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PREFACE

During 1975 there was renewed debate in the Congress over the plans of the U.S. Navy to expand base support facilities on the island of Diego Garcia in the middle of the Indian Ocean. The subcommittee held two hearings in 1975 in which three important aspects of the debate were discussed in considerable detail.

SOVIET ROLE

First, considerable attention was given to the activities and presence of, and facilities available for, the Soviet Union in various littoral states of the Indian Ocean. Special emphasis was given to Soviet dealings with Somalia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), and the Republic of Iraq. In addition to trying to assess Soviet ties with these states, the subcommittee sought to obtain detailed statements from American experts on those three states. One useful paper, submitted by Dr. John Anthony of the Johns Hopkins University, appears as an appendix to these hearings and it focuses on recent developments in the PDRY or the Aden Yemen Government and United States dealings with that state. Unfortunately, we were unable to obtain statements on Somalia and Iraq in time for publication of these hearings.

ARMS LIMITATION PROSPECTS

Second, several congressional inquiries have sought to promote more serious attention by the executive branch to the prospects of arms limitation talks dealing with the Indian Ocean. It is felt by many of us that the United States has not pursued vigorously enough such arms control options for the Indian Ocean and, that since a Soviet feeler on the subject in 1971, little effort has been made to find out what the Soviet Union might be interested in.

Now that Diego Garcia is being expanded, many members continue to want to see the executive branch pursue more seriously this alternative or, at least, give it a higher priority. This theme was also examined in these hearings. Some limited attention is being given to this subject. Appendix 6 contains correspondence between the Defense Department and a private research concern relating to a study of arms limitation prospects for the Indian Ocean. The progress of the study should be watched carefully by the Congress, although the study will likely represent little more than a preliminary examination of some technical aspects of a possible naval arms limitation agreement in the area.

STATUS OF FORMER ISLANDERS

A third theme of these hearings relates to the circumstances under which the former inhabitants of Diego Garcia left or were forced from

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the island and the current status of these former islanders on the island of Mauritius. In one hearing, the subcommittee heard testimony from Senator John Culver and the Departments of State and Defense that related largely to this matter and the role of the United States and its responsibility for what happened to these people and their poor condition today.

The subcommittee also pursued this theme with the Church World Service which has a representative working in Mauritius with these former islanders.

A statement, submitted for the record by Jan van Hoogstraten, Director of the Material Resources Program of the Church World Service and Ms. Nancy Robinson of the Mauritius Council for Social Services, appears as an appendix and it responds to many of the statements made by the Departments of State and Defense in its October 10, 1975, report to the Congress (page 40) on the former inhabitants of Diego Garcia and neighboring islands who were forced to leave when the U.S. base facilities were proposed.

It is the intention of the subcommittee to continue to keep a close watch on developments in these three areas which relate directly to our growing involvement and more permanent presence in the Indian Ocean.

These hearings and the appendixes are an important addition to previous inquiries on U.S. policy in the Indian Ocean. This is the fifth time in 4 years that a subcommittee of the International Relations Committee, formerly the Foreign Affairs Committee, has examined issues relating to the Indian Ocean in hearings. In 1971 the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments had a series of hearings entitled "The Indian Ocean: Political and Strategic Future" and in 1972 and 1973 the Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia held several hearings on the Persian Gulf during which U.S. policy in the Indian Ocean was a central focus. In 1974, the Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia held a series of five hearings entitled "Proposed Expansion of U.S. Military Facilities in the Indian Ocean."

Developments for the last few years and expansion of U.S. base support facilities on Diego Garcia have brought the Indian Ocean and U.S. policy there to the attention of the U.S. Congress and Americans interested in all new areas of foreign policy concern. This vast region and U.S. naval presence and policy there must continue to receive careful congressional attention. Continuing scrutiny of the three themes developed in this print should be one important aspect of the ongoing oversight work of Congress on this area.

Lee H. Hamilton,

Chairman, Special Subcommittee on Investigations

February 1976.

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**DIEGO GARCIA, 1975: THE DEBATE OVER THE BASE AND THE ISLAND'S FORMER
INHABITANTS**

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1975

House of Representatives,

Committee on International Relations

Special Subcommittee on Investigations,

Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 1:32 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Lee H. Hamilton (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. Hamilton. The meeting of the subcommittee will come to order. Today the Special Subcommittee on Investigations wants to examine the reasons behind the decision of the United States to try to develop base support facilities on the island of Diego Garcia in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

This proposal is not new to Congress or to the Committee on International Relations. From 1971 to 1974, two different subcommittees held four separate sets of hearings that related, in one way or another, to United States and Soviet naval policies and presences in the Indian Ocean.

On May 12, 1975, the President sent to Congress a certification that expanded U.S. facilities on Diego Garcia are in our national interest. This certification sets in motion a 60-day period during which either House of Congress can veto expansion plans by passing a concurrent resolution expressing disapproval. Such a resolution is pending before the Senate Armed Services Committee and will be considered by the full Senate.

The purpose of today's hearing is to bring the subcommittee up to date on recent developments in the Indian Ocean area, the scope of Soviet naval activities and naval presence in the area, why an expansion of Diego Garcia is in our national interest and what has happened in the last several months to persuade the President to send forward to Congress his certification at this time.

We are happy to have with us today George Vest, Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs of the Department of State, and James H. Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, Near Eastern, African and South Asian Affairs.

Gentlemen, you have prepared statements which we will include as printed into the record. We would like you to proceed by summarizing your statements in order to maximize time for questions.

Mr. Vest, you may begin, please.

(1)

Statement of George S. Vest, Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

Mr. Vest. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Of course we are really pleased to be here because this matter has come forward to the Hill. We consider it is of real importance, and I am happy to have a chance to just point out to you what we consider to be the highlights of our concern, why we are pressing the matter, because the details have been discussed before you a number of times over previous years.

LONG U.S. ASSOCIATION WITH AREA

I just would like to make a couple of very precise points for background. One, to underscore that the United States is not a latecomer to the Indian Ocean, we have had a long association with the area and that is an association which is based on various explicit interests, longtime interests of trade and more recently very serious interests in relation to oil.

At the same time, quite separately—and I would emphasize I consider this a separate development—the U.S.S.R. has over the past decade developed its own sizable naval presence in the area, and it has developed increasing interests in the area not solely because it is the natural trade route for them—being largely landlocked, this is their natural transit point, but because they have attempted to expand their area of influence in certain countries in that general area.

Now I know that we have a large variety of countries around the littoral with very different interests and very different backgrounds. I would underscore that it is in our interest as well as theirs that this area be developed with stability and that the conduct of affairs there be carried forward tranquilly, and we are as concerned as they for this purpose. To that end we have in these recent years maintained a modest naval presence. I emphasize it has been and has remained modest. We have had our headquarters at Bahrain and a small group there since 1949. We have periodically deployed naval forces into the Indian Ocean since 1973.

DEPLOYMENTS NOT A THREAT

These deployments are not there as a threat and our presence earlier in Bahrain was not there as a threat and has never been so. They are there as a reminder that we consider the seas are free, that we have interests in the area, that we would like it to be known that we are there to reassure our friends and would aim to do so. In other words we would like to maintain a credible deterrent, not to be a threat, and it is in that spirit that we have carried forward our activities there.

I don't see any point in taking up more of your time, sir, except to underscore that what we are seeking to do is to contribute to a healthy atmosphere and to the maintenance of a healthy balance in the area. The Diego facility which has attracted so much attention is only a means to this end, and it is not a base in the sense that the word "base" has so often been used to describe military forces in being and a looming, threatening facility. It is simply a communications and POL facility which would allow the present level of naval interest which

the United States has shown in the area to be carried out expeditiously and economically and does not imply an increased presence or any increase in our own naval forces.

Thank you very much, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. Thank you, Mr. Vest.

Prepared Statement of Hon. George S. Vest, Director, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs, Department of State

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, I am pleased to have this opportunity to discuss with you the proposed expansion of our facilities on the island of Diego Garcia and our national security policy as it relates to the Indian Ocean area in general. I am well aware that the chairman and members of this subcommittee have had a continuing interest in U.S. policy toward this area of the world, as reflected in the several sets of hearings you have conducted in the last four years. My predecessor, Seymour Weiss, appeared before you, Mr. Chairman, slightly over a year ago for an extensive discussion on this very same subject. I propose to address myself briefly to what I believe are the important elements of our policy today, in the hope that our subsequent discussion of these issues will contribute—through continued dialogue between the Executive and Legislative Branches—to the Subcommittee's assessment of these important matters.

As you know, the U.S. is not a power that has come lately to the Indian Ocean area: our long association with that region dates back to the time when our domestic shipping first began to participate in world commerce. Although we have traditionally had more important interests in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Mediterranean areas, we have also long been active in the Indian Ocean area and have had close ties with several of the countries which border that ocean. Other external powers also have significant or residual interests in the area.

The Russians bear more than passing attention. A sizable U.S.S.R. naval presence in the Indian Ocean is now an established fact. The naval ship presence of the Soviet Indian Ocean squadron has continued to increase, highlighted by significant participation in the recent world-wide exercise. The Soviet Union has evidently secured and constructed substantial support facilities in Berbera, Somalia, while continuing to draw some support from facilities at Aden (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen) as well as at the Iraqi ports of Basrah and Umm Qasr.

We are quite conscious of the Soviet Union's aspirations to project its power into distant areas, both politically and militarily. That, in essence, is why we believe that the growth of Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean from 1968 to the present can most convincingly be ascribed to the pursuit of their own perceived national interests, rather than solely as a reaction to U.S. force levels and/or facilities presence as such.

The U.S. also has interests in the area, and I would summarize this necessarily complex matter in the following way: We share with the enormously varied countries on the littoral of the Indian Ocean a common desire that they tackle their many problems in a context of peace and tranquility. We, too, have an interest in their choosing peaceful means for the resolution of disputes. We are interested in assisting in the development of these countries, and are pleased to see forward movement in economic development and toward political stability.

The oil shipped from the Persian Gulf area through the Indian Ocean is essential to the economic well-being of much of the world, especially our allies.

For instance, it is estimated that, in 1974, about 26% of America's petroleum and petroleum product imports, direct and indirect, came from the Persian Gulf. The comparable figure for Western Europe is about 65%; for Japan, over 70%. Clearly, it is in our interest that the vital sea lines of communication over which this oil flows remain open to all nations.

In addition to oil, we have other important commercial and economic interests in the area. We do substantial trade with several states of the region, and opportunities continue to grow. Our air routes crisscross the region. Our merchantmen ply between ports in the area.

Much attention has been focused upon one of our instruments of national policy—military, or more particularly, naval forces—which we employ in furtherance of our interests and those of our allies in the Indian Ocean area.

As you know, we have had a very modest naval presence—a small flagship and two rotationally-assigned destroyers—called Middle East Force in the area, stationed at Bahrain in the Persian Gulf, since 1949. In addition, we have occasionally deployed task groups to the Indian Ocean from the Pacific Fleet. In the last year and a half, we have made these deployments more periodic. These groups have been led by either a major surface combatant or an aircraft carrier, and have sailed the ocean visiting various ports, showing the flag, and joining in exercises with allied and friendly navies.

Our periodic deployments reassure our friends in the area, and serve as a reminder that we are able to respond to threats against our interests and those of our allies. We firmly believe that an effective capability to deploy and support U.S. naval forces in the Indian Ocean area helps to deter attempts to disrupt the vital sea lines of communication which traverse it, and also underscores the importance we attach to the right of all countries to navigate freely on the high seas. These deployments also highlight the flexibility and mobility of our military posture, thereby demonstrating the efficiency and effectiveness of our forces in a wide variety of circumstances and enhancing their deterrent credibility. We believe the periodic demonstration of our ability to operate in the Indian Ocean reinforces our diplomatic efforts to maintain stability in the region, and in contiguous areas such as the Middle East. In that area, during the October 1973 hostilities, our naval deployments exemplified military power in its traditional role of effectively supporting diplomacy.

Those are the considerations which underlie our request to expand the Diego Garcia facility. Currently, the U.S. logistics facility closest to the western Indian Ocean is in the Philippines, some 4,000 miles away. At a time when access to regional fuel supplies and other support is subject to the uncertainties of political developments, we believe the establishment of modest support facilities on the small, uninhabited island of Diego Garcia is essential to insure the proper flexibility and responsiveness of U.S. forces to national requirements in a variety of possible contingencies. The alternative could be an inefficient and costly increase in naval tankers and other mobile logistics elements.

In 1966, the U.S. signed an agreement with the British Government providing that the islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory would be available for 50 years to meet the defense purposes of both governments. In this context, we concluded in 1972 an agreement providing for the establishment of a limited communications station on Diego Garcia. In February, 1974, an agreement was negotiated ad referendum to replace the 1972 agreement and to provide for the construction and operation of an expanded facility which would be capable of providing limited maintenance, bunkering, aircraft and logistics support, and enhanced communications. The British Government announced in December, 1971 its agreement with our proposal.

We are aware of the concerns expressed by some states of the region, but we do not share their conviction that the construction of support facilities on Diego Garcia will result in an arms race or will somehow represent a threat to their interests. On the contrary, we believe such a facility will contribute to the maintenance of a healthy balance essential to the preservation of regional security and stability. There is no intention to station permanently operational units on the island. Nor would the installation necessarily imply an increase in the level of U.S. deployments. Also, a number of regional states, for a variety of reasons, advocate limiting the presence of great powers in the Indian Ocean, as expressed in the several Indian Ocean Zone of Peace resolutions adopted in the United Nations General Assembly. As I stated above, the U.S. strongly desires that the Indian Ocean be a region of peace and stability. However, U.S. policy has consistently been to oppose efforts by littoral states to establish such special legal regimes, as they would constitute an unacceptable departure from long-standing rules of international law concerning freedom of navigation on and over the high seas. It is our considered judgment that the legitimate differences in perspective, between ourselves and certain other nations with respect to Diego Garcia, are susceptible to reasoned discussion within a framework of mutual respect and need not inhibit the development of satisfactory relations with the states of the region.

Pursuant to provisions of the Military Construction Authorization Act of 1975, the President certified to Congress on May 12 that he had “evaluated all the military and foreign policy implications regarding the need for U.S. facilities at Diego Garcia” and had found “that the construction of such facilities is essential to the national interest of the United States.” We hope the Congress will see its way clear not to disapprove this Presidential Certification.

With your permission, I would like for you to hear from Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James Noyes, who will discuss several aspects of the Diego Garcia proposal in more detail.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Noyes.

Statement of James E. Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) for Near Eastern, African, and South Asian Affairs

Mr. Noyes. Mr. Chairman, I, too, welcome the opportunity to testify today on this matter of considerable interest to the Department of Defense. I might just make a few updates since my testimony of last year, specifically with respect to our own naval activities in the Indian Ocean. As Mr. Vest has indicated, the MIDEASTFOR operation has continued during the period. Last July and August we had the cruiser Chicago with several destroyers and an oiler deployed in the Indian Ocean which was followed in November by the carrier Constellation accompanied by four surface escorts and one submarine. Earlier in this year in January and February we deployed the carrier Enterprise with the cruiser Long Beach, two destroyers and a fast combat support ship into the Indian Ocean.

SOVIET AND FRENCH PRESENCES

It is somewhat of an irony to note that despite the very modest level of this presence I refer to, the United States often ranks third in numbers of naval combatants in the Indian Ocean after France and after the Soviet Union. It is with particular reference to the activities of the Soviets that I would like to comment within this 1 year time frame I am referring to.

When I testified last year, there was some doubt as to the trend of the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean area. However, last July in 1974 there was a Somalia-Soviet friendship treaty concluded and now in addition to the Soviet naval communications facility, the regularly stationed barracks and repair ships, onshore housing. POL storage and pier space which we were aware of last year, we have now become aware of their construction of a major air strip, greatly enhanced POL storage facilities and most importantly a missile storage and handling facility.

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT NEEDED

The additional facilities which we are requesting at this time on Diego Garcia, as Mr. Vest has indicated, are of a logistical nature. For example, in terms of the economy and efficiency which their addition would provide, a carrier task group could be sustained, given the presence of the proposed facilities, for about 30 days in the absence of any external source of supply. Such an addition would perhaps buy a measure of immunity from events such as occurred in October 1973 when local supply sources in the Indian Ocean area were jeopardized. I think it should be self-evident that in this area where over one-half of the world's sea borne oil is in transit at any given moment there is a clear need for the United States to have a capability to operate its forces securely and independently. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of James H. Noyes follows:]

Prepared Statement of James H. Noyes, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) for Near Eastern, African and South Asian Affairs

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I have reviewed my testimony of March 1974 and have concluded that it fully reflects my understanding of the strategic situation in the Indian Ocean. Therefore, I shall not repeat the same points here today. However, fourteen eventful months have passed since my previous testimony, and it is useful to review briefly some of the new developments which relate specifically to our proposal to undertake a modest expansion of the facilities at Diego Garcia.

THE U.S. PRESENCE

The Secretary of Defense announced in November 1973 that we intended to return to a policy of more frequent and more regular visits to the Indian Ocean area. Perhaps I can best put that policy in perspective by reviewing the history of U.S. naval deployments to the Indian Ocean since my previous testimony on this subject.

First, the three ships of Middle East Force have continued to operate throughout this period as they have for more than a quarter of a century. The flagship of MIDEASTFOR, the U.S.S. LaSalle, has continued to be homeported in Bahrain, and two destroyers have continued to operate in the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and Indian Ocean on rotation from the United States. The mission of this small command remains, as before, primarily diplomatic. By means of regular port calls, occasional participation in local exercises, and other routine contacts, MIDEASTFOR maintains continuing liaison with the navies and appropriate government officials in the area. We continue to regard this force as a useful adjunct to the entire range of U.S. diplomatic, commercial and other relationships which we maintain with the nations of the region.

The additional deployments to which Secretary Schlesinger had reference have, during the past year, come from the Pacific Fleet. During my previous appearance in March 1974, the carrier U.S.S. Kitty Hawk was in the Indian Ocean with three surface combatants and an oiler. This group departed in April. During July and August of 1974, the cruiser U.S.S. Chicago visited the Indian Ocean with two destroyers and an oiler. In November 1974, the carrier U.S.S. Constellation with four surface escorts and a submarine visited the Indian Ocean and participated in naval exercises with the members of the Central Treaty Organization. The nuclear carrier U.S.S. Enterprise, accompanied by the nuclear cruiser U.S.S. Long Beach, two destroyers, and a fast combat support ship visited the area in January and February of this year—a visit which included emergency assistance to the island nation of Mauritius which had been struck by a violent cyclone on February 6. Since the departure of the Enterprise group, there have been no U.S. deployments to the central Indian Ocean from outside the area.

Over the past fourteen months, we have had additional forces deployed to the Indian Ocean only about 36 percent of the time; or, to put it another way, during 64 percent of this period our only naval presence in the area has consisted of the three ships of the Middle East Force. I believe that this policy has effectively demonstrated our ability to operate significant forces in this important area while avoiding any actions which might be interpreted as provocative. In view of all the discussion about U.S. military activities in the Indian Ocean, it is somewhat ironic to note that in terms of numbers of naval combatants, the United States very frequently ranks third, after France and the Soviet Union. That is, in fact, the situation at the present time.

THE SOVIET PRESENCE

At this time last year, there was some debate about the trend of Soviet military presence in the Indian Ocean area. Much of that doubt has been removed by the actions of the U.S.S.R. itself. In July 1974 the U.S.S.R. signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the nation of Somalia. Admiral Gorshkov, the commander of the Soviet Navy, visited there in December. Last year, we reported that the Soviets had access to the port which they constructed for Somalia at Berbera, which dominates the Gulf of Aden and the mouth of the Red Sea. In addition to the naval communications station, the permanent barracks/repair ship, the housing ashore, the POL storage tanks, and the pier

space which was reported at that time, we have now become aware that the U.S.S.R. has commenced construction of a major airstrip, has greatly expanded the POL storage, and is constructing a missile storage and handling facility. The number of Soviet ships which visited Berbera in 1974 increased to more than 60 from fewer than 50 the year before, including the visit of a nuclear powered submarine.

Soviet forces in the Indian Ocean participated much more actively in the recent world-wide Soviet naval exercise than had been the case in 1970. One innovation during this year's exercise was the use of aerial surveillance over the Indian Ocean by Soviet aircraft—some of which operated from airfields in littoral states. The average level of Soviet combatant naval ships increased modestly in 1974 over 1973. The Soviet minesweeping operation in Bangladesh was completed, but another minesweeping operation was undertaken in the northern Red Sea in preparation for the reopening of the Suez Canal. This latter operation included a number of first line Soviet combatant units, notably including the helicopter carrier Leningrad—the first visit of this type unit to the Indian Ocean.

In short, the Soviet presence continued to grow steadily as it has ever since it was first established in 1968. Soviet interests in the Indian Ocean will continue to increase, particularly now that the Suez Canal once again provides more ready access. This fact is reflected in Soviet strategy, which appears to be building for the long term.

I would like to reiterate what I said here more than a year ago, that none of us in the U.S. Government believe we should base our own presence in the Indian Ocean on a narrow ship-for-ship comparison with the Soviet Union. Both nations have sufficient interests in the region to justify a presence there even if the other were absent. However, the growth of Soviet military presence in the region must necessarily remain a significant factor for us in determining our own policy.

DIEGO GARCIA

The only significant changes to the information previously provided to you about our proposed expansion of facilities on Diego Garcia are those effected by the Congress. Our original request for \$32.3 million in fiscal year 1975 military construction funds was reduced to \$18.1 million, subject to congressional review of a Presidential Certification of the necessity of such construction. We have requested an additional \$13.8 million in the current fiscal year 1976 MILCON bill, and, if the project is not disapproved, we will request a further \$5.9 million in fiscal year 1977 to complete the planned construction. (Estimated construction costs in out years may increase due to inflation.)

There have been suggestions that the true price of the Diego Garcia installation will be \$175 million. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I would like to clarify this point.

As you are aware, the funds for Diego Garcia which have been requested in fiscal year 1975 and fiscal year 1976 were the required funds for military construction, and it was the MILCON bill which was the subject of previous hearings. This section of the budget does not include costs associated with salaries, with procurement of communication equipment, or with the replacement of engineering equipment associated with construction. Last year, the Navy was requested to provide an estimate of the total cost, including these additional elements. They did so, and the \$175 million figure is based on these Navy estimates which were provided to Congress. Let me review for you what these figures show.

First, the figures include work that has already been authorized and completed on the communications station and its supporting facilities. Congress in 1971 authorized \$20.45 million for the construction of a limited communications station on Diego Garcia. Procurement and installation costs of the hardware for the station amounted to approximately \$2.8 million. The salaries and subsistence costs for the Seabee unit which carried out the construction came to about \$21 million. The food, fuel, repair parts and transportation of the Seabees was another \$11.4 million. And the replacement of major items of construction equipment amounted to \$9.8 million, for a total of about \$65.3 million. This is the sum which has already been spent in constructing and outfitting the communications station now operating on Diego Garcia.

Applying the same procedure to anticipated future costs in early 1974, the Navy estimated that the proposed additions to the present station would cost approximately \$108 million through fiscal year 1976. This sum, plus previous expenditures, gave a grand total of about \$173 million for the entire installation. It

should be noted that this estimate did not foresee the successive delays which will now push the completion date back to fiscal year 1977 or later, so the total cost may subsequently be increased due to inflationary pressures.

These figures are not secret. They were provided to Congress in early 1974. In using these figures, however, we believe it is important to recognize that 38 percent of the total represents funding which has already been authorized and appropriated by the Congress, and that the remainder includes salaries and consumables as well as direct construction costs.

Our proposal for Diego Garcia involves precisely the same facilities today as those which were initially proposed in early 1974, i.e., lengthening the runway from 8,000 to 12,000 feet, increasing the available POL storage, the building of additional quarters for personnel assigned there, constructing a pier to facilitate cargo handling, dredging of the harbor to permit several ships to anchor there simultaneously, and constructing additional utility and recreational facilities. I have attached to my statement a detailed summary of the proposed construction items.

The more basic question—why do we need Diego Garcia and why is it so important to U.S. national interests—is much more critical to our discussion here today. I believe the answer is very straightforward. The additional facilities which we have requested for Diego Garcia would provide an assured access to logistical support which, for example, could sustain the operation of a normal carrier task group in a contingency situation for a period of about 30 days in the absence of any external sources of supply. In a world of great economic and political uncertainty, that margin of time could mean the difference between an orderly, efficient resupply of U.S. forces and a hasty, ad hoc, expensive operation requiring a significant diversion of support assets from other areas. Thus, in addition to the increased operational flexibility which we would acquire from enlarged support facilities on Diego Garcia, we would in effect be buying a measure of immunity from events such as those in October 1973 when local supply sources were severed.

In an area as important as the Indian Ocean, where over half the world's sea-borne oil is in transit at any given moment, I believe the necessity for the United States to be able to operate its forces securely and independently is self-evident.

**Attachment—
Diego Garcia
Facilities Development Plan**

Fiscal year 1975 ¹ :	In thousands
POL storage, 320,000 BBL	\$5,492
Pier	4,000
Runway extension/aircraft parking apron	3,500
Powerplant expansion (phase I)	1,165
Substation	252
Subsistence building addition	393
Aircraft parking apron, 25,000 SF	1,000
POL storage, 160,000 BBL	1,800
Munitions storage, 6,000 SF	<u>1,800</u>
Subtotal	18,102
Fiscal year 1976 : ¹	
POL storage, 160,000 BBL	1,530
Powerplant expansion (phase II)	1,254
Aircraft parking apron/runway extension	1,173
Hangar	572
Operations building addition	265
Airfield transit storage	160
BEQ-277MN	4,325
BOQ-32MN	1,550
Ready issue ammunition magazine	251
Cold storage, 4,190 SF	531
General warehouse, 13,200 SF	713
Receiver building addition, 1,250 SF	149
Amphibious vehicle repair hardstand, 1,110 SF	46
Aircraft arresting gear	245
Utilities distribution system	927
Armed Forces radio and television station	<u>100</u>
Subtotal	13,800

See footnote at end of table.

Fiscal year 1977 : ¹	In thousands
Corrosion control wash rack	-----
Crash fire station, 7,232 SF	-----
Structural fire station, 3,000 SF	-----
Aircraft ready issue refueler	-----
Shed storage, 7,100 SF	-----
Fleet recreation pavillion, 6,000 SF	-----
Outdoor recreation	-----
Public works shops, 16,570 SF	-----
Flammable storage, 2,670 SF	-----
Chapel addition	-----
Club addition, 2,774 SF	-----
Hobby shop addition, 1,500 SF	-----
Navy exchange warehouse, 5,400 SF	-----
Special Services {??}ue and Office, 1,580 SF	-----
Theater, 3,500 SF	-----
Library addition, 2,500 SF	-----
Education center, 4,124 SF	-----
Subtotal	\$5, 900
Total	37, 800

1 Fiscal year 1976 and fiscal year 1977 projects are subject to price growth due to Inflation. Current estimates are based upon fiscal year 1976 price projections.

PRESIDENT FORD STATEMENT

Mr. Hamilton. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

On August 28, 1974, in a press conference, President Ford said, and I am quoting him, "The Soviet Union already has three major naval operating bases in the Indian Ocean."

The Defense Department later said that the President was referring to Berbera, Umm Qasr and Aden. Mr. Colby of the CIA testified in July of 1974 that while Soviet naval ships have access to some facilities at Aden and Umm Qasr, its access is limited, and that while some construction is taking place at Berbera in Somalia, the port is small and construction not extensive.

Now you have got a very different assessment of the extent of Soviet naval operations by the President and by Mr. Colby, the President referring to these facilities as major naval operating bases and Mr. Colby stating quite the contrary. Why the conflict?

Mr. Noyes. Mr. Chairman, I think the discrepancy is apparent rather than real. It is a question of how one defines a base. There are many, many ways of doing that, many different types of interpretation. It is a question of simply what criteria one wishes to use. I can only assume that—

STATEMENTS ON UMM QASR

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Noyes, let me quote to you the words of Mr. Colby with regard to Umm Qasr.

Soviet naval ships also have some access to the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr in the Persian Gulf where Soviet technicians have been assisting in minor port development.

Now the President talks about a major naval operating base and the Defense Department identifies it as Umm Qasr. There is not a major Soviet naval operating base at Umm Qasr today, is there, Mr. Noyes?

Mr. Noyes. It depends on your definition, Mr. Chairman. The Soviets have put major naval ships into that port and they have received varying degrees—

Mr. Hamilton. Would our Defense Department consider the Soviet Union's naval operating base in Umm Qasr as major?

Mr. Noyes [continuing]. I am sure they depend upon whom you talked to in the Defense Department.

Mr. Hamilton. How about you, Mr. Noyes?

Mr. Noyes. I would say that it is a major base, yes.

Mr. Hamilton. Soviet base in Umm Qasr?

Mr. Noyes. A base which the Soviets have access to.

NATURE OF BASE

Mr. Hamilton. How are you using the word "base" there? Can they repair any of their ships there?

Mr. Noyes. I do not believe in that sense of major repairs that there are those facilities.

Mr. Hamilton. They cannot carry out any repairs there?

Mr. Noyes. Well—

Mr. Hamilton. Do they have any men stationed there?

Mr. Noyes [continuing]. There are from time to time certainly Soviet construction people and technicians there. I do not know precisely what they are prepared to do or not do in terms of ship repair.

Mr. Hamilton. Do they have any barracks there?

Mr. Noyes. I really don't know.

Mr. Hamilton. Do they have any communications there? Do you have any pier space?

Mr. Noyes. I am simply not aware of what at this point is Iraqi and what is Soviet.

Mr. Hamilton. Do you have any air strip there?

Mr. Noyes. Nothing adjacent or nearby there.

ADEN CASE

Mr. Hamilton. Now let's take Aden. Mr. Colby says, and I am quoting:

Repair facilities at the former British naval base at Aden have not been used by Soviet warships although support ships and occasionally small warships stop there for refueling and replenishment. Soviet transports periodically land at an ex-RAF air base, now Aden's international airport.

Is that a major naval operating base?

Mr. Noyes. It is certainly a very major naval operating base. It is a question of—

Mr. Hamilton. Is it for the Soviets?

Mr. Noyes [continuing]. It could be and—

Mr. Hamilton. Is it?

Mr. Noyes [continuing]. Potentially.

Mr. Hamilton. But it is not now?

Mr. Noyes. Depending on one's definition.

Mr. Hamilton. The subcommittee will take a break while we vote. The subcommittee stands in recess. [Whereupon, at 1:50 p.m., the subcommittee recessed until 2:10 p.m.]

MISSTATEMENTS BOTHER CONGRESS

Mr. Hamilton. The subcommittee will resume its sitting. We were talking about the naval bases that the President referred to as major naval operating bases in the Indian Ocean. Mr. Noyes and Mr. Vest, I want to make this point: that I think there are good and justifiable reasons for Diego Garcia, defensible reasons that can be expressed to the Congress to persuade the Congress to approve the money for Diego but it does seem to me that it is both a fair and an accurate expression to refer to those ports as major Soviet naval operating bases. If you ever sit and wonder why the Defense Department and why the State Department have problems of credibility with the U.S. Congress, then this is exhibit A for you to think about.

Now I don't personally think under any stretch of the imagination these bases can be considered major Soviet naval bases. The CIA does not think so and I think it is quite inaccurate to try to say that that is what you have here. I hope you will express to those persons who support the expansion of Diego Garcia that when you make these kinds of misstatements of fact you really do harm to your case with many of us in the Congress.

CIA VIEW

Now referring further to testimony by Mr. Colby, let me quote some of his testimony to you and see if you agree with his assessment. He said, and I quote:

If there is no substantial increase in U.S. naval forces in the area, we believe the Soviet increase will be gradual, say one to two surface combatants per year. Should the United States make a substantial increase in its naval presence in the Indian Ocean, a Soviet build up faster and larger than I have just described would be likely. In any event, the Soviets would probably not be able to sustain an Indian Ocean force significantly larger than that presently deployed there without reordering their priorities and shifting naval forces from other areas.

The question is, do you agree with the Director of the CIA's assessment?

STATE AGREES WITH CIA

Mr. Vest. Why don't I start on that one, sir, if I may.

I think as far as it goes I do agree with fundamentally what he is saying there. I don't know what the rest of his testimony may have been in the context of that question. I think there are other factors. For example, when we talk about whether the Soviets will try to build up, the factors which may lead the Soviets to increase their force, it will not simply be necessarily the presence of the United States. They have large interests in the area, large concerns about their presence and large worries about states in which they have accumulated influence, so there may be other factors as well which will add to the totality of Soviet decisions.

Second, on sustaining a force, I don't claim to be the military expert at all, but it would seem to me that with the Suez Canal open the capacity for Soviet surges or Soviet buildup and for maintaining forces, if we wish to for a somewhat longer time, is going to be quite different because their forces can come out of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea more directly into the Indian Ocean than was the case before the Suez Canal was open.

IS DIEGO A BIG INCREASE IN U.S. ACTIVITY?

Mr. Hamilton. Why doesn't the proposed expansion of Diego Garcia represent a significant increase in United States activity in the Indian Ocean that is likely to bring forth a significant increase of Soviet activity?

Mr. Vest. Again, sir, I think it is a perfectly rational thing as well to define, to draw a distinction, between the naval presence and the cost and capacity involved. The presence of the ships that we move into the Indian Ocean or into the areas adjacent thereto, the Diego Garcia facility is simply a facility to make this activity more efficient and less expensive than in the past.

Mr. Hamilton. You don't consider it an increase in naval presence in the Indian Ocean on our part?

Mr. Vest. To provide the facility? No, sir, I do not, in the sense that we can carry out at more expense the same number of visits as we have in the past. Our avowed policy is purely visits to the area and the facility there is to make them more reasonably permissible.

Mr. Noyes. May I just add, Mr. Chairman, that I think that the key distinction to be made is between facilities and force levels and that the expansion of the logistics capability of Diego Garcia does not predetermine force levels.

[The following was submitted for the record:]

**The Speaker,
The House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.**

Dear Mr. Speaker: On May 13, the President sent to the Congress a message concerning his determination, in accordance with Section 613(a)(1)(A) of the Military Construction Authorization Act, 1975, that the construction of United States facilities on Diego Garcia is essential to the national interest of the United States.

I am pleased to transmit to you today the attached supporting justification which has also been approved by the President. I hope it will be of assistance to the House in its consideration of this important legislation. With kindest regards.

Sincerely,

Max L. Friedersdorf,
Assistant to the President.

The White House
Washington, D.C.

Justification for the Presidential Determination on the Construction of Limited Support Facilities on Diego Garcia.

In 1966, the United States signed an agreement with the British Government providing that the islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory would be available for 50 years to meet the defense purposes of both governments. In this context, we concluded in 1972 an Administrative Agreement providing for the establishment of a limited communications station on the small atoll of Diego Garcia in the central Indian Ocean. In February 1974, an agreement was negotiated ad referendum to replace the 1972 agreements and to provide for the construction and operation of a proposed support facility. The British Government announced in December 1974 its agreement with our proposal to expand the facility.

The United States has an important interest in the stability of the Indian Ocean area. In particular, the oil shipped from the Persian Gulf area is essential to the economic well-being of modern industrial societies. It is essential that the United States maintain and periodically demonstrate a capability to operate military forces in the Indian Ocean. Such exercise of our right to navigate freely on the high seas communicates to others the importance we attach to the stability of the region and to continued free access by all nations.

The credibility of any U.S. military presence ultimately depends on the ability of our forces to function efficiently and effectively in a wide range of circumstances. Currently, the U.S. logistics facility closest to the western Indian Ocean is in the Philippines, 4,000 miles away. At a time when access to regional fuel supplies and other support is subject to the uncertainties of political developments, the establishment of modest support facilities on Diego Garcia is essential to insure the proper flexibility and responsiveness of U.S. forces to national requirements in a variety of possible contingencies. The alternative would be an inefficient and costly increase in naval tankers and other mobile logistics forces.

Objections have been raised to this proposal on the grounds that it will prompt an increase in the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean and give rise to an arms race in the region. Clearly, both we and the Soviets are aware of the military presence of other nations, but it would be incorrect to assume that Soviet actions are determined exclusively by the level or nature of our force presence. The growth of Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean from 1968 to the present can most convincingly be ascribed to the pursuit of their own national interests—including the continuing expansion of the Soviet Navy in a global “blue water” role—rather than to US force presence as such.

A distinction must also be drawn between facilities and force presence. The proposed construction on Diego Garcia would enhance our capability to provide support to US forces operating in the Indian Ocean. However, there is no intent to permanently station operational units there, and the installation would not imply an increase in the level of US forces deployed to that region. We have, on several occasions, expressed our willingness to consider constructive proposals for arms restraint in the Indian Ocean, but we do not believe that construction on Diego Garcia should be contingent upon the outcome of discussions on such proposals. In our view, these are two separate issues.

The Diego Garcia proposal has been criticized by a number of regional states which favor the concept of a special legal regime limiting the presence of the great powers in the Indian Ocean, as expressed in the several Indian Ocean Zone of Peace resolutions adopted in the United Nations General Assembly. United States policy has consistently been to oppose measures that would constitute an unacceptable departure from customary international law concerning freedom of navigation on the high seas.

We are aware of the concern expressed by some states of the region, but we do not share their conviction that the construction of support facilities on Diego Garcia will result in an arms race or that these facilities will somehow represent a threat to their interests. On the contrary, it is our belief that such facilities will contribute to the maintenance of healthy balance essential to the preservation of regional security and stability. It is our considered judgment that the legitimate differences in perspective between ourselves and certain other nations with respect to Diego Garcia are susceptible to reasoned discussion within a framework of mutual respect and need not inhibit the development of satisfactory relations with the states of the region.

LIKELY SOVIET RESPONSE

Mr. Hamilton. Is it your judgment that the Soviets as a result of this proposed expansion will not respond by expanding their presence or would you reasonably expect, as Mr. Colby does, that they will respond by increasing their presence?

Mr. Noyes. Mr. Chairman, I believe Mr. Colby was principally referring to the Soviet responses to past force levels. When we have moved in a particular kind of force in a certain situation, yes, the Soviets have responded. They have sent ships in response but in terms of what they have wanted to do—and they have not, of course, achieved all they wanted to do in obtaining and maintaining base facilities in the area—they have proceeded consistently, absolutely as far as I can see irrespective of anything the United States has or has not done. Those intentions seem to be embedded, as Mr. Vest, has said, in very long-range strategic requirements of their own that in part reflect what we do but seem to have a great many other political and military implications.

Mr. Hamilton. Surely what we are doing in Diego Garcia is not going to discourage Soviet presence in that area, is it?

Mr. Noyes. I would certainly not argue that.

Mr. Vest. No.

ENCOURAGING SOVIET ACTION

Mr. Hamilton. As a matter of fact, isn't it reasonable to think that if we step up our activity in the Indian Ocean—expand the runway, build piers, put in building additions, aircraft parking aprons, POL storage, munitions storage, powerplant expansion, aircraft parking apron, one way {sic: runway} expansion, hangers, transit storage facilities, ammunition magazines, cold storage, general warehouses, amphibious vehicle repairs, aircraft arresting gear and on and on and on and on—isn't it reasonable to expect that if we do all of those things that the Soviet Union is going to respond in some way to that and aren't they going to have the basis of saying, "Look, the United States is engaged in a substantial buildup in the Indian Ocean?" If you are a Kremlin planner, aren't you then going to say, "We better get with it in the Indian Ocean and start building up our presence in that area of the world?" Now isn't that a reasonable kind of expectation?

Mr. Vest. Sir, I think there will be an element of that, but I think the situation has these additional factors. They have already made a decision to have a presence in the Indian Ocean and. to maintain that presence, they are going to be perfectly coldblooded about identifying the fact that what we are doing is making it possible to more effectively maintain our presence there.

U.S. DECISION

Mr. Hamilton. Of course we have made the same decision, haven't we, Mr. Vest?

Mr. Vest. Yes, sir. We have made the decision that we would like to maintain our presence for our own reasons, not simply vis-a-vis the Soviets in the area. We have done that over a long period of time. The facilities themselves I do not think will be the controlling factor.

Mr. Hamilton. They are not going to be a discouraging factor.

Mr. Vest. No, they will not be a discouraging factor.

Mr. Noyes. Isn't it worth observing, Mr. Chairman, that were we not to proceed with the expansion of Diego Garcia facilities it would appear highly doubtful that this would encourage the Soviets to dismantle or desist from any of their plans and activities in Berbera and other areas in Somalia?

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. du Pont.

DIEGO FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Mr. du Pont. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I apologize to the two witnesses for having missed their opening statements but I have had a chance to look them over and listen to some of the questions that the chairman has just put to you and I think maybe before I ask my questions we might put the thing into a little different perspective.

Mr. Hamilton just read a long list of facilities that are going to be available at Diego Garcia and said would this not be an encourage-

ment to the Soviets to build similar facilities? I think that puts the cart before the horse. Those facilities that Mr. Hamilton read off perhaps with one or two exceptions are already in existence for the Soviet Union at Berbera and Aden. Umm Qasr has a channel depth limit. They could be available at Aden. Of course, Aden is one of the best facilities in the world and if the government there ever got itself together and decided the Soviets were going to have fuller use of that, they would have those facilities there.

In addition, the Suez Canal is open today and that is a very short run from the Black Sea for Soviet naval units. So I think those facilities are already there, and I am not so much concerned about escalating an arms race in the area as I am about making sure that there is some effective U.S. presence somewhere between Italy and the Philippines. With the exception of the force at Bahrain there really is not.

MIDEASTFOR AND BAHRAIN

Now let me ask my questions from that perspective. First of all, is it your impression that if the force leaves Bahrain—and there is some indication that the government there is pushing us in that direction—do you see the Diego Garcia facility as more or less a replacement for the Bahrain force? If Diego Garcia is developed as your testimony has outlined, would you recommend that the Bahrain force be dispersed?

Mr. Noyes. I am sorry, Congressman. I just missed the last couple of words.

Mr. du Pont. If and when Diego Garcia is fully operational, would it be your judgment that the American force in Bahrain could be dispersed—could be either moved to Diego Garcia or sent home or sent to the Mediterranean or somewhere else?

Mr. Noyes. My assumption is that were we to lose the facility at Bahrain, the significance of Diego Garcia would increase in a general way but because of its distance it could not be really considered a replacement for the Bahrain facility. Perhaps the primary significance of the Bahrain MIDEASTFOR operation has been diplomatic rather than military. Certainly that kind of presence could be continued in the area without the physical facilities of Bahrain but, as I say, I think it would make it all the more important that we had adequate logistic capability of Diego Garcia. I doubt very much whether you would homeport destroyers there but you would undoubtedly want to have that facility for ships transiting the area.

POSSIBLE BAHRAIN WITHDRAWAL

Mr. du Pont. Have you made or will you make any recommendation to the President on the removal of the force at Bahrain? Maybe that does not even fall within your jurisdiction.

Mr. Vest. At the present time we are still in negotiation with the Government of Bahrain and I don't think that we had assumed as negative an outcome as we are assuming right away here at this time. In general I know of no plans to move what we do in Bahrain to Diego. They have quite separate functions primarily and it is too far away to undertake the function of the other.

IRANIAN NAVY

Mr. du Pont. All right. Now let's talk a minute about Iran. In his military development plan the Shah has destroyers, which will be delivered I guess starting several years from now and then over a period of years but certainly within 10 years, and which will presumably be on station in the Iranian Navy. Do you know of any plan to coordinate the defense of the strait or operations in the Indian Ocean between the Iranian Navy and the American Navy at such time as the Iranian Navy has that capability?

Mr. Vest. No. I do not, sir.

Mr. Noyes. No.

STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Mr. du Pont. Do you know who has the primary defense responsibility for the Strait of Hormuz?

Mr. Vest. In what sense do you mean, sir?

Mr. du Pont. Well, in a military sense, sir. Sixty percent of the world's oil goes out through the strait and today there is not much of a naval presence anywhere taking care of the defense of that vital link in the world's economy.

Mr. Vest. What you have is a number of countries with keen interests operating, if you will, in a sort of a standoff relationship, all assuring that everything goes through.

Mr. du Pont. Well, they have keen interests but not much capability at the moment to back those interests up and once the Iranian Navy forces are in place and they have those six destroyers they are going to have a capability. That is why I ask the question as to who has the responsibility now, or is it left to the littoral states entirely to manage the security of the strait?

Mr. Noyes. At the present, Congressman du Pont, I think as Mr. Vest has said all the states of the gulf feel that they have a responsibility, they do have some capability. Saudi Arabia is developing a naval capability which, as you say, will take some time as will the Iranian but I believe it will turn out to be a cooperative and shared common need of all those states to look after the security of the strait. At the moment the Iranians have near the strait the only very effective force.

DIEGO AND HORMUZ STRAIT

Mr. du Pont. And you see no direct linking of Diego Garcia with the defense of the strait? You said a moment ago it was more a question of presence there than of military replacement for the Bahrain force.

Mr. Vest. In the term "direct" no, sir, but in the term "indirect" yes, sir.

Mr. du Pont. In other words, in a refueling capacity and supply capacity?

Mr. Vest. If one of our objectives is to provide some credibility to our belief that the seas are to be transitable and open and that we want some forces there and want to make them as effective as possible, that is the function of Diego. One of the natural consequences is to be able to make evident to people that we are concerned about the transit all the way up there as well.

POSSIBLE INVASION OF OILFIELDS

Mr. du Pont. All right. One more question. I had the opportunity a week ago of talking with King Khalid in Saudi Arabia about this area and about the military problems in it. That was shortly after the most recent bout of stories in the American press about the impending invasion of Saudi Arabia to protect our oil interests. In order to get the question laid to rest, would it be your opinion that the Diego Garcia base was in any way related to the potential invasion of Saudi Arabia by the United States?

You shouldn't be hesitating.

Mr. Vest. I am so stunned with the question, Mr. Congressman.

Mr. du Pont. Well, you may be startled with the question but having spent 2 weeks there, I can say that their perspective is very different.

Mr. Vest. Yes.

Mr. du Pont. I think it very important that we make it clear that the United States has absolutely no intention of such military action, that such military action would be inappropriate and beyond consideration on the part of this country and I hope you would agree with that.

Thank you.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Bonker.

CIA INTELLIGENCE IS GOOD

Mr. Bonker. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My intention is not to overwork the testimony by Mr. Colby, but in my brief time in the Congress I have found that the CIA, at least in its research and data, intelligence collection, has been more reliable, has been more accurate than any other agency in the administration. When Mr. Colby did appear on the Senate side before Mr. Symington's subcommittee he did downplay the importance of and the threat of the Soviet presence in that area. He pointed out the Soviets forces in the Indian Ocean are not as substantial as you imply and said that Moscow apparently prefers to keep minimal its presence in the Indian Ocean. In fact, he went on to imply that, if anything, we might provoke them to increase their naval forces by our action.

Now I would like to know if our information is accurate from the CIA and, if their credibility is as good as I think it is, and, as the President implied when he addressed the joint session of Congress a few weeks ago, if you rely on the CIA for intelligence and recommendations: and if you do, do you accept their information? And if you did on this particular subject, did you find their intelligence valid? And if not, why haven't you accepted it as part of your decisionmaking?

STATE IN TOUCH WITH CIA

Mr. Vest. Sir, I know that at least in all of the records that I have seen (the origins of Diego Garcia predate my coming back to an assignment in Washington to the State Department), but all the records I have seen and in all of the activities in the intervening period, we have worked in close touch with the CIA just as we do on any major activity involving the executive branch. However, the pursuit of this installa-

tion, this activity at Diego Garcia, for us has not simply been a matter of equating that if the Soviets do this, we do that. The linkage that you draw in taking that one portion of his testimony has not been the total basis on which we have pursued this activity.

Mr. Bonker. I can understand that.

Mr. Vest. We have a valid reason for Diego Garcia that goes beyond that.

Mr. Bonker. May I ask if you find his information acceptable? Do you agree with the testimony that he presented to the Senate subcommittee? I mean if you accept that, then it has got to be a basis for your decision and/or you can reject it.

Mr. Vest. No. You can accept what he says as a factor in the decision, not the total basis.

POSITION OF SECRETARY OF STATE

Mr. Bonker. It seems, based on some of the things that Mr. Kissinger has said over the last few years, that he has been somewhat ambiguous on this same subject and has expressed skepticism about a naval buildup in the Indian Ocean. Is his position very clear on this issue?

Mr. Vest. I think so, sir, because again I must emphasize we are not talking about a naval buildup, we are talking about a facility to allow us to deploy naval forces on a schedule which we have maintained periodically since the October war. There is no intent to increase the naval buildup, there is no plan to enlarge the number of deployment into the Indian Ocean. It is a facility to allow us to continue that activity in a period frankly when, after the events we have had in the other areas of the Pacific, reliable bunkering, reliable information and so on, are fairly valuable things. So I don't think there is any question of our desires there.

DIEGO AS ONLY LOGISTICAL MOVE

Mr. Bonker. So you would not refer to it as naval buildup or gunboat diplomacy, you just see it as a logistical move?

Mr. Vest. Yes, sir. I am not so naive as to say it does not have a further naval impact and consequence, but its primary purpose is logistical. If we were going to put forces there and keep forces there, it would represent something else. It could be a threat. But I think one of the more interesting things in light of the events in the Pacific is the remark by the Prime Minister of Singapore—I read a report of his public statement in which he, after talking about all of the things that have happened in the Pacific in more recent months, at the end, put emphasis on the ability of the fleet to be there and to move and the stability which he implied the presence of the fleet contributes to such an area. What we are asking for is something that will make it simpler for the fleet to move.

SOVIET INTERPRETATION KEY

Mr. Bonker. Of course what we might consider logistic and just an effort to deploy a navalness in the future could easily be interpreted by the Soviets as being a buildup. I know now we are schizophrenic

whenever they move in an area to increase their logistical support, so I think the potential or the threat of a naval buildup in that area is imminent if we continue on our present course.

I just might say that in the post-Vietnam era when we are trying to reassess our global commitments, perhaps reshaping our foreign policy, and it seems to me that we need to concentrate our military and strategic efforts, recognizing that it is difficult for us to continue the global commitments, and that we just can no longer afford politically or economically to police the entire world, that we need to concentrate our efforts in areas of strategic importance. Areas such as this properly could be justified or rationalized if we are going to have to see it eventually in terms of what we need elsewhere. If we are going to cut back or cut down, this might be one area in which we can make that decision.

CONSEQUENCES OF CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL

My last question is that I understand the Congress now has 60 days upon the certification from the President to act on this matter. What would be your assessment if we act to disprove the request? What will be the fallout or the effects of that action?

Mr. Vest. Sir, it is totally hypothetical, but I think that you will find some countries who will interpret that as being a deliberate choice on the part of the United States to withdraw from the ability, not to be the policeman, but the ability to add some credible weight to stability in areas that go beyond our immediate concerns such as the traditional area in the Northwest Pacific and in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic.

I would not want to overweigh it, but I think that there are countries that would look at it that way, because after all that is said, I think that a good percentage of the independent free countries in the larger Pacific basin do value our ability to move. If we are inhibiting our own ability to move, they will consider this a negative direction deliberately chosen. I certainly would not overweigh it because I can't judge. There will certainly be a number who will pay no attention to it, one way or the other, because in the world of today a number of countries are so busily and heavily engaged in considering the problems of their own navies that they are not looking out that much. I can't really be more specific than that.

Mr. Bonker. Thank you.

MEANS TO REASSURE FREE NATIONS

Mr. Harrington. Before I begin, I would like to apologize for my late entry. Although this may have been asked, I want to establish the means that are available, or have been available historically, by which we have periodically reassured the free nations, as you choose to describe them, that we are ready for any contingency that might develop without this base.

What have we done to meet this need and to play this positive role in your eyes in the past?

Mr. Noyes. The means that were traditionally available?

Mr. Harrington. I am asking, what were we doing to fill the void

that you say the Diego Garcia base will fill before we had such facilities?

Mr. Vest. If I could start, sir.

Mr. Harrington. I am not sure that I am asking it as precisely as you would like.

HISTORY OF PRESENCES

Mr. Vest. If I could begin at least on this. Historically, up until the post-World War II period, the British had played a very large role in the Indian Ocean basin throughout and then they gradually moved out or are moving out. The French played their role. The Soviets for a long time, until they had gotten themselves sufficient equipment after World War II. had not begun to play a major role in the area, although the desire of Russia to move to the warm seas has been something historically everybody has known about for centuries. Thereafter we used our own fleets to come into the area and, without Diego Garcia, we managed this. We have had a number of facilities throughout the Pacific which facilitated this. We, with the passage of time, had a minimum facility at Diego which then has been used ever since. Meanwhile, the British are residually there in certain areas but gradually pulling out. I would expect within another year, a year and a half, you would find very little British presence there at all. So it has been a combined affair at an earlier time, and gradually it is being taken over by ourselves.

Mr. Noyes. May I just add one thing, Congressman Harrington?

Mr. Harrington. Certainly.

OIL FACTOR

Mr. Noyes. Also with reference to Congressman Bonker's earlier comment about the possibility of the strategic significance of this area diminishing from our viewpoint. I think the transition Mr. Vest refers to also includes another one and that relates to oil. The papers, I think it was yesterday, carried an article that we are now moving up to a 22-percent dependence on oil from that part of the world versus a 17-percent dependence. The United States has not been accustomed to this sort of dependence on foreign resources in its history. I think that we must not fail to see the significance of this transition. I personally view that as obviously the key factor in relation to the sea lanes. Certainly we can go in and out of the Indian Ocean and work there without a logistics support facility at Diego Garcia but we can do so with much greater efficiency and in times of emergency greater speed if that logistic capability is built up.

DISTANCE FROM U.S.S.R. TO DIEGO

Mr. Harrington. A few years ago, the rationale for expanding our fleet was the necessity of protecting access to foreign supplies of oil, based on expectations concerning our potential need for an increased foreign supply of oil in the future. Let me ask, to follow Mr. Bonker's apt analogy, approximately how far is Diego Garcia from the nearest Soviet border or area?

Mr. Noyes. About 3,000 miles I think it is roughly.

Mr. Harrington. If we were to extend our analogy to determine

the likely area in this hemisphere which the Soviets would choose to have a Diego Garcia of their own, where would we have Soviet presence in the Western Hemisphere?

CUBA AND UNITED STATES COMPARISON

Mr. Noyes. Have they not already done that, sir, in Cuba?

Mr. Harrington. I suppose they have.

Mr. Vest. If you were a Soviet strategist and you wanted to send a ship over and stop in and stretch its sea legs and get straightened out, they can do this in Cuba. If you have got to take the worst case kind of situation, if you have got planes of one kind or another, they can go over the United States and land at Cuba. So they have a facility at Cuba which is a different one from the kind that we are talking about because it is a very much closer one.

Mr. Harrington. Very what?

Mr. Vest. A very, very much closer one than they have there at the present time.

Mr. Harrington. I am thinking of a situation that might develop due to the expectations generated by the Nixon rhetoric of the early 1970's, and what that response kind of attitude might illicit {sic: elicit} from the Soviet Union in a setting we have been led to believe is no longer possible in this period of detente.

I suppose our differing points of view will not coincide at this time. Thank you, sir.

I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Winn.

Mr. Winn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Vest, can you pull the mike a little closer to you. I notice some of the people in the back of the room were straining and when we have open hearings we want them to be able to hear what we are talking about. I apologize for being late. I did have a chance to go over your prepared remarks that were sent to our offices yesterday.

SOVIET ACTIVITY IN 1973

I would like to get back to this subject of Diego Garcia. One question was asked about how close the U.S.S.R. presence was in the Indian Ocean. Of course history tells us that they have been present for quite some time and in large numbers, but I am not sure in my own mind. When President Nixon had to declare an alert of our troops and our ships in the Mideast, was there a Russian or a Soviet movement toward the Mideast from the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Noyes. Not to my knowledge, Congressman Winn, no. There was a subsequent large Soviet naval buildup in the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Winn. After that?

Mr. Noyes. Yes.

Mr. Winn. Then the movement we were aware of was some troop movement, some air units and the Mediterranean Fleet, I gather.

Mr. Noyes. That is correct.

Mr. Winn. But to your knowledge there was no action on the part of the Soviets in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Noyes. Not timed precisely with that alert.

Mr. Winn. So there would be no tie?

Mr. Vest. It was a consequence, sir.

Mr. Winn. It was a consequence.

Mr. Vest. And not at the time. It was a consequence of heightened tensions at the time on both sides, at which point they reinforced their fleet in the Indian Ocean.

MAYAGUEZ-TYPE INCIDENT

Mr. Winn. Now with the situation of the Cambodian ship seizing our freighter, doesn't this bring out some of the problems that we may face in the future if we don't have Diego Garcia as a base? In other words, possible harassment?

Mr. Vest. You do invite problems if you have no credibility to your claims. If you claim that the seas are open and your vessels should be allowed to go there, and you have no way of protecting your own citizens or acting at least to reinforce them after the event has happened, you invite actions that can range anywhere from irresponsible to pure radical. We are not setting out to have a large activity in the Indian Ocean, we are only trying to continue the action we do have. As a minimum action we think it reinforces just that degree of stability that we think is valuable in the area.

Mr. Winn. But thereby because of that—not that incident but because of that possibility—Diego Garcia is more important to us now than we thought that it might be before? Is that right?

Mr. Vest. It has been highlighted by the event.

POSITION OF DIEGO GARCIA

Mr. Winn. It has been highlighted, yes. That is a good way to put it. Is there any question about Diego Garcia being in the open sea lanes?

Mr. Vest. No, sir.

Mr. Winn. None whatsoever?

Mr. Vest. No, it is open sea.

Mr. Winn. How far?

Mr. Vest. And uninhabited.

Mr. Winn. There are no inhabitants in Diego Garcia?

Mr. Vest. No inhabitants.

Mr. Winn. None at all?

Mr. Vest. No.

Mr. Winn. Not even as many as we have on Christmas Island?

Mr. Vest. No, sir.

Mr. Winn. That is not very many.

I think that is all I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

SOVIET SHIP DAYS

Mr. Hamilton. Gentlemen, let me try to get some information about the Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean. Until 1973 the testimony before the committee was that Soviet ship days were 8,262. Do you have the number of ship days for 1974 and for the first months of 1975? Would you like to supply it for the record?

Mr. Noyes. I was just going to distinguish anything classified, Mr. Congressman. In 1973 the overall Soviet ship days—now this is com-

bining auxiliary, submarines, warships and so on—was about approaching 9,000. In 1974 that went up to about 10,500.

Mr. Hamilton. How about in 1975? Is it in the same magnitude as 1974 or substantially more?

Mr. Noyes. I don't have that, sir, unless—if we exclude the mine clearing operations and special things like that, it appears that the level of Soviet combatants remains about the same.

Mr. Vest. Just one point. In 1975, one point is that the Soviets had that very extraordinary, extensive worldwide naval exercise. This would certainly have created an unusual number for that period.

COMPARING 1975 AND 1974 SOVIET ACTIVITY

Mr. Hamilton. Is it your impression that Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean is about at the same level this year as last?

Mr. Noyes. It appears to be thus far about the same.

Mr. Vest. Yes.

NUMBER OF SOVIET VESSELS

Mr. Hamilton. In 1973 our information is that the number of Soviet naval ships in the area numbered about 16—2 frigates, 1 cruiser with missiles and perhaps 2 nuclear submarines. What are the figures for 1974 and 1975?

Mr. Noyes. I would have to supply that for the record.

Mr. Hamilton. Would you do that, please.

[The following information was submitted for the record:]

On the basis of ship days spent in the Indian Ocean by Soviet naval units during 1974, the normal Soviet presence averaged between 20 and 21 ships at any given time. This average figure does not include harbor clearing operations in Bangladesh or the Strait of Gubal. Approximately one half of these units were combatants and the remainder were support ships. Using the same measure for the period through May 31, 1975, the average Soviet presence was approximately 20 ships at any given time. The slightly lower figure for 1975 is a result of the unusually high Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean in early 1974 in the months following the October 1973 Arab-Israel War. During the first week of June, 1975, the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean consisted of two guided missile destroyers, two destroyer escorts, an attack submarine, two minesweepers, an amphibious landing ship, five naval support vessels, a space recovery ship, two oceanographic ships, and two naval-associated tankers.

SOVIET PORT CALLS

Mr. Hamilton. In 1973 our information is that the port calls made by Soviet naval vessels in Indian Ocean ports were 153 of which 7 were to Somalia. Do you have the figures for 1974 and the first months of 1975?

Mr. Noyes. Again I would rather supply that.

Mr. Vest. Just for your information here, I think the figures for 1974 would be a total of 176, of which 85 were listed for Somalia, but we will have to confirm those figures.

Mr. Hamilton. Would you supply that for the record, please.

[The following information was submitted for the record:]

The following table provides the best data available to DOD on the number of Soviet ship visits to Indian Ocean ports during 1973, 1974, and through May 31, 1975. These figures include visits to Bangladesh and Egypt in connection with harbor clearance and mine-clearing operations by the Soviet Navy:

{ Soviet port calls }	1973	1974	1975
Bangladesh	14	18	0
Ethiopia	1	1	0
India	6	2	4
Iraq	13	18	7
Kenya	5	6	0
Kerguelen Island	0	1	2
Maldives	1	3	0
Mauritius	11	16	11
Pakistan	0	0	1
Somalia	50	85	22
South Yemen	16	36	1
Sri Lanka	7	10	0
Egypt (Red Sea ports)	0	25	0
Yemen	0	0	1
Total	125	206	49

SOMALIA

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Noyes, I am interested in your assessment of what is happening in Somalia. Your statement refers to the fact that the Soviets have a naval communications station, permanent barracks, repair ship, housing field, POL storage, pier space, and then you also indicate that they are constructing a missile storage and handling facility. What is the significance of that missile storage and handling facility?

Mr. Noyes. This is a very difficult question to answer because as yet all we can see is a capability developing. It is very hard to know the intention. We don't know whether they intend to store and repair surface-to-surface ship missiles or air-to-surface missiles that would be used on aircraft. We really don't know what is intended. All we can do is look at the capability and—

MISSILE FACILITY

Mr. Hamilton. The New York Times reported this last month that Defense Department officials had told that paper that the Soviet Union was stockpiling long-range guided missiles at Berbera. Is that correct?

Mr. Noyes. This relates to no information I know about. I know of no such facts.

Mr. Hamilton. We don't know what kind of missiles they are storing there then?

Mr. Noyes. No, sir. The facility is still under construction so it is possible that they do not as yet have missiles in there. I simply do not know that.

Mr. Hamilton. What are the possibilities? What is the most likely thing that they are doing there? Are these missiles to go on ships to be fired from ships or are they missiles to be fired from land to air, or what kind of missiles are most likely there?

Mr. Noyes. Here I get into a very speculative area but I doubt if they are surface to air. The indications are presumably that they are ship-to-ship missiles, a type of missile that is very delicate and needs a great deal of repair and work to keep it functioning properly. Instead of taking them all the way back to the Soviet Union, it is simply a matter of efficiency and convenience. The same if they are for aircraft, long-range air-to-surface missiles. The same mechanisms are very delicate and they have to be constantly worked on.

SOVIET CAPABILITIES

Mr. Hamilton. What does this mean in terms of Soviet capabilities in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Vest. That again is speculative. There is no question, I think, that it would—at least from my personal point of view—it will appreciably enhance their capability because of the fact that they customarily bring their ships to the area and leave them a long time either in port or anchored. That has been the pattern of deployment and stationing of their forces of naval ships. If they leave them there any length of time, time, travel and the climate and all the rest are going to degrade the reliability of these missiles, whatever they may be.

To be able to put those missiles in proper shape, there is in Somalia a major asset for keeping themselves in what they would consider proper fighting shape.

Mr. Winn. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hamilton. Yes.

CLARIFICATION ON FACILITY

Mr. Winn. Would you call this facility a supply and maintenance depot type of thing? At least that is what they used to call it, a similar type from your description. I am having a little hard time reading it. You are talking about maintenance.

Mr. Noyes. Yes. Repair, maintenance, storage.

Mr. Winn. Thank you.

Mr. du Pont. Would the chairman yield for a question?

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. du Pont.

Mr. du Pont. From your own knowledge of the Berbera facility, could you rule out the possibility that there would be launching sites for surface-to-surface missiles there?

Mr. Noyes. No, I could not rule out such a possibility but those indications are not there to my knowledge. As I say, all we see is the capability, we don't know the intention.

Mr. Hamilton. Have we seen any missiles there?

Mr. Noyes. Could I provide such an answer in executive session or classified?

Mr. Vest. We are getting in a very sensitive position.

WHAT EVIDENCE OF MISSILES?

Mr. Hamilton. How do we know it is a missile storage area?

Mr. Vest. Well, when you consider or when you look at the intelligence available, you can make, I think, a comparison—there are people trained in the study of the intelligence data and I think then that they have something to go on.

Mr. Winn. What is the percentage? What percentage of completion? Maybe you said it and maybe I missed it. How far along is this facility? Half, three-quarters or almost complete?

Mr. Noyes. It would appear to me to be three-quarters, two-thirds complete, something in that range.

Mr. Hamilton. Your statement also includes the words “major air strip.” To me that means that it would handle Soviet long-range aircraft. Is that a correct interpretation?

Mr. Noyes. That is correct. This air strip is not yet completed but the evidence indicates that it will be capable to take any Soviet aircraft.

INDIAN OCEAN AND THE SOVIET NAVY

Mr. Hamilton. I have seen estimates that the Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean is less than 15 percent of their total worldwide naval activity. How does that statement strike you?

Mr. Vest. I would have to verify it, sir; I could not say.

Mr. Hamilton. I am trying to get some idea of just how important the Indian Ocean is for the Soviets.

Mr. Vest. I will be glad to try to find an answer for that and send it for the record.

[The following information was submitted for the record:]

In 1974, Soviet naval deployments to the Indian Ocean constituted 20% of all Soviet naval out of area deployments in all oceans of the world. In that year, Soviet ship-days in the Indian Ocean were approximately 30% greater than out of area deployments in the Pacific, approximately 25% less than comparable deployments to the Atlantic, approximately half the level of Soviet deployments to the Mediterranean, and more than eight times the level of Soviet deployments to the Caribbean.

Mr. Hamilton. What is your impression generally, without reference to the figures involved? What priority do the Soviets put upon the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Vest. I hate to jump to a figure, sir. I would be glad to check that out though.

ASSESSING OVERALL SOVIET CAPABILITIES

Mr. Hamilton. Let me put it this way. These same assessments state in more general language that the Soviets place a low priority on the Indian Ocean, that they have a low profile there, that they don't have any aircraft carrier capability there, that they have virtually no reconnaissance capability in the Indian Ocean. How do those statements strike you?

Mr. Vest. I think there is some validity in that, sir, because I think it goes to the point of the force that is there, and I think that the force that is there to date has largely been one to show Soviet power in the area. Similarly, if you follow their deployments in relation to the situation, to periodically have enough there to be able to be an antinavy force in terms of some other navy, they have not gone into extensive activities of the kind that you were referring to.

You have to, I think, look at one point, which is that the circumstances describe whether something is influential or not. It is a case of how many frogs are in the puddle. If there is not a great deal in that Indian Ocean, if the other countries have practically nothing or only very small vessels, it takes only a little bit of steaming around or ships anchored off your shores, or anchored off the island of Socotra, or available for a port visit, to bring home to the countries there that the Soviet Union is a naval power of interest in the area and important. So the size is a relative factor.

SOMALIA, ADEN, AND IRAQ—SOVIET FRIENDS

Mr. Noyes. And also isn't it worth noting that the persistence and the priority that the Soviets have placed on improving political-mili-

tary relations in Somalia, in Aden, in Iraq should cause us to scratch our heads on the issue of oil. They are not dependent on that oil. It is the West who depends on that oil.

Mr. Vest. And Japan. Japan gets at least 70 percent of its oil from that area.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Noyes, you said that the United States ranks third in the number of combatants in the area after I think the Soviets and France.

Mr. Noyes. From time to time.

CARRIER TASK FORCE

Mr. Hamilton. Now, of course, there are other ways of measuring presence other than the number of combatants. When we have a carrier task force in the area we clearly have predominant military strength and naval strength, do we not, in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Noyes. In terms of fire power, certainly.

Mr. Hamilton. And we have that capability at any time to put a carrier task force into that area, do we not?

Mr. Noyes. Yes, Mr. Congressman, depending on the circumstances of distance, et cetera.

JUSTIFYING AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

Mr. Hamilton. Now is it going to be necessary to have 15 aircraft carriers in order to fulfill our commitments in the Atlantic, the Pacific and now in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Vest. No. Simply placed, sir, the point is that we have commitments that we are carrying out in the Pacific and the Atlantic, but the activity that we have called for in the Indian Ocean does not call for tying up a specific carrier definitely or a specific force indefinitely. It calls for periodic separate visits to the area and that is the only commitment we have made.

Mr. Hamilton. The expansion of our presence in Diego Garcia then will not in any way be a justification for additional aircraft carriers in the fleet?

Mr. Vest. No.

Mr. Hamilton. You might say that more emphatically, Mr. Vest, so we get that clearly on the record.

Mr. Vest. No.

Mr. Hamilton. Is that also your understanding, Mr. Noyes?

Mr. Noyes. It is, Mr. Congressman. It is really another issue.

IS EXPANSION ONE SHOT AFFAIR?

Mr. Hamilton. The State Department testified last year that the proposed expansion of the facilities at Diego Garcia was a one shot affair. Is that still the case?

What I am concerned about here is that next fiscal year you may be coming in here and asking for a lot more money for additional expansion of Diego Garcia. Up to this point the testimony has been very clearly that you are seeking to expand just one time and that it is not your intention to enter into a long-range program of expansion. Now is my understanding correct?

Mr. Vest. Yes, sir. I have to say all the planning, all of the thinking

that I have seen in any place calls for this being one undertaking. I can't predict what the future powers of the U.S. Government may decide, but there has been no thinking that I have seen anywhere that calls for other than this one activity.

COST OF DIEGO GARCIA

Mr. Hamilton. Now how much money have we spent to date on expanding Diego Garcia?

Mr. Noyes. You are speaking of the communications? Of course it depends on which way you count it but it totals approximately about \$100 million.

Mr. Hamilton. Spent thus far?

Mr. Noyes. The actual construction this far is \$20.45 million. Procurement costs—I have this in detail in my statement. There are also procurement costs and other costs, it depends on how you count it.

Mr. Hamilton. I want to set these figures before us in some reasonable sort of a way, Mr. Noyes, so that we know how much has been spent and how much is projected to be spent from this time forward.

Mr. Noyes. I believe my statement covers it quite adequately.

Mr. Hamilton. What page are you referring to?

Mr. Noyes. I am on page 6. It really begins on page 5, that whole financial discussion.

Mr. Hamilton. So the sum of \$65.3 million has been spent in constructing and outfitting the communications station?

Mr. Noyes. Well, now you are getting into food, fuel, transportation of the Seabees, such things as that totaling \$65.3 million.

FISCAL YEAR 1976 REQUEST

Mr. Hamilton. And your request for fiscal year 1976 is how much?

Mr. Noyes. That is \$13.8 million. If that is approved, we would be coming back in fiscal 1977 for another \$5.9 million to complete.

Mr. Vest. Sir, I wonder if it would help if we sent you afterwards the chart which lists exactly how much has been spent.

Mr. Hamilton. Yes, would you please.

Mr. Vest. Because there are two kinds of figures here. There are figures involving Seabees' salaries, food, things of this nature, and construction costs, which are quite another thing which have been authorized.

Mr. Hamilton. I would appreciate your furnishing that.

[The following information was submitted for the record:]

DEVELOPMENT COSTS FOR DIEGO GARCIA

The \$173 million estimated cost of the total planned development provided to the staff of the Appropriations Committee in the spring of 1974 is composed of the following elements:

	Millions
Military construction	\$54.7
Seabee costs:	
Labor	53.2
Operation and maintenance	33.7
Equipment	27.1
Communications equipment and installations	<u>4.5</u>
Total	173.2

Note—The attached summary sheet provides additional detail

BASE DEVELOPMENT COSTS— NAVY¹, DIEGO GARICA [In millions of dollars]

	Total cost communication station and logistic facilities expansion			
	Projected cost of fiscal year 1976 MCON (completion of Navy expansion)			
	Projected cost of proposed fiscal year 1974 supplemental MCON request			
	Authorized communication station			
Military construction appropriation (Construction materials, special construction equipment and shipping costs.)	20.450	29.000	5.232	54.682
Communication station operations and maintenance costs (Expenditures incidental to the installation of communication station equipment on island.)	.453	.500	.408	1.361
Communication station equipment procurement	<u>2.314</u>	<u>0.650</u>	<u>0.145</u>	<u>3.089</u>
Subtotal	23.217	30.130	5.785	59.132
Military personnel costs ² (Salaries and subsistence costs for the Seabee personnel.)	20.940	25.210	7.022	53.177
Seabee annual operating costs (Consumable camp supplies, fuel, repair parts and transportation used by the Seabee's on Diego Garcia.)	11.370	17.690	4.638	33.748
Replacement of major pieces of construction equipment	<u>9.760</u>	<u>13.840</u>	<u>3.522</u>	<u>27.122</u>
Subtotal	<u>42.070</u>	<u>56.740</u>	<u>15.232</u>	<u>114.042</u>
Total	65.287	86.870	21.017	173.174

1 This cost summary provides narrative description of the cost categories originally provided to the Congress in tab A. The costs include all fiscal year 1975 cost estimates and differs from subsequent cost estimates provided by the Navy by an inflation factor and a phasing of the work over 3 years vice 2 years.

2 The costs associated with the deployment of Naval Construction Forces (Seabees) are identified separately because generally such costs are incurred regardless of the location the Seabee units are employed.

Mr. Hamilton. Now the grand total you say is \$173 million. Page 6 of your statement. The State Department agrees with that?

Mr. Vest. Yes, sir; but I would emphasize there is a distinction in the kinds of figures that went into this.

Mr. Noyes. That would be with the proposed addition.

PRESENCE OR CAPABILITY NEEDED

Mr. Hamilton. I understand.

Let me raise one other question about the role of the facilities in Diego Garcia and that is to get clearly in my mind whether you are talking here about whether our objective is to have a naval presence in Diego Garcia or a naval capability there. The testimony we have had before this committee frankly goes back and forth on that distinction. Last year, Mr. Vest, your predecessor testified, and I quote, "Having a military presence in the area would be conducive to stabilizing the situation." That same kind of language has appeared in other statements before this subcommittee.

The Navy, however, when it comes in does not talk so much about presence as they do capability. Now there is a difference there. It may be that we want both but the rationale has often been stated differently. How do you view it? Are we shooting for a presence there or a capability? And if both, which predominates?

Mr. Vest. At the cost of jumping my military colleague here. I would say that, as I see it, we are shooting for both a military capability and a presence in the Indian Ocean. I must emphasize we are

talking about the Indian Ocean and not about Diego Garcia itself. In the Indian Ocean, the degree of military presence, depending upon our assessment of our interests, may vary up and down. Two years ago we moved to a periodic visit. Before that we did not consider it necessary but the necessity for the capability is equally, I think, valid here so that we have an installation. If we have a particular need, we can move with greater ease in economy.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. du Pont.

MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

Mr. du Pont. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

When the Mayaguez was captured by the Cambodians it took 48 hours to get a U.S. ship on the scene coming from the Philippines. Suppose the capture of the Mayaguez had occurred off the south coast of the Arabian Peninsula: how many hours would it have taken to get a U.S. ship there?

Mr. Vest. I cannot frankly say, Mr. Congressman.

Mr. Noyes. Off the south coast of—

Mr. du Pont. The Arabian Peninsula.

Mr. Noyes. Well, had one of the MIDEASTFOR destroyers been somewhere in that area, it would have been a matter of perhaps 8 hours or so but of course they are rotating about and it is a very hard—

POSSIBLE IMPORTANCE OF MIDEASTFOR

Mr. du Pont. Now if MIDEASTFOR had been there, of course it would have been a quick response. If MIDEASTFOR were not there, if the Government of Bahrain went through with their suggestion that MIDEASTFOR get out, how long do you suppose it would have been?

Mr. Noyes. Again in what still seems to us the unlikely event that MIDEASTFOR cannot operate from Bahrain, it is certainly my view that we will still continue to have a naval presence in the Indian Ocean. Whether it would be a headquarters afloat or be in some other location, I could not speculate.

Mr. du Pont. But if the MIDEASTFOR was not there, and at the time of the Mayaguez the canal was shut, and if we by chance would have somebody in the area, we might have gotten the ship there within a couple of days. But if there had not been someone in the area, it would have meant coming either from the Mediterranean around the coast of Africa or that same ship from the Philippines. If you just take with your eye and see how far 48 hours is from the Philippines to the coast of Cambodia, you can see that it would have been four or five times that to get to the south coast of Saudi Arabia.

OIL AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF AREA

I am sorry Mr. Bonker left because he made some comments about shifting our naval priorities to areas of greater strategic significance, greater strategic importance—those are the words he used. Let's talk about strategic importance for a moment.

As I said earlier, 60 percent of the world's oil comes out through the Strait of Hormuz. There are about 50 to 70 tankers a day that transit

the strait. That is pretty strategically important I would say. The canal is opening now and I wonder if you have any figures, based on the last time the canal was opened, on what kinds of shippers will now be using the Red Sea. Do you have any volume figures on that?

Mr. Noyes. I don't have anything with me. Of course with the development of the supertanker a great deal of oil will still go around the cape but there will, of course, be an enormous standard size tanker—

Mr. du Pont. Won't there be a substantial increase in addition to the Persian Gulf traffic? Won't there be a substantial increase in freighter traffic through the Red Sea? That, too, will provide some American interest. Some ships will be American ships and others will be chartered by American companies and that would provide another American interest in the region or some kind of presence or capability in the area.

NAVAL CAPABILITY AND NAVAL PRESENCE

Could you tell us the difference between a naval presence and a naval capability?

Mr. Vest. I don't know that I really can, but I will take a shot at it, sir.

A naval presence, depending upon the circumstances, can be almost anything from a training vessel with a bunch of cadets on it to a force of almost any size; a major aircraft carrier or anything that brings home to the group you are visiting that this represents the presence of the United States. However, when you get to the word "capability" you add the assessment, what can that presence do? A group of training students is not going to have any capability and therefore you get to the assessment of the capacity of that group to do something if needed. So we use the two words that way.

Mr. du Pont. So a carrier visit—

Mr. Vest. Has presence and capability.

Mr. du Pont. Has both.

Mr. Vest. Yes.

Mr. du Pont. The Bahrain force MIDEASTFOR is a capability?

Mr. Vest. I would say in terms of its effect in the area it has had, however, very large presence.

Mr. du Pont. Yes.

Mr. Vest. Very large presence. It has meant something in terms of presence ever since it was first established there.

Mr. du Pont. You cannot have a capability without having a presence but you can have a presence without having a capability.

Mr. Vest. Right, sir.

Mr. du Pont. And Diego Garcia is going to add both?

Mr. Vest. Both.

Mr. du Pont. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

DIEGO PRESENCE

Mr. Hamilton. How many people do we have on Diego Garcia now?

Mr. Noyes. We have at the present, Mr. Chairman, approximately 1,060 and these figures fluctuate from day to day. There are approxi-

mately 380 persons connected with the operation and support of the communications station itself. Then there are about 50 people who are flight safety personnel and one battalion of Seabee's. Roughly 630 constitute the remainder who are not part of the group; in other words, when they complete their work, they will depart.

Mr. Hamilton. Once the construction and expansion is completed, what will be the force level on that island?

Mr. Noyes. If the proposed expansion goes through, the approximate figure of 575 total personnel is now—say between 575 and 600—is now what we are planning, about 100 logistics support type people and about 475 communications and support people.

MASIRAH

Mr. Hamilton. Have we obtained any special landing rights on the British air base at the island of Masirah?

Mr. Vest. On Masirah, we have had conversations but we have not made specific arrangements of any kind.

Mr. Hamilton. We have no rights on that island as of today, is that a correct statement?

Mr. Noyes. I believe we have traditionally had an emergency landing right of some kind but we have not concluded any agreement to change that to date.

Mr. Hamilton. Are we in the process of getting some kind of rights on that island now?

Mr. Vest. We are in the process now of studying exactly what we would consider to be useful, because it is a very minimal situation there and we have not really pursued it.

Mr. Hamilton. To your knowledge there is no request pending with the British Government?

Mr. Vest. The British request for a specific facility?

Mr. Hamilton. Yes.

Mr. Vest. No. The British are aware that we are looking into the situation, and we have not gone to them with anything specific.

VISITS OF AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

Mr. Hamilton. Could you give us a list of the number of times that U.S. aircraft carriers have visited the Indian Ocean since October 1973?

Mr. Vest. We will provide that for the record, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. And how long they were there and what the added cost of these visits would be?

Mr. Vest. I am sorry. I don't understand exactly what you are asking for there at the end.

Mr. Hamilton. Deploying them in the Indian Ocean as compared to keeping them in—

Mr. Vest. Whatever their previous station was?

Mr. Hamilton. Yes.

Mr. Vest. All right, sir.

[The following information was submitted for the record:]

**SUMMARY OF U.S. NAVY INDIAN OCEAN OPERATIONS
JAN. 1, 1973 TO JUNE 5, 1975
[Periodic deployments by 7th Fleet units]**

Dates	Duration (days)	Task group composition	Number of ports visited
Oct. 29, 1973 – Dec. 8, 1974	41	Hancock CVA-19; Preble DLG-15; Bagley DE-1069, Gray DE-1054; and Kawishiwi AO-146.	Ethiopia 1.
Dec. 1, 1973 – Jan. 15, 1974	46	Oriskany CVA-34; Buchanan DDG-14, England DLG-22; H.E. Holt DE-1074; R.E. Peary DE-1073; and MARS AFS-1.	Seychelles 1; Kenya 1.
Dec. 27, 1973 – Mar. 3, 1974	65	Bainbridge DLGN-25; Schofield DEG-3; Mispillion AO-105.	Iran 1; Seychelles 1.
Feb. 26, 1974 – Apr. 21, 1974	54	Kitty Hawk CV-63; Somers DDG-34, Bronstein DE-1087; Kirk DE-1037; and Sacramento AOE-1.	Kenya 1.
July 29, 1974 – Aug. 30, 1974	33	Chicago CG-11; Fanning DE-1076; Mackenzie DD-836, and Passumpsic TAO-107.	Pakistan 1; Sri Lanka 1; Iran 2; Affars/Issas 1; Kenya 1; Mauritius 1.
Nov. 10, 1974 – Dec. 5, 1974	26	Constellation CVA-64; Berkeley DDG-15, Cochrane DDG-21; Stein DE-1065; Plunger SSN-595; and Camden AOE-2.	Pakistan 1.
Jan. 12, 1975 – Feb. 21, 1975	41	Enterprise CVAN-65; Long Beach CGN-9; B. Stoddert DDG-22; Rathburne DE-1057; Camden AOE-2; and Passumpsic TAO-107.	Kenya 1; Seychelles 1; Mauritius 1.

With respect to the additional costs associated with carrier deployments to the Indian Ocean as opposed to their normal operating areas in the Pacific, there is no reliable means of determining such costs. A carrier task group is a self-contained unit whose costs are very similar regardless of the area of operation, i.e., the cost of conducting air operations during a short deployment to the Indian Ocean is essentially the same as the cost of identical operations in the Sea of Japan. A true comparison would require a comparison of levels of operational activity in the different environments, but there are no reliable norms of operational levels since these vary widely over time and cannot be directly associated with carrier location. Support costs for the supply train of a carrier group in the Indian Ocean would be much higher than in the Pacific if a hostile local environment and absence of local supply sources were assumed. It is, of course, in circumstances such as this that the proposed facilities in Diego Garcia would be most critical and most cost-effective. However, any estimates of dollar figures would depend, inter alia, on the length of the supply chain, the duration of the deployment, and the intensity of air operations—all of which are hypothetical. Another way of measuring comparative costs would be the substitution cost of having major military assets present in one area and absent from another. This, however, is essentially a strategic judgment and subject to a variety of circumstances. It is not a tangible cost to which a dollar figure can be attached. Depending on the assumptions and circumstances, the costs of Indian Ocean deployments could be shown to be much higher than operations in the Pacific Fleet area, essentially the same, or even lower. Consequently, in the absence of a detailed scenario, comparative dollar estimates are likely to prove more misleading than useful.

DIEGO AND A MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Noyes, you have an interesting phrase at the bottom of page 7 of your statement where you are talking about why we need Diego Garcia and you say that:

Thus, in addition to the increased operational flexibility which we would acquire from enlarged support facilities on Diego Garcia, we would in effect be buying a measure of immunity from events such as those in October 1973 when local supply sources were severed.

Now you seem to be tying in the Diego Garcia base there to the Middle East conflict in some way or you could be. I would like you to be explicit at that point.

Mr. Noyes. Mr. Chairman, what I am referring to there is the disruption in the usual sources of POL in the area for our naval forces and I am saying that if we had the logistics capability we are asking for in Diego Garcia we would have a 30-day supply of POL for a typical carrier task group which would be sufficient time to set in motion a logistical pipeline to replenish that. We would not be in the same position we were in in October 1973.

Mr. Hamilton. Does Diego Garcia figure in any way in our contingency planning for outbreak of conflict in the Middle East?

Mr. Noyes. Mr. Chairman, I regret that the contingency planning area is one in which I cannot get into in an open hearing.

Mr. Hamilton. What do you mean you cannot get into it? You don't know about it or—

Mr. Noyes. I am under the ground rules of our Department. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are responsible for contingency planning and any statements on that subject must be made by them.

POL STORAGE

Mr. Hamilton. We had some testimony before this subcommittee last year from an executive branch witness, and I am not sure which one it was, that said that the amount of petroleum storage on Diego Garcia would be about the load of a medium-sized tanker—not even a big tanker. Is that about the storage capacity on Diego Garcia or is it substantially more than that?

Mr. Noyes. More than that. The contemplated storage capacity will be 700,000 barrels, a 640,000 barrel increase over present capacity. This will still be fairly modest. The Navy AO-143 class oiler carries 190,500 barrels of petroleum. Viewed in this context the storage capacity envisioned for Diego Garcia will equate to 3.7 AO-143 oilers, and as I say, this capacity could support an entire carrier task group for 30 days.

Mr. Hamilton. The amount of oil stored there could supply a carrier task force for 30 days?

Mr. Noyes. That is correct.

ARMS RESTRAINT EFFORTS

Mr. Hamilton. Are you aware of any effort by the United States to obtain arms restraint in the Indian Ocean, Mr. Vest?

Mr. Vest. Since the last discussion with the Soviets which you are familiar with, no, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. How long ago is that?

Mr. Vest. I believe that was 1971, sir, and I am not aware of specific further conversations between ourselves and the Soviets on this subject since that time.

Mr. Hamilton. You are only aware of the one conversation?

Mr. Vest. There were two conversations, I believe.

Mr. Hamilton. Where did they take place and when?

Mr. Vest. To be absolutely correct, sir, I will have to supply that I do not have it in my head right here at this time.

Mr. du Pont. Would the chairman yield?

Mr. Hamilton. Yes. Mr. du Pont.

Mr. Vest. It is in my predecessor's statement of last year and I just do not have that handy here at this time.

[The State Department subsequently submitted that July 1971 was the most recent discussion between the United States and the U.S.S.R.]

OTHER SUPPLIERS

Mr. du Pont. You mention only conversations on arms limitations with the Soviets. How many countries are selling arms in the gulf area now?

Mr. Vest. To my knowledge, certainly four major countries sell in that area.

Mr. du Pont. At least four?

Mr. Vest. At least four—and five, in fact.

Mr. du Pont. Assuming that—

Mr. Vest. Because, you see, each of the major powers sells arms in that area and so do a number of our European allies.

Mr. du Pont. You asked the Soviets, the French, the British, the Germans?

Mr. Vest. Yes, and it is perfectly possible that the Italians or others may have provided arms in the area as well. I don't know for sure. Once we go past the major European allies, I can't state for a fact that they are selling in that area at the present time.

Mr. du Pont. As a matter of fact, in Salzburg President Sadat's bodyguards were carrying an Israeli manufactured submachinegun so perhaps the Israelis are selling in the area as well, but it is not just a simple question of just sitting down—

Mr. Vest. No, it is not.

Mr. du Pont. There are many countries involved?

Mr. Vest. There are many countries involved.

U.S. PRIORITIES

Mr. Hamilton. Why does it not make some sense to talk about arms limitations before you launch upon an expansion of a facility, to at least make an effort? Why do we just skip over that as a step? Why is it it has been 1971 since we have talked to the Soviets about this and we just make up our mind to go ahead and expand the facility?

Mr. Vest. Well, I would say, sir, throughout this period we have had our own explicit interests in the area. We could see that they were engaged in a policy which reflected their own interests in the area.

Mr. Hamilton. Isn't it to our interest not to have any military buildup in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Vest. I do—

Mr. Hamilton. Why isn't that to our interest?

Mr. Vest [continuing]. Ideally disarmament is in everybody's interest, if this is the ideal that is likely to be forthcoming, but we are dealing in a world in which they have expressed an evident interest which they are carrying forward. Now if there is any chance—

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Vest, they just turn that around and make the same argument.

Mr. Vest [continuing]. Yes.

Mr. Hamilton. There is no end to that process.

Mr. Vest. There is none. We have engaged in a long process of negotiations with the Soviets on a series of activities.

NO EFFORT AT TALKS

Mr. Hamilton. You have not done any negotiating with the Soviets on limitation of arms on the Indian Ocean, you have not even tried in recent months or years?

Mr. Vest. Well, I am not in a position to say, sir—

Mr. Hamilton. When was the last time, Mr. Vest, we talked with the Soviets about limitation of arms in the Indian Ocean?

Mr. Vest [continuing]. 1971.

Mr. Hamilton. And it is now 1975.

Mr. Vest. Yes.

Mr. Hamilton. We are not trying very hard, are we? Mr. du Pont.

ROLE OF ACDA

Mr. du Pont. When was the last time a member of our ACDA— Arms Control and Disarmament Agency—visited the Persian Gulf area?

Mr. Vest. I really don't know, sir. I would have to find that out.

Mr. Hamilton. Is it your impression that anyone has ever been there?

Mr. Vest. There is a distinction between visiting the area and having continued to make studies as to what would be a practicable way of dealing with a situation as complex as the Indian Ocean with its varied interests there.

Mr. du Pont. But it is pretty hard to make any kind of studies without somebody going out there and actually having a look?

Mr. Vest. I just cannot say when ACDA may have made such a visit.

Mr. du Pont. Will you check that for us and supply it for the record?

Mr. Vest. Yes.

[The following information was submitted for the record:]

In February-March 1974, Dr. John Lehman, Deputy Director of ACDA, visited the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean areas, including the island of Diego Garcia.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Winn, any further questions?

Mr. Winn. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hamilton. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

The subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:35 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]

DIEGO GARCIA, 1975:
THE DEBATE OVER THE BASE AND THE ISLAND'S FORMER INHABITANTS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1975
House of Representatives, Committee on International Relations
Special Subcommittee on Investigations,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 2:05 p.m. in room H-236, the Capitol, Hon. Lee H. Hamilton (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. Hamilton. The meeting of the subcommittee will come to order.

This afternoon the Special Subcommittee on Investigations continues its inquiry into U.S. plans to develop base support facilities on the island of Diego Garcia.

Two issues are of particular interest to us today. First we would like an update from the executive branch on what is taking place on the island now that final efforts in Congress to stop development have been defeated.

Second the subcommittee wishes to explore the circumstances under which the former inhabitants of Diego Garcia were removed to make way for our uninhabited base island. We are also interested in finding out more about the situation of the former islanders today.

It is evident that despite whatever efforts are made to pass responsibility for these islanders to Great Britain or Mauritius, the United States has some responsibility for the removal of over 1,000 islanders from Diego Garcia and surrounding islands and that, as an accomplice in this venture, we along with Great Britain and Mauritius bear a moral obligation to help these people find some sense of their former feeling of community elsewhere.

We are fortunate to have as our first witness today the distinguished Senator from the State of Iowa, John Culver. Senator Culver has spent considerable time in the last year investigating the Diego Garcia base issue.

Our two executive branch witnesses who will testify following Senator Culver's testimony are George Churchill, Director, Office of International Security Operations, Department of State and Comdr. Gary Sick, Country Director for the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs at the Department of Defense. Mr. Churchill and Commander Sick are partially responsible, I gather, for the report of the former inhabitants of Diego Garcia which was presented to Congress October 10, 1975, and which is before members of the subcommittee.

Senator Culver, we welcome you back briefly to your former committee. We are happy to have you with us today. You may proceed as you see fit. Your statement will be entered into the record.

Statement of Hon. John C. Culver, a U.S. Senator from the State of Iowa

Senator Culver. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a personal pleasure for me to have this opportunity at your invitation to appear before this distinguished subcommittee to discuss the matter of Diego Garcia and in particular the treatment given the former inhabitants of that small atoll in the Indian Ocean.

PRESIDENT CERTIFICATION OF NECESSITY

I have joined with many of my colleagues in the Senate to oppose construction of a major U.S. military installation on Diego Garcia. The arguments we have stated previously have been strengthened in my judgment by the disclosures of recent weeks.

When this issue was considered by the Senate in July under provisions of lawmaking approval of the base expansion contingent upon Presidential certification of necessity and congressional acceptance, we argued as follows:

No. 1, diplomacy should be tried first. Specifically the United States should seek discussions with the Soviet Union on mutual naval arms limitations in the Indian Ocean.

Inexplicably, no approach—I emphasize, Mr. Chairman, not one bit, no approach—to the Russians on this subject has been made since 1971. This fact was admitted last year in testimony before Congressman Hamilton's Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia and again repeated before the Senate Armed Services Committee this year. No effort was made in the intervening months to try this diplomatic approach despite the Senate Armed Services Committee's specific request.

When other Senators and I raised this matter with Soviet officials during interparliamentary meetings in Moscow in July we were given reason to believe that the Soviet Union might respond favorably to an American initiative to seek means of reducing tension in the Indian Ocean. Senators Hart of Colorado, Leahy of Vermont and I offered the specific suggestion of seeking a bilateral understanding to limit ship-day deployments for example in that region.

BUILD FIRST, TALK LATER

Despite these indications and other congressional urgings for negotiations the State Department rejected the suggestion and relied instead on the old bargaining chip argument, that we should build our base first and then talk about talking.

We are still at an impasse on negotiations. Nothing is being done to avert a costly superpower arms race in the Indian Ocean which according to defense analysts at the Brookings Institution could lead to a three-ocean U.S. Navy at a cost of \$5 billion to \$8 billion in new procurement and \$800 million per year in increased operating costs.

Surely diplomacy should be tried before we are caught up in such an arms race.

TACTICAL MILITARY SUPERIORITY

Our second major argument, Mr. Chairman, was that the proposed Diego Garcia base was not necessary or urgent for military reasons at the present time, thus allowing an opportunity for negotiations.

Without going into elaborate detail the simple fact is that notwithstanding increased Soviet naval presence and the limited facilities at Berbera the United States can easily deploy vastly superior firepower on the Indian Ocean any time it wants to. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James Noyes so admitted to this subcommittee as recently as June 5 of this year.

The fact is undeniable because we have giant aircraft carriers and the U.S.S.R. at present has none. The U.S.S. Enterprise for example carries over 60 planes, many with an effective radius of over 700 miles. The Russians cannot match that kind of firepower any time we want to marshal it.

And whether or not we build a base at Diego Garcia we can still maintain tactical military superiority in the Indian Ocean.

RISKING GOOD U.S. RELATIONS

Our third argument was that the proposed base expansion ran the risk of alienating the nations along the Indian Ocean littoral which have been vocal and adamant against this base. No nation of the area has gone on record favoring such a U.S. base. On the contrary all have supported repeated United Nations efforts in the so-called Zone of Peace resolutions to forestall a great power military rivalry in the Indian Ocean, including such allies as Australia.

We believe that proceeding with base expansion in the face of such opposition and without having made a good-faith effort at negotiations might well jeopardize U.S. policy in that area and in fact it already has. We seek friendly relations with those countries. American ships currently have access to some 36 ports for refueling.

If we proceed in arrogant disregard of the views of those nations we may well find that access denied, particularly when it might be most needed.

DIPLOMATIC BACKLASH

Already we are suffering from a diplomatic backlash as a result of the Senate's vote as recently as July 28 permitting a go-ahead on Diego Garcia construction.

Somalia, which had been receptive to the suggestion of a U.S. naval port visit, perhaps as a way of reducing its current dependence on the Soviet Union, deferred any scheduling of such a visit because the atmosphere after the debate earlier this summer was not conducive to a friendly visit.

Only last week delegates to the British Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, meeting in New Delhi, criticized the U.S. base expansion plan. According to the Baltimore Sun—this was last week, Mr. Chairman—"The opening day of the Conference devoted all its working sessions to discussion of the tension that is being generated because of the American decision to go ahead in spite of opposition from all littoral and hinterland countries." The headline read: "U.S. Draws Fire on New Naval Base."

Mr. Chairman, this backlash was predictable and avoidable. We can still recoup some of our standing if we proceed affirmatively to seek mutual arms limitations and especially if we defer base expansion for a few months until diplomacy has at least been tried, which would possibly obviate the need for the base at all.

DISREGARD OF FORMER INHABITANTS

In the meantime we face renewed criticism because of disclosures about the acquisition of base rights on Diego Garcia.

Early in September the Washington Post's African correspondent, David Ottaway, visited Mauritius and discovered a colony of former residents of Diego Garcia who are now living in what he called abject poverty. He also revealed that these people had been forced to move from their homes in order to make way for the planned U.S. base and were then not provided promised assistance for relocation and reestablishment.

No witness, Mr. Chairman, no witness in any of the 1974 or 1975 appearances before Congress mentioned that there had been inhabitants living on the island, some for generations.

In fact Congressman Hamilton's subcommittee was told just the opposite last year when a State Department witness testified on March 6 :

"... the nature of the island itself, which is a rather small piece of land, is also fortuitous in that it has no local population whatsoever so we have a minimal degree of the sort of political problems"—so saith the State Department witness—"that are sometimes associated with establishing a facility of this sort."

The only other references were to Diego Garcia as "uninhabited."

My staff went back and discovered obscure references in classified documents given to Congress in the early 1970's when people were still living there. But even these called the residents "rotating contract personnel," {sic: personnel} thus clearly implying only temporary residence.

Mr. Chairman, that testimony was either based on ignorance or was deliberately misleading. In either case the Congress was denied full and accurate information about this major military initiative.

RESETTLEMENT REPORT

When the Pentagon proved slow to provide full details on the eviction of the former inhabitants of Diego Garcia I introduced an amendment, adopted by the Senate, requiring a full report.

Pending disposition of that amendment in conference the State and Defense Departments provided on October 10 a nine page "Report on the Resettlement of Inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago." This report was apparently intended to respond to the congressional demand for background information.

Mr. Chairman, I would request that a copy of this report be included in the hearing record at this point.

Mr. Hamilton. Without objection it is so ordered.

[The information referred to follows:]

REPORT ON THE RESETTLEMENT OF INHABITANTS OF THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

The British Indian Ocean Territory was established in 1965, in order to meet future UK and US defense needs. At that time the four islands groups (Chagos Archipelago, Aldabra Islands, Farquhar Group, and Desroches) which comprised the territory were sparsely populated, essentially by contract workers and their dependents who had been brought to the islands to work in coconut plantations. Some 1,000 persons of Seychellois and Mauritian extraction inhabited the Chagos Archipelago, which includes the island of Diego Garcia. This report addresses, within the limits of information now available, the demography of the Chagos Archipelago, the reason for relocating this population, and the financial and other arrangements for their resettlement.

DEMOGRAPHY

According to the best information available to the United States and United Kingdom in 1964, the population of the three habitable islands in the Chagos Archipelago, Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos, and Salomon, at that time was approximately 1,000, of whom about 640 were considered Mauritians and some 360 Seychellois. On all three islands, the sole economic activity was the production of copra and other coconut products at plantations owned since 1962 by the Chagos Agalega Co. headed by Mr. Paul Moulinie of Mahe, Seychelles. On Diego Garcia, out of a population of 483, all but 7 persons were engaged in work on the coconut plantations, or were their dependents. (The exceptions were 6 officials at a Mauritius Government meteorological station on the island, and one unemployed person.) The male workers on the plantations, who numbered 204, were under contract for two years at a time in the case of married men and 18 months in the case of bachelors.

On Peros Banhos and Salomon the entire population of 291 and 219 respectively, was dependent on the coconut plantations, except for 2 unemployed persons on Peros Banhos.

Historically, it appears that coconut plantations were established by Europeans in the Chagos Archipelago as far back as the 18th century. In early times the plantations used slave labor and in more recent times corvee labor imported primarily from Mauritius and the Seychelles. In 1964, it was typical practice to bring in Seychellois and Mauritians on 18-month to 2-year contracts at about \$3 to \$4 per month, plus housing and rations.

There was no modern administration on the islands of the Chagos Archipelago, although there were infrequent visits by magistrates from Mauritius. The islands appeared in fact to be estates organized and administered on much the same principle as were, for example, the German plantations in the Cameroons in the 1930's. There was little evidence of any real sense of a distinct community evolved by the special local environment, and it appeared that any attachment to the locale could be attributed to the easy-going ways of the old plantation company rather than to sentiments regarding the islands themselves. The change in plantation ownership in 1962 appeared to have loosened the old ties.

Despite the basically transitory nature of the population of these islands, there were some often referred to as "Ilois", who were oriented more toward the islands than toward Mauritius or the Seychelles. In the absence of more complete data, it is impossible to establish the status of these persons and to what extent, if any, they formed a distinct community. In 1964, perhaps 42 men and 38 women, with 154 children out of the total population of Diego Garcia might be considered to be Ilois, of whom no more than 3 men and 17 women could be regarded as having their permanent homes on the island. Any survey of the "Ilois" is complicated by the varying usage of this term, which sometimes refers to those oriented toward life on the islands, sometimes to all those born in the Chagos islands regardless of extraction or orientation, and sometimes (in its legal sense) only to those of Mauritian extraction born in the Archipelago.

On the basis of all information available in the 1964-1965 period when formation of the British Indian Ocean Territory was under consideration, it appeared that the transfer of the inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago would be feasible and that the persons then working on the islands would accept employment under suitable conditions elsewhere.

THE DECISION TO RESETTLE

The Anglo-American Agreement of 1966 for "Availability of Certain Indian Ocean Island for Defence Purposes" (TIAS 6196) provides that the islands of the Chagos Archipelago as well as other islands comprising the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) would be made available as required to meet the needs of both governments for defense. The British Government completed purchase of the lease holds of the copra plantations held by the Chagos Agalega Company by 1967, while allowing contained operations under revocable leases until such time as the islands might be required for defense purposes as envisaged in the 1966 agreement. Since the island populations were almost totally dependent on the plantations, it followed that defense use would require the relocation of the workers and their families. Under the agreement, the British Government, which retained full sovereignty over the BIOT, assumed the responsibility for all administrative arrangements including any required resettlement, when islands were required for the defense needs of either country.

One of the main considerations in setting up the British Indian Ocean Territory was that the islands were thinly populated essentially by contract laborers and their dependents, whose attachment to a specific locale was tenuous. It was anticipated that when an island such as Diego Garcia was required for defense purposes the plantations would be closed and the workers and their families relocated, and no persons would remain there except official United States and United Kingdom personnel assigned to, or residing on, the station, with the possible exception of foreign contractors temporarily required for the construction of military facilities or the dredging of harbors. There were several reasons for desiring uninhabited islands for military use. Security was a factor considered by both governments. The United States was concerned about the social problems that could be expected when placing a military detachment on an isolated tropical island alongside a population with an informal social structure and a prevalent cash wage of less than \$4.00 per month. It appears that the United Kingdom also was concerned with the problems involved in establishing civil administration for islands it was considering developing for military purposes.

RESETTLEMENT

In 1969, the British made tentative plans for moving the workers and their families from Diego Garcia to make way for the joint communications facility which was then being considered by the US Congress. Several alternative relocation sites were considered, including the islands of Peros Banhos and Salomon in the Chagos group. However, the plantations on these two islands were deteriorating and could not be maintained without a considerable investment which was not feasible unless the islands could be exempted from military use for at least twenty years. In the event such a commitment was not possible and the British made arrangements to move the plantation workers from Diego Garcia, and later from Peros Banhos and Salomon. The workers recruited from the Seychelles were returned there. The others either went direct to Mauritius or, in some cases to Peros Banhos and Salomon in the first instance and subsequently to Mauritius.

The Government of Mauritius informed the non-Seychellois workers on the Chagos islands in 1965 that with the detachment of those islands from Mauritius to form the BIOT, the workers there should seek employment elsewhere. A number of workers on the islands recruited on Mauritius consequently decided against reviewing their contracts. Those working on the Chagos islands declined from more than 1,000 in 1964 to 839 in 1971. When the employers moved the workers on Diego Garcia in 1971, the total number of persons there was 359. The number moved from the islands of Peros Banhos and Salomon in 1973 was 470, including a small number who had gone to those islands from Diego Garcia in 1971. Thus the total number of persons moved from the Chagos islands between 1971 and 1973 was 829.

The physical relocation of the workers which the closure of the Chagos plantations necessitated was carried out by the Chagos Agalega Company which was responsible for the movement of its workers. We understand from the British that although there was some initial reluctance on the part of the older people to move, all went willingly. No coercion was used and no British or U.S. servicemen were involved.

RESETTLEMENT FINANCING

The British have been on record since 1965 as willing to pay appropriate compensation when relocation of workers and their families in the BIOT became necessary. The count of persons affected by the closure of plantations in the Chagos Archipelago seems somewhat unclear. In addition to the 829 persons moved from 1971 to 1973, there were apparently some 400 persons who had worked on the islands and who had voluntarily settled in Mauritius between 1965 and 1970. According to Mauritian Government records, 1151 persons had a claim to compensation. Thus, the number considered eligible for compensation was higher than the number on the islands at any one time since 1964, probably reflecting the turnover of labor on the island plantations. Other differences in the numbers may be caused by deaths and births, or by the difficulties in keeping track of an essentially migrant population.

Pursuing its intent to compensate resettled persons, the UK reached agreement with the Mauritian Government in 1973 to provide 650,000 pounds sterling (\$1.4 million) to Mauritius for relief and relocation of all those who had worked or lived in the Chagos Archipelago in 1965 or later, and who subsequently set-

tled in Mauritius. The Mauritian Government acknowledged that the 1973 payment represented a full and final discharge of British obligations in this regard, and accepted complete responsibility for the people involved, most of whom were Mauritian citizens by birth or by virtue of Mauritian nationality provisions.

The Mauritian Government had developed a resettlement plan for the first group of islanders returning from the Chagos Archipelago as early as 1969, but available information indicates that the funds provided by the UK Government remain largely undisbursed. On October 1, 1974, representatives of the resettled islands {sic: islanders} petitioned the Mauritian Government to give each family a piece of land, separate housing, and jobs in Mauritius. The following day, the Prime Minister of Mauritius directed attention to the 1973 agreement with the UK and confirmed that resettlement efforts were being made.

Recent Mauritian Government figures indicate that of 421 families in the resettlement group, 243 heads of family were now in "settled occupations" in Mauritius. Old age pensioners account for 57, and 74 are on public assistance. Twenty eight heads of family want to return to Diego Garcia, and eight families are willing to go to Agalega Island as part of a possible resettlement scheme. (The shortfall may reflect deaths and emigration). The Mauritian Finance Minister recently stated that the Mauritian Government has decided to resettle as many of the "Ilois" as possible on Agalega Island, with employment similar to their previous occupation in the Chagos Archipelago and in improved living conditions.

FINANCING BIOT COSTS

Expenses incurred by the British Government in connection with the establishment of British Indian Ocean Territory were as follows:

Million pounds

Compensation to Mauritius for transfer of sovereignty	3.0
Payment to Chagos Agalega Co for transfer of freehold	1.35
Payment to Mauritius for Resettlement of workers	.65
Compensation to Seychelles for transfer of sovereignty	<u>6.2</u>
(Construction of Mahe Airport)	*11.20

* (Approximately \$30.0 million. It is impossible to make a precise conversion because of the devaluation of the pound during the period when expenditures were being made.)

At the time of the 1966 Anglo-American Agreement on shared use of the BIOT, the United States Government agreed to provide one half of the cost of establishing the BIOT, but not to exceed \$14 million. To date, \$11,542,000 of this amount has been provided. US financing was not applied to any specific British expenditure, but was related to the total of expenses incurred by the UK in setting up the BIOT.

US financing was provided by waiving, to the extent of \$14 million, the 5 percent research and development surcharges accruing in connection with the UK purchase of the Polaris missile system. Under this arrangement, US obligations in respect to creation of the BIOT were to be debited against a trust fund established pursuant to Article XI of the US-UK Polaris sales agreement concluded on April 6, 1963. Under the sales agreement, the British had agreed to pay a 5 percent research and development (R&D) surcharge on the cost of hardware items procured for them.

The legal basis for these payments was addressed in 1965, and is summarized as follows: "insofar as the payments relating to R&D are concerned, the proposal foregoes payment up to the amount of \$14 million. This sum is not a sum owing to the United States. The exact amount of the R&D is uncertain depending on the price of the items sold. It is further uncertain in that the United Kingdom may at any time at its option cancel the Polaris purchase, without being liable for any R&D charges over and beyond those calculated on items already delivered. Also significant is the fact that Section 507 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, does not require the imposition of any R&D charge whatsoever. Such a charge could have been omitted from the agreement, and was inserted in the agreement only as a matter of policy. Accordingly, the waiver of such a charge in exchange for a valuable consideration does not constitute the

waiver of a charge which the Executive Branch is under a statutory mandate to collect. Viewed in this light, the United States is merely giving up one right in exchange for another right of equal or greater value.”

CONCLUSION

In reconstructing the discussions that led to the formation of the British Indian Ocean Territory and the establishment of a joint US-UK communications facility on the island of Diego Garcia, it is evident that the question of the island population was one of concern to both governments and that appropriate steps were taken to ascertain the numbers of people that might be affected by the closure of plantations and the nature of the communities in which they lived. Information available at the time provided convincing evidence that the population of the Chagos Archipelago was essentially migratory, almost entirely comprised of contract laborers with ties in the Seychelles or Mauritius, and totally dependent on the coconut plantations for their livelihood.

It appeared that most of the inhabitants would accept work elsewhere if given the opportunity. Thus the removal of workers and their families from the Chagos Archipelago—for reasons that were considered compelling—seemed at that time both reasonable and feasible, provided adequate resettlement funds were made available.

While it was US policy to ensure that military facilities would be located in an uninhabited area, it was always clearly understood between the US and British authorities that all responsibility for the people on the islands lay with the UK, which retained sovereignty over the BIOT. While the resettlement doubtless entailed discomfort and economic dislocation for a number of the families involved, it is clear that the UK was willing from the outset to provide adequate relocation funds and technical assistance in dealing with settlement problems. The 650,000 pounds transferred to Mauritius by the UK in 1973 is still available, and the Mauritian Government has stated that it intends to pursue a resettlement program. The British Government has welcomed the Mauritian Prime Minister’s recent suggestion that the UK might assist the Mauritian Government in working out a resettlement scheme more acceptable to the islanders.

Information provided by the Administration to the Congress over the years reflected the status of the population on the BIOT islands at different times. In April 1969, in a letter to Senator Symington, then Secretary of Defense Laird mentioned that the islands of the British Indian Ocean Territory had a small migratory population. Testimony before the Military Construction Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee in May 1970, included the statement that the British had made further plans for resettlement of workers. The resettlement having been completed in 1971, testimony before the Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in March 1975, included a statement that there was no indigenous population on Diego Garcia. In June 1975, in testimony before the Special Subcommittee on Investigations of the House Committee on International Relations, Diego Garcia was again referred to as uninhabited.

Financial arrangements for the establishment of the British Indian Ocean Territory were covered in Secretary Laird’s letter to Senator Symington referred to above. Before proceeding with the US arrangement for contributing the agreed U.S. share of the expense of establishing the British Indian Ocean Territory, the Administration carefully reviewed the legal aspects of waiving the research and development surcharge connected with the Polaris Missile system being acquired by the UK.

While the US was not involved in the arrangement for resettling the population of the Chagos Archipelago, and our share of the BIOT financing was not assigned to this or any other specific activity, it should be noted that U.S. concern for the people of Mauritius has been expressed in other direct ways. For example, in February this year units of the 7th Fleet provided cyclone relief assistance to Mauritius at a cost to the U.S. of over \$300,000. In addition the U.S. has pledged \$25,000 to assist the victims of the cyclone.

In sum, the record shows that United States and United Kingdom officials acted in good faith on the basis of information then available to them, with respect to the issue of resettling the people of the Chagos Archipelago. The Laird-Symington letter of April 1969 offered the Congress an opportunity to address resettlement and funding arrangements as well as the Diego Garcia construction pro-

gram. There is no outstanding US obligation to underwrite the cost of additional assistance for the persons affected by the resettlement from the Chagos Islands.

DIEGO GARCIA BACKGROUND

Senator Culver. Mr. Chairman, this report generally confirms the press reports which have come out in recent weeks and reveals that the whole base acquisition and the accompanying depopulation of Diego Garcia was tarnished by secret agreements withheld from the appropriate committees of the Congress.

In barest outline the facts are these. In 1964 approximately 1,000 people lived in the Chagos Archipelago, of whom nearly 500 were on Diego Garcia, where they were engaged in the production of copra and other coconut products.

Of these people on Diego Garcia about half were considered “ilois,” that is, those native or otherwise closely oriented to the islands rather than to Mauritius or the Seychelles.

SECRET ARRANGEMENTS

In 1966 the United States and the United Kingdom signed an executive agreement granting American military base rights for 50 years.

One of the provisions of this public agreement requires consultation on “administrative measures” to enable the island to be used for defense purposes. In fact those measures were to be the depopulation of the island.

Another provision, paragraph (4), says quite explicitly {sic: explicitly}: “The required sites shall be made available to the United States Authorities without charge.”

In fact the accompanying secret agreements provided that the United States would compensate Britain for acquisition expenses by waiving payments due as surcharges for research and development of the British-purchased Polaris missile system. The U.S. Government promised to bear half the cost, up to \$14 million, by such waivers.

There is no record that the Congress was told of these secret arrangements in 1966. The earliest notification, which was sparse and vague, came in the spring of 1969, by which time over \$9 million in surcharges had been waived. Even so the State Department report mentions only House Appropriations and Senate Foreign Relations Committees as recipients of this information. Omitted from the select list were House Foreign Affairs, Senate Appropriations and House and Senate Armed Services Committees. They received no notification at all.

DEPOPULATION AND RELOCATION

While the Congress was left in the dark the local inhabitants were evicted and relocated on Mauritius. Some of this was accomplished gradually between 1965 and 1971 by refusals to renew work contracts. During 1971-73 the remaining residents were given Hobson’s choice of leaving or staying and starving.

The next sad chapter of this story took place on Mauritius, where the Diego Garcians were kept together, poorly housed, living in a ghetto, denied the promised land and money to start a new life.

SIDESTEPPING OUR RESPONSIBILITY

The State Department report washes its hands of this problem and places all responsibility for the people on the United Kingdom. Whether or not that may be true in a legal sense I believe {sic: believe} that we cannot so lightly dismiss America's role and responsibility in these events.

Simply put, these people were evicted from their homes only when and because the United States wanted to build a military base.

We add nothing to our moral stature as a nation by trying to sidestep all responsibility for these people. We should be pressing, aggressively, for prompt action by the governments concerned, either to return these people to some nearby islands or to provide them the homes and livelihood once promised them on Mauritius.

THE MEANS BECOMES THE END

Mr. Chairman, we still have an opportunity to turn back from our base expansion program by deferring further expenditures until diplomacy has been tried.

The recent disclosures about the origins of this base only serve to strengthen the case against construction.

As the Washington Post put it in a September 11 editorial:

The dubious case for planting an American base and fleet in the Indian Ocean has been rendered practically indefensible by disclosure of how the site got to be the "uninhabited"—and therefore politically uncomplicated—place which its United States Government sponsors repeatedly proclaimed it to be.

Mr. Chairman, Diego Garcia has a symbolic importance in the context of our foreign policy objectives far beyond the immediate issue of expanding a naval base to accommodate carrier task forces.

The military expansionists in our Defense and State Departments push on inexorably like a giant bulldozer, oblivious to diplomatic options, oblivious to violations of human rights, oblivious to the strong objections of nations friendly to us, oblivious to the clear risk of inciting a new superpower arms competition in a comparatively stable area of the world and also oblivious to the repeatedly expressed directives of the Congress.

What happens is the means become the end and military expansionism in effect assumes command of our foreign policy with diplomacy in the role of ex post facto rationalization.

This, Mr. Chairman, I believe is the true lesson and portent of Diego Garcia.

[The prepared statement of Senator John C. Culver follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN C. CULVER, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF IOWA

I appreciate and welcome this invitation to appear before this distinguished subcommittee to discuss the matter of Diego Garcia, and in particular the treatment given the former inhabitants of that small atoll in the Indian Ocean.

I have joined with many of my colleagues in the Senate to oppose construction of a major U.S. military installation on Diego Garcia. The arguments we have stated previously have been strengthened, in my judgment, by the disclosure-recent weeks.

When this issue was considered by the Senate in July, under provisions of law making approval of the base expansion contingent upon Presidential certification of necessity and Congressional acceptance, we argued as follows:

1. Diplomacy should be tried first. Specifically, the United States should seek discussions with the Soviet Union on mutual naval arms limitations in the Indian Ocean.

Inexplicably, no approach to the Russians on this subject had been made since 1971. This fact was admitted last year in testimony before Congressman Hamilton's subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, and again repeated before the Senate Armed Services Committee this year. No effort was made in the intervening months to try this diplomatic approach, despite the Senate Armed Services Committee's specific request.

When other Senators and I raised this matter with Soviet officials during interparliamentary meetings in Moscow in July, we were given reason to believe that the Soviet union {sic: Union} might respond favorably to an American initiative to seek means of reducing tension in the Indian Ocean. Senators Hart of Colorado, Leahy of Vermont, and I offered the specific suggestion of seeking a bilateral understanding to limit ship-day deployments in that region.

Despite those indications and other Congressional urgings for negotiations, the State Department rejected the suggestion and relied instead on the old bargaining chip argument—that we should build our base first, and then talk about talking.

We are still at an impasse on negotiations. Nothing is being done to avert a costly superpower arms race in the Indian Ocean, which according to defense analysts at the Brookings Institution could lead to a 3-ocean U.S. Navy, at a cost of \$5 billion to \$8 billion in new procurement and \$800 million per year in increased operating costs.

Surely diplomacy should be tried before we are caught up in such an arms race.

2. Our second major argument, Mr. Chairman, was that the proposed Diego Garcia base was not necessary or urgent for military reasons at the present time, thus allowing an opportunity for negotiations.

Without going into elaborate detail, the simple fact is that—notwithstanding increased Soviet naval presence and the limited facilities at Berbera, the United States can easily deploy vastly superior firepower. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James Noyes so admitted to this Subcommittee on June 5. The fact is undeniable because we have giant aircraft carriers and the USSR at present has none. The U.S. Enterprise {sic: U.S.S. Enterprise}, for example, carries over 60 planes, many with an effective radius of over 700 miles. The Russians cannot match that kind of firepower.

And whether or not we build a base at Diego Garcia, we can still maintain tactical military superiority in the Indian Ocean.

3. Our third argument was that the proposed base expansion ran the risk of alienating the nations along the Indian Ocean littoral, which have been vocal and adamant against this base. No nation of the area had gone on record favoring such a U.S. base. On the contrary, all have supported repeated United Nations efforts in the so-called Zone of Peace resolutions to forestall great power military rivalry in the Indian Ocean.

We believe that proceeding with base expansion, in the face of such opposition and without having made a good faith effort at negotiations, might well jeopardize U.S. policy in that area. We seek friendly relations with those countries. American ships currently have access to some 36 ports for refueling.

If we proceed in arrogant disregard of the views of those nations, we may well find that access denied, particularly when it might be most needed.

Already we are suffering from a diplomatic backlash as a result of the Senate's vote permitting a go-ahead on Diego Garcia construction.

Somalia, which had been receptive to the suggestion of a U.S. naval port visit, perhaps as a way of reducing its current dependence on the Soviet Union, deferred any scheduling of such a visit because the atmosphere after the debate earlier this summer was not conducive to a friendly visit.

Only last week, delegates to the British Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, meeting in New Delhi, criticized the U.S. base expansion plan. According to the Baltimore Sun, "The opening day (of the Conference) devoted all its working sessions to discussion of the tension that is being generated because of the American decision to go ahead, in spite of opposition from all littoral and hinterland countries." The headline read: "United States Draws Fire on New Naval Base."

Mr. Chairman, this backlash was predictable and avoidable. We can still recoup some of our standing if we proceed affirmatively to seek mutual arms

limitations, and especially if we defer expansion for a few months until diplomacy has been tried, which would possibly obviate the need for the base.

In the meantime, we face renewed criticism because of disclosures about the acquisition of base rights on Diego Garcia.

Early in September, the Washington Post's African correspondent, David Ottaway, visited Mauritius and discovered a colony of former residents of Diego Garcia who are now living in what he called "abject poverty." He also revealed that these people had been forced to move from their homes in order to make way for the planned U.S. base, and were then not provided promised assistance for relocation and reestablishment.

No witness in any of the 1974 or 1975 appearances before Congress mentioned that there had been inhabitants living on the island, some for generations.

In fact, Congressman Hamilton's Subcommittee was told just the opposite last year, when a State Department witness testified on March 6:

"... the nature of the island itself, which is a rather small piece of land, is also fortuitous in that it has no local population whatsoever so we have a minimal degree of the sort of political problems that are sometimes associated with establishing a facility of this sort."

The only other references were to Diego Garcia as "uninhabited." My staff went back and discovered obscure references in classified documents given to Congress in the early 1970's, when people were living there, but even these called the residents "rotating contract personnel," thus clearly implying only temporary residence.

Mr. Chairman, that testimony was either based on ignorance or was deliberately misleading. In either case, the Congress was denied full and accurate information about this major military initiative.

When the Pentagon proved slow to provide full details on the eviction of the former inhabitants of Diego Garcia, I introduced an amendment, adopted by the Senate, requiring a full report.

Pending disposition of that amendment in conference, the State and Defense Departments provided, on October 10, a 9-page "Report on the Resettlement of Inhabitants of the Chagos Archipelago." This report was apparently intended to respond to the Congressional demand for background information.

Mr. Chairman, I would request that a copy of this report be included in the hearing record at this point.

Mr. Chairman, this report generally confirms the press reports which have come out in recent weeks and reveals that the whole base acquisition and the accompanying depopulation of Diego Garcia was tarnished by secret agreements withheld from the appropriate committees of the Congress.

In barest outline, the facts are these:

In 1964, approximately 1,000 people lived in the Chagos Archipelago, of whom nearly 500 were on Diego Garcia, where they were engaged in the production of copra and other coconut products.

Of these people on Diego Garcia, about half were considered "ilois"—that is, those native or otherwise closely oriented to the islands rather than to Mauritius or the Seychelles.

In 1966, the United States and the United Kingdom signed an executive agreement granting American military base rights for 50 years.

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The State Department report washes its hands of this problem and places all responsibility for the people on the United Kingdom. Whether or not that may be true in a legal sense, I believe that we cannot so lightly dismiss America's role and responsibility in these events.

Simply put, these people were evicted from their homes only when and because the United States wanted to build a military base.

We add nothing to our moral stature as a nation by trying to sidestep all responsibility for these people. We should be pressing, aggressively, for prompt action by the governments concerned, either to return these people to some nearby island or to provide them the homes and livelihood once promised them on Mauritius.

Mr. Chairman, we still have an opportunity to turn back from our base expansion program by deferring further expenditures {sic: expenditures} until diplomacy has been tried.

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What happens is the means become the end and military expansionism, in effect, assumes command of our foreign policy with diplomacy in the role of ex post facto rationalization.

This is the true lesson and portent of Diego Garcia.

Mr. Hamilton. Thank you very much, Senator Culver. I want to express my appreciation to you for the work that you have done in making known the facts with regard to treatment of the islanders who formerly inhabited Diego Garcia. I think you have performed a real service, not only to the Congress of the United States but to the Nation. We deeply appreciate your testimony this afternoon.

I want to assure you that the subcommittee is going to pursue the treatment of these islanders, which is the purpose of our session this afternoon. We are doing this in large measure because of the initiative you have taken in making known these facts, Senator.

Senator Culver. Thank you.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Winn?

1966 PUBLIC AGREEMENT

Mr. Winn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator, I too appreciate your bringing this to the attention of the committee again.

On page 3, your second paragraph, you refer to a 1966 agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom. Do you have a copy of that? Or do we have that in our record?

Senator Culver. The public agreement? I have a copy. I believe we can provide that for the record. I will be happy to do that.

Mr. Hamilton. Without objection we will make it a part of the record at this point.

[The information referred to follows:]

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Availability of Certain Indian Ocean Islands for Defense Purposes
Agreement Effected by Exchange of Notes
Signed at London December 30, 1966:
Entered into Force December 30, 1966

The American Ambassador
to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
30 December 1966

Sir, I have the honor to refer to recent discussion between representatives of the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning the availability, for the defense purposes of both Governments as they may arise, of the islands of Diego Garcia and the remainder of the Chagos Archipelago, and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches constituting the British Indian Ocean Territory, hereinafter referred to as "the Territory". The United States Government has now authorized me to propose an Agreement in the following terms:

- (1) The Territory shall remain under United Kingdom sovereignty.
- (2) Subject to the provisions set out below the islands shall be available to meet the needs of both Governments for defense. In order to ensure that the respective United States and United Kingdom defense activities in the islands are correlated in an orderly fashion:
 - (a) In the case of the initial United States requirement for use of a particular island the appropriate governmental authorities shall consult with respect to the time required by the United Kingdom authorities for taking those administrative measures that may be necessary to enable any such defense requirement to be met.
 - (b) Before either Government proceeds to construct or install any facility in the Territory, both Governments shall first approve in principle the requirement for that facility, and the appropriate administrative authorities of the two Governments shall reach mutually satisfactory arrangements concerning specific areas and technical requirements for respective defense purposes.
 - (c) The procedure described in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) shall not be applicable in emergency circumstances requiring temporary use of an island or part of an island not in use at that time for defense purposes provided that measures to ensure the welfare of the inhabitants are taken to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of the Territory. Each Government shall notify the other promptly of any emergency requirements and consultation prior to such use by the United States Government shall be undertaken as soon as possible.
- (3) The United Kingdom Government reserves the right to permit the use by third countries of British-financed defense facilities, but shall where appropriate consult with the United States Government before granting such permission. Use by a third country of United States or jointly-financed facilities shall be subject to agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the United States Government.
- (4) The required sites shall be made available to the United States authorities without charge.
- (5) Each Government shall normally bear the cost of site preparation, construction, maintenance, and operation for any facilities developed to meet its own requirements. Within their capacities, such facilities shall be available for use by the forces of the other Government under service-level arrangements.

However, there may be certain cases where joint financing should be considered, and in these cases the two Governments shall consult together.

(6) Commercial aircraft shall not be authorized to use military airfields in the Territory. However, the United Kingdom Government reserves the right to permit the use in exceptional circumstances of such airfields, following consultation with the authorities operating the airfields concerned, under such terms or conditions as may be defined by the two Governments.

(7) For its defense purposes on the islands, the United States Government may freely select United States contractors and the sources of equipment, material, supplies, or personnel, except that—

(a) the United States Government and United States contractors shall make use of workers from Mauritius and Seychelles to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with United States policies, requirements and schedules; and

(b) the appropriate administrative authorities of the two Governments shall consult before contractors or workers from a third country are introduced.

(8) The exemption from charges in the nature of customs duties and other taxes in respect of goods, supplies and equipment brought to the Territory in connection with the purposes of this Agreement by or on behalf of the United States Government, United States contractors, members of the United States Forces, contractor personnel or dependents, and the exemption from taxation of certain persons serving or employed in the Territory in connection with those purposes, shall be such exemption as is set out in Annex I to this Note.

(9) The arrangements regarding the exercise of criminal jurisdiction and claims shall be those set out in Annex II to this Note.

(10) For the purpose of this Agreement:

(a) “Contractor personnel” means employees of a United States contractor who are not ordinarily resident in the Territory and who are there solely for the purpose of this Agreement;

(b) “Dependents” means the spouse and children under 21 years of age of a person in relation to whom it is used; and, if they are dependent upon him for their support, the parents and children over 21 years of age of that person;

(c) “Members of the United States Forces” means (i) military members of the United States Forces on active duty; (ii) civilian personnel accompanying the United States Forces and in their employ who are not ordinarily resident in the Territory and who are there solely for the purpose of this Agreement; and (iii) dependents of the persons described in (i) and (ii) above;

(d) “United States authorities” means the authority or authorities from time to time authorized or designated by the United States Government for the purpose of exercising the powers in relation to which the expression is used;

(e) “United States contractor” means any person, body or corporation ordinarily resident in the United States of America, that, by virtue of a contract with the United States Government, is in the Territory {sic: Territory} for the purposes of this Agreement, and includes a sub-contractor;

(f) “United States Forces” means the lands {sic: plural}, sea and air armed services of the United States, including the Coast Guard.

(11) The United States Government and the United Kingdom Government contemplate that the islands shall remain available to meet the possible defense needs of the two Governments for an indefinitely long period. Accordingly, after an initial period of 50 years this Agreement shall continue in force for a further period of twenty years unless, not more than two years before the end of the initial period, either Government shall have given notice of termination to the other, in which case this Agreement shall terminate two years from the date of such notice.

If the foregoing proposal is acceptable to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I have the honor to propose that this Note and its Annexes, together with your reply to that effect, shall constitute an Agreement between the two Governments which shall enter into force on the date of your reply.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

David Bruce,
American Ambassador.

The Right Honorable George Brown, M.P.,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Office,
Whitehall, London, S.W.I.

ANNEX I.—CUSTOMS DUTIES AND TAXATION

1. CUSTOMS DUTIES AND OTHER TAXES ON GOODS

(1) No import, excise, consumption or other tax, duty or impost shall be charged on:

- (a) material, equipment, supplies, or goods for use in the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the facilities which are consigned to or destined for the United States authorities or a United States contractor;
- (b) goods for use or consumption aboard United States public vessels or aircraft;
- (c) goods consigned to the United States authorities or to a United States contractor for the use of or for sale to military members of the United States Forces, or to other members of the United States Forces, or to those contractor personnel and their dependents who are not engaged in any business or occupation in the Territory;
- (d) the personal belongings or household effects for the personal use of persons referred to in subparagraph (c) above, including motor vehicles, provided that these accompany the owner or are imported either— (i) within a period beginning sixty days before and ending 120 days after the owner's arrival; or (ii) within a period of six months immediately following his arrival;
- (e) goods for consumption and goods (other than personal belongings and household effects) acquired after first arrival, including gifts, consigned to military members of the United States Forces, or to those other members of the United States Forces who are nationals of the United States and are not engaged in any business or occupation in the Territory, provided that such goods are: (i) of United States origin if the Commissioner so requires, and (ii) imported for the personal use of the recipient.

(2) No export tax shall be charged on the material, equipment, supplies or goods mentioned in paragraph (1) in the event of reshipment from the Territory.

(3) Article 1 of this Annex shall apply notwithstanding that the material, equipment, supplies or goods pass through other parts of the Territory en route to or from a site.

(4) The United States authorities shall do all in their power to prevent any abuse of customs privileges and shall take administrative measures, which shall be mutually agreed upon between the appropriate authorities of the United States and the Territory, to prevent the disposal, whether by resale or otherwise, of goods which are used or sold under paragraph (1)(c), or imported under paragraph (1)(d) or (1)(e), of Article 1 of this Annex, to persons not entitled to buy goods pursuant to paragraph (1)(c), or not entitled to free importation under paragraph (1)(d) or (1)(e). There shall be cooperation between the United States authorities and the Commissioner to this end, both in prevention and in investigation of cases of abuse.

2. MOTOR VEHICLE TAXES

No tax or fee shall be payable in respect of registration or licensing for use for the purposes of this Agreement in the Territory of motor vehicles belonging to the United States Government or United States contractors.

3. TAXATION

(1) No members of the United States Forces, or those contractor personnel and their dependents who are nationals of the United States, serving or employed in the Territory in connection with the facilities shall be liable to pay income tax in the Territory except in respect of income derived from activities within the Territory other than such service or employment.

(2) No such person shall be liable to pay in the Territory any poll tax or similar tax on his person, or any tax on ownership or use of property which is situated outside the Territory or situated within the Territory solely by reason of such person's presence there in connection with activities under this Agreement.

(3) No United States contractor shall be liable to pay income tax in the Territory in respect of any income derived under a contract made in the United States in connection with the purposes of this Agreement, or any tax in the nature of license in respect of any service or work for the United States Government in connection with the purposes of this Agreement.

ANNEX II—JURISDICTION AND CLAIMS

1.(a) Subject to the provisions of sub-paragraphs (b) to (l) of this paragraph,

(i) the military authorities of the United States shall have the right to exercise within the Territory all criminal and disciplinary jurisdiction conferred on them by United States law over all persons subject to the military law of the United States; and

(ii) the authorities of the Territory shall have jurisdiction over the members of the United States Forces with respect to offenses committed within the Territory and punishable by the law in force there.

(b)(i) The military authorities of the United States shall have the right to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over persons subject to the military law of the United States with respect to offenses, including offenses relating to security, punishable by the law of the United States but not by the law in force in the Territory.

(ii) The authorities of the Territory shall have the right to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over members of the United States Forces with respect to offenses, including offenses relating to security, punishable by the law in force in the Territory but not by the law of the United States.

(iii) For the purposes of sub-paragraphs (b) and (c), an offense relating to official secrets or secrets relating to national defense.

(c) In cases where the right to exercise jurisdiction is concurrent the following rules shall apply:

(i) The military authorities of the United States shall have the primary right to exercise jurisdiction over a member of the United States Forces in relation to (aa) offenses solely against the property or security of the United States or offenses solely against the person or property of another member of the United States Forces; and (bb) offenses arising out of any act or omission done in the performance of official duty.

(ii) In the case of any other offense the authorities of the Territory shall have the primary right to exercise jurisdiction.

(iii) If the authorities having the primary right decide not to exercise jurisdiction, they shall notify the other authorities as soon as practicable. The United States authorities shall give sympathetic consideration to a request from the authorities of the Territory for a waiver of their primary right in cases where the authorities of the Territory consider such waiver to be of particular importance. The authorities of the Territory {sic: Territory} will waive, upon request, their primary right to exercise jurisdiction under this paragraph, except where they in their discretion determine and notify the United States authorities that it is of particular importance that such jurisdiction be not waived.

(d) The foregoing provisions of this paragraph shall not imply any right for the military authorities of the United States to exercise jurisdiction over persons who belong to, or are ordinarily resident in, the Territory, or who are British subjects or Commonwealth citizens or British protected persons, unless they are military members of the United States Forces.

(e)(i) To the extent authorized by law, the authorities of the Territory and the military authorities of the United States shall assist each other in the service of process and in the arrest of members of the United States Forces in the Territory and in handing them over to the authorities which are to exercise jurisdiction in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph.

(ii) The authorities of the Territory shall notify promptly the military authorities of the United States of the arrest of any member of the United States Forces.

(iii) Unless otherwise agreed, the custody of an accused member of the United States Forces over whom the authorities of the Territory are to exercise jurisdiction shall, if he is in the hands of the United States authorities, remain with the United States authorities until he is charged. In cases where the United States authorities may have the responsibility for custody pending the completion of judicial proceedings, the United States authorities

shall, upon request, make such a person immediately available to the authorities of the Territory for purposes of investigation and trial and shall give full consideration to any special views of such authorities as to the way in which custody should be maintained.

(f)(i) To the extent authorized by law, the authorities of the Territory and of the United States shall assist each other in the carrying out of all necessary investigations into offenses, in providing for the attendance of witnesses and in the collection and production of evidence, including the seizure and, in proper cases, the handing over of objects connected with an offense. The handing over of such objects may, however, be made subject to their return within the time specified by the authorities delivering them.

(ii) The authorities of the Territory and of the United States shall notify one another of the disposition of all cases in which there are concurrent rights to exercise jurisdiction.

(g) A death sentence shall not be carried out in the Territory by the military authorities of the United States.

(h) Where an accused has been tried in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph and has been acquitted or has been convicted and is serving, or has served, his sentence or has been pardoned, he may not be tried again for the same offense within the Territory. Nothing in this paragraph shall, however, prevent the military authorities of the United States from trying a military member of the United States Forces for any violation of rules of discipline arising from an act or omission which constituted an offense for which he was tried by the authorities of the Territory.

(i) Whenever a member of the United States Forces is prosecuted by the authorities of the Territory he shall be entitled

(i) to a prompt and speedy trial;

(ii) to be informed in advance of trial of the specific charge or charges made against him;

(iii) to be confronted with the witnesses against him;

(iv) to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor if they are within the jurisdiction of the Territory;

(v) to have legal representation of his own choice for his defense or to have free or assisted legal representation under the conditions prevailing for the time being in the Territory;

(vi) if he considers it necessary, to have the services of a competent interpreter; and

(vii) to communicate with a representative of the United States and, when the rules of the court permit, to have such a representative present at his trial which shall be public except when the court decrees otherwise in accordance with the law in force in the Territory.

(j) Where a member of the United States Forces is tried by the military authorities of the United States for an offense committed outside the areas used by the United States or involving a person, or the property of a person, other than a member of the United States Forces, the aggrieved party and representatives of the Territory and of the aggrieved party may attend the trial proceedings except where this would be inconsistent with the rules of the court.

(k) A certificate of the appropriate United States commanding officer that an offense arose out of an act of omission done in the performance of official duty shall be conclusive, but the commanding officer shall give consideration to any representation made by the authorities of the Territory.

(l) Regularly constituted military units or formations of the United States Forces shall have the right to police the areas used by the United States. The military police of the United States Forces may take all appropriate measures to ensure the maintenance of order and security within these areas.

2.(a) The Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Kingdom respectively waive all claims against the other of them—

(i) for {sic: For} damage to any property owned by it and used by its land, sea or air armed services if such damage— (aa) was caused by a member of the armed services or by an employee of a Department with responsibility for the armed services of either Government in the execution of his duties or (bb) arose from the use of any vehicle, vessel or aircraft owned by either Government and used by its armed services provided either that the vehicle, vessel or aircraft causing the damage was being used in connection with official duties, or the damage was caused to property being so used.

(ii) For injury or death suffered by any member of its armed services while such member was engaged in the performance of his official duties.

(iii) For the purpose of this paragraph "owned" in the case of a vessel includes a vessel on bare boat charter, a vessel requisitioned on bare boat terms and a vessel seized in prize (except to the extent that the risk of loss or liability is borne by some person other than either Government).

(b)(i) The United States Government shall, in consultation with the Government of the Territory, take all reasonable precautions against possible danger and damage resulting from operations under this Agreement.

(ii) The United States Government agrees to pay just and reasonable compensation, which shall be determined in accordance with the measure of damage prescribed by the law of the Territory, in settlement of civil claims (other than contractual claims) arising out of acts or omissions of members of the United States Forces done in the performance of official duty or out of any other act or omission or occurrence for which the United States Forces are legally responsible.

(iii) Any such claim presented to the United States Government shall be processed and settled in accordance with the applicable provision of United States law.

The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
to the American Ambassador

Foreign Office,
London S.W.I.

From the Minister of State

30 December, 1966.

Your Excellency, I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Note No. 25 of the 30th of December, 1966, which reads as follows:

30 December, 1966.

Sir, I have the honor to refer to recent discussion between representatives of the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning the availability, for the defense purposes of both Governments as they may arise, of the islands of Diego Garcia and the remainder of the Chagos Archipelago, and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches constituting the British Indian Ocean Territory, hereinafter referred to as "the Territory". The United States Government has now authorized me to propose an Agreement in the following terms:

(1) The Territory shall remain under United Kingdom sovereignty.

(2) Subject to the provisions set out below the islands shall be available to meet the needs of both Governments for defense. In order to ensure that the respective United States and United Kingdom defense activities in the islands are correlated in an orderly fashion:

(a) In the case of the initial United States requirement for use of a particular island the appropriate governmental authorities shall consult with respect to the time required by the United Kingdom authorities for taking those administrative measures that may be necessary to enable any such defense requirement to be met.

(b) Before either Government proceeds to construct or install any facility in the Territory, both Governments shall first approve in principle the requirement for that facility, and the appropriate administrative authorities of the two Governments shall reach mutually satisfactory arrangements concerning specific areas and technical requirements for respective defense purposes.

(c) The procedure in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) shall not be applicable in emergency circumstances requiring temporary use of an island or part of an island not in use at that time for defense purposes provided that measures to ensure the welfare of the inhabitants are taken to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of the Territory. Each Government shall notify the other promptly of any emergency requirements and consultation prior to such use by the United States Government shall be undertaken as soon as possible.

(3) The United Kingdom Government reserves the right to permit the use by third countries of British-financed defense facilities, but shall where appropriate consult with the United States Government before granting such permission. Use by a third country of United States or jointly-financed facilities shall be subject to agreement between the United Kingdom Government and the United States Government.

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- (4) The required sites shall be made available to the United States authorities without charge.
- (5) Each Government shall normally bear the cost of site preparation, construction, maintenance, and operation for any facilities developed to meet its own requirements. Within their capacities, such facilities shall be available for use by the forces of the other Government under service-level arrangements. However, there may be certain cases where joint financing should be considered, and in these cases the two Governments shall consult together.
- (6) Commercial aircraft shall not be authorized to use military airfields in the Territory. However, the United Kingdom Government reserves the right to permit the use in exceptional circumstances of such airfields, following consultation with the authorities operating the airfields concerned, under such terms or conditions as may be defined by the two Governments.
- (7) For its defense purposes on the islands, the United States Government may freely select United States contractors and the sources of equipment, material, supplies, or personnel, except that—
- (a) the United States Government and United States contractors shall make use of workers from Mauritius and Seychelles to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with United States policies, requirements and schedules; and
- (b) the appropriate administrative authorities of the two Governments shall consult before contractors or workers from a third country are introduced.
- (8) The exemption from charges in the nature of customs duties and other taxes in respect to goods, supplies and equipment brought to the Territory in connection with the purposes of this Agreement by or on behalf of the United States Government, United States contractors, members of the United States Forces, contractor personnel or dependents, and the exemption from taxation of certain persons serving or employed in the Territory in connection with those purposes, shall be such exemption as is set out in Annex I [1] to this Note.
- (9) The arrangements regarding the exercise of criminal jurisdiction and claims shall be those set out in Annex II [2] to this Note.
- (10) For the purpose of this Agreement:
- (a) “Contractor personnel” means employees of a United States contractor who are not ordinarily resident in the Territory and who are there solely for the purposes of this Agreement;
- (b) “Dependents” means the spouse and children under 21 years of age of a person in relation to whom it is used; and, if they are dependent upon him for their support, the parents and children over 21 years of age of that person;
- (c) “Members of the United States Forces” means—
- (i) military members of the United States Forces on active duty;
- (ii) civilian personnel accompanying the United States Forces and in their employ who are not ordinarily resident in the Territory and who are there solely for the purpose of this Agreement; and
- (iii) dependents of the persons described in (i) and (ii) above;
- (d) “United States authorities” means the authority or authorities from time to time authorized or designated by the United States Government for the purpose of exercising the powers in relation to which the expression is used;
- (e) “United States contractor” means any person, body or corporation ordinarily resident in the United States of America, that, by virtue of a contract with the United States Government, is in the Territory for the purposes of this Agreement, and includes a sub-contractor;
- (f) “United States Forces” means the land, sea and air armed services of the United States, including the Coast Guard.
- (11) The United States Government and the United Kingdom Government contemplate that the islands shall remain available to meet the possible defense needs of the two Governments for an indefinitely long period. Accordingly, after an initial period of 50 years this Agreement shall continue in force for a further period of twenty years unless, not more than two years before the end of the initial period, either Government shall have given notice of termination to the other. In which case this Agreement shall terminate two years from the date of such notice.

If the foregoing proposal is acceptable to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. I have the honor to propose that this Note and its Annexes, together with your reply to that effect, shall constitute an Agreement between the two Governments which shall enter into force on the date of your reply.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

David Bruce,
American Ambassador.

The Right Honorable George Brown, M.P.,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.I.

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the foregoing proposal is acceptable to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, who therefore agree that Your Excellency's Note, together with the Annexes thereto and this reply, shall constitute an Agreement between the two Governments which shall enter into force on this day's date.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration,

Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

Chalfont,
(For the Secretary of State).

His Excellency,
The Honourable David K. E. Bruce, C.B.E.

PUBLIC VERSUS SECRET AGREEMENT

Mr. Winn. I am particularly interested in the fourth paragraph where you quote from that document, saying that the required site shall be made available to the U.S. authorities without charge.

Then you go down a little further and say that we have paid some \$9 million in surcharge that had already been waived by 1969.

Senator Culver. Congressman Winn, we had on the one hand the public agreement that I referred to, where it is expressly stated that these sites would be made available without charge to the United States.

Then in addition there were secret annexes to that agreement— which we have an unfortunate familiarity with in other contexts— where in fact arrangements were entered into whereby the United States agreed to pay up to \$14 million by discounting the R. & D. on the Polaris missile system and \$9 million of that had in fact actually been expended between 1966 and 1969 when this highly selective and vague and quiet notice was slipped under the door to some selected committees who were very busy and, I might add, to only a few members, as far as we can ascertain.

[The following was submitted for the record:]

ACCRUED R. & D. SURCHARGES AGAINST THE POLARIS SALES AGREEMENT

Fiscal years :	Dollars
1964	224, 000
1965	1, 819, 000
1966	1, 724, 000
1967	1, 984, 000
1968	3, 621, 000
1969	1, 031, 000
1970	251, 000
1971	140, 000
1972	188, 000
1973	177, 000
1974	155, 000
1975	209, 000
July 1975	19, 000
Total	11, 542, 000

Mr. Winn. To a few members of those two committees?

Senator Culver. And in a vague letter.

EVIDENCES OF A COVERUP

Mr. Winn. I think that is quite interesting. I am sure this committee will want to look into that a little further because in the State Department report you cited it mentions only the House Appropriations and the Senate Foreign Relations Committees as recipients of this information.

Senator Culver. Yes, sir. As far as I have been able to ascertain, Congressman Winn, in the case of the Senate it may be well to explore the distribution that was made with regard to that one vague letter that was transmitted. As far as I know that went only to the chairman of the particular subcommittee involved on the Senate side. I can't attest for any additional distribution. Perhaps that is something we could explore with department witnesses. To my knowledge it did not go any farther than that.

Mr. Winn. I guess the contention was that the less we knew, the better off they were.

Senator Culver. Yes, sir. I think this whole tragic sordid tale is replete with evidences of a coverup.

Mr. Winn. Do you know if there are any people over there now who have not been moved?

Senator Culver. I understand they have all been moved, Congressman, yes, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. If I may interrupt, Mr. Winn, I think we have now several votes on the House floor. I think in order not to detain the Senator what we ought to try to do is to ask any questions we might have of the Senator fairly quickly. I don't want to interrupt you.

Mr. Winn. That is fine.

Mr. Hamilton. Otherwise I think he would be detained for a series of three or four votes, which may last a half-hour or 45 minutes or so.

Are there any other questions for Senator Culver?

TWO INDEPENDENT ISSUES

Mr. du Pont. I would just make one comment, not so much a question. I think it is very important that this committee keep separate the two questions we are talking about. There are very definite defense questions that ought to be developed. There are similarly very definite questions about what happened to the people who lived there. I don't think those two issues fit. They ought to be considered independently.

Senator Culver. I think it is absolutely appropriate to address the whole question as you suggest, Congressman du Pont, on the merits. I think if you explore that very carefully I have very little question as to how you will come out.

DISREGARD OF FOREIGN POLICY

Secondarily, I also think that one of the things that should be of particular interest to this committee, because it is the Foreign Affairs Committee {sic: Committee} of the House of Representatives, is why there has been this arrogant disregard of the foreign policy consequences and implications of going ahead with this base expansion at a time when in every year since 1971 the United Nations resolutions have called for a zone of peace over there.

Even Australia opposes this base. Last week the British Commonwealth Conference met and spent a whole day of business sessions on opening day criticizing this decision by the Senate last July.

We have also had repeated urgings by the Congress of our own State Department, which supposedly has something to do with foreign policy, of trying to initiate diplomatic discussions. If we make that formal overture and the Soviet Union is unresponsive, uncooperative, is not engaging in good-faith negotiations on that, then I think we have clearly established where the burden of responsibility lies and in the Soviet court.

We can also demonstrate to our allies that we have made a good-faith effort to avoid the dangers of a superpower arms race escalation in that area.

Supposedly this is the age of detente. We are in strategic arms limitation talks. We have the consequences and backlash here which I think are so adverse to our national security interest in terms of access to some 36 ports in the area right now, some of which we used during the Middle East war.

Mr. Hamilton. Congressman Solarz?

Thank you very much, Senator, for your appearance. We appreciate it.

The subcommittee will stand in recess until we complete this series of votes.

[A recess was taken.]

Mr. Hamilton. The subcommittee will resume its hearing.

Gentlemen, you may proceed with your statements.

Mr. Churchill. do you want to begin?

Statement of George T. Churchill, Director, Office of International Security Operations, Department of State

Mr. Churchill. Yes, thank you, Mr. Congressman.

I am pleased to be here on this subject. I understand our report will stand as our basic submission, but I would like to make a few supplemental remarks if it would be helpful.

BRITISH MAJOR SOURCE OF REPORT

In preparing the report my colleagues and I were struck by the paucity of information in our files relating to the inhabitants of Diego Garcia and the other islands of Chagos Archipelago. Most of the information we did find came from British sources. In piecing together the history of resettlement it was necessary to turn again to the British to fill in many of the details on the numbers of persons involved, their status and the social circumstances of their lives.

We have provided in the report as comprehensive a picture as we were able to do with the material available to us. However, in the absence of any real sociological or anthropological study of the islands before their inclusion in the British Indian Ocean Territory, there will always remain the possibility of differing interpretations of the way of life in the Chagos group.

INHABITANTS OF DIEGO GARCIA

The material we were able to unearth supports the view that with very few exceptions the inhabitants of Diego Garcia and the other Chagos islands were contract laborers and their families whose livelihood depended on the coconut plantations and whose ties to the island were tenuous. While it is true that contract laborers elsewhere, including Hawaii, have established or become part of a true indigenous culture there is little evidence that such a process had begun in the Chagos Archipelago.

In 1964 no more than 3 men and 17 women were reported as having permanent homes on the island. The evidence also suggests that life on the island plantations was far from idyllic. The cash wage was low. The management was paternalistic at best and at its worst it was severely authoritarian.

The settlements on Diego Garcia appear to have been something more than work camps but considerably less than free indigenous communities. Everyone worked for the company, lived in a company house, was issued rations and bought his few rations at the company store. The company sometimes sponsored corn-growing or pig-raising on a sharecropping basis and often engaged women and children in cottage industries making twine, brooms, and so forth from byproducts of the coconut industry.

A travel book entitled "Limuria" by Robert Scott gives a somewhat impressionistic account of life in the lesser dependencies of Mauritius, apparently in the 1950's. Scott sums up his economic observations with the remark that "the islands have nothing but coconut oil to offer which could sustain their populations. Their sole skills and the rhythm of the islanders' lives are dictated and limited by the extraction of coconut. All other activities are subsidiary, a means of providing jam but not bread and butter and must so remain."

ESTABLISHING A COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY

When the British Indian Ocean territory was established it was recognized that the coconut plantations would have to be closed if any of the islands were to be used for military purposes. Obviously if the plantations were closed the workers would have no livelihood on the islands and would have to seek employment elsewhere.

The United States-United Kingdom agreement to establish a joint communications facility on Diego Garcia set this train of events in motion.

BRITISH SOVEREIGNTY OVER ISLAND

In the files we found no lack of concern for the inhabitants of the Chagos Islands. The British Government, with whom the responsibility for these people lay, assured us they were prepared to make appropriate arrangements for their resettlement including an assumption of compensation costs. It appeared in short that humane resettlement of the plantation workers was a feasible undertaking.

We emphasize in our report that the British retained full sovereignty over the islands and were responsible for administrative arrangements, including resettlement. Almost all the contract laborers and their families were Mauritian citizens by birth or by special Mauritian nationality provisions. These statements are not merely an

exercise in “passing the buck.” As sovereign power in the BIOT Her Majesty’s Government found it in the national interest to agree to a joint communications facility on Diego Garcia and to assume full responsibility for subsequent arrangements to close the plantations and move the workers.

RESETTLEMENT OPERATION

As for the Mauritian role, there are definite limits to the influence any government may have on another sovereign government regarding its responsibilities toward its own citizens.

Our research into the files reveals that the details of the resettlement operation were observed and reported by our people in the field. There were hitches. A ship breakdown in 1971 delayed the move and caused food supplies on Diego Garcia to run low, a shortage that was remedied by our Seabee contingent.

In 1972 it appeared that the Mauritian Government had not yet put into effect its relocation plan for the Chagos workers, partly because it was politically difficult to favor this group over other unemployed and disadvantaged Mauritian citizens—Mauritian unemployment was running close to 20 percent at the time—and British financing although clearly in prospect was not yet available.

During the 1971-72 period we consulted with the British regarding the difficulties and delays in resettlement and were assured they were actively following the program and were negotiating with the Mauritian Government for a sizable compensation fund.

\$1.4 MILLION AGREEMENT

The United Kingdom and Mauritian Governments reached agreement in 1973 for \$1.4 million in relocation funds to cover 1,151 persons, an amount which seemed to us quite generous as it covered about 320 more people than were moved from the islands and provided about \$1,220 per person in a country with an average per capita income that was about \$265 in 1972.

Mauritian progress in disbursing these funds has been slow. According to recent reports the Mauritian Government has now accepted a British offer of technical advice in setting up a relocation program and is planning to establish the still unsettled workers on Agalega Island.

THE QUESTION OF U.S. CONCERN

Reviewing the resettlement process I conclude that our lack of involvement in the relocation of the workers did not result from a lack of human concern or an unawareness of the difficulties encountered but rather from an acknowledgement of the sovereignty and responsibility of the United Kingdom and Mauritian Governments regarding their territory and their citizens.

There has been some question as to when and in what form the existence of inhabitants of Diego Garcia was brought to the attention of Congress. I am going to ask Gary Sick to list the instances when the existence of these inhabitants was mentioned to the Congress. I believe you will agree there is no evidence here of any deliberate effort to conceal what was essentially a nonconcealable fact. That is the end of my statement.

Mr. Hamilton. Thank you, Mr. Churchill.

Commander Sick.

Statement of Comdr. Gary G. Sick, Country Director for the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Department of Defense

Commander Sick. Mr. Chairman, I was very pleased and privileged to be invited here today since I am one of the people who has been closely associated as much as anyone else with developments on Diego Garcia in the last couple of years.

CURRENT CONSTRUCTION ON DIEGO GARCIA

I was asked to make some comments about the current status of construction on Diego Garcia, what is going on there now, what is going on in the Indian Ocean. Then I will have some comments to make if you like about the congressional relationships that I have managed to dig up.

I have submitted for the record a detailed summary of what is going on currently as far as construction of Diego Garcia is concerned. I can summarize this for you very briefly. It is a point-by-point rundown of different aspects of construction projects.

Mr. Hamilton. That will be submitted in the record without objection.

[The following was submitted for the record:]

DIEGO GARCIA CURRENT PROGRAMING STATUS

Diego Garcia is operational as an austere communications facility. A request was included in the FY 1974 supplemental appropriations bill for \$29 million for construction of expanded facilities to support the occasional presence of Navy ships in the Indian Ocean. Congress deferred consideration of the program to FY 1975.

In the FY 1975 MCON Program Congress authorized \$14.802 million for the Navy and \$3.3 million for the Air Force for the expansion project but appropriated no funds. Both the Navy and the Air Force will be requested to absorb the fund shortage.

Congress has authorized \$13.8 million in the FY 1976 MCON Program for the remaining portion of the original \$29 million expansion project. There is no appropriation act as of this date. None of the construction authorized in FY 1975 has been started pending execution of the necessary agreement with the British Government. The Navy will request \$5.9 million in the FY 1978 MCON Program for the balance of the Diego Garcia construction program.

Tab A is a summary of authorization and appropriation actions. Tab B is a summary of the construction program.

Diego Garcia Construction Program— Programing Summary [Thousands of dollars]			
Fiscal year	Description	Authorization	Appropriation
Navy:			
1970	Naval facility (1st Incr)	9, 556	
1971	Naval communication facility (1st Incr)		5, 400
1972	Naval communication facility (2d Incr)	<u>4, 794</u>	<u>8, 950</u>
Subtotal		14, 350	14, 350
1973	Dredging	6, 100	6, 100
1975	Expansion of facilities (1st Incr)	14, 802	(1)
1976	Expansion of facilities	13, 800	(2) 13, 800
1978	Various facilities	(2) <u>05, 900</u>	(2) <u>05, 900</u>
Subtotal		54, 952	40, 150
Air Force:			
1975	Various facilities	<u>3, 300</u>	(2)
Total		58, 252	40, 150

(1) To be funded from available appropriations.

(2) Not yet approved.

**Diego Garcia Construction Program— Construction Status, Oct. 31, 1975
(Fiscal year, project, and appropriation amount)**

- 1971—Naval communications station (1st increment), \$5,400,000:
Communications facilities—Completed.
Personnel support facilities—Underway-complete August 1976.
Fuel system—Underway-complete December 1975.
Airfield—Completed.
Waterfront facility—Requirement canceled.
Utilities—Underway-complete December 1976.
- 1972—Naval communications station (2d increment), \$8,950,000:
Personnel support facilities—Underway-complete, July 1976.
Fueling system—Underway-complete, December 1975.
Airfield facilities—Underway-complete, December 1975.
Utilities, public works, and maintenance facilities—Underway-complete, December 1976.
- 1973—Dredging—Underway-complete, June 1976, \$6,100,000.
- 1974—None.
- 1975—Expansion of facilities, \$14,802,000:
POL facilities—February 1976 to April 1979.
Pier—June 1976 to February 1978.
Airfield pavement—November 1975 to April 1977.
Personnel support facilities—December 1975 to September 1976.
Powerplant and utilities—June 1976 to March 1979.
Air Force—Parking apron; POL storage; ammunition storage—November 1975 to April 1979, \$3,300,000.
- 1976—Expansion of facilities, \$13,800,000:
POL facilities—February 1976 to April 1979.
Airfield facilities—November 1975 to May 1978.
Personnel support facilities—March 1976 to November 1978.
Communication facilities—May 1977 to October 1978.
Supply facilities—October 1976 to February 1979.
Powerplant and supporting utilities—June 1976 to March 1979.
- 1977—None.
- 1978—Expansion of facilities, \$5,900,000:
Recreational facilities—July 1978 to March 1980.
Supply facilities—July 1978 to April 1980.
Land operational facilities—July 1978 to January 1980.
Airfield facilities—July 1978 to October 1979.
Maintenance facilities—July 1978 to December 1979.

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Commander Sick. All right, sir. The communications station that was previously funded—

Mr. Hamilton. Are you going to summarize this now?

Commander Sick. Yes, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. I don't see any reason to do that. Just go ahead with the rest of your statement.

Commander Sick. One point I should make clear about that statement is that no construction of the expanded facilities has begun yet on the island. There have been purchases and procurement and planning, but no groundbreaking, no actual activities on the island itself. Some of the project dates for commencement are in November of this year. That is contingent upon British approval of the agreement for the expanded facility on Diego Garcia. No activity will commence until that time, and if the British do not approve in November of this year construction will be delayed accordingly.

INDIAN OCEAN DEPLOYMENTS

In terms of deployment, as you are well aware, Mr. Chairman, we had a policy of more frequent, more regular, military deployments in the Indian Ocean. We have continued that. The U.S.S. Enterprise, with a group of ships, was there in January and February of this year. In the middle of this year the U.S.S. Reeves, a cruiser, was there with several other ships and stayed for several months. Within the last week the U.S.S. Midway entered the Indian Ocean with a group of ships and will spend some time in the Indian Ocean as part of our overall policy of periodic visits to the area. These are, of course, in addition to the three ships of the Middle East Force.

At the present time we have eight ships in the Indian Ocean, including the carrier Midway. According to my calculations, we have had deployments from outside the Indian Ocean approximately 33 percent of the time over the last year and a carrier present about 20 percent of the time.

POPULATION TRANSFERS

If you are interested I can go through what the Soviet Union has today and other aspects of the situation. I am not sure how much you want to get into that.

If not I will move with your permission to the area of the population transfers.

Mr. Hamilton. Yes, will you, please?

Commander Sick. I have made an attempt over the past few weeks to uncover as much information as possible. The files on Diego Garcia are simply voluminous. I have tried to go through as many of them as possible with respect to the population question and what has been referred to as an attempt to cover up the fact that there was a population there and that it was moved.

I have tried particularly to find out whether that was in fact the case because this was not the impression of those of us who worked very closely with the subject.

AUGUST 1974, THE BREAKING STORY

In going back, I discovered that the Diego Garcia story broke for the very first time in August of 1964 when the Washington Post published an article by Mr. Robert Estabrook. I found in the files a copy of an article which he wrote in November 1964 which mentions that "wherever possible, any indigenous population would be moved out with full compensation." This was a known fact from the very beginning. That was before any official mention of it was made and before there actually was a BIOT.

It is my impression that this continued to be reported in the press during the period when there was a population on the island.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S REQUEST

In 1969-70, a budgetary line item was introduced to the Congress by the administration asking for construction of a limited facility on Diego Garcia. At that time the usual form 1391 was submitted to

Congress to the appropriate committees, which explained the request for the line item and gave the details of it. In this case it included the Appropriations and Authorizations Committees of both House and the Senate.

On the explanation part of the form, it states in the first paragraph: "Diego Garcia is the most centrally located island in the Indian Ocean and is physically satisfactory to meet the mission requirements. Its present population consists of approximately 400 to 500 rotating contract personnel engaged in harvesting copra. Land titles have been acquired by the United Kingdom and use rights of the land have been acquired by the United States." This was submitted to those committees in 1969 and again to the Appropriations Committees in 1970 as part of the request.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION HEARINGS

Then in 1970 during one of the hearings before the Military Construction Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee a Navy witness volunteered in respect to this subject that, "The British have gone a little farther about removing the population from there now." This was not followed up. No further questions were asked.

Also in the hearing there was an insert in the record which talked about the financing of the BIOT, the U.S. role that was played, and announced that "The detachment of the BIOT from Mauritius and the Seychelles occasioned some costs to eliminate private ownership of land and property; for purchase of land, resettlement of local inhabitants, etc."

LAIRD'S LETTER OF FINANCIAL EXPLANATION

As you are aware, in 1969 there was the letter from then Defense Secretary Laird to Senator Symington at his request which explained the financing arrangements. The letter mentioned that there was a small migrant population on the island and in the minute that was attached to that in explanation it pointed out that the British responsibilities included those measures "necessary for modifying or terminating any economic activity then being pursued in the islands, resettling any inhabitants, and otherwise facilitating the availability of the islands for defense purposes."

A SENSITIVE SUBJECT

All of these were in executive sessions. The entire subject of Diego Garcia was considered classified at that time in response to British sensitivities about the discussion. Nothing was handled in open session.

However, when in 1974 there was a request in a supplemental budget—the first request—to expand the facilities at Diego Garcia, it was no longer considered a sensitive subject. Everything began to be discussed in the open for the first time.

NO NATIVE POPULATION

At that time, as part of the hearings that were going on. the Military Construction Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Com-

mittee met on March 8, 1974, and asked a Defense Department witness in open session about this question. I have some words here that were exchanged back and forth between them.

Admiral Marshall was asked about the British subjects that previously had lived on the island. He said, "I can't honestly answer that question. They were copra workers on a British possession." He doesn't know about their nationality. He said. "I have read the history of the island and generally you are correct," that is, that there was no native population there. He said. "Several countries have put people ashore there, a rather typical operation in the late 1700's, 1800's. The island population went from one country to another but there was no native population."

Mr. Davis said, "At the present time there is no civilian population and no civilian economy?"

"No, sir."

That is published in the open hearings of that period and is available.

STRATEGIC RATIONALE

I would like to make one point or leave one point with you as a result of this, which I believe is important: that the people who were working on this issue, at least in the 1974-75 time period, sincerely believed that this was a matter of public record and knowledge. It had been properly raised and discussed in the 1969-70 Congressional Review that in fact there were people still there on the islands when the question of resettlement was one of considerable importance.

The entire focus, not only in that period but in subsequent periods, has been on the strategic rationale for Diego Garcia : why do we need this, what is the strategic importance of it? It is quite clear that we focused on that element almost to the exclusion of everything else, and the statements which were made that Diego Garcia is uninhabited were considered to be simply statements of fact.

The station has been operational on the island since early 1978. There have been no people on the island except U.S. and British military personnel since 1971 and there was certainly no intent to conceal the fact that there had been people on the island previously.

That is all I have to say, sir.

UNITED STATES POSITION TOWARD RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. Hamilton. Thank you, Commander Sick.

Is it the position of our Government now, that we have no responsibility toward these islanders? Is that our position?

Mr. Churchill. We have no legal responsibility. We are concerned. We recently discussed the matter with the British. The British have discussed it with the Mauritian Government. We have expressed our concern.

Mr. Hamilton. It is our basic position that it is up to the British. Is that it?

Mr. Churchill. It is our basic position that these people originally were a British responsibility and are now a Mauritian responsibility.

Mr. Hamilton. We have no responsibility, legal or moral?

Mr. Churchill. We have no legal responsibility. Moral responsibility is a term, sir, that I find difficult to assess.

Mr. Hamilton. I can appreciate that. So there is nothing moving now in the Government to help these people in any way? You are not aware of any step being taken to help?

Mr. Churchill. Yes, sir. we have had informal—

Mr. Hamilton [continuing]. I mean our Government.

Mr. Churchill. We are not directly involved in helping them, no, sir.

BACKGROUND SOURCES FOR REPORT

Mr. Hamilton. You mentioned in your opening comment, Mr. Churchill, about the paucity of information with regard to the report that you filed. Where did you obtain the information for that statement? What were your sources?

Mr. Churchill. The basic sources, sir, are British. All population data that I discovered regarding these people were from British sources.

Mr. Hamilton. British sources, being what?

Mr. Churchill. Data from colonial days in Mauritius before it was independent and from British efforts to collect information.

Mr. Hamilton. Did you get your information from the British Embassy here in town or London or where?

Mr. Churchill. We had quite a bit in our files. Where there were gaps we asked the British either through the Embassy here or through our Embassy in London.

Mr. Hamilton. Did you at any point talk to the Mauritian authorities?

Mr. Churchill. No, sir; we did not.

Mr. Hamilton. Did you talk to the Mauritian Council of Social Services? I presume you did not,

Mr. Churchill. No, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. Did you talk to any of the islanders themselves?

Mr. Churchill. No, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. My understanding then is that neither the State Department nor anyone else in the U.S. Government did any investigative work with either the Council on Social Services, the islanders or the Mauritian Government? Is that correct?

Mr. Churchill. That is correct.

METHOD OF REMOVAL

Mr. Hamilton. Were the islanders forcibly removed, as Mr. Ottaway reports in the Washington Post?

Mr. Churchill. We have no evidence that any force was used. We have quite a bit of evidence that there was no force used.

Mr. Hamilton. Did they go willingly?

Mr. Churchill. Some of them were reluctant to leave, especially the older people. But they went willingly.

Mr. Hamilton. Under what kind of inducements?

Mr. Churchill. When the coconut plantation was closed there were no further means of livelihood on the island.

Mr. Hamilton. So we closed the coconut plantations and then they moved. Is that it?

Mr. Churchill. Yes.

COMPENSATION FOR RESETTLEMENT

Mr. Hamilton. The British have the \$1.4 million available which has been turned over to the Mauritian Government. Is that a correct understanding?

Mr. Churchill. Yes, accepted by the Mauritian Government as full compensation for resettling these workers.

Mr. Hamilton. But to your knowledge that money has not reached the islanders themselves?

Mr. Churchill. Only very small amounts.

PETITION PRESENTED BY DIEGO GARCIANS

Mr. Hamilton. Have you been in receipt of this petition that was drawn up by the Diego Garcians and presented to the British Embassy with copies delivered to the American Embassy as Mr. Ottaway reports?

Mr. Churchill. May I see it, sir?

Mr. Hamilton. I don't have it. I have a report on it in the Washington Post, which indicates Diego Garcians have asked Great Britain and the United States to take certain action with regard to this. Are you aware of that petition at all?

Mr. Churchill. I have not seen any such petition.

Mr. Hamilton. Do you have the primary responsibility for Diego Garcia in the State Department now?

Mr. Churchill. Yes.

Mr. Hamilton. So if there were such a petition presented to an American Embassy that would come to your attention, would it not?

Mr. Churchill. Yes; it would.

PRESENT CONDITION OF ISLANDERS

Mr. Hamilton. Do you know anything about the condition of these people at the present time? Senator Culver described them as living in a ghetto. We have one report here in the paper that says some 40 of them have died, that they don't have any jobs. There is an unemployment rate—17 percent of the family heads have full-time jobs; 33 percent are unemployed; 50 percent work part time. Do you know anything about the conditions of these people?

Mr. Churchill. We have similar information.

Mr. Hamilton. Do you think that those statistics are approximately correct?

Mr. Churchill. Out of 421 families in the overall group 243 heads of family are now in settled occupations in Mauritius; 57 are old-age pensioners in Mauritius; 74 are on public assistance.

Mr. Hamilton. Do you have an unemployment rate of any kind?

Mr. Churchill. Among these people?

Mr. Hamilton. Yes.

Mr. Churchill. I am sure there is. The 74 on public assistance. I assume are unemployed; 28 heads of family want to return to Diego Garcia. Apparently they are not happily settled in Mauritius.

Mr. Hamilton. Is it our position that they cannot return?

Mr. Churchill. Yes, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. We would not allow them to return?

Mr. Churchill. That is right.

THE PLANTATION WORKERS

Mr. Hamilton. The report also indicates that with regard to at least one person who was born on the island, as were his parents, grandmother and most of his children, your comments, Commander, suggest that they are rotating personnel and contract personnel and migrant population, which seems to stand in contrast at least with what Mr. Ottaway reports with regard to one such person.

Commander Sick. Yes, sir; there is no question but that there were some people who had been living on the island for some time, for several generations. And our report, I believe, makes that quite clear.

The bulk of the islanders, however, the bulk of those who were there working on the plantations at the time, it is our understanding from the information that was made available to us that the vast bulk of them were there in fact on short-term contracts, working for the company who owned the coconut plantation on which they worked and who hired labor on short-term contracts to come in and work the plantations for them.

PERMANENT RESIDENTS

Mr. Hamilton. How many {sic: many} people have been there for some time?

Mr. Churchill. Our information is that 3 men and 17 women were considered permanent in 1964. No information on exactly how long they had been there. We don't have much information on that.

Mr. Hamilton. Those figures you cited to me came from what source?

Mr. Churchill. They too came from a British source.

Mr. Hamilton. And you made no independent effort to confirm that?

Mr. Churchill. That is correct.

Mr. Hamilton. Were the people themselves, the islanders, consulted at all about their transfer from Diego Garcia? Or were they just told that the plantation was going to be shut down and that they had to move?

Mr. Churchill. I have no record of any consultations with them.

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Mr. Hamilton. Your conclusion in your report was that there was little evidence of any real sense of a distinct community evolved by special local environment. Is that conclusion adopted from the British?

Mr. Churchill. That certainly was the conclusion of the British observers. Aside from that and other material in our files I have no independent judgment.

Mr. Hamilton. The fact that they had a church there, that they had a graveyard there, shows some sense of community, doesn't it?

Mr. Churchill. It certainly shows there were people on that island for some time. Whether it was the same people or different shifting people is something that right now is beyond my ken.

A REPORT BASED ON ASSUMPTION

Mr. Hamilton. You conclude in your statement "it appeared that the transfer of the inhabitants would be feasible and that the persons

then working on the islands would accept employment under suitable conditions elsewhere.”

One of the things that strikes you when you read this report, Mr. Churchill, is that the language of it is quite—almost as tenuous, I suppose, as the ties that you say the people have to the island. It is very slippery language, “it appears it would be feasible,” and this kind of language. Would you agree with my observation there? Is that because of the paucity of data?

Mr. Churchill. We tried to be as specific as we possibly could. Very often we had to make assumptions because we simply didn’t have enough data.

CONDITION OF THE COCONUT PLANTATIONS

Mr. Hamilton. Among other things, you conclude, “the plantations on these two islands were deteriorating and could not be maintained without a considerable investment.” How do you reach that conclusion if the data is so bad?

Mr. Churchill. We did have quite a bit of data on the plantation company because of discussions between the company and the British about acquisition of the holdings. We did learn from that quite a bit about the plantations.

Mr. Hamilton. Your impression is the plantations were what, about to go out of business, were they?

Mr. Churchill. On the two peripheral islands the plantations apparently had to be reestablished if they were to be economically viable. On Diego Garcia, our information is that the plantations never were in top economic shape.

Mr. Hamilton. They continue to have a flourishing trade in coconut on other islands in the region, do they not?

Mr. Churchill. I am not sure I can answer that, sir. The coconut trade, the word “flourishing”—

Mr. Hamilton. Or at least viable.

Mr. Churchill. Continuous.

WAIVER OF A FEE

Mr. Hamilton. Has Congress at any time appropriated money for the Diego Garcians on a line item basis?

Mr. Churchill. For the inhabitants? No, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. Where did this money come from that we gave the British? Was that in the defense budget somewhere?

Mr. Churchill. Gary, can you—

Commander Sick. Yes, sir; this was a waiver of a fee that the British otherwise would have paid us.

Mr. Hamilton. So there is no cash transfer.

Commander Sick. There is no cash transfer. It was a waiver of a fee for research and development on the Polaris missile program that the British would have paid us. We waived a 5-percent charge up to a quantity of \$14 million.

Mr. Hamilton. What did the British have on this island prior to 1966? Did they have a military installation?

Commander Sick. No, sir.

Mr. Churchill. No, sir; 75 years ago it was a coaling station. It was a World War II airstrip.

JOINT DEFENSE PURPOSES

Mr. Hamilton. We leased it beginning in 1966. It {sic: Is} that right?

Commander Sick. Yes.

Mr. Hamilton. The agreements were executed at that time. That gave us permission to do what?

Commander Sick. It gave us permission to use the islands in the British Indian Ocean Territory for mutual defense purposes of the United States and United Kingdom.

Mr. Hamilton. We put our first installations there when?

Commander Sick. 1972.

Mr. Hamilton. And the islanders were removed when?

Commander Sick. 1971.

Mr. Hamilton. So the islanders were really removed because we wanted to establish a base there.

Commander Sick. They were definitely removed because the island was to be used for defense purposes.

Mr. Hamilton. For U.S. defense purposes.

Commander Sick. It is a joint base, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. British—

Commander Sick. United States-United Kingdom.

BRITISH SOVEREIGN TERRITORY

Mr. Hamilton. In that circumstance how is it that we can deny responsibility for those people? We kicked them off the island for our purposes. If we hadn't decided to put a base there they would have been able to continue their lives. It is not the British that are taking over that base and expanding it now. It is the United States.

I just don't see how under that circumstance you can reach the conclusion that the United States has no responsibility. How do you reach that conclusion?

Mr. Churchill. I assume that from the British standpoint it was a problem of eminent domain. The British entered into the decision with us to establish a joint communications center. It was their sovereign territory. The citizens were theirs. It was a problem of eminent domain. These problems are never easy. It is a matter of some kind of a balance. They did decide to do that. They did move off their inhabitants.

Mr. Hamilton. The British have a sense of responsibility, but we don't.

Mr. Churchill. That is essentially true.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Winn?

THE ELEMENT OF HUMAN CONCERN

Mr. Winn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think the chairman makes a very good point there. I just have the feeling all the way through this hearing that the American negotiators and the people involved have said, "this is all a British problem and let the people sink or swim and just let the British worry about it."

I don't know where any human concern shows up on your part or in your report or anywhere else. I can't understand why we are so damned interested in this thing as a military base that we don't have some type of input or ask questions or check on the human beings that are living on this island before we kick them off at our request through the British.

Mr. Churchill. Sir, we certainly were concerned at that time about these people.

Mr. Winn. We have no reports to show that, do we? Other than going back to the British files and colonial background?

Mr. Churchill. We knew the people were there. We knew they would have to be moved. The British indicated from the very start they would be willing to make adequate arrangements for these people and adequate settlement funds.

Mr. Winn. Don't we sit in on any of these negotiations to be sure— we are not really talking about a lot of people that it would be too burdensome for the United States to sit in and see that those people, particularly those that are there two and three generations, as I understood the statistics the Chairman gave, that there are two and three generations living there now, were there.

It seems to me the military and the State Department just wash their hands of those people that were living on the islands.

Mr. Churchill. I would say, sir, that we didn't "wash our hands."

Mr. Winn. I can't see anything that you did anything about it.

Mr. Churchill. We discussed it from time to time with the British and assured ourselves that the British were indeed providing financing, which in my view was quite generous.

LACK OF ROOM

Mr. Winn. You can throw a bunch of money out of the biggest building in Washington but that is not going to take care of poverty-stricken people, the people that have been working in the coconut plantations all these years, whatever their means might be, their type of living, their living standards, and just say, "OK, we will give you some money out of the washing out of the Polaris."

I don't understand too when Diego Garcia has been described to us as a communications and supply facility by the U.S. military, why was it necessary to depopulate Diego Garcia?

Mr. Churchill. There were several considerations there, sir. One was that the economic activity, the coconut plantation, simply had to go.

Mr. Winn. Why?

Mr. Churchill. There wasn't room apparently for both. The land used for plantations had to be taken over for the facilities.

Mr. Winn. Maybe we could have set those people up with some American ingenuity and British ingenuity and made them a better way of life and they could have been more helpful to the United States instead of clearing the island.

What you remind me of really is the building developer that goes in and knocks down all the trees and gets them all knocked down out of the way and then comes back in and puts some 2- or 3-foot trees in and says, "Oh, yeah, we have got trees all over the subdivision." You are doing that with people.

RESETTLEMENT PLANTATIONS

Mr. Churchill. The British were working with the plantation company in trying to set up plantations in other islands where these people could be moved. For a while that seemed to be a viable scheme. But it fell through.

Mr. Winn. I don't understand why it is necessary to depopulate the Peros Banhos and the Salomon Island as well.

Mr. Churchill. The problem there was that these islands were not economically viable unless the plantations were replanted. That couldn't be done unless they had a very long-term guarantee that the islands would not be used for military purposes.

Mr. Winn. Wait a minute. Say that again. You are putting an element in there that we haven't heard about, the possible military use of those two islands.

Mr. Churchill. The whole British Indian Ocean Territory was set up as a place which the United States and United Kingdom could use for military purposes if necessary. So it was a question of whether we could guarantee that these two islands would not be used for military purposes over a long period of time. That guarantee could not be forthcoming. Therefore the plantation company was not willing to reestablish the plantations. It takes a long time to grow a coconut tree.

Mr. Winn. I realize that. But on Peros Banhos and the Salomon the entire population was 291 and 219 respectively; all were dependent on the coconut plantations except for two unemployed persons on Peros Banhos.

Mr. Churchill. That is right, sir.

Mr. Winn. That is quite a few people who are making a living. That is over 500 people that are making a living there on those two islands. You told the Chairman it wasn't a viable trade facility. It looks to me like it must have been. I don't know. I can only take your word for it.

Mr. Churchill. Our understanding is that those plantations simply couldn't continue without an extensive investment which the owners would not make unless they could have clear use.

LACK OF U.S. SUPPORT

Mr. Winn. What about us? We are going to throw some money at them and give the British some money and let it go at that, which is what it seems to me our attitude was over there.

Why couldn't we have helped on those islands and help them bring the business back if possible? We have pretty good know-how. We are not big on coconut plantations. But I am sure we have some people that could make it a going business.

We really wanted to get them out of there, didn't we? Just clean them out. get rid of them. Get them out of our way.

Mr. Churchill. On Diego Garcia that is quite so.

Mr. Winn. What about the other two?

Mr. Churchill. The other two islands are a different story.

Mr. Winn. We depopulated them, didn't we?

Mr. Churchill. Yes, sir, that decision was reached because the plantations could not continue.

ALTERNATIVES TO DEPOPULATION

Mr. Winn. If you close them like you did on Diego Garcia they don't continue, no. People can't make a living on plantations when they are closed.

Did the United States consider alternatives to depopulation? I sort of asked that before. But I don't know that I got an answer.

Mr. Churchill. Aside from the plantations in fact there was no economic livelihood. There was a security side to this. We preferred not to have third-country nationals on the island. There was a social problem; it would have created definite problems if we had had American servicemen on an island with a native population.

Mr. Winn. We have them elsewhere, don't we?

Mr. Churchill. Yes, but these are unaccompanied people. The servicemen don't have their families there.

PUTTING THE ISLANDERS TO WORK

Mr. Winn. Was there ever any consideration of hiring the former inhabitants there? These are pretty small islands, aren't they?

Mr. Churchill. They are very small.

Commander Sick. Eleven square miles. Diego Garcia.

Mr. Winn. You couldn't see any advantage in hiring some of these people and giving them jobs and a decent living instead of running them out of their own home territory?

What about the men? Why couldn't the men be of some service? They are losing their jobs. The plantations have gone down the drain. I would think some of those men would be pretty happy to get certain types of jobs.

Mr. Churchill. A good many of these people were specialized copra workers. Obviously some could have worked in construction.

Mr. Winn. I am sure they could work in construction and carry wood and put up temporary buildings, whatever you are going to do over there. Some of those people who lived there were pretty talented, pretty capable for doing a lot of things.

Was there any consideration of hiring those people?

SEABEES TO DO THE JOB

Mr. Churchill. The decision was made to go with the Seabee detachment.

Commander Sick. There was consideration given; yes, sir. Initially the plan was to try if possible to use local labor to the extent possible. I don't really know the details of what went into the decision. For whatever reason, when the Seabees did their initial survey of the island it was decided to use the Seabees to do the job. It was not a large job in the sense of perhaps needing—I really can't speak to that. I don't know the—

Mr. Winn. They have got to put up sanitary facilities. They have got to put up some type of housing. I would imagine OMB would probably be pretty damned surprised how much cheaper they probably could have gotten it done than if they did it through the Seabees. I don't know who makes those decisions. But I wish I had been there and heard some of the discussions. I might have been persuaded the other way but I am not right now.

Does the 1966 agreement include the Salomon and Peros Banhos?

Mr. Churchill. Yes sir, they are all included in the same agreement.

Mr. Winn. As well as Diego Garcia.

Mr. Churchill. And three islands in the vicinity of the Seychelles.

U.S. ROLE TOWARD INHABITANTS

Mr. Winn. And three other islands. We touched on this a little while ago. It is pretty hard. But I suppose we have to differentiate between an official position and an individual position. But what do you envision should be the U.S. role in insuring the welfare of the former inhabitants? The chairman asked this basic question.

I gather by your answer before that you just don't really feel much obligation at all.

Mr. Churchill. I would say that what we can do, we can and should do through the British Government, which has special ties with Mauritius because of Mauritius' commonwealth status, and through the Mauritian Government, which has the responsibility for its citizens and which has, is holding, the funds which the British made available.

MILITARY ROLE OF DIEGO GARCIA

Mr. Winn. What is the role of Diego Garcia for the U.S. military? What is the military role?

Mr. Churchill. Commander Sick?

Commander Sick. The role for which it is intended at this stage or after expansion? I assume that is what you mean. Of course it was initially established as a communications site. It has been serving this purpose since early 1973. It fills a communications gap in the whole central portion of the Indian Ocean, where otherwise there would be no reliable military communications on a regular basis.

The expansion of the facility is intended to increase the fuel storage capacity there, to provide facilities for loading and off-loading of fuel, to provide expanded room for ships to anchor in the lagoon, and to provide a somewhat longer air field—simply to increase its role as a support facility as apart from the communications part.

Mr. Winn. How big is the airfield now?

Commander Sick. The air field is 8,000 feet now.

Mr. Winn. That is pretty short.

Commander Sick. Yes, sir. It will reach 12,000 with expansion.

Mr. Winn. Are you doing that now?

Commander Sick. No, sir. It will begin very soon.

Mr. Winn. It is in the planning stage.

Commander Sick. Yes, sir. Planning and initial procurement has begun.

Mr. Winn. How many men do we have over there? How many Americans? Are there families over there?

Commander Sick. No, sir. They are just servicemen. They are the Seabees and those who are assigned to the communications site and air field. The total is just over 1,000. Most of them are Seabees. When the expansion is completed and the operation is running, we estimate there will be between 550 and 600 people assigned to the island on a regular basis.

Mr. Winn. What about the other islands? We are not on any of the other islands?

Commander Sick. No, sir; we have no people on any of the other islands.

STRICTLY FOR SUPPORT

Mr. Winn. If you are enlarging the runway it looks like Diego Garcia is going to serve as a base for bombers and fighter aircraft.

Commander Sick. No, sir; we have no plans to.

Mr. Winn. Transports?

Commander Sick. The lengthened runway is basically to permit tanker aircraft to operate from the island. There is no plan whatever to establish any basing of any military forces on the island, aircraft, ships or anything else. The communications station and the facilities are there to support units that are coming through. But there is no intent to base any operational military forces there.

BRITISH PARTICIPATION

Mr. Winn. Are the British going to participate in this construction in any way whatsoever?

Commander Sick. No, sir.

Mr. Winn. Then is it going to be a joint venture or is it going to be strictly American?

Commander Sick. The British have 25 officers and men there on the island currently, including a liaison officer who is the representative of the BIOT Commissioner, because it is British sovereign territory. They will retain a number of people at the site in the future in its expanded state. We don't anticipate that there is going to be a large number of British military people. Basically they will participate with us in the communications site there and take advantage of it for their own communications.

A JOINT DECISION

Mr. Winn. Who is pushing for this enlargement of all the activity in the Indian Ocean? Is it the Department of Defense?

Mr. Churchill. I would say it is a joint decision.

Mr. Winn. Is it a joint decision?

Mr. Churchill. Yes.

RUSSIAN ACTIVITY IN THE AREA

Mr. Winn. You asked the chairman if he wanted you to put in information on the Russian activity over there after you told what we had over there. Is theirs about the same, without getting into all the numbers and statistics? More than ours? Less than ours?

Commander Sick. No, sir. Very simply we have eight ships there currently with an aircraft carrier. They have approximately 20 ships there right now.

Mr. Winn. But no aircraft carriers?

Commander Sick. No. The Soviet Union doesn't yet have any operational aircraft carriers. About 12 of those ships are combat units. They have three guided missile destroyers in the area as well as a guided missile nuclear submarine.

Mr. Winn. Are you disagreeing with Senator Culver's statement that we would have an advantage over there?

ESTABLISHING MORE FLEXIBILITY

Commander Sick. If I understand Senator Culver correctly he is saying that the striking power of a U.S. naval task force in the area is greater than, say, a comparable number of ships of the Soviet Union or the larger number of ships that the Soviet Union maintains in the area. I agree with him on that, that a carrier task force operating in the Indian Ocean has more striking power than, say, the number of ships the Soviet Union has operating there today.

The point of Diego Garcia as a support facility is to provide more flexibility for those units to operate. As it is now, the units which operate in the northwest Indian Ocean rely on supplies which either come from the Persian Gulf states where the tankers have to go in and top off their fuel tanks and keep refueling the task force. They do burn up a tremendous amount of fuel, especially aviation gasoline, while they are at sea.

They either do that or have to go all the way back to the Philippines and pick this up or they go even further, depending on where the sources are.

In a case where they are actually needed—not in a peacetime situation where things are quiet—but in a situation where they might really be needed in the area for one reason or another, the sudden closure of the area in terms of, say, fuel support would mean a sudden necessity to create a pipeline of ships going at least back to the Philippines.

The idea of having a facility on Diego Garcia is to have a place that is in the area, which provides independent secure access to logistic support as well as the support of reconnaissance aircraft and other units that operate in the area in support of those ships.

BUILDING UP A HOT SPOT

Mr. Winn. I have never been one to shut the door on the defense of this Nation. But it looks to me like we are just playing a frame of checkers or chess with the Russians here, building up another hot spot. They will keep bringing more of their navy in there, which according to Zumwalt and some of the rest of them for the last 4 or 5 years is bigger than ours, number-wise.

We will get Diego Garcia all built, listed under a "communications" deal. We will be able to fly fighters and bombers in there with an enlarged runway.

It just looks to me like we are just asking for trouble there down the road on this thing.

BRITISH RESPONSIBILITY

The point is I really don't think we treated those people fairly over there, if the reports are right. I am sure some of them were probably ready to retire if they got their hands on a little money anyway.

But I can't understand the lack of human interest in those people over there on the part of the State Department or Defense. To me it is obvious.

Commander Sick. I have been through the files rather carefully. My impression is that the entire negotiating record is studded with occasions where the British were asked to assure us that the people would be adequately compensated and they would be taken care of and that the British would assume the responsibility for these people, that the rights of those people would be protected. Those are all words that are in the negotiating record. They appear over and over again.

Mr. Winn. They are just words.

Commander Sick. Yes, sir.

Mr. Winn. We didn't do any looking over their shoulder to see if they were carrying through with it. But we did wipe out a \$14 million debt or obligation.

Commander Sick. There was some looking over their shoulder afterward, sir. As Mr. Churchill mentioned, this was not simply allowed to die while everybody looked the other way. But nobody would argue that more couldn't have been done.

FREE USE OF LAND

Mr. Winn. One last question, Mr. Chairman.

In Senator Culver's last page he refers to the 1966 document. He says a provision in paragraph 4 says, "The required sites shall be made available to the U.S. authorities without charge."

Do you disagree with that, Mr. Churchill? What I am getting at is. why did we give them the \$14 million if it was supposed to be a freebie?

Mr. Churchill. We make a distinction between assisting the British in funding the establishment of the British Indian Ocean Territory for which we did excuse a portion of the research and development funds for the Polaris. The agreement makes any use of land free of charge to us. That is where this polarity comes in here.

Mr. Winn. I wanted Senator Culver to put the entire agreement in there. I would have to read it and probably get some interpretations though. But how you got from having the right to use and occupy and build on sites at no charge and all of a sudden we have got \$14 million going out through erasing an indebtedness from the Polaris is pretty far-fetched negotiating of some type. I don't know whether they outsmarted us or not. It is kind of hard for me to put together in my own mind.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Do you care to reply to that?

Commander Sick. No, sir.

Mr. Winn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hamilton. Will you furnish to this committee, Mr. Churchill, the portions of that agreement that are secret?

Would you furnish them to the committee on a classified basis? I think you have already done it with the Senate Armed Services Committee. So I don't think there should be any problem in that regard.

[The classified information was submitted and retained in committee files.]

A MISLEADING REPORT

Mr. Hamilton. Commander Sick, on several occasions you have said to us that you think the record shows pretty clearly that the Department of Defense and the Department of State have been very open and forthcoming on those matters.

Let me quote a couple of sentences to you out of your report. One of these sentence? says, for example at page 4. "We understand from the British that although there was some initial reluctance on the part of the older people to move, all went willingly."

To the casual reader or even to the careful reader, from that statement you get the impression that those islanders left without any kind of coercion, voluntarily and, as you say, willingly.

But Mr. Churchill testifies to us today that first of all we cut out the plantation. We take the livelihood away from them. Then we take them off the island. It seems to me that any fair disclosure of the facts in this report would have said precisely that and not that the islanders left willingly.

I cannot by any stretch of the imagination call that a fair statement. I don't see how you can call it a fair statement and then testify that you cut their jobs off first and then transferred them. Do you want to respond to that?

Mr. Churchill. Yes, sir. It is much more my report than Commander Sick's.

Mr. Hamilton. This is a report of the U.S. Government, Mr. Churchill, and not of you or Commander Sick.

I am just saying that on the basis of your testimony it is a misleading report in that instance and in another one that I will mention in a moment.

"ALL WENT WILLINGLY"

Mr. Churchill. The only thing I can add to that, Mr. Congressman, is that in reading what I could outside of our files on the history of these islands there seems to have been a constant record of companies shutting down one plantation, moving workers from one island to another island and to another and so forth.

The fact of a plantation closing and of the workers being shifted is not at all—

Mr. Hamilton. Do you consider the statement that "all went willingly" to be a fair disclosure of the facts in this situation?

Mr. Churchill. In the sense that no coercion at all was used.

PROOF OF AN INDIGENOUS POPULATION

Mr. Hamilton. No coercion was used when you cut off their jobs? What other kind of coercion do you need? Are you talking about putting them on the rack?

The second statement that certainly appears to be misleading appears on page 8 of your statement toward the bottom where you say "There was no indigenous population on Diego Garcia."

There were people on that island. There were people who had been there for several generations by your own testimony. I cannot find that that statement is fair or complete when you tell us flatly "there

was no indigenous population on Diego Garcia.” A statement cited by Senator Culver says that “it has no local population whatsoever.” Strictly speaking that statement is correct because at the time it was made there was no local population. We had already kicked them off. But it seems to me to be misleading nonetheless and not complete. But the statement in your record, your report, just says “there is no indigenous population.” Your testimony doesn’t support that. I think it is misleading.

SEEBEES CORROBORATE BRITISH REPORT

Mr. Winn. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Hamilton. Yes?

Mr. Winn. I agree with you 100 percent, particularly in view of the fact that, correct me if I am wrong, you say you made no independent survey. All of your information was taken from the British files, you said. You take it as gospel. You didn’t talk to any of the people over there.

Commander Sick. Again, there were Americans who visited the island.

Mr. Winn. I would think so.

Commander Sick. I had a number of discussions with some of the gentlemen who were the engineers of the Seabee detachment who arrived on Diego Garcia in 1971. I discussed with them what conditions were, what things looked like. They corroborated what the British told us, that this was in fact the situation as it existed there.

With regard to the indigenous population. I felt that we were making an accurate statement. If I understand the technical use of that word at all, these people, regardless of how long they had been there, were there for only one purpose, that is, to work on the copra plantation which was owned and run by a group that lived on another island, worked it as a management operation there. There was no other reason for them to be there. They had no other purpose. They had no land of their own. Their house belonged to the company. The food that they were getting belonged to the company. Everything on the island was a company operation.

Mr. Hamilton. Some of them have been there for three generations.

Commander Sick. Yes, sir; that is absolutely true.

U.S. NEGLIGENCE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. Hamilton. This statement, Commander Sick, if technically correct, which I would not concede, is certainly not comprehensive nor forthcoming with regard to the facts. It is clever. It is slick. But it is not the full truth. That is my objection.

I don’t hold you responsible for that. I don’t hold Mr. Churchill responsible for it. I know you have done the best you can with a difficult task.

The fact that strikes me is that these people were transferred in 1972.

Mr. Churchill. 1971, sir.

Mr. Hamilton. 1971? Thank you. That makes it worse. This is now 1975. 4 years. Nothing has been done to help them. There is money set aside to help them. The reason they were uprooted is because the United States wanted to put the island to its own use.

I suppose you are correct, Mr. Churchill, when you [say](#) that we have no legal responsibility for these people. But it is certainly not a glorious chapter in the compassion of the United States to deny responsibility for those people.

I thank you for your testimony today. I think you have tried to be very forthcoming in response to questions. The questions have not been easy.

The situation is difficult to defend, in my judgment.

Mr. Winn?

POOR HEALTH CONDITIONS

Mr. Winn. Mr. Chairman, you referred to a certain number of people that had died. I just wonder if any of our people over there made an inquiry of the British or Mauritian Government people as to why they died. Is it malnutrition? Is it disease? Is it something that we with our medical background could be helpful in to cut down on that? I doubt that it is strictly old age, although there is reference to elderly people.

Mr. Churchill. We haven't had any statistics, sir.

Mr. Winn. Somebody mentioned this. Weren't you reading from a story?

Mr. Hamilton. I read in a story in the Washington Post by Mr. Ottaway that 40 people have died since they moved to Mauritius.

Mr. Winn. Since 1971.

Mr. Churchill. We do know that in 1971 when the Seabees were on the island and the inhabitants were still there that the Seabees found some of them in very poor health. This was a normal condition of their lives. They gave them medical assistance.

Mr. Hamilton. Is there anything further?

Thank you very much, gentlemen.

The subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:08 p.m. the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene at the call of the Chair.]

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APPENDIX 1
BIOGRAPHIES OF WITNESSES
GEORGE T. CHURCHILL

George T. Churchill. Director, Office of International Security Operations, Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, December 19, 1921. Student at Yale University (BA, 1942) and Fletcher School (MA in Economics, 1959). U.S. Army Service (Captain, Field Artillery) 1943-1946. Joined Department of State, Foreign Service, in January 1950. Served in Frankfurt Munich, Rome, Singapore, Ankara, and Athens. Washington assignments include: Officer-in-charge Turkish Affairs (1964-1966); detail to Peace Corps (1966-1968); Country Director for Greece (1971-1974).

JAMES H. NOYES

James H. Noyes was sworn in on September 15, 1970 as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense in the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.

As Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern, African, and South Asian Affairs, Mr. Noyes will have primary responsibility for all policy matters of Defense interest pertaining to the countries of the Near East and South Asian Region, including Greece and Turkey, and for Africa.

Mr. Noyes was born March 29, 1927, at San Francisco, Calif. He received his B.A. degree from Yale University in 1950. Subsequently, he studied for 1 year as a special student at Allahabad University, India, and in 1953, received his master's degree in political science at the University of California, Berkeley. He served both in the Middle East and in the United States with American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., during the period 1955 through 1959. After leaving the American Friends of the Middle East, Inc., Mr. Noyes served as a lending officer in Bank of America's International Banking Administration, San Francisco, until joining the Asia Foundation in September 1962.

Immediately before this Defense appointment, Mr. Noyes served as Director, Northeast Asia Division for the Asia Foundation, San Francisco. From 1965 through 1968, he was assigned as the Foundation's representative in Ceylon.

Mr. Noyes is married, and has three children.

COMDR. GARY G. SICK

Born: April 4, 1935, in Russell, Kansas.

Education: University of Kansas, B.A. French Litt., Phi Beta Kappa, 1957; Fulbright and Rotary Scholarships. Institut de Touraine, Tours France, 1957-58; Defense Language School, Arabic, 1964-65; Naval War College Newport, R.I., 1969-70; George Washington University, M.S. International Affairs, 1970; and Columbia University, Ph. D. Political Science, 1973.

Military Service: Commander Sick received his commission in the US Navy in 1957 as a graduate of the NROTC program at the University of Kansas. He has served on the staff of Commander Middle East Force in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean (1958-59); as a political analyst on Middle East Affairs with the Fleet Intelligence Center, Kenitra, Morocco (1959-60); as Assistant Naval Attache, Cairo, Egypt (1965-67); and on the Antisubmarine Warfare Staff of the U.S. Sixth Fleet at Naples, Italy (1967-69).

Present Position: Country Director for the Persian Gulf Shaikhdors & Indian Ocean Area in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs.

GEORGE S. VEST

George S. Vest, a Foreign Service Officer, Career Minister, is Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs.

Before assuming his present post, Mr. Vest was Special Assistant to the Secretary of State for Press Relations and Department Spokesman. In 1973 he headed the U.S. Delegation to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Before that he was Deputy Chief of the U.S. Mission to NATO (1969-72), and Deputy Chief of the U.S. Mission to the European Communities (1967-69). Over the course of his career, Mr. Vest has served in Bermuda, Ecuador, and Canada, as well as with NATO in Paris.

A graduate of the University of Virginia (AB, 1941; MA, 1947), he served overseas in North Africa and Italy during World War II as an officer in the U.S. Army.

Mr. Vest was born in Columbia, Virginia on December 25, 1918. He is married to the former Emily Barber Clemons. The Vests have three children and presently reside in Maryland.

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APPENDIX 2

Letter of June 19, 1975, From Congressman Lee H. Hamilton to John Duke Anthony of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies Requesting Information and Dr. Anthony's Reply Entitled, "Relations Between the United States and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY); Problems and Progress."

House of Representatives,

Committee on International Relations,

Washington, D.C., June 19, 1975.

Dear Dr. Anthony : The Special Subcommittee on Investigations of the House International Relations Committee has held a couple of hearings in the last few weeks on United States plans to expand base support facilities on the island of Diego Garcia. This inquiry was a followup of a more lengthy inquiry made in the 93rd Congress.

In testimony, the Department of Defense and the State Department has placed considerable importance on increased Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean in general and Soviet ties and facilities in Somalia, Iraq and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in particular. Because of the specific focus of several of the comments made, we wanted to receive testimony on Soviet relations, presences and commitments in these three states. Unfortunately, the crowded congressional schedule will not permit a hearing at this time.

We would, however, like for you to submit a brief statement for inclusion in the record if time permits. Our particular interests include: your assessment of Soviet relations in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (their durability, their strength, the client relationship, nature and amount of Soviet aid, the quid pro quo, if any, for aid, etc.); your assessment of United States policy towards the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (why relations have not improved, what opportunities, if any, exist for better relations); your assessment of what threat, if any, poses for United States interests in the area or for United States friends in the region; and your conclusions as to whether, on the basis of your knowledge with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, expansion of United States base support facilities on Diego Garcia is warranted.

I appreciate your consideration of this letter and hope that you might be able to respond by July 25, 1975 with an interim note or call saying whether or not you might be able to reply. You might wish to contact my staff consultant, Mike Van Dusen, if you have further questions. He can be reached at (202) 225-8095.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Lee H. Hamilton,

Chairman, Special Subcommittee on Investigations.

Relations Between the United States and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY): Problems and Progress (By John Duke Anthony)¹

U.S.-PDRY relations have never been remotely as healthy as the two parties would have liked them to be. The reasons for this less than amicable state of affairs are numerous, and include major differences between the way the two countries have perceived and acted towards one another in areas spanning virtually the entire length of the international relationship spectrum. A brief survey of U.S.-PDRY relations in these areas will delineate why the association has been so negative. With this background one can begin to see how recent events have helped to foster new dimensions to U.S.-PDRY affairs, which in fact manifest incipient prospects for improved relations between the two states in the future.

¹ The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of Ms. Darcie Ann Bundy and John E. Peterson for the helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this statement.

THE DIPLOMATIC BREACH

The diplomatic aspect of U.S.-PDRY relations has been fraught with difficulties since the day the new state was born; from the outset both parties have felt awkward in the relationship. From the PDRY point of view the fact that formal diplomatic relations existed from late 1967 onward was a locus of potential embarrassment. This was especially so from the view point of the more militant members of the country's ruling National Front, the political party to which Great Britain had transferred authority at independence. According to these officials, had independence been granted in the Spring of 1967 instead of in the Autumn, there would have been no diplomatic relations between Aden and America, as PDRY would have severed its diplomatic relations with the U.S. at the time of the June War in the manner of Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, the Sudan, Syria and the Yemen Arab Republic—and for the same reasons: in protest to the consistently strong U.S. support for Israel.

While formal diplomatic ties with the U.S. were a source of uneasiness to the Aden regime as they threatened to tarnish its image among other Arab revolutionary states, the relationship was also perceived as awkward from the American viewpoint. The United States, after all, had been in the forefront of those countries that had counselled Britain against withdrawing militarily from Aden. U.S. interests in the matter were perceived not in terms of the historically analogous position between America and Aden¹ but in terms of geopolitics. In short, what America considered as most important was not the granting to Aden of its national independence but the continued existence of the British bases there.

Thus, instead of a friendly beginning which had marked America's relations with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia after those states had won their independence from France, America's commitment to healthy diplomatic relations with the new regime was suspect from the outset. Under the circumstances, the fact that diplomatic relations remained in force until as late as October 1969 must in retrospect be seen as one of the ambiguities of America's overall relationship with the Arab world during those years.

EARLY PDRY GRIEVANCES AGAINST THE U.S.

Limited U.S. support for Aden's independence movement during the 1950s and 1960s was a slight in itself to the country's nationalists, but the newly independent regime nurtured other grievances against the U.S. as well. Foremost among these was the lack of U.S. financial aid at a time when the PDRY economy had been dealt devastating blows by the withdrawal of the British forces in November 1967 and by the closure of the Suez Canal a few months earlier. While the former event was anticipated, in no way was the latter. The combination of these two events crippled the regime's more moderate leaders who were seeking the means to build a viable economic base for the fledgling state. It became clear that unless substantial amounts of foreign aid were immediately forthcoming the government's prospects for survival were slim.

It was within this crisis-laden context that the Aden government groped for a meaningful relationship with the United States during the last days of the Johnson Administration. However, appeals for assistance from an America preoccupied with the war in Vietnam proved fruitless, and the PDRY soon joined the ranks of other developing countries whose requests for economic aid were turned down at that time.

While on economic grounds there seemed plausible justification for the U.S. failure to extend Aden the financial support requisite to maintain itself, relations were considerably complicated by the interjection of other factors. Not the least of these were indirect U.S. support for several groups opposed to the National Front which, having fled northward at independence to the neighboring Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) and to Saudi Arabia, sought to overthrow the Aden regime. Because they received strong political and financial support from Saudi Arabia, one of America's closest Arabian allies, tension and suspicion crept into the PDRY'-U.S. relationship.

Added to a plethora of political and socioeconomic problems attendant to the PDRY government's efforts to consolidate the administrative apparatus and

1 Among all the peoples of the Middle East, only the Adonis, like the Americans two centuries earlier, had to win their independence by forcibly dismantling a British colonial structure.

maintain public order, were major crises in the realm of national defense and internal security in which the U.S. was indirectly implicated. In the Winter of 1968, some of the aforementioned groups that had lost to the National Front began launching cross-border forays into PDRY. The government was hard pressed to defend the outlying regions from such attacks. When some of these groups were on occasion captured, the link to American arms supplies in Saudi Arabia proved unsettling.

With the U.S. hard pressed to prove its innocence of the wrong-doings attributed to it, growing anti-American sentiment among PDRY government leaders became manifest following the convening of the National Front's Fifth General Conference—the first in the independent state—in March 1968. In its final resolutions, the U.S. was served notice indirectly that its interests in PDRY and adjacent areas thereafter would be in for rough sailing. Although the more stridently leftist wing of the Party prevailed during the Conference itself, in its aftermath the moderate and conservative elements combined forces and managed to arrest and exile most of those individuals. Among those who left were 'Abd al-Fattah Ismail and Salim Rubayya 'Ali, but they were to return fifteen months later and emerge as the dominant elements themselves.

From late March 1968 until June 1968—when the Ismail-'Ali group came to power—U.S.-PDRY relations improved little, if at all, for during that time two of the regime's major grievances against the U.S. were in no way redressed. Additional appeals for U.S. economic aid met with the same resistance as had earlier requests, and worse, the number of cross-border forays conducted with U.S. weapons were on the increase. When pressed for an explanation, the U.S. denied complicity, pointing out that while it did indeed provide Saudi Arabia with military equipment, that state was obligated not to transfer those arms to third parties without prior American permission. Since no such authorization had been given and as U.S. officials disclaimed any capability of monitoring effectively the use of the weapons once they arrived in Saudi Arabia. Washington felt able to deny steadfastly any complicity in the border raids. From the perspective of Aden, not to mention that of the villagers in the outlying border areas where much of the fighting occurred, this explanation was less than convincing. In time, parades would be held to display the increasing quantities of American arms captured. Indeed, when U.S. Congressman Paul Findley (Rep.-Ill.) visited Aden in May 1974, the country's military museum was filled with captured U.S. military equipment.

When the National Front's left wing took control in June 1969, it became clear that a more markedly ideological approach would henceforth characterize U.S.-PDRY relations. "American imperialism" thereafter became a frequent theme as the regime regularly denounced American activities in the world as a whole. U.S. business operations in Aden, along with those of most other countries, were nationalized in September 1969, and at the anniversary celebration of independence in the Fall, the new President. Salim Rubayya 'Ali, unilaterally declared that the country's diplomatic relations with the U.S. were thereby renounced because of America's continuing support for Israel. By Christmas 1969 the first of a number of persons, some of them American citizens, were arrested and charged with spying for the U.S.

U.S. support for the new regime eroded swiftly during the last half of 1969. Against the background of its limited enthusiasm for the violent and radical manner in which the state was launched, it was easy for the U.S. to develop antipathy for the way in which PDRY's policies had evolved, especially when it became clear that these policies were destined to clash head-on with American interests. The PDRY government thereafter was increasingly perceived in Washington as implacably hostile to important U.S. allies and friends in the area (Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia from the beginning and Northern Yemen and Oman soon afterwards), as Aden became a sanctuary for groups seeking to overthrow the established regimes in those states.

The growing ties between the PDRY and the communist world during this period provided fuel to these negative perceptions. Rebuffed both by Britain and the U.S. in its appeals for aid. the regime turned to the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China for a sympathetic response. Soon most of the equipment for the PDRY defense forces was Soviet-made and Soviet advisers and technicians were involved in training the army in use of the equipment. With each increment of Communist aid to the regime, more and more members of the official U.S. community wrote the regime off as "lost." In December 1970–January 1971, the U.S. media gave major play to incorrect reports that PDRY had permitted the Soviet Union to establish a military base on Socotra Island.

This episode was but one among others that indicated that the U.S. government and a substantial segment of the media which carried its views was prepared to believe the worse.

Throughout this period, and especially following the abrupt ouster of American diplomats from Aden in late 1969, a number of U.S. government officials begun to assume exceptionally unsympathetic stances vis-a-vis the Aden regime. This was unlike the attitudes of these same officials at the time in regard to other radical Arab states such as Algeria and Iraq. In these countries, U.S. companies had also been nationalized and American policies were just as frequently denounced in the local media. The fact that U.S. officials encouraged American businessmen to get involved with Algeria and Iraq commercially—despite the absence of diplomatic relations—yet counselled the opposite in the case of PDRY, pointed to an apparent inconsistency in U.S. policy toward radical regimes.

Upon closer examination, however, other factors prove to have been determinative. Neither Algeria nor Iraq was considered a serious menace to U.S. allies of the order of Saudi Arabia, with which PDRY early found itself at ideological loggerheads and in conflict over disputed territory. Aden, moreover, was considered an economic backwater with the Suez Canal closed. Algeria and Iraq, by contrast, were important sources of energy and in possession of increasing amounts of capital that the U.S. sought to attract. Moreover, America was confronted by the fact that its assessment of the regime in Aden was shared for the most part by Great Britain, with whom it had long been predisposed to cooperate on geo-strategic policy matters relating to the oil producing states located north and east of PDRY.

Owing to considerations such as these, U.S.-PDRY relations to date have been a one-of-a-kind phenomenon, with each party expecting of the other things that it either was unable—or for all kinds of reasons unwilling—to do. All in all, it has been an unproductive association for both states, an unfortunate situation for which both share the blame.

SOVIET RELATIONS WITH PDRY

USSR-PDRY relations have been written about in the U.S. far more than U.S.-PDRY relations. The principal reason is that the association between the Soviet Union and PDRY has been much more extensive. Of added importance, because the military side of the relationship has a potential to affect U.S. strategic capabilities in the region, the relationship as a whole has been viewed with concern. At no point, however, has PDRY provided the Soviets with anything approximating the claims made by the media or by U.S. officials in testimony before Congressional committees. Depending on the category of the relationship under examination, USSR-PDRY ties have spanned a range from close to correct to cordial. Contrary to some reports, PDRY has not been a Soviet “client state” or “satellite” with all the pejorative overtones that such descriptions imply.

The position of the USSR in PDRY has been bolstered mainly by military and economic assistance. As noted earlier PDRY had stated economic assistance as one of the bases of the relationship it hoped to establish with Great Britain and the U.S., but this quest came to little that was tangible. Soviet economic aid to PDRY has included development loans, favorable credit facilities for necessary purchases, and a substantial number of civilian technicians. Included among the latter individuals have been construction superintendents involved in road building, dam and reservoir construction, a harbor master for the port, and development of the country’s potentially rich but long neglected fisheries industry.

The nature of the military relationship has been substantially different. Two charges, however, that have consistently been leveled at the regime—namely, that the Soviets already had or were constructing a base on the Island of Socotra or had established a base in Aden—have been proven unfounded. Yet the reports themselves did much to prolong the hiatus in PDRY’s isolation from Western countries in general, for they were accepted by many parties without challenge. Regarding the amount of Soviet military aid to PDRY, one can safely assert that it has been, on balance, far from massive. By no standard has PDRY military dependence on the USSR approached that which earlier existed in Egypt, Iraq or Syria. Even were it otherwise, criticism of the regime’s relationship with Moscow in this respect has always had a hypocritical ring as much of it has come from people who were asked to provide military aid long before such requests were submitted to the Soviets. The critics refused to grant that aid, and thereby handed the military supply and training business to the Soviets on a silver platter.

The phenomenon is analogous to the outcry against Egypt's accepting arms from the Soviet bloc in 1955 after having been refused same from Great Britain and America.

Still another side to USSR-PDRY relations has been Soviet support for the ideological stance of the Aden regime. In general the Soviet Union has been instrumental in helping to cultivate a respect for some of the principles of Marxism-Leninism as these relate to Third World countries without insisting that these principles be enshrined in a Communist Party, per se. Aden has had a Communist Party since 1960—the People's Democratic Union.² The Party's membership, however, has always been small, even though some of its leaders have been appointed to important positions in the government. Most observers are of the opinion that the size of the Communist Party's membership and support base is considerably smaller than that in Northern Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey or Iran.

The Communist Party membership in Aden is weak not only in numbers, but also in terms of its overall influence on the regime. The party's relations with the National Front have always been cool; historically, there has been little love lost between the two. The reasons for the separateness of the two organizations both before and after the establishment of the U.P.O. are mainly political. During the independence movement, members of the National Front resented the fact that the Communists almost ritualistically espoused the Soviet path to national independence. Then the Soviets were counselling that all nationalists in South Arabia would be best advised to follow the lead of Egypt, which in those days was far more prone to follow Soviet suggestions than now. While this was undoubtedly seen as making good sense from the point of view of Moscow and Cairo, the approach was flawed in the eyes of many Aden nationalists. The latter claimed that they, not the Russians or the Egyptians, knew what was best in the circumstances. Hence, the National Front in the end opted not only to refuse to join ranks with the Communists and vice versa, but also to refuse to subordinate themselves to what emerged as one of the Front's principal adversaries—the Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY), backed by Egypt and the USSR. All this is important by way of background to demonstrate that Soviet footing in Adeni political and ideological circles—and, equally, that of the local Communist Party—is not now nor has it ever been as secure or as pervasive as many have made it out to be.

Yet the National Front would be the first to admit that its own doctrines and policies, as well as the manner in which it has organized itself and functions as a party, have been greatly influenced by the Soviet example. Indeed, one of the unique characteristics of the country to date is the fact that its principal political organization—the National Front cum U.P.O.—is different from counterpart organizations in other “socialist” states in the Arab world, i.e. Syria, Libya, Algeria, Iraq and, until recently, Egypt. In those states, the army, more often than not, has been the preeminent political grouping, despite the existence, as in the case of the Ba'th in Iraq and Syria, the Arab Socialist Union in Egypt and Libya and the National Front in Algeria, of a mass organization. Yet in Aden, for the most part, the situation has been the reverse. There the Party is all-important politically. Moreover, this is not a new development: it has been so since independence. In enshrining the principle of civilian control over the military, the National Front has taken a leaf from Soviet political experience and transplanted it in Aden. Thus, at every level of the defence levels, and indeed within every operational unit, there is the equivalent of a party commissar, trained as a soldier by the army but assigned to his post by the Front. Such individuals belong first and foremost to the Front, to which they are bound by a loyalty tighter than that which binds them to the army as far as orders and hierarchy are concerned.

In all of this, the Soviet Union has played a guiding (but not formative) role. A major contribution in this direction was the provision of Soviet instructors for the National Front's cadre school. At this school Front members received instruction not only in the theoretical underpinnings of Marxism-Leninism but also in the organizational principles through which an essentially civilian oriented party is able to administer and control both the military and technical apparatuses {sic: apparatuses} of the state. The success of this venture would be difficult to assess with any precision at this stage in its development. However, a preliminary

² In 1975, the National Front, the People's Democratic Union, and the Ba'th Party formed a coalition called the Unified Political Organization (U.P.O.).

judgment would accord this approach some of the credit for the fact that the regime has not been overthrown by the military nor has there been anywhere near the degree of militant opposition to it from within that critics have predicted since independence.

In sum, it is clear from the foregoing that the impact of the Soviet Union on PDRY politics has been considerable but far more limited in nature and extent than many have supposed. Soviet influence, it must be reiterated, has never been paramount in Aden. For most of the period since independence, Chinese influence and support existed simultaneously, especially in the development sphere, in the extension of low interest loans and in the provision, until the Spring of 1973, of military support for the Aden-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG). In addition, Eastern European (e.g. East Germany and Bulgaria, especially), Cuban, Algerian, Iraqi, Kuwaiti, and Libyan support has also been significant.

Also to be carefully noted is that the Soviet Union and China were extending aid to North Yemen throughout this same period. Indeed, support from these two leading Communist powers has been granted to a greater extent and over a far longer period of time to that country than to Aden, where Soviet relations date only from 1967, in contrast to Northern Yemen where there was a Soviet presence as early as the late 1920s and a significant military aspect to the relationship since the mid-1950s. The phenomenon of strong support from the Soviet Union and other Communist states for a country of major geo-strategic importance in Southwest Arabia therefore has not been unique in the case of the PDRY as to time and place. Seen in historical perspective, the concern throughout this period that Aden was fast becoming or had already become a Soviet satellite must be revealed as on considerably tenuous grounds.

THE PDRY LEADERSHIP

The PDRY leadership structure has many facets to it that are too often overlooked or ignored by those quick to place it in the stereotyped mold of other one-party states. Closer study reveals that the organization of power is not monolithic and that there have been for some time many different influences operating on the political attitudes and values of the people and on the National Front in particular. An understanding of some of these differences is essential if one is to appreciate the milieu in which the country's political dynamics take place.

Although the official platform of the National Front has incorporated a number of Marxist-Leninist principles (e.g. "democratic centralism," "scientist socialism," etc.), the government itself is a coalition of different elements and ranges across a wide spectrum. The National Front, the preeminent organization within the U.P.O., was formed in June 1962 out of numerous different political groups. The members of these bodies were army officers, trade unionists, intellectuals, and middle echelon clerks and bureaucrats employed in what was then the urban Colony of Aden and the rural hinterland of the Aden Protectorate. Many of the original members had previously belonged to the South Arabian League (SAL). The SAL was the first nationalist group with a widespread base in both the Colony proper and in the Protectorate interior to launch a militant campaign for independence from the British in the early fifties.

From the outset local nationalist goals have been a common theme among the members' objectives. To these were added concerns of a pan-Arabist nature during the late 1950s, when Arab unity schemes were on the ascent, and support from Egypt and other countries was readily forthcoming. Dating from the time of the Front's founding in June 1962, the same month when a wide range of legislation introducing an Arab variant of socialism in Egypt was decreed, its members have leaned leftward in their ideology. "Nationalism," "Unity (pan-Arab)" and "Socialism"—the three core ideological concepts espoused by the Front's followers—these principles have comprised the theoretical underpinnings for most of the Party's policies from the time of its inception.

Since independence there has not been any outright rejection of these three guiding principles, nor have they been bypassed by other means. The concepts have been defined much more precisely, however, and one of them, socialism, has clearly influenced the other two considerably. Nationalism has come to be defined as being a goal worthy of pursuit contingent upon its base in the "proper" social classes and institutions.

As to what is proper in this instance, the regime has constantly indicated that entire groups and classes once described as nationalists during the days of the independence movement are almost by definition to be excluded from the ranks

of the new kind of nationalist that has come to the fore in recent years. Hence, tribal leaders, members of the petite bourgeoisie, large landowners, and similar elite groups who obtained their political status under the former colonial regime, are not included, even though they probably number in the thousands. Neither are most of the senior army officers or civil servants who were trained by the British, the rationale being that many among these two groups willingly collaborated with the British, and vice versa, to perpetuate the traditional political and socio-economic system. That system, in the view of the government since independence, was organized in such a way as to exclude from power and participation in the country's political process whole strata of people, most of whom were of working class, peasant, or other humble origins.

The nature and orientation of "Arab unity" among the regime's goals have also been redefined. As a result of the new classes and socio-economic groups that nowadays form the country's leaders, the regime has come to consider that unity between itself and other Arab states in the literal sense, i.e., the actual merger of two or more regimes into one, is unlikely to succeed and indeed is an undesirable pursuit unless the regimes in question are of a common orientation on most questions of a political and ideological nature. It is principally for this reason that the government's unity talks since 1972 with Northern Yemen, with whom it otherwise shares a great deal in the realm of geographical and ethno-national sentiments, have proceeded so slowly. Despite their many similarities, the two states are poles apart politically and ideologically, although the gap is being narrowed by talks which have taken place periodically since the unity scheme was declared.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Thus while the developing rapprochement between the PDRY regime and North Yemen falls far short of Nasirite unity schemes of earlier years, it nonetheless bespeaks the inception of an era of conciliation and cooperation in Aden's intra-regional and by extension, greater international, affairs. Particularly important in this regard was the Rabat Conference of December 1974, when, following the earlier lead of Kuwait, Iraq and Libya, several of the oil producing states in the Arabian Peninsula manifested a growing willingness to disburse substantial amounts of economic aid to Aden in spite of the absence of diplomatic relations. The initial conduit for this additional assistance was the Arab League, to which funds were funneled by Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi for this express purpose. There are indications, however, that such funds will henceforth be dispensed directly and that other states will follow this trend in extension of aid to PDRY. These initiatives, taken by two states with which the U.S. has intimate ties and many interests {sic: interests} in common, may signal the emergence of a new era in intra-Peninsular relations between states previously at ideological loggerheads with one another.

A second event of vital and even more direct impact for the fostering of new dimensions to PDRY-U.S. affairs has been the re-opening of the Suez Canal. This has resulted in a much revived awareness of the importance of various ports south of the Canal, all the way to the end of the Red Sea where the Gulf of Aden begins. It is within this context that the acute significance of the port of Aden—to the U.S. no less than its actual and would-be adversaries—has become manifest.

Although it will be some time before use of the Canal will result in the level of traffic in and out of Aden harbor that characterized the port prior to the 1967 closure, there is no doubt that PDRY's economic fortunes based on its port facilities at Aden are destined to revive. U.S. interest in the use of these facilities arises directly out of their location in the most conveniently situated port along the Canal-Red Sea-Indian Ocean route. Prior to the Canal's closure. U.S. merchant ships and oil vessels found Aden a most suitable bunkering station. More particularly, Mobil, Caltex, and Esso had storage tanks there.

These two major events—the beginnings of a Saudi/Abu Dhabi-PDRY rapprochement, and the re-opening of the Suez Canal—are making for a marked turn about in the manner the Aden government relates to the surrounding world. The signs are numerous: a lessening of its support for the rebellion in neighboring Oman : the release of three American citizens who had been imprisoned on charges of spying : the placement of advertisements in the New York Times inviting American oil companies to bid on petroleum concessions in the eastern part of the country : the welcoming of an American firm to bid on a proposed fish meal plant, and the generally much more moderate tone assumed by PDRY diplomats

and other government officials in the course of proceedings in various international forums.

PDRY officials have increasingly indicated that they would very much like to pursue a course of mutually beneficial economic projects with American companies in order to hasten their development process. They see nothing contradictory in offering favorable terms to private American enterprise for purposes or involving them in what remains largely a socialist-oriented economy. In this, Americans and Adenis need only follow the lead established by relations between the U.S. and Algeria and the U.S. and Iraq. In each of these instances commercial and technological interchange proceeded apace at an impressive rate despite the absence of diplomatic relations, and the PDRY leaders see no reason why that pattern cannot be emulated in their case as well. These same officials intimate that in the event of the development of a healthy commercial relationship between the two countries, they would fully anticipate that PDRY would be amenable to an amelioration of other sore points and differences in the overall relationship.

From their side, the Adenis are prepared to permit U.S. usage of their port facilities which remain unrivalled in the general area. And PDRY, one of the poorest of all the Arab states, has much to gain from the U.S. and the West at large in terms of technological and other forms of development assistance; indeed, Aden came early to the U.S., with its aid requests (as did Algeria and Iraq), and only turned to the Soviet Union with U.S. rejection of their quest. It seems clear to this observer that the Aden regime has begun to make the initial cautious steps toward addressing issues yet in dispute between it and the U.S., with a view toward turning a new and more positive page in the relationship. Herein lies a point at which U.S. geo-strategic, political and economic interests would appear to converge with the development needs and training aspirations of a people situated along one of the most vitally important maritime arteries of the world.

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APPENDIX 3

“Diego Garcia, The Islanders Britain Sold,” From the Sunday Times of London, September 21, 1975

The story of Diego Garcia, told on these pages, is a mixture of desert island intrigue, world power rivalries, and insensitive muddling. Caught up in it are 1,000 British citizens who were living and working peacefully on three islands in the Chagos Group until the late sixties when the British Government entered into secret negotiations with the United States to use them as part of the Indian Ocean defence complex against Soviet Union activity. In a remarkable period of post-Imperial dealing, Britain bought the islands and then recreated them so that they could be rented as “uninhabited” to the American military.

Whether Britain has profited from the buying and selling is not yet clear. We paid a total of £4m for them and in a complex deal seem to have received at least as much in dollars. But what is clear is that:

The islanders deported to Mauritius are as a result considerably poorer (as William Ellsworth-Jones reports). They still await compensation and one of them is suing the British Government.

Despite assurances on the joint-use of the island as a communications facility, it has been handed over almost entirely to the Americans, who apparently paid the British Government for the clearance costs.

Both British and American governments have persistently underplayed the defensive role Diego Garcia was to perform in the US Navy’s burgeoning world strategy.

Even when strident opposition to the construction of a major US base on Diego Garcia was being voiced in Washington—not least by the CIA—both Labour and Tory British Governments have quietly allowed the expansion of the facilities to proceed.

One thousand British citizens lost their homes and livelihoods to make way for an American naval base in the British island colony of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. And they are still without compensation promised to them, though the British Government has given Mauritius £650,000 for their resettlement.

Even that sum is dismissed as inadequate by the islanders’ legal adviser, Gaetan Duval, who said in Port Louis yesterday that £15m was needed.

The story of Diego Garcia, pieced together last week by Sunday Times reporters in Mauritius, Washington and London, contrasts vividly with statements issued by the British, American and Mauritian governments, both at the time and in recent weeks when a Congressional inquiry in Washington has begun to uncover this bizarre episode in Britain’s colonial history.

The islanders were moved from Diego Garcia after 1968 and deposited in Mauritius. There they have been living in squalor.

The official British attitude has been that there was no settled community on the island, simply a group of copra factory contract workers. Our inquiries suggest, on the contrary, that some of the deported islanders had family roots and had lived there for up to five generations; there was a church and a school as well as the factory.

The Foreign Office has suggested that the 1,000 inhabitants of Diego Garcia and its neighboring islands, Peros Banhos and Salomon, left willingly. Britain, in fact, left the responsibility for clearance to a private contractor: no British official supervised it or has followed up the islanders’ fate.

So muddled was the last stage of evacuation that 35 islanders had to spend their first nine days in the Seychelles in prison because no one provided anywhere else for them to stay. The 35, who included women and children, were allowed out of prison by day, but locked up again at nine each night.

In Mauritius last week groups of islanders, interviewed by Will Ellsworth-Jones of The Sunday Times, made it clear that none of them had left willingly. They had left peacefully simply because they had no choice, and they were bitter

about the way they had to abandon their homes and their chickens and ducks, their biggest source of wealth.

Tracking the islanders down in the slums around the Mauritian capital of Port Louis, Ellsworth-Jones reports two things are common to almost all their hovels. First, there is nearly always a framed portrait of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh staring embarrassingly from the walls, which are sometimes no more than tin canisters beaten flat. Secondly, from some dark corner, they usually manage to dig up their other prized possession: a birth certificate showing they were born on one of the three Chagos islands. Seldom can they read it, but they know its importance since one of them, Michel Vencatassen, began to sue the British Government, claiming that he was “ordered, coerced or compelled” to leave his home.

Roche Bois, where both Michel and Marie Vencatassen live is beside the Port Louis municipal rubbish dump. Many of the islanders have gravitated to the area because, being about the most unattractive part of a beautiful island, it is also the cheapest. In Roche Bois lives Mrs. Elian Chamona. Six small strips of corrugated iron make up her home. In Britain, it would be thought of as a dry shack for chickens. Even among the poorer parts of Mauritius it would probably be considered a disgrace that anyone should live here, let alone a mother and her seven children.

Mrs. Chamona was born in 1936 on Peros Banhos island. She visited Mauritius twice on holiday. Her husband, who was born on Salomon, never paid a visit. They were among the last group of islanders to leave their homes, and arrived in Mauritius early in 1973.

She left behind a three-roomed house, about ten ducks, and a few chickens. She has been living for the last two years in a hovel. It is not that it is dirty. In fact, one of the traits of these islanders is that, despite their conditions, they manage to keep themselves and their homes remarkably clean. It is just appalling to see a woman and her seven children try to live in a tin hut where there is only room for an iron double bed, four chairs and a cupboard. At night a mattress is put on the floor so that the children who do not share her bed can sleep on the floor between chairs.

Her husband left Mauritius 23 days ago, contracted to go fishing on a nearby island. It was the only job he could get. It means that she will not see him again until December.

“We were told that we had no right to stay on the island,” she says. “We were told that if we were permitted to stay there would be no ship to feed us. ...”

The islanders claim that when they were deported they were promised a piece of land and money for a house when they arrived in Mauritius. They have received neither land nor the house. The last group of islanders who arrived from Peros Banhos in 1973 refused to leave the boat that brought them when they found no help ready for them.

This unexpected militancy brought results. They were housed partly in a complex of dockers’ flats, and partly in Government housing. After two months in the Government houses, rent demands started to appear. These the islanders have ignored.

The Mauritian Government can claim that as a developing country it has huge problems but the fact remains that islanders have to go begging to survive, and live in shacks which are little more than chicken coops. The Government has got no further than acquiring one piece of land in Pointe aux Sables, which is generally known as the brothel district of Mauritius, and is negotiating for a second piece of land in Roche Bois, known as the worst slum in Port Louis.

HOW A QUIET DEAL EVOLVED INTO A MAJOR US COMMITMENT

From its earliest discovery by the Portuguese in the 16th century, Diego Garcia seems to have fulfilled each visitor’s schoolboy dream of a desert island. A long V-shaped atoll of coral reefs, dazzling sand and coconut trees encircles a huge lagoon 14 miles long and four miles across—regarded by many sailors as one of the finest natural harbours in the world. An Englishman, James Horsburgh, who was shipwrecked on the island in 1786, described it as “one of the wonderful phenomena of the globe.”

By the 1780s a French company had already begun extracting coconut oil from the palms and the population, including slaves and a small leper colony, numbered 275. With the defeat of Napoleon, Diego Garcia passed from French to British sovereignty, though like all the former French possessions in the Indian Ocean it has retained strong French connections to the present day.

The copra (dried coconut) industry continued to flourish, with the emancipation of the slaves and their conversion to “contract workers” causing little alteration to the island’s life style—or it seems, to the British government’s conception of their national status.

By the turn of the century. Diego Garcia boasted three flourishing copra factories, a less successful coaling station for ships on the Australia run, a church, a hospital, a jail, a light railway, some handsome French-colonial style houses and more than 500 inhabitants. Already those on “written contract” with the copra company were in a minority of the residents and more than three-quarters considered themselves permanent settlers. As early as 1870, inhabitants were building their own thatched cottages rather than living in company quarters.

Diego was employed as a naval radio and flying boat base in the last war. Two Catalina flying boats destroyed in a 1944 cyclone still lie wrecked in the jungle. And when the traveller, Robert Scott, toured the Chagos group in the nineteen-fifties he could report on a thriving settlement at East Point, together with three or four other villages and numerous smaller hamlets. “East Point has a look of a French coastal village miraculously transferred whole to this shore,” he wrote in 1961.

He described “the touches of old-fashioned ostentation in the chateau and its relation to the church ... the neighbourly way in which whitewashed stores, factories and workshops, shingled and thatched cottages, cluster round the green. The lamp standards along the roads and the parked motor lorries.” He also noted the warm welcome of the islanders and the habit of the schoolchildren of bringing out British flags to greet all and every visitor. It was, as the Diego Garcians now recall in their Creole patois, ‘la vie facile’.

The islanders owned their own boats, fished, cultivated gardens and livestock and lived in a community in which, in Scott’s words, “roots have been struck and a society peculiarly suited to the islands have been developed.” In the early sixties the copra industry was entering a period of increasing prosperity and quantities of guano (used for phosphate) were being shipped out as well. With the prospect of independence for the islands’ administrative capital in Mauritius, the Chagos group might reasonably have expected to continue its untroubled life indefinitely—one day perhaps casting a hopeful nod in the direction of the international tourist trade. But it was not to be.

The Islands of the Chagos Archipelago first swam into the collective consciousness of Western defence strategists in the late fifties. It was then that American experts began to realise the need for communications facilities across the Indian Ocean—there was none at that stage between Eritrea in Ethiopia and the Philippines. And both the British and the Americans were aware of the geographical and physical suitability of the Diego Garcia lagoon.

PROMISE TO INDIA

Already in 1963-64 initial discussions began between the two governments on the future of the Indian Ocean islands, and they took on a new urgency for the British with the impending loss of Aden and the need for an alternative refueling base to Gan on flights to the base in Singapore, which the first Wilson administration was still intending to retain.

So public did these discussions become that the Labour Government felt it necessary to assure the Indian Government quite categorically that neither it nor the U.S. had any intention of setting up “a military or naval base in the Indian Ocean.” Besides, as Harold Wilson frequently found occasion to say at this time, the British Government would never impose a military base upon an unwilling native population.

Both these assurances were shortly to experience some imaginative reinterpretation. In April 1965, the Colonial Secretary, Anthony Greenwood, travelled to Mauritius for independence talks at which the hiving off of some of the smaller islands, especially the Chagos group, was agreed. The islands were to remain as colonies, renamed the British Indian Ocean Territories (BIOT).

The case for retaining Diego Garcia, Greenwood recalled last week “was to make the withdrawal from Aden more palatable especially to the Americans.” The Government paid the Seychelles and Mauritius the princely sum of three million pounds in compensation for “loss of sovereignty” over the islands.

Anthony Greenwood now says he thought at the time that the inhabitants of the islands were “a handful of fishermen and turtle hunters.” The islands were anyway to be cleared of their occupants, and the reason was quite simply security, about which the Americans had apparently felt most strongly.

Dissident locals and violent neighbors were becoming the curse of American overseas bases. The joy of Chagos was, so the British appear to have assured the Americans, that it was to all intents and purposes uninhabited. The plantation company would be bought out and the “contract worker” would by the same token dematerialise. The company, Chagos-Agalega Ltd., received £1,100,000 for the “freehold” of the islands which passed to the BIOT.

The logic of this was conveyed by an announcement in May, 1966, that the government intended to “depopulate” BIOT islands as soon as possible. At the same time an agreement was signed between a junior minister at the Foreign Office, Lord Chalfont, and the U.S. Ambassador, David Bruce, which stated that the island of Diego Garcia would “remain available for defense purposes for 50 years.”

At this stage neither the Americans nor the British have been able to explain why it was necessary to depopulate the islands for what was then seen as no more than a “communications facility,” nor why such a facility should require the closure of a thriving copra business. Nor, since even today it is only Diego Garcia that is being used, can they explain why the Salomon and Peros Banhos islands in the Archipelago had to be cleared as well—except for the ubiquitous excuse of “security.”

Considerable mystery also surrounds what exactly the British Government—and taxpayer—received in return for providing the Americans with one of the world’s finest “uninhabited” potential bases. Retaining Diego Garcia cost no less than four million pounds (in compensation to Mauritius, the Seychelles and to the plantation company). Ostensibly the original agreement suggested that the island would be freely available to both British and American governments, each paying for whatever they wanted, with the Americans paying no rent.

However, it emerged in Washington last week that there was indeed a financial trade-off. At least \$11.5 million worth of “bills” or expenses incurred by Britain in securing the real estate of the island and emptying it of its inhabitants has been paid by the US Government—the last payment being made in July this year.

These payments were not in fact approved by Congress, and it has been suggested that they came either from offsetting the research and development costs on Britain’s Polaris missiles bought from the Americans or from a straight payment from Presidential or Secretary of Defence discretionary funds. At any rate, it seems the British did not get so bad a deal as at first appears.

The British colonial authorities in the Seychelles, however, were now left with the problem of providing the Americans with vacant possession. And they were more aware than the Colonial Office in London appears to have been of the nature of the settlements—they had been administering them and sending magistrates to them for a century and a half.

In 1967, the BIOT took over the freehold of the islands and entrusted the management of Diego Garcia to a Mr. Marcel Moulinie, whose family had owned a third of Chagos-Azalega Ltd. He said: “We were not told when we took over that we should run the plantations down.” But the rundown commenced in 1968 with workers who went on holidays or visits to other islands simply not being allowed passages to return. About half of the 1965 total of roughly 700 inhabitants had departed by the end of 1970.

THE NEGOTIATOR

The British authorities appear to have played no part at all in the clearance. The first Governor of the BIOT, Lord Oxford, and Asquith, stated last week that he regarded Diego Garcia as the “more settled” of the islands. But negotiation over the clearances was left in the hands of his deputy, Mr. John Todd.

The Treasury Solicitor last week “strictly instructed” Mr. Todd to make no comment on any aspect of the case. But the Foreign and Commonwealth Office concede that no government official of any kind supervised the clearance. It was left to Moulinie and to the time-honoured principle that the inhabitants were “contract workers” and therefore the responsibility of their employer, and not the British Government. The fact that they were previously resident on British soil and were to be transported to what was now a foreign country, Mauritius—1,200 miles away—was neither here nor there.

Moulinie himself clearly had his qualms about the operation. “The moment I saw these islands, I took to them,” he says. “It was a paradise there.” He added,

“It wasn’t very pleasant telling them they had to go. We told them we had orders from BIOT. We just said, sorry fellows but on such-and-such a day we are closing up. They didn’t object, but they were very unhappy about it, and I can understand this because I am talking about five generations of ilois (islanders) who were born there.”

Work on the plantations actually stopped in 1971. In March of that year, the Americans arrived and, according to one of the islanders, Michel Var, told them that “no one has the right to stay”—the first they knew that one day they would definitely have to leave. The Americans were friendly towards the islanders, taking them on a tour of their installations and handing out Coke and candy to the children and beer to the adults. Eventually some of the islanders were to sell them their boats.

Two ships were used for the eventual clearances, the Nordvaer, owned by the BIOT, and another vessel, the Isle of Farquhar. At first the islanders were given a choice: either be taken to Mauritius or to the neighbouring islands in the archipelago.

ANIMALS LEFT BEHIND

The last inhabitants to leave Diego Garcia went, according to Michel Var, in September 1971. The Nordvaer steamed into East Point and the islanders discovered that instead of bringing the provisions they had expected to replenish their store it had come to take them off. On September 28 it was loaded up by the islanders with copra and the plantation machinery that could be salvaged. Late that night the last 35 islanders were paid off and allowed to load their own baggage, although their most valuable possessions, their animals, they had to leave behind.

Michel Var was himself one of the “written contract” workers. He signed his contract with the Chagos-Analega company on February 18, 1963, and his thumb-print was witnessed by a Port Louis magistrate. Since he never left the island again after that, his contract although technically only for two years, was simply continued on with his salary starting at 18 rupees a month, slowly rising as his responsibility increased.

Michel Var contracted to work for eight hours a day on the upkeep of the plantation, collecting coconuts, digging and sifting guano and loading and unloading ships. In return, apart from his pay, he was given a free house, ten and a half-pounds a week of rice, flour or maize. 125 grammes of salt per week. 500 grammes of coconut oil, plus medical treatment and even burial expenses.

Some controversy surrounds the degree of coercion used in the departure. One islander, Michael {sic: Michel} Vencatassen, is bringing a test action against the British Government on the grounds, according to his London solicitor, Bernard Sheridan, that he was “ordered, coerced and compelled” to leave. The British authorities deny this strongly, saying the islanders were not a British responsibility and left of their own accord.

The British, however, are relying on a confidential report on the clearance given them by Moulinie himself, and on the fact that a sum of £650,000 was made available to help in the islanders’ resettlement. After meeting about 50 of the islanders in Mauritius last week, we were told that the most plausible explanation was they left peacefully for the simple reason that they had no choice. They were also told there would be land and money for them in Mauritius.

Another islander, Marie Vencatassen, said, “We asked to stay but we were told it wasn’t possible. The Americans had bought all the islands and we had to leave. We were told it was the last boat.” The islanders who first moved to the Peros Banhos and Salomon islands were finally transported on to Mauritius in 1973. Each of the voyages, cramped under tarpaulins above the copra on the rolling decks of the Nordvaer, were clearly a nightmare for the islanders. But it was only a foretaste of what was to come.

Having been promised a home and land in Mauritius, the islanders on the last trip were taken first to the Seychelles so that the ship’s cargo could be disembarked. “We were vaccinated and went through customs.” says Marie “We asked for Mr. Paul Moulinie [Marcel’s uncle] and we walked about one and a half miles to his office. He tried to get us somewhere to stay but he couldn’t, and he told us the only place that was empty was the prison. We slept in cells on prisoners’ mattresses. The prisoners served us food. It was bad. The doors were locked at nine o’clock.”

Marcel Moulinie said last week that the jail idea was suggested by the administrator of the BIOT. Nine days later the islanders were put back aboard ship and taken 1,000 miles to Mauritius.

When they arrived in Mauritius neither the promised land nor money for housing was provided. The last group of islanders who arrived from Peros Banhos in 1973 refused to leave the boat that brought them when they found that no help was waiting for them: a rare show of militancy which secured them accommodation in dockers' flats and government housing. But all the islanders are bitter about the fate of the £650,000 which the British Government paid the Mauritian authorities for "relief and resettlement." They have yet to see any evidence of this being spent and ask. "Why the delay?"

"That of course is the £650,000 question." replied one Mauritius government official when asked the same question last week. The Mauritius Government blames everything, from the difficulty in buying land to this February's cyclone Gervaise which left 90,000 people homeless. For the present, it has got no further than acquiring one piece of land in Pointe aux Sables, which is popularly known as the brothel district of Mauritius, and are negotiating for a second piece of land in Roche Bois, which is known as Port Louis' worst slum.

A particular source of bitterness among the older islanders is their loss of the pensions to which they felt they were entitled if not by contract at least by well-established custom. Jean Desir, who received what by island standards was a high salary—80 rupees a month—says he considers he was entitled to a pension of half his pay on top of the 80 rupees if he continued to work.

The Mauritius Government has paid out old age pensions to 57 islanders, public assistance to 74 and family allowances to 78. Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo, the finance minister, says "conditions may be bad for some of these people, but not worse than for a lot of our people who have been living here all the time. {}" He says that none of the money has walked away, it is still there on trust. He argues—convincingly—that he would have been foolish just to dole out all the money in a lump sum to islanders who had very little concept of a society based solely on a money economy. But he is hard put to explain what has caused the delay in providing any kind of help for the islanders other than to say that it takes time to ensure that the money is spent in the right way.

He estimates that about half the islanders would like to return to their homes and he says the Mauritian Government has now begun to consider the possibility of setting them up as a co-operative on Agalega island where there is already an established coconut plantation. Unlike some government officials, Sir Veerasamy is not demanding more money from the British unless it can be shown that the British actually made money on the deal by getting cheap Polaris missiles. He says sadly: "It is easy to be wise after the event. But the problem is that when we talked about these islands in 1965 nobody realized that these people would not settle all right in Mauritius."

Tracking the islanders down in the slums around the Mauritian capital of Port Louis, two things are common to almost all their hovels. First there is nearly always a framed portrait of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, staring embarrassingly from walls which are sometimes no more than tin canisters beaten flat. Second, from some dark corner, they usually manage to dig up their other prized possession: a birth certificate showing they were born on one of the three Chagos islands. Seldom can they read it, but they know at least that it is important.

The islanders' former home was meanwhile being swiftly built up by the Americans from a "shared communications facility" into being the apple of the eye of naval strategists. For the past nine years, U.S. Navy officials have worked assiduously, secretly and ultimately successfully to turn a British colony into what is now on the road to becoming a new Okinawa.

In the process an ocean which American diplomats, including the present U.S. United Nations delegate, Daniel Moynihan, have described as marginal to American interests and best left as a neutral zone, has been transformed into yet another area of potential confrontation between East and West. In the resultant battle between Washington departments, the hawkish Pentagon has throughout been able to rely on the assistance of successive British Governments, both Labour and Conservative, for its side of the argument.

When the 1966 Agreement with Britain on Diego Garcia was signed, the Americans were preoccupied with Vietnam. But in 1967 another Anglo-American scientific mission surveyed the islands. Their first choice for development, Aldabra, was rejected after an outcry from conservationists. But the Americans seemed happy with the second choice. "It's the Malta of the Indian Ocean." said Admiral John McCain, U.S. Commander in the Pacific. After Nixon took office

in 1969 the Pentagon urged that the 1965 Agreement be implemented, particularly since the Russians were now “threatening” the Indian Ocean.

The Russians had arrived in 1968 with about six ships, had recovered their Zond 5 satellite off Mauritius, had laid buoys around the Seychelles and paid visits to several ports. Over 1968-69 the number of Russian ship-days they spent in the area increased from 529 to 1,138, according to Washington. “They have every intention of filling the gap left by British withdrawal,” warned Admiral McCain.

The Senate, however, fearful of another Asian imbroglio, refused the funds for developing the facility. This led one British official to admit to the Commons Public Accounts Committee that we appeared to have paid “a million pounds for a copra plantation.”

U.S. Navy chiefs were prepared to wait; they were anyway concerned about the strength of the Labour Government’s commitment to “facilities” on the island. And after the Conservative election victory of June 1970 Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, chief of U.S. Naval Operations, wrote a personal letter to the new foreign secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, to congratulate him and look forward to close co-operation in the Indian Ocean.

Sir Alec, who considered that the Soviet presence there alone justified the sale of arms to South Africa, was more than game. In December the two governments agreed in principle to build “a naval communications facility.”

It is likely that the island’s communications role will be as a transmitting station for Very Low Frequency (VLF) radio signals in the Omega navigational system developed by America to help nuclear submarines position their missiles accurately. Omega requires eight such stations for global coverage, and if Australia refuses to allow one on her territory—as seems possible in view of the intense controversy the suggestion has created—Diego Garcia, in the middle of the Indian Ocean, would be an obvious alternative. The Australians fear that an Omega station on their soil would present an obvious target for nuclear attack.

But the U.S. Navy seemed to have wider hopes for the use of Diego Garcia—probably closer to those of its War College which in October 1970 recommended “a highly visible multilateral military presence, preferably naval, in the area.”

Once the State Department had announced that the inhabitants of the island would be “relocated” the Navy flew in a command staff and several hundred Seabees—naval labourers—to build the sort of quarters Americans like. No attempt whatsoever was made to hire labour from the 360 people then inhabiting the island, despite the provisions of the 1966 Agreement which specified that local people should, if possible, be given work.

Since the end of 1970 there have been anything up to 1,000 Americans on the island plus 30 to 60 British naval ratings. The British are under a Lieutenant Commander who is also the Political Resident and is supposed to impose the rule of British law upon the Americans. The first Resident was Lt. Commander P. J. M. Canter.

Relations have not always been easy and British ratings report that many of the Seabees are “stoned out of their minds all the time.” Their building programme has therefore lagged behind. The Americans, the ratings say, also cause something of a hazard by insisting on driving very fast, on the wrong side of what passes for a road (driving on the left still theoretically applies as in many other British colonies). Their superiors have also flouted the terms of the agreement by refusing to allow the British to use the communication facilities without American supervision. Lt. Commander Canter was given an M.B.E. after his time on the island.

In March 1973, just after Nixon had achieved his “peace with honour” in Vietnam, the communications station was opened, with a lack of publicity which has characterised the venture throughout. Later public pronouncements were limited to assurances to Congress that there were “no plans to transform this facility into something from which forces could be projected.”

The Yom Kippur War, however, gave the U.S. Navy’s ambition’s {sic: ambitions} a crucial boost. On November 30, 1973, Secretary of Defence Schlesinger announced that the Navy would pay the Indian Ocean far more attention than in the past and at the beginning of 1974 Congress was asked for more funds to convert the communications facility into a “naval support base”—to extend the runway from 8,000 feet to 12,000 feet and to build a fuel storage depot that could supply an aircraft carrier task force for 28 days.

According to a State Department memo marked “secret,” both American and

British Governments agreed to try and conceal the nature of this remarkable request—which would in effect override almost every assurance given before. Press spokesmen were instructed to say that the new plans were “just a natural extension” of what had been built before.

CONGRESS OBJECTS

It is, however, less easy to bamboozle the American Congress than the British Parliament. Under intense questioning from a Congressional committee, Admiral Thomas Moorer, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, agreed that the new runway would allow the landing of B-52 bombers. Air Force Major-General George Loving announced that he would like to see the island used for the original purpose Denis Healey had in mind in the mid-sixties—as a base for F1-11s which have a range of 5,600 miles and carry nuclear warheads. The lagoon was to be dredged and equipped for aircraft carriers and submarines. In its secret memo, the State Department admitted that weapons would be stored on the island.

The American Congress initially refused to authorize the 29 million dollars requested by the Pentagon for the expansion. “It’s only a down-payment.” declared Senator Mike Mansfield who gave many examples of the way military costs escalated—and military intentions get out of hand. Congressman Robert Leggett added: “If you like Vietnam, you’ll love Diego Garcia.”

Congress delayed the expansion for more than a year. But just before a crucial vote on the issue this summer, the Pentagon played another card in what is known as their traditional same of “The Russians are coming.” They published aerial photographs purporting to show that the Russians were building a huge missile base at Berbera in Somalia. A Congressional junket was organized to look at it. Inevitably “hawks” agreed and “doves” disagreed with the Pentagon’s claims, although the Somalians refused to allow them to inspect the actual sites. But the claims were considered strong enough to force the necessary bill through The Senate. On July 28 this year, the Pentagon was empowered to expand Diego Garcia as it wished.

A week beforehand, the British Defence Secretary, Roy Mason, announced to an apparently complaisant House of Commons that the Americans were proposing not a base but only “a very austere communications facility for aircraft and ships.” When asked the difference between a base and a communication facility, Mr. Mason replied that the former included “replenishment, stores and recreation.” He also maintained that Diego Garcia was a much smaller facility than the RAF’s staging post on the island of Gan. On the basis of evidence available both in Washington and on the ground in Diego Garcia itself, it is hard to see the factual basis for Mason’s statement.

The effect of this expansion is difficult to predict. Throughout the last five years the main American argument has been the need to counter the Soviet threat. In fact the U.S. Navy was eager for an island base long before the Russians ever touched a toe in the warm southern waters, and there is considerable disagreement even within Washington over whether the new base will deter or encourage Russian expansionism in what is one of the richest areas of the world.

Henry Kissinger has been lukewarm towards the project arguing that there is no direct relationship between influence in the area and the number of ships in the sea. He has dismissed Zumwalt’s claim that the re-opening of the Suez canal will strengthen the USSR. And in July last year, the doves found themselves an unusual ally in the CIA Director, William Colly, who said that the Soviet forces in the Ocean “have been relatively small and inactive.” In fact, he said, the Russians tended to compete with the United States, and an American build-up would force them to increase their own presence there. Such escalation is, of course, the fear of the many countries bordering the Indian Ocean, who have called for it to be declared a neutral zone.

The Russians apart, Diego Garcia fits well into what the Pentagon calls its “blue water strategy” for the defense of what remains of “free world.” Asia. In 1972 the Military Review carried a major critique of U.S. Defense policy in which it argued that in Vietnam “we have learned that, in strategic terms, ground power can be quite inflexible once committed ... while aircraft and ships can often reverse course and make a clean break, ground forces can rarely do so, once engaged.” The Pentagon has thus developed a series of naval bases stretching from Yokosuka in Japan (which became the permanent home of the carrier Midway last year), through Tinian island, the Philippines to Diego Garcia and Simonstown in South Africa.

THE RISKS INVOLVED

In August 1973 American B-52 pilots who were bombing Cambodia out of Thailand complained that their next base would be on the British island. Now that the Americans are being forced to give up their berths for nuclear submarines in Sattahip, Thailand, and may also be denied berths in the Philippines, the isolated lagoon of Diego Garcia may prove their ideal southern base as well.

The way in which the Vietnam war ended, the Mayaguez adventure and the increasing difficulty the Americans now face in maintaining their bases in Asian countries have all confirmed President Ford in the need for Diego Garcia which he now describes as “essential to U.S. security.”

Senate liberals feel that all along it was more essential for U.S. Navy self-aggrandisement than essential for the U.S. security. And they feel that British help in clearing the island of potentially undesirable inhabitants was one of Diego Garcia’s most attractive features. They fear that now that the U.S. Navy is, for the first time, a three-ocean concern, it will use Diego Garcia to argue for maintaining more ships and more aircraft.

Yet the risks of the Diego Garcia venture are not only of increasing costs to the Americans, but of increasing tension in the one part of the world from which confrontation has until now been absent. The late Senator Richard Russell, who was chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee and responsible for handing money to the services, once remarked: “If we make it easy for the navy to go places and do things, we will find ourselves always going places and doing things.”

“Whoever heard of Diego Garcia?” asked Senator John Culver this summer? “But then whoever heard of the Gulf of Tonkin?”

The difference for Britain is that Diego Garcia is supposed to be British soil.

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APPENDIX 4

“Islanders Were Evicted for U.S. Base”

by David B. Ottaway, From the Washington Post, September 9, 1975

PORT LOUIS, Mauritius, Sept. 8.—More than a thousand inhabitants of the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia, which the Pentagon told Congress was virtually uninhabited, were forcibly removed before 1972 to make way for a controversial American naval base there.

The islanders are now living in abject poverty here in Mauritius, more than a thousand miles away, and have been petitioning the British and American embassies as well as the Mauritian government for help. But Washington has rejected all responsibility for their plight, and London has placed the onus on Mauritius, which already faces serious economic problems.

Diego Garcia and other islands in the Chagos group, 1,000 miles south of India's southern tip, were part of the British colony of Mauritius before Mauritius became independent.

Britain leased Diego Garcia to the United States in 1966, and the Defense Department now plans to expand its naval and air base facilities there. The proposal has aroused controversy in Congress and elsewhere because of its implications for an enlarged U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean.

Britain gave the Mauritian government about \$1.4 million in 1972 to provide housing, social services and other resettlement assistance for the displaced Diego Garcians, but they say little of this money ever reached them.

One American relief organization attempted in 1972 to raise the issue of United States “co-responsibility” for the fate of the Diego Garcians, but the State Department replied that their problems are strictly the concern of Britain and Mauritius, and not in any way those of the United States.

The organization has thus been obliged to try to help the Diego Garcians without assistance from the U.S. government.

Almost nothing has been written, outside Mauritius itself, about the fate of the island's hapless residents. The few Western press reports that have touched on the former inhabitants have generally described them as “transient laborers” from Mauritius numbering only a few hundred.

But interviews here with several dozen Diego Garcians and others familiar with their plight revealed that there were once more than 300 families—between 1,200 and 1,400 people—living on Diego Garcia and two neighboring islets, many of them third- and even fourth-generation inhabitants.

Almost a decade ago. Britain began quietly evacuating the islanders to make way for future British and American naval, air and communications facilities and the last Diego Garcians were ordered off the island by late 1971.

This allowed the Pentagon to tell Congress during the heated debate over the base that Diego Garcia was virtually uninhabited {sic: uninhabited} and that creation of the base would not cause any indigenous political problems.

But one old man. who said he was part of the final evacuation, recalled being told by an unidentified American official: “If you don't leave you won't be fed any longer.”

And the plight of the Diego Garcians is a political issue in Mauritius, where opposition groups charge that the transplanted population has been neglected and uncompensated for its losses.

In the last year, the Diego Garcians have organized and have asked Britain and the United States to press the Mauritian government to provide them with housing, land, jobs and other facilities to start a new life.

About six months ago. they drew up a formal petition and presented it to the British embassy, with copies delivered to the American embassy, Mauritian Prime Minister Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, and several opposition leaders. They also discussed their plight with U.S. embassy officials on several occasions.

[A spokesman for the State Department in Washington said that he was not aware of any petition and that the department is not considering any action “at

this time.” A British Embassy spokesman said the embassy here “has no knowledge” of the situation. He noted that if such an approach had been made in Mauritius, the matter would normally be taken up with the Commonwealth office in London.]

The petition is primarily a plea for help, but it also expresses the Diego Garcians’ feelings about being summarily tossed off their island to make way for a military base.

“We the inhabitants of the Chagos Islands—Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos and Salomon—have been uprooted from those islands because the Mauritian government sold the islands to the British government to build a base,” the petition begins.

“Our ancestors were slaves on those islands, but we know that we are the heirs of those islands. Although we were poor there, we were not dying of hunger. We were living free ... Here in Mauritius when animals are debarked, an enclosure with water and grass is prepared for them. But we, being mini-slaves, we don’t get anybody to help us. We are at a loss, not knowing what to do.”

The document goes on to ask for a meeting with British embassy officials to explain their problems in detail.

“We (want to) let the British government know how many people have died through sorrow, poverty, and lack of food and care,” it says. “We have at least 40 persons who have died.”

It ends with an appeal to Britain to get the Mauritian government to provide them with plots of land, a house for each family and jobs, and says that if these facilities are not forthcoming, “It is preferable that we be sent back to our islands.”

But the British reportedly told the islanders to address their petition to the Mauritian government, and the Diego Garcians are still waiting for assistance from some quarter while struggling to survive as best they can.

The conditions under which the islanders left Diego Garcia and their present difficulties were detailed by some of the former inhabitants in interviews at several of their homes in Roche Bois, suburb of Port Louis, where many of them now live.

One of the principal leaders is Christian Ramdas, 41, who was born on the island as were his parents, grandmother and most of his children. He said he went on vacation to Mauritius in 1965 shortly after Diego Garcia and the other islands in the Chagos group were formally split off from Mauritius to form part of the separate British Indian Ocean Territory, and was not allowed to return.

The three islands’ former inhabitants, who are mostly Indo-Mauritian and speak a French dialect, originally went to the Chagos as workers on coconut plantations owned by Mauritians or by companies based on the British Seychelles Islands.

Working conditions on the Chagos Islands appear to have been close to those of slavery. The plantation workers were given food, housing, and the equivalent of about \$4 a month to buy clothes, tea and coffee from the company store

Yet there was apparently a certain security on Diego Garcia which they obviously miss here on Mauritius.

“The life was easy, very easy,” according to Ramdas.

“We had animals and raised chickens.” said a young woman who has found work here as a maid. “We could fish off the island and we didn’t need a lot of clothes.”

On Mauritius, the Diego Garcians seem lost souls, living for the first time in a money economy where rent, food and clothing are priced far above their meager incomes and where they are either unsuited for the available jobs or discriminated against by employers who favor local Mauritians.

Although they apparently got along on about \$4 a month in the Chagos, they say a family can hardly make ends meet on Mauritius with \$65 a month.

A recent private survey of the Diego Garcians found that only 17 per cent of family heads had full-time jobs, 33 per cent were unemployed and 50 per cent worked part time.

Unskilled and uneducated, most “ilois” (French for islanders), as the Diego Garcians are called here, seem doomed to find only menial jobs, unless the local government undertakes some kind of special retraining program for them.

A Mauritian government spokesman said that two plots of land had been bought for housing sites but that the Diego Garcians themselves had rejected the idea of living in separate cities and wanted individual homes in locations of their own choosing.

Some of the men, such as Ramdas, would like to return to Diego Garcia to work on the American base and look after the church and cemetery where their relatives are buried. "We asked the U.S. Embassy to allow some of us to go back there, but there has been no reply," Ramdas said.

In the first British-American agreement concerning Diego Garcia, signed in December 1966, some consideration was given to employing "workers from Mauritius and Seychelles to the maximum extent practicable consistent with United States policies, requirements and schedules." But no specific mention was made of taking on the former inhabitants as workers.

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APPENDIX 5

“The Diego Garcians,”

Editorial From the Washington Post, September 11, 1975

The dubious case for planting an American base and fleet in the Indian Ocean has been rendered practically indefensible by disclosure of how the site got to be the “uninhabited”—and therefore politically uncomplicated—place which its United States government sponsors repeatedly proclaimed it to be. It got that way, we now are told in a dispatch from Washington Post correspondent David Ottaway, only because virtually all of the 1,200 or 1,400 residents of Diego Garcia and its two neighbor islets were forcibly removed to Mauritius 1,000 miles away to make way for the base. One of several dozen former Diego Garcians interviewed by Mr. Ottaway recalls being told by an American who participated in the evacuation: “If you don’t leave you won’t be fed any longer.” Since their removal, the Diego Garcians have lived in poverty and neglect in Mauritius, futilely petitioning the Mauritian, British and American governments for relief or return.

Granted, a lot went wrong in the world in the years 1966-72, in which this act of mass kidnapping took place. But it takes a very jaded observer not to be repelled by the sordidness of it all. First, there was the complicity of the British lessors and American leasees in solving the politically inconvenient problem of people on Diego Garcia by uprooting them from their homes and traditional ways. One wonders what strategic rationale was concocted inside the bureaucracy to justify the transfer of these few people who had gotten in the way of the cold war juggernaut. Then, there was through the years, on both sides of the Atlantic, a highly effective coverup, facilitated no doubt by the fact that the Diego Garcians in their poverty and their remoteness had scant recourse. Finally, there were the constant affirmations by the Pentagon that the lack of people on Diego Garcia was precisely one of those characteristics that made the island an appropriate place for a “modest” facility in the Indian Ocean.

Only last summer did the Congress vote the funds to start building an air base and carrier task force facility on the island. It did so only after a two-or-three-year-long debate over whether an American military presence in the Indian Ocean would unnecessarily antagonize the riparian states, provoke the Russians into a more intensive Indian Ocean naval competition, and fuel a naval arms race: or whether such a presence was justified in order to “stabilize” a region rendered increasingly sensitive by the oil tankers that ply its waters and by hints of Soviet interest in it. In the end, it took a full-scale Pentagon campaign to play up the existence of a new Soviet naval facility in the Somali Republic to persuade a reluctant Congress that the United States should build its own base in Diego Garcia. There is little evidence that Congress realized that it was committing itself not simply to the current costs of the base (measured in millions of dollars) but to the future costs of the fleet (billions) that is meant to be permanently deployed there when it is built. Congressional efforts to induce the administration to negotiate limits on naval deployment with the Soviet Union were brushed aside with the retort, by one high State Department official, that the United States did not have to “tug its forlock” and petition Moscow to remove the American Navy from the Indian Ocean.

The strategic case for a base on Diego Garcia was always a close question, one which its sponsors never made particularly well. But it is not a close question at all that the people of Diego Garcia were treated in a shameful way and that they should not be allowed to languish now in the miserable condition to which high strategy {sic: strategy} unfeelingly consigned them. For the United States government to keep on insisting that it has no responsibility for the people displaced by its lease on Diego Garcia is intolerable. At the very least, Congress should review the issue to ensure fair treatment to the foreign people of the island.

APPENDIX 6

Correspondence Dated August 26, 1975, Between the Defense Department and a Private Research Company With Regard to a Study of Arms Limitation Prospects for the Indian Ocean

August 26, 1975.

Hon. James H. Noyes,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Near Eastern, African and South Asian Affairs), Department of Defense, Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Noyes : In view of the growing public and congressional interest in U.S. and Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean, the question of regional naval arms control in that area would seem to be a timely one. Anticipating inter-agency studies on that subject, Delex Systems, Inc., is pleased to submit this unsolicited proposal to perform a supportive study on the mechanics of Regional Naval Arms Control.

The proposed study would address methods to quantify naval arms, to verify the presence or absence of such arms, and to restrain naval forces to agreed-upon levels. U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Indian Ocean basin would be considered as would those of other possible non-littoral signatories, keeping in mind the asymmetries of the navies involved and their differing interests in the region. The proposed study would :

1. Identify alternate means to quantify "naval presence" in the region. Specific alternatives to be investigated include measures such as ship-days, personnel-days, and tonnage, and appropriate weighted combinations.
2. Analyze these alternatives in terms of verifiability, perceived equality (i.e., negotiability), military utility, potential of circumvention, and impact on U.S. naval posture, establishing trade-offs based on the relative merits of the alternatives. Current and probable future military procurement programs would be an important factor in the analysis.
3. Examine corollary effects such as:
 - Possible major signatory force levels that might be established within the context of a set of alternate methods of quantification,
 - The implications of different treaty area boundaries, e.g., the 12 mile limit and low water mark, and signatory shore bases in littoral states on naval arms control, and
 - The military implications for the navies of non-signatories, both littoral and non-littoral, such as the PRC Navy and the Royal Navy.

An Understanding of the Problem is presented as Enclosure (1). Since the proposed study requires a working familiarity with intelligence information, a knowledge of U.S. and Soviet naval forces and weapon system trends, and a consideration of the tactical and technological stimulants in the U.S.-Soviet interaction as they affect system evolution, the qualifications of Delex Systems, Inc., in these areas are presented in Enclosure (2). The resumes of Mr. C. D. Allen, Jr., the proposed study director, as well as other members of the staff and Mr. Norman Polmar, Consultant, who would contribute to the study are presented in Enclosure (3). A cost estimate provided in the general format of DD form 633-4 is Enclosure (4).

Should there be further questions concerning the nature of our proposal or our corporate capability to perform the study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Delex Systems, Inc.
Dr. Richard H. Abrams, Jr.,
Vice President.

Enclosure.

Understanding Of The Problem

Quite aside from their political and economic value, arms control measures must be not only negotiable but, under U.S. arms control policy, verifiable.

Disregarding exterior factors which may weigh in the balance, negotiability implies that all signatories perceive the proposed measures to offer no diminution of their own national security posture and, preferably, enhancement of that posture. The root problem, which may also contain the means for actually enhancing the prospect of negotiability, is the gross asymmetry of the U.S. and Soviet navies. The two nations have very different perceptions of the military worth and purpose of their own and each other's forces, and, partly for this reason, structure and operate their navies in very different ways. Moreover, military technology advances so rapidly that these perceptions themselves constantly change, and the military utility of identifiable units or weapons shifts about, further complicating the task of agreeing on quantitative units of measure. For example, a ban on major caliber naval guns would have operated to the disadvantage of the U.S. Navy as recently as 1969, but would be of no consequence to any naval power today. Until recently, limits on aircraft carriers would affect only the U.S. Navy, and limits on tactical cruise missiles, only the Soviets, but within the next decade both navies will attach significant, but differing and varying, importance to both. Currently, the Soviet Navy relies on land-based aircraft for the targeting of their ship-launched, long-range, anti-carrier cruise missiles, but future alternate means are likely to emerge. Thus, the air strip at Berbera might play an indispensable role in Soviet anti-carrier operations in the Indian Ocean in the near future, while at a later date it could have an entirely different place in their tactical scheme.

Addressing the problem of verification, the complexity and diverse physical characteristics of naval weapons makes it increasingly difficult to determine their presence or absence in a given ship, which determination, in turn, would establish the military "worth" of that ship. For example, antiship missiles can now be fired from standard 21-inch torpedo tubes. Should a submarine with four torpedo tubes be assumed to carry antiship missiles; if so, how many? (Modern submarines can carry up to ten torpedo—or missile—reloads for every tube.) Moreover, the firing of antiship missiles requires the permanent installation of anti-ship cruise missile weapons control equipment, and most submarines are not now, and may never be, so equipped. However, without actually boarding the submarine, it would be nearly impossible to verify the presence or absence of an antiship missile capability, or the number of missiles carried (at that particular time). Worse, it is becoming increasingly difficult to determine from exterior appearance whether a missile carries a conventional or nuclear warhead, or what its range might be within an order of magnitude. (Until recently, the U.S. intelligence community ascribed triple its real range to a Soviet anti-ship missile which had been operational for years.) All of these uncertainties undermine the confidence of all parties in the value of an arms control agreement, and the development of confidence-building measures to offset these fears is a vital ingredient of naval arms control.

An in-depth knowledge of these problems as seen by the U.S and Soviet navies is prerequisite to the design of modern naval arms control measures. It simply is no longer meaningful to categorize warships by tonnage and gun caliber as in the Washington and London Naval Conferences of half a century ago. Other yardsticks may exist, usable under some conditions for finite periods of time, but they are not obvious, and their identification requires an extensive knowledge of modern U.S. and Soviet naval technology and tactics.

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APPENDIX 7

Letter Dated January 16, 1976, to Chairman Lee H. Hamilton from Jan S. F. Van Hoogstraten, Director, Material Resources Program, Church World Service with General Remarks and Comments on the Diego Garcia Issue

January 16, 1976.

Hon. Lee H. Hamilton,

Chairman, Special Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman Hamilton: As I had promised you, all too long ago, here are some remarks as received from Miss Nancy Robinson of the Mauritius Council for Social Service, from other sources in Mauritius, as well as some additional ones from myself. These comments refer to the Congressional Record (Senate) October 20, 1975, S 18228–S 18230, and in general terms to the issue of Diego Garcia before the Special Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on International Relations.

⁽¹⁾ I quote from a communication by Miss Robinson to me:

“The only part—of the Congressional Record as cited—that relates to the future rather than to the past is Agalega. At the time of writing (Nov. 12, 1975, there is no official confirmation here that there are plans to send—or invite—the Diegans to go to Agalega. However we do have a confirmation that the Mauritian Government is “buying” the islands, i.e., discontinuing the lease and compensating the company. This evoked a heated reaction among what seems to be a majority of the Diegans when it was suggested that they might be sent to Agalega. Their arguments being that they were already unrooted once: are just starting to get settled in Mauritius: the children are in school: they will ‘starve to death’ if they get sent there, etc. In 1971 I saw a survey report mentioning that 8 families had expressed a desire to go to Agalega—I assume they went if they indeed wanted to go. Several of the Diegan families have been back and forth to Agalega.”

I may add here that the conditions in Agalega should be improved by the Government of Mauritius and this process should be encouraged. The new Administrator in Agalega seems to be alert to such improvements and so is his wife. At the same time there seems to be no justification for the Mauritius Government to use the money for the resettlement of the Diegans to improve Agalega. The Mauritius press reported that the Mauritian Ambassador to the USA, Mr. Guy Balancy, was quoted as saying that President Ford seemed to favor the plan for resettling the Diegans in Agalega.

(2) Miss Robinson: With reference to p.41¹, demography, paragraph 1. All but 7 engaged in work on the coconut plantations: this included such functions as cook and housekeeper for the manager, building construction for local housing, boat construction. Under contract for two years: seems to have been automatically renewed as long as they stayed on the island, and their dependents automatically hired. If they left, they might or might not be rehired.

(3) Miss Robinson: With reference to p.41, demography, paragraph 3: Slave labor. In Agalega, at least, this was recent enough that the grandparent generation remembers—that Uncle so and so hung himself rather than submit to more punishment.

(4) Miss Robinson: p.41, demography, paragraph 4. No real sense of a distinct community. This seems to have been true, but there is definitely a way of life—and there is something about the cemetery where the relatives are buried that we’ve heard from several families.

(5) Miss Robinson: p.41, demography, paragraph 5. No more than 3 men and 17 women could be regarded as having their permanent homes on the island. This seems low, unless they mean the families who had never been off the island

¹ Resettlement report begins on page 40 of this committee print.

for any reason. There are many more than that, for instance, whose birth certificates show one after another of the children born on the island. Also, since the action resulted finally in closing all the islands, one must count all those who had their permanent homes on the other islands.

(6) Miss Robinson: P.41, demography, paragraph 6, lines 4-5: Persons would accept employment under suitable conditions elsewhere. This still seems to me to be true, and there have never been those suitable conditions.

(7) Miss Robinson: P.42, Resettlement: What plans did Britain make in 1969? Why did they wait until late 1973 to transfer funds to Mauritius, when it was already too late for properly receiving these people?

(8) Miss Robinson: P.42, Resettlement, paragraph 2: Workers “decided” against renewing(?) the contracts. They say they had no choice. The Company told them they couldn’t go back.

(9) Miss Robinson: P.42. Resettlement, paragraph 3: Coercion. I think it is true that there was no physical force used. But there was also no choice. Not only were they told that this was it—everyone off the island—but also there would no longer be any work, any food, any house, etc., since all belonged to the company.

(10) Miss Robinson: P.42. Resettlement Financing, para.2: “Most” of whom were Mauritian citizens. There are a few cases for whom this is still not cleared up. We were unable to get birth certificates for one family for this reason.

(11) Miss Robinson: P.43. Resettlement Financing, para.1: I am not aware that the Mauritian Government had any resettlement plan as early as 1969.

(12) Miss Robinson: P.43. Resettlement Financing, para.1: The Diegans still hold to what they put in the petition, the text of which should be available to the US Embassy.

(12-a) I may add here that those who have seen the petition seem to agree that the Diegans did an excellent job in preparing and getting signatures or thumb prints from some 200 adults for this petition. All knew exactly what they wanted to say and what they signed.

(13) Miss Robinson: P.44. Conclusion, para.3: I don’t see how it is clear from the outset that the U.K. was willing to provide technical assistance in dealing with settlement problems.

(14) I enclose a copy of an interview with Mrs. “P”. Mrs. “P” is aware that this story may be used and has no objections—Document A-1.

(15) I further enclose a copy of an interview with Mr. “N”. Mr. “N” is aware that this story may be used and has no objections—Document A-2.

(16) I also attach a copy of a Document B-1, i.e., a Summary of a Survey of the Persons Displaced from the Chagos Islands.

(17) I have also been asked to share with the Committee the following comments from a Mauritius citizen—I know his identity—on the above-mentioned S 18228—S 18230—Congressional Record. October 20, 1975. This person is familiar with refugees from the Chagos Archipelago.

(a) P.42. Resettlement Financing, para.1, lines 5-7: I do not think that the persons who had worked on the Islands before the evacuation had settled voluntarily in Mauritius. Some came for medical treatment, the Company refused to re-employ them. Others were sent by force by the Manager of the Islands because of their behaviour or simply because they did not share the views of the Manager. (They were rejected on insubordination ground).

(b) P.41. demography, para.3, lines 5-6: Labourers received \$3 to \$6 monthly plus housing and rations of rice, flour, salt and oil and even so they had some savings. When they came to Mauritius some of them had over Rs.2000—thus families had radio-cassettes and record-players. They also had done extra work in the coconut fields and went fishing. Although life on the islands was trying, the islanders were conditioned to that kind of life. They had breadfruits to eat, coconut to drink and could prepare their local meals plus plenty of fish. Here in Mauritius they cannot afford a slice of salted fish and breadfruit is excessively expensive. It can be said that they can get all these things in Agalega, but they want what was promised to them (by Mr. Todd, Governor of the Seychelles and the Representatives of the BIOT as well as by the Representative of the Agalega and Chagos Company, Ltd.) i.e., money and housing. We must ask the questions:

— Has the Government of the Seychelles compensated those from the islands who are there now?

— Will the Government of Mauritius buy the freehold of Agalega from the Chagos and Agalega Co. Ltd. for the specific purpose of resettling those returning from the Chagos Archipelago or does the Government have other intentions?

- With what money will the Government of Mauritius take over Agalega? If the G.O.M. intends to use the money given to it for “the resettlement of the workers,” will these workers become proprietors of their houses there?
- Has the Government consulted the persons concerned before taking over Agalega?
- What do the Islanders think of that project? Some or even many have been to Agalega and refused to renew their contracts.
- If they are sent by force to Agalega, will they receive a “disturbance” allowance as those Government officers working there do receive?
- Meanwhile will they receive an allowance or any other assistance from the Government until such time as more permanent resettlement plans become functional?
- One wonders whether the interest accumulated in the bank on the unused 0.65 million pounds sterling earmarked for “the resettlement of workers” {will} be distributed to the islanders for Christmas.
- Finally I believe that the USA has a moral obligation towards these islanders. If the USA wants to protect our zone—from what?—they should first of all see that those who sacrificed their motherland are protected.

(18) I also enclose a copy of an article in the “Manchester Guardian” of Tuesday, November 4, 1975 by Martin Walker entitled, “Price on Islanders’ Birthright.”

(19) If and when the United States is asked to contribute or is offering to contribute towards the final resettlement of the islanders in Mauritius or elsewhere, it might be useful to take the following views into account which have reached us from Mauritius:

- (a) Housing: Include housing for the “Diegans” with the first 600 cyclone-reconstruction houses. Do not put the Diegans all together in one cité. Put them together with Mauritians on a not-less-than 1:4 ratio. Where practical, scatter them within a housing complex. Make the families the owners of these homes and give them their deeds. Deduct from the funds given for the Diegans based on the value of these deeds. Give those living at Cité La Cure the choice of keeping the houses where they are living.
- (b) Furniture: Calculate a basic minimum set of furniture to give each family. Have it built and ready by the time the cyclone houses are. Deduct the actual cost from funds given for the Diegans.
- (c) Social Worker: Hire a social worker to work full time with the families for a given period (say two years). The worker would prepare them for living in the new housing, help investigate vocational training needs, follow the children in their school progress, and look into individual needs.
- (d) Jobs and Vocational Training: Provide a program of intensive personalised introduction of the Diegans to specific trades where there are job opportunities. The Diegans should be in a training group separate from other Mauritians for a long enough period to give them confidence in their ability to learn and perform these skills well enough to earn a decent living with them, and to make a good showing when working together with other Mauritians.
- (e) Funds Paid by British Government: Calculate what is the total amount available for each family (average of about Rs.21,000, not counting what was set aside for job rehabilitation?). Keep track of an “account” individually for each family, and subtract from this the value of the house when they receive the deeds, the set of furniture, etc. Let each family present proposals, more or less as is done for Mauritius Housing Corporation or a loan from the Development Bank. Proposals might cover the purchase of a piece of land they know is available, purchase of tools, of animals, the cost of secondary or vocational schooling for one of the children, or whatever they find is necessary. As paid, the amount would be deducted from the total “account.” Possibly any balance remaining might be used to open a bank account for the family. The amount allocated for job rehabilitation (Rs.553,000 plus 250,000?) could be used for organizing any kind of training to be followed by large numbers of Diegans. Training specialized for one or two families would be deducted from their accounts.
- (f) Meanwhile some favor to add a provision for paying the families a living allowance until the houses are built, etc.
- (g) Finally, those close to the Diegan resettlement problems feel that the most important step is the immediate formation of an Association of Diegans which could both speak for them and work on priority needs. This should be encouraged.

(20) Finally, I enclose a copy of a letter I wrote dated October 6, 1975 to the Senator of Missouri, the Honorable Stuart Symington, which is self-explanatory. This letter, to which I received no reply, should not be inserted in the Record.

On behalf of Church World Service, I express my appreciation to you, the members of your committee and indeed to Dr. Michael Van Dusen for their efforts to bring this matter into the open. May that action contribute to a just solution of the problems of the Diego Garcians.

Respectfully yours,

Jan S. F. van Hoogstraten,
Director, Material Resources Program.

Enclosures:

Document A-1

Document A-2

Document B-1

Article from Manchester Guardian, dd. Nov. 4, 1975

Copy of letter dd. Oct. 6, 1975 [not included in committee print].

Document A-1

Mrs. "P" came to Mauritius from Diego Garcia in 1968 with her 6 children. Since then she has taken on the care of two additional children, when her sister died and the children were left homeless. The 8 children range in age from 9 to 19.

Since coming to Mauritius. Mrs. "P" has lived in three locations: Roche Bois, Terre Rouge, and now Riche Terre, all on the outskirts of Port Louis.

When the children were little she washed clothes for a family in Port Louis, even though it meant leaving the children alone, in order to have something to feed them and pay the rent. She now gets some help from Public Assistance, but she finds this scarcely enough to pay the rent and feed the children, with nothing for buying clothing.

She tried to get a place for one of the older boys to work as a carpentry apprentice, but was told he would have to pass 6th standard first. Since the boy had never been to school, there was no chance. The children 9 to 15 now go to school, since the special project was started this year for the schooling of the children from Diego and other Chagos Islands.

Mrs. "P" has tried to raise animals and plant a garden. The greens she planted grew, but they were stolen. She bought some chickens and was refraining from selling any or using any of the eggs. Her hope was to raise about three generations and sell them all at once in order to get enough money to buy two goats to give her children. One day she found most of the chickens dead; she assumes they were poisoned. The five that were left and the coop were lost in February in Cyclone Gervais. She also lost during the cyclone her two coconut-straw mattresses that she brought from Diego. She tried to save them, but the wind became too strong and she and the children had to flee to a neighbor's house. When she returned, the mattresses, and most of the iron sheets from the house, were gone. Now she has had to gather grass for the children to sleep on.

To rebuild her house after the cyclone, Mrs. "P" received 15 poles and 10 iron sheets from the Government. The woman from whom she rents is a widow herself and said she would not be able to rebuild, so Mrs. "P" did the best she could herself. In some places she nailed cardboard over the holes in the old iron sheets. She covered the roof with thatch, but it leaks.

In order to get the chores done, Mrs. "P" wakes her children at 5 a.m. and they help her before they leave for school. At school they get milk and bread and sometimes cheese. During the day she does not make herself lunch—only some tea—in order to save everything possible for the children's evening meal. She knows she's losing weight and strength from not eating properly.

In Diego she didn't have to worry about all this. She had a nice-sized yard and raised chickens. She was given greens from the manager's garden, and fish as part of her ration. Wood for cooking had only to be gathered. When she thinks about Diego, she wishes she could be buried there when she dies, as all her relatives were. Her parents and her grandparents were born in Diego and they were all buried there.

If there were a question of going back to Diego now to work, she would have to talk about it with her children before deciding. Certainly she would not go without the children. What she really thinks is that the Government should give her a house with a small yard that she would know was hers, as she was told to expect when she first arrived. If the Government cannot manage this,

she thinks they should give each family their money and let them make their own arrangements. For those who wanted to spend all their money in drink, that would be their own problem; she would look after the future of her children.

Document A-2

Mr. "N" and his wife and 5 children (ages 5-14) have just moved to a former shop on Sans Paletot Road in Petite Rivière. This is the fourth place they have lived since they came to Mauritius from Peros Banhos in 1973. The first house at Pont Bruniquel, Port Louis, for which they paid Rs.15 a month, was too leaky to live in. The second in Roche Bois, Port Louis, was too expensive. Then they shared the two rooms of the grandmother and others of her family at Cité La Cure, north of Port Louis, for two months until they found this place—one room for which they pay Rs.25 a month. They have signed up for a Government-subsidized Central Housing Authority house, but have been told that their name is far down the waiting list.

Mr. "N" has no regular work; he does whatever work he can find. For the moment he is crushing rocks. Once he worked as a construction laborer. Periodically he has gone to St. Grandon to fish. Here he must sign up for six months or so at a time and cannot take his family. When he goes he allocates Rs.75 per month to be sent to his family; whatever he earns in addition—maybe Rs.50 per month—he receives as a lump-sum payment when he returns. Mrs. "N" has now found work helping in the garden of someone in Petite Rivière.

The oldest son has been pointed out by his teacher as a smart child, interested in school, who is being held back by malnutrition. The mother says he has always been frail. Now the doctor says he has anemia. Sometimes he feels too weak to move. Last week he had to miss three days of school because the doctor said he should stay in bed. The mother is learning what foods he should have, and says she will try to improve his diet, but she has trouble finding the money to feed the family at all.

Document B-1

Summary of Survey by Hélène Siophie of the Persons Displaced from the Chagos Islands

Families visited:	0,292
Families responding:	0,277
Number of persons:	1,183
Places residing:	
(1) Baie du Tombeau	
(2) Bois Marchand	
(3) Cassis	
(4) Cité la Cure	
(5) Dockers Flat	
(6) Mon Choisy	
(7) Pailles	
(S) Petite Rivière	
(9) Pointe aux Sables	
(10) Riche Terre	
(11) Roche Bois	
Date of arrival in Mauritius:	
1960 and before	106 families
1961–68	85 families
1969–73	86 families
Employment:	
Heads of family who work	178
Old age pension recipients	78
Unemployed heads of household	21
Type of Work:	
Cane and Agriculture labourers	2
Carbon maker	1
Carpenter	2

Type of work—Continued

Casuals (anything they find each day)	5
Cook (aboard ship)	1
D. W.C.	1
Dockers	85
Factory Workers	7
Fishermen	25
Guardians	3
Maids	22
Mason	1
Stevedores	6
Stone breaker	1
Truck Loaders	16

Of these, 100 are “temporary,” which usually means they have work (and pay) some days and not others.

Education:

Children 6–12 not in school at time of survey	56
Children 13–16 not in school at time of survey	22
In college	8
Apprenticeships	13
Unemployed youth	35
Adults who can read to some extent	10

All those 6–9 not in school. All the 10–15 who are interested (28) in special class.

Housing:

Home owners	3 families
Rent a plot of land	11 families
Housed by Government	17 families
Housing provided by campment owners or sugar estate	11 families
Rent paid:	
Less than Rs 10 per month	26 families
Rs 11–15 per month	67 families
Rs 10–25 per month	66 families
Rs 26–35 per month	28 families
More than Rs 35 per month	17 families
Living with relatives	24 families
Size of homes:	
1 room for 5–9 persons	47 families
Houses in bad condition	151
Public assistance:	
Recipients of family allowance	48
Recipients of outdoor relief	26

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{Pages 114-121 are typewritten pages from which the preceding summary was prepared}

[From The Manchester Guardian, Nov. 4, 1975]

Price of Islanders' Birthright

(Martin Walker reports from Mauritius on the fight for compensation for the Diego Garcians)

Michel Venkatassen is illiterate, speaks a creole dialect which is understood by some 2,000 other people on earth, and is suing the British Government. He is one of the Diego Garcia islanders forced to leave their atoll home to make way for an American naval base in the Indian Ocean.

He is the plaintiff in the islanders' suit against Britain largely because he and his wife packed a bundle of family papers—which they cannot read—when they were told to leave Diego Garcia in September, 1971.

Because those papers included his birth certificate, his father's birth certificate, and some documents indicating that his grandfather was born on the atoll, he was chosen as the man with the most provable case.

For Michel, his three sons, and five grandchildren, the lawsuit means a kind of a living. Most of the family lives in a four-roomed house for which, they pay about £3 a month, or about a third of their income.

Michel tried to become a fisherman when exiled, but the local fishermen, themselves unable to compete with the new fishing fleets with refrigerated holds, do not welcome further competition, so Michel's family live mainly from a subsidy from the lawyers fighting their case for compensation.

It so happens that Michel's and the islanders' lawyer is the leader of the parliamentary Opposition in Mauritius, and their compensation has become a key political issue here.

The question of the American base itself is not essentially in dispute. Gaetan Duval, leader of the Opposition, positively likes the idea of the base "to protect my freedom from the Communists. They want bases in my ocean too." The Prime Minister, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, has protested to Britain and America that he gave up the Diego Garcia islands for a simple staging and communications post—not the £50 million base now envisaged.

But he shrugs his shoulders: "I may say as much as I like, but our hopes rest on the diplomatic initiative mounted by the Australian and Indian Governments, in the name of all the Indian Ocean nations, to keep these water {sic: waters} a neutral zone."

Six weeks ago, the US Senate delayed funds for the base when it learned, from reports in the Guardian and the American press, that the island it had been told was uninhabited had once contained some 1,200 people—who were discreetly evacuated by Britain before the Americans moved in.

In Britain and the US, the merits of the base and the ethics of that evacuation were the issue. In Mauritius, these manoeuvres of the Great Powers were of less moment than the fate of the £650,000 compensation paid by Britain to Mauritius to help to resettle the evacuees.

Until the islanders' fate became internationally known, some six weeks ago, they were living in deep poverty. But in the past six weeks, almost 40 families have been given apartments in public housing blocks built for dockers. Others have been given public land and sheets of corrugated iron with which to build shacks.

Ram Dass built his gleaming, metallic new home in a hollow by the dock's oil-storage tanks. A cow, some goats, and chickens graze around the four-room dwelling where Ram Dass and three other families live.

When the rains come, the hollow floods almost to the rim. But at least it is a home, and the Diego Garcians are now living in rather more comfort than Mauritians made homeless by last February's hurricane. The damage, however, has already been done. Diego Garcia was remote and disease free, scoured of germs by wind and distance. Of a total of more than 900 who came to Mauritius, 28 of the children died from influenza.

Adults and children died of the diphtheria against which Mauritians are automatically vaccinated. And the cultural shock of arriving in the teeming, humid, poorer quarters of Port Louis still takes its toll. "They are without guts, without nerves, in a state of shock," say {sic: says} Gaetan Duval "We have had to force them to react, to claim their rights. They are happy just to sit and die."

He is seeking—or at least, he has staked out as the first claim in negotiations—£30,000 compensation for each family, to enable them to buy some farmland,

some animals, and a home. The £650,000 Britain has already given amounts to £3,000 for each family.

The Mauritius Government last month announced a plan to buy two of the Agalega Islands 500 miles north of Mauritius from a Seychelles company for the Diego Garcians, but no resettlement plan has yet been agreed.

The Government's position is delicate. While it does not want Duval's opposition to make all the running on behalf of the islanders, it does not want to offend Mauritians, particularly the hurricane victims, by favouring the refugees.

But the cause of the Diego Garcians is perfectly suited to the bizarre political talents of the almost absurdly charismatic Duval. "They came to me because I am the sun," he says. "I am the king here. My party is not based on ideology but on love."

In court, as a barrister, Duval presents a case with an odd mixture of the forensic and the impassioned. Holding court, in a bar or restaurant, he is maudlin, fiery, and cantankerous in turn. "You saw my strike of the sugar workers yesterday?" he asked. "I wanted to show the Government my power." The barmen grin and call him "Rol."

What all this will do for the unfortunate Diego Garcians is not clear. The lawsuit grinds slowly through the high court in England.

The base itself looks almost certain to be built. And to meet conditions when the rains come in January Ram Dass has already picked out a convenient hillock where he reckons he and his family and his livestock will be safe from floods.