

FOR PRESS:



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AUTHORITY TO CALL OUT TROOPS IN NEW GUINEA

In relation to the Gazelle situation, several pressmen have been asking questions this afternoon about whether the Prime Minister had given the Administrator of Papua New Guinea authority to call on troops should he find this necessary.

The Prime Minister has replied as follows:-

"The Government was advised by the Administration that it would be prudent to arrange for troops of the P. I. R. to be available for use in the Gazelle Peninsula in case a situation developed which police on the spot were not numerous enough to handle.

"The Government accepted this advice and has taken the necessary steps to this end.

"The Administrator is empowered to call on the assistance of the P. I. R. to protect lives and property should the situation require it. It is not believed that this will be necessary but it is believed that if it should prove to be necessary it should be done."

CANBERRA
20 July 1970