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PRIME MINISTER

Bill for the Separation of Anguilla from St. Kitts-Nevis
(OD(80) 32)

In this memorandum the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary seeks the agreement of his OD colleagues by 2nd April to the introduction of legislation to facilitate Anguillan separation in Parliament in the current session.

2. The reason for urgency in this matter is set out in paragraph 7 of the memorandum. A failure to meet the commitment to formal separation this year could cause the overthrow in Anguilla of the present Chief Minister, Mr. Gumbs by his predecessor, Mr. Webster whose addiction to violence in such circumstances could be a matter of embarrassment to the Government. This problem has arisen for the reasons set out in paragraph 6 of the memorandum.

3. Apart from the Attorney General, who may wish to make some technical points, I do not believe that any members of OD will disagree with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's proposal. But it may be difficult to find time for the addition of this Bill to this session's very crowded programme. You may therefore care to tell the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary that (subject to any points raised by other OD members), while you agree to his proposal in principle, the timing of any legislation will need to be discussed with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Acting Leader of the House of Lords in the light of the pressure on the legislative programme. If necessary the matter should be brought to the Legislation Committee for consideration.

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CDL's comments attached

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

31st March 1980

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