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BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES

1. BIOT LIKELY COME UNDER DISCUSSION IN SUBCOMMITTEE I OF COMMITTEE 24 DURING A.M. APRIL 12. UKUN JAS JUST SHOWN US STATEMENT PREPARED FOR USE THERE GIVING FACTUAL ACCOUNT OF PROCESS OF DETACHMENT OF BIOT, STRESSING LACK OF INDIGENEOUS INHABITANTS, ETC. ONLY MENTION OF FUTURE PLANS IS IN FOLLOWING SENTENCES:

"THESE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE LAND ARE A NATURAL STEP, FOLLOWING FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TERRITORY. THEY INVOLVE NO NEW PLANS, NO TERRITORIAL EXTENSION OF THE BIOT AND NO IMPLICATION THAT ANY DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO GO AHEAD WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF DEFENCE FACILITIES ON THE ISLANDS."

2. IN ADDITION, IF PRESSED CONCERNING BASES UK DEL PLANS TO STATE:

"WE HAVE LISTENED TO VARIOUS ALLEGATIONS FROM THE DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES OF ABOUT ALLEGED PLANS FOR THE CREATION OF BASES IN THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY. THESE HAVE BEEN BASED EXCLUSIVELY ON LIBERAL QUOTATIONS FROM VARIOUS ORGANS OF THE PRESS. I SUGGEST THAT THESE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WOULD DO BETTER TO IGNORE SPECULATIVE COMMENT OF THIS NATURE, AND TO ACCEPT THE CLEAR STATEMENT ON THIS POINT MADE BY THE BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE AT THE END OF LAST YEAR. SPEAKING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON 16 NOVEMBER, MR. HEALEY MADE A CATEGORICAL STATEMENT, IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION, THAT THE BRITISH GOVT., AND I QUOTE, 'HAVE NO PROGRAMME FOR CREATING BASES IN THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY'. WITH REGARD TO ASCENSION ISLAND, WHICH HAS ALSO BEEN MENTIONED BY CERTAIN DELEGATIONS, I AM AUTHORIZED TO SAY THAT MY GOVERNMENT HAVE NO INTENTION OF SETTING UP A BASE ON THE ISLAND."

3. UK DEL ASKED THAT WE NOTIFY SOONEST IF FOREGOING GIVES US ANY PROBLEMS.

EXEMPT.

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