

10/10

No. BIOT/157/172/III

PERSONAL &
CONFIDENTIAL

OFFICE OF THE
B.L.O. (M)
VICTORIA,
SEYCHELLES.
HG-318

JEM 18/3

[Handwritten signature]

Would you please refer to my letter BIOT/157/172/III of 6th October on resettlement in which I said I would write separately on the question of the immediate transfer of Ilois to Agalega.

2. As you know the Nordvaer sailed to Chagos in August to begin the resettlement but then broke down. This resulted in her being unable to bring back passengers from Diego Garcia although she was able to bring some copra and some stores. As we did not know how long it would take for repairs the Isle of Farquhar set off for Chagos and began removing mainly Ilois families from Diego Garcia to Peros and Salomon as well as stores and equipment. The Nordvaer returned from Mombasa in mid September and went to Diego Garcia where she removed the remaining Seychellois from Diego Garcia and also eight Ilois and Mauritian who decided they wished to return to Mauritius. As their contracts have expired we cannot of course prevent them from doing so. She also brought some copra and equipment which is not needed on the other two islands. The passengers for Mauritius will leave here at the end of this week by the M.V. Mauritius which is on a regular guano run.

3. The Isle of Farquhar should be here in mid October. She will bring copra and surplus stores and also some passengers. How many she will bring and who she will bring depends on the response of the remaining Ilois to the offer of jobs on Agalega. Chagos Agalega Company will arrange to send those for Agalega there either from here on a continuation of the Isle of Farquhar voyage or by a diversion.

4. Moulinie is now talking of being able to take more than 25 families to Agalega and if this is possible and if there are talks we would plan to remove these families by the Nordvaer when next she goes to Chagos and leave them on Agalega on her return. The increase in jobs available on Agalega for the Ilois is mainly caused by the difficulty now being experienced in recruiting Seychellois from here.

5. The breakdown of the Nordvaer has meant a more expensive operation than we had originally planned in that we have had to make additional voyages which do not fit into the normal commercial pattern of running the islands. This being so if the overall cost should not really be reflected in the running costs of the plantations but should be met from resettlement funds. When the Isle of Farquhar returns I will let you have a breakdown of costs.

6. The increasing opportunities to employ Ilois on Agalega if they are matched by an equal willingness on the part of the Chagos Ilois to take them will change the position on Peros and Salomon. We may find that the populations on these islands is reduced to the state where we can no longer continue to run them with such populations. It may then be desirable to close down altogether one or other of the islands or possibly both. The obvious economic solution would be to close both but the dispersal of the Ilois may prevent this from being possible. Again we shall know better later this month and I will keep you informed of developments.