

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-04

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TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY

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AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

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BEIRUT ALSO PASS BAGHDAD; MILITARY ADDEES ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

AGS: XO, US, UK

SUBJECT: PUBLICITY ON DIEGO GARCIA AGREEMENT

JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

1. THE US AND THE UK ARE SCHEDULED TO SIGN THE DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION AGREEMENT IN LONDON ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SIGNING WILL NOT BE MADE UNTIL FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, TO ALLOW HMG TO SUBMIT THE AGREEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON FEBRUARY 26 AND ANNOUNCE THE ACCORDS BY WAY OF A RESPONSE TO A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION.

2. ON THE US SIDE, KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WILL BE INFORMED ON A CLASSIFIED BASIS OF THE SIGNING ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 25. THEY WILL ALSO BE INFORMED THAT A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, AND THAT THE DIEGO GARCIA AGREEMENT, AS WELL AS THE RELATED DOCUMENTS, I.E. THE SERVICE-TO-SERVICE AGREEMENT AND THE SUPPLEMENTAL LETTER OUTLINING THE PLANNED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS THE SAME DAY.

3. TEXT OF THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO BE MADE IN WASHINGTON ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, FOLLOWS: QUOTE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND HER MAJESTY S GOVERNMENT SIGNED AN AGREEMENT ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, PERMITTING THE EXPANSION OF NAVAL FACILITIES FOR JOINT USE OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS ON THE ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. AT PRESENT THERE IS A NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS STATION AND AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AIRSTRIPE ON THE ISLAND. THE EXPANSION PROGRAM CALLS FOR FUEL STORAGE, AND EXTENDED RUNWAY, A PIER, AND SUPPORT FACILITIES. UNQUOTE

4. THE FOLLOWING Q'S AND A'S MAY BE USED ON AN IF-ASKED BASIS:

(1)Q.DID THE US CONGRESS NOT WITHHOLD FUNDS FOR THIS PROJECT?

A. FISCAL YEAR 1975 FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF 18.1 MILLION DOLLARS ARE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE FOR THIS EXPANSION PROJECT. THE US CONGRESS HAS APPROPRIATED BUT DELAYED THE USE OF MOST OF THE 13.8 MILLION DOLLARS FISCAL YEAR 1976 FUNDS UNTIL MID-APRIL 1976.

(2) Q. WILL DEVELOPMENT OF DIEGO GARCIA NOT ADD FUEL TO THE US-RUSSIAN ARMS RACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN?

A. THE EXISTENCE OF THE DIEGO GARCIA FACILITY WILL NOT ENTAIL AN INCREASE IN US NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS INTO THE AREA. OPERATIONAL FORCES WILL NOT BE PERMANENTLY BASED AT DIEGO GARCIA.

(3) Q. WHAT SORT OF ARRANGEMENT DID WE PREVIOUSLY HAVE FOR USE OF DIEGO GARCIA?

A. AN AGREEMENT WAS CONCLUDED FOR A NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY ON DIEGO GARCIA BY AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES ON OCTOBER 24, 1972. THIS SUPPLEMENTS THE BASIC AGREEMENT OF DECEMBER 30, 1966, REGARDING THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN

TERRITORY. THE BASIC AGREEMENT IS FOR AN INITIAL PERIOD OF 50 YEARS.

(4) Q. DOES THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA GO BEYOND WHAT WAS INITIALLY AGREED UPON WITH THE BRITISH?

A. THE CURRENT PLANS TO DEVELOP EXPANDED SUPPORT FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA ARE IN COMPLETE ACCORD WITH THE PHILOSOPHY SET FORTH IN THE ORIGINAL 1966 AGREEMENT FOR OUR USE OF THE ISLANDS IN THE BIOT QUOTE FOR THE DEFENSE PURPOSES. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSE OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS AS THEY MAY ARISE. UNQUOTE

(5) Q. IS THE UK CONTRIBUTING FINANCIALLY TO THE EXPANSION OF FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA?

A. NO. FUNDS FOR EXPANSION ARE BEING PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES. AND, OF COURSE, IT IS THE US INSTALLATION WHICH IS BEING EXPANDED.

(6) Q. WELL, DO THEY (THE UK) FURNISH PERSONNEL OR OTHER SUPPORT?

A. YES. UK PERSONNEL ASSIST IN MANNING THE FACILITY.

(7) Q. HOW MANY UK PERSONNEL? WILL THEY BE INCREASED?

A. ABOUT 30. THE NUMBER IS REVIEWED FROM TIME TO TIME.

(8) Q. WILL BRITISH FIRMS BE ABLE TO TENDER FOR THE WORK?

A. THE US GOVERNMENT EXPECTS THE WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT BY US NAVAL CONSTRUCTION CORPS.

(9) Q. WHY DOESN'T THE UK MAKE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION, IF THIS IS A COOPERATIVE DEFENSE EFFORT?

A. THE UK HAS MADE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION BY PROVIDING THE REAL ESTATE REQUIRED FOR THE INSTALLATION ON DIEGO GARCIA.

(10) Q. WILL THE UK SERVICES ALSO INCREASE THEIR USE OF THE ISLAND?

A. THE AGREEMENT WOULD PERMIT THIS.

(11) Q. SEVERAL NATIONS IN THE AREA OF THE INDIAN OCEAN, PARTICULARLY INDIA, HAVE EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF WESTERN MILITARY BASES IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD. WAS THAT OPPOSITION TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DECIDING TO GO FORWARD WITH EXPANSION OF THE DIEGO GARCIA BASE?

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A. WE ARE AWARE THAT SENTIMENT HAD BEEN EXPRESSED BY SOME STATES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA ABOUT PRECLUDING THE RIVALRY OF GREAT POWERS. IT IS CERTAINLY NOT THE UNITED STATES' DESIRE TO ENTER INTO SUCH COMPETITION. WHAT IS IN QUESTION HERE IS SIMPLY RESPONDING TO THE NEED TO PROVIDE, IN ADDITION TO RELIABLE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES, BETTER LOGISTICAL AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT TO AMERICAN AND BRITISH VESSELS AND AIRCRAFT WHICH MAY BE OPERATING IN OR TRANSITING THE OPEN SEAS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

(12) Q. WILL THE EXPANSION OF THE DIEGO GARCIA FACILITY AND OUR NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN HAVE THE EFFECT OF INTENSIFYING ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENT IN THE AREA AND OF INCREASING THE INFLUENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION? ARE THE BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FROM OUR EXPANDED PRESENCE SO GREAT AS TO BALANCE THESE POSSIBLE BAD EFFECTS?

A. AS FOR THE INFLUENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE REGION, IT ALREADY HAS MADE ITS PRESENCE FELT. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE DIEGO GARCIA FACILITY WILL TEND TOWARD INCREASING SOVIET INFLUENCE. THE BENEFITS TO BE ACCRUED BY FURTHER ENHANCING REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT CAPABILITIES ARE CONSIDERABLE AND WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON SHIP AND PLANE TRAVEL, AS WELL AS AIR AND SEA RESCUE ACTIVITIES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THESE ARE TANGIBLE BENEFITS.

(13) Q. HOW LARGE IS DIEGO GARCIA ATOLL AND HOW MUCH OF IT WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE FACILITY?

A. DIEGO GARCIA IS A V-SHAPED ATOLL ROUGHLY 14 MILES IN LENGTH AND 5 MILES IN WIDTH. THE WIDTH OF THE ISLAND SURROUNDING THE LAGOON VARIES BETWEEN 300 AND 7200 FT. THE FACILITY OCCUPIES APPROXIMATELY 1/3 OF ITS 5700 ACRES.

(14) Q. HOW MANY US AND UK MILITARY PERSONNEL WILL BE STATIONED ON THE ISLAND WITH THE FACILITY EXPANSION?

A. WE ENVISION ABOUT 500-600 PERSONNEL TO MAN THE COMPLETE

FACILITY.

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(15) Q. IS THERE ANY NATIVE POPULATION ON THE ISLAND?

A. NO. AT ONE TIME THERE WAS A SMALL NUMBER OF CONTRACT LABORERS FROM THE SEYCHELLES AND MAURITIUS ENGAGED TO WORK ON COPRA PLANTATIONS ON THE ISLAND, BUT THEY WERE TRANSFERRED WHEN THE PLANTATIONS WERE CLOSED DOWN.

(16) Q. WHO WILL COMMAND THE FACILITY?

A. A US OFFICER WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THE FACILITY AND A ROYAL NAVY OFFICER WILL COMMAND THE ROYAL NAVY ELEMENT. THE LATTER WILL BE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ISLAND AS A WHOLE.

(17) Q. HOW MANY SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT WILL BE STATIONED ON THE ISLAND? WHAT WILL BE ITS CAPACITY?

A. WE HAVE NO PLANS AT PRESENT TO ASSIGN ANY SHIPS OR AIRCRAFT TO THE FACILITY. WE ARE SIMPLY OFFERING SUPPORT CAPABILITY TO MILITARY UNITS OPERATING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AT ANY GIVEN TIME. THE CAPACITY IS A FLEXIBLE THING. WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE PROTECTED ANCHORAGE FOR SAY A DOZEN OR SO SHIPS BUT NOT TO LOGISTICALLY MAINTAIN CONTINUED OPERATION FROM THE ISLAND. THE SAME WILL BE TRUE OF AIRCRAFT.

(18) Q. WHY ARE YOU EXTENDING THE 8000 FOOT RUNWAY?

A. EXTENDING THE RUNWAY TO 12,000 FT. WILL MAKE THE FIELD AVAILABLE FOR USE BY ANY OF A VARIETY OF AIRCRAFT IN THE INVENTORY REQUIRING MORE THAN 8,000 FEET FOR SAFE OPERATION. WE EXPECT MUCH OF THE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FOR THE

ISLAND WILL BE HANDLED BY MILITARY AIRCRAFT.

(19) Q. WILL THE ISLAND SUPPORT SUBMARINE ACTIVITY?

A. A BASE CAPABLE OF SUPPORT OF NAVAL SURFACE SHIPS OBVIOUSLY HAS CERTAIN PARALLEL SUPPORT CAPABILITIES FOR SUBMARINES AS WELL. HOWEVER, IF YOU ARE ASKING IF ANY SPECIALIZED SUPPORT CAPABILITY FOR SUBMARINES IS BEING

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INSTALLED, THE ANSWER IS NO.

(20) Q. HOW WILL THIS FACILITY BE SUPPORTED?

A. FROM LOGISTIC BASES IN THE UNITED STATES AND ELSEWHERE.

(21) Q. DO PLANS FOR EXPANSION INCLUDE ANY PROVISION FOR STORAGE OF AMMUNITION, INCLUDING STORAGE OR MAINTENANCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS? WILL SHIPS OR AIRCRAFT USING THE FACILITY CARRY NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

A. THIS IS PLANNED AS A MODEST SUPPORT FACILITY. AS FOR NORMAL TYPE-AMMUNITION, I WOULD NOT RULE OUT A SMALL STORAGE OF STANDARD AMMUNITION; HOWEVER, IT IS THE PRACTICE OF BOTH COUNTRIES NEITHER TO CONFIRM NOR DENY THE PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ANYWHERE.

(22) Q. WHO WILL BE ABLE TO USE THE FACILITIES?

A. US AND UK FORCES; HOWEVER, INTERNATIONAL LAW REQUIRES THAT ASSISTANCE BE GIVEN TO SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT OF ALL NATIONS THAT MAY BE IN DISTRESS.

(23) Q. WHEN WILL THE PROGRAMMED EXPANSION BE COMPLETED?

A. PROBABLY BY THE END OF 1979 OR EARLY 1980.

(24) Q. WHAT WILL BE THE TOTAL COST OF THE FACILITY AS PRESENTLY ENVISIONED?

A. APPROXIMATELY 39.2 MILLION DOLLARS IN MILITARY CONSTRUCTION FUNDS FOR THE EXPANSION.

(25) Q. WILL DEPENDENTS BE ALLOWED TO ACCOMPANY US PERSONNEL?

A. NO. TOURS OF DUTY FOR US MILITARY PERSONNEL WILL BE 12 MONTHS UNACCOMPANIED BY DEPENDENTS.

(26) Q. WHAT ARE THE POSSIBILITIES OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN US AND SOVIET UNION NAVAL FORCES IN THIS AREA?
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A. NO MORE THAN ANY OTHER LOCATION WHERE UNITS OF BOTH FORCES OPERATE.

(27) Q. WHAT IS THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE PEOPLE WHO FORMERLY WORKED ON DIEGO GARCIA?

;S YOU KNOW THEY WERE RESETTLED PRINCIPALLY IN THE SEYCHELLES AND MAURITIUS. ONE OF THE MAIN CONSIDERATIONS SEYCHELLES AND MAURITIUS. ONE OF THE MAIN CONSIDERATIONS IN SETTING UP THE BIOT WAS THAT ONLY CONTRACT LABOR N-

HABITED THE ISLANDS AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY WHEN THE

PLANTATIONS WERE CLOSED NO PERSONS WOULD REMAIN WHO WERE NOT OFFICIAL US OR UK PERSONNEL.

(28) Q. COULD YOU PLEASE REVIEW THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE US AND THE UK REGARDING DIEGO GARCIA?

A. THE DETACHMENT FROM MAURITIUS AND THE SEYCHELLES OF THE ISLANDS NOW COMPRISING THE BRITISH INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY (WHICH INCLUDES DIEGO GARCIA) REQUIRED COMPENSATION TO THOSE GOVERNMENTS FOR SUCH MATTERS AS LOSS OF SOVEREIGNTY, PURCHASE OF PRIVATELY OWNED PROPERTY OR LAND, AND RESETTLEMENT OF MIGRATORY WORKERS. THE USG AGREED IN 1966 TO PROVIDE HALF THE TOTAL COST INVOLVED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BIOT UP TO A MAXIMUM OF 5 MILLION POUNDS STERLING (14 MILLION DOLLARS) BY WAIVING TO THAT EXTENT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT SURCHARGES FOR UNITED KINGDOM PURCHASE OF THE POLARIS MISSILE SYSTEM.

(29) Q. DID THE US PAY ANY OF THE 3 MILLION POUNDS, OR 1.4 MILLION DOLLARS COMPENSATION TO MAURITIUS FOR RELIEF AND RESTITUTION OF THE WORKERS?

A. OUR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WERE INTENDED TO COVER ONE HALF OF THE COST OF CREATING THE BIOT. ALL FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED, FOR EXAMPLE MAURITIUS, WERE HANDLED BY THE BRITISH AS SOVEREIGN ADMINISTRATOR OF THE TERRITORY. THE THREE MILLION POUNDS PAID TO MAURITIUS BY THE UK WAS FOR LOSS OF SOVEREIGNTY; AN ADDITIONAL 650,000 POUNDS WAS PAID TO THE MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

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MENT FOR THE COST OF RESETTLING THE PLANTATION WORKERS.

(30) Q. WHY ARE WE EXPANDING OUR FACILITIES ON DIEGO GARCIA?

A. THE US SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ANNOUNCED IN 1973 THAT THE US WAS RETURNING TO A POLICY OF MORE FREQUENT DEPLOYMENTS OF OUR FORCES TO THE INDIAN OCEAN. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AN AUGMENTED PRESENCE IN THAT AREA MORE FREQUENTLY THAN IN THE PAST. DEPLOYMENTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN ARE FAR REMOVED FROM NORMAL US NAVAL SUPPORT FACILITIES IN THE PACIFIC. WE FEEL IT IS DESIRABLE FROM BOTH AN ECONOMIC AND OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO OUR FORCES IN THE AREA A SAFE AND DEPENDABLE HAVEN WHICH CAN PROVIDE LOGISTIC SUPPORT WITHIN CONVENIENT OPERATING RANGE.

(31) Q. WHAT FACILITIES ARE PRESENTLY IN DIEGO GARCIA?

A. THE PRESENT FACILITY IS AN AUSTERE NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS

FACILITY WITH A PURPOSE TO CLOSE WHAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE A GAP IN OUR WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AND TO PROVIDE COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT TO US AND UK SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

(32) Q. WHAT WILL BE ADDED IN THE EXPANSION PROGRAM?

A. THE FACILITIES NOW ON THE ISLAND TO HANDLE SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT WILL BE IMPROVED SO THAT OUR FORCES HAVE THE OPTION TO USE THE FACILITY FOR REFUELING, RESUPPLY, AND OTHER SUPPORT. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS WILL INCLUDE LENGTHENING THE RUNWAY, IMPROVING SHIP SUPPORT FACILITIES, ENLARGING AIRFIELD RAMP AREA, INCREASING POL STORAGE, AND CONSTRUCTING A PIER. KISSINGER

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