



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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May 12, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Max Friedersdorf  
The White House

FROM: Robert J. McCloskey *RM*

SUBJECT: Senate Opposition to Diego Garcia

Our soundings indicate that:

- (1) Senator Mansfield will vigorously oppose a Presidential finding that the expansion of Diego Garcia is essential to the national interest;
- (2) He will insist upon a full scale debate which would entail the risk of resurfacing much of the Indochina war rhetoric;
- (3) No one can forecast with accuracy the outcome of a Senate vote, unless the President asks Bobby Byrd and Bob Griffin to conduct Whip counts; and
- (4) There would be no chance of getting the money request for FY-1976 if the President does not make the finding required to use FY-1975 funds.

Mansfield's resolution opposing the President's finding is drafted and ready to go. A vote analysis conducted by his staff before the collapse of Vietnam, found that only about a third of the Senate would support the Administration. Mansfield's staff believes the Administration might pick up a few votes from those Senators who would oppose any new efforts to curtail the President's flexibility in the security field, especially in the aftermath of Vietnam.

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.4

MR 92-61, #28, State Ltr. 2/5/93  
By KOH 3/17/93

The Administration is in a relatively stronger position, however, in that the Congress would be challenging a Presidential finding that the expansion is essential to the national interest rather than directly voting for money or an authorization. However, we cannot measure the number of votes this would attract. Our soundings indicate there might be as many as six members of the Armed Services Committee opposed to the concept of expanding the facility.

On the House side, Hamilton is still troubled with the expansion of Diego Garcia and would probably hold hearings if the President submitted the finding that the expansion should proceed. Given the new membership in the body, we anticipate the opposition would be stronger than last year, but we are inclined to believe that the Administration's viewpoint would prevail as it has in the past.