

~~SECRET AMBLE~~

Ref. No: 2601/005

Date : 22/3/54

CONTROL OF MCP SEARCH

Director.

It is submitted that responsibility for the control of MCP search should pass from D.S.B. to an appropriate authority in or the Federation. There are operational, practical and political reasons in support of such a change.

The problem is essentially a tactical one and has been characterised by periods of quiet but fruitless search enlivened by periods of great local but abortive activity. During these latter phases, the tempo of events has not admitted of the delays inherent in control at a distance and Singapore has correctly taken the initiative at these times.

Resources available, with the exception of portion of the AMF detachment at are entirely and are undoubtedly not as robust as anyone could wish. One assumes however that their magnitude is proportional to the priority accorded to the problem by the Home authorities.

The matter is further complicated by local politics played by the Federation and Colony authorities and it is clear that the house is by no means in order and that this is hindering the effort. A signal from GGO addressed to D.S.B. and said "Federation ... are critical enough of our thoroughness and interest as it is" to which replied "Fully agree". For D.S.B. to be brought into disrepute with any authority in the Far East through circumstances beyond its control is not very satisfactory from an Australian point of view.

It is submitted that D.S.B. responsibility should be limited to:-

- (a) Agreeing with what Australian resources should be permanently allotted to this problem and what additional resources under D.S.B. control should be made available in an emergency.
- (b) Provision of technical advice.
- (c) Backstop processing.

A.N.S.
MS.

p.s. Pls see para 3 CCMG's 20/200/3

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