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REFERENCES a. Tananarive's 673  
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SUBJECT: BIOT

For Assistant Secretary Newsom

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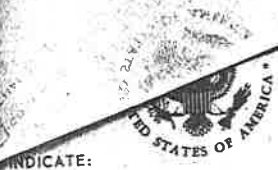
1. The following information on USG interest in the British Indian Ocean Territories (BIOT) is for your background and FYI use only. It should be emphasized that this is a peculiarly sensitive subject, particularly as it relates to Diego Garcia and (a) Executive Session classified hearings now in progress on the Hill and (b) our relations with the UK.
2. In November 1965 British Government by Order in Council created BIOT by administrative reorganization of several islands in Indian Ocean. Islands are Aldabra, Farquhar,

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*AF/E:Mr. Marks:PM/ISO:WNe* 6/15/70 21027 PM/ISO - *J. Stoddart*  
CLEARANCES: AF/C - Mr. J. Sullivan *W* OP/61 - Capt. Leddick *W*  
OSD/FMRA - Mr. Neher *W* S/S - Mr. ~~Harley~~ Lloyd *W*  
*H - Mr. Grant (info).*  
*W*

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ACTXXX Page 2 Amembassy PORT LOUIS, TANANARIVE, NAIROBI

Ile des Roches (formerly part of British colony of Seychelles) and Chagos Archipelago (formerly part of Mauritius colony). They are administered directly from the UK through an Administrator who is resident in the Seychelles.

3. By exchange of unclassified diplomatic notes dated Dec. 30, 1966, the UK agreed to make BIOT available for USG and/or UK defense purposes. Separate classified notes provided for sharing by USG and UK of cost of detachment of islands from Mauritius and Seychelles plus acquisition of privately owned islands. USG undertook pay one-half these costs, not to exceed \$14 million (the US contribution was in the form of waiving Polaris R&D charges to that extent). Major detachment costs for UK are construction of \$14 million airport in Seychelles and a subvention to Mauritius.

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4. USG proposes construct austere communications facility on Diego Garcia in Chagos Archipelago. Total cost to be \$23 million over three year period. British at their expense, currently plan to relocate the small Seychellois and Mauritian migrant population of Diego Garcia to Agalega Island. Facility to be built by <sup>Seabees</sup> ~~USN~~ and manned by USN personnel but will fly British flag and have resident British liaison officers. Basic purpose of facility is communications support for ships and aircraft in Indian Ocean.

5. Diego Garcia proposal was included in FY 1970 military construction appropriation but was deleted by Senate subcommittee, and subsequently defeated in Senate/House Conference. It has been resubmitted in FY 1971 military construction appropriation request with the emphasis being placed on austere communications facility. \$5.4 million is being requested in FY 1971 budget. Prognosis for

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favorable Congressional action this year is only fair.

6. Governments of Australia, New Zealand, India and Mauritius have been apprised of our plans by HMG to minimum degree and in most general terms only. By agreement, discussion this project with other governments has been done only by British and only after consultation with USC.

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