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MR. ALEXANDER

Convention Against the Taking of Hostages Bill

In his memorandum (OD(81) 19) the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary invites his colleagues, by their silence, to agree that the Government should enact by the end of 1981 a Bill to ratify the United Nations Hostages Convention.

2. The grounds he adduces for undertaking this legislation and for going so soon are uncontroversial and compelling. QL has agreed (QL(81) 2nd Meeting) that this Bill should be included in the 1981-82 Programme and that it should be taken early, provided that the Opposition agree (as they very likely will) to having the Second Reading in Committee. The drafting of the Bill is well under way and there is no reason why it should not be ready for introduction at the start of the new Session.

3. There is no need therefore for the Prime Minister to comment on Lord Carrington's proposal.

(D.J Wright)

20th March 1981