

Telegram from the Commonwealth Relations Office on internal security matters after Malayan independence (London, 23 August 1957)

Caption: In a telegram dated 23 August 1957, the Commonwealth Relations Office examines the question of responsibility for internal security in Malaya after the country's independence. The Federation of Malaya will be wholly responsible for the country's internal security; Commonwealth forces will only intervene in exceptional circumstances or to protect nationals of a Commonwealth country.

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Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office

TO: U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN AUSTRALIA
U.K. HIGH COMMISSIONER IN NEW ZEALAND

RPTD: KUALA LUMPUR
COMMISSIONER-GENERAL SINGAPORE (VIA FOREIGN OFFICE)

(Sent 21.30 hours, 23rd August 1957)

CYPHER

IMMEDIATE

No. 1218 }
No. 559 } SECRET

Addressed U.K. High Commissioners in Canberra No. 1218 and Wellington No. 559, repeated Kuala Lumpur No. 84 and Commissioner-General Singapore.

My immediately preceding telegram. 175

M A L A Y A

Following is text of proposed Directive

As from August 31st, when the Federation of Malaya achieves independence within the Commonwealth, the Federation Government will become wholly responsible for internal security matters. Overseas Commonwealth forces will not, therefore, be used on normal security operations to maintain law and order.

2. Should exceptional circumstances arise in which a specific request was received from the Federation Government for the assistance of overseas Commonwealth forces in maintaining law and order, any such request should at once be referred to the Commanders-in-Chief, Far East, and to the United Kingdom High Commissioner in the Federation. It would be the duty of the latter immediately to inform his Australian and New Zealand colleagues.

3. Overseas Commonwealth Naval, Land and Air Forces may, however, be used to protect the lives of their nationals in the event of an emergency in which they are endangered, whether or not a request for assistance is received from the Federation Government. Unless the emergency is so serious that time does not permit, the agreement of the United Kingdom High Commissioner (who would in turn consult his Australian and New Zealand colleagues) and the Commanders-in-Chief, Far East must be sought before action is taken. In any case the action being taken is to be reported without delay to the High Commissioner and to the Commanders-in-Chief, Far East.

4. For the purposes of the directive, the definition of "nationals" in paragraph 3 above is:-

- (a) Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies, Australia and New Zealand, provided they are not also citizens of Malaya.
 - (b) The families and dependants of members of the overseas Commonwealth forces.
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Copy to:-

D.II

Colonial Office
M/Defence

Mr. Hennings
Mr. Hosie
Secretary, C.O.S. Committee

Copy to Foreign Office (Telegram Section) for retransmission to
Commissioner-General Singapore.

MALAYA DEPT.
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