

SECRET Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Op-93B/ejs

Memo No. 00130-60

SECRET - Unclassified upon removal of encl

TO : Chief of Naval Operations

DATE: 11 July 1960

FROM : Director, Long Range Objectives Group

SUBJECT: Assuring a Future Base Structure in the African-Indian Ocean Area

OP-00
OP-002
OP-003
OP-004
OP-005
OP-006

Encl: (1) OPNAV ser 0092P93 of 27 Jun 1960

1. The enclosure is forwarded as being a matter of particular interest to you.

Very respectfully,

Horacio Rivero
HORACIO RIVERO
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy

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Dakar to Southwest Africa, in order to assert U. S. interest, support U. S. prestige and influence, be forewarned of and deter Communist bloc interference; and when required, intervene promptly to defeat aggression or subversion, restore order, and/or evacuate Western inhabitants.

b. To maintain on occasion a similar posture along the East African coast from Mozambique to Djibouti.

c. To maintain in coordination with UK forces a similar posture with respect to the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf.

d. To maintain an obvious capability to support promptly and with appropriate force, the nations of Southern Asia (Iran, Pakistan, India, Burma) against aggression or threats thereof from the north. Appropriate force will include tactical air striking power (carrier, USMC, or TAC), and ground forces (USMC/STRAC).

e. To maintain deployed SSBN in the Indian Ocean.

f. To provide dispersed, alternate anchorages or replenishment points for naval forces in the area, with particular reference to second-phase operations in general war.

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DOD DIR 5200.10

What are you doing on this good idea if we can get past it done

on 25, D. C. Op 23C/njs
EXEMPT from automatic declassification
Ser: 0092P93
per E.O. 11652, Sec. 5(E)(2) 27 June 1960

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MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS (PLANS
AND POLICY (Op-06)

Subj: [Assuring a Future Base Structure in the African-Indian Ocean Area (U)

Ref: (a) Op-93 ser 031P93 of 23 May 1960 ←

Encl: (1) A Long-Term Base Structure for South Atlantic and Indian Ocean
(2) Chart of the South Atlantic-Indian Ocean

1. Anticipation of [possible war and tension situations] during the next 10 to 15 years suggests that several of the following national requirements may arise which will affect facility needs in the areas of the Indian Ocean and sub-Saharan Africa:

a. To maintain sustained patrol, surveillance, and show-of-force operations along the West African coast from Dakar to Southwest Africa, in order to assert U. S. interest, support U. S. prestige and influence, be forewarned of and deter Communist bloc interference; and when required, intervene promptly to defeat aggression or subversion, restore order, and/or evacuate Western inhabitants.

b. To maintain on occasion a similar posture along the East African coast from Mozambique to Djibouti.

c. To maintain in coordination with UK forces a similar posture with respect to the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf.

d. To maintain an obvious capability to support promptly and with appropriate force, the nations of [Southern Asia] (Iran, Pakistan, India, Burma) against aggression or threats thereof from the north. Appropriate force will include tactical air striking power (carrier, USMC, or TAC), and ground forces (USMC/STRAC).

e. To maintain deployed SSBN in the [Indian Ocean.]

f. To provide dispersed, alternate anchorages or replenishment points for naval forces in the area, with particular reference to second-phase operations in general war.

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g. To accomplish the foregoing without reliance on logistic support or staging bases, use of which can be denied or restricted or delayed at will either by local nationalisms or by European powers having interests adverse to ours in the local situation, or under Soviet threat.

h. To maintain surveillance of the Soviet central areas by electronic or other means, without dependence on facilities which can be denied or restricted under threat or as the result of domestic politics.

i. To maintain communications to the Indian Ocean area, without dependence on mainland facilities which can be denied.

2. Emphasis is placed on avoidance of mainland facilities because of mounting evidence that dependence thereon, in the long-term future, will be unsafe in the face of Soviet threats and agitation, and perhaps of UN pressures when the accretion of new African states gives the undeveloped nations a majority vote therein. Reference (a) advanced the thesis that only relatively small, lightly populated islands, separated from major population masses, could be safely held under full control of the West in the face of the currents of nationalism, but that timely action would be required to segregate these islands and secure them against automatic loss as the larger domains to which they are now politically attached are lost to Western control.

3. The enclosures develop a long-term base structure to meet the gamut of possible future requirements outlined in paragraph 1, utilizing only islands, of the type above described, which are still fully or partially under the control of western powers.

4. The three or four key islands of this base structure stand an excellent chance of being lost to western control within the next one to three years unless prompt action is taken to separate them politically from the populous mainland domains to which they are attached. These islands are:

Diego Garcia, a large atoll ideally suited, by location, physical characteristics, isolation, and political unimportance, to be the primary western fleet base and air staging point in the Indian Ocean. No other island in this ocean compares with it in desirability for this purpose. It is

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fleet base
contingency to other names

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now politically attached, however, to the 1100-mile-distant colony of Mauritius which is due for early autonomy.

Socotra a large but lightly populated island standing in a controlling position 150 miles off the horn of Africa and 200 miles from Southern Arabia. While Socotra has little to offer as a fleet base, its location and size may in time make it indispensable (if and when mainland bases are denied) as a base for patrol and recon aircraft, for staging of TAC and STRAC forces, for long-range electronic surveillance (TEPEE, etc.), and for communications relay, vice Asmara. Socotra belongs to one of the Southern Arabian sheikdoms under UK protection; the potential instability of the Aden protectorates needs no comment.

Principe and Annobon are the two smaller and more lightly populated of the four islands in the Gulf of Guinea. A minor base here would be essential to unhampered surface or air patrol operations off West Africa; Principe provides a choice of two small but reasonably protected anchorages. An airfield here would be helpful for full-payload staging of STRAC forces (and TAC units) rapidly across Africa, in the event political considerations dictated against use of more northerly routes. Principe may support an adequate airfield; if it does not, Annobon, while possessing no harbor, can probably support a 6,000-foot strip, properly oriented. It is possible that Principe (with only 7,000 people) can be held indefinitely by its Portuguese owners; however, its political attachment to the large island of Sao Tome (50,000) may place it in jeopardy. Annobon, as a very minor appendage of the 280-mile-distant mainland colony of Spanish Guinea (surrounded by already independent Camerouns and Gabon) is in much greater jeopardy of early loss.

5. The remaining islands in the base structure developed in the enclosure are either firmly held isolated islands (Ascension, Cocos) or are within the Seychelles colony which does not appear in danger of early loss to UK control, although sooner or later a loss of UK ability unilaterally to grant base rights in this colony to the U. S. must be anticipated, as the colony proceeds to a degree of self-government.

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6. It appears to Op-93 that to protect our future freedom of military action in the sectors under discussion, against the certainly increasing (although specifically unpredictable) threats and requirements therein, it has now become as essential to "stockpile" base rights in this area as it is to stockpile any material commodity which foreseeably will become unavailable in the future. If we wait, in our usual fashion, until a specific deployment requirement demands supporting shore facilities, we may find it too late to acquire reliable facilities on acceptable terms, if at all.

7. Op-93 therefore proposes, as essential to our long-term requirements, the initiation of prompt action: (a) to assure the segregation and prevent alienation of the islands described in paragraph 4, and (b) to obtain appropriate long-term U, S, rights therein or in some cases possibly outright ownership thereof. Toward this end Op-93 proposes specifically:

(1) Review of the entire ultimate base structure described in the enclosure from the standpoint of suitability to meet possible long-term Navy requirements, and modification or refinement thereof as indicated. The list of sites has deliberately been made inclusive, in the thought that all contingencies should be provided for by rights, but that all sites do not have to be developed.

(2) Action to obtain USAF/Army concurrence and support with respect to those included facilities supporting STRAC, TAC, long-range electronic surveillance, and air logistics capabilities.

(3) Early submission of an action paper through proper Joint Staff/SecDef channels to Sec State.

(4) Discussion with UK, at an appropriate stage, of possible joint development and usage plans for those islands under UK control.

8. The previous separate proposal for acquisition of rights at Diego Garcia obviously remains of sufficiently high urgency to deserve independent and accelerated prosecution by OPNAV; it should be referred to as one element of a broader plan but, because of its key importance to the Navy, should not be held up pending acceptance of the

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entire plan. The plan as a whole is of national rather than solely naval scope, but the Navy would appear to have primary service interest in the plan as a whole, and in Diego Garcia in particular.

9. The rapid course of events in Africa suggests that current proposals for use of Mombasa should be reviewed against the long-term plan, before any commitment is made to major expenditures at what may prove to be a very-short-term mainland base.

10. Nothing in this proposal is intended to imply a need for early construction or other naval expenditures at the sites mentioned. Construction can be deferred until specific and immediate requirements arise and funds made available; what cannot be deferred is gaining the assurance that the sites will be available when needed. Table II of the enclosure suggests a possible order of priority for a long-term program to develop the sites listed. It should be noted that a good proportion of the air facilities will be of primary interest to USAF/Army, and will thus not all be charges on the Navy.

11. Op-93 is not insensitive to the political implications of "territorial aggrandizement" herein. Outright acquisition is suggested in some cases only to avoid the greater evil of being forced to support Portuguese-Spanish colonialism, or Arab pretensions, in order to retain base rights or obtain renewals thereof. Since the territories concerned are among the most neglected minor backwaters of the world, a compensating opportunity is offered to develop them as showcases of American ways, in their respective areas.

Horacio Rivero
HORACIO RIVERO
Rear Admiral, U. S. Navy
Director,
Long Range Objectives Group

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Op-00 Op-60
Op-09 Op-61
Op-03 Op-90
Op-04 Op-92
Op-05 Op-94

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A LONG-TERM BASE STRUCTURE FOR THE SOUTH ATLANTIC
AND INDIAN OCEAN, INDEPENDENT OF THE AFRICAN AND
ASIAN MAINLAND

I. SITES AND FUNCTIONS

[MAIN FLEET ADVANCE BASE,] INDIAN OCEAN

Diego Garcia (Fleet anchorage, airstrip, Marine encampment).

Northern Chagos Group (minor supporting facilities, e.g., dispersal anchorage, amphibious exercise area, advanced radar and acoustic warning posts, if required).

MINOR BASE FACILITIES

Indian Ocean

Port Victoria, Mahe Islands (dispersal and replenishment anchorage, airstrip, fuel storage).

Ile Desroches, Amirante Islands (dispersal and replenishment anchorage, possible airstrip).

Coetivy Island (dispersal and replenishment anchorage, airstrip, possible ammo storage).

Aldabra Island (minor anchorage and airstrip for support of local patrol and surveillance, southeast Africa; possible ammo storage).

Socotra (airstrip for support of patrol and surveillance, Arabian area; electronic surveillance and communications relay installations).

Gulf of Guinea

Principe Island (anchorage and possible airstrip for support of local patrol and surveillance, West Africa).

Annobon Island (airstrip if terrain on Principe unsuitable).

ENCLOSURE (1) to
CNO ltr ser 0092P93 of 6/27/60

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AIR STAGING BASES

Ascension (existing UK facility).

Principe/Annobon (see above).

Aldabra (see above).

Seychelles (Mahe, or Coetivy, or Desroches, see above).

Socotra (see above).

Diego Garcia (see above).

Keeling Cocos (existing Australian facility).

II. PRIORITY OR URGENCY OF ACTION

	<u>URGENCY OF OBTAINING RIGHTS</u>	<u>ANCHORAGE PIERS, ETC.</u>	<u>AIRSTRIP</u>	<u>OTHER FACILITIES</u>
<u>Diego Garcia</u>	1	1	2	3
Northern Chagos	*	5	<u>1</u>	5
Victoria, Mahe	3	#	@	2 (fuel)
Ile Desroches	3	4#	@	-
Coetivy	3	4#	@	@@
Aldabra	3	4	4	@@
Socotra	1	3	<u>3</u>	3
Principe	2	3#	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Annobon	1**	2**	<u>2**</u>	-

* Should be included in Diego Garcia agreement.

** If Principe unsuitable for airstrip; harbor facilities only to support airstrip.

Probably little or no development required.

@ Priority 2 at one of these three locations, priority 5 at the other two.

@@ Priority 3 or 4 if ammo storage, otherwise no other facilities.

Underlining indicates facilities for which USAF/Army may bear a major or significant share of costs.

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III. POLITICAL ASPECTS AND TYPES OF ACTION INDICATED

ISLAND	AREA SQ. MI.	POPUL.	PRESENT CONTROL	POLITICAL PROSPECT	SUGGESTED BASIS FOR ACQUIRING RIGHTS
Diego Garcia	10+	500+	UK-Mauritius Colony	(1)	Long-term U. S. lease, with open-ended provision for expanding as required.
No. Chagos	5+	Minor	UK-Mauritius Colony		
Mabe	55	30,000	UK-Seychelles Colony	(2)	Agreement for joint UK/US development and use of specified facilities only.
Desroches	2	Minor	UK-Seychelles Colony		Long-term U. S. lease, with open-ended provision for expansion as required.
Coetivy	5+	100+		(2)	
Aldabra	40+	Minor			
Socotra	1,000	12,000	Qishn Sultanate,	(3)	a. UK/US purchase for joint use and development
Abdal Kauri	100	1,000	Aden Protectorate (UK)		b. UK/US long-term lease
Principe	53	7,000	Portuguese (Colony with Sao Tome)	(4)	a. Outright U. S. purchase of island.
					b. Long-term U. S. lease of base areas.
Annobon	7	1,000	Spanish (Spanish Guinea)	(5)	Outright U. S. purchase

(1) Mauritius will probably receive autonomy within the British Commonwealth in the near future.

(2) Seychelles colony will probably be the last fully-controlled UK colony in or bordering the Indian Ocean.

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- (3) Alienation of Socotra would probably be impossible in the event an Arabian Federation of some sort (independent of UK) replaced the present arrangement of small sultanates under UK protection.
- (4) Sao Tome (pop. 50,000) may wish to associate with a mainland African state.
- (5) Spanish Guinea is likely to be absorbed into one of the larger neighboring African states.

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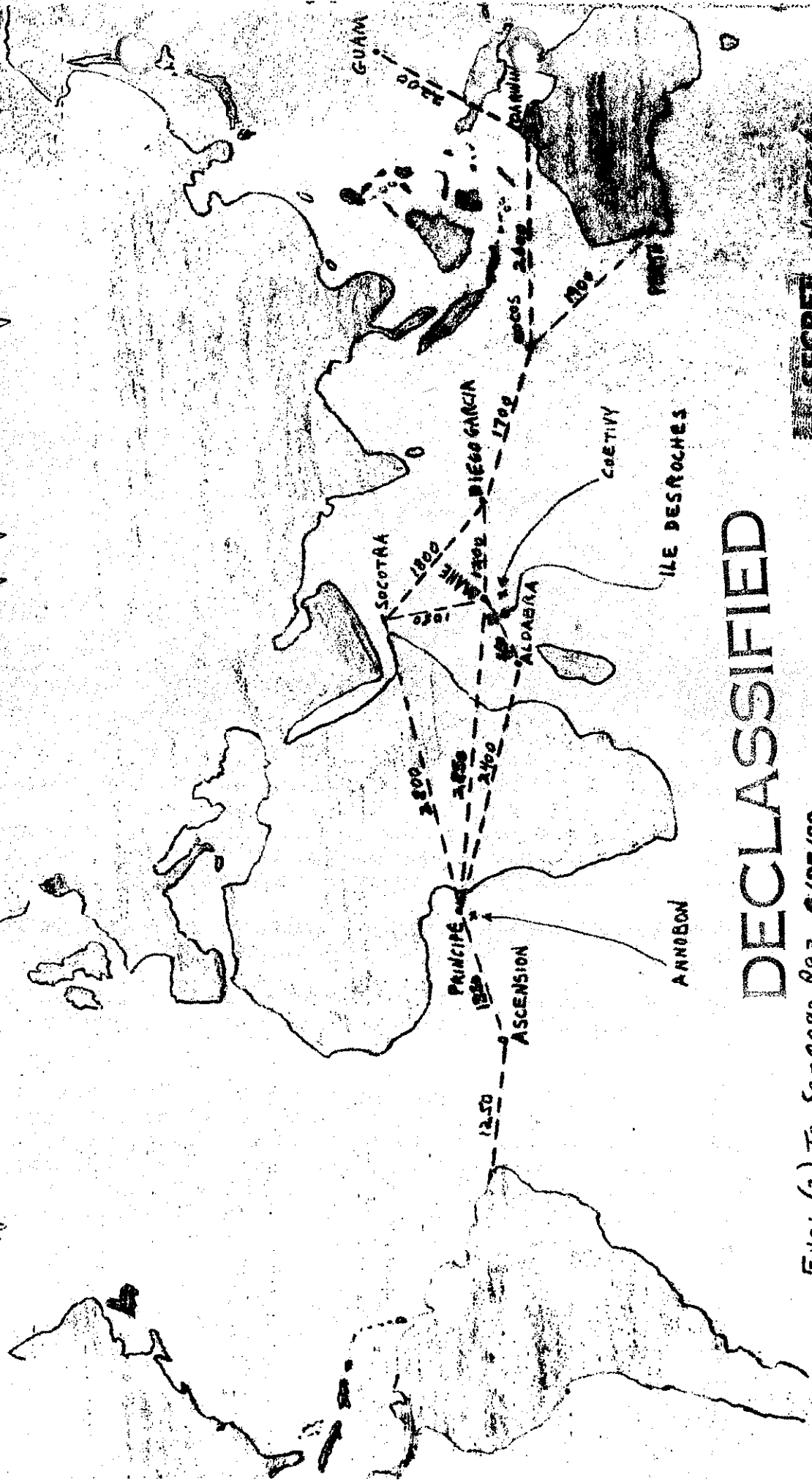
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CHART OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC INDIAN OCEAN AREA

Showing Proposed Long-Term Base Structure
and Staging Routes avoiding Mainland bases.



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