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-CSE 615-71 ATT.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

IN REPLY REFER TO

Op-61/afc

Ser 01697P61

28 JAN 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Via: The Vice Chief of Naval Operations *WVR*

Subj: Status Report on International Aspects of Diego Garcia (U)

Ref: (a) Op-61 memo ser 01678P61 of 22 Jan 1971

1. (U) In accordance with VCNO note on reference (a) the following is the second weekly status report on the international aspects of Diego Garcia.
2. (C) UK and US (CINCUSNAVEUR and Embassy London) representatives met on 22 January to open negotiations on a written agreement on the details of the Diego Garcia facility. The government-to-government agreement on the BIOT of November 1966 grants the US general rights to use the BIOT for defense purposes but requires that supplementary agreement be reached on details of each facility operated in the BIOT. The British presented a skeleton draft which posed some problems:
 - a. The geographic scope and functions of the facility could be unduly limited;
 - b. The proposed time limit of 25 years is only one-half the term of the overall agreement and appears too short;
 - c. The agreement would permit the British to allow fishing and mineral exploitation of the island and surrounding territorial waters - we oppose this as the BIOT is supposed to be "set aside" for defense purposes;
 - d. Access provisions might restrict the US from allowing entry by third country nationals, ships and aircraft.
3. (C) On the other hand the draft provision on UK manning and the relationship of RN personnel to the commander of the facility appears to be acceptable. The British have made it clear that the skeleton draft is for purposes of opening the negotiation only and that they do not expect the US to agree with all points. A US position is being staffed in OPNAV, ISA and State and will be sent to CINCUSNAVEUR and Embassy London in time for a second meeting next week.

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after 12 years

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4. (C) The Commonwealth Prime Minister's conference in Singapore ended on 22 January with little attention paid to Diego Garcia. Prime Minister Bandaranaike of Ceylon made a speech complaining about the facility but it was couched more in terms of reluctant acceptance of a fait accompli than an indication that the Ceylonese are prepared to make a continued issue of the matter. The debate about UK arms sales to South Africa served as a lightning rod to divert extensive debate on Diego Garcia.
 5. (C) The Government of Somalia issued a strong statement against the construction of the facility on 26 January. Although the government-dominated press had been negative earlier, this was the first official statement by the government. The intensity of the Somali statement was about as expected.
 6. (C) Embassy Moscow reported the first Russian reaction to Diego Garcia in an airgram of 13 January. The Soviet press published a series of articles portraying the facility as a massive base aimed at the "progressive" regimes and national liberation movements in the region. The articles emphasize the possibility of intelligence collection by facilities on the island and the sinister aims of the US and UK in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, the articles make it clear that "messengers of peace", i.e. their navy, will continue to make friendly visits to the area.
 7. (C) Professional staff members of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Preparedness Subcommittee of that Committee asked for and received a briefing on Diego Garcia on 24 January. The briefing was given by Captain R.S. Leddick, Op-614 and Commander R.F. Stalder, Op-605E4. An OLA representative was present. The staff members were keenly interested in all aspects of the new communications facility. They were specially thorough in their questioning on the requirement for the communications capability in the area and seemed satisfied with the responses given by the briefers.
 8. (U) We have now received a progress report from the reconnaissance party on Diego Garcia. The message was transmitted for them by the Mauritian meteorological station on the island through HMS Mauritius. They report

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that their work is proceeding satisfactorily and that they will be ready to leave Diego Garcia on 30 January.

Walter L. Small

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Op-04
Op-092
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Op-44
Op-60
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WALTER L. SMALL
Director, Politico-Military Policy Division

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
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Ser 01678P61

00 (INFO)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Subj: Status Report on Diego Garcia (U)

1. (U) The following report is a summary of the current status of the significant outstanding international problems related to Diego Garcia rather than an account of developments in the last 24 hours. Because most of these matters are now being negotiated with other countries by a complex series of messages, it is likely that there will be few items to report on a daily basis in the future. Therefore, unless otherwise directed, this report will be changed to a weekly requirement to be delivered to your office each Friday.

2. (C) Relocation of the copra workers is proceeding in a satisfactory manner. The Administrator of the BIOT has given his assurance that the three small settlements on the western half of the atoll will be moved immediately to the eastern half. All copra producing activities on the western half will also cease immediately. The BIOT ship NORDVAER is relocating people from Diego Garcia to Peros Banhos, Salomon Islands, and the Seychelles on a regular basis. The entire move will be accomplished by the end of July. Our estimate is that this plan is the best possible for earliest evacuation of Diego Garcia with a minimum of publicity. Since this issue is well on track, special biweekly reports will be terminated, but we will continue to report to you on a weekly basis.

3. (C) All concerned foreign authorities have been informed that we will not hire any local labor for work on Diego Garcia. There has been no sharp objection to this policy. Our acceptance of the BIOT plan for relocation has helped to ease the acceptance of the policy of no hiring.

4. (C) The negotiation of the service level arrangement between the Navy and the UK Ministry of Defense (MOD) is commencing in London with a meeting between the British, the Embassy and CINCUSNAVEUR scheduled for 22 January. The UK Defense and Foreign Ministries have proposed, and we have concurred, that they attempt a first draft of the detailed service-to-service agreement to be sent to Washington for our comments. Among other subjects, this draft will set forth the British position on the relationship between the

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senior Royal Navy Officer and the Station Commander. Per your note of 16 January, the Royal Navy Officer may be called "Officer in Charge of the Island" or "Island Administrator" or some other term desired by the British. One point in preliminary negotiations has been that the senior British officer should be responsible for the discipline of the Royal Navy personnel and for necessary civil administration but he should be junior to the Station Commander and functionally subordinate to him. The UK Foreign and Defence Ministries seem in accord with this idea but have indicated a concern that he be given a real function within the operational framework of the station. In any case, after the receipt of the draft agreement from the British we will be in a position to work out the exact nature of the relationship and the titles of the respective positions.

5. (C) Navy has now released a draft message to Embassy Port Louis requesting an economic survey to determine whether fresh provisions for the Diego Garcia facility can be purchased on Mauritius. If the purchasing program is feasible we would plan to station one or two USN personnel on Mauritius to oversee the program and handle mail for the construction forces. Another message is being prepared to give details of the staging operations to Embassy Canberra to complete the requirements for obtaining Australian approval for staging through Cocos Island.

6. (C) The above relates the current status of the important outstanding problems. In addition to a weekly status report, I will inform you immediately of any significant developments.

7. (U) In order to be responsive to the CNO's request for bi-weekly reports on copra worker relocation, it is suggested that copies of this weekly report be forwarded to him.

Walter T. Jones

Copy to:
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Cp-04
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ADMINISTRATIVE: [illegible]

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