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1 ELW

a/p, n/c
Mr Simons, SEAD

cc Mr Cortazzi or

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2) N Goldsmith
3) N Jones: 622
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PORTUGUESE TIMOR

1. Michael Cooke came on the 'phone urgently this afternoon.
2. He had had a telegraphic request from Canberra saying they would be interested to know the extent to which we would be anxious to protect Indonesia's interests.
3. He did not know if this was a "mindless question" but guessed that it might be in the hope we would say that we were keen so to do.
4. I told him that:
 - (a) our object was to get as little involved as possible, although
 - (b) our Presidency of the Security Council made this less easy than we would wish. It seemed likely that the Security Council would address the problem on Wednesday
 - (c) we would not want to put the Indonesians in the dock; but
 - (d) we might need to express concern
 - (e) pragmatically it might seem to us that the best end result would be incorporation of Portuguese Timor in Indonesia; but the way in which this was being brought about was not desirable
 - (f) our Mission in New York was discussing tactics with the Australians, Americans and The Nine and we would wish to be guided by them
 - (g) he would know (he didn't) that Guinea-Bissau had introduced shocking amendments to the consensus resolution which was being discussed yesterday; and that as a result the sponsors were likely to withdraw it. This would not prevent Guinea-Bissau, Tanzania and Mozambique et al from introducing their own variant
 - (h) distant as we were from the scene of action in Portuguese Timor, it would suit us well to align ourselves with an acceptable Australian line, if they evolve one.
5. Mr Cooke's belief was that the Australian Government in public were expressing concern, distress, etc; but that they

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were not unduly concerned by the turn of events. This of course was a purely personal view.

Pm.

P J E Male

9 December 1975

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