



## Time to Remember Sha Tau Kok Boundary Stones Between Hong Kong Colony & China



**Mao's great Proletarian Cultural Revolution commenced its seemingly everlasting bloody toll in 1966. North of Hong Kong colony's border, China was tearing its century old culture apart like a rag doll. Red Guards were hell bent on purging the authorities, teachers and parents raining blows on each other's factions. By the spring of 1967 the political climate was rising hotter under one's collar in Hong Kong. The chaos was being felt in Hong Kong. China's Cultural Revolution impacted directly upon Hong Kong culminating in the 1967 serious disturbances.**

During his campaign of terror to eliminate real or imagined opponents of his regime, Mao Zedong (毛澤東) set an official killing quota of one per thousand members of the population, although he tolerated up to three per thousand, according to a historian who has published a new assessment of the era.

Frank Dikotter, a history professor at the University of Hong Kong, said that between 1947 and 1957, the Communist Party killed some five million civilians.

**The writer saw some dead bodies floating around the colony harbour waters with their hands tied with wire believed to have been executed mobster style.**

**Pro-communist leftists in Hong Kong, inspired by the Cultural Revolution in China folly, in early May 1967 turned a San Po Kong artificial flower factory labour dispute spark igniting a fire now known as the 1967 Riots.**

**The dispute at San Po Kong was contained but these disturbances spread to north Kowloon and then to other areas. Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution was in full sway along the China border and pressure on Hong Kong's borders. There were rumours circulating in the colony that China was planning to undermine the Hong Kong government.**

**On 8 July 1967 there was a serious border incursion incident when China militia and civilian mob threatened Sha Tau Kok, N. T. fishing village where the border was only marked by a line of boundary stones. The demarcation line divided the main street of the village of Sha Tau Kok into Chinese and British sectors. Three hundred or more communist demonstrators chanting Mao slogans and waving the 'little red book' of his sayings and began pelting the local police station with stones and dynamite 'fish bombs'. A senior police officer said that three or four snipers forced the police to keep their heads down. They also received short bursts from "some form of machine gun,"**

**The Hong Kong police fired tear gas and wooden batons to disperse the unruly gang.**

**The Rural Committee Office and the police post then came under heavy sniping and machine gun fire from Chinese armed militia. The besieged policemen sent out appeals for help. The Gurkhas were immediately dispatched, arriving in armoured vehicles to contain the situation.**

**Lieutenant-Colonel Ronald McAlister, commander of the 1st Battalion 10th Gurkha Rifles, had been ordered to secure Sha Tau Kok, using minimum force. McAlister took two companies from his battalion, about 240 Gurkhas, and advanced across mostly open paddy fields. With troops on either side of him, he marched up the road backed by a troop of armoured cars provided by the Life Guards. He was to fire only if fired directly upon. He gave the order to his Gurkhas to unsheathe their kukris when they were 300 yards from the village. There was a burst of gunfire from Chinese militia across the border, providing cover as their comrades withdrew hastily. The Gurkhas did not return fire as the aggressors retreated.**

**By the time a detachment from the 1/10 Gurkha Rifles had arrived to relieve the Police companies, five police officers had been killed and eleven wounded. The policemen were released and the dead and wounded evacuated. (FCO Confidential report, 'Border Incidents', NA FCO 21/193)**

**A Chinese retired former police officer who witnessed the Sha Tau Kok incident recalled, 'We simply were not prepared for machine gun fire,' 'several officers were killed straight away but we were all pinned down behind our vehicles and could not rescue them'.**

**Pro-communist rioters upgraded their violence in the urban area placing home-made explosives in the streets. Laboratories of some leftist schools were turned into bomb making workshops. The police showed remarkable restraint despite the police becoming the principal targets. By the end of September 1967, the Pol./Mil. HQ had noted a total of 588 'genuine' bombs leaving six people dead and 168 injured. There were also other numerous 'hoax' bombs that had to be investigated and dealt with.**



**Serious disturbances occurred routinely with incitements to violence made with continuous broadcasting from the Bank of China including 'kill (HK Governor) Trench' and 'police turn your weapons'. Occasional flare ups continued along the border until late 1967. The abduction of two Chinese constables on 29 September and of Inspector Frank Knight at Man Kam on 14 October led to intense negotiations between Peking, Hong Kong and London. In the event Knight 'escaped captivity' on 20 November and the two constables were deported on 26 November. A border**

agreement between both parties was signed in November 1967 'Hong and Border Incidents', (FCO report, 16 Oct. 1967, FCO 21/210)

The bombing waves did not subside until October of the year. In December 1967, Zhou Enlai ordered the leftists group in Hong Kong to stop all bombings. The riots in Hong Kong finally came to an end. Fifty-one people, including eleven policemen and a fireman were killed in the riots of the 1967. Over 800 people were wounded, including 200 from the law enforcement. A British police bomb disposal expert lost a hand and forearm in March 1971 defusing two suspicious explosive objects found outside the Government Colonial Secretariat.

Public support for the pro-China leftists dipped into all time low as the public renounced their irrational and violent behaviour.



Commissioner of Police Stephen Lo Wai-chung made changes this month to the "Modern Era 1945-67" section of the force's history particularly the HK 1967 Riots. With respect, he feebly and clumsily said readers might find the force's history too long and lose interest and was not political. Others, particularly Hong Kong police officers who faced the 1967 onslaught may have found Lo's changes were a ghastly understatement, unsupportable and the police website untrustworthy.

Descriptions of mobs' political links during the riots were played down in the latest Chinese-language version.

One line which previously read: "Huge mobs waving Mao's quotations and chanting slogans at Government House" was changed to "Huge mobs finally 'rallied' at Government House"



Lo's update might have been acceptable as follows: "**The left wing aggressive rabble attempted to intimidate unflinching Governor Trench but failed.**"

An 180-character description of the mobs making bombs in the hot May that year in the older version was cut short and summarised into a 34-character sentence.



The term "leftist schools" – where mobs made bombs to be planted "indiscriminately on the streets" – was **removed**. See photo seizure of school made Molotov bombs. Lo's change might have been acceptable as follows: "**Leftist school made bombs were distributed indiscriminately in the streets 588 being 'genuine' bombs leaving six people dead and 168 injured including children**".

In another line, the words used to identify gunmen who shot and killed five police officers were changed from "Communist Party

militia” in the old version to “mainland gunners” Lo’s update might have been acceptable as follows: **“The Rural Committee Office and police post came under heavy sniping and machine gun fire from Chinese militia leaving five police officers killed and eleven wounded”.**

Six brave police officers who died doing their duty for the people of Hong Kong. **哀悼** A tribute from the Commissioner of Police and from their brother officers.

**為維護和平而光榮殉職的六位警務人員**



**Corporal FUNG** Yin Ping was born on 20th November, 1924. He spent his childhood in Indonesia and later returned to Hong Kong. He was a member of the Police Force since 1946. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 1952. He was killed during the 1967 riots on 10th July. He was married to Mrs. Yip and had two children.

**Constable WONG** Lin was born on 20th May, 1924. He was educated at the Hong Kong and Taikang Middle School. He joined the Hong Kong Police on 30th March, 1946. At the Police Training School, he was awarded the Silver Medal for being the best all-round recruit in his squad. He served in the Police Force until 1967. He was killed during the 1967 riots on 10th July. He was married to Mrs. Yip and had two children.

**Constable KONG** Sing Kai was born on 20th May, 1924. He was educated at the Hong Kong and Taikang Middle School. He joined the Hong Kong Police on 30th March, 1946. At the Police Training School, he was awarded the Silver Medal for being the best all-round recruit in his squad. He served in the Police Force until 1967. He was killed during the 1967 riots on 10th July. He was married to Mrs. Yip and had two children.

**P. S. (K. S.) CHAN** Kwai was born on 20th July, 1924. He joined the Hong Kong Police on 30th July, 1946. Following his initial training, he was posted to the Police Training Centre, Frontier and New Territories Headquarters. He was shot dead during the incident at the Tai Koo on 10th July, 1967. He was a keen sportsman, playing football, cricket and hockey. He was married to Mrs. Chan and had two children.

**P. S. (K. S.) CHAN** Kwai was born on 20th July, 1924. He joined the Hong Kong Police on 30th July, 1946. Following his initial training, he was posted to the Police Training Centre, Frontier and New Territories Headquarters. He was shot dead during the incident at the Tai Koo on 10th July, 1967. He was a keen sportsman, playing football, cricket and hockey. He was married to Mrs. Chan and had two children.

**Constable LAM** Fu Wah was born on 18th January, 1941. He joined the Hong Kong Police on 10th August, 1961. Immediately after he left school, he was a keen sportsman and was a member of the Police Force. He was shot dead during the incident at the Tai Koo on 10th July, 1967. He was a keen sportsman and was a member of the Police Force. He was shot dead during the incident at the Tai Koo on 10th July, 1967. He was a keen sportsman and was a member of the Police Force.

Many Police Officers have died in the past in Hong Kong, but seldom in such circumstances. It is a tribute to their courage and sacrifice. Their families will be given our deepest sympathy.

Many Officers have died in the past in Hong Kong, but seldom in such circumstances. It is a tribute to their courage and sacrifice. Their families will be given our deepest sympathy.

Many Officers have died in the past in Hong Kong, but seldom in such circumstances. It is a tribute to their courage and sacrifice. Their families will be given our deepest sympathy.

Commissioner Lo said police were working on a fuller version of the force’s history but were concerned readers might find it too long and lose interest. He said a link to the full version would be put onto the webpage when it is complete.

Lo should first invite those who were old enough like the writer and others who weathered the communist threat in Hong Kong 1967 to comment?

Fortunately, the Colonial Hong Kong Government have both secret, confidential, and other detailed records of the event, as do professional and amateur historians and interested parties such as the media.

He said the force had noted opinions (whose?) on the latest update and would take heed of them in the future. I should think so!

**“Tell the truth, or someone will tell it for you.”**

Stephanie Klein, Straight Up and Dirty: A Memoir.

Kernowkid

September 2015 See also website ([kernowkid.com](http://kernowkid.com))

