

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PUS/ 55
13 DEC 1990
N.I.O. LONDON

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FROM: Q J THOMAS, AUS(L)
13 December 1990
AUSL/MR/8447

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cc Mr Pilling
Mr Alston

POLITICAL MOVEMENT AND THE PROVISIONALS

As I expect you recall the Secretary of State held a meeting on 11 September to discuss this subject. He agreed that a note should be prepared on what happened in Cyprus/East Africa when British Government allowed amnesties to erstwhile terrorists (paragraph 4(k) of the Private Secretary's note of 14 September).

2. In his minute of 17 October Sir John Bletloch agreed with the proposal in my minute of 19 September that SIL, in consultation with the FCO should carry this forward. In fact following a discussion with Mr Cooke, Mr Rickard and Mr Hallett, Mr Hallett, who until recently was of course in SIL but has now returned to the FCO Research and Analysis Department, prepared the attached note on colonial experience.

3. Further work could of course be carried out on this, whether through SIL or by Mr Marsh, working under Mr Alston's guidance, as part of the package of activity he has in hand on this subject.

4. An obvious next step, for example, might be to work up a paper on how we might operate an amnesty, and whether we should do so, in the Northern Ireland context specifically (perhaps with a glance also at its implications for prisoners in Great Britain.) At some point such work would presumably need to involve either Mr Wilson and/or Criminal Justice Branch and/or Prison Department.

5. Obviously I and SIL would be ready to assist in carrying any of this work further forward, but, unless and until further instructed, can I take it that this remit has been discharged?

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13 December 1990
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