

22 Aug. 1968
inside

Reference 27

SECRET

Mr Counsell

I attach a rather tart letter from Mr Wooller with a copy of my reply. ⁽²⁶⁾ Will you please arrange for the note which I have ⁽²⁸⁾ promised him to be prepared and sent to him.

EN
(E.G. Norris),
9 September 1968

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ARCHIVES No. 61
11 SEP 1968
P510/10

SECRET

26



BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION,

PORT LOUIS.

22 August, 1968.

10/32)

Dear Eric

It has, I think, now become necessary for me to know what is going on in the matter of defence facilities in BIOT in general and Diego Garcia in particular.

2. You will remember that I mentioned to the Secretaries of State the possibility that Dr. Ram might raise with them the question of establishing in Mauritius facilities which had been planned for Aldebra. (Both the American Chargé d'Affaires and an interested British-cum-South African contractor had previously made informal soundings with Dr. Ram on this subject.) At the time of the Ministers' visit I was, of course, told very smartly that there was no question of providing Aldebra-type facilities in Mauritius or elsewhere in this part of the world.

advanced

13

3. My American colleague has now learned (as a result of innocent enquiries about using the American geodetic facility team on Diego Garcia to examine the possibility of employing there 280 inhabitants of that island who would otherwise have been thrown out on to the labour market in Mauritius or the Seychelles) that his people have advanced plans for constructing a defence facility (as well as the temporary geodetic facility) on Diego Garcia which have been the subject over some months of a dialogue with London. We come into this as the result of an equally innocent reference made (Porter's letter PJ 10/10 of 8 August, 1968) about the action to be taken over the repatriation of about 150 "islanders" now destitute in Mauritius. Mauritius Ministers had been murmuring vaguely about the case, and with the benefit of the hindsight offered by my American colleague's confidences I have no doubt that they are on, however vaguely, to whatever is going on in Diego Garcia.

Yours Ever

Arthur
(A. Wooller)

LAST REF.	13.
NEXT REF.	

E.G. Norris, Esq., C.M.G.,
A.U.S.S.,
Commonwealth Office,
Downing St.,
S.W.1.

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SECRET

Reference..... (33)

Mr. Council

I should be grateful if you would cast an eye over the draft telegram I have placed below in reply to the telegram we have received from Mauritius at (30). The latter is perhaps unnecessarily astringent as no delays have occurred in this Department.

at (29)

2. My draft telegram is based on the views supplied by the BIOT section in Pacific and Indian ~~and~~ Ocean Department.

3. One of the difficulties which has arisen is that the Mauritians have based their claim on a statement made by the then Premier in 1965 when he said that the British Government had undertaken to meet the full cost of the resettlement of Mauritians at present living in the Chagos Archipelago. PIOD say they cannot trace any such agreement in written form, and that in any case the question of meeting resettlement costs would only arise if and when it became necessary to move any Mauritians because of proposed military developments on Diego Garcia.

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13 SEP 1968
P. B. Porter

P. B. Porter
P. B. Porter
11 September, 1968

Mr. Porter
We agreed to delete para 4 from your draft.

Edwin Cummings
12/9.

Telegram now off file as amended.
Slings below.

P. B. Porter
12/9.

Registry No. **PT 10/10**
 DEPARTMENT _____

* Date and time (G.M.T.) telegram should reach addressee(s) _____

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	PRIORITY MARKINGS (Date) 11 September, 1968 <i>13/9</i>
Top Secret Secret Confidential Restricted Unclassified SECRET	Emergency Immediate Priority Routine PRIORITY

CYPHER *02042*

En Clair. _____
 Code _____
 Cypher _____

[Security classification -if any] **SECRET**

[Codeword-if any] _____

Draft Telegram to:—
 Port Louis
 No. *389*
 (Date) _____
 And to:— *12/9*

Addressed to **PORT LOUIS**
 telegram No. _____ (date) _____
 And to _____
 repeated for information to _____
 Saving to _____

Repeat to:—

Saving to:—

Distribution:—

Files
 EAD
 FIOD

Copies to:—

Nothing to be written in this margin

UN 12/9 ONLY

Your Telegram No. 347.
 Resettlement of Mauritians formerly resident in BIOT.

Two distinct issues are involved here:
 (A) the possibility of any future resettlement of Mauritians resident in Diego Garcia because of American proposals to develop an 'austere communications facility' on Diego Garcia; and
 (B) the representations made by the Mauritius Ministry of Social Security referred to in Dawson-Moray's letter 32/5 of 27 July.

2. On (A) letters from Norris and Counsell follow in reply to your letter 10/32 of 22 August follow in next bag.

3. As regards (B) the present Mauritian representation cannot possibly stem from any question of the removal of Mauritian residents consequent upon proposals for the military development of Diego Garcia. On the contrary this appears to be a matter solely between employer and employee in which we would not (repeat not) be involved.

14 Day

No suggestion that in any further discussions with Mauritians on request mentioned in Descelles' letter

12/9
1605/11/92

CONFIDENTIAL

Commonwealth Office,

Downing Street,

London, S.W.1.

PJ 10/10

September, 1968

28
I am writing in continuation of Eric Morris's letter of 9 September and to add my apologies for the fact that you, like the other posts concerned, were not informed earlier about the proposal to develop an "austere facility" on Diego Garcia. In fact you will see from the copy of the letter to the American Embassy, a copy of which accompanies Defence Department letter ZD 1/2/8 of 12 September, copied to Humphrey Arthington-Davey (which had been prepared before your letter to Eric was received) that H.M.G.'s assent was only given on 3 September and so your American colleague was indeed way out in front with his talk of "advanced plans". In fact you will see that the proposal is still hypothetical as no money has yet been allocated for it.

Original at: MANRITUS A.C.
This Copy for:
Information only/Action on
Para(s)

(E. H. M. COUNSELL)
East Africa Department

LAST REF.	28.
NEXT REF.	

H. E. Mr. A. Woeller, G.B.E.,
British High Commissioner,
PORT LOUIS.

Original at:
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Information only/Action on
Para(s)

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