

Mr. Julian Smith



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

24 January 1997

London SW1A 2AH

Telephone: 0171

The Ilois Group of Seychelles
c/o Cyril Bertrand
National Cultural Centre
Port Victoria
Mahe
Seychelles

Dear Mr Bertrand

Your letter of 16 December to the previous Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was copied to the Prime Minister, Mr Major. I have been asked to respond as Head of the Indian Ocean Section, Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Her Majesty's Government does not consider it is under any obligation to pay compensation in this case.

Yours sincerely
L. Smith

Louise Savill
African Department (Southern)

Chagos Social Committee
c/o W P B Noad
P O Box 648
Victoria

Tel: 224440

3 October 1997

Mr Peter Thompson
The British High Commissioner
British High Commission
Victoria

Dear Mr Thompson,

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

On behalf of the Committee, I write to inform you that a Chagos Committee has been registered in Seychelles and enclosed is a copy of its Constitution for your information.

Your attention is drawn particularly to Article Two, items 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7 of such Constitution and it would be appreciated if you would kindly take up such matters with the British Government.

Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the statement made in the Seychelles Nation of 13th September 1997 (copy enclosed) on the alleged payment being made to a politician in Seychelles in exchange for the people from Chagos to be exiled in Seychelles. Would you please confirm as soon as possible the authenticity of that statement.

The Committee awaits your kind reply to the above matters and should you wish to meet some of the members to discuss these matters, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

J T ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

Encs.



British High Commission
Victoria

Ms J T Alexis
c/o W P B Noad
PO Box 648
Victoria

6 October 1997

Dear Ms Alexis,

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

Thank you for your letter of 3 October on the formation of the above committee. I am looking into the matters you have raised, and will let you have a more substantive reply in due course.

*Yours sincerely
Peter Thomson*

P A B Thomson
High Commissioner

Chagos Social Committee
c/o W P B Noad
P O Box 648
Victoria

Tel: 224440

5th November 1997

Mr Peter Thompson
The British High Commissioner
British High Commission
Victoria

Dear Mr. Thompson,

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

Please refer to my letter dated 3rd October 1997 concerning the Chagos Social Committee (Seychelles) and your prompt acknowledgement of receipt of same.

A month has now passed and my Committee awaits your comments on these matters. Your earliest advice on the current situation with the British Government is kindly requested.

For your information there are some 200 persons living in Seychelles who were affected by the deportation from the Chagos Archipelago.

Yours sincerely,

QJ/xx:

J T ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

Encs.



British High Commission
Victoria

Ms J T Alexis
Chairperson, Chagos Social
Committee
c/o W P B Noad
PO Box 648
Victoria

24 November 1997

Dear Ms Alexis

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

Your letter of 3 October, which I acknowledged on 6 October, told me of the formation of the above committee, and asked me to take up a number of questions with the British Government.

The main points raised were those relating to the aims/objectives numbered 2,3,4,5, and 7 under Article Two of the committee's constitution. I have now received the British Government's comments on these points. If I may, I will take them serially.

On aim 2, it is our understanding, although we are continuing a search through Government archives in the UK, that all the archives and civil status records relating to Chagos are most likely to be held in Mauritius. I have heard it suggested that some of the records were burnt when the last workers left the Territory. If that were so, I am sure we would have heard of a similar claim from Mauritian Ilois.

On aim 3, those who hold British Passports as a result of a connection with the British Indian Ocean Territory have British Dependent Territory (BDT) citizenship, not British citizenship. Their BDT citizenship status does not offer right of abode in the UK. The same applies to BDT citizens everywhere, be they from Chagos or Bermuda. The only category of British nationality which carries with it the right of abode in the UK is British Citizen. Neither does BDT citizenship carry an automatic right of abode in the dependent territory concerned. That is a matter of the immigration policy of the dependent territory. In the case of the British Indian Ocean Territory, access is restricted

/for



for reasons explained below. But those born in the Chagos who returned to the Seychelles are not stateless. They are BDT citizens who are "ordinarily resident" in the Seychelles.

On aim 4, following their departure from the Chagos, almost all the Ilois settled in Mauritius. The British Government made a financial grant to the Mauritian Government to help with the structural costs arising from their resettlement. Subsequently, following discussions between the two Governments, a Trust Fund was set up under Mauritian law to assist further with the community's resettlement. No such arrangement was made between the British and Seychelles Governments. Only a small number of Ilois chose to resettle in the Seychelles. Most of those who disembarked in Seychelles after the evacuation were migrant workers returning home, with, in some cases, children born in Chagos during the contract period. The structural problems which the Mauritian arrangements were intended to address did not arise here.

On aim 5, putting aside the term 'homeland', which we cannot in any case accept, it is not possible for those born in the Chagos to return to live there. It is now some 25 years since the last workers left the islands. There is no infrastructure to support a settlement, and there is certainly no possibility of re-establishing the copra plantations, upon which the previous community depended, on any commercially viable basis. The islands are simply too small and too remote. There is also a legal objection. Under the 1966 Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States, the whole of the Territory was made available solely to meet the possible defence needs of both Governments until, at least, 2016.

On aim 7, the British Government does not accept that the Ilois are 'indigenous people' of the Territory. The basis on which they were on the islands was that of a terminable work contract between the plantation owners and themselves or their parents. The British Government therefore cannot agree to the suggestion that the Ilois are being denied the "right to return to [their] country" (or are "subjected to arbitrary exile") as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

You also asked me to confirm the authenticity of an assertion in the Seychelles Nation of 13 September. I have no knowledge of the foundation of that assertion and am therefore unable to comment on it. I suggest you take that up with the newspaper.

Yours sincerely

P A B Thomson
High Commissioner

COPY

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)
c/o Ms Jeannette Alexis
Hermitage - Mahe
Republic of Seychelles
Tel: 224440 (o) 323008 (h)

21st February 1998

The High Commissioner
British High Commissioner
Victoria House
Victoria

Dear Sir

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

Reference is made to your letter dated 24th November 1997 in reply to mine of 3rd October 1997 on the above matter.

I wish to inform you that my Committee is not fully satisfied or agreeable to the explanations given in your letter on the issue of the Chagossians residing in the Seychelles. The delay in conveying this sentiment to your goodself is regretted but was owing to the undersigned being indisposed for the last couple of months. A more detailed reply will be communicated to you in due course.

In the meantime, the Committee has written to the Government of Mauritius with a view to obtain assistance and a copy of the said letter is enclosed herewith for your information.

Yours faithfully

J.T. ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

Enc

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE

C/o Ms J.T. Alexis
Hermitage – Victoria
Mahe – Seychelles
Indian Ocean

Tel 224440 (office) - 323008 (home) Fax: c/o Mr P Noad : 225784

16th March 1998

Mr Robin Cook
The Foreign Secretary
Her Majesty's Government
St. James Street
Whitehall
London
ENGLAND

Dear Mr Cook

CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

I am sure you are well aware of the departure from the Chagos Archipelago of people living there in 1971/72 in order that these islands could be leased to the USA for use as a military base

Some of the people who left the islands went to Mauritius and some to the Seychelles islands. The former received compensation by way of land allocation and finance but those going to the Seychelles received neither form of compensation.

I have discussed this matter with the last British High Commissioner to Seychelles, Mr Peter Thompson and exchanged correspondence with him but have not received an acceptable explanation or any real attention including discussion across the table. It is felt by my Committee that this matter has not reached the desk of the Foreign Office and the attention of your good self in particular.

I would like to ask you to investigate this matter and advise whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to pay compensation to those who have settled in the Seychelles as were paid to those who settled in Mauritius as there is such an anomaly in the treatment of the two groups of deported Chagossians.

Yours sincerely

J.T. Alexis (Ms)
CHAIRPERSON

Cc BHC - Seychelles, CSC - Mauritius



From the High Commissioner

British
High Commissi
Victoria

17 March 1998

Ms J T Alexis
Chairperson
Chagos Social Committee
Hermitage
Mahe

Victoria House (3rd Fl)
P.O. Box 161, Victor
Mahé, Seychelles

Telephone: 225225, 225356
Telex: 2269 (a/b 2269 UKF)
Telegraphic address: UKREP
Facsimile: 225127

Dear Ms Alexis,

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

Thank you for your letter of 21 February.

In his letter of 24 November 1997 my predecessor mentioned an exhaustive search which was continuing through Government archives in Britain. I have since been told that all this effort has uncovered none of the records you seek, which surely points to the conclusion that there are none there. I have also been advised that it now seems to those who have been looking that it is more likely that at least some of the archives and Civil Status records relating to Chagos were in fact held by the Seychelles authorities as recently as the 1980's.

You may wish to redirect some of your enquiries accordingly.

*Yours sincerely,
John Yapp*

J W Yapp



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

Telephone. 0171

30 March 1998

Ms J T Alexis
Chairperson
Chagos Social Committee
Hermitage
Victoria
Mahe
Seychelles

Dear Mrs. Alexis,

Thank you for your letter of 16 March to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I have been asked to reply as the Head of the African Department (Southern).

First of all, may I give you my assurance that officials in London are aware of the matter.

You are right that we did provide money to the Government of Mauritius. The British Government made £650,000 available in 1973. The Government gave a further ex gratia sum of £4 million in 1982 to the Ilois Trust Fund in Mauritius. Both of these sums were designed to assist with the resettlement of the contract workers in Mauritius. The Government of Mauritius also provided land to the value of £1 million for the same purpose.

The resettlement problems that existed in Mauritius did not exist in the Seychelles on the same scale. The vast majority of those returning to the Seychelles had been born and brought up in the Seychelles, whereas a number of those returning to Mauritius had been born on the Chagos islands, and some had parents who were also born there.

Yours sincerely
Christopher Wilton

Christopher Wilton
Head of African Department (Southern)

16 April
Fwd QHJW

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE
Hermitage - Victoria - Mahe
Republic of Seychelles
Indian Ocean
Tel: 224440 (o) - 323008 (h)

8th June 1998

Mr Christopher Wilton
Head of African Department (Southern)
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH
England

Dear Mr Wilton

CHAGOSSIANS IN SEYCHELLES

May I thank you for your letter of 30th March 1998, the contents of which have been noted.

I would like to make the following observations. Although the majority of people went to Mauritius, there was still a number of Chagossians that had similar background to those that went to Mauritius that came to the Seychelles. It is not understood why payments of compensations were not shared equally to everyone concerned rather than concentrated on only a particular group.

Those that came to Seychelles suffered similar dilemma as those in Mauritius - difficulties in re-settling themselves without proper accommodation, work, and money but with families to support. Some had to pay visitors' permits, citizenships in order to be accepted legally by the Government of Seychelles. With due respect, it is felt that your office must have been misinformed on the Chagossians in Seychelles, they were actually born and some were even brought up and had children of their own on these islands. It is not correct to say that most of those in Seychelles were born and brought up in Seychelles.

The Chagossians had hoped to be considered alongside those in Mauritius when the first payments were made since a group from Mauritius did undertake registrations of those living in Seychelles, however, they were completely disregarded. It is known, however, that 2 or 3 people whom could afford it, flew over to Mauritius and did get paid in the form of money and land. Were the payments made to Mauritius supposed to be shared to all the Chagossians including those in Seychelles or elsewhere, if not, is the British Government prepared to

consider paying to the Chagossians in Seychelles a pro-rata payment as was paid to the Chagossians in Mauritius?

It is hoped that you will look into the matter thoroughly without delay and correct the anomaly that exists. Should you wish to have any further information on the matter, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely

JEANNETTE T. ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

cc: Mr P Yapp
High Commissioner
British High Commission
Victoria - Mahe
Seychelles



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

Telephone: 0171

07 July 1998

Ms J T Alexis
Chairperson
Chagos Social Committee
Hermitage
Victoria
Mahe
Republic of Seychelles

Dear Mrs. Alexis,

Thank you for your further letter of 8 June.

I have to say again that to the best of our knowledge there were very few "Chagossians" amongst those that returned to the Seychelles following the closure of the plantations in the Chagos islands. This did not create the same resettlement problems that existed in Mauritius, where over a thousand "Ilois" chose to settle. And it was to assist with these resettlement problems that the British Government made money available to the Government of Mauritius.

*Yours sincerely
Christopher Wilton.*

Christopher Wilton
Head of African Department (Southern)

cc: J Yapp Esq, BHC, Victoria

Copy

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)

P.O. BOX 613, VICTORIA, MAHE,
REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES

TEL: 224440 (O) 323008 (H)

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6th August 1998

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH
England

Attention: Mr Christopher Wilton
Head of African Department (Southern)

Dear Mr Wilton

CHAGOSIANS IN SEYCHELLES

Please refer to your letter dated 7th July being a reply to my letter dated 8th June 1998.

It is regretted to advise that your reply does not provide a full and real answer to the points raised in my earlier letter. In fact, some 2000 Chagossians were deported to Mauritius and were given no choice but to go there. A further 200 or so were likewise deported by the British Government to Seychelles. The former did receive the compensations stated in your letter dated 30th March 1997 but the fact remains that those who were sent to Seychelles received no financial compensations or land allocation.

It is with regret I have to say that this matter is not considered to have been given full and proper attention by the British Government on behalf of the deportees to the Seychelles who received neither financial compensations nor land allocation there.

A recent article in the British Telegraph Newspaper did not indicate any Chagossians living in the archipelago whose population was said to consist of some 1700 British and US military personnel and 1400 civilian contractors believed to be mainly Mauritians. This article is rather misleading in this respect as these population figures probably refer to the current state of affairs as opposed to those which existed in 1970/71, the time of deportation of persons born in the Chagos islands and who have never thereafter been allowed to return and live there.

Following an article in a Mauritius Newspaper, written in

French, it is understood that persons born in the Chagos islands, whether deported to Mauritius or Seychelles have the right to full British citizenship. Could you please confirm whether this information is true or not true and whether any such person wishing to resettle in the United Kingdom would be paid further compensations including airfares to the United Kingdom together with a resettlement allowance.

Again, I request for at least equal treatment be given to the 200 or so persons deported to Seychelles and who suffered similar humiliations to those who were deported to Mauritius but who were not given any form of compensation.

Kindly investigate this matter thoroughly. Perhaps a visit to Seychelles is necessary or the use made of your local High Commissioner's resident personnel. You will find the above situation to be correct and factual.

I look forward to your earliest reply and I am quite happy to provide a detailed list of all persons deported to Seychelles in respect of names, places and dates of birth.

Yours sincerely

J.T. Alexis (Ms)
CHAIRPERSON

CC: Secretary General of the Commonwealth - London
Minister for Foreign Affairs - Seychelles
President of Mauritius
M. J Yapp - British High Commissioner - Seychelles



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

Telephone 0171

07 July 1998

Ms J. Alexis
Chairperson
Chagos Social Committee
Hermitage
Victoria
Mahe
Republic of Seychelles

Dear Mrs. Alexis,

Thank you for your further letter of 8 June.

I have to say again that to the best of our knowledge there were very few "Chagossians" amongst those that returned to the Seychelles following the closure of the plantations in the Chagos islands. This did not create the same resettlement problems that existed in Mauritius, where over a thousand "Ilois;" chose to settle. And it was to assist with these resettlement problems that the British Government made money available to the Government of Mauritius.

Yours sincerely
Christopher Wilton.

Christopher Wilton
Head of African Department (Southern)

cc: Yapp Esq, BHC, Victoria

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)
P.O. BOX 613 - VICTORIA - MAHE - SEYCHELLES
TEL: 224440 (O) 323008 (H) EMAIL: paulnoad@Seychelles.net

27th April 1999

Ms Louise Savill
Atlantic and Oceans Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Dear Ms Savill

COMPENSATION - CHAGOSIANS IN SEYCHELLES

Following my letter dated 21st March 1999 I have not to date received a reply. Would you kindly provide me with a reply I can inform my committee and membership of the current situation.

I enclose a copy of my previous letter for your speed of reference and am sending this reminder via the local British High Commissioner's office for speed of delivery.

I look forward to an early reply.

Yours sincerely



J.T. ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

[Chagos-4]

file ref

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)
P.O. BOX 613 - VICTORIA - MAHE - SEYCHELLES
TEL: 224440 (O) 323008 (H) EMAIL: paulnoad@Seychelles.net

21st March 1999

Ms Louise Savill
Atlantic and Oceans Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Dear Ms Savill

COMPENSATION - CHAGOSSIANS IN SEYCHELLES

Following numerous correspondences on the above subject, I have received unconfirmed reports that a lump sum payment was allegedly made by the British Government to the Seychelles Government before the latter's Independence in 1976.

The payment which was allegedly made between the year 1975-1977 to the then Seychelles coalition Government was to assist in the resettlement of the Chagossians that were deported to the Seychelles.

Could you please advise whether any such payment was actually effected to the Seychelles for the reasons stated above, and if so, to whom was the payment made and what was the total sum paid.

I look forward to an early reply.

Yours sincerely

J.T. ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

[Chagos-1]

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file copy

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)
P.O. BOX 613 - VICTORIA - MAHE - SEYCHELLES
TEL: 224440 (O) 323008 (H) EMAIL: paulnoad@Seychelles.net

21st March 1999

Ms Louise Savill
Atlantic and Oceans Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Dear Ms Savill

COMPENSATION - CHAGOSSIANS IN SEYCHELLES

Following numerous correspondences on the above subject, I have received unconfirmed reports that a lump sum payment was allegedly made by the British Government to the Seychelles Government before the latter's Independence in 1976.

The payment which was allegedly made between the year 1975-1977 to the then Seychelles coalition Government was to assist in the resettlement of the Chagossians that were deported to the Seychelles.

Could you please advise whether any such payment was actually effected to the Seychelles for the reasons stated above, and if so, to whom was the payment made and what was the total sum paid.

I look forward to an early reply.

Yours sincerely

J.T. ALEXIS (MS)
CHAIRPERSON

[Chagos-3]

CHAGOS SOCIAL COMMITTEE (SEYCHELLES)
P.O. BOX 613, VICTORIA, MAHE,
REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES

TEL: 224440 (O) 323008 (H) E-MAIL: paulnooad@seychelles.net

7th March 1999

Ms Louise Savill
Atlantic and Oceans Section
Overseas Territories Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Dear Ms Savill

CHAGOSIANS IN SEYCHELLES

Please refer to your letter dated 25th August 1998, the contents of which are noted with regret.

The peoples living on the Chagos islands at the time of their removal to Seychelles and Mauritius is not in dispute. However, how can HMG pay three trenches of compensation to those deported to Mauritius and none to those deported to Seychelles? Throughout my correspondence on this matter with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, I feel the matter is being swept under the carpet and not receiving serious attention. No action has been taken on the contents of my penultimate paragraph in the letter to Mr Wilton dated 6th August 1998. We are a very small group of people trying to seek a fair deal from a large country and are making no progress. We do not have even the funds to appeal to other interested parties in particular the International Committee assistance. I am sure the Foreign Secretary himself, Mr [redacted] is not aware of our dilemma and feelings. Surely just because there were only a relatively few who were deported to Seychelles does not deny them proper and at least similar compensation to those deported to Mauritius?

Moving onto details of those returned to Seychelles, without their prior consent, attached is a photocopy of a letter acknowledging the receipt of BIOT registers of births, marriages and deaths for the period 1978 to 1971 and as you will notice, the letter has been signed on behalf of the Administrator for the BIOT. It is surprising to learn from the BHC Seychelles that the Government Archives in Britain today holds none of these records. It is also interesting to note that your office does not even have knowledge of the people that were deported to Seychelles and for your information, I enclose a list of such people.

Carey



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Our reference: OTI375/001/99

London SW1A 2AH

19 April 1999

Telephone: 0171

Ms J T Alexis
Chairperson
Chagossian Social Committee (Seychelles)
PO Box 613
Victoria
Mahe
Republic of Seychelles

J. T. A.

Thank you for your further letters of 7 and 21 March, the former enclosing your list of those born in the Chagos islands now resident in the Seychelles, for which I am grateful.

Concerning the 1878-1971 births, deaths and marriages registers relating to the Territory, the Government archives do hold many registers although we suspect these are not a complete set. These were only found last year. Earlier searches had not found them, and as our records indicated that that a search in 1984 for proof of birth in the Chagos for a particular Mauritian citizen was found in the Seychelles, the assumption was that all records after 1967 were there. (Mauritian archives hold records prior to 1967.)

On the issue of 'compensation' I can only reiterate that there is nothing further to add to the earlier correspondence between yourself and Mr Wilton, African Department (Southern), Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Your letter also asks about the outcome of the Government review of policy towards the Overseas Territories. This was concluded last month with the publication of the White Paper on 17 March. The Government does not propose to extend the offer of British citizenship to British Dependent Territories citizens who owe their status to their association with the British Indian Ocean Territory or the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus. These were excluded because of the special nature of the Territories, namely as military bases. The status of British Dependent Territories citizens connected with the British Indian Ocean Territory remains unchanged.



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Finally, and in answer to your second letter, to the best of my knowledge there were no payments made to the Seychelles Government in connection with the resettlement of the Chagossians. However the Seychelles would still have been in receipt of project aid funds up until Independence. The attached extract from 'A Yearbook of the Commonwealth 1976' makes brief mention of this and a special financial agreement in lieu of independence.

*Yours sincerely
Louise Savill*

Louise Savill
Overseas Territories Department

0171 270 2890

cc: J W Yapp Esq, BHC Victoria

Extracts

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Currency is the Seychelles rupee of 100 cents which is tied to, and cent backed by, sterling at the rate of 7½ to one rupee. There is no control.

In the absence of definitive figures, it is estimated that visitors brought more than Rs 80m (£6m) in foreign exchange on the current account in 1973. Domestic exports were valued at Rs 11m (£1.0m) re-exported at 1.7m in the same year, while total imports amounted to Rs 191m (£14.5m). Details of visible exports in 1973 were as follows:

Copra	Rs. 1,000	£1,000
Cinnamon bark	7,299	547
Coconuts (fresh)	1,609	271
Fish (frozen)	551	41
Guano	513	38
Backs, hides & skins of turtle	471	15
Cloves	102	8
Others	90	7
	268	20

Details of the main items imported in 1973 are as follows:

	Rs. 1,000	£1,000
Rice	9,352	701
Sugar	7,219	541
Dairy Products	6,617	496
Fruit and Vegetable	6,077	456
Meat and Meat preparations	3,979	298
Other Foodstuffs	14,103	1,058
Beverages	5,757	432
Tobacco and Cigarettes	2,014	151
Mineral Fuels	16,220	2,717
Condu materials and Vegetable oils	2,697	202
Chemicals	9,029	677
Manufactured Goods and articles	48,964	3,672
Machinery and transport equipment	16,929	2,770
Postal packages etc.	2,396	180

Most of the copra goes to Pakistan and about 40 per cent of chemicals are exported to the United States. On the import side 27 per cent comes from the Commonwealth and other preference areas.

Government Finance and Taxation

Estimates of recurrent revenue for 1976 are Rs. 98.4m and of recurrent expenditure Rs. 99.9m (£7.5m). There is also a continuing programme of projects which have been financed almost entirely from British aid funds. This was worth around Rs. 30m (£2.3m) in 1975. Following the constitutional changes in March 1975, special financial assistance was agreed for 1976 to 1979 as repayment of £10m in the first instance for capital projects.

The recurrent revenue is heavily dependent on indirect tax (mainly import duties) which account for about two thirds of the total. The principal source of income tax which is

Cost of Government Expenditure 1975/76

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Seychelles

Current taxation is based on a graduated scale. A system of rates is also being introduced, chargeable on the value of immovable property.

No tax is chargeable on all income arising in Seychelles and earned from abroad remitted to Seychelles. In the case of individuals who are permanent residents of Seychelles unearned income arising outside Seychelles is chargeable whether remitted or not. The basis of assessment is the income of the previous year preceding the year of assessment. There is a provision for income taxed in Seychelles who are taxed elsewhere. A pay-as-you-earn system was introduced in January 1976 to collect tax on employees' emoluments.

Exemptions which may be deducted in calculating the chargeable income for a person resident in Seychelles are as follows:

Salaries	Rs. 2,400
Children	Rs. 1,200 for each of the first two Rs. 600 for each of the next two

Child allowances

Driving abroad	Rs. 3,500 for each (maximum Rs. 7,000)
Dependent relative	Rs. 750 (maximum and limited to one only)
Contributions	Actual amount paid maximum (12½ per cent of assessable income)

Other rates of income tax are:

First Rs. 4,200 of chargeable income	nil
Next Rs. 10,200 of chargeable income	10%
Next Rs. 10,800 of chargeable income	20%
Next Rs. 10,800 of chargeable income	25%
Next Rs. 12,000 of chargeable income	30%
Excess over Rs. 48,000	35%

Married women is taxed separately. Companies and non-residents pay a rate of 35 per cent and non-residents receiving interest or royalties from companies are taxed at 15 per cent of the gross amount. Persons engaged in trade or business, the usual deductions are allowed in respect of capital expenditure incurred in the production of the income. Generous allowances are also allowed annually in respect of capital expenditure incurred in the construction or acquisition of hotel buildings, industrial buildings or buildings, and on the purchase of plant and machinery. A business loss is set off against income from other sources for the same year. If the loss cannot be set off in the one year, the unabsorbed balance is carried forward and allowed as a set off in future years.

There is some evidence to suggest that the Seychelles Islands were known and in the Middle Ages by traders from Arabia and the Persian Gulf sailing from ports in East Africa with the montoons; they are clearly associated

with the port of Zanzibar.

C Wilton Esq
HM Commissioner
British Indian Ocean Territory
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London
SW1A 2AH

Our Ref: C/011581/9901/pkc

3 June 1999

Dear Mr Wilton

CHAGOS ISLANDERS REMOVED TO THE SEYCHELLES

I have received instructions from the members of the Chagos Social Committee (Seychelles) which is a registered association whose Objects include the promotion of the interests of those born on the Chagos Islands and who were unlawfully removed to the Seychelles by those acting on behalf of Her Majesty's Government between 1971 and 1973.

I attach a list of 99 of such Ilois, in respect of most of whom I hold photocopied Birth Certificates attesting to their birth on one or other of the Chagos Islands.

You will be familiar with the issues which give rise to the Ilois' complaints, and these include the unlawfulness of their removal, the false promises of compensation made, the inhuman and degrading treatment which they received upon removal and upon being dumped in the Seychelles, the loss of their homes, jobs and possessions, the failure to make any kind of compensation or reparation, and the continuing neglect of these Ilois, all of whom are citizens of the British Dependent Territory (BIOT). You will also be aware of the promulgation of the BIOT Ordinance 1971 which, in breach of their right to return to their homeland, purports to prohibit their return.

You will also be aware that, unlike the arrangements made in 1982 between the Governments of Britain and Mauritius, whereby £4m was paid into a trust fund for the benefit of the Ilois, no such compensation arrangements have been made in favour of the Seychelles' Ilois. Indeed, as appears from the attached copy letter of 24 January 1997 written by your Administrator, Louise Savill, it would seem that "Her Majesty's Government does not consider it is under any obligation to pay compensation" to the Seychelles Ilois. It is considered that this assertion is a further breach of the rights of the Ilois.

The purpose of this letter, therefore, is to invite you to make prompt and effective proposals in favour of the Seychelles Ilois as follows:

1. confirming that their removal and loss of homes and possessions was unlawful

2. confirming that the Immigration Ordinance 1971 (BIOT) is unlawful
3. confirming the right of the Seychelles Ilois to return to the British Indian Ocean Territory
4. to make proposals for the compensation of the Ilois for what they have suffered and to make adequate proposals for their rehabilitation

We should be grateful to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully

SHERIDANS

Enc



THE TREASURY SOLICITOR

Queen Anne's Chambers, 28 Broadway, London SW1H 9JS

DX 123242 St James's Park Direct Fax: 0171 210 3433 Switchboard 0171 210 3000 (GTN 210)

Direct Line: 0171 210 3466

Sheridans Solicitors
14 Red Lion Square
London WC1R 4QL

Please quote:
L984150C/LMD/JLA/D2

Your reference: C/011581/9901

Date: 14 June 1999

Dear Sir

SEYCHELLES ILOIS

I write further to your letter of 3 June 1999 addressed to the former Commissioner of BIOT. I am instructed in this matter and I should therefore be grateful if you would address all future correspondence to me.

The factual circumstances of the Ilois who returned to the Seychelles differ in certain respects to those of the Ilois who returned to Mauritius. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a very substantial overlap in the issues raised in your letter and those raised in the proceedings brought by you on behalf of Mr Bancoult, a Mauritian Ilois (CO/3775/98). In particular, I note that in both matters you assert that the BIOT Immigration Ordinance 1971 is unlawful and that the Ilois concerned have a right to return to BIOT.

As you are aware, the Commissioner of BIOT does not accept the validity of the assertions made in the application brought by Mr Bancoult; for similar reasons the Commissioner does not accept the validity of the assertions made on behalf of the Seychelles Ilois in your letter of 3 June 1999.

I assume, in the light of this response, that you will wish to issue proceedings on behalf of the Seychelles Ilois. If that is your intention, it is essential that proceedings are issued at the earliest opportunity, in order to ensure that all relevant issues in both cases are canvassed and considered in a comprehensive, orderly, cost effective and expeditious manner, in accordance with the overriding objective set out in Part 1 of the Civil Procedure Rules. I therefore ask that you confirm, as soon as possible, whether you intend to issue proceedings on behalf of the Seychelles Ilois and, if you do, that you agree that their case and the proceedings brought by Mr Bancoult

FROM-Treasury Solicitors

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should be heard and considered at the same time.

Yours faithfully,



L M DANN (MISS)
for the Treasury Solicitor

The Treasury Solicitor
Queen Anne's Chambers
28 Broadway
London
SW1H 9JS

Our Ref: C/011581/9901/pkc
Your Ref: L984150C/LMD
/JIA/D2

23 June 1999

Dear Sirs

SEYCHELLES ILOIS

Thank you for your letter of 14 June.

The purpose of our letter dated 3 June was to give your clients notice that they Seychelles Ilois were a separate group whose history and present circumstances are somewhat different from those of the Mauritian Ilois, but who, nonetheless, support the action brought by Olivier Bancoult. Accordingly, if his action is successful, then the Seychelles Ilois will benefit from any ruling that might be made in favour of the applicant.

Therefore, whilst the Seychelles Ilois reserve all their rights to issue separate proceedings and claim any separate relief which may be available to them, they do not presently propose to issue any proceedings, but instead will support the action of Olivier Bancoult. Therefore, subject to knowing what is the case to be filed on behalf of the Respondent, it is likely that further Affidavits will be filed on behalf of both the Mauritian Ilois and Seychelles Ilois.

Yours faithfully

SHERIDANS
rgifford@sheridans.co.uk

CO/3775/98

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
QUEENS BENCH DIVISION
DIVISIONAL COURT

CROWN OFFICE LIST

IN THE MATTER OF AN
APPLICATION FOR JUDICIAL
REVIEW

QUEEN -v- THE SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR THE FOREIGN &
COMMONWEALTH
OFFICE (1)

HM COMMISSIONER
FOR THE BRITISH
INDIAN OCEAN
TERRITORY (2)

EX PARTE LOUIS OLIVIER
BANCOULT

STATEMENT OF JEANETTE
THERESE ALEXIS

SHERIDANS
14 Red Lion Square
London
WC1R 4QL

Tel : 0171 404 0444
Ref : C/011581/9901
WP Ref: PKC00002082.doc

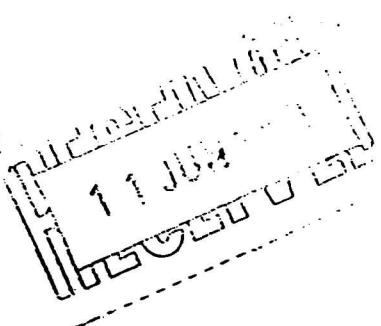
HM Commissioner
British Indian Ocean Territory
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH

Your reference: C/011581/9901/pkc
Our reference: OTI375/004/99

08 June 1999

For the attention of R D Gifford Esq

Sheridans
14 Red Lion Square
London WC1R 4QL



Dear Sirs

Thank you for your letter of 3 June which was addressed to Mr Wilton, my predecessor as Commissioner for the British Indian Ocean Territory.

We are considering the points you raise and will let you have a reply as soon as possible.

C J B White
Commissioner

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