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W. S. I. O. T.
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VICTORIA
SEYCHELLES

Dear Allan,

The Nordvaer has just returned from Chagos with a cargo of some 120 tons of copra. Also on board were 53 Ilois (15 men 15 women and 23 children). They came from Peros Banhos and Salomon and took passages as they wish to go on leave to Mauritius and return later to the islands. They have been told that they are entitled to the passages to Mauritius but that we cannot guarantee return passages. The Ilois are at present accommodated in houses here in Mahe and will sail for Mauritius on the M.V. Mauritius early in July.

2. This latest exodus reduces the labour force on Peros Banhas and Salomon to 50 men and 55 women with 174 children. In my letter BIOT/157/172/IV of 18 May I told you we proposed to concentrate the population on Peros Banhos but those on Salomon refused to move and the Manager did not press the issue. In the interests of maintaining the peace on the islands I am sure he was right and that we can only move the people between islands with their willing cooperation.

3. I have spoken with the Captain of the Nordvaer who tells me that there is a general acceptance on the two islands that they will one day close down and that there is a general air of apathy on the islands. It seems that we are moving towards a stage where everyone will be sitting under a coconut tree waiting for the end and not even picking up the nuts. There is little the Manager can do about this as they have no enforceable and effective sanctions to use against those who do not work properly.

4. I am afraid that it all boils down to the old cry of the sooner we evacuate the islands the better.

(J R Todd)
ADMINISTRATOR BIOT

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