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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AIRGRAM

DEF 15 IND-45
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AIR PRIORITY
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DEF 4 4K-45

A-2170
NO.
TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE
INFO: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, CINCPAC/MEAFSA for POLAD, CINCLANT for POLAD, CINCPAC for POLAD
FROM : AmEmbassy, LONDON
SUBJECT: Indian Ocean Island Facilities
REF : Embtel 4187

COPY NO

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DATE: March 3, 1964

ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION
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LIMDIS.

The referenced telegram has sketched the general nature of the discussions on this subject which took place in London 25-27 February 1964. The purpose of this airgram is to transmit for the record the pertinent documents, and to convey something of the general atmosphere of these discussions.

Attached for these purposes, therefore, are: a copy of the agreed statement of the results of the discussion, together with a list of participants and a joint analysis of the political effect of an increased U. S. defense presence in the Indian Ocean and the nature of the diplomatic presentations to be made as a consequence (Enclosure No. 1); a summary presentation of a British military appreciation of the potential for strategic development purposes of the Indian Ocean islands (Enclosure No. 2); and a summary of essential data on these islands (Enclosure No. 3).

Enclosures att & P

1. Agreed statement with attachments
 2. Summary presentation
 3. Summary of essential data
- (Distribution of covering airgram and enclosures:
Department of State - 1 copy; Department of Defense - 15;
CINCPAC - 5; CINCLANT - 5; CINCPAC - 5)
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FORM DS-323
Drafted by: G/PM-HMeyers/flj,kf&lbs

Contents and Classification Approved by:

Clearances: DOD/ISA - R. Bronez (in draft) POL/F - R. A. Ericson

February 28, 1964

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This document consists of 22 pages
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The general atmosphere in these discussions was cordial. The Foreign Office, Ministry of Defense and Service representatives clearly wished to move the conversations along to points of mutual agreement and to act in cooperation so far as strategic development of the islands was concerned. The Colonial Office representatives, while friendly, were unwilling to commit their Ministry to action without the usual reservations about consulting local authorities and the need to make haste slowly. The Commonwealth Relations Office representative could not convey information on Africa largely due to the need to await the results of his Minister's pending visit to East Africa and his consequential decisions. Despite these qualifications, it is clear that HMG is truly pleased at this U. S. initiative in this area, wants to cooperate as far as it can, and wishes to be consulted closely on future developments. This last point should be emphasized. The British regard our presence as supplementary to theirs; not as a substitution.

Of particular items of interest, the following are worth noting:

The British strategic concepts concerning use of the islands are essentially similar to those of the U. S. They see development of particular islands as insurance against loss or limitation of existing base or staging facilities. They envisage developing the western island area (particularly Aldabra) to avoid, if required, overflying black Commonwealth Africa on the way to the Far East and as means of enhancing police operations in East Africa and the Middle East. They see the middle island area development as helpful to their uncertain position in the Maldives. They do not envisage withdrawal from their bases on the littoral, but wish to provide for contingencies of this nature and for a secondary line of support behind the on-shore base complex.

In practical terms, the UK might be willing to play a major role in constructing facilities in Aldabra, while their immediate interests in Diego Garcia seem limited to use of supplementary U. S. facilities (e.g. an airstrip) if necessary, and to putting in an oil storage depot and possibly a small communications facility on land not needed by the U. S.

Finally, the Foreign Office implied that, despite Colonial Office reserves on where the administrative control over the Chagos Archipelago might be transferred, it should in any event be transferred from Mauritius to some more manipulable context.

FOR THE AMBASSADOR:

George S. Newman
George S. Newman

Counselor for

Politico-Military Affairs

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U.S. Defence Interests in the Indian Ocean
MEMORANDUM of U.K./U.S. London Discussions

February 1964

Official discussions between representatives of the U.K. and U.S. Governments took place in London from February 25-27, 1964. On the U.K. side, the Foreign Office, Commonwealth Relations Office, Colonial Office, Ministry of Defence and Service Departments took part. On the U.S. side, the Departments of State and of Defense and the military commands concerned were represented. A list of both delegations is at Annex A. The following is agreed between the two sides as recording the results of the discussions and recommendations to their respective governmental authorities for future action.

Background

2. The U.S. Government is considering a greater defense presence in the Indian Ocean area to complement (but not in any way to replace) the existing British effort in this area. U.S. participation is likely to mean over a period of time:-

- (a) Periodic visits by a U.S. task force into the Indian ocean area.
- (b) The installation of military communications and technical facilities on islands under British sovereignty.
- (c) The development of austere base facilities to support U.S. forces which may be deployed in the area.

H.M.G. in the U.K. have welcomed this American initiative and agree that their joint basic objectives in the Indian Ocean area are first to deter Communist encroachment on countries bordering the Indian Ocean and second to have the capacity to deal firmly and rapidly with local disturbances in the area.

3. It was accepted by both delegations that the U.S. interest in developing a greater defense presence and support facilities in the area was conceived as a complement to the existing U.K. strategic posture, and would provide a valuable joint insurance in case of any loss or limitation of use of existing facilities.

Political reactions by countries on the periphery and presentation by both Governments to third countries of the American initiative.

4. The two delegations agreed on a joint assessment (at Annex B) of the probable reactions of countries on the periphery to the American initiative and on the line which should be followed by both Governments in presenting this, as the need arises, to third countries.

5. As regards periodic visits of the task force, the U.S. delegation agreed to keep H.M.G. informed of U.S. general intentions and, in particular, to give as much notice as possible of requests to visit any U.K. bases.

U.S. Interest in technical and support facilities.

6. The U.S. delegation confirmed their positive interest in the development of a

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communications facility, subject to joint survey, in Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago, which is now under the administration of Mauritius. They also expressed interest in the development of austere support facilities in Diego Garcia, and in a lower order of priorities possibly in Aldabra, the remainder of the Seychelles area, and the Cocos/Keeling Islands (under Australian administration). Such facilities might include in the long-term:-

- (a) Stockpile area for substantial portion of an Army division plus other pre-stockage facilities.
- (b) Air base capable of supporting cargo, troop carrier, and tanker aircraft. Facilities to support antisubmarine patrol operations and air logistic operations. Parking area for two to four squadrons of aircraft.
- (c) Naval anchorage and base area to support a carrier task force, amphibious, and support ships.
- (d) Communications station.
- (e) Amphibious staging area.
- (f) Space tracking and communications facilities.
- (g) Fuel and ammunition storage.
- (h) Secondary support anchorages and logistic air strips.

The U.K. delegation reserved their position about the dimensions of any space tracking facilities which the U.S. might possibly propose to establish on Diego Garcia.

The U.S. delegation recognized that topography might preclude the location of facilities for the above objectives in one single island and, since the entry of their forces into the area in individual instances might be from either East or West, according to circumstances, envisaged the development of some support facilities at both extremes of the Indian Ocean, with, ideally, a principal base area in the center. The U.S. delegation emphasized that they wished to avoid the political problems arising from the development of military facilities in populated areas and to have assured security of tenure for at least 25 years.

Diego Garcia

7. Subject to survey, the U.S. delegation envisaged that if H.M.G. agreed, the most suitable arrangement would be that H.M.G. should be responsible for making available the necessary land, at H.M.G.'s expense. H.M.G. would also be responsible for any resettlement of population and compensation. For their part the U.S. Government would undertake to accept construction and maintenance costs of the facilities they would build and to share the facilities with the U.K. The two Governments would consult as necessary about the establishment of any possible U.K. military facilities which might be required in the island.

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8. It was agreed however by both delegations that it would be imprudent to undertake any survey until the constitutional future of Diego Garcia (together with the remainder of the Chagos Archipelago) was determined. The U.K. delegation undertook to recommend to H.M.G. that in the light of the joint strategic interest, the feasibility of the transfer of the administration of Diego Garcia (and the remainder of the Chagos Archipelago) and the Agalega Islands from Mauritius should be pursued as rapidly as possible and to inform the U.S. authorities if and when such transfer was effected.

9. When it is agreed that a survey can take place, this should be a joint project, under U.K. auspices, with the U.S. contingent of minimum size necessary. The U.K. would provide one of H.M. ships for the purpose.

Aldabra

10. The U.S. delegation expressed a possible interest in the eventual development of an air staging post in the Western Indian Ocean. Aldabra seemed a likely possible site for this. The U.K. delegation said there might well be a future U.K. requirement of a similar nature in this area and made available to the U.S. side a survey for a possible airfield, which had already been completed of Aldabra. Consideration of such a facility was agreed by both delegations to be a matter for further reference to governmental authorities.

Cocos/Keeling Islands

11. The U.S. delegation explained that they had already been advised informally by Australian authorities of interest in U.S. use of facilities to be developed in the Cocos/Keeling islands. It was agreed by both delegations that since the U.K. also shared a positive interest in facilities there, further approaches to the Australians might best be undertaken in concert by the U.K./U.S. At the same time a general explanation would be given to the Australians of the discussions held between the U.K. and the U.S. It was agreed that the U.K. and U.S. Governments would keep in close touch on this matter.

Summary of agreed recommendations

12. The U.K. delegation agreed to recommend to the U.K. governmental authorities that they should:-

- (a) Consider favourably the possibility of the development by the U.S. of such facilities on U.K. island possessions as they may require, on the following general principles:-
 - (i) H.M.G. should be responsible for acquiring land, resettlement of population and compensation at H.M.G.'s expense.
 - (ii) U.S. Government should be responsible for all construction and maintenance costs.
 - (iii) U.S. Government would share these facilities, during development and subsequently, with the U.K.

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(iv) The two governments would consult as necessary about the establishment of any possible U.K. military facilities that might be required.

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(b) Pursue as rapidly as possible the feasibility of transfer of the administration of Diego Garcia (and other islands in the Chagos Archipelago) and the Agalega Islands from Mauritius.

(c) As soon as politically practicable, facilitate a joint survey of Diego Garcia and any other islands under British sovereignty in the Indian Ocean area that the U.S. may require.

13. The U.S. delegation agreed:-

(a) To recommend to the U.S. Governmental Authorities acceptance of the proposals set out in paragraph 12 above.

(b) To consider further the location of a site for an air staging post in the Western Indian Ocean.

(c) To consider further whether jointly to approach the Australian Government regarding possible use of facilities in the Cocos/Keeling Islands.

(d) To communicate further with the U.K. regarding all the above.

London
 27th February, 1964.

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ANNEX AU.S. Delegation

Mr. Jeffrey C. Kitchen	Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Politico - Military Affairs
Mr. Frank Sloan	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
Rear Admiral J.W. Leverton, Jr.	Deputy Chief of Staff, CINCLANT
Mr. Howard Meyers	Department of State
Mr. George Newman	American Embassy
Mr. Ray Bronez	Department of Defense
Captain Walter Stencil	Joint Staff
Mr. R.A. Ericson, Jr.	American Embassy
Colonel George Hannah	U.S. Air Force Staff
Captain Charles Tucker	London Staff, CINCSTRIKE

U.K. Delegation

Mr. E.H. Peck	Assistant Under-Secretary, Foreign Office
Mr. J.P. Waterfield	Foreign Office
Rear Admiral P.J. Hill-Norton	Assistant Chief of Naval Staff
Captain J.C.Y. Roxburgh, R.N.	Deputy Director of Plans (Navy)
Commander G.R.M. de la Pasture, R.N.	Defence Planning Staff
Lieutenant-Colonel A.H. Thrift	Defence Planning Staff
Lieutenant-Colonel V.H. Martin	Defence Signal Staff
Mr. M. Holton	D.S.11, Ministry of Defence
Mr. F.H. Mawer	M II, Admiralty
Mr. R.F. Havell	Head of S 6, Air Ministry

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Group Captain J.H.L. Blount	Deputy Director Air Plans 2, Air Ministry
Major-General G.R. Price	Commonwealth Relations Office
Mr. J.D. Higham	Colonial Office
Honble, A.P. Cumming -Bruce	Colonial Office
Mr. R. Terrell	Colonial Office

Note:- Mr. Phillips Talbot, Assistant Secretary of State, State Department, and Mr. R.S. Crawford, Assistant Under-Secretary, Foreign Office, also attended for part of the talks.

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The Political Effect of increased American defence participation in the Indian Ocean on the countries of the periphery and the political presentation to be made by the U.K. and U.S. Authorities

Introduction

"Increased American participation is likely to mean:-

- (a) Periodic visits into the area of an American carrier force (say once every six months). This force is likely to sail from the Pacific through the Singapore or Malacca Straits, and to visit Diego Suarez, Aden and the Gulf of Oman (and probably Mombasa) on the initial visit and possibly Karachi and an Indian port, Malaysia and Indonesia. Subsequent visits will depend on circumstances.
- (b) The installation of a few communications and other technical facilities on British possessions (e.g. most probably in the Chagos Archipelago).
- (c) The possible development of an "austere base" - i.e. airstrip, anchorage, oil depot, on one or more islands under U.K. control.

2. Paragraph (a) above is more likely to attract publicity than (b) or (c). Our line, agreed with the Americans, might be "this is not provocative; this is an area where the British have always provided the major Western presence; now here is a sign of Western solidarity, and of an increasingly solid Western military guarantee behind the various Western treaty commitments (CENTO, SEATO etc.).

COUNTRY BY COUNTRY ASSESSMENT OF REACTIONS TO INCREASED U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR U.K./U.S. ACTION IN EACH CASE

The following assessment and recommendations for action have been agreed by the U.K. and U.S. delegations during their talks in London from February 25 to 27, 1964

IRAN

Reaction Would welcome Naval task force deployment; no problems with technical facilities; would welcome austere base. Grateful for support and for presence in Indian Ocean.

Action by U.S./U.K. Make the most of the "support for CENTO and for Iran" theme.

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IRAQ

Reaction Reaction largely dependent on volume of communist - neutralist propaganda, and on state of Arab-U.S. relations. Mildly suspicious but not deeply interested.

Action by U.S./U.K. Diplomatic explanation of any major visits to the Gulf by U.S. representative in Baghdad portray increased U.S. presence as not directed against any state, available for help in natural disasters, potential support for countries menaced by CHICOM expansionist efforts.

U.A.R.

Reaction As for Iraq, but quick to seize on any tactlessness in presentation for anti-West propaganda.

Action by U.S./U.K. As for Iraq.

SUDAN

Reaction Not interested.

Action by U.S./U.K. If Sudanese inquire, use line recommended for Iraq.

ETHIOPIA

Reaction Interested, probably welcoming attitude.

Action by U.S./U.K. Careful presentation through U.S./U.K. diplomatic channels. Line similar to that for Iraq, adding that presence will make for greater stability in the area.

PERSIAN GULF GENERAL

Reaction Take note that U.S. appear to be backing up British policies - grateful for this.

Action by U.S./U.K. U.K. primary responsibility.

KUWAIT

Reaction As for Persian Gulf.

Action by U.S./U.K. U.S. will explain locally before task force enters area. U.K. will support as necessary.

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SAUDI ARABIAReaction

While public attitude would be constricted by pan-Arab and pan-African feeling, would welcome task force. Have no problems with technical facilities and generally would be pleased with increased U.S. presence.

Action by U.S./U.K.

U.S. should explain with attention directed to increased ability to contribute to stability of area.

SOMALI REPUBLICReaction

Government position opposed; possible that pro-Western element may be encouraged.

Action by U.S./U.K.

U.S. should do their best with diplomatic presentation along lines for Iraq, but without reference to CHICOM threat.

EAST AFRICA

(Kenya, Uganda,
Tanganyika)

Reaction

Perhaps less influenced than formerly by pan-African line, which is likely to allege that cold war is being brought into Indian Ocean. But with tactful presentation, with particular note of friendly intentions, might welcome privately increased presence, and would probably welcome benefits of occasional visits. Probably apprehensions that increased U.S. presence might adversely affect their desires for neutralist position.

Action by U.S./U.K.

Great care with presentation and timing of any visits. U.S. must make approaches but U.K. would welcome prior consultation over method and timing.

ZANZIBARReaction

Likely to be distinctly adverse and would not welcome naval visits.

Action by U.S./U.K.

As above, but more difficult to prevent loud protests.

MADAGASCARReaction

Has requested task force visit. Likely to welcome

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future visits and increased U.S. military presence.

Action by
U.S./U.K.

U.S. to confirm when task force schedule clear.

SOUTH AFRICA

Reaction

Welcome.

Action by
U.S./U.K.

None at present. (U.S. not presently considering sending this task force to South Africa.)

South-East Asia

BURMA

Reaction

Publicly highly suspicious; danger of protests if not carefully handled. Private satisfaction that Western strength increased in area vis-a-vis Chinese.

Action by
U.S./U.K.

Careful presentation, stressing non-aggressive intention.

MALAYSIA

Reaction

Pleased, provided the carrier force does not visit Indonesia, but might reluctantly accept such a visit anyhow, dependent on the circumstances at the time. No problems with technical facilities; would welcome increased U.S. presence as backing up U.K.

Action by
U.S./U.K.

U.S. responsibility to clear visits with Malaysians; dependent on task force schedule and influenced by reactions of India, Pakistan, Indonesia. U.S. will keep U.K. informed on political and military levels.

INDONESIA

Reaction

Probably reluctant to have task force visit Indonesia. Particularly suspicious if carrier force visits Malaysia. Opposed to any increased U.S. military presence in "Indonesian Ocean".

Action by
U.S./U.K.

U.S. responsibility.

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THAILAND

Reaction Welcome support for SEATO.
Action by Plug this for all that it is worth.
U.S./U.K.

INDIA

Reaction Any increase in U.S. military presence likely to provide adverse press and Governmental reaction. Intensity of this reaction will be conditioned by internal domestic factors - non-alignment needs, and whether CHICOMS threatening. In last event Indians could almost welcome presence. No great problems with technical facilities.
Action by Careful presentation before taking any action.
U.S./U.K. U.S. responsibility to obtain clearance for visits.

PAKISTAN

Reaction Indifferent to technical facilities; probably would accept task force visits, although not happy about it. Would accept increased U.S. presence but public attitude would be dependent on state of Indo-Pakistan, CHICOM and U.S.-U.K./Pakistan relations and on Afro-Asian reactions.
Action by U.S. responsibility. Careful presentation of
U.S./U.K. political and further military benefits of task force and increased U.S. presence, particularly to Ayub. U.K. would welcome being kept closely informed and would support if necessary.

CHINA

Reaction Strongly hostile obviously; possibilities for anti-American exploitation dependent on reactions of other countries.
Action by No initiative by either U.K. or U.S.
U.S./U.K.

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CEYLON

Reaction

Except for communication facility, Government and public reactions hostile. Will be strongly opposed to any increased U.S. military presence. No visits by task force expected to be allowed (particularly due to Ceylon's denial of visits of "ships with nuclear weapons or equipment for nuclear warfare").

Action by
U.S./U.K.

U.S. responsibility. U.K. would welcome being kept informed.

Conclusion

Although increased American participation will be welcome to several countries in the area, it will provoke suspicion and criticism in several others whose hostility will be exploited by the Chinese Communists. The critics are likely to be more vocal than the supporters of this development. Every effort should be made to reduce this reaction to the minimum by careful advance explanations to the countries in the area.

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PRESENTATION BY CAPTAIN ROXBURGH RN. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Gentlemen,

INTRODUCTION

I am now going to explain the extent to which we consider the islands of the Indian Ocean have a potential for development for strategic purposes; I shall mention our own actual and possible future strategic requirements where applicable, and my political colleagues will explain the political implications of the development of any of the islands for military purposes.

To start with let me say that our strategic communications will remain for a long time dependent on relay stations along the strategic routes. With our loss of sovereignty in Kenya affecting our present facilities in Nairobi and the ever changing pattern of political circumstances which in the future may affect our other major relays, all the islands I shall discuss, and particularly those which combine a convenient geographical position with a potentiality as naval refuelling or air staging points, must be considered as potential communications centres. Similarly, with the development of STOL and V/STOL aircraft many islands which are at present unsuitable for use as air staging posts may assume a new significance in the future.

SOCOTRABritish Strategic Interest

The Chiefs of Staff view is that the establishment of a new Middle East base at Socotra could not be justified on political and financial grounds. However, it is in a commanding position in relation to the Horn of Africa and could possibly be developed to support air-transported or seaborne operations if we lost our defence facilities in Aden.

Development Potential

Socotra, some 70 miles by 20 miles and with a population of about 12,000, has no harbour or safe anchorages and, being exposed to monsoons for most of the year, the development of a harbour would be both difficult and expensive.

A World-War II RAF airfield on the island has a runway of about 9000 feet, but lack of maintenance and the encroachment of wadis have reduced the useable length to about half.

Apart from cost, there is no practical reason why Socotra could not be developed as a base, staging post, or communications centre.

KURIA MURIA ISLANDSBritish Strategic Interests

We can at present foresee no requirement to develop any major military installations in the Kuria Muria Islands, but it is possible that we may in the future wish to install radio navigational aids on up to three islands in the Indian Ocean, one of which should

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be situated off the Arabian Peninsula.

Development Potential

The Kuria Muria Islands consisting of five small and barren islands, totalling only 28 square miles in all, are formed mostly of granite with rocky peaks. The islands are not suitable for the construction of airfields, but a small air-strip could possibly be built in the north-west of Hallaniya Island, the largest of the group (some 15 square miles in size). This is the only island of the group now inhabited and musters some 55 backward people. The cost of developing either a sizeable port or airfield would be prohibitive.

MASIRAH

British Strategic Interest

Our strategic interest in Masirah which is 40 miles by 8 miles in size and has a total population of about 2000, lies in the airfield which, will, when development is complete, assume greater importance as a staging post and possibly as a forward base for mounting operations in the Persian Gulf should other facilities be denied to us.

Development Potential

Port facilities are rudimentary, although a deep water oil terminal has just been completed. The development of port facilities would be expensive and complicated by the strong south-westerly winds which prevail for four months during the monsoon seasons. These also make overside cargo working extremely difficult at that time. Water is scarce, but if further distillation facilities could be provided and political agreement reached for land to be available, large-scale facilities could be established.

SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles Government administers some 90 islands which fall into five groups: Seychelles, Amirante, Farquhar, Cosmoledo, and Aldabra, together with two separate islands Coetivy and Astove. Their total area is about 110 square miles of which Mahe is by far the largest with an area of 56 square miles. Their total population is 41,500 of whom 33,500 live in Mahe.

The Seychelles Group (Mahe, Praslin, La Digne, Silhouette, Frigate, and other adjacent islands) and Coetivy Island

Strategic Interest. British strategic interest in the Seychelles Group and Coetivy lies in their location relatively near the African coast and in their development potential. Apart from an extensive anchorage the Admiralty has two oil fuel tanks on St. Anne Island, a satellite of Mahe, which are not in use but kept in care and maintenance. As you know the United States has a small tracking station on Mahe.

Development Potential. Although Mahe has a rugged terrain recent survey has revealed the possibility of constructing an airfield. Coetivy would also be suitable for development of an airfield. St. Anne is too small even for an airstrip. Port facilities in the group and Coetivy are limited to small craft only, except at Port

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Victoria in Mahé, where ships up to the size of frigates can enter the inner harbour and where there is extensive open anchorage in seven to thirteen fathoms. There is insufficient evidence to show whether the remaining islands in the group are suitable for development for strategic purposes.

The Amirante, Farquhar, and Cosmoledo Groups

British Strategic Interest. We have no immediate strategic requirement to use these islands. However the advent of STOL and V/STOL aircraft may produce a requirement to use some of these islands as stepping stones across the Indian Ocean.

Development Potential. There is insufficient evidence to show whether any of the islands of these groups are suitable for development for strategic purposes.

Aldabra Group and Astove

British Strategic Interest. Aldabra consisting of four flat coral islands forming an atoll with a total area of 6.4 square miles and a population of 100, is potentially of considerable strategic importance. Should we wish to develop an air reinforcement route to the Middle and Far East avoiding North Africa and Arabia, it would be the best situated island for staging LRT aircraft, on a route round or over Southern Africa, between Ascension Island and Aden or Gan. Aldabra is also the best situated island for staging MRT aircraft between Aden and Southern Africa should we in the future lose other facilities in the area.

Development Potential. Our current assessment is that a strategic airfield could be built at Aldabra, although difficulties of terrain are likely to make it expensive.

MAURITIUS AND RODRIGUEZBritish Strategic Interests

Mauritius, a pear shaped island measuring 38 miles from north to south and about 27 miles across at its widest part, has an area of 720 square miles and a population of some 682,000.

There are two major facilities there which are most important to our strategy:-

- (a) The airfield at Plaisance is an essential staging post for medium-range transport aircraft travelling from Aden to the High Commission Territories, the Rhodesias, and Nyasaland, if staging facilities in East Africa are not available. It could also be an important staging post on the eastabout route to Singapore when the Middle East air barrier exists.
- (b) A strategic wireless station on the island which is vital to our world-wide communications.

Rodriguez some 10 miles long by 5 miles wide has the surprisingly large population of 18,300 for such a small island. We have no immediate strategic interest in this

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island, which is a dependency of Mauritius. It consists of a single mountain rising to a height of 1300 feet with little level ground and has no apparent development potential, but there is an excellent open anchorage for vessels of deep draft.

Development Potential

A large military base could be established in Mauritius. Port Louis is the only port in the island and will take ocean going vessels. It has an estimated military capacity of 2500 tons a day. There is one former landing ground and there are at least four sites all suitable for possible development as landing grounds.

AGALEGA

Agalega consisting of two main islands, each of about 5 square miles joined by a spit of drying land one mile in length, has a total population of 225.

British Strategic Interest

At the moment we have no strategic interest in these two small islands. However, should it be impracticable to build an airfield on Aldabra, should we ever need one there, the Agalega islands might be the best alternative should survey show this to be practicable.

Development Potential

It would not be practicable to develop any naval facilities in the islands.

CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGOBritish Strategic Interest

This archipelago consists of 14 major groups of islands and coral reefs totalling about 25 square miles. The only inhabited islands are the Salomon Islands (with 200 inhabitants $3\frac{1}{2}$ square miles in size), Peros Banhos, consisting of some 32 islands totalling 5 square miles with 342 inhabitants, and Diego Garcia, 11 square miles and with 200 inhabitants. Diego Garcia, potentially the most important island from our point of view here, consists of a narrow strip of land 31 miles long and varying in width from $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to 40 yards and enclosing a lagoon 13 miles long and 6-8 miles wide. At present we have no firm plans to develop these islands, although Diego Garcia has been earmarked as a possible site for the installation of one of a chain of three radio navigational aids, to which I have already referred. In some eventualities these islands could have the following strategic value to us:-

- (a) Naval. With the present availability of our main base at Singapore, our facilities at Aden, and our potential facilities at Addu Atoll, there is no immediate requirement to develop Diego Garcia for further use by the Royal Navy. However, if we were to be denied some or all of these facilities, circumstances might necessitate developing naval forward operating facilities at Diego Garcia, which is potentially well suited for this purpose. We have already stated that in certain circumstances the Admiralty Oil Fuel Depot at Aden might have to be moved to the Maldives and tentative plans for this have been made. If for any reason it proved to be impossible or undesirable to move this depot to the Maldives, Diego Garcia could provide an alternative

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location which, although not so satisfactory operationally, would guarantee greater security of tenure.

- (b) Air Staging and Communications. If for any reason Gan is likely to be denied to us it would be essential to develop alternative staging facilities between the Middle East and Far East, and alternative strategic communication relay facilities. In these circumstances a requirement will probably arise for the development of Diego Garcia for both purposes. If this was not possible, it might be desirable to build staging facilities for STOL and V/STOL aircraft on one of the other islands.
- (c) Space. Our possessions in equatorial regions are of great potential value for space launching and tracking purposes and Diego Garcia might well prove suitable for this.

Development Potential

Diego Garcia has an extensive and good anchorage sheltered from prevailing winds and suitable for fleet units. If a requirement should arise for forward operating facilities land would be available for limited shore installations. It may be possible to construct an airfield on Diego Garcia or facilities for STOL and V/STOL aircraft on one of the smaller islands.

We have insufficient evidence to show whether any of the other islands of the Archipelago are suitable for development for strategic purposes.

MALDIVE ISLANDS

These consist of an archipelago of hundreds of small islands stretching some 500 miles from north to south with a total area of little more than 100 square miles. They are formed into 19 atolls. The total population of the islands is 90,000.

British Strategic Interests

British strategic interests in the Maldives are centred on Addu Atoll where some 8000 people live. There is an excellent anchorage where the Admiralty have stationed an oil hulk to provide fuel for use by HM ships making fast passages across the Indian Ocean. It is planned to replace the oil hulk by an oil fuel depot ashore. The RAF have a staging post on the island of Gan which provides an essential link in our reinforcement plans and is likely to become an increasingly important link for United Kingdom operations East of Suez. Gan also provides an important relay station in our strategic communications system. The physical limitations of Gan are such that we could not, I am afraid accept any permanent United States service ground staff, stores, or permanent installations ashore. My political colleague will deal with the implications of the use of any of the other islands in Addu Atoll.

Development Potential

Of the 19 atolls which make up the archipelago, 14 offer spacious and protected anchorages of which the best is Addu Atoll. The islands are covered with jungle, scrub,

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SUMMARY OF ISLANDS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Island	Political Affiliation	Population	Area (sq.m.)
<u>Agalega</u>	Mauritius	225	
North			5
South			5
<u>Aldabra Group</u>	Seychelles		
Aldabra		100	6.4
Assumption		31	.6
<u>Amirante Islands</u>	Seychelles		
African Islets		N11	?
Alphonse		93	.7
D'Arros		105	.75
Desroches		112	1.9
Eagle		N11	
Marie Louise		16	.2
Poivre		78	1.5
St. Joseph		N11	?
<u>Astove</u>	Seychelles	50	1.9
<u>Chagos Archipelago</u>	Mauritius		
Danger		N11	?
Diego Garcia		200	11
Eagle		N11	?
Egmont		N11	?
Nelsons		N11	?
Perhos Banhos		342	5
(32 islands)			
Salamon (11 islands)		205	3.5
Three Brothers		N11	?
<u>Christmas Island</u>	Australia	2000	
<u>Cocos/Keeling Islands</u>	Australia	650	
<u>Coetivy</u>	Seychelles	210	2.5
<u>Cosmoledo Group</u>	Seychelles		
Goelette		N11	
Menai		N11	
Polyte		N11	
South		N11	

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Cosmoledo Group (cont'd)

West North	Nil	
Wizard	Nil	
<u>Farquhar Group</u>	<u>Seychelles</u>	
Cerf	Nil	
Farquhar	172	2.4
Goelette	Nil	
Providence	70	.6
St. Pierre	45	.6
Trois Iles	Nil	
<u>Kuria Muria Islands</u>	<u>Aden</u>	<u>Total 28</u>
Gharzant	Nil	
Hallaniya	55	
Hasikiya	Nil	
Qibiya	Nil	
Suda	Nil	
<u>Maldives (200 Islands) Independent</u>	90,000	<u>Total 100</u>
Addu Atoll (including Gan)	8000	
<u>Masirah</u>	<u>Oman</u>	2000
<u>Mauritius</u>	<u>British Colony</u>	681,619 720
<u>Rodriguez</u>	<u>Mauritius</u>	18,335 40
<u>St. Brandon</u>	<u>Mauritius</u>	90 .5
Otherwise known as Cargados		
Carajos		
<u>Seychelles</u>	<u>British Colony</u>	
Bird	49	.25
Denis	67	.5
Frigate	94	.9
La Digne	1,842	4
Mahe	33,478	56
North	53	.8
Platte	21	.2
Praslin	3,836	15
Recife	4	.08
Silhouette	780	8
St. Anne	Nil	?
<u>Socotra</u>	<u>Aden</u>	12,000 1400

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and coconut palms, and are generally not more than five to six feet above mean sea level. Their centres are usually lower than the margin and are frequently marshy; few of the islands are large enough for airfields but strips could easily be cleared.

COCOS OR KEELING ISLANDS

The Cocos, or Keeling Islands as they are sometimes called have a total population of about 650 and consist of some 27 small coral islands varying between 50 yards and 5 miles in length and up to 700 yards in width.

British Strategic Interests

Our normal route from Singapore to Australia involves overflying Indonesia. Overflight clearance has recently been denied us, and the northern alternative route via the Philippines and Australian East New Guinea is long and is dependent on Filipino good-will, which is problematical in view of her opposition to Malaysia. Therefore the Cocos or Keeling Islands, which are administered by Australia, now assume importance as an air staging link. Whilst the airfield there has a runway long enough for our needs, it will be necessary to carry out further development if it is to be used regularly by heavy aircraft. Any joint development would depend on Australian agreement.

Development Potential

Of the 27 small coral islands of the group only North Keeling, Home, Houseburgh, and South Island might provide suitable additional sites for airfields in addition to the existing airfield on West Island. There is anchorage within the lagoon for medium draught ships, but no port facilities within the group.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND (INDIAN OCEAN)

Finally we come to Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean. This is some 50 to 60 square miles and has a total population of about 2000, of which 1000 are employees of the Phosphate Company there.

British Strategic Interests

I understand the Australian Government are considering developing a military airfield on Christmas Island for strategic staging to Singapore and Gan. They are also interested in a base for maritime reconnaissance in the area. It is also possible that we may wish to establish a radio navigational station on the island.

Development Potential

A strategic airfield could be built on the island. A pier projects from the shore in Flying Fish Cove; a vessel cannot actually berth alongside but has to be at moorings a few feet off. Owing to exposed conditions the cove is an uncomfortable place to lie in and is often untenable.

That, Gentlemen, concludes my presentation on the development potential of the Indian Ocean Islands. I now hand you over to Mr. Higham of the Colonial Office to give you the Political background.

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SOCOTRA

1. Position. Latitude 12° 0'N Longitude 53° 0'E
2. Political Status. Sultanate of Socotra, with nominal suzerainty of the Arab mainland region of Mahra. Has been under British protection since 1886 and is subject to an advisory treaty concluded in 1954.
3. Population and General Features. 12,000 (estimate, 1952). About 70 miles by 20 miles. It rises from sandy coastal plains to limestone plateaux with an average height of 1,000 feet and a nucleus of granite peaks rising about 4,000 feet.
4. Climate. Torrid. North east monsoon November to March, south west monsoon June to August.
5. Communications. Nil.
6. Water. Generally available north central and north eastern areas. Abundant supplies from November to March during NE monsoon. Water at the airfield at Ras Karma for the war time garrison of between 500-700 was obtained from two wells nearby.
7. Port Facilities. No ports. Some landing places on north and south sides of the island, and several anchorages. Jetty near airfield in disrepair.
8. Airfield Facilities.
 - (a) An airfield, sited about 7 nm west of Hadibo, was a World War II RAF Wellington station, but was abandoned in 1947 and no maintenance has been carried out since. No facilities are available and although still suitable for occasional use by piston engined aircraft of the Beverley category, it would be necessary to construct a new runway and to provide support facilities for operational use.
 - (b) Runway details
 - (i) NNE/SSW 9000 x 600 ft. (but only 4000 x 300 ft. usable).
 - (ii) ENE/WSW 6000 x 600 ft. (but only 4600 x 300 ft. usable).
 - (iii) WNW/ESE 3000 x 300 ft. (unusable).

All runways are of graded and compacted sandy earth with stone debris, sparsely grassed and littered with loose stones. Encroaching wadis and lack of maintenance since 1947 have considerably reduced the usable lengths of the runways and because of the quantity of loose stones they are unsuitable for light aircraft or aircraft with single wheel undercarriages. Aircraft with multi-wheeled undercarriages (e.g. Beverley) can use the NNE/SSW and ENE/WSW runways but damage from loose stones is possible.

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- (c) Capability of Extension. We have no information on the development capability of this airfield and to give a reliable assessment of this a detailed study would be necessary. However, from a quick appraisal it appears that surrounding hills (east through south to south-west) in approaches would probably limit any appreciable extension of the NNE/SSW and WNW/ESE runways, but the ENE/WSW runway seems to be comparatively clear of obstructions and it is possible that a runway in excess of 9,000 ft. could be provided on this or on a slightly different alignment. However, since the ground to the south west is crossed by shallow wadis a ground survey would be necessary to determine its suitability for runway construction.

9. Electricity supplies. Nil.
10. POL Storage. Nil

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KURIA MURIA ISLANDS

1. Position. Latitude 17°30' North. Longitude 55°52' East.
 2. Political Status. The Kuria Muria islands are technically part of Aden Colony but are administered by the Political Resident, Persian Gulf.
 3. Population and General Features. Only the largest island of the group, Hallaniya, is inhabited. The population is transient and rarely exceeds 70. The five islands extend about 45 miles from west to east, and lie some 25 miles south of the mainland. The islands are mostly formed of granite with rocky peaks.
 4. Climate. The climate is very hot and dry. Strong winds occur during the south-west monsoon. Rainfall is about 2-8 inches per annum.
 5. Communications. None.
 6. Water. Water is found on only two of the islands. On Hallaniya water is plentiful for the requirements of the present population but is brackish. There is some water on Suda Island.
 7. Port Facilities. Some shelter can be found from the south-west on the north side of Hallaniya but there are no natural harbours.
 8. Airfield Facilities. None.
 9. Other Facilities. None
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MASIRAH

1. Position. Latitude 20° 20' N Longitude 58° 40' E.
 2. Political Status. Part of the Sultanate of Oman.
 3. Population and General Features. 2,000 (estimated). 40 miles by 8 miles. Barren, rolling hills, highest point 750 ft. in the north.
 4. Climate. Hot and dry for most of the year. Strong south west winds prevail June to October. North-east winds prevail November to March.
 5. Communications. RAF radio.
 6. Water. Scarce natural sources. Limited supplies by distillation.
 7. Port Facilities. One small jetty near airfield at northern tip of island, where stores can be landed from vessels at anchor $\frac{1}{2}$ mile off-shore. Otherwise only beach landings. A new deep water terminal for unloading up to 2.330M gallons aviation fuel has been provided beside the jetty on the north-west tip of the island. Jetty and beach landings are impossible during the monsoon period from May to September.
 8. Airfield Facilities. Under development as a staging post and operating point. Main runway NNW/SSE 7,500 x 150 ft asphalt, designed to a LCN of 40, but because of high weight-bearing capacity of the sub-soil the actual LCN is likely to be about 60; capable of extension to over 12,000 ft. Subsidiary runway ENE/WSW 5,650 x 100 ft. sand and gravel, LCN 50; capable of extension to at least 8,000 ft.
 9. Electricity Supplies.)
10. POL Storage.)
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SEYCHELLES GROUP

1. Position. Ninety or so islands lying between Latitude 4° and 10° South, and Longitude 46° and 57° East.
 2. Political Status. British Colony.
 3. Population and General Features. Total population of the colony in 1960 was 41,500 of which 33,500 live on Mahe. They derive largely from the original French colonists and their slaves, and from Chinese and Indian immigrants. The principal islands of the group including Mahe, Praslin, La Digne, and Silhouette are granitic, mountainous, or hilly, and some are fringed by reefs. The other islands are flat and of coral formation.
 4. Climate. The climate is warm, humid, and monsoonal. The islands are under the influence of the SE monsoon from May to October, and of the NW monsoon from December to March, with intervening periods of variable winds.
 5. Communications. See Mahe, otherwise nil.
 6. Water. Supplies are generally adequate throughout the year but are often polluted, and sources of water should be treated.
 7. Port Facilities. Only developed in Mahe. See Mahe and Aldabra.
 8. Airfield Facilities. There are no airfields in the archipelago.
 9. Electricity Supplies. See Mahe, otherwise nil.
 10. POL Storage. See Mahe, otherwise nil.
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MAHE

1. Position. Latitude 4° 40' South, Longitude 55° 28' East.
 2. Political Status. British Colony.
 3. Population and General Features. Population of Mahe in 1960 was 33,500. Mahe 17 miles by 4 miles, is the largest of a group of 90 islands and reefs. It has little level ground and consists of rugged, partly palm covered terrain with heavily weathered granites rising to form main peaks of 3,000 ft.
 4. Climate. Warm, humid. Monsoonal winds south easterly May to October, west north westerly winds December to March. Weather fair during south east monsoon; overcast, squally and rainy during north west monsoon.
 5. Communications. There is a Cable and Wireless station.
 6. Water. Generally adequate.
 7. Port Facilities. Extensive anchorage in 7-13 fathoms. One small pier - depth at head 12 ft where frigates can berth stern to. A few local cargo craft. Monthly steamer service from East Africa and Bombay.
 8. Airfield Facilities. None existing though the lagoon was used by flying boats during the war. Air Ministry in conjunction with the Colonial Office have recently completed a survey and a possible site has been discovered for a 10,000 ft. runway.
 9. Electricity. Available.
 10. POL Storage. Bulk storage for 608 tons.
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ALDABRA

1. Position. Latitude 9° 25'South Longitude 46° 22'East.
2. Political Status. British Colony - dependency of the Seychelles.
3. Population and General Features. Population about 100. Four flat coral islands, total area about 6½sq. miles, forming an atoll. Scrub vegetation.
4. Climate. Warm, humid, Monsoonal south easterly winds from May to October and west north west winds from December to March.
5. Communications. Nil.
6. Water. Brackish water from shallow pools and well. Limited fresh water in South Island (the main island) only.
7. Port Facilities. None developed. There are anchorages outside the lagoon and a channel about 8-9 fathoms deep into the lagoon for 1 3/4 miles. Remainder of lagoon is shallow and full of coral heads. To seaward shore is steep-to and impracticable for landing stores. Inside the lagoon it is impossible to approach the shore at all except in very shallow draft craft. Large scale landing of stores would require construction of a deep water harbour or at least a harbour to take lighters.
8. Airfield Facilities. None existing. Sufficient flat land exists for constructing an airfield but all facilities would need to be provided labour would have to be brought from Mahé.
9. Electricity Supplies. Nil.
10. POL Storage. Nil.

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MAURITIUS

1. Position. Latitude 20° 18'South Longitude 57° 35'East.
2. Political Status. British Colony with Dependencies.
3. Population and General Features. 681,619 (1962). Area 720 sq. miles. Northern part is fairly flat, rising gradually to a central plateau. Elsewhere coastal plain is narrow. Bordering the central plateau are 3 mountain ranges and other isolated hills and peaks. Extensive sugar cane. Mountains and isolated hill areas are forested.
4. Climate. Tropical maritime. Prevailing south east trade winds; cyclones, especially December to April.
5. Communications
 - (a) RN Wireless Station.
 - (b) Cable. World wide via Seychelles, Rodriguez and Durban.
 - (c) Radio. To Dar-es-Salaam.
6. Water. Generally adequate.
7. Port Facilities. Port Louis. One alongside berth for a vessel up to 600 ft. and 30 ft. draught. Several mooring buoys. Shore cranes available, max. lift 20 tons. Wartime fuelling berth (by flexible pipeline) existed at Grand Port in south east of island.
8. Airfield Facilities. Airfield at Plaisance 20° 26'South 57° 41'East, elevation 180 ft., runway 6640 ft., concrete on rock. Estimated LCN 50. Has been used by Britannias at 164,000 lb AWW. Diversion airfield available at Reunion Island (French) 127 nm distant.
9. Electricity Supplies. Available.
10. POL Storage. Available at Port Louis from commercial sources. 3 depots total capacity 43,000 tons.

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AGALEGA

1. Position. Latitude 10° 33'South. Longitude 56° 45'East.
2. Political Status. Dependency of Mauritius.
3. Population and General Features. The population is about 225. Agalega consists of two main islands about 12 miles long, joined by a ridge of drying sand about one mile long. Both islands are thickly covered with coconut trees.
4. Climate. Mean daily maximum temperature varies from 87°F in March to 81°F in August. Winds are predominantly between east and south east, 5 to 10 knots. Cloud cover will exceed 6/8 on about 12 days a month throughout the year.
5. Communications. None
6. Port Facilities. Anchorage is obtainable in depths of 17 to 20 fathoms in Little Mapeu Bay on the western side of South Island.

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RODRIGUEZ

1. Position. Latitude 19° 42' South, Longitude 63° 27' East.
2. Political Status. Dependency of Mauritius.
3. Population and General Features. The population numbers about 18,300 people. The island is of volcanic foundation composed principally of basalt with a little upraised coral at each end. It is hilly throughout with but little level land.
4. Climate. Mean daily maximum temperature varies between 87°F in January and 78°F in July. The prevailing wind is between east and south east, 5 to 7 knots. Mean cloud cover throughout the year is between 4/8 and 5/8.
5. Port Facilities. There is an excellent anchorage for vessels of deep draught in Mathwin Bay. Access is through two channels having least depths of seven and four fathoms respectively.
6. Communications. Rodriguez is connected with the general telegraph system.
7. Water. Water is scarce in the dry season, from November to December, as many of the streams are dry.

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CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

1. Position. Latitude 5°20' South. Longitude between 71° and 72° East.
2. Political Status. Dependency of Mauritius.
3. Population and General Features. The archipelago consists of 14 major groups of islands and coral reefs of which the largest are Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos and the Salamon Group. The total population of the archipelago was 742 in 1962. Peros Banhos and the Salamon Islands are habitable atolls consisting of low coral islands, mostly covered with coconut palms, surrounding central lagoons.
4. Climate. It is warm and humid and rainfall is heavy. Prevailing winds are south east from June to September and north west from December to April.
5. Communications. Nil.
6. Water. Very small quantities of brackish water from wells.
7. Port Facilities.
 - (a) Salamon Islands. There is deep water in the lagoon which is some three miles long and three miles across, but there are numerous coral rocks and therefore anchorage facilities are limited.
 - (b) Peros Banhos. Anchorage can be obtained in the lagoon which is some 10 by 13 miles in extent; however, it is not very sheltered and there are also numerous shoals, rocks and coral reefs.

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DIEGO GARCIA

1. Position. Latitude 7° 20' South. Longitude 72° 25' East.
2. Political Status. Dependency of Mauritius.
3. Population and General Features. The population (Census 1962) is about 200. It consists of a narrow strip of land 31 miles long, varying from 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles to 40 yards in width and aggregating 11 square miles. It encloses a lagoon 13 miles long and 6-8 miles wide. Practically the whole island is under cultivation with coconut plantations.
4. Climate. The climate is warm and humid and rainfall is heavy. Prevailing winds are south east from June to September and north west from December to April.
5. Communications. Nil.
6. Water. Very restricted supplies of brackish water from wells.
7. Port Facilities. The lagoon has three entrance channels of which the main one has a least depth of 31 feet. It provides an extensive area of good anchorage in depths of from 8 to 16 fathoms in reasonable holding ground sheltered from the prevailing winds.
8. Flying Boat Alighting Area. A flying boat alighting area exists, but this has not been used since 1950, and possesses no facilities.

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MALDIVES

1. Position. Between Latitude 8°North and 1°South Longitude 73°East.
 2. Political Status. The Maldives are an independent protected state under the British Government which is responsible for external affairs.
 3. Population and General Features. The population numbers about 90,000. Male, the only town, has a population of 12,000. The islands form an archipelago stretching some 500 miles from north to south. The total land area is little more than 100 square miles. The archipelago consists of 19 atolls each of which consists of a ring of coral reefs and islands encircling a lagoon dotted with small islets. Some 200 of the islands are inhabited, their average size being just over half a square mile and none is larger than four square miles.
 4. Climate. The climate is very warm and humid. The greater part of the Maldives are under the influence of the SW monsoon from June to August and the NE monsoon from November to March.
 5. Communications. There are no telecommunications other than the RAF facilities at Gan.
 6. Water. Water is available on many of the islands at a maximum depth of 10 feet.
 7. Port Facilities. Fourteen of the atolls afford good anchorage, otherwise there are no port facilities of any kind except at Gan.
 8. Airfield Facilities. See Gan.
 9. POL Storage. See Gan.
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GAN

1. Position. Latitude 00° 42' South, Longitude 73° 09' East.
2. Political Status. Part of a Sultanate under British protection.
3. Population and General Features. No indigenous population. Is one of a group of atolls, 2,800 yards by 1,200 yards. Well wooded.
4. Climate. Very warm and humid. Less marked monsoonal than in N. Maldives. Heavy rainfall - 150 inches a year. Hurricanes rare.
5. Communications. RAF.
6. Water. Adequate but brackish.
7. Port Facilities. Extensive sheltered anchorage for large vessels in lagoon. One jetty with depth of 12 ft. at head. Tankers anchor off Jetty and secure their sterns to mooring buoys close to the seaward edge of the reef. Fuel is pumped ashore by pipeline.
8. Airfield Facilities. Gan Island airfield elevation 7 ft. Runway 8,700 ft. concrete, LCN 60. Not extendable.
9. Electricity Supplies. Available.
10. POL Storage. Full RAF servicing facilities available.

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COCOS ISLANDS

1. Position. Latitude 12° 00'South, Longitude 96° 50'East.
2. Political Status. Australian Dependency.
3. Population and General Features. 650 (1959). About 27 small coral islands varying between 50 yards and 5 miles in length, up to 700 yards wide with little variation in elevation.
4. Climate. Tropical. SE trades prevail. Rough weather in first quarter of the year - seldom typhoons.
5. Communications. Cable and wireless station with HF WT, teleprinter line to Perth.
6. Water. Limited wells, with occasional shortages.
7. Port Facilities. West Island. There is anchorage within the lagoon for medium draught ships, but there are no port facilities within the group.
8. Airfield Facilities. West Island 12° 11'S, 96° 50'E. Elevation 10 ft. runway 8000 ft. primed coral, 75,000 lb SIWL, extensible by 2000 ft. by using present overrun strips. Further extension would involve filling the lagoon. Capable of accepting Britannias at 185,000 lb and probably VC 10sup 300,000 lb AUW. Hydrant refuelling.
9. Electricity Supplies. Available, locally generated.
10. POL Storage. Minimum stocks of 84,000 gals. of AVTUR with storage for 310,000 gals. AVGAS is also available. Replenishment is by sea tanker at intervals calculated to prevent stocks falling below the minimum. If replenishment out of schedule is required sufficient time should be allowed for the charter, filling and voyage time of the tanker.
11. Accommodation. 80 beds for transients, can be increased to 130.

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CHRISTMAS ISLAND

1. Position. Latitude 6° 45'N. Longitude 105° 13'E.
2. Political Status. Australian Dependency.
3. Population and General Features. In 1955 the total population was about 2000 of which 1000 are employees of the Phosphate Company. The island is of limestone formation, densely wooded and rising from the sea to a central plateau in successive terraces and cliffs. The coast is composed of perpendicular and almost continuous cliffs, from 20 to 80 feet high, interspersed with rough beaches where the cliffs have crumbled away.
4. Climate. Temperature varies between 88°F in January and 73°F in August. The prevailing wind is between east and south east, 5 to 10 knots. Mean cloud cover is 4/8.
5. Communications. There is a radio station in the settlement at Flying Fish Cove.
6. Water. Water from springs is laid on to the pier but owing to local requirements can only be supplied in small quantities.
7. Port Facilities. There is a pier in Flying Fish Cove; a vessel cannot actually berth alongside but has to lie at moorings a few feet off. Owing to exposed conditions the cove is an uncomfortable place to lie in and is often untenable.
8. Airfield Facilities. Nil.
9. POL Storage. Nil.

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