

C 1179.

S E C R E T

COPY No. 25

C A B I N E T M I N U T E

Canberra, 30th April, 1962.

Decision No. 188

Submission No. 159 - Australian Participation in Counter-Communist Activity in South-East Asia.

The Cabinet accepted the need for continued Australian participation in assistance programmes to counter Communist activity in South-East Asia and to maintain the Western alignment of our Asian allies. It approved the following measures:-

- (a) announcement at an early date of an offer of a further £A3 million, for aid to the SEATO and Protocol States;
- (b) expenditure in the remainder of the current financial year, as may be found necessary, of an amount not exceeding £50,000 additional to the amount provided in the vote for 1961-62, the Minister for External Affairs in consultation with the Minister for Defence to approach the Treasurer on an ad hoc basis for the necessary additional funds;
- (c) the unexpended balance at 30th June, 1962, of the present programme for SEATO aid (approximately £500,000) to be considered an addition to the amount of £3 million in (a), making a total of approximately £3.5 million against which future expenditure can be provided to cover the completion of existing projects and the new programme envisaged;
- (d) this aid is to be made available through appropriate annual amounts not exceeding £1,000,000 to be used for assistance to the Asian members of SEATO and the Protocol States of the following categories:

868
~~851~~

Australian Archives

A4940/1

C4642

Australian programme to counter communist pressure in SEATO area

Decision No. 188 (Continued)

- (i) assistance of a defence support nature, including training, with the agreement of the Minister for Defence;
- (ii) civil aid and technical assistance which it is desirable to grant under SEATO auspices;
- (iii) weapons and munitions, subject to the agreement of the Minister for Defence in accordance with principles laid down by Cabinet in its Decision 100 of 1950 on Export of Arms, and in consultation with the United States military authorities.

2. The Cabinet did not approve the proposal that the necessary appropriation be provided within the Estimates of the Department of External Affairs. It indicated that the appropriation should continue to be part of the Estimates of the Department of Defence, though as an addition to the vote which will be determined from year to year for the defence programme following the normal submissions by the Minister for Defence.

3. The administrative arrangements envisaged by the Cabinet were that the projects should be developed by the Minister and Department of External Affairs. The Minister for Defence would continue to be consulted on projects of defence significance or of defence support nature, and other Departments would be consulted where it is appropriate that they should be informed of or give advice on particular projects. However, since the appropriation will remain with the Department of Defence, there will need to be arrangements which recognise the responsibility of that Department for financial programming and control.

Certified true copy

A. J. Bunting

Secretary to Cabinet.

Australian Archives

A4940/1

C4642

Australian programme to counter communist pressure in SEATO area

869
852