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21 December 1981

CABINET

DEFENCE AND OVERSEA POLICY COMMITTEE

POWERS OF DIRECTION OVER PORTS

Note by the Secretaries

In the event it was not possible to proceed with the meeting of the Committee arranged for 17 December to discuss the memorandum by the Secretary of State for Defence (OD(81) 56) about reserved powers of direction over ports in the United Kingdom; but it was agreed that the matter need not be brought back for discussion at a later meeting if it could be resolved by further consultation between the Secretary of State for Defence and the Secretary of State for Transport.

2. As a result of this further consultation, the Secretary of State for Defence and the Secretary of State for Transport have now agreed that reserve powers of direction in the interests of national defence should be provided in the Transport Bill due to be introduced in Parliament in January 1982; that these powers should be similar to those provided by Section 27(6) of the Transport Act 1962 but extended to all ports in the United Kingdom; that no penal provisions should be included; and that before the Transport Bill is given its First Reading, which on present plans should not be earlier than 28 January, there should be consultations with the ports authorities.

Signed ROBERT ARMSTRONG
R L WADE-GERY
R L L FACER

Cabinet Office

21 December 1981

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