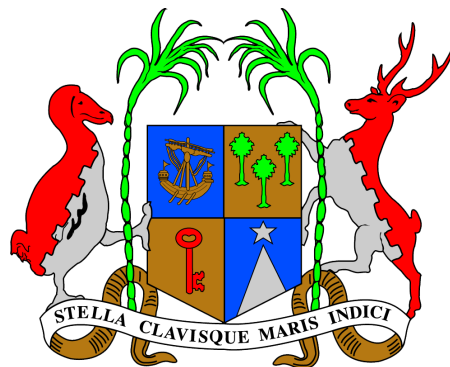


ARBITRATION UNDER ANNEX VII OF THE 1982 UNITED NATIONS  
CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

**REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

**v.**

**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN  
AND NORTHERN IRELAND**



**MEMORIAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

VOLUME II

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1 August 2012

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BRIEF NO. 14

SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT  
TO WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK

21 - 24 March

RECEIVED IN ARCHIVE NO. 37
20 MAY 1965
24/66

### DEFENCE INTERESTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Discussions with the Americans have been going on for some time at the official level about the proposals for military facilities on one or more of the small island dependencies of Mauritius and the Seychelles. The United States Embassy have warned us that Mr. Rusk may ask the Secretary of State how the matter stands, since the American side are waiting for a reply to their proposals.

2. The background is as follows. Ever since the Chinese attack on India, and possibly even before that, the Americans have been conscious of a gap in their military dispositions in the Indian Ocean area. They have no forces continuously deployed between the Mediterranean and the South China Sea and no bases between the Mediterranean and the Philippines. In December 1963 they announced that a carrier task force would pay periodic visits to the Indian Ocean area. Her Majesty's Government welcomed this move, and two visits have since taken place. In February 1964 it was agreed between United States and British officials that, subject to the results of a survey, a United States military communications station and supporting facilities should be built on the island of Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago, administered by Mauritius but over a thousand miles North-East of the main island. It was further agreed that this might turn out to be the beginning of a project on a wider scale with other facilities in the western part of the Indian Ocean (perhaps on Aldabra, an island administered by the Seychelles), with the possibility of more facilities

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in the eastern part of the Indian Ocean (perhaps in the Cocos-Keeling Islands, which are administered by Australia). The Americans were at pains to emphasise that this initiative was intended to complement, and not to replace, the British military effort in the area. They also made it plain that any islands chosen for military facilities must be free from local pressures which would threaten security of tenure, and that in practice this must mean that the islands would be detached from the administration of Mauritius (soon due for independence) and of the Seychelles (where pressure for independence is beginning to be felt).

3. It was agreed that the United States Government would pay for any facilities constructed, allowing us joint use at all times; while Her Majesty's Government would be responsible for making the chosen islands available and for paying the necessary compensation to local interests. These principles were subsequently approved by Ministers in London.

4. A joint Anglo-American survey of a number of likely islands, including Diego Garcia, was carried out from June to August 1964. The Premier of Mauritius (Dr. Ramgoolam) and the Executive Council of the Seychelles were consulted beforehand and raised no objection to the survey. An approach was also made to Dr. Ramgoolam about the possibility of detaching islands in the Chagos Archipelago from the Mauritius administration. His reaction was guarded. Rumours had for some time been current in the islands that the Americans proposed to build 'bases' in the area. At about this time there appeared a number of speculative stories in the world press. These in turn gave rise to unfavourable reactions from some of the governments of African and Asian countries bordering on the Indian Ocean, as well as from the Soviet Union, the United Nations, and the Cairo Conference of Non-Aligned Countries.

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The public line we took in reply was that certain communications and other facilities were a possibility but that no decision had been taken.

5. The American Embassy have recently produced proposals for the use for defence purposes of seven islands administered by Mauritius and the Seychelles, listed in three categories of priority. First comes Diego Garcia (where it is proposed to make a start as soon as possible on the construction of a communications station, together with an airstrip) and in the interests of security and future expansion, the rest of the Chagos Archipelago; second comes the island of Aldabra as a site for an air staging post, to be constructed at some time unspecified in the future; and thirdly, a list of five islands (Coetivy, Agalega, Farquhar, Ile des Roches, and Cosmoledos) which the Americans considered might be useful for unspecified defence facilities at some future date.
6. This is how the matter rests. Ministers will shortly be asked to reaffirm Her Majesty's Government's general support for this scheme and to agree that the Colonial Office should undertake the necessary constitutional steps in Mauritius and the Seychelles. Meanwhile the Ministry of Defence, in conjunction with other interested Departments, are calculating the cost of the acquisition of the islands chosen and assessing the military potentialities of each island. It is hoped that a paper will be circulated to Ministers within the next two or three weeks.
7. The Secretary of State will not wish to raise the subject, since we are not ready to give a substantive answer. If Mr. Rusk raises it, the Secretary of State can say that we regard the plan as an imaginative and valuable concept, that we are examining the American proposals as a matter of urgency, but that as Mr. Rusk will understand, there are a number of different - and difficult - aspects to be considered, and we are not quite ready to give a reply. If the Secretary

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/or

## ANNEX 8

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SECRET

of State is able to secure the agreement of the Colonial Secretary and the Defence Secretary, before he leaves for Washington, to his giving a more encouraging reply to Mr. Rusk, so much the better.

Permanent Under-Secretary's Department

18 March, 1965

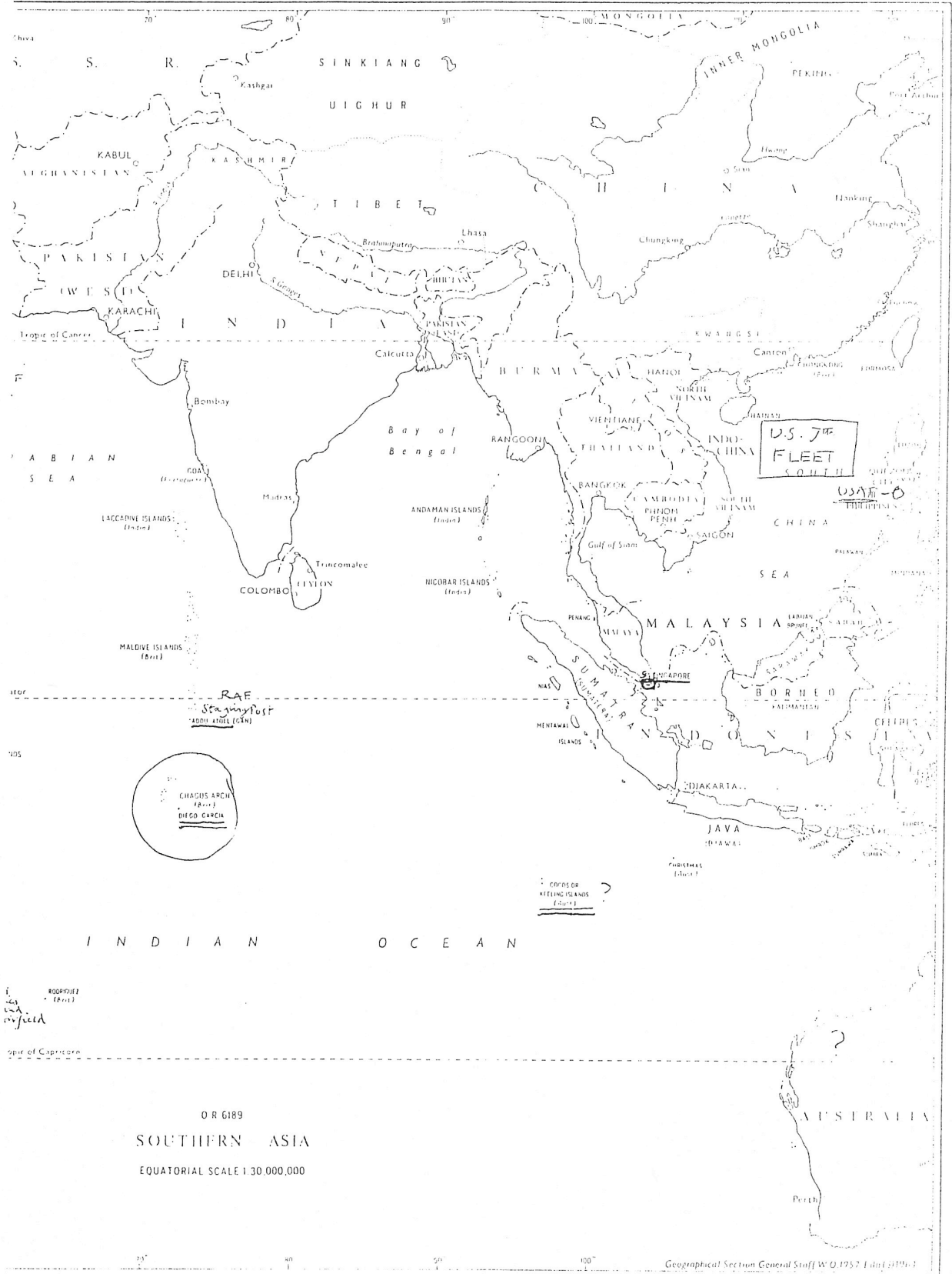
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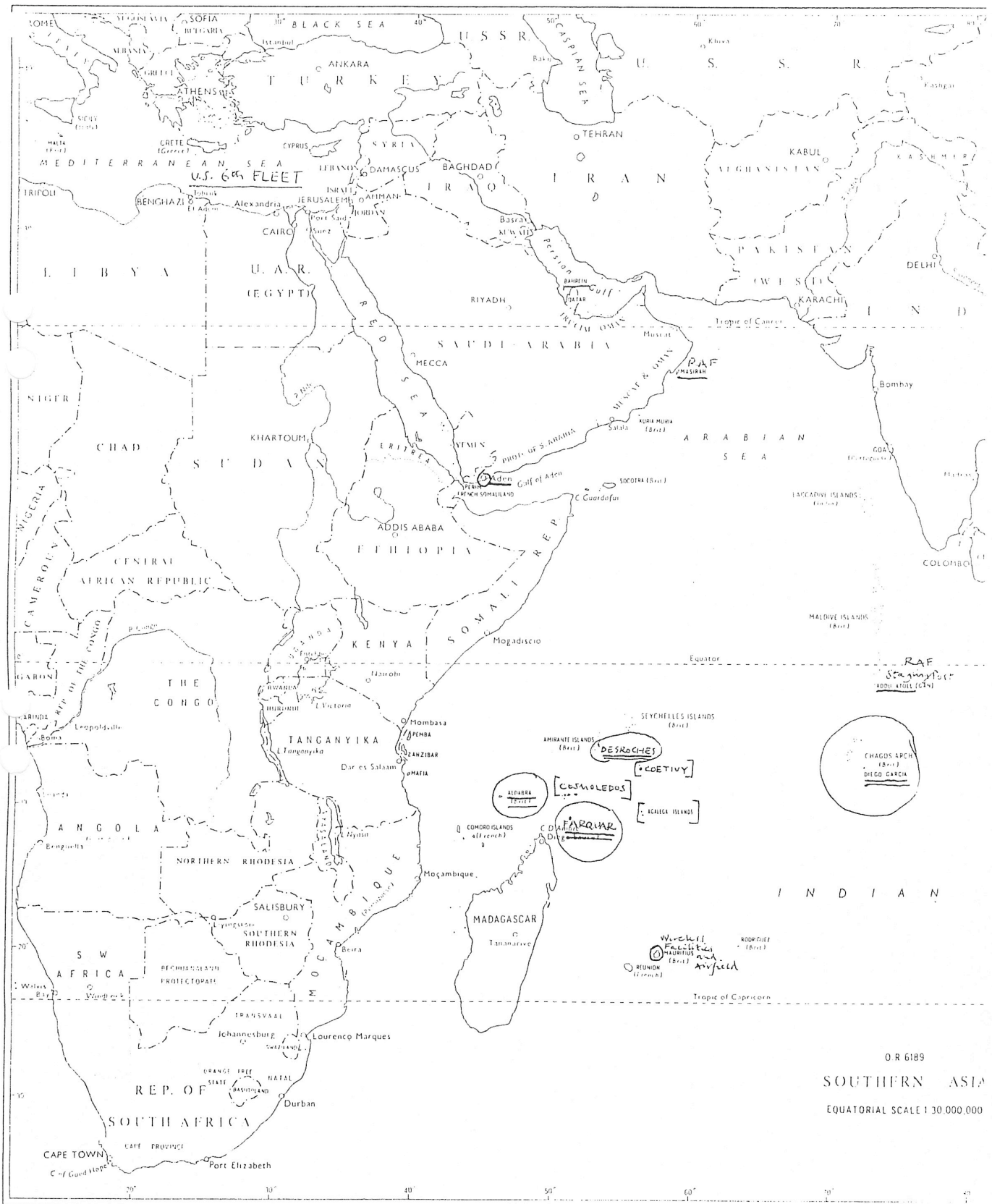
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ANNEX II



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**ANNEX 9**

Foreign Office Telegram No. 3582 to Washington, 30 April 1965,  
FO 371/184523

# ANNEX 9

SECRET

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO WASHINGTON

Cypher/OTP & By Bag

FO(S)/CRO(S)/WH(S) DISTRIBUTION

No. 3582

30 April, 1965

D. 15.17 30 April, 1965

IMMEDIATE

SECRET

Addressed to Washington telegram No. 3582 of 30 April,  
Repeated for information Saving to U.K.Mis. New York No. 789

Defence Facilities in the Indian Ocean.

Please speak to Mr. Rusk or an appropriately senior member of the State Department, on the following lines.

2. As the Prime Minister has already told Mr. Rusk, we are anxious to press ahead with this project as rapidly as possible. We consider that the islands chosen for defence facilities to be developed either immediately or in due course, should be Diego Garcia and the rest of the Chagos Archipelago (Mauritius) and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar and Des Roches (Seychelles). Agalaga (Mauritius) and Coctivy and Cosmoledo (Seychelles) should be dropped.

3. It is now clear that in each case the islands are legally part of the territory of the colony concerned. Generous compensation will, therefore, be necessary to secure the acceptance of the proposals by the local Governments (which we regard as fundamental for the constitutional detachment of the islands concerned) in addition to compensation for the inhabitants and commercial interests which will be displaced. The total may come to as much as £10 million. We should, therefore, like to discuss with the United States Government the possibility of a contribution to these costs from their side.

4. You should add that Her Majesty's Government are not finally committed at this stage. We are, however, ready to approach the Seychelles and Mauritius Authorities with firm proposals for the detachment of the islands listed above. Timing of such an approach is not yet finally decided because of Mauritius political considerations.

/5.

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## ANNEX 9

SECRET

Foreign Office telegram No. 3582 to Washington

-2-

5. Before making this approach it would be prudent to discuss what publicity line should be taken if the details should leak, and what approaches should be made in the capitals of the countries bordering the Indian Ocean who will be mainly concerned.

6. I should like to compare ideas with Mr. Rusk on this next week. It would be helpful if he could then give me at least a provisional answer to the suggestion in paragraph 3 above. Once a proposal is put to the Mauritius and Seychelles Authorities, a speedy (and therefore generous) settlement is most likely to be the best way of disarming criticism.

CCCCC

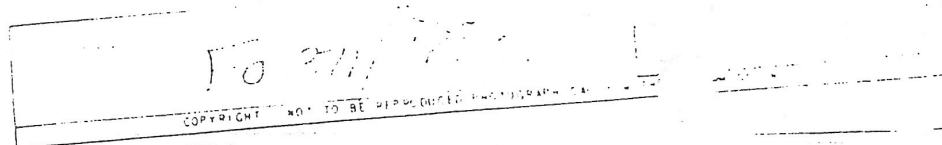
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**ANNEX 10**

Colonial Office Telegram No. 198 to Mauritius, No. 219 to  
Seychelles, 19 July 1965, FO 371/184526

ANNEX 10



SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM  
FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO (1) MAURITIUS  
(2) SEYCHELLES

Cypher

Sent 19th July, 1965. 18.00 hrs.

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET(AND PERSONAL) TO MAURITIUS  
(1) PERSONAL No. 198  
(2) No. 219

To (1) Your telegram Personal No. 61.

To (2) Your telegram Personal No. 56.

U.K./U.S. Defence Interests.

Matter has now been considered by Ministers in light of your advice. Americans have been informed that while we could not agree to their proposals in full we are nevertheless willing in principle to pursue proposed joint development further on the basis that, subject to the agreement of the two Governments, which we regard as essential, we would be prepared to detach from Mauritius and Seychelles and make available for our own and American use the following islands:

the whole of the Chagos Archipelago (including Diego Garcia),  
Aldabra,  
Farquhar and Desroches.

The position is thus that, whilst no final decision to proceed has yet been taken, provided that total compensation necessary to secure agreement of Governments of Mauritius and Seychelles is not too large, project will be proceeded with. As you know basic intention is that Britain should be responsible for cost of acquisition of necessary islands and compensation generally whilst Americans would finance construction costs of defence facilities.

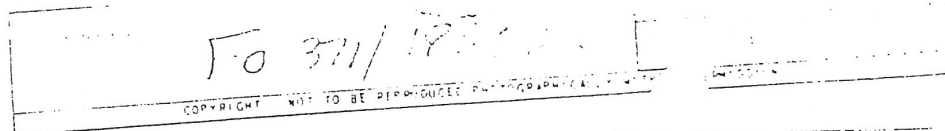
2. For your own information Ministers were when considering the matter, aware of my views on probable elements in compensation necessary to secure acceptance of these proposals by Governments of Mauritius and Seychelles as follows:-

- (i) unavoidable costs in respect of
  - (a) compensation for island owners;
  - (b) costs of resettlement of displaced labour;
- (ii) probable demands by Governments for compensation in respect of loss of territory (additional to existing and anticipated development assistance under normal arrangements) which might comprise -
  - (a) provision of a grant to Seychelles sufficient to cover the cost of a full length civil airfield on Mahé (which we assume might be £2-3 m.);

SECRET

/(b)

## ANNEX 10



SECRET

- (b) provision of a capital grant to Mauritius, the amount being almost certainly not less than that involved in (a) above;
- (iii) willingness to finalise on generous terms draft agreement covering the American Tracking Station in Seychelles which must in any case be settled as soon as possible and which unefficials would be likely to insist upon before considering any further facilities for Americans;
- (iv) possible additional demands from Mauritius -
  - (a) to cooperate in a scheme to enable substantially more Mauritian emigrants to settle in Britain;
  - (b) to make efforts to secure American agreement to a substantial sugar export quota for Mauritius to the U.S.A.

3. Expenses as at (1) in preceding paragraph are clearly unavoidable. So too no doubt are some substantial compensation payments on lines of (ii). As to (iii) we recognise that in this wider context this should not present undue difficulty. As to (iv) both these possible demands would cause us grave difficulties and we sincerely hope that Governor Mauritius will be able to steer his Ministers off making them.

4. As indicated above no final decision on this project has yet been taken. In view of appreciable total compensation cost which seems inevitable we have raised with Americans question whether, without departing basically from division of costs of project indicated in paragraph 1 above, they would be prepared to make some contribution to compensation costs. The Americans have now stated that they are prepared in principle to make such a contribution. They have however stipulated (and we agree) that this fact and the method of payment, which would not be direct, must be kept strictly secret, and they attach the greatest importance to this. In any case, before Ministers here can take final decision on whether project should go ahead, we need some clear indication as to amount and nature of compensation necessary to secure Mauritius and Seychelles agreement.

5. Ministers have therefore directed that discussions should now be opened with Mauritius and Seychelles Governments on proposals outlined in paragraph 1 above. The object of this initial round of consultations with -

(to (1)) your Ministers

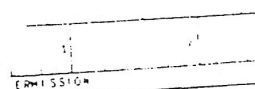
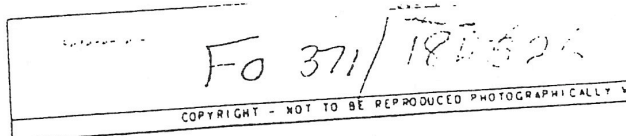
(to (2)) members of your Executive Council would be:-

- (i) to secure their reactions to proposed development on lines indicated in paragraph 1 above;
- (ii) to attempt to clarify likely compensation demands so as to enable us to gauge what it might be necessary to offer to secure willing and public acquiescence in proposed developments.

/You

SECRET

## ANNEX 10



SECRET

## OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

You should not, of course, in these initial discussions indicate contents of paragraph 2 above. You should explain that before the British Government finally decides whether to go ahead with the project it is necessary to have some idea of its likely cost since, if this were too high, it might not be possible, in view of current overseas finance difficulties, to proceed with it at all. The British Government does not wish -

(to (1)) Mauritius

(to (2)) Seychelles

to incur any expense or loss as a result of the operation and will naturally be responsible for meeting the cost of compensating landowners and also the cost of resettlement of displaced labour. In addition, the British Government recognises that it would be reasonable for the Governments of Mauritius and Seychelles to expect some element of compensation in view of the proposed detachment of territory and would welcome an indication from those Governments of their views as to the level of compensation likely to be required to make the project acceptable to their public opinion.

6. In putting the matter to your unofficials you should indicate that as regards Diego Garcia there is a firm requirement for the establishment of Communications Station and supporting facilities including an airstrip. As regards the remainder of the islands (including the remainder of the Chagos Archipelago) you should indicate that the requirement for these is in the nature of an insurance for the future, that no firm plans exist for early defence developments on them but that it is possible that air and/or naval facilities may be required in future years. In addition, you should make plain points about timing of movements of population and about use of local labour mentioned in paragraph 1 of my telegram -

(to (1)) Personal No. 66

(to (2)) No. 75.

In this connection with reference to O.A.G. Seychelles telegram No. 104, whilst the Americans have indicated that they would not rule out possibility of employing Seychelles labour in connection with construction of facilities we know that this is likely to be difficult for them; any long-term employment possibilities once defence facilities are operational are extremely unlikely. O.A.G. Seychelles should not therefore take initiative in raising this matter with members of Executive Council; if point is raised by them there would be no objection to saying that British Government recognises importance to Seychelles of additional employment opportunities and will certainly bear the point in mind. For your own information, we, of course, have in mind in this connection that if civil airfield is built on Mahé as part of quid pro quo this would generate very considerable employment possibilities.

7. I assume that you will judge it useful to stress the importance of these developments in the context of future security in the Indian Ocean area. However, both we and the Americans are anxious to play down this argument and also the American strategic role; these aspects are liable to arouse particular suspicions and hostility in some of the countries around the Indian Ocean.

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In instructions to British and American posts abroad, therefore, as little as possible is being said about these points. I must leave it to you to decide how to deal with this dilemma; I suggest that if necessary you should say merely that in the short run we welcome joint Anglo/American developments in the area, even though their practical effects would be limited at first to communication and supporting facilities on one island. In the longer term we would regard the possible eventual construction of air or naval staging facilities on one or more of the islands as a potential contribution to the security of the area, to the benefit of all concerned. You should add that H.M.G. hope that the proposals will be welcomed in Mauritius and Seychelles and that they attach considerable importance to securing the support of

(to (1)) your Ministers

(to (2)) members of your Executive Council

to them.

8. You should explain that it would be intended that the islands in question should be constitutionally separated from Mauritius and Seychelles and established, by Order in Council as a separate British administration. The Americans would not be prepared to go ahead on any other basis. Any suggestion of the islands required being made available on the basis of either leases or defence agreements with Mauritius or Seychelles must therefore be ruled out.

9. The above is also the answer to the point raised in O.A.G. Seychelles telegram No. 118 i.e. the Americans would not go ahead on any basis except excision. Excision would, of course, not (repeat not) affect constitutional relationship between Seychelles and Britain which would in any case be developed in the future as in the past in consultation with Unofficials in Seychelles. There would be no objection to O.A.G. Seychelles speaking on these lines to members of Executive Council if matter is raised; for his own information, with reference to his telegram No. 108 and paragraph 4 of his telegram No. 118 I am satisfied that integration would be most unlikely to be acceptable to Parliament here.

10. Present intended scope of development is as indicated in paragraph 6 above and you should not go beyond this. We recognise however that in light of recent newspaper speculation you may be asked about possibility of islands being used in connection with nuclear forces. If this point is raised you can only say that it is an established point of both British and American policy never either to confirm or to deny the presence or absence of nuclear weapons in any base; or to confirm or to deny the intended use of any defence facility in connection with nuclear weapons. This policy is adopted for obvious reasons and if point is raised you must ask your unofficals to accept this; you could, however, point out that at present all that is intended is communications facilities in Diego Garcia.

11. In putting matter to -

(to (1)) your Ministers

(to (2)) members of your Executive Council

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/please

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## OUTWARD TELEGRAM FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

please emphasise strictly confidential nature of proposals and stress that at this stage they should give no publicity to any part of them or discuss them with anyone, except amongst themselves.

12. I understand from recent discussions in London with Governor, Mauritius, that he will put matter to Council of Ministers on Friday, 23rd July. I also understand from Governor, Seychelles, that Executive Council normally meets on Thursdays and I suggest, therefore, that O.A.G. Seychelles should raise matter with Executive Council on 22nd July. If Governor, Mauritius, wished to give advance information on matter to Premier there would be no objection to him doing so also on 22nd July. Grateful urgent telegraphic confirmation that these timings will be followed. Subsequently grateful also for telegraphic confirmation after you have spoken to unofficials that you have done so, in order that we can institute follow-up through posts in Commonwealth and Foreign countries.

13. If you require further guidance before putting the matter to your unofficials I shall be very willing to supply any information you may need. A separate telegram will be sent before 22nd July in reply to O.A.G. Seychelles telegram No. 143 covering arrangements for administration of detached islands after detachment on lines recently discussed here with Governor, Seychelles and Governor, Mauritius; telegram will be repeated to Governor, Mauritius.

14. I should be grateful if as soon as possible you could let me know unofficials' reactions and, in particular, let me have estimates of the likely cost of compensation.

(Encryption sent to Ministry of Defence for transmission to Mauritius)

### Copies sent to:-

Ministry of Defence	- Mr. C.W. Wright
Ministry of Overseas Development	- Mr. I.H. Harris
Treasury	- Mr. J.A. Patterson
Foreign Office	- Mr. E.H. Peck
Commonwealth Relations Office	- Mr. L.B. Walsh Atkins

SECRET

**ANNEX 11**

Colonial Office Telegram No. 199 to Mauritius, No. 222 to  
Seychelles, 21 July 1965, FO 371/184524

# ANNEX 11

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## OUTWARD TELEGRAM

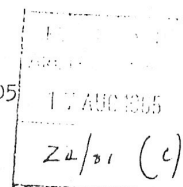
FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

TO SEYCHELLES (O.A.G.)

Cypher

PAC 93/892/05

Sent 21st July, 1965. 00.15 hrs.



IMMEDIATE

SECRET (AND PERSONAL TO MAURITIUS)

No. 222

Addressed to O.A.G. Seychelles.  
Repeated IMMEDIATE to O.A.G. Mauritius,  
PERSONAL No. 199.

My telegram No. 219, paragraph 13 (to Mauritius  
PERSONAL No. 198) and your telegram No. 143.

Administration of detached islands.

In discussion here with Governor Mauritius and  
Governor Seychelles agreement was reached on arrangements  
necessary under Legal, Administrative and Financial heads.  
These, with minor changes, have since been cleared with other  
interested Departments and proposed arrangements are set out  
in subsequent paragraphs which inter alia provide answers to  
questions raised in your telegram under reference.

### 2. Legal.

- (a) Chagos to be detached by amendment of section 90(1)  
of Mauritius Constitution Order in Council 1964 to  
include reference to dependencies by name.  
Consequential amendment to Mauritius Interpretation  
and General Clauses Ordinance. Detachment of  
Aldabra Desroches Farquhar by suitable amendments to  
Letters Patent.
- (b) Separate territory to be established by Order in  
Council similar to British Antarctic Territory  
Order in Council 1962. Under this a representative  
of Her Majesty would be appointed (referred to for  
convenience below as Commissioner although some  
other title may eventually be chosen). The  
Commissioner would be the same person as the  
Governor, Seychelles and would under the Order in  
Council have power to make laws.
- (c) Seychelles law to apply mutatis mutandis in detached  
islands including Chagos archipelago.
- (d) For Diego Garcia we shall have to decide in  
consultation with Americans, Ministry of Defence and  
Governor how cases involving British or American  
service personnel will be handled. Until such  
personnel arrive (and indefinitely in other detached  
islands) Commissioner could by law or administrative  
action provide for magisterial powers of island  
managers to continue and for Seychelles courts to

/try

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try cases when necessary. By arrangement with Mauritius Government he could ensure that Mauritius magistrates continued to visit Diego Garcia and other Chagos islands as in past, pending alternative arrangements.

## 3. Administrative.

- (a) General. Administration in detached islands not immediately required for defence purposes to be neither better nor worse than at present in short term, including continuation of secondment of Mauritius teachers, nurses, etc. to Chagos; in longer term any improvements should not go beyond keeping in step with what is done in other Seychelles islands.
- (b) Staff for islands. Staff required to be borrowed by Commissioner from either Mauritius (e.g. magistrates for visits to Chagos and nurses and teachers for posting there) or from Seychelles.
- (c) Resettlement
  - (i) People from Diego Garcia (and any other islands when evacuated) should be resettled in other out-islands rather than in Mauritius or Seychelles.
  - (ii) Resettlement on other detached islands to be avoided if possible.
  - (iii) Aim at resettling as many as possible of the people from Diego Garcia (and certainly the Mauritians who are "iluois") on Agalega.
  - (iv) American agreement to employ maximum number of locals on Diego Garcia during construction phase, to be sought so as to spread resettlement and so as to increase prospect of there being alternative work available in Seychelles by time any Seychellois who could not be absorbed in Agalega returned to Mahe.
- (d) Staff for Commissioner. We thought Commissioner would need one good Expatriate administrative officer plus local assistant plus supporting local staff for Commissioner and Administrative officer; local staff to be recruited in Seychelles.
- (e) No separate buildings, telegraph facilities, etc. needed for Commissioner.
- (f) Ship. Need for Commissioner to have shipping available (over and above that at present serving Seychelles islands) to enable him to administer in particular Chagos (and also handle resettlement operation) is accepted in principle. We have not yet gone into question of how this need would be met.

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## OUTWARD TELEGRAM

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

### 4. Financial.

- (a) Taxes. No taxes or duties to be raised and no development incentives to be provided by Commissioner in detached islands.
- (b) Seychelles Government to continue to derive revenue (e.g. export duty on copra and income tax from owners) in respect of detached islands; if any change required in Seychelles law to make this possible, there would be no objection to this.
- (c) Services. In return for (b) Seychelles Government to be responsible for cost of providing services on existing lines in detached islands not at once required for defence purposes (including parts of Chagos Archipelago other than Diego Garcia) e.g. as in paragraphs 2(d) and 3(b) above. In this context, as regards Chagos, you will no doubt hope to arrange as part of deal with Chagos/Agalega Company that in future they will export Chagos copra through Seychelles so that Seychelles will be able to derive export duty on it.
- (d) Costs of new services resulting from detachment operation (e.g. paragraphs 3(d) and (f) above) would be met by British Government.
- (e) Development. No (repeat no) long term incentives (e.g. tax remission for replanting) to be given by Seychelles Government in respect of detached islands not immediately needed. Short term incentives (e.g. tax holidays and fertiliser subsidies), however, could be given. Full scale (i.e. short and long term) incentives should be given to Company for development of Agalega, Seychelles law if necessary being amended to make this possible; legal advice is that fact that Agalega is Mauritius territory would not (repeat not) render such action ultra vires.
- (f) Compensation to island owners. Importance is attached to compensation being fixed at time of detachment on basis of existing assets and not (repeat not) at time island is required for defence use. Ideal arrangement from point of view of H.M.G. would be for actual payment only to be made when islands required for defence use. We recognise however that, at any rate as regards Moulinié and Chagos/Agalega Company, as we should be seeking co-operation from them e.g. over resettlement on Agalega and point in (c) above, we may have to envisage including in package deal with them (which will in any case be necessary) agreement to pay compensation on detachment and arrangements for continued running of islands not immediately needed (a lease back of islands from Commissioner to Company on short term basis on economic terms and on basis that any future development was at lessee's risk would be one way of tackling this).

/5.

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SECRET

5. We hope above provides sufficient guidance for purposes of initial discussions of defence proposals in Executive Council and with Moulinie; there is no objection to any of these matters being discussed with them (you should, however, stress that title of Commissioner is used only for convenience - see parenthesis in paragraph 2(b) above). In brief our idea is that in islands not immediately needed for defence purposes there should be smallest possible disturbance of existing arrangements.

6. One other point arises. We have noted Newton's arguments for transfer of Agalega to Seychelles. We do not, however, wish to complicate detachment operation by ourselves raising this issue. Rennie thinks it possible that it may arise during his talks with Mauritius Ministers. If so we can of course consider it at same time as but as separate exercise from detachment operation.

(Encyphered text passed to Ministry of Defence  
for repetition to Mauritius)

Copies sent to:-

Treasury	- Mr. J.A. Patterson
Commonwealth Relations Office	- Mr. L.B. Walsh-Atkins
Foreign Office	- Mr. E.H. Peck
Ministry of Defence	- Mr. F.J. Burlace
Ministry of Overseas Development	- Mr. I.H. Harris

SECRET

**ANNEX 12**

Mauritius Telegram No. 170 to the Colonial Office, 23 July 1965,  
FO 371/184526

# ANNEX 12

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SECRET

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

*Extr  
Z  
10*

FROM MAURITIUS (Sir J. Rennie)

Cypher D. 23rd July, 1965.  
R. 23rd " " 21.30 hrs.

24 JUL 1965

*17 M. ...*

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET AND PERSONAL  
PERSONAL NO. 170.

24/116 (A)

*for info, needed  
other pt. ...*

Your telegram Personal No. 198.

U.K./U.S. Defence Interests.

*Extr  
26/7*

I informed Ministers this morning of what is proposed. While not ill-disposed they asked for time to consider further. This was reasonable request and while making clear you wish (corrupt group) early indication of their views, I agreed to discuss again on Friday 30th July unless you instructed me to pursue urgently before then.

2. Dislike of detachment was expressed both by Premier and Duval though I explained this was regarded as essential. It was clear however that any attempt to detach without agreement would provoke strong protest.

3. Premier raised the question of mineral or other valuable rights that might arise in future and considered the interests of Mauritius must be safeguarded. He also referred to reversion to Mauritius if use for defence purposes abandoned.

4. Interest was shown in the project as bargaining counter for the benefit of Mauritius but no indication was given of intention to use for party advantage. I was asked whether I had any idea of the compensation contemplated. I replied that clearly difficult to assess and you had asked me to sound them on the point. Ministers mentioned the possibility of the American sugar quota and referred to press speculation on the amount of compensation. I said that the sugar quota would raise difficult issue, and that lump sum payment would be favoured, and that exaggerated ideas should not be entertained since there was limit to the amount the British Government would think it worth paying for the facility.

Copies sent to:-

Ministry of Defence	- Mr. C.W. Wright
Ministry of Overseas Development	- Mr. I.H. Harris
Treasury	- Mr. J.A. Patterson
Foreign Office	- Mr. E.H. Peck
Commonwealth Relations Office	- Mr. L.B. Walsh Atkins

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**ANNEX 13**

Mauritius Telegram No. 175 to the Colonial Office, 30 July 1965,  
FO 371/184526

# ANNEX 13

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## INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

FROM MAURITIUS (Sir J. Rennie)

Cypher

D. 30th July, 1965  
R. 30th " " 17.00 hrs.

RECEIVED  
NO 12  
- 8 AUG 1965  
74/123

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET AND PERSONAL  
Personal No. 175

Your telegram Personal No. 204.

U.K./U.S. Defence Interests.

At meeting of the Council of Ministers today the Premier speaking for the Ministers as a whole, said that they were sympathetically disposed to the request and prepared to play their part in the defence of the Commonwealth and the free world. They would like any agreement over the use of Diego Garcia to provide also for the defence of Mauritius.

2. Ministers objected however to detachment which would be unacceptable to public opinion in Mauritius. They therefore asked that you consider "with sympathy and understanding" how U.K./U.S. requirements might be reconciled with the long term lease e.g. for 99 years. They wished also that provision should be made for safeguarding mineral rights to Mauritius and ensuring preference for Mauritius if fishing or agricultural rights were ever granted. Meteorological and air navigation facilities should also be assured to Mauritius.

3. As regards compensation for Mauritius they suggested the United States might purchase annually from Mauritius 300,000 to 400,000 tons of sugar at the Commonwealth negotiated price against the purchase by Mauritius from the United States of 75,000 tons of rice at about £40/41 per ton c.i.f. and 50,000 tons of wheat at about £25 per ton. American market for up to 20,000 tons of frozen tuna would also be of interest. United States might also be helpful about immigration. In addition there should be capital sum towards development. They also hoped that some use might be made of Mauritius labour in construction.

4. Premier suggested there should be discussion with representatives of British and American Governments either on the occasion of or before the September conference.

5. These views were subscribed to by all the Ministers present (only Ringadoo and Forget were absent) with reservation by Bissoondoyal that he would object to use as "nuclear base". On this point I took the line laid down in paragraph 10 of your telegram Personal No. 198. Ministers appreciated that Mauritius Government might be criticised for acquiescing in the project but were prepared to accept this consequence. (I said all criticism from outside need not be taken at face value and they agreed).

/6.

SECRET

# ANNEX 13

Reference:-

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6. I told Ministers I would report their views to you. Attitude to detachment is awkward but not unexpected despite my warning that lease would not be acceptable. Proposals for compensation are also highly inconvenient though Ministers are setting sights high in the hope of doing the best for Mauritius. I should like to emphasise, however, that apart from the regrettable leak (which is the fault of one Minister at the most) Ministers have taken responsible line and given collective view after consultation among themselves, and that so far there has been no attempt to exploit for party advantage with a view to constitutional conference. I hope also that inclusion of some element of trade in compensation will be seriously considered.

7. You may wish to repeat to Governor Seychelles for his information.

(Repeated to Seychelles as C.O. tel No. 242).

Copies sent to:-

Ministry of Defence	- Mr. C. W. Wright
Ministry of Overseas Development	- Mr. I. H. Harris
Treasury	- Mr. J. A. Patterson
Foreign Office	- Mr. E. H. Peck
" "	- Mr. Morland
Commonwealth Relations Office	- Mr. L. B. Walsh Atkins
" " "	- Mr. J. S. Champion

SECRET

**ANNEX 14**

Colonial Office Telegram No. 214 to Mauritius, 10 August 1965,  
FO 371/184526

## ANNEX 14

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SECRET

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

Enter 2

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

13 AUG 1965

Copies sent to the P.C. and Mr. Trench

ZU/123 (b)

TO MAURITIUS (SIR J. Rennie)

Cypher

PAC 93/892/01

Sent 10th August, 1965. 21.30 hrs.

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET AND PERSONAL  
PERSONAL No. 214

Addressed to Governor, Mauritius.  
Repeated " " Seychelles, No. 260.

Z/123/c

Your telegram PERSONAL No. 175.

U.K./U.S. Defence Interests.

I should be grateful if you would inform Ministers that I much appreciate their willingness to co-operate and am gratified to know that the proposals outlined in your telegram have been made by the Council after careful and independent deliberation by Ministers themselves.

2. Please explain to Ministers that the United States Government has maintained throughout our discussions with them that the islands chosen for the development of defence facilities must be made available directly by Her Majesty's Government and that a leasehold arrangement would not do. We realise that Ministers might have difficulty over the public reactions to detachment; but we believe that any leasehold arrangements would make Mauritius Ministers vulnerable to accusations of harbouring "foreign bases".

3. Such accusations might prove extremely troublesome to Mauritius Ministers both internationally and domestically, as long as the lease continued. Outright detachment would avoid this. It is therefore the arrangement favoured by H.M.G. and is also in what we believe to be in the best interests of Mauritius.

4. If on reconsideration Ministers are prepared to accept detachment, recognizing that it is the only acceptable arrangement, Her Majesty's Government will do their utmost in negotiations with the United States Government to secure what they can of the various benefits indicated in your telegram. You should however warn Ministers that the chances of success are reduced by the fact that some of the suggestions involve difficult issues of domestic politics in the United States. You might invite them to discuss other elements of compensation within the direct power of Her Majesty's Government to grant and explain that, having regard to the United States Government's preparedness to meet the entire cost of construction of any defence facilities to be provided, any attempt to insist upon such contributions could prejudice the proposals as a whole. Equally, of course, H.M.G. will have to consider carefully whether they could meet whatever bids for compensation your Ministers may decide to make.

(Encyphered groups passed to M.O.D. (Navy) for transmission to Mauritius)

SECRET

/Copies

SECRET

**ANNEX 15**

Mauritius Telegram No. 188 to the Colonial Office, 13 August  
1965, FO 371/184526

# ANNEX 15

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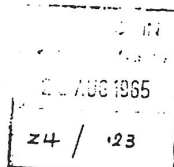
INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

AMENDED COPY (Corrections \* and underlined)

FROM MAURITIUS (Sir J. Rennie)

Cypher D. 13th August, 1965.  
R. 13th " " 21.45 hrs.



PRIORITY  
SECRET AND PERSONAL  
PERSONAL No. 188.

Your Secret and Personal telegram No. 214 and my Secret and Personal telegram No. 185.

ZH/22/6

U.K./U.S. Defence Interests.

I conveyed to Ministers your views this morning \*explaining objections to lease and warning them of difficulty about compensation in the form of American trade. They renewed the suggestion of discussion in London between representatives of governments concerned and both the Premier and Duval said that they were sure that agreement could be reached in this way. They were clearly not prepared to agree here and now.

2. I am sorry that I have not been able to obtain the desired agreement but I think it would be counter productive to press further at present. You may like to consider discussion in the first instance with the Premier on his arrival in London before the conference.

Copies sent to:-

Ministry of Defence	- Mr. C.W. Wright
Ministry of Overseas Development	- Mr. I.H. Harris
Treasury	- Mr. J.A. Patterson
Foreign Office	- Mr. E.H. Peck
" "	- Mr. Morland
Commonwealth Relations Office	- Mr. L.B. Walsh Atkins
" "	- Mr. J.S. Champion

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3/2

SECRET

## **ANNEX 16**

Record of a Meeting in the Colonial Office at 9.00 a.m. on Monday,  
20th September, 1965, Mauritius – Defence Issues, FO 371/184528

# ANNEX 16

SECRET  
U.K. EYES ONLY

MAURITIUS - DEFENCE ISSUES	
RECORD OF A MEETING IN THE COLONIAL OFFICE	
2. AT 9:00 A.M. ON MONDAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER, 1965	
24/169	PRESENT:

Secretary of State  
(In the Chair)

Sir H. Poynton	Sir R. S. Ramgoolam
Sir J. Rennie	Mr. J. Koenig, Q.C.
Mr. Trafford Smith	Mr. A. R. Mohamed
Mr. A. J. Fairclough	Mr. S. Bissoondoyal
Mr. J. Stacpoole	Mr. J. M. Paturau

The Secretary of State again expressed his desire to keep the discussion of the proposal to establish defence facilities in the Mauritius dependencies separate from the Constitutional Conference and mentioned his own double role as a spokesman of Her Majesty's Government's interests in this matter and as a custodian within the British Government of the interests of Mauritius. He enquired about the upshot of the meeting between Mauritian Ministers and officials of the U.S. Embassy in London.

Mr. Koenig replied that the U.S. spokesman had been unable to offer concessions. They had promised to transmit to their Government the points made by the Mauritius Delegation but had been unable to give any indication when the U.S. Government's reaction would be made known.

The Secretary of State suggested that the Mauritius Government should draw the conclusion from the United States Government's attitude - for instance their insistence on excision and their refusal to consider a lease - that the Americans did not regard the proposed facilities as indispensable. (In subsequent discussion the possibility that

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the facilities required might conceivably be established in islands belonging to Seychelles was mentioned by the Secretary of State). He went on to outline, for the confidential information of the Mauritius Ministers, the economic assistance which the Mauritius Government could expect from Britain up to 1968 irrespective of compensation for the defence facilities; this would include a C.D. & W. allocation for 1966/8 totalling £2.4m., i.e. £800,000 per year, while Britain would envisage that, subject to the relevant criteria being met and if a genuine need could be shown, it would be possible to consider making available Exchequer loans to Mauritius at the rate of about £1m. a year. This possible loan figure was in no sense an allocation - allocations of Exchequer loans were never made and it was not intended that this should be done in this case.

Sir S. Ramgoolam commented that this would fall far short of Mauritius' needs for development finance.

The Secretary of State said that in present economic conditions, Britain was unfortunately unable to increase her total aid to the developing countries. He suggested that against this background a sum of the order (say £1m.) previously mentioned as compensation for the detachment of Diego Garcia would be very valuable if it were used to finance, for instance, a land settlement scheme. Whatever sum was settled on, it should be allocated for specific and identifiable projects and would, of course, be entirely separate from the compensation to be paid to land owners in Diego Garcia and from expenditure on resettlement.

Sir S. Ramgoolam said that the Mauritius Government was not interested in the excision of the islands and would stand out for a 99-year lease. They envisaged a rent of about £7m. a year for the first twenty years and say £2m. for the

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remainder. They regarded the offer of a lump sum of £1m. as derisory and would rather make the transfer gratis than accept it. The alternative was for Britain to concede independence to Mauritius and allow the Mauritius Government to negotiate thereafter with the British and United States Governments over Diego Garcia.

Mr. Koenig spoke of Mauritius' record of loyalty to Britain in two World Wars and his own natural inclination to advocate that the facilities required for Commonwealth defence should be made available free of charge. As against this the grave economic needs of Mauritius made him anxious to find some middle way between a generous gesture of this kind and what Sir S. Ramgoolam had proposed. He urged that the possibility of inducing the U.S. Government, who had rejected all the suggestions which the Mauritius Government had put forward, to find some alternative method of providing economic assistance for Mauritius should be explored. The U.S. Embassy officials had left him unconvinced that the U.S. Government understood or felt any interest in the economic needs of Mauritius.

Mr. Mohamed suggested that the Mauritius Government should now await replies from the U.S. Government on the points which had been discussed at the recent meeting. But Sir S. Ramgoolam thought it would be better to bring further pressure to bear upon the U.S. Government through the British Government to increase the quota for Mauritius sugar in the U.S. domestic market.

The Secretary of State pointed out that Diego Garcia was not in present conditions a source of wealth to Mauritius; and that it would be in the general interests of the area, including the interests of Mauritius, that there should be an Anglo/U.S. military presence there.

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Sir S. Ramgoolam rejoined that he fully understood the desirability of this, not only in the interests of Mauritius but in those of the whole Commonwealth. He repeated that he would prefer to make the facilities available free of charge rather than accept a lump sum of £1m. which was insignificant seen against Mauritius' annual recurrent budget amounting to about £13.5m. - with the development budget the total was about £20m. He was not trying, he said, to extract the large sums he had mentioned from the British Government, for that would damage the prosperity of the parent country of the Commonwealth to which all the developing countries in the Commonwealth looked for aid. It was from the United States that additional aid should come. ||

The Secretary of State pointed out that the U.S. Government undertook world wide defence responsibilities in alliance with Britain. The distinction Sir Seewoosagur was observing was therefore an over-simplification. He invited comments from the other Mauritian Ministers.

Mr. Bissoondoyal and Mr. Mohamed expressed their support for the views expounded by the Premier.

After Sir S. Ramgoolam had suggested that if Mauritius could sell 300,000 tons of sugar yearly in the U.S. domestic market she would gain some £15m., Mr. Trafford Smith pointed out that, as explained earlier, under the proposed arrangement it fell to Britain to undertake all expenditure connected with the acquisition of the site for the proposed facilities, including compensation to the Mauritius Government.

Mr. Koenig said that, recognising that this was so, the Mauritius ministers had tried at their meeting at the United States Embassy to argue for assistance over and above financial compensation; they wanted arrangements which would provide assistance with trade. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam stressed

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that Mauritius ministers needed to provide for the future; lump sum compensation now was no good; something of long term assistance to the people of Mauritius was necessary and this was why trade arrangements were sought.

Sir John Rennie made the point that, if Mauritius obtained lump sum compensation now, they could put it into valuable development which could provide a continuing benefit to Mauritius and a continuing income to the Mauritius Government. It was moreover the case that the Mauritius Government would be acquiring land which it did not at present own in compensation for land surrendered in Chagos. Sir Hilton Poynton agreed and made the point that if, for example, lump sum compensation were invested in a land settlement scheme, then the position would be that at no capital cost to the Mauritius Government they would have secured an appreciable recurrent benefit by way of rents paid by the settlers.

Mr. Mohamed interjected that there had been some experience of the difficulty in collecting rents; a land settlement scheme would not produce much income.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam repeated that the matter should be considered on the basis of Chagos being made available on a 99 year lease. The Secretary of State said that he could of course see the advantages of this from Mauritius's point of view. He wished that he thought that such an arrangement might be acceptable. The United States Government had been so specific and categorical in insisting that British sovereignty must be retained over Chagos - in other words that Chagos should be made available on the basis of detachment - that he felt sure that a lease would not be acceptable. In these circumstances, as he had said

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earlier, it was his own personal view that the whole project might well fall through and the United States Government look elsewhere for the facilities they sought if Mauritius continued to demand a lease.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that the sort of compensation that had been suggested was of no real interest to the Mauritius Government. The United States was spending vast sums of money elsewhere in the world on bases that were not secure. Admittedly Diego Garcia was not being used at present; but in the future it might be of great strategic significance. Mauritius must obtain some significant benefit from making it available. He did not pretend to know the military significance of Diego Garcia but, in considering compensation for Mauritius, the scale on which the United States has accepted expenditure on bases elsewhere had to be borne in mind. The Secretary of State pointed out that it was most unlikely that Diego Garcia would ever be built up on such a scale as the kind of bases that Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam was referring to. Sir Hilton Poynton made the point that Sir Seewoosagur appeared to be referring to the cost of building military installations and not of acquisition of sites. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam repeated that attention should be paid to what the United States had spent elsewhere in considering compensation for Mauritius. There were other considerations also to be borne in mind. Mauritius had an increasing population to cope with and the Government must ensure that standards do not decline - or only do so very slightly. A lump sum of £1 million was not of interest.

Mr. Paturau made the point that if, as had been suggested, the suggestion of using Diego Garcia were dropped and the required facilities were developed in islands belonging

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to Seychelles, this would cost a great deal more. These islands were much further from, for example, India and Ceylon and so would presumably be less directly valuable. It therefore seemed to him that it must be worth an appreciable amount to the United States that Diego Garcia should be made available. Mauritius should have obtained a one hundred thousand ton U.S. sugar quota in 1962. It was lost as a result of political pressure. If, given the apparent value of Diego Garcia to the United States Mauritius could now use political pressure to secure a substantial sugar quota, this seemed to him only sensible.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam then suggested that the Mauritius ministers' proposals should be communicated to the United States Government. When Mr. Trafford Smith made the point that the United States Government was not directly involved since negotiations on this matter were between the Mauritius and British Governments, Sir Seewoosagur suggested that it might then be better if the whole matter were left until Mauritius were independent and were then negotiated with the independent Government.

The Secretary of State then said that it might be possible for him to secure agreement to increasing the proposed compensation from £1 million in the direction of £2 million. In reply to this Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that the Mauritius ministers had not come to bargain. They could not bargain over their relationship with the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. But there were real economic difficulties in Mauritius and if the British Government could obtain assistance on the lines they had suggested this would be highly desirable. He reiterated that lump sum compensation was not of such importance as something which would ensure a steady economy for Mauritius over a period of years. As

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regards the suggestion that lump sum compensation could be invested in e.g. land settlement he said that he did not wish to be tied to particular projects at once; he did not wish to commit future governments of Mauritius. Land settlement had been tried some years ago and lessons had been learned and changes made. On this point Sir John Rennie interjected that, whilst he did not himself think that £1 million was very much by way of compensation, it was nonetheless clear that land settlement must be undertaken now; and capital provided by way of lump sum compensation would make this possible.

The Secretary of State said that what Mauritius ministers were really saying was that because the United States could not help over her sugar quota and trade, then the United Kingdom must stump up hard cash instead. Mr. Mohamed said that this was not really the way they looked at it. If only the U.K. were involved then they would be willing to hand over Diego Garcia to the U.K. without any compensation; Mauritius was already under many obligations to the U.K. But when the United States was involved as well then they wanted something substantial by way of continuing benefit. They were prepared to forego lump sum compensation but continuity was essential and the most important thing was the U.S. sugar quota. The Secretary of State said that he would like to be clear on the attitude of Mauritius ministers. As he understood it their attitude could be summed up as follows:

- (i) If economic assistance from the United States on the scale that had been suggested could be made available then the Mauritius Government would be willing to agree to the detachment of the Chagos Archipelago without compensation.
- (ii) If however economic assistance on the lines suggested was not forthcoming then they would propose that

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Chagos should be made available on a 99 year lease at a rental of £7 million per annum for 20 years and £2 million thereafter.

- (iii) That the Mauritius Government were not in any event interested in lump sum compensation from Britain of £2 million, part in capital at once and part spread over a period.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, commenting on the third of the above points said that they could not contemplate demanding assistance that they would regard as adequate from their "parent and relation"; this would only take away part of a limited pool of assistance which was of help to the whole Commonwealth. But a foreign government was involved and they should pay up. The Secretary of State made the point that U.S. and U.K. defence facilities throughout the world were so inextricably interwoven together that it simply would not be possible for us to demand from the United States that they should make substantial annual payments to Mauritius. Mr. Koenig took this point and said that he thought that the United States could not be expected to make money payments to Mauritius; what they wanted was trade. Although at the meeting they had had at the U.S. Embassy the point had been made that the administration was not responsible for the sugar quota, he, Mr. Koenig, had made the point that, given the present position in Aden and Singapore and given also the attitude of China, it seemed to him very possible that these considerations would so impress even Congress that they might be willing to adopt a different attitude regarding the sugar quota for Mauritius than the one they had adopted on the previous occasion in 1962; it was noteworthy that their attitude then, too, had been dictated by political considerations.

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The Secretary of State said that it would obviously be highly undesirable to have a public discussion in Congress involving the situation in Aden and Singapore. Even though, as Mr. Koenig pointed out there had been public discussion of defence facilities in the Indian Ocean, it would be impossible for these to be linked with the question of the sugar quota. The Secretary of State added that if it would be of assistance he would have thought that it would have been possible to agree that any agreement concerning Chagos might provide that it would be returned to Mauritius if British and American defence interests in it ceased; he would have to consult his colleagues on this point but it seemed to him feasible.

Mr. Paturau said that he could see that the Mauritius Government's original proposal of a U.S. sugar quota of three to four hundred thousand tons would be extremely difficult since it would inevitably have to be linked with the question of defence facilities. But surely discussion of a one hundred thousand ton quota was possible without this difficulty; one hundred thousand tons was the figure that had been proposed by the U.S. administration in 1962 but completely rejected by Congress; there seemed no reason why discussion of a quota of this amount now need be linked with the defence issue. Mr. Trafford Smith again stressed the intense difficulties that would arise over any question of a special sugar quota for Mauritius because of the fact that all other Commonwealth suppliers were involved.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam then said that an alternative arrangement might be to calculate what benefit Mauritius would have derived from the sort of sugar quota and other trade arrangements that they had been suggesting and for the

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United States Government to make yearly payments to Mauritius of that amount. One could calculate the figure on the basis of say, 20 per cent gross profit on say, £13 to £15 million worth of sugar plus the benefits of the proposed rice and wheat agreements. He was talking in this connection in terms of a lease but if the islands were detached then different figures could easily be calculated; it should in any case be provided that if the islands ceased to be needed for defence purposes they would revert to Mauritius.

Sir H. Poynton mentioned the precedent of certain U.S. bases in the West Indies, leased in 1940 and no longer needed, which had reverted to the jurisdiction of the Government concerned.

Mr. Paturau said that for the past two years Antigua and Fiji had been taking up Mauritius' quota in the U.S. market and they would have no grounds for complaint if Mauritius' quota was now enlarged at their expense; but in fact the 100,000 tons a year, for which Mauritius was asking, could be absorbed in the increase of consumption in the United States.

Sir H. Poynton said that the British Embassy in Washington had advised strongly against any departure from the "past performance" formula. The United States might offer some readjustment within the Commonwealth quota but even this would risk breaching the "past performance" formula to the disadvantage of the Commonwealth as a whole. Moreover even if this difficulty could be avoided it would clearly be extremely difficult to secure agreement within the Commonwealth.

Mr. Paturau said that Mauritius had been unfairly dealt with when quotas were established on the basis of performance in the first half of a year since Mauritius, along with all Southern Hemisphere producers, was a "second-half-year" producer.

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Summing up the discussion, the Secretary of State said that the Mauritius Government sought economic help from the United States, or failing this a monetary payment from the United States. He felt bound to warn Mauritian Ministers that there was no prospect of their getting anything approaching what they were asking for, and that there was a risk that the United States Government would look elsewhere for the facilities they needed. It would be cheaper to build an island than pay the sums suggested. He suggested an adjournment and expressed the hope that the Mauritius Government would look urgently for more acceptable proposals which could be discussed at an early further meeting.

Some discussion followed on the method by which Sir S. Ramgoolam's figure of £7m. a year for additional economic aid had been arrived at. Sir S. Ramgoolam said that he had calculated the benefits Mauritius would receive from the proposals about trade in sugar, wheat and rice between Mauritius and the U.S.A. at about £3-4m. a year; and had put forward £5-7m. to take account of rising population and unforeseen needs. It appeared, however, that if the United States took 300,000 tons of Mauritius sugar at the domestic price (£45 per ton) the difference between this and the world price for the same quantity (at £20 per ton) would be £7.5m. per annum.

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**ANNEX 17**

Colonial Office, Note for the Prime Minister's Meeting with  
Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Premier of Mauritius,  
22 September 1965, PREM 13/3320

PRIME MINISTER

*This is a press brief, as X-47/13 has  
estimated, either by cutting off or re-tying on  
cards.*

*/hr*

Mauritius

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam is coming to see you at 10.00 tomorrow morning. The object is to frighten him with hope: hope that he might get independence; Fright lest he might not unless he is sensible about the detachment of the Chagos Archipelago. I attach a brief prepared by the Colonial Office, with which the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office are on the whole content. The key sentence in the brief is the last sentence of it on page three.

I also attach a minute from the Colonial Secretary, which he has not circulated to his colleagues, but a copy of which I have sent to Sir Burke Trend. In it, the Colonial Secretary rehearses arguments with which you are familiar but which have not been generally accepted by Ministers.

*Jaw*

September 22, 1965

SECRETPRIME MINISTER AW

I am glad you are seeing Ramgoolam because the Conference is a difficult one and I am anxious that the bases issue should not make it even harder to get a Constitutional settlement than it is already. I hope that we shall be as generous as possible and I am sure that we should not seem to be trading Independence for detachment of the Islands. That would put us in a bad light at home and abroad and would sour our relations with the new state. And it would not accord well with the line you and I have taken about the Aden base (which has been well received even in the Committee of 24). Agreement is therefore desirable and agreement would be easier if Ramgoolam could be assured that:

- (a) We would retrocede the Islands if the need for them vanished, and
- (b) We were prepared to give not merely financial compensation (I would think £5,000,000 would be reasonable but so far the D.O.P. have only approved £3,000,000) but a defence agreement and an undertaking to consult together if a serious internal security situation arose in Mauritius.

The ideal would be for us to be able to announce that the Mauritius Government had agreed that the Islands should be made available to the U.K. government to enable them to fulfil their defence commitments in the area.

A9.

Lancaster HouseH 22nd September, 1965SECRET

Copy sent to  
Sir B. Trend 22A.

SECRET

NOTE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING  
WITH SIR SEEWOSAGUR RAMGOOLAM, PREMIER OF MAURITIUS

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (call him 'Sir Seewoosagur' - pronounced as spelt with accents on the first and third syllables: or 'Premier' his official title. He likes being called 'Prime Minister').

Born Mauritius 1900. Hindu. Locally educated, studied medicine at University College Hospital, London. L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S. Leader of the Mauritius Labour Party, the largest Mauritius political party, which polled 42% of the electorate at the 1963 General Election. In politics since 1940. Knight Bachelor, June 1965, dubbed last Saturday, September 18th, his 65th birthday.

Getting old. Realises he must get independence soon or it will be too late for his personal career. Rather status-conscious. Responds to flattery.

The Defence Facilities Proposals

The proposal is that the whole of the Chagos Archipelago (population about 1000), shall be detached from Mauritius: and three islands from Seychelles. In developing defence facilities, the British would be responsible for providing the sites, including compensation, removal and resettlement of population, etc., and the Americans for construction, with joint British-American user of the facilities. Neither the American nor the British defence authorities can accept leasehold. At present no more than an airfield and communications installations will be constructed.

Cost

On the British side, the total cost might be up to £10m., of which Mauritius and Seychelles would each receive about £3m. compensation for detachment, while costs of compensation to land-owners, resettlement of displaced population and other contingencies might amount to £3-4m. [The U.S. Government has secretly agreed to contribute half these costs indirectly, by writing off equivalent British payments towards Polaris development costs.]

The Mauritius reaction

The proposals have been discussed, first in Mauritius by the Governor with the Council of Ministers, and more recently in London by the Secretary of State with the four main Mauritius party leaders and a leading Independent Minister. Their reaction has been that, while in principle they are anxious to co-operate in western defence, they cannot contemplate detachment but propose a long lease, and that they would require concessions from the Americans as regards U.S. purchases of Mauritius sugar and Mauritius purchases of U.S.

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U.S. rice and wheat on favourable terms, and also as regards emigration to the U.S. The unsurmountable difficulties of securing these concessions from the Americans, especially as regards sugar (which the Mauritians regard as the most important) have been explained to Mauritius Ministers at length, and they have heard the arguments direct from the Economic Minister at the U.S. Embassy. When offered lump-sum compensation for detachment of the order of £2m., they brushed it aside as a drop in the ocean of Mauritius requirements, returned to their proposals for trade and immigration concessions from the U.S., and suggested as an alternative that they should receive what the Mauritians calculate is the money value of these concessions, viz. up to £7m. per annum for twenty years and £2m. per annum thereafter. (They appear to think that we ought to persuade the Americans to pay this. The Premier at one stage said he was not trying to "sting" Britain for this).

There is thus deadlock as to compensation for detachment. In discussion however, Mauritius Ministers have made it clear that, since the Americans are involved, their desire is for trade concessions from the Americans, and that, if it were simply a matter of helping Britain, they might consider providing the sites as a gesture of co-operation - though whether with or without the £2m. compensation is not clear. The discussions have also shown that agreement that the islands should revert to Mauritius when no longer required for defence facilities might help.

In the course of discussion, the Secretary of State hinted that, if Mauritius Ministers persisted in their demands, it might be necessary for H.M.G. either to call the whole thing off or to consider whether the facilities could be provided entirely on Seychelles islands. On their side, Mauritius Ministers are well aware that H.M.G. wishes to continue to enjoy the use of H.M.S. Mauritius, a £5m. communications station, and Plaisance air-field, both in the island of Mauritius itself and both of strategic importance.

#### The Mauritius Constitutional Conference

The gap between the parties led by Sir S. Ramgoolam wanting independence, and the Parti Mauricien and its supporters who seek continuing association with Britain, will not be closed by negotiation. H.M.G. will have to impose a solution. The remaining conference sessions will be devoted to bringing the position of all parties on details of the constitution as close together as possible and, in particular to securing the agreement of all parties to the maximum possible safeguards for minorities. The Secretary of State's mind is moving towards a decision in favour of independence,

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F.O. say :  
at 30:45  
must see  
Clegg.

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followed by a General Election under the new Constitution before Independence Day, as the right solution, rather than a referendum to choose between independence and free association, as the Parti Mauricien have demanded.

Sir S. Ramgoolam's present position

The Premier heads an All-Party Government - hence the negotiations on defence facilities with the leaders of all parties. It is thus difficult for him to come to any final agreement on the defence facilities without consulting his colleagues. The Premier should not leave the interview with certainty as to H.M.G.'s decision as regards independence, as during the remaining sessions of the Conference it may be necessary to press him to the limit to accept maximum safeguards for minorities.

Handling the interview

The Prime Minister might say that he has heard of the progress of the Conference and knows that the Secretary of State is impressed by the difficulties of the proposals for a referendum and free association, and the strength of the case for independence. If the ultimate decision is in favour of independence, the Premier will understand the necessity to include in the Independence Constitution maximum safeguards for minorities, especially as regards the electoral system, so as to remove as far as possible their legitimate fears. With the Conference approaching its end it would be regrettable if difficulties should arise over the defence facilities question. The Premier has asked for independence but at the same time has said that he would like to have a defence treaty, and possibly to be able to call on us for assistance in certain circumstances towards maintaining internal security. If the Premier wants us to help him in this way, he must help us over the defence facilities, because these are in the long term interests both of Britain and Mauritius. He must play his part as a Commonwealth statesman in helping to provide them.

Throughout consideration of this problem, all Departments have accepted the importance of securing consent of the Mauritius Government to detachment. The Premier knows the importance we attach to this. In the last resort, however, detachment could be carried out without Mauritius consent, and this possibility has been left open in recent discussions in Defence and Overseas Policy Committee. The Prime Minister may therefore wish to make some oblique reference to the fact that H.M.G. have the legal right to detach Chagos by Order in Council, without Mauritius consent, but this would be a grave step.

Colonial Office, September 22nd 1965.

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## **ANNEX 18**

Record of a Conversation between the Prime Minister and the  
Premier of Mauritius, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, at No. 10,  
Downing Street, at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 23 September 1965,  
FO 371/184528

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RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE  
PREMIER OF MAURITIUS, SIR SEEWOSAGUR RAMGOOLAM, AT NO. 10,  
DOWNING STREET, AT 10 A.M. ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1965

Present:-

The Prime Minister  
Mr. J.O. Wright

The Premier of Mauritius,  
Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam

After welcoming the Prime Minister of Mauritius, the Prime Minister said how glad he was to see him in London: the Queen had told him at his audience the previous Sunday of the honour she had bestowed on him on his 65th birthday. The Prime Minister then asked Sir Seewoosagur how the conference was going. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that the conference was going reasonably well. He had had a discussion with his colleagues the previous evening and they were now thinking over what he had said. He himself felt that Independence was the right answer; the other ideas of association with Britain worked out on the lines of the French Community simply would not work. There was also some difference of opinion over the future of the electoral pattern in Rhodesia.

The Prime Minister said that he knew that the Colonial Secretary, like himself, would like to work towards Independence as soon as possible, but that we had to take into consideration all points of view. He hoped that the Colonial Secretary would shortly be able to report to him and his colleagues what his conclusion was. He himself wished to discuss with Sir Seewoosagur a matter which was not strictly speaking within the Colonial Secretary's sphere: it was the Defence problem and in particular the question of the detachment of Diego Garcia. This was of course a completely separate matter and not

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bound up with the question of Independence. It was however a very important matter for the British position East of Suez. Britain was at present undertaking a very comprehensive Defence Review, but we were very concerned to be able to play our proper rôle not only in Commonwealth Defence but also to bear our share of peace-keeping under the United Nations: we had already made certain pledges to the United Nations for this purpose.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that he and his colleagues wished to be helpful.

The Prime Minister went on to say that he had heard that some of the Premier's colleagues, perhaps having heard that the United States was also interested in these defence arrangements, and seeing that the United States was a very rich country, were perhaps raising their bids rather high. There were two points that he would like to make on this. First, while Diego Garcia was important, it was not all that important; and faced with unreasonableness the United States would probably not go on with it. The second point was that this was a matter between Britain and Mauritius and the Prime Minister referred to recent difficulties over taxi-drivers at London Airport.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that they were very concerned on Mauritius with their population explosion and their limited land resources. They very much hoped that the United States would agree to buy sugar at a guaranteed price and perhaps let them have wheat and rice in exchange. The important thing was not so much to have a lump sum but to have a steady guaranteed income.

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The Prime Minister said that Britain would of course continue with certain aid and development projects. The money for the airfield at Diego Garcia would also come from Britain and would come in the form of a flat sum. Moreover that flat sum would not be very much more than the Secretary of State had already mentioned. While he could make no commitment at the moment, the Prime Minister thought that we might well be able to talk to the Americans about providing some of their surplus wheat for Mauritius. As for Diego Garcia, it was a purely historical accident that it was administered by Mauritius. Its links with Mauritius were very slight. In answer to a question, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam affirmed that the inhabitants of Diego Garcia did not send elected representatives to the Mauritius Parliament. Sir Seewoosagur reaffirmed that he and his colleagues were very ready to play their part.

The Prime Minister went on to say that, in theory, there were a number of possibilities. The Premier and his colleagues could return to Mauritius either with Independence or without it. On the Defence point, Diego Garcia could either be detached by order in Council or with the agreement of the Premier and his colleagues. The best solution of all might be Independence and detachment by agreement, although he could not of course commit the Colonial Secretary at this point.

Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that he was convinced that the question of Diego Garcia was a matter of detail; there was no difficulty in principle. The Prime Minister

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said that whilst we could make no open-ended commitment about the defence of Mauritius, our presence at Diego Garcia would, of course, make it easier to come to Mauritius's help when necessary.

On leaving, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam said that the one great desire in Mauritius was that she should retain her links with the United Kingdom. Mauritius did not want to become a republic but on the contrary wished to preserve all her present relationships with the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister said that he felt that the Commonwealth had a much more important rôle to play in the future than it had even in the past as a great multi-racial association. The last Prime Ministers' meeting had been a very exciting one and he looked forward to seeing Sir Seewoosagur at the next one.

As Sir Seewoosagur was leaving, the Cabinet was assembling outside the Cabinet Room and the Prime Minister introduced Sir Seewoosagur to a number of members of the Cabinet.

September 23, 1965

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