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No. 1138/2



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PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE  
MAURITIUS

17th September, 1968.

The Prime Minister's Office (External Affairs Division) present their compliments to the British High Commission and have the honour to inform the British High Commission that there are at present 55 persons born in the former dependencies of Mauritius now forming part of the British Indian Ocean Territory who have asked to be repatriated with their families to their native island, where most of them have left their personal belongings. A list of those persons is enclosed. (Annex A).

\* \* \*

in Mauritius  
a letter

2. Those persons were formerly employed by the Chagos and Agalega Co. Ltd. but on the expiry of the contract which they signed in Mauritius before the Magistrate of the Industrial Court, they were returned to Mauritius on the 19th May, 1967, by the employing Company, represented here by Messrs. Rogers & Co. It is understood that their contract was not renewed because the British Indian Ocean Territory was not in favour of further labour intakes and that the Chagos and Agalega Co. Ltd. have started negotiations with the British Ministry of Defence on this question.

(HS)

3. In addition to those persons, there are 81 adults and 56 children who arrived in Mauritius from either Diego Garcia, Peros Banhos or Salomon Island, on the 30th March, 1968 and who are stranded here.

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4. Relief was provided by the Mauritius Government to all the persons mentioned above but provision of such relief has been stopped.

5. It is regretted that a copy of the agreement between the British and Mauritius Governments on the cession of those islands now forming part of the British Indian Ocean Territory is not available. In case any such written agreement exists, it would be appreciated if a copy could be made available to the Mauritius Government.

6. It is observed that on the 10th November, 1965, in reply to a Parliamentary Question concerning Defence facilities in the Indian Ocean, the then Secretary of State declared in the House of Commons that the cost of re-settling elsewhere those inhabitants who could no longer remain in the British Indian Ocean Territory would be the responsibility of the British Government.

7. During the visit to Mauritius of Mr. Todd, Administrator of the British Indian Ocean Territory in May 1967, the question of the repatriation of those Citizens of Mauritius born in the islands now forming part of the British Indian Ocean Territory was discussed and Mr. Todd then stated that a census was being arranged to find out who of those persons

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living in the British Indian Ocean Territory belonged to Mauritius and who did not. Mr. Lord considered that that exercise would last about a year.

8. It would be appreciated if the Mauritius Government could be informed of the proposals of the British Government for the resettlement of the inhabitants of those former dependencies of Mauritius now forming part of the British Indian Ocean Territory.

9. The Prime Minister's Office (External Affairs Division) avail themselves of this opportunity to renew to the British High Commission the assurances of their highest consideration.



The British High Commission  
Cerne House,  
Port Louis.