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Mr. J. Thomas, Defence Policy Department

(220)(222) Thank you for your minutes of 10 and 13 November. I have the following comments:

- (a) A two-stage resettlement (involving temporary use of Paros Banhos and Salomon) should be avoided, if possible, even if only for the sake of simplicity and presentation. Two-staging is not in itself necessarily objectionable (as stated in Truman's minute of 13 November). The Ilois are migrant labourers and I do not think would greatly mind moving from one island to the other; nor is there any reason why it should be costly; but it would lay HMG open to criticism.
- (b) It is correct that the Aid Talks are long since concluded, and we cannot expect any further visits by Mauritian Ministers competent to discuss resettlement until the summer. I agree that it would be risky to invite a Minister to London especially for resettlement negotiations, especially as we hope to keep them in a low key. It would be best, therefore, for us to send a team to Mauritius.
- (c) The key to the whole resettlement problem is Agalega. Only after the potentialities of Agalega have been fully examined can the magnitude of the resettlement problem be determined. There is, therefore, no point in opening talks with the Mauritians before we can do so with Moulinié. If, as you suggest, we could take Moulinié into our confidence before the all clear is given, there would be a saving of valuable time.
- (d) Mr. Kennedy of the Treasury said in July that there was no need to tackle in advance the question of where the money should come from. Basically it should come from the £10 million E.I.O.T. allocation, but if this were insufficient, consideration would be given to finding the money when the amount needed is known. I take the Chancellor's minute to mean that the Treasury must be consulted before any financial commitment is made to the Mauritius Government over the cost of resettlement, but that we don't have to go to the Treasury until discussions have shown the amount likely to be needed.