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July 10, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The Washington Post tomorrow may break a story on our effort with the British to develop island facilities in the Indian Ocean. State has persuaded Friendly to hold off publishing since mid-June in order not to upset the delicate process of bringing the islanders into camp. But now he fears being scooped, and State may not be able to hold him off any longer.

We agreed with the UK in February to survey several British islands--in the Seychelles, Mauritian and Chagos groups--to find good sites for coasts and other support facilities. Last week the British sounded out local administrators in the islands and got a favorable reaction. The one thing we haven't had a chance to do is brief major governments surrounding the Indian Ocean to limit their initial public reaction. It would be easier if we could keep this under wraps for another week, but we can probably ride out the propaganda blow if it breaks.

McGeorge Bundy

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Authority NSC 14r. 7/28/76

NARA, Date 5-25-04