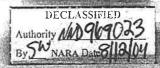
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9			N. S.	the Prime Minister in the Legislative Assembly					
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2				concerning the former inhabitants of Diego Gard	cia. The Prime				
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Response of the Prime Minister to a question of the Henorable Haurice Lesage

Sir

Honographe Members are aware that a few islands of Chagos Archipelago were handed over in 1965 to the British Government who then established what is now known as the British Indian Ocean Territory.

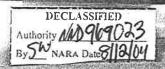
People who were working there have since that time been coming back to Mauritius on the expiry of their contract. Some of them have been able to find suitable employment in Mauritius or Agalega; others, who are over 60 are drawing old age pension and those who have not been able to find employment are assisted by the Public Assistance Department.

A census of these workers was carried out recently and a communique has been published inviting those who have not yet registered or have changed their addresses to notify the Ministry of Labour and Social Security of their whereabouts.

On the statement published in the press regarding the imprisonment of 116 workers expelled from Diego; I am advised that, with the reduction of activities in that Island, the workers were given the option of working in Agalega, Peros Banhos or Salomon Island or to return to Mauritius. 8 employees with their families making a total of 14 persons, opted to come back to Mauritius whilst the rest agreed to work in Agalega, Peros Banhos or Salomon Island. Those who had opted for work in those islands were paid a disturbance allowance of Rs.500. The other 8 employees and their families were transferred to Seychelles on the 30th September and are returning to Mauritius. They will be paid all monies due to them under their contracts by Messrs. Rogers and Go. who are the representatives of the employees. Due to lack of other suitable accomposation they were, during their stay in Seychelles, housed in an unused modern prison building completely separated from the main prison building, and were supplied with cooked food.

Ever since the question of the rehabilitation of persons from the Chagos archipelago was raised, I have constantly been assured by the British Government of their readiness to cooperate in resettling all Mauritians evacuated from that area. Possible resettlement plans are now under

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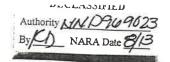
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investigation. These plans will be designed to take into account both the wishes and the best interests of the people concerned and will cover both those how being evacuated and others already in Mauritius.

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NJG				October 2	7. he stated	that HMG	had initially	left to Moulinie of		
- 6		DISTRIB	1.7101	Chagos-Ag	alega Ltd. th	e prepar	ation of a res	ettlement scheme on		
20001	ESTED	פוא ו כוט	UTION	Agalega f	or the non-Se	ychelloi	s 11018 Irom I	riego Garcia. Moulinie		
				had at some point indicated he preferred not to do this. He alleged that unspecified "Directors" of his company would press						
				for more elaborate plans than were necessary in order to obtain						
				greater British financial help. Accordingly, Moulinie and BIOT						
				administrator Todd are now working together in the Seychelles to produce an acceptable resettlement plan which HMG will						
				to produc	e an acceptab	le reset	on Perce Ranhe	mica HMF WILL		
	POST F	ROUTING	3	finance. Meanwhile the Ilois on Peros Banhos have received their "disturbance allowances" and will gradually be moved to						
TO:	Action	-	Initials	Agalega a	s the Todd/Mo	ulinie p	roject can be	developed.		
AMB *						adding the state of		to Marmitian Thois		
ОСМ				Carter no	eturned bere	is more	complex. He p	to Mauritian Ilois and understood that		
FOL.		-	ļ	there wer	e only a limi	ted numb	er of such peo	ple but has now		
ECON	-	-		been told	that there a	re more	than 400 head	of family here.		
CONS	-	4		More subs	tantial funds	tine "	he question by	ed to relocate them as been discussed with		
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	-	+	1	shortly t	o develop a c	nestion	aire which can	a be used with the 🚍 🤺		
USIS		+		Ilois her	e not only to	ascerte	in their prec	ise number but also 5		
1			1	Tt oseme	likely that a	MADY Will	wefar to re	main here. Carter		
				noted the	t MMM leader	Berenger	and UDM poli	tician Ollivry are		
FILE				celling o	on him on Octo	ber 28.	presumably to	discuss the		
Action	Taken			"humanitarian" issue which they raised earlier (Port Louis 977). Carter expects Ollivry, an astute lawyer, to raise the embarrass-						
				ing quest	ion of citize	mship.	If he does, C	arter will confirm		
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that the non-Seychellois Ilois probably are dual nationals of Mauritius and the UK. If his callers then ask why HMG does not permit those who wish to do so to emigrate to Great Britain, Carter will endeavor to discourage this line on the ground that others of similar limited background and experience in the past have had great difficulty in adjusting to British conditions and not infrequently have asked to leave.

Carter informed the Ambassador on November 1 that his meeting with Berenger and Ollivry had generally followed the script. He indicated that HMG accepts the responsibility for assistance in resettlement of the Mauritian Ilois but that plans to this effect must be developed in collaboration with the GOM. Carter commented that the two main problems are: (a) whether to pay compensation to individual Ilois or place funds at the disposal of the GOM for their integration into the economy; and (b) whether those Mauritian Ilois now here will in most cases wish to remain or be transported to Agalega. The report of Carter's conversation with Berenger/Ollivry appearing in the Star October 29 stated that "the British High Commissioner recognized the responsibility of his Government with respect to the inhabitants of Diego Garcia expelled as the result of the transfer of their native island to Great Britain by this Government in 1965."

Comment: It seems now generally accepted that the USG has no significant responsibility on the Ilois issue. Coincidentally, we have had a good press here as the result of the arrival on October 29 of the first C-130 from Diego to transport Mauritian produce and retail items there. Both the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Ringadoo noted the aircraft at Plaisance during the reception for Ringadoo on his return from the United States (see our A-204). A routine press release issued by the Embassy (see enclosure), stressing the economic benefit to Mauritius of such purchases, was featured in several papers and carried on the Government-controlled MBC radio news. We believe the net effect was a timely demonstration of general USG interest in assisting Mauritius as a result of the installation of our Diego communications facility.

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Enclosure: Press Release, 10/29/71

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