



CDP  
314.

FCS/85/86

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT

Carriage of Aid Cargoes to India

1. Thank you for your letter of 27 March.

2. As I understand it the problem is not one of getting the Indians to agree to abide by the aid agreements. They have made it clear in writing that they understand and accept the shipping clause. The problem is rather one of getting them to accept that the agreement is not being respected at the operating level. I hope that the evidence now being passed over by our High Commission will convince them that something must be done.

3. Accordingly I propose that you might add the following to the "line to take":

"Pleased that you recognise the need to abide by the agreement. Could you ensure that the parastatals and other organisations concerned who have been regrettably lax hitherto, are instructed to follow the agreement".

However I do not believe that the fifth supplementary point is relevant. As I made plain in paragraph 4 of my minute of 20 March I doubt whether there would be any advantage to the UK in threatening to take, let alone taking, action under S14 of the Merchant Shipping Act. I therefore propose that your "Supplementary Point 5" should read:

/"I cannot



"I cannot accept that you would not be able to abide by the provisions of your aid agreements. I shall have to review the options open to me, and I shall consult my colleagues about our further response to this situation".

I very much hope you would only consider using this point in the unlikely event that the Indians categorically reject our position. I am sure you have in mind the importance of avoiding a row with the Indians on this issue on the eve of the Prime Minister's visit.

4. I am copying this minute to the Prime Minister and to our colleagues on MISC 19.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

(GEOFFREY HOWE)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
3 April 1985

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