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831

PREM 19/316

SECRET.

Part 1

Confidential File

New Hebrides Constitutional Conference  
Independence. Insurrection on  
Island of Santo.

NEW HEBRIDES

PT 1.

August 1979

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>3.9.79</del>		17.7.80					
<del>5.12.79</del>		ends.					
<del>30.5.80</del>							
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<del>21.7.80</del>							

PREM 19/316

PART 1 ends:-

Cc(80) 29th Coes Mu 2 17.7.80

PART 2 begins:-

Em Vola 574 12.7.80



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FROM UKMIS NEW YORK 171507Z JUL 80

TO IMMEDIATE F C C

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1026 DATED 17 JULY 80

INFO PRIORITY VILA, PARIS, WASHINGTON, CANBERRA, WELLINGTON, SUVA,  
PORT MORESBY, HONIARA.

NEW HEBRIDES: U N ASPECTS

1. NOW THAT THE PROSPECTS ARE RECEDING OF SOLVING THE SANTO PROBLEM BY NEGOTIATION BEFORE 30 JULY, YOU MAY LIKE AN ASSESSMENT OF THE UN IMPLICATIONS OF THE OTHER OPTIONS ANALYSED IN VILA TELNO 555.
2. JIMMY STEVENS HAS NO SUPPORTERS HERE. THE UN IS WEDDED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF MAINTAINING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF COLONIES WHEN THEY BECOME INDEPENDENT. WE AND FRANCE ARE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT THIS PRINCIPLE IS NOT BREACHED IN THE NEW HEBRIDES. THERE WOULD BE NO COMPLAINTS THEREFORE IF WE AND THE FRENCH WERE TO USE MILITARY FORCE TO END SANTO'S SECESSION (OPTION (B) IN VILA TELNO 555), ALWAYS PROVIDED OF COURSE THAT WE WERE DOING SO WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT.
3. IT SHOULD FOLLOW FROM THIS THAT OPINION AT THE UN WOULD SUPPORT A DECISION TO POSTPONE INDEPENDENCE IF OUR INTENTION WAS CLEARLY TO USE THE TIME GAINED TO SOLVE THE SANTO PROBLEM. YOU WILL HAVE SEEN FROM MY TELNO 1010 THAT I THINK VUNIBOBO MIGHT REPORT IN THIS SENSE. BUT, ILLOGICAL THOUGH IT SEEMS, WE WOULD RUN INTO CRITICISM HERE IF WE DELAYED THE INDEPENDENCE DATE (OPTION (C)), UNLESS WE HAD FIRST PERSUADED THE ELECTED GOVERNMENT TO ASK US TO DO SO. THERE MIGHT BE AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF 24, LEADING TO A CRITICAL REPORT TO THE NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND THERE WOULD BE THE RISK OF SOME HALF-BAKED APPEAL TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL.
4. IF OUR DECISION IS TO LEAVE ON 30 JULY WITHOUT HAVING RESOLVED THE SANTO PROBLEM (OPTION (D)), THE COMMITTEE OF 24 WILL PRODUCE A REPORT CRITICISING US AND FRANCE FOR HAVING FAILED TO FULFIL OUR DUTY OF BRINGING THE COUNTRY TO INDEPENDENCE IN A CONDITION OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND THERE WILL NO DOUBT BE A DISOBLIGING RESOLUTION AT THIS YEAR'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY. BUT THAT WILL BE THE COMMITTEE'S LAST FLING: THE NEW HEBRIDES WILL PASS FROM ITS AGENDA ONCE IT BECOMES INDEPENDENT. I AM SURE THAT AN APPLICATION FROM THE NEW HEBRIDES FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE UNITED NATIONS WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY ACCLAIM AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR'S ASSEMBLY.
5. BUT WE WOULD STILL HAVE TO GUARD AGAINST THE SANTO PROBLEM BEING BROUGHT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. THIS SEEMS TO ME THE GREATEST DANGER WE FACE HERE, BECAUSE THE RUSSIANS WOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE TROUBLE AND WE COULD BE FACED WITH EMBARRASSING DECISIONS VIS-A-VIS THE FRENCH, EG OVER RESOLUTIONS WHICH SINGLED THEM OUT

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FOR

# CONFIDENTIAL

FOR CRITICISM. THERE ARE TWO WAYS IN WHICH THE SECURITY COUNCIL MIGHT BECOME INVOLVED. FIRST, LINI MIGHT APPEAL TO THE COUNCIL FOR SOME KIND OF UN PEACEKEEPING OR OBSERVER FORCE TO HELP HIM PUT DOWN THE REBELLION (ON THIS, SEE MY TELS NOS 995 AND 1010). SECONDLY, LINI MIGHT COMPLAIN TO THE COUNCIL ABOUT ALLEGED FRENCH SUPPORT FOR STEVENS (EG BLOCKADE RUNNING FROM NEW CALEDONIA) AND ASK THE COUNCIL TO CALL UPON FRANCE TO DESIST.

6. IF YOU AGREE THAT INVOLVEMENT OF THE COUNCIL IS TO BE AVOIDED IF POSSIBLE, I THINK THAT WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE LINI TO THINK IN TERMS OF SOLVING HIS PROBLEM IN THE REGIONAL CONTEXT RATHER THAN BRINGING IT IN AN ILL THOUGHT OUT WAY TO THE UNITED NATIONS. IT MIGHT ALSO BE WORTH DISCUSSING THIS WITH THE AUSTRALIANS AND NEW ZEALANDERS, IN THE HOPE THAT THEY WOULD GIVE HIM SIMILAR ADVICE.

PARSONS

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DESBY FCO/PARIS 171200Z  
FM WILA 171030Z JUL 80  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 567 OF 17 JULY  
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS.

*ms*  
Read in full.

FOR DONALD FROM YASH GHAI.

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION GHAI-THORNE.

1. I HAVE HAD VARIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NEW HEBRIDES SINCE YOUR DEPARTURE. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SEES THE PROBLEM AS PRIMARILY POLITICAL AND ONLY SECONDARILY OF LAW AND ORDER. IT STILL HOPES TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS AND ARE WILLING TO OFFER A SUITABLE POST, POSSIBLY IN THE CABINET, TO A NAGRIAMEL MEMBER. THEY HAVE REITERATED THEIR OFFER TO THE FRANCOPHONES OF THE SPEAKERSHIP OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THE OMBUDSMAN.

2. THE GOVERNMENT WILL FIND DELAY IN INDEPENDENCE UNACCEPTABLE. PREPARATIONS ARE TOO FAR ADVANCED AND CELEBRATIONS ARE SCHEDULED TO START IN NINE DAYS TIME ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. IT IS MOST LIKELY THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL DECLARE INDEPENDENCE IF FRANCE AND BRITAIN DO NOT AGREE AND SEVERAL HEADS OF STATE WILL ATTEND. MOREOVER ANY DELAY IN INDEPENDENCE OR RIDER ON IT RUNS SERIOUS RISK OF UNDERMINING THE PRESENT CONCILIATORY ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

3. I HAVE MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS WITH THE TEXT ON REGIONALISATION BASED ON PROPOSALS ALREADY TELEXED TO YOU. THE STATEMENT ON CITIZENSHIP IS READY AND WILL BE PUBLISHED TOMORROW AND TELEXED TO YOU.

4. AT THE MOMENT I CAN REALISTICALLY SEE ONLY TWO OPTIONS. BOTH ARE BASED ON 30 JULY AS DATE OF INDEPENDENCE. THE FIRST IS SOME JOINT ACTION TO OPEN UP SANTO AND RESTORE CENTRAL AUTHORITY IN LUGANVILLE. ON 1 AUGUST THE JOINT FORCE WILL BE WITHDRAWN AND NEW HEBRIDEAN POLICE WILL ENSURE PUBLIC ORDER. THE GOVERNMENT IS OPTIMISTIC IT CAN REACH A SETTLEMENT WITH JIMMY STEVENS. THIS IS MY PREFERRED SOLUTION.

5. THE SECOND OPTION IS TO GRANT INDEPENDENCE ON 30 JULY TO THE WHOLE ARCHIPELAGO AND DO NOTHING ABOUT SANTO. BRITAIN AND FRANCE SHOULD HELP ENSURE BLOCKADE. THE GOVERNMENT WILL DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM AND IS LIKELY TO SEEK A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WITH JIMMY STEVENS.

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6. I EMPHASIZE THAT AT THIS LATE STAGE, IT WOULD BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCEPT A DELAY IN INDEPENDENCE. IF YOUR PROPOSALS INVOLVE DELAY YOU SHOULD SERIOUSLY RECONSIDER THEM FOR RISK OF TOTAL REJECTION AT THIS END. BY STICKING TO 30 JULY WE CAN PERSUADE THE GOVERNMENT TO UNDERTAKE AND BEGIN IMPLEMENTATION OF SEVERAL CONCILIATORY STEPS.

7. IF THE PROPOSAL IN PARA 4 IS ACCEPTABLE, IT WOULD BE POLITIC NOT TO INSIST ON CONCESSIONS MENTIONED IN PARA 1. AS PART OF ANY PACKAGE. (THESE CLEARLY GO BEYOND THE PACKAGE THE MISSION WAS AUTHORISED TO PUT TOGETHER). WE SHOULD LEAVE IT TO THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE THESE OFFERS AND IN THIS WAY TO HELP CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT.

8. I SHALL HAVE TO LEAVE VILA WITHIN TEN DAYS OR SO AND WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR FURTHER WORK IF THERE IS A DELAY IN INDEPENDENCE.

9. GRATEFUL IF PARIS WOULD SHOW ABOVE TO ARIBAUD FROM CHAI TOGETHER WITH COMMENTS ON GOVERNMENT REGIONALISATION PROPOSALS IN MY TELEGRAM NO 566.

STUART

FILES

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PS/LPS

PS/MR BLAKER

PS/PUS

SIR E YOUDE

MR STRATTON

MR DONALD

MR FERGUSSON

CABINET OFFICE



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DESKBY (FCO/PARIS) 171000Z

FM VILA 170715Z JUL 80

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 565 OF 17 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS

PRIORITY MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS

NEW YORK SUVA

INFO SAVING HONIARA PORT MORESBY (FCO PASS ALL).

*Read i full.*

*ms*

MY TELEGRAM NO 560: NEW HEBRIDES.

1. SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF THE DONALD/ARIBAUD MISSION YASH GHAI HAS BEEN WORKING WITH THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT ON THE REGIONALISATION PROPOSALS (NEW TEXT IN MIFT). AS EXPLAINED IN YASH GHAI'S ACCOMPANYING COMMENTARY, IN ADDITION TO ALL THE POWERS IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT, THESE WOULD PROVIDE THAT REGIONAL LAWS AND BUDGETS WOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO CHALLENGE BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, AND THAT DISPUTES BETWEEN THE TWO WOULD BE REGULATED BY THE SUPREME COURT. THIS IS A SUBSTANTIAL DILUTION OF SOVEREIGNTY, WHICH ROBERT AND LIZOP ORIGINALLY TOLD YASH GHAI WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE, THOUGH THEY NOW SEEM TO BE HAVING YET FURTHER SECOND THOUGHTS.
2. IN ADDITION THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT HAVE AGREED A DECLARATION ON CITIZENSHIP (TEXT WILL FOLLOW TOMORROW) AND LIZOP IS WORKING (SOMEWHAT ERRATICALLY) ON THE LAND QUESTION.
3. THERE IS ALSO A FINAL CONCESSION WHICH THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY SUBJECT TO THE VERY CLEAR PROVISIO THAT BRITISH AND FRENCH FORCES RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT TO LUGANVILLE BEFORE IT IS MADE OPERATIVE AND THAT INDEPENDENCE ITSELF IS ON 30 JULY. THIS IS THAT THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT WOULD, BEFORE 30 JULY INDEPENDENCE, BE WILLING TO ANNOUNCE THE OFFER OF AN APPOINTMENT OF A NAGRIAMEL MINISTER IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THE OFFER ALREADY ANNOUNCED OF THE SPEAKERSHIP, OMBUDSMAN AND PERHAPS AN AMBASSADORSHIP TO LEYMANG, CARLOT AND BOULEKONE (THE GOVERNMENT BELIEVE, RIGHTLY, THAT THIS OFFER WOULD MORE REALISTICALLY REPRESENT THE BALANCE OF POLITICAL FORCES THAN A MINISTRY FOR ONE OF THE GANG OF THREE).
4. IT SEEMS TO ME AND TO YASH GHAI THAT THESE OFFERS, WITH THE PROVISIO IN PARA 3 ABOVE, FORM TOGETHER A SUBSTANTIAL PACKAGE TO OFFER TO MINORITY CONCERNS. WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO ACCEPT THE PACKAGE NOW. IF IT FAILS, THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT CONSIDER ITSELF BOUND TO ANY PART OF IT.

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5. ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT IS THAT IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT FRENCH AND BRITISH FORCES ARE NO LONGER BEING ASKED TO DO ANYTHING BUT GO INTO LUGANVILLE AND COME OUT AGAIN ON 30 JULY OR IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS. THEREAFTER THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT POLICE WOULD TAKE OVER, IF NECESSARY WITH PNG BACKING. THIS WOULD BE NO COMFORT TO THE FRENCH AND PERHAPS SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH THEM. IT IS HOWEVER RELEVANT TO THEM THAT, BY THE FRENCH AND BRITISH TAKING ACTION FIRST, BLOODSHED ON BOTH SIDES SHOULD BE AVOIDED, SINCE A BACK-UP PNG POLICE WOULD BE QUITE A DIFFERENT MATTER FROM AN INVASION FORCE. IT IS, I BELIEVE, CERTAIN THAT, IF ANYONE EXCEPT THE BRITISH AND FRENCH DID THE REOCCUPATION OF LUGANVILLE, PEOPLE WOULD BE KILLED AND THE SCARS WOULD NOT HEAL FOR YEARS. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW ALSO THIS NEW FACTOR OF AVAILABLE MELANESIAN POLICE SUPPORT AFTER REOCCUPATION AND INDEPENDENCE MEANS THAT WE NEED NOT WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT THE CONSIDERATIONS IN MY TELEGRAM NO 555 PARA 1(B). SANTO WOULD NOT COLLAPSE AGAIN WHEN WE LEFT, AND THERE WOULD PROBABLY NOT EVEN BE ANY NEED TO ARREST THE RINGLEADERS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE (WITH ALL THE PROBLEMS OF FRENCH NATIONALITY THAT THIS WOULD ENTAIL). THEY WOULD BE PICKED UP AND DEPORTED AFTER INDEPENDENCE. IN OTHER WORDS WE ARE NOW BEING ASKED TO DO NO MORE THAN REOCCUPY SANTO FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS.

6. AS SEEN FROM HERE, THEREFORE, WE NOW HAVE A STRONG CASE TO PUT TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT ON THE FOLLOWING LINES:

(A) WE WERE RIGHT TO TRY ONCE MORE WITH STEVENS, AND ARIBAUD AND DONALD DID EVERYTHING POSSIBLE, BUT IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT STEVENS WILL NOT VOLUNTARILY DISMANTLE HIS DE FACTO SECESSION.

(B) THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT HAVE OFFERED A GOOD PACKAGE OF CONCESSIONS TO THE MINORITIES, BUT WE SHALL PROBABLY LOSE THIS IF WE DO NOT REOCCUPY, OR IF WE DELAY INDEPENDENCE. THE PACKAGE WOULD BALANCE INTERVENTION AND SHOULD HELP TO RECONCILE THOSE MINORITIES WHO ARE STILL RECONCILABLE.

(C) WE ARE ASKED TO DO NO MORE THAN RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT TO LUGANVILLE TOWN NOW, AND TO LEAVE AT INDEPENDENCE ON 30 JULY. LET US DO SO, JOINTLY, WITH THE FRENCH IN THE LEAD IF THEY PREFER.

7. IF DIJOURD DEMURS, WE COULD EXAMINE THE ALTERNATIVES - UDI, A POSSIBLY BLOODY INVASION OF SANTO BY GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS OR FOREIGN FORCES, NO PACKAGE, NO CONCESSIONS FOR FRANCOPHONIE, THE HOSTILITY OF THE REST OF THE PACIFIC, AND THE ABANDONMENT OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE UNITY OF THE COUNTRY, THE LEGAL GOVERNMENT AND THE CONSTITUTION.

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8. IF ALL THESE ARGUMENTS FAIL OR IF DIJOUW WILL ONLY AGREE TO INTERVENTION IF INDEPENDENCE IS DELAYED, OR IN RETURN FOR FURTHER CONCESSIONS, THEN I BELIEVE WE SHOULD FALL BACK ON A SIMPLE WITHDRAWAL ON 30 JULY. FROM DISCUSSIONS WITH LINI AND HIS MINISTERS SINCE HIS RETURN FROM TARAWA, IT IS CLEAR THAT, WHILE THEY STILL HOPE FOR FRANCO/BRITISH INTERVENTION, THEY DO NOT EXPECT IT, AND WILL NOT BUY THE CHANCE OF IT WITH DELAY OR WITH FURTHER CONCESSIONS BANKABLE IN ADVANCE. BY THE SAME TOKEN THE OPTION OF REOCCUPATION AND A DELAY IN INDEPENDENCE ACCOMPANIED, AS THEY FEAR, BY YET FURTHER DEMANDS FOR CONCESSIONS, NO LONGER EXISTS AS FAR AS THEY ARE CONCERNED. THEY WOULD REGARD THE PRICE AS TOO HIGH TO PAY. WITH THE OPENING OF THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS ONLY A WEEK AFTER THE NEW DATE FOR THE PARIS MEETING, THE TRAUMA OF POSTPONEMENT WOULD BE ALMOST TOO MUCH FOR THEM TO BEAR. THE FLAGS ARE ALREADY OUT IN THE STREETS.

9. I HAVE DISCUSSED AND AGREED THIS TELEGRAM WITH YASH GHAI AND WE HAVE JOINTLY CLEARED WITH LINI THAT IT PROPERLY REPORTS THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. IN DOING SO LINI REEMPHASISED THAT THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT WOULD STRONGLY PREFER A REOCCUPATION OF SANTO BY THE FRENCH AND BRITISH FOLLOWED BY INDEPENDENCE ON 30 JULY. THIS WOULD SET THE HISTORICAL RECORD STRAIGHT. BUT, IF THIS FAILED THEY COULD LIVE WITH A MERE WITHDRAWAL AT INDEPENDENCE. THE ONE ESSENTIAL, FROM THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT'S POINT OF VIEW, WAS THAT THE PARIS MEETING SHOULD RESULT IN THE CATEGORICAL AND PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE BY THE FRENCH AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS OF 30 JULY INDEPENDENCE. I HAVE ALSO TOLD ROBERT WHAT I KNOW OF THE NHG'S PREFERRED PACKAGE, BUT HAVE NATURALLY NOT DISCUSSED WITH HIM THE TACTICS SUGGESTED IN THIS TELEGRAM.

10. I HOPE ALL THE ABOVE DOES NOT CUT ACROSS DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN DONALD AND ARIBAUD ON THE WAY HOME. THERE WAS NOT TIME BEFORE THEY LEFT TO AGREE ON WHAT THEY WOULD BE RECOMMENDING. HOWEVER IT HAS SEEMED TO US IMPORTANT TO REPORT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND TO GET THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT'S POSITION AS CLEAR AS POSSIBLE AFTER LINI'S RETURN AND BEFORE THE PARIS MEETING.

STUART

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LEGAL ADV.  
PS  
PS/LAS  
PS/T. ALAKER

Ps/US  
SIL EXCHANGE  
AL STRATTON  
AL FERGUSON  
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CC: JIMT  
DOR  
PCO  
Leader of the  
CO  
CASS Gordon  
Sir Noel Short  
(H/C)

BK

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

New Hebrides  
15 July 1980

Independence Gift to the New Hebrides

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 14 July on this subject. She has agreed that up to £6,000 may be spent on the purchase of an Independence Gift to the Government of the New Hebrides.

I am sending copies of this letter to the recipients of yours.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

LB



Prime Minister

Office of Contingency  
Planning - which I hope  
will be required. Agree A?  
I think

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

I hope that when

14 July 1980

problems will

be solved before we  
dash into independence

Speed. out

Dear Michael,

14/7

Independence Gift to the New Hebrides

As you know, the New Hebrides is due to attain independence on 30 July and has applied for full membership of the Commonwealth. It is customary for these occasions to be marked by the presentation of a gift from the British Government; and, notwithstanding the present uncertainties, we need to proceed with the necessary formalities.

A

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury has approved expenditure of up to £6,000 for the Government gift. We shall be consulting the Government of the New Hebrides about the form which this gift might take.

//

We should be grateful if you would seek the Prime Minister's approval for the proposed presentation. Once this has been given, it is customary for an announcement to be made by means of an arranged Parliamentary Question for written reply by the Prime Minister. It is sometimes tabled by the Leader of the Opposition personally. I enclose a suggested draft question and answer, together with a background note. If the proposal is approved, we should be grateful if you could arrange for the PQ to be tabled and answered before independence. It is possible that the proposed date of 30 July will slip; and clearly tabling of the PQ must await a firm date for independence. We shall let you know when this is finally fixed.

As is customary, the House of Commons will present a gift of a parliamentary nature separately to the House of Assembly of New Hebrides. They will make the appropriate arrangements themselves.

I am sending copies of this letter without enclosures to Martin Hall (Treasury), David Edmonds (Dept of the Environment), Colin Egerton (Privy Council Office), John Stevens (PS/Leader of the House), David Wright (Cabinet Office) and to C A S S Gordon and Sir Noel Short (House of Commons).

yours ever  
Rodric Lyne

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary



WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION AND ANSWER

TO ASK THE PRIME MINISTER whether it is proposed that a gift should be presented to the Government of <sup>the</sup> New Hebrides to mark the attainment of independence on [30 July].

THE PRIME MINISTER

The House will, I feel sure, wish to send congratulations to the New Hebrides on their impending independence, along with best wishes for the happiness and prosperity of the people of those Islands. Her Majesty's Government proposes to offer a suitable gift to mark the occasion.

Tuesday 29 July 1980

(Answered by the Prime Minister on 29 July)

UNSTARRED Mrs. Gwyneth Dunwoody: To ask the Prime Minister,  
NO. 86 whether it is proposed that a gift should be presented  
to the Government of the New Hebrides to mark the  
attainment of independence on 30 July.

The House will, I feel sure, wish to send congratulations  
to the New Hebrides on their impending independence,  
along with best wishes for the happiness and  
prosperity of the people of those Islands. Her  
Majesty's Government proposes to offer a suitable  
gift to mark the occasion.



## BACKGROUND NOTE

### INDEPENDENCE GIFTS TO THE NEW HEBRIDES

1. It is the practice for the British Government and for the House of Commons to present gifts to Governments and Legislatures respectively on independence, provided those countries are becoming members of the Commonwealth.
2. The Treasury have sanctioned expenditure of up to £6000 on the Government gift. The House of Commons will make the arrangements for their gift.
3. The Vanuatu authorities would be consulted about the form that the Government gift might take. The announcement about the Government gift, in the form of a written Answer to a Parliamentary Question, should be made before independence day.



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*New Hebrides*

DESKBY 110700Z

FM VILA 110505Z JUL 80

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 542 OF 11 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS

PRIORITY MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS  
NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY TARAWA.

YOUR TELNO 385: NEW HEBRIDES.

1. ANGLO/FRENCH MISSION HAVE NOW BRIEFED LINI AND HIS MINISTERS. WHILE THEY WERE SCARCELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ACHIEVING ANYTHING FURTHER FROM THE SANTO REBELS, APPROVAL HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR ARIBAUD AND DONALD TO RETURN TO SANTO TO CONTINUE THE NEGOTIATION ON SUNDAY. LINI'S MINISTERS WILL DRAFT A TEXT ON WHICH TO BASE NHG'S RESPONSE.

2. YASH GHAI AND LIZOP ARE WORKING ON A DRAFT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON DECENTRALISATION. WE ARE NOT SURE HOW FAR IT WILL BE RELEVANT TO TABLE A TEXT ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION ON LAND TENURE BUT THIS IS ALSO BEING WORKED ON BY YASH GHAI AND LIZOP. NONE OF THE FRENCH COLONS IN SANTO HAPPENED TO RAISE THE MATTER OF LAND WITH ARIBAUD, AND THE MAIN THRUST OF LINI'S ANXIETY IS TO DISCOVER WHETHER OR NOT STEVENS WILL ACCEPT HIS GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY.

3. LINI AND BARAK SOPE REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE PACIFIC FORUM. THEY WOULD LIKE A PUBLIC DECLARATION BY BRITAIN AND FRANCE SPECIFICALLY TO COVER THE DATE OF INDEPENDENCE BUT ALSO TO CONFIRM THE STATEMENTS MADE BY ARIBAUD AND DONALD IN SANTO ON OUR JOINT ATTITUDE. WE HAVE URGED THE GREATEST PRUDENCE WHILE TALKS ARE STILL IN TRAIN.

4. THE PACKAGE AS SUCH HAS NOT CAUSED LINI'S GOVERNMENT ANY PARTICULAR PROBLEM, SINCE THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS IN IT OF COURSE ALSO DEPEND ON GETTING A CLEAR ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY IN SANTO.

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5. DONALD HAS BEEN WORKING IN THE CLOSEST HARMONY WITH ARIBAUD AND ASSESSMENT IN PARAGRAPH 7 OF MY TELEGRAM NO 535 WAS AGREED WITH HIM. THE LATTER IS CLEARLY ACTING ON DIJLOUD'S PRECISE INSTRUCTIONS AND HIS ADVICE SHOULD CARRY WEIGHT.

6. IF DIJLOUD/BLAKER MEETING IS FIXED DEFINITELY FOR 17 JULY IT WOULD THEORETICALLY BE POSSIBLE FOR ARIBAUD AND DONALD TO FLY FROM NOUMEA ON 15 JULY IN TIME FOR THAT MEETING. THEY COULD DO THIS IF THE TALKS ON THE MORNING OF 14 JULY IN SANTO PROVE CONCLUSIVELY THAT THEY ARE WASTING THEIR TIME CONTINUING THE DISCUSSION WITH STEVENS.

7. IF THERE STILL REMAINS A CHINK OF LIGHT ON 14 JULY, YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER POSTPONING THE MINISTERIAL MEETING BY A FEW DAYS UNTIL THERE IS A CLEAR BASIS ON WHICH THE TOUGH DECISIONS CAN BE TAKEN. DONALD FEELS THAT IN THIS EXTREMELY COMPLEX SITUATION HERE, MINISTERS MIGHT WELCOME FIRST HAND ACCOUNTS FROM HIM AND ARIBAUD.

8. HOWEVER, FOR REASONS OF MAINTAINING CONFIDENCE HERE WITH LINI'S GOVERNMENT IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY FOR DONALD AND ARIBAUD TO RETURN TO THE NEW HEBRIDES AFTER THE MINISTERIAL CONSULTATION, BUT THIS MUST DEPEND ON THE NATURE OF THEIR DECISIONS.

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NAD  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR BLAKER  
SIR E YOUDE  
MR FERGUSSON  
MR P H MOBERLY

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*M seen*

DESKBY 100800Z

FM VILA 100635Z JUL 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 537 OF 10 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS

PRIORITY MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY TARAWA

MY 2 IPT'S : NEW HEBRIDES

DECLARATION DU GOUVERNEMENT PROVISOIRE DU VEMARANA

NOUS, PEUPLE DU VEMARANA (ILE DE SANTO), APPARTENENT A LA GRANDE FAMILLE MELANESIENNE, MAIS AYANT NOS PARTICULARISMES PROPRES, DECLARONS SOLENNELLEMENT,

LA DECENTRALISATION QUE L'ON NOUS PROPOSE MAINTENANT VIENT TROP TARD ET NE CORRESPOND PLUS AUX NECESSITES ET AUX REALITES DE L'HEURE.

LE GOUVERNEMENT CENTRAL, DEPUIS SON ACCESSION AU POUVOIR, A TOUJOURS MANOEUVRE POUR EVITER DE DONNER A LA REGIONALISATION LE SENS PREVU PAR LA CONSTITUTION.

SANTO, DEPUIS MAINTENANT 40 JOURS, SE GERE ELLE-MEME GRACE AU DEVOUEMENT DE SES ENFANTS. ELLE A PROUVE QUE LA PRESENCE DES REPRESENTANTS DU POUVOIR CENTRAL N'ETAIT QU'UNE FACADE ET NE CORRESPONDAIT PAS A UN BESOIN.

A L'APPROCHE DE L'INDEPENDANCE, LE GOUVERNEMENT CENTRAL NE PEUT COMPTER QUE SUR LA FORCE DES ARMEES ETRANGERES POUR ASSURER SA SURVIE.

EN CONSEQUENCE, NOUS, LES ENFANTS DE VEMARANA, ACCEPTONS D'ETRE RATTACHE A UN ETAT NEO-HEBRIDAIS AYANT UN GOUVERNEMENT CENTRAL DONT LES COMPETENCES SERONT LIMITEES A :

- LA DEFENSE NATIONALE,
- LA MONNAIE,
- UNE PARTIE DES RELATIONS EXTERIEURES,
- LA CITOYENNETE.

SANTO, D'ORES ET DEJA, EST LIBRE ET INDEPENDANTE EN DEPIT DU BLOCUS EXERCE A SON ENCONTRE, ET ENTEND GARDER CETTE INDEPENDANCE.

SI LES DESIRS QUE NOUS EXPRIMONS CI-DESSUS DEVAIENT NE PAS ETRE PRIS EN CONSIDERATION, NOUS SERIONS, A NOTRE CORPS DEFENDANT, CONTRAINT A LA SECESSION DEFINITIVE,

LA FRANCE ET LA GRANDE-BRETAGNE DONNERAIENT ALORS L'INDEPENDANCE A CE PAYS, EN SACHANT QUE SON GOUVERNEMENT PRESIDE PAR LA PASTEUR LINI, NE POURRA SE REINSTALLER A SANTO QUE DANS LE SANG DES ENFANTS DU VEMARANA.

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NOUS SOMMES PRETS A COMPOSER SUR LES POINTS QUE NOUS  
VENONS D'EXPOSER.

NOUS NE SOMMES PAS PRETS A NOUS SOUMETTRE.

NOUS, PEUPLE DU VEMARANA, QUELLE QUE SOIT NOTRE ORIGINE,  
DEMANDONS NOTRE DROIT A VIVRE LIBRE ET DANS LE RESPECT  
DE NOTRE VOLONTE ET DE NOTRE COUTUME.

NOUS SUGGERONS QUE SOIT, ENTRE AUTRES, AMENAGE L'ARTICLE  
94 DE LA CONSTITUTION, DONT NOUS RAPPELONS QU'ELLE ETE SIGNEE  
PAR AUCUN REPRESENTANT DU VEMARANA.

LES RESPONSABILITES ENCOURUES SERONT LOURDES SI LES FETES  
DE L'OMDEPENDANCE DEVAIENT SE DEROULER DANS LE SANG ET  
EN ENCHAINANT UNE PARTIE DE LA POPULATION, COMME  
CELA SE PASSE ACTUELLEMEHQ A TANNA.

FAIT A SANTO, VEMARANA,  
CE 9EME JOUR DE JUILLET MIL NEUF CENT QUATRE VINGT.  
LE PREMEIR MINISTRE DU  
GOUVERNEMENT PROVISOIRE

JIMMY MOLI STEVENS

FCO PLEASE PASS

STUART

[REPETITION TO TARAWA, HONIARA  
REFERRED FOR DEPARTMENTAL DECISION  
REPEATED AS REQUESTED TO OTHER POSTS]

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FM VILA 100845Z JUL 80  
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TELEGRAM NUMBER 536 OF 10 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
PRIORITY MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY TARAWA

MIPT: ANGLO/FRENCH TALKS WITH JIMNY STEVENS AND COLLEAGUES,  
9 AND 10 JULY.

1. ARIBAUD AND I SECURED 10 MINUTES PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH JIMMY STEVENS BEFORE THE TALKS BEGAN. WE PUT IT TO HIM THAT THIS MIGHT BE THE LAST CHANCE FOR A PEACEFUL WAY OF SOLVING THE SANTO PROBLEM. THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WERE ABSOLUTELY UNITED IN THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE AGREED CONSTITUTION AND FOR WALTER LINI'S DULY ELECTED GOVERNMENT. WE ASKED FOR HIS FULL COOPERATION IN GETTING THE SITUATION UNBLOCKED AND IN PUTTING INHAND A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS TO RESTORE PEACE AND UNITY TO THE NEW HEBRIDES.

2. THE FORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH STEVENS AND HIS QUOTE MINISTERS UNQUOTE WERE WIDE-RANGING AND AT TIMES WITHOUT PATTERN. ARIBAUD AND I WORKED OUR WAY PATIENTLY TO THE KEY QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT STEVENS ACCEPTED THE LEGALITY OF LINI'S GOVERNMENT AND HIS AUTHORITY THROUGHOUT THE ARCHIPELAGO.

BUT WE BEGAN WITH DISCUSSION OF THE CURRENT PREOCCUPATIONS OF STEVENS' VEMARANA MOVEMENT, SUCH AS LAND, THE NEED TO RESPECT CUSTOM, THE NEED TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION TO GIVE SANTO ITS INDEPENDENCE AND A SHORT ONE SIDED HISTORY FROM CRONSTEADT OF EVENTS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES SINCE 1975.

3. ON THE LAND QUESTION, JIMMY STEVENS PARADOXICALLY APPEARED TO BE ARGUING THE CASE ALREADY ADOPTED IN THE CONSTITUTION. HE SAID THAT TITLES TO LAND ALREADY DEVELOPED WOULD BE RESPECTED BUT THAT ALL OTHER UNDEVELOPED LAND SHOULD RETURN TO THE CUSTOM OWNERS. HE HAD BEEN FIGHTING ON THE LAND ISSUE FOR 27 YEARS AND DID NOT WISH INDEPENDENCE TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE THIS QUESTION HAD BEEN SOLVED. WE POINTED OUT THAT UNDER THE CONSTITUTION LAND WAS DESTINED TO COME BACK TO THE NEW HEBRIDEANS. AT A LATER STAGE THERE WAS A DISCUSSION ON WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT ABOUT LAND OWNERSHIP AND WHAT THE ROLE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WOULD BE. STEVENS SHOWED DISTRUST ABOUT LETTING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT HOLD SUCH LAND AT ALL SINCE HE WAS SURE IT WOULD NEVER GET BACK TO THE ORIGINAL CUSTOM OWNERS. IT WAS AGREED NEVERTHELESS THAT THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE PROPER MACHINERY FOR DEALING WITH DISPUTES. THE STEVENS GROUP SHOWED INTEREST IN PARALLELS IN OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE THERE HAD BEEN SIMILAR PROBLEMS OVER LAND OWNERSHIP AFTER INDEPENDENCE. ( SOME MILD COMIC RELIEF WAS AFFORDED DURING DISCUSSION OF THE LAND ISSUE BY A MINOR EARTH TREMOR WHICH FOLLOWED ONE OF STEVENS' MORE FRUITY PONTIFICAL REMARKS ABOUT QUOTE LAND BEING OUR MOTHER UNQUOTE).

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4. THROUGHOUT THIS EARLIER PART OF THE DISCUSSION MALIU, AIDED AT TIMES BY STEVENS, ARGUED THAT EVERYTHING HAD BEEN WRONG SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION WHICH HAD NEVER BEEN AGREED BY THE VEMARANA PARTY. YASH GHAI AND ARIBAUD HAD LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN POINTING OUT THE FAILURE OF THE SANTO PEOPLE TO USE THE MANY OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED THEM WHEN THE CONSTITUTION WAS BEING DRAFTED AND SINCE THAT TIME ALSO. WHEN WE PRESSED STEVENS REALLY HARD, HE ADMITTED THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO TEAR UP THE CONSTITUTION: HE ONLY WANTED THE BRITISH AND FRENCH TO FIND A WAY TO PUT INTO THE CONSTITUTION THE IDEA OF QUOTE CONFEDERATION UNQUOTE OR WHATEVER TERM WAS USED TO DESCRIBE THE AUTONOMY WHICH HE HAD IN MIND.

5. AT ONE POINT MALIU COMPLAINED ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF THE MILITARY FORCES OF THE TWO POWERS. WHO WOULD THE ROYAL MARINES FIGHT? WERE THE ENGLISH REALLY CONTEMPLATING FIGHTING THE FRENCH? WOULD THE FRENCH PARATROOPERS IN NEW CALEDONIA COME TO KILL FRENCHMEN? WOULD THE FORCE OCCUPY ALL OF SANTO OR ONLY LUGANVILLE? IF THEY CAME, THEY WOULD SEE HOW HARD IT WAS TO GO ABOUT FREELY. MALIU WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO OPENLY EXPRESSED UNEASE ABOUT THE PROXIMITY OF BRITISH AND FRENCH TROOPS.. THE LINE ADOPTED BY ARIBAUD AND MYSELF WAS THAT WE HAD TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION BEFORE MATTERS GOT OUT OF HAND. IF FORCE EVER HAD TO BE USED THEN IT WOULD PROVE THAT WE HAD TOTALLY FAILED. OUR JOINT PRESENCE REFLECTED OUR HOPE OF FINDING A POLITICAL SOLUTION BY NEGOTIATION. ARIBAUD ALSO MADE A HELPFUL STATEMENT ON AID WHICH MADE IT CLEAR THAT A SANTO WITHIN THE NEW HEBRIDES WOULD BENEFIT, BUT THAT NO FRENCH AID COULD POSSIBLY GO TO ANY PART OF THE NEW HEBRIDES IN A STATE OF REBELLION.

6. MIDWAY THROUGH THE MORNING, MALIU READ OUT A TOUGH STATEMENT DATED 8 JULY TO THE EFFECT THAT THE MELANESIAN PEOPLE (SOLOMANS, FIJI, PAPUA NEW GUINEA ETC) HAD NEVER FORMED A UNITED STATE, AND THAT NEITHER THE CONDOMINIUM OF 1906 NOR THE PROTOCOL OF 1914 INSTITUTED A STATE. THE STATEMENT ASSERTED THAT IT WAS ONLY THE CONSTANT USE OF FORCE BY THE TWO POWERS THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE TO ATTEMPT THE CREATION OF A STATE. IT DECLARED THAT THE ISLANDS OF SANTO, AOKA, AMBRYM, NORTH MALEKULA, MAEWO, EPI, PAAMA, PENTECOST AND TANNA WERE NO LONGER CONTROLLED BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. IT ASKED THE TWO POWERS NOT TO FIGHT AGAINST SANTO AND TO LET WALTER LINI'S GOVERNMENT QUOTE DIE IN PEACE UNQUOTE. THIS DOCUMENT HAD CLEARLY BEEN DRAFTED BEFORE OUR ARRIVAL AND BEEN DESIGNED TO DOVETAIL WITH THE BIT OF THEATRE WITH THE CUSTOM CHIEFS.

7. ARIBAUD AND I REACTED STRONGLY TO THIS STATEMENT AND WE WERE ABLE WITHOUT MUCH DIFFICULTY TO MAKE THE STEVENS SIDE WITHDRAW IT ALTOGETHER. AFTER LUNCH THEY PRODUCED IN ITS PLACE A DECLARATION, THE TEXT OF WHICH IS IN MIFT.

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8. WE WITHDREW FROM THE MEETING TO CONSIDER THIS, AND ON OUR RETURN SAID THAT WE NOTED SEVERAL REFERENCES IN THE TEXT TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WHICH SEEMED TO IMPLY ACCEPTANCE OF ITS EXISTENCE AND THAT IT WAS AT LEAST HELPFUL THAT MENTION WAS MADE OF THE KIND OF POWERS WHICH THEY WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE ATTRIBUTED TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. WE SUGGESTED THAT WE COULD TAKE THAT AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE LINI GOVERNMENT PROVIDED WE COULD DRAW ON VARIOUS REMARKS MADE DURING THE DISCUSSION TO EXPLAIN THEIR POSITION.. WE HAD NOTED:

- (A) THAT THE UNITY OF THE COUNTRY WAS ACCEPTED;
- (B) THAT THERE WAS NO WISH TO TEAR UP THE EXISTING CONSTITUTION
- (C) THAT THERE WAS NO DESIRE TO CONTEST THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS ; AND
- (D) THE LEGAL EXISTENCE OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WAS ACCEPTED.

9. MALIU REACTED WITH A BURST OF TEMPER AND A STATEMENT THAT IF WE WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE DECLARATION TOUT COURT THEN THE SITUATION WOULD BE FROZEN AGAIN. THIS WAS VIRTUALLY THE LAST STATEMENT THAT MALIU WAS ALLOWED TO MAKE. SEVERAL MINUTES LATED ONE OF STEVENS' AIDES SUMMONED HIM FROM THE ROOM AND WE NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN. THEREAFTER CRONSTEADT TOOK UP THE RUNNING AND THE TONE OF THE SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WAS MUCH MORE REASONABLE. HOWEVER THE MOST THAT CRONSTEADT AND STEVENS WOULD AGREE WAS THAT:

- (A) THEY ACCEPTED THE UNITY OF THE NEW HEBRIDES SUBJECT TO THE DEFINITIONS IN THEIR DECLARATION;
- (B) THEY DID NOT WISH TO TEAR UP THE CONSTITUTION, BUT THEY WERE ANXIOUS TO ACCOMMODATE THEIR NOTION OF INDEPENDENCE WITHIN THE LAW ON REGIONALISM;
- (C) THEY ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLE OF A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (AS OPPOSED TO QUOTE THE UNQUOTE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT); AND
- (D) OUR MISSION SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.

10. WE AGREED TO RETURN WITH THESE IDEAS AND THE DECLARATION TO CONSULT WITH FATHER LINI. AT A SESSION THIS MORNING WITH THE FOUR OF US AND JIMMY STEVENS ALONE WE COULD NOT BUDGE HIS DISTASTE FOR THE EXISTING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND IN PARTICULAR HIS UNWILLINGNESS TO SEE THE RETURN OF A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PRESENCE TO SANTO. HOWEVER, MIXED WITHIN HIS FOLKSY HUMBUG, WE THOUGHT WE DETECTED A WISH TO FIND A WAY FORWARD.

11. A MEETING WITH FATHER LINI IS SCHEDULED FOR EARLY TOMORROW, FOLLOWED BY A WORKING LUNCH WITH HIS FULL CABINET.

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*These 3 lets will  
bring you up to date  
on the New Hebrides*

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS

PRIORITY MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY TAPAWA

MY TELNO 525 AND YOUR TELNO 380: NEW HEBRIDES

FROM DONALD

1. I AND MY COLLEAGUES IN THE ANGLO/FRENCH MISSION HAVE JUST RETURNED AFTER 48 HOURS IN SANTO. WE HAD A FULL DAY OF TALKS WITH JIMMY STEVENS AND HIS COLLEAGUES ON 9 JULY, CONTINUING DURING THE MORNING OF 10 JULY. MIFT SUMMARISES THESE DISCUSSIONS.
2. ARIBAUD AND I MET THE RESIDENT FRENCH COMMUNITY ON 8 JULY AND WERE LEFT IN NO DOUBT ABOUT THE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP THEY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE BLOCKADE. THERE IS A GENUINE FEAR AND DEPRESSION AMONG THE FRENCH COLONS. WE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE BRITISH AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS WERE COMPLETELY UNITED ON OUR APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF SANTO. ARIBAUD WAS GOOD IN PRESENTING THE FIRMNESS OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S POSITION THAT THE COLONS COULD NOT COUNT ON ANY SUPPORT FOR SECESSION OR INDEED ANY AID AFTER INDEPENDENCE IF SANTO WJE STILL IN REBELLION. THE MOOD OF THE FRENCH SHOWED AN ALMOST PATHOLOGICAL LACK OF TRUST IN WALTER LINI'S CAPACITY OR FAIRNESS SINCE HIS ELECTION. ONE OR TWO OF THE MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH COMMERCIAL COMMUNITY THREATENED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE NO OPTION BUT TO TAKE UP ARMS IF THE AUSTRALIANS AND FIJIANS WERE CALLED IN BY THE LINI GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST HIM. ARIBAUD AND I WARNED AT THIS POINT OF THE VERY SERIOUS SITUATION THAT WOULD ARISE IF THEY FELT INCLINED TO FLOUT THE COMBINED AUTHORITY OF BRITAIN AND FRANCE. ON THE WHOLE, HOWEVER, WE FOUND THE COLONS ANXIOUS FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND GENERALLY PESSIMISTIC AND BEWILDERED RATHER THAN BELLIGERENT.
3. THROUGHTOUT OUR TIME IN SANTO WE PRESENTED A SOLID UNITED FRONT. I THINK THIS MADE A CONSIDERABLE IMPRESSION ON THE RESIDENT COMMUNITY AND ON JIMMY STEVENS AND HIS CREW. WE SUCCESSFULLY AVOIDED BEING TRAPPED INTO ATTENDING THE CEREMONY RENAMING THE MAIN STREET AFTER ALEXIS YOLOU.
4. THE DISCUSSIONS WERE HARD, BUT SUBSTANTIAL, THE ATMOSPHERE WAS GOOD AND WE BROACHED THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS. THE SURFACE OF THE ICE HAS BEEN CRACKED AND SUFFICIENT PROGRESS HAS, I THINK BEEN MADE FOR FURTHER TALKS TO BE USEFUL. SUBJECT TO FATHER LINI'S VIEWS WE WOULD LIKE (AND ALREADY HAVE JIMMY STEVENS' AGREEMENT) TO RETURN TO SANTO ON 13 JULY. THERE IS CLEARLY A LONG WAY TO GO BUT WE ARE NOT WITHOUT HOPE.

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5. IT TURNED OUT THAT ONE OF THE REASONS WHY JIMMY STEVENS COULD NOT SEE US BEFORE 9 JULY WAS HIS WISH TO MUSTER ABOUT 250 QUOTE CUSTOM CHIEFS REPRESENTING THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENTS UNQUOTE OF AOBA, AMBRYM, NORTH MALEKULA, MAEWO, EPI, MALO, PAAMA AND PENTECOST WHO WISHED TO ASSOCIATE WITH SANTO'S SECESSION. THOUGH THERE WERE TANNA REPRESENTATIVES IN THE OFFING, WE HAD NO FORMAL CONTACT WITH THEM. WE AVOIDED MEETING THESE GROUPS PUBLICLY (THERE WERE TV CAMERAS PRESENT) BUT WE AGREED TO SEE THEM IN THEIR RESPECTIVE DELEGATIONS PRIVATELY THIS WAS IN FACT HELPFUL, SINCE ARIBAUD WAS ABLE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS FORCIBLY IN ENGLISH ( INTERPRETED 8 TIMES IN BISLAMA BY STEVENS) THAT :

- (A) FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN RECOGNISED AND BACKED UP THE GOVERNMENT OF FATHER LINI AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS WHICH HAD BROUGHT HIM TO POWER WERE LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC AND FAIR;
- (B) BOTH GOVERNMENTS WISHED TO ENSURE THE UNITY OF THE NEW HEBRIDES WITH INDEPENDENCE ON 30 JULY AND THAT THEY WOULD NEVER RECOGNISE OR SUPPORT ANY SECESSION BY ANY ISLAND.
- (C) NEVERTHELESS THERE WERE DIFFICULT POLITICAL PROBLEMS WHICH SHOULD BE SOLUBLE BY DISCUSSION IN A MELANESIAN WAY TO INTEGRATE LAW AND CUSTOM.

JIMMY STEVENS NOW HAS THE POSITION OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS  
LOUD AND CLEAR.

6. WE SHALL NOW HAVE TO DISCUSS THE NEXT STEPS WITH FATHER LINI.  
IN SUM, WE HAVE FAILED AS YET TO GET ANY STATEMENT FROM STEVENS ACCEPTING THE AUTHORITY OF THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT THE ARCHIPELAGO. THIS IS PERHAPS NOT SURPRISING AT THIS STAGE PARTICULARLY AS ARIBAUD HAS TOLD ME THAT POSITIONS HAD HARDENED MUCH FURTHER THAN HE HAD IMAGINED IN SANTO AND IN ONE SENSE WE HAVE DONE WELL TO HALT THE ROT AND GET TALKS STARTED. AS GAINS FOR THE MISSION, WE HAVE GOT AGREEMENT FROM STEVENS THAT HE ACCEPTS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE UNITY OF THE NEW HEBRIDES IN THE SENSE OF HIS DECLARATION (MY 2ND IFT); THAT HE DOES NOT WISH TO TEAR UP THE CONSTITUTION PROVIDED A WAY CAN BE FOUND TO ACCOMMODATE SANTO'S AUTONOMY UNDER A SUITABLE REGIONAL LAW; THAT HE ACCEPTS THE PRINCIPLE OF A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ALTHOUGH HE WILL NOT GO SO FAR AS TO ACCEPT THE AUTHORITY OF WALTER LINI; THAT HE HAS EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT OUR MISSION WILL CONTINUE TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES AND THAT PERHAPS FOR THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE A FORMAL STATEMENT ABOUT THE POWERS WHICH THE VEMARANA GROUP WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONCEDE TO A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (NAMELY NATIONAL DEFENCE, CURRENCY, PART OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND NATIONALITY).

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7. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON HOW FATHER LINI VIEWS THESE GESTURES. THE POWERS WHICH STEVENS PROPOSES TO LEAVE TO THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ARE LESS EVEN THAN THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS HAVE AT THIS MOMENT, SINCE THEY EXCLUDE INTERNAL SECURITY. THEY ARE ALSO FAR FROM BOTH THE SPIRIT AND THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION. HOWEVER, THEY ARE, I BELIEVE AND HOPE, ONLY AN OPENING POSITION, AND THE NEXT STAGE SEEMS TO US TO BE FOR YASH GHAI TO WORK OUT WITH THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT AN OUTLINE OF WHAT DEVOLUTION OF POWERS THEY ARE PREPARED TO OFFER, SO THAT, AT THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS, WE CAN WORK TO BRING THESE POSITIONS CLOSER TOGETHER. ALTHOUGH BOTH THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT AND THE TWO RESIDENCIES HAVE BEEN ROUND THIS CIRCUIT BEFORE, THE NEW FACTOR, I BELIEVE, IS THE CLEAR STATEMENT OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT THAT SECESSION IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PERSUADE LINI THAT THIS MAKES IT WORTH TRYING AGAIN.

8. I HAVE AGREED THE ABOVE ASSESSMENT WITH STUART

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Mike

Thank you

~~MA~~

You may wish to be aware of Mr Blake's proposed trip.

~~MA~~

10/7/80.

*see Mini 16, file*

RESTRICTED

*This is a copy. The original has been extracted and closed, 40 years.*

*New Hebrides*

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH



*ms*

7 July 1980

*Primi Rawster*

*To Mr Blaker.*

*Dear Michael,*

*Print 7/7  
Print 8/7*

New Hebrides: Invitation to the Prime Minister to attend Independence celebrations on 30 July

For the record you should know that we have received from the New Hebrides Government an invitation to the Prime Minister to attend their Independence Day Celebrations on 30 July. Mr Blaker, the Minister responsible for our relations with the New Hebrides, is available to represent the British Government at these celebrations. It is possible that the date will slip as a result of present problems, but 30 July remains our target.



No answer to, or acknowledgement of, the invitation is required. We are in constant touch with the New Hebrides Government.

*yours ever*

*Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

*\* ~ \* Passage deleted and closed, 40 years, under a FOI Exemption.*

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*Wayland  
29 June 2010*

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 523 OF 7 JULY

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Read in full

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
PRIORITY MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY

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MYTELNO 517: NEW HEBRIDES

1. YASH GHAI AND LIZOP HAD SEVERAL HOURS OF TALKS IN SANTO ON 4 AND 5 JULY. THEY SAW JIMMY STEVENS, CRONSTEAD, MALIU AND TWO OR THREE OTHERS. YASH GHAI REPORTS THAT ALTHOUGH THE ATMOSPHERE WAS FRIENDLY, THE TALKS WERE DIFFUSE AND UNSATISFACTORY. OLD ALLEGATIONS OF BAD FAITH ON LINI'S PART WERE REPEATED: THERE WERE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE HERCULES AIRCRAFT BEING USED TO FERRY POLICE TO TANNA: THERE WERE CALLS FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE BRITISH TROOPS IN VILA. ALEXEI YOLOU'S DEATH AND THE LEGALITY OF THE BLOCKADE WERE ALSO RAISED. CRONSTEADT SAID THAT HE HAD WANTED TO TALK FOR A LONG TIME ABOUT REGIONAL POWERS NOT ONLY FOR SANTO BUT OTHER ISLANDS AS WELL, BUT THE LEGAL EXPERTS COULD NOT GET A CLEAR PICTURE FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF WHAT THEY WANTED.
2. AT ONE TIME, LATE ON THE SECOND DAY, JIMMY STEVENS COMPLAINED THAT NOTHING EVER CAME OF REPEATED TALKS: HE WANTED TO LIVE IN PEACE: THE BRITISH TROOPS MUST GET OUT: HE WOULD ASK THE RUSSIANS TO COME AND SHOOT THEM ETC.
3. YASH GHAI'S STRONG IMPRESSION WAS THAT THE SANTO GROUP DID NOT WISH TO ENTER MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS. THEY FELT IN A POWERFUL POSITION AND WERE AFRAID THAT PROPER TALKS WOULD INEVITABLY MEAN SOME REDUCTION OF THEIR PRESENT AUTHORITY AND THAT THEREFORE THE WILL TO MAKE THE TALKS SUCCEED DID NOT EXIST.
4. BE THAT AS IT MAY, THE SANTO GROUP INDICATED THAT THEY WERE PREPARED TO RECEIVE DONALD AND ARIBAUD. YASH GHAI RETURNED TO VILA ON THE NIGHT OF 5 JULY. LIZOP ELECTED TO STAY ON ON THE GROUNDS THAT HE COULD BE HELPFUL IN PREPARING THE GROUND. HE SUBSEQUENTLY PASSED A MESSAGE (ON 6 JULY) THAT HE THOUGHT THE TEAM SHOULD COME TO SANTO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH A PLANE WAS READY THIS MORNING TO TAKE DONALD, ARIBAUD AND YASH GHAI TO SANTO, WE HAVE HAD A DAY OF CONFUSED MESSAGES BETWEEN VILA AND SANTO DURING WHICH LIZOP HAS, HOWEVER, SAID THAT JIMMY STEVENS WILL MEET DONALD AND ARIBAUD ON THE MORNING OF WEDNESDAY 9 JULY.

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5. DONALD AND ARIBAUD, WITH FULL COOPERATION FROM ROBERT, WILL CONTINUE TRYING TO GET TO SANTO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND I HOPE AT LEAST BEGIN CONTACT WITH JIMMY STEVENS ON WEDNESDAY. TODAY'S MESSAGES DO NOT LEAVE US PARTICULARLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT DONALD'S CHANCES OF BRINGING HOME A BANKABLE STATEMENT.

6. LOCALLY, THE FRENCH APPEAR TO BE UNDER NEW AND TIGHTLY DRAWN INSTRUCTIONS TO COOPERATE WITH US AND ARIBAUD IS IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE DOMTOM BY TELEPHONE. ROBERT SHOWS SIGNS OF INCREASING IMPATIENCE AND HAS EVEN TALKED PRIVATELY ABOUT THE ULTIMATE NEED TO DESPATCH FRENCH PARATROOPERS TO KNOCK SENSE INTO REBEL HEADS IN SANTO. LINI HAS TO LEAVE ON 9 OR 10 JULY FOR THE PACIFIC FORUM AND WE SHALL COME UNDER MORE PRESSURE FROM HIS GOVERNMENT TO ANSWER WHAT HMG WILL DO IF THE REBELLION HAS NOT ENDED BY 30 JULY. WE MAY NEED SOME JOINT CONTINGENCY PLANS VERY SOON.

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STUART

[REPETITION TO HONIARA & PORT MORESBY  
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INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
PRIORITY MODUK (DS11 DCP'S) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY.

MY TELEGRAMS NO 503, 506 AND 510: **NEW HEBRIDES.**

*ms*

FOLLOWING FROM DONALD.

1. AFTER THREE DAYS TALKS I HAVE BEEN TAKING STOCK.
2. DESPITE WHAT SEEMS LIKE CONTRADICTORY AND EXAGGERATED PRESS REPORTING FROM HERE AND ELSEWHERE (ON WHICH WE HAVE AN INCOMPLETE PICTURE) OUR MISSION IS ON COURSE. THE FIRST HURDLE, ADMITTEDLY, NOT VERY HIGH, HAS BEEN CLEARED. LINI'S GOVERNMENT DID NOT SEEM TOO ALARMED BY THE PACKAGE, ALTHOUGH WE MAY HAVE TROUBLE WITH THE FINE PRINT. AT ANY RATE, THEY HAVE NOT SUGGESTED AT ANY TIME THAT WE WERE ASKING CONCESSIONS IN MORE FIELDS THAN ARE REASONABLE. WE HAVE SECURED THEIR AGREEMENT TO MAKING CONTACT WITH JIMMY STEVENS WITHOUT ANY PRECONDITIONS. NEVERTHELESS THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT SEEM FRUSTRATED AND WEARY WITH THE PAST LACK OF UNITY OF THE TWO METROPOLITAN POWERS IN DEALING WITH THE SANTO REBELLION. THEY ARE NOT BASICALLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THIS FRESH MOVE TO END IT.
3. YASH GHAI AND LIZOP ARE NOW ON THEIR WAY TO SANTO, HAVING STUDIED WHAT TURNED OUT TO BE RATHER RUDIMENTARY TEXTS PREPARED BY THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL DEFINING POWERS WHICH MIGHT BE CONFERRED ON REGIONAL COUNCILS BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THEY WILL MAKE A PRELIMINARY RECONNAISSANCE OF STEVENS' CURRENT ATTITUDE TO UNITY AND DECENTRALISATION. IT IS LIKELY THAT YASH GHAI WILL COME BACK TOMORROW OR SUNDAY MORNING. THIS WILL BE USEFUL, AS LIZOP PREFERS TO BE CONSIDERED AS MUCH AN ADVISER TO STEVENS AS A MEMBER OF OUR MISSION.
4. ARIBAUD AND I HAVE STRESSED THE NEED TO KEEP UP THE MOMENTUM AND IN ANY CASE EXPECT TO FOLLOW THE LEGAL EXPERTS TO SANTO ON SUNDAY. ARIBAUD MEANWHILE IS WORKING ON THE FRENCH COLONS IN VILA SO THAT THE WORD GETS BACK TO THE FRANCOPHONES IN SANTO THAT FRANCE WILL NOT SUPPORT A SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT AND THAT THE FUTURE EDUCATION OF FRANCOPHILE CHILDREN MAY BE JEOPARDISED BY PROLONGATION OF SUPPORT FOR STEVENS' REBELLION.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

/5.

## CONFIDENTIAL

5. WE HAVE HAD A USEFUL MEETING WITH MINISTER OF LANDS, WHO HAS CONFIRMED NHG POLICY THAT LEASES OF RURAL LAND WILL NORMALLY LAST 30 YEARS, AND LEASES OF URBAN OR PUBLIC LAND WILL NORMALLY LAST 50 YEARS. HOWEVER LEASES UP TO 75 YEARS MAY BE MADE FOR BIG INVESTMENT PROJECTS THAT TAKE A LONG TIME TO PAY OFF. (LEASES CAN OF COURSE BE RENEWED). LEGISLATION IS ALREADY BEING DRAFTED AND COULD BE PASSED BY ABOUT 15 JULY. YASH GHAI AND LIZOP WERE MODERATELY ENCOURAGED BY OUR TALKS AND HAVE TEXTS OF THE MINISTRY'S COMMUNIQUE OF 24 APRIL WHICH SET OUT THE POLICY.

6. THE NEXT THREE DAYS WILL SHOW WHETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE ANYTHING USEFUL WITH STEVENS. ARIBAUD WILL DELIVER A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM DIJOU TO STEVENS WHEN HE AND I REACH SANTO. HE DESCRIBES ITS TONE AS HELPFUL, THOUGH I HAVE SEEN NO TEXT.

7. ARIBAUD HAS ALSO TOLD ME THAT THE FRENCH ARE SEEKING TO IMPEDE THE FLIGHT TO PARIS OF A SANTO DELEGATION NOW IN NOUMEA (IT ARRIVED BY THE REBEL SHIP). THE DOMTOM APPEAR TO BE TRYING HARD TO HONOUR THE DIJOU/BLAKER UNDERTAKINGS, BUT WHETHER FRENCH GOVERNMENT MORAL AND OTHER PRESSURE WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO BUDGE STEVENS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

STUART

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

DEPTL DISTN  
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WED  
UND  
CABINET OFFICE



GRS 210  
UNCLASSIFIED  
FM WELLINGTON 040515Z JUL 80  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 232 OF 4 JULY  
AND TO PRIORITY VILA, ROUTINE PARIS AND CANBERRA

NEW HEBRIDES

1. MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR TALBOYS, SAID TODAY IN PRESS STATEMENT THAT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE GOVERNMENTS OF BRITAIN AND FRANCE HAD NOT YET FORMALLY AGREED ON A DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE IN NEW HEBRIDES. "INDECISION AS TO WHETHER THE TERRITORY WILL OR WILL NOT BECOME INDEPENDENT ON 30 JULY, THE DATE PROPOSED BY THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT, IS UNFORTUNATE. IT SERVES TO ENCOURAGE POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY AND TO UNDERMINE THE AUTHORITY OF FATHER WALTER LINI'S ADMINISTRATION."

2. NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT FULLY SUPPORTED AN INDEPENDENT NEW HEBRIDES. "FATHER LINI'S GOVERNMENT WAS CHOSEN BY A MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF EVERY ISLAND GROUP IN THE CONDOMINIUM, FOLLOWING A CLOSELY SUPERVISED, DEMOCRATIC ELECTION. ITS LEGITIMACY AND POPULAR SUPPORT CAN NOT BE IN QUESTION. I BELIEVE IT IS READY AND ABLE TO ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COUNTRY."

3. CHIEF MINISTER AND MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET WERE WELL KNOWN TO MANY NEW ZEALANDERS. "FATHER LINI IS A GOOD FRIEND OF OURS. NATURALLY WE SHALL PARTICIPATE IN THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS IN VILA LATER THIS MONTH." MR TALBOYS SAID PRIME MINISTER, MR MULDOON, IS ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING WITH CHIEF MINISTER DURING FORTHCOMING MEETING OF FORUM AND HE EXPECTED FATHER LINI WOULD PLAY A FULL PART IN DELIBERATIONS OF THE ORGANISATION.

FAWCETT  
DEPTL DISTN  
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UND  
CABINET OFFICE

[COPIES SENT TO ND 10 DOWNING ST]

CONFIDENTIAL

FM VILA 020315Z JUL 80

CONFIDENTIAL

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 506 OF 2 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS

PRIORITY MODUK (DS11 DOP'S) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON  
UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY.

MY TELNO 503: NEW HEBRIDES.

*Read in full*

1. SECOND PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN DONALD, ARIBAUD AND LINI LASTED NEARLY AN HOUR AND A HALF THIS MORNING. AFTER YESTERDAY'S MEETING, BEASANT HAD GIVEN A MISLEADING IMPRESSION IN BRIEFING THE PRESS THAT TODAY'S MEETING MIGHT SEE THE BREAKDOWN OF OUR TALKS. IT IS PRETTY CLEAR THAT HE HAD MISINTERPRETED THE CHIEF MINISTER'S INSTRUCTIONS. THE LATTER HAD INTENDED TO INDICATE THAT THE PRIVATE MEETINGS WOULD PROBABLY END TODAY AFTER WHICH A DECISION WOULD BE TAKEN ON THE NATURE OF FURTHER WIDER DISCUSSIONS TO INCLUDE THE TWO RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS AND NEW HEBRIDEAN MINISTERS. IN VIEW OF THE LOCAL PRESS FLURRY, HOWEVER, IT WAS AGREED TODAY WITH LINI THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO FURTHER STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS UNTIL WE JOINTLY HAD SOMETHING SUBSTANTIAL TO SAY. (BEASANT MAY, OF COURSE, MUDDY THE WATERS AGAIN.)
2. AT THIS MORNING'S SESSION, TALKS COVERED THE POSSIBLE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS TO END THE SECESSION IN SANTO (ENDING WITH REMOVAL OF BLOCKADE) ON THE ANGLO/FRENCH LINES AGREED MINISTERIALLY ON 25 JUNE IN LONDON. LINI SHOWED HIMSELF RECEPTIVE TO PREPARATION OF A LAW ON REGIONALISATION AND A LAW OR DECLARATION OF INTENT ON LAND TENURE FOR THE EXPATRIATE PLANTERS. ARIBAUD GAVE A SKILFUL PRESENTATION OF THE LIKELY IMPACT OF FRENCH AID AFTER INDEPENDENCE AND THE KIND OF PRESSURE LINKED WITH THE AID OFFER THAT COULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE FRENCH PLANTERS TO WEAKEN THEIR SUPPORT FOR JIMMY STEVENS ON SANTO AND TO CONVINCE THEM THAT THEIR BEST INTERESTS LAY IN SUPPORTING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THIS MADE A GOOD IMPACT ON LINI. (PARIS PLEASE PROTECT, SINCE ARIBAUD HAS NOT RELAYED THIS IN HIS OWN REPORT).
3. LINI CONFIRMED HIS GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUED WILLINGNESS TO TALK WITH STEVENS, BUT EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT STEVENS' WILLINGNESS TO CO-OPERATE AND THE AGONIZINGLY SLOW TIME THAT IS NORMALLY REQUIRED FOR ANY MELANESIAN DISCUSSION. HE WAS QUITE HAPPY FOR THE ANGLO/FRENCH MISSION TO SHUTTLE BETWEEN SANTO, TANNA AND VILA AS APPROPRIATE. HE ALSO WELCOMED THE DETERMINATION TO GET THE NECESSARY LEGISLATION PREPARED BY 15 JULY IF POSSIBLE; WHILE RECOGNISING AGAIN THAT THE TIMESCALE WAS SHORT, HE INDICATED THAT ENOUGH WORK HAD ALREADY BEEN DONE TO COUNTER-ACT THIS.

CONFIDENTIAL

14.

## CONFIDENTIAL

4. OTHER TOPICS COVERED WERE THE VALUE OF AN INTERPRETATIVE DECLARATION ON CITIZENSHIP FOR HALF-CASTES AND THE PREPARATORY WORK THAT WOULD BE NEEDED BY YASH GHAI AND LIZOP ON THE LEGAL ASPECTS. (YASH GHAI ARRIVED TODAY AND WILL BE PRESENT WHEN ARIBAUD AND DONALD MEET THE LAND MINISTER THIS AFTERNOON.)

5. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE NEXT SESSION WOULD BE A PLENARY MEETING ON 34 (AS RECEIVED) JULY WITH THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT WHICH BOTH RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS WOULD BE PRESENT AND POSSIBLY YASH GHAI AND LIZOP.

IN GENERAL ATMOSPHERE IS QUITE GOOD AND, THOUGH WE GATHER THAT LINI WAS A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED YESTERDAY AT WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS THE ABSENCE OF NEW CONSTRUCTIVE IDEAS, HIS MOOD TODAY REVEALED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AND WILLINGNESS TO GO ALONG WITH OUR SUGGESTIONS. IF THE PLENARY MEETING ENDORSES LINI'S APPROACH, WAY WILL BE CLEAR TO DRAFT THE LEGISLATION AND TO TACKLE THE QUESTION OF APPROACHING JIMMY STEVENS.

STUART

COPIES SENT TO  
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

FILES  
SP D  
WED  
NEWS. D  
DEF. D  
UND  
PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PUS  
SIR E YOUDE

2  
CONFIDENTIAL

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE A LONDRES

Service de Presse et d'Information

58 Knightsbridge, S.W.1.

01-235 8080

*New Hebrides*

NOTE D'ACTUALITE

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*A. Alexander*  
*Fascinating for show*  
*Roman 19 June 1980*  
*fall!*  
*J 24*

CTL/DISCOM/133/80

NEW HEBRIDES

STATEMENT TO THE PRESS BY M. PAUL DIJOU, SECRETARY OF  
STATE FOR OVERSEAS DEPARTMENTS AND TERRITORIES  
(17 JUNE 1980)

The New Hebrides are, perhaps, on the brink of irreparable events.

X | A few weeks away from independence, for which we have been meticulously preparing for several years, Great Britain thought it useful to send soldiers and military equipment into this country without our agreement and without it being necessary.

| France disapproves of this step. She considers that an internal political problem in the New Hebrides will not be solved by the intervention of European soldiers, unless Great Britain intends now to assume sole responsibility for public order in the New Hebrides.

| Walter Lini's Government bears a not inconsiderable responsibility in this situation. I ask him : will they be proud when several of their compatriots have been killed or wounded ? Do they not think that permanent wounds will then remain within their population ? Should they not, after what happened on Tanna, rather show a little understanding ? Do they want people to say throughout the Pacific that they used foreign soldiers to crush their brothers, when all forms of negotiation remained possible ?

| I am sure that the New Hebrides Government which we have unfailingly supported, and wish to continue to support, will understand the purpose of France's action and take every possible step to bring about genuine negotiations in which the fundamental problems can be dealt with : the unity of the New Hebrides and regionalization of Santo and Tanna, the sharing by all the political families in the exercise of responsibilities, the conditions for the necessary reconciliation.

| To the moderates, I address, once more, a solemn appeal. I understand their anxieties and their frustrations. I know they do not want the New Hebrides to go further towards breaking up and they know that the French Government is opposed to any secession.

| I ask them therefore with the greatest firmness to agree to the opening of genuine negotiations with the Government, in which, if necessary, Great Britain and France will be able to participate at the appropriate time.

.../.

There must be no more delay. It is no longer a time for preconditions and ultimatums. There must be a return to moderation and tolerance. It is to this task that France is unceasingly devoting herself : she wants, at all costs, to achieve reconciliation while there is still time.

To the British Government we have confirmed that we were ready, as it has asked us, to examine what needs to be done, now, to bring to the New Hebrides lasting peace and unity, that do not rest simply on the presence of foreign soldiers, but on the consensus of the New Hebrideans themselves.

These talks can begin immediately, as soon as genuine negotiations have begun in the New Hebrides, that is when we are assured that, in accordance with the Condominium's rules, nothing will be undertaken without our agreement or which might ruin the still remaining chances of achieving a peaceful solution.

France and Great Britain must resume their collaboration, refrain from any unilateral initiative of any kind whatsoever and prepare, once more, together, the accession of this country, for which they remain jointly responsible for several weeks more, to an independence that will not lead to new divisions and clashes./.

CONFIDENTIAL



New Hebrides <sup>VB</sup>

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

19 June 1980

*Dear Rodene,*

New Hebrides

The Prime Minister has seen Paris telegram 557 of 17 June on this subject. She has noted against the last part of the first sentence of paragraph 2 that President Giscard did not make any stipulation to the effect that British troops could not be used in the New Hebrides other than with the full consent of France.

*Yours ever*

*Richard Alexander*

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

*5/7/80*

OUT TELEGRAM

	Classification and Caveats <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Precedence/Deskby <b>IMMEDIATE</b>
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ZCZC	1	ZCZC
GRS	2	GRS
CLASS	3	CONFIDENTIAL
CAVEATS	4	
DESKBY	5	
FM FCO	6	FM FCO 171800Z JUNE 80
PRE/ADD	7	TO IMMEDIATE PARIS
TEL NO	8	TELEGRAM NUMBER
	9	AND REPEATED FOR INFORMATION PRIORITY TO VILA
	10	MIPT: NEW HEBRIDES
	11	1. At 1730Z I spoke on the telephone to Francois-Poncet (who
	12	had initiated the call). Francois-Poncet apologised for having
	13	to trouble me about the "ridiculous" New Hebrides problem, but
	14	said that the feeling in Paris amongst the people who handled the
	15	question was that there was "a very high degree of likelihood"
	16	that <u>British troops would go unilaterally to Santo to re-establish</u>
	17	<u>the authority of the central Government.</u> I referred to my
	18	conversation with Sauvagnargues and said that I could not
	19	understand where this story came from. Francois-Poncet replied
	20	that Dijoud had told him that unilateral British action was
	21	"extremely likely". I said that there was no question of such
///	22	action and that I was perturbed by what Dijoud was doing. We
//	23	had been very careful not to criticise the French in public
/	24	whereas Dijoud had said some pretty rough things about us.
	25	Francois-Poncet said that he had heard Dijoud's remarks in

*IMMEDIATE*

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword Parliament
File number	Dept Private Office	Distribution Departmental SPD WED
Drafted by (Block capitals) R M J Lyne		cc No 10 Cabinet Office
Telephone number 233 4831		
Authorised for despatch <i>RIML 17/4</i>		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats  
CONFIDENTIAL

Page  
2

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 2 Parliament and knew also that he had been speaking to the press.  
 3 Dijoud had suggested to him that there were 1000 Frenchmen on  
 4 Santo who would provide armed resistance to any British invasion.  
 5 2. I said that this sort of talk was silly (Francois-Poncet  
 6 seemed inclined to agree). Dijoud's energies would be better  
 7 spent in working out how to achieve a peaceful solution.  
 8 Mr Blaker would be going to Paris on Thursday to try to settle  
 9 the question. I asked Francois-Poncet to tell Dijoud to settle.  
 10 Francois-Poncet said that he would do so (the implication was  
 11 that he would speak to the <sup>Elysee</sup> ~~Presidency~~).  
 12 3. The tone of the conversation was relaxed. Francois-Poncet  
 13 was disposed to treat this as an absurd dispute in the manner  
 14 of the 1890s, but concluded by saying (half jokingly) that he  
 15 did not want to wake up one morning and find that the marines  
 16 had re-established imperial British rule.  
 17 4. See MIPT  
 18 CARRINGTON  
 19 NNNN  
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# OUT TELEGRAM

	Classification and Caveats <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Precedence/Deskby <b>IMMEDIATE</b>
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2 GRS  
3 CONFIDENTIAL  
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6 FM FCO 171800Z JUNE 80  
7 TO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
8 TELEGRAM NUMBER **IMMEDIATE**  
9 AND REPEATED FOR INFORMATION **PRIORITY VILA**

10 <sup>My two</sup> MIPTS: NEW HEBRIDES  
11 1. You will note that, in response to Sauvagnargues's requests  
12 for assurances that British troops would not be used unilaterally  
13 on Santo, I did not comment on hypothetical circumstances in  
14 which our troops might be used. I made it clear that any  
15 suggestion that we were about to intervene unilaterally was  
16 entirely false, and that our objective was a peaceful, <sup>N.P.</sup> I  
17 negotiated settlement, jointly achieved with the French. I  
18 also referred Sauvagnargues to statements made by Mr Blaker  
19 and myself in Parliament. In this connection, you should make  
20 appropriate use of my reply to a supplementary question from  
21 Lord Hatch on 16 June. Lord Hatch asked whether the marines  
22 might be used to suppress a rebellion against the democratically  
23 elected government of the New Hebrides, and whether the French  
24 had a veto on the movements of the marines. I replied "I  
25 think that the legal position because of this condominium is a

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword <b>Little</b>
File number	Dept <b>Private Office</b>	Distribution  <b>Departmental SPD WED</b>
Drafted by (Block capitals) <b>R M J Lyne</b>		<b>cc No 10 Cabinet Office</b>
Telephone number <b>233 4831</b>		
Authorised for despatch <i>R M J Lyne 17 Jun</i>		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats  
CONFIDENTIAL

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2 little obscure. But I myself can conceive of no circumstances  
3 in which there was need to maintain order or to safeguard the  
4 welfare of the population in which the French should not agree  
5 to the use of our troops."

7 CARRINGTON

8 NNNN

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10 3. As you and Stuart will appreciate, in the light  
11 of my replies to Sauvagnargues and Francois Poncet  
12 there can be no question of any marines going  
13 to Santo in any capacity in present circumstances.  
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OUT TELEGRAM

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6 FM FCO 171730Z JUNE 80  
7 TO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
8 TELEGRAM NUMBER  
9 AND REPEATED FOR INFORMATION **IMMEDIATE** PRIORITY VILA  
10 NEW HEBRIDES

*Today's developments,  
Read in full*

11 1. The French Ambassador called on me and Mr Blaker this  
12 afternoon. He had been instructed to express the concern  
13 of the French Government about ~~the~~ rumours of a planned British  
14 military intervention in Santo and Tanna. The French  
15 Government would be firmly opposed to any such intervention,  
16 which would be incompatible with the 1914 protocol. If one  
17 of the two powers said that an action was unilateral, it was  
18 unilateral. Sauvagnargues said that any form of military  
19 intervention would ruin the possibility of a peacefully  
20 negotiated settlement, which Messrs Blaker and Dijoud had  
21 agreed to be our joint objective, and would have the most  
22 serious consequences for Franco/British relations. He had  
23 further noted that British Ministers had stressed in Parliament  
24 their attachment to the principles of joint action.  
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NNNN ends telegram		BLANK	Catchword 23. I replied
File number	Dept	Distribution	
Private Office		Departmental SPD WED cc No 10 Cabinet Office	
Drafted by (Block capitals) R M J Lyne			
Telephone number 233 4831			
Authorised for despatch <i>RPL/JL 17/61</i>			
Comcen reference	Time of despatch		

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

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2 2. Sauvagnargues was also instructed to say that Monsieur  
3 Dijoud would like to see Mr Blaker as soon as possible.

4 3. I replied that I regretted that Sauvagnargues had spoken  
5 in this way. I had hoped that he had come to say that it was  
6 time for our two countries to settle the problem. I did not  
7 wish to have to go over once again the differences which had  
8 arisen between us. These had been explained to the Ambassador  
9 by the PUS. However, I wished to point out that Mr Blaker and  
10 I had gone out of our way in our public statements to say  
11 nothing critical of the French Government. The most we had done  
12 was to express our puzzlement. I regretted that Monsieur  
13 Dijoud had not behaved in a similar manner, but had been strongly  
14 critical of the British in public.

15 4. I said it was absurd to suggest that the British had plans  
16 to invade Santo or Tanna. I did not know the source of this  
17 suggestion. Agreement had been reached on the New Hebrides  
18 Constitution. Elections had been held which were accepted as  
19 free and fair. It was agreed that the results of the election  
20 should be put into effect. We had agreed with the French that  
21 the Santo rebellion could not be allowed to continue. It was  
22 therefore essential to settle the Santo problem as soon as  
23 possible: no one wanted a military intervention.

24 5. Sauvagnargues said that he had explained to the PUS that  
25 the French Gendarmes would withdraw from Vila after 24 hours.  
26 The main problem was to settle the relationship between the  
27 Central Government and the islands of Santo and Tanna. The  
28 negotiations which were due to have taken place under the  
29 constitution between the regional and local authorities had not  
30 come about. The French Government was now concerned that the  
31 British might seek to impose a solution without negotiation by  
32 using their troops. When I remonstrated with Sauvagnargues  
33 and pointed out that it was the French who had unilaterally  
34 decided to send in their Gendarmes, he replied that he personally

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OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Page 3
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2 regarded this as a "ghastly blunder" on the part of the French

3 which had given us the pretext to send in our forces. I told

4 Sauvagnargues that I found his attempt to <sup>impute</sup> ~~impute~~ our motives

5 highly offensive. Sauvagnargues withdrew his remark, but again

6 requested an assurance that the British troops would not go to

7 Santo unilaterally. I <sup>repeated</sup> ~~again said~~ that there was no suggestion

8 that the British troops were going to Santo.

9 6. I said that I thought it was not productive to pursue this

10 line of argument further, and that I hoped Messrs Blaker and

11 Dijoud could have a more fruitful discussion when they met. I

12 repeated my request that Monsieur Dijoud should refrain from

13 further public criticism of the UK. This is not the way

14 friendly countries should set about solving a problem together.

15 This was something of a storm in a teacup and we should preserve

16 our sense of proportion. Mr Blaker added that it was also

17 unhelpful for Monsieur Dijoud to try to impose pre-conditions

18 on their next meeting. It was quite inconceivable that he

19 should make a public statement (in advance) of the kind suggested

20 by M Dijoud.

21 7. M Sauvagnargues said that his instructions about the Blaker/

22 Dijoud meeting had not referred to any pre-conditions. He

23 quoted Robert's remarks in his 17 June broadcast (Vila tel no

24 429) to the effect that the marines were not coming as enemies.

25 He reiterated that there should be no misunderstanding about the

26 use of our troops. The British Government had said that they

27 would help to maintain law and order. This could be taken to

28 imply that they were there to crush the secession, especially as

29 there was now no problem about law and order. I <sup>do</sup> ~~do~~ not accept

30 that there was no law and order problem especially when one

31 island was in a state of rebellion. I pointed out that the

32 secessionists were refusing to accept the results of the

33 elections held on Santo itself, in which Jimmy Stephens had been

34 defeated. Sauvagnargues was flummoxed by this, and clearly was

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OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats  
CONFIDENTIAL

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2 unaware of the election result on Santo. I said that we could  
3 not accept the continuation of a rebellion in defiance of the  
4 election result. The French Government had taken a similar  
5 position. We must therefore try to resolve the problem now  
6 by peaceful means. 8. See MIFT.

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8 CARRINGTON

9 NNNN

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GRS 880

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY 170845Z

FM PARIS 170805Z JUN 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 557 OF 17 JUNE 1980

CONFIDENTIAL

MY TELNO 552: NEW HEBRIDES

DIJOU D SUMMONED ME TO SEE HIM YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND KEPT ME FOR ONE AND A HALF HOURS. THE GOING WAS HARD ALL THE WAY BUT HE BECAME MORE REASONABLE TOWARDS THE END.

2. HE TOOK THE LINE THAT PRESIDENT GISCARD HAD SAID TO MRS THATCHER AT VENICE THAT FRANCE DISAPPROVED OF THE SENDING OF THE MARINES, EXPECTED THEM TO BE USED SOLELY FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE BRITISH RESIDENCY AND DEMANDED THAT THEY SHOULD NOT BE USED ON ANY DUTIES IN THE NEW HEBRIDES OTHER THAN WITH THE FULL CONSENT OF FRANCE. HE SAID HE WAS SPEAKING TO ME WITH THE AUTHORITY OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE FULL ACCORD OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. M. DIJOU D INDICATED THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO BLOCK OFF THURSDAY 19 JUNE FOR A MEETING WITH MR BLAKER, BUT HE WOULD REQUIRE CERTAIN ASSURANCES BEFORE EMBARKING ON A MEETING. HE STARTED BY SAYING THAT FRANCE WOULD REQUIRE A PUBLIC DECLARATION BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THAT THE BRITISH FORCES WOULD NOT BE USED FOR ANY PURPOSE IN THE NEW HEBRIDES OTHER THAN WITH THE FULL CONSENT OF FRANCE.

4. I TOLD MONSIEUR DIJOU D THAT I COULD NOT CONCEIVE OF A STATEMENT BEING MADE BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON THE LINES HE ASKED, AND CERTAINLY NOT A PUBLIC ONE. BRITAIN WAS IN NO WAY IN BREACH OF ITS TREATY OBLIGATIONS AND COULD NOT REASONABLY BE ASKED NOT TO DO SOMETHING WHICH SHE WAS NOT DOING. I SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO GIVE SOME SORT OF ASSURANCE THAT BRITAIN INTENDED TO ABIDE BY ITS TREATY OBLIGATIONS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES INsofar as FRANCE DID. MONSIEUR DIJOU D SAID THAT IT WENT WITHOUT SAYING THAT FRANCE WOULD ABIDE BY ITS TREATY OBLIGATIONS. I REPLIED THAT THE SAME WENT FOR GREAT BRITAIN.

5. WE CAME BACK TO THIS QUESTION OF AN ASSURANCE AGAIN AND AGAIN, WITH MONSIEUR DIJOU D CONSTANTLY INSISTING THAT FRANCE HAD A JUST CASE AND BRITAIN HAD NONE. I POINTED OUT THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO DIFFICULTY AT ALL IN ESTABLISHING THE DOUBLE NEGATIVE, THAT IS TO SAY THAT BOTH COUNTRIES WOULD REFRAIN FROM BREAKING THEIR TREATY OBLIGATIONS. WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS POSITIVE AGREEMENT ON POLICY. IT WAS FROM POSITIVE AGREEMENT,

I.E. INTERMINISTERIAL DISCUSSION, THAT FRANCE WOULD FIND HERSELF OBTAINING THE CONFIDENCE AND ASSURANCE WHICH SHE SOUGHT.

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6. AT ONE POINT I TOLD MONSIEUR DIJOURD THAT HE REALLY MUST NOT KEEP ASKING US TO STOP BEATING OUR WIFE. HE SAID THAT THE TROUBLE WAS THAT FRANCE FELT PRECISELY LIKE A BEATEN WIFE. I SAID THAT BRITAIN HAD BEEN DOING NO BEATING SO IT MUST BE SELF-INFLICTED. AT ANOTHER POINT HE SAID THAT FRANCE HAD BEEN WITHIN TWO FINGERS OF BEING HUMILIATED. I REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO POSSIBLE BRITISH INTEREST IN HUMILIATING FRANCE, WHICH WAS OUR ALLY AND PARTNER.

7. ABOUT HALF WAY THROUGH OUR TALK MONSIEUR DIJOURD UNBENT TO THE POINT OF USING THE WORD MISUNDERSTANDING TO DESCRIBE EVENTS OF THE PAST WEEK. I THANKED HIM FOR USING IT AND SAID THAT IT OPENED THE WAY TO PROGRESS. I INSISTED THROUGHOUT THAT THE DISCUSSION BETWEEN ROBERT, STEWART AND LINI IN VILA ON 11 JUNE HAD BEEN ABOUT A JOINT INTERVENTION AND NOT SIMPLY ABOUT A FRENCH ONE. MONSIEUR DIJOURD KEPT ON SAYING THAT MY VERSION OF EVENTS WAS FALSE AND I HAD TO POINT OUT TO HIM THAT HE DID NOT HAVE A MONOPOLY OF THE TRUTH. !

8. I GATHER THAT A RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN MADE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD SEND A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT GISCARD. I AM INCLINED TO THINK THAT THIS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE HELPFUL AT THE PRESENT STAGE. MONSIEUR DIJOURD IS MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND WHAT I THINK IS NEEDED IS A RESPONSE TO HIM IN ORDER TO CLEAR THE WAY FOR TALKS ON THURSDAY OR ANY SUBSEQUENT DATE THAT MR BLAKER CAN MANAGE. I HAD THE IMPRESSION TOWARDS THE END OF OUR TALK THAT MONSIEUR DIJOURD WOULD ACCEPT SOME SORT OF RESPONSE CONVEYED THROUGH ME IF YOU THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE, BUT YOU MIGHT PREFER TO SEND A MESSAGE FROM MR BLAKER. I THINK, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO ACHIEVE THE RIGHT DEGREE OF AMBIGUITY IN AN ORAL RATHER THAN A WRITTEN COMMUNICATION. I SHALL SEND MONSIEUR DIJOURD'S CABINET TODAY THE TEXT OF YOUR STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS YESTERDAY, INCLUDING THE SENTENCE THAT YOU ARE SATISFIED THAT BRITAIN IS ACTING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 1914 PROTOCOL. IF YOU SO INSTRUCTED ME, I COULD BUILD ON THIS TO ASSURE MONSIEUR DIJOURD THAT BRITAIN CONTINUED TO HAVE EVERY INTENTION OF ABIDING BY THE 1914 PROTOCOL AND COUNTED ON FRANCE DOING THE SAME.

9. MONSIEUR DIJOURD WAS PERSISTENT IN POINTING OUT THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF GIVING THE NEW HEBRIDES INDEPENDENCE BY 30 JULY. I SAID THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS NOT SO PESSIMISTIC. HE CLAIMED THAT HE STILL HELD THE ACE, BEING THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD PERSUADE STEVENS TO COMPROMISE. I SAID THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO THINK OF A JOINT HAND RATHER THAN ACES.

CONFIDENTIAL

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## CONFIDENTIAL

10. AS I WAS LEAVING I TOLD MONSIEUR MONTPEZAT THAT IT WAS NO USE HARPING ON ALLEGED OFFENCES BY BRITAIN. IF THIS CONTINUED I WOULD BE BOUND TO SAY THAT ON THE BRITISH SIDE WE THOUGHT THAT FRANCE HAD CHEATED OVER THE GENDARMES. HE WOULD SEE THAT THIS SORT OF TALK LED NOWHERE. THE MISTAKE ON FRANCE'S PART HAD BEEN TO TRY TO IMPOSE A VETO. THE SENSIBLE COURSE WAS TO WORK OUT A JOINT POLICY OF A POSITIVE KIND. MONTPEZAT AGREED WITH THIS BUT SAID THAT IT WAS GOING TO BE DIFFICULT. HE EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH ME FOR AN INFORMAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS.

11. I SHALL SEND SOME FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE TALK BY BAG. WE SHALL REPORT SEPARATELY BY TELEGRAM WHAT M. DIJOU D SAID TO THE PRESS YESTERDAY.  
HIBBERT

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GRS 48φ  
UNCLASSIFIED  
DESKBY 1712φφZ  
FM PARIS 1711φ5Z JUNE 8φ  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 558 OF 17 JUNE 198φ.

NEW HEBRIDES: M. DIJOURD'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF 16 JUNE

1. THE DOMTOM CLAIM NOT TO HAVE A COMPLETE TEXT OF WHAT M. DIJOURD SAID TO THE PRESS ON 17 JUNE. THEY HAVE SAID THAT THE REPORT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE CARRIED BY AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE IS ACCURATE IN ALL RESPECTS.

2. ACCORDING TO AFP, HE SAID "ANY UNILATERAL MILITARY ACTION IN THE NEW HEBRIDES ON THE PART OF ONE OF THE METROPOLITAN POWERS WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE RULES OF THE CONDOMINIUM" AND ADDED THAT FRANCE WOULD REFUSE PERMISSION FOR THE ~~2φφ~~ BRITISH "COMMANDOS" TO BE USED AS A FORCE OF REPRESSION. M. DIJOURD ADDED "I AM CONVINCED THAT GREAT BRITAIN WILL HESITATE TO LEND MILITARY SUPPORT TO WALTER LINI WHOSE ACTIVISM CAN ONLY HINDER THE EFFECTS OF THOSE WHO ARE WORKING TO RE-ESTABLISH PEACE AND HARMONY IN THE CONDOMINIUM". ACCORDING TO M. DIJOURD "SANTO ANNOUNCED ITS SECESSION TO DEMONSTRATE A DESIRE FOR AUTONOMY MUCH MORE THAN TO SEIZE INDEPENDENCE. HISTORY WEIGHS HEAVILY ON THESE ISLANDS WHERE THE CONDOMINIUM HAS CREATED AN ARCHIPELAGO BUT NOT A COUNTRY. FOR THE MODERES, EACH ISLAND, AFTER INDEPENDENCE, SHOULD REGAIN ITS LIBERTY AND A GOVERNMENT OF CUSTOM CHIEFS, WITHOUT RULING OUT THE CREATION BETWEEN THEM OF A SORT OF FEDERATION".

3. M. DIJOURD THOUGHT THAT WALTER LINI'S GOVERNMENT HAD COMMITTED ERRORS IN PRACTISING "A SYSTEMATIC INTOLERANCE" TOWARDS THE FRANCOPHONES AND THE CUSTOM CHIEFS IN EXCLUDING THEM FROM HIS GOVERNMENT AND IN "UNDERMINING" (MINORANT) THE INFLUENCE OF FRANCE. M. DIJOURD ADDED THAT THE POPULATION OF THE NEW HEBRIDES REMAINED DEEPLY SPLIT IN TWO AND THE UNTIMELY ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS HAD NOT CALMED PEOPLE'S MINDS. ACCORDING TO AFP, M. DIJOURD DENIED THE RIGHT OF THE NEW HEBRIDES PRIME MINISTER TO RESORT TO FORCE IF THE NEGOTIATION WHICH HIS TWO REPRESENTATIVES WERE TO UNDERTAKE ON SANTO ON 17 JUNE FAILED. "THIS

RIGHT BELONGS SOLELY TO THE METROPOLITAN POWERS AND FRANCE IS OPPOSED TO IT." M. DIJOURD ADDED: "ONE MUST AVOID GIVING A DRAMATIC ASPECT TO THE OPPOSITION THAT HAS EMERGED IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES BETWEEN FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN". M. DIJOURD SAID HE WAS CONVINCED THAT A MEETING WITH HIS BRITISH COUNTERPART WOULD BRING ABOUT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MANY REACTION "AMOUR PROPRE".

/4. LE MONDE

4. LE MONDE OF 17 JUNE REPORTS A PART OF M. DIJOU'D'S PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH DOES NOT APPEAR IN THE AFP ACCOUNT. ACCORDING TO LE MONDE, M. DIJOU'D SAID "IT OUGHT TO BE CLEAR THAT FRANCE, WHICH HAS THE JOINT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MAINTAINING OF ORDER IN THE CONDOMINIUM, WILL REFUSE THE DEPLOYMENT OF BRITISH TROOPS EXCEPT FOR GUARDING THE OFFICES OF THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION. IT IS FOR THE NEW HEBRIDEANS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THEIR PROBLEMS. IT WOULD BE UNREASONABLE TO ENVISAGE THE DEPLOYMENT OF SOLDIERS BELONGING TO ONE OF THE BEST UNITS OF THE BRITISH ARMY WHO HAVE ARRIVED WITH A CONSIDERABLE ARMOURY, AGAINST MELANESIANS ARMED FOR THE MOST PART WITH BOWS AND ARROWS AND WHOSE ONLY REQUEST IS FOR A LITTLE UNDERSTANDING".

5. MIFT CONTAINS A REPORT ON TODAY'S PRESS REACTIONS.  
HIBBERT

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vb

*New Hebrides*

17 June 1980

New Hebrides

The Prime Minister has seen your letter to me of 16 June on this subject together with the enclosed draft. As you know, she has decided that she would prefer not to send a message to President Giscard at this stage. She believes that the situation should be allowed to develop further and in particular that it should be allowed to become clear whether the French are in fact trying to obstruct a meeting between Mr. Blaker and M. Dijoud before she intervenes again with President Giscard.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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DESKBY 161100Z

FM VILA 160649Z JUN 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCC

TELEGRAM NUMBER 419 OF 16 JUNE

AND TO IMMEDIATE PARIS AND MODUK (DS11) BOTH ALSO DESKBY  
PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA  
HONIARA PORT MORESBY

MY TELNO 417

1. STEVENS HAS ACCEPTED THE CHIEF MINISTER'S PROPOSAL,  
COMMUNICATED TO HIM THROUGH THE FRENCH RESIDENCY, PROVIDED  
THAT STEVENS HIMSELF CAN ATTEND THE FIRST MEETING.  
THE CHIEF MINISTER HAS AGREED. THE VEMARANA ARE DISCUSSING  
TONIGHT IN VANAFO WHAT DATE TO SUGGEST FOR THE MEETING. I  
HAVE URGED ROBERT TO USE HIS INFLUENCE TO ENSURE THAT IT IS AS  
SOON AS POSSIBLE.

2. I THINK IT CAN FAIRLY BE CLAIMED THAT THE PRESENCE  
OF BRITISH TROOPS HAS CONCENTRATED (NUMBER OF GRPS UNDEC)

TOO EARLY TO PREDICT WHETHER THE TALKS HAVE ANY PROSPECT OF  
SUCCESS.

*[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]*

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO TELEGRAM NUMBER 417 OF 16 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS MCDUK (DS 11) (BOTH DESKY)  
PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK  
SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY

NEW HEBIDES POLITICS

1. I ASKED THE CHIEF MINISTER AND HIS WIFE TO A FAMILY DINNER LAST NIGHT AND THEREAFTER SPENT TWO HOURS WITH LINI DISCUSSING HOW THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH TROOPS COULD BE USED TO PROMOTE A NEW POLITICAL INITIATIVE WHILE HE ACKNOWLEDGED THE SHOCK TO BOTH SIDES OF THE EVENTS OF RECENT WEEKS, LINI STRESSED THE DIFFICULTY FOR THE VANUAKU PARTY OF ACCEPTING PEOPLE INTO THE GOVERNMENT WHO SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN SUPPORTING REBELLION. MOREOVER, WHILE THIS MIGHT GET OVER THE IMMEDIATE POLITICAL PROBLEM, HE WAS NOT CONVINCED THAT A COALITION GOVERNMENT WOULD PUT US IN A STRONGER POSITION TO NEGOTIATE WITH JIMMY STEVENS, PARTICULARLY SINCE ROBERT' STATEMENT (MY TELNO 411) WHICH HAD JUST BEEN RELEASED.

2. HOWEVER THIS MORNING, AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH ROBERT AND MYSELF AND TELEPHONE CONVERSTIONS BETWEEN LINI, THE PRIME MINISTER OF SOLOMON ISLANDS AND THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY-GENERAL, LINI HAS JUST TOLD ME THAT HE PROPOSES, IF ROBERT AND I AGREE, TO ANNOUNCE THIS EVENING THAT A TEAM CONSISTING OF ONE OF HIS OWN CLOSEST ADVISERS MOLISA, AND ROBERT' AND MY DEPUTIES, PERES AND TURNER, WILL, IF STEVENS AGREES, GO TO SANTO WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS TO MEET THE VEMARANA LEADERS. HE INTENDS TO

SUGGEST THAT THEY SHOULD BE, ON THE ONE HAND THE RESTORATION OF GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY ON SANTO, AND ON THE OTHER THE LIFTING OF THE BLOCKADE. LINI'S THOUGHT IS THAT BY STARTING WITH DEPUTIES ON BOTH SIDES IT LEAVES THE WAY OPEN FOR FURTHER MEETINGS BETWEEN PRINCIPALS ( LINI, ROBERT, STEVENS AND MYSELF) AT A LATER STAGE. HIS PRELIMINARY THOUGHT ABOUT THE AGENDA FOR SUCH A SECOND MEETING IS THE DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY COUPLED WITH THE SURRENDER OF ALL ARMS ON BOTH SIDES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

3. THIS FORMULA SEEMS TO ME POLITICALLY SHREWD AND I HAVE ENDORSED IT. I UNDERSTAND THAT ROBERT HAS DONE THE SAME AND THAT A LETTER IS LIKELY TO BE SENT TO STEVENS TONIGHT.

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4. IF THE PROPOSED MEETING HAPPENS I IMAGINE THAT ONE OF THE VEMARANA' FIRST DEMANDS WILL BE THE REMOVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS FROM THE NEW HEBRIDES. I DO NOT NOT THINK THAT WE COULD AGREE TO THIS AT SUCH AN EARLY STAGE, BUT, SUBJECT TO YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, I SUGGEST THAT WE COULD GIVE A FORMAL UNDERTAKING THAT THEY WILL NOT BE USED WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ARE STILL GOING ON EXCEPT IF NECESSARY, IN AN INTERNAL SECURITY ROLE IN VILA

COMMS NOTE: CHANGE NAME BOULC IN PARA TWO TO READ PALAUD

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( Repetition to HONIARA  
referred for departmental decision,  
repeated as requested to other posts. )

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PS  
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PS/M Blaker  
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DESKBY FCO PARIS MODUK 161000Z

FH VILA 160400Z JUN 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NO 416 OF 16 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS MODUK (DS11)

PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA

HONIARA PORT MORESBY.

Cabinet Office (for Mr Somerville)

BRITISH FORCES IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

(Bopt)

1. AFTER ROBERT SENT ME HIS LETTER OF PROTEST (MY TELNO 408) I HEARD FROM A FRENCH JOURNALIST THAT HE WAS INTENDING TO RELEASE IT AT A UNILATERAL PRESS CONFERENCE LAST NIGHT. I TELEPHONED TO ASK HIM NOT TO AND HE AGREED (ACCORDING TO THE AUSTRALIAN CONSUL. HE ALSO RECEIVED CANCELLATION INSTRUCTIONS FROM DOMTOM ON GROUNDS THAT PARIS AND VILA WERE GETTING OUT OF STEP).

IT THEN BECAME APPARENT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESS HAD GOT HOLD OF THE DRAFT OF HIS ORIGINAL LETTER INCLUDING MANUSCRIPT AMENDMENTS (SOURCE OF LEAK UNKNOWN). HE THEREFORE QUOTE TO CALM THE PRESS UNQUOTE, ISSUED HIS SOMEWHAT WATERED DOWN PRESS COMMUNIQUE (MY TELNO 411). HE SENT ME A COPY OF THIS BUT AGAIN DID NOT CONSULT ME.

2. THIS MORNING, SINCE I WAS BEING URGED FOR COMMENT BY THE PRESS, I ISSUED MY RESPONSE (MY TELNO 412). HOWEVER



I CLEARED THIS WITH ROBERT AND LINI IN ADVANCE DURING OUR MORNING MEETING BEFORE IT WAS RELEASED. I ALSO DELETED AT ROBERT'S REQUEST BUT AGAINST LINI'S PROTEST, THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF MY DRAFT, WHICH READ QUOTE I WOULD HOWEVER, POINT OUT THAT THE DECISION TO RECOMMEND TO OUR GOVERNMENTS THE SENDING OF JOINT BACK-UP FORCES TO THE NEW HEBRIDES WAS TAKEN BY US JOINTLY AT THE REQUEST OF THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT. UNQUOTE.

3. ROBERT IS THUS SO FAR AHEAD IN THE UNILATERAL PUBLICATION STAKES THAT HE IS OUT OF SIGHT. MORE SERIOUSLY FOR OUR LOCAL HOWEVER, THE STATEMENT AND ITS PUBLICATION MUST REMOVE A LARGE PART OF THE DETERRENT EFFECT OF SENDING THE MARINES HERE, SINCE STEVENS WILL DOUBTLESS CONCLUDE THAT THEY ARE IN FACT A PAPER TIGER. (I FEAR THAT THE REPORTERS HAVE GOT HOLD OF MY PHRASE QUOTE DUKE OF YORK SYNDROME UNQUOTE, PERHAPS FROM BRIEFING FROM SOMEONE IN THIS RESIDENCY, AND IT MAY APPEAR IN THE PRESS.)

4. I PUT IT TO ROBERT THIS MORNING THAT HE HAD TOLD US THAT HE HAD THREATENED STEVENS WITH THE GENDARMES IF HE DID NOT ACCEPT THE FRANCO-BRITISH OFFER PUT TO HIM BY LINI. ROBERTS STATEMENT SEEMED TO ME TO HAVE EMASCULATED A SIMILAR ATTEMPT AT JOINT PRESSURE. HE CONCEDED THAT I HAD A POINT, BUT SAID THAT THE STATEMENT WAS ISSUED ON THE DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS OF M. DIJOURD. I ASKED WHETHER, IN VIEW OF PRESIDENT GISCARD'S APPARENT ACQUIESCENCE IN OUR ACTION, M. DIJOURD HAD CLEARED HIS INSTRUCTIONS WITH THE FRENCH PRESIDENT. ROBERT SAID THAT, FOR HIS MINISTER'S SAKE, HE HOPED HE HAD.

5. ROBERT THEN DEVELOPED THE THEME THAT THE QUARREL WAS NOT BETWEEN US LOCALLY, BUT BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS. HE AGREED THAT WE HAD JOINTLY RECOMMENDED THE ARRIVAL OF JOINT FORCES, BUT WHEN THE GENDARMSE HAD BEEN SENT ACCORDINGLY BUT WITHOUT THE PRIOR CONSENT OF LONDON, MR. BLAKER HAD OBJECTED. WHEN THE THREAT HAD RECEDED AND THE GENDARMES HAD BEEN REMOVED, M.

TREAT HAD RECEDED AND THE GENDARMES HAD BEEN REMOVED, M.

DIJOUH HAD SIMILARLY OBJECTED TO THE UNILATERAL ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS. I SAID I HAD TWO COMMENTS: FIRST THAT M. DIJOUH'S OBJECTION WAS ASTONISHINGLY PUBLIC,

AND SECOND THAT, IF WE AGREED THAT IT WAS RIGHT TO MAKE A JOINT ASSESSMENT THAT BACK-UP FORCES WERE NEEDED, THEN IT MUST EQUALLY BE RIGHT TO MAKE A JOINT ASSESSMENT THAT THEY WERE NO LONGER NEEDED AND COULD BE TAKEN AWAY AGAIN.

FCO PSE PASS ALL

STUART

QNNNN

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FM VILA 152315Z JUN 80  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 412 OF 16 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS MODUK DSII  
PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NE TORK  
SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY

MIPT

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT I ISSUED MORNING  
16 JUNE LOCAL.

BEGINS  
PRESS STATEMENT

I HAVE SEEN THE PRESS COMMUNIQUE WHICH INSPECTOR-GENERAL ROBERT  
RELEASED ON 15 JUNE.

QUESTIONS OF ANGLO/FRENCH RELATIONS ARE FOR OUR GOVERNMENT'S  
IN LONDON AND PARIS TO COMMENT ON, NOT FOR CIVIL SERVANTS  
IN PORT VILA, HOWEVER DISTINGUISHED. THE JOB OF INSPECTOR-GENERAL  
ROBERT AND MYSELF ~~TO WHICH WE ARE BOTH PROFESSIONALLY AND~~  
PERSONALLY COMMITTED, IS TO CARRY OUT OUR INSTRUCTIONS JOINTLY  
AND IN THE CLOSEST POSSIBLE COLLABORATION, PARTICULARLY IN THESE  
DIFFICULT TIMES.  
ENDS

2. COMMENT FOLLOWS

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FM VILA 152315Z JUN 80  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 411 OF 16 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS MODUK DSII  
PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK  
SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY

MY TEL NO 408: ROBERT'S LETTER.

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE FRENCH  
RESIDENCY 15 JUNE (LOCAL).

BEGINS

COMMUNIQUE A LA PRESSE

LA FRANCE NE SOUHAITE PAS LA PRESENCE DES FORCES BRITANNIQUES  
QUI SONT ARRIVEES CE MATIN A BAUERFIELD. CERTTE PRESENCE NE  
REPOND EN AUCUNE FACON AUX NECESSITES DE LA SITUATION.

LE SECRETAIR D'ETAT AUX DEPARTEMENTS ET TERRITOIRES D'OUTRE-  
MER A RAPPELE RECEMMENT A SON COLLEQUE BRITANNIQUE,

LA PPOSITION DU GOUVERNEMENT FRANCAIS A CE SUJET.

AUX DIFFICULT4ES QUE CONNAISSENT ACTUELLEMENT LES NOUVELLES-  
HEBRIDES, IL N'Y A PAS D'AUTRES SOLUTIONS DURABLES QUE LA NEGOCIATI  
ON, LE COMEPROMIS ET LA RECONCILIATION ENTRE TOUTE LES TENDANCES  
EN PRESENCE.

DANS CES CONDITINS, IL NE PEUT ETRE QUESTION POUR LE REPRESENTA  
NT DE LA FRANCE DONT L'ACCORD EST INDISPENSABLE A TOUTRE OPERATIONS  
A CONDUIRE PAR DES FORCES EXTERIEURES, D'AUTORISER L'EMPLOI DES  
TROUPES BRITANNIQUES POUR QUELQUE ACTION QUE CE SOIT.

JE L'AI FAIT SAVOIR A MON COLLEQUE BRITANNIQUE EN LUI  
DEMANDANT DE LIMITER LEUR INTERVENTIN A UNE SIMPLE PRESENCE  
TACTIQUE.

DE MON COTE, JE POURSUIVRAI INLASSABLEMENT MES EFFORTS,  
CONFORMEMENT AUX INSTRUCTINS DU SECRETAIR D'ETAT, POUR TENTER  
D'AMENER LES RESPONSBLE DE CE PAYS A UNE MEILLEURE COMPREHENSIN  
RECIPROQUE ET A UN PLUS JUSTE SENTIMENT DU CONSENSUS QUE NECESSITE  
LA PREPARATIN D'UNE INDEPENDANCE DONT LA DATE PREOCCUPE DE PLUS  
EN PLUS TOUS CEUX QUI SONT ATTACHES AU BONHEUR DES NEO HEBRIDAIS.

/ PREPARER

PREPARER CETTE INDEPENDANCE EN UTILISANT LA FORCE ET LA  
REPRESESSIN, PARTICULIEREMENT EN UTILISNT DES SOLDATS VENUS  
DE L'EXTERIEUR, NE PEUTE QUE CONDUIRE A UNE DIVISIN  
ENCORE PLUS PROFONDE DU PAYS ET JE LE CRAINS A DE NOUVEAUX  
AFFRONTLEMENTS ET A DE NOUVEAUX MORTS.

LA NORT D'ALEXIS YOULU DEVRAIT NOUS INCITER A PLUS  
DE PRUDENCE ET A PLUS DE MODERATION.

J J ROBERT

ENDS

FCO PASS ALL

STUART

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

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CONFIDENTIAL

*New Hebrides*



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

16 June 1980

*Dear Michael,*

New Hebrides

Following the Prime Minister's discussions with President Giscard d'Estaing in Venice last week, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary thinks it would be useful to send a rapid message to the French President both to draw attention to Lord Carrington's statement in Parliament today and to reiterate our wish to work together with the French to achieve settlement. I attach draft telegrams to Paris accordingly.

The Embassy in Paris have been in touch with the DOMTOM at our request to try to arrange an early meeting between Mr Blaker and M Dijoud. Mr Blaker was prepared to go to Paris tomorrow, but we have received no confirmation from Paris that such a meeting has yet been arranged. The message therefore only reiterates our determination that our two Governments should remain in the closest touch on this problem and that Mr Blaker is prepared to meet M Dijoud at the earliest possible opportunity to discuss ways of pursuing a peaceful negotiated solution.

The message also reflects the Chief Minister's readiness to re-open talks with Mr Stephens and the latter's encouraging response (Vila Tels 417 and 419). This could provide an opportunity to break the current deadlock and is a development which we must instruct our Resident Commissioners to encourage.

*yours ever*

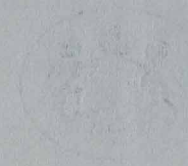
*Roderic Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

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Patent and Copyright Office  
London W2 1AL



16 JUN 1980



# OUT TELEGRAM

	Classification and Caveats <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Precedence/Deskby <b>IMMEDIATE</b>
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ZC S ASS VEATS SKBY FCO E/ADD L NO	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	ZCZC GRS CONFIDENTIAL  FM FCO 161930Z TO IMMEDIATE PARIS TELEGRAM NUMBER REPEATED FOR INFORMATION TO IMMEDIATE VILA, PRIORITY CANBERRA, WELLINGTON, SUVA, HONIARA, PORT MORESBY, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK NEW HEBRIDES 1. Following is text of a message from the Prime Minister to President Giscard. Please arrange for it to be delivered as soon as possible. Following their discussion in Venice, the message is designed to lower the temperature, while maintaining the pressure on M Dijoud to agree to an early meeting with Mr Blaker. 2. Mr Blaker is content for you to judge how best to inform M Dijoud of the message. BEGINS My dear President I am glad that we had a chance to discuss the New Hebrides in Venice, and found our talk most useful. In the light of it
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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword 7 I was surprised
File number	Dept SPD	Distribution  Files SPD(6)
Drafted by (Block capitals) C M CARRUTHERS		
Telephone number 233-7874		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	



OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Page 2
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<<<<

1 <<<<  
 2 I was surprised to hear of the protest made by your Resident  
 3 Commissioner in the New Hebrides about the present<sup>ce</sup> of British  
 4 troops in Vila. This does not reflect our clear understanding  
 5 of the recommendation of our respective Resident Commissioners  
 6 following their meeting with the New Hebrides Council of  
 7 Ministers on 11 June. We therefore thought it necessary to  
 8 clarify our own position publicly. I attach a copy of a  
 9 statement made by Lord Carrington in the House of Lords today.  
 10  
 11 At the same time, I would emphasise that I do not wish to see  
 12 this problem become a source of <sup>diplomacy</sup> tension between us. As we  
 13 agreed in Venice, our two governments must work closely together  
 14 in pursuit of a peaceful negotiated settlement. I have been  
 15 encouraged by reports of a further attempt by Fr Lini to re-open  
 16 negotiations with Mr Stephens and his associates. Mr Stephens  
 17 has apparently responded positively. I believe that Mr Blaker  
 18 and M Dijoud should now meet as soon as possible, and endeavour  
 19 to build upon this new initiative. I sincerely hope that in  
 20 this way we can renew our joint commitment to work for a  
 21 peaceful transition to independence for the New Hebrides.  
 22  
 23 With my very best wishes,  
 24 Yours sincerely  
 25 Margaret Thatcher  
 26 ENDS  
 27 3. The text of the Secretary of State's statement in the House  
 28 today is in MIFT.  
 29 CARRINGTON  
 30 NNNN  
 31  
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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
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# OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats

UNCLASSIFIED

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*DESKBY NEXT CONTACT*

FROM FCO  
IMMEDIATE PARIS  
INFO IMMEDIATE VILA

9 INFO PRIORITY CANBERRA, WELLINGTON, SUVA, HONIARA, PORT MORESBY,  
10 WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK  
11 TELEGRAM NUMBER  
12 NEW HEBRIDES  
13 MIPT

14 On 11 June, following the shooting of a prominent  
15 opposition Deputy during a demonstration in the island of Tanna,  
16 the New Hebrides Government asked the two Resident Commissioners  
17 to recommend to their governments the despatch of British and  
18 French forces to the New Hebrides. This request was made during  
19 the course of a Cabinet meeting, and both Resident  
20 Commissioners agreed to make such a recommendation to their  
21 respective governments. The Chief Minister's understanding of  
22 their agreement was later confirmed in writing. It was in  
23 response to this joint recommendation that the French decided to  
24 send some gendarmes from New Caledonia. They informed us of this  
25 decision. It was also in response to the joint recommendation

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NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword and
File number	Dept SPD	Distribution  FILES SPD
Drafted by (Block capitals) C M CARRUTHERS		
Telephone number 233 7874		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats UNCLASSIFIED	IMMEDIATE	Page 2
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~~that the French decided to send some gendarmes from New Caledonia. They informed us of this decision. It was also in response to the joint recommendation and to match the French action that we decided to send a contingent of the Royal Marines, in order that we might be in a position to act jointly, should the need arise, with the French gendarmes. We informed the French of this decision.~~

On 12 June the French Government decided to withdraw their gendarmes from the New Hebrides and did so that day.

On 15 June the French Resident Commissioner made a formal protest to the British Resident Commissioner about the despatch of the Royal Marines.

In deploying our troops in Vila, we are not only demonstrating our willingness to live up to our obligations, but we are satisfied that we are acting in accordance with the 1914 Protocol which governs the joint administration in the Condominium.

I am seeking an early meeting with M Dijoud, the responsible French Minister, in order that we may clarify our joint approach to the problems in the New Hebrides. Meanwhile it remains the intention of HMG, to do all in our power to promote a peaceful solution to the problem, to support the democratically elected Government and to safeguard the integrity of the New Hebrides.

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword
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mg.

PRIME MINISTER

New Hebrides: Mr. Blaker's statement

Peter Blaker had another difficult time in the House today. There was much derision from the Opposition when he attempted not to go into any details about what you and President Giscard said to each other in Venice about the New Hebrides. He was asked by Mrs. Dunwoody what Giscard had said to you, and rather foolishly said that it would not be proper for him to say what had been said to you.

Bernard Braine asked what lawful authority the British troops would have to use force in their present situation, which he described as "ludicrous". Mr. Blaker said that he agreed that it would be desirable to avoid the use of force, but that opinion in the Pacific was very grateful to Britain for sending the Marines.

He said several times that he hoped that France and Britain, in the persons of M. Dijoud and himself, could very soon re-establish a common policy line.

Eric Ogden said that Mr. Blaker had been too honest, too correct and too trusting with the French. Mr. Blaker said that he thought Mr. Ogden's remarks might possibly be double-edged. Mr. Ogden said that of course they were. Mr. Blaker said that it did not help to impugn the motives of the French Government. Once again, he said that his purpose was to restore a joint Anglo/French policy.

Mr. Kilfedder asked whether British troops would be used if the French did not acquiesce, and whether they would be withdrawn on independence. Mr. Blaker said that the first question was hypothetical (which aroused more laughter from the Opposition) and that it would be normal to withdraw troops at independence. He had also said that 30 July was still the target date for independence, but that it would clearly not be responsible to allow independence to take place while there was an insurrection in the islands.

NJS

THE NEW HEBRIDES

With your Lordships' permission I shall make a statement on the New Hebrides.

On 11 June, following the death of a prominent opposition Deputy on the island of Tanna, the New Hebrides Government asked the two Resident Commissioners to recommend to their governments the despatch of British and French forces to the New Hebrides. This request was made during the course of a Cabinet meeting, and both Resident Commissioners agreed to make such a recommendation to their respective governments.

The Chief Minister's understanding of their agreement was later confirmed in writing. It was in response to this joint recommendation that the French decided to send some gendarmes from New Caledonia.

/They

They informed us of this decision. It was also in response to the joint recommendation that we decided to send a contingent of the Royal Marines, in order that we might be in a position to act jointly, should the need arise, with the French gendarmes. We informed the French of this decision.

On 12 June the French Government withdrew their gendarmes from the New Hebrides.

On 15 June the French Resident Commissioner made a formal protest to the British Resident Commissioner about the despatch of the Royal Marines.

In deploying our troops in Vila, we are not only demonstrating our willingness to live up to our obligations, but we are satisfied that we are acting in accordance with the 1914 Protocol which governs the joint administration in the Condominium.

/My

My hon Friend the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs is seeking an early meeting with M Dijoud, the responsible French Minister in order that we may clarify our joint approach to the problems in the New Hebrides. Meanwhile it remains the intention of Her Majesty's Government to do all in our power to promote a peaceful solution to the problem, to support the democratically elected Government and to safeguard the integrity of the New Hebrides.

# CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 16φ  
CONFIDENTIAL  
DESKBY 161115Z  
FM PARIS 161φ4φZ JUN 8φ  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 556 OF 16 JUNE 198φ

M I P T

NEW HEBRIDES: MR BLAKER'S STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1. SINCE SENDING MY TUR I HAVE SEEN VILA TELNO 411 CONTAINING THE TEXT OF THE PRESS COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY ROBERT IN VILA AT ROUGHLY WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN EARLY MORNING PARIS TIME YESTERDAY, 15 JUNE.
2. ITS TERMS MAKE IT CLEAR THAT MONTPEZAT WAS BEING LESS THAN HONEST WHEN HE APOLOGISED AT LUNCHTIME YESTERDAY (PARA. 5 OF MY TEL NO 552) FOR THE LEAKING OF ROBERT'S OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION TO STUART. IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT ROBERT WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO PUT THE NEGATIVE FRENCH POINT OF VIEW ON PUBLIC RECORD IN HARSH TERMS, ALMOST CERTAINLY ON M. DIJOURD'S INSTRUCTIONS.
3. THIS LEADS ME TO REINFORCE THE RECOMMENDATION IN PARA 1 OF MY TUR THAT A WAY SHOULD BE FOUND THIS AFTERNOON OF INDICATING THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WHAT THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY PUTS OUT IN VILA AND WHAT THE FRENCH PRESIDENT SAID TO MRS THATCHER IN VENICE AND TO PUT THE ONUS FOR EXPLAINING THIS DISCREPANCY ON FRANCE.

HIBBERT

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# CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 24φ  
CONFIDENTIAL  
DESKBY 161115Z  
FM PARIS 161φ25Z JUN 8φ  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 555 OF 16 JUNE 198φ

NEW HEBRIDES: MR BLAKER'S STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1. BY LETTING M. ROBERT LEAK HIS PROTEST IN VILA THE FRENCH HAVE MANAGED TO GET THE PRESS TO SAY THAT THERE HAS BEEN A FORMAL INTER-GOVERNMENTAL PROTEST BY FRANCE WHEN IN FACT NONE HAS BEEN MADE EITHER IN PARIS OR LONDON. I SUGGEST THAT WHEN MR BLAKER MAKES HIS STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE THIS AFTERNOON, IT MIGHT BE BEST TO TAKE THE LINE THAT IT IS FOR THE FRENCH RATHER THAN FOR THE BRITISH TO EXPLAIN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT ROBERT HAS SAID IN VILA. AS FAR AS THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENTS ARE CONCERNED, THERE IS AGREEMENT THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SHOULD REMAIN IN CLOSE TOUCH AND MR BLAKER IS WAITING TO HEAR WHEN M. DIJOURD CAN MEET HIM IN PARIS THIS WEEK.
2. IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL IF MR BLAKER COULD EXPLODE THE FRENCH THESIS THAT CALM PREVAILS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES. IT NEEDS TO BE GOT INTO THE PRESS HERE THAT IT IS HARDLY POSSIBLE TO SPEAK OF CALM WHEN ONE OF THE LARGE ISLANDS IS IN REBELLION AND BEING BLOCKADED AND ASSORTED INCIDENTS CONTINUE TO HAPPEN ELSEWHERE.
3. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO SAY THAT FOR THE MOMENT THE MORE EYE-CATCHING DECLARATIONS BY RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS AT VILA ARE NOT SO IMPORTANT AS THE EFFORTS WHICH THE NEW HEBRIDEANS THEMSELVES MAKE TO TRY TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEM BY PROCESSES OF DEMOCRATIC CONSENT. THE ROLE OF THE METROPOLITAN POWERS SHOULD CHIEFLY BE TO MAINTAIN PUBLIC ORDER, FOR WHICH THEY ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE, WHILE THE NEW HEBRIDEANS DEVELOP THEIR OWN POLITICAL SOLUTIONS.

HIBBERT

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# CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 270

UNCLASSIFIED

FM VILA 150347Z JUN 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO DESKBY 150830Z

TELEGRAM NO 403 OF 15 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS DESKBY 150900Z MODUK DS11

PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA

HONIARA PORT MORESBY

*Full sequence of tels from  
Vila: you may have to  
compare with those from Paris  
which you have just read.*

1. I HAVE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING LETTER FROM INSPECTOR  
GENERAL ROBERT AT 1400 HOURS LOCAL ON 15 JUNE AFTER THE  
ARRIVAL OF THREE VC10S AND ONE HERCULES AIRCRAFT.

*nb.*

BEGINS

MONSIEUR LE COMMISSAIRE- RESIDENT

J AI RECU MISSION DU SECRETAIRE D ETAT AUX DEPARTEMENTS ET  
TERRITOIRES D OUTRE-MER, DE VOUS ADRESSER UNE PROTESTATION  
CONTRE LA PRESENCE DES TROUPES BRITANNIQUES QUI VIENNENT DE  
DEBARQUER A BAUERFIELD.

JE VOUS RAPPELLE NOTRE POSITION DANS CETTE AFFAIRE. SI LES  
EVENEMENTS QUI ONT CONDUIT AU MEURTRE D ALEXIS YOULU  
LEGITIMAIENT LA VENUE DE FORCES DE MAINTIEN DE L ORDRE  
EXTERIEURES A PORT VILA EN RAISON DE LA TENSION QUI A REGNE  
DANS CETTE VILLE, DANS LA JOURNEE ET DANS LA NUIT DU  
MERCREDI 11 JUIN, CE QUI A ENTRAINE, AVEC NOTRE ACCORD L APPEL  
AUX GENDARMES MOBILES, LE RETOUR AU CALME QUE NOUS CONSTANTONS  
DEPUIS CETTE DATE, NE JUSTIFIE PLUS LA PRESENCE DE FORCES  
EXTERIEURES ET ENCORE MOINS LA VENUE D UNITES MILITAIRES.  
C EST LA RAISON POUR LAQUELLE LES GENDARMES MOBILES ONT ETE  
RENVOYES A NOUMEA.

C EST POUR MARQUER, LA DESAPPROBATION DE MON GOUVERNEMENT QUE  
JE NE ME SUIS PAS FAIT REPRESENTER CE MATIN A L ACCUEIL DES  
TROUPES ANGLAISES.

J AI PRIS NOTE DE L ASSURANCE QUE VOUS M AVEZ DONNEE LA  
14 JUIN QUE LE COMMANDO BRITANNIQUE RESTERAIT STATIONNE A  
PORT VILA ET NE SE DEPLACERAIT DANS AUCUNE PARTIE DE  
L ARCHIPEL. JE DOIS VOUS PRECISER QUE TOUT DEPLACEMENT OU  
TOUT EMPLOI DE TOUT OU PARTIE DES UNITES BRITANNIQUES QUI SERAIT  
ORDONNE UNILATERALEMENT, SERAIT CONSIDERE PAR MON GOUVERNEMENT

*/comme*

COMME UNE VIOLATION DU PROTOCOLE DE 1914 ET DU PLAN CONJOINT  
DE 1973.

J AI EGALEMENT RECU MISSION DE REFUSER TOUTES LES PROPOSITIONS  
QUE VOUS AVEZ EU L HONNEUR DE ME FAIRE LE 14 JUIN. IL NE  
SAURAIT ETRE QUESTION, EN L ETAT ACTUEL DES CHOSES, NI D ACCEPTER  
L ETAT D URGENCE, NI DE DONNER AUX TROUPES BRITANNIQUES UNE  
CAPACITE QUELCONQUE LEUR PERMETTANT D INTERVENIR A QUELQUE TITRE  
QUE CE SOIT A PORT VILA OUR AILLEURS DANS L ARCHIPEL.

TOUT CE QUE JE POURRAIS ACCEPTER SERAIT LA MISE EN VIGUEUR  
D UN TEXTE SPECIAL PERMETTANT DE REPLACER SOUS NOTRE AUTORITE  
CONJOINTE LES SERVICES PUBLICS ESSENTIELS NOTAMMENT LA RADIO,  
LA POLICE ET LES COMMUNICATIONS EXTERIEURES ET INTERIEURES,  
DE MANIERE A FAIRE FONCTIONNER CES SERVICES NORMALEMENT.

JE DOIS EGALEMENT VOUS EXPRIMER MA CRAINTE QUE LE PRESENCE DE  
VOS TROUPES NE DONNE, PLUS PARTICULIEREMENT A LA POPULATION  
MELANESIENNE, LE SENTIMENT QUE L ACTUEL GOUVERNEMENT NEO-HEBRIDAIS  
NE FONE PLUS SA LEGITIMITE QUE SUR LA PROTECTION DE VOS FORCES  
D INTERVENTION.

ENDS

2. I TAKE IT THAT THIS IS ALL ON THE DIRECT ORDERS OF M DIJOU  
ROBERT HAD YESTERDAY AGREED TO COME TO THE AIRPORT OR AT LEAST  
BE REPRESENTED. THE REFUSAL OF MY PROPOSALS PRESUMABLY RELATES  
TO THE EMERGENCY LAW AND POLICE POWERS AS STATED IN THE LETTER.  
I HOPE IT DOES NOT AMOUNT TO A REVERSAL OF ROBERTS AGREEMENT  
YESTERDAY TO TRY FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION ON THE LINES OF  
MY TELS TO VENICE. I SHALL BE DISCUSSING LATTER WITH LINI THIS  
EVENING.

FCO PLEASE PASS ALL

STUART

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

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# CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 116φ  
CONFIDENTIAL  
DESKBY 16φ8φφZ  
FM PARIS 152φ4φZ JUN 8φ  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 552 OF 15 JUNE 198φ

*ms.*

MY TELNO 551: NEW HEBRIDES

1. WHEN NOTHING WAS HEARD FROM THE DOMTOM IN THE COURSE OF THIS MORNING, THE ACTING HEAD OF CHANCERY CONTACTED THE POLITICAL COUNSELLOR AT THE ELYSEE AND CONVEYED TO HIM OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE PUBLICITY FOLLOWING M. ROBERT'S REMARKS IN VILA, THE UN-AVOIDABLE NEED IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR MR BLAKER TO SAY SOMETHING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TOMORROW AND THE LACK OF ANY RESPONSE FROM THE DOMTOM ABOUT A MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO MINISTERS.
  
2. SHORTLY AFTER THIS MONTPEZAT GOT IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY AND SAID THAT IN THE LIGHT OF OUR CONVERSATION LAST EVENING, HE WISHED TO SPEAK TO ME PERSONALLY. A LITTLE LATER LEVITTE RANG YOUNG AND ASSURED HIM THAT THE IDEA OF AN EARLY MEETING WAS DEFINITELY ACCEPTED ON THE FRENCH SIDE.
  
3. I WAS NOT ABLE TO BE AVAILABLE FOR MONTPEZAT ON THE TELEPHONE UNTIL 18φφ HOURS. HE THEN TOLD ME THAT HE HAD VARIOUS POINTS TO CONVEY FOLLOWING OUR CONVERSATION OF YESTERDAY EVENING. IN THE FIRST PLACE, M. DIJOURD FOUND HIMSELF WITHOUT ANY CLEAR INFORMATION ABOUT THE ARRIVAL OF THE BRITISH TROOPS AT VILA. ALL HE HAD WAS WHAT ROBERT TOLD HIM. I QUESTIONED THIS AND SAID THAT INFORMATION ABOUT THE SENDING OF THE TROOPS HAD BEEN FORMALLY COMMUNICATED TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT ON THREE OCCASIONS, AND THE SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE FORCE HAD BEEN WIDELY PUBLICISED AND WERE WELL-KNOWN. MONTPEZAT CONTINUED TO PRETEND THAT M. DIJOURD DID NOT KNOW WHEN OR HOW THE BRITISH AIRLIFT WAS GOING TO END OR WHAT BRITAIN INTENDED TO BE UP TO IN THE NEW HEBRIDES. I TOLD MONTPEZAT THAT THERE WAS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR THIS. ALL THE NECESSARY INFORMATION SHOWING THE VERY LIMITED NATURE OF THE BRITISH MOVE HAD BEEN MADE FREELY AVAILABLE TO THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES.
  
4. MONTPEZAT THEN CONTINUED WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT M. DIJOURD'S LETTER OF 12 JUNE HAD REMAINED UNANSWERED. I SAID THAT I HAD REFUTED THIS YESTERDAY. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS HAD BEEN INDICATED TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WHEN THE PRIME MINISTER SPOKE TO THE PRESIDENT AT VENICE. ON THE BRITISH SIDE IT WAS ASSUMED THAT AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AT THIS LEVEL WAS ALSO IN PART AN EXCHANGE WITH THE DOMTOM. MONTPEZAT CONCEDED THAT THIS WAS CONSTITUTIONALLY CORRECT BUT STILL INSISTED THAT M. DIJOURD, AND PARTICULARLY HIS SENTENCE DISAPPROVING THE SENDING OF BRITISH TROOPS TO VILA, HAD NOT BEEN ANSWERED.

CONFIDENTIAL

/5.

5. MONTPEZAT THEN SAID HE WAS INSTRUCTED BY M. DIJOURD TO TELL ME THAT THE MINISTER HIMSELF HAD AUTHORISED M. ROBERT AT VILA TO PUT ON RECORD THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S DISAPPROVAL OF THE MOVE OF BRITISH TROOPS. I ASKED IF THE INSTRUCTIONS COVERED PUTTING IT ON RECORD WITH THE PRESS, BUT MONTPEZAT REFUSED TO BE DRAWN. HE DID, HOWEVER, CONCEDE LATER IN THE CONVERSATION THAT ROBERT'S LATEST INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO AVOID PRESS STATEMENTS. EARLIER IN THE DAY HE HAD IN FACT APOLOGISED FOR THE FACT THAT THE PRESS (AFP) HAD GOT HOLD OF THE LETTER WHICH ROBERT DELIVERED TO STUART EARLIER TODAY. I TOLD MONTPEZAT THAT MR BLAKER WOULD BE MAKING A STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS TOMORROW AFTERNOON. ROBERT'S STATEMENTS HAD AROUSED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST. I UNDERTOOK TO SEND ROUND A COPY OF THE TEXT OF MR BLAKER'S REMARKS TODAY ON THE BBC WORLD THIS WEEKEND. MONTPEZAT INDICATED THAT HE ALREADY KNEW OF THE BROADCAST.

6. NEXT MONTPEZAT TURNED TO THE QUESTION OF A MEETING. HE SAID THAT, IN VIEW OF WHAT I ALREADY KNEW, HE HAD NO NEED TO REPLY TO THE QUESTION I HAD PUT ABOUT THE HOLDING OF A MEETING. WHEN I PRESSED HIM TO EXPLAIN WHAT THIS MEANT, IT EMERGED THAT THE DOMTOM WAS A BIT MIFFED THAT THE EMBASSY HAD APPROACHED THE ELYSEE AT MIDDAY. IT BECAME CLEAR THAT M. DIJOURD HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO STAY IN PARIS FOR A MEETING AND THAT HE WAS DOING THIS WITH CONSIDERABLE ILL-GRACE. MONTPEZAT WAS UNABLE TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT A DEFINITE DATE. I ASKED HIM TO CONFIRM THAT M. DIJOURD HAD REGISTERED MR BLAKER'S OFFER TO BE IN PARIS ON TUESDAY. THE MOST HE WOULD SAY WAS THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE A REPLY TO THAT IN THE COURSE OF TOMORROW.

7. MONTPEZAT THEN SAID THAT, BEFORE A MEETING TOOK PLACE, M. DIJOURD WOULD WANT TO HAVE SOME GUARANTEES ABOUT BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE TO THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES. WHEN I PRESSED HIM TO EXPLAIN THIS DELPHIC PHRASE HE HAD DIFFICULTY IN DOING SO. HE GAVE A LONG EXPLANATION OF WHICH THE ESSENCE SEEMED TO BE THAT MEETINGS WOULD IN FUTURE HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY PREPARED AND PROPERLY STRUCTURED, THAT THEY COULD NO LONGER BE INFORMAL AND FRIENDLY, AND THAT BRITAIN, HAVING CREATED CERTAIN CONDITIONS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES, UGHT TO BE THE ONE TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE HANDLING OF THE PROBLEM. I SAID THAT I WAS GLAD TO HEAR THIS BECAUSE I COULD, IF IT WAS DESIRED, ALREADY PUT FORWARD POINTS WHICH HMG THOUGHT SHOULD BE AGREED AS GUIDELINES FOR THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS. I OFFERED TO LET MONTPEZAT HAVE THEM STRAIGHT-AWAY. HE IMMEDIATELY BACKED OFF, SAYING THAT HE HAD NO AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT ANYTHING FROM ME AT PRESENT. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION I WAS ABLE TO INDICATE THE GENERAL NATURE OF THE DRAFT GUIDELINES (YOUR TELNO 258) AND HE PROFESSED TO FIND THEM ENCOURAGING. 2

CONFIDENTIAL

/8.

8. IN HIS ELABORATIVE COMMENTS, MONTPEZAT SAID THAT BRITAIN HAD CHOSEN TO ESTABLISH A POSITION OF STRENGTH IN THE NEW HEBRIDES. I SAID THAT THIS WAS FALSE. BRITAIN HAD SIMPLY ESTABLISHED A PRESENCE IN VILA. FRANCE HAD MILITARY GARRISONS IN THE PACIFIC BUT NO-ONE ACCUSED HER OF ESTABLISHING POSITIONS OF STRENGTH AND IT WAS INAPPROPRIATE TO SPEAK OF A SMALL BRITISH FORCE IN THOSE TERMS. MONTPEZAT DREW PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE SENTENCE IN ROBERT'S COMMUNICATION TO STUART WHICH SUGGESTED THAT LINI'S POSITION WOULD NOW DEPEND ON BRITISH SUPPORT. I SAID HE MUST REALISE THAT THIS VIEW WAS SIMPLY NOT SHARED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. THE POSITION WAS THAT THE CONDOMINIUM HAD RECENTLY WORKED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO UNDERMINE THE AUTHORITY OF THE ELECTED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, AND THE BRITISH PRESENCE WOULD SIMPLY RESTORE THE BALANCE. WHAT NEEDED TO BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WAS PRECISELY THE BALANCE WHICH NEEDED TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

9. TOWARDS THE END, MONTPEZAT SAID THAT HE THOUGHT HE SHOULD LET ME KNOW THAT HIS MINISTER'S ATTITUDE WAS THAT OF SOMEONE FROM WHOSE EYES THE SCALES HAD DROPPED. HE NOW SAW THAT HE HAD BEEN COMPLETELY WRONG IN HIS HANDLING OF THE BRITISH AND MUCH TOO FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL. I SAID THAT IF IT WOULD INTEREST MONTPEZAT, I TOO COULD TELL HIM STORIES ABOUT SUBJECTIVE PERSONAL ATTITUDES. AT THE PRESENT TIME IT WAS NOT THESE WHICH WERE IMPORTANT. WHAT NEEDED TO BE DISCUSSED WAS THE OBJECTIVE SITUATION EXISTING IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

10. WHEN HE HAD FINISHED HIS COMMUNICATION ON BEHALF OF M. DIJOURD, MONTPEZAT ALLOWED HIMSELF TO SAY THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A PRIVATE TALK WITH ME TO HEAR MY VIEWS ON THE EVENTS OF THE PAST WEEK. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS AVAILABLE AT ANY TIME BUT WOULD NOT WISH TO ENGAGE IN THIS SORT OF CONVERSATION ON THE TELEPHONE. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD GET IN TOUCH WITH ME, BUT GIVEN THE PRESENT MOOD OF HIS MINISTER HE WAS NOT SURE THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO RISK TALKING TO ME TOMORROW. THE POSITION SEEMS TO BE THAT M. DIJOURD HAD BEEN TOLD FAIRLY SHARPLY TO STAY IN PARIS AND TALK AND FEELS HUMILIATED AND VERY SORE.

HIBBERT.

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CABINET OFFICE

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 47φ  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FM PARIS 14222φZ OF 14 JUN 8φ  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 551 OF 14 JUNE 198φ

NEW HEBRIDES

1. I THINK I SHOULD RECORD THE MAIN POINTS WHICH I REPORTED IN MY TELECON WITH MR. BLAKER AT 2φ45Z THIS EVENING.
2. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO RAISE ANYONE AT THE DOMTOM THROUGHOUT THE LATE AFTERNOON AND EVENING. WE FINALLY REACHED MONTPEZAT BY LEAVING A DISTURBING MESSAGE WITH THE TELEPHONIST. I WARNED MONTPEZAT OF THE DANGERS OF THE LINE ROBERT WAS TAKING PUBLICLY IN VILA ABOUT FRANCE DISAPPROVING OF THE SENDING OF BRITISH TROOPS. IF THIS WAS CONFIRMED PUBLICLY BY THE DOMTOM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD SCARCELY BE ABLE TO AVOID PUBLISHING THE FULL STORY OF RECENT EVENTS AND EXCHANGES, AND FRANCO-BRITISH RELATIONS MIGHT BE DAMAGED. I OFFERED TO GO ROUND TO DISCUSS MATTERS.
3. MONTPEZAT SAID HE HAD JUST SEEN M. DIJOURD. IT WAS INDEED THE CASE THAT FRANCE DISAPPROVED OF THE SENDING OF BRITISH TROOPS. I SAID IT WAS ONE THING TO SAY THIS BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS AND ANOTHER TO SAY IT TO THE PRESS. THE PRIME MINISTER AND PRESIDENT HAD AGREED AT VENICE THAT THE TWO MINISTERS SHOULD MEET IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THEY COULD DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF SUBSTANCE.
4. MONTPEZAT SAID HE HAD NO INFORMATION FROM THE ELYSEE ABOUT ANY AGREEMENT FOR A MEETING OF MINISTERS. THE DOMTOM WAS THE DEPARTMENT WHICH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NEW HEBRIDES AND M. DIJOURD'S MESSAGE TO MR. BLAKER OF 12 JUNE HAD NOT BEEN ANSWERED. I SAID THAT INDEED IT HAD: BY MR. BLAKER'S MESSAGE OF 13 JUNE OFFERING, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER, TO COME TO PARIS FOR TALKS ON 17 JUNE. MONTPEZAT PRETENDED THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF THIS AS IT WAS NOT IN WRITING.

CONFIDENTIAL

/5. MONTPEZAT

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5. MONTPEZAT CONTINUED TO TRY TO CONFINE THE CONVERSATION TO THE CASE WHICH M. DIJOURD TRIED TO MAKE AGAINST THE UK IN HIS MESSAGE OF 12 JUNE, VIZ., THE UNILATERAL AND THEREFORE UNACCEPTABLE NATURE OF THE BRITISH ACTION. I INSISTED THAT THIS WAS A QUESTION OF SUBSTANCE WHICH REQUIRED DISCUSSION BETWEEN MINISTERS, IN THE MANNER PROPOSED BY THE TWO HEADS OF GOVERNMENTS. I SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS ONLY BY GETTING ON WITH THE MEETING BETWEEN MINISTERS THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS COULD PROVIDE THEMSELVES WITH SOMETHING TO SAY WHICH MIGHT PREVENT A HIGHLY UNDESIRABLE ESCALATION OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS. MONTPEZAT FINALLY CONCEDED THAT HE WOULD SEEK INSTRUCTIONS AND CONTACT US ON SUNDAY.

6. A POINT WHICH HE MADE COMPLETELY CLEARLY WAS THAT THE DOMTOM HAD ITS INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE ELYSEE BUT THESE CONTAINED NOTHING ABOUT A MEETING OF MINISTERS. WE SHALL SEE WHETHER THIS IS STILL THE POSITION TOMORROW.

7. AS REGARDS ROBERT, MONTPEZAT SAID THAT HE HAD CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS TO IGNORE THE BRITISH TROOPS WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN VILA. I COMMENTED THAT THIS DID NOT SEEM TO BE A CARDINAL POINT FOR DISCUSSION.

HIBBERT

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GRS 140  
UNCLASSIFIED  
FM PARIS 131415Z 80  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 544 OF 13 JUNE 1980  
INFO PRIORITY VILA

*MS*  
/

MIPT: TEXT OF GAULLIST PARTY STATEMENT ON NEW HEBRIDES

BEGINS:

THE ARCHIPELAGO OF THE NEW HEBRIDES IS DESTINED FOR INDEPENDENCE.

THE SERIOUS EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE ON THE ISLANDS OF SANTO AND TANNA SHOW THAT AN ILL-~~PREPARED~~ AND BADLY IMPLEMENTED DECISION TAKEN IN A TENSE POLITICAL CLIMATE LEADS TO UNREST THAT CAN BECOME BLOODY.

THE RASSEMBLEMENT POUR LA REPUBLIQUE CANNOT ACCEPT THE USE OF FORCE AGAINST PEACE-LOVING PEOPLE WHO WISH TO PRESERVE THEIR CULTURE AND BUILD THEIR FUTURE IN FRIENDSHIP WITH FRANCE.

THE RPR THEREFORE ASKS THE GOVERNMENT NOT TO GIVE IN TO FAMILIAR BRITISH PRESSURES WHICH SEEK TO IMPOSE UPON THE WHOLE OF THE ARCHIPELAGO A GOVERNMENT WHICH SERVES THEIR (BRITISH) INTERESTS.

ENDS.  
HIBBERT

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*M. Alexander*

*original filed on: - Euro Pd : Venice Council Meeting Pt 4*

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FM VENICE 131045Z JUN 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 19 OF 13 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE VILA, PRIORITY MODUK (DS11), CANBERRA, WELLINGTON,  
WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, SUVA, HONIARA, PORT MORESBY.

MY IPT:

NEW HEBRIDES - PRESS LINE.

1. ON THE RECORD

THE PRIME MINISTER AND PRESIDENT GISCARD HAD SOME DISCUSSION OF THE NEW HEBRIDES AT THEIR BILATERAL MEETING THIS MORNING AND AGREED THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS SHOULD REMAIN IN THE CLOSEST TOUCH IN THEIR HANDLING OF THE PROBLEM. THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL CONTINUE THEIR JOINT EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM BY PEACEFUL MEANS.

2. IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS

THE COMPANY OF BRITISH TROOPS IS PROCEEDING TO VILA AS ALREADY ANNOUNCED.

EILBECK

XXXXX  
ADVANCE COPY

MR SAWERBUTTS  
JIC Assessment Staff  
Cabinet Office  
PS/No 10 D/SV.

PS  
PS/LPS  
PS/MR BLAKER  
PS/PS  
SIR D. MAITLAND  
MR DONALD  
MR ADAMS  
Hd/SPD  
Hd/WED  
Hd/DEF. D.  
Hd/NEWS D.  
Hd/CONS. P. EM. UNIT

CONFIDENTIAL

FM VENICE 131025Z JUN 83

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 13 OF 13 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE VILA, PRIORITY MODUK (DS11), CANBERRA, WELLINGTON,  
WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, SUVA, HONIARA, PORT MORESBY.

NEW HEBRIDES

A copy of this tel is also in -  
Euro PD: Venice Council meetings p4

1. THE PRIME MINISTER DISCUSSED THIS TODAY WITH THE FRENCH PRESIDENT. SHE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE BRITISH TROOPS WOULD GO TO VILA AND URGED THAT A MATCHING CONTINGENT OF GENDARMES SHOULD BE SENT AGAIN FROM NOUMEA SO AS TO ENSURE THE GENUINELY JOINT CHARACTER OF THE FORCE.

2. PRESIDENT GISCARD RAISED NO OBJECTION TO THE DESPATCH TO VILA OF BRITISH TROOPS. BUT HE WAS RELUCTANT TO SEND A FRENCH CONTINGENT. HE CONTENDED THAT FRANCE ESCHEWED THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN COLONIAL SITUATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER CONTINUED TO ARGUE FOR THE DESPATCH OF A MATCHING FRENCH CONTINGENT. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT COMMENT ON THIS POINT, BUT URGED THAT THE BRITISH TROOPS SHOULD NOT IN FACT GET INVOLVED IN MILITARY ACTION AGAINST ANY OF THE ISLANDERS. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IT WAS NATURALLY OUR HOPE THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE TROOPS WOULD SUFFICE TO ENCOURAGE NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT THE USE OF FORCE WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY. THE DETERRENT EFFECT WOULD OF COURSE BE ENHANCED BY A FRENCH PRESENCE.

3. THE MATTER WAS LEFT ON THAT BASIS. IT WAS AGREED THAT MR BLAKER AND M. DIJOU should MEET AT THE BEGINNING OF NEXT WEEK JOINTLY TO CONSIDER WHAT FURTHER ACTION MIGHT BE REQUIRED.

4. PLEASE SEE MIFT FOR LINE BEING TAKEN HERE WITH THE PRESS.

EILBECK

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DESKBY 130830Z (PARIS/MODUK)

FM VILA 121930Z JUN 80

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 396 OF 13 JUNE

AND TO FLASH VENICE (FOR P U S)

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS AND MODUK (DS11 DOP'S)

PRIORITY CANBERRA, WELLINGTON, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK,  
SUVA, HONIARA AND PORT MORESBY.

TELECON CARRUTHERS/STUART: NEW HEBRIDES.

THE FOLLOWING IS MY GENERAL ASSESSMENT, WRITTEN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND SENT EN CLAIR IN THE HOPE THAT IT MAY BE USEFUL TO THE DISCUSSIONS IN VENICE.

1. I AM ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT THE BRITISH FORCE, HAVING BEEN ANNOUNCED, SHOULD NOW COME TO VILA. IF IT DID NOT, THE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT WOULD FEEL TOTALLY ABANDONED AND AT THE MERCY OF EUROPEAN POLITICS, AND I DO NOT KNOW HOW WE COULD RECONSTRUCT ENOUGH GENERAL CONFIDENCE TO GO FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THE REESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIP OF CONFIDENCE BETWEEN LINI, ROBERT AND MYSELF IS A PURELY PERSONAL ONE, WHICH DOES NOT EXTEND TO THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE. IT IS BASED ON THE JOINT ASSUMPTION THAT BRITISH TROOPS WILL ARRIVE ON SATURDAY AND THAT WE MUST JOINTLY COVER THE GAP AND THEN START PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE. IF IT APPEARED THAT WE HAD AGAIN CHANGED OUR MINDS FOR EUROPEAN POLITICAL REASONS AND THAT THE NEW HEBRIDES WAS BEING LEFT TO STEW IN ITS OWN JUICE, THEN I AM SURE THIS CONFIDENCE WOULD COLLAPSE, AND UNFOUNDED SUSPICIONS OF THE MALEVOLENCE AND POWER OF FRANCE AND THE SUPINENESS OF BRITAIN WOULD BE REVIVED NOT ONLY HERE, BUT THROUGHOUT THE PACIFIC.
2. WHOEVER KILLED YOLOU, THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENTS CANNOT ESCAPE SOME RESPONSIBILITY. THE WHOLE SITUATION IS BORN OF THE POLARISATION OF POLITICS, FOR WHICH THE CONDOMINIUM HAS BEEN THE FOCUS, EVEN THOUGH NOT THE ORIGINAL CAUSE. PLUS THE REALLY TERRIBLE FEELINGS OF FRUSTRATION, ON BOTH SIDES, BUT MORE PARTICULARLY ON THE GOVERNMENT'S, AT BEING UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING, BECAUSE OF THE IMPOTENCE OF THE CONDOMINIUM, TO CARRY OUT ORDINARY POLICE ACTIONS AND THUS THE VIRTUAL IMMUNITY OF THOSE WHO, FOR WHATEVER REASON, WISH TO CHALLENGE THE RULE OF LAW. THIS HAS LED TO THE FEELING THAT NORMALLY LAW ABIDING PEOPLE HAVE TO TAKE THE LAW INTO THEIR OWN HANDS.
3. IT FOLLOWS THAT WE MUST NOW BE SEEN TO HOLD THE RING WHILE THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES AS A WHOLE GET BACK THEIR CONFIDENCE IN LAW AND ORDER AND START TO RECONSTRUCT THEIR OWN POLITICAL FUTURE. AND THE RING HOLDING SHOULD BE JOINT, SO THAT THE CONFIDENCE CAN BE ON BOTH SIDES AND WE CAN GET AWAY FROM THE TERRIBLE CONDOMINIUM GAME OF WORKING OUT WHO HAS QUOTE WON UNQUOTE. IN OTHER WORDS WE SHOULD FOLLOW THE ORIGINAL JOINT RECOMMENDATION OF ROBERT, LINI AND MYSELF FOR A JOINT FORCE, AND THE GARDE MOBILE SHOULD COME BACK WITH OUR TROOPS, IF NOT BEFORE, AND AWAY WITH QUESTIONS OF WHO HAS OR HAS NOT ACTED UNILATERALLY.
4. I REALISE THAT IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THE FRENCH TO REGARD THE PRESENCE OF TROOPS AS A RING HOLDING RATHER THAN A HEAD BASHING EXERCISE. ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE CONDOMINIUM HAS BEEN THAT THEIR PHILOSOPHY OF THE WAY THAT THE POLICE SHOULD BE USED IS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM OURS, AND EVERY TIME A POLICE ACTION HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WE HAVE GOT BOGGED DOWN IN A DISCUSSION OF THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF FORCE AND WHO IS PROVOKING WHOM. MY OWN VIEW OF HOW THE ARMY SHOULD BE USED WHEN IT FIRST ARRIVES IS THAT IT SHOULD BE HIGHLY VISIBLE BUT MILITARILY INACTIVE. COLONEL GUTHRIE AND I HAVE IDEAS OF SOME COMBINED JUNGLE TRAINING AND HEARTS AND MINDS PROGRAMMES, PERHAPS CLEARING A MUCH NEEDED TRACK THROUGH THE CENTRE OF THE ISLAND. THE ORDINARY POLICE AND THE PMU, BEING MELANESIAN FACES, WOULD THEN BE ABLE TO ACT WITH MUCH MORE CONFIDENCE AND POTENTIAL TROUBLEMAKERS IN THE ISLANDS OTHER THAN SANTO WOULD BE DETERRED.

New Heb

ps/sfs

5. SANTO IS A SPECIAL PROBLEM, BUT, AGAIN, PERHAPS THE FRENCH WOULD BE RE-ASSURED IF THEY COULD BE CONVINCED THAT THE ARMY ARE NOT GOING TO GO RUSHING IN TO START SHOOTING FRENCHMEN AND THE QUOTE FRIENDS OF FRANCE UNQUOTE. IN CURRENT POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES I DOUBT IF SANTO IS SOLVABLE UNTIL A GENERAL POLITICAL CONSENSUS IS RESTORED IN THE OTHER ISLANDS, BASED ON THE RENEWED CONFIDENCE DESCRIBED ABOVE, PLUS THE GENERAL POLITICAL SHOCK OF ALEXIS YOLOU'S DEATH. I WOULD THEREFORE BE INCLINED TO PUT SANTO ON ONE SIDE FOR A SHORT WHILE. I REALISE THAT THIS MAY MEAN KEEPING THE ARMY HERE A BIT LONGER THAN FOR A SIMPLE IN AND OUT MILITARY OPERATION, BUT IF THEY TREAT IT AS A LONG DISTANCE MOVEMENT/TROPICAL EXPERIENCE/ JUNGLE TRAINING EXERCISE, RATHER THAN JUST LIVING IT UP IN THE BARS OF VILA, I DOUBT IF THIS WOULD MATTER. THE MAIN COST IS PRESUMABLY GETTING HERE.

6. MY OWN IDEA IS THAT AS SOON AS NERVES HAVE SETTLED DOWN AFTER THE ARMY'S ARRIVAL, ROBERT AND I SHOULD GET TOGETHER A SMALL GROUP OF THE SENSIBLE CENTRE, PERHAPS LINI, LEYMAND AND A COUPLE OF OTHERS, AND SEE WHETHER A START COULD NOT BE MADE ON RECONSTRUCTING A POLITICAL CONSENSUS. IN THE CHANGED POLITICAL CLIMATE I THINK A NUMBER OF SOLUTIONS MAY BE OPEN TO US WITHOUT ABANDONING SUPPORT FOR THE VERDICT OF THE ELECTORATE, BUT NOT FOR DISCUSSION IN AN OPEN TELEGRAM. ONCE THE CONSENSUS WAS WORKING AGAIN, AND WITH ALL THE OPTIONS AND PRESSURES AVAILABLE FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE ARMY, WE COULD, I BELIEVE, HOPE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF SANTO. AT ANY RATE IT SEEMS WORTH A TRY AND SOMETHING WHICH THERE IS NO NEED TO QUARREL WITH THE FRENCH ABOUT. IF, WHEN THE TALKS ARE GOING AGAIN, THE MELANESIANS THEMSELVES THINK THAT INDEPENDENCE SHOULD BE POSTPONED FOR A MONTH OR TWO, THEN IT WILL NOT BE THE END OF THE WORLD, (I MIGHT, UNLESS REPLACED, HAVE TO COMMUTE FROM FINLAND FOR A BIT, BUT THAT DOES NOT MATTER). BUT THE DECISION ON ANY POSTPONEMENT SHOULD BE THEIRS.

7. TO SUM UP, I THINK THAT:

- (A) THE ARMY SHOULD COME HERE AS PLANNED
- (B) THE GARDE MOBILE SHOULD RETURN
- (C) THE PROBLEM OF SANTO SHOULD BE LEFT ON ONE SIDE FOR THE TIME BEING
- (D) ROBERT AND I SHOULD THEN GET NON-SANTO POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS GOING, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A LATER JOINT MINISTERIAL VISIT SHOULD BE KEPT IN VIEW.

STUART

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QSL AT 122025Z PDG

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of Press Office New Heb

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MM

Mr Carruthers, SPD

New Hebrides

/ I attach the text of an on the record statement which British and French spokesmen will be making in Venice this morning about the Prime Minister's discussions with President Giscard d'Estaing. The text has been telephoned through to Mr Blaker in the House of Commons and Lord Trefgarne in the House of Lords for use as necessary this morning.

*RMJ Lyne*

13 June 1980

(R M J Lyne)

ccs:-

PS/LPS  
PS/Mr Blaker  
PS/PUS  
Sir D Maitland  
Mr Donald  
News Dept  
Defence Dept

Mike Pattison Esq  
10 Downing Street

ON THE RECORD

The Prime Minister and President Giscard had some discussion of the New Hebrides at their bilateral meeting this morning, and agreed that the two Governments should remain in the closest touch in their handling of the problem. The two Governments will continue their joint efforts to resolve the problem by peaceful means.

In answer to questions

A company of British troops is proceeding to Vila as already announced.

0961 MDP 87



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CONFIDENTIAL

FM PARIS 121045Z JUN 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 533 OF 12 JUNE 1980

INFO FLASH VENICE

INFO IMMEDIATE VILA

INFO ROUTINE SUVA, CANBERRA, WELLINGTON

FCO TELNO 13 TO VENICE: NEW HEBRIDES

1. THE DOMTOM HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THE FRENCH GENDARMES LEFT VILA BETWEEN 0700Z AND 0815Z THIS MORNING, 12 JUNE. AS ALSO REPORTED TO MR BLAKER'S OFFICE BY TELEPHONE, M DIJOURD IS SENDING A FURTHER MESSAGE TO MR BLAKER REITERATING M DIJOURD'S VIEW THAT THE SENDING OF GENDARMES HAD BEEN A JOINT ACTION, AND REPEATING HIS OPPOSITION TO THE SENDING OF BRITISH TROOPS. (TEXT TO FOLLOW BY TELEGRAM WHEN RECEIVED.)

2. THE DOMTOM, IN DEFENDING THE LINE THAT THE FRENCH ACTION WAS A JOINT ONE, HAVE HINTED THAT THIS EMBASSY MAY HAVE MIS-REPORTED THE MESSAGES TRANSMITTED IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING OF 11 JUNE. THEY TRIED TO SUGGEST THAT WHEN THE MESSAGE ABOUT THE SENDING OF THE GENDARMES WAS COMMUNICATED TO THIS EMBASSY THE DECISION TO SEND THEM HAD NOT IN FACT BEEN FINALLY TAKEN AND THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S AGREEMENT WAS BEING "ANTICIPATED". THE IMPLICATION IS THAT THE DECISION TO SEND THEM BECAME A JOINT ONE BECAUSE A NEGATIVE BRITISH COMMENT WAS NOT MADE. IN OTHER WORDS THEY ARE CLAIMING JOINTERY BY BRITISH DEFAULT. THESE SUGGESTIONS HAVE BEEN FIRMLY REJECTED AND THE DOMTOM HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S VIEW OF WHAT CONSTITUTED PROPER CONSULTATION WAS AS EXPLAINED BY THE PUS TO THE AMBASSADOR. (YOUR TELNO 274 TO VILA.)

HIBBERT.

NNNN

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ERE FLSH FLASH

*Mr. Alexander*  
*PS/sfs*  
*PUS*  
*H. Fenn*

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GRS 612  
UNCLASSIFIED  
FROM FCO 121230Z JUNE 80  
FLASH VENICE  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 21 OF 12 JUNE  
FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY  
NEW HEBRIDES  
BACKGROUND

1. THE ORIGINS OF THE ANGLO-FRENCH CONDOMINIUM DATE BACK TO 1887. THE BASIC CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENT IS THE ANGLO-FRENCH PROTOCOL OF 1914 WHICH CREATED TWO SEPARATE ADMINISTRATIONS (AND LEGAL SYSTEMS) IN ADDITION TO A FEW JOINT SERVICES. THIS SYSTEM HAS RESULTED IN A SOCIETY WHICH IS DIVIDED ON LINGUISTIC, RELIGIOUS AND, LATTERLY, POLITICAL LINES. THE ANGLOPHONES (MAINLY PRESBYTERIAN AND ANGLICAN) GENERALLY SUPPORT THE VANUAAKU PARTY (VP). THE FRANCOPHONES (MAINLY ROMAN CATHOLIC) SUPPORT A LOOSE FEDERATION OF PARTIES COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE 'MODERATES'.

2. POPULATION  
NEW HEBRIDEAN - 112,500  
FRENCH - 5000 (APPROX)  
BRITISH - 400 '  
AUSTRALIAN - 450 '  
OTHERS 750 '  
(MOSTLY PACIFIC ISLANDERS)

3. CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION

UNDER 1914 PROTOCOL, EACH METROPOLITAN POWER RETAINS SOVERIEGNTY OVER ITS OWN NATIONALS AND NEITHER MAY EXERCISE SEPARATE AUTHORITY OVER THE TERRITORY. ACCORDINGLY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE, AND IN PARTICULAR OF THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION IS A JOINT ONE. UNTIL INDEPENDENCE THE TWO METROPOLITAN POWERS RETAIN FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNAL SECURITY. MOREOVER, UNDER THE HIGHER OBLIGATIONS IMPOSED BY UN CHARTER THEY MOST PROMOTE TO THE UTMOST, WITHIN THE CHARTER SYSTEM OF PEACE AND SECURITY, THE WELLBEING OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE TERRITORY, AND DEVELOP SELF-GOVERNMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREELY EXPRESSED WISHES OF THE PEOPLE. BRITAIN AND FRANCE AGREED BY AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES ON 23 OCTOBER 79 TO GRANT INDEPENDENCE IN 1980 TO THE NEW HEBRIDES WITH ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IN TACT UNDER THE CONSTITUTION AGREED AT THE VILA CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER 79.

4. ELECTIONS OF 14 NOVEMBER 1979

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS WERE HELD ON SAME DAY. A UN OBSERVERMISSION WAS PRESENT. MISSION CONSIDERED ELECTIONS FREE AND FAIR AND THAT 'RESULT TRULY REFLECTS THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE'.

5. VP WON 26 OF 39 SEATS IN NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY - I.E. TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY WHICH, ON INDEPENDENCE, WILL ENABLE THEM TO CHANGE MUCH OF THE CONSTITUTION SHOULD THEY SO WISH (ALTHOUGH VITAL ELEMENTS E.G. PROTECTION OF TRI-LINGUILISM, ENGLISH, FRENCH AND BISLAMAR, ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND POWERS AND ORGANISATION OF REGIONAL COUNCIL, WOULD REQUIRE A REFERENDUM.

6. VP ALSO WON NARROW MAJORITIES IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE 15 SEAT REGIONAL COUNCIL ON ISLANDS OF SANTO AND TANNA. IN BOTH CASES THE LOSING SIDE COMPLAINED OF IRREGULARITIES AND LODGED ELECTORAL PETITIONS. BUT NO EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT THIS IS ANYTHING MORE THAN SOUR GRAPES.

7. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SANTO AND TANNA INSURRECTIONS

SANTO

ON SANTO, JIMMY STEPHENS LEADS A WELL-ESTABLISHED SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT (NA GRIAMEL). HE HAS THE BACKING OF FRENCH PLANTERS (COLONS) AND HAS RECEIVED SUPPORT (FUNDS AND LEGAL ADVICE) FROM THE RIGHT WING AMERICAN PHOENIX FOUNDATION. NA GRIAMEL IS WELL ORGANISED AND CLAIMS NOT ONLY SANTO, BUT SEVERAL SMALLER SURROUNDING ISLANDS AS PART OF ITS 'TERRITORY' (E.G. MAEWO AND AMBRYM).

TANNA

THE PROBLEMS ON TANNA STEM PRIMARILY FROM CUSTOM (TRIBAL) DIFFERENCES. THE VARIOUS FACTIONS RALLY TO THE FRANCOPHONE OR VP BANNER WHEN IT SUITS THEM, AND THEY DO HAVE LINKS WITH NA GRIAMEL ON SANTO. BUT THEY SPEND MOST OF THEIR TIME ARGUING AMONG THEMSELVES. WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF THE 'JOHN FRUM' CARGOE CULT, THEY ARE NOT WELL ORGANISED. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE OF EITHER COLON, OR OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN PRESENT PROBLEMS ON THE ISLAND, WHERE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY REMAINS INTACT.  
CARRINGTON

NNNN

FLASH

ADVANCE COPY

PS

PS/LPS

PS/Mr Blaker

PS/PCS

Air D. Lattand

Mr Donald

Mr Leguerron

Hd of SPD

Hd of WED

Hd of Det D

Cabinet Office

10 Downing St.

X 12

CONFIDENTIAL

FM VILA 120615Z JUN 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NO 395 OF 12 JUNE

AND TO FLASH VENICE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS MODUK (DS11)

PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA

HONIARA SUVA PORT MORESBY.

NEW HEBRIDES SECURITY.

1. I HAVE HAD A CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING IN A GOOD ATMOSPHERE WITH ROBERT AND LINI.

2. ROBERT SAID THAT HE HAD FIRM INSTRUCTIONS FROM DIJOU TO WITHDRAW THE GENDARMES TO NOUMEA THIS AFTERNOON. HOWEVER HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE OPPOSITION PLANNED A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION TO PARADE THE PORTRAIT OF ALEXIS YOLOU AT 4 PM LOCAL AND ONE OF THE TWO GENDARME PLATOONS WOULD STAY HERE UNTIL THIS WAS OVER. THEY WOULD DEFINITELY LEAVE THIS EVENING.

3. HE SAID THAT M DIJOU'S REASONS FOR ORDERING THE RETURN TO NOUMEA WERE PARTLY THAT THE RISKS TO SECURITY WERE OVER AND PARTLY A REACTION TO A VANUAAKU PARTY (NOT GOVERNMENT) STATEMENT LAST NIGHT SAYING THAT THE FRENCH HAD STIRRED UP TROUBLES IN TANNA. SECONDLY ROBERT SAID THAT M DIJOU AND MR BLAKER WERE CONSIDERING TAKING BACK THE ORDINARY POLICE AND

TROUBLES IN TANNA. SECONDLY ROBERT SAID THAT M DIJOURD AND MR BLAKER WERE CONSIDERING TAKING BACK THE ORDINARY POLICE AND THE RADIO INTO THE HANDS OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS, AND HE SOUGHT THE VIEWS OF THE NHG.

4. LINI SAID HE COULD NOT AGREE THAT THE DANGERS WERE OVER. NOR WAS HE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATEMENTS BY THE VANUAAKU PARTY. HE WOULD REGARD THE REMOVAL OF THE GARDE MOBILE BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS AS A SERIOUS STEP BY FRANCE.

5. DRAWING ON MY EPISCOPAL ANCESTRY, I THEN MADE A STRONG APPEAL TO ROBERT TO RECONSIDER THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE GARDE MOBILE BEFORE BRITISH TROOPS ARRIVED. IT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY IF THERE WERE DISTURBANCES IN THE NEW HEBRIDES IN THE INTERVAL. FIVE FRENCH CITIZENS, LEADERS OF THE SANTO REVOLT, WERE KNOWN TO HAVE ARRIVED IN VILA. THEY KNEW THAT THEY WOULD HAVE THREE EMPTY DAYS IN WHICH THEY MIGHT ACT BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS. IF THIS HAPPENED I WAS SURE THE WORLD WOULD SAY THIS WAS BECAUSE WE WERE IMPORTING EUROPEAN DIFFERENCES INTO THE PACIFIC, FROM WHICH THE NEW HEBRIDEANS WOULD BE THE SUFFERERS. ON THE QUESTION OF THE POLICE AND RADIO I SAID I WAS WAITING FOR INSTRUCTIONS. I ALSO MENTIONED OUR PREVIOUS AGREEMENT THAT WE SHOULD RECOMMEND THAT BOTH FRENCH AND BRITISH FORCES SHOULD COME HERE. HAD THERE BEEN A MISUNDERSTANDING?

6. LINI THEN SOFTENED CONSIDERABLY AND SAID THAT HE WOULD CONSIDER WITH THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THE IDEAS OF TEMPORARILY HANDING BACK THE POLICE AND THE RADIO. IF THIS WAS PART OF A REAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMERGENCY POWERS LAW (WHICH ROBERT AND I HAVE NOW SIGNED) THEN THEY MIGHT NOT OPPOSE THIS. BUT THEY WOULD DO SO IF IT APPEARED TO BE MERELY A HUMILIATION OF A-H-E.

7. FINALLY ROBERT SAID THAT HE WAS IN A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION. HE HAD DIRECT ORDERS FROM HIS MINISTER AND THE RETURN OF THE GARDE MOBILE WAS IRREVOCABLE. HE AGREED THAT THERE WAS NO MISUNDER-

7. FINALLY ROBERT SAID THAT HE WAS IN A VERY DIFFICULT POSITION HE HAD DIRECT ORDERS FROM HIS MINISTER AND THE RETURN OF THE GARDE MOBILE WAS IRREVOCABLE. HE AGREED THAT THERE WAS NO MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT OUR JOINT RECOMMENDATION OF JOINT FORCES AND PROMISED TO SEND ME THE RECORD OF HIS TELEGRAM TO PARIS TO DEMONSTRATE THIS (I WILL TELEGRAPH TEXT TO VENICE IF I GET IT IN TIME). HE ASSURED LINI THAT, DESPITE THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE PLATOONS, HE WOULD TAKE EVERY STEP TO PREVENT TROUBLE BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS. IF THE GARDE MOBILE WAS NEEDED IT WOULD RETURN. IN PARTICULAR HE WOULD ENSURE THAT NO FRENCH SUBJECTS, INCLUDING THE SANTO LEADERS GOT UP TO MISCHIEF. HIS POLICE WOULD COOPERATE WITH MINE TO TAKE ALL POSSIBLE PRECAUTIONS AT KEY POINTS IN THE INTERIM.

8. WE THEN AGREED THAT BETWEEN VOW AND INDEPENDENCE WE MUST TAKE EVERY PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY FOR THE THREE OF US TO BE SEEN TO BE ACTING TOGETHER. FOR EXAMPLE WE AGREED TO ATTEND TOGETHER THE FUNERAL MASS FOR ALEXIS YOLOU IN PORT VILA TOMORROW.

9. ROBERT CLEARLY REALISES THAT HIS MINISTER HAS PUT HIMSELF HOPELESSLY ON THE WRONG. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT HIS AGREEMENT THAT WE MUST BE SEEN TO WORK TOGETHER IS WHOLLY CYNICAL. ANYWAY I WILL DO MY BEST TO BUILD ON IT. THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE GARDE MOBILE AT THIS MOMENT IS STILL A DISGRACE BUT ROBERT REALISES CLEARLY THE POTENTIAL EMBARRASSMENT TO HIM AND FRANCE IF THERE ARE DISTURBANCES IN THE INTERIM AND I AM NOW CONFIDENT THAT HE WILL DO HIS BEST TO ENSURE THAT THERE ARE NONE. I SHALL TOO.

STUART

FLASH

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY PARIS 120700Z

FM VILA 112359Z JUN 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NO 389 OF 12 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS

ROUTINE MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY.

TELECON STUART/CARRUTHERS: NEW HEBRIDES SECURITY.

1. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAVE DENIED THAT ROBERT AGREED BEFORE ME AND THE NEW HEBRIDES COUNCIL OF MINISTERS TO RECOMMEND TO HIS GOVERNMENT THE DESPATCH OF BOTH FRENCH AND BRITISH FORCES TO VILA TO MAINTAIN SECURITY AND THAT THIS QUESTION MAY BECOME AN ISSUE AT THE FORTHCOMING EUROPEAN SUMMIT.
2. MIFT CONTAINS THE TEXT OF A LETTER WHICH FATHER LINI HAS WRITTEN TO BOTH ME AND ROBERT TODAY. (SIGNED TEXT FOLLOWS BY BAG.. IT IS, OF COURSE, WRITTEN AT MY REQUEST, BUT IT IS THE TRUTH. THE OTHER WITNESSES ARE THE REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS EXCEPT FOR KORISA WHO WAS IN TANAN. ROBERT MAY CLAIM THAT, BECAUSE OF HIS IMPERFECT KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH HE DID NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS AGREED. BUT I TRANSLATED FOR HIM WHERE HE REQUESTED IT, THE CRUCIAL PARTS OF THE DISCUSSION, INCLUDING THIS POINT AND I HOPE HE DOES NOT ACCUSE ME OF WILFUL MISINTERPRETATION. ONE POINT NOT COVERED IN THE LETTER IS THAT ROBERT SAID AT THE MEETING TO EXPLAIN A POSSIBLE DELAY IN THE ARRIVAL OF THE GENDARMES, THAT HE EXPECTED THAT DIJOU D WOULD WANT TO CONSULT MR BLAKER FIRST.
3. ROBERT HAS TOLD ME THAT HE HAS FIRM INSTRUCTIONS TO SEND THE FRENCH GENDARMERIE BACK TO NOUMEA TODAY IN PROTEST AGAINST MR BLAKER'S ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. I HAVE SAID TO HIM THAT THIS WOULD IN MY VIEW BE THOROUGHLY IRRESPONSIBLE.
4. INFLAMMATORY LEAFLETS SIMILAR TO THOSE DISTRIBUTED IN SANTON, ARE BEING PASSED AROUND THE TOWN, CALLING ON PEOPLE FROM OTHER ISLANDS, PARTICULARLY REFUGEES FROM SANTO, NOT TO TRY TO GET WORK HERE, AS THE GOVERNMENT OF WALTER LINI HAS NO AUTHORITY IN VILA. EVEN ASSUMING, AS I DO, THAT THE FRENCH DO NOT INTEND INCIDENTS TO FOLLOW THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE GENDARMES BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS, I AM AFFRAID THAT POTENTIAL TROUBLEMAKERS WILL INTERPRET WITHDRAWAL AS BEING INTENDED TO GIVE THEM A FREE HAND. WITHDRAWAL OF THE GENDARMES NOW WILL THUS

BE MORE DANGEROUS THAN NEVER HAVING SENT THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE.

5. I HOPE THAT THE OFFICE WILL IMMEDIATELY PROTEST IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS AT THIS IRRESPONSIBLE WITHDRAWALJHWO00000

5. I HOPE THAT THE OFFICE WILL IMMEDIATELY PROTEST IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS AT THIS IRRESPONSIBLE WITHDRAWAL. I DO NOT IMAGINE THAT THIS WILL DEFLECT M DIJOURD FROM HIS COURSE BUT AT LEAST IT WILL PLACE UPON HIM THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY INCIDENTS BEFORE THE MARINES ARRIVE.

6. IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS PASSING BETWEEN ROBERT AND PARIS. PENDING HIS RECEIPT OF FATHER LINI'S LETTER, I HAVE NOT YET CHALLENGED HIM ON HIS ALLEGED DENIAL THAT HE AGREED TO RECOMMEND JOINT FORCES. BUT I HAVE TOLD HIM OF THE CRITICISMS OF ME IN PARIS TELNO 250. HE EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT AND SAID HE HAD MADE NO SUCH PROTEST. MEANWHILE OUR RELATIONS REMAIN ON A BASIS OF RATHER GRIM CORDIALITY AND DETAILED COOPERATION (EG ON THE DESPATCH OF FURTHER PMU TO TANNA YESTERDAY AND THE JOINT MISSION OF PERES AND TURNER). I INTEND TO KEEP THEM THAT WAY. WE BOTH EXPLODE OCCASIONALLY, BUT I BELIEVE HE ACCEPTS, AS I DO, THAT THIS IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE TENSION UNDER WHICH WE ARE BOTH LIVING, AND NEITHER OF US ARE THE SORT OF PERSON TO LIE DOWN WITH OUR LEGS IN THE AIR.

7. DIJOURDS MESSAGE (PARIS TELNO 250) IS RIDICULOUS. I ASSUME IT IS INTENDED TO COVER HIS OWN DEPARTURE FROM JOINTERY.. I WILL SEND A DETAILED REFUTATION BY BAG IF I HAVE TIME

STUART

PLEASE ALSO COPY FLASH TO VENICE.

STUART

NNNN

K

*H. Alexander*  
*SA PS/SJS*  
*PUS*

*original filed on Euro PD: Venice Council Meeting 14*  
*H. James*

O.

CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 121230Z JUN 80

FLASH VENICE

TELEGRAM NUMBER 19 OF 12 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, VILA, MODUK

FOLLOWING FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY FROM PS/MR BLAKER

NEW HEBRIDES

1. OUR TELEGRAM NO 16 UPDATES THE BRIEFS PROVIDED FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE. I EXPECT THE PM AND SECRETARY OF STATE WILL ALREADY HAVE DECIDED HOW TO PLAY THIS ISSUE WITH THE FRENCH. BUT MR BLAKER HAS ASKED ME TO RECORD THAT HE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD EXPLAIN THAT HE THINKS IT ESSENTIAL THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD SPEAK TO PRESIDENT GISCARD ABOUT THE NEW HEBRIDES AT VENICE.
2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE DISCUSSED WITH MR BLAKER YESTERDAY THE POSSIBILITY OF MR BLAKER MAKING AN EARLY VISIT TO PARIS FOR TALKS WITH M. DIJOURD. MR BLAKER THINKS THAT HE SHOULD NOT GO TO PARIS UNTIL AFTER THE VENICE MEETING. THERE COULD BE A RISK OF CROSSED WIRES IF HE DID.
3. MR BLAKER ALSO THINKS THAT IF HE VISITED PARIS TODAY OR TOMORROW HIS VISIT WOULD INFLAME SPECULATION ABOUT A POSSIBLE ANGLO FRENCH RIFT.

CARRINGTON

NNNN



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PUS  
G. Fenn.

CONFIDENTIAL  
FROM FCO 120930Z JUNE 88  
TO FLASH VENICE

*Original filed on: - Euro PA: Venice Council Meeting Pg 4*

TELEGRAM NUMBER 16 OF 12 JUNE  
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, VILA PRIORITY MODUK (DS11 DOPS)  
CANNBERR, WELLINGTON, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, SUVA, HONIARA,  
PORT MORESBY  
FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY  
NEW HEBRIDES.

VILA TELNO 389 (COPIED TO YOU).  
PLEASE ADD FOLOWING POINTS TO SECRETARY OF STATE'S AND PRIME  
MINISTER'S BRIEFS.

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. DONTOM HAVE CONFIRMED THAT FRENCH WITHDREW THEIR GENDARMES FROM VILA AT 0700Z TODAY.
2. INFLAMMATORY PAMPHLETS ARE BEINP DISTRIBUTED IN VILA, AND THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF DISTURBANCES BEFORE OUR TROOPS ARRIVE.

POINTS TO MAKE

1. THIS IS UNFORTUNATE. WHILE NOT CONSULTED IN LONDON, WE AGREED TO DEPLOYMENT OF GENDARMES AS ADVANCE ELEMENT OF JOINT SECURITY FORCE. (BRITISH TROOPS ARRIVE 142200Z).
2. WITHDRAWAL OF GENDARMES, AFTER WE HAVE PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THAT OUR CONTRIBUTION TO A JOINT FORCC IS ON ITS WAY, MIGHT GIVE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE NO LONGER PREPARED TO ACT JOINTLY.
3. VILA IS QUIET AT PRESENT. BUT SHOULD FURTHER DISTURBANCES OCCUR BEFOR OUR TROOPS ARRIVE, ASSUME FRENCH WOULD BE PREPARED RE-DEPLOY THEIR GENDARMES.
4. IN ANY EVENT, STRONGLY URGED THAT GENDARMES SHOULD RETURN TO VILA TO COINCIDE WITH ARRIVAL OF BRITISH TROOPS. WE MUST BE SEEN TO BE ACTING IN CONCERT.
5. WE CAN THEN CONSIDER WHAT FURTHER STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO PROMOTE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION AND FACILITATE EARLY WITHDRAWAL OF OUR JOINT FORCE.

CARRINGTON

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CONFIDENTIAL  
DESKBY 120735Z  
FM FCO 120057Z JUNE 80  
TO IMMEDIATE VENICE  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 13 OF 12 JUNE 80  
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS VILA

FOR PS FROM RESIDENT CLERK.

1. PARIS RANG RESIDENT CLERK ON WEDNESDAY EVENING TO REPORT TELEPHONED QUERY FROM MONTPEZAT, POLITICAL DIRECTOR OF THE DOMTOM, ON WHETHER THE DECISION TO SEND THE MARINES WAS IRREVOCABLE. IF IT WAS, THEY WOULD ARRIVE TO FIND THE FRENCH GENDARMES HAD LEFT. THIS WAS A RENEWAL OF THE THREAT MADE EARLIER IN THE DAY THAT THE FRENCH WOULD WITHDRAW IF WE SENT TROOPS.
2. PARIS HAS TOLD MONTPEZAT THAT THE QUESTION SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN VENICE, BUT THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S STATEMENT WAS QUITE CLEAR.
3. VILA WILL BE SENDING YOU SITREPS, AS THE FRENCH ARE THREATENING TO WITHDRAW IN THE NEXT FEW HOURS, AND ARE STIRRING UP THE FRENCH CITIZENRY WHO MAY REACT VIOLENTLY AGAINST NON-VILANS. UPDATING TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S BRIEFS SHOULD REACH YOU BY 121000Z.

CARRINGTON

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DESKBY 120735Z  
FROM F C O 120043Z JUN 80  
TO IMMEDIATE VENICE  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 12 OF 12 JUNE

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU FOR PS TO S OF S AT REQUEST  
OF RESIDENT CLERK WAS RECEIVED FROM VILA TELEGRAM NUMBER 388  
OF 12 JUNE  
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS AND MODUK (DS11 DOP'S).

NEW HEBRIDES SECURITY SITUATION.

ROBERT TELLS ME THAT HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO IMMEDIATELY  
WITHDRAW THE GENDARMES TO NOUMEA HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO  
WITHDRAWING THEM AT 6 P.M. TONIGHT (120700Z), UNLESS  
THERE ARE DISTURBANCES IN VILA DURING THE DAY. HE EXPECTS  
NO SUCH DISTURBANCES.

CARRINGTON

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✓ PUS  
✓ G. Fern

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UNCLASSIFIED  
DESKBY 120735Z  
FM FCO 120046Z JUNE 80  
TO IMMEDIATE VENICE  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 11 OF 12 JUNE 80  
FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU FOR PS TO S OF S AT REQUEST  
OF RESIDENT CLERK.  
WAS RECEIVED FROM VILA TELEGRAM NO 388 OF 12 JUNE.  
INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
ROUTINE MODUK (DS11) CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW  
YORK SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY.

M I P T.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER FROM NEW HEBRIDES CHIEF MINISTER,  
FATHER WALTER LINI, TO MYSELF AND INSPECTOR GENERAL ROBERT  
DATED 12 JUNE.

BEGINS

I WRITE TO CONFIRM MY UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT PASSED AT A  
MEETING BETWEEN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND THE FRENCH AND  
BRITISH RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS ON 11 JUNE.

I ASKED THE BRITISH AND FRENCH RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS TO MEET  
WITH MYSELF AND MY MINISTERS TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBLE SECURITY  
RESULTS OF THE DEATH OF ALEXIS YOLOU IN TANNA. I FORMALLY  
REQUESTED THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS TO SEND A JOINT FRENCH  
AND BRITISH FORCE TO VILA TO MAINTAIN SECURITY. IN VIEW OF  
THE FACT THAT FRENCH FORCES WERE AVAILABLE IN NOUMEA, I  
ASKED THEM TO COME IF POSSIBLE THE SAME DAY, PROVIDED THAT  
BRITISH FORCES FOLLOWED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

BOTH RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS AGREED IMMEDIATELY TO RECOMMEND  
TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE SENDING OF BOTH  
FRENCH AND BRITISH FORCES.

CARRINGTON

NNNN

SENT AT 120210Z KAW

GE VENEZIA 80

✓ PS  
✓ PUS  
✓ Mr. Finn  
Mr. Alexander /  
H. Whitmore



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

*Original filed  
Eusobol (Comm. Policy) 43*

11 June 1980

*Dear Michael,*

European Council: New Hebrides

/ I attach a brief on the New Hebrides for use in discussion with the French in the margins at Venice. The Prime Minister may wish to discuss the handling of the subject with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary on the aircraft. Lord Carrington has not yet seen the brief.

/ In addition to the brief itself, I attach copies of the following:

- (a) Lord Carrington's statement today;
- (b) Vila Telegram 384 reporting discussions between the British and French Resident Commissioners about the deployment of forces;
- (c) Paris Telegram 529 reporting M. Dijoud's first message about the deployment of French gendarmes;
- (d) Telegram summarising the last meeting with M. Dijoud in London (on 9 June).
- (e) Draft telegram reporting Sir M Palliser's conversation this evening with the French Ambassador.

*yours ever  
R M J Lyne*

(R M J Lyne)  
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

NEW HEBRIDES: POINTS TO MAKE

1. We wish to maintain the principle of joint action with you in dealing with the current problems in the New Hebrides.
2. We regret that we were not consulted before your decision was taken to despatch gendarmes from Noumea to Vila.
3. There appears to be a misunderstanding between us over what was agreed by our Resident Commissioners in Vila.
4. Our view is that the Resident Commissioners agreed that any forces sent from outside the New Hebrides should be a joint one.
5. They also agreed to recommend that we should both respond to Lini's latest request for French and British military assistance.
6. Although not consulted we accept your deployment of gendarmes to be your response to that recommendation.
7. The despatch of British troops represents our response to that recommendation.
8. The size and composition of the British force is consistent with our contingency plan for a joint operation by both our governments (the French are aware of the force levels in our plan for such an operation).
9. We must clearly avoid letting this misunderstanding become the cause of friction between us.
10. As agreed when M. Dijoud visited London we should instruct our Resident Commissioners to cooperate more closely in the New Hebrides. They should work for a resumption of negotiations taking as a starting point the concessions and preconditions agreed by Mr Blaker and M. Dijoud on 2 June.
11. We believe that the presence of British and French forces in the area should encourage both parties to negotiate seriously. Should the security situation in the New Hebrides improve to our mutual satisfaction we should be prepared to agree to the joint withdrawal of our respective forces.
12. We would hope that Mr Blaker and M. Dijoud would be able to visit the New Hebrides, as agreed on 9 June, to bring negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion.

## NEW HEBRIDES CONDOMINIUM

### ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. Independence is planned for 30 July 1980. We and French now accept this date.
2. Until independence Britain and France remain jointly responsible for internal security. The British and French Resident Commissioners in Vila each have two 30-man platoons of riot trained police mobile units (PMUs) for this purpose. The ordinary police force is controlled by the New Hebrides Government (NHG).
3. Since he lost local elections in November 1979 Stephens, leader of secessionist Na Griamel movement, has been threatening militant action. On 28 May he took over Santo island with aid of 40 French colons (mostly half-castes). Stephens also has support of Right Wing American Phoenix Foundation which aims to create a base for dubious business operations.
4. Reliable reports from Santo difficult to obtain. But clear that Stephens is in complete control on the ground. Some 2,000 people, including 104 non New Hebrideans (21 Britons) have been evacuated in an exercise organised by British Resident Commissioner.
5. On 30 May NHG formally appealed for help from Britain and France to quell the rebellion. The Minister of State, Mr Blaker, met responsible French Minister M Dijoud in Paris on 2 June (M Dijoud had been unable to agree to an earlier meeting). M Dijoud refused to contemplate the use of force at this stage. He insisted on a further appeal to both sides to renew political talks begun in London in March. It was agreed that we would press the Chief Minister (Fr Lini) to offer concessions (conditional on the restoration of his authority on Santo). The French would exert pressure on Stephens, who had until recently at least their tacit support.

6. The two Ministers reaffirmed their support for the legitimate government and the Independence Constitution agreed by all parties in Vila last year. They also reaffirmed their determination to safeguard the territorial integrity of the Condominium. Mr Blaker made a statement in the House of Commons along these lines on 3 June.

7. On 3 June we instructed our Resident Commissioner to act with the NHG, while co-ordinating his actions with his French colleague. On 5 June Fr Lini broadcast an appeal to Stephens offering concessions provided that Santo returned to the status quo ante 28 May. He gave Stephens 24 hours in which to reply. Stephens reply did not meet Fr Lini's demands and on 9 June the French Resident Commissioner visited Stephens on Santo. Stephens agreed to meet Fr Lini on neutral ground but he added that he wanted Mr Blaker and M Dijoud to attend. He also demanded that the blockade be lifted. The French Commissioner rejected these demands.

8. On 6 June Mr Blaker invited M Dijoud to London to plan ahead in case Fr Lini's initiative failed. They met on 9 June.

9. Mr Blaker told M Dijoud that we were considering activating our existing contingency plan for pre-deployment of troops in Vila in order to be able to act jointly to restore order. M Dijoud argued that the presence of British troops in Vila, at this stage, would be provocative. French colons would misinterpret their presence, which France would regard as unilateral action in breach of the principles of the Condominium.

10. Mr Blaker and M Dijoud agreed that British troops positioned over the horizon, in Fiji or another nearby friendly country, would indicate our willingness to act jointly with the French gendarmerie already based on New Caledonia. British troops of company size with HQ element would be so deployed.



11. Mr Blaker and M Dijoud also undertook to instruct their Resident Commissioners to work more closely to press the two sides to resume their dialogue. Mr Blaker and M Dijoud would visit the New Hebrides to supervise the final stages of a negotiated solution in late June or early July. The Secretary of State met both Ministers and stressed the need for joint co-operation at all levels to resolve the problem.

#### LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

12. During the night of 10 June an opposition crowd of 200-300 led by Mr Alexis Yolou, a member of the National Assembly marched on the district HQ on Tanna, apparently see the release of 29 prisoners in the jail. Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd who responded with shotgun and rifle fire. In the confusion Mr Uolou was killed. There are now 2 PMU platoons on Tanna.

13. On 11 June M Dijoud asked the Embassy in Paris to inform Mr Blaker that the French Government had decided to send immediately a contingent of gendarmerie from Noumea to Vila in order to "prevent clashes in Vila between supporters of the Vanuaku Pati (Fr Lini) and the Moderes (colon backed) following the death of Alexis Yolou".

14. On 11 June HMG decided to despatch troops to Vila to be seen to be acting jointly with the French and in response to an agreed recommendation by both Resident Commissioners.

15. On 11 June a message was received via the Embassy to the effect that the French President would withdraw French gendarmes if British troops were sent to Vila, which they would regard as unilateral action.

16. The Secretary of State and Mr Blaker announced in Parliament on 11 June that British troops would be deployed to Vila.

A

STATEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, 11 JUNE,  
BY LORD CARRINGTON, ON NEW HEBRIDES

With your Lordships permission, I shall make a statement on the New Hebrides.

As Your Lordships are aware, the noble Lord, Lord Trefgarne made a statement to the House on the third of June on current problems in the New Hebrides. He informed Your Lordships that if no progress was made towards reconciliation then Britain and France would decide jointly on what further action to take.

My honourable Friend, the Minister of State, and I met Monsieur Dijoud, the French Minister responsible for Overseas Territories on 9 June as part of our continuing consultations on the situation in the Condominium.

/Your Lordships

Your Lordships will be aware that within the last 24 hours the security situation in the New Hebrides has deteriorated. I regret that last night on the island of Tanna, Alexis Yolou, an opposition political leader on the island, was killed: the exact circumstances of his death are not yet clear.

In order to maintain the joint commitments of the British and French Governments to preserve law and order and the territorial integrity of the New Hebrides, the French Government today sent a contingent of Gendarmes from Noumea in New Caledonia to the New Hebrides.

/Her Majesty's

Her Majesty's Government are despatching to Vila one company of Royal Marines with a Headquarters element and logistic support.

*This action*  
The ~~despatch of troops~~ by both Governments does not reflect any change in our determination to work jointly for a peaceful solution to the present problems.

B

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GRPS 987

CONFIDENTIAL

FM VILA 110545Z JUNE 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 334 OF 11 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 110900Z PARIS IMMEDIATE MODUK (DS11)

CANBERRA WELLINGTON SUVA HONIARA PORT MOFESBY WASHINGTON UKMIS  
NEW YORK

MIPT: TANNA.

1. ROBERT AND I MET THE WHOLE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THIS MORNING AT LINI'S REQUEST. THEY WERE VERY NERVOUS ABOUT A POSSIBLE BACKLASH FOLLOWING YOLOU'S DEATH. AT THAT STAGE IT WAS KNOWN THAT HE HAD DIED FROM SHOTGUN WOUNDS BUT ASSUMED THAT THIS MUST HAVE BEEN BY A VP SUPPORTER.

2. LINI AGAIN ASKED FOR FRENCH AND BRITISH MILITARY ASSISTANCE MAINLY TO RESOLVE SANTO BUT MORE IMMEDIATELY TO ENSURE THAT NO ONE TRIED TO RETALIATE IN VILA. I REMINDED ROBERT THAT HE HAD OFFERED TO BRING THE GARDE MOBILE FROM NOUVEA TO PROTECT VILA AND ASKED WHETHER THIS WAS STILL SO.

3. HE REPLIED THAT IT WAS, AND SAID THAT HE WOULD ASK DIJOURD TO AGREE TO SEND IT THIS AFTERNOON. WE BOTH AGREED THAT IT REMAINED DESIRABLE THAT ANY EXTERIOR FORCE SHOULD BE JOINT, AND SAID THAT WE WOULD RECOMMEND ACCORDINGLY TO BOTH OUR GOVERNMENTS. LATER ROBERT TOLD ME THAT DIJOURD HAD GIVEN HIS CONSENT AND THAT THE GARDE MOBILE WOULD ARRIVE AT 2700Z THIS AFTERNOON. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO WITHDRAW THE FORCE AS SOON AS THE CURRENT DANGER WAS OVER.

CONFIDENTIAL

/ 4. THIS IS ALL

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4. THIS IS ALL TRAGIC. IT IS GOING TO BE HARD TO ESTABLISH THE FACTS, LET ALONE DISPEL THE MYTH, WHICH WILL BE THAT THE BRITISH POLICE (OR IF NOT, THE VF) KILLED YOLOU: THAT THE NEW HEBRIDES ARE IN CHAOS, AS DIJOUH ALWAYS PREDICTED: AND THAT IT IS ONLY THE FRENCH WHO HAVE RESTORED ORDER.

5. HOWEVER, SINCE THE FRENCH HAVE NOW SENT FORCES TO VILA (AND ACTED UNILATERALLY AT THE MHG REQUEST WITHOUT CONSULTING MHG), I CONSIDER THAT THE WAY IS NOW OPEN TO SEND BRITISH FORCES DIRECT TO VILA AT THE SAME REQUEST, RATHER THAN FIJI, INITIALLY TO PROTECT THE GOVERNMENT, BUT ONCE HERE, TO HELP EXERT INFLUENCE ON GENERAL NEGOTIATIONS. COLONEL GUTHRIE HAS TELEGRAPHED SEPARATELY ON THE MILITARY DRAWBACKS TO FIJI, AND I ON THE POLITICAL. IF WE ARE ALREADY PREPARED FOR THE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SENDING FORCES TO THE PACIFIC AND IF THE FRENCH VETO ON VILA IS NOW REMOVED BY THEIR OWN ACTION, THEN I AM SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT PLACE FOR BRITISH FORCES. THE ONLY SNAGS MIGHT BE THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT REMOVE THEIR FORCE BEFORE OURS LEFT UK, SAYING THAT THE EMERGENCY WAS NOW OVER, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE LIKELY TO TRY TO INSIST ON PARITY OF NUMBERS (CLOSER TO 170 THAN 200). FROM ALL THIS I RECOMMEND THAT BRITISH FORCES SHOULD LEAVE FOR HERE TODAY IF POSSIBLE, POSSIBLY IN ONE COMPANY STRENGTH TO START WITH.

6. IN ORDER TO PREVENT OR ELIMINATE ANY BACKLASH, IT IS TEMPTING TO IMPLY THAT YOLOU MAY WELL HAVE BEEN KILLED BY MISTAKE BY HIS HIS OWN PEOPLE. BUT THE WORST POSSIBLE SCENARIO WOULD BE ANOTHER HOLA MASSACRE COVER-UP WHICH WAS LATER DISPROVED, AND I RECOMMEND THAT NEWS DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOT SPECULATE FURTHER

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UNTIL THERE ARE AT LEAST PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM A JOINT CIG/  
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S TEAM THAT HAS ALREADY LEFT FOR TANNA.

7. LOOKING ON THE BRIGHTEST POSSIBLE SIDE, IF YOLOU'S DEATH  
CAN BE ISOLATED AND IF CALMING BRITISH AND FRENCH FORCES ARE SENT  
HERE, THEN IT COULD CONCEIVABLY START THINGS MOVING TOWARDS  
SOME SENSIBLE POLITICAL COMPROMISES. EVERYONE ON BOTH SIDES  
HAS BEEN PLAYING GAMES FOR TOO LONG, AND THE FIRST DEATH  
FOR MANY YEARS MAY JOLT THEM BACK TO REALITY.

8. THE PEOPLE MOST IMMEDIATELY AT RISK ARE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT  
LEADERS AND VP SUPPORTERS REMAINING IN SANTO. I HOPE WE  
CAN PROTECT THE FORMER, BUT THESE EVENTS WOULD BE A GOOD EXCUSE  
FOR STEVENS TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE LATTER.  
FCO PLEASE PASS ALL

STUART

[DEFINITION NO NONLARA REFERRED FOR DEPARTMENTAL DECISION,  
REPEATED AS REQUESTED TO OTHER POSTS]

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

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FM, PARIS 110430Z JUN 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 529 OF 11 JUNE 1980

INFO IMMEDIATE VILA SUVA CANBERRA AND WELLINGTON

No 10 DS.

MR A.R. SOWERBUTTS,  
JIC ASSESSMENT STAFF  
CABINET OFFICE.

RC

C

CLASHES ON TANNA

1. M. DIJOURD HAS ASKED THAT MR BLAKER BE INFORMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAVE DECIDED TO SEND IMMEDIATELY A CONTINGENT OF GENDARMERIE FROM NOUMEA TO VILA. THE ROLE OF THE GENDARMERIE WILL BE TO ATTEMPT TO PREVENT CLASHES IN VILA BETWEEN SUPPORTERS OF THE VANUA AKU PATI AND THE MODERES FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF ALEXIS IOLOU ON TANNA.
  2. ARI BAUD OF DIJOURD'S CABINET STRESSED THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WERE NOT REPEAT NOT REQUESTING HMG TO SEND A CONTINGENT OF BRITISH TROOPS TO THE NEW HEBRIDES. ACCORDING TO ARI BAUD, THE FRENCH VIEW THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE GENDARMERIE AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE AND INTEND TO ORDER THEIR RETURN TO NOUMEA IF THE SITUATION IN THE NEW HEBRIDES IS CALM OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS.
  3. M. DIJOURD HOPES TO DISCUSS THESE DEVELOPMENTS WITH THE MINISTER OF STATE LATER THIS MORNING (11 JUNE) ON THE TELEPHONE.
- HIBBERT

|| 11 AM



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OO PARIS  
GRS 637  
CONFIDENTIAL  
FROM FCO 101730Z JUNE 80  
IMMEDIATE VILA  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 267 OF 10 JUNE  
AND TO IMMEDIATE PARIS  
INFO SUVA  
TELEGRAM NUMBER

NEW HEBRIDES - BLAKER/DIJOUD MEETING 9 JUNE

1. MR BLAKER MET M. DIJOUD IN LONDON FOR TWO HOURS ON 9 JUNE. I SAW DIJOUD FOR HALF AN HOUR AFTERWARDS.
2. THE MEETING BEGAN WITH ANALYSIS OF THE PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE PARIS MEETING OF 2 JUNE. DIJOUD ACCEPTED THAT LINI'S CONCESSIONS COVERED THE POINTS AGREED AT THE PARIS MEETING BUT SAID THAT THE 24 HOUR ULTIMATUM WAS MALADROIT AND SUGGESTED THAT THE OFFER WAS NOT SERIOUS. MR BLAKER REGRETTED ROBERT'S LACK OF SUCCESS WITH STEPHENS AS A RESULT OF WHICH THE NECESSARY PRE-CONDITIONS FOR THE RESUMPTION OF TALKS HAD NOT BEEN MET. DIJOUD SAID THAT ROBERT'S MISSION HAD NOT BEEN A TOTAL FAILURE AND THAT THERE WERE STILL GROUNDS FOR PURSUING A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION.
3. THE MEETING THEN CONSIDERED WAYS OF BREAKING THE DEADLOCK. MR BLAKER SAID THAT WE WERE CONSIDERING THE PRECAUTIONARY MOVE OF BRITISH TROOPS TO VILA TO DEMONSTRATE OUR READINESS TO HONOUR OUR COMMITMENTS TO THE NHG AND TO ENABLE HMG TO ACT JOINTLY WITH FRANCE TO RESTORE ORDER IF NECESSARY. DIJOUD SAID THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD AMOUNT TO UNILATERAL ACTION AND WOULD BE IN BREACH OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CONDOMINIUM. IN HIS VIEW IT WOULD BE MISINTERPRETED BY THE FRANCOPHONES, WOULD PROVE PROVOCATIVE AND COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO FRANCE. MR BLAKER STRESSED THAT THE MOVE WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH OUR EXISTING CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR JOINT ACTION, WOULD GIVE ADDED IMPETUS TO THE PARTIES TO RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES BY NEGOTIATION AND WOULD DISCOURAGE THE NHG FROM PRECIPITATE ACTION. AFTER A LENGTHY DISCUSSION DIJOUD ACCEPTED THAT THE POSITIONING

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OF BRITISH TROOPS SOMEWHERE ELSE IN THE REGION WOULD PROVIDE PARALLEL PRESENCE TO THAT OF THE FRENCH IN NOUMEA AND MIGHT HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON BOTH PARTIES TO THE PRESENT DISPUTE. A POSSIBLE PLACE FOR SUCH DEPLOYMENT MIGHT BE FIJI, SUBJECT TO THE AGREEMENT OF THE FIJI GOVERNMENT.

4. THE MEETING THEN AGREED THAT, IN ADDITION TO THE POSSIBLE DEPLOYMENT OF BRITISH TROOPS, FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS WOULD BE SENT TO RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS TO WORK MORE CLOSELY IN ENDEAVOURING TO PERSUADE THE TWO PARTIES TO RESUME THE DIALOGUE INTERRUPTED BY THE EVENTS ON SANTO SINCE 28 MAY. A JOINT STATEMENT WOULD ALSO BE ISSUED LATER THIS WEEK BY BOTH MINISTERS IN WHICH THEY WOULD URGE THE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS, GIVE NOTICE OF THE PRECAUTIONARY DEPLOYMENT OF BRITISH TROOPS AND ANNOUNCE THEIR INTENTION TO VISIT THE NEW HEBRIDES TOGETHER TO BRING TALKS TO A SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION. THEY WOULD EXPECT THE GROUND WORK TO BE COMPLETED AND WOULD HOPE TO GO TO VILA AT THE END OF JUNE OR EARLY JULY.

5. DIJOURD SAID IN THE COURSE OF THE TALKS THAT HE WOULD BE SENDING AN AID MISSION TO THE NEW HEBRIDES ON 13 JUNE. IF A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION COULD BE FOUND TO THE PRESENT PROBLEM FRANCE WAS PREPARED TO OFFER 100 MILLION FRANCS ANNUALLY. IN RETURN SHE WOULD EXPECT THE POSITION OF HER COLONS TO BE PROPERLY PROTECTED: SECURITY OF LAND TENURE, RESPECT FOR THEIR CULTURE AND EDUCATION AND NO DISHONOURABLE TERMS FOR INDEPENDENCE. IF FRANCE WAS OBLIGED TO PAY COMPENSATION TO THE COLONS FRENCH AID WOULD BE REDUCED BY THE AMOUNT INVOLVED.

6. THE BASIS UPON WHICH TALKS WOULD BE RESUMED WAS NOT FULLY DISCUSSED BUT IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE WOULD BE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONCESSIONS AND PRE-CONDITIONS AGREED AT THE PARIS MEETING OF 2 JUNE. WE PROPOSE TO BRODUCE A DRAFT OF AN AGREED MINUTE WHICH WOULD REFLECT THIS FACT. WE WOULD ENVISAGE THAT THE RESTORATION OF NHG AUTHORITY ON SANTO AND THE LIFTING OF THE BLOACKADE WOULD BE CONCURRENT WITH THE RE-OPENING OF TALKS SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN SANTO OR VILA.

7. WE SHALL SEND BY TELEGRAM DRAFT TEXTS OF A JOINT STATEMENT AND AN AGREED MINUTE. THE PRECAUTIONARY DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS

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HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO CABINET.  
CARRINGTON

NWNN

X

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tribution:-

[TEXT]  
 Paris telegram No 529 to me: NEW HEBRIDES  
 1. Permanent Under-Secretary summoned French Ambassador this evening (11 June) to express Lord Carrington's surprise and concern at unilateral action of French Government in deciding to send gendarmerie from Noumea to Vila. Ministerial consultations on 9 June have resulted in agreement on necessity for the two governments to act together and Lord Carrington could not understand why we had not been consulted. It had <sup>Surveys</sup> been a serious mistake for Dijoud not to have discussed the situation with the Minister of State before taking the unilateral decision described in Tel. under ref. 12.  
 before taking unilaterally the decision described in tel under reference.

pies to:-

Sauvagnargues sought to argue that there had been ~~an~~ agreement in Vila for the intervention of the gendarmes because of the sudden emergency. The French Government was totally against military intervention, nevertheless, and President Giscard had only agreed to a limited operation with the gendarmes being withdrawn after the demonstration was over. France's real objection was to the despatch of military units. It was probable that the British troops would arrive after the gendarmes had gone, and ~~the French version of events was that~~ <sup>it would seem to many British</sup> the British were perhaps using the sending of the gendarmes as a ~~pretext~~ <sup>pretext</sup> for military intervention.

3. The PUS took the Ambassador <sup>firmly</sup> through the sequence of events with ~~illustrations~~ <sup>quotations</sup> from ~~our~~ <sup>our</sup> telegrams to show conclusively that the French had acted hastily and unilaterally in breach of our agreed understanding. The Ambassador attempted to prove the "innocence" of the French decision, while privately admitting that there had <sup>perhaps</sup> been a "silly mistake".

4. The PUS warned Sauvagnargues that the Prime Minister and ~~Secretary of State~~ <sup>Secretary</sup> would want to talk to President Giscard <sup>at tomorrow's European Council</sup> about these misunderstandings in the hope that we could agree on joint action and stick to that. He said that it would <sup>be</sup> ~~be~~ <sup>injudicious</sup> to assume that the sending of French gendarmes could be an "in and out" operation. Perhaps Mr Blaker and M Digoud might have agreed that this was a possibility. They might not. What ~~was~~ needed was the considered joint advice of the Resident Commissioners

/on the

He underlined the contradiction between this and the agreement reached with Dijoud here on 9 June that we must act at all times in closest accord.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN

He underlined the contradiction between this and the agreement reached with Dijoud here on 9 June that we must act at all times in closest accord.

on the grounds which could then be properly evaluated in concert by the British and French Governments.

5. The French Ambassador was <sup>fully</sup> ~~well~~ briefed and fought his corner well, but he was left in no doubt about our concern and our insistence on better consultation in future. *Joint action has to mean what it said.*

Joint action had to mean what it said.

*D. W.*  

---

*11/6.*

STATEMENT ON NEW HEBRIDES BY THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, MR PETER BLAKER MP, IN THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS ON WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 1980

TO BE CHECKED  
AGAINST DELIVERY

RA  
MS

With your permission Mr Speaker, I shall make a statement on the New Hebrides.

As the House is aware, I made a statement to the House on the third of June on current problems in the New Hebrides. I ~~informed the House~~ <sup>said</sup> that if no progress was made towards reconciliation then Britain and France would decide jointly on what further action to take. My right honourable and noble Friend and I met Monsieur Dijoud, the French Minister responsible for Overseas Territories on the 9th of June as part of our continuing consultations on the situation in the Condominium.

The House will be aware that within the last 24 hours the security situation in the New Hebrides has deteriorated. I regret that last night in the island of Tanna Monsieur Yolu, an opposition political leader ~~on the island~~, was killed. The exact circumstances of his death are not yet clear. In order to maintain the joint commitments of the British and French Governments to preserve law and order and the territorial integrity of the New Hebrides, the French Government today sent a contingent of Gendarmes from Noumea in New Caledonia to the New Hebrides. Her Majesty's Government are despatching to Vila one company of Royal Marines with a Headquarters element and logistic support.

/The

*This action*

~~The despatch of troops~~ by both Governments does not reflect any change in our determination to work jointly for a peaceful solution to the present problems.



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DESKBY (PARIS) 111000Z

FM VILA 110830Z JUN 80

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 385 OF 11 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS, MODUK (DS11), CANBERRA, WELLINGTON,  
WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK, SUVA, HONIARA, PORT MORESBY.

MY TELEGRAM NO 383: TANNA.

1. ROBERT HAS A FIRST ORAL REPORT FROM THE FRENCH DOCTORS WHO PERFORMED THE AUTOPSY ON YOLOU. IT APPEARS THAT WOUNDS WERE AS FOLLOWS:-

- (A) BLOW ON THE HEAD BY A BLUNT INSTRUMENT, NON-FATAL;
- (B) POINT TWO TWO BULLET WHICH ENTERED ARM AND EXITED THROUGH SHOULDER, NON-FATAL;
- (C) POINT TWO TWO BULLET WHICH ENTERED BACK, PENETRATED LUNG AND STOPPED UNDER RIBS, FATAL.
- (D) SHOTGUN WOUND IN SIDE, WHICH PERFORATED INTESTINES, FATAL.

2. ACCORDING TO ROBERT DOCTORS CONSIDER THAT ALL WOUNDS WERE PROBABLY INFLICTED WHILE YOLOU WAS STANDING UP.

3. THESE REPORTS APPEAR TO SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE POSSIBILITY THAT YOLOU WAS CAUGHT IN ACCIDENTAL CROSS FIRE.

4. TURNER AND COOKE HAVE NOW RETURNED (LEAVING ROUSE IN TANNA WITH 18 MEN). THEY TELL ME THAT TWO OTHER PEOPLE ARE KNOWN TO HAVE RECEIVED POINT TWO TWO WOUNDS (NOT FATAL) AND HAVE BEEN EVACUATED TO THE FRENCH HOSPITAL IN VILA. THEY ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE TWO OTHERS WITH LESS SERIOUS POINT TWO TWO WOUNDS IN THE FRENCH HOSPITAL IN WHITESANDS, TANNA. COOKE HAS CONFIRMED THAT NO FIREARMS WERE USED BY POLICE. PHYSICAL CHECK OF ROUNDS AND RIFLES CONFIRMS THIS.

5. OTHERWISE TURNER AND COOKE CONFIRM ACCOUNT IN MY REFTEL EXCEPT THAT MINISTER KORISA SAYS THAT YOLOU WAS NOT TRYING TO HOLD CROWD BACK BUT URGING THEM ON TO THE POLICE.

6. CONTENTS OF KNAPSACK WHICH A NUMBER OF WITNESSES SAY THEY SAW YOLOU CARRYING AT THE BEGINNING OF THE EVENTS (WHICH CONTENTS WERE FILMED BY BBC TV, SEEN BY TURNER AND ARE NOW IN HANDS OF THE POLICE), INCLUDE FIVE STICKS DYNAMITE, SIX DETONATORS, WIRES, FUSES, TWO HOME MADE BOMBS, SIX EX-FRENCH GAS CARTRIDGES, TWO SHOTGUN CARTRIDGES, ARROWS, WIRE PRODS AND SLING, A TAFEA (TANNA SECESSIONIST) FLAG, AND HAND-WRITTEN UNSIGNED LETTERS IN FRENCH AND BISLAMA ADDRESSED TO YOLOU CONTAINING INSTRUCTIONS ON ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIONS. TURNER SAW KNAPSACK AT POLICE STATION STILL UNOPENED, AND IS FIRMLY OF OPINION THAT CONTENTS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN PLANTED.

/7. REMAINING

7. REMAINING DYNAMITE FOUND (PARA 9 OF REFTTEL) WAS IN  
OPENING OF DRAIN WHICH RUNS UNDERNEATH AIRFIELD RUNWAY.

8. (PARA 4 OF REFTTEL). THE PMU CONSTABLE WHOSE RIFLE WAS  
TAKEN WAS HIT OVER THE HEAD AND HAND BUT WAS DISCHARGED AFTER  
TREATMENT. ONE OTHER CONSTABLE WAS SLIGHTLY INJURED YBY  
SLINGSHOT.

STUART

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FM VILA 110645Z JUNE 80

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 384 OF 11 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE DESKBY 110900Z PARIS IMMEDIATE MODUK (DS11)

CANBERRA WELLINGTON SUVA HONIARA PORT MORESBY WASHINGTON UKMIS

NEW YORK

MIPT: TANNA.

1. ROBERT AND I MET THE WHOLE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THIS MORNING AT LINI'S REQUEST. THEY WERE VERY NERVOUS ABOUT A POSSIBLE BACKLASH FOLLOWING YOLOU'S DEATH. AT THAT STAGE IT WAS KNOWN THAT HE HAD DIED FROM SHOTGUN WOUNDS BUT ASSUMED THAT THIS MUST HAVE BEEN BY A VP SUPPORTER.

2. LINI AGAIN ASKED FOR FRENCH AND BRITISH MILITARY ASSISTANCE MAINLY TO RESOLVE SANTO BUT MORE IMMEDIATELY TO ENSURE THAT NO ONE TRIED TO RETALIATE IN VILA. I REMINDED ROBERT THAT HE HAD OFFERED TO BRING THE GARDE MOBILE FROM NOUMEA TO PROTECT VILA AND ASKED WHETHER THIS WAS STILL SO.

3. HE REPLIED THAT IT WAS, AND SAID THAT HE WOULD ASK DIJOURD TO AGREE TO SEND IT THIS AFTERNOON. WE BOTH AGREED THAT IT REMAINED DESIRABLE THAT ANY EXTERIOR FORCE SHOULD BE JOINT, AND SAID THAT WE WOULD RECOMMEND ACCORDINGLY TO BOTH OUR GOVERNMENTS. LATER ROBERT TOLD ME THAT DIJOURD HAD GIVEN HIS CONSENT AND THAT THE GARDE MOBILE WOULD ARRIVE AT 2700Z THIS AFTERNOON. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO WITHDRAW THE FORCE AS SOON AS THE CURRENT DANGER WAS OVER.

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/ 4. THIS IS ALL

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4. THIS IS ALL TRAGIC. IT IS GOING TO BE HARD TO ESTABLISH THE FACTS, LET ALONE DISPEL THE MYTH, WHICH WILL BE BE THAT THE BRITISH POLICE (OR IF NOT, THE VP) KILLED YOLOU: THAT THE NEW HEBRIDES ARE IN CHAOS, AS DIJOUO ALWAYS PREDICTED: AND THAT IT IS ONLY THE FRENCH WHO HAVE RESTORED ORDER.

5. HOWEVER, SINCE THE FRENCH HAVE NOW SENT FORCES TO VILA (AND ACTED UNILATERALLY AT THE NHG REQUEST WITHOUT CONSULTING HMG), I CONSIDER THAT THE WAY IS NOW OPEN TO SEND BRITISH FORCES DIRECT TO VILA AT THE SAME REQUEST, RATHER THAN FIJI, INITIALLY TO PROTECT THE GOVERNMENT, BUT ONCE HERE, TO HELP EXERT INFLUENCE ON GENERAL NEGOTIATIONS. COLONEL GUTHRIE HAS TELEGRAPHED SEPARATELY ON THE MILITARY DRAWBACKS TO FIJI, AND I ON THE POLITICAL. IF WE ARE ALREADY PREPARED FOR THE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SENDING FORCES TO THE PACIFIC AND IF THE FRENCH VETO ON VILA IS NOW REMOVED BY THEIR OWN ACTION, THEN I AM SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT PLACE FOR BRITISH FORCES. THE ONLY SNAGS MIGHT BE THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT REMOVE THEIR FORCE BEFORE OURS LEFT UK, SAYING THAT THE EMERGENCY WAS NOW OVER, AND THAT THEY WOULD BE LIKELY TO TRY TO INSIST ON PARITY OF NUMBERS (CLOSER TO 120 THAN 200). FROM ALL THIS I RECOMMEND THAT BRITISH FORCES SHOULD LEAVE FOR HERE TODAY IF POSSIBLE, POSSIBLY IN ONE COMPANY STRENGTH TO START WITH.

6. IN ORDER TO PREVENT OR ELIMINATE ANY BACKLASH, IT IS TEMPTING TO IMPLY THAT YOLOU MAY WELL HAVE BEEN KILLED BY MISTAKE BY HIS HIS OWN PEOPLE. BUT THE WORST POSSIBLE SCENARIO WOULD BE ANOTHER HOLA MASSACRE COVER-UP WHICH WAS LATER DISPROVED, AND I RECOMMEND THAT NEWS DEPARTMENT SHOULD NOT SPECULATE FURTHER

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UNTIL THERE ARE AT LEAST PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM A JOINT CIC/  
PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S TEAM THAT HAS ALREADY LEFT FOR TANNA.

7. LOOKING ON THE BRIGHTEST POSSIBLE SIDE, IF YOLOU'S DEATH  
CAN BE ISOLATED AND IF CALMING BRITISH AND FRENCH FORCES ARE SENT  
HERE, THEN IT COULD CONCEIVABLY START THINGS MOVING TOWARDS  
SOME SENSIBLE POLITICAL COMPROMISES. EVERYONE ON BOTH SIDES  
HAS BEEN PLAYING GAMES FOR TOO LONG, AND THE FIRST DEATH  
FOR MANY YEARS MAY JOLT THEM BACK TO REALITY.

8. THE PEOPLE MOST IMMEDIATELY AT RISK ARE NEW HEBRIDES GOVERNMENT  
LEADERS AND VP SUPPORTERS REMAINING IN SANTO. I HOPE WE  
CAN PROTECT THE FORMER, BUT THESE EVENTS WOULD BE A GOOD EXCUSE  
FOR STEVENS TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE LATTER.  
FCO PLEASE PASS ALL

STUART

[REPETITION TO HONIARA REFERRED FOR DEPARTMENTAL DECISION,  
REPEATED AS REQUESTED TO OTHER POSTS]

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*in PM's OD folder*

*New Hebrides*

PM/80/44

THE PRIME MINISTER

New Hebrides: Security Situation

1. In his minute of 6 June Peter Blaker informed you and members of OD of the serious situation in the New Hebrides and that we were considering the precautionary despatch of a company size unit with HQ element to Vila. The deployment of such a unit to the area would demonstrate our commitment to protect the territorial integrity of the Condominium and would put us in a position where we could act jointly with the French should this prove necessary.
2. M Dijoud, the responsible French Minister, came to London for talks with Mr Blaker on 9 June. I also saw him for half an hour. M Dijoud considered that the precautionary deployment of British troops to Vila itself would breach the principles of the Condominium, would be misinterpreted by francophones in the territory and would be counter-productive. He said that France could not accept such a move. We do not accept that a precautionary deployment of troops to Vila would of itself put us in breach of the 1914 Protocol. However it would neither be to the advantage of the emergent New Hebrides, nor in our wider interests, to risk a serious confrontation with the French by deploying troops in the face of opposition from the French Government.
3. M Dijoud agreed that we should be seen to be in a position to act in concert with the French, should the need arise; and that it would therefore be useful for us to have appropriate forces readily available elsewhere in the region. Such a move would demonstrate our resolve to bring the New Hebrides to independence, encourage the parties to resolve their differences and discourage the NHG\* from precipitate action.

\*New Hebrides Government

/4.

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2

5. It was agreed that this arrangement for the pre-positioning of British troops in the region, as part of a package, should help us to make progress through negotiations. We also agreed that we should instruct our two Resident Commissioners to work more closely in their efforts to persuade the two sides to resume the dialogue interrupted by the secession of Santo on 28 May. A joint statement will be issued later this week in which we and the French will set a timescale within which we expect some real progress to be made. We shall then propose that the two responsible Ministers should go to Vila to bring the negotiations to a conclusion about the end of June or early July.
6. The French will be sending a mission to the New Hebrides this week with a generous economic aid offer (the implementation of which will be conditional on a commitment by the New Hebrides Government to respect the vital interests of French citizens in the New Hebrides).
7. Our preferred place for pre-positioning troops is Fiji. This is about one hour's flying time from the New Hebrides. Furthermore I understand that UK forces in Fiji would be subject to our own Service jurisdiction.
8. Subject to the Defence Secretary's views I should be grateful for your approval to approach the Fiji Government, or another friendly government in the region, for their agreement to the precautionary deployment of a company size unit with HQ Element and signals support and for your authority for their subsequent deployment.

/9.

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9. We shall have an opportunity to discuss this briefly in OD this afternoon. I am copying this minute to other members of OD and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'C' with a horizontal stroke underneath.

(CARRINGTON)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
10 June 1980

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*In PM's OD folder*

PRIME MINISTER

OD - 10th June 1980 - New Hebrides

I understand that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will be raising the question of the New Hebrides at this afternoon's OD on the basis of a minute which he will be sending round today to members of OD this afternoon. It is probable that not all the members of OD will have seen it by the time of the meeting and I will have spare copies available.

2. You may care to suggest that the matter should be raised as Item 3 on the agenda after the discussion on the Brandt Commission's Report. I believe that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary mentioned to you what he had in mind at dinner yesterday evening.

3. The immediate issue is the precautionary dispatch of a company of British troops plus a battalion HQ to be prepared to carry out a joint operation with the French if necessary, because negotiations have failed.

4. I have not yet seen the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's minute. But after asking him to introduce the item, in discussion you may wish to cover the following points:-

- (a) Are we in full agreement with the French over the next step?
- (b) What is the attitude of the governments of Australia and New Zealand?
- (c) If it is suggested that the troops should be standing by in Fiji, will this cause trouble with the Fijian Government?
- (d) Fiji is about 800 miles from Espiritu Santo. How will they get into action if this were needed?
- (e) Does the provision of this force cause any problems for the Ministry of Defence? Are the troops trained and equipped for action in the climate of the New Hebrides? What medical facilities will go with them?

(Robert Armstrong)

*(approved by Sir R Armstrong  
and signed on his behalf)*

10th June 1980

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New Hebrides

JS

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10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

9 June 1980

NEW HEBRIDES: SECURITY SITUATION

The Prime Minister has seen Mr. Blaker's minute to her of 6 June on this subject. She is broadly content with the approach outlined in it, but has said that, in a fast-moving situation, she would expect to be consulted again before any decision to despatch troops from this country to Vila is taken or implemented.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of OD, and to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

MODSA.

C.A. Munro, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

MS

①

Prime Minister

*Yes - but things seem to be changing over the weekend can't we discuss reports with Blanche.*

*I imagine that you would wish to be consulted again before a decision to despatch troops was implemented? This minute comes close to asking for carte*

*Blanche 6/6*

NEW HEBRIDES: SECURITY SITUATION

1. You will be aware of the serious security situation in the New Hebrides Condominium following the insurrection on the island of Santo on 28 May. Peter Carrington has asked me to inform you and other members of the OD Committee about the latest position.

2. Britain and France are jointly responsible for internal security in the territory until independence, due on 30 July. On 2 June I met my French colleague, M Dijoud, in Paris. We agreed to make a further appeal to the protagonists to resume the political talks begun in London in March, and to settle their differences peacefully. Fr Lini, the Chief Minister, has now offered a resumption of talks and certain concessions to the rebel leader (Stephens) on condition that the authority of the Central Government is restored on Santo forthwith. Stephens has shown himself willing to talk, but it seems unlikely that he and his French colon backers will agree to Fr Lini's conditions in full. The Opposition in Parliament are pressing for more decisive action. Pressure is also building up in the UN.

3. Peter Carrington told the Cabinet on 5 June that if negotiations were not resumed shortly he may need to recommend the despatch of British troops to Vila in order to demonstrate that we are prepared to live up to our obligation to safeguard the territorial integrity of the Condominium. Local security forces under the control of the Resident Commissioners are inadequate to restore order on Santo.

*cc (80) 22 concs minute 2 (extract)*



4. We have considered alternative courses, but reluctantly conclude that, should a negotiated settlement not prove possible, the only way to restore the authority of the legitimate government on Santo is for Britain and France jointly to deploy troops. We are therefore considering with the Ministry of Defence the precautionary despatch from the UK of sufficient forces (a battalion HQ and one Company of Royal Marine Commandos) to Vila to enable us to carry out a joint action with French troops (based nearby in Noumea) should this prove necessary. This would be consistent with the existing Joint Theatre Plan (known to the French), which provides for a joint operation with the French. Our troops would not be sufficient for a unilateral British action to restore order on Santo. Should this be necessary at a later stage they would need to be reinforced. But their presence in Vila would steady the nerve of the government, encourage Stephens to negotiate seriously and discourage a colon-inspired coup in the capital: a possibility which the French take seriously.

5. M Dijoud has expressed his willingness to consider whatever next steps are necessary should our latest initiative come to nothing. I have invited him to London for talks early next week. By then it should be clear whether or not Stephens has shown himself willing to accept the restoration of the central government's authority on Santo. If he has not done so, I would propose to inform M Dijoud that we are ready to activate our contingency plans and send troops to Vila. We should then be in a position to carry out a security action with French forces should this prove necessary.

6. I am copying this minute to members of OD and Sir Robert Armstrong.

P.A.R.B.

6 June 1980



## NEW HEBRIDES CONDOMINIUM

### ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. Independence is planned for 30 July 1980. We and French now accept this date.
2. Until independence Britain and France remain jointly responsible for internal security. The British and French Resident Commissioners in Vila each have two 30-man platoons of riot trained police mobile units (PMUs) for this purpose. The ordinary police force is controlled by the New Hebrides Government (NHG).
3. Since he lost local elections in November 1979 Stephens, leader of secessionist Na Griamel movement, has been threatening militant action. On 28 May he took over Santo island with aid of 40 French colons (mostly half-castes). Stephens also has support of Right Wing American Phoenix Foundation which aims to create a base for dubious business operations.
4. Reliable reports from Santo difficult to obtain. But clear that Stephens is in complete control on the ground. New Hebrides Government District Commissioner and 8 policemen have been detained, and police station ransacked. Some 2,000 people, including 104 non New Hebrideans (21 Britons) have been evacuated in an exercise organised by British Resident Commissioner.
5. On 30 May NHG formally appealed for help from Britain and France to quell the rebellion. The Minister of State, Mr Blaker, met responsible French Minister M Dijoud in Paris on 2 June (M Dijoud had been unable to agree to an earlier meeting). M Dijoud refused to contemplate the use of force at this stage. He insisted on a further appeal to both sides to renew political talks begun in London in March. It was agreed that we would press the Chief Minister to offer concessions (conditional on the restoration of his authority on Santo). The French would exert pressure on Stephens, who had until recently at least their tacit support.



6. The two Ministers reaffirmed their support for the legitimate government and the Independence Constitution agreed by all parties in Vila last year. They also reaffirmed their determination to safeguard the territorial integrity of the Condominium

7. Mr Blaker made a statement in the House of Commons along these lines on 3 June. The statement was agreed with the French, who rejected our suggestion that we should set a deadline by which negotiations must be re-started.

8. On 3 June we instructed our Resident Commissioner to act accordingly, while coordinating his actions with his French colleague to ensure that he kept his part of the bargain. While we think the Chief Minister will be prepared to make an offer of concessions, it appears highly unlikely that the pre-conditions will be met.

9. On 5 June, the Chief Minister broadcast an appeal for renewed discussions with Stephens. He offered those concessions which we had agreed with the French, on condition that the authority of his government should be restored on Santo. He gave Stephens 24 hours to reply.

10. Stephens has not yet reacted to this message. But in response to an earlier appeal from the Chief Minister, he claims to have released his hostages (although they are still on Santo) and has offered to negotiate, on condition that the talks take place on Santo in the presence of Mr Blaker and M Dijoud.

# CONFIDENTIAL

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DESKBY 040600Z (ALL ADDRESSEES)

FM VILA (NFT) JUN 80

TO IMMEDIATE MODUK ARMY

TELEGRAM NO 348 OF 4 JUNE.

AND TO MODUK AIR ACDS OPS AND DMO

INFO FCO

FOR MODUK (ARMY) MODUK(RAF)

ACDS OPS AND DMO FROM GUTHRIE

SIC 13D

INFO FCO (REF TELNO 246 OF 2 JUNE).

NEW HEBRIDES.

1. THE CURRENT THREAT IS TWO FOLD. FIRST, IN SANTO SOME 800 ISLANDERS ARE IN REVOLT. THOUGH POSSESSING SOME FIREARMS IN THE MAIN THEY ARE ARMED WITH SPEARS, CLUBS? BOWS AND ARROWS. THERE IS A HARD CORE OF SOME 40 FRENCH NATIONALS, MOSTLY COLONS OF MIXED BLOOD, SOME WITH MILITARY EXPERIENCE WHO MIGHT WELL RELISH FIRING ON A WEAK BRITISH FORCE.
2. SECONDLY, THOUGH THE REST OF THE NEW HEBRIDES IS CURRENTLY QUIET THERE IS A DANGER OF UNREST SPREADING BEYOND SANTO AND VIOLENT DEMONSTRATIONS OCCURRING ON OTHER ISLANDS AND IN PARTICULAR IN VILA ITSELF.
3. THE THREAT COULD WELL CHANGE QUICKLY. THE SITUATION DETERIORATING IN VILA AND FRANCOPHONE SYMPATHISERS THREATENING STABILITY IN OTHER ISLANDS.
4. IN VIEW OF THE CURRENT THREAT AN ASSAULT ON SANTO BY THE BRITISH ALONE SHOULD BE IN BATTALION STRENGTH. THE RISKS IN USING A SMALLER FORCE WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE. THE ASSAULT FORCE WOULD SEIZE AND HOLD FOR AS LONG AS NECESSARY:
  - A. AIRFIELD
  - B. POLICE STATION
  - C. GOVERNMENT OFFICES
  - D. PORT
  - E. INSURGENTS HQ AND RADIO STATIONIT IS UNLIKELY THAT MANY OF THE RINGLEADERS WHO WOULD FLEE INTO THE JUNGLE WOULD BE DETAINED. THE BATTALION COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO ROUND THEM UP. ONCE KEY POINTS HAD BEEN SEIZED THE ASSAULT FORCE COULD BE REDUCED IN SIZE. POLICE COULD REASSUME CONTROL.
5. THE ASSAULT COULD BE DONE FROM THE SEA OR BY PARACHUTE. I DISCOUNT AN INITZAL AIR LANDING AS SANTO AIRFIELDS ARE HELD AND HAVE BEEN BLOCKED BY OIL DRUMS. IF BY SEA AN ADEQUATE FLOTILLA OF ASSORTED LOCAL BOATS COULD BE ASSEMBLED. THERE ARE A VARIETY OF OPTIONS OPEN FOR EMBARKING FROM NEARBY ISLANDS AND DISEMBARKING ON SANTO WHICH I AM INVESTIGATING.

*Read in full (a military assessment).*

*ms.*

CONFIDENTIAL

*16.*



6. IF BY PARACHUTE THERE IS MORE THAN ONE POSSIBLE DZ AND ONCE AN AIRFIELD IS SEIZED AIRLANDING COULD FOLLOW. I WILL OVERFLY DZS LATER TODAY. UNTIL I HAVE DONE A MORE DETAILED RECCE I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO ADVISE ON THE PREFERRED METHOD OF ASSAULT BUT BOTH ARE CERTAINLY FEASIBLE.

7. IF AN ANGLO/FRENCH FORCE ASSAULTED SANTO I WOULD THINK THE BRITISH COMPONENT COULD BE REDUCED TO A COMPANY.

8. NOBODY SHOULD BE UNDER ANY ILLUSION THAT FRENCH NATIONALS COULD BE SHOT IF A BRITISH FORCE ASSAULTED SANTO.

9. IF A BRITISH ASSAULT ON SANTO IS UNACCEPTABLE AT PRESENT AND JOINT BRITISH/FRENCH ACTION CANNOT BE AGREED AS A PRECAUTION TROOPS COULD BE MOVED TO VILA. IF TROOPS WERE AT VILA THEY WOULD:

- A. BE SEEN TO BE DOING SOMETHING BY THE BASICALLY TIMID MELANESIAN
- B. BE ABLE TO ACCLIMATIZE. THE EFFECTS OF THE JOURNEY SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED.
- C. BE ABLE TO PLAN FUTURE OPERATIONS AND POSSIBLE ASSAULT ON SANTO.
- D. BE ABLE TO BACK UP THE LOCAL POLICE WHO WILL QUICKLY COME UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE IF THE SECURITY SITUATION DETERIORATES.
- E. CAN BE ON THE GROUND AND BE IN A POSITION TO REACT QUICKLY. THE FRENCH AT NOUMEA COULD BE IN VILA IN 5 HOURS.

10. I AM ASSURED THAT THE PRESENCE OF TROOPS ON VILA WOULD REDUCE TENSION AS OPPOSED TO INFLAMING THE LOCALS.

11. IF THIS ALTERNATIVE TO AN ASSAULT ON SANTO WAS THOUGHT DESIRABLE - AND IT IS BY THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER - A BATTALION HQ AND TWO COMPANIES WOULD BE SUFFICIENT. ADEQUATE ACCOMMODATION CAN BE ARRANGED AT VILA. IF THE SITUATION REMAINED THE SAME ON SANTO AND AN ASSAULT AT A LATER DATE BECAME NECESSARY BY THE BRITISH ALONE THE REMAINDER OF THE UNIT CONCERNED COULD REINFORCE. FURTHERMORE THERE WOULD BE A CHANCE THAT WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME THE SUPPORT FOR AND RESOLUTION OF JIMMY STEVENS AND HIS SUPPORTERS WOULD WANE AND THE BATTALION HQ AND TWO COMPANIES MIGHT WELL BE ABLE TO SEIZE SANTO KEY POINTS BY THEMSELVES.

12. IF THIS SECOND COURSE OF SENDING TROOPS TO VILA WAS DEEMED PREFERABLE TO ASSAULTING SANTO RAF ADVISER'S INITIAL FEELING WHICH WILL BE CONFIRMED TODAY IS THAT VC10 CAN LAND AT VILA SUBJECT TO PERFORMANCE LIMITATION. C130 WOULD BE REQUIRED TO REMAIN IN THEATRE TO MOVE TROOPS FROM VILA TO NEARBY ISLANDS IF REQUIRED.

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| 13

## CONFIDENTIAL

13. AFTER A MORE DETAILED RECCE OF THE ISLANDS WHICH WILL INCLUDE AIRSTRIPS I WILL SIGNAL AGAIN.

14. IF IT WAS DECIDED TO DEPLOY INITIALLY A FORCE TO VILA AND THE ASSAULT ON SANTO WAS RULED OUT FOR THE TIME BEING ON PURELY OPERATIONAL GROUNDS AND I STRESS PURELY OPERATIONAL GROUNDS THERE WOULD BE MERIT IN THE "IN ROLE" PARAS BEING DEPLOYED EVEN THOUGH THEIR ARRIVAL WOULD BE SLOWER THAN IN SPEARHEAD BATTALIONS. THE SEA LANDING ON SANTO IS NOT DIFFICULT AND WE WOULD KEEP OUR OPTIONS OPEN IF THE ASSAULT ON SANTO WAS ORDERED AT A LATER DATE.

15. I HAVE HAD THE GREATEST ASSISTANCE FROM THE BRITISH RESIDENCY. HOWEVER THEIR STAFF ARE LIMITED IN NUMBERS AND I WOULD RECOMMEND SENDING MILO AND AN AQ ADVISER ON THE FIRST AVAILABLE CIVIL AIRCRAFT.

IN ADDITION IT WOULD GREATLY ASSIST POLICE IF A GOOD YOUNG CAPTAIN COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ACT AS 2IC OF POLICE MOBILE UNIT FOR ONE MONTH. RESIDENT COMMISSIONER HAS ALREADY REQUESTED THIS IN TELEGRAM 326 OF 1 JUNE, PARA 5 TO FCO. THESE REQUESTS ARE STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER WITH WHOM I HAVE DISCUSSED THIS TELEGRAM.

STUART

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

DEPTL DISTN  
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SECURITY D  
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OPA  
CABINET OFFICE

E. R.

cc: Michael Alexander  
New Hebrides

PRIME MINISTER

told PLaidlaw on 3/6

MJ

New Hebrides

Three PNQ's about the mini-rebellion in the New Hebrides were tabled today: all were disallowed. As you will know, Mr. Blaker has been in Paris today discussing the issue with his French opposite number.

He would like to make a statement in the House tomorrow. Given the degree of interest which has been shown, I am sure that he is right to do so.

Content that there should be a Foreign Office statement on the New Hebrides tomorrow?

Yes not

MJ

2 June 1980

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GRPS 1620

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DESKBY FCO/PARIS 021100Z

FM VILA 020802Z JUN 80

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NO 332 OF 2 JUNE

INFO IMMEDIATE PARIS (FOR PS/MR BLAKER) MODJK (DS11 DOP'S)  
PRIORITY CANBERRA WELLINGTON WASHINGTON UKMIS NEW YORK SUVA  
HONIARA PORT MORESBY.

*Read in full*

NEW HEBRIDES: GENERAL APPRECIATION.

1. IT MAY BE WORTHWHILE TO HAVE MY THOUGHTS IN ADVANCE OF MR BLAKER'S MEETING WITH M DIJOU.
2. FROM THE CURRENT ATTITUDE OF THE FRENCH RESIDENCY, THAT THERE IS NO SUBSTANTIAL PROBLEM ON THE GROUND AND THAT ONE SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVERREACT, I WOULD GUESS THAT M DIJOU MAY TAKE THE LINE THAT, REGRETTABLE THOUGH THE EVENTS OF SANTO ARE,, THE ANSWER IS TO GET JIMMY STEVENS AND THE CHIEF MINISTER TOGETHER AGAIN TO WORK OUT A QUOTE MELANESIAN UNQUOTE SOLUTION. STEVENS HAS PROPOSED A MEETING IN A RADIO MESSAGE RELAYED FROM CUSTODY BY DALESA, (WHO ACCORDING TO REASONABLY RELIABLE BUT NOT EYE WITNESS REPORTS, WAS BEATEN TO MAKE HIM DO IT AND TAKEN TO THE FRENCH HOSPITAL) AND WE UNDERSTAND HE MAY BE PREPARING A COMMUNIQUE TO THIS EFFECT. DIJOU MAY PERHAPS URGE THAT MEANWHILE ANY THREAT OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS SHOULD BE AVOIDED SINCE THEY WOULD DAMAGE THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE WITHOUT ACHIEVING MUCH AND THAT THE THREAT OF USE OF MILITARY FORCE IS UNTHINKABLE.
3. ASSUMING TGAT WE ARE NOW PREPARED TO GO ALONG WITH THIS SCENARIO, THERE APPEAR FROM HERE TO BE THREE OPTIONS:-
  - (A) THE DIRECT USE OF MILITARY FORCE. LATEST REPORTS DISCOUNT WIDE DIRECT INVOLVEMENT BY FOREIGNERS OR USE OR THREAT OF FIREARMS IN THE EVENTS OF WEDNESDAY MORNING. NUMEROUS HALF-CASTES ARE HOWEVER NOW IN EVIDENCE IN CONTROLLING ACTIVITIES IN SANTO TOWN. I WILL DISCUSS MILITARY POSSIBILITIES WITH ADVISERS TOMORROW BUT I AM INCLINED AT THIS MOMENT TO DOWNGRADE THREAT OF EXTENSIVE RESISTANCE FROM WHITE SYMPATHISERS WITH FIREARMS. IF WE GO FOR THIS OPTION HOWEVER I ASSUME THAT IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL TO HAVE EITHER FRENCH PARTICIPATION OR AT LEAST ACQUIESCENCE. USE OF BRITISH FORCE AGAINST FRENCH CITIZENS IN FACE OF OPPOSITION OF FRENCH GOVERNMENT SEEMS POLITICALLY ALMOST UNTHINKABLE AND I HAVE TOLD AUSTRALIAN CONSUL AS MUCH.
  - (B) PRECAUTIONARY MOVEMENTS OF TROOPS. GIVEN THE UNCERTAIN ATMOSPHERE IN THE ISLANDS THE NEED TO BE SEEN TO BE DOING SOMETHING AND THE BASICALLY TIMID NATURE OF MELANESIANS, THERE MAY BE SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR SENDING SOME FORCES (SAY TWO COMPANIES, BEST OF ALL IN A SHIP) DIRECT TO VILA BUT WITHOUT ORDERS AT THE MOMENT TO TAKE ACTION IN SANTO. EVEN IF THE FRENCH

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DECLINED TO JOIN THIS, WE COULD EXPLAIN OUR UNILATERAL PRESENCE AS BEING NO MORE THREATENING THAN THE STAND-TO OF FRENCH UNITS IN NOUMEA, SINCE WE HAVE NO HANDY BASE OF OUR OWN. UNDER THE VISIBLE THREAT OF BRITISH FORCES (IN WHICH THREAT EVERYONE IN THE NEW HEBRIDES NOW BELIEVES, WHILE THEY HAVE NO SUCH BELIEF IN A FRENCH THREAT ACCOMPANIED BY ECONOMIC MEASURES (SEE C) BELOW), IT IS POSSIBLE THAT POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS COULD GET UNDER WAY, WHICH WOULD BE MORE THAN THE MERE REITERATION OF THE EXTREMISTS ULTIMATE DEMANDS. SUCH A PRECAUTIONARY AND WARNING PRESENCE WOULD ALSO DOUBTLESS HELP OUR IMAGE IN THE ANGLOPHONE PACIFIC. A RISK WOULD HOWEVER BE THAT SINCE WE WOULD PRESUMABLY HAVE TO ASSURE THE FRENCH THAT THE FORCE WAS NOT THERE WITH THE INTENTION OF USING IT, IT MIGHT BECOME KNOWN TO THE OPPOSITION THAT IT WAS A PAPER TIGER.

(C) ECONOMIC, ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL PRESSURES ON THE EXTREMISTS TO NEGOTIATE. WITH THE TANKER DIVERTED THERE IS ENOUGH PETROL IN SANTO FOR FOUR WEEKS NORMAL USE AND TWO MONTHS DIESEL. WITHOUT OVERT CONNIVANCE OF THE FRENCH, IT MAY BE DIFFICULT TO RESTOCK. THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION PROBABLY DO NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO CHARTER TANKERS. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN THE TOWN WILL ALSO INEVITABLY DECLINE. THE MAIN FRENCH DEPARTMENT STORE CLOSED LAST WEEK AND REMOVED ITS STOCK (THUS PROMPTING ACCUSATIONS OF PRIOR KNOWLEDGE, THOUGH THE REASONS WERE PROBABLY TRADE LOSSES). THE AUSTRALIAN BURNS PHILP HAS, UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE GOVERNMENT, AGREED TO RESTRICT ITS SALES TO FOOD, WHICH WILL ANYWAY SOON RUN OUT IF THE HARBOUR IS KEPT EMPTY. BARCLAYS BANK HAS BEEN PERSUADED TO CLOSE AND TRANSFER ITS ACCOUNTS TO VILA. THE OTHER MAIN BANK (THE FRENCH BANQUE DE L'INDOCHINE ET SUEZ) IS HOWEVER STAYING OPEN FOR CASH TRANSACTIONS. WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND PEOPLE FROM OTHER ISLANDS WHO HAVE LIVED IN SANTO TOWN, ECONOMIC LIFE MAY WELL SLOW DOWN CONSIDERABLY IN THE SHORT RUN.

NEVERTHELESS I DOUBT IF THIS DECLINE WOULD BE ENOUGH TO BRING ABOUT REAL NEGOTIATIONS. THE BUSHMEN FOLLOWERS OF STEVENS, AND EVEN THE COLONS, LARGELY LIVE OFF THE LAND, AND ON BALANCE I CONSIDER THAT A PROMISE OF NEGOTIATIONS THROUGH SANCTIONS WOULD PROBABLY BE FALSIFIED. IT WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE BELIEVED. LINI KNOWS ALL ABOUT RHODESIAN UDI AND QUOTE WEEKS RATHER THAN MONTHS UNQUOTE.

4. IN THE LONGER TERM TIME IS PROBABLY NOT ON THE NHG'S SIDE, BECAUSE OF THE EXTERNAL FACTOR. IN THIS SANTO IS DIFFERENT FROM PNG'S BOUGAINVILLE AND THE WESTERN SOLOMONS. IT WOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT FOR SANTO, WITH ITS 15,000 POPULATION, TO SURVIVE, EVEN TO PROSPER AS AN ECONOMIC SEMI-DEPENDENCY OF NEW CALEDONIA, WITH FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL HELP FROM THE PHOENIX FOUNDATION. THE FRENCH HAVE ALREADY SUGGESTED A CONSUL IN SANTO AND REGIONALLY DIRECTED AID. THIS WOULD PRESUMABLY BE INTENSIFIED.

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5. WHAT WOULD SUFFER FROM THIS WOULD BE THE RESIDUAL NEW HEBRIDES.  
[SIC] THE FRENCH MIGHT WELL AGREE TO CONTINUE SUBSTANTIAL AID TO THE  
RUM FOR FRENCH EDUCATION IN ORDER TO PROTECT FRANCOPHONIE AND  
BUY ACQUIESCENCE TO A CONFEDERAL (IE COSMETIC ONLY) LINK  
WITH SANTO. BUT THE NHG IS ALREADY WILTING UNDER ALL THIS  
PRESSURE TO THE POINT WHERE I DOUBT WHETHER IT AND THE RESIDUAL  
UNITY OF THE NEW HEBRIDES COULD LONG SURVIVE. MOREOVER WITH  
EITHER AN INDEPENDENT SANTO OR A LOOSE CONFEDERATION THE NEW  
HEBRIDES WOULD BE EVEN MORE ECONOMICALLY UNVIABLE THAN IT  
IS AT PRESENT AND WE MIGHT BE STUCK WITH BUDGETARY AID INDEFINITELY.
6. MY HARD CONCLUSION IS THAT IF WE CANNOT GET OPTION (A)  
THEN WE SHOULD AT LEAST HOLD OUT FOR (B) COUPLED WITH  
(C).

STUART

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MR STRATTON  
MR DONALD  
MR ADAMS

COPIES TO:-  
MR A R SOWERDUTTS  
JIC ASSESSMENT STAFF  
CABINET OFFICE



2

10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

Lord Carrington mentioned to you yesterday that there is a problem in the New Hebrides. This may get some publicity over the weekend.

I attach the draft of a Foreign Office paper for OD which explains what is going on.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MAD'.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'MAD'.

30 May 1980

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr Stratton

PS/PUS

PS

NEW HEBRIDES SECURITY SITUATION

1. Mr Blaker has asked for an OD paper to be prepared on the situation in the New Hebrides following the attempted secession on the island of Santo.
2. I submit a draft.

C M CARRUTHERS  
South Pacific Department

30 May 1980

cc: PS/LPS  
PS/Mr Blaker

Mr Pattison, No 10 Downing Street  
(At request of APS/Mr Blaker)



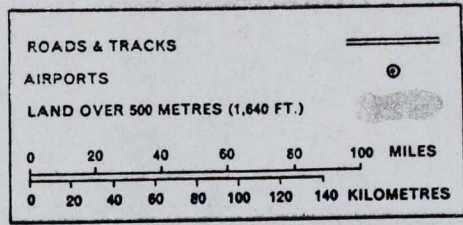
FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

MAY 1980

# The New Hebrides

166°E.

TORRES ISLANDS  
 VANUA LAVA BANKS  
 GAUA I. (SANTA MARIA) ISLANDS



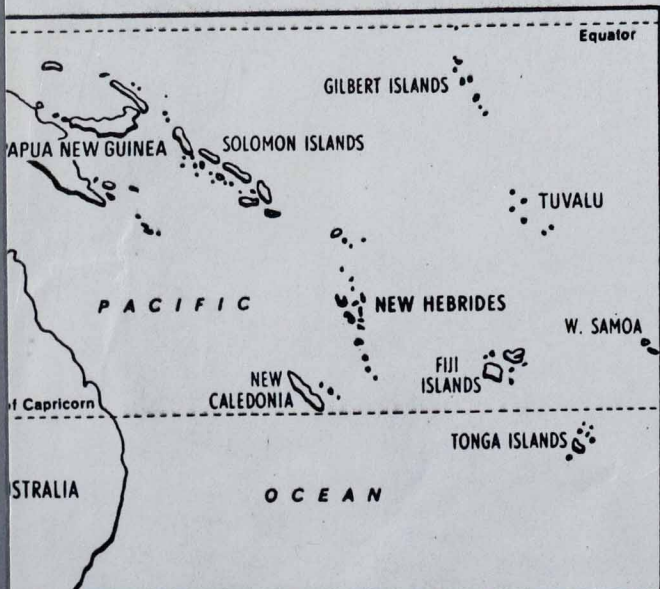
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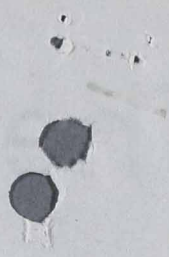
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ANEITYUM

Newspaper



30 MAY 1960  
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OD( )

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CABINET  
DEFENCE AND OVERSEAS POLICY COMMITTEE  
NEW HEBRIDES SECURITY SITUATION

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs

- A
1. The New Hebrides is an Anglo/French Condominium in the South Pacific established by a Protocol of 1914. It will receive independence during 1980 by virtue of the provisions of an Exchange of Notes between the British and French Governments dated 23 October 1979 (copy attached).
  2. The New Hebrides Government has formally proposed that the date of independence should be 30 July 1980. Her Majesty's Government are ready to accept this date and are seeking the agreement of the French Government.
  3. Until independence, the British and French Governments remain jointly responsible for the internal security of the Condominium. The British and French Resident Commissioners in Vila have two platoons each of riot trained police mobile units (PMUs) for this purpose. The PMUs are separate from the ordinary police force which is the responsibility of the New Hebrides Government.
  4. On 28 May an insurrection occurred on the Island of Santo in the north of the archipelago (copy attached). The rebellion was led by the Santo based Na Griamel movement, whose President, Mr Jimmy Stephens, has long harboured illusions of separate independence for Santo. Mr Stephens has in the past received support from the American Phoenix Foundation, which aims to create a base, free from governmental control, from which to pursue dubious business operations.
- B

[CONFIDENTIAL].

5. Reliable reports from Santo are difficult to obtain, but it is clear that the extremists are in complete control on the ground. The New Hebrides Government's Deputy Commissioner has been arrested, the Government police force in Santo have been detained and their police station ransacked. The airport, harbour and radio-station are in extremist control.
6. On 30 May, the New Hebrides Government formally requested assistance from Britain and France to quell the rebellion. The Minister of State, Mr Blaker, will be meeting the responsible French Minister, M. Dijoud, in Paris on Monday 2 June to discuss developments and to consider how we should jointly respond to the New Hebrides Government's request. At the request of the British Resident Commissioner in Vila, two military advisers (in civilian clothes) will leave this weekend for Vila to provide the Resident Commissioner with expert military advice.
7. The total strength of the British and French PMUs is 120 men (60 under British command and 60 under French command). Both we and the French consider that a PMU operation against the extremists could not be successfully launched without the support of troop reinforcements (which would need to be provided from the UK, and on the French side, from their garrison in New Caledonia).
8. Despite this request for assistance from the metropolitan governments, the New Hebrides Chief Minister appears keen to find a solution to the problem by peaceful negotiations with the extremists. The Chief Minister and the British and French Resident Commissioners believe the situation in Santo will remain unchanged over the next few days while all concerned explore the possibility of talks.
9. After Mr Blaker has seen M. Dijoud on 2 June, I shall invite my colleagues to consider what action may be necessary, either jointly with the French Government or unilaterally, to honour our obligation to maintain law and order in the country and bring the rebellion to an end.

C. DITrade <sup>New Hebrides</sup>  
LPSO  
MOD  
HMT  
ECO  
HO

BK



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

5 December 1979

New Hebrides Independence


The Prime Minister has seen the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's memorandum of 29 November on this subject. She agrees, subject to the views of her colleagues that necessary legislation to provide for the requirements in paragraph 6 of the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's memorandum should be introduced in Parliament.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to the members of OD and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

George Walden, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

15

  
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Ref. A0842

PRIME MINISTER  

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New Hebrides Independence

(OD(79) 42)

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's memorandum seeks agreement for the introduction, in the current Session, of legislation for such amendment of United Kingdom enactments as will be required if the New Hebrides should join the Commonwealth after reaching independence in April or May 1980. The granting of independence will not itself require legislation.

2. This Amending Bill would follow a well established pattern and should be short and non-controversial. The New Hebrides' status as an Anglo-French co-dominion is unusual but the French at official level now expect the country to apply to join the Commonwealth. It would not prevent it joining francophone associations also.

3. The memorandum also serves to inform the Committee of the Conference on the future of the New Hebrides held with the French in September this year; of the subsequent Exchange of Notes agreeing to grant independence and of the General Election won by the Anglophone party almost certain to seek Commonwealth membership.

4. I recommend that you express agreement, subject to the views of your colleagues, to the proposal made by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary. The Lord Privy Seal has written separately to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster about the timing of the introduction of the Bill.



(Robert Armstrong)

4th December, 1979

vb

New  
Hebrides

3 September 1979

I am writing to acknowledge Stephen Wall's letter to me of 21 August about the composition of the party for the New Hebrides Constitutional Conference. The Prime Minister is content with these arrangements.

MAP

R.M.J. Lyne, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

A. V. L.





Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

31 August 1979

*Dear Mike,*

NEW HEBRIDES CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

*Min 2/3 file* 2  
In my letter to you of 15 August about Mr Blaker's visit to the New Hebrides, and subsequent tour of certain ASEAN countries, I undertook to write again about the composition of the official party for the New Hebrides Constitutional Conference. The dates for the Conference (17 to 19 September) have already been agreed with the French Government. Lord Carrington and the Prime Minister have agreed that Mr Blaker should attend. He will be joined in Vila by his French colleague, M Dijoud.

We have agreed with the French that officials from London and Paris should meet in Vila for one week immediately before the Conference to prepare the ground for Ministers. There is a considerable amount of preliminary work to be done if the Conference is to set the seal on an Independence Constitution.

Lord Carrington proposes that three officials should travel to Vila to support Mr Blaker: Mr Ridgway (New Hebrides Desk Officer) and Mr Hendry (Legal Adviser) would leave London on 6 September, arriving in Vila on 9 September in time for the preparatory officials' meeting; Mr Snodgrass (head of South Pacific Department) would leave London on 13 September, arriving in Vila on 16 September.

A provisional booking has also been made for Mr Cortazzi, Deputy Under Secretary of State, to travel to Vila with Mr Blaker should serious difficulties arise between now and the Conference.

*Yas ever,*  
*Stephen*  
(J S Wall)

Mike Pattison Esq  
10 Downing Street

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

31 AUG 1979

