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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

EXECUTIVE
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ND9-3
FC36-4

(4)

May 10, 1977

Dear Senator Stennis:

Regarding your letter to the President of May 6, 1977, you are probably now aware that Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher responded on May 7, 1977, to a similar inquiry by Senator Culver.

I would like to assure you that no fiscal year 1978 funds will be expended for aircraft maintenance and barracks construction on ^{*}Diego Garcia until the Administration has completed an Indian Ocean policy review and has had an opportunity to evaluate the results of discussions with the Soviet Union on Indian Ocean arms control. Further, the Administration will consult fully with the Congress prior to any decision regarding construction of these facilities on Diego Garcia.

Sincerely,



David Aaron
Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

The Honorable John C. ^{*}Stennis
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

URGENT ACTION

May 10, 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: DAVID AARON


FROM: JAMES THOMSON *JAT*
VICTOR UTGOFF *W*

SUBJECT: Stennis Letter on Diego Garcia

Senator Stennis (Tab B) has requested Presidential assurance that no funds will be spent for aircraft maintenance or barracks facilities on Diego Garcia without notifying the Congress, even though the Senate Armed Services Committee is prepared to authorize the FY 78 expenditure. Secretaries Brown and Vance have already agreed not to spend these funds until the on-going Indian Ocean policy review has been completed. Warren Christopher has already given (Tab C) Senator Culver the assurances requested by Senator Stennis.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the attached letter to Senator Stennis, which reiterates the policy set out by Warren Christopher. Our response is due on the Hill by Tuesday night.


Gary Sick concurs.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

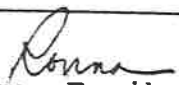
Date May 7, 1977

TO: Jane Pisano

I'm sending this directly to you
rather than through normal channels
because Dan Tate left me a note to
indicate you were expecting the
letter. He also said a response is
needed by Tuesday night.

Any problems, contact Dan or me.

Thanks.


Ronna Freiberg
Director, Congressional
Correspondence

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

FRANCIS J. SULLIVAN, STAFF DIRECTOR

May 6, 1977

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20050

Dear Mr. President:

My purpose in writing to you is to make clear the position of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Diego Garcia.

fm The Committee has just completed its consideration of the FY-78 Military Construction Authorization bill. Authorizations for all construction projects requested for Diego Garcia are included in that bill.

Based on a last minute plea by the Secretary of the Navy that a reduction would "greatly limit the President's options" in any negotiations with the Soviet Union on mutual arms restraint in the Indian Ocean, the Committee agreed to authorize the full \$7.3 million contained in the budget request. The Committee strongly endorses your publicly announced objective of seeking mutual arms restraint in the Indian Ocean and does not wish to impede that effort in any way.

However, I want to emphasize the concern of this Committee that the Navy should not be permitted to construct a full-fledged base on Diego Garcia -- piece by piece -- without Congressional consideration of an overall plan. When the debate was held on Diego Garcia in the summer of 1975, the Navy clearly identified the limited scope of the facility that it said was required. Now the Navy has requested in the FY-78 military construction bill, authority to construct barracks for 200 additional men and airfield facilities to accommodate the permanent stationing of operational aircraft. This appears to be a departure from the austere facility that the Congress agreed to in 1975.

I am asking for your assurance that the Navy will not be permitted to expand the missions on Diego Garcia without presenting a new overall plan to the Congress. I would request specifically that before any project authorized for Diego Garcia for Fiscal Year 1978 is allowed to proceed to construction, that the decision to proceed be carefully considered in light of the current negotiating situation and that the Armed Services Committees of Congress be notified of your intent to proceed together with the considerations involved in such a decision.

The Committee considered adding a provision similar to the above request into the bill, but felt that this letter would preserve the greatest range of negotiating options.

I look forward to a response from you on this matter at the earliest possible time. I feel sure it will be an item of public debate when the bill reaches the floor of the Senate next week.

Sincerely,


John C. Stennis

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

May 7, 1977

Dear John:

I understand that you have inquired about the Administration's position on the Diego Garcia military construction program now under consideration by the Congress.

The Administration's request is consistent in dollar terms, adjusted for inflation, with the Diego Garcia expansion plan that the past Administration presented to the Congress. We have, however, altered the earlier plan by scaling down some facilities and substituting certain basic aircraft maintenance capabilities. With the loss of the facilities formerly available in Thailand, the maintenance location nearest to Diego Garcia is thousands of miles away in the Philippines. The increased barracks space we have added to the plan would house the men who would perform aircraft maintenance and other support functions.

Secretary Vance and Secretary Brown have agreed that no funds will be expended for aircraft maintenance and barracks' construction until the Administration has completed an Indian Ocean policy review.

We have, as you know, proposed to the Soviet Union that we work toward an agreement on arms control in the Indian Ocean that would avoid a competitive arms race and lead toward the President's announced goals in this area. We and the Soviets have agreed to meet in June for initial discussions, and we are currently making preparations for these and later discussions.

The Honorable
John C. Culver,
United States Senate.

We consider it particularly important at this early stage in bilateral discussions that the United States take no unilateral actions which could be misconstrued by the Soviets. The construction bill now before the Congress seeks to retain capabilities which have long been planned for the region as a whole; the altered plan merely replaces facilities originally available at Utapao in Thailand. A change in the plan as it now stands could adversely impact our arms control objectives.

But, I would stress, we do not intend to carry out the altered construction plan until we have formulated our Indian Ocean policy, and have a clearer idea of whether it will be feasible to achieve an arms control agreement that would make this construction unnecessary. We intend to consult with the Congress on the results of our Indian Ocean policy review and to explain fully the reasons behind any decisions regarding Diego Garcia that might flow from that review.

Sincerely,

Wm.

Warren Christopher
Acting Secretary

NSC CORRESPONDENCE PROFILE

EXC		REF ID			LOG NUMBER	
MO	DA	MO	DA	HR		
57	59	11	77	02	758	

INITIAL ACTION

UNCLAS ☒ LOG IN/OUT

LOU ☐ NO FORM ☐

C ☐ EYES ONLY ☐

S ☐ CODEWORD

TS ☐ SENSITIVE

SOURCE/CLASS/DESCRIPTION

TO PRES _____

BRZEZINSKI _____

AARON _____

WORSLOW ☒

FROM SECRETARY Freiberg, R

SECDEF _____

DCI _____

STATE EXSPC _____

OTHER _____

S/S _____

X REF _____

SUBJECT

Letter to Pres from Sen John C. Stennis re Ctr 74-78 Military Construction Authorization bill re Diego Garcia

DISTRIBUTION/INITIAL ACTION ASMT

INTERNAL ROUTING AND DISTRIBUTION					REC CY FOR
ADV CYS	ACTION	CONCUR/ COMMENTS	COORDINATE	INFO	
ADV CYS <u>BRZEZINSKI/AARON</u>					
STAFF SECRETARY					
CONGRESSIONAL				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ECONOMIC					
EUR/CANADA					
FAR EAST					
INTELLIGENCE					
PEOPLE'S REP OF CHINA					
MID EAST/NO AFRICA		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
POLICY ANALYSIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GLOBAL ISSUES				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRISIS MGMT					

ACTION REQUIRED

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT

MEMO FOR MR BRZEZINSKI

REPLY FOR Carson Signature

APPROPRIATE ACTION _____

MEMO _____ TO _____

RECOMMENDATIONS _____

JOINT MEMO _____

REFER TO _____ FOR: _____

ANY ACTION NECESSARY? _____

CONCURRENCE OR COMMENTS _____

DUE DATE: 5-10

COMMENTS: (INCLUDING SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS)

Logan Lee Murphy

SUBSEQUENT ROUTING/ACTIONS

DATE	FROM	TO	STATUS	SUBSEQUENT ACTION REQUIRED (OR TAKEN):	DUE	CY TS
<u>May 10</u>	<u>Pharmann</u>	<u>Carson</u>		<u>Letter to Senator Stennis</u>		
<u>5/10</u>		<u>Carson</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Dr Carson</u>	<u>5/10</u>	
<u>5/11</u>			<u>C</u>	<u>DA said to Stennis</u>		

DISPATCH

DISPATCH

SPECIAL DISPOSITION:

SPECIAL INDEXING

NOTIFY

M/F O _____ BY _____

IF _____

CRT ID: _____

OPEN _____

CLOSE: PO

MS ☒ DY ☒

SA ☒ PP ☒

CPA ☒