

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

- 15 Apr

Mr. Long -

Bill -

This is long

order: I hope

for me moving

to point as rapidly

as possible 220441/2

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SECRET att. only

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U.S. OVERSEAS BASES

NAVY recently submitted to ISA a short study entitled "Assessing a Future Base Structure in the African-Indian Ocean Area" for discussion at the Interagency planning luncheon of 4 April. The study introduces a concept designed to overcome some of the problems encountered by the U.S. in maintaining overseas bases. Although this particular study is concerned specifically with the African-Indian Ocean area, the concept is equally applicable to the Pacific Ocean area. The study has not been formally staffed within the Department of Defense but is currently being considered within the Joint Staff.

The Navy study suggests that the best means of assuring the availability of needed facilities can be provided by access rights to sparsely populated and economically unimportant islands well removed from mainland areas.

The study points out that many of the islands in question are currently under control of Western allies but may in the future be lost to the West because of political pressures in the UN and the growing movement for independence. The study indicates that:

- a. Now is the time to provide for possible future U.S. use of those strategically located islands by negotiation of long-term agreements and to separate, by purchase if necessary, selected islands from their affiliation with other territories.
- b. Such action should be taken with indigenous populations before friendly nations lose protective control over them.
- c. Nationalist or neutralist interests of newly independent nations or federations may well prevent successful negotiations at a later time.
- d. These time-consuming negotiations should be completed before a specific need for military facilities arises.

It was decided at the planning luncheon that the concept has considerable merit and should be further explored by State and Defense.

No OSD objection to  
declassification  
subject to NSC

concurrence

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Prepared by the Coordinating  
Staff (NSC & Collateral  
Activities)

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