

APPENDIX 3

CALLING OUT THE DEFENCE FORCE *

Requests by the States for assistance by the Defence Force.

- 1912 The Government of Queensland sought the assistance of the Defence Force fearing wide-spread violence arising out of a general strike. The Commonwealth Government, while acknowledging its obligation to a State to protect it against domestic violence, did not accept that conditions warranted the request to be complied with and rejected the application. The request specifically invoked section 119 of the Constitution.
- 1916 The Government of Tasmania sought assistance in anticipation of disturbances on the occasion of a referendum. There was no reference to section 119.
- 1919 The Western Australian Government requested Defence Force intervention to assist in the event of expected violence during a wharf strike. (In 1920 and in 1921, the Western Australia Government urged the Commonwealth to send a war ship to Broome as a precaution against riots. Also in 1921 the Government of Western Australia requested the Commonwealth Government to make a force available to deal with an expected riot in Perth. All requests were declined)
- 1923 The Victorian Government requested assistance from the Defence Force during a police strike. No reference was made to section 119. The Commonwealth did not accede to this request but the Minister for Home and Territories directed that military action be taken to protect Commonwealth interests in Melbourne such as furnishing guards for buildings including the GPO, Federal Parliament House, the Commonwealth Treasury buildings and telephone exchanges.
- 1928 The South Australian Government requested the issue of ammunition and military equipment during a waterside workers' strike. There was no reference to section 119.

Occasions when troops have been 'called out' to provide aid to the civil power

- 1970–71 The Pacific Island Regiment stationed in Papua New Guinea and then a part of the Australian Defence Force was called out to suppress, should the need arise, domestic violence on the island of New Britain. The troops were not required.
- 1978 The Defence Force was called out following a bomb blast outside the Hilton Hotel in Sydney where delegates to the Commonwealth Heads of Government had gathered for a meeting. Over 1,000 troops were

deployed for some days to secure the route between Sydney and Bowral, where the delegates were also to meet, as well as the streets of Bowral and to 'protect internationally protected persons'. This call out was not made under section 119 of the Constitution or section 51 of the Defence Act.

Elizabeth Ward in her study cited two instances when the Defence Force was called on to perform duties to protect Commonwealth interests.

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| 1983 | RAAF flights over South-West Tasmania to photograph work being carried out by the Tasmanian Government 'in contravention of Federal regulations'. |
| 1989 | Deployment of troops at Nurrungar to defend the Nurrungar joint defence facility. |

Occasions when the Defence Force have carried out the functions of civilian workers.

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| 1949 | During the coal miners' strike, military personnel were used to unload coal from a ship docked in Melbourne and to work the open cut coal mines in NSW. |
| 1953 | Troops used at Bowen in Queensland to load ships. |
| 1981 | Airlift by RAAF of passengers stranded by airline industrial dispute. |
| 1989 | Airforce personnel made available for use by commercial airlines during a pilots' dispute over wages. |

* Information taken from B. D. Beddie and S. Moss, *Some Aspects of Aid to the Civil Power in Australia*, Occasional Monograph no. 2, Department of Government, Faculty of Government, UNSW, Canberra 1982 and Elizabeth Ward, Research Paper 8, 1997-98, Parliamentary Library, Parliament of Australia.