

HC

RESETTLEMENT OF THE ILOIS FROM B.I.O.T.

1. I attended a meeting this morning in Mr. Ringadoo's office to discuss with the representatives in attendance from the Ministries of Agriculture and Labour, possibilities for resettlement projects.
2. At the latest count there are 169 Ilois already in Mauritius who are still a liability on the social services and outdoor relief. These comprise about 55 families who are for the most part living within small compass at Roche Bois, a village just north of Port Louis. The Ministry of Labour have tried to interest the men in work on tea estates and aloe fibre production without success.
3. The latest idea, which was put forward by Mr. Ringadoo at the meeting, was to mount a pig breeding and rearing project specifically for the Ilois which could be established in the Roche Bois area where land was cheap. It would be run on cooperative lines and be supervised by a few people, say members of the Young Farmers Clubs, who already had experience of pig production. If this were successful Ilois, who could not be resettled on Agelaga after the next exodus from B.I.O.T., might be integrated into the scheme but the readjustment might be more difficult for them than for those who had been in Mauritius since 1968.
4. The officials at the meeting were instructed to meet the Ilois at Roche Bois, discuss the idea with them, and to prepare a project. Meanwhile no effective costing could be prepared.
5. I mentioned that we had already had tentative discussions with the Economic Planning Unit (and with Mr. Charles Lynn) about the prospects for a coconut plantation scheme and that all advice from agriculturalists and economists was against the idea for economic, entomological and land use reasons. I also mentioned the EPU's idea for employing the Ilois on a scheme for clearing the islands round the coast and preparing them for tourism; an idea which also visualised settling them in small "tourist" villages. Mr. Ringadoo was less impressed with this than with the pig rearing idea.
6. There was no comment when I suggested that we might send a man to Mauritius to discuss possible projects although I felt that this would not be unwelcome. I said that we would keep in close touch with the Mauritius Government about it.

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