

BACKGROUND NOTE

FALKLANDS

UN AS TEMPORARY ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY

1. On 19 April Mr Healey suggested that the UN provide a temporary Administrator after Argentine forces had left the Falklands. Though similar arrangements were mooted for Trieste and Jerusalem in 1947, the only actual precedent for the UN acting as temporary administering authority is West Irian. In 1961 UN initiated discussions leading to agreement between the Netherlands and Indonesia to transfer the administration of West Irian to a UN Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) under the Secretary-General who was to appoint a UN Administrator with discretion to transfer all or part of the administration of the territory to Indonesia at any point after 1 May 1963. This Agreement, which was endorsed by a Resolution of the General Assembly, also contained certain guarantees for the population including provisions for the exercise of the right of self-determination before the end of 1969. UNTEA took over the administration in October 1962 and sovereignty was transferred to Indonesia in May 1963. The 1969 plebiscite pronounced in favour of Indonesia, though its conduct was much criticised.

2. In the House of Commons on 14 April Mr Healey also referred to the 1947 crisis in the Dutch East Indies though here the UN did not act as Administering Authority but in its role as mediator. The UN Security Council established a Good Offices Committee leading in 1948 to a truce between Indonesia and the Netherlands which broke down. In January 1949 the Security Council called for the transfer of sovereignty to the Republic of Indonesia and the Good Offices Committee, renamed the United Nations Commission for Indonesia, was asked to assist the parties in implementing the resolution. Round table talks, facilitated by the Commission, agreed on a cease fire and the withdrawal of Dutch troops was supervised by UN military observers. A further round table conference (Netherlands/Indonesia/

/ UN Commission)



UN Commission) in August 1949 drew up a Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty and transfer took place in December 1949. The question of West Irian was held over.