

would thus be advised that bunkering of these particular ships would be within the exemption granted in Washington to USA parent companies concerned;

(f) In the case of each ship to be bunkered its cargo manifest would be shown to the Consulate in Vancouver and automatic bunkering would be assured if the ship were carrying only wheat or other Canadian-origin cargo.

4. We were informed by FAC that the formalities relating to the USA Consulate in Vancouver followed the pattern already in existence in all ports in countries bordering on the Pacific with respect to the bunkering by USA subsidiaries of any ship going to mainland China.

5. Pending your instructions I have taken the precaution of informing both State (Ivan White, Deputy Assistant Secretary of BNA) and Treasury (Leddy, Assistant Secretary) that the procedural pattern contemplated by FAC appears to me, from the larger point of view, to prejudice seriously the usefulness of the President's suggested solution.

[A.D.P.] HEENEY

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DEA/9030-40

*Le délégué commercial à Hong Kong  
au sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures  
Trade Commissioner, Hong Kong,  
to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs*

LETTER NO. 51

Hong Kong, February 23, 1961

CONFIDENTIAL. CANADIAN EYES ONLY via Diplomatic Bag.

Reference: Ottawa's Y-35 of February 2nd† and NATO Paris' 318 of February 8th.†

FAMINE IN CHINA

Dear Sir:

Both telegrams under reference cover the food situation in China very well and this is merely to add one or two footnotes on the situation as seen from Hong Kong.

The penultimate sentence of Y-35 is absolutely correct but I would add to natural calamities, commune organizational defects and peasant resistance another cause of China's food problems, namely, sheer physical debilitation from malnutrition and overwork combined with a loss of all interest in, or incentive to, work. As you know, Chinese New Year is a traditional period for overseas Chinese to return to the mainland and this year has been no exception insofar as Hong Kong Chinese are concerned. Many servants and office workers who visited their home villages, largely in Kwangtung, for the New Year period which commenced February 15th, are now returning to Hong Kong with tragic tales concerning the food situation as they found it. Even allowing for possible exaggeration, there seems to be no doubt whatsoever that many people are on the verge of starvation and many are suffering from malnutrition and either cannot or will not work efficiently. It is now reported that ordinary peasants in some cases have had their grain ration reduced to as low as nine catties a month which is a starvation level since secondary food items are also either scarce or non-existent. According to returnees, to eke out their grain ration, many are grinding rice straw and mixing it with their other food but because the ground straw is brittle it is said to be causing throat irritation and other ill effects. Even the PLA troops stationed along the Hong Kong border had their grain ration reduced at the end of August, 1960, from approximately 60 catties per month to 30 catties per month.