



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

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IN REPLY REFER TO
Op-61/afc
Ser 01738P61

12 FEB 97

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Via: Vice Chief of Naval Operations *WV*

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

Ref: (a) Op-61 memo ser 01678P61 of 22 Jan 1971
(b) Op-61 memo ser 01712P61 of 5 Feb 1971

1. (U) In accordance with VCNO note on reference (a), the following is the status report on the international aspects of Diego Garcia for the week ending 11 February 1971.

2. (C) JAG and OPNAV have now prepared a draft memorandum of understanding for presentation to the U.K. through OSD and the Department of State. The draft is being circulated within OPNAV for final clearance. It will be presented to VCNO for approval before it is forwarded. The Navy draft is intended to follow the original agreement with the U.K. on the uses of the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) as closely as possible and to allow maximum operational flexibility for the station commander.

3. (C) The Diego Garcia reconnaissance party returned to Davisville on 7 February. CDR WHITE, the party leader, reported that all objectives of the visit were achieved. The data gathered will assist in landing operations and proved that the plan of using coral for aggregate is feasible. CDR WHITE also reported that Mr. TODD, the Administrator of the BIOT, and Mr. MOULINIE, former owner of Diego Garcia, accompanied the party and worked out arrangements for the relocation of the copra workers. Both TODD and MOULINIE agree that the relocation can be accomplished with a minimum of inconvenience to the workers and their families. One group of Seychellois returned to Mahe with the reconnaissance party. Op-61 has asked CDR WHITE to come to Washington to brief interested State Department officials on relocation. He is qualified to do this because of his first hand experience on the island and his knowledge of BIOT plans for relocation. The date for his visit is not set but it probably will be within the next two weeks. It is recommended that the VCNO receive a short, informal oral report from CDR WHITE if the VCNO's schedule permits.

*cdh white
skd to see
VCNO 2/18*

GROUP 4
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4. (C) Embassy Canberra reports that the Government of Australia will have some problems in accommodating the transfer of the three groups of construction personnel from aircraft to ships at Cocos Island. The problem arises because of the necessity to make arrangements with the sensitive patriarch of the most important family on the island. The Australians see the problem as soluble; there should be no requirement for a change in staging plans.

5. (C) A Navy team led by Captain GRAESSLE (Op-942C) gave a briefing to Under Secretary of State IRWIN on 8 February as reported in reference (b). The briefing was well received. We continue to receive excellent cooperation from the Department of State on matters related to Diego Garcia.

6. (U) In accordance with your wish, next report will be submitted on 26 February, i.e., henceforth bi-weekly.

Walter L. Small

WALTER L. SMALL
Director, Politico-Military Policy Division

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