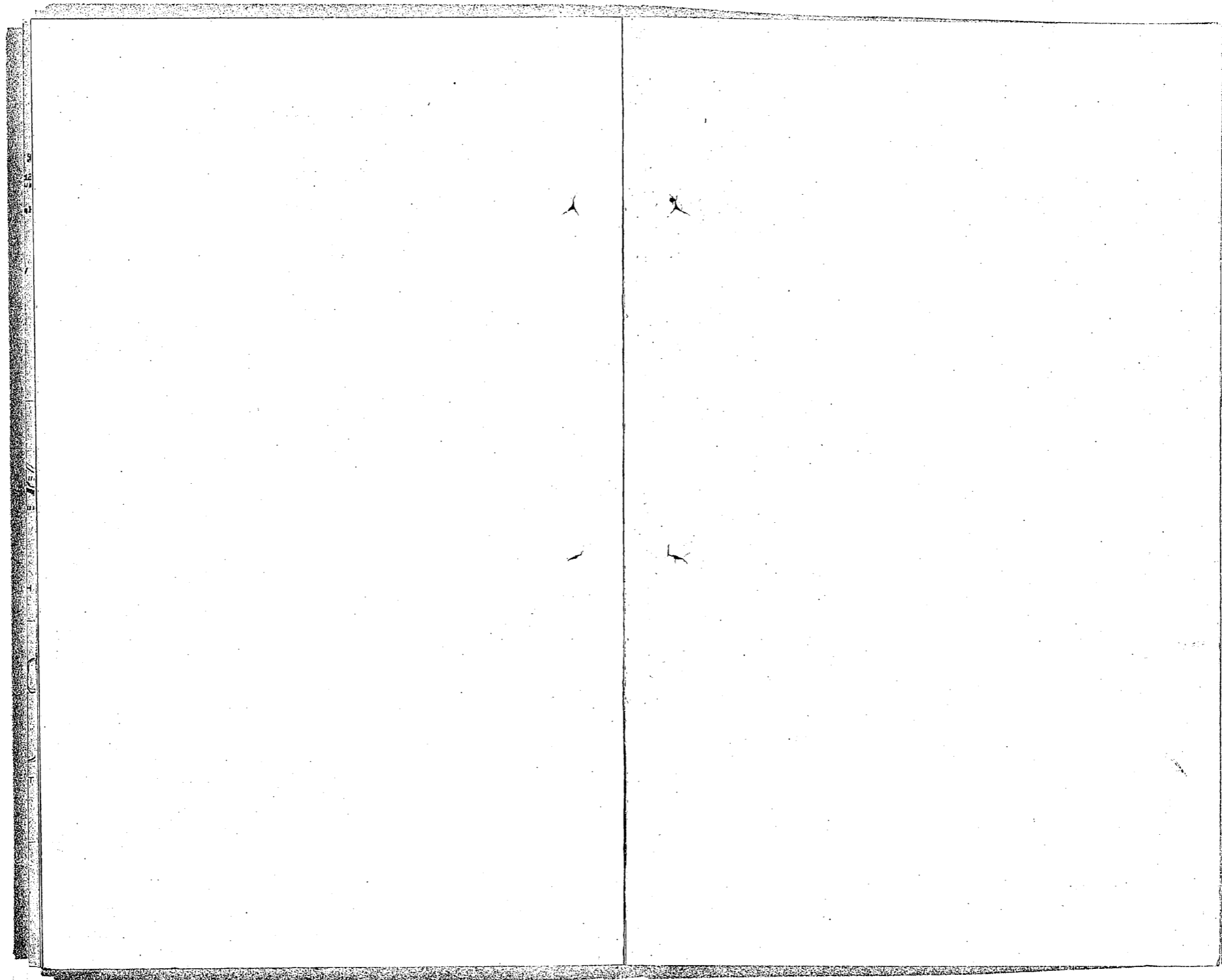
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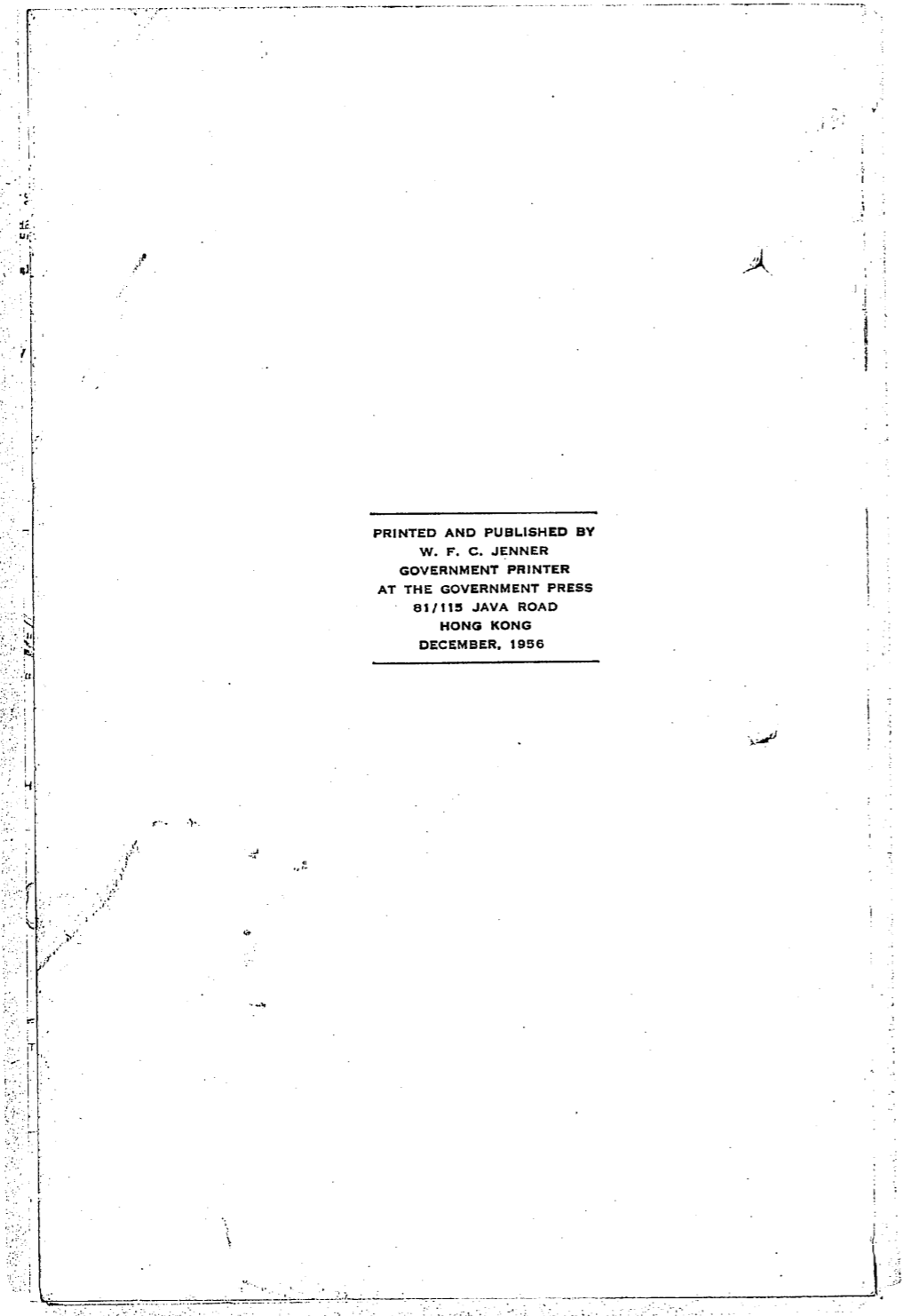


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HONG KONG



REPORT
ON
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OCTOBER 10TH TO 12TH, 1956,
TOGETHER WITH COVERING DESPATCH
DATED THE 23RD DECEMBER, 1956,
FROM
THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG
TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR THE COLONIES

外務省
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Price: \$ 4.50

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DESPATCH FROM THE GOVERNOR OF HONG KONG TO THE
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

No. 2150

GOVERNMENT HOUSE
HONG KONG

23rd December, 1956.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit herewith my Report on the riots which took place in Kowloon and Tsuen Wan two days before my return to Hong Kong in October. The narrative of events has been compiled from all available sources and the passage in Chapter V which deals with the responsibility for the disorders is based on the results of investigations carried out to date. It is possible that further information may still come to light on this but I would not expect it to affect the broad conclusions drawn in the Report.

2. To obtain a proper assessment of these riots, the conditions in which they broke out and the problem which they presented to the authorities, it is essential to understand something of the resettlement areas which were the focus of the disorders in Kowloon and the people who inhabit them. For the last three years the Hong Kong Government has undertaken a vigorous campaign to rehouse the hundreds of thousands of homeless persons, for the most part refugees from the mainland, whose closely packed squatter huts dotted all over the urban areas of the Colony have constituted a very serious fire and health hazard. Of the 200,000 persons so far resettled some 125,000 are housed in three areas of 7-storey blocks of rooms, the object being partly to make the maximum use of the very limited flat building land available and partly to house the maximum number of people with the maximum speed at a rental which they can afford to pay; this will of course only permit the provision of the barest amenities. It has been necessary to build these resettlement blocks in the urban areas in order that the inhabitants may be housed near their work; they would otherwise have preferred to continue to squat in the streets and on the hill-sides. The people themselves for the most part live at a bare subsistence level; they own little or no personal property; the great majority have no real stake in the Colony. Employment is difficult and in some cases indifferently paid. They are people who have fled from their homeland and it is not surprising if their fate has engendered a sense of frustration and bitterness. Though many of them may have no strong political convictions, for the most part

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0142

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they bear resentment against the present regime in China to which they attribute their present hardships, and it is understandable that such political affiliations as they have incline to the Nationalist cause. This background explains the dryness of the timber which was waiting to be ignited by any suitable spark, while the density of population in the area in which they live (which must be about the highest in the world) explains the difficulties with which the police had to contend in trying to break up and quieten large gatherings of unruly persons. Mob emotions are fickle and unpredictable and when turned to their own purposes by gangsters and criminals can be a formidable weapon.

3. There is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that the riots in Kowloon were planned beforehand. On the contrary, all the indications are that they started spontaneously. Had they been planned, moreover, for any specific purpose it is certain that they would have been much more widespread and would very probably have embraced the Island as well. In fact, they were confined for the first 24 hours almost entirely to a small but densely populated area in the North-West of the Kowloon peninsula. What is certain is that from a very early stage the disorders were exploited for their own purposes by gangs of criminals, hooligans and Triad Societies. It is significant that nearly half the reported crime in the Colony occurs in the northern part of Kowloon, which was the main centre of the rioting. As a result of the intensive Police action taken during the disturbances many members of these gangs are now in custody. Because property chiefly attacked by the rioters belonged to supporters of the present government in China (and in particular those which had flown the Communist flag on October 1st) it has been suggested in some quarters that the riots were planned by agents working for the Nationalist cause. The truth is that the riots in Kowloon were spontaneous and those taking part were agents of no one but themselves, people of Nationalist persuasion egged on by criminals bent on personal gain and power. In Tsuen Wan, although there is no evidence of any planning prior to the outbreak of disorder in Kowloon, it would appear that people of Nationalist persuasion joined in collaboration with Triad gangs to redress old scores and to attempt to win a dominant position in the labour world.

4. I turn now to the sequence of events and the way in which the situation was handled. In assessing this it is necessary to avoid the use of hindsight in the light of after knowledge and to consider the situation as it presented itself from time to time. The original incident at the Li Cheng Uk resettlement area was of a not unexpected nature, given the occasion and it was indeed to deal with any such incidents that substantial Police precautions had been taken. Even when the trouble revived in the evening of the 10th there was still no reason to suspect anything more behind it than the irresponsible activities of crowds whose temper was excited and temporarily inflamed by the celebration of an anniversary on which

ii

feelings always run high. Throughout that first night therefore when the disorders were confined to a very limited area of the town it was the object of the Police firstly to contain them and prevent them spreading, and secondly to subdue them by conventional Police methods which would not inflict any serious casualties. This was in my view both a right and understandable course. It is the duty of the Police to win and keep the confidence of the people among whom it is their task to move and mix every day. They must rightly therefore refrain from using lethal weapons or other methods which may provoke lasting hostility between themselves and the population they exist to serve, until it has become absolutely clear that they cannot prevail by the conventional methods. In the event their tactics during the first night appeared to have been fully justified when quiet had been restored in the early hours, and, with the movement of public transport and other signs of normality on the morning of the 11th, there was every reason to hope that, with the passing of the anniversary which had been the occasion for the high feelings engendered, the heat of those feelings would have fallen below the flashpoint and the troubles be at an end. This outcome however would not have suited the gangsters who were now fully alive to the opportunities the situation offered. When the troubles broke out again shortly before 10 a.m. on the 11th it was clear that the threat to law and order was very much more serious, and the Police at this point were given emphatic instructions that whatever force was necessary to suppress the disorders, including the use of firearms, must be used without hesitation and the situation brought under control without delay. At the conference held at 12.30 p.m., when it had become clear that even with these more severe methods the Police were not achieving their object and that the chief reason was the difficulty of getting to grips with the rioters owing to the very mobile and fluid character of the mobs, the decision was taken to call in military assistance and the Commander, British Forces, decided to deploy three battalions to cordon off the affected areas.

5. Some criticism has been voiced because the Military were not called in earlier. While it is no doubt true in the light of after knowledge to contend that if their services had been called on at an earlier stage the situation would have been brought under control more quickly, the justification for doing so was not so apparent at the time. The Military are not auxiliary Police; the responsibility for quelling civil disorders rests on the civil authorities and, only when it is clear that the civil authorities are unable to achieve this by their own resources, are they justified in calling on the Military for assistance. Up to the time that renewed rioting broke out on the morning of the 11th, I consider there were good grounds for judging that the situation could be handled by the Police. I think the most that can be said is that the decision to call on the Military might have been taken earlier on the morning of the 11th, though even at that time it was not unreasonable to see whether the more aggressive

iii

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0143

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Police tactics would produce the desired result. It is also pertinent to record that up to the time the decision was taken to call for military assistance in Kowloon there had not been a single fatal casualty, other than those due to the accident to the fire engine. That is the general picture. As regards the particular case of Tsuen Wan, the facts are that on the night of the 10th and until the late afternoon of the 11th the riots had been confined to a limited area of Kowloon with the resettlement areas as the focal points. The Police had to maintain their normal cover everywhere but were too hard pressed in Kowloon to spare reinforcements as a precautionary measure elsewhere. But since Tsuen Wan was potentially explosive with its large number of left wing and right wing factory workers, and since the movement of troops necessarily takes time, it would probably have been wiser to have anticipated the developing situation and, on the first sign of trouble, to have called for military assistance in the expectation that it would be required. One must however, as I have stated earlier in this paragraph, be careful not to judge in the light of after knowledge.

6. There are a number of lessons to be learnt from the sequence of events and from which further measures will be considered to improve our equipment for handling any similar outbreaks in the future. I shall be addressing you later on these and will only mention two directions in which I consider improvements must be made as soon as possible,—Police communications and mobility. It is very difficult in rioting of this kind to obtain a clear picture of what is happening, to assess the developing situation and to estimate what progress is being made in bringing it under control. It is therefore essential that those on the spot should keep in the closest touch with headquarters and be in a position to make frequent reports and receive instructions. In addition it may happen that an incident, reported to headquarters, will find a party of Police, available perhaps two streets away, but unaware of what is happening and out of touch with headquarters. In such a case more Police units have to be sent out from headquarters with consequent wastage of manpower. Difficulties were experienced with the use of radio cars on this occasion, since they were especial targets to the rioters and their retention at the scenes of disorder would have involved too many Police in their protection. It is also essential that Police units should be able to move quickly to and from an incident to ensure the most economical use of manpower. For this there must be adequate Force transport. These and other matters will all be examined.

7. It only remains to say that the Police conducted themselves with great restraint and fortitude, and although 44 out of the 60 fatal casualties were inflicted by the Police, they did everything possible to minimize casualties. The Military too performed their task with efficiency and good humour and showed great consideration throughout in their dealings with the civil population.

iv

8. These deplorable events serve once again to draw attention to the very real problems presented by the influx of population into the small urban areas of Hong Kong and Kowloon, which have produced conditions of unparalleled overcrowding and the attendant threat to law and order that arises therefrom. The world conscience which has recently been roused by the plight of about 100,000 refugees from Hungary might well be awakened to the situation of five to six times that number who fled into Hong Kong in 1949-50. Within its limited resources of land, materials and money the Hong Kong Government has done and is doing all it can to ameliorate the conditions of these homeless refugees; but without substantial emigration to reduce the numbers or outside help to supplement Hong Kong's capacity to absorb them, the task is slow and uphill. In the meantime the risk of a similar outbreak to that which took place in October will be ever present and require increased vigilance.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(signed) A. GRANTHAM
Governor

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ALAN LENNOX-BOYD, M.P.

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0144

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**REPORT ON THE RIOTS IN KOWLOON
AND TSUEN WAN
OCTOBER 10TH TO 12TH, 1956**

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
CHAPTER I.—Introductory	1
CHAPTER II.—Narrative (Kowloon)	5
CHAPTER III.—Narrative (Tsuen Wan)	29
CHAPTER IV.—Summary of Casualties and Damage	44
CHAPTER V.—Comments and Conclusions	48

MAP APPENDIX

- A. General map of Kowloon, with parts of the New Territories and of Hong Kong Island.
- B. Street map of part of Kowloon.
- C. Sketch map of the Tsuen Wan area.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

- C.P.: Acting Commissioner of Police.
- D.C.: Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police.
- A.C.: Assistant Commissioner of Police, Kowloon and New Territories District.
- S.D.I.: Sub-divisional Inspector of Police, Tsuen Wan.
- 24 F.E.R.: The 24th Field Engineer Regiment.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTORY

October 10th, the anniversary of the Chinese Republican Revolution of 1911, is celebrated annually as the principal Nationalist Chinese Festival, known as the "Double Tenth"; and October 1st, the anniversary of the formal establishment of the Central Peoples' Government of the Peoples' Republic of China in 1949, is commemorated annually as the principal Communist Chinese Festival. On these occasions buildings are decorated, fire crackers discharged and indoor political meetings are held by supporters of the respective régimes, usually in trade union premises, restaurants or theatres. The flags of the Chinese Peoples' Government and of the Nationalist Government in Formosa, as the case may be, are extensively flown on trade union buildings, commercial and business premises and private houses. These celebrations arouse a considerable degree of political feeling; it has always been recognized in Hong Kong that there is a danger of disorder on these occasions and precautions are taken every year as a matter of course. These include control of meetings and functions, prohibition of outdoor public meetings and processions and special vigilance by all branches of the Police Force. Police leave is stopped and the Force is brought to a state of readiness; efforts are made to get information of any plans which might lead to breach of the peace, a watch is kept on known political centres, extra patrols and search parties are sent out and riot units stand by.

2. The conditions of extreme overcrowding in the urban areas of Hong Kong and the resettlement of immigrants require brief mention here, since they form an important element in the background to the riots. The population in 1945 at the end of the Japanese occupation was about 600,000; it is now estimated at over 2½ millions; 2 millions or more of these people live in the built up areas round the harbour, of whom over a million live in Kowloon. See Map A. There had been a large influx, perhaps amounting to a million, by the end of 1946; a second large influx, amounting to some half a million, consisted of refugees who entered the Colony during the later stages of the civil war

in China, in 1949 and 1950; these were predominantly of Nationalist, or at least anti-Communist, sympathies and many came from North or Central China, without previous connexions with Hong Kong; they are as yet integrated to a limited degree only with the local Cantonese community. The refugees now living in the Colony include all classes of people; the majority are poor people who may have seen better days, for instance as property owners or business men, or as officials or soldiers serving under the Nationalist Government in China. They see little chance of resuming their former life in their homes in China and, as is common with exiles, their temperament has often been soured by adversity.

3. These people are now scattered all over the Colony but a great number originally found shelter in squatter huts on the hillsides surrounding the urban area on both sides of the harbour, or, where they could afford to do so, bought out tenement and flat dwellers at tempting prices, thus inducing the latter to live in squatter shacks. There are about 300,000 people still living as squatters, but about 200,000 have been resettled by the Government in the last few years, over half of them in three resettlement estates situated on the north western edge of Kowloon. Each estate consists of a group of ten to twenty five 'H' shaped seven storey blocks, containing some 350 to 800 rooms each and housing anything from 2,000 to 4,000 people. Reading from west to east, the population of the three estates (all of which feature in the narrative which follows) is: Li Cheng Uk 33,000, Shep Kip Mei 55,000 and Tai Hang Tung 38,000. These three highly concentrated groups comprising over 125,000 people in all are predominantly in sympathy with the Nationalist cause and opposed to the present government of China; this opposition is mainly a matter of personal feeling, though many are loosely organized in right wing labour unions and other bodies. The estates are all fringed on the north by steep foothills and the first two are bounded on the south and west by congested streets of tenements, through which run two main roads, one to the western extremity of the New Territories at Castle Peak and the other to the central part of the New Territories at Taiipo and the frontier with China 24 miles away. The junction of these two main roads, a focal point during the riots (referred to below as the main road junction), lies immediately west of the Shek Kip Mei estate. The general population density of this whole area of north west Kowloon is estimated roughly at some 2,000 people to the acre.

See Map B

4. Another feature of the local scene are the Triad Societies. These originated in China some three centuries ago as secret societies composed of patriots working to overthrow the Manchu Ching Dynasty and restore the native Ming Dynasty to the throne. Some of these societies supported the revolutionary movement of Sun Yat Sen and one of the leaders came to Hong Kong in 1897 on Sun's instructions and formed a society named the Chung Wo Tong, the object of which was to rally support for Sun's movement among Chinese residents of the Colony. After the revolution of 1911, in which the patriotic aims of this Society were fulfilled, it proliferated into a group known as the Wo group, consisting now of over 20 Triad Societies with a membership roughly estimated at some 50,000; these societies, together with other but smaller groups, degenerated into "strong arm" gangs engaged in "protection" and extortion rackets and other forms of crime, while preserving in some degree the Triad rituals. They organize and "protect" opium divans, brothels etc., control pimps and pickpockets and prey upon hawkers and shopkeepers and also purport to "arbitrate" in disputes within their "territory". In recent years they have attracted more members and gained greater power; while they have for very long been unlawful societies, it is most difficult to bring the process of law to bear on individual members because the Chinese hold these societies in great dread, fearing brutal reprisals if they assist in exposing their activities to the authorities. Until 1949, deportation provided an effective deterrent for Triad activities and it was possible to keep a fairly tight rein on these gangs. Deportation has since become largely impracticable and serious crime has increased. Prosecution before the Courts with a view to imprisonment is less effective because it is very difficult to find witnesses to give evidence against Triad members in open Court. One of these Triad Societies, known as "14K" originated in Canton during the Nationalist regime as a semi-official underground organization of a political character, its members being mostly Nationalist army personnel and minor officials. With the influx of refugees into the Colony this Society was established in Hong Kong and has gradually gained influence; it has lately increased its membership, drawn largely from poor refugees, including many youths. The activities of the members of this "14K" Triad group have in recent years been almost entirely those of gangsters and racketeers. There is some evidence that during the past year the "14K" group has been expanding its membership and its activities in an attempt to attain

a position of dominance in Kowloon, particularly in the north western district. These gangster societies have a strong position in the squatter areas and consequently in the resettlement estates. It should be emphasized that Triad gangs are always organized for concerted action whenever opportunity offers, each with its couriers, leading thugs and fighting members.

5. The establishment of the Hong Kong Police Force is some five thousand rank and file with four hundred and seventy five Inspectors and sixty Officers. The effective strength is less than five-sixths of this, owing to vacancies, leave etc. The Force normally operates in three shifts in the twenty four hours, reduced to two shifts of twelve hours each in an emergency. There are nearly sixty police stations or posts, including frontier posts, and 24 marine police craft in the Colony which require to be continuously manned; in addition, it is essential that the specialized sections of the Force, the Criminal Investigation Department, Special Branch, Communications and other units should function at full pitch during disorders. The numbers available for riot duty are therefore limited by these requirements. Three permanent emergency units exist, totalling five riot units or some three hundred men; all members of the Force are trained for riot duty and each of the nine police divisions can muster on average two units and Headquarters another three, making twenty six riot units or one thousand five hundred and sixty men in all; allowance must of course be made for periods of rest between operations. Six units were employed during Phase 1 of the disorders; during the evening and night of October 10th the force was built up to eighteen units and as the riots developed and spread on October 11th a maximum of twenty one riot units or one thousand two hundred and sixty men was employed. The Force is controlled by the Commissioner in emergency conditions from an operations room which adjoins the Colony control room; this has direct telephone and wireless contact by a variety of channels with the two District Control Rooms, where the Assistant Commissioners in charge of Kowloon and New Territories and of Hong Kong Island Districts exercise their command; from this room all messages passing within the Force radio network can be monitored. A Secretariat and a military liaison officer are posted in the operations room when circumstances so require. The two District control rooms have direct wireless contact with all their divisional police stations, with police launches etc. and also have accommodation for the commander of military internal security forces, so as to form a joint headquarters.

4

6. There was no indication of any kind prior to October 10th, 1956 that there would be violent anti-Communist demonstrations or disturbances on that day. It was however known that the Nationalists intended to celebrate the day in Hong Kong on the largest scale yet, with a view to offsetting the celebrations on October 1st. On the morning of the "Double Tenth" it was evident that decorations and preparations for the celebration were more elaborate than in previous years; many private houses were extensively decorated and, as on earlier occasions, some of the more notable displays were in and around the squatter and resettlement areas in Kowloon. Exhaustive investigation has not revealed the existence of any planning of the disturbances prior to the incident at Li Cheng Uk described immediately below; nor is there evidence of collusion with any outside agency.

CHAPTER II

NARRATIVE (KOWLOON)

The dispute over the flags

*(Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate: October 10th
11.00 a.m.—2.00 p.m.)*

7. It was decided at a meeting of the Resettlement Policy Committee of the Urban Council held on October 3rd, 1956 that inhabitants of the resettlement estates should be warned not to stick paper flags or other decorations on the walls of the buildings, as they had been found difficult to remove afterwards. The resettlement staff were instructed accordingly. There was no objection to the display of flags on poles or on strings. At Shek Kip Mei, the oldest of the three estates, the warning was disseminated among settlers through the Kai Fong or Neighbourhood Association; some flags stuck on the walls in this estate were actually removed by the settlers themselves on October 10th, at the instance of the Kai Fong, as being pasted up contrary to instructions. At Tai Hang Tung which was the next estate to be built, a celebration committee had been set up for October 10th and formed a convenient channel of communication between the staff of the Resettlement Department and the residents. In Li Cheng Uk, the most recent estate, where only one block had been built by the previous October, no representative body exists, but representations from settlers were dealt with by the staff in accordance with the instructions given.

5

RA'-0413

0148

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October
10th
9.0 a.m.

8. On October 10th at about 9.0 a.m. a junior member of the Resettlement Department, who was in charge of Li Cheng Uk Estate and had quarters on the top floor of Block G, the central block, noticed some small Nationalist flags and a number of Nationalist symbols stuck on the walls of the block; he and the officer in charge of that block removed the flags, but were unable to reach two large "Double Ten" symbols (each consisting of two joined crosses, the Chinese character for ten), which were pasted in an inaccessible but very conspicuous position on the outer wall of the crossbar of this 'H' shaped block which faces down a street leading to the main road. These two large symbols were partially removed about 10.30 a.m. The fact that after midnight on October 9th flags and "Double Ten" symbols were pasted on the walls of Block G, including the top floor which is occupied by the quarters of the staff, while little attention was paid to the other ten blocks in the estate, suggests that this may have been a deliberate challenge to the officer in charge of the estate by settlers who considered him unduly strict in his control of their decorations. That officer knew that his superior, the Resettlement Officer in charge of Estates, was visiting Li Cheng Uk on the morning of the 10th; this reinforced his intention to see that the instructions were observed and no flags pasted up. There is no reason to believe that the officer in charge of the estate was acting otherwise than in good faith in doing everything in his power to see that his instructions were observed.

11.0 a.m.

9. Soon after 11.0 a.m. a crowd including many children began to collect in front of the Resettlement Office and there were requests for money to replace the flags which had been removed and torn in the process. A small police party arrived and the officer in charge tried unsuccessfully to persuade the crowd to disperse; by this time 300 to 400 people had collected and were demanding that the flags be replaced. Two members of the resettlement staff then pasted up six or seven flags, hoping to pacify the crowd, which started to drift away in small groups.

11.45 a.m.

Shortly before this, at about 11.45 a.m., the Divisional Superintendent of Police of the area visited the scene and went off to report by telephone to the Assistant Commissioner in charge of Kowloon and New Territories District (referred to below as the A.C.), at Police Headquarters, Kowloon. When he returned to the Resettlement Office, he

6

found that the crowd was beginning to collect again and was asking for an apology from the resettlement officer concerned for having had the flags removed. The latter had meanwhile left the estate and a more senior officer, the Resettlement Officer in charge of Estates, had arrived. By this time the crowd had increased again to some 500. There was however no sign of hostility and the A.C.'s orders to the Superintendent on the spot were to play the incident down and avoid a show of strength, which he considered would be likely to exacerbate the situation, one which at that time did not seem different from the sort of localized incident which might occur on an occasion of national celebration. The A.C. discussed the position with the Acting Deputy Commissioner at Colony Headquarters on Hong Kong Island (referred to below as the D.C.) and it was agreed that it called for tact and persuasion rather than for force.

October
10th

10. There was then a demand that fire crackers should be discharged by the resettlement staff, a traditional form of apology, and a supply was sent for. While the crowd was waiting for these at least one agitator was noticed to be engaged in rousing tempers among people of Nationalist sympathies who formed the great majority of those who had assembled. By 1.15 p.m. the crowd had grown to about 2,000, most of whom were interested spectators from the resettlement blocks; the police were reinforced to a strength of four sections (32 men). At 1.30 p.m. the fire crackers arrived but did not satisfy some members of the crowd, who had apparently decided to exploit the situation. Demands were then made by spokesmen such as that 100,000 fire crackers should be provided, to hang from top to bottom of the block, that portraits of Sun Yat Sen and Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek should be erected on the block with a large Nationalist flag, and that the officer in charge of the estate should apologize publicly before the crowd and in Chinese newspapers. Although most of the crowd did not seem hostile, it became clear before 2.0 p.m. that an easy settlement of this affair was unlikely.

1.15 p.m.

1.30 p.m.

2.0 p.m.

The course of the riots

11. Paragraphs 13 to 43 describe the general course of the riots in Kowloon; the sequence is chronological except where clarity is served by dealing with a particular incident or area as a whole. Reference to the maps in the Appendix, on which the location of the various incidents numbered in the margin is indicated, may assist the reader to follow the sequence of events "on the ground".

7

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Phase 1

Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate and adjacent streets to the south (October 10th, 2.0 p.m. - 3.20 p.m.)

October 10th

See Map B

12. During this first phase disorder was confined to the resettlement estate and a congested area of one block to the south west, bounded by the main Castle Peak Road. At the end of this phase there was a lull of some three hours. The A.C. had already ordered all operations rooms in his command to be fully manned and instructed riot units to be ready to move at short notice. The D.C., and through him the Acting Commissioner of Police (referred to below as the C. P.), at Colony Headquarters on Hong Kong Island across the harbour was kept continuously informed of the situation.

2.0 p.m.

13. At 2.0 p.m. the A.C. was on his way to the scene from his Headquarters in the centre of Kowloon about a mile away, with one riot unit of 60 men. On arrival he stationed the riot unit close by, ready for action but out of sight of the crowd, while he met the Divisional Superintendent, who had been on the scene since about 11.45 a.m., at the Resettlement Office in Block A, the block nearest to the main road. The A.C. estimated the crowd at this time at about 1,000; the people did not seem to be in a hostile mood and the crowd was tending to thin out. At about 2.15 p.m. a cheer went up and it was found that one room of the Resettlement Offices had been broken into from behind and a member of the staff assaulted; the offices were put under police guard and the injured man sent to hospital. The crowd seemed curious but still not hostile.

2.15 p.m.
Incident 1

2.25 p.m.

Incident 2

14. About 2.25 p.m. another member of the staff who was seeking to leave the area was chased by part of the crowd down the street to the main road, where he was severely assaulted; when a police party arrived this man, who was bloodstained from his injuries, had taken refuge in a lorry and was surrounded by some 300 people. He could not be extricated to be taken to hospital until 3 sections of police (24 men) had been mustered to clear a path through the crowd. The crowd then turned on the police and pelted them with mineral water bottles from a nearby shop. The A.C. considered that a baton charge would not be effective with the number of police on the spot and decided to use tear smoke. Four shells were fired and the crowd dispersed along the Castle Peak Road and back into the resettlement estate. This incident proved to be a turning point: hitherto the animosity of the crowd, composed mainly of settlers of Nationalist sympathies, had

8

been directed against the resettlement staff, for "interference" with the display of flags on the "Double Tenth". The police had now rescued their intended victim and this provided the opportunity for the lawless element in the crowd to direct its feelings against the forces of law and order. While the Nationalist flag was used by the rioters as a symbol throughout the ensuing disorders, the original dispute was largely forgotten from this moment.

October 10th

15. Shortly after this a second riot unit from the nearest Police Station at Shamshuipo, half a mile away to the south, arrived in Castle Peak Road and 4 further riot units were ordered to the scene. At about 2.30 p.m. when these reinforcements arrived, the A.C. had under his direct control 6 riot units (about 360 men). He placed two units at the junction of the two streets leading from Castle Peak Road to the resettlement estate. Almost at the same moment thick black smoke was seen from the direction of the estate and one unit was despatched to investigate. It was heavily stoned from the verandahs of two resettlement blocks, and three tear smoke shells had to be fired to drive the stone throwers indoors. On reaching the Resettlement Offices at the corner of the estate, the police party found them looted and partially on fire; a large bonfire of the furniture and records was burning outside. The fire brigade was sent for and extinguished the blaze by 3.0 p.m.

2.30 p.m.

Incident 3

16. As a result of police action, the crowds were now dispersing from the immediate area. The A.C. ordered Block A (in which the offices were located) to be cordoned off with a line of "knife rests" through the surrounding streets and this was done without interference. Traffic began to flow normally again along Castle Peak Road. By 3.20 p.m. all crowds had dispersed and the situation was quiet. The A.C. decided that it was best to avoid attracting attention to the area by leaving large forces there and ordered four riot units to return to their stations, leaving two, one manning the cordon of "knife rests" and one in reserve. On the C.P.'s instructions, the D.C. visited the area about 3.30 p.m. and found everything quiet; he reported that there was no reason to expect any renewal or extension of the disturbances.

3.20 p.m.

17. The scene of these events was an area less than 400 yards square running from the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate to the main Castle Peak Road, and situated in the north western suburbs of Kowloon, over three miles in a direct line from the tip of the peninsula; the crowds concerned had consisted very largely of settlers, known to be Nationalist partisans, and therefore in a state of enthusiasm on the "Double Tenth". The disorders des-

9

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0150

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October
10th

cribed had specific origins on the spot and were not planned. There was no ground during this lull for expecting the much more serious and widespread rioting which developed later in the day, but the police remained in a state of instant readiness. The military Commander of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Garrison was kept informed. Arising out of this incident two people had been arrested and three or four injured.

Phase 2

(October 10th 6.30 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

- (a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo areas
- (b) Mongkok area (to the South)
- (c) Tai Hang Tung area (East of (a)) and beyond

(a) Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuipo Areas (October 10th 6.30 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

6.30 p.m.

18. At about 6.30 p.m., by which time workers had returned home and had had their evening meal, crowds of young men started to collect along the "knife rest" cordon in the Li Cheng Uk area and the temper of the crowd changed. Abuse was shouted at the Police, some stones were thrown and there was an increasing attitude of defiance and mounting excitement; police instructions to disperse were ignored. It is now known that as early as 6.0 p.m. Triad Society members were being mustered to exploit the situation; this undoubtedly had a bearing on the temper of the crowd at this stage. Two riot units from Hong Kong Island were now made ready to move across the harbour.

7.0 p.m.
Incident 4

At about 7.0 p.m. two very large Nationalist flags appeared in the crowd near the north west corner of the cordoned area, following which the "knife rests" were partially broken down at this point; a barrage of tear smoke fired by a section of 8 men dispersed this crowd successfully. The A.C. then arrived with reinforcements consisting of four riot units (240 men). He used his forces to break up the crowds and prevent them reforming and decided to include in the cordoned area the tenement block between it and the Castle Peak Road, but not to enlarge it further and thereby tend to spread the disorder to the south. However, loose crowds continued to assemble round the cordoned area and the police were stoned at intervals. At 8.10 p.m. the A.C. ordered a drive with two riot units, one on either side of the block in the centre of the estate, which with a tear smoke barrage succeeded in clearing the immediate area; at the same time the "knife rest" cordon was extended down

8.10 p.m.
Incident 5

10

to the main road, as previously decided. On the south eastern edge of the cordon an aggressive crowd caused a large disturbance outside a cinema at about 8.35 p.m.; this crowd was driven back by tear smoke but continued to stone the police at intervals. A few minutes later a riot unit cleared this crowd to a distance of two blocks to the south east with tear smoke and the cordoned perimeter was correspondingly extended and the two side-streets blocked off where they join the Castle Peak Road. There were now six blocks included in the cordon.

October
10th
8.35 p.m.
Incident 6

Incident 7

19. The situation between 8.0 and 9.30 p.m. was that disorder gradually spread south and east from the Li Cheng Uk area, but was contained on a line about half way to the main road junction. The object of the police during this period was to restrict the area of disturbance and prevent it spreading towards Kowloon and at the same time to disperse the crowds, which were still composed mainly of local residents, and induce them to return to their homes. In the immediate surroundings of Li Cheng Uk the police held a perimeter embracing some six tenement or resettlement blocks in considerable force, but were not able to get to grips with rioting crowds on the southern and eastern edges of the area who were confining themselves mainly to "tip-and-run" stoning attacks on the police. From about 9.30 p.m. the situation within the perimeter was reasonably well under control. But fresh outbreaks of rioting began to develop to the south, centred on the main road junction and overflowing into side-streets. A number of vehicles, including some containing service personnel, were attacked. It is now known that about 10.0 p.m. a crowd about 1,000 strong, led by 14K and Wo On Lok Triad members carrying Nationalist flags, emerged from the Shek Kip Mei Estate, began stoning vehicles and later attacked the Garden Bakery (see paragraph 23). By 10.30 p.m. rioting on a large scale was taking place at the main road junction, where cheer leaders and groups with Nationalist flags were seen inciting the crowd to yet further disorder. To meet this serious situation 2 riot units arrived from the south and the A.C. redeployed 3 units from the Li Cheng Uk area. Police at road blocks previously set up at Shatin and Tsuen Wan were instructed to stop vehicles entering Kowloon from the New Territories and other blocks were set up near Police Headquarters to stop north bound traffic. At about 10.15 p.m. the D.C. left Colony Headquarters to take command at the Kowloon Control Room, since it was clear that the A.C. must continue to direct operations at the scene of disorder for some time. At this stage the A.C. in charge of Hong Kong Island was ordered to be specially vigilant against any spread of disorder across

10.30 p.m.

Incident 8

11

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October 10th the harbour and Special Branch personnel were sent out to report from near the scene of the many incidents which were now occurring. As the evening wore on it was realized that the situation was becoming increasingly serious. With the spread of disorder, the tactics of the mobs changed; they became very mobile over a widening area of Kowloon, melting away on the arrival of the police, and regrouping in a nearby street to continue attacking vehicles, shops and so on. It was difficult to bring the police units to bear on these rapidly shifting gangs which did not present easy targets for baton charges or the effective use of tear smoke, despite the C.P.'s instructions that it should be used in good quantity.

Incident 9 20. Meanwhile two fire engines had arrived to deal with a small fire in a street parallel to the main Castle Peak Road; soon after turning into the main road on its return journey at about 10.0 p.m. the leading fire engine, a Dennis Rolls Royce machine carrying a 55 foot fire escape ladder, met a heavy fusillade of bricks, pieces of concrete and bottles thrown by crowds of rioters who also attempted to block its passage. The driver was struck on the head by a stone and lost control of the vehicle which crashed into the crowd, mounted the pavement and pinned several people against a wall at the side of the road. Two people, one a woman, were killed outright and one died in hospital as a result of this accident, while five of the crowd were seriously injured. While the injured members of the crowd were being put on stretchers and loaded into ambulances, which had been heavily stoned on their way to the scene, the rioters continued to discharge showers of stones from the roadside and from verandahs and rooftops, one of the injured being hit by a stone as he was being carried on a stretcher to the ambulance. This serious accident and the deaths and injuries caused contributed to inflaming the temper of the crowd. At about 11.0 p.m. a military ambulance was stoned at the same spot, the driver was knocked unconscious and the ambulance crashed into the back of the disabled fire engine, which has since proved a total loss. Soon after the first accident the Deputy Chief Officer set out for the scene in a land rover of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Some 400 yards short of the junction the vehicle was forced to a standstill by crowds and the D.C.O. with a sub-officer completed his journey on foot, leaving the driver in charge of the vehicle. Shortly after this the driver was surrounded and stoned and had to escape to save his life.

Incident 10 11.0 p.m. The crowd then overturned the appliance and set it on fire; it also became a total loss. These incidents illustrate the situation at this time in the vicinity of the main road junction. In an area some 400 yards square, of which the

12

junction formed the north east corner, eight police riot units, later increased to eleven, continued to be heavily engaged with large mobs of rioters in a running fight which persisted until about 3.0 a.m. on October 11th.

21. At about 11.20 p.m. the Officer Administering the Government accompanied by the Acting Colonial Secretary visited the C.P. in his control room. The latter reported the situation fully, including details of police dispositions and the degree of force and weapons used; he explained that he had been reluctant, despite the gravity of the disorder, to instruct his men to abandon the policy of resorting to the use of fire arms only in extreme circumstances. It had by now become clear that members of the regular Police Force would begin to suffer from fatigue if the riots continued throughout the night, as many of them had already been on duty all day without relief; it was therefore decided to mobilize the Police Auxiliaries. By 4.0 a.m. over 600 men had come on duty; by 8.0 a.m. on October 11th, 1,150 had reported and the total later reached 1,551. The Auxiliaries provided one riot unit and took over the entire radio control at Kowloon Police Headquarters; they also manned police stations, radio vans and harbour launches and provided escorts, patrols and guards, until their demobilization at 4.0 p.m. on October 15th. This proved a most valuable accession to police strength. At 11.20 p.m. a broadcast request was made to the public to keep away from the affected areas and this was repeated at intervals until midnight; similar warnings were given on the morning of October 11th and at intervals thereafter until the curfew was imposed. Shortly after midnight joint military and police headquarters in Kowloon were manned (see paragraph 32 below).

22. In the original area of disturbance at Li Cheng Uk bands of rioters continued in sporadic stoning attacks against the police which were kept in check with tear smoke. At 2.0 a.m. the police post in the resettlement estate, a room normally manned by one constable, was reported attacked; it proved that an attempt had been made to break into the post, which was soon afterwards evacuated. The situation at Li Cheng Uk gradually became quieter until at 3.30 a.m. one riot unit was ordered to return to Kowloon Headquarters for action elsewhere; by 4.0 a.m. there were no further incidents and at 6.0 a.m. the remaining riot unit was withdrawn to Headquarters.

23. Meanwhile, a serious fire started at the Garden Bakery, a large mechanized bakery housed in a concrete building of 3 storeys in the angle of the two main roads

13

RA'-0413

0152

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October 10th-11th facing the junction. 12 lorries belonging to the Company and parked behind the building were set on fire by the rioters at 11.25 p.m. and the building was stoned; the ground floor of the Bakery was involved before midnight and burnt fiercely owing to inflammable stock. Poles with burning material attached were thrown through the broken windows of the building and helped to spread the fire. The fire brigade was subjected to a barrage of stones both en route and at the scene of the fire and required constant police protection. A path had to be cleared by police for the turncock as the water valve was close to the crowds; meanwhile the second floor of the Bakery, containing flour stocks, was ablaze. The fire, which might have spread disastrously up Castle Peak Road, was energetically attacked and brought under control after about two hours.

Midnight 24. At about midnight the situation from the police point of view was that a large crowd of rioters was still centred round the main road junction and near the Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate to the east of it, while other crowds were rioting in streets to the south west of the junction. The A.C. decided to clear Yen Chau Street, the important street running south west from the junction past the Shamshuipo Police Station to the harbour. This was achieved with one riot unit which had to fire tear smoke repeatedly at gangs of rioters in the side streets. Meanwhile, after a very tough and protracted fight, the police gradually secured a firm control of the main road junction. Incident 14

Incident 15 Between midnight and 4.0 a.m. at least six shops in this area, including a goldsmiths and two Garden Bakery branch shops, were looted by Triad gangs.

October 11th 2.30 a.m. Incident 16 25. The centre of resistance now moved south along the main road from the junction; there was a fire in the roadway at the first crossing beyond the junction and barricades at the second and third crossings to the south. At 2.30 a.m. the A.C. began a drive down the road and decided to use sickening smoke. He succeeded in breaking through the barricades and clearing the main road for about a thousand yards beyond the junction. The C.P.'s appreciation in the small hours of October 11th was that there were still mobs of 100 to 700 engaged in arson and serious assaults and attacks on property in Shamshuipo but that, starting from about 2.0 a.m., these had become less severe and by 3.0 a.m. had been reduced by continuous and wide-spread police action to scattered cases of disorder by small groups of hooligans. Nevertheless he considered it advisable, at 4.30 a.m., to obtain the agreement of the Station Commander Kai Tak that the latter would be responsible for protecting the airport, thus relieving the police of this responsibility.

14

(b) Mongkok and area to the South
(October 10th 11.0 p.m.—October 11th 6.0 a.m.)

26. The Mongkok area is habitually heavily crowded in the evenings; this was the state of affairs until midnight on October 10th. But groups of hooligans began to collect about 11.0 p.m. at two road crossings in the northern part of Nathan Road near the Mongkok Police Station, which is about a mile south of the main road junction. These groups became riotous and cars were stoned and some members of the Regular Forces injured; there was some looting in this area by gangs, mostly consisting of Wo group Triads. At about 1.30 a.m. part of a riot unit broke up these crowds, numbering several hundred, with tear smoke. Until about 5.30 a.m. gangs of hooligans roamed the Nathan Road area as far south as Austin Road (which is about half a mile from the tip of the Kowloon peninsula), looting and throwing stones. These disorders were gradually brought under control by the police until by about 6.0 a.m. the area was quiet. Incident 17

(c) Tai Hang Tung area and beyond
(October 11th 12.30 a.m. - 6.0 a.m.)

27. At 12.30 a.m. a report reached the control room at Kowloon Police Headquarters that suspicious persons were assembling near the Heung To School, a recently constructed private school of Communist complexion about a quarter of a mile north east of the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate which, in common with the other two estates further west, contains settlers of predominantly Nationalist sympathies. A quarter of an hour later it was reported that the police post in this area (a room manned by a constable) was on fire. An Inspector with 16 men was sent to investigate and found the post looted and the contents burning outside. Later information connects this incident with 14K and Wo On Lok Triad gangs. The party was then very heavily attacked by mobs in the area and by settlers from the verandahs of the resettlement blocks and was forced to withdraw without reaching the school, during which it suffered severe injuries, one inspector and four constables being later admitted to hospital. This party met a riot unit south of the area which used tear smoke to disperse these rioters, and held a line keeping them contained in the resettlement estate. At 1.15 a.m., in answer to another call from the school, a second police party was despatched; this party arrived at a point overlooking the school and reported no sign of disorder. The party therefore withdraw. At 1.50 a.m. a further report Incident 18

15

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October 11th was received from the school that some 70 people seemed about to try to set the buildings on fire, but no forces could be spared at that time from the main riot centres in the built-up areas to investigate. Further calls were received and at 3.30 a.m. a riot unit south of the area was detailed to visit the school; at the same time the A.C., who was still at the main road junction, received an urgent message that the school was on fire. He left at once for the school with one riot unit, later meeting the second unit which was already on its way there. The A.C. with the two units passed through the Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate without opposition; on arrival at the school at about 4.30 a.m. he found a large pile of furniture etc., on fire outside; parts of the main building had caught fire but the structure was not seriously threatened. It appears from later inquiry that the first attack on the school was repulsed by the staff; between 3.0 and 4.0 a.m. the mob set fire to an adjacent hut and forced their way into the compound, looting the ground floor of the school and setting fire to the furniture etc. outside. The A.C. entered the school and found some 20 members of the staff in an upper room. 11 men, suspected of the arson, were also found in the building and taken into custody. The police put out the fire in the building and the Fire Brigade which had meanwhile arrived extinguished the fire outside. A police guard of four sections of a riot unit was placed on the school and the staff evacuated the building on police advice for their own safety. Meanwhile two minor incidents were reported from Kowloon City, further east near the airport, during the small hours; and information was received at about 3.45 a.m. that a crowd was wrecking a traffic pagoda near the airport entrance. This crowd was dispersed by the police.

28. By 6.0 a.m. on October 11th the whole of Kowloon was quiet. All riot units were recalled for rest and replaced by strong mobile patrols, the streets were cleared of wrecked vehicles and the omnibus services were resumed. The object at this stage was to restore conditions in Kowloon to normal at first light on the morning after the "Double Tenth". At 8.45 a.m. the D.C. returned to Colony Headquarters to report to the C.P. In doing so, he expressed the opinion that since there had been such widespread disorder and the situation had been exploited by criminal gangs any recurrence would merit stern measures. The C.P. agreed that if disorder broke out again this would imply a planned extension of the riots, and must be met with stronger force including the use of firearms wherever justified. In maintaining the policy restricting the use of firearms hitherto, the C.P. was influenced by the fact that

16

there were still many curious spectators in the crowds and that firing might have resulted in heavy casualties including injury to these passive elements.

29. The rioting had so far occurred on the afternoon, evening and night of the "Double Tenth" festival, when the Nationalist sympathizers who form such a large proportion of the population of north western Kowloon were in any case elated and disposed to demonstrate their opposition to the present régime in China; and were therefore ripe for exploitation by Triad and criminal gangs. It was a reasonable expectation that, since the police had gained control of the rioting in the early hours of October 11th, the cold light of the morning after the festival day would find the celebrants less apt for any further mischief to which the gangsters might seek to incite them. During this second phase a total force of some 1,100 police was in action, excluding small patrols. The weapons used were baton, tear smoke, both as shells and as grenades, and in the later stages sickening smoke. A few shots were fired by individual officers but only in self-defence. Casualties were two killed in the accident to the fire engine (a third died later), some twenty people seriously injured, including one suffering from a gunshot wound, and fifty with minor injuries. The police had suffered a good number of casualties, including ten serious enough for hospital treatment, of whom one was detained in hospital. Some 140 arrests had been made.

Phase 3

(October 11th 10.0 a.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

- (a) *Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuiipo*
- (b) *Mongkok and Yaumati (to the South)*
- (c) *Eastern and north eastern Kowloon*

(a) *Li Cheng Uk and Shamshuiipo*
(October 11th 10.0 a.m. - 7.30 p.m.)

30. The hope that the disorders would not extend beyond the "Double Tenth" was not realized and this second lull proved to be not much longer than the first, some four hours. Shortly before 10.0 a.m. on October 11th a police patrol reported being stoned by a large crowd near Li Cheng Uk, the Resettlement Estate where the riots started. A riot unit arrived and succeeded in driving a

October
11th
10.0 a.m.
Incident 20

17

RA'-0413

0154

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October 11th large and excited crowd of rioters off one road junction on the main Castle Peak Road in this neighbourhood, but had not sufficient numbers to disperse them from the area; a further unit reached the scene, sickening smoke was fired, and the crowd broke but reformed out of range. With the arrival of a third unit, the main Castle Peak Road was cleared and kept open and the crowds were scattered down side streets with the assistance of tear smoke. At about midday Triad gangs, continuing their activities of the previous day, looted two provision stores and two factories in Castle Peak Road. Later other gangs forced occupants of cars to buy Nationalist flags at a number of points in the Kowloon peninsula. Flags were also sold by Triad members on bicycles or in cars. At about 12.45 p.m. a large crowd was seen to be gathering near the main road junction and building a barricade across the Castle Peak Road 100 yards to the north west; this barricade was smashed by an armoured car on its way to deliver supplies of smoke to the riot units at Li Cheng Uk, and the crowd round it dispersed with the aid of tear smoke shells fired by the crew.

12.45 p.m. Incident 21

31. Simultaneously another mob of some 500 assembled in the next street south of the barricade, and began to surge down the street towards the Shamshui Po Police Station 500 yards away, burning two motor vehicles in the street on the way. This mob was led by a man carrying a Nationalist flag, a common feature throughout the disturbances. Yet another crowd of about the same size was rioting in the area between the Police Station and the sea. These moves were considered a threat to the Police Station; the Divisional Superintendent successfully broke up these mobs with Greener gunfire and blocked off a number of side streets in the area; an armoured car arrived in the rear of those fleeing northwards and scattered them. Meanwhile riotous mobs in very large numbers continued to collect round the main road junction and for a mile or more to the south along the main road and in streets on both sides of it. Two more riot units were ordered to this area, making a total of 5 (300 men). These renewed disorders developed very rapidly despite the police reinforcements which were rushed to the scene of the first outbreak. The mobs were even more mobile and elusive and tear smoke had the effect only of dispersing the rioters for a short time and at one spot. Among the tactics employed by the mob was the lighting of bonfires of wood and paper in the streets to attract fire engines, which were then violently attacked from the street and surrounding buildings; the Fire Brigade was unable during this period to answer calls without a police escort. It was clear to the C.P. that the riots had passed beyond the stage of being traceable to mob hysteria due to the national day, and were

being fomented and fanned by criminals for their own ends; the confession of two avowed members of Triad Societies, arrested during the morning, that these Societies were among those inciting and directing the mobs tended to confirm this appreciation. Since normal tactics were not effective in securing control quickly the C.P. issued emphatic directions soon after 10.0 a.m. that the rioting must be brought under control with the minimum of delay by any necessary means and that if circumstances justified it there should be no hesitation in opening fire on the rioters.

October 11th

32. At 12.30 p.m. a Conference was held between the Officer Administering the Government, the Commander British Forces, the Acting Colonial Secretary and the C.P. at the operations room at Police Headquarters, at which the situation was reviewed. The mobs had hitherto been able largely to escape the punitive action of the strong forces of police deployed against them by evasive tactics, for which the crowded maze of streets and tenements in the affected areas lent excellent cover; even when their activities had a focus during particular acts of arson or looting they made little attempt to fight off the police but scattered in front of them, only to regroup out of sight. The chief need therefore was to confine the mobs of rioters within limited areas and pin them down so that the police might be able to bring full force to bear on them. It was decided at the Conference to use troops in support of the police. There had been close contact throughout the riots between Police Headquarters and Headquarters Land Forces and Hong Kong and Kowloon Garrison Headquarters, the latter situated near the tip of the peninsula. On a police situation report at 9.0 p.m. on October 10th the Garrison Commander had warned two Artillery Regiments that they might be required for internal security operations and at 11.0 p.m. each Regiment had been ordered to place two Internal Security Troops (30 men in each Troop, total 120 men) in a state of immediate readiness. Shortly after midnight the joint Military and Police Headquarters in Kowloon had been manned. At 10.0 a.m. on October 11th one infantry battalion had been warned by Headquarters Land Forces to be ready to move to Kowloon at an hour's notice and at 11.30 two other battalions, together with the scout cars of the Armoured Regiment, the 7th Hussars, had been given similar instructions. At 1.45 p.m. these three battalions and the scout cars were ordered to move to Kowloon.

1.45 p.m.

33. A drive was launched at 2.0 p.m. by riot units in force from Kowloon Police Headquarters which was on the fringe of the rioting at the time, to free the main road and side streets of crowds as far as the junction. Three units

October
11th

(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 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 now five riot units (300 men) in the immediate vicinity 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 not 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.

1.30 p.m.
Incident 23

34. During the period up to 2.0 p.m. the whole of the area south west and south 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 p.m. M. Ernst, Swiss Vice-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 died of burns received at the same 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 3.30 p.m. with one riot unit; two Internal Security Troops of the 74th Light Anti-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 from the junction area which had moved south. This sweep was effective and out-flanking movements by the mobs were prevented. At 3.45 p.m. two further Internal Security Troops, (from the 15th Medium Regiment R.A.), which had replaced the first two at Police Headquarters, were also ordered to the main road junction which was completely cordoned by 4.30 p.m. 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.

4.0 p.m.

35. At about 4.0 p.m. the three battalions which had been ordered into Kowloon for cordon duty began arriving.

20

Their arrival, together 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 round the main road in the original 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 by 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 5.45 p.m. 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 7.30 p.m. 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 instances of looting no further disorder occurred in that part of the city.

October
11th

7.30 p.m.

36. The three infantry battalions, which arrived in Kowloon from the New Territories between 4.0 p.m. and 6.0 p.m. had completed deployment by 7.30 p.m. when the Curfew Order came into operation, in such a way as to divide Kowloon into three sections, between which movement was controlled by the security forces. One battalion area comprised the main riot centres in north western Kowloon, down to Boundary Street 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 reconnaissance flights were arranged from the evening of October 11th until October 14th, each Auster aircraft carrying a police officer as observer. 1900 Air Observation Post Flight, Royal Air Force made 22 sorties and the Hong Kong Auxiliary Air Force 3, each of about an hour. These were extremely valuable in reporting crowd movements and fires to police radio cars or to Headquarters.

See Map B

21

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0155

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(b) Mongkok and Yaumati

(October 11th 2.30 p.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

October 11th 2.30 p.m. Incident 24 37. About 2.30 p.m. riotous crowds collected south of Police Headquarters along Nathan Road, which runs up the centre of the Kowloon peninsula; these crowds were being incited to violence by gang leaders and the police repeatedly used tear smoke and opened fire on them; during this period a provision store with stocks of goods from China was looted by Triad gangs which also smashed traffic signs and lights in the streets and stoned the Canton Provincial Bank, causing slight damage. Police Headquarters and the Mongkok Police Station were stoned later in the evening. 11.0 p.m. Despite the curfew, it was not until about 11.0 p.m. that order was restored in this district. The difficulty was to bring force to bear on comparatively small bands of hooligans which ran riot over a wide area and broke up temporarily on the approach of police parties. At 8.30 p.m. a report of a large crowd at the Jordan Road junction, less than a mile from the southern tip of the peninsula, proved exaggerated; but small groups of hooligans were abroad in this neighbourhood, intent on looting and destruction. By 1.0 a.m. this most southerly area of Kowloon was quiet, and remained so.

(c) Eastern and north eastern Kowloon

(Kowloon City, Hung Hom and Ngau Chi Wan)

(October 11th 5.30 p.m.—October 12th 1.0 a.m.)

October 11th 5.30 p.m. 38. Most of the serious incidents which occurred during the evening and night of October 11th took place in three principal districts on the eastern side of Kowloon, an area so far scarcely affected. The main source of disorder was undoubtedly the highly congested district immediately west of the Kai Tak airport which has for long been a haunt of Triad Societies, "strong arm" gangs and criminals; immediately south of this lies a road junction, close to the western end of one of the airport runways. South of this again there was a series of incidents, particularly in Hung Hom, a reclaimed area projecting into the harbour to the east on the level of Jordan Road. At one stage the disorder spread east beyond the airport where some factory and other buildings were attacked and looted. The first report from the eastern side of the peninsula, at 5.30 p.m., was of a crowd on the main road to the airport near Hung Hom Police Station numbering about 300. This crowd was not disorderly, being composed mainly of factory workers, and was easily dispersed by a small force of police. A much more serious situation developed shortly afterwards at the road junction on the edge of the airport.

22

October 11th—12th Incident 25 Here there is a very large omnibus terminal where it was reported that many buses had been abandoned, while a crowd of several hundred had assembled on the open ground which forms the runway extension. The Divisional Superintendent from Kowloon City turned out with a riot unit and found a crowd of some 2,000 who scattered over the open ground and showered the police with stones. A particularly active and truculent mob was also assembled in a narrow street running northward from the road junction into the heart of Kowloon City. The whole of this neighbourhood rapidly became crowded with mobs of rioters who refused to disperse and were not dislodged by tear smoke. It was necessary to fire with Greener guns before the crowd could be broken up and driven northwards. The road junction was then cordoned off and held in strength. Between 3.0 p.m. and 9.0 p.m. small gangs armed with hammers and iron bars forced shopkeepers in this district to buy flags for amounts from \$5 to \$20 each; flags were also forced on motorists, pedestrians and householders. At 7.30 p.m. a crowd of about 200 south of the junction had to be dispersed with gunfire. Two further incidents occurred during the night, one outside a branch of the left wing Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union north of the junction, where a Triad gang of about 40 was stoning the premises; on being ordered to disperse this gang turned on the police who had to fire; the other incident was at midnight, when it was reported that a crowd of 50 to 100 people was breaking into the Yee Wo Tai Weaving Factory north of Kowloon City. It transpired that some stock had been taken and a small gang ran away when the police arrived. At 1.30 a.m. a second report reached the police and this time it was found that the factory had been ransacked; the police party sent to the scene opened fire on the looters killing four; 36 suspects were arrested. This area remained quiet for the rest of the night. In Hung Hom further south, which was the second main area of disorder on the eastern side of the peninsula, crowds were reported in two or three streets near the docks. A small police party was heavily stoned in this area about 8.45 p.m. and was forced to use its revolvers to avoid being overrun; one person was killed and another wounded, after which the crowd began to break up. Soon after, a police armoured car arrived and completed its rout. There was some looting of shops by gangs about 7.30 p.m. Incident 26 Incident 27 Incident 28 Incident 29

9.15 p.m. Incident 30 39. Further to the north east beyond the airport in Kun Tong Road there was a report at 9.15 p.m. of trouble at the Amoy Canning Factory; the manager informed a police inspector who arrived by car to investigate that an

23

RA'-0413

0157

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October 11th
 Incident 31
 hour earlier a gang had threatened to wreck his factory if he did not hoist the Nationalist flag, which he did. Soon after, an officer of the R.A.F. Regiment at the airport informed the inspector that three small factories nearby, an iron works, a cotton factory and an ornamental stone works, had been fired and damaged; the Royal Air Force had detained seven suspects in connexion with these incidents. When he arrived at the R.A.F. guard room, the Inspector was told by a sentry of a fire visible in the Ngau Tau Kok resettlement area. On its way up the hill to the area, the police car stuck and was surrounded by a gang of 30 armed with heavy clubs. Gun and revolver fire drove off this gang and four were arrested. The fire proved to be a bonfire of furniture etc. looted from two huts. On its way back to Kowloon City Police Station, which it reached about midnight, this police party removed various obstructions erected across the main road which borders the airport.

11.0 p.m.
 Incident 32
 At about 11.0 p.m. a patrol car discovered a strong road block about half a mile south of the road junction on the edge of the airport; a police party reinforced the crew of the car and a number of shots were fired at a scattered mob which was stoning the police; the block was then removed. Two rioters were killed, one injured and six arrested. One further case of arson reported during the night was at the resettlement area at Ho Man Tin near the railway west of Hung Hom. The resettlement offices were found to be ransacked but a fire had already been extinguished when the police arrived; the labourers' quarters had also been looted. No rioters were found on the scene. Between 8.0 a.m. on October 11th and 8.0 a.m. on October 12th a further 367 persons had been arrested.

10.40 p.m.
 Incident 33

Phase 4

(October 12th 9.30 a.m. - 2.0 p.m.)

40. The initial Curfew Order required all persons to remain within doors from 7.30 p.m. on October 11th to 10.0 a.m. on October 12th throughout the Kowloon peninsula from Lai Chi Kok on the west to the district beyond the airport on the east. As is apparent from the preceding paragraphs, this Order was not fully observed during the night; it was the first of its kind ever made in Hong Kong and came into operation at only about an hour's notice after being announced by radio. It took time for the public generally to appreciate what was expected of it and for the first few hours of the curfew the security forces warned curfew breakers without making arrests. But the curfew provided these forces with powers which were essential for the purpose of isolating the active mobs of rioters. As news of the measures taken to enforce the curfew, including

the many arrests made later, spread through the city, the passive element progressively left the streets, thus enabling the forces of law and order to concentrate on their main task. The curfew continued throughout Kowloon for 24 hours from 10.0 a.m. on October 12th. But breaks of two hours, "staggered" in five zones were permitted for distribution and purchase of food. It was extended at the same time to Tsuen Wan to the north west (see Chapter XI below) and to Shatin over the hills to the north; at 7.30 p.m. it was further extended 6 miles beyond Tsuen Wan to include the Sham Tseng area. At 10.0 a.m. on October 13th it was lifted from the first zone in the tip of the peninsula, which enabled some ferry services to be resumed, and twenty four hours later throughout Kowloon; but was re-imposed on the nights of the 14th and 15th from 6.0 p.m. to 7.0 a.m. in the north western district which had been the focus of the riots. In the Tsuen Wan area the curfew remained in operation, with two-hour breaks, until 10.0 a.m. on October 16th. During the morning of October 12th many people continued to leave their homes for reasons unconnected with the disturbances and military forces at the cordon points and police patrols made numerous arrests. There were also cases of looting and arson committed by relatively small gangs and some large crowds collected. But disorder did not take on the character of concerted mob violence and nowhere assumed the menacing proportions of the two previous days; the situation steadily improved during the afternoon and night as the curfew was more rigidly enforced.

See Map B

See Map A

41. At 9.0 a.m. on October 12th troops broke up a crowd collecting on the Castle Peak Road from the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Estate and half an hour later police in an armoured car had to fire tear smoke at Shek Kip Mei to drive indoors a crowd, largely of settlers, which though not really hostile refused to disperse. Shortly before 10.0 a.m. near Li Cheng Uk another crowd of 500 to 600, mostly people intent on shopping at a market nearby, had also to be dispersed indoors with tear smoke. At 10.20 a.m. troops stopped a large crowd which was trying to cross the cordon from the south to their homes in the resettlement areas. Repeated attempts had been made, with some success, to loot a provision shop on the main road in the Mongkok district; the previous day the police had fired on looters at this spot, killing two, and on October 12th a police party, arriving near the shop in response to a telephone call, again opened fire, killing one looter and driving the rest of the gang away; two other attacks later in the morning were driven off by the police. At 11.30 a.m. two shops in the main road near Li Cheng Uk, both selling produce from

October 12th 9.00 a.m.

Incident 34

10.20 a.m.

Incident 35

11.0 a.m.

Incident 36

11.30 a.m.

Incident 37

October 12th 12.30 p.m. China, were attacked and set on fire; one of these had been looted on the previous day, together with a neighbouring toy shop which also carried stocks of Chinese goods. Fairly large crowds collected and the Fire Brigade was stoned at one stage, but the crowd, which was not as a whole aggressive, was dispersed with tear smoke. The two fires were extinguished by 12.30 p.m. but the entire contents of the two shops were either looted or burnt. Further north along the main road a party of police which was attacked had to fire, killing one person. At 1.45 p.m. the offices in the Incident 38 Ho Man Tin Resettlement Area in central Kowloon were again set on fire; the perpetrators had left by the time the police and Fire Brigade arrived. At about 2.0 p.m. another fire occurred at the Heung To School behind the Incident 39 Tai Hang Tung Resettlement Estate; the police party left in charge there earlier (see paragraph 27) had withdrawn the previous evening as the area was quiet. When the police arrived they met with no opposition and there was no sign of those responsible for the fire. The Fire Brigade reached the scene shortly before 3.0 p.m., but the school fire hydrants had been smashed and no outside supply of water was available; the fire could not therefore be effectively tackled. After this no further acts of violence were reported in Kowloon. Police patrols were active and continued to arrest curfew breakers and suspected looters. From the time of the original fire at the Li Cheng Uk Resettlement Office at 3.0 p.m. on October 10th until this second fire at the School, a period of about 48 hours, the Fire Brigade had dealt with 17 fires in Kowloon, some of which were trivial while others were serious outbreaks. Fire appliances were unable to reach nine further fires, mostly of motor vehicles or looted stock burning in the streets. Fire engines, ambulances and uniformed personnel were singled out for attack by the rioters and had to be constantly protected by the police. The Brigade consists of 540 officers and men and was reinforced on October 11th by some 200 men of the Auxiliary Fire Service. Six vehicles of the ambulance service made some 45 journeys and conveyed about 80 patients to hospital during the same period. The Brigade, the Auxiliaries and the Ambulance Service did their duty well and without flinching in adverse conditions.

Phase 5

(October 12th 2.0 p.m.—October 16th 10.0 a.m.)

42. It was now clear that the security forces had firm control of the situation. The police were therefore able to concentrate their attention on seeking out and arresting the

26

rioters, looters and arsonists and on collecting evidence to bring the perpetrators of the disorders before the Courts for punishment. During the afternoon and night of October 12th widespread raids were made on boarding houses and other premises in Shamshuipo and Yaumati districts and also on Hong Kong Island. A raid was also made in a small area of Kowloon City at about 3.0 p.m. 200 suspects were arrested and a quantity of looted goods recovered. During a raid at Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate about 6.30 p.m. a few warning shots were fired by the police to enforce orders to settlers to keep indoors; 490 arrests were made there. Up to midnight on October 12th over 1,170 people had been arrested, of whom nearly 800 had been charged before Court with rioting or kindred offences, or with breach of Curfew Orders. On October 13th a large screening operation took place at Li Cheng Uk, where the riots had their origin, lasting from dawn until midday; over 1,000 men were arrested on suspicion and marched away with the assistance of two military Internal Security Troops. A similar raid in the Tai Hang Tung area between 3.30 and 7.0 p.m. resulted in the arrest of some 700 suspects. Military forces assisted in these operations and continued during the day to arrest numbers of curfew breakers and hand them over to the police to be dealt with according to law. To enable the police to investigate the very large number of suspects, the Emergency (Detention) Regulations 1956 were made on October 14th. These empowered the police to hold suspects for inquiry for 14 days, as opposed to the normal 48 hours, without bringing them before a magistrate, with extensions of a like period at the Governor's discretion.

43. On October 14th, when the curfew was lifted throughout Kowloon at 10.0 a.m., two battalions of the Regular Forces, with attendant scout cars, returned to their camps but remained on call. The remaining battalion together with two Internal Security Troops from the Royal Artillery remained on duty and re-imposed a cordon round the north western area, which was placed under curfew again at 6.0 p.m.; police made further arrests of curfew breakers during the evening in this area. Next morning the remaining battalion returned to camp, leaving two Internal Security Troops on hand at Police Headquarters Kowloon. The police enforced the curfew in the north western area again on the night of the 15th and on the morning of the 16th it was finally lifted, all troops returned to barracks and the joint Headquarters ceased to be manned.

27

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0159

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Effect on essential services in Kowloon and return to normal conditions

44. The imposition of the curfew at short notice disrupted a number of services provided by Government or the utility companies. Cross-harbour ferry services were discontinued at Government request, except for a few special ferries run for the benefit of essential services or to assist stranded people to return home; motor bus and taxi services were brought to a standstill and the local train service ceased, although trains bringing people from China on October 12th and 13th, many of them returning Hong Kong residents, were allowed to run into Kowloon where arrangements were made to pass a total of over 3,000 passengers through curfew areas or across the harbour; a few other trains were run for special purposes. Passengers travelling by air were conveyed under police escort to and from the Peninsula Hotel at the southern end of Kowloon and the airport, or brought there from Hong Kong Island direct by launch and, while five aircraft were directed elsewhere by their companies, there was very little interference with normal passenger air services. No passenger ships arrived or departed during October 11th and 12th. Scavenging and conservancy services, the distribution of fresh fish and vegetables, and of rice, and postal services, were initially brought to a standstill; utility companies whose continued and efficient operation was of great importance during the riots such as the telephone, electricity, gas and rediffusion companies, together with departments of Government such as Urban Services, Waterworks, Public Relations, Radio Hong Kong, the Royal Observatory and the New Territories Administration had difficulty at first in maintaining their operations as essential staff and supplies were unable to move through the curfew areas, and across the harbour. This was particularly serious in the case of the Medical Department as the Kowloon and Lai Chi Kok hospitals were overflowing with casualties, at a time when it was difficult to move essential staff and supplies and to discharge the less serious cases through the curfew zones. If it had not been for a generous and timely offer of assistance from the 33rd General Military Hospital which opened its doors to admit civilian casualties, there would have been a risk of a temporary breakdown. These difficulties were gradually overcome by improvisation and with the aid of police or military escorts, or in some cases by the loan of military transport.

45. Transport services in Kowloon and the cross-harbour ferries began to run again as soon as the curfew allowed; scavenging and conservancy was resumed on the night of October 12th and operated normally from the

following day; from October 12th, bulk supplies of vegetables, and from the following day of fish, were brought into markets in Kowloon and sold during the two-hour breaks in the curfew periods; quantities sold were normal (except for imported vegetables) by October 15th although prices remained slightly inflated for a time; beginning on October 13th special steps were taken to move supplies of rice across the harbour since, while supplies never in fact ran short, the price rose slightly; postal services returned to normal by October 16th. Other essential services not depending on distribution by road or water succeeded in maintaining their operations at the full pitch required by the emergency.

CHAPTER III

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS IN TSUEN WAN

Description of the area

46. The Tsuen Wan area is a centre of light industry, particularly textiles and enamelware, on the main road running westwards close to the sea from Kowloon to Castle Peak; the town of Tsuen Wan is situated some 8½ miles from the tip of the Kowloon peninsula, or 5½ miles from the junction with the Taipo Road which was the chief centre of rioting in Kowloon. Tsuen Wan itself is a town to all appearances, but is composed of a group of some eight old Chinese villages, joined together by recently constructed houses and shops; two of these villages, Muk Min Ha and Hoi Pa, feature in the narrative which follows. The population of Tsuen Wan town is about 60,000. See Map A See Map C

47. The principal industrial area stretches along the main road from Kwai Chung some two miles east of the town to a point about two miles west of the town. There are 75 registered factories employing over 12,000 workers, of whom 3,000 are women; another two or three thousand work in smaller concerns. Some 5,000 of these workers are employed in textile mills. At Sham Tseng about five miles west of Tsuen Wan lie the Hong Kong Brewery and the Factory of Kowloon Textile Industries Ltd., a mill employing some 1,100 workers. In the textile factories the workers, who are not inhabitants of Tsuen Wan, are for the most part housed in dormitories and eat communally; they do not have their families with them and so have no stake in the place other than their employment. A large proportion are of Nationalist or Communist sympathies; it is natural that feeling should run high and disputes occur between the two groups of workers, living as they do at very close quarters; there is particular danger of this at the time of

the two festivals, October 1st and October 10th (see paragraph 1). Many of the industrial workers in this area are members of trade unions. In Hong Kong the unions fall, with few exceptions, into two groups, namely those affiliated to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Federation of Trade Unions which is Communist in sympathy (referred to below as left wing unions), and those affiliated to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Trade Union Council which is Nationalist in sympathy (referred to below as right wing unions). At a rough estimate, half the workers in Tsuen Wan are members of trade unions, about equally divided between right wing and left wing unions, while half or perhaps more do not belong to any union but are generally speaking anti-Communist in sympathy. The unions with which this narrative is concerned, among a number of others with branches in Tsuen Wan, are, on the left wing:—

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber and Plastic Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Enamel Workers' General Union;

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union;

and on the right wing:—

The Hong Kong and Kowloon Cotton Spinning, Weaving, Dyeing and Printing Trade Workers' General Union.

This last Union has its headquarters in the Hung Hom district of Kowloon, and has factory committees or factory representatives at the larger textile factories in Tsuen Wan.

Preliminary

48. On October 1st, 1956, Chinese Communist flags were flown from a number of factory dormitories and other buildings at Tsuen Wan, including left wing union premises, in celebration of the national day of China. One of the factory dormitories from which Communist flags were flown was that attached to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, situated about 300 yards west of the Police Station, which employs some 110 left wing workers. The management of this factory does not permit national flags to be flown from the factory itself but allows the workers to put up decorations and flags in the dormitory. Early on the morning of October 1st, 1956, a non-Communist worker living in the

dormitory of this factory pulled down one of the Communist flags and a lantern decoration which had been put up by left wing occupants of the dormitory, who then protested to the management; the man responsible was subsequently persuaded to replace the flag and decoration and to apologize to the left wing workers, thus apparently closing the incident.

49. On October 9th, right wing workers in this dormitory put up Nationalist flags and decorations, including the slogan "Long live the Chinese Republic" in large characters in the windows of the dormitory, in preparation for their celebrations on the following day. As was customary, a staff official of the management inspected the dormitory in the late evening of October 9th; he required the right wing workers to remove the slogan as it was considered likely to cause undue offence to left wing workers in the dormitory. This request caused some indignation amongst the right wing workers who then decided to remove all flags and decorations, which they did during the early hours of October 10th. There was no trouble at the time but the management's action was undoubtedly resented. The story was circulated among right wing workers in the area that the management had forbidden the employees of this factory to celebrate their national day; this story was believed and led to agitation among the workers. The incident was not reported to the police.

50. It has since been discovered that a number of meetings had been held by right wing workers in the Tsuen Wan area before October 10th at which the celebrations on the national day were discussed and planned. At a meeting held on October 4th by the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill Committee of the right wing Union it was decided to decorate the factory and to appeal to other Unions for support if the management objected. Meetings were also held by a committee to organize general celebrations at the Tsuen Wan Theatre and the Wah Hing School, these being presided over initially by a Vice-Chairman of the right wing Union. On the evening of the 10th a group of people who were not workers but included Nationalist partisans and members of Triad Societies held a special meeting at the Wah Hing School, after the "Double Tenth" celebrations were over, at which the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill incident was discussed. It was agreed that support would be given to the right wing workers at this factory from "other sources", believed to imply Triad gangs. On October 11th at midday the same people again met at the school; it was stated at this meeting that at 5.0 p.m. that day the management of the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill would be required by Union

representatives to fly the Nationalist flag, to dismiss all left wing workers and to discharge the official who had objected to the decorations on October 9th; right wing workers from other factories and Triad members would collect outside the factory in support; active members of the crowd would be recognizable by a handkerchief tied round the left wrist or a Nationalist paper flag in the jacket breast pocket; a system of flag signals between the factory and the Wai Hing School was also arranged. In the afternoon of October 11th Committee members at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill requested four other factories each to send 50 workers to the factory at 5.0 p.m. that day. As a sequel to this series of meetings, starting on the evening of October 10th when disturbances were known to have broken out in Kowloon, the events in Tsuen Wan followed a pattern, particularly in the case of the incidents at factories; for instance the leader of each section of the crowd controlled his gang by whistle in many cases; buildings to be attacked were distinguished by large Nationalist flags planted in the ground in front; demands made upon the management of factories generally included the flying of the Nationalist flag, dismissal of left wing workers and a privileged position for the right wing Union; in at least three cases "protection" money was extorted in addition; assaults on left wing workers were general throughout the riots.

51. The Police Force stationed in Tsuen Wan consisted of two Sub-Inspectors, one being the officer in charge, or Sub-divisional Inspector (referred to below as the S.D.I.) and 70 other ranks. The Station area is a sub-division of Shamshuipo in north western Kowloon. Police patrols were increased, as in other areas, on October 10th and Special Branch personnel were posted to the town. Reports were regularly made to Shamshuipo Divisional Station. When he heard news of the rioting in Kowloon, the S.D.I. put up a road block at the eastern end of the town, manned by 8 men. Seven patrols of two constables each kept the main road and streets under observation and a further patrol of a section visited villages north of the road. The S.D.I. with a detective sergeant paid regular visits to his men on patrol.

52. Nothing unusual occurred during October 10th or the morning of the 11th. During the afternoon, a Revenue Officer reported being stopped by a group of 10 men carrying Nationalist flags and forced to transport them in his van from Sham Tseng to a point little more than a mile short of the town. The S.D.I. went and challenged these men who said they were right wing workers employed by Major Contractors Ltd. and had heard rumours that their decorations in the town were to be destroyed by left wing

See Map C

workers. They dispersed on being called upon to do so. October 11th
The employees of this Company, engaged on tunnel work in connexion with a new reservoir at Tai Lam Chung a few miles west of Tsuen Wan, are thought to include many ex-Nationalist soldiers and Triad members.

Outbreak of disorder

53. At about 4.30 p.m. a detective sergeant in the course of patrol found a group of about 50 women textile workers, dressed in white blouses and black skirts with straw caps on their heads, close to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill. This group, which came from an adjoining factory, was shouting demands in chorus to the factory management to put back the Nationalist flags, referring presumably to those which the workers had themselves removed two days before in the circumstances described in paragraph 49; a crowd began to collect, consisting largely of male factory workers dressed in khaki shorts and shirts, some of whom started shouting and abusing the factory management; it should be explained that the male and female dress described is worn by people of Nationalist sympathies for meetings, rallies or demonstrations. The S.D.I., who had now arrived, and the sergeant warned these people to disperse and tried to reason with them but the women continued shouting and groups of people began to converge from all directions, among them some men carrying large Nationalist flags on long bamboo poles which they stuck in the earth just outside the factory. The crowd, estimated at about 500 at this stage, began to get excited and its temper worsened when a group of men recognized to be employees of Major Contractors Ltd. appeared. The S.D.I. then returned to the Police Station to report the situation and collect a police party. There was no feeling against the police at the time and he was not obstructed as he walked the 300 yards along the road. The instructions he received from his Divisional Superintendent at Shamshuipo Police Station were to return at once to the scene with three sections of police and to attempt to disperse the crowd with baton charges and, if necessary, with tear smoke.

54. When he got back to the factory with this police party who were armed with batons, tear smoke and three Greener riot guns, and included some plain clothes detectives (total about 30 men), the S.D.I. found the crowd had increased, that there were more flags and that the factory had been stoned and many windows broken. The crowd was threatening to burn down the factory and there were several people with cans of petrol or kerosene in their hands. The main demand was that Nationalist flags should be hoisted at once on the factory building itself; the

October
11th

detective sergeant suggested to a member of the staff that it would be advisable to comply but none of the staff on the premises were prepared to give the order; instead a notice had been posted on the gate asking the workers to wait for proper negotiations. The S.D.I. left about nine of his force in charge of police vehicles parked a short distance away, including a Land Rover equipped with wireless, and advanced towards the crowd with his men. The situation in the road outside the factory was very confused at the time; passers by on foot or in buses or cars were being attacked, and parts of the crowd were trying to overturn and set fire to vehicles in the roadway while others were putting up a barricade of stones across the road. The police party did what it could to prevent assaults and damage to vehicles but became entangled with the crowd in the process and lost formation. The S.D.I. ordered his men to prepare to use tear smoke but there were several buses and a petrol lorry close by, surrounded by the crowd, and he decided that the use of smoke shells would be dangerous until these vehicles had been moved on. At this stage the S.D.I. was instructed by radio to use Greener gunfire if necessary, but he considered that in the situation in which the police found themselves and in view of their weak fire power this would serve only to inflame the crowd, without resulting in the restoration of order; moreover some people in the crowd were heard to shout that the buses and passengers would be burnt if the police opened fire. Meanwhile some of the crowd had climbed into the factory and opened the main gate from inside; fire crackers were discharged nearby, apparently as a signal, and part of the crowd surged into the factory, bursting through a section of police drawn up outside the gate. Once inside, the crowd ran riot, setting fire to cotton and to a van parked in the compound; kerosene was poured on the floors and ignited with matches. Some broke into the workers' dormitory, and looted or smashed the contents and assaulted left wing workers. A number of the police party entered with the crowd and tried to prevent arson and assault but, acting individually in the face of a large mob, were ineffective. Meanwhile police vehicles which were threatened by a section of the mob were successfully defended by a corporal with a sten gun, but a motor van nearby was overturned and set on fire. It was clear by this time that the police had no control over the situation; it was feared that arms carried by the party might fall into the hands of the mob, or that it might successfully attack the Police Station, where there was a force of only 16 men at the time, and take the stocks of firearms kept there. The S.D.I. was therefore authorized to withdraw and defend the Station. The party returned inside the Police Station about 7.15 p.m. and, as will appear

7.15 p.m.

34

below, the military authorities were at once requested to take steps to restore order in the town. October
11th

55. Meanwhile a series of demands had been laid upon the management by spokesmen of the right wing workers inside the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill. At about 5.30 p.m. five spokesmen had visited the management and demanded that the Nationalist flag be flown, left wing workers discharged and the staff official who had ordered the decorations to be removed on October 9th dismissed; these demands were not accepted. Later, at the height of the attack on the factory, two of these five introduced to the mill manager a stranger who appeared to be in some authority over the rioters; this man demanded that flags be hoisted by the manager and the largest string of fire crackers obtainable discharged, under threat of burning down the factory; he also demanded a thousand dollars. On this being paid by the management, he ordered the fire which had been started to be extinguished and led the mob out of the factory. Later still, after a meeting in the factory canteen, leaders of the right wing workers in the factory repeated earlier demands and added others, such as that new employees should be engaged only through the Union Committee which should be recognized by the management and that no Union member should be dismissed. Under duress the management accepted these demands, after which this factory was not further attacked.

56. At 6.0 p.m. a report reached Police Headquarters on Hong Kong Island from the Special Branch post in Tsuen Wan that a crowd had assembled at 5.15 p.m. outside the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, where there was a dispute with the management over the flying of Nationalist flags. News of the withdrawal of the police party inside the Police Station reached the Commissioner's control room at 7.15 p.m. The C.P. decided that he could not spare police reinforcements from Kowloon or elsewhere for Tsuen Wan. He therefore requested the Commander British Forces, who was in the control room at the time, to move military forces into Tsuen Wan to take control of the area. The latter agreed to this request. 7.15 p.m.

57. There was an interval between the withdrawal of the police at about 7.15 p.m. and the arrival of the military internal security force from the west at 9.30 p.m., punctuated by the arrival and passage through the town of an escort force from the Green Howards between 8.0 and 9.0 p.m. During this period left wing union and other premises were attacked and looted by the rioters and the inmates brutally assaulted and humiliated. While the rioting was in progress at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill, a section of the

35

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0153

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October 11th Incident 41 mob left the factory and made for the Welfare Centre of the left wing Hong Kong and Kowloon Rubber and Plastic Workers' General Union, a stone hut on the hillside north west of the factory; the occupants fled and the crowd broke in, ransacked the premises and broke the windows and roof. The main body of the mob which was now between 500 and 1,000 strong moved eastwards to the Police Station; when the defenders threatened Bren gun fire, the mob continued to the east. Passing the junction of the road to Sek Kong the mob, led by men with large Nationalist flags, attacked three groups of left wing Union premises. The first group Incident 42 consisted of adjacent buildings lying in the Muk Min Ha area some 600 yards from the Police Station, first a clinic and dispensary run by the Federation of Trade Unions for members of its affiliates, together with quarters for the staff above, and secondly the welfare centre, co-operative store and library of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union and the welfare centre of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union, both housed in rooms on the first floor of adjacent houses in the village; the inmates attempted to defend these premises but the mob broke in, looted the buildings, burnt the furniture etc. outside and assaulted the occupants severely, taking those who failed to escape with them. Six employees of the clinic, four of them women, were dragged out from the first floor of the building; in the two welfare centres were 31 people in all, who resisted the attacks; they were bound in pairs with pieces of cloth and haled off by the mob. Four of those assaulted in this incident later died of their injuries. A house adjoining the welfare centres which was formerly used as a canteen was also ransacked. Moving about 1,000 yards further east along the main road, the mob attacked Incident 43 a second group of three buildings, the local branch of the Society of Plantations, a barber's shop close by which had flown Chinese Communist flags on October 1st and the premises of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union; at the last the occupants numbering about 21 were assaulted and one later died of his injuries. These buildings were all ransacked and the furniture smashed to pieces. The Union premises were also fired with the aid of kerosene. The leader of the mob during these attacks carried a large Nationalist flag on a bamboo pole which was planted in front of the place to be attacked.

58. The rioters divided at this stage into two sections. One section took the occupants of the left wing premises which had been ransacked, some 60 people in all, to the Castle Peak Road in the centre of Tsuen Wan where

there were two "pailaus" or large bamboo structures with Nationalist decorations and pictures, erected for the celebration of October 10th, one near the Hung Lin Bakery and one near the Tsuen Wan Theatre. Here they were mercilessly assaulted and beaten so that many became unconscious. A number of them had their outer clothing torn off during the course of the brutal attacks made on them; there is no evidence of rape. The other section of the mob entered Hoi Pa Village south of the main road and attacked a third group of buildings, the School of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Silk Weaving Workers' General Union and the local branch of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Enamel Workers' General Union. At the latter the occupants resisted the mob for some time; finally the building was fired, the defenders forced out, caught by the mob, violently assaulted and taken off to the Castle Peak Road where they were beaten again. The buildings attacked were all ransacked and some nine adjoining houses and the Hoi Pa Restaurant received incidental damage at the hands of the mob. At about this time a convoy of the Green Howards arrived on the eastern outskirts of Tsuen Wan. On seeing them, the rioters built a barricade of stones across the road at the eastern end of the town through which the convoy broke soon afterwards; the mob then scattered into side streets, leaving their victims lying by the roadside, some severely injured and others lying still to avoid being further assaulted. It was this scene which gave rise to the story that sixty dead bodies had been seen in Tsuen Wan. The total dead or fatally injured in the whole Tsuen Wan area proved to be 8. (See paragraph 68 below).

59. Military Headquarters had had at 7.0 p.m. a report of rioting in Tsuen Wan, with an indication that the situation of the police there was serious; five minutes later Headquarters Land Forces warned the 24th Field Engineer Regiment at Tai Lam Camp, 8 miles west of Tsuen Wan, to prepare for internal security operations there; Regimental Headquarters and four field troops, each of one officer and thirty other ranks, were detailed for this and began to prepare for the move. At 7.40 p.m., this force was ordered to restore order in Tsuen Wan and to establish a joint Army and Police Headquarters there. At about 8.0 p.m. an escort party of two officers and 10 men from the Green Howards, with ration trucks, were proceeding from Lai Chi Kok north west of Kowloon to their camp in the New Territories, when they found the main road blocked at the eastern end of Tsuen Wan and could see fires and rioting going on in the town; they deployed across the road and were joined by two platoons sent by their Commanding Officer at 8.20 p.m. with orders

October
11th

to clear the road blocks and see the convoy through onto the Sek Kong road, which joins the coast road in Tsuen Wan; the Commanding Officer heard soon after that other troops were already on their way to Tsuen Wan from the west. The convoy was passed through by about 9.0 p.m.

60. Meanwhile the force from the 24th Field Engineer Regiment (referred to below as 24 F.E.R.), consisting of four officers and 120 other ranks, with Regimental Headquarters, left Tai Lam Camp at 8.53 p.m. and arrived at the western end of Tsuen Wan at 9.22 p.m. They found large crowds and boulders blocking the road but their entry, in heavy vehicles, was not actively opposed; they arrived at the Police Station at 9.30 p.m. and the Acting Commanding Officer of the Regiment took over from the S.D.I. The situation as it appeared to 24 F.E.R. when they took over at 9.30 p.m. at the Police Station was that in the factory area west of the town crowds had partially blocked the road with boulders for 250 yards, burnt a car and three motor cycles and damaged the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill by fire; these crowds were in hostile mood. There was also considerable movement on foot between the east and west of the town past the Police Station; the town area east of the junction of the road north to Sek Kong appeared from the main road to be fairly orderly.

11.0 p.m.

61. A field troop was sent with a bugler and police interpreters to order everyone off the streets by 11.0 p.m. Moving west to the edge of the factory area this party saw few people and no rioting in progress; to the east of the Police Station no crowds were seen near the road, but some ten injured people were lying by the roadside near the Wah Hing School and another four near the Silk Weaving Workers' Union premises, together with a pile of burnt furniture and papers. Soon after the return of the troop, a party of military and police left the Station to attend to the injured and picked up about 60 people in all near the various buildings attacked by the rioters and the Wah Hing School; they were taken at about 11.0 p.m. to the Lady Maurine Health Centre in the eastern part of the town and the more serious cases sent to hospital in Kowloon. At about this time two field troops were sent out, each with some 12 police, to enforce the "curfew". This was not easy as groups dispersed in one area only to collect elsewhere, and in some instances refused at first to disperse; in one case a patrol was faced with a crowd of about 400 which was with difficulty induced to disperse within a time limit of 5 minutes. At about 11.30 p.m. a troop of 24 F.E.R. met one company of the Green Howards with scout cars of the 7th Hussars some 400 yards east of the Sek Kong road

11.30 pm.

38

junction. This force had been clearing the eastern part of the town and now enforced the "curfew" in the road running south alongside Hoi Pa village to the sea. No further disorder took place in the town itself, but several incidents affecting the neighbouring factories occurred during the night.

October
11th

62. At about 10.30 p.m. the factory of the Oriental Sui and Canning Co. which lies on the other side of Tsuen Wan Bay about a mile south east in a direct line from the Police Station was attacked by a mob of 100. Earlier in the evening an ex-employee had extorted two sums of money on a threat that the factory would be damaged; and after an anonymous telephone call a Nationalist flag had been hoisted. The mob failed to break the metal grilles guarding the windows but forced two employees inside by threats to open the gates; they then smashed furniture etc. with which they made a bonfire outside and burnt a motor van; the interior of the factory also caught fire. The workers' quarters were likewise ransacked and fired. The workers themselves had taken refuge on the hillside behind and were uninjured. At about 11.15 p.m. the fire at the factory was seen from the Police Station; by half past midnight troops had escorted a fire engine to the scene and the fire was extinguished.

Incident 46

63. At about 11.0 p.m. it was reported that a group of 40 people were threatening the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill No. 2, formerly the New China Textile Factory, 1½ miles east of the town; they did in fact raid the dormitory and assault left wing workers, who were forced to "kowtow" and repeat anti-Communist slogans. An hour earlier a gang of ten had smashed and burnt the contents of a hut near the factory which was used by left wing workers as a recreation centre; the seven inmates escaped. A patrol of the Green Howards later reported that all was quiet at this factory.

11.0 p.m.
Incident 47

64. Four other factories in the immediate vicinity of Tsuen Wan were visited by crowds of rioters during the night. These incidents followed a pattern; in each case a mob collected outside the factory carrying Nationalist flags, demands were made by spokesmen of the crowd under threat of burning down or looting the factory and the management generally acceded under duress. Left wing workers were assaulted whenever the mob could lay hands on them. Outside the Textile Corporation Factory a mob assaulted left wing workers entering the building at 6.30 p.m. Rioters re-assembled there at 9.0 p.m.; work stopped and all but some 30 left wing workers left the factory; three right wing employees of this factory then entered and demanded that the thirty workers still inside should

Incident 48

39

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October 11th-12th be dismissed and handed over to the mob. These thirty resigned and left by a side gate, but were caught by the mob, beaten and forced to "kowitz" and shout anti-Communist slogans. Later a gang forced its way into the dormitory at this factory, dragged out the left wing workers and forced them to march in procession along the road to the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill and back carrying a Nationalist flag.

Incident 49 The South Sea Textile Factory was visited four times by mobs during the evening; work stopped and on the third occasion five unknown men entered and forced the management to let them hoist a number of Nationalist flags; on the final visit four spokesmen demanded the dismissal of left wing workers but the management temporized and the mob left the vicinity. A crowd of 200 to 300 arrived outside the South Textiles Factory at about 8.0 p.m. on October 11th, carrying Nationalist flags and shouting; three right wing employees of the factory entered and demanded that flags be hoisted, that all left wing workers be dismissed, that the right wing Union be recognized and engagements and dismissals be subject to its approval, and that workers be paid during any stoppage of work. The assistant manager acceded under duress and signed a document which has since been recovered. About midnight a patrol visited this factory, where a crowd was reported, and found about 1,000 people who appeared by their dress to be right wing workers. They refused to disperse but eventually agreed to leave the roadway. At about 8.0 a.m. the next day, October 12th, a small crowd visited the Pacific Worsted Mills. Five spokesmen demanded that left wing workers be dismissed, that engagements and dismissals be subject to the approval of the right wing Union, which should be encouraged by the management, and that certain employees should receive increased pay; the management accepted these demands in writing under duress and the crowd dispersed.

Incident 50

Incident 51

October 12th 65. By the small hours of October 12th the general situation in the immediate area of Tsuen Wan was quieter. Meanwhile at Sham Tseng, some 4 miles to the west of Tsuen Wan, the Kowloon Textile Factory Committee of the right wing Union had called a meeting at 8.0 p.m. on October 11th, which was attended also by workers from Tsuen Wan factories and employees of Major Contractors Ltd., believed to be Triad members. It was agreed that demands should be laid upon the management of this factory, supported by a gathering of right wing workers, that the Nationalist flag be flown and left wing workers dismissed. A crowd arrived outside the Kowloon Textiles Factory about 2.0 a.m. and the Chairman of the

2.0 a.m. Incident 52 Union Factory Committee demanded that the Nationalist

flag be hoisted and work stopped. Meanwhile the crowd began stoning the factory and some of them climbed in and forced the watchman to hand over the keys and open the gates. About 100 people rushed in and overturned three cars in the compound, setting alight to one of them. One group forced open a strong box and took three shot guns and ammunition; two of these guns were later found smashed and thrown into the sea. While this was going on, a workers' spokesman demanded that, in addition to stopping work and hoisting the flag, the management should dismiss left wing workers and recognize the right wing Union. The factory engineer accepted the conditions under duress and signed a paper to this effect; he also promised to pay \$2,500 the next day for five Nationalist flags; two of the leaders who were workers from this factory signed the paper and one of them then announced to the crowd that the conditions had been accepted. Whistles were blown as a sign for withdrawal, one large and four small Nationalist flags were hoisted and the rioters bowed three times before them. The leader then seized a motor truck belonging to the factory in which parties of rioters were driven to the South Sea Textiles Factory in Tsuen Wan; as the crowd left, boulders were rolled on to the roadway as a block. At about midnight the house of a left wing film actress between Sham Tseng and Tsuen Wan, which was used as a recreation club by workers, was ransacked by a group believed to have included some from the Kowloon Textiles Factory. At Sham Tseng village small gangs broke into a shop, two huts and two stone houses, one used as a welfare and recreation centre of the Hong Kong and Kowloon Spinning, Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers' General Union and looted and wrecked the premises.

66. The four troops of 24 F.E.R. spent the rest of the night in active patrols to ensure that the people kept off the streets. A report at 7.30 a.m. that the Hong Kong Brewery at Sham Tseng was being attacked proved false. At 8.25 a.m. the 27th Light Battery R.A. was ordered to the Brewery. At 10.0 a.m. on October 12th a Curfew Order came into force in Tsuen Wan, extended at 7.30 p.m. to cover the Sham Tseng area. This remained in force, with two-hourly intervals between noon and 2.0 p.m. daily, until 10.0 a.m. on October 16th.

67. At about 11.0 a.m. on October 12th some 640 left wing workers were brought to the Police Station from the direction of the factories to the west by a group of right wing workers; they were allowed to remain in the compound for protection until the afternoon of October 14th

when they were moved to the South Sea Textile Factory with a police guard. Many other left wing workers left the factory area during the riots, either taking to the hills to the north or making their way to Kowloon. During the day a number of reports of expected disorder reached the police, but none of these proved well founded; they were a natural product of nervousness on the part of factory staffs. On October 14th reinforcements of 120 police moved into temporary accommodation at the South Sea Textiles Factory and at the Hong Kong Brewery at Sham Tseng; at 8.0 p.m. on October 14th the bulk of the military force was withdrawn and the remainder left on October 15th, handing back control to the police.

Casualties in Tsuen Wan

68. Eight deaths are known to have occurred as a result of the riots in the Tsuen Wan area, six after admission to hospital, and one on the way to hospital; one body was found in the street near Hoi Pa village on October 11th; in all these cases death was due to injuries inflicted with blunt instruments. 63 other serious casualties were taken to hospital in Kowloon of which 54 were admitted. 46 other injured people were treated at the Lady Maurine Health Centre at Tsuen Wan. All the dead have been identified and all persons reported missing in the Tsuen Wan area since the riots have been accounted for.

Arrests

69. During the night of October 11th joint military and police patrols made 42 arrests for rioting and unlawful assembly in the vicinity of the Police Station. Early in the morning of October 14th a large force of military and police sent from Kowloon conducted a sweep from the factory area in the west to the junction of the Sek Kong Road in the east and arrested some 600 suspects. At 3.0 p.m. the same day a further 42 arrests were made in the rest of Tsuen Wan.

General

70. The principal characteristics of the riots in Tsuen Wan were: firstly a degree of organization among the mobs, which were led by men with large Nationalist flags, responded to whistle blasts, used a system of white wristbands as a mark of recognition and were amenable to withdrawing from a factory, the management of which had hoisted this flag, paid the requisite protection money or met other demands; secondly, the concerted and destructive

attacks on buildings housing Communist sympathizers, whether union premises, houses or shops, together with the brutal and humiliating treatment of the occupants, especially if they attempted to defend their premises; thirdly the cases of extortion under threat of arson or wholesale destruction of a factory and through the widespread forced sale of Nationalist paper flags; fourthly the tendency to use the occasion of disorder to pay off old scores either against the political opponent or the former employer; and fifthly the attempt to establish right wing unions in a position of monopoly by securing undertakings in writing from factory managements that left wing workers would be dismissed and replaced by people acceptable to these unions.

Effect on the labour situation in Tsuen Wan and return to normal conditions

71. On the morning of October 16th, when the curfew was finally lifted, the only factories which could not resume operation owing to damage were the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill and the Oriental Soy and Canning Factory. Nearly all the other factories and mills resumed work on that day, many with their labour force depleted by arrests or by absence owing to nervousness. Later in the day a drift away from the textile factories developed. This was initiated apparently by the left wing unions calling their members to headquarters in Kowloon to report on their experiences during the riots; the right wing workers then became afraid of reprisals and also began to leave. On the two succeeding days only about a third of the labour force was at work in the mills. By October 22nd some 70% had returned, but a few days later rumours of plans for reprisals or for further violence were in circulation, associated with the birthday of Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek on October 31st. These appeared to be without any solid basis whatever but served, with the removal of a police riot unit quartered in one of the factories to a less conspicuous location in the neighbourhood, to cause general alarm; some workers left for Kowloon, while others did not report for the night shift. The managements of several textile factories, finding their labour force reduced again to some 30%, thought it advisable to grant holidays at the end of the month. Meanwhile the police increased their strength considerably and made it plain that they were ready for any fresh outbreak. The rumours proved unfounded and no incident occurred on October 31st; thereafter the labour situation in the Tsuen Wan area rapidly improved. By November 2nd it was virtually normal.

CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY OF CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE

Casualties

72. 443 casualties are recorded by the hospitals, 59 fatal. Of the remaining 384, 151 were cases of minor injury treated in hospital and sent home. There were 223 admissions, of which some were discharged by October 18th without detailed records. Details of injuries, sex and age in 164 cases recorded were as follows:—

Casualties admitted to Hospitals of which detailed records exist
(Excluding those who died after admission)

Injury	Adult		Juvenile (under 18)		Total
	M	F	M	F	
Head Injuries.....	15		1		16
Fractures	6	1	3	1	11
Burns	1		1		2
Gunshot Wounds	61	11	7	3	82
Other severe injuries	6		1		7
Minor injuries.....	36	6	4		46
Total.....	125	18	17	4	164

There were probably many more cases of injury which did not reach the hospitals; for instance, a police surgeon set up a first aid post at Police Headquarters Kowloon and treated many cases which were not sent on to hospital; moreover a number of the injured rioters no doubt deliberately concealed their wounds in order to avoid attracting the attention of the police. Of the 59 fatal casualties, 31 were

dead on arrival at hospitals and 28 died in hospital. Details of cause of death, sex and age are as follows:—

Analysis of deaths

Cause of Death	Adults				Juveniles (under 18)		Total
	Male		Female		Male (no females)		
	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	Died in Hospital	Brought in Dead	
Fire Engine accident	1	1		1			3
Blunt instrument	5	3					8
Gunshot							
(1) Greener Gun.....	13	18				2	33
(2) Other ball ammunition	6	1			1		8
(3) Smoke Shell		3					3
Burns		2	1				3
Multiple injuries.....	1						1
Totals.....	26	28	1	1	1	2	59

The injuries which resulted in death were caused as follows:—

(a) by the Police—		
Gunshot	41	
Smoke shell	3	44
(b) by the rioters—		
In Tsuen Wan (see paragraph 68)	8	
Accident to the fire engine (incident 10) ...	3	
Burns (incident 23)	3	
Suicide while in custody	1	15
		<u>59</u>

Two of those who died of burns and the man who committed suicide were rioters and the fatal injuries sustained were due to their own actions. Where a particular incident is known to have resulted in one or more deaths, this is mentioned in the narrative; but most of those shot by the police did not die on the spot and it is not possible to relate more than a few of these deaths to a particular

time or place with any certainty. The number of deaths which occurred in each district was as follows:—

See Map B	Shamshuipo	24
	Yaumati	5
	Mongkok	1
	Kowloon City	9
	Tsuen Wan	8
	Unknown	12

55 of the dead have so far been identified, 43 by relatives or friends (10 directly and 33 by photographs), 7 by criminal records and 5 by names only, given by themselves when admitted to hospital; 4 are unknown. A missing persons inquiry bureau was established at Kowloon Police Headquarters and relations of missing persons were publicly invited to come to the bureau to check photographs or particulars available of the dead, the injured and persons in custody. 13 of the dead rioters had previous criminal records. There were no fatal casualties among the security forces. 4 officers and 13 other ranks of Her Majesty's Regular Forces were injured and of these 1 officer and 3 other ranks were admitted to hospital; 107 members of the Police Force were injured, of whom 8 were treated in hospital and 1 detained. One fatal casualty was of a European (see paragraph 34) and 7 European civilians were admitted to hospital with injuries.

Damage

73. The damage caused by the riots resulted mainly from arson and looting. In many instances it has proved impracticable to obtain more than a rough estimate, generally supplied by the owners or occupants of the premises or property damaged. It is evident that the figures are in many of these cases considerably inflated, and some had to be based on replacement value without allowance for depreciation. The following is a brief summary with an indication of the types of property involved (\$16=£1):—

IN KOWLOON

(1) <i>Industrial and commercial</i>	
(a) The Garden Bakery (preliminary estimate by the management based purely on replacement cost)	\$3,000,000
(b) Small factories and other concerns, including four weaving factories, a toy and a metal factory and a stone works	500,000

46

(c) Some thirty shops including provision stores, goldsmiths, bookshops and four small film studios	\$300,000
(2) <i>Some twenty private houses, flats, etc.</i>	50,000
(3) <i>Schools</i>	250,000
(4) <i>Private vehicles</i>	
About twenty destroyed by fire and fifty damaged, including seven burnt and five damaged at the Garden Bakery	200,000
(5) <i>Government buildings</i>	
consisting of offices, police posts and quarters in resettlement areas and slight damage to a post office	50,000
(6) <i>Other Government property</i>	
including two fire engines, other vehicles, street signs, traffic signals, etc.	170,000

IN TSUEN WAN

Damage by fire and looting to factories, trade union and similar premises and minor damage to private property	250,000
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74. In Kowloon, all but one of the small factories looted or burnt, and nearly all the thirty shops and private houses are believed to have displayed Chinese Communist flags or decorations on October 1st. Most of the stores which were looted had products from China on sale. Private cars were in general indiscriminately attacked and burnt as obvious targets for mob violence, especially if they did not fly the Nationalist flag or pay protection money. The Government property damaged fell into two categories, namely premises in resettlement areas, and vehicles, street signs etc. on which the rioters could readily lay hands. In Tsuen Wan all the union premises and nearly all the private property looted or set on fire were buildings used or occupied by left wing sympathizers; the circumstances in which factories were damaged have been described in Chapter III. It is proper to add that the fact that left wing premises were, generally speaking, singled out for attack, looting and arson, does not necessarily imply that the rioters were all strong Nationalist supporters. In many cases, criminal gangs intent on creating disorder as a cloak and a lever for increased extortion sought to exploit the emotions aroused by the "Double Tenth" celebrations and made use of the Nationalist flag to this end. This aspect is dealt with more fully in the succeeding chapter.

47

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CHAPTER V
COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

75. The course of the riots in Kowloon fell naturally into three phases, separated by two short intervals. During the first phase, lasting from 2.0 p.m. to 3.20 p.m. on October 10th, the officials and property of the Resettlement Department were initially the target of attack, until the police intervened to protect an officer from renewed assault and so drew the animosity of the crowd. This was composed almost entirely of settlers although there are reports of strange faces being seen among them; there is no doubt that many settlers are members of Triad and criminal gangs and would not be slow to grasp such a favourable opportunity for challenging law and order. This phase was short but during the ensuing lull word was passed round in Triad circles that disorder had broken out at Li Cheng Uk connected with the removal of Nationalist flags by officials, a situation by which "the brothers" (the term used by these gangsters) should seek to profit. In the second phase, lasting from 6.30 p.m. on October 10th until 6.0 a.m. on October 11th, Triad gang leadership came increasingly to the fore. At first members acted individually but there is evidence that by 10.0 p.m. organized gangs led by men carrying large Nationalist flags were debouching in force from Shek Kip Mei Resettlement Estate; in the small hours of October 11th a series of shops in Shamshuipo, all with Communist connexions, were looted by mobs each led by Triad gangs from the Wo or 14K groups, at a time when the operations of the police were concentrated at the main road junction immediately adjacent to this estate which was continually invested by large mobs of rioters. After 10.30 p.m. on October 10th the rioters became at once bolder in their defiance of the police, for instance in building barricades of boulders, overturned cars etc. across the main roads, and also more adept at evading baton charges or tear smoke. During the third phase from 10.0 a.m. on October 11th until the small hours of the following morning, (with which events took a much more serious turn in that the riots could no longer be associated directly with the "Double Tenth" celebrations), a further series of shops and small factories were looted by Triad gangs which became increasingly determined and destructive during the morning and early afternoon. Occupants of cars, and in Kowloon City shopkeepers, were forced under threat of assault to "buy" Nationalist flags, a characteristic form of extortion. The police were being strongly attacked throughout this period and were obliged to resort increasingly to firearms.

See
paragraph
4

48

This, and the arrival of regular troops to cordon the disturbed areas, caused organized resistance by large mobs to crumple rapidly. By midnight only scattered gangs of looters remained active in Kowloon.

76. The extremely high population density of north western Kowloon, estimated at some 2,000 people to the acre, is a factor which needs to be constantly borne in mind in considering the handling of the riots. In this district the streets are, except late at night, continuously thronged with people of all ages going about their business. If anything unusual such as a traffic accident or an altercation occurs, a crowd of hundreds collects almost at once, becoming a densely packed mass of thousands of people in a few minutes, unless the situation is dealt with rapidly. In the resettlement estates, the inhabitants of only one of the smallest blocks would form a crowd of 2,000 if they all came into the street at once. The Shek Kip Mei Estate with a population of 55,000 housed in 25 blocks lies a stone's throw from the main road junction and provided both a huge reservoir of manpower and a convenient and safe place of retreat during the rioting at this spot. The population of the urban areas of Kowloon north of Jordan Road, as shown on Map B, approaches a million; the residential area is very small relative to the population. In such overcrowded conditions police movement is hampered and leaders of the mob have little difficulty in sheltering behind a screen of curious onlookers which includes many women and children. It is noticeable in photographs taken during the riots, while the police were being stoned or were firing tear smoke shells, that small boys were often in the forefront of the crowd: in such conditions the police were reluctant to risk killing passive by-standers, including children, by resort to firearms; moreover since the gangs of rioters often did not stand their ground when the police appeared but scattered and fled, an order to fire would in many cases have involved shooting into the backs of a retreating mob. Yet, unless they open fire, the police are at a disadvantage in a scattered game of tip and run in a maze of streets; moreover the typical tenement building has a series of balconies on each floor which are ideally suited for pelting the police in the street below with any handy missile. Large stones and blocks of concrete, too heavy to be thrown, were in fact dropped on police units and vehicles and on fire engines from these points of vantage. In the resettlement estates a police party is confronted with a seven-tiered erection with continuous verandahs on both sides of the street, all teeming with people who may be either harmless spectators or thugs armed with brickbats or heavy stones. Tear smoke or

49

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sickening smoke require concentration if they are to be effective; in these riots really suitable targets such as small and compact stationary or advancing crowds seldom presented themselves. When fired at a rapidly retreating group of rioters, or upwards at verandahs from which the police are being stoned, tear or sickening smoke has little effect. In these circumstances the crowds soon lost their fear of smoke, which proved a disappointing weapon in preventing the riots developing to a stage at which the use of firearms could no longer be avoided. Even gunshot has much less impact on crowds sprinkled with rioters, whether on verandahs or scattering through side-streets at a distance from the advancing police, than when ringleaders of a compact mob are brought down.

77. Watch and ward is the primary role of the Police Force; police training stresses the necessity for co-operation with the public and for tact and persuasion and the minimum use of force. It must be the duty of any police force to exercise the greatest possible restraint in the handling of disorder and to resort to firearms only in self-defence, to save life or where there is a grave and continuing threat to public order. In maintaining this attitude until it was evident beyond all doubt, both that a determined and prolonged onslaught was being made on the rule of law in the Colony, and also that all deterrents short of firearms had been fully employed without success, the Acting Commissioner of Police directed the operations of his Force in consonance with its accepted role and functions.

78. The Hong Kong Police Force has to police a highly developed and congested sea port with a population of over two millions, together with rural areas, islands, a highly indented coastline and the frontier with China. To meet large scale riots the structure of the Force requires to be suddenly and drastically changed and almost the whole Force regrouped in a number of ad hoc mobile units. This change was successfully carried through and in general the police functioned well as a security force; in particular, the discipline and steadiness of the men in face of heavy and constant stoning was admirable. The fluid tactics of the mobs made it necessary for police formations to be highly flexible and mobile; the small number of armoured cars available proved invaluable, but limitations of transport and communications had the result that the men in action could not always be deployed to best advantage.

79. The extreme mobility of the mobs in Kowloon may be attributed partly to the natural desire of the rioters to keep out of range of police batons, smoke grenades and shells and in the later stages gunfire; but this mobility was

due even more to their lack of any very definite objective other than the creation of a state of general disorder and weakened police control in a widening area of the city, so as to induce an atmosphere congenial to their further criminal activities. This lack of any definite objective was one of the most important elements in the situation in Kowloon from the police point of view. It made it impossible for the police to anticipate the likely targets of mob action or to deploy in advance of any new outbreak of violence. It must be conceded, therefore, that the initiative lay with the rioters throughout the early stages of the disturbances and until the main trouble centres were cordoned off and the curfew imposed. While there is ample evidence, from subsequent interrogation, of organized Triad activity there is indication neither of co-ordinated central control of the riots by a superior Triad or other body nor of any planning of the disturbances before the initial outbreak at Li Cheng Uk on the afternoon of October 10th. These gangster organizations, in common with "protection" and extortion gangs of the same kidney in other parts of the world, retain the close-knit "blood brotherhood" of a secret society; each gang preys continuously upon the inhabitants, especially the small traders, of a particular district which is regarded as its exclusive "territory". They need to make no special plans before exploiting a favourable situation; all that is required is a message or sign passed rapidly round in the particular "territory" that members should muster on business. These gangs favour the Nationalist cause because some have political origins and most are composed largely of Nationalist sympathizers. Having succeeded in causing widespread disorder on the "Double Tenth", when the flag-symbol is ever present, the gangs then directed their attacks at premises which only ten days earlier had displayed the Communist 5-star flag. Furthermore, by using the Nationalist flag as a symbol and cover, purely gangster elements, who possibly had no overt political affiliations themselves, managed to obtain or enforce the support, either active or passive, of large numbers of people whose political sympathies were strong but who were not necessarily disposed to violence.

80. As has been explained in Chapter I, the areas of refugee squatter huts were strongholds of the Triads, who have not relaxed their grip on the same clientèle now rehoused in the resettlement estates. On October 10th the gangs centred in the Shek Kip Mei Estate saw their chance, while the police were heavily engaged at Li Cheng Uk, to exploit resentment felt against the Resettlement Department over the affair of the flags, and consequently against

the authorities including the police, and to incite the crowds to destroy the property of Communist sympathizers; on the following day the gangs in Kowloon City and Yaumati seized their opportunity for extortion and looting while the police were fully occupied in Shamshuipo district. The rapidity with which resistance on a large scale collapsed when the police began to use firearms without hesitation and regular battalions were seen moving into Kowloon in force tends to confirm the conclusion that the rioters had no planned objectives and were prepared, as soon as they saw that the tide was turning, to abandon their efforts to create a state of general disorder. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that gangs of this nature have, in Hong Kong as in other places, a stake in disorder which yields increased dividends not merely at the time, through extortion under immediate threat of assault or arson, but for as long as the fear of renewed violence induces their victims to pay an increased premium in "protection" money. The more brutal and ruthless the gangs when they have a chance to run riot, the richer and more prolonged their harvest. It is significant that during the year ending in March 1956 some 75% of the cases of reported crime in the Colony originated in Kowloon; and over 45% of the total occurred in the northern part of Kowloon, that is in Shamshuipo and Kowloon City districts, the two main centres of rioting. Evidently the criminal gangs confined their operations during the riots very largely to the "territory" from which their income as racketeers is drawn. The conclusion that the rioting in Kowloon was instigated and fanned by criminals, for criminal and not political or other ends, is confirmed not only by this geographical concentration in the more lawless districts of the Colony but also by the fact that no attacks were made on the main administrative or business centres, whether on the mainland or on Hong Kong Island.

81. In Tsuen Wan the riots also grew out of objections to some of the decorations for the "Double Tenth". There is no evidence of planning prior to October 10th; but it does appear both from the information later obtained about the meetings of October 10th and 11th, and from the similarity of many of the demands made on factory managements that, encouraged by news of the riots in Kowloon, right wing union leaders in Tsuen Wan and other anti-Communist elements made a concerted attempt to intimidate factory managements, with a view to inducing them to expel left wing workers and to recognize the right wing union as the sole representative of the workers. The

See paragraphs 50 and 65

attacks on left wing union and other premises and the severe assaults on their occupants developed when the mob at the Pao Hsing Cotton Mill had roused itself to a state of frenzy and hysteria by its successful acts of violence and destruction, and then found itself no longer opposed by the police and was temporarily able to run riot in the town without restraint. It must be remembered that there has been bitter rivalry between the right wing and left wing trade unions in the Colony for a number of years. Particularly strong feelings are engendered when workers of opposite political sympathies work, and also live, side by side as in the Tsuen Wan area. Rivalry is intensified during the period of celebration of the two national days in October and violent incidents have occurred from time to time, leaving old scores to be settled on one side or the other.

82. The Army units which took part in the suppression of the riots consisted firstly of the 15th Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery and the 74th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment, Royal Artillery, from Kowloon which supported police drives from Police Headquarters Kowloon northwards to the main road junction and assisted in the cordoning and security of the junction during the afternoon and evening of October 11th; secondly of three infantry battalions, the Green Howards, the North Staffordshire Regiment and the Northamptonshire Regiment, with scout cars of the 7th Hussars, which were moved into Kowloon from the New Territories during the same period to cordon the areas of rioting, as shown on Map B; and thirdly of the 24th Field Engineer Regiment, which took over control of Tsuen Wan at 9.30 p.m. on the same evening. This latter unit was subsequently reinforced by the 27th Light Battery, Royal Artillery, the 15th Field Park Squadron, Royal Engineers and elements of the 7th Hussars. In addition, mobile patrols visited various parts of the New Territories and Internal Security troops stood to on Hong Kong Island. The officers and men of the Colony's Regular Garrison conducted themselves in a commendably forbearing 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 large scale disorder during the evening of October 11th. The military forces did not find it necessary 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.

83. Many arrests were made by the police during the riots. Extensive screening operations took place on October 12th, 13th and 14th and many suspects were taken into custody, both in Kowloon and in Tsuen Wan. The search for those responsible for the disorders has been vigorously pursued since then and further investigations have resulted in more arrests. Over 6,000 people in all have been arrested, of whom some 3,000 were released after being questioned. A further 1,455 were charged with breach of Curfew Orders and 1,241 of these were convicted and sent to prison for periods ranging from 7 days to 2 months, while 214 were fined, bound over or discharged. Up to the end of November 740 of the remaining persons in custody had been charged with more serious offences committed in Kowloon and many had been convicted, while others were awaiting trial. The position at the end of the month may be summarized as follows:—

(Offences committed in Kowloon)

Offence	Convicted	Awaiting trial	Acquitted or discharged	Total
Murder	—	7	1	8
Riot and unlawful assembly	51	176	140	367
Looting	119	11	29	159
Wounding	—	1	—	1
Triad membership	103	41	37	181
Possession of arms	2	1	5	8
Breach of Deportation Order	16	—	—	16
TOTAL	291	237	212	740

Prison sentences imposed range as follows:—

For riot: 6 months to 2 years.

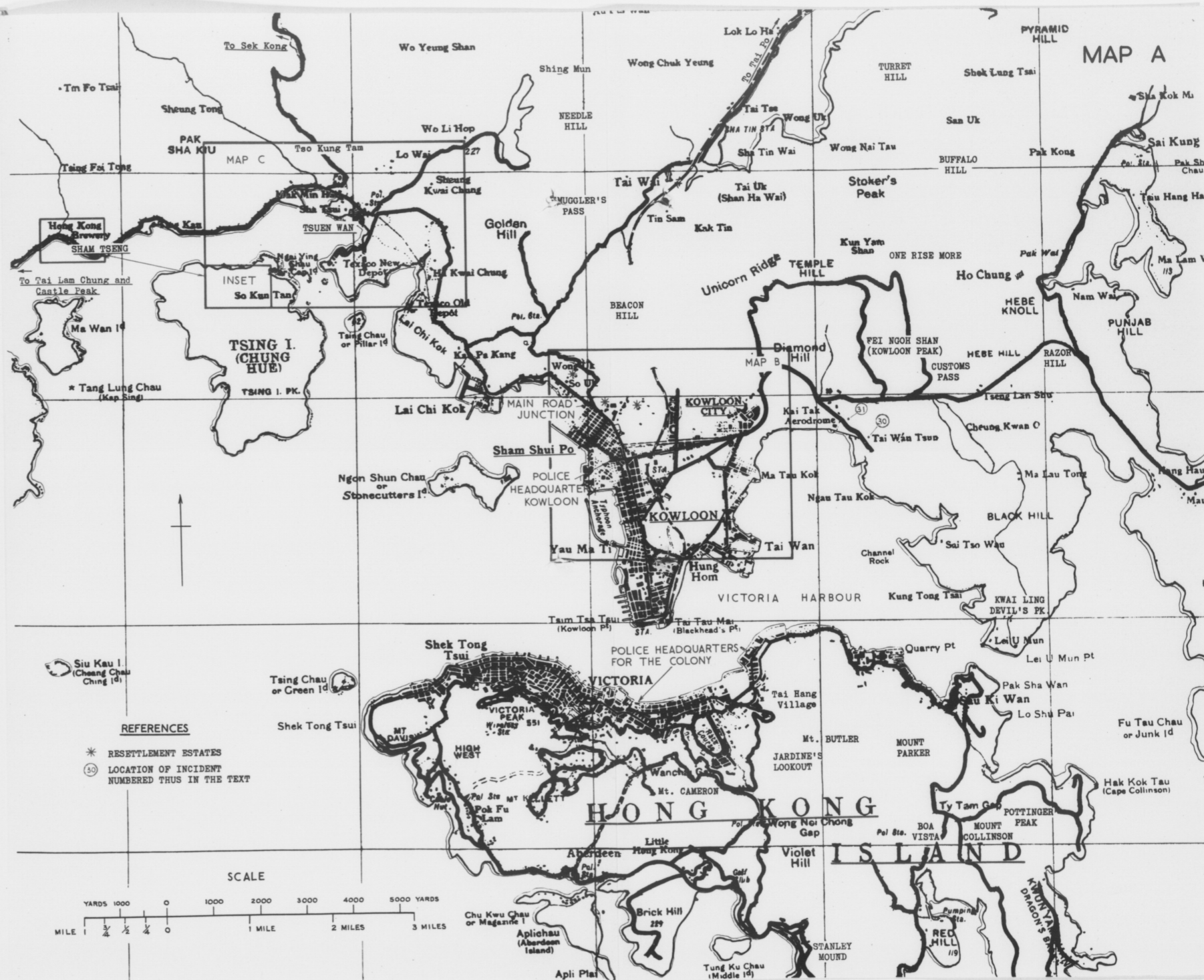
For riot with membership of a Triad Society: 1 year to 3 years.

For Triad membership: 6 months to 2 years.

For looting: up to 1 year.

In connexion with the looting of the Yee Wo Tai Weaving factory in Kowloon City in the early hours of October 12th (Incident 28), a total of 91 people have been charged, 58 with rioting or Triad offences, (6 convicted and 52 awaiting trial) and 33 with looting (23 convicted and 10 discharged); for

offences committed at the Heung To School (Incident 19), 17 people have been convicted of looting and 4 of Triad offences; in connexion with the attack on two shops in Castle Peak Road (Incident 37) 31 people have been convicted and sentenced for looting. A further 146 people were charged on November 27th with offences committed in Tsuen Wan; a total of 186 charges were laid, including 167 of riot; other charges included arson, intimidation and riotous assault. All these cases were pending at the end of November; and some 600 people remained in custody while investigations continued. All cases so far disposed of have been heard in the Magistrates' Courts, the jurisdiction of which extends to a maximum sentence of two years' or in the case of consecutive sentences three years', imprisonment. The more important of the cases still pending will be the subject of committal proceedings for trial in the higher Courts, which are empowered to impose heavier sentences. It is necessary to add that the strenuous efforts of the police to ensure that all those responsible for the disorders are duly punished according to law have been considerably hampered by general reluctance on the part of witnesses, particularly witnesses of the rioting in Tsuen Wan, to come forward and give evidence.



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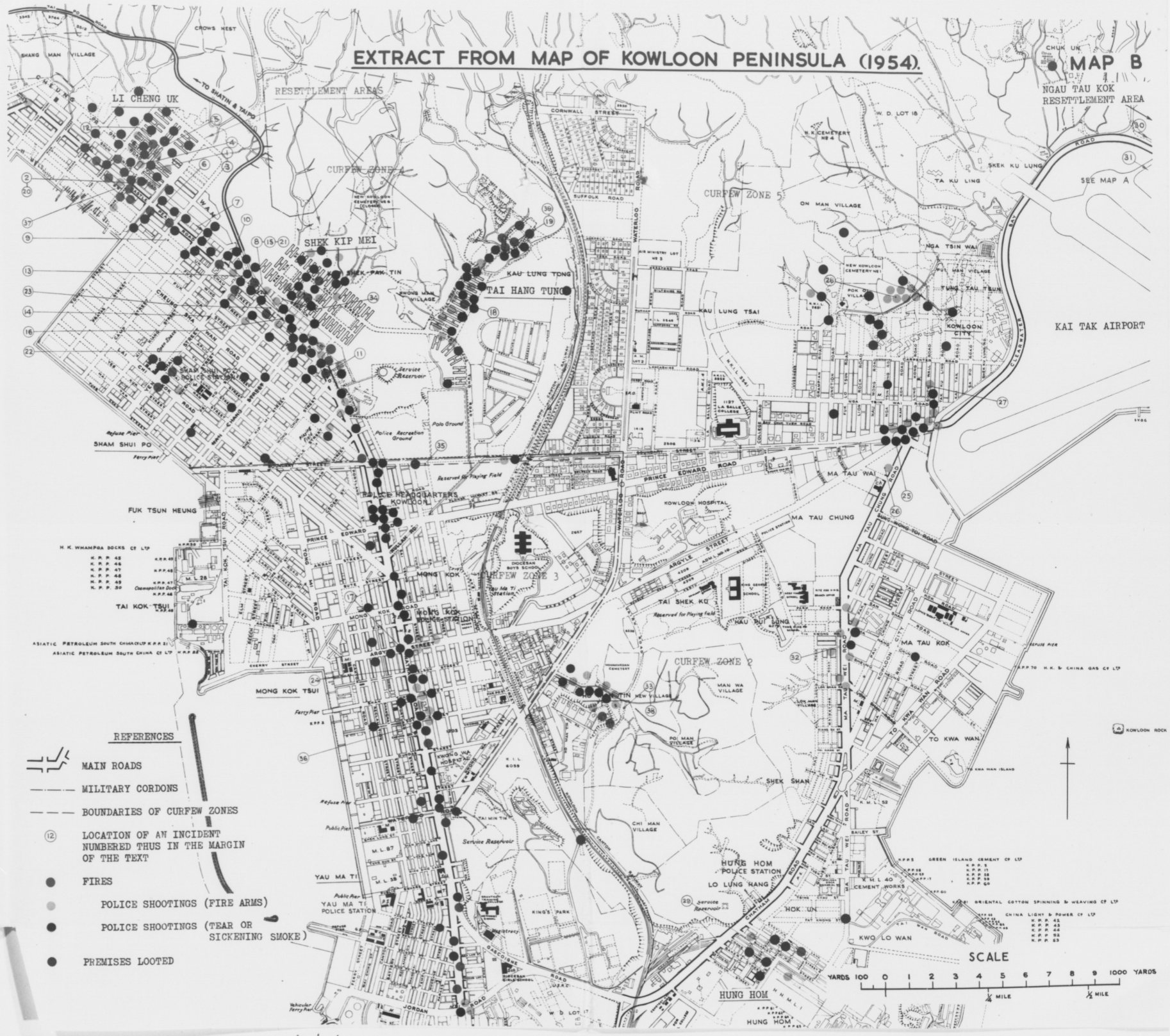
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EXTRACT FROM MAP OF KOWLOON PENINSULA (1954)

MAP B
NGAU TAU KOK
RESETTLEMENT AREA



- REFERENCES
- MAIN ROADS
 - MILITARY CORDONS
 - BOUNDARIES OF CURFEW ZONES
 - LOCATION OF AN INCIDENT NUMBERED THUS IN THE MARGIN OF THE TEXT
 - FIRES
 - POLICE SHOOTINGS (FIRE ARMS)
 - POLICE SHOOTINGS (TEAR OR SICKENING SMOKE)
 - PREMISES LOOTED

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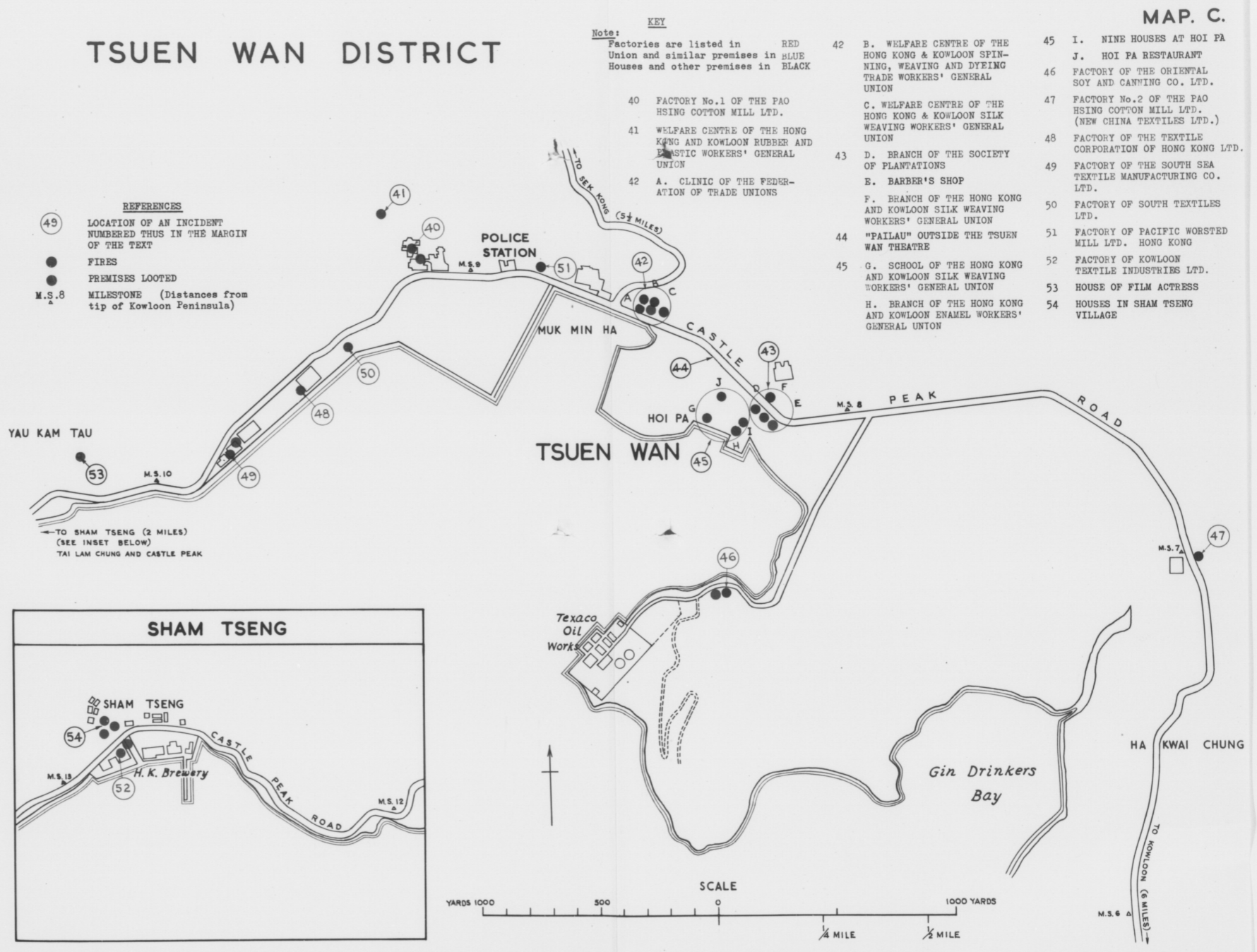
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TSUEN WAN DISTRICT

MAP. C.



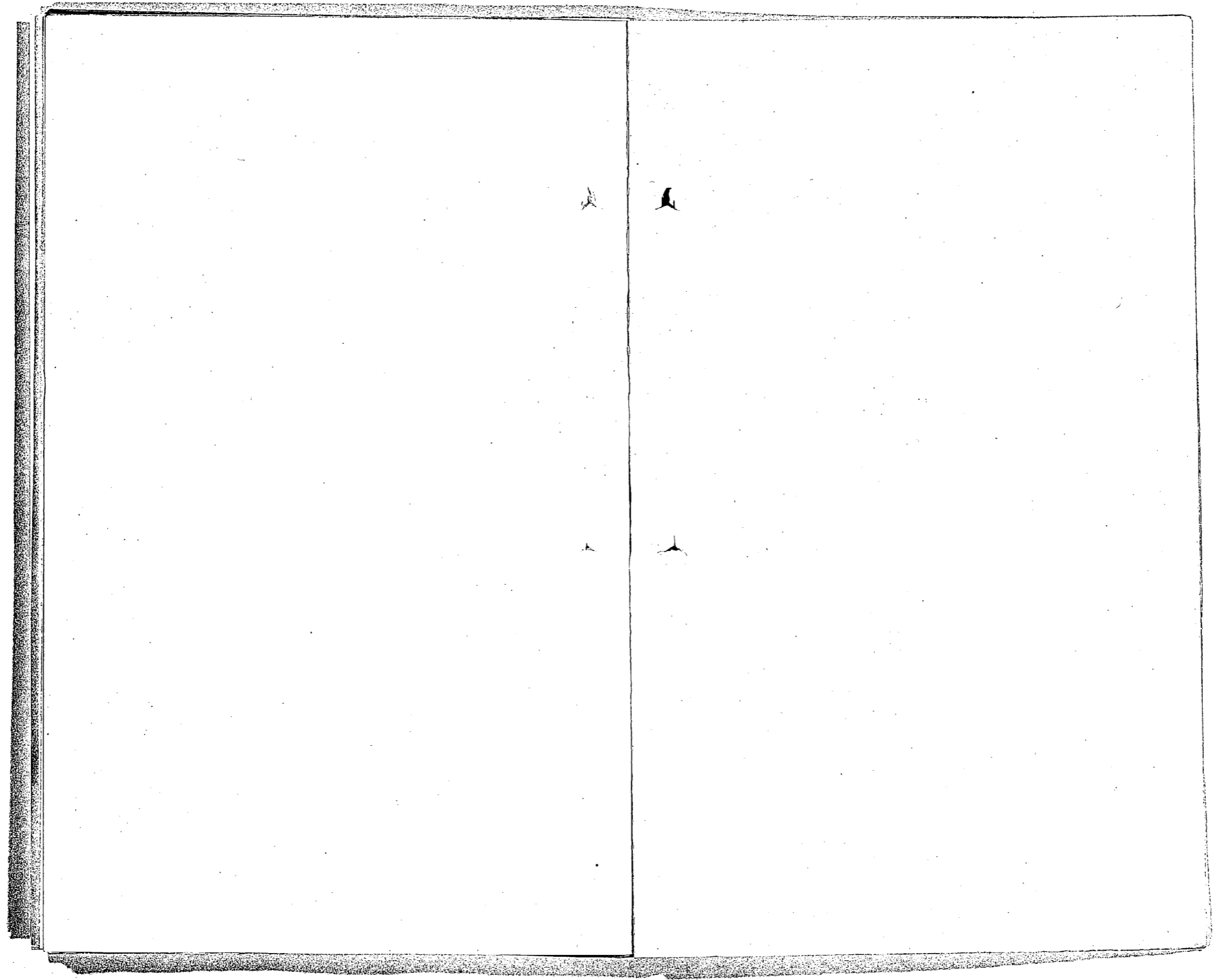
KEY
 Note: Factories are listed in RED
 Union and similar premises in BLUE
 Houses and other premises in BLACK

REFERENCES
 49 LOCATION OF AN INCIDENT
 NUMBERED THUS IN THE MARGIN
 OF THE TEXT
 ● FIRES
 ● PREMISES LOOTED
 M.S. 8 MILESTONE (Distances from
 tip of Kowloon Peninsula)

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|----|--|
| 40 | FACTORY No.1 OF THE PAO Hsing COTTON MILL LTD. | 42 | B. WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG & KOWLOON SPINNING, WEAVING AND DYEING TRADE WORKERS' GENERAL UNION | 45 | I. NINE HOUSES AT HOI PA |
| 41 | WELFARE CENTRE OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON RUBBER AND PLASTIC WORKERS' GENERAL UNION | 43 | D. BRANCH OF THE SOCIETY OF PLANTATIONS | 46 | FACTORY OF THE ORIENTAL SOY AND CANNING CO. LTD. |
| 42 | A. CLINIC OF THE FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS | 44 | "PAILAU" OUTSIDE THE TSUEN WAN THEATRE | 47 | FACTORY No.2 OF THE PAO Hsing COTTON MILL LTD. (NEW CHINA TEXTILES LTD.) |
| | | 45 | G. SCHOOL OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON SILK WEAVING WORKERS' GENERAL UNION | 48 | FACTORY OF THE TEXTILE CORPORATION OF HONG KONG LTD. |
| | | | H. BRANCH OF THE HONG KONG AND KOWLOON ENAMEL WORKERS' GENERAL UNION | 49 | FACTORY OF THE SOUTH SEA TEXTILE MANUFACTURING CO. LTD. |
| | | | | 50 | FACTORY OF SOUTH TEXTILES LTD. |
| | | | | 51 | FACTORY OF PACIFIC WORSTED MILL LTD. HONG KONG |
| | | | | 52 | FACTORY OF KOWLOON TEXTILE INDUSTRIES LTD. |
| | | | | 53 | HOUSE OF FILM ACTRESS |
| | | | | 54 | HOUSES IN SHAM TSENG VILLAGE |

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